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HARD TIMES AHEAD: An Economic Survey

by L. Bernstein



POST-ELECTION PROSPECTS

— EDITORIAL



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Editorial

A SHAM DEMOCRACY

"The general election has once again proved that democratic rule in South Africa is a sham."

Sunday Express, April 20, 1958.

WHILE representatives of the new independent States of Africa were meeting at Accra in Ghana, to pledge their solidarity for the dignity, self-rule and freedom of their peoples and those of all Africa, a demonstration of a very different kind was taking place at the Southern end of our mighty Continent.

Both in the Union and the Federation, the very mild and tentative approaches towards slightly more liberal alternatives, as suggested by Graaff and Todd, were resoundingly rejected by the White minorities who monopolise political rights and economic privileges. In terms which could not be misunderstood, they served notice upon Africa and the world that they intend to defend their ill-gotten and untenable domination to the bitter end.

For freedom-fighters in South Africa the General Election result is grim and foreboding.

Back in Parliament, with more seats and votes than ever, is a hateful Party like the Nationalists, the party of bigoted racial narrow-mindedness: with all its degrading contempt and inhumanity towards everyone who hasn't a pink skin, all its ignorant hostility towards everything that is advanced and forward-looking.

True enough, the U.P. is not much better — always kowtowing to the Nats and always blathering about "White" supremacy. But after ten years of hell, every African, Coloured and Indian was convinced of one thing: Nothing, but nothing, could be worse than the Nats. Apart from a handful of intellectual parlour-politicians, of the dismal 'emancipation-through-suffering' school, every Non-European was hoping eagerly for a U.P. victory. And the same is true of the hundreds of thousands of European anti-Nats who had pinned their hopes on "Div."

And it's a grim prospect that faces our country in the immediate future too. A new round of oppressions and restrictions, no doubt. With the treason trial proper soon to start and with the new packed Parliament due to reassemble soon and start anew with odious legislation. It's another depressing thought that this time there won't even be those two grand fighting M.P.'s Alex. Hepple and Leo Lovell to cast a ray of truth and sanity into the murky and crazy debates in the Assembly.

We have dwelt on these uncomfortable realities, not because we wish to depress our readers, or because we ourselves are pessimistic about the future — far from it! — but because the starting-point of political wisdom is the recognition of facts as they are, not as we would like them to be. Let us know the worst. Then we can start soberly and realistically thinking and planning, to consolidate our forces, to eliminate our weaknesses, to parry the attacks of the enemy, to achieve future advances and victories.

It is not good enough merely to feel indignant at the Nationalists' return to office. We must ask why these things happened, and what must now be done.

We began this article with a quotation: the first sentence of the Editorial in the "Sunday Express" of April 20, headed: "A Sham Democracy." Quite right, it is a sham democracy. But why does the "Express" think so? For one reason only: because the electoral system is loaded against the United Party.

"In form and in theory, last week's election had the classic and fundamental quality of a democratic poll, since every qualified person had the right to vote," continues the "Sunday Express" (our emphasis.)

"In fact and in substance, however, the democratic character of the election was wrecked," it goes on, "by the electoral system which, in effect, gave most people the equivalent of half a vote each." (Again, our emphasis.)

The Editorial goes on to prove its point by showing that whereas the Nats and the U.P. received approximately the same total number of votes (about 700,000 each) the Nats have almost twice the number of seats in the Assembly (103 to 53) and 77 seats in the Senate to the U.P.'s eight. "By no stretch of the imagination can such a pattern of Government be the product of a truly democratic election."

Now, there are times when half-truths are worse than blatant lies, because we can see and recognise the lie, whereas the half-truth can take us in. It is precisely because the "Express" Editorial says — and says so admirably — some things which are true and important, that its failure to tell the whole truth becomes the more reprehensible and inexcusable.

Indeed, the two paragraphs we have quoted above contain two glaring mis-statements.

Mis-statement No. 1: That "the classic and fundamental quality of a democratic election" is that "every qualified person" has the right to vote. A clever juggling of words — but it just isn't so. The fundamental quality of a democratic election is that the people shall be qualified to vote.

Mis-statement No. 2: That the election of April 16 gave "most people the equivalent of half a vote each." Wrong again. The election gave "most people — most adult South African citizens — no vote at all.

The reasons why we have a sham democracy is that four-fifths of our citizens are excluded from the franchise.

To say that "democratic rule in South Africa is a sham" without including or even mentioning that simple, essential and universally-known fact, is nothing but empty playing with words and ideas, devoid of any serious content or intention.

Of course the Nats. have wangled and jerrymandered the delimitations and the Senate. Of course the Government is determined — to quote the "Express" once more — "to entrench itself and perpetuate itself in power." And the United Party and the newspapers which support it come along now and complain that the whole thing is a swindle and a sham. But all along they have connived and been accomplices in the far bigger swindle of holding elections with only an unrepresentative fraction of the people allowed to vote — and calling the result "democracy." And, what is more, they continue to do so.

This is more than a question of scoring debating points off the "Express" — if it were we should not have wasted so much space on it. It is the fundamental question which lies at the root of the U.P.'s futility and ineffectiveness, inside and outside Parliament: its intellectual dishonesty, hypocrisy and political opportunism.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

"There is no evidence to suggest that the Government will take any steps to change our electoral system in order to make it genuinely democratic." With this colossal understatement we bid farewell to the "Express" (to which, although it might no seem so, we are in fact grateful for at least trying — unlike most of its contemporaries — to discuss the significance of the election seriously.) So, what's to be done about it? Neither the United Party nor its supporting Press has made the slightest effort to answer this question for the benefit of the 700,000 who voted against the Nationalist Party, or the ten million who have no votes but who loathe and detest the Nationalist Party and everything it does and stands for. How do we ever get rid of the Nats? Do you go on contesting crook elections in which they fix it so that you are bound to lose every time? (And how long do you think it will take to tear the heart out of your supporters playing that game?) Do you go on substituting empty half-truths, dishonest evasions and meaningless platitudes, for a genuine fighting democratic faith? (While the Nationalists who at least stand for some sort of principle — a nasty, Nazi principle though it is — are capturing the minds of the White youth, inside and outside the schools; and your members, and some of your leaders too, schooled in flabby opportunism, are ratting one by one to the winning side.)

We have no doubt that the majority of the members, leaders and journalists of the United Party honestly and sincerely dislike the Nationalist Party and fear a future of increasingly unrestrained dictatorship under it. But they will be contributing absolutely nothing to the struggle against Nationalist dictatorship — in fact they will positively be helping it — if they keep ignoring and hiding away the plain facts:—

1. That we can never get rid of Nationalist Party government under the present electoral system;
2. That this system is grossly undemocratic and has been so ever since Union because it excludes the Non-White majority from the vote:

3. That the only way to defeat the Nationalists is by overwhelming and united pressure from all democrats, White and Non-White, in favour of radical electoral reform, a universal franchise as recommended by the 1957 Multi-Racial Conference.

