

# FIGHTING TALK

ORGAN OF THE SPRINGBOK LEGION

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## STOP CALLING FOR CONVENTIONS

**T**HE call for a new South African Convention is gathering ground, chiefly in Natal. Cashing in on the popular hostility to the Government's breach of the constitution, the proponents of the idea are holding the Convention out as a cure-all and a solution to all the deep issues of our times.

The idea is not a new one. It has popped up in different guises in South African politics from time to time. In its most widely canvassed form, it is the idea of "taking the native question out of the field of party politics." Its supporters speak as though it is the mantle of Parliament that causes disputes between political parties on problems of the native people. They try hard to convince themselves, and us, that if only elected representatives of the white people met in another hall, without the presence of leaders, whips and Hansard writers, a sudden remarkable unity of views would emerge, a unity which can never emerge in Parliament itself.

The mystical reasons for the belief are hard to find. Still harder to discover are the reasons held by United Party leaders in Natal, and gradually spreading to the party throughout the country, that if only elected representatives from all constituencies gathered in a meeting called "The South African Convention" instead of in the House of Assembly, magically and mysteriously a basis of agreement would be found for a constitution which would guarantee the basic liberties of the people.

It is a nice picture. Mr. Strauss solemnly proposing that the Supreme Court be the final arbiter of whether Acts of Parliament are legal in terms of the new constitution, and Dr. Malan solemnly supporting. Or. Mr. Lawrence proposing that the Coloured voters of the Cape be enrolled on a common roll with Europeans, and Dr. Donges solemnly agreeing. A nice picture. If the reality were not so tragic, it would be comedy in high vein.

Yet it is essentially this picture, of the lion and the lamb lying down together

to protect our liberties, that the leaders of the Convention movement seek to sell.

Nevertheless, the proposal cannot be laughed aside. The Natal United Party is not a joke, but a serious body with apparent support of the majority of Natalians. It does not propose the Convention in order to raise a laugh.

What then is the significance of the proposal. There can be only one meaning to it, if it is seriously proposed. And that is that at the Convention a basis of agreement is to be sought between the United Party and the Nationalist Party (or, if they do not appear as parties, between the fascists and the democrats) on what guarantees of liberty are to exist in South Africa. Such an agreement can only be reached on the basis of the United Party surrendering some of their

principles in order to overcome some of the Nationalists' intransigent objections to the present constitutional safeguards.

Looked at in this way, the Convention, far from being a joke becomes a sinister manoeuvre, threatening our present constitutional rights. Far from representing the fighting anti-Nationalist feelings of the people of Natal, it is in fact the beginning of a retreat from the present "No interference with the constitution" stand.

Natal, we fear is being led up the garden path by the proponents of a Convention. While the people cry "Forward", the leaders advance backwards.

If this is not the meaning of the Convention call, we would like to know what it is. Is it perhaps a political stunt, not seriously meant? If so, it is time it was disowned by the United Party. This is a time for struggle against the Government, not for smart-aleck stunts, nor for sounding the retreat before the battle has been entered.

## Learn from Wakkerstroom

**T**HE harsh reality of the 2,000 vote Nationalist majority at Wakkerstroom gives the answer direct to Mr. Strauss for his assertion, elsewhere in this issue, that he is "... confident that the policy of the United Party and its allies in the Democratic Front ... will command the support of the great majority of the electorate at the next general election."

It should now be obvious beyond arguing that elections cannot be won on the policies enunciated by the United Party leader at Paarl and the Zoo Lake — policies which promise to change only the voting qualifications of British immigrants, to make Communism punishable by hanging rather than a ten-year prison sentence, and to leave the whole remaining mountain of Nationalist legislation intact, except for minor administrative sugaring of the pill.

It is time for change, for bold progressive policies of co-operation IN STRUGGLE of all the Government's thousand enemies; time for policies of extending liberties and raising living standards of all South Africans, black and white; and above all time for fighting with both hands, with bold and unconventional methods such as those proposed in the pamphlet "Action Stations".

If Wakkerstroom does not awaken Mr. Strauss, his party and its Torch Commando allies to that simple fact, then the writing is on the wall for them, for us and for South African democracy.

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## GUEST WRITERS' CORNER

## GERM WARFARE IS A REALITY

D. N. Pritt, Q.C., answers questions

**T**HE following questions concerning the use of bacteriological weapons in the war in Korea were put to Mr. D. N. Pritt, Q.C., world-famous barrister, politician and journalist, during his recent visit to Johannesburg.

*Q.: Do you believe that germ warfare is actually being practised in Korea, and by whom?*

*A.:* Yes, I do. I believe that it is being practised by the United Nations forces, probably the Americans.

*Q.: What parts of the country have suffered from this type of warfare?*

*A.:* From my information, parts of North Korea and Northern China were involved.

*Q.: Where did your information come from?*

*A.:* The information was collected by a commission of enquiry which went to Korea last year to investigate allegations of atrocities. There was no question of bacteriological warfare being used until they were actually on their way, whereupon the members of the commission were asked to enquire into these allegations too.

*Q.: Who did the commission consist of, and who was responsible for sending them in the first place?*

*A.:* The commission consisted of legal people, each from a different country and all eminent in their field. There were practising lawyers from Belgium, Brazil, France, Britain, and a judge from Poland. They were sent by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, of which I am chairman.

*Q.: How was the evidence collected?*

*A.:* Mostly by interviewing people who were actually involved. They heard evidence from Chinese and North Korean scientists, who gave expert evidence regarding the effect of these germs and also from peasants and villagers who had found germ-carrying insects as well as the containers in which these insects were dropped.

*Q.: Was the commission satisfied as to the accuracy of the evidence?*

*A.:* Largely, yes. The people interviewed were normal, average witnesses. It would have been difficult, extremely difficult, for the authorities to have concocted the whole story. Many trick questions were put to the witnesses by the commissioners during cross-examination in an effort to trip them up, but the final report indicates that the evidence was accurate.

*Q.: What was the nature of the evidence?*

*A.:* The bulk of the evidence consisted of witnesses who confirmed that insects carrying plague, cholera and typhus germs were found in regions and climates in which they could not normally live. And not in towns or villages, but in the countryside, on rocks and in the mountains. American planes had been heard and seen to pass over these regions a few hours previously without dropping bombs, but were seen to drop something. These were afterwards found to be American-type containers, in which a number of insects were found, in addition to those found nearby. There were I may add, outbreaks of cholera, typhus and plague in these regions shortly afterwards, but they were fortunately not allowed to develop into major epidemics. It is true, of course, that that part of the world has had cholera and other epidemics in the past, but never at the height of winter, and rarely did the outbreak start in the rural districts, but almost always in the big cities where conditions were conducive to the spread of such diseases. When the commission returned to Europe and published its findings, the scientific evidence was confirmed by Western bacteriologists as being consistent with the allegation.

*Q.: Is the written report of the commission available to any who wish to study it?*

*A.:* Yes, the report can be obtained by anybody from the Association's headquarters.

*Q.: Mr. Pritt, do you believe that the Americans are capable of such a terrible method of warfare?*

*A.:* The average American citizen —

of course not! But I believe that the American army chiefs, the people who dropped two atom bombs on crowded cities, solely for the purpose of testing this ghastly weapon were and are capable of dropping germ-carrying insects over enemy territory for the same purpose.

