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**FIGHTING TALK**

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ORGAN OF THE SPRINGBOK LEGION.

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## DIE NATURELLE PROBLEEM: WAARHEEN?

**E**LDERS in hierdie uitgawe verskyn 'n opsomming van 'n memoranda deur die Johannesburgse tak van die Springbok Legion voorgelê aan die Kommissie van Ondersoek na die onlangse onluste in die Naturelle-dorpe aan die Rand.

Die opstellers van die Memoranda poog o maan te toon wat volgens hulle mening die hooforsake is van die onluste. Daar word onder andere melding gemaak van die intense gevoel van verdeling wat vinnig besig is om pos te vat by die Naturelle, veral in die stede. Dit is op hierdie aspek wat ons graag hier wil uitbrei.

Stel u self in die plek van 'n Naturel wat uit enige van die Naturelle-gebiede in b.v. Johannesburg aankom, waar hy in aanraking kom met alles wat die moderne beskawing kan aanbied, terwyl hy voortdurend in die wete verkeer dat dit alles buite sy bereik is. Dit is weliswaar dieselfde as 'n lewe sonder enige hoop, en die gevoel van verydelde hoop wat noodwendig daaruit moet voortspuit lê, volgens ons mening aan die wortel van al die kwaad.

Elke mens ongeag wat die kleur van sy vel is, het ambisies. In Suid-Afrika is daar egter dié verskil, vir die blanke is daar altyd hoop om sy ideale verwesenlik te sien, terwyl die Naturel onder ons huidige ekonomiese stelsel in die allermeeste gevalle tot ongeskoolde arbeid gedoem is, en dan is daar selfs 'n verskil in beloning wanneer daardie ongeskoolde arbeid deur 'n blanke of naturel verrig word.

Dit is hierdie ongelyke of liefs onregverdige behandeling wat van die Naturel 'n prooi maak vir „opswepers.”

Die tyd het aangebreek dat ons aan Suid-Afrika begin dink as 'n land waarin daar elf miljoen mense woon en nie twe een 'n half miljoen nie. Ons moet voorsiening maak vir die benodighede van elf miljoen. As ons gewoon raak aan die gedagte dat daar b.v. huise gebou moet word vir elf miljoen mense om in te woon, en nie net vir twee en 'n miljoen nie, dan sal onsbouwerkers miskien nie so bevrees wees dat hulle sonder werk sal wees, indien die naturel opgelei word as vakman nie. Met ander rel as 'n probleem te beskou. Die Naturel konstateer die grootste bate wat woorde, ons moet ophou om die Naturenige land kan wens om te hê, nl. 'n koopkrag, en as potensiële verbruiker, moet hy noodwendig ook as potensiële produseerder beskou word.

Wanneer ons in hierdie artikel pleit vir gelykheid van geleenthede, op ekonomiese gebied, dan bedoel ons eensins dat daar totaal moet weggedoen word met die kleurlyn op sosiale gebied nie. Hierdie aspek van die saak bied ook geen probleem nie, hoofsaaklik omdat nog die blanke nog die Naturel verlang om met mekaar op sosiale gebied om te gaan.

Die ou, storie: van wil jy jou dogter met 'n waffer sien trou, en nog meer soortgelyke uitlatings, is dus niks anders as spookstories bedoel om die onkundige mee bang te maak nie, en behoort deur die persoon wat die vooruitgang van Suid-Afrika as 'n geheel op die hart dra, bejeën te word met die minagting wat dit verdien.

Tenoor hierdie denkrigting staan die teorie van manne soos Dr. Eiselen, en andere, en waaraan die Nasionaliste ook lippediens bewys, nl. algehele territoriale skeiding van die twee rasse. Hierdie teorie is egter basies retrogressief en as sulks onprakties. Net so min as wat jy 'n rivier kan laat terugvloei op eie baan deur dit op te dam, net so min kan jy van 'n hele ras verwag dat hulle moet terugkeer tot 'n primitiewe staat wat hulle reeds vyftig jaar gelede ontgroeit het. Terwyl die ongeskoolde, onwillige en onbevredigende swerwende arbeidskragte wat logies daarop moet volg alleen die gevoel dat alles verydel is by die Naturel sal laat verskerp. Die kwaad wat dus die wortel van die probleem uitmaak sal hierdeur vererger in plaas van 'n oplossing te wees.

...Dit is aan oorwegings soos hierdie dat die kommissie aandag moet skenk, en ons hoop dat hulle dit die regering aan die verstand sal bring dat hulle Apartheidsbeleid blote ceverblindings is, wat die probleem vererger in plaas van 'n oplossing te help soek.

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# Summary of the Memorandum Submitted by the Springbok Legion to the Commission of Enquiry into Riots in the Witwatersrand Area

THE Johannesburg Branch of the Springbok Legion submitted a Memorandum of some length to the Commission of Enquiry into the Newlands Riots. The memorandum was divided into five separate sections:—

- (a) Economic and Social.
- (b) Discriminatory Laws.
- (c) Administration of Laws and Native relations with the Authorities.
- (d) Channels of Political Expression.
- (e) Summary.

