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FIGHTING TALK



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ORGAN OF THE SPRINGBOK LEGION.

Our New Chairman's Message

ONE of the points that emerged clearly from the 8th Annual Conference of the Legion was the fact that during the last year there was a decline in membership and a general diminution in national, branch and group activity. This trend has serious consequences and must be arrested. But I believe the process can be stopped and that we can go further and strengthen our ranks.

I do not consider that the problem is purely a question of organisation and that its solution depends entirely on the canvassing of lapsed members and in conducting membership drives, although this must obviously not be overlooked in finding a solution to the problem. But I believe that the answer lies largely in the Legion adopting a more positive role and in giving more publicity to its programmes and policies.

During the last year we were on the defensive. Firstly because the organisation itself was attacked, and secondly because the democratic structure in South Africa was being whittled away by the Nationalist Government. In defence of our own position we took a negative line. Instead of stating clearly what we do stand for, we merely attempted to deny the accusations of our accusers. Similarly in regard to the attacks on freedom in South Africa our policy was to defend what freedoms we have or had, rather than to press for their extension.

It is significant that the principle objectives which brought the Springbok Legion into existence and to which the Legion owed its popularity in the past are positive in concept, e.g.,

- to ensure decent work, pay and adequate living conditions for all ex-servicemen,
- to gain economic security for the dependants of fallen soldiers, sailors and airmen,
- to carry over into civilian life the unity and co-operation among races which was achieved on the battlefield,
- to give active support to any individual, group, party or movement working for a society based on the four freedoms.

It is necessary, I feel, to restate these principles, and bearing them in mind, to endeavour once again to put them into practice.

Specifically it is clear from the resolutions adopted at Conference that the Legion still has a positive contribution to make to the solution of the non-European problem in South Africa on the question of the economic security and welfare of ex-servicemen and their dependants, on the question of racial unity, and additionally that as ex-servicemen we have a duty to perform in propagating the cause of world peace. We must give expression to these policies in the ensuing year. Because some of them are not so pressing as

the struggle against fascism in South Africa, there is the danger that they may again be overlooked. We must ensure that this does not happen.

In carrying out these policies, we must give them the fullest publicity, because I believe that there is a large body of the South African public, both ex-servicemen and other, who feel as we do on these issues, but who require the stimulus which the Springbok Legion could provide, to give expression to their beliefs.

It is my opinion that the energetic prosecution of these positive policies could revitalise the organisation and bring into our ranks those members whose interests we have been able to sustain.

(Written by J. Sachs, 37, Main House, Main street, Johannesburg.)



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Letters to the Editor

P.O. Box 28,
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11th April, 1951.

The Editor,

I am a member of the Springbok Legion and in good standing, also the Play Bill of the Clarendon Dugout. I have exploited all the local willing helpful, talent, so now I apply to the Legion to help me in my future fixtures.

I know that Jo'burg is teeming with people only too anxious to entertain ex-servicemen, but I do not know how to get in touch with same. If you or any in Headquarters will help me out of a difficulty I shall be pleased.

At each of our meetings we require one or two singers or entertainers, people who can keep the boys happy. There is no accompanist or musician in the dugout so those willing to help must provide their own. Clarendon will pay reasonably but extravagant figures are out of the question.

I will anxiously await a reply.

Yours respectfully,

F. J. SMYTH.

A Letter from a Pass-Bearer

The Editor,
"Fighting Talk,"

Sir,

I live in Orlando and always come to work by train. As soon as we get off the train we usually find a white man and his African assistants just outside the station stopping nearly every African man and demanding passes.

Many of us are able to produce the passes, but, after having produced them, we are usually asked, "Waar werk jy?" This type of question is put to those people who carry EXEMPTION PASSES and, of course, even to those men who are able to produce their SERVICE CONTRACTS.

Another important thing which deserves special attention in this matter is that the police rough handle the Africans when asking for their passes. In a case where one has successfully shown

the document asked for, the police seem so annoyed that with a hostile attitude a Pass or certificate is thrown on the ground and we are told, "Go, Kaffir."

Another feature of this questioning, which takes place almost every morning at Park Station, is that if a group of newly arrived Africans appears the man who is questioning you will run over to the group still carrying your pass in his hand. Then the only sensible thing you can do is to run after him and ask him to give you back your pass. And indeed it goes without saying that quite a good part of our time is wasted every morning and we often get to our places of work late.

BEER RAIDS.

Beer raids take place at any time, just when the police feel like doing so. But these raids are done mostly late at night or very early in the morning between 4 and 5 a.m., when it is thought that Africans may be caught unprepared. The doors are usually flung open and, if locked, a forceful knock is made and you are ordered to open. Usually there is a European policeman with a group of African policemen with sticks.

Immediately the door is opened the whole house is disturbed. While the European policeman is looking in every corner, even ordering you to remove the mattress from the bed in case there is some liquor hidden, the African police are demanding passes from all the men present. This must be done at once or you are pushed and knocked about and driven to the police station, even sometimes when you have your pass quite in good order.

At the police station you are charged with having failed to produce a pass and you may be fined 10/- or £1. You get let off with a fine only providing that some relative has brought your pass to the police station. This rough handling of people late at night or early in the morning while they are still asleep has often resulted in many innocent people being assaulted and taken to the station.

THE JOHANNESBURG PASS OFFICE

It is not uncommon today to see people every day queuing outside the Johannesburg Pass Office. These poor people must spend their time there apparently for no other reason than that they are Africans and must carry passes. They go to the Office to have their passes put in order or to have their permits renewed in order to avoid trouble with the police.

Hundreds of them have their passes taken away and are given in their place an ENDORSEMENT ORDER, describing the holders as "surplus" or "redundant natives". They have to leave the city and go back to the country and live on . . . who knows what? Even more painful is the lot of those who are forced to leave their wives and children in Johannesburg, because the head of the family is now considered "redundant", simply because he happened to lose his job and was unable to find another one in the specified time.