*Q.: It has been asserted by some, that these insects were dropped by the Chinese and North Koreans themselves in order to implicate the Americans. Do you think this is likely?*

*A.:* Definitely not. The North Korean and Chinese people, particularly the former, need no extra artificial reasons for hating the Americans; they have more than sufficient cause without resorting to manufactured evidence, and their authorities would be extremely foolish to try such an unworkable stunt on their own people.

*Q.: How does the average man in the street in America as well as in Europe react to the idea of germ warfare?*

*A.:* There is no question but that the ordinary people all over the world regard it with the greatest horror. I believe that it is only public opinion which is preventing the warmakers from using these and other terrible weapons on an open and large scale. We all remember how quickly we in Europe reacted to the news of the proposed dropping of atom bombs by General MacArthur.

*Q.: What books have you written on the Korean war?*

*A.:* I wrote a pamphlet entitled "Light on Korea", which I believe to contain a fair presentation of the other point of view in the Korean tragedy. Unfortunately this book has been banned in South Africa. I feel it is up to all of us to put as much pressure as possible on our respective governments in order to bring this conflict to a speedy conclusion.

## BARBARISM.

*"I believe we should have total preparedness based upon the laws of the jungle, that everyone should learn every art and science of killing. I do not think war should be restricted to armies, navies and air forces or that there should be any restrictions concerning methods or weapons of destruction. I would approve bacteriological warfare, gas, atomic and hydrogen bombs and intercontinental rockets. I would not ask mercy for hospitals, churches, educational institutions or special groups."*

Ellwood Cecil Nance, President of the University of Tampa, Florida, U.S.A.

## IS DIE V.P. BANG VIR SY EIE WAPENS?

DIE V.P. is voorwaar 'n snaakse party, wat bang is om gebruik te maak van sy eie skietgoed. Insteede wend hulle klipharde pogings aan om die wapens van die Nasionale Party te leen of na te boots.

Ons dink bv. aan die spektakel wat die V.P. gebied het tydens die regering se aanval op die „United Democratic Fund” of liever op die V.P. om hulle besit van die fonds. Enige redelike mens sou verwag het dat hulle sou antwoord „Natuurlik het ons 'n fonds en dit is heeltemal waar dat dit 'n miljoen pond sterk is, en ons gaan elke pennie daarvan aanwend om die Nasionale Party uit die saal te lig.” Maar nee, nie die V.P. nie; soos 'n hond wat vet gesteel het blaas hulle druipter die aftog. Hierdie mense kan nou maar eenmaal nie leer dat 'n politieke stryd nie gewen kan word deur voortdurend op die verdediging terug te val en so die inisiatief aan jou teenstander besorg.

### EN SY EIE MENSE IS SONDER LEIDING.

As Mnr. Strauss se droom verwesenlik word sal hy eersdaags die leier wees

van een-tiende van die volgelinge van die Nasionale Party. Dit sou dan volgens hom nodig wees om 'n tiende van die regering se ondersteuners oor te haal om die V.P. te steun om die volgende verkiesing te wen. Hoe dit gedoen moet word, en of die V.P. se beginsels nog verder verwater moet word om hierdie mense tegemoet te kom is iets waarvoor Mnr. Strauss egter swyg. Intussen smag sy eie ondersteuners wat terloops die oorgrote meerderheid van die bevolking uitmaak na positiewe leiding. Mnr. Strauss sal goed doen om sy eie magte te monster en dié van die Nasionale Party aan hulle oor te laat.

Deur ons plan vir 'n landswye stilstand van werk te aanvaar kan hy die regering dwing om onmiddellik verkiesing uit te skryf, in watter geval die V.P. kan wen sonder die hulp van 'n enkele Nat. volgelinge.

### DIE GEVAL VAN JERLING.

So Mnr. J. D. Jerling vroeër leidende figuur van die Ossewabrandwag is deur die V.P. met ope arms ontvang aan die boesem gedruk en op albei wange gesoen. Terselfdertyd word die Springboklegioen wie se lede die vermetelheid gehad het om gedurende die laaste oorlog teen die vyande van Suid-Afrika en die vriende van die Ossewabrandwag te gaan veg, deur dieselfde party se leier geredudeer.

Die ergste van alles is die feit dat die legioen vandag uitgemaak word vir onverantwoordelikheid deur dieselfde man vir wie dit nog altyd daadwerklik gesteun het, en omdat dit nog altyd onverpoos geveg het teen Mnr. Jerling se vorige vriende, en vandag die enigste organisasie in die land is wat 'n plan het om Suid-Afrika te red van die soort dwingelandy waarna die organisasie waarvan Mnr. Jerling tot onlangs behoort het strewe.

### PRICE CUTS.

The Suppression of Communism Act has tended to make people afraid of making any reference whatsoever to Communism or Socialism as economic systems. Let us not forget, however, that socialists — and that is all that Russia claims to be economically . . . communism has still to come . . . maintain that their economic system ultimately lower prices and higher standards of living.

Interesting, therefore, to read of price-cuts — not just bargain sales! — in the U.S.S.R. and China, averaging 11 per cent as well as Czecho-Slovakia, Poland and Rumania. Czecho-Slovakia's budget shows 18.2 per cent. on social and cultural needs and 6.9% on defence. Poland has made provision for a big expansion in schools, village cinemas and village medical stations.

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# THEY FIGHT TO LIVE

**JUNE 26th** has been fixed as the day upon which the Non-European National organisations will put their "Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign" into operation. By the time this article goes to press, it should be possible to judge how far the campaign has won the support of the Non-European masses; at present it is very difficult to form an opinion on this point.

When the decision to defy the discriminatory laws was taken nearly six months ago by the African National Congress and the S.A. Indian Congress, a great many details still remained to be worked out. All that was settled was that there should be some form of civil disobedience.

## TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.

In subsequent discussion, it has become clear that there are broadly two schools of thought on the form which the campaign should take. The first school, strongly influenced by the ideas of Gandhi, relies upon the moral effect of acts of self-sacrifice by a few leaders. They consider that if men who are known as leaders of the Non-European peoples submit to imprisonment as a protest against segregation, a far reaching effect will be produced. The ordinary people will be inspired by their leaders' example, overseas opinion will be shocked and Europeans will be filled with doubts as to the morality of the present system.

The second school of thought rejects the idea that the example of a few martyrs can significantly affect the course of history. They believe that passive resistance can only be a useful political weapon if it is carried out on a mass basis. On this view, the ultimate objective of the campaign must be to render the administration of apartheid laws impossible. If this objective is not achieved, the campaign will nevertheless serve the purpose of drawing masses of people into political activity of a very practical kind, thereby increasing their political consciousness.

It seems that the second school of thought has largely prevailed in recent discussions. After the meetings and rallies on April 6th, which were intended to test the enthusiasm of the Non-European public for the general idea of the campaign, the "Action Committee" of the Congresses decided to call for the enrolment of 10,000 volunteers to launch the campaign on and after June 26th. This decision seems to indicate that a mass basis for the campaign is planned.

## VOLUNTEER ARMY.

According to statements recently issued by officials of the Congresses, re-

cruiting for the "volunteer army" is proceeding briskly and the target of 10,000 volunteers is in sight. The next step will thus be large-scale action by these volunteers.

Strong emphasis is laid by the movement's leaders on the fact that the volunteers will act in a strictly non-violent manner. Only responsible and disciplined persons are being accepted as volunteers, say the leaders. Otherwise, far more than 10,000 could have been obtained.