The memorandum, however, made it clear that such a division was purely arbitrary since in reality each overlaps the other. But the overall picture that is contained in the memorandum is:—

(a) That there are deep-seated causes for real dissatisfaction by the African peoples.

(b) That the African peoples suffer from frustration.

(c) That as a result of (a) and (b) outbreaks of violence etc. are inevitable under present-day conditions.

At the outset, however, and in terms of our Constitution, the Springbok Legion deprecates the use of violence or lawlessness or any other action which does not conform to the accepted democratic principles and practices.

## 1. Economic and Social.

- (1) Cost of Living.
- (2) Housing.
- (3) Transport.
- (4) Unemployment Insurance Fund.

(a) The African worker has always lived at or below the breadline, even having regard to their low standard of living. Wages have increased since before the war, but have failed to keep pace with the increased cost of living. The impact on impoverished Africans without any reserves has been far greater than on European workers.

(b) The housing situation has for years been critical, and while control measures on the part of the N.A.D. and municipality have failed to remedy matters, these measures have undoubtedly

caused much ill-feeling and resentment among Africans.

(c) The transport services are inadequate to deal with traffic at peak hours, causing many workers to lose time at their place of work. The transport boycotts in the past, and the fact that violence is often directed against transport vehicles indicates that this grievance is a very real one.

(d) The withdrawal of Unemployment Insurance Benefits from workers earning less than £180 per annum, has caused increased anxiety among the African people who believe that the Government has defrauded them in not repaying the money which they have paid in.

(f) The parsimonious attitude of the Government in regard to native school feeding, caused great resentment among natives who resent the discrimination against them — the least privileged section.

## 2. Discriminatory Laws.

S.29 (1) of Act 38 of 1927 provides that any person who utters any words or does any act or thing with intent to promote any feeling of hostility between natives and Europeans is guilty of an offence. The intention must be to create or foment a feeling of discord between the races. In practice, Europeans who break this law are never prosecuted, especially when they are making political speeches, but natives are.

Act 15 of 1911, the Native Labour Regulation Act contains a host of regulations, which when broken, render an African liable to some form of punishment. Such obnoxious regulations as:—

- (1) Refusing to perform a lawful command of a person in authority over him.
- (2) Committing a breach of any rules prescribed for good order, discipline, or health, on mines or works.

Such regulations which seem to be rules for an army, are hardly conducive to the propagation of goodwill between European and Africans.

By Proclamation 150 of 1934 issued under Act 38 of 1927 a native commits an offence, who enters, travels within or leaves a Pass Area without being in possession of a Pass in the prescribed form, or who fails to produce the pass if required to do so by any policeman or authorised officer, or if he carries an exemption, fails to produce his exemption to an authorised person.

The effect of this Proclamation is:—

(1) To facilitate association between natives contravening this Proclamation and criminals;

(2) To cause a feeling of irritation;

(3) To give unscrupulous Europeans and Natives an opportunity to pose as policemen and extort money from Natives in exchange for a release;

(4) To give unscrupulous policemen an opportunity to effect an arrest by destroying a Pass that a Native may be carrying.

Under S. 31 of the Native Urban Areas Act, 1945, a Native may not be in any public place within a proclaimed urban local authority without a Night Pass. We have known natives to be arrested for this offence when they were standing in the street outside the premises where they were employed and resided.

Under section 50 of Act 31 of 1917, a policeman of the rank of Sergeant or above, may authorise the searching of premises without a warrant for evidence of an offence, if he believes on reasonable grounds that the delay in obtaining a search warrant would defeat the object of the search. The section provides that as far as possible search should be made in the daytime in the presence of at least two respectable inhabitants of the district. In practice the police have ignored the last named requirements and have raided frequently at all hours of the night. They have arrested any number of people for being in possession of liquor and goods and for being without a Pass of one description or another, without proper enquiry as to whether the individual arrested ought to be charged.

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Under the Native Urban Areas Act of 1945, areas may be allocated in towns where Natives must reside. Although there is an obligation on the authorities to provide such facilities, it has been ignored on financial grounds. Such a law without implementation has resulted in overcrowding, discontent and dissatisfaction.

The operation of discriminatory laws can be successful until such time as those discriminated against begin to realise and dislike the inferior status imposed by such laws. The greater part of the special legislation relating to natives conflicts with the Rule of Law which is considered as fundamental and which lawyers have to study before qualifying in South Africa. The Rule of Law in the negative sense provided that no man is punishable, or can be lawfully made to suffer in body or goods except for distinct breach of law established in ordinary legal manner before the ordinary courts of the land. It is important to note that with regard to natives:—

(a) The Governor-General in Council usually decides when a law shall apply to Natives in any area;

(b) In certain cases he may lay down the penalties by regulation;

(c) The law that may exact a penalty from the Native does not apply at all to the European.