MUNICIPAL LOCATIONS.

Before a man can proceed to the Pass Office to obtain a PERMIT TO SEEK WORK, he must first be cleared by the Location Superintendent. This involves a thorough questioning. You have to produce proof that you are a resident of the location. Often the owner of the house in which you are living must go along with you and there is difficulty, if his name is not the same as yours. The purpose of all this questioning is to prove that you do live in Johannesburg and that you are not an African who has come from outside. After all this you are given a letter to go to the Pass Office.

Now you are given a PERMIT TO SEEK WORK, which is valid for seven days, after which it must be renewed. If you haven't found work after six weeks, you are told you must be sent to the rural areas as there is work there. So you are transferred to another area where you know nobody and you do not know even where you can stay. You are now given a LETTER OF TRANSFER or you are endorsed out of the urban area.

It must be realised that many times a young man who was even born and bred in the location and knows no other home can still be sent away, if he cannot find work. Another thing is that it is not an easy matter to have the endorsement

(Continued on page 11)

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Where Do YOU Stand?

ALL over the world reaction is on the march and Civil Liberties and democratic rights are being attacked. All over the world people — common people like ourselves — are asserting fundamental principles and concepts and taking their stand for these despite propaganda, labels, intimidation and victimisation. Individuals and organisations are being forced to take a stand one way or the other.

Those who evade the issue have made a decision whether or not they admit it. To be neutral or evasive, and even ignorant, is a political act with political consequences. It is a tacit — even if grudging — acceptance of reaction and as such, a siding with it.

There are individuals who try to convince themselves that they have taken their stand because they belong to an "anti-Nat." organisation. This is a form of evasion for, unless they assert and fight for fundamental principles and concepts in and through their organisation, they are compromising them and betraying themselves and the struggle.

Similarly, there are organisations that evade the issue and rationalise their evasion on the basis that they are "non-political", or that they can make a more effective contribution to the struggle if they are not "labelled". There are a thousand and one variations of this evasion, including the excuses put forward in justification for failure to work and associate with other organisations that have taken their stand and been "labelled" as a consequence. None of them is valid. The organisations that use them are begging the issue and, whether or not they will admit it, by so doing are furthering the cause of reaction.

Today we live in a political atmosphere in which organisations and individuals are "labelled" and persecuted as "Communist", if they fight for progress. But, if we wish to fight for the underprivileged, for trade unionism, better pay, increased C.O.L.A., the preservation of Civil Liberties, World Peace and similar objectives, there is no alternative for us other than to assert and fight for the fundamental principles of democracy or to submit and give up the struggle for all the other objectives.

These principles and concepts are the things for which the generations that have gone before us fought, suffered and died. The millions who died in World War II did so precisely for these things. They were good things to fight for then and they are good now. They have not changed in any way because the propaganda of reaction has "labelled" them and reactionary and fascist governments, with the acquiescence of

the confused and cowardly, have arrogated to themselves and their Ministers the wide powers of Suppression of Communism Acts and similar legislation.

The issue is testing the integrity of individuals and organisations. There can be no shirking or equivocating. The outcome is not in doubt, only how long it will take, how severe the struggle will be and its cost in terms of individual human suffering and misery. The more there are, both individuals and organisations, the sooner it will be over and the fewer casualties there will be.

It is obvious that if the people who subscribe to democracy and the Rule of Law — who are the majority — are organised to express opposition to reaction and to demand adherence to democratic concepts, we must prevail.

If we are organised and united in our opposition, there will be fewer casualties since the individual crying in a wilderness of apathy and servility, is easily silenced but the collective voice of an organised people is indestructible. Throughout the ages tyrants have learned this the hard way. Unfortunately, it is true that the "tyrannised" also learn the hard way.

The organisations and individuals who

equivocate on this issue must also accept a measure of responsibility for the human suffering and misery that their direct participation in the struggle might have reduced or alleviated.

The Springbok Legion and the individuals in it are making a direct, material and effective contribution to this struggle by:

- (a) having these basic principles and concepts in the Aims and Objects of the Constitution,
- (b) mobilising a number of people to take their stand and fight for these ideals, thus providing a rallying point and an example for others to do likewise,
- (c) doing so without equivocation in an atmosphere of intimidation, victimisation and compromise and as a result of all this,
- (d) influencing and stimulating other organisations and individuals to take a determined and unequivocal stand.

Where do YOU stand? Are you FOR Democracy or AGAINST it? It is one or the other. WHICH?

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? WHEN LAST DID YOU ENROL A NEW MEMBER? HOW LONG AGO IS IT SINCE YOU SENT IN A DONATION? DO YOU READ "FIGHTING TALK"? DO YOU LIKE IT? HAVE YOU ANY CRITICISM EITHER OF OUR JOURNAL OR OF LEGION POLICY? WRITE TO US. IN THE MEANTIME MAKE USE OF THE ATTACHED MEMBERSHIP FORM.

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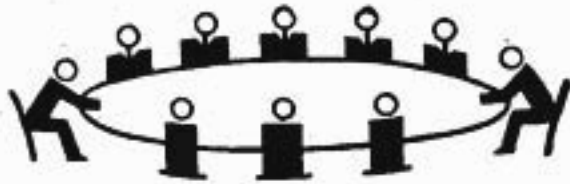
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DIE Jaarlikse Konferensie van die Springbok Legioen is vir dié van ons wat soms 'n bietjie moeg voel in die stryd, 'n bron van inspirasie, 'n samekoms plek waarheen ons gaan in die wete dat ons ander Legionarisse daar sal ontmoet wat ons sal verseker dat die stryd teen reaksie nog net so belangrik is as wat dit gedurende die oorlog was.