Exactly what laws are to be defied and in what way has not yet been revealed and no doubt will not be revealed in advance. Amongst the possibilities which have been mentioned are refusal to carry passes, entry of railway stations through "Europeans only" entrances, crossing of provincial borders without permits, etc. Where leaders receive prohibitions under the Suppression of Communism Act, their defiance of these prohibitions will form part of the campaign. The general policy of the volunteers will be to accept prison sentences instead of a fine. While this attitude may originate in the "self-sacrifice" conception, it has a good deal of practical point to it, in that a sudden large increase in the prison population would constitute a serious embarrassment to the authorities. If a sufficient number of people were to court imprisonment to render the country's prison system unworkable, the Government would be compelled to come to terms in some way with the Non-Europeans.

## WHAT PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS?

What are the prospects of such a result being achieved? Ten thousand volunteers are, of course, not merely enough to achieve it. In a country where there are about a million criminal prosecutions every year, an extra ten thousand could be absorbed without an intolerable strain on the administration. A Government which is not very particular about the conditions under which it houses prisoners could no doubt cope with a substantial influx.

The ultimate success of the campaign, then, will depend on the extent to which the first 10,000 volunteers can inspire a still larger number to follow their ex-

ample. The temper and morale of the Non-European people and the organising ability of their Congresses will be the main factors which will influence the outcome, but these factors will in turn depend on others. One of the things which will undoubtedly influence the course of the campaign will be the reaction to it of liberal-minded Europeans. If the Europeans can feel that they are fighting together with Europeans' friends against an ideology supported merely by certain political parties, their morale must be higher than if they receive the impression that the entire European race is united against them.

Progressive Europeans therefore have an important task in connection with the campaign. It is their duty to combat the prejudice which will no doubt be spread by even the "liberal" Press and to try to gain maximum moral support for the Congresses' campaign.

## SOME QUESTIONS.

This may strike some very well-meaning liberals as a tall order. To support Non-Europeans in an open conflict with the law does not come easily to the average European. To those decent, democratic citizens who sympathise with the objectives of the campaign but find its methods alarming, the Non-European people put the following questions:—

1. Do you consider that a Jew in Nazi Germany was morally obliged to obey Nazi laws?
2. If not, do you agree that the sanctity of laws depend on its morality and disappears when the law is immoral?
3. If so, do you agree that a stage can be reached when it is right for a good citizen to break the law?
4. Has the stage not been reached when the humiliation and oppression of a voteless people becomes the central item in the policy of a ruthless Government?
5. If the Non-Europeans win their demands, will you ever have to fear a Nationalist Government again?

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## "MONTSERRAT"

THREE years ago Cecil Williams decided that the Legion should produce a play to raise badly-needed funds for the Legion. He had a play which tackled a social problem and in itself furthered one of the aims of the Legion, racial tolerance. The play was "Home of the Brave"; I need hardly tell you that it aroused tremendous enthusiasm among the public and made a good deal of money. The profits of that play were to enable us to effectively rally public opinion against the anti-Communist Act and the Nat's subsequent assaults on our democratic structure.

Eighteen months later, with our financial resources again stretched to breaking point, Cecil found another play which was excellent theatre (and therefore a potential box-office success) and of definite social significance. Differences of opinion on the N.E.C. delayed the presentation of "Deep are the Roots" six months but eventually, in October 1951, it opened at the Library Theatre.

The atmosphere was tense on the opening night. The play attacked the most deeply rooted prejudices of the South African audience but thanks to intelligent direction, skilful writing and sincere performances (particularly from Joyce Fowler) there was an extraordinary demonstration of enthusiasm from the house which was to be repeated every night for the rest of the run.

Cecil produced the play again in Cape Town with a fresh cast and, working under extremely difficult circumstances, scored another triumph, both artistic and financial.

In "Montserrat", which opened at the Library Theatre on July 1st, Cecil believes he has a worthy successor to "Home of the Brave"

and "Deep are the Roots." The theme, of political courage put to the test, is most timely. Every day we hear of people who are being forced to choose between their own (and their families') safety and security and their convictions.

The play, which has been adapted by Lillian Hellman from a French play by Robles, is set in Venezuela at the time of the struggle for national liberation from Spanish tyranny. Montserrat, a young, idealistic Spanish officer has been caught assisting Bolivar, leader of the Resistance. Six people are picked at random from the streets and given one hour in which to convince Montserrat that he must reveal the hiding place of Bolivar; otherwise all six will be shot. That is the central situation of this tensely dramatic play.

The part of Montserrat is being played by Ronald Wallace, well known for his work for National Theatre, and other well-known local character actors are Raymond Matuson, Ricky Arden, Cillah Jaspán (all in "Deep are the Roots") and Simon Swindell, who was so impressive in "The Browning Version". The most difficult role, that of the sadistic Colonel Izquierdo is played by Michael Drin, who came from Cape Town to play the part. He gave a widely acclaimed performance as the Senator in the Cape Town production of "Deep are the Roots."

At the time of writing we do not know if Cecil has "done it again". There are many imponderables which make it difficult to estimate in advance a theatrical success. But with a strong play and a good cast we believe he has the ingredients to repeat his previous success in putting forward worthwhile ideas whilst making ammunition for democracy — hard cash.

## WAR FILMS

SINCE the days of the early silent films, producers have been attracted to war films by the romantic possibilities of spectacular battle scenes and heroics. But there have been film artists who have truthfully brought to war films their inspired observation of men in combat and they have created something of more lasting value.

From about 1920 until the early 1930's a great number of pacifist novels, plays and films were made, many of them very effectively. One of the most outstanding of these novels, "All Quiet on the Western Front" by Remarque, was filmed under the direction of Lewis Milestone. This director who has made films of greatly varying standards, brought to "All Quiet" not only great technical resource and an eloquent style but unusual feeling and sincerity. The film was remarkable on many counts, — for Milestone's grasp of the situation, for the manner in which he squarely faced the horror of the situations and never lapsed to sentimentality in the scene of peace and beauty.

"All Quiet" was frankly pacifist. It stated forcefully that soldiers did not hate the enemy but were made to kill their fellow-men for self-preservation. The guilt for the war was laid at the doors of the big men who governed the countries and stayed safely at home to pile up war profits.

In "The Purple Heart" and "A Walk in the Sun", directed by Milestone during the 1939-1945 War the position is different. Here there is an acceptance of the necessity of war, tinged with regret and compassion. "The Purple Heart" is an account of the trial, torture, and execution of captured American Airmen in Japan. Despite its theme

(Continued on page 15)

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## BRANCH



## ITEMS

### STILL "ACTION STATIONS".

THE distribution of "Action Stations" and the leaflet supporting it, entailed an enormous amount of work for Branch members. In Johannesburg 20,000 envelopes had to be addressed and despatched with pamphlets inserted, but as usual every one tackled their share of the work with good humour and the operation was quickly completed.

Percy Cohen and Barney Fehler rushed 30,000 leaflets and pamphlets to Durban by car, where local members assisted in a hectic distribution amongst the crowd at the protest meeting calling for a National Convention. Unfortunately some well-known Durban members were conspicuous by their absence, but all the more credit to those who worked so effectively.

\* \* \* \*

### AND LEAFLETS.

OTHER branches are busy distributing leaflets and pamphlets at every suitable opportunity. Among those who would welcome some help are Mr. Vieyra of Brakpan, Dave Katzeff of Pretoria, Syd Matus of Randfontein, Harry Chafkin of Benoni, Mannie Baker and Stan Campbell of Germiston, Pera Bennun of Port Elizabeth and Max Kalley of Cape Town.