The consequence of this constant discrimination is inevitable — the natives must come to regard the law as something imposed from without, contrary to their wish. They therefore regard the law as something to be obeyed if it can be enforced and something to be broken as an expression of independence. Once the native comes to regard it as morally justifiable to break a law because the European made that law, the law ceases to have any value. At present this is the situation along the Reef where Natives regard the law as being wrong, and do not think of themselves as committing crimes.

### 3 Administration of Laws and Natives' relations with the Authorities.

(1) *Police Raids.* If any one cause can be cited as the proximate or culminating cause of the riots, and activities of the Police in the course of raids for liquor, Passless Natives, etc., may be stated to be responsible. The law (section 50 of Act 31 of 1917) permits of the search of premises without warrants for evidence of an offence — subject to certain safeguards. In practice the Police

appear to work on the assumption that all Natives are potential criminals, and conduct widespread searches late at night, when innocent and guilty alike are shaken up.

(2) It has been shown that it is extremely easy for a native to be convicted on one or another offence, and the system of deportation to farms for forced labour impose a heavy burden on urban natives. This system gives rise to great resentment.

(3) It would appear that under the last Government, a sort of status quo had been achieved, which the present Government had disturbed with new and proposed legislation. The vague doctrine of "Apartheid" has filled natives with forboding by reason of its vagueness, and the pin-pricking measures invoked under that name. Separate entrances to the station achieve nothing in a positive sense but engender resentment and fear. Experience has taught natives that when they are separated from the rest of the population, that it is seldom to their advantage.

(4) Crown Ministers have made political speeches containing threats to native criminals — tightening up of gaol conditions and more corporal punishment. In this context one must remember the enormous number of Natives who go to gaol annually. The Commissioner of Police (Witwatersrand) would be met with violence."

Natives are obsessed with a legitimate urge to learn, and an educated class is emerging. To these, and therefore to the mass of natives, the possibility of the abolition of African Training Schools and the removal of Natives from Universities is frustrating.

European hooliganism and unprovoked attacks on natives which occur, have also done much to exacerbate racial feeling.

#### D. Channels of Political Expression.

It is probably that the major factor contributing to the outbreak of rioting and lawlessness on the Witwatersrand is the complete denial to the African peoples of any adequate form of political expression.

(1) They do not enjoy direct representation in the Legislative bodies which govern the country and manage their affairs. Nor, with the exception of the Cape, in some measure only have they the right to elect their own freely chosen representatives to these legislative bodies.

(2) Such channels of expression as they have, such as the Bunga and the Native Representative Council, are restricted in scope and insufficient to serve the cultural, economic and political needs of their people. They are treated with contempt by the European Parliament and the European Electorate and their recommendations to Parliament are ignored.

(3) The meagre indirect representation by Europeans afforded them in the Legislative bodies does not ensure the adequate presentation of their problems.

The fact that even this meagre indirect representation is now threatened by the declared policy of the Government to abolish Native Representation of the African Peoples.

(4) Even the legitimate democratic practice of combining in organisations to improve their conditions is in some measure denied to the African People, as organisations such as the African National Congress which owe their origins to the need of these people to express themselves politically, are only allowed to exist on a semi-legal basis. They are subjected to threats of investigation by the Police and administrative action by the Minister and in some areas, such as Bethal, are not even permitted to hold meetings. Similarly, African leaders are intimidated, labelled as agitators and often victimised. We have reason to suspect that individuals giving allegiance to any political or semi-political organisation are similarly victimised.

As evidence of at least the intention to deny political expression to the African People, we submit Draft Proclamation 1890 which to date has not been given effect owing to the widespread opposition which it aroused. We believe that this denial of any form of political expression such as exists in our social, economic and political structure and which is further aggravated by the policies of the Government, must inevitably give rise to a situation wherein the accumulated dissatisfaction and frustration of the African People must find an outlet in riots and other illegal and anti-social forms. While we do not condone lawlessness and rioting we believe that it is necessary for European South Africans to recognise and accept the principles inherent in the above, and that it is unreasonable and illogical to expect of the African People that they respect and practice our standards of social and political practice when the

(Continued on page 7)

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# Man Alive... You're Half Dead

THE greatest disappointment of the two years since the Nationalist Government came into power, has been the inability of the United Party to give an effective lead to the anti-Nationalist groups in the country.

The anti-nationalist vote, both in May 1948 and again in the Provincial Council elections a year later, showed that there is a solid body of voters, actually a majority, who have no faith in Dr. Malan's party. The actions of the Government since its accession to power have undoubtedly increased the opposition to it, and there is little doubt that to-day the Nationalist Government is definitely a minority Government.

As such, it should not be in power. That it is in power and at present unshaken is largely due to the fact that the largest body amongst the anti-nationalists the United Party, has not welded the anti-nationalists into an effective front for the preservation of Democracy. The United Party, the Labour Party, the Trade Unions and the many organisations pledged to fight for the preservation of democracy, are disunited and in many cases dispirited. No situation could be more satisfactory to the Nationalists who have made political capital galore out of it: in fact they have used the disunity to create even greater division amongst the democratic forces, working on the old principle of divide and rule.

