

Why Liberalism is not Communism

There has recently been considerable controversy in the *Rand Daily Mail* over the Nationalist attempts to make "Communism" and "Liberalism" indistinguishable. Through the courtesy of the *Rand Daily Mail* we reprint part of the third in a series involving Prof. Pistorius of the Progressive Party, Nationalist Senator J. H. Grobler and Walter Hain, Pretoria Branch Chairman of the Liberal Party.

SENATOR J. H. GROBLER'S explanation of why his party "will not compromise on the race issue" (*Rand Daily Mail*, November 13) was little more than the inevitable inventory of local White prejudices and superstitions which one has come to expect from the racial politician on such an occasion.

His attempt to refute Prof. Pistorius's assertions that "Nationalism is more like Communism" and that "Nationalist policy encourages the growth of Communism" is in the form of a countercharge that Liberalism is like Communism. In support of this charge he offers two attitudes which both share — one man, one vote, and an acceptance that the South African nation consists of all the people who inhabit the Republic of South Africa.

The rule not the exception

Now if one wishes to establish an identity of interest between two beliefs it is axiomatic that the evidence which one presents must establish an area of agreement between them which is peculiar to them, which they do not share with others and which therefore sets them aside from the general run.

This Senator Grobler has conspicuously failed to do: the universal franchise is a policy shared by Conservatives, Socialists, Democrats and Republicans, etc.; it is the rule, and not the exception, among parties and ideologies.

Similarly the concept that a nation consists of all the people who inhabit the country is a universal one. Dr. Verwoerd's quaint notion that *he* decides which South Africans belong to the nation and which do not, is no more than an Hitlerian-type fantasy.

The aspect of a party which indicates the true character of that party is its attitude towards the individual *vis-a-vis* the State, for it is essentially this attitude which determines whether the party is democratic or totalitarian in character. And it is in this aspect that the National Party shows such a strong affinity with, and the Liberal Party such a strong divergence from, Communism.

For both Nationalists and Communists share a tendency to exalt the State at the expense of the individual, to restrict individual freedom in the interests of easy administration, to circumvent the courts in order to hamstring difficult opponents, to silence unanswerable criticism with drastic and far-reaching laws (both share almost identical Sabotage Acts), to regard as treason any criticism of their policies, to disregard basic human rights; in short, to act in a totalitarian manner as opposed to a liberal (or democratic) manner.

Ideology of discontent

As to the charge of "furthering the aims of Communism" with which the Government is so ready: this accusation must surely be judged against the conditions which breed Communism.

In essence Communism is an ideology of discontent; it has never flourished except in conditions of social, political or economic injustice. The question whether the aims of Communism are promoted by the Liberals, whose policies are designed to make political, social and economic injustice merely a bad memory in South Africa, or by the Nationalists, whose apartheid policies are an attempt to maintain the very White privilege and non-White underprivilege which result in ideal conditions for its promotion, is therefore easily answered.

Similarly the Nationalist prattle of "racial suicide" is an insult to the intelligence of those to whom they address it; for the fact is that if a racial group really wishes to maintain its identity it will do so independent of the political situation — the Jewish people offer outstanding proof of this.

Senator Grobler's rhetorical question "What has been accomplished by 'compromise' in Kenya, Tanganyika and the Federation under a system of Partnership?" can best be answered with another question: "Well, what has? Have the Whites been exterminated? Has there been enforced racial 'mixing'? Have Whites been subjected to Pass Laws, Influx Control, Job Reservation, Group Areas, etc.?"

Since the answer is in the negative in each case one wonders whether the Senator is conversant with conditions in those countries. It is clear that the Afrikaner Nationalists are not content merely to maintain their identity, but that they interpret "racial

survival" as a perpetuation of the privileged status for the White man.

Their true quarrel with the emergent African States is simply that the White man has lost his privileged position there.

The Nationalist ethos depends upon the existence of barriers between people, and barriers require constant maintenance if they are to endure. It is an historical truism that succeeding generations show themselves to be increasingly less concerned with maintaining the barriers which their forefathers have erected.

The question then is not "WILL apartheid go?" but rather "HOW and WHEN will it go?" The increasing hysteria of the National Party seems to indicate that it is aware of the position.

AD. HAIN: Democracy Safe in Her Hands — Peter Brown

MRS. ADELAINE HAIN, Pretoria Secretary, of the Liberal Party, has received a "warning" to desist from her political activities from the Magistrate of Pretoria. The Minister of Justice maintains that these activities are furthering the aims of communism.

When Mrs. Hain asked the magistrate what activities the Minister objected to he said: "You should know." She has now written to the Minister to ask him if he can answer her question. She has also announced that she intends going on with her political work in exactly the same way as she has always done.

On the occasion of her warning the following statement was made by Peter Brown, National Chairman of the Liberal Party.

If anything were needed to show up the fraud of the Suppression of Communism Act, and the cynical manner in which Mr. Vorster uses it, this threat to Mrs. Hain should do it. Nobody could be less of a communist than she is; nobody could be more positively opposed to violence in any form.

Why then does the Minister warn her?

The reason is that, in the Nationalist hot-bed of Pretoria, she and her fellow-liberals have consistently and with great courage set out to expose apartheid as the shabby attempt to entrench white privilege at the expense of non-white rights which at bottom it is. They have done this by opposing

the loss of African freehold rights in Lady Selborne, by publicising Pretoria's vicious Group Areas plans and in a hundred-and-one other ways. In addition they have tried to give a balanced picture of apartheid to overseas visitors to Pretoria by showing them this seamy side of Government policy.

Adelaine Hain's real offence is that she has made things uncomfortable for the smug Pretoria administrators of apartheid. So, although she has neither committed nor been found guilty of any offence, she must be "warned" and her freedom threatened.

These warnings and threats are cowardly acts of a powerful Government which dares not have the true effects of its policies advertised by people who really know what they mean.

Adelaine Hain's struggle against apartheid has been a magnificent example to all South Africa. Her fighting response to Mr. Vorster's warning is another. Democratic principles in South Africa would be quite safe in her hands.

They certainly are not in those of Minister Vorster, whose actions will only ensure that when his particular totalitarian system collapses, it will be succeeded by another at least as bad.