

# FIGHTING TALK

ORGAN OF THE SPRINGBOK LEGION

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(Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.)

## "Either Hammer or Anvil Be!"

In the history of every land there are a few decisive periods which stand out in sharp relief from the overall, misty backgrounds of their time. We have lived in such a period during this, the last week of August 1952. Future historians will point to this week as marking the ending of one period, and the beginning of another in the slow upward struggle of South Africans to freedom from fascism and oppression.

In this week, the High Court of Parliament handed down its fateful decision, overriding the Supreme Court, and declaring the Separate Representation of Voters Act to be law in the land. The Nationalists burnt their boats behind them, elevating their Party caucus above the Courts of Law. For them there can be no turning back; from here on they are committed to the hilt to whatever illegalities, whatever Hitlerite measures are needed to make our courts bend the knee before the Nationalist dictatorship.

In this week too, the focus of world and South African attention shifted to the Non-European Defiance Campaign, to the trial of its leaders under the Suppression of Communism Act and the wave of mass acts of defiance which have accompanied it. Never in its history had South Africans been so sharply brought to see the Non-European people in the light in which they have now revealed themselves — in the light not merely of hewers of wood and drawers of water, but as people forging their own destiny, and with it shaping the pattern of the South Africa which is to come. The conscious, determined, organ-

ised stirring amongst the black people almost shouldered the High Court of Parliament off the stage. The Campaign of Defiance, too, reached the stage of no return, firing the imagination of the Non-European people so that for them, there can now be no turning back.

Two dynamic forces stood face to face in this historic week — the Nationalist movement striding forward to the destruction of the rule of law and to fascist dictatorship; the Non-European Campaign in action for the abolition of unjust laws and the extension of liberty and freedom. The times left no room for neutrals; either for or against; either hammer or anvil.

This was the week in which the leaders of the "opposition" chose to crouch in no-man's land, crying above the sounds of battle: "A plague on both your houses." Mr. Strauss called for voters to defeat Malan at the next election, while condemning Malan's fighting foes in the Defiance Campaign. His Natal lieutenant, Mr. D. E. Mitchell, raising the white flag before the battle had been decided, announced that if the Defiance Campaign achieved greater successes, Europeans should throw in their weight with the Government of fascism, with the High Court architects of dictatorship.

This was the week when the Torch Commando, born, bred and nurtured on the slogans of "Defend the Constitution", and "Malan Resign!" witnessed the rape of the Constitution in a blanket of impenetrable and unmoved silence. Here was the fork in the road they have travelled under the suffocating wing of the United Party; either left on the paths of their beginning, in

active mass campaigning against Malan's Government; or right on the path of appeasement, surrender and defeat mapped out by Mr. Mitchell. Either with the Defiance Campaign forward, or with Mitchell back.

Neither silence nor scuttling for cover can save any South African individual or organisation from the final decisions which this week has posed. We of the Springbok Legion have taken our stand; against fascism; against the High Court of Parliament; for liberty and democracy; for the Defiance Campaign.

It is time for others to take their stand before they are left helpless and unaided between the hammer and the anvil.



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## KNOWLEDGE WILL HELP PEACE!

THREE members of the Legion resigned in the month of July and one in the month of August. The principal reason for the resignations was the appearance in "Fighting Talk" of the interview with D. N. Pritt on germ warfare in Korea.

Some of the points made by the members were: ". . . *The International Association of Democratic Lawyers, of which Pritt is chairman, is a Commie outfit dressed up with the usual fancy name to mask its true political colours and their 'evidence' . . . is therefore not even worth reading*" . . . "*the terms 'America' and 'American' . . . are obviously part of the Communist plan to discredit America*" . . . "*I can just see Korean peasants picking out germ-carrying insects from the non-germ-carrying*" . . . "*the containers that were supposed to have been used are shown by propaganda photographs to be leaflet containers*" . . . "*the Koreans and Chinese died in their own filth and this story of germ-warfare was concocted to save face*" . . . "*Do you really believe America to be stupid enough to use bacteriological weapons?*" . . . "*Had the United Nations used the Atom Bomb twelve months ago, the war would have been over*" . . . "*Why did not the Commission look into the condition of our P.O.W.'s?*"

### RESTRICTED READING

These extracts reveal the disadvantage we all labour under when our reading is restricted to the ordinary daily papers and weekly magazines. At least, when an intelligent person has access to papers, books and magazines which because of their political affiliations can be expected to have different approaches and interpretations of happenings, the reader can be sure that he is not being duped. Finally, perhaps, he will be in a position to analyse all the reports and come to his own independent conclusion.

There is, however, no arguing with a man who reads one constantly-reiterated point of view and then declares that he knows all the answers. It is surprising that in the year 1952, when we are all aware of the vast power of propaganda and the vast employment of the numerous media of propaganda, that an ordinary citizen can be so naive as to swallow for gospel truth every word that he reads. This must be said, naturally, of a Communist who reads only Communist literature, as well as of a non-Communist

who reads only what the capitalist press prints.

What seems to be an objective approach to the truth is provided by 'Critic' (a pseudonym generally attributed to Kingsley Martin, the Editor) of the independent, progressive but non-Communist English weekly, "The New Statesman and Nation". In the April 12 issue "Critic" writes, ". . . use of bacteriological warfare in Korea and China . . . no evidence . . . But this week, however, I have become converted to the view that the Chinese and Koreans have a case which deserves careful consideration." (There follows an account of a press conference in Oslo given by the President of the Chinese Academy of Science, at which were shown photographs and actual films taken in loco) . . . "I may only add that I was a complete sceptic, indeed scoffer, and that now I am convinced only that there is a case for investigation."

### AN OPEN MIND

Here is a world-famous journalist of an eminently respected and admired publication who, after dismissing the early allegations of germ-warfare in Korea, is persuaded to keep an open mind, after he has heard more about the affair. Is not that the attitude which any democratic, intelligent man should adopt? Resignation reflects little credit on the intelligence of our members, who give no indication that they have any knowledge whatsoever of the masses of testimony and evidence that have been given by numerous non-partisan observers and investigators in Korea and China.

Unfortunately it is not possible to assemble in this magazine all the material that has been presented on this horrible subject. The Transvaal Peace Council has prepared a memorandum of a dozen pages on germ-warfare. Arrangements have been made for copies of the Memorandum to be sent to the members who have resigned. Other members can obtain copies by writing to the Transvaal Peace Council, P.O. Box 525, Johannesburg.

Let it be re-stated: it is not the Legion's intention or desire to bludgeon

all its members into thinking the same way. The Memorandum is being sent to our indignant ex-members to give them some idea of what is being said on the other side.

### INFORMATION

Reference must still be made to some of the points raised by our readers.

(a) Of the eight lawyers who comprised the investigating commission, only one is a Communist: only two came from the other side of the "iron curtain": the Austrian member is a Roman Catholic professor of International Law, and so on.

It is, therefore, an ignorant impertinence for our reader to condemn the Commission's findings out of hand. To him

everyone who does not hold the same views as he does is a liar. Such an attitude will get him nowhere in the search for truth.