Men are notoriously weak and vacillating without a leader. They are a prey to propaganda, emotional clap-trap and all the devices of modern party-politics so efficiently exploited by the Nationalists. Leadership is essential if the gradual disintegration of the democratic forces is not to be inevitable. At present it is obviously the United Party which must give the lead.

The United Party is not leading. Its parliamentarians are performing their task as the official opposition perfunctorily with occasional moments of brilliance but more frequent lapses into utter ineffectiveness. The no confidence

motion at the beginning of this Session was an example of the ineffective attacks made by the United Party — what could have been a major offensive with serious effects upon the Nationalist Government was hardly more than a damp squib.

There has been little real sign of a rejuvenation of the vital unit of party organisation — the Branch. There was much enthusiastic talk about reorganising and revitalising the branches, there was some ill-directed bustle. But now the Party had settled down again to a placid life without fundamental change. Little or no use has been made of the thousands of young people, particularly ex-servicemen who flocked to the United Party banner after the defeat of May, 1948. Little attempt has been made to capture public attention and to mobilise opinion against the many anti-democratic actions of the Government.

Fundamentally, the failure of the United Party has been due to its lack of a clear-cut policy. Policies it has: too many of them; too many of them purely negative in that they are merely anti-nationalist without offering positive alternatives to National policies. The Party's policy on every South African problem must be carefully thought out and presented to the public so forcefully that it becomes as well-known as — and better known than — the Nationalist's policies.

We firmly believe that the United Party is capable of giving the lead to the democratic front, of welding it into a solid bloc which will oust the Nationalists from power. There are as many able men in the United Party as in the Government and there are thousands prepared to follow them. The critical hour is approaching and whether the democratic forces will be able to oust the Nationalists before they entrench themselves, depends upon the United Party. Let it begin now at once to assume leadership along a clearly-defined path to a better South Africa.

## Summary of Memorandum

(Continued from Page 5)

use of these same channels is denied to them. Throughout the civilised world certain principles and practices are recognised and accepted as being necessary to good and sound government. These principles and practices are fundamental to the practice of Democracy and are embodied in the Charter of Human Rights which was unanimously adopted by the U.N.O. We believe that African people are deeply conscious of these injustices and because of this suffer from an ever increasing sense of frustration.

We wish to draw attention to the contradiction inherent in the attitude of a large section of European South Africa which, on the one hand, makes it a necessary requisite that the African people should acquire and practice these concepts before they can be granted adequate forms of political expression, and, which on the other hand, denies them the opportunity to do so.

### E. Summary.

The proximate cause of the riots appear to have been the violent reaction to intensified Police raids. But the feeling which created the situation, is a result of complex grievances and frustrations, coupled with a legal and constitutional bar on effective means of expression. The situation has been aggravated to a critical point by the Government native policy, and the general tightening up in administration of existing native legislation.

The Government has made no constructive statement of policy, but on the contrary, promises more repression. For example, after an incident in Newlands when a tram was stoned, Government statements demanded a more rigorous punishment, and that the Municipality remove the stones along the tram track, which makes such forms of demonstration possible.

We believe that if the present policies and attitudes are persisted in, the results can only be disastrous to the economy of the country, and the securing of safety of the people, both white and black. The recognition of this, and the introduction of policies more in accord with the needs of the situation, is imperative.

# The Native Building Workers' Bill

THIS Bill, now before Parliament is extremely important, as it is likely to serve as a model for future Native Industrial Legislation.

The Legion is opposed to it, both on general principles and because of certain Clauses, which are contrary to democratic practice and detrimental to the workers involved.

The Bill is supposed to be a measure towards the solution of the Native housing problem, by the creation of a skilled building force to work in Native areas. It lists a large variety of skilled operations in which training may be provided, of which only a few would ever be required in mass housing projects. Since the training will be on a "learn while you earn" basis, the building workers will never become masters of their trade, and will in fact never advance beyond the semi-skilled stage which they have already reached. Why then the Bill? The Bill is in fact an Apartheid measure, which in return for the alleged skilled training, takes away the right of any Native to do any form of building operations outside a Native area. Furthermore, the Bill, as certain clauses ensure, will provide a source of cheap, unorganised labour, entirely subject to the Minister's will. Below is a detailed examination of the clauses which render the Bill unacceptable.

Relations in industry affecting white workers, are governed by the Industrial Conciliation Act, a series of restrictions of the right to strike, which are balanced by the recognition of the right of collective bargaining, and workers' representation on controlling bodies. This Bill embodies all the restrictive clauses, but makes no provision for genuine workers' representation. It gives no recognition to the African Building Workers' Union, and empowers the Minister to nominate the Union which will represent the workers. By no stretch of imagination can any Union likely to be nominated by the Government be thought to have the Native builders interests at heart.

Section 17 (1) empowers the Minister to appoint police as inspectors of

working conditions. Apart from the obvious inefficiency of such untrained inspectors, it is clear that their role will become that of enforcement by intimidation. It is also a dangerous step towards State direction of all labour, as happened in Germany.

