

THE NATIONAL SITUATION
OR

The Real Tasks Of The Liberatory Movement.

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It is no longer necessary these days to explain at length the intentions of the herrenvolk with respect to the Non-Europeans. They themselves express their policy with brutal frankness. It was a foregone conclusion that the White electorate would give the Nationalist Party a mandate to carry on with its Apartheid plans for another five years. Its election plank had been: Baasskap; Group Areas; Reservation of jobs for Whites only. The Nats. have received the green light for the intensification of the oppressive laws against the Non-Whites. We live in a state of permanent emergency. As in the time of war, we exist under martial law. Meetings of more than ten Africans are banned throughout the Union. In this the Nats. have the full support of the United Party. For even before the official ban, in most of the ^{towns} ~~towns~~ under the control of the U.P. the ban was already in operation ^{un-}officially.

Everywhere, in town and country, the screw is being tightened. There is the wholesale ejection of women from the towns in complete violation of family ties; the imposition of passes on men, women and children; the tightening up of the Stabilization scheme in the villages; the removal of the few Coloured males from the Common Voters' Roll and the establishment of the Coloured Affairs Department; the application of the Land Act in the form of ~~Group~~ Group Areas; the robbing of our children of education and the dismissal of teachers; the setting up of Bantu Authorities; the sealing off of villages by Proclamation and, so that the rest of the country may not know what is happening there, the forbidding of anyone either to enter or leave the prescribed area without a permit. All these measures battering ceaselessly at our existence are too well-known to require many words from us.

In the international arena, world events of shattering importance are taking place and the relationships between countries are changing every day. The balance of forces has altered irrevocably. Sputnik, visibly encircling the world, has dramatically called attention to the new relation of forces and demolished the old illusions concerning the technological backwardness of "Asiatic" Russia. This world-shaking event has not only jerked the Western countries out of their smugness but has confronted them with many insoluble problems. The so-called uncommitted countries, which have hitherto leaned backwards to curry favour with America and Britain, now find it not ~~maxsafe~~ altogether safe to be too closely associated with their patrons. And the smaller nations, who considered it prudent/...

prudent, despite irksome burdens, to take cover under the umbrella of the Americo-British military might, have suddenly found themselves naked. They have discovered that the umbrella is leaking and their flank is exposed. There is now a constant tug-of-war for the ^{colonial and} semi-colonial countries between the Western world headed by America, on the one hand, and on the other the East headed by Russia.

This dramatic change of forces is making itself felt in the politics of the various countries. In each one it has resulted in tensions which in turn sharpen the internal relationship of forces. In South Africa, too, the same tensions are making themselves felt. Local politicians call it: the deterioration of race relations. Everyone can see the writing on the wall. And it has the effect of galvanising them into action; each individual or group reacts according to his political lights. Some see in the crisis the stirring of the "Black Giant." Others foretell the "doom of White Civilization" and yet others perceive the dread shadow of the Red Flag. Each group is forced to fall back on its fundamental position and reveal its true colours. All are driven by a sense of desperate urgency. They have to do something before it is too late.

The Nats. reach for their guns and shriek alternately "Black Giant" or "Red Giant." Invoking the spirit of old Kruger, they issue a call to all the faithful to rally within the laager. The United Party shout for a return to the old and tried methods of deception, "voluntary segregation" and peaceful development. The liberals, surpassing themselves with eloquence, make a dash for the capture of the leadership of the Non-European oppressed. The quislings among the Non-Whites scurry hither and thither begging for jobs. The inveterate opportunists cry out for co-operation and the re-establishment of "good race relations."

These tensions are not limited to the herrenvolk and their hangers-on. The accumulating pressures make themselves felt throughout the whole field of the political life of the Non-Europeans. Those organisations that fall within the fold of the Congress of Democrats are experiencing sharp conflicts. The pressures have released the ~~centrifugal~~ centrifugal tendencies inherent in its diverse elements which now tend to fly off in their respective directions. The extreme right wing reveals its tribalistic affinities; the racialists are showing their true colours; the conservatives are jockeying for positions of vantage; the concession hunters are revealing their hand, while the left-wing has its time cut out thinking up stunts to hold these diverse elements together. All this in turn has its repercussions on the Non-European Unity Movement itself. Those organisations that comprise it are

by no means impervious to the pressures that are going on. No single individual or group lives in a vacuum. They, too, are feeling the stresses and strains produced by the widespread tensions in the society in which they live.

In this series of articles we propose to examine the effect of the pressures on the various groups and parties in South Africa and to show the mainspring of their political actions together with the roots of their political thought.