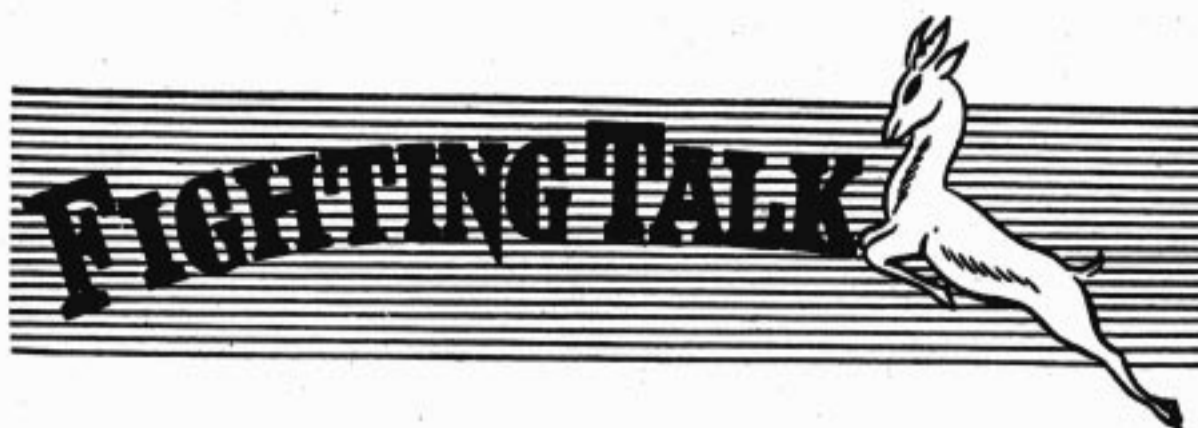


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OCTOBER, 1951.

Volume IX. No. 10.

ORGAN OF THE SPRINGBOK LEGION.

OUR WORD

LET'S FIGHT NOW FOR PEACE



DEFEND THE FREE PRESS

THE long-expected assault on the freedom of the press has come with the announcement by the Minister of Justice that the "Guardian" is given a matter of three weeks in which to show reason why it should not be banned.

This assault follows the pattern of all fascist attacks on democratic institutions, viz. begin with the left and work your way rightwards until all opposition has been suppressed.

It is history now that under the Suppression of Communism Act, the elementary principles of justice have been thrown overboard. In the case of this particular newspaper, a three-man commission of enquiry met in secret to investigate the "Guardian" and submitted to the Minister their secret report. As the "Cape Times" put it " . . . The Minister need not accept the Report, but can merely light his pipe with it . . . "

No thinking South African can treat this as an isolated instance. It is part and parcel of the Nationalist programme for a Broederbond fascist republic, and the duty of the citizen is clear.

Use every means at your disposal to protest against this tyranny. The political policy of the "Guardian" has nothing whatever to do with your actions in these circumstances. If the "Guardian" is banned, "Fighting Talk" may well be next, for we are also opposed to the Nats. So indeed are the "Rand Daily Mail", the "Cape Times" and, in fact, the major portion of the free press in South Africa. This matter is urgent. Act now!

REGULAR readers of "Fighting Talk" will have noticed from time to time articles, cartoons and "fillers" dealing with the subject of world peace, and the time has arrived, we think, to come out fairly and squarely with the question—"Are you prepared to help in the struggle for the preservation of peace and the prevention of war?"

It is a bitter reflection that the maintenance of peace has indeed become a struggle, yet the fact must be faced. A glance at a newspaper on any day of the week will bring home vigorously the realisation that war and war preparations are once again the highlights of contemporary life.

There is no promise of world peace in the capture by United Nations Forces of "Heartbreak Hill" in Korea, nor is the uncertain United States lead over Russia in hydrogen bombs a signal milestone on the road to peace and plenty. On the contrary, such announcements confirm that there is a war raging which may well spread and cast the world into the abyss of World War III.

And what can we do about it?

We as ex-servicemen have a special responsibility to do all in our power to prevent war, for who is better qualified than an ex-Serviceman to tell the world what war means? Ex-Gunner van Tonder knows better than the Wall Street brokers and Senator Robert Taft how horrible is the wholesale slaughter of a modern battlefield, and even he has

seen only a glimpse of what World War III would be like.

The Springbok Legion is fully aware of its special duty and has affirmed and reaffirmed at every national conference its uncompromising demand for a peaceful settlement of the world's problems. We have in various statements and articles demanded the absolute banning of atomic weapons and the conclusion of a Five Power Peace Pact. But this is hardly enough.

Organisations exist both in this country and overseas whose aims are the prevention of war, and our members are free, and indeed, should be encouraged to join these bodies. We have reached the stage where we must make a definitive stand against another war. We must join any and every organisation which we think may help to avert the threatened catastrophe. We must make peace propaganda our food and drink, just as its negation will mean our death and destruction.

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# YOU'RE TELLING US

## Letters to the Editor



The Editor,  
Fighting Talk.  
Dear Sir,

Herewith 10/- for the "Kitty".  
**ANTI-COMMUNIST.**  
Dear Unknown Member,

Thank you very much for your generous donation. We hope all other 'anti-communist' members will follow suit!

Your nom-de-plume is intriguing. I get the impression from it that you said to yourself, "Well, the Legion may be 'communist', but it has a fine record and I'm proud of it notwithstanding." But doesn't that suggest that you too have fallen for the Communist smear? Careful, old friend! Did you see what happened at the Torch Commando meeting at Alberton? The Nats. in the audience disrupted the meeting by shouting at the speakers, 'Kafferboetie', 'Communist', etc.

Will you in two years' time be sending a donation to the Torch Commando 'even though it is considered to be a communist organisation'?

All the same, thanks again for your loyalty and your financial support.

Yours, etc.,

Editor Fighting Talk.

