

THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION,  
1948 - 1953

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ABSTRACT

The primary focus of the thesis is the attempt by the United Party, between 1948 and 1953, to regain political power.

It argues that although policy issues were important, insufficient attention has thus far been paid to the United Party's organisational weakness, particularly in regard to its inability adequately to register and delete voters, as an explanation for the Party's 1948 defeat. The United Party had, therefore, from a far more heterogeneous base of support, not only to implement organisational reforms so as to evince an efficiency equal to that of the National Party but had also to clarify what it intended to achieve by its pragmatic race policy.

It is argued that the essence of the latter had been white immigration. Only a substantial white population, it was felt, would induce that sense of white security sufficient to allow the peaceful accommodation of the aspirations of the unenfranchised. Faced with the immediate curtailment of immigration and unable to emphasise, through fear of alienating marginal Afrikaans-speaking voters, its importance, the Party was progressively forced to give

ground on its race policy. Its tendency to do so and yet demand the retention of constitutional guarantees made the Party an easy target for Government manipulation.

Seen against this background the United Party initiative in encouraging the establishment of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, its formal alliance with the Labour Party and the considerable structural reforms it was able to implement as a consequence of its informal alliance with financial and mining interests, failed to halt the swing of marginal voters away from it.

The United Party's 1953 General Election defeat not only resulted in a crippling collapse of its financial support but also led to a gradual realignment of opposition parliamentary politics towards a rapprochement with those extra-parliamentary forces which were already assuming their place as the real opposition to the National Party Government.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	vi
Abbreviations	vii
Note on Nomenclature and Footnoting	viii

PART I

Chapter 1:	Introduction	1
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PART II

## A Majority in Both Houses

Chapter 2:	The General Election: Preparations and the Government's Defeat, January - May 1948	24
Chapter 3:	The General Election Results: Autopsy and United Party Dissension, May - August 1948	54
Chapter 4:	Government Consolidation; Opposition Reform, June - September 1948	70
Chapter 5:	The Parliamentary Session, August - September 1948	82

PART III

## More than a "Passing Phase"

Chapter 6:	A United Party Action Committee; Negotiations with Havenga, October 1948 - January 1949	90
Chapter 7:	United Party Reforms; the Parliamentary Session, January - February 1949	107

Chapter 8:	The Provincial Council Elections, March 1949	117
Chapter 9:	The Parliamentary Session; the Vereeniging, Mayfair and Benoni By-Elections, March 1949 - March 1950	141

#### PART IV

##### A New Leader: An Inauspicious Start

Chapter 10:	The Parliamentary Session; A New United Party Leader, January - July 1950	174
Chapter 11:	The Elections in South-West Africa, September 1950	193
Chapter 12:	The United Party Afrikaans-Language Press: Collapse and Revival, June 1948 - March 1951.	214

#### PART V

##### Reformed and Aroused

Chapter 13:	United Party Re-Organisation, April 1950 - March 1951	228
Chapter 14:	The Birth of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, January - June 1951	248
Chapter 15:	United Party Finances; the Replacement of J.W. Mushet and O.A. Oosthuizen, June - December 1951	274
Chapter 16:	The Labour Party, March - December 1951	283

#### PART VI

##### The Alliance Holds

Chapter 17:	The United Party Marginal Seat Drive, September 1951 - July 1952	290
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Chapter 18:	The United Democratic Front, January - May 1952	300
Chapter 19:	The Wakkerstroom By-Election and its Consequences, March - September 1952	321
Chapter 20:	Natal, April - September 1952	342
Chapter 21:	Delimitation, May 1951 - January 1953	364
Chapter 22:	Natal, October 1952 - January 1953	377

#### PART VII

##### Principle versus Expediency

Chapter 23:	The Defiance Campaign: Liberal and Conservative Reaction, June 1952 - February 1953	393
Chapter 24:	The Election Campaign, February - April 1953	411

#### PART VIII

##### The Parting of the Ways

Chapter 25:	The General Election Results	424
Chapter 26:	The Aftermath, Part 1: Natal, April - June 1953	432
Chapter 27:	The Aftermath, Part 2: The United Party	442

#### PART IX

Chapter 28:	Conclusion	461
Appendices		469
Bibliography		562

PREFACE

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Finally, in compliance with the regulations of the University of Natal, I declare that this whole thesis is, except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, my own original work.

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September 1989

ABBREVIATIONS

A.E.U.	Amalgamated Engineering Union
A.N.C.	African National Congress
A.P.	Afrikaner Party
C.G.	Central Group
C.P.S.A.	Communist Party of South Africa
F.A.K.	Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings
G.N.P.	Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party
H.N.P.	Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty
L.P.	South African Labour Party
M.E.C.	Member of Executive Council
M.P.	Member of Parliament
M.P.C.	Member of Provincial Council
N.P.	National Party
O.B.	Ossewa-Brandwag
O.F.S.	Orange Free State
S.A.B.C.	South African Broadcasting Corporation
S.A.C.P.	South African Communist Party
S.A.F.T.U.	South African Federation of Trade Unions
S.A.I.C.	South African Indian Congress
S.A.I.R.R.	South African Institute of Race Relations
S.A.L.P.	South African Labour Party
S.A.P.	South African Party
S.A.T.L.C.	South African Trades and Labour Council
S.W.A.	South-West Africa
U.D.F.	United Democratic Front
U.N.O.	United Nations Organisation
U.N.S.W.P.	United National South West Party
U.P.	United South African National Party
W.V.A.C.	War Veterans' Action Committee
W.V.T.C.	War Veterans' Torch Commando



NOTE ON NOMENCLATURE AND FOOTNOTING

The terms Coloured, European, non-European, Indian and Native have been used as they were in colloquial use during the period covered by this study.

Page references have in most cases been indicated when acknowledging quotations from newspapers. Where this has not been done indicates that the quotation has been derived from the extensive collection of newspaper clippings in the United Party Papers.

PART ICHAPTER 1INTRODUCTION

Although Africans were registered on the South African common roll until 1936 and Indians and Coloureds in the Cape remained on it for twenty years longer, their numbers were minuscule in comparison to the size of the white electorate.<sup>1</sup> Within the latter the most significant linguistic group, and that part of the electorate which underwent the most profound social and economic change between 1910 and 1948, were the Afrikaans-speakers.

During this period rural poverty and economic expansion, primarily in mining and manufacturing,<sup>2</sup> led to rapid Afrikaner urbanisation. In 1900 less than 10 per cent of Afrikaners lived in cities and towns.<sup>3</sup> By 1951 the figure

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1. See Appendix I: Registered Voters According to Race, 1909-1953.

2. Percentage Growth in South Africa's Real National Income:

1919-29 - 5,0

1929-39 - 5,8

1939-49 - 5,8

D.H. Houghton: The South African Economy, p.40.

Volume of Output of Three Main Sectors as a Percentage of Gross Domestic Product:

<u>Sector</u>	<u>1911/2</u>	<u>1924/5</u>	<u>1932/3</u>	<u>1938/9</u>	<u>1951/2</u>
Agric.	17,4	19,9	12,2	12,6	13,8
Mining	27,1	17,4	24,3	20,7	13
Manufac.	6,7	12,4	13,6	17,7	25
All other sectors	48,8	50,3	49,9	49,0	49,6

Ibid., p.42.

3. By 1926 the figure had risen to 41 per cent. In 1936 it was 48 per cent and in 1946 60,4 per cent. H. Adam and H. Giliomee: The Rise and Crisis of

was 69 percent.<sup>4</sup> Between these years the white population of the country increased at a rate of between 1,7 and 2,2 per cent per annum.<sup>5</sup> Afrikaners, however, made up a disproportionately large part of that increase. The 1936 census figures showed that for every 100 English-speakers over 21 years of age, there were 115 Afrikaans-speakers, and that for every 100 English-speakers under 7 years of age, there were 212 Afrikaans-speakers.<sup>6</sup> It was primarily for this reason that, despite urbanisation, the size of the predominantly Afrikaans-speaking, white rural population remained virtually stable.<sup>7</sup>

The Afrikaners did not enter the urban areas on a basis of equality with the already largely urbanised white English-speaking population. The Carnegie Commission of Inquiry estimated that the number of near destitute, predominantly Afrikaans-speaking whites rose from 106 000 in 1921 to 300 000 in 1933.<sup>8</sup> This number constituted a quarter of the total Afrikaans-speaking population of just over one million, most of the rest of whom shared the Poor Whites' background of a deficient diet and poor education.<sup>9</sup> The

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Afrikaner Power, p.150.

4. J. Robertson: Liberalism in South Africa, 1948-63, p.16. Total White Urbanisation as a percentage.
- |      |   |      |
|------|---|------|
| 1921 | - | 55,8 |
| 1926 | - | 58,2 |
| 1931 | - | 61,3 |
| 1936 | - | 65,2 |
| 1946 | - | 72,5 |
- N.M. Stultz: The Nationalists in Opposition, 1934-1948, p.94.
5. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.93.
6. Ibid.
7. White Rural Population:
- |      |   |         |
|------|---|---------|
| 1921 | - | 671 980 |
| 1926 | - | 701 400 |
| 1931 | - | 708 300 |
| 1936 | - | 696 500 |
| 1941 | - | 680 000 |
- The Forum, August 1952, p.9.
8. H. Adam and H. Giliomee, op. cit., p.150.
9. Ibid. By 1920 the education of white children was,

challenge posed by the virtual monopoly of the country's mining, financial and manufacturing wealth by the English-speakers<sup>10</sup> and by economic competition from the rapidly increasing African urban population,<sup>11</sup> made the dislocated and proletarianised Afrikaner work-force peculiarly susceptible to those forms of collective action which held the promise of deliverance from destitution.

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at least up to Standard VI, both compulsory and free. By the late 1930s about 40 per cent of whites did not study further than Standard VI while the bulk of the remainder did not go beyond Standard VII. At this time about 60 per cent of all schools attended by whites were small one or two teacher rural schools. The quality of English taught in Afrikaans-medium schools was markedly poorer than that of Afrikaans taught in English-medium schools. An inability adequately to communicate in English was a severe handicap in the competition for work in the urban areas. E.G. Malherbe: The Bilingual School: A Study of Bilingualism in South Africa, pp.120-121.

10. In 1945 only one Afrikaner company had a capitalisation in excess of £1 million in contrast to 116 non-Afrikaner companies quoted by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange as having at least that amount of capital. W.H. Vatcher: White Laager: The Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism, p.93.

Per Capital income in pounds in 1946:

Whites	-	389
English-speaking	-	561
Afrikaans-speaking	-	266
Indians	-	77
Coloureds	-	64
Africans	-	32

H. Adam and H. Giliomee, op. cit., p.173.

11. Percentage Urban:

	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1946</u>
Africans	13	14	19	24,3
Coloureds	50,4	52,4	58	62,15
Indians	52,8	60,4	69,5	72,8

D.H. Houghton, op. cit., p.270.

It is estimated that, in the mid-1930s, more than 70 per cent of African children received no schooling. Of the minority who did attend school less than 2 per cent went beyond the first years of schooling to the higher standards. J.D. Shingler: Education and Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961, p.274.

The G.N.P., in alliance with the Afrikaans churches<sup>12</sup> and the Broederbond,<sup>13</sup> held significant advantages in propagating such solidarity on an ethnic rather than on a class basis.<sup>14</sup> Urban racial segregation and the sheer volume of Afrikaner urbanisation contributed to the development of virtually exclusive Afrikaans-speaking urban areas.<sup>15</sup> Here, in lieu of any concerted effort by Trade

12. Nearly 90 per cent of Afrikaners and, according to the 1951 census, over 53 per cent of all whites in South Africa, were members of the Dutch Reformed Churches. W.H. Vatcher, op. cit., p.110. The Predicants in these institutions thus presided over solidly ethnic congregations. The growth in influence of the fundamentalist Kuyperians and the "Volkskerk" movement in the 1920s and 1930s saw the development, in these churches, of the key concepts of "Christian Nationalism". The latter, in upholding the immutable exclusivity of ethnic groups, supported the notion of the "organic solidarity of the 'divinely created' Afrikaner volk." R. Davies, D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini: The Struggle for South Africa: A Reference Guide to Movements, Organizations and Institutions, Vol.II, p.273. English-speaking churches rejected the theological justification for "Christian Nationalism". Their white membership was considerably smaller than that of the Dutch Reformed Churches: Anglican 15 per cent, Methodist 8 per cent, Roman Catholic 5 per cent and Presbyterian 3 per cent. W.H. Vatcher, op. cit., p.110.
13. This clandestine and exclusive Afrikaner nationalist organisation was far stronger in the Orange Free State and Transvaal than it was elsewhere. In the Transvaal, where the H.N.P. organisation was until the mid-1940s weak, the Broederbond emerged as a powerful force in crystallising the debate within Afrikaner nationalist ranks. Not only was it instrumental in establishing "front" organisations such as the Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Associations (F.A.K.), it also, during the 1930s, initiated a struggle to take over key unions in the white labour movement and helped mobilise Afrikaner capital in the "Afrikaner Economic Movement". R. Davies et al, op. cit., p.268.
14. H. Adam and H. Giliomee, op. cit., p.52.
15. Ibid., p.65.

Unionists<sup>16</sup> or the L.P.<sup>17</sup> and C.P.S.A.<sup>18</sup> to win over Afrikaner workers, the G.N.P. and its allies, by building on the cultural "remoralisation" of the 1920s,<sup>19</sup> were able not only to articulate a dynamic mythology of a common Afrikaner historical experience but also to establish a wide-ranging hierarchy of exclusive institutions with which to "encapsulate the urban Afrikaner."<sup>20</sup>

Success in its endeavours to prevent the "denationalisation" of these people was vital to G.N.P.-H.N.P. survival, for urbanisation necessarily resulted in successive Delimitation Commissions awarding parliamentary seats to the urban districts at the expense of rural ones. Between 1936 and 1946, eleven new urban seats were created. Seven of these were taken from those areas where the G.N.P.-H.N.P. was strongest, the rural Cape Province and the Orange Free

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16. In 1937, of 118 trade union organisations, about 100 had non-Afrikaner Secretaries although the majority of members were Afrikaans-speaking. Only E.S. Sachs, Secretary of the Garment Workers Union, worked for and achieved any success in fostering a class consciousness among the predominantly female Afrikaner workers in his union. *Ibid.*, p.109.
17. From its establishment in 1910, the L.P. was primarily concerned with the objectives of the predominantly English-speaking trade unions from which the majority of its members came. This pre-occupation, and its fundamental dilemma of how to reconcile its socialist principles with the demands of white labourers only, prevented it from offering serious competition to the N.P. for the loyalty of Afrikaner workers.
18. The Communist Party of South Africa was never a serious contender for the loyalty of urban Afrikaners. By as early as 1924 it had already taken the decision to concentrate on assuming the leadership of African workers as opposed to becoming the radical wing of the orthodox labour movement. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality: South Africa Since 1948, p.61.
19. H. Adam and H. Giliomee, *op. cit.*, p.52.
20. L. Thompson: Change in Contemporary South Africa, p.26.

State.<sup>21</sup> In addition, three others were obtained at the expense of the rural Transvaal, where the Party had significant potential.<sup>22</sup> By 1948 it had become impossible, in view of the number of English-speaking rural constituencies in Natal, for the H.N.P. to come to power without significant urban support.<sup>23</sup> The corollary, though, given its numerical preponderance, was that the political consolidation of the Afrikaans-speaking electorate would enable the Party to come to power on the basis of that support alone.

The position of the U.P., the weakening of support for which forms a major theme of this study, was entirely different to that of the G.N.P./H.N.P. Unlike the latter, which was free to develop a political programme which was "grotendeels gemik...om die hartsnare van die kieser te raak en te prikkel,"<sup>24</sup> the U.P. was obliged to be both flexible and pragmatic. This was because it was not only faced with the problem, from the time of its formation in 1934, of governing the country, but also because it was committed to a "volkseenheid" which embraced the entire white community.<sup>25</sup> Lacking the bonding that that unity might

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21. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.94.

22. Ibid. The Seventh Delimitation Commission in 1937 gave 59 of the Union's 150 "white" seats to the urban areas. The Eighth, in 1943, increased this number to 68 and the Ninth added two more in 1948. The Witwatersrand region was the prime beneficiary of these redelimitations. In 1943 the number of Rand seats grew from 26 to 32 and, in 1948, they increased to 34. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p.95. In 1938 the G.N.P. contested 16 seats on the Witwatersrand but received only 23,6 per cent of the vote. In 1943 the 23 H.N.P. candidates on the Witwatersrand received 31,9 per cent of the vote. Ibid., p.90.

24. L.S. Steenkamp Papers, 16:43 United Party Papers, Part 2, Die Organisasie Probleem van die V.P., n.d.

25. T.D. Moodie: The Rise of Afrikanersdom: Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion, p.186. A considerable proportion of the English-speakers in

eventually provide, the Party's relatively low degree of intrinsic cohesion was compensated for by the supreme ability of both Hertzog and Smuts to align behind them a wide spectrum of political elements.

But the weakness of this reliance became evident in 1939 when Smuts refused to acknowledge the country's right to neutrality. His refusal, by destroying the already strained consensus upon which the Party rested, politically discredited the moderate wing of Afrikaner nationalism<sup>26</sup> and precipitated a 25 per cent decline in the Party's Afrikaans-speaking support.<sup>27</sup>

This structural shift at its base obliged the Party to place greater reliance upon its English-speaking urban supporters to maintain its organisation. Because this more affluent group did not see in politics, as did the bulk of those who supported the H.N.P., a means to improve its position,<sup>28</sup> the disorganisation consequent upon the 1939 split<sup>29</sup> was compounded by a decline, particularly between elections, in both the branch system and in formal Party membership.<sup>30</sup>

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South Africa were not English by descent. They were a heterogeneous group with little sense, with the possible exception of those English-speakers in the Eastern Cape and Natal, of linguistic or cultural nationalism. A.W. Stadler: The Party System in South Africa, 1910-1948, pp.107-108.

26. H.B. Brotz: The Politics of South Africa, p.13.

27. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.88.

28. M. Broughton: Press and Politics in South Africa, p.182.

29. A U.P. report observed that during September 1939, "almost overnight the records of our branches and our office bearers throughout the length and breadth of the Transvaal had to be salvaged from what was formerly a common office." U.P. Papers, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Office Committees, 18 November 1939-29 August 1949, Vol.I, No.183, Meeting of the Transvaal Head Committee, Chairman's Report, 14 August 1946.

30. M. Broughton, op. cit., p.182.



The change in the Party's leadership was also, in this respect, not without significance. Smuts, attempting to set a precedent for the all-embracing white South Africanism which was his ambition, consistently opposed the building of a disciplined party with a paid-up membership. He preferred instead that the system should be contractual with loyalty to the Party's principles as the only binding cement.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to the U.P., H.N.P. membership was limited to those who subscribed. The bulk of Party funds was derived from this source and from sympathetic contributors. The twin benefits of this system was the personal commitment it encouraged among the Party's following and the close estimate it provided canvassers of the degree of support enjoyed by the Party.

Smuts could initially afford to indulge his concept of the contractual nature of Party membership because his close relationship with the mine owners, financiers and industrialists ensured a significant, if ad hoc, flow of funds into the Party's coffers. Reliance upon these sources, however, exacted a heavy long-term cost. A U.P. memorandum observed:

Few want to contribute to our Party funds because they cannot reconcile themselves to the belief that we are not getting good and plenty from the 'Capitalists'...it must not be thought that we do not attempt to raise funds, nor that we altogether fail in that direction, but there is no 'Party Chest' and no reserve for 'Organisation' on a large scale.<sup>32</sup>

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In December 1947 U.P. membership was put at approximately 223 194. Very few were, however, active members. J.C. Smuts Papers, File 389, Details of the U.P. Organisation as at 10 December 1947.