We know this is unpalatable advice to the U.P. people, soaked and schooled as they are in the conventional racial prejudices of our South Africa. And we should not deceive ourselves that many of them will take it. Yet, it is the truth; let them summon up the courage and intellectual integrity to admit it, or stand condemned as agents and accomplices in fastening the chains of Nationalist slavery on our land.

Fortunately the future of our country does not depend on the doubtful prospect of discovering hitherto hidden qualities of courage and integrity among the spokesmen of the United Party.

THE THIRD PARTY

A stranger to South Africa would have been astonished to find, on polling day, that not a single candidate of the African National Congress was standing for election. For there was hardly a day prior to the election on which Congress and its partners in alliance was not prominently featured in the newspapers. The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition kept appealing to the people not to vote for Congress, and so did all sorts of other people ranging from General J. Edgar Rademeyer down to Dr. Verwoerd's tame Chiefs and the lickspittle "Bantu" newspapers.

It is not our purpose, in the present Editorial, to debate the details of the stay-at-home on April 14, the extent to which the response was disappointing to the Congress movement and why, or the soundness of the back-to-work call. These are matters which are being thoroughly discussed at present within the movement itself, and which we hope to return in our next issue; we shall content ourselves at present by expressing the opinion that throughout the Congress leadership displayed statesmanship of a far higher order than that of either the main Parties to the election itself.

What we think is of larger significance is that, to all who have eyes to look below surface appearances, the Congress emerged from the election period with immeasurably increased stature, as the only genuine opposition to the Nationalist Party.

Inevitably, it is now around the Congress movement that there is beginning to form that united democratic front of the South African people which, in the end, will put an end to the ill-omened era of Nationalist dictatorship. We do not wish to belittle the role of the Liberal and Labour Parties, the democratic Churchmen and other progressives who, at the Multi-Racial Conference and elsewhere have taken their stand for democracy. But the Congress alliance has established itself today, as never before, as the hard core — alike of resistance to the tyranny of Baaskap and of the rallying for future advance to Free South Africa.

From the bitterness and the harsh lessons, the debates and the added clarity that will flow from the events of election week, 1958, the movement will emerge, we are convinced, more closely-knit in unity, more steadfast and hardened in struggle. And from now on it will increasingly enjoy the support of thinking South Africans of all races who have seen through the fraud and the sham of our so-called "democracy" as it was revealed on April 16.

DR. DUBOIS IS NINETY

— In this article the famous American scholar of African descent, Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, noted fighter for Negro rights, looks backward, and forward, from his ninetieth birthday, February 23, 1958.

This is the month of my 90th birthday, I have lived to an age which is increasingly distasteful to this nation. Unless by 60 a man has gained possession of enough to support himself without paid employment, he faces the distinct possibility of starvation. He is liable to lose his job and to refusal if he seeks another. At 70 he is frowned upon by the Church and if he is foolish enough to survive until 90, he is often regarded as a freak. This is because in the face of human experience the United States has discovered that Youth knows more than Age. When a man of 35 becomes president of a great institution of learning or United States Senator or head of a multi-million dollar corporation, a cry of triumph rings in the land. Why? To pretend that 15 years bring of themselves more wisdom and understanding than 50 is a contradiction in terms.

Given a fool, a hundred years will not make him wise; but given an idiot, he will not be wise at 20. Youth is more courageous than age because it knows less. Age is wiser than youth because it knows more. This all mankind has affirmed from Egypt and China 5,000 years ago to Britain and Germany today. The United States knows better. I would have been hailed with approval if I had died at 50. At 75 my death was practically requested. If living does not give value, wisdom and meaning to life, then there is no sense in living at all. If immature and inexperienced men rule the earth, then the earth deserves what it gets: the repetition of age-old mistakes, and wild welcome for what men knew a thousands years ago was disaster. I do not apologise for living long. High on the ramparts of this blistering hell of life, I sit and see the Truth. I look it full in the face, and I will not lie about it, neither to myself nor to the world. I see my country as what Cedric Belfrage aptly characterises as a 'Frightened Giant', afraid of the Truth, afraid of Peace. I see a land which is degenerating and faces decadence, unless it has sense enough to turn about and start back.

It is no sin to fail. It is the habit of man. It is a disaster to go on when you know you are going wrong. I judge this land not merely by statistics or reading lies agreed upon by historians. I judge by what I have seen, heard and lived through for near a century. There was a day when the world rightly called Americans honest even if crude; earning their living by hard work; telling the truth no matter whom it hurt; and going to war only in what they believed a just cause after nothing else

scemed possible. Today we are lying, stealing and killing. We call all this by finer names: Advertising, Free Enterprise, and National Defence. But names in the end deceive no one; today we use science to help deceive our fellows; we take wealth that we never earned and we are devoting all our energies to kill, maim, and drive insane, men, women and children who dare refuse to do what we want done.

No nation threatens us. We threaten the world. Our President says that Foster Dulles is the wisest man he knows. If Dulles is wise, God help our fools — the fools who rule us. They know why we fail — these military masters of men — we haven't taught our children mathematics and physics. No, it is because we have not taught our children to read and write or to behave like human beings and not like hoodlums

Criticism is treason, and treason or the hint of treason testified to by hired liars may be punished by shameful death. I saw Ethel Rosenberg lying beautiful in her coffin beside her mate. I tried to stammer futile words above her grave. But not over graves should we shout this failure of justice, but from the housetops of the world. Honest men may and must criticise America: describe how she has ruined her democracy, sold out her jury system, and led her seats of justice astray. The only question that may arise is whether this criticism is based on truth, not whether it may be openly expressed. What is truth? What can it be when the President of the United States, guiding the nation, stands up in public and says: 'The world also thinks of us as a land which has never enslaved anyone'.

Everyone who heard this knew it was not true. Yet here stands the successor of George Washington who bought, owned, and sold slaves; the successor to Abraham Lincoln who freed four million slaves after they had helped him win victory over the slave-holding South. And so far as I have seen, not a single periodical, not even a Negro weekly, has dared challenge or even criticise that extraordinary falsehood. This is what I call decadence. It could not have happened 50 years ago. In the day of our fiercest controversy we have not dared thus publicly to silence opinion. I have lived through disagreement, vilification, and war and war again. But in all that time, I have never seen the right of human beings to think so challenged and denied as today. The day after I was born, Andrew Johnson was impeached. He deserved punishment as a traitor to the poor Southern whites and poorer freedmen. Yet during his life, no one denied him the right to defend himself. A half-century ago, in 1910, I tried to state and carry into realisation unpopular ideas against a powerful opposition — in the white South, in the reactionary North, and even among my own people. I found my thought being misconstrued and I planned an organ of propaganda — *The Crisis* — where I would be free to say what I believed.