Die Konferensie vanjaar was dan ook geen uitsondering. Uit alle takke oor die land het afgevaardigdes bymekaar gekom en in toespraak na toespraak het hulle onomwonde laat blyk dat die Legioen se stryd teen die Nasionaliste vandag net so belangrik is as die stryd wat ons gedurende die oorlog teen die Nazis en Fasciste gestry het.

Die besprekingspunte het die volgende drie punte in hoofsaak beklemtoon:

Eerstens: Dat oud-soldate onwrikbaar glo dat vooruitgang alleen kan bestaan in die behou van vrede, en dat ons as 'n oud-soldate organisasie alles in ons vermoë moet doen om te help om vrede te behou. Die volgende besprekingspunt eenparig aangeneem beklemtoon hierdie standpunt.

„Die Konferensie glo dat daar niks is — geen saak, geval of teenstrydigheid van belange — wat die gebruik van atoomse wapens regverdig, en besluit dat die Springbok Legioen sal deelneem aan alle vredesbewegings binne die beleid van die Legioen.

Tweedens: Die Legioen se onwankelbare opposisie teen die Nasionaliste se beleid van rassehaat en hulle totalitêre neigings.

Derdens: Dat die toekomstige vooruitgang van Suid-Afrika hoofsaaklik afhang van die goeie verhouding tussen blank en gekleurde. In hierdie opsig is dan ook andermaal skerp kritiek uitgeoefen op die apartheidsbeleid van die regering. Vir die eerste maal in die Legioen se geskiedenis is daar dan ook eenparig besluit oor 'n basis vir 'n toekomstige nie-blanke beleid.

Punt No. 37 op die agenda kortliks saamgevat stel die volgende voor: Uitbreiding van die stemreg tot die nie-

DIE KONFERENSIE

blankes op 'n Onderwys-kwalifikasie basis, weglating van die industriële kleurlyn, erkenning van nie-blanke vakbonde, herroeping van sulke diskriminerende wette soos die Paswette en die Groepsgebiede Wet. Die Konferensie stel verder voor dat 'n nasionale liggaam deur die Parlement daar gestel word om die wenslikheid tot uitvoering van bogenoemde voorstelle te ondersoek.

Tenslotte wil ons Jack Sachs geluk-

wens met sy verkiesing tot Nasionale Voorsitter van die Legioen, en aan Jock Isacowitz wat hierdie taak neergelê het wil ons ons hartlike dank uitspreek vir die onskatbare diens wat hy gedurende etlike jare aan die organisasie bewys het.

En so, hernu in ons ywer om te veg vir die vryheid waarin ons glo en waarvoor ons gedurende die oorlog geveg het, gaan ons 'n ander jaar van stryd tegemoet.

BRANCH



ITEMS

Since the last Branch Items appeared there has been a spate of activity in the Branches and Groups. In addition the Johannesburg Branch Annual General Meeting and the Annual National Conference have taken place.

The Johannesburg Branch Annual General Meeting elected Mr. G. McKenzie for another term as Chairman. Mr. A. Lipman was elected Branch Secretary. Others re-elected were: Peter Beyleveld, Trudy Richter, Roy Cousins, Rica Hodgson, Mackie Pereira, Jack Sachs and Dr. Percy Cohen. New members to the Committee are Dr. Hathorn, Wilfred East, Bernie Arenstein, J. Slovo, Addie Israel, and Mr. Kreel.

At a glance it is obvious that this is a real working Committee. It is a pity that since accepting office Mackie Pereira has decided to go and live in Cape Town. The Branch and the Central Group will miss her and Henry. Cape Town will find them a welcome addition to their active people.

The Johannesburg Branch must be congratulated on the Cocktail Party it arranged for Conference delegates. It was a very pleasant and enjoyable affair. The opportunity it provided in the hustle of the Annual National Confer-

ence for delegates and old friends to get together and reminisce was very welcome. The pleasant atmosphere of the Rand Women's Club would be hard to find anywhere else in Johannesburg.

Among the many equally welcome faces seen at the Cocktail party was that of Blitz Storm. His ruddy face and premature gray hair have only missed one Annual National Conference since the Legion was formally constituted.

Jack Sachs, the new National Chairman, started pottering around on the piano at the tail end of the party and disclosed no mean talent. The Branch should bear this in mind for the future.

Central Group has a get-together planned for Tuesday, April 24th, in Cecil Williams' flat. In case you have forgotten the address it is: 163 Anstey's Buildings, Joubert Street, Johannesburg.

Judith's Paarl Group has a Smoker arranged for Wednesday, 25th April, at 8 p.m. at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Slovo, 6 Beltring Court, Cor. Viljoen and Berea Streets. The beer is on the ice and the Welcome mat is out.

Germiston Branch are having a meeting at the Alex Hotel, on Friday, 27th April, at 8 p.m. Cecil Williams is to have the leading role.

FAREWELL, JOCK!



It had to come some time. That much we knew, but each year, as National Conference came around, we held thumbs and hoped that Jack would still be National Chairman. This time he has dug in his heels. He announced to Conference that he would not accept nomination for the National Executive Committee.

No one has earned a rest so thoroughly as Jack and yet there is no one whom we would rather keep slogging away in our midst.

Jack Iacowitz has for almost ten years been the outstanding personality in ex-service affairs. There are some who may have had more honours thrust upon them, some who may have cornered more of the limelight, but not one of them, it can be ascertained, wielded so powerful an influence as Jack. That comes, of course, from the fact that Jack was national chairman of the Springbok Legion, which by its breadth of vision and militancy of action set the pace, in the field of ex-service affairs.