31. M. Broughton, op. cit., p.176.

32. A.H. Jonker Papers, File 116, Political Organisation, n.d.

Another consequence of the Party's lack of a large, enrolled, active membership was the extraordinary variety of nomination procedures to which it had to resort in order to select its election candidates.<sup>33</sup> Because so many of these procedures resulted in either divisive nomination contests or in the selection of unsuitable candidates, the Party frequently resorted to the use of electoral colleges.<sup>34</sup> But the ease with which the Party hierarchy could manipulate the selection of branch nominees to these colleges further damaged the Party's branch structure. A Party supporter complained:

Why should the branches work year in and year out for the Party when, at nomination time, their right to nominate and elect the candidate of their choice can be [so] loaded against them that they have no chance of success?...Is it any wonder that many United Party branches have ceased to function and that in scores of cases meetings have not been held due to poor attendances?<sup>35</sup>

The enthusiasm engendered by the war effort<sup>36</sup> and the diversion of the thrust of the H.N.P. attack to the O.B., the New Order and the A.P. as the "wreckers of Afrikanerdom",<sup>37</sup> masked the more blatant of the U.P.'s

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33. See Appendix II: U.P. and H.N.P. Nomination Procedures.
34. W.A. Kleynhans: South African Political Problems, p.162.
35. Ibid., p.166. As a consequence of these factors the U.P. did not have many branches in each constituency and the annual returns of the existing branches were not regularly submitted. Ibid., p.179.
36. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, General Correspondence 1946-48, Aa 1882, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947.
37. T.D. Moodie, op. cit., p.236.

organisational deficiencies during the 1943 General Election campaign. Also concealed was the tenuousness, despite its apparent election triumph,<sup>38</sup> of the Party's hold on power. Although the U.P. increased its parliamentary representation by 17 seats, it did so largely at the expense, not of the H.N.P., but of the A.P. and New Order.<sup>39</sup> The H.N.P., for its part, not only consolidated its position as the sole parliamentary spokesman of Afrikaner nationalism, but also increased by two its number of seats in parliament. No less significant was the growth of its support in the Transvaal<sup>40</sup> where, particularly on the Witwatersrand, it was clearly under-represented.<sup>41</sup>

Of 49 seats won countrywide by majorities of under 1 000, 28 had been won by the Government. The U.P. was, in fact,

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38. 1943 General Election Results:
- | <u>Pre-Election</u> |      | <u>Post-Election</u> |      |
|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| U.P.                | - 72 | U.P.                 | - 89 |
| H.N.P.              | - 41 | H.N.P.               | - 43 |
| New Order           | - 16 | L.P.                 | - 9  |
| A.P.                | - 8  | Dominion Party       | - 7  |
| Dominion Party      | - 8  | Independent          |      |
| L.P.                | - 4  | (pro-war)            | - 2  |
| Independent         | - 1  |                      |      |
39. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.90.
40. The G.N.P. in the Transvaal operated on a severely limited budget during its early years. J.G. Strijdom had at times to cover the Party's expenses out of his personal funds. The first full-time, paid officials were not hired until the early 1940s. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.42. In as late as 1944 the Transvaal was omitted from the H.N.P.'s drive for subscriptions to the Republican Fighting Fund as the Party organisation in that province had not yet been sufficiently established. Sunday Express, 8 June 1947, p.11.
41. In the rural areas of the Transvaal the U.P. gained 15, or 65,2 per cent of the seats, with only 49,5 per cent of the votes. The H.N.P. was not much more than half as successful with 42,8 per cent of the votes. K.A. Heard: General Elections in South Africa 1943-1970, p.25. The H.N.P. was defeated by fewer than 840 votes in 5 of the Witwatersrand seats it contested in 1943. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.91.

secure in only a relatively small number of safe urban seats.<sup>42</sup> Herein lay the importance of the 1943 General Election: It made the balance of power between the U.P. and H.N.P. sufficiently close for the loyalty of the marginal voter to become a matter of crucial importance.<sup>43</sup>

But, at this critical period when political survival demanded an improvement in organisational efficiency, the U.P.'s voluntary workers were, unlike those in the H.N.P., "almost entirely diverted from the Party to the war effort..."<sup>44</sup> The appointment, in the Cape Province and in the Transvaal, of full-time constituency organisers,<sup>45</sup> by appearing to lessen the need for assistance to the Party, merely aggravated the decline in the voluntary effort. Although the majority of these organisers were withdrawn in early 1946, post-war fatigue among U.P. supporters and their concern with re-adjusting to peace-time conditions prevented any improvement in the degree of voluntary assistance offered to the Party.<sup>46</sup> By July 1947 674 of 1 696 U.P. branches countrywide were moribund.<sup>47</sup>

Smuts's prolonged absences overseas during and immediately after the war also contributed to the Party's organisational

42. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.29.  
 43. T.D. Moodie, op. cit., p.238.  
 44. U.P. Papers, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Office Committees, 18 November 1939-29 August 1949, Vol.I, No.183, Meeting of the Transvaal Head Committee, Chairman's Report, 14 August 1946.  
 45. Ibid.  
 46. Ibid., U.P. Central Head Committee Minutes and Annexures, 21 February 1941 - 19 August 1963, Notes on Organisation: Transvaal, Excluding Witwatersrand, n.d.; and Ibid., Cape Provincial Head Committee Minutes, 29 September 1941 - 22 October 1951, Minutes of Head Committee Meeting, Cape Province, 5 June 1946.  
 47. Ibid., U.P. Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 24 February 1941 - 2 December 1952, Vol.I, Plans for the General Election, 7 July 1947.

decay for, during these periods, it was run on only a caretaker basis. A 1946 report of the Transvaal Head Committee observed that

throughout the war years the leaders of the Party were largely occupied with the great and burning national and international problems arising out of the war and the organisation as such was left to a large extent in the hands of the Provincial Offices concerned.<sup>48</sup>

Unlike the position in the federally organised H.N.P., the unitary structure of the U.P. prevented its provincial officials from exercising effective authority.<sup>49</sup> The Party's Central Head Committee<sup>50</sup> was unwieldy, its Central Executive met too infrequently to provide effective alternative control and its General Secretary, O.A. Oosthuizen, had both too many functions to fulfill<sup>51</sup> and was significantly less effective in that office than was his predecessor, Louis Esselen.<sup>52</sup>

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48. Ibid., U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Committee Minutes, 18 November 1939 - 29 August 1949, No.183, Meeting of the Transvaal Head Committee, Chairman's Report, 14 August 1946.
49. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.285. Although no formal H.N.P. Central Executive existed, in practice the Party's four provincial leaders constituted an efficient directorate. At its base, instead of the inactive U.P. branch system, the Party had a cell system copied, in 1941, from the O.B. W.K. Hancock: Smuts: The Fields of Force 1919-1950, p.498. See Appendix III: U.P., H.N.P./N.P. and L.P. Structures.
50. The U.P. Central Head Committee consisted of the Cabinet, ex-Ministers and ex-Deputy Ministers who were members of the Party, the 4 Provincial Chairmen, 10 appointed members from each province, members of the Central Executive Committee and the Party's Union Treasurer. D. Worrall (ed.): South Africa: Government and Politics, p.248.
51. The entire U.P. Head Office staff consisted of 3 officials. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.287.
52. Interviews: Professor W.A. Kleynhans and Sir de Villiers Graaff.

During the course of 1944, while U.P. supporters were concentrating their efforts upon collecting war funds,<sup>53</sup> the H.N.P. launched a Republican Fighting Fund. The object of the Fund was to raise £100 000 to finance the Party's next General Election campaign.<sup>54</sup> By June 1947 slightly more than £50 000, primarily from the Cape Province and the Orange Free State, had been collected.<sup>55</sup> Facing a considerable deficit and a suspension of contributions by its major benefactors because it lacked adequate financial accounting,<sup>56</sup> the U.P., towards the end of 1947, made, for the first time, a similar appeal when it launched the General Smuts Election Fund.<sup>57</sup> Not only was the drive made far too late but, as in the Party's previous fund raising efforts, it attracted only a fraction of the money required.<sup>58</sup>

The U.P.'s administrative and financial difficulties were compounded because it was more sensitive than was the H.N.P.

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53. U.P. Papers, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Committee Minutes, 18 November 1939 - 29 August 1949, No.208, Notule van Spesiale Hoofbestuurs Vergadering, 10 December 1947.

54. B.J. Schoeman: My Lewe in die Politiek, p.120.

55. Sunday Express, 8 June 1947, p.11. Republican Fighting Fund Collections, July 1947:

Cape Province	-	£32 500
Orange Free State	-	£18 000
Transvaal	-	£ 1 433
Natal	-	-
		<u>£51 933</u>

J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.54, No.2, Republikeinse Strydfonds, n.d. By July 1947, £6 695 of the £10 995 donated by the Fund to the Provincial Parties was given to the Party in the Transvaal. Ibid. £4 695 of this amount was spent on the Witwatersrand. Ibid., Vol.151, No.5, H.N.P. Transvaal, Jaarlikse Geldelike Verslag aan die Kongress, 1947. Including revenue from the Fighting Fund, the Transvaal H.N.P.'s 1947 income was £20 695. Ibid.

56. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.298.

57. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389, Draft of Suggested Circular: General Smuts Election Fund, n.d.

58. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.298.

to international opinion. Its struggle to come to terms with a changed post-war environment placed in question the Party's bona fides among its marginal supporters for the aims of the war, which it had so enthusiastically supported, had been couched in essentially liberal terms while the prominence of J.H. Hofmeyr in the Government lent it a liberal aura.<sup>59</sup> The Government's difficulties were aptly illustrated when, in 1946, it attempted to forestall international criticism of its treatment of the country's Indian community by trading segregation for a qualified franchise. This ended in humiliating failure and lost prestige.<sup>60</sup>

Far more significant, however, were the consequences of the Government's war-time restoration of some measure of mobility to the labour market in order to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding economy.<sup>61</sup> The primary result of this relaxation was a 63 per cent increase, between 1936 and 1946, in the country's urban African population.<sup>62</sup> This

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59. J.D. Shingler, op. cit., p.25.

60. W.B. White: The Evolution of Policy Towards the Indians in Natal, 1943-1948, p.110.

61. R. Horwitz: The Political Economy of South Africa, p.7. The war ushered in a change from small scale, under-capitalised ventures dependent upon journeymen and unskilled labour, to expanded scale, adequately capitalised factories employing increasing numbers of operatives. From 1924 to 1940 fixed capital per employee grew negligibly. From 1939 to 1944 it grew at an annual rate of 5,01 per cent and, from 1948 to 1953, at 10,79 per cent. Ibid., p.320.

62. E. Hellman: Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa, p.239. Approximate number of Africans in Urban areas:

1911	-	508 142
1921	-	587 000
1936	-	1 141 643
1946	-	1 794 212

Ibid.

Percentage Distribution, According to Skill, of Workers in Industries Subject to Wage Determinations, 1937-1947.

rapid growth, which occurred simultaneously with a virtual suspension in housing construction,<sup>63</sup> not only made possible effective African political mobilisation but also enhanced white fears for their own security.

Acknowledging these fears, but recognising the permanence of African urbanisation, Smuts pursued a pragmatic "social policy away from politics."<sup>64</sup> He was not so naïve as to believe, though, that such a policy would prove adequate in the long term, having earlier written that he had been led to "question the adequacy of the Marxian view that human conflicts arise solely from material and economic causes, and can be dealt with on that level merely by economic and social reform."<sup>65</sup> The question of the extension of a meaningful franchise to Africans could only be adequately dealt with, he felt, once white fears had been addressed. His policy priority therefore, at a time when Africans were vociferously pressing their claim to political rights and the H.N.P. was preaching the virtues of Apartheid,<sup>66</sup> was

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	<u>African</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Coloured</u>	<u>Indian</u>	<u>Total</u>
Skilled	4,1	81,4	14,5	31,9	34,0
Semi-Skilled	12,7	16,5	30,7	32,2	18,0
Unskilled	83,2	2,1	54,8	35,9	48,0

G.H. Calpin (ed.): The South African Way of Life: Values and Ideals of a Multi-Racial Society, p.186.

63. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.117.

64. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, File 3, Secret Cypher Telegram, J.C. Smuts to J.H. Hofmeyr, n.d. Smuts, in May 1947, was only prepared to go so far as the introduction of an all-African, all-elective Native Representative Council which would spend its own revenues and make laws within the sphere of its own interests. W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.489.

65. J.C. Smuts: Jan Christian Smuts, p.482.

66. The Afrikanerbond vir Rassestudie, established under Broederbond auspices, elaborated the Apartheid concept from 1935. By 1943 Malan had started to use the word in speeches. By 1945 the H.N.P. had adopted the concept as official Party policy. I. Wilkins and H. Strydom: The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond, p.198.



immigration. Envisaging the establishment, on the new Orange Free State goldfields, of an authority similar to that which had controlled the development of the Tennessee Valley, Smuts, at an August 1946 U.P. Transvaal Head Committee meeting, said:

If we were to put our problems in due order, I would first put this matter of strengthening our European population in South Africa. It is no use talking of our future, and taking measures for our future, unless we put first of all this paramount question of our European population and this problem of immigration that lie before us.<sup>67</sup>

But this approach, both in terms of its vagueness and the threat which immigration posed to the white Afrikaner electorate's numerical preponderance, left the U.P. vulnerable to H.N.P. attack. Smuts's failure adequately to comprehend the inherent political danger stemmed from a miscalculation of the time that was available to him.<sup>68</sup> Poorly organised and without the ethnic base and paid-up membership with which the H.N.P. was accurately able to identify its support, the U.P. hierarchy either remained blind to or gravely underestimated the decline in the Party's support. In September 1947, J.L. Horak, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Secretary, making a personal assessment

67. U.P. Papers, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Committee Minutes, 18 November 1939 - 29 August 1949, No.173, Minutes, Transvaal Head Committee, 14 August 1946. The number of white immigrants to the Union during the years 1936-1939 averaged 7 200 per annum. After a lull during the war years, the numbers were:
- |      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| 1946 | - | 11 256 |
| 1947 | - | 28 839 |
| 1948 | - | 35 631 |
- L.S. Steenkamp Papers, 16:43, United Party Papers 1938-1974, South Africa's Fatal Year: 1948, May 1949.
68. M. Ballinger: From Union to Apartheid: A Trek into Isolation, p.136.

of the effects of the Delimitation Commission's draft scheme upon the Party's election prospects, wrote:

The Platteland area...remains, in my appreciation, fairly stable, particularly as regards the Eastern Transvaal area, where the Commission accepts, in its preliminary scheme, our recommendations with scarcely any change. There is no blinking the fact that the H.N.P. is making an unrelenting effort to capture rural seats; some twenty-three full-time organisers are employed in the Transvaal, and this corps busies itself mainly in intensive "huisbesoek". Most of its members are callow youths, and the distorted interpretations of current events and the Government's policy with which they attempt to gain support are fantastic....But, in my considered opinion, they are gaining little ground and will lose most of that which they have gained as time passes.<sup>69</sup>

On 10 December 1947, three weeks after Hofmeyr had been "reliably informed that a secret 'Gallup poll' just completed by the Nationalists gives them 76 seats for the 1948 Elections,"<sup>70</sup> a U.P. memorandum provided an assessment that, in an immediate election, a U.P.-L.P. combination would be secure in 74 seats, the S.A.P.<sup>71</sup> in 1 and the H.N.P. in 39. Referring to the remaining 36 seats, it stated that it was "reasonable to assume that one

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69. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389, J.L. Horak to O.A. Oosthuizen, 29 September 1947. One of the difficulties facing U.P. analysts was the absence, because of the capital outlay required, of a comprehensive card index system of voters in its constituency organisations. U.P. Papers, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 24 February 1941 - 2 December 1952, Vol.I, Plans for the General Election 1948, 7 July 1947.
70. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, General Correspondence 1946-1948, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 15 November 1947.
71. At its 9 December 1947 Congress the Dominion Party had changed its name to the South African Party. W.B. White, *op. cit.*, p.138.

half...will be won by the United Party. This brings the Nationalist total to 58 seats, and the United Party total to a similar figure to what it is at the moment."<sup>72</sup> Two days later Oosthuizen, in a diary entry, wrote that

there is evidence on all side of growing confidence of election victory....We have just completed our conferences - Cape, Natal and Transvaal - all three most successful and happy. All three characterised by a good friendly co-operative spirit. The Party is in fine fettle to win the General Election.<sup>73</sup>

On 23 December he wrote:

Placed an analysis of our seats before the General: 85-89. He seemed more than pleased. The new delimitation report appeared this afternoon. We have no real complaint about it. We should do well on it generally speaking.<sup>74</sup>

Oosthuizen's optimism was based on little more than wishful thinking, inexcusable for a man whose duty it was to give the Party hard-headed guidance. There was, in fact, ample evidence to indicate that the Party was losing support. Not only had the first issue of the Party's General Election Letter conceded that "we have to accept the position that the public is suffering from war-weariness and desires a change,"<sup>75</sup> but the results in the majority of the ten by-elections held since the 1943 General Election showed a clear trend away from the Party.<sup>76</sup> The most significant of

72. J.C. Smuts Papers, File 389, Details of the United Party Organisation as at 10 December 1947. The memorandum listed 5 rural Transvaal seats as "safe" and 6 as "probables". Ibid. In December 1947 the U.P. held 86 seats in Parliament, the H.N.P. 48, the L.P. 7 and the Dominion Party 5. There was 1 Independent. Ibid.
73. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 12 December 1947.
74. Ibid., 23 December 1947.
75. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389, General Election: Party Letter No.I, n.d.
76. On 10 May 1944, the H.N.P. won the Wakkerstroom by-

these, "a major political disaster, worse than the defeat of the old South African Party at Wakkerstroom,"<sup>77</sup> was the 1946 U.P. loss, after holding the seat with a 1 288 vote majority in 1943, of Hottentots-Holland.<sup>78</sup>

Without mentioning Hofmeyr's eve-of-election statement in the constituency that "Natives will eventually be represented in Parliament by Natives and Indians by Indians,"<sup>79</sup> or the fact that the Party's provincial leader, Senator A.M. Conroy, had failed to play any part in the by-election,<sup>80</sup> a U.P. report on the defeat stated that it was "satisfied that no blame attached to the Party organisation."<sup>81</sup> Looking elsewhere for the cause of the failure, the report went on to state that it was

satisfied that the manner in which certain organisations such as the Deciduous Fruit Board, Marketing Board, Fisheries Development Corporation, and various other controlling bodies are

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election with a majority of 221 votes after the U.P. had won the seat with a 551 vote majority in 1943. In 1945 the H.N.P. won the Kimberley District seat with a majority of 244 votes after the U.P. had held it by 511 votes in 1943. In 1946, although the H.N.P. failed to take Caledon, the 1943 U.P. majority was reduced by 666 votes. In 1947 the H.N.P. increased its 1943 majority in the Wolmaranstad constituency by 1377 votes and, contesting the Zululand seat for the first time, the H.N.P. received 1454 votes. B.M. Schoeman: Parlementêre Verkiesings in Suid Afrika, 1910-1976, p.276.

77. A.H. Jonker Papers, File I, What Hottentots-Holland Means, 24 January 1947.
78. The H.N.P. majority was 637 votes. B.M. Schoeman, op. cit., p.276.
79. A. Paton: Hofmeyr, p.443.
80. A.H. Jonker Papers, File I, What Hottentots-Holland Means, 24 January 1947.
81. U.P. Papers, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 24 February 1941 - 2 December 1952, Vol.I, No.119, The Aftermath of Hottentots-Holland By-Election, Report of Special Committee, n.d.

being administered, is generally regarded by the electorate as representing unnecessary interference with private enterprise and a serious encroachment upon the liberties of the people. The general public appear to feel that sacrifices which they cheerfully accepted as their contribution towards the war effort have been retained and operated in a manner which they appear to regard as an unnecessary survival of obnoxious forms of bureaucracy. Your Committee is under no illusions regarding the depth of feeling which these bodies have engendered and the disastrous effect which their policies are having upon the electorate.<sup>82</sup>

Quite apart from its by-election victories at the expense of the U.P., the ranks of the H.N.P. had been further increased when, in 1946, M.J. van den Berg crossed the floor from the L.P. and when, in mid-1947, J.B. Wolmarans, M.P. for Losberg, left the U.P. for the H.N.P.<sup>83</sup>

Misguided confidence in the acumen of his political analysts would also explain why, despite the obvious drift of the primarily Afrikaans-speaking floating voters away from him, Smuts, in early 1947, rejected Havenga's terms for the re-incorporation of the remaining Hertzogites into the U.P.<sup>84</sup>

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82. Ibid. The persistence of shortages and the inflationary pressure caused by the considerable post-war flow of investment capital into the country had convinced the Government of the necessity of extending the life of the Control Boards.
83. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.131. On 17 March 1948, E.P.J. Pieterse, M.P. for Pretoria North Central, was to do likewise after accusing the Smuts Government of failing to accord Afrikaans equal standing with English. Ibid.
84. J.L. Basson: J.G. Strijdom: Sy Politieke Loopbaan van 1929 tot 1948, p.517. Havenga's terms were a guarantee of as many as eight seats in the House of Assembly for former A.P. M.P.s and his own admission to the Cabinet as Smuts's successor. Ibid.

Both more politically astute and better informed than Smuts, Malan wooed marginal voters by retreating from issues, such as republicanism, when they had doubtful electoral appeal and by actively courting the A.P.<sup>85</sup> By late March 1947, despite his own concern about the O.B. presence in the A.P.<sup>86</sup> and Strijdom's vociferous objections to any agreement except on the basis of incorporation,<sup>87</sup> he had reached the first of a series of agreements with Havenga.<sup>88</sup> This enabled him, under the banner of "Afrikaner Unity", to broaden the extent of his appeal and so to seal the fate of the poorly organised U.P.

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85. Between 1943 and 1946 the A.P. had held no congresses and had failed to contest any by-elections. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.102. Malan and Havenga had opened negotiations in April 1945. It would appear though that the latter would have preferred an alliance with Smuts. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.517.
86. By 1948 some 80 per cent of A.P. supporters were assumed also to be members of the O.B. Hans van Rensburg, the O.B. leader, was an Executive Committee member of the A.P. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.242. In a June 1947 letter to Havenga, Malan outlined why his agreement with the A.P. specifically excluded any agreement with the O.B.: "Ek mag hieraan toevoeg dat ek al lank suspiesie gehad het dat die Regering niks liever sou sien as dat ons aan die O.B. gekoppel sal word nie, en dat in afwagting daarvan hul vireers nie verder wou gaan met seker getuienis in 'n aantal diefstal- en moord-sake waarin die O.B. betrokke was nie. Dis veral daarom dat ek tot hiertoe nog geen ooreenkoms met die O.B. wou aangaan of enige onderhandeling met hul wou hê nie of ons deure vir hul wou oopmaak nie. Ek het gevrees dat dit ons sou kompromitteer." J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.59, No.4, D.F. Malan to N.C. Havenga, 25 June 1947.
87. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.538.
88. The initial agreement simply stated that their future relationship would arise out of their "partnership in the national service." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.241. In June 1947 both men appeared together on the same platform for the first time in fifteen years. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.105. In August 1947 Havenga announced that the A.P. would not nominate members of the O.B. to any seats which the A.P. might contest. Ibid., p.107.

The background to the defeat of the Smuts Government in 1948 has received extensive consideration in a number of works. The most useful of these are those by H. Adam and H. Giliomee,<sup>89</sup> D. O'Meara,<sup>90</sup> T.D. Moodie,<sup>91</sup> N.M. Stultz<sup>92</sup> and W.H. Vatcher.<sup>93</sup>

The major focus of this study is, however, the attempt by the U.P., between 1948 and 1953, to regain power. K.A. Heard's work, General Elections in South Africa 1943-1970, and G.M. Carter's The Politics of Inequality, constitute the major studies of the period covered in this thesis. While each of these works has proved to be of great value, their usefulness is limited because their authors lacked access to the considerable volume of primary material which has subsequently become available. An important exception in this regard is S.L. Barnard and A.H. Marais' Die Verenigde Party: Die Groot Eksperiment. The broad scope of this enquiry means, however, that it does not deal with the period 1948-1953 in any great detail. D.M. Scher's scholarly work The Disenfranchisement of the Coloured Voters 1948-1956, while making extensive use of the available source material, deals only marginally with the issues which are the major concern of this study.