(b) The majority of British people are 'anti-Communist' and yet the majority of people in Britain today are strongly 'anti-American'. The rank and file of the trade unions, the Labour Party and even the majority of Labour M.P.'s have this attitude to America because they see around them the effects of America's war-policies. They see no less than 38 U.S. military airfields, where atom-bombers are in training: they see their 'welfare state' crumbling under the intolerable burden of re-armament: they see nearly half a million unemployed and hundreds of thousands on short time: they see Britain being embroiled in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation with a revived Wehrmacht as the spearhead of NATO's army. Even the Tories are rebelling. Let us quote an eminent Tory M.P., Lord Hinchinbroke, in the House of Commons: "The Americans are all bent on making Western Germany a fulcrum of their economic power in Europe. On top of it comes the proposal, American-sponsored, American-pressed, for the re-armament of Germany. The end of such a policy will

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## BOOK REVIEW

## AS OTHERS SEE US

SEVERAL kinds of journalists write books about South Africa and South Africans. There are the Government sponsored pens that depict this country — for the benefit of an unimpressed UNO Assembly — as a land flowing with milk, honey, harmony and apartheid. There are the "I-saw-Africa" school who pause from a fourteen-day round-the-Union tour to pick up a few newspaper cuttings, a few official handouts, and then tell the world in three-hundred pages that our problems are complex but we are doing our best. And there are the Sachs-Cadman school, writers with a hobby horse of social-security or "progressive capitalism", who cover just enough ground to prove their theory, and miss out just enough to avoid raising unanswerable doubts.

Basil Davidson fits into none of these categories. Like many others who have reported on Southern Africa, he is first and foremost a reporter. But unlike many, he does not use the scissors-and-paste technique of putting a book together, but thinks, questions and reasons for himself. His recently published *Report on Southern Africa* is refreshing reading. For here is an observer who sees us not in the formal stereotypes of Empire builders, race-saviours or slave owners, but in a new light, as people brought face to face with a great social

challenge. That challenge to European South Africans to find a way to live in friendship and mutual respect with Non-Europeans is the thread he finds running through all our politics, all our

social and economic troubles and prospects.

Davidson finds us afraid to face the challenge, looking the other way, beating our brains out in fruitless struggle on side-issues, even refusing to acknowledge that the challenge exists. We remind him more of Neros, fiddling, than of Clives or Wilberforces.

Nor is this a sketchy tripper's observations. For Davidson has studied deeply of blue-books and reports. He has travelled widely and listened to much. He has an acute perception, and the great reporter's ability to sift wheat from chaff, to seize on essentials. Those who have read his many articles in the "New Statesman and Nation" will know him as an able and interesting writer, capable of making even a report on us as readable as any best seller. *Report on Southern Africa* is a book you must not miss. L.B.

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"FIFTY years ago, it was possible to think that 'white supremacy' could be upheld for long generations into the future. Under the conditions of pre-industrialism, many things were possible which will now not be possible much longer. For with industrialism in rapid growth, the upholding of such a system becomes a lost cause. In South Africa, where the process is far advanced, one may watch the spectacle of white men starving and persecuting the non-white workers and potential workers without whom their industries will fail. One may see how factories make consumer goods for populations which are denied the means to pay for them. Even if the rest of the world were stagnant and indifferent, such a system could not work for long. Either the industries will fail, or the workers will assert their rights. The struggle for assertion may be cruel and bloody. There are unhappy indications that it will be. But it will not be stopped for that, as the workers of other lands have amply proved."

"The choice for the whites, then, is no longer simply one of choosing between the two roads which lead to freedom or bondage for the Africans. The choice now is differently framed. It becomes one of waging a bitter and perhaps bloody struggle as the Africans step by step assert their rights — or of conforming intelligently to the needs of those social and economic forces which white civilization has itself forced into motion. Once again in contrast with the past, the first of these two roads can no longer be chosen with any hope of prolonged success."

(Extracts from Basil Davidson's, "Report on Southern Africa.")

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# HUNGRY FOR LAND

IN England in the days of Good Queen Bess there occurred a social and economic upheaval which, with small variations, has been duplicated in almost every industrial country of the world at one time or another.

It was in brief what is today characterised as "a drift to the towns" and was, in Shakespeare's England, the subject of almost as much discussion, argument and legislation as is the squatter problem in modern Johannesburg. Under various poor laws, vagrancy laws and statutes the legislature made strenuous efforts to stem the tide of those who were quitting the land and rushing to claim their share of the more varied attractions, the wider liberties and higher wages offered in the larger towns.

As a consequence the towns became burdened with a tremendous load of indigent folk for whom neither jobs nor homes could be found. These hapless people were either shut away in 'work-houses' or 'places of correction' or set to work on roads or other public works. Or they were beaten and banished beyond the city limits, lest they become a burden upon the taxpayers, who by law were bound to care and provide for the 'poor, halt, lame and impotent' within the city limits.

But mostly they were sent back whence they came — in terms of a law compelling any able-bodied man or woman — not being of noble birth (!) — of no fixed employment to become a farm labourer.

## NOTHING UNIQUE

Now this set-up is all perfectly familiar to us here in Johannesburg or in any larger city in South Africa at the present time. The parallel can be extended further to include the crime waves and shantytowns and all the other by-products of our own "drift to the towns". The story is set forth here to show that there is nothing unique about the economic and social crisis through which South Africa, in her turn, is passing.

Indeed the story holds for us one lesson of surpassing importance and one that is not, perhaps, immediately apparent. It is that our economic crisis has little or nothing to do with the particular ethnic or racial character of our social complex. It has nothing to do, necessarily, with the fact that our landless peasantry, who comprise to a large extent the migratory wave descending upon our cities, are mainly Africans. The various measures, such as vagrancy laws,

work permits, curfews and so on, which bear more than superficial resemblance to the laws of 16th century England and which might in our day bear the label, "To be applied to Non-Europeans Only", would in Elizabethan times have borne the label, "To be applied to the Labouring Classes Only."

And it was not only the laws that were similar. In England four hundred years ago the upper classes would argue heatedly, as a justification of these discriminatory statutes, that really the labouring classes were mentally, morally and physically of a lower order of human nature than the upper classes and that these laws were really framed for the GOOD of men and women, who, after all, were little better than animals.

But, of course, South Africa's economic crisis, like England's long ago, consists in much more than merely a drift to the towns. Indeed, this drift is a symptom of the crisis, rather than the crisis itself.

## THE GREAT TREK

To discover the roots of the crisis one asks first of all why there is a drift to the towns: what is the nature of this economic force which compels people in



their tens of thousands to desert the comparative tranquility of rural life to become part of the squalor and poverty and degradation of the city slums?

Well, let us here mention another historical migration of considerable importance — the Great Trek. You see, the roots of the crisis go deep in time, and one must delve back as far as that to find their beginnings. Indeed, one might go back much further to van Riebeeck and the Mercantilist Society, which sent him from his home, right across the world, to establish a trading station at the Cape. In this venture van Riebeeck an obedient civil servant, was obeying the orders of his masters. But, although

he probably did not realise it, he was doing much more than that.

For he was bringing a new economic system to this dark continent and, on arrival, he planted not only the vine and vegetables, but the seeds of Business and Enterprise too.

With him came lesser officials of the Dutch East India Company and in their wake the first real colonisers. They were retreating from the highly integrated monopoly-ridden social fabric of 17th century Europe, from which they had gained very little but misery and want, into what they thought would be a simpler, more congenial, if more primitive, form of society.