The Editor,  
Fighting Talk.  
Dear Sir,

Congratulations on your article, "Justice . . . with a Sjambok", which is one of the best I have read in "Fighting Talk."

The presentation of facts without emphasis on emotional terms is always desirable in preference to articles depending for effect on epithets which, when removed from their context, are little else than abusive. The effect is then often the reverse of that intended. The Shavian principle of avoiding personalities and relying on facts, presented in the most arresting fashion possible, is a very sound one.

Many of the points made by G. L. Handley in his letter published in the August issue are well made.

Yours faithfully,

R. J. W. McL.

Johannesburg.

The Editor,  
Fighting Talk.  
Dear Sir,

I am glad the Legion has advised its members to work for the Torch Commando. The movement is catching on like wildfire and even here in Pretoria we are doing excellently.

But I am getting fed-up with these wiseacres who have never done a job in their lives and who now come forward and start 'warning' people against the dangers of the Torch Commando. These people say, "But, how can you support a movement which is pledged to throw out the Government? That amounts to insurrection." And, "This movement will inevitably lead to civil war." And, "How do we know they won't become fascists? That's just how Mussolini started," etc., etc.

I say to these saboteurs, "Get into the movement and take on the responsibility yourself of seeing that all these terrible things don't happen."

The Torch Commando is a young organisation and is beset, therefore, with all the vicissitudes of inexperience and youthfulness, but, say what you like, it has guts and the will to get the Nats. out. That's good enough for me and that's why I'm working for them. After all, surely the defeat of the Nats. is our primary job.

Yours, etc.,

Flt. Sgt. M. B. R.

Pretoria.

11th October, 1951.

The Editor,  
"Fighting Talk,"  
Main House, Main Street,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

At a time when intimidation has overshadowed the best in some of the people who have been in the forefront of the struggle for progress, when the light and joy has gone out of the conversations with our friends, in which it was not so much what we said to each other, but what there was no need to say, in a language we used to understand so well, that gave our

friendship and human relationships the zest, warmth and comradeship that was to comforting when the fight was tough, at such a time "Deep Are The Roots" is being played at the Library Theatre.

Whilst in our country there prevail vicious discrimination, increasing brutality to our Non-European peoples, we are presented with a play which depicts a Negro as an ordinary decent human being. The aspirations of Brett, the Negro, the beliefs and convictions of his fair-minded white friends, contrast strongly with realities in South Africa. They bring to mind the vituperations of Nationalists, whose unreasoning hatred and prejudices can seriously put forward views at their conferences condemning any contamination of Europeans by Non-Europeans, even when it is only the case of using the same telephone booth or driving the same motor car.

The reactions of the large audiences that see the play, however, must lift up our hearts. It has brought home the fact that a sense of justice, a love for what is good and decent still prevails amongst a section of white South Africans. (It could perhaps be an indication to the leaders of the Opposition that in place of their assurances and apologies to the Nats. that they really don't regard the Non-European as a factor worth worrying about, they should preach tolerance rather than appeasement). The play must have given courage and heart to progressives whose judgment and convictions had become clouded.

The determination of Cecil Williams and those who stood with him to produce this play is something that some of us will not forget easily. How right they were and how proud they make us feel of them. The cast too — each and everyone did more than just take a part in the play. "They acted with their hearts as well as with their heads." They too had a decision to make before undertaking to play in "Deep Are The Roots" and they took it unhesitatingly and staunchly. They deserve their success.

I think it was Eugene Debs who said, "While there is a soul in gaol I am not free." The converse too is true. While there are freedom-loving people prepared to make a stand the cause of the oppressed is not lost. To misquote Howard in "Deep Are The Roots" "They are a ray of hope."

Yours, etc.,

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# The Municipal Elections Are Important

THE Johannesburg municipal elections this year are particularly interesting for several reasons.

One is that a new Ordinance is in effect and that, instead of elections being held yearly as in the past, they will be held every three years.

Another reason is that the Nationalists are making their most determined effort to date to win some ground in the municipal field.

A third reason is the appearance of the Labour Party in some strength. Will it get good or bad support? It has no election pact with the United Party, and in many ways, therefore, the election is a test of strength.

Finally, apartheid has come to the municipal election field, with the so-called "black spots" as the bone of contention.

It is not necessary to discuss the first two reasons — they speak for themselves. But the other two points deserve mention.

One of the political problems of the past few years has been whether the Labour Party is getting stronger, weaker or just remaining stationary. Some experts declare that the Labour Party is

due to be obliterated from the South African political scene unless it radically changes its policies. Others think that the Labour Party will capture the votes of workers who are expected to swing away from the Nationalist and United parties.

For some time now, there has been a strong feeling in the United Party that there should be no further election pacts with the Labour Party. This view represents a deliberate effort to remove the Labour Party from the political scene. If, however, the Labour Party musters sufficient support in the municipal elections to prove that it does serve a useful purpose in South African politics, then these United Party elements will have to alter their views.

The entry of Mr. E. S. Sachs and other Garment Workers' officials into the municipal political field as candidates is also of considerable interest. How will the workers react to their presence? Is the time ripe for the formation of a more truly workers' party? Or are the workers attaching themselves to the big parties?

The municipal election results should tell.

And what about apartheid as an election cry in municipal politics? Dr. G. E. N. Ross, leader of the Nationalists in the City Council, declared recently that the Nationalists would bring in apartheid and test public reaction.

Apartheid in Johannesburg has turned out to be the "black spots" — those Native areas in the western part of the city which the Government says it is going to remove. The scheme is obviously fantastic; and it becomes ridiculous when one remembers just how many Natives in and around Johannesburg need houses. What about the shanty towns like Moroka?

This scheme is fantastic, but even more fantastic was the reaction of the United Party in the City Council. It was announced recently that the Johannesburg City Council had agreed in principle

to accept responsibility for the removal of the "black spots."