The significant gaps left by previous research into the

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89. H. Adam and H. Giliomee: The Rise and Crisis of Afrikaner Power.  
 90. D. O'Meara: Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948.  
 91. T.D. Moodie: The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion.  
 92. N.M. Stultz: The Nationalists in Opposition, 1934-1948.  
 93. W.H. Vatcher: White Laager: The Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism.

parliamentary opposition in South Africa and the ready availability of a vast body of virtually unresearched primary material in the University of South Africa archives provided the motivation for this study. It is hoped that it will contribute to a better understanding of the parliamentary opposition's reaction to the challenge posed by the N.P. as it fashioned the "Apartheid State" and consolidated its power between 1948 and 1953.



PART IIA MAJORITY IN BOTH HOUSESCHAPTER 2THE GENERAL ELECTION : PREPARATIONS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S  
DEFEAT, JANUARY-MAY 1948

The L.P. emerged from the ideological conflict which had been brought to a head by the 1946 Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act with six seats in the House of Assembly but with its infrastructure and credibility severely impaired.<sup>1</sup> The Party's rump nevertheless possessed greater ideological coherence particularly in regard to race policy.<sup>2</sup> Fissures however remained.

The Party's left-wing was most influential in its

1. R.H. Davies: Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa 1900-1960, p.313. The National and Natal Executives of the L.P. having accepted the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill in principle, W. Madeley, the Party's leader, and M.J. van den Berg M.P., resigned from the Party in April 1946. The Rev. C.F. Miles-Cadman M.P., left the L.P. in March 1947 because it had, he said, become subject to "strong Communist influences". W.B. White: The Evolution of Policy towards the Indians in Natal: 1947-1948, p.138.
2. The Party's "Progressive Group", which had become active in 1940, succeeded in getting its recommendations in regard to race policy accepted at the Party's 1946 Annual Conference. The policy, expressed in generally vague terms and not pressed too hard from public platforms, proposed the extension of political rights, on communal rolls, to those currently without the franchise, the economic upliftment of rural areas and enactment of the principle of equal pay for equal work. G.H. Calpin, op. cit., p.148.

Johannesburg heartland having, until 1945, under the leadership of Jessie Macpherson, dominated that city's municipal politics.<sup>3</sup> The six year alliance with the U.P. had, however, been largely responsible for preventing the infusion of the left-wing's ideological zeal into the Party's parliamentary caucus. The replacement of Jessie Macpherson as Chairman of the Party by John Christie, leader of the parliamentary caucus, at the Party's 1948 Annual Conference<sup>4</sup>, not only served to strengthen co-operation between the caucus and the Party organization but also to present a more moderate public image.

The process of resuscitating the Party also involved attempts to strengthen its historically weak links with the Trade Union movement. Although the Party's overall shift to the left since 1946 had lost it the support of a number of the Unions which had been previously affiliated to it<sup>5</sup>, it

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3. In 1945 18 of the 42 Johannesburg City Councillors were L.P. members. J. Macpherson was the city's Mayor.
  4. Rand Daily Mail, 5 January 1948, p.7. The supreme policy making organ of the L.P. was the annual Party Conference which was attended by delegates from each branch. Between Conferences, the Party was controlled by the National Executive Council. This body consisted of 25 members elected by the Annual Conference. The Party's constitution stated that not more than one third of the National Executive was to consist of M.P.'s. This attempt to prevent the Council from being dominated by the Party's Parliamentary Caucus had little effect for the Caucus tended, in practice, to be largely independent of Executive control. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.345.
  5. Most important among these was the Mineworkers' Union. Although the formal takeover of the 22,000 strong Union by Albert Hertzog's National Council of Trustees only took place in 1949, the swing towards the H.N.P. among the majority of the Union's membership was almost complete by 1948. I. Wilkens & H. Strydom, op. cit., p.113. It was for this reason that H.J. Cilliers, L.P. M.P. for Mayfair, who owed his election to the Mineworkers' Union, was, in early

was able to establish new links with the "left" Unions which had hitherto remained aloof. E.S. Sach's Garment Workers' Union, for example, affiliated in 1947.<sup>6</sup> Nine of the fourteen members elected to the Party's National Executive in January 1948 were Trade Unionists.<sup>7</sup>

These sources of both revenue and membership were not available to the Party in Natal. Having hoped to co-operate with Natal Unions in the formulation of an election policy, the Party, in January 1948, was warned by its General Secretary that Trade Unions in Natal could be

roughly divided into two classes - Indian and anti-Indian Trade Unions. The Trades and Labour Council are ruled by the Indian bloc. Errol Shanley, the leader of the Communist Party in Natal, is the Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, and J.C. Bolton, now apparently one of our bitterest enemies, is the Chairman...To attempt to make any contact with the Trade Unions and especially with the Trades and Labour Council at the present time, is simply wasted effort, not only that but it will sink us completely in Natal.<sup>8</sup>

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- 1948, being brought under pressure by the Union to resign from the Party. Rand Daily Mail, 21 January 1948, p.7.
6. R.H. Davies, op. cit., p.313. Following the defeat of the Garment Workers' Union backed Independent Labour Party in the 1943 General Election, the Party joined with the Progressive Labour Group to form the Socialist Party. This Party's failure to survive prompted the Garment Workers' Union to reaffiliate with the newly acceptable L.P. B. Bozzoli (ed.): Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives, p.267.
7. Rand Daily Mail, 5 January 1948, p.7. The Trade Unions were accorded weighted votes at the Party's Annual Conference. The adoption of policy changes as a consequence of this vote exacerbated tensions between the Party's right and left wings.
8. S.A.L.P. Papers, Labour Party General Secretary to A.T. Wanless, 20 January 1948.

Eager for allies, L.P. representatives also approached the Springbok Legion<sup>9</sup> offering to permit that organisation to select candidates to fight the General Election under the banner of the L.P.<sup>10</sup> The Legion refused to be drawn however, for, at its September 1947 National Conference, it had adopted a resolution calling on "the United Party, the Labour Party, and all progressive bodies and individuals to arrange a common front in the face of this reactionary challenge."<sup>11</sup>

Meeting on 14 December to define more clearly its pre-election strategy, the Springbok Legion's National Executive saw the organisation's concern as lying in two distinct areas: To influence U.P. and L.P. nominations in a "progressive direction" and to provide voluntary assistance to both parties.<sup>12</sup>

In regard to the former, the Johannesburg branch of the Legion subsequently reported that its members would be able to "play a decisive role, in the event of a nomination fight within the ranks of the anti-Nat. parties", in five constituencies.<sup>13</sup> In regard to the latter, a 23 January National Executive meeting, deciding that the first priority was the registration as voters of all ex-servicemen,<sup>14</sup> went

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9. See Appendix 4: Background to the Springbok Legion.
  10. J.C. Smuts Papers, Volume 389/3, Headed: Secret, Unsigned, n.d.
  11. Ibid., Vol.389/3, Special National Conference, September 1947. The Conference was opened by Smuts. M. Fridjhon: The Torch Commando: A Study in Opposition Politics in White South Africa, p.3.
  12. Springbok Legion Papers, National Executive Committee Minutes, April 1947 - July 1948, Special National Executive Conference, 14 December 1947.
  13. Ibid., Johannesburg Branch, 1944-1950, General Meeting, 16 February 1948.
  14. Ibid., National Executive Committee Minutes, April

ahead with the appointment of a Committee of Organisers whose task it was to form branches of ex-servicemen in every constituency on the Witwatersrand and in all the larger urban centres in the country.<sup>15</sup> The National Executive later reported: "Our whole campaign has been finalised with the full knowledge, advice and approval of United and Labour Party Headquarters."<sup>16</sup>

O.A. Oosthuizen, General Secretary of the U.P., writing in early January 1948, had few misgivings as to the state of U.P. preparedness: "According to confidential reports from organisers, the position is good and sound. We ought to hold the position we now have."<sup>17</sup> The election date not yet having been decided upon, J.H. Hofmeyr, a few days later, wrote: "The general position has during recent months improved as far as the Government is concerned, and if the

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- 1947-July 1948, National office, 23 January 1948.
15. J.C. Smuts Papers, Volume 389/3, unsigned, n.d. The Legion was also promised support by members of the British Empire Servicemen's' League. Ibid.
  16. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, File Cd, Election Propaganda, To all United Party and Labour Party candidates, n.d. Three election teams comprising paid Legion organisers visited about fifty selected constituencies where the ex-service vote was considered important. The teams' task was not only to register ex-servicemen, but also to attempt to draw them into the service of either the U.P. or L.P. Springbok Legion Papers, National Executive Committee Minutes, April 1947 - July 1948, National Executive Committee, 21 April 1948. "Commandos" of the Legion also carried out general propaganda campaigns on behalf of the U.P. and L.P. Ibid., Minutes of the Fifth Annual National Conference, 27-29 March 1948. By the end of April 1948 the Legion had instituted a small but nationwide press advertising campaign and had distributed 2500 posters and "hundreds" of copies of two booklets and 4 leaflets which it had prepared. Ibid., National Executive Committee, 21 April 1948.
  17. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 1 January 1948.

election were to take place now we would almost certainly win it...."18

But, in the same letter, Hofmeyr revealed the price his herculean efforts since the outbreak of war had exacted upon his health: "From the personal point of view I really would not mind in the least to be out of office for a spell...one can't go on enduring this kind of strain indefinitely."19

In as early as May 1947 Hofmeyr had asked Smuts to relieve him of the particularly stressful finance portfolio.<sup>20</sup> Smuts had, however, prevaricated. But, in the face of Hofmeyr's obvious fatigue<sup>21</sup> and his repeated requests to be relieved of the portfolio,<sup>22</sup> Smuts, on 15 January, finally relented. In a general reshuffle Hofmeyr was appointed deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mines and of Education.<sup>23</sup> That Smuts had made the change reluctantly is

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18. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Ga 30, File 5, Hofmeyr Personal, J.H. Hofmeyr to K. Underhill, 11 January 1948.
19. Ibid.
20. Hofmeyr was at the time Minister of Finance and of Education and Leader of the House of Assembly.
21. A. Paton, op. cit., p.468.
22. Some U.P. members were in favour of asking Havenga to assume the portfolio. Hofmeyr was adamantly opposed to the idea. A. Paton, op. cit., p.456. Hofmeyr, as Minister of Finance, was not popular among the Business Community: "His stubbornness to heed responsible representations and afford redress concerning discriminatory taxation measures...stamped him as no Minister of Finance." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.275, R.E. Bell to J.C. Smuts, 28 May 1948.
23. In the reshuffle C. Sturrock took over Finance; H. Lawrence, Interior and Justice; C. Steyn, Labour and Welfare; J.W. Musher, Economic Development; S.F. Waterson, Transport, and C.F. Clarkson, Posts and Telegraphs. The reshuffle was also an attempt by Smuts to use Lawrence, who took over the Interior ministry from Clarkson, as effectively as possible after the role he had recently played at the United Nations in defending the Government's policy towards

evident from a letter he wrote to Ouma Smuts: "I am sorry but Jantjie was set upon the change which, just on the eve of the session, comes at a very unsuitable time and will perhaps not be understood by the public."<sup>24</sup>

It was perhaps inevitable that political observers would see Hofmeyr's appointment to the deputy Premiership as his assumption also of the role of Smuts's heir apparent.<sup>25</sup> This was certainly the interpretation which the Rand Daily Mail placed on the reshuffle:

The announcement that he will be Deputy Prime Minister is made with the evident object of informing the public that, in relinquishing the portfolio of Finance, he is not forfeiting his status in the Cabinet...Its recognition means that he is officially second-in-command in the Union Government, and therefore heir presumptive to the Premiership.<sup>26</sup>

Hofmeyr himself, with assistance from Sir Ernest and H.F. Oppenheimer, appears, at that time, to have been preparing himself for just such a role. With the intention of creating a sympathetic press syndicate, negotiations were then underway, on Hofmeyr's behalf, to purchase the Johannesburg-based Sunday Express, the Port Elizabeth Saturday Post and, possibly also, Pietermaritzburg's Natal Witness.<sup>27</sup> Defending the strategy of creating a

- South African Indians. W.B. White, op. cit., p.134.
24. J. van der Poel: Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol.VII, August 1945 - October 1950, pp.172-173, J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 16 January 1948.
25. Smuts was 77 years old. Hofmeyr was 54. "No-one in the cabinet apart from Smuts could match Hofmeyr's experience and ability. He had at various times held seven different portfolios. During the Prime Minister's wartime and post-war trips abroad, Hofmeyr had served as acting Prime Minister." N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.140.
26. Rand Daily Mail, 17 January 1948, p.6.
27. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/F4, File 3, Publications, The Forum, Confidential Memorandum on Press Developments

specifically pro-Hofmeyr press, H.F. Oppenheimer argued that the pro-U.P. press could "at any moment become a stick to beat him. If he has his own press, he would at least have something to lean on in the event of a clash, say over Native urbanisation, in which Argus Press might oppose him."<sup>28</sup>

Hofmeyr's appointment as deputy Prime Minister was of particular significance coming as it did only a few days before Malan, during the 20 January no-confidence debate, in effect, opened the H.N.P. election campaign. Instead of moving a no-confidence motion covering the entire spectrum of Government policy, he introduced a motion calling for the abolition of the Natives' Representative Council and for the repeal of legislation designed to provide Indian and African representation in Parliament.<sup>29</sup> With Smuts admonishing the Opposition to "look to the future, not to the next General Election", United and Labour Party<sup>30</sup> members, together with the Natives' Representatives, combined to defeat the resolution.<sup>31</sup> C.F. Miles-Cadman, leader of the Central Group<sup>32</sup> and C.F. Stallard, leader of the South African

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from J.P. Cope, n.d. Hofmeyr already controlled the "c" class shares, which afforded him policy control, in The Forum. The same procedure was envisaged in regard to any future acquisitions.

28. Ibid. J.P. Cope to J.H. Hofmeyr, 16 March 1948. The Oppenheimers withdrew their support from the project subsequent to the Smuts Government's May 1948 defeat.
29. House of Assembly Debates, 20 January 1948, Col.62.
30. H.J. Cilliers, L.P. M.P. for Mayfair, absented himself from the House of Assembly on the day that Christie spoke against Malan's motion. Rand Daily Mail, 22 January 1948, p.7.
31. House of Assembly Debates, 26 January 1948, Col.423.
32. Major, the Rev. C.F. Miles-Cadman, M.P. (Durban North) had left the L.P. in March 1947 and soon afterwards formed the Central Group. The main planks of the Central Group were the abolition of the Coloured vote and African representation in Parliament, the introduction of a Social Security



Party,<sup>33</sup> however, supported it.

Stallard's action precipitated a split within the S.A.P. On 26 January, J.S. Marwick M.P. (Pinetown) and Senators E. Stubbs<sup>34</sup> and G.R. Richards, announced that they were resigning their Party membership in protest against Stallard's "repudiation of a pledge given to the Natives as embodied in the Act of Union which, without their consent, could not be denounced."<sup>35</sup>

These resignations freed Stallard to commit the rump of his Party to an unofficial alliance with the H.N.P. On the day following the resignations he said: "The time has come when those who think alike (on the colour question) should get together as they did during the war and subordinate their differences."<sup>36</sup>

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Programme and the saving of "Natal, Transvaal and Cape Province from social and economic ruin by reason of pressure (of whatever type) by Indians or other Eastern peoples". Rand Daily Mail, 21 January 1948, p.4.

33. At a 21 October 1947 Dominion Party Congress it had been decided not to support the U.P. in the forthcoming General Election. W.B. White, op. cit., p.138.
34. A.B. Xuma, President-General of the A.N.C., wrote to Stubbs informing him: "This move has reassured my people that South Africa still has statesmen who can dare to uphold her honour and integrity..." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.279, No.342, A.B. Xuma to Sen. E. Stubbs, 27 January 1948.
35. Rand Daily Mail, 27 January 1948, p.7. The split left the S.A.P. with only three members in Parliament: Col. C.F. Stallard (Pietermaritzburg District); C. Neate (Natal South Coast) and J.G. Derbyshire (Durban Central).
36. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.121. Smuts wrote: "I am indeed sorry to see Stallard ending his career in the way he is now doing. It can only be the end, so let him rest in peace." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.278, No.29, J.C. Smuts to Sen. E. Stubbs, 10 February 1948.

With such an alliance offering the prospect of tying down the U.P. in as many as ten Natal and Eastern Cape seats which the H.N.P. did not itself propose to contest, Malan, on 30 January, responded to Stallard's overtures:

The declaration by Colonel Stallard is a rallying call which will be heard everywhere...can anything be conceived which will bring the two great races closer together than if English and Afrikaans-speaking people should stand together for the maintenance of white South Africa...<sup>37</sup>

Discussions between the S.A.P. and H.N.P. were subsequently broadened to include the Central Group<sup>38</sup> and Senator Charles Henderson's minuscule United Labour Party.<sup>39</sup> They resulted in the H.N.P. agreeing to provide financial<sup>40</sup> and press support for its new allies and undertaking to instruct its supporters to vote for them in seats where there were no H.N.P. or A.P. candidates.<sup>41</sup>

Having attempted, in so far as it could, to consolidate and strengthen its organisation, the L.P. had appointed a General Election Action Committee which, in mid-January

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37. Rand Daily Mail, 30 January 1948, p.12.

38. Miles-Cadman had, on 21 January 1948, announced that the Central Group would nominate at least 14 candidates though, "pending a National Conference, the candidates would essentially be independents." Rand Daily Mail, 21 January 1948, p.4. The Conference was never held.

39. Rand Daily Mail, 23 March 1948, p.9.

40. T. Wilks Papers, D. Mitchell File, p.142.

41. W.B. White, op. cit., p.139. In Natal the S.A.P. and Central Group each nominated five candidates to stand in the General Election, Daily News, 26 April 1948, p.1.

1948, set in motion the selection of candidates for the twenty-three seats which the Party had stated its determination to contest.<sup>42</sup> Incapable of sustaining that number of candidates,<sup>43</sup> it is likely that the nominations were merely a bargaining ploy for, soon afterwards, the Party approached the U.P. for an election agreement.<sup>44</sup>

Support for such an agreement was not unanimous within either the U.P. or L.P. Those who opposed it feared the inevitable erosion of party morale and organisational efficiency in those constituencies apportioned to the erstwhile ally. Neither side, moreover, trusted the bona fides of the other.<sup>45</sup> It was the vulnerability, in the event of three-cornered contests, of at least twelve U.P. and L.P. Witwatersrand seats which finally drove the two parties to the negotiating table.<sup>46</sup>

The initial proposal which the L.P. laid before the U.P. was for the allocation to the L.P. of six seats on the Witwatersrand,<sup>47</sup> two seats in Durban, a Port Elizabeth seat

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42. Forward, 16 January 1948, p.5. The nomination procedure involved branches proposing candidates whose names were then forwarded to a Provincial Sub-Committee. This Committee then sent a shortlist for the Provincial Executive's approval and subsequent endorsement by the National Executive. S.A.L.P. Papers, J.A. Henry to D. Ritchie, 26 January 1948.
43. S.A.L.P. Papers, The Secretary, Finance Committee, to the Honorary Secretary, Cape Provincial Executive, 16 February 1948.
44. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.12, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.C. Smuts, 23 January 1948.
45. Oosthuizen reported that "Solly Sachs and his Communist supporters" were prominent among those supporting an agreement, Ibid., Vol.277, No.13, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.C. Smuts, 2 March 1948. In February 1948 the U.P. and L.P. opposed one another in the Turffontein and Pretoria North Central Provincial by-elections. Forward, 27 February 1948, p.5.
46. Rand Daily Mail, 5 January 1948, p.7.
47. Benoni, Germiston, Johannesburg City and Alberton,

and one Cape Senate seat. Despite a subsequent L.P. accusation that the U.P. "were deliberately holding up negotiations to prevent Labour from organising properly",<sup>48</sup> an agreement had, by 11 March, been reached. The L.P. would fight Johannesburg City, Benoni, Germiston City, Rosettenville, Edenvale and Wonderboom<sup>49</sup> in the Transvaal and the Umbilo and Durban Central seats in Natal. In addition, the L.P. was allocated one Cape seat and one Transvaal seat in the Senate.<sup>50</sup> The agreement made no provision for L.P. representation in a post-election U.P. cabinet and, although not part of the written agreement, the U.P. made it clear that it would not call upon its supporters to vote for Labour candidates "who are generally regarded as having Communistic leanings."<sup>51</sup> While conceding that the agreement was "not as favourable as he would liked to have seen",<sup>52</sup> Christie accepted it as a reasonable compromise.

But a meeting of the National Executive of the L.P., called especially to ratify the agreement, took exception to the inclusion of the marginal Wonderboom seat and to Edenvale, where the "branches of the United Party in that constituency

and to exchange the marginal seats of Krugersdorp and Mayfair for Kensington, Edenvale, Rosettenville or Randfontein. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.13, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.C. Smuts, 2 March 1948.

48. Ibid.

49. The L.P. was asked to contest Wonderboom "because it was felt that it would give point to Labour support to the United Party in the Pretoria area." S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File No.1, Minutes of Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 12 March 1948.

50. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.14, O.A. Oosthuizen to J. Christie, 11 March 1948.

51. Ibid.

52. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 12 March 1948.

had indicated that they would definitely not support a Labour Party candidate."<sup>53</sup> Rejecting the agreement, the Executive recommended instead the replacement of Wonderboom and Edenvale with two other suitable Witwatersrand seats and the addition of the Durban seat of Umlazi.<sup>54</sup>

Although there is little evidence to indicate what transpired, the U.P., at a subsequent meeting, must have adopted an uncompromising stand. Although it agreed to allocate the more favourable Durban seat of Umlazi to the L.P., it then withdrew the offer of Durban Central and refused to replace either Edenvale or Wonderboom.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the L.P. National Executive's dissatisfaction with the final agreement, a leader in the Rand Daily Mail observed that

the Labour Party is getting very good value as the price of its co-operation. It has at present six members in the House of Assembly and one Senator so that the proportionate increase in its Parliamentary representation would be considerable. The United Party, on the other hand, is wise in being generous. It is far better that Labour should have the seats than that any of them should fall into the hands of the Nationalists.<sup>56</sup>

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53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Evidence supporting these conclusions has had to be based on the seats finally contested by the L.P. in May.

