

LIBERAL OPINION



EDITOR:

268 Longmarket Street,
Pietermaritzburg.

PRODUCTION & CIRCULATION:

P.O. Box 66, Wynberg.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 The South African Foundation
 - 2 Mr. Nehru and Goa
 - 3 Sabotage
 - 4 The South African Way of Life . . .
 - 5 Uhuru for Umtata?
 - 6 Apartheid and the Law
 - 7 Background to Transkei Self-Government
-

The South African Foundation

FRESH FROM PEKING, hot-foot for Havana, Field-Marshal Montgomery stopped off to dine with Dr. Verwoerd. It must have been a good dinner. Certainly it inspired in him a blind and uncritical devotion to apartheid not previously seen outside the ranks of the Nationalist Party.

It is doubtful whether Field-Marshal Montgomery's views on current questions carry much weight in 1962. However, even if his views are not important, his relationship with the South African Foundation is. The fact that his South African host was Sir Francis de Guingand and that, besides being an old army associate, Sir Francis heads the Foundation, makes it incumbent on that organisation to make its attitude on certain questions clear.

Unbiased Picture

The Foundation claims that its task is to keep aloof from politics and to present an unbiased picture of South Africa.

What do its members, and particularly those of them who have interests in the English-language press, think of the Field-Marshal's quite unfounded strictures on that press? Do they approve?

What do its members, and particularly those who support the Progressive Party and the United Party, say about his endorsement of the Transkei constitutional arrangements and of Nationalist Party policy in general?

If the Foundation is really the impartial body it is claimed to be, do its members approve of their Chairman's close public association with a person whose few weeks in South Africa showed him to be a blind and uncritical propagandist for apartheid and one who would let no opportunity slip to sing its praises?

If the Foundation does not wish to be associated with Field-Marshal Montgomery's views, what is it going to do about his visit?

Many people regard the Foundation as no more than a machine to whitewash apartheid, a sophisticated ally of the State Information Service. For, in spite of its frequent protestations of its impartiality, the Foundation has, to the best of our knowledge, not yet been heard to make any public condemnation of any important aspect of apartheid. On the other hand, what it certainly has done is to try to persuade the world that apartheid is not so bad as it seems.

After the Montgomery visit, the Foundation will become permanently and rightly associated in the public mind with the Government's propaganda machine, unless it takes drastic steps to dissociate itself from all the unfortunate pronouncements its Chairman's late guest made. ★

Mr. Nehru and Goa

It may be possible to find reasons to justify Mr. Nehru's invasion of Goa, but it is not easy to find good ones.

Mr. Nehru's past prestige has rested on his support for Gandhian philosophy, on his support for the United Nations, on his stated belief in policies of negotiation as opposed to those of aggression and on his apparent determination to introduce into the realm of international affairs the standards of behaviour expected of ordinary men in their private lives.

Goa shattered all this. ★

Jock Isacowitz

MEMBERS of the Party will, I know, want a prominent place in this issue to be given to a few words in memory of Jock Isacowitz.

Jock died in Johannesburg on the night of January 30th. To say that his death leaves a gap in the ranks of the Liberal Party would be an unforgivable understatement.

I will not say anything here about Jock's political activities, in the Springbok Legion and elsewhere, before the Liberal Party started; suffice it to say that he had already built up a formidable and honoured political name for himself by the early 1950s. Jock attended the meeting in Cape Town at which the Liberal Party was launched. There were people at that meeting who had doubts about whether a new political party should be formed, but Jock had none. He was convinced of the need at that moment in 1953, just after the Nationalists had won their second election victory, for a non-racial Party.

The contribution which Jock Isacowitz made towards building the Liberal Party into what it has now become, probably outweighs anything which any other individual has done. Certainly his was the drive which created the base on which the Transvaal Division has been built. He served us in many capacities—as Transvaal Chairman, as National Vice-Chairman, as a brilliant organiser, an outstanding conference chairman, a most perceptive political student, an incisive debater, a warm friend and, even on the darkest day, an inveterate optimist.

The Government recognised Jock Isacowitz for what he was—an opponent to be respected. So it banned him from all meetings for two years and, when the 1960 Emergency came, it put him in gaol for three months.

We cannot replace Jock. All we can do is try to emulate his example of unceasing work for the Party and of faith in the ultimate victory of the things for which it stands.

Our great sympathy goes to Eileen, her three children and the other members of his family.

PETER BROWN.