

Voice of South Africa.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of South Africa recently issued an important statement of policy. It called for an immediate Second Front in Europe, called for the Three-Power Conference to be a renewed demonstration of unity between the allies, and then went on to put forward a policy for South Africa, following the recent elections.

"In South Africa the Government's sweeping election victory was more than an expression of the electorate's support for the Government's war policy. It was a mandate to the Government to intensify its efforts for victory over Fascism.

"Everywhere the deepest dissatisfaction has been expressed with the Government's reactionary blundering handling of the food question, its appeasement of the Fifth Column, its shabby treatment of our soldiers. Yet the majority of the people voted solidly for the Government candidates, because they accepted the pledges of General Smuts that South Africa's war contribution will be intensified.

"But, although fortified with a much-increased Parliamentary majority, the Government is taking no steps to carry out the mandate of the electorate. Instead, there is every sign that it is bent on slackening off in its war effort. While our Allies are battling desperately for victory, 'a Ministry of Demobilisation' has been established in South Africa. A recent Government order enables the military authorities to discharge any non-commissioned man or woman from the Army, on the grounds that he or she is 'surplus to Service requirements.' And already there are reports that soldiers, especially non-Europeans, are being quietly dismissed, without employment being provided for them.

"The relaxation in our war effort is matched by a growing offensive of Big Business against the workers and non-European peoples within South Africa. The food question becomes increasingly serious every week, but the Government, apparently dominated by big farmers and food monopolists, refuses to ration and pin down the prices of the people's food. A series of brutal evictions of Indian coloured people in the Transvaal, under the notorious Pegging Act, is followed by Smut's disgraceful statement to the Dutch Reformed Church racialists, threatening renewed measures of industrial and residential segregation against non-Europeans. The important portfolio of Social Welfare has been taken away from the Labour Party representative, Walter Madeley.

"While these serious tendencies bring comfort to Hitler's friends in this country, they are a menace to the people, especially to the

South African Labour movement. A great responsibility now rests on the leaders of that movement.

“The creation of a firm alliance of the Labour Party, the Communist Party and the Trade Union movement, based on a common policy of action for the defense of the people’s interests, can transform the whole situation. It can revitalise the whole of the progressive and democratic forces in South Africa, check the growing swing to reaction in home policy, and be the means of providing a great new people’s effort from South Africa for the Second Front.

“United, Labour can force a democratic solution to the food crisis, peg down the cost of living, and check inflation by increased taxation of profits. United, the workers can secure greater representation on all governing bodies, reverse reactionary segregation policies and achieve the extension of democratic rights to all South Africans, irrespective of colour.

“This is the crucial period. What is at stake is not only the winning of the war, but the kind of peace that will follow. A real people’s victory—a victory that will bring liberation and democracy to all peoples—depends on the way the war is fought, and the degree of unity and organised strength now reached by the Labour movement, standing at the head of all progressive and democratic forces.

“Forward to Unity for a People’s Victory!”