## FREEDOM

What they did establish — not very securely, as we shall see — was a sort of patriarchal, pastoral society, based upon an abundance of land and a huge reservoir of Bantu, Hottentot and Bushman slave labour. As this community grew, they moved northwards from the Peninsula, adding huge tracts to their land holdings, clinging to a precarious anarchy which, contrasted with the severity of Mercantilist rule and regulation, to them meant freedom.

There began a sort of mad three-legged chase between three different economic and social orders.

*... Behind them, settled firmly on the fringes of the Cape Colony, was the Chartered Company, first Dutch, then British, representing the highest form of economic development then existing:*

*... In front of them were the Bantu tribesmen with their tribal organisation, on a lower rung of the economic ladder than they themselves.*

As the Business and Enterprise of the Company moved in upon them, they in turn pressed forward upon the Africans, buckling and bending and eventually breaking the latter's tribal institutions. Harried and harrassed, robbed and pillaged on all sides by the strange intruders, the Bantu fell upon each other in fratricidal assault, only to succumb eventually to the white man's rifles.

Thus we have what might be called the organic nature of the Great Trek. What of the Trekkers themselves? Did they in their ignorance really believe that they could preserve intact their patriarchal paradise in a land which had rich profits to yield?

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## HUNGRY FOR LAND

(Continued from page 5)

### AXIOM

It is an inescapable axiom that the more highly developed and efficient economic organisation will *always* prevail over the less highly developed and efficient. Therefore, as the Bantu tribes disintegrated before the onslaughts of the Trekkers, so the patriarchal society of the Boers crumbled under the weight of what was fast becoming modern capitalism. The process started by the Chartered Companies in the Cape was completed by the British in the course of two Boer Wars. And South Africa, which began as a refuge from Business and Enterprise, was integrated at last into the world capitalist complex.

Now, what has all this to do with the drift to the towns? The answer is — everything. You see, the Africans — and Europeans, for that matter — who are now descending in their thousands upon Johannesburg are animated by the same *will-to-survive*, as prodded the Elizabethan Englishman into fleeing the feudal manor.

English feudalism, Bantu tribalism and the patriarchal slave society of the Voortrekkers, have this factor in common: all three have as their basis the *land* as the chief form of wealth. Under the first two the relationship between labourer and master is a direct one, implying a certain degree of villeinage. Neither can survive in a money economy, based upon wage labour and so each disintegrates. Thus, the villein went to the town to seek a livelihood, because the feudal manor in decay could no longer sustain him and the sons of the Voortrekkers deserted the land and the ways of their forefathers, not because they were shiftless and steeped in sin, but because the land and their traditions had deserted *them*.

### HYPOCRITES

What of the African? Surely if feudalism cannot survive in a money economy, their tribalism based upon common ownership of the land certainly will not.

Those who talk piously about helping the African to rebuild the tribal sys-

tem which nurtured him are either hypocrites or fools. You may wish, however sincerely, to save the African from the dubious ways of the white man, but in all truth you cannot. Once an economic system has perished, nothing on earth can revive it, for the objective conditions under which it can flourish no longer exist.

The African comes to town because he must go somewhere. In the seventeenth century he would have fled across the sea and lost himself in virgin continents beyond the reach of any state authority. Today you cannot go to the remotest Pacific island without finding a station-waggon to meet you. And so, not being able to escape from the system, the African must seek integration into it. Being no longer a peasant, he must become a worker in the town.

When Senator Le Roux, in a recent statement, deplored what he called 'the excessive wages paid to Africans in the cities', he was not praising the generosity of the industrialist, but chanting a last dismal dirge over the corpse of South Africa's primitive agriculture that has sought to perpetuate its existence by means of coercion, farm contracts, rural gaols and passes.

### THE GOOD EARTH

To the African the soil has always been the Good Earth. It has given him food and nourishment and shelter since the very dawn of his existence. It has been the basis of his religion and his culture and his social organisation. Precisely for these reasons, how he must hate it when it suddenly becomes the element of his bondage; when to till the soil is suddenly no longer a creative work but part of a prison sentence or a fetter upon his right as a free man to go his way and earn his living as he pleases!

Let this truth penetrate the cruel, warped minds of those who associate the farm gaol with sunshine and fresh air and the natural habitat of the African people.

The African *will* return to the land one day. But he is determined, now as never before, that he will return to it only as a free man in a free society. Till then he will continue to come to the city, where, though he lives in poverty and squalor, though he may be harried by police and made to carry passes, he is at least neither bondman nor slave.

lo Benedek does a smooth directorial job, and if the film is less moving than the play, it is one more indication that well-constructed plays usually, if not always, lose something when translated to the screen.

## DEATH OF A SALESMAN

Film Review by R.C.

STANLEY KRAMER is the young producer who has amazed Hollywood by his ability to find financial backing for unusual or controversial themes, and, even more astounding, make money on them. Actually he is a good deal less daring than he is credited with being. He has shown a shrewd assessment of how sensational handling of a "hot" subject can pay off — the "negro" problem in "Home of the Brave", in which the Jew in the play is slickly replaced with a Negro, the boxing racket "exposure" in "Champion", the ex-serviceman rehabilitation problem in "The Men."

That "Death of a Salesman" should be filmed at all in America today is surprising. The play is a ruthless exposure of the false values of capitalist society. It takes a man on the verge of mental collapse and by means of a flash-back technique brilliantly analyses the society which has reduced him to that condition. The outworn adages, the false slogans that delude the middle-class that if they only play the game according to the rules they will "make good" are mercilessly exposed for their fraudulency.

How does such a film emerge from the U.S.A. today? Perhaps Kramer and his backers were counting on the public's (and critics') inability to understand the message of Miller's play. (Incredibly, there are even people with intellectual pretensions who explain the play in terms of "an individual's neuroticism", or the "insecurity peculiar to salesmen". Are the salesman's delusions any more inconsistent than, for example, those of the white collar worker who despises the more highly paid artisan?)

Or one might be tempted to think that the producers, too, were unaware of the play's significance, were it not for the fact that lines which emphasise the message have been subtly deleted and the ending changed, so that the last word is left with Charley who says "It's these poor salesmen who have all this difficulty."

The film will doubtless get by at the box-office through its emotional appeal and the magnificent playing of Frederic March as the salesman. ("Marvellous acting eh!"). Mildred Dunnock is superbly restrained as his wife, and Kevin McCarthy, who was in the London production, is a very effective Biff. Laz-

(Continued in previous column)

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THERE was a time when every rookie was spurred on by the promise that a field-marshal's baton was issued by the Q.M.G. along with knapsacks. Even if there were any truth in the story, it would be of little value in firing young men's ambitions these days. After Chiang, Goering and General Tojo, the other ranks can be pardoned for their suspicion that a C. in C.'s baton is something to steer well clear of.

Someone should have passed this suspicion on to General Matt Ridgway, Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's armed forces, before he took the job over. It would have saved him many a bitter experience, and perhaps have strengthened some of the dying reserves of Europe's friendship for America. C. in C. NATO, as the General is discovering for himself, is no bed of roses.