The Bill makes the workers' certificate another pass, since it must be produced on demand, subject to penalties. During the period of training, the Minister may direct any worker to leave his employment and to go to any other boss he may nominate. There is no provision for consultation with either boss or worker, nor any channel for a worker to request change of employment.

The cheapness of the labour is ensured by the Minister's right to suspend or cancel any Wage Determination in force in any area where Native builders are to be employed. Racketeering is encouraged by the provision, fantastic in this age, that workers may be paid partly or wholly in kind. What price compulsory company shops? The right to recover wages by civil action is so restricted as to be virtually impossible, while the Court may or may not award the worker in full, any underpayment assessed and claimed.

There are many more clauses of a more technical legal nature, which are contrary to democratic practice, and which serve to bind the workers without protection to the will of the Minister.

We have the example of the Indian Land Tenure Bill, where the restrictions were first made law, and then the compensation — the limited franchise, conveniently dropped. We know that immediately the Bill becomes law, Natives will be prohibited from carrying on their trade in the non-Native areas, but we challenge the Government to undertake to immediately finance full employment on housing schemes for those thrown out of work. Is it not likely that the restrictions will be imposed, and that through financial and other difficulties little or nothing will be done about the positive side of the measure?

The Legion's attitude is this:—

- (1) The Bill is a piece of vicious undemocratic anti-Native legislation, and should be scrapped.
- (2) Substantial sums should be provided in the form of loans for municipal and private building schemes.
- (3) Existing skilled and semi-skilled native builders could be employed, without prejudice to other existing fields of employment.
- (4) That regulation could be achieved by recognition of the African Building Workers' Union, and the setting up of a democratically elected Board. By means of Trade Tests, degrees of skill could be established and rates of pay fixed by agreement.

The Bill as it stands offers no real solution to either the desire of the Natives for more opportunities to develop, nor to the housing shortage. We have no faith in the real desire of the Government to do anything constructive about matters affecting Natives and this Bill only serves to confirm our attitude.

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"The Population Registration Bill (Donges Pass Bill)?"

## ROUND-UP

BY VIC EDDY

### A HOUSE OF SORROW

I AM writing in a particularly depressed frame of mind. I have just been attending a few debates in the House of Assembly. Nothing is more calculated to depress and thoroughly sober a usually cheerful type like myself than an afternoon of listening to the Hon. Minister of Labour speaking on incentives in industry, interspersed with an exchange of bon mots between the Member for Pampoenfontein and the Member for Kwaakraal. Perhaps, after all, that is the ultimate function of Parliament — to make ordinary people like you and I vitally conscious of the need for political action on the part of the man in the street. If that is the case, then the House of Assembly is a great institution and is doing its job very well indeed.

### DON'T FALL FOR INCENTIVES

WHILE we are on the subject, it is very interesting to see how every time a spokesman of the Nationalists opens his mouth, he betrays the class interests of the Nationalist Party. Instead of being concerned with the workers, as they claim they are in fact only a party of vested interests. The Minister of Labour made this quite clear when he spoke on wage incentives in industry. The Minister strongly favoured such a system. He claimed (moreover, and quite unjustifiably) that the majority of workers accepted it. But when you remove the undergrowth of verbiage that invariably surrounds and camouflages a Ministerial proposition, the wage incentive scheme reveals itself as nothing more nor less than a boon for the boss and the boss only. For the mass of the workers it means an unhealthy production speed-up, and an inevitable over-production leading to unemployment. So much for the Labour Minister's schemes and so

much also for the reactionary trade union leaders who support and propagate such schemes.

★

### WAKE UP, CAPE TOWN!

THE need in Capetown for an organisation like the Springbok Legion is so great that it is a source of amazement to me how our active contacts in the Peninsula have allowed the Branch to disintegrate. It is a good organisational objective that no branch of any organisation will function without a solid nucleus of at least two people who are prepared to do the spadework. There are some very sound Legion pioneers living in Cape Town and it is high time they did a little more than just read their Contact Letters.

★

### IRREFUTABLE

PEOPLE who talk about Apartheid and usually refer to "different stages of development of the African people" would do well to ponder over a recent report from Southern Rhodesia, where a non-European school has realised a 100 per cent. pass for all its African students. If this were a record only for Africans it would be remarkable indeed. But when it is a record for all students, black and white, then it is a complete refutation of the race theories of the Strydoms and Enslens. It is the complete answer to Apartheid and Bantustan. This exam, I may add, was not of a lower standard than those written by white students and the results included no less than twenty-six distinctions! What a tremendous vista of human knowledge would be opened up if the benefits of education were to be extended to all the people on our Continent.



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# -:- ONE MAN'S MEAT -:-

## OH! TO BE A FARM HAND

MY chequered past includes a spell as a tobacco farmer and not long ago a friend came to me for the gen about the game. The information about climate; possible yields and sundry other items all pleased him no end, but when I said that he would need at least one labourer per morgen, his face fell. He had the farm, the water, the capital, the lot, only he couldn't hope to scratch together more than about three Africans in that area of the Bushveld. A once well populated area has been denuded of labour.