You will remember that, fresh from University studies, Jack found himself in uniform in East Africa, where he and others started pondering on the fate of ex-servicemen AFTER the war was done. He realised that, if there were to be no forgotten men, there had to be no forgotten politicians. On that basis

he proclaimed the need for a new-type, modern ex-servicemen's organisation, which would concern itself with the welfare problems of ex-soldier-rehabilitation and at the same time, partly out of self-interest and self-justification, partly out of a consciousness of the political necessity, would carry over into civic street the struggle for democracy and its related ideals, which underlay the social military struggle then raging.

It is now old history how the men in East Africa met up with men with similar thoughts in the Western Desert and at home in Kaffirkraal, and how they formed THE SPRINGBOK LEGION, not dreaming for a moment of the obstacles they were to encounter and the victimisation in the U.D.F.: not dreaming for a moment of the glorious response from service people and civilians alike. They did not dream that the day would come when the Legion would be a political force in the country, so vital a force that the opponents of the Union's war effort would one day find it necessary to stigmatise the Legion as their most dangerous non-party foe.

Throughout the intervening years Jack has guided the Legion's destinies as its national chairman. His contribution to the Springbok Legion cannot be measured. His influence in moulding Legion policies and activities has always been immense and few can rival him for logical, purposeful thinking. His example and inspiration to other Legionnaires is readily recognised. His influence on other ex-service organisations must not be overlooked and there can be hardly a single ex-volunteer in the country, European and Non-European, who has not at some time in some way benefited materially from Jack Iacowitz's participation in ex-service affairs.

Three pictures of Jack stand out in my mind. The Government sent Jack and Sir William Campbell of the B.E.S.L. up north in 1945 to talk 'amalgamation' to the boys. Jack had always refused a commission, so caused some difficulties in various messes, since though a V.I.P., he was only a sergeant-major. For that reason about eight of us were gathered in a private room in the Minerva Hotel in Rome and Jack told us the truth of the Helwan Riots and then talked to us of amalgamation with

A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE OF 1951 was marked by many notable features, which entitles it to go down on record as a great success.

There was a certain impatience shown with "pious" resolutions (those to which everyone subscribes but which are impossible to implement) and a marked feeling that all present were keen to get down to a practical job of work. This was due to a realisation that there is a greater need than ever for the Legion. Now that the fate so clearly foreseen by the Legion is overtaking South Africa, it was obvious to the delegates that the Legion is the organisation, outside of the political parties, best fitted to carry on the defence of democracy, and where possible to carry the fight to the Nats, with demands for the extension of democratic rights. So the fighting spirit was strongly in evidence.

Conference too, provided a sort of vantage point from which delegates surveyed both the past and the future. As to the past, a healthy degree of self-criticism brought into the open what some delegates considered to be weaknesses and shortcomings during the past

year. This feeling was examined, and it was generally agreed that the Legion must act more strongly in the economic interests of ex-servicemen before we can justly claim the title of "soldiers' trade union". It is definite that with the lead given by Conference, far more attention will be paid to Housing and Economic welfare problems of ex-servicemen.

Concern was expressed at the danger that the N.E.C. and Johannesburg committees may get out of step with the rest of the membership. This possibility was examined, and it was decided to keep members well informed and where possible to consult with them on matters of opinion.

Representation of branches was fairly good, and many new faces were present. Throughout the proceedings, the level of debate was high, and everyone present experienced a definite "uplift".

Jack Sachs, the new Chairman, emerged very clearly as a man who thinks clearly and knows his own mind. His energy and devotion are praiseworthy, and with his leadership the Legion can look forward to a year of intense and purposeful activity.

At Johannesburg City Hall Steps, confronted with an audience of thousands, Jack spoke on the Citizenship Bill and expounded his favourite thesis — the True South African Nationalism, within which would be room for English and Afrikaner, European and Non-European, Gentile and Jew. He gave his audience, surfeited with the narrow bigoted exclusive uno-operative Nationalist Party theories, a picture of what this country could be like. For that ideal

he fights still.

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WELCOME, JACK!

THE feeling of delegates to Conference was that no one more suitable to take over the national chairmanship could be found than Jack Sachs. As conference chairman he impressed delegates with his sound handling of the sometimes heated and confused debating; with his clear-headed understanding of Legion policy; with his sober appreciation of the Legion's tasks in these precarious times and, above all, with his unassuming yet tenacious and likable personality.

Jack Sachs volunteered in May 1949 as a Sapper in the 5th Field Coy., S.A.E.C. He was up north in Egypt and ended up as a captain, administrative officer for the Pay Corps in the M.E.F.

He joined the Legion in April 1944 and recalls clearly a number of Legion meetings in Helwan. With a chap, named Badenhorst, and Morris Kagan, Jack kept Legion interests high in Tewfik. When he came home he served on the Finance Committee of the Johannesburg Non-European Branch, which at that time was carrying a gigantic burden of welfare work among African and Coloured ex-volunteers. Later Jack took over the secretaryship of the North-Eastern Group in Johannesburg. It was not long before he was serving on the Johannesburg Branch Executive Committee, the National Executive Committee, the National Finance Committee and the National Non-European Committee.

Now he takes over the national chairmanship of the Legion. His record is outstandingly good.

One local Legionnaire was overheard to remark that Jack got the nomination because he has faithfully attended every Three-in-One, a qualification which rates high with Johannesburg members.

Jack Sachs is married to Hennie Margolis, who has been actively associated with the Legion since 1944. During that year and the succeeding year she was a Welfare Officer in our Johannesburg office, at the same time serving as a committee member of the non-European Branch. Recently she was handling all Non-European welfare correspondence and has been a valuable member of the National Non-European Committee. Jack and Hennie have two children, two cats and one dog to occupy their spare time. For the rest Jack runs a business and doesn't forget to advertise in "Fighting Talk".



Mr. JACK SACHS

New Chairman of the Legion.