It all started the day he set foot in Europe to take over where Eisenhower left off. Paris turned out in force to welcome him — with a sea of banners screaming "Ridgway go home!" The "Go home" leaflets showered the streets. But the General didn't receive any personally, because the whole Paris police force, and a substantial slab of the French army stood by with tanks and tommy-guns to keep the Parisians from the new 'liberator'.

Not an auspicious beginning for the attempts to produce a massive armed force in Western Europe under U.S. leadership. But there was worse to follow. Even the infectious Ridgway smile began to slip slightly when the scenes repeated themselves in every European capital he visited. The smile vanished altogether when a Go Home! banner unfurled itself from a balcony of the U.S. Embassy in London, just as the General arrived. It seemed that everyone was out of step except our Matthew. Something had to be done and done quickly before the rot went too far.

#### ROUND-UP

Something was done. In Paris, Communist leader Jacques Duclos was arrested while driving home with his wife,

a flagrant breach of his constitutional immunity as a member of the House of Representatives. He was charged with plotting to endanger the French state by taking a leading part in the anti-Ridgway, anti-NATO demonstrations. His chauffeur was found to be carrying a revolver; he was charged with being in control of secret arms for sinister purposes. Duclos' tame pigeon was solemnly handed over to scientific laboratories for testing, the suggestion being bruited about that under the ruffled feathers was disguised a Comintern secret courier, carrying instructions, and possibly gold, from Moscow to Duclos.

The Duclos arrest misfired in classic fashion. Thousands of French workers struck work, demanding Duclos' release and Ridgway's return to the U.S.A. The examining magistrate, one of the few in France who had refused to serve under the Vichy regime, tore the prosecution case to threads, dismissed the charge and set Duclos free.

In Britain, less spectacular, anti-Ridgway demonstrators were charged with "insulting behaviour". Some were sentenced. Yet quietly, unspectacularly, but effectively, the slogan "Yanks Go Home!" appeared in chalk and white-wash on walls of G.I. barracks, on U.S. Army cars.

If that were the whole affair, it would perhaps not shake the world. But that was only the start. Worse was to follow on the issue of German rearmament which lies at the very heart of the NATO military plans. It is around this issue that the U.S. plans for militarisation of Europe stand or fall.

#### THE FRONT BREAKS

The issue of re-militarising Germany was sharply raised by the Peace Treaty. Each of the Western Powers, whose representatives drafted the Treaty, was required to ratify it. In doing so they would be ratifying the plan to raise a German army, a mercenary army, under the overall command of General Ridgway. The British Labour Party refused to vote for ratification, weakly it is true, and divided among its own ranks. But

in Parliament on this, the key to NATO policy, the Labour-Tory common front on foreign policy split for the first time since 1940, and hundreds of Labour members crossed to the division lobbies to record a solid "No" to the re-arming of Germany. And all the by-election signs of the past twelve months tell that the Labour Party today speaks for the majority of Britons.

In France it was little better. Communists and Gaullists, the two largest groups, voted solidly against. Only a fractional majority carried through the act of acquiescence to U.S. dictates in defiance of every commonsense consideration of national security.

And still the NATO army existed on paper only, an army overstuffed with brass-hats, headquarters and intelligence units but devoid of the p.b.i. who make armies tick. In the Conference room it was easy; easy for the assembled heads of the Western Powers, under the stern eye of General Ridgway and impelled by desperate longings for dollar credits to plan an army of thousands of men, dozens of divisions.

#### ROUGH WEATHER

But the best laid schemes of men and mice come up against the hard realities of life. The NATO plans, for their fulfilment, required a two-year conscription period in all the contributing countries. Belgium tried it out; there were strikes in industry, sit-down protests in the army. France, which solemnly accepted the proposal at the Conference table, paled at the prospect. Partly it was the spectre of Belgium's reaction which frightened; partly it was the sheer unreality of piling on the military expenditure in a bankrupt and starving country. France, some months after the Conference, announced that conscription would remain at the previous period of eighteen months.

The blind lead the blind. Belgium, drawing new strength from the French defection, last month reduced her conscription period to eighteen months. Before the NATO army had been satisfactorily assembled on paper, it was beginning to crumble and reveal the shifting, unstable foundations on which it was being built. For the harassed General Ridgway, troubles do not come singly. There was still the unkindest cut of all, the defection of those very German allies whose semi-independence is the fruit of the unflagging Yankee endeavours to build a West European army.

Herr Krupp, last of the munition bar-

(Continued on page 10)

ALEXANDRA Township is in many respects like most other Native townships on the Reef, with its overcrowding, transport difficulties, lack of social amenities, general poor state of health of the inhabitants. But in other respects, which will be discussed below, Alexandra has its differences.

It is situated near the north-eastern outskirts of Johannesburg, on the Pretoria road. Occupying an area of approximately two square miles, its official population, according to the last census, is about 60,000, but according to an unofficial estimate by the local authority, the true figure is nearer 80,000. This gives a density of population of about 40,000 per square mile, which is fantastic when it is realised that buildings of more than one storey are few and far between.

Alexandra, lying as it does outside the municipal boundaries of Johannesburg, is not administered by the City Council as are most of the other townships scattered round Johannesburg; nor does it fall under the jurisdiction of the per-urban board which controls the neighbouring European townships. Instead, it is administered under the Local Authorities Act by a Health Committee, appointed by the Government with the exception of two representatives of the local stand-owners.

#### HOUSING PROBLEMS.

Alexandra Township is one of the very few areas in South Africa where Africans are allowed to own land. For this reason, the demand for stands far exceeds the supply, with the consequence that land values are grossly inflated: an average price for a small unimproved stand approaches £900 today. The owner of the stand usually has to borrow money for the purchase of the stand and building of rooms at exorbitant rates of interest; in order to repay these loans and meet the interest charges, stand-owners are in many cases obliged both to charge rents which are very high, and to overcrowd the small stands with large numbers of rooms to be let. Further, because of the chronic shortage of housing for Non-Europeans common to the whole of South Africa, each room accommodates far more people than should be the case.

The majority of wage-earners are employed in Johannesburg, and most of these have to travel 12 miles to and from work every day by bus. To arrive at work by 8 a.m., the worker usually has to start queuing for a bus at about 5 a.m., and it is often 6 to 8 p.m. before he has arrived back at his home again. Besides the large proportion of his income expended on bus-fares, one

work in the municipal area. These restrictions do not apply to women, but against this must be weighed the fact that many of them have families in the



# ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP—1952

By

'AESCLAPIUS'

must also reckon the fatigue involved in queuing for transport, and the lack of an adequate breakfast because of the early rising. Many others cycle to work every day, but this also involves the expenditure on upkeep of the bicycle.

Recently, a large number of small industries have been established in neighbouring peri-urban industrial sites in Wynberg and Bergvlei — a case of industry coming to the source of labour instead of the usual position in Johannesburg where the worker has daily to travel long distances to his place of work.

#### EMPLOYMENT DIFFICULTIES.

A grave disadvantage to all adult males living in Alexandra is that unless they have passes to work in Johannesburg, it is extremely difficult for them to find work. In fact, anyone subject to influx control finds it almost impossible to get the necessary permission to

township, and have to find jobs where they are not required to live-in at the place of employment; this often compels them to earn their livelihood by doing washing and ironing, one of the lowest paid jobs.