This was no easy sailing. My magazine reached but a fraction of the nation. It was bitterly attacked and once the government suppressed it. But in the end I maintained a platform of radical thinking on the Negro question which influenced many minds. War and depression ended my independence of thought and forced me to return to teaching, but with the certainty that I had at least started a new line of belief and action.

As a result of my work and that of others, the Supreme Court began to restore democracy in the South and finally outlawed discrimination in public services based on colour. This caused rebellion in the South which the nation is afraid to meet. The Negro stands bewildered and attempt is made by appointments to unimportant offices and trips abroad to bribe him into silence. His art and literature cease to function. He is scared. Only the children like those at Little Rock stand and fight. The Yale Sophomore who replaced a periodical of brains by a book of pictures concealed in advertisements, proposed that America rule the world. This failed because we could not rule ourselves. But Texas to the rescue, as Lyndon Johnson proposes that America take over outer space. Somewhere beyond the moon there must be sentient creatures rolling in inextinguishable laughter at the antics of our earth. We tax ourselves into poverty and crime so as to make the rich richer and bring more crime and poverty. We know the cause of this: it is to permit our rich business interests to stop socialism and to prevent the ideals of communism from ever triumphing on earth. The aim is impossible.

Socialism progresses and will progress. All we can do is to silence and jail its promoters. I believe in socialism. I seek a world where its ideals will triumph — to each according to his need; from each according to his ability. For this I will work as long as I live. And I still live.

The ECONOMIC CRISIS— hard times ahead

by L. BERNSTEIN

NO purpose can any longer be served by arguing whether we are caught in a depression, or merely in a "recession" as American publicists hopefully proclaim. It is enough to know that, in the space of a few months, all the signs of deep and serious economic crisis have caught the entire capitalist sector of the earth in their grip. Production — the barometer of the economic health of society — has declined seriously; unemployment has risen sharply. These signs of the crisis show themselves most sharply in the most advanced and highly developed sector of capitalist society, the United States of America; but they are not confined to that country. At differing rates and differing intensities they are reproducing themselves in all the capitalist countries, the highly-developed manufacturing and industrial centres such as Britain and West Germany as well as in the under-developed, under-industrialised colonial countries. Nor could it be otherwise. In our time, the economy of every country has become so inter-related and dependent on the economy of others — for finance capital, for marketing and exchange, for raw materials, techniques and tools, that every country of the capitalist world reacts like a sensitive seismograph to every earth-tremor in the economy of another.

What is the extent of the crisis? In America, the most spectacular declines in production have been in the key sectors of industry. The motor-car manufacturing industry, king-pin of American manufacture, estimates that production this year will decline about 5.3 million units — an optimistic estimate which is being revised downwards from month to month — from plants whose capacity is 8 million units per year; that is to say that optimistic estimates expect 30% of productive capacity to go unused. It is reported that almost 1 million cars are already piled up in sale-rooms and warehouses awaiting buyers. American shipyards have cancellations of orders for 600,000 tons of new ship construction, while over 200,000 tons of American shipping have been laid up in port for lack of cargo. Texas oilmen have reduced production drastically setting a maximum allowable output of eight day's production for the entire month of April, the lowest production level in history. U.S. steel output is down 48.5% of capacity in April, and still falling. And total industrial production is at its lowest level since 1954, and running at a rate of 15,000 million dollars per year below the boom level of six months ago.

The farm area put under crops this year, 333 million acres, is the lowest recorded since 1917.

More dramatic than the production figures, however, are the figures for American unemployment, now reaching an official figure of over 5½ million (and still rising) — or one in twelve of all Americans employed for wages. Trade union circles put the real unemployment figures higher; for the official figures, they claim, do not show the thousands upon thousands who are only partially employed, two days a week, or half-days only, or those on short time.

Similar reports, less startling but nonetheless indicating the same falling trend come from other countries. Norway, one of the great shipping nations, has over 400,000 tons of shipping laid up in port, 4% of her total capacity. Britain has 500,000 tons laid up, and 99 ships idle in British ports, the lion's share of a world total of 1½ million tons of shipping laid up 'for the duration.' West Germany's Ruhr steel mills reported at the end of January 1958 that orders on hand for rolled steel stood at 5.16 million tons against 6.3 million tons in the same month of 1957. Canada, with a population almost exactly one tenth that of the United States, has almost exactly one tenth of the U.S. number of unemployed, 555,000.

A different facet of the crisis, reflecting (but not responsible for) the drop in world production and world trade, is the sharp decline in basic raw material prices, which has drastically altered the economic prospects and conditions of producing countries, chiefly the subject or semi-dependent colonial countries. Barclay's Bank index of world prices shows the following percentage decline in prices from the end of 1956 to the end of 1957: Copper 32.8%; Zinc 40.4%; Lead 37.8%; Rubber 23.3%; Wool 20.3%; Sugar 21.4%; Maize 23.5%; Wheat 14.5%. Nor have these prices become stabilised at these new low levels. They are still readjusting themselves downwards to the continuing decline in production and thus in demand, and stabilisation of prices, "bottoming out" as it is called in America, does not yet appear to be in sight.

From these facts, it might well appear that we are face to face with another of the cyclical depressions of capitalism, which will develop in precisely the same way and with all the same characteristics as the depression of, say, the early thirties. It is true that the hallmarks of the classic cyclical depression are there. But history does not repeat itself in precise likeness. New developments produce new features. The crisis of the present time is no exception.

The onset of past crises of the capitalist economy have been marked by a steady and considerable fall in commodity prices, by the desperate cutting of prices 'to the bone' by traders concerned to offload stocks at almost any price. Wages of those still employed during past depressions have, it is true, fallen; but they have fallen slower than prices due to stubborn working-class and trade-union resistance to wage cuts. The result has been then, that particularly during the early stages of past depressions, the real wages of those still employed (i.e. the amount of goods they can buy with their wage packet) has tended to rise. It is proving vastly different this time. We now have a new phenomenon — that in the early and developing stages of a depression, prices of consumers' goods are still rising (even though basic raw material prices have fallen), the cost of living is rising, and real wages are falling. In America as in South Africa, the

official government cost-of-living index continues to rise. The dollar has fallen in value by 6.3% in the past 22 months due to price increases. But coupled with this price rise has gone a rise in profits and in dividends, with record profits being recorded by the major companies in almost every field.