This is political opportunism of the worst kind. To safeguard its votes in the western suburbs, the United Party-dominated City Council accepted the Nationalist plan. Even United Party newspapers were aghast at the council's action, and the council has come in for a great deal of criticism from these papers.

"Die Transvaler", the Nationalist newspaper in Johannesburg, commented sarcastically that if there had been no elections in the offing, the council would not have taken the step.

There is no possibility of the council falling into Nationalist hands — that disaster does not yet await Johannesburg. The Nationalists have not even nominated sufficient candidates to make this possible. But everyone should take a keen interest in the elections, because they could be a guide to many political trends.

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# THE WORLD WANTS PEACE

IT'S curious to notice how mankind's desire for peace expresses itself at different times in different ways. I can remember, for instance, the days when a strong pacifist movement swept the world — back in 1934-5. I remember public meetings, discussions, even petitions. Then there was the international effort to make the League of Nations into an effective organisation for peace. Can you bring to mind as well the number of books, novels, essays, drawings that came out in dispraise of war?

Yet, the big politicians of the world somehow still managed to mismanage our affairs and war came.

Ever since the war's end we have lived in uneasiness, in fear of another war and the people of the world are still afraid. Truman won his election on a promise of peace: Aneurin Bevan sweeps to Labourite popularity merely because he looks in the direction of peace: Stalin confuses the warmongers by plumping for a peaceful world in which capitalism and communism can exist side by side.

And the people of the world stay threatened — but not helpless. Once again commonsense demands that we must try to force the politicians of the world into paths of peace. And so in every country of the world people are signing the petition for a meeting of the representatives of Britain, France, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., and China.

The petition in each country simply asks the government to use its power to bring about the signing of a Pact of Peace by the Big Five. This is the modern way in which we ordinary people try to preserve peace, try to avert the cataclysm of war. We believe it's better to talk it out than to shoot it out.

It's a pity that there can't be an agreement on total disarmament. That always strikes me as being the first sensible thing to do. I don't trust anybody, whatever his politics, so long as he's waving around a loaded gun. There are politicians who say, 'We can negotiate only from strength'. That's a phony argument. Stripped of its panicking propaganda, it means, 'We'll talk turkey only when we're in a position to dictate our terms to our potential enemies'. This is not thinking in terms of negotiation. It is thinking in terms of military conquest.

In any case, as far as the Western powers are concerned, it's not a very promising line to follow. No realist can ignore the fact that the Russians and the Chinese have a fierce and stubborn

attitude to any threat to their national independence. They won't be intimidated into submission by a show of arms. Similarly, do you think that South Africans or Britishers or the Yanks would sign a treaty at the point of a Russian gun? Not on your life.

Let's remember, too, that the Chinese and the Russians have given proof that they were thoroughly competent fighters in this modern age. Hitler and Chiang Kai-Shek could have answered that one! As long as there is re-armament on one side, there'll be a competing effort on the other side. Peace does not lie along that path. (Incidentally, did you notice that for the first time Stalin has told the word that Russia has the Atom-bomb to use, if . . . ? Previously, he has always spoken for peace).

And would war solve anything at all? We know in our hearts that it wouldn't. The U.S.A. will not persuade the Russians to believe in capitalism by dropping atom-bombs on their cities; any more than the Soviet Union could make converts by dropping atom-bombs on American cities. Nobody would convert anybody to anything. (But in the meantime, the armament-manufacturers are making sky-high profits. Their dividends are greater today than they were even during the last war! Don't let us forget that little factor. Wars and rumours of war, cries for new and better guns and tanks and planes may send up your cost-of-living, may slow down production of our simple daily needs, but — let us never forget it — wars and rumours of war pay handsome profits to a handful of earth's population.)

No. We dare not allow ourselves to believe that the horror and futility of another war is inevitable. If we did believe that war is inevitable, we should be actively assisting to bring about such a catastrophe as few of us would survive.

Everyone of us who treasures life and man's heritage of culture and civilisation, who believes in that ideal of a better and happier life which inspired the heroes of Alamein, Stalingrad, Coventry, has an earnest duty to fulfil. That duty is to mobilise the peace-lovers — and isn't that all of us? — to sign the petition to bring about a Pact of Peace between the Big Five. We fight for our own future.

## Political Quiz

and . . . .

1. Who replaced General MacArthur in Korea?
2. What Nationalist M.P. was formerly a Labour M.P.?
3. What constituency did he represent?
4. What post does Averell Harriman occupy?
5. Who succeeded Ernest Bevin as Britain's Foreign Secretary?
6. What is Benelux?
7. What number of the retiring Johannesburg City Councillors are United Party Councillors?
8. How many Labour Party members of Parliament are there at present?
9. Why does the film, "Desert Fox", stink in our nostrils, even before we see it?
10. What country in Asia is trying to free itself from imperialism?

## . . . . Answers

1. Ridgway.
2. Van den Bergh.
3. Krugersdorp.
4. Foreign Aid Administrator.
5. Herbert Morrison.
6. Customs Union between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.
7. 33 out of 42.
8. Six.
9. Because it glorifies militarism, and paints Rommel and the Nazi High Command as gallant gentlemen who didn't really like Hitler!
10. Viet-Nam is trying to free itself from French domination.

# HOUSING FOR BLACK AND WHITE

MAN'S first quest was for food, his second for shelter. This has it been in days gone by — thus has it remained even unto today. Any attempt to deny him this elemental rights is an attempt to deny his right to exist.

As society grew more complex so have man's needs become more complicated. But basically those needs have remained the same viz. food and shelter.

Housing i.e. physical shelter, has become a recognised social problem since the days immediately after the Industrial Revolution. The new factories acted as a magnet for the widely scattered rural peasants. And though the machines were housed, the workers who were to mind these machines were left to their own devices. Due to this economic inability to acquire their own homes, they tended to cluster around their places of employment in ever increasing numbers under the most unhygienic and stummy conditions.