The housing conditions are appalling. Stands vary in area from a quarter to a half acre, and most of them have anything up to twenty or thirty families living there. Few can afford to rent more than one room, and consequently there develops the usual picture of a family of five or six people living, eating, cooking and sleeping in a single room about fifteen feet square. This room will contain a stove (if the family can afford one), table and chairs, all their belongings, foodstuffs; one or two beds are the most that a family has to sleep in; the children either sleep on the floor and three or four to a bed. The floor is usually of stone or cement. Ven-

tilation and lighting are often completely inadequate.

Each stand is provided with one tap (sometimes under lock-and-key and opened only at certain hours during the day). The three to four lavatories are emptied twice a week and refuse collected once a week. As these latter services are charged for per rata, they are usually quite inadequate for the needs of the stand population.

#### COST OF LIVING.

A recent survey of the cost-of-living of representative families in Alexandra throws some very interesting light on how an average African family leads its life.

*The diets are almost invariably deficient in calories. The protein intake is usually fairly high, but as it is derived chiefly from cereals and not from high-class animal protein sources such as meat, eggs and dairy products, it falls far short of minimum requirements. One of the gravest deficiencies is in respect of vitamins supplied by fresh fruit and vegetables. Of course, one of the chief reasons*

for the present time — approximately double. Very few families, indeed, can balance their expenditures by income from earnings, and in most cases the deficit is made up by illicit means. The most common methods are through the sale of illicit liquor and gambling.

The social and recreational amenities are on a very low level. There are three public squares in the township; one is used as a bus terminus, while the other two remain waste tracts of land. There is one public tennis-court, but there are no sports fields or swimming baths. The absence of a supply of electricity in all but two of its twenty-two streets means that there is no street-lighting, with the resulting danger of assaults taking place at night. This effectively reduces the social life of the inhabitants to a minimum.

#### THE PRIVILEGE OF EDUCATION

Schooling for children is similarly on a poor level. A minority of children of school-going age are able to be accommodated at the fourteen odd primary schools (which are mostly run by government-aided missions) and the one secondary school. Those children who

needed to reconstitute the original throughfares.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

In the sphere of public health, one of the responsibilities of all local authorities is the provision of isolation facilities for infectious diseases. Inadequate as these are in Johannesburg itself, the municipality at least has a non-European hospital for these particular cases. As far as Alexandra is concerned, it has to share with the rest of the Transvaal the facilities of one small Government hospital; in actual practice, this amounts to very little indeed. The net result is that epidemics of children's diseases rage throughout the township, and open cases of tuberculosis lie at home, infecting all and sundry.

The inevitable result of all the overcrowding, low wages, inadequate food and poor amenities is obviously a low standard of health. The infantile mortality rate is generally considered to be a fairly accurate index of the health of a community.

In Alexandra in 1951, over 400 out of every 1,000 children born died within the first year of life.

are privileged to attend school suffer from an almost complete lack of playing fields and facilities for study in their overcrowded, dimly-lit homes, a poor diet and often a lack of adequate parental control, because the mother is out during the day to supplement the family income.

The local authority is in charge of the administration of the township; in particular, public health, sanitation, issuing of licenses, etc. The only major source of revenue is from the inhabitants themselves, in the form of rates and sanitation and refuse-collection fees. The inevitable result, in a poor community, is that adequate refuse collection is impossible, as is proper sanitation. Only part of one of the streets is tarred, and the lack of adequate drainage has turned many stands into miniature canyons which cut across streets so that a major bridge-building campaign would be

The people themselves are well aware of the situation. They are forced to count every penny merely to exist; yet they have, for example, seen the necessity for preventing the spread of tuberculosis and have within recent months collected enough money to establish a tuberculosis settlement for Alexandra.

The facts are there to be seen by anyone who takes the trouble to go to Alexandra and see for himself. Alexandra has many problems peculiar to itself, but most of its difficulties are the lot of the majority of urban Africans in South Africa today.

These people are inevitably beginning to react to their intolerable existence; through their "Defiance of Unjust Laws" Campaign, they are protesting against the most glaring aspects of the difficulties standing in the way of their progress.





THE leaders of the Anglo-American bloc committed a crime against humanity when they decided to pay Alfred Krupp five million pounds as compensation for the loss of his armament factories. I read this news item with the same feeling of disgust as when I read of the release of the major war criminals, or when I read about a particularly hideous crime in the paper.

It would not even be accurate to describe Krupp as having been a willing tool of the Nazis. He was one of the Nazi leaders, a dealer in death, a slave-trader, a moneyed thug of the worst possible type. It is a safe bet that of every twenty people killed during the last war, nineteen met their death through a Krupp product. And this is the man who posed with a bunch of flowers outside Landsberg prison, from which he was released after serving less than one-fifth of his twenty-year sentence for war crimes.

Next time you and I pay our taxes, let us remember that a portion of them will go, albeit indirectly, to Alfred Krupp, to compensate him for the loss of his armament industry.

#### MIDDLE EAST GET-TOGETHER

ON the same page of the newspaper carrying the above item, another report, this time from Israel, publicised Prime Minister Ben-Gurion's statement that Israel was ready and willing to join the Middle East Defence Pact.

Of course, Mr. Ben-Gurion did not explain to his people that this move would mean sitting at the same table as former Nazis and Nazi supporters, since these are now being encouraged by the Western powers to take a lead in the preparations for World War III. Perhaps he realized that for the Israelis

this would be too big a pill to swallow, especially in view of the fact that only a few months ago Israel was having nothing to do with Germany — even to the extent of refusing German-made machinery as compensation for Jewish losses during the last war.

Now it appears that Ben-Gurion can be as good a Petrouchka as anyone when the puppet-masters start tugging.

\* \* \*

#### AN INSULT.

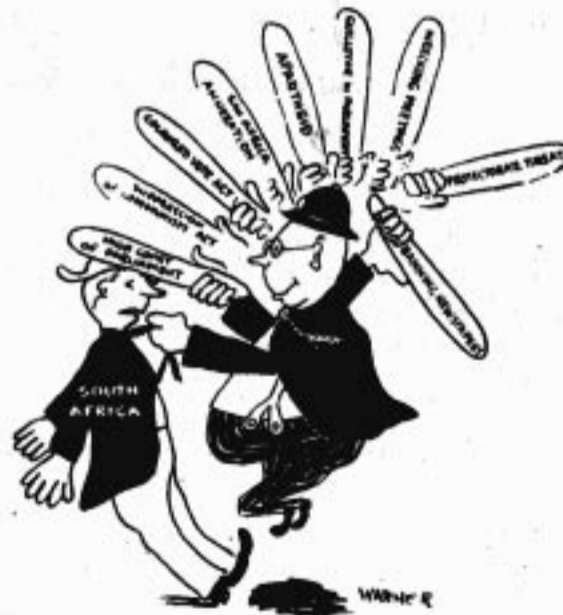
IN Johannesburg last month a magistrate, when sentencing a group of "Defiance" volunteers, remarked, "Where are your leaders now? Why don't they come forward and speak for you?"

The worthy magistrate should know that the leaders of the campaign are either in jail or awaiting trial. None of the non-European leaders can be accused of shirking his job.