56. Rand Daily Mail, 17 March 1948, p.6. The 17 March Turffontein and Pretoria North Central by-election results substantiated claims that the U.P. had been generous. The result in the former was U.P. 1872; L.P. 846. In the latter it was U.P. 2259; L.P. 154. Rand Daily Mail, 18 March 1948, p.7. In early May Smuts issued an appeal to U.P. supporters in the eight affected seats to vote for the L.P., Forward. 14 May 1948, p.1. The L.P. Executive agreed, in

The results of the prolonged negotiations<sup>57</sup> between the H.N.P. and A.P., having been assented to by the respective party congresses, Malan, on 22 March, called on H.N.P. adherents to support the A.P. in the eleven seats which had been allocated to it.<sup>58</sup> Havenga, on the following day, reciprocated by calling on A.P. supporters to vote for the H.N.P. and its allies in constituencies being contested by them.<sup>59</sup>

Smuts's defensive pact with the L.P., in order to secure the Witwatersrand, afforded the U.P. little advantage outside its limited strategic purpose. On the other hand, Malan's offensive pact with Havenga, a man of "statesmanlike sobriety",<sup>60</sup> stood to yield substantial gains both in terms of possible victories in seats which the H.N.P. could not itself hope to win and in improving the chances of H.N.P. candidates in marginal seats.

Although the formal announcement of the date of the General Election was made by Hofmeyr on 24 March, the final day of

principle, to L.P. and U.P. speakers appearing together on the same platform. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 6, File 6, Resolution passed by the National Executive Council, n.d.

57. In June 1947 the O.B. had secretly undertaken to establish numerous ostensibly A.P. branches throughout the country. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, D.F. Malan to N.C. Havenga, 25 June 1947.
58. The agreement provided for A.P. representation in a post-election H.N.P. Cabinet but, much to Strijdom's chagrin, did not include any commitment by the A.P. to unite with the H.N.P. Only one of the eleven seats, the Ladybrand seat which was to be contested by Havenga himself, was a "safe" seat. Six of the remaining seats were U.P. "probables". N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.132.
59. H.B. Thom: D.F. Malan, p.193.
60. W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.499.

the parliamentary session,<sup>61</sup> the decision had actually been taken some two weeks earlier. Explaining the motive behind the decision, Hofmeyr wrote:

We think that it will be to our advantage to have the election fairly soon, since at the moment the country is prosperous and grievances have receded into the background. But apart from that, we have been influenced by the international situation. Since the Czechoslovakian incident took place it looks as if anything might happen, and we don't want an international crisis to coincide with a General Election campaign if possible. Moreover the danger of a crisis may influence the electorate to turn to a Government which has served it well in past crises.<sup>62</sup>

Smuts echoed Hofmeyr's sentiments when, a few days later, he wrote:

My main underlying note will be that in times of grave crisis such as the world is now passing through, it is on the whole best to stick to the tried leadership which has proved successful in the past, rather than to embark on risky changes.<sup>63</sup>

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61. Smuts had wanted the session to be as short as possible and thus only essential matters had been dealt with. H.B. Thom, op. cit., p.190. Although there were Cabinet members who wanted to present a popular budget before the election, Hofmeyr refused, holding that to do so would be improper. A. Paton, op. cit., p.479.
62. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Hofmeyr Personal, A1/Ga30, File 5, J.H. Hofmeyr to K. Underhill, 14 March 1948. Douglas Mitchell reported that Smuts had agreed, soon after the departure of the Royal family, to hold the election towards the end of 1947 but that Hofmeyr had not approved. He reminded Smuts "that a promise had been given that political capital would not be made of the Royal visit". T. Wilks: The Biography of Douglas Mitchell, p.55.
63. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 21 March 1948. No evidence has been found to support P. Meiring's assertion that Smuts chose

But it was in foreign affairs, particularly since the 1946 defeats he had suffered at the United Nations in regard to his Indian policy and South-West Africa, where Smuts had lost much of the electorates' confidence.<sup>64</sup> This decline in confidence was made the more serious by the developing overlap between foreign and domestic affairs. Lack of conspicuous success in the former exacerbated already perceived defects in the latter.<sup>65</sup>

But a posteriori criticism of the defects in Smuts's domestic policies, particularly those in regard to race, have been overplayed. B. Friedman, in particular, does Smuts an injustice by accusing him of being a defensive protagonist of the status quo.<sup>66</sup>

During its term in office, the Smuts Government had gone beyond what was politically acceptable to the majority of the white electorate. It had attempted, though at the price of segregation, to extend political rights to Indian South Africans and real advances had been made in African education.<sup>67</sup> Beginning with the 1941 van Eck Report on the

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the election date to accommodate his installation, in June 1948, as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. P. Meiring: Smuts the Patriot, p.179.

64. J. Barber: South Africa's Foreign Policy 1945-70, p.41.
65. This had already been brought home by the dramatic 18 March 1948 crossing, to the H.N.P. benches, of E.P. Pieterse because of Smuts's alleged pro-British bias. Rand Daily Mail, 18 March 1948, p.7.
66. B. Friedman: Smuts: A Reappraisal, p.162.
67. After 1910 the Provincial Administrations subsidised the missionary education of Africans. By 1925 the total amount paid by the provinces was £340,000 per annum. In that year the Union Government undertook the responsibility for subsidising this education, taking the £340,000 as a minimum and adding to it four shillings in every pound of Native Poll Tax. Due primarily to Hofmeyr's influence, this amount was



industrial and agricultural requirements of the country, a report which Margaret Ballinger considered to be a "highly encouraging document",<sup>68</sup> there followed a series of what were, in contemporary terms, enlightened reports.<sup>69</sup> The entire approach of these series of reports, which culminated in the April 1948 Report of the Native Laws (Fagan) Commission,<sup>70</sup> reflected Smuts's pragmatic, evolutionary approach.<sup>71</sup>

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progressively raised to twenty shillings in the pound. By 1945 expenditure totalled over £2,200,000. In that year, by Act 29, the administration of the subsidy was transferred from the Native Affairs Department to that of the Union Education Department, additional revenue being met by grants from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. E.H. Brookes: Apartheid: A Documentary Study of Modern South Africa, p.41.

68. M. Ballinger, op. cit., p.108.
69. Some of the reports were specially concerned with African affairs, such as the Douglas Smit enquiry into the conditions of urban Africans and an enquiry into the wage rates of African mine workers. Others included Africans in their purview. Chief among the latter were the reports and recommendations of the permanent Social and Economic Planning Council which had been established in 1941. Ibid., p.109.
70. Chairman of the Commission was Mr Justice Fagan, erstwhile Minister of Native Affairs in the Hertzog Government. See Appendix V: The terms of Reference of the Native Laws (Fagan) Commission and a Brief Summary of the Commission's Findings. On 29 March the H.N.P. had released the Sauer Commission Report which provided "an accommodating and flexible framework into which the torrent of Apartheid legislation was subsequently to be poured and which became the essence of the Party's election manifesto." M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds): The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol.II, pp.408-9. A few days later the Synodical Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church released a report which concluded that "the policy of the church is based on the principles of Apartheid and Guardianship as stated in the Bible", Rand Daily Mail, 5 April 1948, p.6. See Appendix VI: Summary of H.N.P. Race Policy, 1948.
71. H. Lever, South African Society, p.297.

But, adherence to a policy of "uplift", which acceptance, in particular of the latter Commission's findings implied,<sup>72</sup> raised the question of Smuts's policy's ultimate compatibility with continued white supremacy. Vociferous repudiation of this implication did little to prevent equally vehement Opposition accusations that Government actions exposed a glaring contradiction between declared intentions and actual policy.<sup>73</sup> This is illustrated in the events of 20-21 April 1948.

Playing down republicanism,<sup>74</sup> reassuring English-speaking voters that their language rights were secure and that the returned soldiers would continue to be generously treated, Malan, in a keynote address at Paarl on 20 April, accused Smuts of having done nothing to save white South Africa from the rising tide of colour. The appointment of Hofmeyr as Smuts's successor would, he said, simply open the floodgates.<sup>75</sup>

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72. On 23 April 1948, P. van der Byl, Minister of Native Affairs, wrote: "The Chief spoke to me about preparation of legislation on the lines of the Fagan Commission...I have today instructed my people to prepare legislation on the report..." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.279, No.299, P. van der Byl to H. Cooper, 23 April 1948.
73. E.P. Dvorin: Racial Separation in South Africa: An Analysis of Apartheid Theory, p.192.
74. T.D. Moodie wrote: "A.J.R. van Rhijn, who headed the Republican Fighting Fund during the middle forties, admitted to me that he was better able to raise money for the Party by mentioning the fact that white women were dancing with black men in Cape Town, than by stressing the republican issue. In his own words, ...Advocate Erasmus geared Nationalist policy to the colour issue after I had spoken to him about this." T.D. Moodie, op. cit., pp.249-250.
75. B. Friedman, op. cit., p.206. On the following day the H.N.P. issued its election manifesto. It gave first place to the charge that the Government was impotent in the face of the colour problem. Then, in

On the following day, Smuts replied:

This really is a war against Hofmeyr...We are not for equal rights. We are for the position of the white race as the leading race in South Africa, and that will remain so. But we are for working together in the economic sphere so that the powers of both sections shall be used to their best advantage for the benefit of the country as a whole.<sup>76</sup>

Here lay the essential weakness in the U.P. election campaign: nobody of real ability in either strategic planning or in administration had replaced the former General Secretary of the Party, Louis Esselen.<sup>77</sup> Paton wrote: "What the United Party needed was one big and active mind that knew the danger of the Hofmeyr boggy that the Nationalists were creating, and would counter it confidently and aggressively, using the Fagan Report."<sup>78</sup> The U.P. made very little attempt to capitalize on Strijdom's extremism in order to emphasise the equally grave succession issue which beset the H.N.P.

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order, the manifesto listed the threat of Communism, the sacrifice of the Union's interests in foreign trade and external relations, and, finally, domestic maladministration. The manifesto reiterated that the republican issue would only be decided by a special referendum. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.137. The A.P. did not issue an election manifesto.

76. Rand Daily Mail, 22 April 1948, p.7. Dr N. Diederichs and Albert Hertzog ran a secret organisation specialising in the spreading of slander against opponents. Hofmeyr was the major pre-election target of this organisation. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.26., Korrespondensie: Land, Regering en Kabinetsake 1923-1955, Declaration by Maria Dorothea Haarhof, 17 December 1948.
77. Interview: Professor W.A. Kleynhans.
78. A. Paton, op. cit., p.480.

On 25 April, while attending the O.F.S. Congress of the U.P. and a day prior to nomination day, the first indication that the U.P. election campaign was not progressing smoothly crept into Oosthuizen's diary entries: "There were signs of a wonderful spirit among our delegates. Unfortunately there were also signs of unsatisfactory organisation. Many appeals for help received from candidates."<sup>79</sup>

The following day saw the nomination of a total of 304 candidates for the 150 House of Assembly seats.<sup>80</sup> Twelve candidates were returned unopposed.<sup>81</sup> The U.P. nominated 139 candidates, the L.P. 8, the H.N.P. 92 and the A.P. 10.<sup>82</sup> Twenty-six of the seats contested by the H.N.P.-A.P. alliance were in the urban areas of the Transvaal - 18 on the Witwatersrand and 8 in Pretoria.

Confirming Hancock's assertion that, for the U.P., the period 26 April - 26 May "more or less defined the campaigning season",<sup>83</sup> Smuts, soon after nomination day, issued a General Election message extolling his Government's war record and its ability to adjust to peace-time conditions. In regard to the latter, he wrote:

...although the work is not yet done,  
no-one hoped that it could be done in  
the life of one Parliament and with the

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79. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed Version of Diary, 25 April 1948, p.16.
80. Transvaal, 66; Cape Province, 55; Natal, 16; O.F.S., 13.
81. Six on the Witwatersrand and 6 in the Cape Province. All, with the exception of the H.N.P. seat of Oudtshoorn, were represented by the U.P. The only unopposed Cabinet Minister was Dr H. Glukman, Minister of Health and M.P. for Yeoville.
82. The S.A.P. nominated 11 candidates, the Central Group 11, the Communist Party 3, and the Christelike Histories Staatsparty 1. There were 29 Independents.
83. W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.497.

whole world still in confusion, South Africa has again surprised the world with the progress we have made...<sup>84</sup>

While his assertion was not without validity, the Government's administrative record was not unblemished. While the causes of a number of the public's complaints<sup>85</sup> about the Government's apparent inefficiency were arguably outside its control, others were clearly the consequence of a weak and undermanned Cabinet. For this Smuts was himself largely to blame. He was naïve in his assessment of some of the individuals he appointed<sup>86</sup> and, dominating the Cabinet, he suppressed the initiative of others.<sup>87</sup>

The equivocal confidence of Smuts's Election message was reflected in Hofmeyr's diary entry of 2 May: "Generally I am satisfied with the way in which things are going but am not sure that the Nats may not be able to pull something out of the bag."<sup>88</sup> Two days later, in his diary, a concerned Oosthuizen noted: "...everybody is harassed and busy, some with anxiety but mostly in consequence of rank inefficiency."<sup>89</sup> A leader in The Star ascribed evidence of

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84. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, General Election 1948, Election News, p.1.
85. There were shortages of meat, white bread and housing. There was a continuation of unpopular wartime controls into the post-war period, a 7,2 per cent rise in the price index between 1946 and 1948 and a 7 per cent rise in the level of registered unemployed during April 1948. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.141. D.H. Houghton, op. cit., p.293.
86. E.G. Malherbe: Never a Dull Moment, p.278.
87. D. Geldenhuys: The Diplomacy of Isolation, p.9. P.J. van der Byl, referring to Smuts, wrote: "Older men who have great intellectual qualities and are fearless and powerful leaders, are apt, when in command, to resent criticism and ignore advice." P. Meiring, op. cit., p.181.
88. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 2 May 1948.
89. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 4 May 1948, p.16.

apathy among U.P. supporters to the fact that "there has probably never been an election easier to win."<sup>90</sup> A few days later, a leader in the Daily News warned: "Meetings are being poorly attended. Within the ranks of the responsible political parties there is often difficulty in mobilising workers to the task ahead."<sup>91</sup>

The apathy among U.P. supporters in Natal was not entirely due to over-confidence. Eleven days after the 15 April dissolution of parliament<sup>92</sup> the U.P. published its Election Manifesto.<sup>93</sup> Reflecting the Party's original lack of

90. The Star, 29 April 1948, p.8. The average poll in the 1948 General Election was 3.1 per cent higher in H.N.P.-A.P. contested seats than in all other seats. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.156.

91. Daily News, 5 May 1948, p.8.

92. The state of the Parties at dissolution was: U.P., 89; H.N.P., 49; L.P., 6; S.A.P., 3; Central Group, 1; Independents, 2. The 3 Natives' Representatives were unaffected by the dissolution.

93. The first object of the U.P., it stated, was the "maintenance of white civilization and the way of life known as Western Democracy...." Other objects were the achievement of national unity, the maintenance of the Union's existing constitutional position and economic system, the continuation of controlled and selective immigration, the enlargement of the rights and functions of the Natives' Representative Council and the recognition of the Coloured people as an "appendage" of the white community. It promised that a new U.P. government would "cope" with the rising cost-of-living. The manifesto stated that the U.P. desired a stable African labour force accommodated in segregated urban townships where they could exercise local self-government. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.138.

The L.P. issued its election manifesto on 6 May. The Party undertook to reduce the cost-of-living, to protect wage standards, to guarantee full employment and adequate pensions, and to introduce a National Health Service and a comprehensive Social Security Scheme. The Party also undertook to maintain social and residential segregation, to strive for the industrialization and agricultural development of the "Native Territories", to slow down African

enthusiasm for it, the manifesto merely "affirmed" the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act.<sup>94</sup> Despite its obvious desire to play down the question, the Government's policy towards South African Indians became an important election issue in Natal.<sup>95</sup> Primarily responsible for this development were the small Natal-based parties and some Independents for whom the question of race was the most significant point of departure between themselves and the U.P. A leader in the Daily News observed that the anti-Smuts parties were "making the Indian question one of the main issues in the election. The S.A.P. nee Dominionites are bringing it forward at every meeting; the Independents are giving it considerable emphasis."<sup>96</sup>

In April the Durban Joint Wards Committee created a particularly delicate problem for the U.P. It sent a circular to all Natal General Election candidates, in an obvious attempt to make any future amelioration of the South African Indian's social and political condition more difficult, asking them to pledge to oppose any legislation granting facilities or benefits to Indians, unless such legislation was made applicable to and was to come into effect simultaneously, throughout the Union.<sup>97</sup> The replies,

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urbanisation and to raise the wages of Africans in the urban areas so that they could not undercut white wages. Daily News, 6 May 1948, p.2.

94. This section on Natal has been adapted from W.B. White, op. cit., pp.140-141.
95. It also became a major issue in some Cape constituencies, J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.62, H. Cooper to the Secretary of the Interior, 18 May 1948.
96. Daily News, 12 May 1948, p.8.
97. Natal Mercury, 18 May 1948, p.13. The Durban Joint Wards Committee had been established in November 1943 in order to press the Government to introduce legislation to segregate Indians and whites in Durban's residential areas. It comprised elected representatives from each of the Burgesses Associations in eight of Durban's Municipal Wards,

which were made public on 18 May, revealed that five U.P. candidates had responded favourably, as had five S.A.P., two A.P., one H.N.P., three Independent, three Central Group and one Independent Labour, candidates.<sup>98</sup> The replies of three U.P. candidates were qualified. Holding that Natal "was honour-bound to blaze the trail in finding a workable solution",<sup>99</sup> only one candidate, an Independent, opposed the pledge. Two days later, to prevent the impression gaining ground that there was equivocation on the issue, seven U.P. Durban and South Coast candidates signed a pledge, circulated in thirty thousand pamphlets, that they would "maintain European civilization by the strict enforcement of the Asiatic Land Tenure Act."<sup>100</sup>

Despite the Natal U.P. candidates scramble to placate racism, Hofmeyr, three days later, wrote: "The omens seem to be good. If only we can get a really decisive victory our political development will be set on a sounder and healthier course."<sup>101</sup>

On the following day, and two days before polling day, Smuts announced the Union's recognition of the State of Israel. In view of British casualties there, a number of commentators have considered that this action cost Smuts votes.<sup>102</sup> But the move was, in fact, tactically astute.

In March 1948 Albert Hertzog had calculated that in thirty constituencies there were a sufficient number of Jewish

W.B. White, op. cit., p.49.

98. Natal Mercury, 18 May 1948, p.13.

99. Ibid.

100. Daily News, 20 May 1948, p.1.

101. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 23 May 1948.

102. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.510.



people to swing the result either way.<sup>103</sup> He had also noted that, at that time, there were two well organised groups in the Jewish community, the Zionists and the Revisionists. Because the latter group were virulently anti-British, Hertzog argued that

dit sal baie min kos om hulle na die Afrikaner oor te bring. En met 'n klein bietjie takt sal dit ook geslaag word om 'n groot gedeelte van die Zioniste te bring. In enige geval sal 'n mens baie van die Rand se setels kan wen as die Jode net gedeeltelik vir die Nasionale Party stem.<sup>104</sup>

On the eve of the election, after the shortest and also one of the quietest campaigns,<sup>105</sup> Oosthuizen wrote:

During the past months we have worked feverishly to get the organization into line, and the voters to understand the issues at stake. I think we have succeeded in stirring the electorate from its apathy...Everything, according to all our reports, is set to bring us a smashing victory at the polls. Our figures are consistently good and the electorate will more than confirm our conservative estimate of 85 seats.<sup>106</sup>

The election's outcome,<sup>107</sup> when it became known on 28 May,

103. B.M. Schoeman: Die Broederbond in die Afrikaner-Politiek, p.37. In 1943 49 seats had been won by majorities of under-1,000. Of these 28 were Government seats. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.29.
104. B.M. Schoeman: Die Broederbond in die Afrikaner-Politiek, p.37. Hertzog made contact with the Jewish Board of Deputies and, as a result, a deputation from the Board met Malan on 22 March 1948. The strategy was still-born however primarily because of opposition from Strijdom and Verwoerd. Ibid., p.38.
105. The Star, 24 May 1948, p.9. Only a half-dozen of several hundred U.P. and L.P. meetings had been broken-up or interrupted. No H.N.P. meetings had been affected. Ibid.
106. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 25 May 1948, p.17.
107. 1948 Election Results (seats held in pre-election

was thus shattering to the U.P. hierarchy.<sup>108</sup> Hofmeyr wrote of Smuts: "It was a great blow and he obviously feels it."<sup>109</sup> Smuts's son later wrote:

The result...shocked my father more gravely than any event I have witnessed. It was far worse than a personal slap in the face...Even the superlative self-control of this iron old man could not hide his bitter disappointment.<sup>110</sup>

Despite a plea by Hofmeyr against doing so,<sup>111</sup> Smuts's initial reaction, upon hearing of his defeat, was to withdraw entirely from public life.<sup>112</sup> His momentary lack

	Parliament shown in brackets)			
	<u>Natal</u>	<u>Transvaal</u>	<u>Cape</u>	<u>O.F.S.</u>
N.P.	1(0)	32(15)	26(21)	11(13)
U.P.	11(10)	26(44)	27(34)	1(1)
A.P.	2(0)	4(0)	2(0)	1(0)
L.P.	2(1)	4(4)	- -	- -
S.A.P.	0(3)	- -	- -	- -
Central Group	0(1)	- -	- -	- -
Indepen- dents	0(1)	0(1)	- -	- -

Daily News, 28 May 1948, p.1.