It is the housing needs of such people in South Africa that I propose to deal with in the main. That these people are mostly Africans is purely coincidental, for workers the world over are more or less in the same predicament where housing is concerned. But whereas in other countries the Century of the Common Man has dawned and the housing needs of ordinary folk are finding political expression of a most powerful nature, the housing needs of the African native, because of the animosity of the problem, tend to be pushed into the background.

In all civilized countries the housing of the less privileged has been accepted as the responsibility of the community. Unless and until we as a community accept this responsibility there can be no solution to the so-called "Housing Problem" — for a very grave problem it is indeed. Bad housing conditions are the breeding ground of discontent, crime, ill-health, inefficiency. Only decent housing can give us any hope for the future.

This problem has been neglected for so long that we do not even dare to think in terms of decent housing. Housing of any kind, even the most primitive form of shelter is the need of the day for the inhabitants of shanty towns such as Moroko, Cato Manor, Cape Flats and the many indescribable slums that depict the approach to most of our cities.

And yet it is within the technical and financial ability of our South African community to sweep away these

slums and replace them with pleasant albeit cheap, houses, at less rentals, provided the will to do the decent thing, the human thing, and in the long run the logical thing, is there.

Councillor A. Schauder, J.P. (Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Port Elizabeth City Council, and a member of the National Housing and Planning Commission) at a meeting convened by the South African Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg in October of last year, convincingly refuted most of the arguments of the Johannesburg City Council — a Council which has thus far lacked the will to do the decent thing and provide all its citizens with proper housing. It has meekly and with a resolution usually reserved for far better causes, refused to accept the civilized concept that housing is the responsibility of the community, even though successive South African Governments have accepted this responsibility by word and deed for some considerable time now.

The attitude of the Johannesburg City Council is that this is a problem of the Government. In most countries housing is definitely a matter for the local authorities aided by central government, and for very good reasons. They alone have the requisite knowledge of local conditions and possess the staff with the necessary experience for such work.

Now let us see whether the Johannesburg City Council's claim that it is unable to shoulder so great a financial burden as the housing of the thousands of Africans who are in need of housing is a tenable one.

Firstly, after steadfastly maintaining the above claim, it suddenly gives its support, nay, it even undertakes to carry out a fantastic and economically impossible scheme of removing the whole of the non-European population from the western areas. It gave the whole scheme the scantiest consideration, even without knowledge of the financial implications of such a scheme. When taken to task by the local Press, Mr. Gordon, the Chairman of the General Purposes Com-

mittee replied that if the Council refused to undertake the removal of the so-called "Black Spots", the Government would have done it. And yet every previous attempt by South African Governments to get the local City Council to provide housing was met with a blunt refusal. "You wish to house the Natives — very well do it yourself, we cannot afford it."

And yet today the Council is prepared to spend money on rehousing people who are already housed — but it cannot afford to house people who are in dire need of housing. Obviously a case where the will to do evil is only matched by the stupidity of its perpetrators.

And is it true that Johannesburg cannot afford the financial burden of housing the needy? Let me quote from Councillor Schauder's paper.

"The Housing Commission grants money at 4% for austerity housing, cheaply built, yet providing civilized living conditions with low rents in proportion. And this money is available to any South African Municipality. The capital is repayable over 40 years. By standard financial practice 14% per annum covers this entire capital repayment. Thus, the total interest and capital charges are 18% per annum.

Consider what this means in practice. It means that a city by finding only £10,000 for interest and redemption per annum can carry out £1 million worth of housing."

The City Orchestra and Music Department cost the City £74,148 in 1949, sufficient to pay for a £2,700,000 housing scheme. The loss on the Municipal golf course was £17,055. This would have paid the charges on 288,000 worth of housing. The loss on the Public Library was £121,119; this alone would have met the charges on 26,000,000 worth of Native housing. The annual loss on Municipal transport in 1949 was £178,910. The annual losses on such amenities as music, golf, the zoo, the library, etc. totalled 2654,970. Yet we accept all these losses quite complacently but the moment housing is mentioned there is an outcry about losses.

Now let me quote some more figures from Councillor Schauder's paper. "In 1949 the Johannesburg Municipality

(Continued in Column 4.)

THE Legion has on several occasions made protests to the Minister of Native Affairs about the removal of the "Black Spots". We received on one occasion a reply that was published in "Fighting Talk" in the August issue. It was our hope that under the circumstances and knowing the number of wild schemes that the Government are always threatening to undertake, this particular scheme would be shelved. A very disquieting piece of news, however, has been the statement by the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Johannesburg Municipality, who has on behalf of the Municipality decided to undertake the moving of the "black spots" with Government assistance.

There are several aspects of this problem which indicate that both United Party and Nationalist Party politicians have no consideration for and will not listen to protests made by the very people who are in a position to inform them of the opinion of the African People as a whole.

The Government has withdrawn the last municipality of the Africans by the dissolution of the Native Representative Council. Local Advisory Boards may as well not exist for since their inception they have been small debating units, without any authority whatsoever. As for Tenants Associations, or property owners among the Africans, their voice least of all carries weight.

Since the politicians are not prepared to listen to the people, their representatives and their organisations, it was hoped that interested bodies, sociologists, and town planners would have some effect by raising their voices. But alas, all opposition has been brushed aside, and the Government and the Municipality are implementing their decisions in effect.

What are the implications of this move? They may be viewed in two different aspects:

(a) The method and reason.

(b) The objective.

The method has been dealt with. The only additional point here is that as yet no alternative site has been found, and the various points that have been made in our original series of questions, such as, how far is the new site? will it be freehold? what about transport? are still unanswered.

The reason behind this gigantic undertaking is, of course, the Government's apartheid policy. There is a contradiction, however, since the Dutch Reformed Church calls for complete segregation. The Nationalists are prepared to go easy on that point, purely because of the economic impossibility of putting

such a theory into practice. But in order to obtain the support of the D.R.C., this colossal blunder is being made.