#### ALL OUT OF STEP

(Continued from page 7)

ons, fresh from a sentence for war crimes, announces that he is no longer interested in making munitions; not for NATO; not for Germany. And this de-



spite the Western powers' promises to "compensate" him for the munition works seized from him when the Third Reich fell. Understandably, after six years in prison, he feels there is little future in the war business.

#### TIME TO GO

And if Germany does not make arms, her industries revitalised by the "Peace Treaty" will be cutting in on the export markets of Britain, of France, of Belgium. Hitting below the belt perhaps; but inevitably those countries too will have to turn from armaments to civilian goods to keep their markets and their trade.

The writing is on the wall for the NATO army. It was a gamble, a big gamble; but it failed. And now, like many a gambler before him, Ridgway stands to lose his boots. This would be a good time to cut his losses and go home.

EUROPE WOULD LIKE HIM BETTER THAT WAY.

#### THE TRUTH

"It must be remembered that no nation in the world, worthy of the name could always be satisfied with no say or only indirect say in the political and socio-economic organisation of the country

in which decisions are taken on that nation's interests and future. To expect the Bantu to be satisfied with such a state of affairs is not only to be unfair to him, but will also eventually lead to the greatest disillusionment and strife."



## NOT CHARITY — — INSURANCE!

*"Without money we can't win the political struggle!"*

YOU'VE heard that before or something like it. You probably thought, "That's true — so true that it doesn't need to be said". Then you went on your way and left the other fellow to dig for it out of his "surplus cash". You did not think it could mean "your money". You had no "surplus", so it couldn't mean that!

You thought, maybe: "If things get better and I have a bit to spare next month, I'll send the Legion a couple of quid. Yes! and if I win the sweep, I'll give them a couple of hundred or perhaps a thousand!"

But things didn't get better. You didn't have a bit to spare and you didn't win the sweep so you didn't do anything by way of a cash contribution.

Well, let us suppose there weren't enough other fellows. Let us suppose it is now August 1953. Those fellows who did come across, were chaps like you who didn't have any "surplus cash". They were digging it out of the same limited resources as you had.

Because there weren't enough of them, there wasn't enough money to do anything effective to change the trend of things. Instead of things getting better, things got worse.

That pamphlet about the "Defiance Campaign" — which could have helped to evoke understanding and sympathy for the campaign from the European electorate — didn't get published. Nor for that matter did any of the other pamphlets, all of which had something vital to say, and which collectively could have changed the trend of developments.

Then after a little while "Fighting Talk" wasn't coming out, and you heard a whisper that the officials and the staff hadn't been paid for months. Maybe you thought: "Geel! those blokes have got a lot of guts! I'd like to help them. If I've got a few quid at the end of the month I'll send it to them." But things

weren't any better at the end of the month, so you didn't send it.

Well, things went on getting worse and worse. You were out of a job. The car had been repossessed. You'd have liked to sell the house, but you couldn't find a buyer to take over the mortgage. Nobody had any money. You'd pawned your golf clubs and a couple of odds and ends to pay the rent. Your worry was: what were you going to give the kids to eat?

Or, if you had a business, you woke up one morning to find that you'd really HAD it! You had plenty of cover but people couldn't pay, so you couldn't pay, so you were out and the liquidators were in.

In any case, you'd got other troubles. The Republic wasn't doing so good by its second, third and fourth class citizens. You'd lost your pass and expected to get "picked up", if you went out to the pawn shop to trade the wife's wedding ring for a little bit of ready money. You'd get unemployment pay if only you were a "first class" citizen. But you weren't.

It wasn't safe in the streets anymore. You might get picked up by the Special Police as a suspected "resister" or beaten up as a suspected "collaborator" by the Resistance. You'd have liked to do something about the political situation, but didn't know where to start or whom to trust. All the chaps who knew and whom you could have trusted were in prison or in concentration camps.

Seriously, that could be the picture. To win this fight we don't only need members and their active support and participation, we need money — **YOUR MONEY AS WELL AS THAT OF ANYBODY ELSE WHO CAN BE PERSUADED TO GIVE.** Just as the Cost of Living has gone up and up, so the Cost of Defending our meagre liberties has risen. It is an urgent problem. It is not only the problem of the Committees and officials — it's your problem too! Success or failure depends on all of us.

It's not Charity we want — It's Insurance.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"I am sending you a cheque for £5 as a contribution from my side and will try to get more from others round about. It is a difficult process, however. The Legion has been doing wonders for the Ex-service man and it must keep up the good work."

G.W.B. (Colesberg).

"Enclosed postal order for £1, as a donation. I cannot afford a regular monthly contribution to the fighting fund, but I will send something every now and again.

"Congratulations on the objective approach to current problems in the 'Fighting Talk.' Best wishes."

B.R.N. (Natal).

"In your issue of August you reproduce a letter addressed by Hodgson to Strauss, from which it appears that the Legion considers a general election should be demanded *now*. I was not asked my view in this matter . . . If the Legion claims to be a democratic organisation, its first step should be to adopt the single transferrable vote system of proportional representation for the election of its branch and main committees . . . These officials of the Legion should consult its members before making any announcement on any subject . . ."

H.F.L. (Johannesburg).

### *Our Reply:*

Proportional representation is a tricky business and it would seem that H.F.L. knows less about it than he imagines. Pro. Rep. can be operated only when there are a number of different sections, groups, parties or territorial areas which can be voted for. In such a case a vote is cast not for an individual but for a group, party or section.

However, if H.F.L. is dissatisfied with the Committees which represent him, the remedy lies in his own hands. Let him become an active worker in the Johannesburg Branch. The more vigorous and outspoken he is, the more certain he will be of finding himself rapidly co-opted on to the Committee. And membership of the National Committee is open to all.

With regard to public announcements, these are made, not by officials of the Legion, but only on the authority and command of the National Committee, which is elected by delegate-representatives at the annual national conference.

*Editor.*



# THE ROOFS ARE OFF

By FATHER TREVOR HUDDLESTON, C.R.

SO much is being said, so many plans are being proposed, so many blueprints are being produced to solve the native housing problem in Johannesburg that we are in danger of overlooking the simple fact that these things do not produce houses.

It would be a very great relief if the authorities would for once stop talking about what they are going to do and get on with the job. For, if one thing is more obvious than any other, it is that the enemy of action is complacency and complacency is bred by the almost endless pronouncements which flow from the lips of our City Councillors and others.

Perhaps, therefore, it is somewhat illogical to add to these pronouncements by another article on the "Native-housing-problem". Yet, if complacency is one enemy, ignorance is perhaps even more dangerous in this matter. And the plain truth is that most people in Johannesburg, even those who would claim to be "liberal" and "progressive", are often as ignorant as those who do not want to know the facts. This is my only justification for writing at all.

## DISHONOURABLE BARGAIN.

FIRST, there is at present in the Johannesburg municipal area alone (exclusive, that is, of the peri-urban belt which covers Alexandra Township and the Kliptown-Albertynsville district) such a backlog in the provision of homes for our African people that approximately 15,000 families are without houses. Many of these families have had their names on the Council's waiting list for eight years.

SECONDLY, at the present moment the only contract on which work was actually started is one for 1,000 houses at Orlando. It is nearly a year since the Council decided to embark on this project: it will be over a year before the people are in occupation. It does not need much mathematical ability to see how long — at the present rate of progress — it will take for the authorities to catch up on the existing backlog.