The Johannesburg Branch seized upon the United Party Rally at Zoo Lake as an excellent opportunity of getting the leaflet to the people who need to read it. Eight thousand leaflets and one thousand pamphlets were distributed during the afternoon. Members are busy distributing at Torch Commando meetings. Operations were successfully carried out at Kensington and Darragh Hall. The Vrededorp meeting turned out to be quite useless for this purpose, since it was more of a free fight than a meeting.

\* \* \* \*

### STOPPAGE OF WORK.

THE June Three-in-One took the form of a public meeting on the ques-

tion of a 'stoppage of Commerce and Industry'. Piet Beyleveld gave an outline of the Legion's history, with particular emphasis on our ability to analyse correctly and take appropriate action. Jack Hodgson analysed the present political situation and gave well-reasoned support for the call for a "stoppage". A number of questions were put from the floor which were intelligently handled by our National Secretary. Everyone present must have gone away doubly convinced of the correctness of the Legion's policy.

Active Legionnaires in Johannesburg are out on a drive to sell guinea seats for the gala premiere of "Montserrat". Cecil Williams's new production. One of our women members who had been inactive of late sold seventeen tickets in two days. "I'm quite useless at selling things," she said modestly. Oh for a few more such useless workers!

## UIT DIE "BLIKFAKKEL"

### BELONING.

Die Blikfakkel onderneem om elke maand 'n van 'n vooraanstaande Nasionalis verklaring te druk en enige Nasionalis uit te daag om die waarheid daarvan te ontken.

Die uitdaging word ondersteun deur £500 wat aan enige persoon gegee sal word wat kan bewys dat die verklaring verkeerd is.

Ontkenning sal aan 'n onpartydige paneel van beoordelaars gestuur word wie se besluit finaal sal wees.

Dié maand se verklaring is as volg:

„Ek wil persoonlik graag die stemreg aan die kleurling-vroue gee.”—(Dr. D. F. Malan.)

## A NEW PAMPHLET FROM THE LEGION

THE "Defy the Unjust Laws" Campaign which start on the 26th of June and which is being organised by the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress and the Franchise Action Council is the subject of the latest Springbok Legion pamphlet.

Written strongly and well, the pamphlet emphasises that this is no campaign of race hatred directed against white people as such. It is a campaign of defiance against all the tyranny and oppression for which the Nationalist Government stands; against all threats and brutality, all the deprivations on liberty which face non-white and white South Africans alike.

The writer points out that a concentrated barrage of hate from the Nationalist propaganda machine will be directed against this campaign. It will be represented as a Black Revolt organised by Communist agitators. Every effort will be made to cloud the issue and to stampede the whites into a blind and panic-stricken opposition. This cannot and must not be allowed to happen. White anti-Nationalists must realise, with calmness and with logic, that this struggle of the African, Indian and Coloured People is part and parcel of their own struggle; a struggle which can only be won if all Anti-Nationalists are prepared to work in the closest co-operation.

In so stating the case for the "Defy Unjust Laws" Campaign, and once again ranging the Springbok Legion on the side of Freedom and Justice, this pamphlet must take a proud place in the growing library of Legion publications.



# VREDEDORP AND ALAMEIN

Some post-battle reflections by Peter L. Anderson

IT is hard to speak calmly of men with broken heads and broken limbs. Yet I will try to speak calmly, because I know that unless the lessons of the battle of Vrededorp are learnt, there will be more broken heads and broken limbs, and the pickhandle of the storm-troops will rule through the land.

I have seen stoning before, and the merciless use of bicycle chains and blackjacks and knuckledusters, although perhaps not so many gathered at one place. I saw them in the pre-war days when Robey Leibrandt and Weichardt were building their Greyshirt storm-troops, and training them in action at anti-Nazi meetings at the Union Grounds. I saw them in 1945 and '46 when the hoodlum gangs were practicing and perfecting the Vrededorp tactics against Communist speakers at the City Hall steps, while the Sunday night crowds drifted peacefully and indifferently to church or to concerts. I know that the Torch-men's heads were not the first to be broken by the storm-troops in the battle to save South Africa from fascism.

But I know more than this. I know that through the years which have passed, at all those meetings where the storm-troopers practice, warnings were given that those who tolerated storm-troop tactics would live to find the storm-troops ranged against them. I know that the democratic press turned a deaf ear to the warnings. I know that the United Party, its leaders and its former cabinet ministers preferred to look the other way.

And now the warnings have come home to roost, and democrats and anti-fascists are in hospital, and political terrorism stalks the United Party and all Malan's opposition. The wheel has turned full turn. Where once Dadoo warned and Smith refused to hear, now Strauss warns and Malan looks the other way.

I try to speak calmly, because it is now time to consider what to do, before it is too late to do anything but knuckle under to the bicycle-chain stormtroopers.

I try to think calmly of what we have learned from Vrededorp, and what it means for our future. I think of our leaders at the Vrededorp battle continually warning us not to fight, reminding us that we are men of peace, acting constitutionally. And I think that because of that advice, the storm-troops who came to fight, fought, went away,

and live to fight again another day. I know that because we held our peace we will have more battles like Vrededorp, more broken heads, and further inroads on our freedom of speech and our right to organise against Malan's fascism. I am reminded of the well-meant but disastrous policies of war-time pacifists, telling us to defeat the enemy by turning the other cheek, and succeeding only in disarming us and making our defeat more likely.

I think of the police acting as body-guard for the stormtroopers at Vrededorp, as I saw them act before at the City Hall steps and the Union Grounds. And I think too of the repeated defence of the policy by Malan's Government, and their refusal to investigate or question their partiality. Now that I have seen them in action at the Garment Workers' meeting and at Vrededorp, I know that the police force is no longer an impartial body of men seeking to keep the law, but a part of the Government apparatus assisting in the foisting of Malan's policies of fascism on the South African people. The realisation is dawning on me that the struggle against Malan will only be won when we see that this is true whether police action concerns anti-pass demonstrations at Odendaal or Garment Workers' meetings at the City Hall steps.

We have learned things at Vrededorp. And now we must turn our minds speedily and calmly to the question of what is to be done. Can Nationalist storm-trooperism be defeated legally, constitutionally, peacefully by hearing the other cheek and waiting for a better day? Vrededorp answers no. Because Vrededorp is itself the result of such a policy pursued over years.

I believe that the time has come when there can be no hesitation. If we do not act now to defeat Malan and the stonier terror he has set in action, it will soon be too late. Vrededorp helped strengthen that belief. There is as yet only one proposal before the South African people. And that is the proposal for a one-day national standstill of commerce and industry to unseat the Government.

I have been asked: Is the proposal constitutional? I neither know or care. I ask rather: Will it be effective? It is not that I have no regard for law and order. It is that I know that there will be neither law nor order if stormtrooper action is not defeated; and I think it is time Mr. Strauss should know that too. I did not join the army because I like war, but because I know there could be no peace without defeat of Nazism.

And now I know that South African Nazism cannot be defeated by insistence on parliamentary action only, or by relying on the impartiality of the police, or by sitting idly by while hoodlums gather and perfect their weapons for the destruction of parliament and law and order.

It is not enough that I should know it, Mr. Strauss should know it, and act accordingly. The Torch Commando, which suffered the broken heads, should know it, and act accordingly. I believe from what I saw of anti-fascists at Vrededorp that thousands will follow a lead for action — be it constitutional or not — if it were given. And I believe that if the Torch Commando fails to give that lead, Vrededorp will be repeated throughout the land till none are safe to speak.