108. At a reception at Government House on 9 June 1948, D.F. Malan and B.J. Schoeman told Oosthuizen that the result of the election "was just as surprising to them." J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 9 June 1948.
109. Ibid., 28 May 1948. For his own part Hofmeyr wrote: "My own feeling is one of relief, it will be good to be able to taking things more easily for a while." Ibid.
110. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.510. Smuts tried to influence the outcome in the Standerton constituency, which he lost, by prevailing upon the Administrator of the Transvaal, Gen. J.J. Pienaar, to use his influence to by-pass regulations in order to build and complete a farm school in the constituency before polling day. The site was prepared but building work was held up due to technical difficulties. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.45, No.280, Unsigned document.
111. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 28 May 1948.
112. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.512.

of leadership prompted P. van der Byl to say: "Here we are faced with a Party falling to bits and the great general is sulking in his tent. No general has the right to stand aside when his army is in retreat..."<sup>113</sup> Not everyone in the Party felt this way. A.G. Barlow, convinced that Smuts had "run his race, he can never run again",<sup>114</sup> wrote: "A small number of my Party colleagues agreed with me; so did some prominent newspaper men."<sup>115</sup>

Bitter recrimination and frantic power-brokering filled the void which Smuts, by default, had left. The "old Tielman Group" accused both Hofmeyr and Conroy of having lost the election. The former because of his allegedly outspoken liberalism and the latter because of his attacks on the Dutch Reformed Churches.<sup>116</sup> Ironically, at a meeting of former Ministers, on 31 May, Conroy demanded Hofmeyr's resignation as Chairman of the Central Executive of the Party to make way for himself.<sup>117</sup> That evening Steyn, Mushet and very likely Lawrence as well, met Ernest Oppenheimer to discuss the leadership issue.<sup>118</sup> What transpired at the meeting is not apparent but, soon afterwards, Lawrence, acting on Steyn's behalf, attempted to solicit the support of Rayner Ellis, editor of the Rand Daily Mail, for Steyn's leadership of the Party. Hofmeyr reported: "Ellis, however, while indicating that he was disposed to support Steyn in preference to myself, took the line that the essential thing was to bring Smuts back."<sup>119</sup>

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113. P. Meiring, op. cit., p.188.

114. A.G. Barlow: Almost in Confidence, p.323.

115. Ibid.

116. G. Heaton Nicholls: South African in My Time, p.432.

117. A. Paton, op. cit., p.491.

118. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Dairy, 4 June 1948.

119. Ibid., 7 June 1948.

A number of appeals made to him on 31 May, Union Day, had, in fact, already helped Smuts to emerge from his black depression. The first was a note from Ernest Oppenheimer:

I am on in years and an old supporter and friend, may I appeal to you to continue to lead the United Party, only in this way can it recover from the present defeat.<sup>120</sup>

The second was a personal visit from Conroy, who told him that his retirement would mean "the complete break-up, and the end for all time, of the United Party."<sup>121</sup> The crucial appeal appears however to have come from his confidante, Gertrude Millin. She found him inclined to make a statement "which would be vague in character, so that people could read between the lines".<sup>122</sup> Urging him to make a definite statement, she eventually prevailed upon him by using the argument that he could not leave Hofmeyr in the lurch and that he would be able to speak more effectively on world affairs if he were leader of the Opposition.<sup>123</sup> Having been deluged with offers, Smuts accepted C. Clark's safe Pretoria East seat.<sup>124</sup>

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120. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, Sir E. Oppenheimer to J.C. Smuts, 31 May 1948.

121. J.C. Smuts, *op. cit.*, p.512.

122. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 19 June 1948.

123. *Ibid.* Smuts left soon afterwards for Europe and returned on 24 June.

124. Clark was assured that, in return, he would be given a seat in the Senate. The assurance proved to be empty. He was subsequently paid an annual allowance of £1,000 from Party funds for the duration of Parliament. There was considerable bitterness on his part when he was not nominated to represent the Party in the by-election following Smuts's death. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Action Committee 1949-50, C. Clark to the Chairman of the Transvaal Action Committee, 7 November 1950. The H.N.P. considered the possibility of opposing Smuts in the by-election but decided against doing so. J.G. Stijdom Papers, Vol.153, p.5, No.6, Notule van 'n Vergadering van die Dagbestuur van die H.N.P. (Tvl.), n.d.

With his confidence, if not his vanity, restored, Smuts soon afterwards said: "If there is blame for the present failure, let it be mine, as no doubt the heavy punishment will be. I can take it."<sup>125</sup> Friedman, with justification, later wrote: "This beating of his breast was not mere ritual, the self-reproach was fully deserved. Politically, he had committed the unpardonable sin: power was within his grasp, but he let it slip through his fingers."<sup>126</sup> Smuts's defeat can largely be attributed to his failure to take active steps to reinvigorate his Party and Cabinet. The consequence of his reliance upon intelligence obtained from the U.P.'s flawed organisation and his intolerance of criticism was a tragic ignorance of the deficiencies of his administration. A.G. Barlow noted:

As in 1924, so twenty-four years later, he deserved his fate: it was not Hertzog's greatness in 1924, nor Malan's strength in 1948, which sent Smuts into the Opposition...It was his own fault...his lack of appreciation of the people who made him and stood by him; his constant aloofness to many of his Party supporters.<sup>127</sup>

A leader in The Star, echoing these sentiments, observed that the leadership of the U.P.

had to some extent lost touch with public opinion and although their policy remained sound and far-sighted, they had failed to take the public imagination

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125. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.512.

126. B. Friedman, op. cit., p.212.

127. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.321. Smuts, in 1943, wrote: "I shall be 78 five years hence, and that is too close to dotage to be called old age. If there is one thing I would hate it would be lingering on beyond my years of usefulness. I have the sad example of Merriman and Hertzog..." P. Meiring, op. cit., p.168.

with them into the vision of the future. The Nationalist Government thus comes in, almost accidentally, to a magnificent inheritance of expansion and prosperity.<sup>128</sup>

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128. The Star, 29 May 1948, p.11.

CHAPTER 3

THE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS: AUTOPSY AND  
U.P. DISSENSION, MAY-AUGUST 1948

The result of the General Election was that the H.N.P.-A.P. alliance obtained a majority of five seats in the House of Assembly<sup>1</sup> over the combined total of the U.P., the L.P. and three Natives' Representatives.<sup>2</sup> The victory was, however, scarcely overwhelming, for the alliance won three seats with majorities of under 100, five with majorities of under 200 and eleven with majorities of under 400.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in an 80,3 per cent poll, it attracted a minority of votes. In the contested seats the U.P. and L.P. polled 547,437 votes or 50,9 per cent of the total votes cast. The H.N.P.-A.P. polled 443,278 votes or 41,2 per cent of the total votes cast.<sup>4</sup> By extrapolating the results in the contested to the

1. Despite Malan's admonition against doing so, 35 H.N.P. candidates, of whom 27 were elected, entered into election agreements with the O.B. The O.B. claimed that in nine of the winning constituencies the O.B. vote had made the difference. T.D. Moodie, op. cit., p.257.
2. H.N.P., 70; A.P., 9; U.P., 65; L.P., 6. See Appendix VII: Votes Cast in Contested Seats, May 1948.  
In the subsequent Senate elections the H.N.P.-A.P. alliance achieved a majority of one. M. Ballinger pointed out that, had the Indian Political organizations accepted the franchise provisions of the 1946 Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, Malan's position, subsequent to the election, might have been made untenable. His majority in the Assembly would have been reduced to two and he would not have gained a majority in the Senate. M. Ballinger, op. cit., p.202. Smuts made no attempt to sidestep the Indian organisations in order to gauge support for the franchise proposals among the Indian public.
3. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.146. None of the winning candidates secured election as a result of a split vote.
4. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.41.

uncontested seats, it has been estimated that the U.P.-L.P. would have polled about 53,3 per cent of the total votes cast while the H.N.P.-A.P. would have polled about 39,4 per cent of the total.<sup>5</sup>

The province which made the most significant contribution to the H.N.P.-A.P. victory was the Transvaal. Here the H.N.P. increased its total of seats to 32 from the 11 which it won in 1943. The A.P. contributed a further 4 seats.<sup>6</sup> In the Cape Province the U.P. lost its majority to the H.N.P.-A.P. by one seat.<sup>7</sup> The position in the Orange Free State remained unchanged. The U.P., with its 1943 majority reduced by 2,124 votes, retained its only seat, Bloemfontein City. In Natal not only did the H.N.P., with 1 seat and the A.P. with 2 seats, establish, for the first time, a toehold, it was also the only province in which the U.P. improved its position. It pushed, at the cost of the Independents and smaller parties, its representation from 6 to 11 seats. The L.P. held the two Natal seats which had been allocated to it.<sup>8</sup>

What made the post-election position in the Transvaal particularly noteworthy was that not only had the H.N.P. and A.P. won all of the rural seats<sup>9</sup> but they had also made

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5. Ibid., p.42.

6. In the Transvaal the U.P. won 26 seats and the L.P. 4.

Seats were allocated between the Provinces as follows:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Cape</u>	<u>Natal</u>	<u>Transvaal</u>	<u>O.F.S.</u>
1937	150	59	16	60	15
1943	150	56	16	64	14
1948	150	55	16	66	13

U.P. Papers, U.P. Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Delimitation Commissions.

7. H.N.P., 26; A.P., 2; U.P., 27.

8. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.565.

9. H.N.P., 20; A.P., 3. The U.P. had won 15 of these



significant gains in the urban constituencies. The alliance won a majority of seats in Pretoria<sup>10</sup> and had, even more significantly, won 8 traditionally L.P. seats on the Witwatersrand.<sup>11</sup> In all of the constituencies the H.N.P. contested, including Hottentots-Holland, its only loss to the U.P., the number of votes it polled were an improvement on those it attracted in 1943.<sup>12</sup>

One of the aspects of the election results which Smuts liked least was the significant cleavage revealed between the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking electorate.<sup>13</sup> The U.P., fielding Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking candidates in about equal numbers, secured an estimated 39,5 per cent of the vote of the white Afrikaans-speaking electorate<sup>14</sup> as well as the support of almost all of the predominantly urban English-speaking voters. The H.N.P.-A.P. alliance, which did not have a single English-speaking candidate, won practically every seat in predominantly Afrikaans-speaking areas.<sup>15</sup>

In this regard Hofmeyr was later to write:

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- 23 seats in 1943. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.39.
10. H.N.P., 4; A.P., 1; U.P., 3.
11. R.H. Davies, et al: The Struggle for South Africa: A Reference Guide to Movements, Organisations and Institutions, Vol.II, p.248.
12. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.566.
13. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.512.
14. Vide supra, Chapter XXV, Footnote 27. This estimate differs considerably from the 20-25 per cent proposed by Neuman and the 18 per cent proposed by Stultz. S. Neuman (ed.), Modern Political Parties, p.79. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.152.
15. S. Neuman, op. cit., p.79. Overall roughly 89 per cent of post-election U.P.-L.P. seats, as opposed to only 21 per cent of H.N.P.-A.P. seats, were situated in the major urban areas. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.39.

...though at the election it was mostly the Party's English-speaking candidates that succeeded, the United Party in Parliament is still far more than any other representative of both sections of our European population. It is not as equally representative as it was in the past. It must repair that defect.<sup>16</sup>

But to attempt to do so raised what was to be, as Hofmeyr confided to his diary, the central dilemma of the U.P.:

Must we...try to compete with the Nats. in the appeal to colour prejudice? If so, can we hope to defeat them? Or else must we come out boldly with a liberal policy? If so, does that not mean giving up the hope of winning back the Platteland?<sup>17</sup>

The U.P. dilemma was the more serious because of the concentration of the bulk of the English-speaking electorate in urban constituencies. In May 1948 the largest U.P. majority was 6,388 votes or 79 per cent of the total poll in that constituency. There were seventeen U.P. and L.P. majorities larger than the largest H.N.P. majority of 4 025 votes or 50,5 per cent of the total poll in that constituency. Of the seats won with majorities below 1 000 votes the H.N.P.-A.P. held 28 and the U.P. only 12.<sup>18</sup> In so far as every vote over a majority of one was "wasted" then, in the 60 seats which the U.P.-L.P. fought and won, 168 559 votes were "wasted". This "wastage" exceeded that of the H.N.P.-A.P. by over 40 000 votes.<sup>19</sup>

Exacerbating the U.P.-L.P.'s liability of geographically

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16. U.P. Papers, Pamphlets donated by Maj. J.D. Opperman, What of the Future: South Africa's Present-day Problems Analysed, p.2., n.d.
  17. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 8 June 1948.
  18. E. Lakeman and J.D. Lambert: Voting in Democracies, p.69.
  19. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.45.

concentrated support was the right of Delimitation Commissions to load or unload constituencies to a maximum of 15 per cent.<sup>20</sup> In 1947 the Ninth Delimitation Commission unloaded 68 of the total of 150 constituencies. All but 10 of these unloaded constituencies were won by the H.N.P.-A.P. On the other hand, only 21 seats won by the H.N.P.-A.P., but 61 of the 71 seats won by the U.P.-L.P., were loaded constituencies.<sup>21</sup>

But the impact of the delimitation upon the election's outcome cannot be limited to the effect of the load-unload factor. Single-member constituency boundaries are notoriously easy to gerrymander if a political party can easily identify its supporters and is sufficiently well organised so as to enable it to present a coherent and persuasive argument to the Delimitation Commission. For the tightly controlled H.N.P., an ethnically-based party in close touch with its grassroots support, this was relatively easily done. For the U.P., drawing its support from a broader base, identification was more difficult.

The U.P. moreover, compounded its inherent liability by mismanaging both the compilation and presentation of its Transvaal Delimitation proposals. In approaching its task the Ninth Delimitation Commission treated the Transvaal, as had been the usual practice, as consisting of three regions:

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20. Some of Smuts's advisers had discussed with him the possibility of altering the rules and customs of delimitation. He had, however, refused. "The existing electoral arrangement, he said, damaging to his own party though they were, had their roots in the pact of good faith which had created and must still sustain the constitution." W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.506.
21. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.146. The contested seats won by the U.P. held, on average, 10 204 voters. The H.N.P. average was 9 312. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.45.

the Pretoria, the Witwatersrand and the Rural regions.<sup>22</sup> The U.P. in the Transvaal presented evidence to the Commission via separate regional committees. There was an obvious lack of co-ordination between them. The Star reported that the H.N.P. derived "a considerable amount of comfort...from the presumed difficulty within the United Party to reconcile town and country claims."<sup>23</sup>

L. Karovsky, who had participated in the work of five Delimitation Commissions, described the U.P.-Witwatersrand General Council Delimitation Committee's performance as a "lamentable fiasco."<sup>24</sup> He reported to Hofmeyr that the Committee<sup>25</sup> "never met until the Judges had commenced [their] work. No wonder that Mr Justice Murray was moved to pass such scathing public criticism on your Party's contradictory proposals."<sup>26</sup>

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22. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Delimitation Commissions 1910-1965, Ninth Delimitation Commission, 13 February 1948.
23. The Star, 20 August 1947.
24. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.67, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947.
25. The Committee consisted of H. Tucker, (Chairman); J.W. Higgerty, M.P.; T.T. Bielski, M.P.C.; and P.B. Bailey Bekker, M.P.C. S.A.L.P. Papers, File 12, U.P. Memorandum in Regard to Delimitation, 1947. Karovsky later reported: "In view of the great political crisis ahead this important task should not have been left in the hands of so inexperienced and weak a representative as what Mr Tucker proved to be..." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.67, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947.
26. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.67, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947. Karovsky also informed Hofmeyr: "With the 1942 Delimitation...we worked more than three months, not two weeks as your people here did this time, and were in daily contact with the Electoral Officer of the day...On that occasion we were able to save Johannesburg West, Mayfair and Langlaagte by creating the Nationalist stronghold of Westdene." Ibid.

A procedural change by the Delimitation Commission had, in fact, been responsible for catching the Committee on the wrong foot. H. Tucker, the Committee's Chairman, reported that

exceptional procedure had been adopted by the Commission. Instead of discussing loading etc., at its first meeting, the Commission expected a plan from the parties, and this fact became known so late that it meant that the Committee concerned had to work against time.<sup>27</sup>

While Tucker's Committee had remained inactive the H.N.P. had "nursed" the Electoral Officer.<sup>28</sup> They were also the first to "submit a cut-and-dried scheme" to the Commission.<sup>29</sup>

In the report it finally submitted, the U.P. Witwatersrand Committee stated that it held to "the sound democratic principle of 'one vote, one value' and urges, and will continue to urge, the closest approximation to equality."<sup>30</sup> It argued, on this basis, that the 1943 average load of 9 per cent on the Witwatersrand as opposed to the average load of 5 per cent on Pretoria had been unjust. "Justice to the voters of the Witwatersrand", it held, "requires that the average percentage load of the seats on the Witwatersrand should be reduced."<sup>31</sup> To achieve this end the Committee,

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27. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1942-1948, Executive Committee meeting, 22 October 1947. At this meeting it was also reported: "Pretoria saved the name of the United Party...by being able to go to the first meeting with a sound scheme." Ibid.
28. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.67, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947.
29. The Star, 20 August 1947.
30. S.A.L.P. Papers, File 12, U.P. Memorandum in Regard to Delimitation, 1947.
31. Ibid.

making a virtue of necessity, proposed only minimal changes to the boundaries of the current 32 Witwatersrand electoral divisions<sup>32</sup> and the addition of both of the seats to which the Transvaal was entitled under the new Delimitation, to the Witwatersrand.<sup>33</sup> On this basis the Committee argued:

Dividing the Witwatersrand area as it stands into thirty-four seats gives an average load of approximately 5,3 per cent which is almost exactly equal to the load which formed the basis of discussion before the Commission in Pretoria.<sup>34</sup>

But Karovsky later pointed out that the failure to recommend a substantial boundary readjustment would exact a heavy price, for there had been, since 1943, a considerable influx of rural whites into the constituencies of Roodepoort, Langlaagte, Mayfair, Westdene and Johannesburg West.<sup>35</sup> Boundary adjustments, he held, would very likely restrict the H.N.P. to two or, at the most, three of the Witwatersrand seats.<sup>36</sup>

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32. These divisions were almost identical with those of 1937 only minor changes having been made by the 1943 delimitation. Ibid.
33. The two additional seats were gained at the expense of the Cape Province and the Orange Free State. In order to remain within the provincial quota rural constituencies could only be unloaded to the extent that urban constituencies could bear the proportionate load. Additional urban constituencies would thus enable either a lightening of the load on the original urban constituencies or a further unloading of the rural constituencies.
34. S.A.L.P. Papers, File 12, U.P. Memorandum in Regard to Delimitation, 1947.
35. The work done by Albert Hertzog, since 1936, in organising Afrikaner mineworkers had, by 1948, begun to bear fruit. Mineworkers held the balance of power in at least six Witwatersrand seats. I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, op. cit., p.113.
36. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.67, L. Karovsky to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 October 1947.

The H.N.P. while also, as suited their purpose, having proposed minimal Witwatersrand boundary changes, argued that at least one of the additional seats should be allocated to the rural region and that a load of 9 per cent should be imposed on the Witwatersrand constituencies.<sup>37</sup>

The recommendations, in regard to loading, in the Commission's final report, were a compromise between those of the H.N.P. and U.P.. It considered that

an average load of approximately 9 per cent per division was unduly high...and one of approximately 5 per cent was too low...a fair and reasonable average load to impose was one of approximately 7 per cent loading of the thirty-three Witwatersrand seats.<sup>38</sup>

The balance of some 5 000 voters left over as a result of this load were incorporated into a new polyglot constituency made up of urban, peri-urban and "semi-rural voters".<sup>39</sup> Classifying this constituency, with only marginal justification, as an urban seat, the Commission's Report concluded:

The scheme had the advantage of maintaining what, in the opinion of your Commissioners, was a reasonable and

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37. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Delimitation Commissions 1910-1965, Ninth Delimitation Commission, 13 February 1948.
38. Ibid. The L.P. Delimitation Proposals were limited to a one and a half page memorandum. Proposing minor changes to only three Witwatersrand constituencies and endorsing the principle of 'one vote, one value', the memorandum then went on to agree "wholeheartedly" with an average 7 per cent Witwatersrand load. It concluded: "Having examined very carefully the proposals of the other Parties...we find ourselves in general agreement." S.A.L.P. Papers, File 12, Memorandum in Regard to Delimitation, 1947.
39. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Delimitation Commissions 1910-1965, Ninth Delimitation Commission, 13 February 1948.

equitable balance between town and country, there then being thirty-four Witwatersrand seats with an average load of 7,1 per cent, and twenty-four country seats with an average unload of 11,9 per cent. Such unload was regarded as not disproportionate, inasmuch as the rural constituencies included at least seven...where sizeable towns, industrial or mining areas and close settlements are to be found.<sup>40</sup>

But the urban load imposed by the Commission was, in reality, significantly higher, for the undermanned U.P. organization had proved incapable of effectively registering the relatively mobile urban electorate.<sup>41</sup>

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40. Ibid. A high degree of unloading was only possible in the Transvaal which had 42 urban seats, and in Natal which had 9 such seats, than in the other provinces with their lower proportion of urban to rural constituencies. In the Orange Free State, for example, the two Bloemfontein constituencies were loaded by 12,4 and 10,5 per cent while the average unload on the 11 rural seats was only 2,1 per cent. In the Cape Province the fourteen Cape Peninsula seats received an average loading of 8,2 per cent while the other urban centres averaged 9,3 per cent. The exceptions were the two East London constituencies which were loaded by 13,3 and 12,3 per cent. The remaining 34 Cape electoral divisions were given an average unload of 5,4 per cent. In Natal the nine urban seats were, on average, loaded by 10,4 per cent while the seven rural constituencies were, on average, unloaded by 12,9 per cent. Ibid.
41. Efficient Party organisation had become particularly important after the enactment, in 1946, of the Electoral Consolidation Act (No.46). By requiring a minimum two months residential qualification it introduced what was virtually continuous registration in urban areas. A U.P. memorandum noted: "...unless the Party is in a position to supervise registration of voters in the urban and peri-urban areas, no amount of propaganda and organisation will win certain seats for the United Party." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.23, Memorandum: Immediate Organisation of Marginal Seats.



