

FUHRER VORSTER

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In South Africa, Malan, Strijdom, even Verwoerd, are already forgotten. Vorster holds the stage, but he too will remain only so long as he keeps pace with his people. Right-wing forces are pressing hard on every front, their most recent victory being in the Mineworkers' Union (all-white), where the "moderate" Nationalists were pushed out in the General Council elections last November because they had sanctioned an experiment in the advancement of African labour.

(The newly-elected right-wing Executive of the Union is reported to have taken a Ku-Klux-Klan oath on assuming office. The Union's interim Secretary-General, Mr Fred Short, vowed to defend the interests of the white workers "unto death".)

Fouche is right when he says "It is the times we live in". As the pressures on the Nationalist Government from inside and outside the country grow, so the swing to the right will be accelerated. The White Supremacists consider compromise worse than death, and seek their salvation in force because they are unable to face the consequences of reason.

It is the more distressing to find that sections of South African opinion formerly opposed to Nationalist extremism are joining in the task of making Vorster presentable to the outside world. Overnight the English-language press, which used to regard him as a monster, changed its tune and started singing his praises as a "reasonable" man, a man you could talk to, a man with the common touch, unlike that remote visionary Verwoerd with his dangerous hallucinations about independent Bantustans. The United Party (official white opposition) started once more to think about the possibilities of a coalition. The South African Information Bureau and its ally, the South African Foundation, trying to repair the harm to South Africa's image caused by both the assassination of Verwoerd and the election of Vorster, poured out a flood of soothing propaganda attractively bottled for the consumption of overseas businessmen.

Vorster himself, in a speech to the Durban Parliamentary Debating Society last November, said the Government was planning to undertake a large-scale campaign to inform other governments and international organizations about what had been and was being done for the non-whites in South Africa. "We have perhaps hidden our light under a bushel too much" he said.

On these campaigns of brainwashing, the South African Government and its allies are spending millions, and are gaining converts in conservative circles in Britain, America and Western Europe. It is becoming fashionable to accept that, in a continent where the independent African governments

are "making a mess of things", the white-ruled countries of the south are, by contrast, stable and reliable.

The right-wing offensive in South Africa calls for intensified efforts on the part of anti-apartheid forces everywhere. Vorster must be exposed as the Nazi he is, not only because of his past, but because of the brutalities which are being perpetrated by his regime right now — the detentions without trial, the jailing and banning of the people's leaders, the breaking up of homes under the pass-laws, the deliberate stunting of the minds of non-white children through twisted education, the denial of opportunity, training and skilled jobs to those whose skins are not white.

More — we must fight against the illusion that South Africa's race problem is purely a "domestic matter". Apartheid is an insult and an injury to Non-Whites, not only in South Africa but everywhere. South Africa denies freedom, not only to her own people but also to the people of South West Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. South Africa is the mainstay of the illegal Smith regime which denies freedom to a further 4 million Africans. South African capital is becoming even more deeply imbedded in the economic body of Africa, undermining the independence of the new African states. Behind South African money come South African ideas. When a Vice-President of Kenya resigns his post to become chairman of Rothmans (Kenya) Ltd, part of Anton Rupert's tobacco empire, we can see how insidious the danger has become.

South Africa is not only working with the imperialists in Africa, she is becoming an imperialist power in her own right, spending millions on her military and police forces, and working hard on the development of atomic weapons.

This is the true image of Vorster — an image of death and destruction to the peoples of Africa, a threat to the independence of African governments — which must be got across to the people of the world.

Vorster must be shown up for what he is: the greatest peacetime criminal in Africa, and one of the greatest in the world, a menace to humanity and the brotherhood of man.