# THE LESSON OF BELGIUM

THERE are many parallels in recent history to the constitutional crisis through which South Africa is passing at the present time. The end of World War II found a virtual epidemic of pro-fascist cabinets, collaborationist ministers, traitors — actual and potential — at large in most of the countries of the world.

In few countries outside South Africa did they actually succeed in assuming the reins of powers. But they made very strenuous attempts to, indeed, and the manner in which various peoples foiled these attempts is worthy of the closest study.

Here we elect to throw the spotlight on events in Belgium in 1950, because the Belgian crisis offers in many respects a parallel to our present crisis so close as to offer us — the Democra-

There are times in every struggle when the retreat must stop before it becomes a rout. Such times were Stalingrad, and Alamein. The decision to turn and fight turned retreat into victory. Vrededorp could be such a turning point, turning retreat into attack and victory. But if its lessons are not learnt, Vrededorp can be just another of those sorry Tobraks which litter the path of our democracy over the past twenty years.

And now I ask — and the question demands an answer — will the Torch Commando turn and fight before it is too late?

tic peoples of this country — a ready-made blue-print, as it were, of the tactics and plans we should follow if we are to rid ourselves of the Nazi collaborators who are now busy trying to entrench themselves in power.

The central figure in the Belgian drama was, of course, Leopold III who, at the commencement of the Nazi invasion of Europe, surrendered his country to the Germans without affording his people the least opportunity to resist the invader. It may almost be said that by that act of treason Leopold created the Dunkirk debacle which led to the Nazi conquest of Europe and the subsequent attack on Russia.

It cost millions of lives and years of bitter suffering to undo the work which Leopold III carried out in a matter of hours, and when the millions had died and the ageing years had passed away and Belgium was liberated at length from the Nazi yoke, the majority of Belgians found, if one may be permitted an understatement, that they bore no particular love for their former Monarch.

One must, unfortunately, refer to a majority of Belgians, because there were — as in South Africa today — a minority, led by the Catholic Social party, who could still bring themselves to make a common cause with their Nazi King, who were for granting an amnesty to von Falkenhayn, the ex-German Administrator of Hitler's Belgian colony, and reinstating Leopold on the throne of Belgium.

When, in the beginning of 1950, Leopold at the instigation of the C.S.P. took the bit between his teeth and announced his intention of ending the regency of Prince Charles and resuming his place as the head of the state, a crisis was immediately precipitated. The anti-Leopold parties, the Belgian Socialist party and the Belgian Liberals immediately withdrew from the existing coalition Government and announced their unswerving hatred of the Fascist King, demanding a referendum on the question among 5½ million voters and proposed, failing a satisfactory majority in favour of the king, to pursue an extra-

parliamentary struggle involving "all legal means including a general strike" in order to rid the country of the Fascist collaborators.

To the proposal for a referendum the C.S.P. agreed, and it was set down for March 12, 1950.

But the question immediately arose — what would constitute a "satisfactory" majority in favour of King Leopold? Proposals were discussed which sound very familiar to our ears: the C.S.P. insisted that any simple majority would constitute a mandate for the King's resumption of office; the King himself stated that he would regard a vote of 55 per cent. in his favour as the "Go Ahead" signal.

What was the attitude of the opposition?

The Socialist Party replied unequivocally that they would regard nothing less than a two-thirds majority in favour of the King as a mandate for his return, and the Liberals, while not stipulating a particular ratio demanded a clear majority in his favour among each of the two linguistic groups, i.e. in the provinces of Flanders and of Wallonia.

The actual result of the referendum was as follows:

In Belgium as a whole:  
57.60% in favour of Leopold.  
42.40% against.  
In Flanders 72% voted in his favour; in Wallonia 42% and in Brussels itself 48%.

The referendum thus failed to resolve the crisis. Leopold adhered to his earlier decision to regard 55 per cent. of votes as a mandate in his favour but fearing the consequences of a precipitate seizure of the throne on his own part, announced in a broadcast statement, that he would leave the final decision in the matter to parliament. The C.S.P. in consequence issued a statement welcoming the result of the referendum and dissolving the regency.

Now, the events of the next few days bear close study — not the least by Mr. Strauss:

March 16: Socialist Party declares the so-called decision of parliament is actually the decision of one party and is thus invalid.

March 17: 24 Hours "Warning" Strike of 300,000 workers in Walloon provinces.

(Continued on page 18)



THE WORLD TODAYby BEN GILES**NOT SO QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT**

**A**FTER two bloody and exhausting world wars have flowered on the soil of German militarism, it would be expected that the world's press would keep a vigilant eye on German affairs, testing every new development there from the effect it will have on the creation of conditions of a third world war.

Life does not live up to such expectations. German affairs are veiled in deepest secrecy, except when there arises a handy stick of circumstances with which to beat the U.S.S.R. What passes for news is designed not to inform but to confuse and obscure the realities of the German threat to world peace. There was the news recently that the Western Powers had negotiated a "Peace Treaty" with Western Germany. This news was followed closely by the surprised and pained outcries from the same Western Powers at the drastic steps taken by the East German Republic to seal off its frontier with the West, and to create a border security zone. It was all written up in a way designed to make the reader shrug his shoulders, mystified, and to turn his back on the whole affair with only a suspicion that "those reds are up to some dirty work again."

**THE NEW MUNICH.**

Turning backs to what goes on in Germany led in the 1930's to world war. It may well do so today, again. The Western "Peace Treaty" with Germany sets the seal on the division of Germany into two separate states. Having decided that it is necessary to do this, the Western Powers' reaction to the East Germans' sealing of the frontier is as hypocritical as would be surprised at the existence of a guarded and fortified frontier between say Italy and France.

What made this indecent one-sided treaty necessary, and inspired its signature in defiance of solemn obligations undertaken at Potsdam and Teheran? From the Western powers, Britain, France and America the treaty was an essential step in the process of rearming Western Germany, and drawing her projected army of twelve divisions into the so-called European Defence Community, from which the U.S.S.R. has been deliberately excluded. It is part of the western strategy of building up an armed alliance against the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Democracies of Europe.

In the work of mobilising German cannon fodder for a new war against Communism, West German Chancellor

Dr. Adenauer has been a prime mover. But it is not as easy as the Adenauer-Acheson axis imagines to scrape up German mercenaries for the resurrection of the dreams of world conquest which perished at Stalingrad. Snags have been many. There will be more.

There has been the refusal of Adenauer himself to fall in wholeheartedly with the American plan. He has demanded, as the price for German co-operation in the western bloc armies, the full and unfettered right of Germany to build its armies, its war factories and its natural resources to the limit, without Allied supervision or direction. Once again the spectre of an appeased Germany turning West rather than East haunts the would be builders of a new German Army. Accordingly, there has been difficulty with France, the two largest political parties, the Communists and the De Gaulle Rally, refusing to commit national hari-kiri at the American say so. It has become necessary to try and suppress the French Communist Party in order to carry through the treaty and the rearmament of Germany.

**TROUBLE UPON TROUBLE.**

There have been further troubles, the sort of troubles that everyone expects with Frankensteins, except apparently American foreign ministers. Dr. Adenauer, now a full fledged head of state, announces that West Germany seeks the reconquest of all her territory, including the regions East of the Oder-Neiss river line, now by international agreement part of Poland, and the Saar region, now part of French territory. The time is past, he declares, when these frontier lines could be "forced on a defeated nation." France, twice devastated in thirty years by the metal and coal munitions kings of the Saar grows yet more uneasy. The Bonn Parliament, assumed by America to be a tame plaything of Dr. Adenauer announces, that it will only consider ratifying the "peace treaty" if it can discuss, amend and if necessary reject each and every clause. The satellite has got well and truly out of hand.