Jack's family seems to be a Legion family, for in addition to his wife's long history with the organisation, his sister, Mrs. Phyllis Altman, was an indefatigable welfare officer in our Johannesburg Non-European office for years. There are few people in the Union who can claim to have done so much for the returned African and Coloured and Indian soldiers as Phyllis Altman. Ray Altman, keeping it in the family, until his departure for London, served on two and sometimes three Legion Committees.

The new National Chairman's message to Legionnaires is found on the front page. Our message to him is:

CONGRATULATIONS!

GOOD LUCK!

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War and High Costs are Buddies

MOST of us are quite used to seeing red about the rising cost of living. If at no other time, we at least have the opportunity to let forth horrible roars against it at the end of each month. Making ends meet has never been an easy business at any rate during my life-time, and to-day it is darned impossible.

Some of us sometimes pass beyond the stage in which we merely rant and rave against rising prices to that at which we try to think things out. Soon we are fulminating again, this time at the alleged instigators of price-spiralling: the Nationalist Government, the farmer who demands and gets impossible prices and subsidies withal, the middleman and his ever-increasing rakeoff, the endless boards and bureaucratic institutions which create scarcities where they need not exist, the workers who are always demanding increases in wages

Well, some of the fault does lie with some of these people but if we can't see further than them, we can't really see the root of the problem. Certainly the Government cannot deny that it is failing to keep the cost of living as low as possible. It seems blithely unconcerned about such insignificant matters when it is busy promoting its profound policies of apartheid and republicanism.

But it is not the Nats, the farmers and the retailers who are the arch-enemies of the reasonable cost of living situation. The arch-enemy is war. Yes, War! Do I need to remind you what a suit cost before the last war, or a box of chocolates, or a pound of rice or a brand new Chevrolet? Salaries have gone up too, I admit, but never as much as prices. It was war that sent those prices soaring never again to return to normal. Prices just don't get back to pre-war levels and it is no use bluffing ourselves that they do. Two wars have shown us that. Wages unfortunately do tend to return; hence the misery which inevitably hits the ordinary man about a decade after the conflict is over.

Now, this isn't a history lesson about the last war and its ancestors. It's a lesson in practical politics because we are faced today for the third time in our little lives by the same upward thrust of the cost of living being brought about by war. It is not just Korea that is doing this although the requirements of that campaign have had a sharp effect on some prices, but the whole tendency on our side of the iron curtain

(what happens on the other side doesn't affect our cost of living) to prepare for war. Enormous sums of money are being spent not only on armaments but also on what the Americans blithely call 'stock-piling' — hoarding essential war materials for D-day. Now, I hardly need remind you, those essential war materials are also essential peace materials such as steel, wool, leather, chemicals of one sort or another, non-perishable foodstuffs. It doesn't need an economist to see that this stock-piling creates a scarcity of materials (cloaked by an artificial prosperity because so much is being bought and sold) which must send the prices up. It's guns or butter for us, H-bombs or ploughshares, Vampire fighters or motor-cars.

In other words, you haven't seen anything yet. If the United States continues her vast expenditure on armaments and her colossal stock-piling drive, and Great Britain does exactly the same on a smaller scale, and also many other countries, prices must rise to a fantastic level. The struggle to exist which is already getting tough for most people who ten years ago didn't know what debt was, will become almost a hopeless task.

So you see, war and high costs are bosom friends. It is therefore stupidly illogical to do what many of us are doing today, calling for an intensified armaments and stock-piling drive on the one hand, and demanding decreases in the cost of living on the other. We will never get a downward trend in the cost of living while war preparations continue. It is no use tackling the prices problem as if it exists in isolation. It is part of the bigger problem of keeping the peace. In other words, the fight for a saner cost of living situation is just one aspect of the fight for peace. Let's therefore put the horse before the cart and fight for peace first. If we succeed in that — and surely no one has a greater vested interest in peace than the ex-soldier — then the cost of living will come down by itself.

CIVIL RIGHTS LEAGUE IN DURBAN

A group of enthusiastic workers in Durban organised tables on the streets to collect signatures — and did very well. Realising that the proposal to interfere with the Coloured vote is not an isolated attack on democratic rights, but that all rights are in danger, they called a public meeting and inaugurated a Durban Civil Rights League.

Legionnaires in Durban are urged to join the League and to give it every encouragement. Further information can be had from: Mr. Kenneth Hill, 282 Ridge Road, or Mr. Kenneth Kirkwood, 2 Pardy Gardens, Musgrave Road, or Mr. Cyril Canin, 14 Landsdowne Crescent, Durban North.

Don't hesitate, you people in Durban. Get in and help the fight.

PETITION TO PARLIAMENT

The Civil Rights League reports that about 90,000 signatures have been collected to the Petition to Parliament in connection with the removal of the Coloured voters from the common roll. The response has in general been good, particularly gratifying from some of the platteland districts. There is no doubt that the conscience of the people has been seriously stirred.

(Continued from page 3)

order reversed. Very, very few people manage to reverse this decision once they are told to go.

"In both European and Non-European, the family is the fundamental unit upon which the community is built and a system which runs contrary to the maintenance of this unit of social life is in essence unsound and it is not surprising to find that all Africans feel so bitter about the pass laws."

Victims of these measures include men whose productive lives have been spent in and around Johannesburg and who have families and houses, boys born and bred here who continue to live with their parents.

The document known as the EXEMPTION PASS has become valueless to an African of late, simply because it helps him only to go visiting friends. It cannot be used to permit him to go and look for work in other areas.

The pass laws are the millstones round our necks.

Yours faithfully,

"AFRICAN EX-SERVICEMAN."

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF URBAN AFRICAN YOUTH?



