

South Africa, provided by the Nats' "rape of the Constitution?" We allowed the initiative to pass to the Black Sash, a movement, which because of limitations inherent in its make-up, could call for nothing more than a return to the Constitution, or for a new National Convention attended by the representatives of those entitled to the vote. Only after the new Senators had been appointed did we call a public meeting, and its lack of success can only be attributed to the fact that by then public interest had dissipated itself on periods of "mourning" and calls for the "honouring of our Constitution." We know that the Freedom Charter points the way forward to a new Constitution for South Africa, but we lost the chance of letting the people know whilst the Senate Act was still a source of apprehension and anger at the Nats to white South Africans.

Press says: "When freedom is won, when democracy is achieved, we shall inherit the leadership of white South Africans." We shall only be entitled to that inheritance, if we prepare ourselves in the struggle being waged now, if we show by example, that we are entitled to that leadership not only of white South Africa but alongside African, Indian and Coloured South Africa as well.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL GROUPS

By D.H.

This article is yet another contribution in the discussion started in the pages of **LIBERATION** by the article 'Can the C.O.D. Win Mass Support?' Further contributions are invited.

THE articles by Johnson and Press in recent issues of Liberation are interesting and useful. But they demonstrate that while it is widely recognised that some sort of social, economic or class realities underlies the two big parties there is little real knowledge of what these realities are. This article outlines some facts about the historical development of the Nationalist movement. It concludes with a few remarks about the social bases of the U.P. and C.O.D.

The Afrikaner nationalist movement was originally based on the farmers and intellectuals. Farming in African-inhabited areas was based on the labour tenancy system. In exchange for a certain amount of labour (usually 3 to 6 months in early days) the African was "given" a plot of land on which to grow food and build a house and

the right to keep a few head of stock on the farm. The system was imposed by conquest and maintained by constant direct personal violence. The ideology which arose on this basis was of fear, hatred and contempt of Africans. The Afrikaner intellectuals (at first almost exclusively Dominees and teachers) were interested in obtaining rights for the Afrikaans language, religion and culture. The fight against British Imperialism gave the movement an additional anti-imperialist and partially-progressive character. These elements determined the nature of the movement from its inception up to the 1920's.

Two new elements emerged to complicate this comparatively simple force about this period. Firstly, the impoverishment and urbanisation of many Afrikaners and their mass entry into the working class. This accompanied and slowly transformed the struggle of the white trade unions against the capitalists culminating in the general strikes of 1913 and 1922. (Comrade Bill by J. Cope.) The entry of the Afrikaners with their established colour prejudices into the ranks of the white workers led to a struggle between the ideas of socialism and class-struggle and the ideas of racialism. It must be admitted that so far racialism has been winning. The first result was the pact government of 1924 when the by-then reactionary Labour Party and the Nats gained power and instituted the "civilised labour policy." This was the policy of giving unskilled and semi-skilled work to "poor whites" and paying them many times what had been payed the Non-Europeans who were displaced. This was not an isolated act as is often imagined but was and is accompanied by a continuous drive to provide (primarily through the State) education and improved opportunities for whites and especially Afrikaners. This has led to an enormous growth in the numbers of Afrikaner white-collar workers—clerks, civil servants and professional people. Thus the Nats succeeded in capturing a new force and building it into a major new social base for their movement.

In connection with this development another closely connected one took place. That is the development of South African state capitalism, Nationalist capitalism built up under the wing of the State, and the new fascist ideology which is its natural expression. Landmarks in this process are: 1924—setting up of the Board of Trade and Industries to study and advise on commerce and industry, 1925—introduction of legislation for tariffs to protect and develop secondary industry, 1928—setting up of ISCOR (pushed through by Hertzog against Smuts' opposition). This development was continued under the combined Cabinet of Hertzog and Smuts by, for example: 1937 the Marketing Act which codified and developed the law concerning the marketing boards, which are state-backed boards of farmers to raise prices for particular farm products in South Africa, dump surpluses overseas and supply farmers with aid to modernise and expand production. Thus the State was used to establish a heavy industry, expand power and transport services, and organise and protect farming and secondary industry, while arranging that Europeans only got good wages, salaries and business opportunities. Very important in organising the specifically Nat participants in this process was the holding of the "Economiese Volkskongress" in 1939

and the subsequent founding of the "Handelsinstituut." Thus the Nats launched and led a new economic policy very popular with the rising capitalists in industry and farming, of some value to traders in that it developed the "home market," and provided jobs for professional people.

Especially from the depression of 1929-1932 and the rise of Hitler in 1933 with his ideas of racialism and "Autarky" (economic self-sufficiency) a new element entered Afrikaner Nationalism, ideas of building up "Afrikaner" capital and using totalitarian, fascist methods to establish white supremacy and Afrikaner dominance for all time. This policy has been carried out with conspicuous success. The first step was to gain totalitarian control of Afrikaner life. A formidable battery of mass organisations and propaganda organs have been captured or created for this purpose: the F.A.K. for cultural affairs, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Afrikaans press and publishing business, SABRA for propaganda among intellectuals, "Christian National Education" for all Afrikaners from kindergarten to University, the "Handelsinstituut" and "Reddingsdaadbond" to guide and build up Afrikaner capital (which is now quite strong (see Dickson's articles in New Age) and the "Blankewerkersbeskermingsbond" to capture the white trade unions for the Nats. (Trade Unions in Travail by A. Hepple.)