**AGAIN ALL THAT?**

Is history just repeating itself? The old appeasement and building of German militarism happening again, with Chamberlain replaced by Truman as the arch appeaser? It sounds like that. But that is not the whole truth. The world has moved on since 1933. This time it is no longer Germany which is being rearmed for the Drang nach Osten. Only West Germany.

The scene has changed. East Germany once the home of the Prussian junkers who lent their weight to Hitler, is today a land transformed. The feudal estates have been divided amongst the peasantry. The industrial empires of the Nazi millionaire backers have been nationalised. The purified nationalism of Hitler has given way to a new nationalism, which finds its expression in the development of culture and of international friendship and co-operation replacing the old nationalism of Deutschland Über Alles.

East Germany is more than just another state in Europe. It is a canker eating at the heart of arising post-war Nazism. If Nazism is arising again in West Germany, it does so on the basis of preparation for war, and of the division of Germany into two separate states. But East Germany has not, and will not abandon its strivings for a re-uniting of Germany into a single state. That striving, which finds a powerful echo in the feelings and aspirations of the people of Western Germany itself, produces a powerful current of public opinion against the rearmament plans which require perpetual division.

The struggle for Germany is not yet over. The German mercenaries are not so readily forthcoming as they were when Hitler ruled. The Western Powers' scheme has many a pitfall to overcome before it reaches its full flowering in a new world war. Despite the desperate manoeuvring, the frantic scheming and the reckless tearing up of treaty obligations, there is a long way to go yet before West Germany can again become what she was in 1941, the policeman and hangman of all Europe's discontented and rebellious peoples.



# Shakespeare as Preacher

by ERROLL DE BURGH WILMOT

(Well-known Johannesburg dramatic critic)

WORDSWORTH and Coleridge both declared that the purpose of poetry was to give pleasure. "The poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure . . ." wrote Wordsworth; and "the proper and immediate object of poetry is the communication of immediate pleasure", Coleridge concurred. To read the contexts in which these declarations were made is at once to modify them; for it becomes apparent that the kind of pleasure of which both wrote—essentially the same kind in each case—requires further definition. Poetry, for example, can appeal, it is clear, only to certain kinds of men: men of a certain education and of a certain sensibility; and the pleasure that poetry gives is of a certain kind, exciting this civilised, cultivated sensitivity. One does not, for example, expect to move, by the power of poetry, policemen or tram conductors at political meetings.

Coleridge and Wordsworth were both following Aristotle, who traced the origin of poetry to man's delight in imitation. In discussing tragedy he said that poetry was grave and philosophic and that, in the words of Ingram Bywaters' translation, "the tragic pleasure is that of pity and fear". In the common language of men we do not speak of pity and fear as pleasurable sensations; and consequently we must suppose that the pleasure of poetry are of a peculiar kind. Only on this basis is it possible to discuss the pleasure of Shakespeare.

One of the greatest of Shakespeare's plays is the tragedy of *Othello*. "*Othello*" is the best constructed of all Shakespeare's tragedies", says G. B. Harrison. "Of all Shakespeare's tragedies . . . *Othello* is the most painfully exciting and the most terrible," says A. C. Bradley. "Of all the great and moving Shakespearean plays, *Othello* is that in which the fullest expression is given to that particular quality of sentiment or emotion, to which beyonds the name of pathos", says E. K. Chambers. "The play as a whole has a distinct formal beauty: within it we are ever confronted with beautiful and solid forms", says G. Wilson Knight. I have chosen to consider

*Othello* as exemplifying Shakespeare as poet and moralist in contradistinction to the vulgar conception of Shakespeare as entertainer. I am obliged to use this latter word in a confined sense which should be clear from the context.

T. S. Eliot has said both that attempts to derive a philosophy or even a set of personal opinions from the evidence of Shakespeare's published works is futile and that Shakespeare made great poetry out of "an inferior and muddled philosophy of life." Mr. Eliot cannot be right in both opinions. I believe him to be right in neither; but I am not (obviously) going to try to extract, in this very brief essay, a compact and consistent Shakespearean philosophy. I am concerned only with demonstrating that, in this one play, *Othello*, Shakespeare propounded certain moral values and that in doing this he realised a fundamental and vital purpose: that is to say, he did not give any grounds for the opinion that "literary" judgments can be made independently of moral and social considerations. I shall now perhaps be accused of saying that Shakespeare can be judged only on the basis of the moral values expressed in his plays; but I must risk that and hope that the important distinction I have made will not be missed by all my readers.

It is evidently not easy to determine what is, in fact, Shakespeare's purpose in *Othello*. Harley Granville-Barker, in his *Preface*, maintained that whereas in *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Macbeth* the "battle-ground" was the hero's soul, in this play "the evil impulse is externalised in Iago; and if Othello's soul be a battle-ground, he himself puts up no fight on it." In one of his essays, T. S. Eliot somewhere says that there is nothing so effective in driving out error in Shakespearean criticism as new error; and this axiom may excuse my opposing to Granville-Barker's opinion my own view that in *Othello* Shakespeare has shown, as in no other character of his creation, the battle between good and evil on a heroic scale.

When Othello meets Desdemona on Cyprus, his first words, interrupted only by Desdemona's "My dear Othello!", are these:

"O my fair warrior!  
It gives me wonder great as my content  
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!  
If after every tempest come such calms,  
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!  
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas  
Olympus-high, and duck again as low  
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,  
'Twere now to be most happy; for I fear,  
My soul hath her content so absolute  
That not another comfort like to this  
Succeeds in unknown fate."

Now this most remarkable passage has never, to my knowledge, received the attention it deserves. (Coleridge, Hazlitt, Bradley, Granville-Barker, Dowden, E. K. Chambers, G. B. Harrison, who have all discussed the play more or less at length, all pass by this passage with brief and oblique comment, or ignore it altogether). When they are read within the context of the whole play, these lines assume the highest significance; and it is not fanciful to describe them as the key to the play's normal purpose. One clue worth remarking is the occurrence here of several antitheses and of adumbrations of the play's outcome. (The latter occur from time to time in the course of the play, providing additional spurs of dramatic irony). I am reluctant to dismiss from these antitheses even Othello's address to Desdemona — "O, my fair warrior!" If this greeting does no more it prepares the ear (or the eye of the reader) for the succeeding contrasts: *tempest* and *calms*; *waken'd* and *death* (where *waken'd* can mean *quickener'd*); *climb hills . . .* and *duck . . . low*; *Olympus* (and *heaven*) and *hell*. The words that follow, from "If it were now to die . . ." to ". . . unknown fate", obviously adumbrate, with a hint, the play's tragic fulfilment; but the "unknown fate" is not only Othello's murder of Desdemona: it is also Hamlet's "undiscovered country."

(Continued on page 13)



## EDITORIAL

# THE CALL FOR A STOPPAGE REMAINS!

THE Legion's call to action has certainly provoked a lively response, both sympathetic and hostile. The sympathy has taken the form of letters of appreciation, some asking for further copies of our pamphlet. The hostility has been expressed through public utterances and the press.

