

He advises against "storming of bastilles" (presumably a petition to the King of France would have been more constitutional?); against "barricade mounting" and "waving of tattered banners." He wants no "tombstones as milestones," but ceaseless constitutional action, argument and much organisation. He doesn't see that the largest tombstone of all is, under the Nationalists, being erected over the Constitution.

I doubt if anyone in the Non-European political movement believes that its aims will be achieved by "one real good mass struggle." The Non-European political movements do not scorn argument and organisation. They are daily engaged in these tasks. But there comes a time in the growth of every political movement when consistent organisation produces militant peoples' actions in defence of rights under attacks or for improvements in conditions. There is the time when patient representations to authority go unheard and argument has clearly failed. If workers are by law denied the right to strike that is presumably when Mr Price would counsel retreat rather than a strike. Or he would demand a guarantee that no striker be victimised and no picket clubbed by a policeman. And if an employer does sack a worker or Mr. Swart does order teargas or the use of a sten gun, this would be the fault of the trade union.

Mr. Price's acquaintance with political campaigns seems acutely academic and remote. Political campaigns are not carefully rehearsed theatrical performances in which the stage manager orders no "concentration of demonstrations in the Eastern Province," "no side-tracking by incidents or provocations." Provocateurs and the government don't take their cues from the producer. But Liberals of his ilk need no great insight into methods of political organisation and struggle, since they believe they will bring the Nationalist regime crashing to the ground not by people's fights and mass struggles, but at the sound of Liberal polemic and the weight of their argument; or by the threat of the Liberals to take the Nationalist Government before a Court packed with Nationalist judges if they try to infringe the constitution.

## **TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC UNITY**

By **NELSON MANDELA**

**T**HE struggle for democracy in South Africa is growing stronger every day. The political organisations of the oppressed people are forging stronger ties between themselves and the masses. A high degree of political understanding has been achieved. The people have become more conscious of their strength and they cry defiance to the racial policies of the Government. In the past, we talked

of the struggle of the African people, the Indian struggle and the struggle of the Coloured people. There was co-ordination neither among these groups nor with those white progressives who fought for equality. But today the people have come to realise the urgent necessity of mobilising, through their respective organisations, all democrats, black and white, to resist and conquer reaction by united effort.

As far back as 1946, the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress issued a joint declaration in which they announced a policy of co-operation between their respective organisations on matters of common interest. Since then and especially from 1950, the Congresses have faithfully adhered to this policy. In opening the Sixth Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress in February this year, Chief Albert Luthuli, the President-General of the A.N.C. declared that notwithstanding the deliberate incitement of Africans against Indians by the Government and their agents, responsible African public opinion was against the expatriation of Indians. He reiterated the desire of Africans to see peace, goodwill and progress flourish in the country and to work for the creation of a partnership in the system of governing the country as would give all people in the Union, regardless of colour, race, creed or origin, a voice in the government of the country. During the same Conference, Dr. G. M. Naicker, President of the S.A.I.C., stated that it was the task of progressive Non-European leaders in South Africa to do everything in their power to unite the country's oppressed people for their liberation. That unity, continued Dr. Naicker, could only be created in the process of united action in struggles against all injustices that flow from the policies of apartheid and segregation. Recently, a new Coloured body — the South African Coloured People's Organisation — was formed. Speaking on its policy, Dr. R. van der Ross, a member of the Executive Committee, is reported by the Advance of the 20th August, 1953, as saying:

"As long as we accept the idea that we are superior to the African, we have ~~no~~ legitimate claim to the rights now enjoyed by Europeans; we must work alongside the African

The urge for united action is not confined to Non-European organisations. There are European bodies in the country who feel that the time has come to forge, through the respective national organisations, bonds of unity among all those who fight for consistent democracy. For many years now the Springbok Legion has openly and fearlessly proclaimed its firm belief in the co-operation of all organisations that fight for genuine and consistent demo-

crazy About the end of last year, European progressives in the Transvaal formed themselves into a Congress of Democrats to secure, among other things, fundamental rights for all South Africans regardless of race, creed or colour. It stands for the co-operation and unity of all those whose sense of justice is outraged by the criminal policies of the Government.