About the same time a member wrote to "Fighting Talk" putting the farmers' angle to the labour problem. The burden of his letter was that he would be prepared to pay up to £10 per month provided he could get a good day's work out of a skilful labourer. The situation is no so bad, he at least can still get workers, even if they are of poor quality; but the inevitable end — result of low wages and tough conditions is . . . no workers at all.

I offer my farming friends this advice in all sincerity — first pay the higher wages, then sort out the suitable workers at will. Pay more than your neighbours and you will be able to pick and choose. It goes without saying that a friendly and sympathetic attitude is of the utmost importance. By all means demand a fair day's work, but first provide the incentive.



## COASTAL RECCE

It's funny how chance events set off long trains of thought. I found a Christmas Menu from 1942, headed "23 Squadron S.A.A.F." and immediately I could see the flat sandy drome backed by the coastal hills at Darling, Cape Province.

We were there for nearly a year and took part in a phase of the war which has never been publicised. Towards the end of 1942 German U Boats suddenly struck, and in one day, sank fourteen ships within 20 miles of Cape Town. From then on the sinkings continued almost daily and aerial convoly began — Venturas by day and Catalinas at night. It was a thankless job, with none of the excitement of combat to break the monotony.

We did have our moments though, such as "Operation Banana," when a plane from George sighted the Japanese fleet on the horizon, some 200 miles to sea. Much "alarm and despondency" resulted, with a first rate panic and a stand-to right round the coast.

The African whose arrest precipitated the Riots was recently found NOT GUILTY of the offence with which he was charged. The Magistrate referred the case to the Commission, and also told the African that there was nothing to stop him from suing the Police for assault.

Further investigation by bombers in force revealed that the "Fleet" was in fact a mass of clouds, which from a distance and with hazy visibility, did look like a fleet of ships.

The war years seem so remote, that unless we record events like this now, they will forever lie forgotten in dusty official war diaries. So, if this yarn has set you thinking of your experiences, do jot them down and send them to "Fighting Talk". We will be only too pleased to print them, quite apart from the fact that I see an easy way out of compiling the whole of this column, if you cooperate.



## IT'S THAT FREUD AGAIN

Three mothers took their daughters to a Psychiatric Clinic, where they were dealt with en masse. After questioning, the doctor said to the first: "Your problem madam is quite simple; you have a complex about money . . . you have even called your daughter Penny." And in the same way, he said to the second mother: "Your trouble is a fixation on drink; as shown by the fact that you called your daughter Sherry." Before he could talk to the third pair, the mother hurriedly rose and said "Come on Fanny, let's get out of here."

IT is more often than not a blessing that our memory is so constituted that we remember the pleasant long after

the unpleasant has faded into the mists of the mind. It is also a danger for it is out of this situation that wasteful and frightful events such as wars are glorified.

I was asked to do a little reminiscing about up North for "Fighting Talk." I thought of the Desert, of Italy, of Spitfires, Generals, of leave in the fleshpots: and whatever I thought about seemed to be pleasant. Sufficient years have now passed to smooth the rough edges of memory and make the war seem to have been a glorious long binge-cum-holiday-cum-debauch.

Shake yourself and remember that it was not that. Don't tell your children it was, and inspire them with the crazy belief in the glory of war which has so often plunged the world into misery. You, fellow ex-servicemen, are dangerous — you are potential war-mongers if you pass on to others your uppermost memories of the War, for as sure as eggs are eggs, those memories are pleasant. You know, I actually heard a fellow the other day longing for the Desert and another glorying in the old-world courtesy of the war with the Afrika Corps. What balderdash, what dangerous impressions to pass on to the next generation! I'm no angel, but I know that the war was more horrible than pleasant, more sweat than glory, more blood than laughter, more pain than joy, more waste than adventure, more death than life. Perhaps at times it has high adventure, but more often it was sheer soul-destroying boredom or sudden dirty death.

Yes, you had a good time, old fellow. But you also had a bad time. And whatever were your personal joys or sorrows, you were part of a killing machine, doing a job which you had to do and which was entirely justifiable — but don't bluff yourself or anyone else that it was a pleasant and glorious business, a little bit of fun between opposing groups of gentlemen.

Your duty as a soldier was to win a justifiable war; your duty as an ex-soldier is to help to create a world in which war is an outlaw. Don't be bluffed by your memory: don't bluff others.

So I won't write my reminiscences of Up North!

*Know your  
Organisations — No. 5*



## THE JOHANNESBURG COUNCIL FOR ADULT EDUCATION

ADULT Education is a new term for an old process. For generations past, some men and women have sought through institutions and societies to advance their knowledge beyond the narrow limits of schooling. These few indulged voluntarily in creative leisure activities. To-day, leisure activities of a constructive nature are considered vitally necessary for everyone and the Adult Education movement is an attempt to bring about such a state of affairs.