The number of voters registered on the 31 May 1947 electoral roll, upon which the report of the Ninth Delimitation Commission was based, was 1 351 920. But, on polling day the number on the rolls was 1 459 670, an increase of 107 750.<sup>42</sup> This growth in the number of registered voters was almost wholly confined to the urban areas. The average increase in the thirty urban divisions most affected was not less than 1 392 voters per division.<sup>43</sup>

Reporting on the causes of the defects in the Party's delimitation proposals and its shortcomings in regard to voter registration, a November 1949 U.P. memorandum observed:

Investigation showed that the organisational side of the Party needed a great deal of strengthening - the tasks which Mr Oosthuizen and his staff were expected to perform were out of all proportion to their strength.<sup>44</sup>

Smuts, in a pamphlet issued soon after the General Election, wrote: "...we could afford to have only two permanent organisers for the whole of the Transvaal (outside the

42. Ibid. Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, August 1952. (Figures modified) Since 12 constituencies were uncontested the total number of voters able to exercise their vote dropped to 1 338 543. Of these 80,3 per cent or 1 075 328 actually voted. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.36.
43. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, August 1952. See Appendix VIII: Table Illustrating the Increase in Numbers on the Voters Roll in Selected Urban Areas Between 1947 and May 1948.
44. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.28, Joint Meeting Central Advisory Committee on Publicity and Central Advisory Committee on Organisation, 7 November 1949.

Witwatersrand) in the recent election...the entire Free State is organised by only one man..."<sup>45</sup>

In comparison to the U.P. the H.N.P. in the Transvaal had, by the end of July 1947, seventeen full-time organisers.<sup>46</sup> By polling day the Party had twelve full-time organisers working on the Witwatersrand alone.<sup>47</sup> These organisers were used to good effect. A 1952 U.P. report noted:

In 1948, after the General Election, the chief Nationalist organiser claimed that their Party organisers had succeeded in getting 12 000 names off the Voters Rolls of the Witwatersrand alone. There may have been some truth in this claim as, at the time, the United Party had no organisation to counter that of the Nationalists.<sup>48</sup>

Such removals certainly formed part of the H.N.P. strategy. A March 1948 meeting of the Transvaal H.N.P. chaired by Strijdom, resolved "...om Kiesafdelings in kennis te stel om die Kieserslyste na te gaan en toe te sien dat sappe waar moontlik geskrap word."<sup>49</sup>

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45. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/1, U.P. Fighting Fund, n.d.
46. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.564. The Transvaal H.N.P. had only two organisers in 1943.
47. Die Transvaler, 8 June 1948, p.2. To a considerable extent the Afrikaans Churches, Schools, Economic Associations and Cultural Societies acted to supplement the efforts of the H.N.P. organisers. S. Neuman: op. cit., p.84.
48. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Reports on Organisation, 1950-1958, Vol.2, Electoral Laws Amendment Act, p.2.
49. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.153, Party Politieke Stukke, Notule: Dagbestuur Nasionale Party 1944 - 24 Junie 1954. H.N.P. (Tvl.), Vergadering van die Dagbestuur, 15 March 1948. With an early General Election a distinct possibility the H.N.P., concentrating on marginal seats, continued to attempt to remove the names of U.P. supporters from the Electoral Roll. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Organisation 1943-1944, 1949, No.140, Uitvoerende Bestuursvergadering,

Still, however, in a state of dazed distraction, many in the U.P. sought scapegoats upon whom to lay the blame for the Party's defeat. Some two weeks after the election Oosthuizen noted in his diary: "...J.H. Hofmeyr was blamed somewhat less for the catastrophic results than had been imagined at first. I find that I also have to take a considerable amount of the blame."<sup>50</sup> His observation in regard to Hofmeyr was premature for, a few days later, Hofmeyr himself wrote:

It is becoming increasingly clear that there is no future for me in the United Party...but I feel that my line should be that the onus is on the Party to force me out or at least to make my position in the Party untenable.<sup>51</sup>

His position deteriorated progressively. Not only did the Nationalist press fan the flames of criticism of him, but speculation became rife of a Smuts-Havenga alliance. It was also reported that discussions had taken place between "leading members of the Party"<sup>52</sup> with a view to having Colin Steyn elected deputy leader. In a dilemma, Hofmeyr, on 27 June, wrote:

...how is it going to be possible for me to strike out on my own especially with Smuts remaining leader?...I cannot see myself taking a line which would look like disloyalty to him and would also tend to split the United Party at such a critical period as the present.<sup>53</sup>

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- 10 June 1948.
50. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 13 June 1948.
51. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 16 June 1948.
52. The Forum, 19 June 1948, p.7.
53. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 27 June 1948.

Smuts, who had returned from overseas on 24 June,<sup>54</sup> refrained from immediately defending Hofmeyr, realising that for him to do so would be fatal to Hofmeyr's credibility as a Party leader. Hofmeyr thus found Smuts's attitude, at a 30 June Transvaal U.P. Head Committee meeting, "evasive" and "disappointing from the personal point of view."<sup>55</sup> He failed to see that Smuts had done as much as he could to deflect criticism of him. The fact that the meeting, called to discuss the Party's response to its defeat, ended in a unanimous vote of thanks to Hofmeyr for his services to the Party, was primarily due to Smuts having provided an undertaking to ensure that the U.P. would, as soon as possible, enunciate "a clear, simple Native policy which every Party member should subscribe to."<sup>56</sup>

A joint meeting of the Party caucus and Head Committee the following week ended on the same note after a more confident Hofmeyr, in an argument endorsed by Smuts, suggested that the U.P. would do serious damage to itself if it expelled him or forced him to resign.<sup>57</sup> While Hofmeyr thus implicitly held hostage those in the Party who opposed him, those who opposed him from outside the confines of the Party

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54. As well as becoming Chancellor of Cambridge University, Smuts was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Leiden. He later wrote: "Both Cambridge and Leiden did me good and made me feel a man and not a worm, in spite of the rebuff from my own people." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.279, No.113, J.C. Smuts to L. Amery, 2 July 1948.
55. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 30 June 1948.
56. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes, 1939-1949, Minutes of Head Committee Meeting, 30 June 1948.
57. W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.511. Somewhat disingenuously Smuts, at a 15 July 1948 meeting of the U.P. Natal Head Committee, said: "There is no deputy leader of the Party...Mr Hofmeyr is not on any ground entitled to be my successor. That would have to be decided by the Party itself." A. Paton, op. cit., p.503. The H.N.P. had no deputy leader.

were under no similar constraint.

Having been disappointed in his hope that Hofmeyr, at the 30 June meeting, would make "a grand gesture by eliminating himself from any United Party office",<sup>58</sup> Mervyn Ellis, editor of the Natal Mercury, threatened Hofmeyr that he would form a Natal Party if he did not soon undertake to do so.<sup>59</sup> Ellis very quickly abandoned his empty threat, for, after holding discussions with a disenchanted Havenga,<sup>60</sup> he came out with a plea for fusion between the U.P. and A.P.<sup>61</sup> It was a plea supported by influential men in the Chamber of Mines and the Rand Club who "wanted to see the end of Hofmeyr, but did not fancy Steyn, or Conroy or Strauss as Smuts's successor..."<sup>62</sup>

In view of the enormity of the possible consequences of these events, Hofmeyr's 2 August diary entry was almost flippant:

...no doubt the malaise in the Party with reference to my own position will continue, though it may not come to the surface. I find myself viewing the situation from a very objective point of view, interested to see how things develop for me personally, but from the purely personal point of view not caring very much.<sup>63</sup>

The Government's narrow majority making a snap General Election a distinct possibility, Barlow expressed the view of a significant body of Opposition opinion when he wrote:

How can we fight a new and critical

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58. The Forum, 17 July 1948, p.7.

59. Ibid.

60. A. Paton, op. cit., p.503.

61. The Forum, 17 July 1948, p.7.

62. A. Paton, op. cit., p.503.

63. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 2 August 1948.

election with Hofmeyr as one of our chief leaders? It will mean the end of the United Party. I do not want to see the Nationalists smashing my Party completely so, as a leader, Hofmeyr must go.<sup>64</sup>

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64. The Forum, 26 June 1948, p.7.

CHAPTER 4

GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATION; OPPOSITION REFORM,  
JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1948

Malan had not even a shadow cabinet ready when the General Election results were announced.<sup>1</sup> His subsequent appointment of Ministers exacerbated the well concealed tensions within the H.N.P., for, Malan, insofar as it was politically possible for him to do so, took care to avoid the northern extremists.<sup>2</sup> Hertzog was furious that he had not been appointed Minister of Labour.<sup>3</sup> Verwoerd, like Strijdom, was so disgusted at the minimal Transvaal representation in the Cabinet<sup>4</sup> and the fact that he had been overlooked,<sup>5</sup> that he was only prevented from resigning the editorship of Die Transvaler by Strijdom's personal intervention.<sup>6</sup> Smuts expressed a low opinion of the integrity of the new Cabinet. He described the Ministers as

1. I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, op. cit., p.117.
2. See Appendix IX: The South African Cabinet, June 1948.
3. B.M. Schoeman: Die Broederbond in die Afrikaner Politiek, p.32.
4. Despite the predominance of Transvaal M.P.s in the H.N.P. caucus, Malan held that "dit was veral in Kaapland dat Nasionalisme behoue gebly het en weer opgebou is." H.B. Thom, op. cit., p.224. Strijdom had expected the Cabinet to consist of a minimum of five Transvalers, two from the Orange Free State, one from Natal and four from the Cape Province. Malan was not prepared to grant the Transvaal more than three seats in the Cabinet, one of which had to be filled by E.G. Jansen who, though leader of the Natal H.N.P., represented a Transvaal seat. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.147.
5. Strijdom tried to persuade Malan to appoint Verwoerd Minister of Transport, J. Wilkens being prepared to make his Ventersdorp seat available to Verwoerd. B.M. Schoeman: Die Broederbond in die Afrikaner Politiek, p.34.
6. Ibid.

"a thoroughly bad lot."<sup>7</sup>

On the evening of 4 June, the day of his official induction as Prime Minister,<sup>8</sup> Malan broadcast a conciliatory message to the country in both of the official languages. After asking for "all well-disposed citizens" to support the implementation of his Government's policies, which, he declared, included retention of Commonwealth and United Nations membership, he went on to define the term "National":

In our minds that word has no exclusive meaning. We use it in an inclusive sense to embrace all sections of the South African population whose welfare and happiness and mutual friendship and co-operation we sincerely wish to promote.<sup>9</sup>

An article in Forward, official mouthpiece of the L.P., commented sceptically that the statement was

obviously designed to satisfy his own people and to allay the fears of other sections of the community. This is consistent with the present need of the Nationalist Party [sic] to neutralise as many people as possible until it can

7. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.512. Hofmeyr was later to concede that "there is no doubt that the new Cabinet Members are a good debating team." J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 24 August 1948. The new Cabinet had a higher proportion of University educated members than any preceding South African Cabinet. N.M. Stultz: Who Goes to Parliament, p.61. Barlow recounted that had Smuts won the election, he would have appointed Dr D. Smit, "an affable, aged, able civil servant", D. Jackson, defeated at Ermelo and D. Mitchell, M.P. for Natal South Coast, to the Cabinet. "Those of us who were saved from the wreck", he wrote, "shivered when we heard that news." A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.322.
8. Smuts left it to Hofmeyr to formally hand over the Government to Malan. Steyn was the only Minister in Smuts's Government to formally hand over his department. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.152.
9. Cape Times, 5 June 1948.



consolidate its position.<sup>10</sup>

In similar vein a leader in the Rand Daily Mail noted: "...when Dr Malan asked for the 'full confidence' of the English-speaking section, he was asking more than can be given."<sup>11</sup>

Conscious of the role the drop in the producer price of milk and the shortage of meat had played in the U.P. defeat,<sup>12</sup> the new administration, during its first week in office, agreed to a rise in the milk price on the Witwatersrand and offered farmers an extra three shillings per one hundred pounds for beef in an attempt to entice slaughter stock to the cities.<sup>13</sup> It announced that the training of African artisans was to be stopped and then proceeded to release Robey Leibbrandt and other "political" prisoners.<sup>14</sup>

In regard to the latter development, Hofmeyr wrote: "Perhaps people will realise that after all the leopard hasn't changed his spots. It seems a bad tactical blunder as far as the Government is concerned. One wonders why they made it so soon?"<sup>15</sup>

There were a number of plausible reasons. To have kept them imprisoned would have been tacit acknowledgement of the validity of Smuts's war policy. More important, from the

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10. Forward, 11 June 1948, p.5.
  11. Rand Daily Mail, 7 June 1948, p.6.
  12. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1942-1969, Uitvoerende Bestuursvergadering, 10 June 1948.
  13. The Forum, 19 June 1948, p.7.
  14. Leibbrandt, a former policeman and a member of the O.B., had been given a life sentence during the war for collusion with Germany. It took five months for all of the "political" prisoners to be released. H. van Rensburg: Their Paths Crossed Mine, p.256.
  15. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 12 June 1948.

H.N.P. point of view, was the likelihood that the release of O.B. prisoners would lead to the dissolution of the O.B. itself. H. van Rensburg later wrote:

Several times, particularly during the later stages of the war when the end was fairly evident, I caught myself wondering whether Smuts would not give us our coup de grâce with one fell swoop; by releasing all Afrikaner internees and political prisoners! It would have been a master-stroke as far as internal peace was concerned. That would have placed us in an impossible position...[but]...for as long as one comrade remained inside the prison, our path was clear. We must go on...

Now, in October 1948, they were all out - and that was that! We made one final spurt with the Distress Relief Fund to help them...After that the end came, noiselessly; almost lethargically.<sup>16</sup>

As Malan had expected,<sup>17</sup> the releases caused the Government considerable embarrassment both because of the short-lived publicity boost it provided their O.B. opponents and because of the internal and overseas opposition which the move aroused.<sup>18</sup>

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16. H. van Rensburg, op. cit., p.257.

17. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.158. It does appear that undertakings were extracted from the released prisoners that they would desist from further political activities. Die Transvaler, 15 June 1948, p.1.

18. Malan, soon afterwards, sent Charles te Water overseas as a roving ambassador to explain the Government's actions and to allay fears about its policies. Louis Gerber, who accompanied te Water, observed that the attempt proved entirely fruitless. Interview: L. Gerber. On 13 July 1948 telegrams were secretly sent from the Commonwealth Relations Office to South Africa and other Commonwealth countries suggesting that no new trials of suspected Nazis should begin after 31 August of that year. The British request was motivated by a desire to more easily engage German scientists against competition from both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Certainly, within the country, strong passions, especially among ex-servicemen, were kindled. On 12 June, Die Volkstem, a U.P. paper, reported:

'n Vloedgolf van verantwoordiging het vanoggend oor die hele land ontstaan...Hierdie optrede van die Regering word ten sterkte afgekeur en bestempel as 'n klap in the gesig van die duisende manne en vroue wat in die oorlog alles opgeoffer het...<sup>19</sup>

Two days later it reported: "Vyf en twintig organisasies van oud soldate...is van plan om Woensdag 'n groot protesbetoging in Johannesburg te hou."<sup>20</sup> Provided, for the first time since the election, with a rallying point, the U.P. organised enthusiastically attended protest meetings. In Durban, on 22 June, it held a protest meeting at which E.R. Browne, leader of the L.P. in Natal, was second speaker.<sup>21</sup>

The protest meetings served to loosen the political ground for Smuts, who, ever since his return from Europe, had been "in a whirl of functions and meetings and ceaseless activity to get the Party on its feet again."<sup>22</sup> While his efforts no

The Star, 8 October 1985.

19. Die Volkstem, 12 June 1948, p.1. In July 1948 Erasmus gave the Director of Military Intelligence twenty-four hours notice of dismissal and removed "masses of files" dealing with the subversive war-time activities of members of the O.B. and of the Broederbond. J.H.P. Serfontein: Brotherhood of Power: An Expose of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond, p.82. In early August the effective demotion of Maj. General Poole, next in line as Chief of the Defence Force, also aroused the ire of ex-servicemen. I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, op. cit., p.119.
20. Die Volkstem, 14 June 1948, p.1.
21. U.P. Papers, Natal Provincial Head Office Committees, Minutes 1948-1967, No.10, Minutes of the Meeting of the Provincial Executive Committee, 17 June 1948.
22. J. van der Poel, op. cit., p.214, J.C. Smuts to D. Moore, 12 July 1948. The process of reform had

doubt had a short-term tonic effect upon the U.P., what it needed in fact, if it was to assume power again, was a restructuring away from its single focus on a charismatic leader towards a clear platform and an effective Party machine.<sup>23</sup>

Such a restructuring required substantial additional funding. To this end, in an attempt to emulate the highly successful Republikeinse Strydfonds<sup>24</sup> which had helped finance the H.N.P.'s 1948 election campaign, the launching of a U.P. Fighting Fund was proposed at a 22 June meeting of the Central Executive Committee.<sup>25</sup> The latter approved the fund on 26 July in the expectation that its target figure of £500 000 would be raised primarily by means of small

already begun. On 22 June the Central Executive Committee had decided to relieve the General Secretary of the task of being directly responsible for propaganda by establishing a Central Propaganda and Publicity Committee. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.146, Meeting of Central Executive Committee, 22 June 1948.

23. The Transvaal H.N.P. was also in the process of honing its Party machine. A commission, appointed on 16 June, recommended, on 26 June, the centralisation of the Party's organisation. The Witwatersrand office was to lose what degree of independence it had enjoyed: "Daar sal een sentrale Partykantoor wees wat staan onder leiding van een Hoofsekretaris wat verantwoordelik gestel word vir die hele organisasie in Transvaal. Hy sal bygestaan word deur twee Assistent Sekretarisse van wie een op die Witwatersrand en een in Pretoria gevestig sal wees." J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.153, p.5, No.6, 26 June 1948.
24. Collections for the Strydfonds were suspended on 17 June 1948. The H.N.P. launched a "Thanks and Work Fund" in early June 1948. The Star, 8 June 1948.
25. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.146, Meeting of Central Executive Committee, 22 June 1948.

donations from the public. In order to achieve this, each U.P. constituency organisation was requested to establish a Fighting Fund Committee.<sup>26</sup>

Introducing the Fund, Smuts wrote:

In the past the United Party has depended on only two sources of revenue - its own organisation and a few hundred individuals who were willing to give generously...But the days are past when these sources alone were adequate.<sup>27</sup>

A leader in The Star pointed out more clearly why the earlier methods of fund raising, in comparison to those of the H.N.P., had become inadequate:

The act of collecting money is the most effective method of creating an efficient and close-knit organisation and of informing public opinion of the policies for which a political party stands...Those who have been induced to pay over their guineas to a...cause are more likely than before to take an interest in its progress.<sup>28</sup>

The appeal to the pocket of the man in the street was not, however, merely the outcome of the desire to cultivate support at the popular level. The U.P., after the election, continued to experience difficulty in attracting money from its wealthy benefactors, the latter having become even more sceptical of the Party's ability to put the money to effective use. It was for this reason that Smuts, because

26. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Cg2, United Party Fighting Fund, 1 October 1948. By January 1949 only £50 000 had been collected. Half of this amount was made up of large donations contributed directly to the Party and not through the fund. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes, 1939-1949, Hoofbestuursvergadering, 11 January 1949.
27. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/1, United Party Fighting Fund, n.d.
28. The Star, 11 September 1949, p.10.

he considered it essential to get the full confidence and support of the larger donors, insisted on the establishment of a Contributors' Committee by the Party, which, on behalf of the donors, would oversee the manner in which funds were expended on larger projects.<sup>29</sup>

From the raising of funds the 26 July meeting of the Central Executive Committee turned its attention to Smuts's 30 June undertaking to draw up a "clear, simple Native policy which every Party member should subscribe to."<sup>30</sup> Significantly, hoping no doubt to lay the Hofmeyr bogey, the Committee agreed that Smuts and Hofmeyr "consult each other in regard to this matter and draft a policy for submission to the members."<sup>31</sup>

The "Re-statement of the Native Policy of the United Party" was submitted to the Party caucus on 24 September and was soon afterwards made public.<sup>32</sup> Smuts's haste to counter the siren call of Apartheid had led him, in following this course, to adopt a questionable procedure. K. Rood, U.P. M.P. for Vereeniging, was later to point out to him that

...it is the prerogative of our Congress

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29. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.152, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 26 July 1948.
30. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes, 1939-1949, Vol.I, No.219, Minutes of Head Committee Meeting, 30 June 1948.
31. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.152, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 26 July 1948. Paton states: "The main work of draughtsmanship had been given to Strauss, but it was the result of considerable discussion inside the Party." A. Paton, op. cit., p.514. No evidence was found to support this assertion.
32. See Appendix X: Re-Statement of the Native Policy of the United Party.

to decide on matters of major policy. The most our caucus can do, therefore, is to decide to pass a resolution to recommend a policy to our respective Provincial Congresses, and for them respectively in turn, to recommend a policy to the Union Congress of the Party.<sup>33</sup>

Rood felt fully justified in laying this charge, for the "Restatement" had made a number of significant alterations to the original policy accepted at the Party's inaugural Congress on 5 December 1934.