The trend towards interracial unity in which members of all South African nationalities combine for a lofty purpose can also be seen outside the field of politics. The policy of the South African Peace Congress which was held in Johannesburg during the month of August this year was conceived in a spirit of the unity of all men and women of goodwill. The striking feature of the struggle today is, therefore, the pressing need being felt for co-ordination and democratic unity.

Attempts are, however, being made by certain elements to undermine this progressive trend. These elements range from the futile lamentations and the mischievous frenzies of Mr. J. K. Ngubane, the reactionary provincial of Phoenix, to the antics of the political abstentionists of the so-called Unity Movement of Cape Town. Mr. Ngubane has repeatedly criticised this line in the columns of the Indian Opinion, a paper founded by the late Mahatma Gandhi in 1903 and which was then a mouthpiece of the Indian people but which now expresses only Manilal Gandhi's opinions. The substance of his fantastic accusations, is that the Defiance Campaign was forced on Congress by the Transvaal; that it was a disastrous step, the biggest political fraud ever foisted on the people and accuses Mr. W. M. Sisulu for the alleged failure. That Dr. Dadoo and the "Dadoo wing of the South African Indian Congress" wield an influence or events out of proportion to the Indian's actual contribution to the joint struggle. He warns against what he styles "underground leftists," and openly invites the secession of the other provinces of the A.N.C. from headquarters.

In making these vague and unsubstantiated generalisations, Mr. Ngubane has deliberately elected to forget the record attendance of delegates from all provinces at the A.N.C. Conference held in Bloemfontein in December, 1951, where it was unanimously resolved to launch defiance. In saying that the Campaign was a disastrous failure he contradicts his own statement published in the Indian Opinion of the 6th February, 1953, that "It (the Defiance Campaign) has won for them (Congress leaders) world-wide respect and admiration." He is ignorant of the tremendous impact the Campaign has had on the people, the high degree of political consciousness that has been achieved, the change over from the vacillating

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\* Since this article was written, a South African Congress of Democrats, on a Union-wide scale, has been established at a national conference held in Johannesburg.

policies of the past to the militant and uncompromising programmes of continued action that are now being prosecuted, the powerful impetus that has been given to the struggle against racial discrimination and the spirit of resistance that has been forged. He is completely blind to the fact that Dr. Dadoo is the honoured and undisputed leader of the entire Indian people, that Mr. Sisulu has acquired immense prestige for the efficient and courageous manner in which he and the other leaders, prosecuted the most dynamic programme of political action ever launched jointly by the oppressed people of South Africa. Shut up in his Phoenix conclave and far removed from his own folk, he naturally is unaware of the high esteem and greater affection in which the two leaders who have attracted his venom are held by the rank and file of the entire democratic camp and that the two have played a leading rôle in forging the imperishable iron brotherhood that holds together our respective communities. Mr. Ngubane has already met a crushing rebuff for not a single individual either from within or outside the movement has been enticed by his subversive activities which ring like a lone voice dolefully lamenting the good old days of racial diatribes and Communist bogeys which have completely vanished from the democratic camp.

Mr. Ngubane's racism and provincialism is matched only by the hypocrisy of the Unity Movement crowd. They have occasionally proclaimed themselves in favour of the unity of the oppressed people in the country. But whenever a call has been made for all progressive organisations to join hands and fight against oppression in united manner, they have consistently stood aloof. Think of the National Day of Protest in 1950, the Train Apartheid Resistance Committee, the Defiance Campaign, the struggle against the removal of the Coloured people from the common roll, all of which offered infinite opportunities for real and genuine unity among the people, and the persistent refusal of the Unity Movement to play its part. It is precisely because of this fatal contradiction between their professions and their actual behaviour that many progressive individuals and organisations are deserting them and joining the ranks of those who consistently fight for true unity and action. Today, there is more movement for unity outside the Unity Movement than within it and, in point of fact, the Gools and the Tabatas are subverting and disrupting the unity of the democratic forces in the country. The plain fact, however, is that the struggle for democracy has reached a stage where it cannot be halted by the race-baiting opinions of Mr. Ngubane and the hypocrisy of the Unity Movement. Today there are rumblings in every village from the Cape Peninsula to Zoutpansberg and from Lobatsi to Nongoma and that rumbling force is one of democratic unity and continued action.

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