THIRDLY, there are thousands of African families at present living in "temporary" shelters under the aegis of the City Council in Orlando itself and at the Moroka Emergency Camp — people who are the permanent labour force of this city and upon whose labour the wealth of Johannesburg largely depends.

FINALLY, in every location and township there are thousands of sub-tenants, sharing the houses of their more fortunate brethren or squatting in the corrugated iron shelters which abound in the backyards of Sophiatown, Newclare and Pimville.

Yet, with this appalling problem confronting them, the Johannesburg City Council has agreed to go forward with plans for removing all Africans from the Western Areas — depriving them of their freehold rights in the process — and has announced that this scheme will not affect in any way existing housing schemes. A more dishonourable bargain could hardly be imagined than that which the United Party in Johannesburg has struck with the Nationalist Government over this expropriation scheme. And, not only dishonourable, but impracticable and unnecessary as well: for a perfectly feasible and economic alternative has been produced by town-planning experts, which would remove slum conditions, but leave the bulk of the population where it is.

Why should these things be? And — more important — what is their effect on the already most critical problem of race relations?

## FATAL HABIT.

I believe that we can answer these questions only if we get rid, once for all, of the quite fatal South African habit of viewing them in the abstract. We think — all the time — in terms of "problems" instead of in terms of "opportunity": we speak — all the time — in abstractions instead of in terms of persons.

What I am trying to say is just this: that you cannot solve a housing "problem" (or any other problem for that matter) unless you can visualise what that problem means in terms of present human suffering; unless you can see its solution in terms of human peace and joy and fulfilment. A blueprint shows you none of these things: neither does it produce them. Let me take you then to just two places in Johannesburg — I could multiply them ten times and still not have covered the reality.

The first is a backyard in Edith Street, Sophiatown. It is midwinter and the wind is blowing the dust across the alley-ways, so that you are almost choked with it. A little group of men who have been working in the city all day come back to their homes in this yard — a row of corrugated iron shacks. Not very comfortable at the best of times, but at least providing a bit of shelter and a bed, and somewhere to cook the evening meal.

But tonight (it is about 9 o'clock) they find their women-folk and children huddled together in the yard, in the open, trying to keep warm round the brazier. The reason? The roofs of their homes have been stripped off and demolition is in progress. The public-health authorities have decided that this is a slum (and no one would deny it!) and have issued an order against the landlord. He has only two alternatives: to run the risk of prosecution and a heavy fine or to turn the sub-tenants out in the street. Reluctantly he chooses the latter, but where are they to go?

"IF NOBODY CARES . . ."

Ask the M.O.H. — it is "nothing to do with him". Ask the Manager of Non-European Affairs — "housing is a national, not a local problem". Ask the Mayor — "it is a matter for Committee". But these men have to work: their wives and children have to live — and a blueprint for a housing scheme at Meadowlands is not going to solve their problem today or even tomorrow.

Or come with me to the Squatters' Camp at Newclare. Twelve hundred people are living there at the moment under hessian and cardboard: they've been there for about three months — all through the coldest days of the win-





ter. And soon the rains will come. Yet only a quarter of a mile away — in South Newclare, the 'Russian' zone — are their own homes. The reason?

Superficially, the action of gangsters who by threat and violence have driven them out: the calculated and incomprehensible inaction of the police in refusing them protection: the fear of this strange force known as the 'Russians', whose motives seem to be a combination of hatred, greed and racial prejudice.

But these things are superficial. Behind and beneath the outward expression lies the inward reality: the deep-moving powers of frustration and utter instability. If the Western Areas Scheme goes through, there will be no permanent home for any of them: why not make as much as we can at the moment and leave the future to take care of itself? If nobody cares, why should we?

Now, if all this were a local affair — a slight though troublesome disorder in a notoriously difficult area — perhaps we could afford not to take it too seriously. I am convinced that it is nothing of the kind.

It is a symptom of a cancer which is eating into the very heart and centre of our society: of a cancer which will soon be inoperable and which will bring death.

### THE ACTED LIE

It is not just the pathetic, aimless, drifting policy which has led to the present housing shortage: this, too, is a symptom and not the disease itself.

*No! it is the shameless arrogance of a class which claims to represent Western civilisation and culture and which, on the basis of that claim, asserts its right to permanent supremacy in South Africa.*

*It is the acted lie which finds expression in the denial of elementary human rights on the grounds of a non-existent moral superiority. It is a challenge thrown in the face of God Who "made man in his own image and likeness" and Who Himself became Man. Houses are necessary for human beings only: homelessness is not a moral problem for lesser creatures — for, after all, they are not 'persons', only abstractions — only Natives.*

*And that is why the houses are not built: and that is why, if ever they are built in adequate numbers, it will be too late to save the social structure itself from absolute collapse.*

*We have already sown the wind: we now begin to reap the whirlwind.*

# KNOWLEDGE WILL HELP

(Continued from page 3)

be one of the most frightful wars, which has ever rent mankind and which would reduce Britain to a shambles overnight" . . . "I urge the Government to go for a four-power conference with Russia now."

Our resigning members apparently do not read "The Rand Daily Mail", in which consistently there appear editorials openly critical of America's policies in Korea, on the question of war with China, on the re-armament of Germany, on handing back millions of pounds to Krupps.

To be anti-war today inevitably entails strong criticism of the most aggressive nation . . . and that means America.

(c) Statement by Mr. R. L. F. Pike, Chairman of the United States House of Representatives Sub-Committee: "The means of delivering germs to enemy territory are simple and involve equipment of the type with which the services are now already well stocked . . . such as the containers used currently for dropping propaganda leaflets."

N.Y. Herald Tribune, April 6.

(d) Dr. James Endicott, President of the Canadian Peace Council, Methodist Minister and for 22 years a missionary in China: ". . . my reasons for believing that the present epidemics are not the result of neglect on the part of the Chinese authorities: Cholera is not a disease endemic to China. It was invariably introduced from the South (Indo-China, for instance) and in hot weather. There has not been a single case of cholera in China for two years, owing to the prophylactic precautions and excellent medical services introduced by the Chinese Government."

(e) Is it any more 'stupid' to use bacteriological warfare than to use atomic warfare?

(f) There seem to have been no allegations that U.N. P.O.W.'s have been badly treated in North Korean camps. On the contrary, U.S. military authorities, when told of excellent treatment by returned American P.O.W.'s, dismissed the treatment as 'propaganda'. A letter to his mother from 2nd. Lieut. Christoffel Lombard in No. 2 Camp at Pyonee Dong, said: "I am still very well and I do believe I am

getting fat. I am as contented as can be expected under the circumstances". (Daily Mail, Aug. 8.) Apparently the same cannot be said of the U.N. P.O.W. Camp at Koje Island.

(g) The Dean of Canterbury, vilified and ridiculed, brought back from China a letter to the Christians in Britain. The letter was signed by well over 400 Christians in China who hold positions of authority in the various church sects — Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Y.W.C.A., Y.M.C.A., Baptist, Congregational, etc. The Anglican Bishops derived their consecration from Canterbury, the spiritual centre of the Anglican denomination. Is it to be assumed that all these Christians are lying when they say that bacteriological warfare crimes are 'irrefutable and undeniable'?