NOTICE of the appointment of an inter-departmental committee to investigate and make recommendations on the employment of Native youths in industry on the Witwatersrand and Pretoria appeared in the Government Gazette of 30/3/51. The terms of reference of this Committee are:—

“To investigate and make recommendations on the desirability or otherwise of:—

1. Prescribing lower wages and other conditions of employment for such juveniles than those for Native adults.
2. Compelling employers to employ a minimum number of juveniles in relation to adults, and
3. Applying measures to ensure that Native juveniles placed in employment in industry will remain in employment until they become adults.

From an examination of these terms of reference it would appear that the Government's intention in making this investigation is to direct Native youth into industry and thus attempt to deal with the ever increasing problems of idleness amongst these youths. Whilst the Legion would approve and support any constructive scheme which seeks to reduce the incidence of idleness with all its attendant evils, it is felt that this scheme, if implemented would not succeed in alleviating this problem and might eventually serve to aggravate it. Before we can evaluate the scheme in relation to the problem of idleness it is necessary briefly to enumerate the causes which experts in this field have ascribed to the growth of this social disease:

(a) The inadequate incomes of Africans which (1) cause both parents to go out to work and leave the children uncared for all day and (2) prevent children from obtaining adequate diets, reasonable clothing or an adequacy of any of their basic requirements.

(b) Unstable family backgrounds resulting from the migratory labour system and the chronic housing shortage,

(c) Inadequate housing conditions.

(d) Lack of schools — nursery, junior, high and vocational.

(e) Lack of any other amenities such as parks, playgrounds, swimming baths, etc.

(f) Lack of vocational and occupational opportunities.

It is this last concomitant factor of the problem that this scheme apparently seeks to combat. But can any scheme succeed when it starts with the last link of this unfortunate chain? Further how does it seek to remedy this deficiency. The first term of reference provides for the employment of juveniles at lower rates of pay than those payable to African adults; the second provides for the fixing of a minimum ratio (not maximum, please note) of youths to adults. Thus the scheme does not in fact attempt to extend the present occupational and vocational opportunities for Africans generally by making provision for their entry into the skilled ranks, and as long as the position of the African adult in industry is limited to that of unskilled and, to a lesser extent, semi-skilled worker, the provisions of this scheme could only succeed in throwing African youths into competition with their parents. Further, if the wage rates payable to juveniles are to be lower than those paid to adults doing the same type of work, this competition would be loaded against the adult. This competition together with the fixing of a minimum ratio of juveniles to be employed would probably succeed in lowering African wage rates and in the long run, African family incomes. It may be argued, that with industry expanding there is sufficient scope for the absorption of all the permanently urbanised African population without the result predicted above. However, in our opinion, because of the limitation placed on the size of the skilled labour force by the colour bar, it is unlikely that industry could expand to a sufficient extent to absorb the urban African labour force if it is to consist of both adults and juveniles in unskilled capacities.

Incidentally, but of equal importance, the employment of a lower paid juvenile force could not in the long run, be in the interests of secondary industry in that it would affect the purchasing powers of the community and thus must curtail the home markets. This in turn would affect the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

The last term of reference provides

for the indenturing of juvenile labour, i.e., that once having entered into such employment, the young employee would be unable to leave until he had reached adulthood. This provision contains the worst threat of all. It provides for forced child labour. From the point of view of industry as well, this aspect would be most unhealthy. To compel industrialists to employ, if necessary, a percentage of forced labour could not assist the country to build up an efficient labour force.

To return more directly to the problem as a whole of idleness amongst African youths, we cannot see that the attempts to solve it along the lines of the investigation to be undertaken by the Committee appointed by the Minister could be successful. Approximately six years ago, Colonel Stubbs expounded a scheme for the formation of Native youth labour corps, which although broader in its basis than the present scheme, contained the same principles. The outcry on the part of the Native adults, who quickly realised the position in which they would be placed by their sons should the scheme be put into operation, caused the authorities to hastily abandon it. And now, as then, it must be faced, that the setting into competition of son against father, would, in addition to the other dangers dealt with above, only succeed in further weakening parental control and authority and would thus further disrupt African homes with all the disastrous consequences attendant thereon.

No, Mr. Schoeman, the answer to the problem of idle African youth or of the improvement of the S.A. labour force and the prosperity of industry does not lie in the direction of the investigation which you have set your departmental committee. To achieve any or all of the objects I have just listed you must find ways and means of removing the restrictions on the more economic employment of Africans and their employment in more skilled positions, for it is only by permitting African adults to attain positions beyond the base level at which even their uneducated sons can compete with them and to obtain adequate incomes for the care and education of their children that you will be facing the problem realistically.

THE DAY I CRIED EUREKA (2)

MAKE YOUR PROTEST NOW

Do you recall what I had to say in the last issue? I said that the Suppression of Communism Act is the gravest danger to democracy in South Africa because it attacks the four fundamental civil rights without which the struggle for improving our way of life would be hamstrung.

And do you remember I suggested the four fundamental civil rights are freedom of opinion, movement, association and organisation?

Well now, I want to make one correction. The correction is this: I implied, I think, that our civil liberties are gravely threatened by this Act. That was a bit silly of me. The fact of the matter is that this Act does not *threaten* civil rights . . . it damned well *destroys* them.

Our civil rights were threatened before the Bill became law. Once the act was passed, civil rights in South Africa were destroyed and they won't be revived until the Act is repealed, until it is no longer the law of the land that freedom of speech, movement, etc., are locked away from the people and imprisoned in the conscience of the Minister of Justice.

Right, I said I'd go through the Act point by point and show how our civil rights are destroyed. Here goes!

Freedom to hold an opinion and to express it:

In the first place the Act forbids you from holding any of the political, social and cultural views held by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, the Comintern and the Cominform. You cannot hold the view (am I safe in even writing this now?) that the capitalist system is outmoded and must be replaced by economic socialism with its attendant repercussions on the social and cultural life of the community. You cannot hold the view that economic socialism can be brought about on the basis of the workers of the country having full power, and so on and so on.