These facts show that the present crisis is not a simple, mechanical repetition of the depression of the thirties. New factors have entered into the economics of the capitalist world since these times; the present crisis cannot be fully understood without understanding and appreciating those factors. It is clear from all the symptoms that this crisis, like earlier crises of capitalism, comes as a result of so-called 'overproduction' — from an excess of goods on the markets and in the warehouses of the world for which there are no buyers to be found. It is also clear that this 'overproduction' is not the result of surpassing absolutely the ability of mankind to consume the goods produced, but rather the result of producing more goods than there is money to buy; it is 'over-production' relative to our spending power, and not to our needs. In the past, between the start of the century and 1930, this relative 'over-production' in the capitalist world gave rise to a depression, a crisis, a period of shake-out and re-adjustment at approximately ten year intervals. What new factors have postponed this crisis so long, and given it its new twists of character?

THE STATE AND MONOPOLIES

To these questions there is, as yet, no definitive, simple answer. The problems are complex and prolonged and careful study by economists will be necessary before final answers can be stated. Some of the factors are, however, clear. State intervention in the once 'free' economy of capitalism has become a tremendous factor. This intervention is of several forms; there is direct nationalisation of industries, a minor aspect in all countries except, perhaps Great Britain; there is direct state control of exports, imports, currency and foreign exchange; there is direct state spending and purchases, both on welfare services and on military preparations; and there is state control of production, limitation of production and fixing of production quotas (as for example, in the United States Agricultural programme). All of these have tended, within limits to produce a measure of control and temporary stability, a balance and attempt at planning not formerly seen. They have been achieved largely at the cost of the working population, by means of high taxation, high rents and high prices encouraged by high interest rates.

In addition there has been the effect of growth of monopolies, which today dominate every field of capitalist undertaking in every country. In the post-war period, an ever greater portion of the investment capital required for new investment (and thus for new productive capacity) has been found not in the classical way by the banks or finance houses or financial markets, but by the monopoly corporation from their own accumulated assets, from their own "treasure-chests", which have accumulated rapidly to globular totals. To this extent, monopolisation has made new capital investment less dependent on the limitations of the former financial purse-string holders, and turned them virtually into their own bankers.*

* The National City Bank estimates that during the years 1946 to 1953 inclusive, \$150 billion was invested in modernising and enlarging plant and equipment in the U.S.A. 64% of this amount came from the internal resources of the companies concerned.

But most important of all has been the effect of war. War breaks the cycle of boom and slump. It replaces the purchasing power of the people as the main outlet for goods produced, with the purchasing power of the state and its war machine. It causes a forced reduction in the output of consumer goods through the conversion of plants from ploughshares to swords; and, while it creates shortages of consumers goods, it enables immense profits to be made and accumulated for future investment. It follows, then, that the period of reconstruction, re-equipping and renovation of industry after the war, from 1946 onwards should appear as the first stage of recovery and boom in the post-war cycle. This recovery, taking place in a world shortage of goods, led to a rapid rise in prices, with a far slower increase in wages. The gap between purchasing power and production widened rapidly; for a time, while Germany and Japan were still clearing the wreckage of war and not yet entering upon the world's markets, the gap could be concealed by finding ready export markets for the 'surplus' goods. But with the return of Germany and Japan to competition in the export markets, 'over-production' in consumer goods became apparent. In Britain, for example, production of consumer goods fell in 1951, and by 1952 there was a fall in the total production of all goods, consumer and capital goods. The United States, following a slightly different pattern, had a sharp fall in total production in 1949/50, with unemployment rising to 4.7 million. Already the revival and boom was beginning to show the symptoms of crisis, when the Korean war broke out. Once again war broke the cycle.

It is, perhaps, more difficult to explain what has delayed the reappearance of crisis signs since the end of the Korean war in 1953/54. One of the answers seems to lie in the tremendous field for investment and the market for goods produced by modern technical developments, by automation, atomic energy, space flight and similar far-reaching innovations, all of which have developed simultaneously within a short space of time. That these developments may well have been responsible for maintaining a boom atmosphere does not, however, eliminate the fact that this new technical innovation speeds up production at the same time as reducing the labour force required for production. It must, therefore, in the long run, widen rather than narrow the gap between production and purchasing power. It is questionable whether there has yet been time for the full depth of this end result to be felt, although, some of the first effects have added to the general causes of the present crisis.*

* In assessing the increasing importance of this factor, it is worth noting that in the U.S. Budget for 1958/59 "increased expenditure for missiles, nuclear ships, atomic energy research and development, science and education, a special contingency fund to deal with new technological discoveries, and increase in pay to obtain competent manpower, add up to a total increase over the comparable figure in the 1957 Budget of \$4,000 million." Eisenhower. State of the Union Message. Jan. 9. 1958.

From some of these factors, which have given to modern capitalist society a modicum of apparent stability and an apparent measure of control over its own economy, some people have been led to believe that the whole boom-slump cycle of capitalism has disappeared, been eliminated. However easy it was to have such illusions a year ago, it is no longer possible today. Whatever stop-gaps are found, whatever seemingly endless process of re-investment of capital goes on, whatever resources are diverted into new technical improvements and innovations, in the end the only real purpose of production is consumption. And in the end, the ever widening gap of the boom years between production and consumption, must be bridged by the destruction of production or the decline of production below the limits of consumption during the slump years. Monopolisation of industry has resulted in a price structure which is no longer closely related to and swayed by changes in supply and demand. It is now possible — and this is what we are experiencing in these opening months of the crisis — for monopolies to fix price levels for their products out of close relation to the market, to raise prices even at a time when demand is falling and when supply already far exceeds it. But this ability too must, eventually, bend before economic law. For even in the age of monopoly, the purpose of production is consumption; and when price-fixing departs so far from reality that it ceases to assist consumption but hampers it, then it is clear that price-fixing practice will have to change, even though it does so late, slowly and unwillingly.

EFFECTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

To some extent the beginnings of the crisis have already had an effect on the economy of Southern Africa. The most spectacular signs of the crisis have been in the field of copper mining, especially in Northern Rhodesia, where the whole economy is dominated by copper. Here the catastrophic fall in copper prices from the high peaks of the Korean war stockpiling days has had shaking results. From a price of £405 at the end of 1955, copper has dropped to £268 at the end of 1956 and £180 at the end of 1957. For the higher-paid European workers it has meant a drastic cut in earnings, though this cut has been masked by the fact that what are called 'basic' wages remain as before, but the 'bonus' paid to workers as a proportion of receipts from copper sales, has been slashed. In the Union, Rustenburg in particular has felt the effect of the virtual collapse of the world platinum market and the sudden contraction of operations in what was, till recently, the town's largest and most prosperous industry.