### KNOWLEDGE — WISDOM

Obviously it is an impossible project to use the columns of our magazine to publish all the news that is not published in the daily papers. Obviously when "Fighting Talk" does carry hitherto unpublished news, there will be members to accuse the Legion of being this, that and the other thing. Equally obviously, however, there is a moral obligation and a political obligation on the Legion to pass on information, which may help members to a more realistic knowledge of and appreciation of facts which vitally affect the issue of war and peace.

There is, furthermore, an equal obligation on our members to keep themselves well-informed and to pass on the information to their friends and associates.

*Knowledge begetteth wisdom!*

### REHABILITATION.

*Vernon Barlow, of the National Institute for the Blind in London, recently listed a number of applications of the Braille system which have been developed in recent years. One of them is a stenographic machine which permits blind students to reach a speed of 130 words a minute and thus to follow lectures and speeches. The stenographic notes may be transcribed on ordinary typewriters.*



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## BOOK REVIEW

# Home Was Never Like This

"From Here to Eternity," by James Jones, published by Collins.

COVERING the period just prior to World War II to shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbour, this novel deals with life in America's Regular Army. Told through the eyes, ears and reactions of an Enlisted Man, an N.C.O. and an Officer, the story brings out more truly than any other of the war novels the drabness, boredom and misery of individual and collective life in the army in war and peace.

The pettiness of army politics, the jockeying for promotions in the different worlds of the N.C.O. and the Officer, the constant fear in both, and by all of getting themselves on someone or other's S . . . list the nepotism and its consequences on efficiency, morale and the behaviour patterns — all of these are depicted with an unerring brush.

And that other world, that of the enlisted man, is portrayed equally as faithfully. Even to the jockeying for fatigues. The irritations of a process that herds men together and which find expression in bullying and taking it out on one another.

What happens to a man, innocent of

any breach of Army Regs. and who cannot be victimised by means of them. therefore, who falls foul of his superior officer and is given "The Treatment" to make him conform — all of this is told with realism and understanding.

The incidence of the brutality of the Military Police and Military Prisons system, described here as taking place in the Schofield Stockade (but in a foreword by the author personally vouched for as having occurred in another stockade in the U.S.A. itself) brought back memories of stories of our own Detention Barracks.

The sex life of Service men is portrayed with all its sordidness, urgency and frustration. If it is pornographic, it is unfortunate. It is something that needs to be told.

It is this, perhaps, together with the brutality of the Stockade incident, which gave rise to the public outcry about the book in the U.S.A. and the subsequent setting up of a Special Committee of Investigation. It is a disturbing tale for any American Mother. Or for that matter for any mother of sons in this war-threatened world.

The novel has its moments of excitement in the action of the battle of Pearl Harbour, but this does not affect the total picture of the general misery, frustration and drabness of life in the army; if anything it serves to bring it into relief and to underline it.

Despite its length, certain weaknesses of construction and the vernacular with the — inevitable in such a novel — incessant interspersing of four letter words, the reader's interest is gripped and held up to the rather inadequate ending. Ex-servicemen will find it of particular interest, since it will recall to them the more unpleasant side of the war years and evoke again the appropriate emotions they experienced then.

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# Time To Choose Your Side

By CIVITAS

THE total number of volunteers arrested in the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign is, at the moment of writing, 3,356. This total has accumulated in the course of some hundreds of separate "incidents" throughout the country. In no case has there been violence of any kind.

These are substantial achievements and they are causing the Government a great deal of concern. It has become clear that there are large numbers of non-Europeans who are prepared to face the sentences normally imposed for contraventions of pass laws and apartheid regulations and that the campaign cannot be halted by merely applying these sentences.

Various counter-measures have been suggested. Mr. Swart's suggestion was, of course, corporal punishment. Mr. Swart's mind seems to concentrate habitually on that. A speaker on the S.A.B.C. giving what was alleged to be a survey of South African affairs, had a more far-reaching proposal. He suggested that labour camps be established in the Reserves, to which 'passive resisters' would be sent and subjected to 'discipline' by their tribal chiefs.

## PASSIVE RESISTANCE

There is one formidable difficulty in the way of both these proposals or of any other which seeks to impose special penalties on passive resisters. This is the difficulty of framing a law which can adequately distinguish between a man who goes without a pass because he cannot get one and a man who goes without a pass because he disapproves of pass laws.

How is the crime of passive resistance to be defined? The volunteers need not necessarily operate in large batches and carry flags and badges. Even if they do continue with these methods, it will need a very skilful draftsman to frame a law to cover them effectively. If they resort to individual acts, the task will become quite impossible.

The Government's only course, therefore, is to try to break the movement by drastic action against its leaders. A start has already been made with the arrest of a number of leaders under the Suppression of Communism Act. The Crown in this prosecution will apparently allege that the Defiance Campaign amounts to Communism as defined in the Act. Part

of the definition of Communism reads as follows:

"... any doctrine or scheme . . . which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic change within the Union . . . by unlawful acts or omissions or by the threat of such acts or omissions."

If convicted under this clause, the leaders will face prison sentences which may extend to 10 years.

## UNDETERRED

This threat has failed to deter the movement. The leaders have announced their intention to intensify the Campaign and the African National Congress Executive is meeting shortly to finalise its plans for the new phase. The leaders state that they still have a large number of volunteers in hand and more are coming in every day. Clearly this is a movement which is deriving momentum from the broad mass of the people and one which will not easily be halted. It is a movement in which the non-European peoples are increasingly reposing their hopes for a better and freer life.

Under the circumstances, it is becoming ever more important for progressive Europeans to define their attitude towards the Campaign. In the eyes of the Non-Europeans, support for the Campaign is becoming the touchstone by which the sincerity of European liberals is judged. No more vital contribution to race harmony can be made by a European today than by showing the Non-Europeans that they have allies in their heavy task.

## THE MORAL ISSUE

White South Africa is faced with a very simple moral issue today. We are not being asked to associate ourselves with violence, with sedition or with revolution. The issue is: do we side with the common people of this country who are trying to create democracy or do we side with the Government which is using all its apparatus of power to perpetuate racialism?

There is no third way.

## JULY 3-IN-ONE

The July Three-in-One took the form of a play-reading, presented jointly with the Mercury Players. The Play, "Winter Journey", was written by Clifford Odets who wrote "Waiting for Lefty" and "Till the Day I Die", but it hardly qualifies to come under the heading of "Committed Drama" — drama tackling social problems. The play does, however, reveal the author's human attitudes to his characters which are not inconsistent with the powerful propagandist of the thirties, and it is undoubtedly 'good theatre'. Beryl Bregman, John Allen, Leon Cohen, Mike Snipper and Beryl Gordon were in the cast, and Legionnaires Roy Cousins and Ernest Ginsberg, who played the lead, gave good accounts of themselves.

## WESTERN CIVILISATION.

The Institute of Race Relations in its recent publication, ". . . Go forward in Faith", gave its definition of the basic values of Western Civilisation.

- belief in the value of the individual human being and his right, by virtue of his humanity, to the fullest expression and development compatible with similar rights of other individuals within the pattern of a democratic state;
- belief in the value of democratic society with its accepted freedoms, rights and duties;
- acceptance of the brotherhood of man in its Christian interpretation.







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