Finally there is perhaps a more fundamental, yet not apparent reason. The areas involved are freehold property and have been for a considerable time. This point is a bone of contention with Nationalists in the Transvaal. It would seem that they feel it an insult that Africans should be allowed to own land, when some Europeans are not able to own land. On first thoughts this may seem an outlandish statement, yet at the recent Transvaal Congress of the Nationalist Party, a question was asked of the Minister of Lands (Mr. Strydom) to what extent African ownership of land was allowed in Urban areas. His reply, while evasive, indicated that there would not be any further extension of this privilege. It is assumed that the area to which the residents of Sophiatown will be removed will not be freehold property.

The objective in this £5,000,000 project would appear to be appeasement of critics of the Nationalists since they have been in power. Granted the area is a slum, and next to Alexandria one of the worst slum areas in the world: grant it too, that every decent intelligent person would like to see and end of such appalling conditions, but at least let there be some sort of round table conference with the parties concerned. If there is to be a move, surely the people who have to move are the first who should be consulted.

Several experts, both sociologists as well as welfare workers, have warned the authorities that the survey that they undertook to ascertain the number of people living in the area would be incorrect. Reason? Well, why tell the authorities how many people live in your house, when you know that you may be moved to an area where you will have no house at all? Further, why tell

the authorities that you are getting double rent from a house which should house one family and is housing six families? Result, a survey in which it is estimated that at least one-third of the numbers are not included.

All these factors prove beyond doubt that either the Government are putting over a colossal bluff, or, if they are serious, they are in the process of whipping up an amount of hatred that may yet cause a serious outbreak of disturbances in the area.

It is of course not too late to recant, and we suggest that in the name of peace if nothing else, the Government should either make it clear that it is prepared to devote £5,000,000 for housing the already enormous backlog in the Johannesburg area, or it should present the public with a fully planned scheme, passed by experts, with representatives of all sections of the people involved. Then and then only then will the Africans, and others, be prepared to assist in removing an admittedly serious slum.

(Continued from Column 2.)

made a profit of 2181,215 on the sale of Kaffir beer. This alone, if applied to Native housing, would have paid the charges on a housing scheme costing £2,000,000, sufficient to house 25,000 families, and furthermore in 1949 the profit on the Moroko Emergency Camp was 267,972, sufficient to finance a housing scheme costing 6,400,000."

The figures speak for themselves. It is high time that ordinary citizens of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and elsewhere, mindful of human suffering, disease and crime, should compel their municipalities to tackle once and for all this most urgent and dangerous problem.

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# The Federation that Failed

**THE** British Government is usually very astute at arranging conferences. But its plans have seldom failed so completely as the Central Africa Federation conference.

This conference was held to discuss the federation of Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia. It was a flop from start to finish, and by the time it was over Nationalist newspapers in the Union were chuckling gleefully. It is interesting to note the reaction of these newspapers, because the Union was an important factor in the whole move towards federation.

The conference, in fact, was an anti-South Africa affair. The federation of Nyasaland and the two Rhodesias was envisaged as a way of limiting the Union's attempts to extend its influence to the north.

The Nationalists have been active in this field ever since they came to power a little more than three years ago, and lately their efforts have been intensified. The Union Government has tried to "sell" apartheid to its northern neighbours, and at the same time to condemn the British Colonial Office's policy of permitting the Africans to have a greater say in their own affairs than they have in the Union.

In this campaign the Nationalists have tried to win over the European settlers in territories to our north. They have tried to convince them that their future prosperity lies not in supporting British Colonial Office policy, but in taking over the Union's apartheid ideas. So far this campaign has met with little success.

Economically — the Union is able to exercise a certain amount of pressure on its immediate neighbours; and all round, therefore, the threat of the Nationalists extending their pernicious influence — at least, to Southern Rhodesia — is not as remote as some people think. Indeed, there are some prominent Rhodesians who believe that Southern Rhodesia is gradually being forced closer to the Union, in spite of the white settlers' dislike of Nationalist doctrines.

There are many reasons why the territories to our north would resist being drawn towards the Union; but the most important is the effect the doctrine of apartheid would have on African opinion, throughout the continent.

Summed up simply, the position is this: Many people in the neighbouring

territories feel that however much revulsion the Nationalists' republican and similar doctrines arouse outside the Union, the rise of African nationalism on the continent may create some liking for apartheid among certain white settlers in the African territories.

The architects of the federation proposals no doubt had this in mind, and it seems that they reckoned that the best way to prevent apartheid spreading northwards — and thus undermining the whole present-day structure in Africa — would be to unite the Rhodesias and Nyasaland in some sort of association and thus block the Nationalists' northwards march.

There have been previous attempts at federation, but they all failed. When it became apparent that the Union was determined to extend its influence northwards, the old federation plans suddenly took on a new meaning. Now it really became essential to have federation. Previously it was just the dreams of empire-builders.

This explains the extraordinary haste that was attached to the conference. The report recommending federation was barely published, when the conference was being held. Unfortunately for the architects, the Africans of the three territories decided that it was not in their interests to be a party to the manoeuvres, and they — almost unanimously — decided to fight federation.

Nyasaland Africans were particularly adamant. They saw in the other two territories, particularly in Southern Rhodesia, the Native policy differed from that which existed in their own country. Southern Rhodesia's Native policy is more akin to the Union's "segregation" than to Nyasaland's policy. The Nyasaland Africans argued. Why be dragged into federation at the risk of losing the rights we enjoy today?

Therefore, when the conference came about, the whole involved manoeuvre fell to pieces because the Africans of the territories did not want to risk the loss of their rights.