Less spectacular but of equal importance for the future is the fall of basic agricultural prices, wool, maize and wheat. The wool price has fallen this season by 30% to its lowest figure in ten years. "An unofficial but reliable estimate" (Rand Daily Mail) is that farmers in the Union will earn from £30 to £35 million less this year than a year ago. That hard times are already beginning to be felt is shown by the fact that bank deposits are declining, while bank advances and loans to customers are increasing, and reached a record level of £336.3 million in January of this year. The Central African Federation, dependent largely on copper and agricultural produce, recorded a decrease in the year's trade of £43 million compared with the previous year. It is difficult to know whether unemployment is rising significantly in the Union, due to the absence of figures for African unemployed, who are usually the last to be hired and the first fired.

In past depressions, South Africa has, to some extent, been shielded from the deepest effects by the cushioning effect of gold, the mainstay of our economy. Here is a peculiar commodity; it is not closely related to normal factors of supply and demand for its marketing, since the entire output is disposed of through Government action; nor does its price fluctuate, having been fixed in dollars by international agreement since 1934. To some extent, therefore, gold production continues almost unchanged during depressions, or has done so in the past) and gold prices remain unchanged. This acts as a cushion for the whole economy against the general and overall decline which marks the depressions of other countries. Yet here, too, there are new factors to consider. Since the last depression, South African gold mining has extended its operation to include the extract of uranium ores from the same gold-bearing rock. This development, which started as a sideline, a secondary activity, almost the production of a by-product, has grown rapidly and startlingly. The figures issued for members of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines for last year show that the estimated working profit from uranium has risen to over £33 million (against an estimated profit of almost £58 million from gold) or 36% of the total profits. How dependent has the gold mining industry thus become on its 'by-product'.

Since uranium production in South Africa is treated as a military secret even in time of peace, it is not known to what extent uranium production has been insulated from the world market in the way that gold has. It is known that there is at present an international agreement in existence for its disposal; but it has not been revealed at what price uranium is sold, or who it goes to, or for how long the agreement holds force. If uranium is subject to the same 'open market' influences as other commodities, there can be little prospect of any "cushioning" of depression coming from here. In fact the signs point the other way, to the extreme instability of the world uranium market, and the possibility of a catastrophic decline in demand. Uranium enjoys a boom because it is the essential ingredient of nuclear energy — whether atomic bombs or atomic power stations — at our present level of scientific achievement. But already scientific development is running ahead; in Britain the experimental machine 'Zeta' has solved, on a laboratory scale, the problem of how to develop nuclear energy from hydrogen. Translate that experiment to the realm of practical, commercial engineering, and the bottom must fall out of the uranium market. Hydrogen is all around us, in the air, in the water; and its extraction is simple and cheap and the supplies almost inexhaustible. Already several Reef mines have reached the limit of profitability of gold, and have closed. It is only possible to speculate — one cannot know — how many more would have closed were it not for uranium production; and how many more will close with a bang should the world prices of uranium collapse. Furthermore, development of gold-mining during the past ten years, the opening up of the Free State Gold Fields and, more particularly, the development of ultra-deep level mines in the Western Transvaal, have only been made possible with the super-profits derived from uranium; the uncompleted parts of these development plans cannot be visualised without a continuation of those super-profits.

Such a convulsion as that at present developing in world economy cannot fail to have an effect upon political climates and political prospects. Twice already war has served the purpose of postponing a depression. Is it

unlikely that now, as the crisis grows deeper, that there will be those who will seek again to "solve" the crisis by reckless adventure and war? That economic pressure is driving already, perhaps unwittingly, to such solutions can be seen from the first reactions of the Eisenhower administration to the crisis, when amidst a general decision to increase spending on roads, housing and other public works to provide employment, it is decided to speed up by 50% the rate of placing of military contracts; arms expenditure, not for security reasons but specifically to stimulate the economy, is to be increased by five billion dollars (or more than the total already huge British arms budget). Today, arms expenditure means above all nuclear weapons expenditure, A bombs, H bombs, inter-continental ballistics missiles to carry them. Thus the first political fruits of the sharpening crisis are the increasingly close threat of nuclear war — a war of human extermination 'to save the economy'. This is surely the final madness of a mad world.

NO EASY WAY OUT

There is, in South Africa, a theory that a depression would cure us of a Nationalist Government, either because the hardship and privation of the people during a depression would turn them against the Government; or because depression would bring the Government to their senses, and make them turn from what is called 'ideological' legislation to bread-and-butter matters. There can be no grounds for such illusions. It is true that the depression of the thirties, here and in Europe, turned many people towards radical ideas, towards communism and socialism as a way out of the crisis. But they were also the years that saw the rise of fascism in Europe and in Africa, Hitler's Brownshirts and Weichardt's Blackshirts. Let that never be forgotten.

In times of crisis people look for a way out. Everyone looks for a way out, workers as well as rulers. For the rulers, the way out lies in increasing reaction; internationally in war, but internally in placing the burden of the crisis heavily and completely on the shoulders of the working people. Clearly that is the path already being taken in Southern Africa. When Bancroft mint closed in Northern Rhodesia, first major victim of the fall in copper prices, European workers it was said would be found other jobs in the industry. But African workers were merely shipped back to the reserves, exported to starve out of sight. In South Africa, though international maize prices have slumped, prices to the consumer are to be maintained, so that the Maize Board can maintain a slightly reduced but nonetheless significant subsidy to the farmers to keep their earnings high. As the depression creeps upon us, school feeding grants are reduced; free hospitalisation is abolished and a 'means test' reintroduced; with the spectre of unemployment close, job reservation is started to place the heaviest burdens of unemployment upon the Non-European worker, and the lightest upon the European.

This is the clear pattern of events to come as the Nationalists will direct them. The workers shall pay for the depression. And in South Africa, things being what they are, the African worker shall pay most. For such a policy there follows inevitably the political policy; smash down the remains of democracy — pass over to fascist dictatorship! Smash the

trade unions before they fight back! Smash the movements of the African people! Double up the police force, strengthen the army! Cut social services but maintain profits! Increase taxation on the lowest paid sections! And drive the jobless, and the starving out of the towns; drive them back to the farms, where there is no wage determination and no limit on their hours of work; drive them back to the countryside to starve, quietly, unobtrusively and out of sight. This is the policy of Nationalism now, and it will be intensified and carried through with greater violence and haste as the depression gathers pace. There is no room here for any illusion that a depression, of itself, makes things better! If things are to get better it will be, not because of the depression but in spite of it, because of the fighting spirit and action of the people in beating off the reaction and in making the rich pay for the crisis!