Schooling is not enough in this modern world, particularly the little schooling that the great masses of the people receive. Man must be adapted to his environment, a task far beyond the schools who lose their pupils at the early age of sixteen or seventeen. That is no age to stop learning. Adult Education takes over the pupil then and continues his education in wider spheres so that he can keep pace with the world about him, act and think as an intelligent citizen and use his ever-increasing leisure time creatively. As our civilisation becomes more complex and leisure time more readily available, the need for Adult Education grows. It is not extravagant to suggest that there is an atomic age ahead in which the educational and cultural needs of adults will be far greater than those of children.

The Adult Education movement in South Africa is still in its infancy. It began as an organised movement as a result of the Eybers Commission of 1946 which surveyed the needs for Adult Education and recommended that State machinery be set up. Unlike most reports, this one was acted upon and a Division of Adult Education was created within the Union Education Department, with Dr. Eybers as Director. He was later replaced by the present Director, Mr. Theron.

The State has not even yet made up its mind about many important aspects of the Adult Education scheme, but it has always sought to decentralise the

Leo Lovell, M.P. who is on the Legion National Executive has asked "Fighting Talk" to let you know that he is keen to hear from any ex-serviceman who has personal queries or complaints. After the magnificent speech Leo made on the Registration Bill, you may be sure your grievance will be well handled. Good show, Leo! We're proud of you.

movement as far as possible and would rather encourage a local desire for adult education activities than foist an organised scheme upon any community. In keeping with this, it evolved the Local Council scheme whereby any community may establish a representative Council to work in co-operation with the Department.

Such a council is the Johannesburg Council for Adult Education. It was formed in 1948 by a number of interested organisations, including the Springbok Legion, and has grown rapidly since then to the position of senior co-ordinating body in the educational and cultural sphere in the city.

The Council represents over eighty organisations in the City and aims at co-ordinating and expanding their activities and at soliciting Government financial aid for them. The affiliated organisations cover any sphere of educational activity: organisations like the Transvaal Art Society, the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra, the S.A. Archaeological Society, the Institute of Citizenship, the T.W.E.A., the Johannesburg Philatelic Society, the Rand Parliamentary Debating Society, the Johannesburg Youth Council, the National Council of Women (Johannesburg Branch), the Christian Education Movement, the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies, the Wild Life Protection Society, etc. — all of which carry out a greater or lesser degree of formal or informal education.

The Council's most important contribution towards promoting the activities of its affiliated organisations is its monthly Diary of Events "In Town Tonight", now in its sixth month and meeting with remarkable success. This folder which displays the programmes of Societies for the month is issued free and no charge is made for space in it. As soon as money is available the Council intends greatly to increase the circulation of "In Town Tonight" as it is undoubtedly highly appreciated and of great value.

The start has been made: much remains to be done — the encouragement of educational and recreational facilities in businesses and factories, the compulsory part-time education of all those who have left school but are under eighteen years of age, the expansion of leisure time facilities and activities, the establishment of People's Colleges. Other countries, particularly the States and Britain, have made great strides in these matters. South Africa has a long way to go but the Johannesburg Council for Adult Education will do what it can to ensure that a generation of useful, alert and thinking citizens is developed as soon as possible, for it is only when citizens are so advanced that true Democracy can flourish.

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## STATEMENT ON THE

# Populations Registration Bill

Issued by the National Executive Committee of the Springbok Legion

THE National Executive Committee of the Springbok Legion at its meeting on Wednesday, March 8th, decided to oppose the Population Registration Bill. The Bill is arousing much concern among ex-soldiers. As soldiers we were required to carry and produce on demand a Route Form or Pass. We remember the indignity as well as the inconvenience and bother of it all. We will not willingly allow ourselves to be placed in a position where we can again be called on, often uncivilly, by a representative of authority to produce a Pass, no matter under what fancy title it is disguised. We accepted the need for passes and similar restrictions as part and parcel of winning the war, but we know of nothing in the affairs of our country that should necessitate this sort of thing now.

But this is not the only reason of our opposition, nor is it the most important. The Bill robs the individual of that anonymity which is his security in some measure against victimisation and discrimination. In a country such as ours that is already torn with racial conflicts, it will introduce yet another dividing and disruptive factor and will facilitate further discrimination on racial grounds.

The Bill in its present form is less objectionable than earlier suggestions had led us to expect. This change appears to be the result of popular clamour against the original proposals. There is no indication that there has been a change of heart on the part of the Government and we are left with the impression that concessions have been made in order to get the Bill through, even in a modified form.

We have no reason to believe that the Government will be content for long with this seemingly innocuous measure. On the contrary, the pattern of Nationalist Party actions since coming to power persuade us that this measure can easily be the foundation upon which a most dangerous super-structure might be erected. Once the Bill is on the Statute

Book it will be easier to introduce amending legislation calling for further information on the Identification Certificate, or giving the Minister power to endorse the Certificates on political grounds. For example, if later, under the cloak of combatting Communism, the Minister is given the power to endorse the Identity Certificate of individuals whom he considers to be "Communist", "Communistically inclined" or any of the other labels that the Nationalist Party apply to those who oppose them, the consequences to the individual could be serious. Not the least of them might be his inability to obtain employment.