The conference, in fact, was so hastily conceived, and the "preparatory work" that usually precedes these sort of con-

ferences was so noticeably lacking that even Sir Godfrey Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, later expressed his annoyance with the bungling. Sir Godfrey is alarmed at the Union's expansionist aims, and he is a fervent protagonist of federation. But he thought that Mr. Patrick Gordon Walker and Mr. James Griffiths, the two British Secretaries of State who handled the conference, had been particularly inept.

Sir Godfrey commented: "The conference was not a very pleasant interlude. While it would be wrong to say that nothing was achieved, it was a bitter disappointment because of the way the whole affair was mishandled by the United Kingdom Government."

Sir Godfrey, it turned out, had realised that the conference was falling to pieces, and in an attempt to hold together what was left, he suggested that the Nyasaland delegation should withdraw and that there should be a federation of the two Rhodesias only, because there is less disparity between their policies. But this suggestion was turned down by Mr. Griffiths.

The conference was such a failure, and the nature of the discussions smacked so much of intrigue, that the Press could not be admitted.

Thus the conference ended abruptly — and miserably. It is quite possible that further efforts will be made to bring the territories together, but this will require a lot of delicate negotiation.

The whole sorry business has taught two lessons: One is that the Africans in the territories are not going to be rushed into a scheme which may result in the loss of hard-won rights.

The other is that the only way to safeguard these territories against the spread of Nationalist influence is to improve the territories internally and to give the Africans there a greater share in the administration of their countries and in their development.

If the Africans are happy and prosperous, and have a full share in the life of the territories, then apartheid and other Nationalist influences will never make the slightest impression on them. This is a far better course than to resort to manoeuvres and intrigues which are based on the most unstable foundations.



## “I Remember At El-Alamein . . . .”

I WISH old Pieter was with us to-day. Pieter was at El Alamein. He was a son of the veld, young in years, but old in natural wisdom. A grand optimist, old Pieter, a born philosopher and politician. He never just spoke to us — he inevitably made a speech. He used to say:

“Until the war there were no South Africans. Now up here our nation has been born. I know, more than you fellows from the cities, how deep the cleavage was between the races. Now it is being mended. I tell you its a miracle. I never dreamed that I would see us united in my lifetime, but we are united now. But will it last? Man, I'm sorry but I don't think it will. You see unity is not just a negative attitude — it is positive. We shall have to fight to preserve the unity we have found here and it will be a blerrie hard fight. None of us will feel like fighting when we get back. But we must be prepared to and if we are positive about it, we can unite South Africa. I am sure of it.”

Not a great speech, I agree. But there is in it the most important lesson we can learn on this business of racial unity. It is this: unity is not merely the absence of hate and disunity — it is a positive attitude. Moreover, it is the climax of the struggle for tolerance and fairplay and as such it must not only be won but consciously maintained. In other words, you don't just get rid of racial hate and replace it with racial unity — you have to fight for racial unity and, having achieved it, fight hard to maintain it. Like the democratic way of life and the ideas of justice and equality, unity is a high ideal and is foreign to many. Without conscious effort on our part and a recognition that pious sentiment is valueless we won't get very far towards united nationhood.

Don't let's bluff ourselves. The gap between English and Afrikaans speaking South Africans is both real and big. Nor is it entirely artificial. Despite the fact that both peoples have developed side by side in the sub-continent, there have been sufficient differences in their developments to bring about a social, cultural and political gap which is hard to bridge.

Quite frankly, racial friction is more natural here than racial unity. The forces at work, apart from the machinations of politicians, produce friction rather than harmony. We must recognise this fact honestly and accept as fundamental that we are striving for something which,

while neither unattainable nor illogical, is against the stream of events. Sentimental speeches and patriotic fervour alone will not bring about unity.

To some extent we who are struggling for national unity are not realists. Yes, we must admit this, for there is, unfortunately no little truth in the assertion that most people are not ready for a common nationhood. Nor, of course, do the circumstances favour us. The racial harmony in the forces during the war was the product of favourable circumstances — a common enemy, common dangers and hardships, common loneliness and longing. These are the things which draw men together. They are not present in the situation today, save that more and more people are beginning to see the Nationalist Government as the common enemy and are being drawn together in the fight against them. So it is, paradoxically enough, the racialists who are producing a situation in which racial unity becomes achievable. People are beginning to see through their clap-trap and uniting against them.

But this in itself does not mean South African nationhood is just around the corner. There is a long struggle ahead. By remembering Alamein and so forth, we are only beginning it. It will be hard work. The reward, however, will be inevitable. For once we achieve a common nationhood and the principles of tolerance and fairplay are firmly entrenched, our other problems become so much easier to solve.

## BOOK REVIEW

### The Kontiki Expedition

“JUST occasionally you find yourself in a queer situation.” This is the matter of fact way in which author Thor Heyerdahl sets out to explain his 4,000 mile trip across the Pacific on a home-made raft.

And for a remarkable man like the author of “The Kontiki Expedition”, this queer situation arises so easily, so casually, that he almost makes you think it could happen to you. Almost.

Its like this. He spends some of the war studying the people of Polynesia, pondering their origin, and the origin of their strange white-skinned, red-haired god, Kontiki. Somehow, he concludes, they must have crossed the Pacific from the coast of South America, 4,000 miles to the East.

And with the rashness of youth, Heyerdahl explains the whole theory to a scientific friend. “How?” asks this doubting Thomas. “They had rafts” Heyerdahl replies; it sounds reasonable enough to him. “You try crossing the Pacific on a raft,” says the friend, with the air of one delivering the mortal last blow at the end of a crushing argument.

And why not? asks Heyerdahl.

So the raft is built. Not just a raft, but a raft built to strict Inca specification gleaned from records and accounts of the earliest Western travellers to Peru. The raft must be of balsa wood. But where to get balsa wood? As scarce these days as bison, so it seems. But nothing daunts Heyerdahl. Together with five fellow Norwegian Americans he hikes to the forests of the Andes, picks out some surviving trees, chops them and floats them down-river to the sea.