WHERE WE STAND

LIBERATION is an independent journal of democratic discussion, tied to no party or organisation.

WE BELIEVE that the struggle for freedom in South Africa — by which we mean equal rights and equal opportunities for all South Africans irrespective of race, sex or colour — needs clear thinking and clear minds.

CLEAR MINDS are born of open, public discussion of all the main problems facing our country.

THAT IS WHY this journal exists.

THAT IS WHY we ask for your support — by writing articles for **LIBERATION**; by donating money to **LIBERATION**; by winning new readers and friends of **LIBERATION**; by subscribing to **LIBERATION** (see form on back cover).

“SOUTH AFRICA AFTER THE NATIONALISTS”

The Editor Sums Up

We launched this symposium in our issue of last November with two stimulating articles: by Mr. Walter Sisulu (formerly general secretary of the African National Congress, now banned from Congress and charged with Treason) and Mr. Patrick Duncan (national organiser of the Liberal Party, once jailed as a Defiance Volunteer). Their articles were followed by a thoughtful article by the Rev. Douglas Thompson and a brilliant and provocative sketch by Mr. Joe Matthews based upon a “report from the future.”

We cannot, thus complain of the quality of our contributions. But we can and do complain of the quantity. Many were invited to contribute, people of widely differing views, ranging from the Socialists of the Labour Party to the ultra-nationalists of the “Africanist” faction. To our disappointment, very few of those invited responded, and our readers who were asked to join freely in the discussion did not do so at all.

We continue to hold out an open invitation to all who are interested in a democratic future for South Africa to contribute their views to this Journal, whether on the problems raised in the Symposium or on any other matter of general interest, though we have now, perforce to terminate the Symposium itself.

We are very grateful to those who did take the trouble to write out their views on the crucial questions originally posed. On the whole, despite differences of approach and detail, they showed a remarkable similarity on fundamentals. One and all, the participants declared their belief in a full democracy for our country, based on a universal adult franchise; and their confidence that the social forces exist in our country to bring about such a profound change.

True, there were differences. Not all the contributors shared Mr. Duncan's enthusiasm for the “free enterprise system” as exemplified in the United States, nor Mr. Matthew's surmise that the partners to the Congress alliance would eventually merge into one big organisation. But all of them were informed with the spirit of free and fearless debate, of boundless faith in our people and their future which is so characteristic of the Democratic Opposition in our country. No contrast is more striking than the total absence of this spirit from the upholders of the present regime in the Union: who are as afraid of new ideas and their free discussion as they are of the future itself. From which remarkable contrast our readers will not find it difficult to deduce who, in fact, the future belongs to.

Job Reservation — Part 2.

“EVERY WHITE MAN A GENTLEMAN”

by **ELI WEINBERG**

(The first part of this article appeared in our last issue)

When the Nats came to power in 1948, they appointed a Commission with the task of redrafting the industrial legislation, so as to include these new principles of Nationalist Labour relations. In the laboratory of this Commission was concocted the new I.C. Act with its anti-trade union principles, its negation of workers' unity, its deliberate purpose of removing the power of collective bargaining and with — as a logical addition — Section 77, the reservation of jobs.

Section 77 of the I.C. Act enables the Industrial Tribunal appointed under the new Act to recommend that certain specified occupations be reserved for particular racial groups.

Shortly after the promulgation of the I.C. Act the Minister of Labour appointed the Industrial Tribunal, making sure that its members would be loyal followers of the so-called Labour Code (?) of the Nationalist Party. Almost immediately the Tribunal was also given the task of “investigating the desirability of making a determination under this section” (Section 77 — Job Reservation) in the Clothing Industry. For the purpose of this investigation five assessors were appointed by the Minister to assist the Tribunal in an advisory capacity. The assessors were:—

- Mr. J. C. Bolton (Garment Workers' Union, Natal)
- Mr. L. A. Petersen (Garment Workers' Union, Cape)
- Miss A. Scheepers (Garment Workers' Union, South Africa)
- Mr. M. H. Emdon (Transvaal Employers)
- Mr. E. R. Savage (Natal Employers).

The Tribunal received evidence from all Industrial Councils, Employers' Organisations and trade unions in the Industry. It also consulted the Central Native Labour Board and the Commissioner for Coloured Affairs. It visited a number of factories and held a number of public meetings.

Eventually it appeared that not one assessor, not one trade union, not one employers' organisation nor any industrial council could be found who considered job reservations in the Clothing Industry either desirable, necessary or sensible. With one voice all those really concerned with the Industry declared their opposition to any kind of job allocation on a racial basis.

It would be interesting to know what the views of the Central Native Labour Board and the Commissioner for Coloured Affairs were. After all, the hundreds of thousands of workers whose fate is in the hands of these authorities have some right to know how their "protectors" were reacting to this threat to the livelihood of their "protegés". But the Tribunal keeps significantly silent in their report about this aspect of the matter!

Only a small section of white workers from Germiston were persuaded to express themselves in favour of job reservation. In the last resort the Tribunal relied on this puny clique for justification of its decision to recommend job reservation, contrary to the overwhelming evidence and in the teeth of opposition of all the people actually engaged in the Industry.

It is difficult to find any real justification in the report of the Tribunal for their recommendation. In fact, the Tribunal admits that "there is considerable substance in the objections raised by the organised employers' association and trade unions against the reservation of work in the Clothing Industry." Nevertheless the report proceeds in a mass of verbose sophistries to argue that job reservation is necessary, for the following reasons:

- a) Europeans in the Clothing Industry must be protected, because their departure from the industry may be a "progressive progress" and ultimately there may be no Europeans left at all.
- b) Europeans must be protected against the possible effects of an economic depression.
- c) Europeans must be protected against encroachment by an alternative and cheaper source of labour from the racial groups, particularly in view of the existence of two different wage rates for the same work in the Transvaal.

DEPARTURE OF THE EUROPEANS FROM THE INDUSTRY

To some extent it is true that there has been a flight of Europeans from the Clothing Industry. Although the figures show that between 1938 and 1953 the number of Europeans grew from 11,114 to 13,083, it must be admitted that during 1953 to 1957 there has been a sharp decline in the number of Europeans. This, however, is explained by the following factors:

- 1) There are many more attractive avenues of employment open to Europeans. Other industries compete for the limited European labour source and offer more advantageous terms of employment.
- 2) Young European girls consider it beneath their dignity to work in factories. They generally prefer commercial jobs as clerks, typists etc., which do not carry with them the stigma of "fabriekmeisie".