Both the old policy and the new emphasised that Christian Trusteeship formed the basis of the Party's "Native Policy", but the new policy went on to state that the Party stood for "European leadership and authority", while the old merely stated that it stood for "European civilisation". The old policy had not specifically rejected equality while the new did, explicitly accepting social and residential separation and the avoidance of "race intermixture".<sup>34</sup> The new policy did recognise, however, and here it departed fundamentally from H.N.P. policy, the permanence of African urbanisation. It stated that African urban areas would "progressively be administered by the Natives themselves, under European guidance."<sup>35</sup> But the most important alteration, from the Party point of view, was contained in Clause 5 of the Re-statement:

In respect of Native political rights, the United Party stands for the maintenance of the 1936 settlement, with the provisions made by it for the existing representation of the Natives by Europeans in the Senate and the House

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33. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.99, K. Rood to J.C. Smuts, n.d.  
 34. A. Paton, op. cit., p.514.  
 35. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.99, A Re-statement of the Native Policy of the United Party, n.d.

of Assembly, the Cape Provincial Council, and for the establishment of the Natives' Representative Council. It favours, further, the development and expansion of the function and usefulness of the Council in relation to Native areas, under the general authority of Parliament.<sup>36</sup>

This clause was in direct conflict with Section 6(b) of the Programme of Principles of the U.P. which stipulated that the matter of African political representation should be left to the "free exercise of the discretion of the individual members representing the Party in Parliament."<sup>37</sup>

Befitting what was to be only the first of a series of attempts at finding a formula that united liberal aspirations with the need to win over the narrow band of floating voters, the caucus, apart from Rood, appears to have accepted the "Re-stated" policy, if not enthusiastically, at least compliantly. Aware of the significance of the new policy to his own position in the Party, Hofmeyr's judgement of it was: "Negative but not unsatisfactory".<sup>38</sup>

The L.P., like the U.P., was also engaged, in the immediate post-election period, in setting its house in order. The spirit in which this was done differed however.

Having won six of the eight seats allocated to it,<sup>39</sup> the

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36. Ibid.

37. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Native Affairs Committee, (1) Background, 1948-1954, The Native Policy of the United Party, 25 October 1948.

38. A. Paton, op. cit., p.514.

39. Christie later said: "The loss of...Wonderboom, was not significant. The Party had realised from the start that its chances at Wonderboom were doubtful." Daily News, 20 July 1948, p.3.



L.P., a U.P. memorandum later reported, was "cock-a-hoop over the General Election results. In Durban yesterday Mr Christie said...the Labour Party has proved its potential strength."<sup>40</sup> The Party's limited resources served though to inhibit the realisation of its claimed potential.<sup>41</sup>

The National Executive Council of the Party, meeting soon after the election, decided to approach the U.P. to discuss a division of seats for the March 1949 Provincial Elections, to establish a Trade Union Committee and to appoint a full-time Assistant General Secretary.<sup>42</sup> Despite a 15 June Organising Committee's statement that the latter appointment "was priority number one, and no obstacle should be allowed to the making of the appointment immediately,"<sup>43</sup> the General Purposes Committee, a month later, advised against it because "the salary of such a person would be a great drain on the Party's financial resources."<sup>44</sup> It recommended instead acceptance of an offer to fill the post in a part-time, honorary capacity.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, primarily through the generosity of the Garment Workers' Union, which

40. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Cg2, Report in Regard to Discussion with Labour, n.d.
41. The L.P.'s expenditure from 1 December 1947 to 23 June 1948, amounted to £1334.6.5. Revenue, primarily Donations (£1275,6.0) and Affiliation Fees (£146.10.0), amounted to £1618.4.9. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 6, File 2, Revenue and Expenditure Account from 1 December to 23 June 1948. Regular L.P. members paid 4 shillings in fees a year. Trade union members paid 2 shillings and 6 pence. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.345.
42. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 20 May 1948. Date incorrect on original.
43. Ibid., Box 23, File 5, Minutes of Meeting of the Organising Committee of the S.A.L.P., 15 June 1948.
44. Ibid., Box 22, File 1, Report of Meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., July-August 1948.
45. Ibid.

undertook to pay the £40 salary for the first three months as a donation to the Party,<sup>46</sup> a full-time organiser was, in July 1948, appointed.<sup>47</sup>

But just how difficult the attempt to resuscitate the Party was to prove was illustrated in the Organiser's First Report:

I find that it is impossible to ascertain what is the membership of the Party. No records are kept at Head Office at all which give us any idea of what members we have...Branches usually keep records of members and sympathisers but I find on going through lists that they do not know which is which, indeed, there seems to be some confusion as to what constitutes a sympathiser.<sup>48</sup>

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46. Ibid., Box 23, File 5, Minutes of Meeting of the Organising Committee of the S.A.L.P., 15 June 1948. The L.P. had only two affiliated unions: The Garment Workers Union, which had a 1953 membership of 1 000; and the Concession Stores and Allied Trades, which had a membership of 200. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.344.
47. The Star, 5 July 1948. Letter to the Editor.
48. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 23, File 5, Organiser's Report, 31 July 1948.

CHAPTER 5

THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION,  
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1948

Though it held a majority of five in the House of Assembly the Government, in the short budget session beginning in August, faced a hostile Senate.<sup>1</sup> By rejecting the budget, the Senate could have forced a joint session of both Houses. Had it done so, the combined opposition would have held a small overall majority. Although this strategy, had it been adopted, might well have provoked a negative reaction from the electorate in a subsequent General Election, the Government was not prepared, in view of its tenuous hold on power, to take that chance. It decided instead, thus forgoing any advantage it might gain in the Provincial Elections, to dissolve the Senate and to hold elections for a new one on 29 July.<sup>2</sup>

The only drama in these elections was in Natal, where the electoral college in that Province held the key to the balance of power in the Senate. Despite some astute political manoeuvring by D. Mitchell, the illness of a U.P. Council member allowed the balance to swing in the Government's favour. The result was the election to the

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1. U.P. 27; L.P. 2; H.N.P. 11; Natives' Representatives 3. The vacant Natives' Representative seat had, until his resignation, been held by Senator Basner. The nomination date for candidates for the four Natives' Representative seats was 31 August. The elections were due to take place on 2 November 1948.
  2. Forward, 16 July 1948, p.5. Excluding the 4 Natives' Representatives the Senate had 40 members. Provincial Councillors and members of Parliament in each of the four provinces elected 8 Senators. The remaining 8 were nominated by the Governor-General. E.A. Walker, A History of Southern Africa, p.532.

Senate of the rabidly anti-Asiatic Independent Labourite, S.M. Petterson.<sup>3</sup> Though he continued to regard himself as an Independent, Petterson pledged himself to support the Government on matters affecting African and Indian policy.<sup>4</sup>

A vacancy in the Transvaal-Orange Free State Natives' Representative seat provided the Government with a majority of one in the new Senate.<sup>5</sup> But the majority was hardly a working one for a President of the Senate had still to be elected. In any subsequent division the President would have to ask for his vote to be recorded, behaviour virtually without precedent.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the Government, as a

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3. T. Wilks, op. cit., pp.65-67. Each of the 8 candidates put up by the U.P. and L.P. in Natal received 4 votes as did Pettersen who was supported by his own vote and those of the 1 A.P. and 2 H.N.P. M.P.s. The issue was decided by putting Pettersen's name and that of one of the 8 U.P./L.P. nominees into a hat. Ibid.

4. Daily News, 30 July 1948, p.2.

5.	H.N.P.	11	U.P.	15
	A.P.	2	L.P.	3
	Ind.	1	Nat.Rep.	3
	Nominated	<u>8</u>		
		22		<u>21</u>

In the November 1948 Natives' Representative Elections, William Ballinger won Basner's seat by a decisive margin. The H.N.P. candidate, J.H. Janse van Rensburg, who had lost his deposit, launched a Supreme Court action aimed at having the election declared void on the grounds that Ballinger had been declared a prohibited immigrant. Had Janse van Rensburg been successful not only would the Government have retained control of the Senate but it would also have had its Assembly majority increased by one as a consequence of Mrs Ballinger having to vacate her seat as a result of her marriage to an illegal immigrant. The Star, 8 November 1973.

6. On 1 October 1948, the President of the Senate, C.A. van Niekerk, exercised his right to vote in order to save the Government from defeat. This was the first time such a procedure had been followed in Commonwealth Parliamentary Government since 1870. D.M. Scher: The Disenfranchisement of the Coloured Voters 1948-1956, p.105.

consequence of the Senate elections, would hold a slender majority in the event of a Joint Sitting of both Houses.<sup>7</sup> Its life remained tenuous though B.J. Schoeman related:

Na die verkiesing van die Speaker en die voorsitter van Komitees, het ons 'n meerderheid van drie in die Volksraad oorgehou wanneer dit in Komitee was. Die V.P. het in die omstandighede geweier om af te paar...Die swepe moes gevolglik toesien dat, wanneer daar gestem moes word, alle lede aanwesig was. Meer as een keer moes 'n siek lid uit die bed gehaal en in 'n kombors toegedraai, sal ingebring word om te stem.<sup>8</sup>

The Opposition, though, was hardly in a position to take advantage of the Government's weakness. Smuts's voice at the U.P.'s first caucus meeting "was that of a tired and aged man."<sup>9</sup> At the opening of Parliament, on 7 August, Margaret Ballinger reported that U.P. members were obviously depressed by their Party's defeat: "Having been in control for so many years, they are not taking easily to the position of the vanquished..."<sup>10</sup>

The Government was understandably anxious, in view of the

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7. The new Senate adjourned almost immediately for it had no private motions to discuss and the Government had no Bills or policy motions to put before it.
  8. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.159. "Pairing" was the matching of a supporter and an opponent so that neither needed to be in the Assembly to vote.
  9. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.322. On 1 August Hofmeyr noted in his diary that Sarah Millin "had been to see Smuts last Friday and found him very weary and distressed. Apparently he gets relief by unburdening himself to her. He is seemingly not too happy in his own family circle." J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 1 August 1948.
  10. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B1, Tenth Parliament Opens: Nationalists Manoeuvre for Security, 14 August 1948.

short time which had been available to the new Ministers, to make the session as brief as possible. The Governor-General, in his speech from the throne, thus announced that no legislation of a fundamental nature would be introduced before the following year.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, on the grounds that it would have been difficult to introduce a no-confidence motion against a Government which had just come to power, the U.P. caucus took the unprecedented decision not to introduce a motion of censure.<sup>12</sup> Die Burger, with justifiable logic, commented that the caucus decision showed "firstly, that the Opposition has no comment to make on the Government's broad lines of policy, and that, secondly, it has nothing of its own to offer."<sup>13</sup> The U.P.'s apparent torpitude continued into the session, for the budget, which was generally acclaimed as a "popular" one "if we regard the populus as being confined to the upper ten per cent of the population",<sup>14</sup> denied any opportunity for vigorous debate.

Deciding to seize the initiative while the tactical advantage was his, T.E. Dönges, on 10 June, suddenly announced that Part II, that part of the 1946 Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act which provided for Indian parliamentary representation, was to be repealed.<sup>15</sup> Initially the Government appeared to have decided to hold such a move in abeyance so as not to make Louw's position at the United Nations any more difficult than it already was.<sup>16</sup>

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11. Ibid.
  12. The Forum, 21 August 1948, p.11.
  13. Ibid., 14 August 1948, p.7.
  14. Ibid., 21 August 1948, p.11.
  15. Apart from tactical considerations, only fear of an imminent U.P. return to power appears to have motivated the Government's action for the representation clauses in the 1946 Act needed a proclamation to put them into effect. Daily News, 16 September 1948, p.1.
  16. The Forum, 21 August 1948, p.6.

Party political considerations made it decide otherwise. The strategy paid immediate dividends.

The divisions which had rent the U.P. in 1946<sup>17</sup> once again threatened to split the Party. A.T. Adams, U.P. Coastal Organiser, advising Oosthuizen that a number of U.P. M.P.s might vote with the Government on the issue, wrote:

The only person who can persuade them otherwise is the Oubaas himself. I have already consulted both Editors of the two Durban papers and they have assured me that they will back a United Party stand against the withdrawal of this political representation. This of course will be a powerful factor in persuading our members to play the game.<sup>18</sup>

On 16 August, Malan, who handled the measure personally, introduced the amending Bill. In view of the "weak-kneed attitude of most of the Natal members"<sup>19</sup> a flurry of U.P. caucus meetings followed to decide upon the Party's response. As a result, the U.P. fell easy prey to H.N.P. propaganda. A leader in Die Burger commented: "If the United Party really possessed a colour policy it should be the easiest thing possible to resolve this problem of the Indian franchise. There should not be any need for secret caucuses."<sup>20</sup>

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17. W.B. White, op. cit., pp.90-94.

18. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, A.T. Adams to O.A. Oosthuizen, 11 June 1948. Control of the U.P. in Natal had been made even more difficult because of the sudden resignation, on 4 June, of C.F. Clarkson, the ineffective Natal Provincial leader. L. Caney, Chairman of the Party in Natal, took over the leadership temporarily until the next Provincial Congress. Daily News, 4 June 1948, p.1.

19. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 18 August 1948.

20. The Forum, 21 August 1948, p.6.

By 24 August Hofmeyr was able to report: "Caucus on Asiatic Bill went quite well. We seem to be pretty well out of the wood as far as this issue is concerned."<sup>21</sup> Hofmeyr failed to reveal that the U.P. amendment to Malan's Bill was a transparent evasion. It proposed that Part II of the Act be investigated by a Select Committee which would also be called upon to seek ways to achieve "international co-operation for a policy of repatriation."<sup>22</sup> The reference to repatriation, an option implicitly repudiated by Smuts with the passing of the original 1946 Act, was the first clear indication of the extent to which the U.P., as a Government-in-waiting, would feel obliged to adopt those aspects of Government policy so obviously attractive to a wide spectrum of the white electorate.<sup>23</sup>

The U.P.'s inability adequately to defend the limited Indian franchise provisions of the 1946 Act proved a personal embarrassment to Hofmeyr for he had originally voted for the measure only because of its franchise provisions.<sup>24</sup> Even more so was it an embarrassment to Smuts. Dr G.M. Naicker, Chairman of the Natal Indian Congress, in a letter to Smuts, wrote: "When this Act was brought before Parliament in 1946 you, in piloting it, stressed the need of taking Chapter one and two together. You are now in honour bound, together with your Party, to vote for the repeal of the whole Act."<sup>25</sup> Smuts's embarrassment very likely accounted for his poor performance in the Assembly during the passage of Malan's Bill. Maurice Webb, a representative of the South African

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21. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 24 August 1948.  
 22. A. Paton, *op. cit.*, p.510.  
 23. On 9 September Christie announced that the L.P. would move an amendment supporting the parliamentary representation of Indians, voting on a communal roll, by whites. *Rand Daily Mail*, 9 September 1948, p.9.  
 24. W.B. White, *op. cit.*, p.93.  
 25. *Ibid.*, p.146, *Indian Views*, 1 September 1948.



Institute of Race Relations, reported that Smuts was pathetically weak. On the Government benches the members were openly amused at his discomfiture. His heart was not in a fight to save a token of political representation for the Indians of South Africa and he knew that, on this issue, he had enemies on his own side of the House as well as on the benches opposite.<sup>26</sup>

At the conclusion of the debate, in which Hofmeyr took no part, the division on the amendment proposed by the U.P. resulted in its defeat 63 votes to 58.<sup>27</sup> Just prior to the division on the amendment proposed by the Government, four U.P. members, three from Durban and one from Pietermaritzburg, walked out rather than vote against it.<sup>28</sup> The Government's amendment was approved by 63 votes to 54.<sup>29</sup> Although most of its members continued to speak against it, the U.P. did not oppose the passage of the Bill at the conclusion of the Third Reading debate.<sup>30</sup>

Soon afterwards, Smuts wrote:

It has been a bad session. Natives, Coloureds and Indians have been under

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26. M. Webb Papers, Unprinted Manuscript, The Colour of Your Skin, Chapter XIX, p.10. Hofmeyr wrote that, during a division on Malan's Bill, Lawrence had said to him: "...how much better it would be to be one of a group of say 25 under my (Hofmeyr's) leadership which could then take a positive line." J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 24 September 1948. Lawrence subsequently denied ever having made such a statement. J. Lawrence, Harry Lawrence, p.223.
27. House of Assembly Debates, 23 September 1948, Col.3160.
28. M. Webb Papers, Unprinted Manuscript, The Colour of Your Skin, Chapter XIX, p.11.
29. House of Assembly Debates, 23 September 1948, Col.3161.
30. Neither did the U.P. oppose the Asiatic Land Tenure Amendment Bills of 1949 and 1950.

constant attack, and we in the Opposition have not been able to ward off the blows struck against those who cannot defend themselves. There is no doubt a wave of reaction rolling over the country, and the sort of policies I have stood for are once more under the hammer...We shall have much more of all this next year and politics will become most unpleasant.<sup>31</sup>

Because he considered that, since the outbreak of the war, he had become "too much of a mythical character", Smuts set out, after the session was over, on a political tour of the Cape "to give the country people the chance of getting to know him again."<sup>32</sup> Soon after the tour was over his eldest son, Japie, died, virtually without warning, of cerebral meningitis. J.C. Smuts, Jnr. wrote: "The event aged my father and made him work harder than ever."<sup>33</sup>

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31. J. van der Poel, op. cit., p.250, J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 29 September 1948. In response to Government threats issued during the session to repeal those limited political rights enjoyed by African and Coloured South Africans, a Civil Rights Action Committee, formed under the auspices of the S.A. Institute of Race Relations, convened, in mid-September, a mass meeting in Cape Town. Working on their own the Springbok Legion in the Transvaal announced plans for a national campaign "to defend democracy". The Forum, 18 September 1948, p.7.
32. W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.509.
33. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.515.

PART III

MORE THAN A "PASSING PHASE"

CHAPTER 6

A U.P. ACTION COMMITTEE; NEGOTIATIONS WITH HAVENGA,  
OCTOBER 1948 - JANUARY 1949

Malan's announcement that the March 1949 Provincial Elections were to be fought primarily on the issue of race<sup>1</sup> provided added impetus to the U.P.'s search for a policy towards South African Indians which would both defuse tensions within the Party in Natal and prevent the H.N.P. from raising it as an election issue. To this end the Natal U.P. Executive, in preparing for the 9-10 November Provincial Congress of the Party, decided, on 20 October, that when the "Indian Question" was reached on the agenda, the Congress would go into Committee and that once in Committee, the Chairman would move that "in order to allow free and frank discussion, Congress remain in Committee..."<sup>2</sup>

Smuts arrived at the Natal Congress a few days after having attended the Transvaal Congress of the Party. Commenting on this "Revival Congress", he wrote: "...it was heartening to see the new spirit of service especially among the junior members of the Party."<sup>3</sup>

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1. U.P. Papers, Congresses, Central, 1934-1950, Vol.I, A.T. Adams to O.A. Oosthuizen, 3 November 1948.
  2. Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, Minutes of Executive Committee, 20 October 1948.
  3. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.278, No.191, J.C. Smuts to Lord Beit, 10 November 1948.

Though his re-election as Provincial Chairman at the Transvaal Congress was an event, Hofmeyr wrote, which "seems to mark the end of the witchhunt",<sup>4</sup> the attitude of the Party in Natal was altogether different. A divisive debate on a resolution proposing the immediate appointment of a National Deputy Leader "acceptable to all sections of the Party", was diplomatically avoided only by means of the introduction of an amendment referring the question to the Union Congress which was due to be held in Bloemfontein later that month.<sup>5</sup>

The Party's inability "to grasp the nettle"<sup>6</sup> was also illustrated in the content of the new "Indian Policy" proposed at the Congress for submission to the Union Congress.

The policy agreed to was based largely on the U.P. amendment to the repeal of Section II of the 1946 Act which had been patched together in August, and upon an extensive memorandum submitted to the Central Executive by the Natal U.P. Executive, on 3 November.<sup>7</sup> It proposed that, failing the achievement of repatriation, a more vigorous policy of segregation should be pursued by tightening the restrictive provisions of Section I of the 1946 Act.<sup>8</sup> This proposal was designed not only to embody the wishes of the majority of Natal's white electorate but was also an attempt to pre-empt Dönges whō was soon expected to announce the contents of a new Bill which was expected to contain just such a provision.<sup>9</sup> As a face-saving gesture, the policy concluded

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4. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 4 November 1948.
  5. A. Paton, op. cit., p.518.
  6. The Forum, 27 November 1948, p.3.
  7. U.P. Papers, Congresses, Central, 1934-1950, Vol.I, A.T. Adams to O.A. Oosthuizen, 3 November 1948.
  8. V.L. Shearer Papers, PV155, File 29, A.T. Adams to V.L. Shearer, 30 April 1951.
  9. U.P. Papers, Congresses, Central, 1934-1950, Vol.I,

with a statement that "any further rights of Union franchise to Indians [shall] be on the basis of the Natives' Representation Act of 1936 as introduced by General Hertzog."<sup>10</sup>

The new policy achieved its purpose for Smuts reported later that month, after a brief tour of the Province: "I found the Party spirit good and heard very little about 'Indians' which generally formed my main political trouble in Natal."<sup>11</sup> But newspaper reaction to his own performance and that of the U.P., at both the Transvaal and Natal Congresses, had not been positive. He was accused of merely being declamatory rather than constructive.<sup>12</sup> The Natal

A.T. Adams to O.A. Oosthuizen, 3 November 1948. On 28 November, Dönges announced, in Pietermaritzburg, that he had decided to appoint a Committee to consider suggestions "from the people of Natal" as to the best way of amending Section I of the 1946 Act. The Committee's subsequent recommendations were incorporated into a June 1949 amending Bill. The most drastic of the Bill's proposals was the addition of business premises to the original Act's restrictions. W.G. Ballinger Papers (Wits), P.R. Pather to T.E. Dönges, 14 June 1949.