And then the raft. Built without screws, nails or wire. A rough hulk of logs, tied together with handspun rope, forty feet long from stern to prow, deck eighteen inches above sea level, and deck house of plaited bamboo.

Now this is where the story really starts. The ‘Kontiki’, with sails hoisted sets off from the coast of Peru with all the gloomy predictions of watery graves and Davy Jones’ locker made by

(Continued on next page)

## "Deep Are The Roots"

. . . . An Outstanding Success

It has been said with some justice that it is easier for a critic to condemn a play out of hand than to applaud it; easier to pan it out of existence than to lyricise it into immortality. Few are the modern plays which are so well constructed, so authentic and so timely as to leave absolutely no room for serious criticism. "Death of a Salesman" is one such play — the play under review is another.

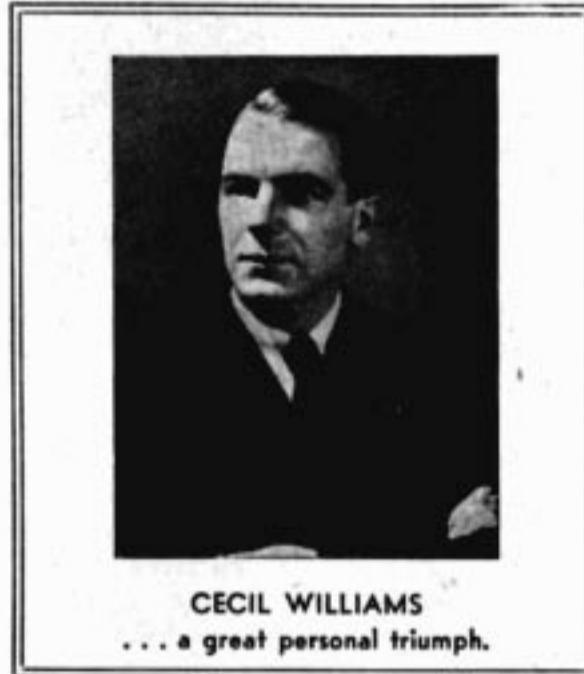
"Deep are the Roots" is a scene out of contemporary American life — the deep Southern part of it — with all the horrors of racial oppression that that conjures up. Around the time-honoured question, "How would you like your sister to marry a Kaffir?", so beloved of South African politicians, the authors, d'Usseau and Gow, have built a hard-hitting and vividly honest dramatic play.

Alice Langdon, the liberal and politically-advanced daughter of a poisonous Southern Senator, is faced fairly and squarely with this problem when her young sister falls in love with a Negro, Brett Charles, who is the son of one of their servants. Naturally, this is no ordinary Negro, but a cultured and civilised man, thanks in no small measure to Alice's education of him. He is also a war hero and a fine, upstanding specimen of manhood.

Bewildered and terrified, Alice has Brett arrested on a trumped-up charge of theft, and in the course of the arrest he is severely beaten up.

The repercussions of her action, both in her own mind and in the entire community, are brilliantly portrayed by the very human characters whose job it is to resolve this conflict in Alice. The play then is an exposé of that rather sorry specimen of modern life — the liberal. The person who "gets it in the neck" from both the right and the left, the person who sometimes carries the torch of civilisation but sometimes, as in Alice's case, can have roots of racial prejudice that are buried deep.

Cecil Williams's production of this play at the Library Theatre early this month, was a satisfactory event from all points of view. The Springbok Legion gained the proceeds of the play, which were considerable, and for Cecil (who is also the Legion's General Secretary) it was a great personal triumph both as producer and actor. Of the half-dozen South African producers I can think of offhand, Cecil alone, I venture to



say, has the political maturity to succeed with a play of this nature.

He was fortunate also in having Lesley Brook, an experienced actress, for the part of Alice Langdon. She captured this complex character with ease and sympathy. All the others gave her excellent support, particularly Joyce Fowler as Genevra, the young sister. John Rutherford as Brett Charles skilfully followed the producer's interpretation of the stiff, unbending and proud young Negro, whilst Cecil Williams himself, as Howard Merrick, Alice's outspoken Yankee fiancé, played his part with polish and conviction. Special congratulations to Dolly Robin as Brett's mother and to Derrick Forman as the Senator. Warren Sands as Cousin Roy, June Davidson as Cillah Jaspán, who succeeded her as "Honey" the Coloured maid, Ray Matuson as the bullying Sheriff and Roy Cousins as his deputy, all, without exception, gave sincere and pleasing performances.

The plaudits with which the daily press greeted this production of a highly controversial play constitute a lasting tribute to Cecil Williams and the entire cast.

## "KONTIKI"

(Continued from previous page)

a dozen old sea dogs keeping them company.

From there on, it's six men, borne by wind and current across empty ocean, with the first land four thousand miles away — a long way by any reckoning, but longer still aboard a primitive craft of dubious sea-worthiness. Polynesia, three months and more away.

And Heyerdahl tells it all, the story of that adventurous voyage, and of its thousand thrills, wonders and dangers. He tells it well, this tale of the deep ocean from near the fish-eye level in a view seldom seen by modern man. A tale of adventure like most men only dream about. And finally a tale of a theory, vindicated if not scientifically proved when the Kontiki washes up on the shores of an uninhabited Polynesian island.

If you like the sea, you'll enjoy every minute of 'Kontiki'. Or if you like high adventure with the added flavour of truth and fact. Or for that matter if you like scientific theory presented and argued in a way that even the layman can enjoy and enter into the argument.

In fact, you'll like 'The Kontiki Expedition', for my money one of the best books of the year.

"The Kontiki Expedition", by Thor Heyerdahl. Published by Allen and Unwin. Obtainable at Pickwick Bookshop, Kerk Street, Johannesburg.



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# First Impressions Of England

By THELMA ROUTH.