Maybe so far you have no objections to offer because you've always been quite content with the capitalist system in general and haven't had any great urge to change the whole system in order to correct one or two points that you don't approve of. Fair enough, but read further.

The Suppression of Communism Act

lays down that you are a Communist if you 'further the achievement of any of the objects of Communism'. Read that again, will you? Do you see that the Act implies that certain 'objects' are the strict monopoly of Communism? Well, that just isn't true. Look into your own mind and examine the social ideals or economic policies that you've collected over the years. Do you mean to tell us that some of your ideals aren't held with equal enthusiasm by Communists?

Gippo Millionaires.

What about when you were in the M.E.F. and C.M.F.? Did you never mutter to yourself, "Bleeding shame the way these gippo millionaires have their houseboats on the Nile and their Maadi Club, while the poor wogs — makes you feel sick to see the flies crawling round the children's eyes — something wrong with the system!" Do you realise that you were uttering a thought which the Reds (among others) have always held?

And in Italy do you remember how we hadn't much time for the officers who were always worming their way into the social circles where principessas and contessas with their hair dyed blue flattered the Allied Liberators, who were going to help them to keep their villas and palazzos and their country estates worked profitably on the squatter system? And what about the Marios and Marias who drove our trucks and did our washing and served at our tables? Do you remember how miserable they were, lack of food, slippers for shoes, old clothes and a fear that the Soldati Sud Africani would throw them out of work and into starvation? What did you think then? Be careful, my boys, such thoughts are unprintable now!

"Blessed are the Poor"

Are you a Christian? Be careful! Jesus Christ anticipated Marx. He overthrew the capitalists' money tables and,

taking a whip, he flogged them out of town. Do you remember? He preached that God had no time for the rich; there was no place for them in heaven, and then he said, "Blessed are the poor for they shall inherit the earth". Are not the thoughts of Christ very like modern political theories of Marxism that the "possessed shall be dispossessed"?

Do you get my point?

These ideas, theories, objects are not exclusively Communist. Nationalisation of industry, removal of the industrial colour-bar, compulsory free education through all stages up to and including the universities, the bonus-incentive scheme, liberation of oppressed minority groups, national health schemes, economic security from the state in old age, communal farming operations — these objects are not peculiar to Communists.

But the Communist Act says that YOU ARE A COMMUNIST if you propagate any of these theories and you will be punished accordingly. Freedom to hold an opinion is shattered, laid low.

Dumb and Ignoble.

And do you know what? For the rest of your days you may not utter a single thought which could incriminate you, so that you will never be in danger of being put in prison for ten years. In other words, the Minister of Justice will never be required to use the dreadful penalties of the Act. He will never have to appear to the public as the wicked, ruthless, cruel destroyer of freedom of speech. But, shades of the Inquisition, the Minister will have destroyed that precious liberty all the same — and YOU will have helped him.

The valiant voices of bygone days that could be heard across the land protesting against injustice, clamouring for better things, will be heard no more. We shall become a nation of mutes, crusaders who have stabled their chargers and put away their lances. Fear will have rendered us dumb and ignoble.

Freedom to Express an Opinion.

Ja, the Government may suppress any

(Continued on next page)

(Continued on next page)

newspaper which in its columns directly or indirectly, "furthers the achievement of any of the objects of Communism".

So, if the "Natal Mercury" prints a speech of Signor Nenni or M. Aragon, it may find itself suppressed. If the "Rand Daily Mail" reports Mr. Attlee giving it socialist stick at the British Trade Union Congress, the "Mail" may find itself up for sale. And if the naughty "Sunday Express" should have occasion to quote from Sidney and Beatrice Webb, it too may find itself in trouble.

Perhaps it becomes clearer to you that by the wording of this Act, by the deliberate looseness of the definitions, the Nationalist Government proclaims the fact that the policies of its party will never overlap with the humanistic ideals of betterment that are held by a host of people other than Communists. The Nationalist Party dissociates itself from progress, from thoughts of toler-

ance, sympathy and co-operation.

And thereby it takes steps to ensure that you shall never be in a position to say how sick you are of its ugly, narrow, odious policies. Criticism is muzzled — the gags are in our mouths.

(Or are they?)

Freedom of Movement.

It is nice, isn't it, to take out the car and saunter your way across to Hout Bay for the Sunday. Nice, too, to take train to Vereeniging to see the Regatta, isn't it? And I must say I've always enjoyed going down to see our Legionnaires at Bloemfontein and having a good old natter about Legion policy and the general political situation. A parson friend of mine says he always welcomes a break from home when he is transferred temporarily to some African church in the Eastern Transvaal. He thinks there's a freshness in his preaching, which he too easily loses, speaking to the well-to-do congregations in Johan-

nesburg. A United Party M.P. acquaintance says he doesn't really like going around to branch meetings and saying the same things again and again, but he does his duty efficiently and with a good grace.

A.W.O.L.

You'll all look terribly silly when you are told that you can't go to Vereeniging and the Eastern Transvaal and Salt Rock and Kimberley, won't you? Yet that is exactly what can happen to you. We've never known before what it means to have our freedom of movement curtailed — or perhaps we have to an extent. Remember your days in the S.A.N.F. and the S.A.A.F. and the S.A.A.? You had to have a pass to get out of camp: a pass to sleep out; you couldn't take it into your head to slip down to Rome for the week-end without your pass. And those blokes who were caught A.W.O.L. had to pay the penalty for taking it into their heads that they could move around freely.