Whilst ostriches were once famed for their feathers, they are now widely accepted as birds having a foolish faith that if they make themselves blind to the obvious, then the obvious will not happen. What has this to do with the Legion? Nothing — for the Legion has faced up to all the issues confronting it resolutely — yet something — for the Legion is a political pressure group, one of whose functions is to try to pull the heads of political ostriches out of the sand. A hard never-ending task this, for South Africa is becoming well known for its political ostriches.

For four years now the Nats. have been reducing our democratic rights and liberties. At first they whittled them away. Later they cast aside the knife for the axe. Now they have provided themselves with a bulldozer with which to topple finally the tree of democracy.

Yet the supporters of democracy find their natural leader refusing to realise that (only a super-ostrich could believe that) once fascism is firmly in control, it would ALLOW itself to be voted out of power. Mr. Strauss seems to be of the opinion that the only alternative to bloodshed in this fight with fascism lies in the General Election next May. He is right in avoiding bloodshed, yes: but how wrong in assuming that an election next May IS an alternative. An election NEXT MAY would mean a Fascist victory.

Mr. Strauss labels our pamphlet proposing a nation-wide stoppage of work — 'pernicious' and 'scurrilous', — without explaining how or why. We recommend that Mr. Strauss consult his dictionary before making statements that may harm, instead of strengthen, the Democratic Front. Scurrilous means 'grossly abusive'. You have read our pamphlet — is it scurrilous? Pernicious means destructive. Here Mr. Strauss was nearer the mark, though his choice of words was poor. Our aim is to destroy Fascism so that Democracy may live.

Mr. Strauss did democracy a disservice in his attack on our proposal. He believes only in 'legal' and 'constitutional' action. Help came from an unexpected source when Mr. Schoeman himself declared a stoppage of work absolutely legal. We agree that such a stoppage is not provided for in the Constitution. The same Constitution does NOT describe a stoppage as unconstitutional. The framers of the Constitution did not envisage such action as becoming necessary. They planned for democracy.

In all seriousness therefore the Legion presses forward its proposal as a democratic weapon, in fact the only remaining democratic weapon that can force a democratic election upon the present government before it is able to force a fascist election upon the people of South Africa.

But while we believe Mr. Strauss to be guilty of burying his head in the sand, we are gratified that Dr. Malan and his men gave our proposal for a stoppage of work such publicity. It is a clear indication of their fear of its effectiveness, that they should try to prejudice the public against such a stoppage by coupling it with revolution, and bloodshed. The only bloodshed he need fear would come from the actions of Nationalists and of the police. Mr. Louw has threatened employers who co-operate with import cuts. Is this threat constitutional and legal? Mr. Schoeman has threatened action against employers who lock out their employees. We agree with him that to be democratic, a national stoppage must be voluntary. That is the stand we took in our pamphlet.

The Nats then are worried. Good! Let their worries turn into a nightmare. May they wake up to find their nightmare a reality. Let us force them to go to the country NOW! Their hooligans are becoming brave, their hooliganism is rapidly becoming organised. They are endeavouring to intimidate the public, their own side as well as ours. They fear the result of a free election. We know that we shall not get one, unless we force it now. The Legion's proposal has started the stone rolling. We believe that the people of South Africa will see to it that this stone keeps on rolling till it has crushed Fascism in this country.

## WHY THE CHANGE?

The Hon. C. R. SWART (present Minister of Justice):

*"We feel that the entrenched clauses are a matter of good faith, and I cannot imagine that any government would alter them by a bare majority . . . the entrenchment of certain clauses in the constitution is a matter of honour."* (Hansard Vol. 17.)

Dr. D. G. CONRADIE (present Deputy Speaker):

*"We are all agreed that there are certain entrenched clauses in our constitution which we have ourselves placed therein. It is our honour and our intention to have those entrenched clauses in our constitution . . . the constitution is the work of the people of South Africa . . . that condition of a majority of two-thirds was made by ourselves . . ."* (Hansard, Vol. 17.)

Dr. A. J. STALS (late Nationalist Minister of Health):

*"I think that no one in the House, or in the Union, doubts the moral obligation of the Parliament and the people to respect the basic principle in our constitution . . ."* (Hansard, Vol. 17.)

Dr. N. J. VAN DER MERWE (then leader of the Nationalist Party in the Orange Free State):

*" . . . the constitution . . . has the value of an honourable agreement on the basis of which Union came about . . . on our constitution is placed the honour of the seal of the people of South Africa. If we go so far as to alter our constitution in a manner different from that provided in 1909 and 1910 . . . then we shall consider this as a sort of breach of faith . . . the honour of South Africans will take care that such a thing does not happen."* (Hansard, Vol. 17.)

These quotations from Hansard conflict grossly with the statements of Nationalist leaders today. One cannot doubt the sincerity of the speeches made twenty-one years ago.

But now the ruling of the Appeal Court is rejected on the validity of the entrenched clauses and a new "supreme court" is created, the "High Court of Parliament"

Only one deduction can be drawn from the startling volte-face — the Nationalists are determined to stay in power, no matter what unethical, immoral steps must be taken. Here is the total negation of the usual concept of democratic government. A negation of democracy means fascism.

We dare not submit.



# YOU'RE TELLING US



## Letters to the Editor

House of Assembly,  
Cape Town.  
30th May, 1952.

The National Chairman,  
Springbok Legion,  
P.O. Box 4088,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Strauss has now been able to give consideration to your letters of 14th and 15th May, 1952, which I acknowledged on 20th idem, and directs me to reply as follows:

Action such as that contemplated by the Springbok Legion in its pamphlet "Action Stations", does not accord with the policy of the United Party, which cannot associate itself in any way with the Legion's proposed "national standstill", which the Party regards as unconstitutional and against the best interests of the country.

Mr. Strauss is confident that the policy of the United Party and its allies in the United Democratic Front, advanced by the most effective constitutional methods, will command the support of the great majority of the electorate at the next general election.

As regards the resolution passed at the Ninth Annual Conference of the Springbok Legion, Mr. Strauss asks me to say that he feels that the United Democratic Front, as now constituted, for the time being adequately represents the combined public opposition to the Nationalist Government.

Yours faithfully,

L. GERBER,  
Private Secretary.

Secretary,  
Springbok Legion,  
P.O. Box 4088,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

This is to confirm the telegram sent to you on the 2nd ordering 2,000 copies of "Action Stations".

... We think that the leaflet is excellent and we are quite sure that our workers will answer that call.

Yours faithfully,

Branch Secretary.

Port Elizabeth.

Secretary,  
Springbok Legion.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find a donation of £5 5s. 0d., a result of your pamphlet "Action Stations". I regret that, not being an ex-serviceman, I am unable to join the Legion, but keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,

A.E.G.

Kroonstad.

The National Secretary,  
Springbok Legion,  
P.O. Box 4088,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

We will be pleased if you will kindly forward to us 100 copies of your pamphlet "Action Stations" for distribution among our members.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

Mr. Cecil Williams,  
Springbok Legion,  
96 Main House, Main Street,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Mr. Williams,

On behalf of our Union please accept our sincere congratulations on the very fine pamphlet issued by you — "Action Stations".

Please forward us 100 copies of same and we shall vote a donation towards the cost of printing the pamphlet at our next special Central Executive Committee meeting.

Yours faithfully,

General Secretary.

### CIVIL RIGHTS LEAGUE

(Cape Town)

429, C.T.C. Building,  
Plein Street.

May 26, 1952.