The basic factor in the decline of the number of Europeans, as compared with the enormous growth of the Non-European labour force, is the rapid expansion of the industry. Between 1938 and 1953 the number of establishments in the industry doubled from 280 to 566 and the total number of employees grew from 18,250 to 45,837. Naturally, the white labour supply could not possibly meet this demand and consequently more and more Non-European labour had to be drawn in. A complicating factor has been the imposition through the Factories' Act of separate amenities, such as cloak rooms, lavatories etc., for the different races. This com-

pelled many employers who might have continued to employ a multi-racial labour force, to employ in preference Non-Europeans only, because it obviated the economic burden of expensive structural alterations and also because Non-European labour was more plentiful.

It is interesting to note that despite the gradual reduction in the share of Europeans in the total labour force, productivity continued to rise rapidly. Thus in 1938 productivity per worker was about £321, whilst in 1953 it was £1,073 per capita. Thus it was largely the Non-European workers who were responsible for increasing the productive capacity of the Clothing Industry from about £6 millions in 1938 to about £50 millions in 1953. For this they are now to be rewarded with deprivation of their skilled jobs, with a continuous threat to their livelihood!

(Incidentally, it is also criterion of the exploitation of the workers in the Clothing Industry that between 1938 and 1953, whilst production increased, according to the Industrial Tribunal, by 738 per cent, average wages rose from about £2.17.0d. per week to about £5.0.9d. per week, an increase of approximately 75% !)

If it is true that Europeans are leaving the Clothing Industry, it does not seem to have affected the growth of the industry. Nor has it had any effect on the economic position of Europeans who have managed, largely by their own preference, to secure other more advantageous positions in other industries. It must be clear, therefore, that the Tribunal's recommendations, insofar as it is based on this premise, has no foundation whatsoever.

In several instances throughout its report the Tribunal makes a show of benevolence towards the Non-European workers. It speaks of the need to protect the rightful claims of other racial groups whilst "protecting" the Europeans and it generally disputes any intention of driving Non-Europeans out of industry or out of skilled positions. But the mask of benevolence is off the moment the Tribunal faces the problem of the threatening economic depression. Here it makes no bones about it that it is its intention that Non-Europeans shall be "the last to be hired and the first to be fired". At all costs the privileged position of the white workers must be maintained. All the better if, in the process, it leads to racial friction and estrangement between different sections of the working class.

Miss Anna Scheepers, President of the Garment Workers' Union of South Africa and one of the Assessors appointed to assist the Tribunal, points in her submission to the dangers of this policy. She says, that with large numbers of qualified workers driven out of the industry, out-work may become a real menace. "These workers have to live and certain manufacturers will make use of this opportunity by giving work out to be done in private homes where unhealthy conditions of employment exist over which no control can be exercised". She concludes that far from protecting white workers, this will lead to an undermining of their standards.

THE THREAT TO THE WHITES BY DIFFERENTIAL WAGE RATES

The most important premise on which job reservation is based is the existence of differential wage rates which, it is argued, enables Non-Europeans to encroach on European precincts. Here the Tribunal glee-

fully pounces on the deplorable mistake of the Garment Workers' Union of South Africa, led by Johanna Cornelius and Anna Scheepers, who signed a wage agreement this year which provides for two different wage rates for the same kind of work.

During the past thirty years, in which the Clothing Industry grew up and developed, the Garment workers of the Transvaal, by reason of superior organisation and a militant fighting policy succeeded in raising their wages and conditions of employment well above those prevailing in the coastal areas. During these years the employers in the Transvaal tried to resist these advances of the workers. In all these struggles the employers claimed that they were unable to compete against the coastal (Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban) industry, who had the advantage of lower wage rates and inferior working conditions. In reply the Transvaal workers set themselves the task to organise the coastal workers and to raise their wages and conditions of employment. In this they succeeded in a measure, most of the improvements in the coastal towns being due to frequent "pepping up" campaigns by Transvaal organisers. However, a considerable disparity always remained, which was met by Transvaal employers in the competitive struggle for markets by superior factory organisation and more modern methods of production. Ultimately, in the struggle for the common market the Cape capitalists caught up with the technical advances of the Transvaal, too. From then on the Transvaal capitalists began to seek new ways of maintaining high profits and found it in the flight from the Transvaal. Gradually, first one, then in larger numbers, Transvaal Clothing manufacturers opened up factories in platteland dorps, where wages were lower, the workers were unorganised and competition for the supply of labour less severe. One of the pioneers in this trend was a firm of clothing manufacturers, established and controlled by Nationalist interest, who moved their factory beyond the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Wage Agreement and employed largely cheap African labour.

This tendency worried the Transvaal Garment Workers' leaders. The obvious remedy was, of course, to concentrate all their efforts and resources on organising the workers in the new industrial areas and on leading them in a militant struggle for higher wages. But this seemed too long and difficult a process, particularly as the majority of the workers affected were Africans and any organising activities amongst them would meet with all kinds of strenuous local and governmental opposition, including the very considerable opposition of the more backward section of the white members of the Union who were led by Nationalist camp followers.

In this situation the employers subtly suggested to the leaders of the Transvaal Garment Workers, that they might be induced to refrain from fleeing from the Transvaal, if some concession on wages was made. To satisfy the conscience of the wavering trade union leaders, the employers offered a guarantee to employ at least 4,000 workers at existing wage rates, if a secondary class of machinists was created at a lower wage rate. The trade union leaders fell for this bait hook, line and sinker and for the first time in 30 years the glorious militant tradition of the Garment Workers of the Transvaal was thrown to the winds and an agreement was signed — without a fight — providing for two wage rates for the same job. One of these rates was a considerable cut of the existing rate, in fact a cut of about 25%.

What the Trade Union leaders apparently failed to realise was the elementary fact that the employers never intended to stop there, that in the long run they would only be content with the lowest rate prevailing in the country, as only that would even out their chances of competition against their more favoured fellow-capitalists in the platteland and the coastal towns. It was also clear that the guarantee to retain 4,000 higher paid workers (obviously intended to be whites) was quite worthless, as there was no way of enforcing this provision, there being no formal ratio for factory.

It is on the basis of this mistake of the Trade Union that the Industrial Tribunal is to score a point. They argue that the lower wage rate favours the Non-Europeans and that the enforcement of the guarantee of 4,000 higher paid workers is only possible through job reservation. Thus the Industrial Tribunal set themselves up as the protectors of the hard won wages of the "European" workers of the Transvaal against their own trade union and against the employers. Naturally, the benevolent Nationalist Government and its Minister of Labour is included in this association of true defenders of the workers, because they would ultimately enforce job reservation. In his minority recommendation, the Chairman of the Industrial Tribunal, Dr. A. P. du Toit Viljoen says: "It is indeed true that because of the introduction of two separate scales for machinists in the Transvaal European operatives are in need of protection". This is followed by an assurance that Dr. S. P. du Toit Viljoen is prepared to be the protector.