(Continued from previous page)

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(Continued from previous page)

Do you like the prospect of having these limitations again? Too bad, old boy, because they're here already. If you dare to utter any of those harmless old opinions of yours — how should you know that Marxists have the same ideas? — then the Minister of Justice can take away all your freedom of movement. He can tell you in a little note that you must go and live in Potgietersrust or Willowmore or Gibeon or Schweizer Renecke. And then farewell to your fancy-free flights — your week-ends in the country — your skirt-chasing twenty miles from home — your Moral Re-Armament Rallies in Heidelberg — your reluctant traipses to see your Ma-in-law in Stellenbosch — all gone. You'll stay where you're told and don't you dare move elsewhere unless you've got a special pass, countersigned by the Minister himself.

Gee, what are things coming to?

Now they're telling me that this is already enough for this issue, so I shall have to carry on this "exploration" into the unknown terrors of the Suppression of Communism Act in the next issue.

Your Protest Now.

In the meantime, the amendments are coming up for a second reading. You'd better protest p.d.q. to your own member of Parliament — particularly if he's a Nationalist: and while you're at it, drop a line to Dr. Malan and Mr. Strauss and Mr. Christie. Let them all know what you're thinking. Finally, what are you doing in your organisations? your trade union, church club, women's association? Have you lost your voice already? That's better — I didn't think you had! Encourage others to make their protests too.

P.L.D.C.

In Johannesburg a number of organisations, including the Legion, the Civil Rights League, the League of Women Voters, the Students Liberal Association and others have formed themselves into an ad-hoc organisation, the Personal Liberties Defence Committee, to canalise opposition to the amendments to the Suppression of Communism Act. The Committee has circularised all M.P.'s; about 250 organisations and is planning to send a deputation to the Prime Minister and the leaders of the other parties.

DOES THIS MEAN YOU?

A visitor to Johannesburg from Rome has sent us the following letter, asking us to investigate. Perhaps you can help.

'A Melnate, in provincia di Como, fra altri prigionieri alleati, erano rifugiati presso la FAMIGLIA DREHER due sottufficiali sudafricani dei quali non si ricorda il nome e si sa solo che uno di questi era figlio di un impiegato postale di Johannesburg: entrambi questi due sottufficiali erano di Johannesburg.

Una notte, contrariamente ai consigli della famiglia DREHER, questi due sottufficiali vollero scappare in Svizzera ed un uomo di fiducia della famiglia DREHER gli accompagnò per mostrare loro la strada. Senonché una pattuglia tedesca li scoprì e li arrestò, conducendoli nelle carceri di Como. L'uomo di fiducia della famiglia DREHER riuscì a salvarsi e sfuggire alla pattuglia tedesca.

La famiglia DREHER, saputo che io vengo a Johannesburg mi prego d'indagare per sapere se questi due sottufficiali riuscirono a salvarsi e ritornare a Johannesburg. La famiglia DREHER prega vivamente di dare notizie, perché dopo l'arresto non seppe più nulla di questi due giovani'.

The above letter recounts the exploits of two young South African soldiers, who were hidden by the DREHER family near Como, until a faithful friend of the family led them in an attempt to escape to Switzerland. The group was captured by the Germans and imprisoned in the Como gaol, from which the guide escaped. He heard nothing further of the two South Africans and would like to find out if the soldiers are well and happy.

Unfortunately the DREHER family do not know the soldiers' names but remember that one of them was the son of a Post Office Employee.

If you recognise the two fellows involved in this story, we shall be glad if you will get either or both to contact us, so that we can put them in touch with the Italian visitor, who will then communicate with the Dreher family.

National Executive Committee of the Springbok Legion, 1951

We have pleasure in welcoming the following members who will form the new National Executive Committee of the Springbok Legion.

Mr. J. Sachs, Chairman, (Johannesburg); Mr. P. J. Hodgson, Secretary, (Johannesburg); Messrs. Leo Lovell M.P. (Benoni); M. Berman (Johannesburg); D. Etheredge (Pretoria); D. Chamberlain (Johannesburg); J. Podbrey (Johannesburg); D. Katzeff (Pretoria); T. Cross (Pretoria); H. Rabinowitz (Johannesburg); Dr. M. Hathorn (Johannesburg); P. Beyleveld (Johannesburg); C. Williams (Johannesburg); W. East (Johannesburg); M. Kagan (Johannesburg).



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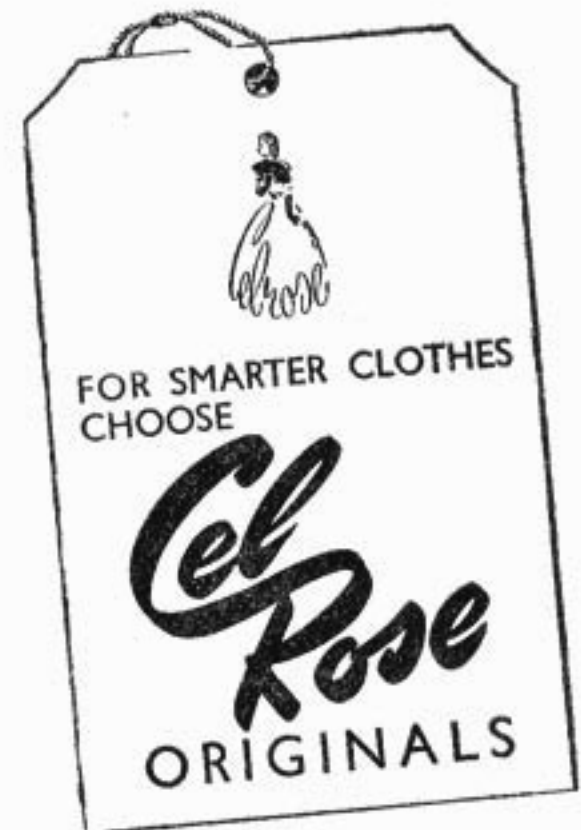
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Unless otherwise stated, J. Podbrey 37 Main House, Main Street, Johannesburg, is responsible for all political matter in this issue.