Due to the limitations of space and my knowledge it has only been possible to present a skeleton outline of the evolution of the Nats. It must be emphasised that the whole thing is a continuous, relatively conscious historical process guided by the Broederbond, with, at least from 1933 Nazi inspiration. We may summarise the present position as follows:

NATS.

Character: A well-organised fascist social movement with a host of interlinked sectional mass organisations, propaganda agencies, and channels of influence of which the National Party is only one. Has a totalitarian grip on all aspects of Afrikaner life.

Class leadership: (1) The farmers. (2) Rising Afrikaner capitalists dependent on state aid and the support of the Nat movement.

Mass Social Bases: White labour dependent on the industrial colour bar for its employment and high wages. Dependants and employees of the state and state capital (SAR & H, SABC), The Steel Group (ISCOR, USCO, AMCOR, VECOR, SABAN, etc.), FOSCOR, SASOL, etc.

U.P.

Character: An old-style Parliamentary party designed to operate the two-party system. A relatively amorphous body led by place seekers.

Class leadership: (1) The mining capitalists. (2) Capitalists allied with or dependent on British capital and/or the mining groups. **Mass Social Bases:** White middle-class, professional strata; English-speaking sections of the working class.

U.P.

Ideological-political base: People influenced by Afrikaner Nationalism, extreme racialism, and/or the belief that a strong policy is needed against the Non-Europeans.

NATS.

Ideological-Political base: People influenced by British Nationalism and Monarchism, people fearing attacks by the Nats on their social position, people favouring the status quo and traditional political methods, people fearing that the Nats will provoke "trouble with the Non-Europeans."

The mining capitalists do not like being taxed to finance State capitalist development, nor do they like tariffs which raise the prices of their supplies. Tariffs, by raising the cost of living, also bring on demands for higher wages, and a rise in labour costs eventually as well. However, the U.P. helped carry out the policy of State capitalist development during the fusion with Hertzog and during the War. Partly this reflects the fact that the mining groups are buying into secondary industry in a major way, and also that the policy is popular with such wide sections of the middle-class whites that it must be supported by any bourgeois party trying to win Parliamentary seats. It may also indicate the rise to influence in the U.P. during the 1930's of groups of farmers and manufacturers. However, aside from the mine magnates and their hangers-on no important coherent class interests are clearly visible in the U.P. This is part of the explanation of the amorphousness of the U.P. and the ease with which it is disintegrating.

Another point which should be noted is the incorrectness of the idea of "progressive" secondary industry (Solly Sachs' "The Choice Before South Africa," and Press's article in Liberation for Dec. 1955). The manufacturers in the Nat group are dependent on the Nats to such an extent that it is ridiculous to imagine them coming into conflict with colour discrimination or even some of its worst features. Those in the U.P. are dependent in general on big mining capital or overseas capital (both in favour of white supremacy). A large proportion of the rest of manufacturers are dependent on state aid (e.g. through tariffs and industrial pioneering by the State firms and the Economic Development Corporation). Moreover, manufacturers benefit through the colour bar keeping labour costs down, the workers divided and Non-European competitors out. The argument that the manufacturers must emerge as a liberal force since they need to use Non-Europeans for skilled work and need to expand the home market by raising living standards is unrealistic. Because of competition (and independent manufacturers are not powerful monopolists in South Africa) no individual capitalist dare do anything else but fight for the highest possible profit, lowest wages and largest turnover for himself to avoid being put out of business. To expect weak manufacturers (I know of no powerful independent manufacturing groups) to fight the combined forces of the Nats and the Chamber of Mines in order to raise the conditions of the Non-European workers in the general, long-term interests of industry and the country as a whole is wishful thinking it seems to me.

Finally, what are the prospects for C.O.D.? To whom may it appeal? So far clearly it has found a response mainly among three groups: (i) youth and students who are less full of racialism than their elders; (ii) intellectuals who are more influenced by arguments, ideas and appeals to principles; (iii) white groups themselves threatened by racialism and religious prejudice—so far mainly Jews, but later no doubt also Greeks and other Continentals, Catholics and eventually Anglicans and British, as the Nats become ever more narrow and desperate. As powerful progressive trade unions are built up with mass Non-European support it should be possible to win widespread support among white workers whose trade union rights and living standards are under attack (albeit less so than those of their Non-European brothers). When we have begun to build mass support among all these groups we shall need to seriously think about methods for gaining a foothold amongst middle-class “Anglicaners” and Afrikaners. But for the immediate future the perspectives it seems to me are fairly clear and plenty of political work is available for all to do.

THE EXTENSION OF THE PASS LAWS

By WALTER SISULU

WHEN the Pass Law was first introduced to control the movement of slaves in 1760 by the settlers of the Cape, no one could have imagined that this slave measure was to cause so much bitterness and misery to millions, generations after its introduction.

It was this measure which gave an idea to Caledon who introduced a proclamation in 1809 requiring the African tribes (Hottentots) to carry passes when moving from one area to another. This infamous Caledon proclamation was the beginning of a forced labour system. It had its basis in the slave system which had taken root in the colony. Since then it has been extended from time to time to the various South African regions, by both Republican and Colonial governments. It has been one of the most important techniques to create a system, not only of forced cheap labour, but also the migratory labour system.

In this system today is found a method for regulating the economic relations between black and white, a method unique in its nature to South Africa. The extension of the pass system to children, African women, and other racial groups in this country, is in fact a continuation of this slave and feudal measure started almost 200 years ago.

A CHALLENGE TO SOCIETY

The Pass laws are therefore not only just one of the Nationalist Government's oppressive measures, but fundamentally a slave measure