Further, once this Bill becomes law it will make it possible for this or any other Government to impose restrictions and to discriminate against other national and religious groups otherwise not so easily identifiable as the Coloured and Native people.

The benefits to the individual outlined by Dr. Donges in his speech in the Second Reading of the Bill cannot compensate for the disadvantages that will result. Such a measure could only have the support of the South African population if it was introduced by a Government in which they had complete confidence and against a background of effective and adequate guarantees of security both to the individual and to minority national, racial and religious groups.

The analogy with similar legislation elsewhere — which has been used by the Government and its Press — will not bear examination. In other countries, the basic purpose of Identity Cards is to facilitate rationing and social security measures. We know of no constructive intentions of this nature by the Government which can justify this legislation here.

The mounting cost of living is already placing a severe strain on the people. The cost of this measure to the country will further increase their difficulties. When this measure was first mooted by Mr. Harm Oost in 1936 it was rejected

on the grounds that it would be too costly. If that was the case then, how much more so is it now.

Our under-staffed Civil Service is only managing to cope with difficulty with its present duties, yet the Government proposes to impose this further burden on the very slender and unconvincing grounds that have been advanced. These proposals cut right across the traditions of our people and we are sure they will see the sinister implications of the Bill and will reject it as forcibly as they can.

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# BRANCH



# ITEMS

**D**URING the last month and the early part of March the Johannesburg Branch was exceptionally active. A memorandum was prepared and submitted to the Commission enquiring into the Riots on the Witwatersrand. A summary of this appears elsewhere in this issue of Fighting Talk. The branch also protested to the Minister of Justice in connection with the allegations of torture by the police to extract confessions from Non-Europeans and demanded an enquiry.

Most of you will have read in the Daily Press of the interview which took place between the Minister, Mr. Louw and the Cost of Living deputation. Rica Hodgson, our representative on the deputation, reports that Mr. Louw was affable and the interview pleasant but fruitless. Her impressions are that the Government regards the increasing cost of living as natural and inevitable and therefore irremediable. We can expect no relief from the Government if we do not make them realise that one of the functions of Government is to protect and improve the standards of living of all sections of the community. The branch is to continue to support the campaign.

The February Branch 3 in 1 consisted mainly of a play reading of "The Hasty Heart", produced by Mina Schneier. The attendance left much to be desired and those of you who were not present missed an excellent evening's entertainment. Plans are under way for the next 3 in 1. This will take the form of a Musical Quiz. Watch the Club Notices of the Star for further details.

The branch is discussing the Population Registration Bill. It is proposed to organise a protest meeting on the City Hall Steps. The Civil Rights League has been asked to participate.

The Branch Annual General Meeting took place on the 20th of March. Mr. G. Mackenzie was re-elected as Chairman of the Branch for the coming year. Mr. H. Rabinowitz was elected branch Secretary, and the following

were elected to the Branch Committee: E. Pereira, P. Cohen, I. E. Lubinsky, R. Hodgson, M. Kaminer, B. Peiser, G. Richter, P. Beyleveld, F. Coetzee, H. Friedland, R. Cousins, H. R. Hart, J. Podbrey. The Branch also elected 19 delegates to attend the Annual National Conference on the 22nd and 23rd of April, and adopted a substantial number of resolutions for the Conference Agenda.

From Pietermaritzburg there is a report that they are presenting a play reading of "Home of the Brave". We will know more of this by the time the next issue goes to press.

From the Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Johannesburg Branch and for the information of those who are interested in the Social Welfare aspects of our work we quote the Social Welfare statistics for the year ending December 31st, 1949.

1. Number of applications for assistance received by the Legion during the year .....	3,276
2. Number of interviews conducted .....	2,301
3. Number of persons placed in employment by Legion during the year .....	201
4. Number of persons not placed in employment by Legion during the year .....	855
5. Number of pension cases dealt with by Legion during the year .....	167
6. Number of persons receiving miscellaneous forms of assistance during the year .....	2,053

The above schedule includes both European and Non-European ex-soldiers — Non-European applications for assistance numbered 1,624 and European applications 1,652.

To maintain and expand the membership of the Legion the N.E.C. has appointed Mr. Roy Cousins as a National Organiser. Roy's main job for the present, and for some time to come, is to chase up all those members who have omitted to renew their membership subscriptions. He is concentrating on Johannesburg for the time being. There are many thousands of ex-soldiers in this area who believe that they are still members of the Legion. They have forgotten that it is a condition of membership in terms of the Constitution that a member shall pay 5/- per annum by way of subscription or £1 5s. od. for Life Membership. It is not the money that we need but the members as, obviously, we can only represent and protect ex-servicemen and women and their interests if we have members and the more we have the better we are able to function. As the N.E.C. is anxious to put Roy onto other equally important work as soon as possible members are asked not to wait until Roy gets around to them but to check on their membership and ensure that they are in Good Financial Standing.

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