The National Chairman,  
Springbok Legion,  
Box 4088,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

At its committee meeting last Friday the Committee of the Civil Rights League (Cape Town) considered your request that it should co-operate in distributing your pamphlet, "Action Stations".

I was instructed in the first place to convey to you my Committee's appreciation of the pamphlet as a whole, which it considers is very well written. My Committee, however, is not happy about its ending and in particular about the proposal for a stoppage of work which would include the Non-Europeans. We have given consideration to this idea on previous occasions, and have always come to the conclusion that in a multi-racial country such as ours it was not a desirable method to use, even if it could be made effective.

This being so, my Committee does not feel that it can help in the distribution of the pamphlet.

With regret and all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

MAGGIE RODGER,

Secretary.

## SHAKESPEARE AS PREACHER

(Continued from page 11)

What, then, is Shakespeare doing in this most remarkable — and extraordinarily beautiful — passage? To my mind the answer is as certain and clear as the oracle of Avon has ever been. The whole play is a dramatic statement of Shakespeare's profound discovery of the root problem of good and evil: that great good breeds great evil, and conversely that the fairest flowers grow on the foulest dunghills. This is to state the matter in terms too simple, of course; as though, by presenting the course of the play as the inevitable doom of Desdemona and Othello, Shakespeare were taking sides in the free will *versus* predestination controversy. Yet he is, in fact, in a manner too subtle for puritan theologians, making a contribution to the discussion of the marvellous mystery of human destiny and human will. His contemporaries — those of them who were educated in the enquiring, sceptical, Renaissance tradition — ought to have understood what Shakespeare was discussing with such profundity and such delicacy; but the Cromwellian revolution so effectively destroyed the Englishman's capacity to think that Shakespeare's significances were obscured for two centuries, only to be revived by Coleridge, whose perceptive genius we are ourselves learning to understand, a century after his death.



### JERLING OR US?

If we live to be a hundred we will never be able to understand the minds of Mr. Strauss and his colleagues in the United Democratic Front. At about the same time as they repudiated our organisation and rejected our pamphlet "Action Stations" ("scurrilous" — Mr. Strauss: "pernicious" — Mr. Kane-Berman), they welcomed with open arms one of the high priests of the Ossewa-brandwag, Mr. Jerling.

No matter that the Springbok Legion fought for South Africa while the O.B. sabotaged; no matter that the rank and file of the Torch Commando are becoming dissatisfied with their meek and muddle-headed leadership, the fact still remains that an ex-leader of the O.B. has condescended to join their ranks. What a political opportunity!

What a sensation!

What a useful weapon in the Wakkerstroom elections!

What a result.

\* \* \* \*

To Wakkerstroom they went with Jerling,

Wit banners high and flags unfurling;  
And torches lit, and speech confusing,  
And losing.

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(Gen. A. K. McAuliffe, head of the U.S. Chemical Corps, speech at Louisville in 1950.)

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(Continued from page 9)

**March 18:** Transport workers in Antwerp stage similar warning strike.

**March 19:** Cabinet resigns.

**March 20:** A Congress convened by the B.S.P. calls for abdication of Leopold and succession of Baudouin. *Issued warning of General Strike.*

**March 24:** Further 24 hour strike in Wallonia by 150,000 miners, 125,000 Iron and Steel workers.

All banks, post offices, shops and schools close in Liege and Mons.

At Pont de Namur 20,000 students and workers are dispersed by a baton charge.

**April 7:** Van Zeeland, leader of the C.S.P. announces his failure to form a Government of all parties and reasserts intention to form a Government of one party.

**April 10:** Socialists issue final warning that any such attempt would be followed by nationwide resistance.

**April 15:** King Leopold offers a compromise whereby he would not abdicate but would delegate his powers to Baudouin.

The Socialists and Liberals, in reply, insisted that Leopold, having delegated his powers, must leave Belgium.

**April 29:** The Regent Prince Charles, dissolves parliament and calls for a General Election to take place on June 4.

The Elections were duly held, and the results of these elections will bear careful analysis:

In the Chambers of Deputies the C.S.P. obtained 108 seats to the opposition parties' 104 seats.

In the Senate the C.S.P. obtained 91 seats to the opposition parties 84 seats. I.e. a majority in both houses.

But of the total votes cast

The C.S.P. polled 47.69%

The Opposition polled 52.31%.

Shakes one, doesn't it?

And what did the *Belgian* opposition have to say to this horribly familiar set-up?

Immediately the results became known the opposition parties with the co-operation of the Trade Unions and Co-operative organisations formed a National Committee of Action which declared that full battle would henceforth be joined; that they no longer recognised Leopold and the so-called "Government" which supported him; that no member of the opposition would serve under him.

They accused the Government of releasing war-criminals, while persecuting members of the resistance movement.

On July 24 workers commenced a campaign of "Total Resistance and Non-Co-operation."

On July 28 — 500,000 people were on strike.

On July 29 — National Committee of Action announces that on the 31st 100,000 men would stage a demonstration march on Brussels.

On August 1 *Leopold relinquishes the throne to Baudouin.*

**BELGIUM'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS WAS OVER!!**

Yes, let's pause here and reflect on this sequence of events. Consider how amazingly similar Belgium's crisis was to the one we are passing through in South Africa. Analyse the component elements in each case:

(1) A king and Government of pro-fascist collaborators or would be collaborators.

(2) An opposition demand for a majority in order to settle matters affecting the constitution.

(3) A Government with a majority of seats in both houses — but a majority based on a minority vote.

(4) A country divided on linguistic lines.

Reflect that but for the resolute, unflinching action of the opposition, *Belgium would today have been a Fascist state.*

And now may we pose a question?

At this crucial hour in South Africa's history the Springbok Legion calls for resolute action to save the country from a fascist dictatorship.

Mr. Strauss refuses to take such action—

Who is irresponsible!!

it was directed with restraint, and successfully avoided sensationalism and hysteria. To its detriment it was occasionally over-sentimental and there were limitations in the dramatic development.

Altogether a finer film, "A Walk in the Sun" analyses a group of men in combat. It describes an American platoon in Italy on a mission in which they lose their officer and senior sergeant at the outset. The emphasis of the film is very much more on character than on incident, though both aspects are equally believable and recognisable. Brilliant in its flow of images, poetic intensity of dialogue, and individual performances, the film ranks as one of the most outstanding products of its medium.

As in "All Quiet" no premium is set on personal bravery. To the men trying to do the job as best they can the question of cowardice and bravery does not arise.

The vast bulk of the war films made during 1939 and 1945 would seem very shallow today, but they were the epitome of realism compared to the synthetic rubbish of a similar nature being churned out in Hollywood at present. This is emphasised to the full by "The Halls of Montezuma", for, incredibly, this cliché-ridden, mechanical superficial piece of exaggeration, is directed by Lewis Milestone.

Not only does it deny everything stated in his two previous war films; technically it is almost unbelievable that it is the work of the same man. If Milestone, of all people, can be reduced to this level by the current "climate" in America, those of us who abhor hysterical war propaganda had best make a practice of studiously avoiding all the current war films which originate in the land of the screaming eagle.

## MOBILISATION.

Extracted from "School and Society", January 1951: "In his speech to the New School for Social Research Mr Ewing suggested the reorganisation high-school curricula so as to secure 'the fullest usefulness to the armed forces' and prepare the children 'a lifetime of mobilisation'."

(Mr. Oscar R. Ewing is the A. traitor of the Federal Security in the United States).

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