LAST night I listened to the hail pelting down on our corrugated iron roof and thought, "In England there is very little hail, and no iron roofs." Everything I see now I seem to see in comparison to things as they are in England. When we first arrived there, our comparisons were in reverse. We looked for the sun, and no-one had seen it for ages. We thereupon looked for something to drown our sorrow, and similarly, there was not.

We left South Africa in February, 1948, and reached London at the end of a very wet winter. No words can describe the mournfulness of the dripping, black, leafless trees, the soggy earth, the mud, and the forlorn look of the people one saw in the streets. No bright rain-coats, no glowing tans, paint peeling off the houses, food scarce and monotonous — very monotonous indeed, unless you are excited by potatoes — and to cap it all, nowhere to live. The lodgings which had been booked for us were suddenly and mysteriously full when we arrived complete with young son and the imminent prospect of another baby. London landlords don't like children. It was quite a common sight to see ads which described in lilted terms "3-roomed flat, kitchen, bathroom, central heating, no dogs or children." Being animal lovers, we were rather hurt to see that dogs were rated even lower than children.

For a whole month we crept around, convinced we would never be warm or full again. Every time we passed a tea-

shop we scurried in and gulped down unspeakable tea, just in case our next meal was not forthcoming. The net result was that we both got very fat. After about a month of these delusions, we suddenly realised that the chances of our dying of either cold or hunger were remote, as forty million other people appeared to be bearing up quite well, and also by then, of course, it was Spring.

I can wax lyrical over the English Spring — in fact, frequently do. Perhaps it is the contrast that makes the magic. Those dreary, wet, sodden trees suddenly burst into the tenderest green, housewives fling wide their windows, much washing, cleaning and painting ensues, and the young men's fancy, they tell me, turns to thoughts of love. In fact, the public parks soon resemble farmyards, with all the lovers and their lasses and much hey-nony-no in the green fields and so on. This continues all through the summer, with intervals for bad weather and listening to the cricket scores.

In winter, they go to football and evening classes. A tremendous amount of adult education (horrible description!) goes on. There are lectures and classes on every conceivable subject, from compost-making to Yogi. No matter how deep the snow or how thick the fog, a hall can be filled. The more esoteric the subject, the bigger the hall.

We attended and participated in many such meetings and schools. I remember a really inspiring weekend school on Africa, attended by some of the most brilliant people in Britain (modest blushes here). We heard Professors Bernal and Joad discuss the scientific basis (or rather, the lack of some) of racialism with Africans from Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan. Ritchie Calder and Kingsley Martin chaired the school, alternately with a doctor from Nigeria. A young poet from Viet Nam addressed the school on Asian liberation. A Sudanese student described the Gezira water scheme. We learnt a great deal that week-end. The delegates seemed surprised at the fairly good number of South Africans present, and we were proud to be able to tell them about the National War Memorial Health Foundation and the spirit that made it possible. We told them about the Legion and of the many thousands of decent South Africans who had fought fascism abroad and were prepared to fight it at home.

I seem to have used up all the space on what Guy has just described as my usual frivolity, so I'll leave him to tell you about the political scene in next month's "Fighting Talk."

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## PERSONALIA

If I were in trouble, I'd like to have PIET BEYLEVELD by my side. Piet is a quiet chap, not given overmuch to nattering, but he radiates strength, dependability and sagacity.

You may guess from the name that Piet is an Afrikaner. He is a Vry-Staater, having been born in Rouxville in 1916. Whenever Dr. Malan and his colleagues talk about the 'real' South African, I think of Piet and not of Dr. Malan. A 'real' South African is a man who has a full and fine patriotic love of South Africa and who, at the same time, can love his country only when it is worthy of love, when it is a democratic, progressive, freedom-loving and tolerant country. That goes for Piet. That's why he is a Legionnaire, because he has a compulsion inside him to fight to create that better South Africa of which we can be unconditionally proud.

As a youngster Beyleveld moved to S.W.A. with his parents and finishing his schooling in Windhoek. Up to the outbreak of war he was farming in the Grootfontein District. Donning uniform in 1940, he served with the T.S.C. Months and months passed with Piet in the 2nd Brigade, sweating it out in East



Africa and then the Western Desert. After an accident in 1944 he transferred to Special Signals, which finally made him responsible for the Afrikaans section of the Forces Broadcasting Services in Cairo, from 1945 until his discharge early in '46.

Meantime he had heard of the Legion, had heard and approved, joining up in 1943. As a member of the Middle-East

Council and the Helwan Branch Committee, he did an immense amount of valuable organisational work. After discharge he continued to turn in a good job for the Legion. He has served for some years now on the Johannesburg and the National Executive Committees.

Piet serves on committees, addresses group meetings, writes articles for "Fighting Talk". But his most valuable contribution to the Legion is his thoughtful and common-sense analysis of any given situation, domestic, national or international. We lean more and more on his sober summing-up of strategy and tactics.

Piet Beyleveld's message for Legionnaires is: A Springbok Legionnaire by the very fact of his membership of the Legion must accept the responsibility of giving a political lead, wherever he may find himself. There are Legionnaires living in isolation in the platteland, maybe active in the United Party; there are Legionnaires working in trade unions, the Torch Commando, the Labour Party, church groups and the Civil Rights League. In those spheres it is the job of Legionnaires to bring honesty of purpose, fearlessness and the ability to work hard. With these qualities a progressive-minded man can achieve a great deal towards cleaning South Africa of the reactionary Nats and their stifling policies.

The advertisement features a central shield-shaped logo with a springbok head at the top. The text inside the shield reads "SPRINGBOK SHIRTS AND PYJAMAS". To the left of the logo is an illustration of a man in a striped suit, and to the right is an illustration of a man in a shirt and trousers holding a golf club.

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Unless otherwise stated, J. Podbrey 37 Main House, Main Street, Johannesburg, is responsible for all political matter in this issue.