The hypocrisy of this claim becomes obvious when it is remembered that the same Dr. Viljoen was Chairman of the Wage Board during the many years during which the Transvaal Garment workers were fighting for higher wages for the coastal workers and that it was this same Dr. du Toit who consistently refused to level up the wages of the lower paid coastal workers in order to protect the higher wages of the Transvaal workers.

As for the Nat. Government's role as protector of higher wages for European workers, one needs only to refer to the encouragement given by them to Nationalist employers who in recent years fled from the towns, where they employed higher paid white workers, to the platteland where they engaged cheaper African workers. This went so far that the Nationalist Minister of Labour recently issued a wholesale retrospective exemption from the wage agreement for this particular firm, when they were found to have underpaid their African employees to the extent of £15,000!

WHY JOB RESERVATION?

It has been said that the Nats could not possibly be serious about job reservation, particularly in the Clothing Industry where in present circumstances it was so palpably impractical and senseless. The fact that the Tribunal and the Minister of Labour were prepared to soften the blow by issuing wholesale exemptions of the Industry and by maintaining the so-called status-quo, i.e. allowing Non-Europeans to remain in the positions they at present occupied seemed to indicate to some that at most the Nats wanted to use job reservation for the purpose of capturing extra votes during the recent General Election.

This view completely ignores the general economic policy of the Nats which follows the well-known Fascist trend of central control and direction of both labour and capital by the Fascist State. The Nats openly advocated this in the form of a Central Economic Council and in general outlines this is the trend that runs through the Report of the Industrial Tribunal.

On pages 19 and 20 of the Report the Tribunal speak of "allocating European labour in such a way that "they can maximise the national income and economic welfare". The Tribunal admits that one way of attracting European labour to an industry where it was most needed, would be "by improving the scales of pay", but hastily discards this idea as having "a cumulative effect" and creating a "vicious inflationary spiral".

By implication the Tribunal concludes that job reservation would assume the necessary number of whites in the industry in dominant positions. The purpose is obviously to preserve the division between European and Non-European workers, to play the one against the other. The White workers are to be discouraged from making common cause with their fellow-workers by investing them with racial privileges.

However, lest the white workers think that the Nat Government will protect them unconditionally, the Tribunal issues a warning in the form of a quotation from the mouth of the Great White Chief himself. Says the Minister of Labour, Senator de Klerk:

"Whatever the theoretical approach to this matter may be, I want to say clearly that the employees in our country must not expect the protection of this clause if they do not carry their weight. If as a result of laxity or any other reason within their control (underlined by us) they are replaced, they must not apply to us for protection."

In other words: You had better behave yourselves! If you play the game, we shall protect you. But if you strike, or oppose our policies, or worse still — if you unite with your Non-European fellow workers — then may the Lord protect you — we certainly will not!

The ultimate danger of job reservation is, therefore, in the drawing of a sharp gulf between White and Non-White workers, in the intensification of racial conflicts, particularly in times of depression. For the Non-European workers it also carries the certainty of unemployment, starvation, degradation and social humiliation.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

The recommendation of the Tribunal has aroused bitter opposition in many quarters, not only amongst Non-European workers, but amongst many European workers, amongst employers in the Clothing Industry, amongst many other industrialists who fear similar encroachments on their domain, and generally amongst all people with a sense of justice. This opposition found expression in many forms, and culminated in the strike of Garment Workers in the Transvaal. The Cape and Natal Garment Workers have decided to take legal action to test the validity of the Determination.

On the whole, however, and considering the extremely serious implications of job reservations, the protest actions have been comparatively feeble and have not seriously perturbed the Nat. government.

The reason is to be found in the fact that the present leadership of the protest movement is ideologically not equipped to conduct a really militant fight on this issue. Both Miss Anna Scheepers and Miss Johanna Cornelius, whose position as leaders of the protest movement is maintained by tens of thousands of Non-European workers, are inclined to allow that in certain circumstances "there would have been justification for this by investigation" (Submission by Miss Anna Scheepers to the Industrial Tribunal). They do not attack job reservation because it is wrong in principle, but because it is "unrealistic" and "impractical" and because it may

endanger the continuation of "the industry". Miss Cornelius goes so far as to commit herself to a demand that "social justice for our members, irrespective of their race, shall be maintained in the event of any determination reserving jobs for European workers" thus almost accepting the principle of job reservation. In effect, De Klerk very subtly satisfied that demand by wholesale exemptions and, therefore, cut away any further serious opposition from that source. This weakness expressed itself clearly during the strike of the Garment Workers, when the leaders warned the workers against associating with their natural allies, the masses of other Non-European workers and the Congress Movement.

The Nats. are not particularly perturbed by the tactics of the leaders of the opposition to job reservation. As long as they can succeed in localising the struggle to the Clothing Industry, they can regard the battle as half-won. The wholesale exemptions will enable the industry to carry on, will lull the opposition into a feeling of temporary security, but in the meantime the principle of job reservation will have achieved a beach-head and a precedent will have been created. Even the threat of legal action to test the validity of the Determination will not worry the Nats. over much. In the first place, the kind of legal action contemplated implies partly the acceptance of Section 77. In the second place, the Nats. themselves have come across certain legal difficulties in the present formulation of Section 77, and intend amending the law anyway.

The principle of job reservation cannot be successfully fought as an isolated attack on one particular section of workers or on one industry. It must be clearly recognised for what it is, namely a vicious attack on the rights of all Non-European workers, a policy designed to perpetuate racial animosity between black and white workers, and part of the general plan of the Nats. to relegate the majority of the people of South Africa to a permanent position of inferiority.

If this is clearly seen, then the method of counter-attack is obvious. The struggle against job reservation must cease to be the domestic concern of a few thousand garment workers. Every worker in every industry must be made to see that: "It is the garment workers today, it is everybody else tomorrow!" The Congress Movement must assume full responsibility for organising large-scale resistance to the plans of the Government to extend job reservation to other industries. The immediate withdrawal of the Determination for the Clothing Industry and the repeal of Section 77 must become a focal point around which a mass movement of workers, intellectuals, industrialists, liberals, of every type of opponent of racial discrimination should be organised. In launching the attack on the Garment Workers, the Nats. were calculating on isolating them and defeating them piecemeal. Their plans can yet be made to misfire and can, in fact, be turned to a serious and possibly fatal defeat of the Nat. Government itself if bold and determined leadership combines all the forces threatened by job reservation into a concerted, purposeful attack on this vicious piece of racial discrimination.

There can be no doubt that the mass of the workers would follow such a lead with enthusiasm, as they have shown conclusively on June 26th last year.

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