10. V.L. Shearer Papers, PV155, File 29, A.T. Adams to V.L. Shearer, 30 April 1951.
11. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 20 November 1948, p.268. Party spirit was not as good as Smuts thought. Because they had broken Party unity, the three M.P.s who had refused to vote against the repeal of Part II of the 1946 Act had, ever since, been exposed to intense criticism. A note on the position of the Party in Natal at the time read: "...instead of fighting the common enemy there is a fight among ourselves...One redeeming feature is that all, without exception, revere the Oubaas. In my humble opinion he alone can rectify the undercurrent." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.279, No.293, R. Tungay to H. Cooper, 20 November 1948.
12. At the Transvaal Congress he had said: "Everything has been sabotaged. It won't be long before the people will discover that we have a depression." Natal Witness, 6 November 1948. See Appendix XI: The

Witness warned:

There was a disappointingly negative tone about the Natal United Party's deliberations...Warnings, however sound and however tellingly prescient, and criticism, however justified and however forcible, are not enough. A clear-cut positive policy is needed, capable of evoking real enthusiasm...The United Party leaders too often present the spectacle of a group of ageing politicians in search of a policy...<sup>13</sup>

This view was widely held. E.G. Malherbe, commenting on the nomination of van der Byl, ex-Minister of Native Affairs who had been defeated in May 1948, as U.P. candidate in the Green Point by-election, wrote:

...I cannot think of a greater stupidity that the Party could have committed at this juncture. I am in close touch with the young, thinking sections of our population and nothing could have been calculated to strengthen them more in their impression of the decrepitude of the United Party than this symptomatic archaism."<sup>14</sup>

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13. Balance of Payments, 1948-1953. Natal Witness, 12 November 1948. Smuts's speech at the Natal Congress, in which he declared that "the people of the world had lost confidence in South Africa", prompted Louw, at the United Nations, to inform Malan: "At this morning's session, Mrs Pandit made a vicious attack on South Africa and twice quoted Smuts's speech in support of her attack." J. van der Poel, op. cit., E. Louw to D.F. Malan, 10 November 1948, p.264. Smuts, in reply to Malan's subsequent criticism, wrote: "Can there be any doubt about the loss of foreign confidence? The sudden and almost unbelievably rapid change in financial conditions here within only a few months is striking proof of it, and the facts which I pointed out fall far short of the real state of affairs." Ibid., J.C. Smuts to D.F. Malan, 12 November 1948, p.266.
14. J. van der Poel, op. cit., E.G. Malherbe to J.C. Smuts, 8 September 1948, p.240. Van der Byl was elected unopposed.

On 8 October Hofmeyr had been told that "there was still much unsettlement in Party circles and a fear of the old gang getting into (the) Cabinet again if the U.P. recovered power."<sup>15</sup>

Neither was the prestige of the U.P. enhanced among the majority of the white electorate when Hofmeyr, only days after the Natal Congress had apparently settled the issue, strongly implied, at a political meeting in Aliwal North, that if the U.P. were restored to power it would re-enact Section II of the 1946 "Asiatic Act".<sup>16</sup>

Four days later the H.N.P. increased its May 1948 majority of 2 014 to 2 150 in the Stellenbosch by-election, a by-election which again exposed deficiencies in U.P. organisation. It was reported that

...the Nationalists were weeks ahead in their canvassing and other acts of organisation...One or two of the Party's more able organisers were moved into the constituency only a week or two ago, and, in one case, only four days before polling took place.<sup>17</sup>

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15. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 8 October 1948.
16. A. Paton, op. cit., p.519. Reporting to Oosthuizen about the incident, Hofmeyr wrote: "I replied that the United Party had declared its policy before the recent elections when it said that it stood by the Act of 1946. The further question was then asked whether the Party would re-enact Chapter II of that Act which was recently repealed. To this I replied that I could not answer a question like that but that my own opinion was that the Party should act in terms of its statement of policy to which I had referred." J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.276, No.38, J.H. Hofmeyr to O.A. Oosthuizen, 15 November 1948.
17. The Forum, 20 November 1948, p.7. Prior to the by-election, the H.N.P., as it had done in May 1948 in Cape Peninsula seats, made massive objections against Coloured voters. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Head Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1948-1963, Vol.I, Notes on Organisation in the Cape Province,

The overall effect, just prior to the 23-25 November Union Congress of the Party in Bloemfontein, was "a demand in some United Party quarters for a frank and critical self-examination."<sup>18</sup> It was primarily for this reason that the Congress spent "unusually long periods in committee."<sup>19</sup> During these sessions, the younger delegates and back-benchers, "voicing their dissatisfaction with some of the old gang who have occupied high positions in the United Party for many years", demanded a greater say in the formulation of Party policy and tactics.<sup>20</sup> Their cause was supported by the Rand Daily Mail:

The times call for a greater degree of vigour and tenacity than has been required in the past; and it is evident that not all of those who have been prominent in the Party during recent years will be capable of showing it.<sup>21</sup>

The outcome was an announcement by Smuts, immediately Congress resumed in open session, of the Party's intention to establish an Action Committee which would, in effect, replace the Central Executive Committee "for the period and duration of the emergency."<sup>22</sup> The new Committee was to consist of the eight members of the existing Central Executive<sup>23</sup> and ten additional members who were to be

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- n.d.
18. The Forum, 27 November 1948, p.7. A week before the U.P. Union Congress, the H.N.P. held the largest Transvaal Congress in its history. Ibid., 20 November 1948, p.7.
  19. Ibid., 4 December 1948, p.8.
  20. Ibid.
  21. Rand Daily Mail, 23 November 1948, p.6.
  22. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Head Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1948-1963, Vol.I, Meeting of the Central Head Committee, 23 November 1948.
  23. The Party leader, the four Provincial Chairmen, the Chairmen of the General Councils of the Cape Peninsula and of the Witwatersrand and the Union



nominated by that Executive.<sup>24</sup> Smuts, in making the announcement, said: "Ons voel dat ons al die veglus van die Party moet inspan, maar die bestaande masjinerie van die Party is nie voldoende nie...Ons moet nuwe bloed vir die stryd kry om die ernstige politieke toestand die hoof te bied."<sup>25</sup> The victory of the "Young Turks" was only partial, for their attempts to influence the appointments to the Committee by having the nominations made at the Congress proved fruitless. It was agreed instead "that careful consideration would have to be given to the nominations, and that the Central Executive should be given three weeks in which to make them."<sup>26</sup>

Despite such tentative evidence of renewal, the Congress failed, even when in committee, to encourage delegates "to speak their minds quite freely on the colour problem about which there is still some confusion."<sup>27</sup> Nor did it, in a closely related issue, discuss the question of succession, the expected showdown between Hofmeyr and the Natal delegates "turned out to be a damp squib."<sup>28</sup> Hofmeyr

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Treasurer of the Party.

24. The Forum, 4 December 1948, p.7.

25. Die Volkstem, 25 November 1948, p.8.

26. The Forum, 4 December 1948, p.7. The selection was finalised by the Central Executive on 6 December 1948. Divided roughly on a provincial basis the nominees included individuals such as J.W. Mushet, Vice-Chairman of the Cape Head Committee, who were of doubtful utility to the Party's immediate needs. But the list also included young newly elected but uninfluential M.P.s such as D.F. Mitchell, Sir de Villiers Graaff and H.F. Oppenheimer. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.171, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1948. See Appendix XII: Members of the U.P. Action Committee, December 1948.

27. The Forum, 4 December 1948, p.8.

28. Ibid.

himself considered that the Congress "went off well. There was a spontaneous demand from the audience for a speech by me and I was given an excellent reception."<sup>29</sup> The Natal Mercury remained sceptical:

It all boils down to whether General Smuts continues to back Mr Hofmeyr or whether he will countenance an approach to Mr Havenga and the Afrikaner Party. So long as General Smuts supports Mr Hofmeyr there can be no proper unity in the United Party...<sup>30</sup>

The paper was not far off the mark for Smuts, in view of the deterioration in relations between the governing parties, had cogent reasons for keeping the succession question open at both the Natal and Union Congresses of the Party.

The tensions, evident during the negotiations leading up to the pre-election alliance between the H.N.P. and A.P., did not diminish subsequent to the election. Havenga was not only dissatisfied with his Party's single Cabinet post but he was also subject to considerable H.N.P. pressure to agree to an alteration of the entrenched clauses by a simple, rather than two-thirds, parliamentary majority.<sup>31</sup> Strijdom,

29. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 23 November 1948.

30. The Forum, 4 December 1948, p.8.

31. Ibid., 4 September 1948, p.7. The entrenched clauses in the constitution, Section 35 concerning the franchise qualifications for Coloured voters in the Cape Province and Section 137 concerning the equality of treatment of the two official languages, could only be amended by a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Parliament at a joint sitting. Male Coloureds and Indians in the Cape Province who earned £50 a year or owned fixed property to the value of £75, and Male Coloureds in Natal who earned £96 a year and owned immovable property worth £50 or received rental from property of £10 a year, were entitled to be registered on the Common Roll. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.146. The H.N.P.'s April 1948 Election Manifesto had explicitly stated that the Party intended to remove Coloured voters from the common roll. Vide Infra Appendix VI.

unwilling to countenance a dilution of Party principles, remained, for his part, adamant that both Parties should fuse.<sup>32</sup> In a private conversation soon after the General Election, with E.G. Malherbe, Havenga "made it quite clear...that he was not very happy within the Malan Party" and that he would "prefer to join up with General Smuts."<sup>33</sup>

By early September tensions within the coalition were yet further heightened when negotiations over the allocation of seats for the Provincial Elections threatened to collapse because of disagreements over the eligibility of O.B. members to stand as A.P. candidates.<sup>34</sup> Acrimony over the issue had permeated down to the Parties at the provincial level. Relations between the two were particularly poor in the Orange Free State while the Natal H.N.P. leader, E.G. Jansen, "had almost fallen out completely with Mr Boy Fullard, Natal A.P. leader."<sup>35</sup>

It was at this time, with the coalition Parties at odds with one another and with the U.P. riven with dissension and defeatism, that Malherbe directed an appeal to Smuts to drop Hofmeyr and depose the existing parties by entering into a political alliance with Havenga. The latter's alliance with the O.B., he argued, was merely opportunist.<sup>36</sup> Only by this creative act, which might also involve Smuts's surrender of the Prime Ministership to Havenga, Malherbe wrote, could a

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32. The Forum, 23 October 1948, p.7.

33. E.G. Malherbe: Never a Dull Moment, p.282.

34. The Forum, 4 September 1948, p.7.

35. Ibid. By 21 September 1948 tentative agreement between the H.N.P. and A.P. had been reached over a division of seats in the Transvaal and the Cape Province: Transvaal - 4 rural and 8 urban seats to be contested by the A.P. Cape Province - 5 seats to be contested by the A.P.

36. J. van der Poel, op. cit., E.G. Malherbe to J.C. Smuts, 8 September 1948, p.237.

political centre be restored which would provide a viable home for moderate Afrikaner Nationalists.<sup>37</sup>

Contrary to the view of a number of commentators,<sup>38</sup> Smuts did not reject Malherbe's suggestion out of hand. Keeping his options open, he sent an equivocal reply: "A combination between the United Party and the O.B. appears rather odd to me...it would be as well to go slowly with the new idea."<sup>39</sup> A copy of a reply which Smuts did not send to Malherbe, provides a clearer insight into his thinking at that time:

Ek sal jou wenke natuurlik alle aandag skenk. Dit is te begryp dat so iets as jy aan die hand gee maklik 'n groter verwarring in die politieke toneel kan [bring?] as daar tans bestaan. Die erns van die huidige posiesie en moontlike ontwikkelinge daaruit is my duidelik. Maar, die tyd en aard van enige [saamtrek?] moet maar aan my oorgelaat word.<sup>40</sup>

During the following two months relations between the H.N.P. and A.P. continued to deteriorate. The H.N.P. in the Orange Free State refused to co-operate in a division of seats and the Transvaal H.N.P. continued to insist that the agreement which excluded O.B. candidates from standing in the May General Election should be extended to include the Provincial Elections.<sup>41</sup>

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37. H. Brotz, op. cit., p.20.  
 38. E.G. Malherbe: Never a Dull Moment, p.283.  
 H. Brotz, op. cit., p.21.  
 W.K. Hancock, op. cit., p.515 is non-committal.  
 39. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to E.G. Malherbe, 13 September 1948, p.246.  
 40. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.278, No.154, J.C. Smuts to E.G. Malherbe, n.d.  
 41. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.59, No.4, p.5., No.175, J. de Klerk to J.L.V. Liebenberg, 1 November 1948.

By early November the negotiations had broken down. Havenga, without making any reference to the entrenched clauses, outlined the state of relations between the two Parties in a 9 November letter to Malan. On the issue of Party fusion, he wrote: "Daar is genoegsame gronde wat bewys dat dit onverstandig en onwenslik sou wees om hierdie saak te probeer forseer omdat die nodige goeie gesindheid en vertrouwe skynbaar nog nie aanwesig is nie."<sup>42</sup> In regard to the O.B., he contended that the A.P. "staan in geen betrekking hoegenaam tot hierdie non-party politieke organisasie, en bowendien is dit altoos deur ons nadruklik beklemtoon dat ons nooit vereenselwig was met die ideologie of doelstellings van die beweging."<sup>43</sup> In conclusion, he wrote:

...spyt dit my dat dit onmoontlik is vir my om die Provinsiale setels, wat u bereid is om aan ons vir bestryding toe te ken, te aanvaar onder enige voorwaarde waaronder die H.N.P. geregtig sal wees om sig in te meng met die Kandidaatstelling deur die A.P., en die reg voorbehou om sulke kandidate wat lede is van die A.P. vooraf te keur.<sup>44</sup>

In his reply on 12 November, Malan accepted with regret that Party unification was, for the foreseeable future, not possible. He defended, however, his Party's rejection of O.B. provincial candidates on the grounds that they continued to propagate their own ideology and were, in fact, "'n Party binnekant 'n Party."<sup>45</sup>

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42. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, Afrikaner Eenheid, N.C. Havenga to D.F. Malan, 9 November 1948.  
 43. Ibid.  
 44. Ibid. On 28 January 1949 the "Grootraad" of the O.B. adopted a resolution assuring Havenga "van die diepe waardering van ons Beweging vir die Lojaliteit wat u teenoor ons betuig het..." Ibid., Vol.27, Ossewabrandwag en Nuwe Orde, J. van der Westhuizen to N.C. Havenga, 2 February 1949.  
 45. Ibid., Vol.27, Afrikaner Eenheid, D.F. Malan to

It was soon afterwards that Hofmeyr wrote in his diary, during the second day of the U.P. Union Congress, that there was a

growing impatience of rank and file of Afrikaner Party at attitude of Nationalists and their desire to come to terms with us...Some of our people got together and subsequently spoke to me. They felt that some approach should be made to Havenga but were very emphatic that no arrangement should be come to at my expense.<sup>46</sup>

In a subsequent disclosure, which, if true, would certainly serve to make the approach to Havenga more explicable, Barlow said that Hofmeyr was prepared "in the interests of the country, to stand down as second-in-charge to General Smuts in favour of Mr Havenga."<sup>47</sup>

N.C. Havenga, 12 November 1948. At Malan's urging, the H.N.P. in the Cape Province had made it possible for O.B. members who accepted the obligations of H.N.P. membership to join the Party. Ibid., N.C. Havenga to D.F. Malan, 9 November 1948. In the Transvaal, Diederichs was in the process of launching a smear campaign against van Rensburg who "word skuldig gehou vir die houding wat die Afrikaner Party nou inslaan. Die beleid is nou om hom te vernietig dan sal Mnr Havenga en die Afrikaner Party vanself tot niet gaan." Ibid., Vol.26, Declaration by Maria Dorothea Haarhoff, 17 December 1948.

46. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 24 November 1948. When Dr Strydom, editor of the U.P. paper Die Suidersstem, had approached Hofmeyr on 23 August to secure his approval for an approach to Havenga he had been rebuffed. Hofmeyr wrote: "...I had no desire to link up with the Ossewa Brandwag nor, I felt sure, had Smuts. Moreover the proposed link-up would strengthen the reactionary elements in the United Party..." Ibid., 23 August 1948.

47. Cape Argus, 4 December 1948, p.1. Barlow was in the group which had approached Hofmeyr on 23 November. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.324.

A few days after the approach had been made to him, Oosthuizen informed Hofmeyr that Havenga intended to break with the H.N.P. "but that he wanted to know what our attitude would be...He said that he would not insist on any conditions for co-operation."<sup>48</sup> After consulting with Smuts, Hofmeyr wrote what was to be his final diary entry: "...S was willing to see H and the sooner the better."<sup>49</sup>

Relations between Havenga and the H.N.P. continued to deteriorate. On 29 November, at a secret meeting between him and his cabinet colleagues, Dönges, Jansen and le Roux, the latter group proving anxious to remove the Coloured people from the Common Roll as soon as possible, he reiterated his view that the entrenched clauses could not be amended by a simple majority.<sup>50</sup> Even if a two-thirds majority had not been necessary, he said, he did not believe that the Government's majority in Parliament could be regarded as being representative of the "Volkswil".<sup>51</sup> He expressed this view again a few days later when he opened the A.P. Annual Congress. He also threatened that if the Government went ahead and ignored the entrenched clauses, he

48. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Box A1, Diary, 26 November 1948.  
 49. Ibid. Hofmeyr died on 3 December 1948. Smuts wrote: "He was only fifty-four and my destined successor." J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 6 December 1948, p.272. As a consequence of Hofmeyr's death, J.G.N. Strauss took Hofmeyr's seat in the Assembly and H.F. Oppenheimer replaced Hofmeyr on the U.P. Finance Committee. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1948.  
 50. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.106.  
 51. Ibid. Malan held that legal advice had confirmed the competence of Parliament to alter the entrenched clauses by a simple majority and that Havenga's requirements with regard to the "Volkswil" would be met by the results of the March 1949 Provincial elections. J. van der Poel, op. cit., p.273.

would resign his seat in the Assembly.<sup>52</sup>

His views, and those of his Party, are explicable by reference to the events surrounding the passing and repeal of Section II of the 1946 "Asiatic Act". It had been passed on the basis of a Party vote in the face of bitter Opposition resistance. The result was its repeal once the Opposition came to power. It was a recurrence of this nature which the A.P. wished to avoid in regard to the Coloured common roll franchise.<sup>53</sup> It was on this basis that a resolution was unanimously adopted, at the 1-2 December A.P. Congress, committing the Party "...om saam te werk met enige Party of groep wat dit met die Afrikaner Party eens is, oor daardie fundamentele beginsels wat Generaal Hertzog sy lewenstaak gemaak het en soos neergelê in die Program van hierdie Party."<sup>54</sup> On 4 December Havenga confirmed, in a letter to Malan, that the A.P. would not participate in the Provincial Elections.<sup>55</sup>

On 6 December Smuts wrote:

A crisis has arisen which, if Havenga is really sincere, may recast the whole political situation. Things are in a flux and at present it is impossible to foresee what will come out of it...It is naturally a delicate and, for me, an extremely anxious situation. I am

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52. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.107.

53. Ibid., p.110.

54. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.59, No.183, Houding van Afrikaner Party in die Eerskomende Provinsiale Verkiesings, n.d.

55. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, Afrikaner Eenheid, N.C. Havenga to D.F. Malan, 4 December 1948. Havenga's decision was approved by the A.P.'s Head Committee on 11 December 1948. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.59, No.183, Houding van Afrikaner Party in die Eerskomende Provinsiale Verkiesings, n.d. The correspondence between Malan and Havenga was made public in early December.



awaiting developments...<sup>56</sup>

On 7 December a C.J. Uys, reluctantly acting as A.P. intermediary, received a coded telegram from Dr Strydom, editor of Die Suiderstem:

As gnl. Smuts saamreis...sal dit bloot wees om finale reelings vir sy uittrede uit die Politiek...Dis nou die oomblik vir die verbreking van die samewerking met die H.N.P. sodat hy, Havenga, vry is om oor finale ooreenkoms te onderhandel. Hy verloor niks nie want hy bly in beheer van beherende stemme.<sup>57</sup>

Two days later, in a speech at Swartruggens, Smuts made an implicit public overture to Havenga: "Die posisie is tans gelyk aan die in 1932 toe 'n dure plig op my gerus het...Toe die verskriklike toestand in die land gekom het, het ek aan genl. Hertzog gesê ons moet bymekaarkom."<sup>58</sup> Describing how everything built up by the Fusion Government had become endangered, Smuts continued: "Ek juig die woorde van Mnr Havenga toe in verband met die Regeringsbeleid. Hy bewys Suid-Afrika 'n diens. Dit toon dat daar ook buite die Verenigde Party 'n gesonde gevoel in Suid Afrika is."<sup>59</sup>

Expressions of opposition from within the U.P. to an alliance with the A.P. were exceptionally muted. What little adverse comment there was, was not limited to the Party's left-wing. P. van der Byl, for instance, wrote: "We are not called upon to run round hat in hand, like some

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56. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 6 December 1948, p.272.
57. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, Afrikaner Party 1941-1951, C.J. Uys to N.C. Havenga, 6 January 1949. There is no evidence to indicate whether Strijdom was acting on his own initiative or not.
58. Die Volkstem, 9 December 1948, p.9.
59. Ibid. P. Meiring is incorrect when he states, while discussing the possibility of a U.P. rapprochement with Havenga, that "...the plans ran aground when they reached Smuts." P. Meiring, op. cit., p.199.

small splinter party seeking, by expediency, to get some support for ourselves, or to grasp at any straw to keep our heads above water."<sup>60</sup>

It does appear that the possibility of a U.P.-A.P. alliance remained alive into early 1949. Reporting on the issue at an 11 January meeting of the Executive Committee, Smuts "het die vergadering gevra om nie propaganda hieroor te maak nie, maar die saak in sy hande te laat."<sup>61</sup> But, whatever thoughts Havenga might once have entertained of leaving the Government were stillborn. On 18 January his Private Secretary reported that Havenga "alles in sy vermoë doen om die bestande samewerking in die Volksraad te bewaar."<sup>62</sup>

It is likely that, acutely aware as he was of the alienation of a considerable majority of the Afrikaans-speaking electorate from the U.P., Havenga had come round to the view that a more viable means of restoring power to the political centre would be via Malan's wing of the H.N.P. As a consequence of his Party's withdrawal from the Provincial Elections, he expected that the resultant decline in support for the Government would, by enhancing his position as broker of power, also enhance his prospects of becoming Malan's successor.

Smuts nevertheless persisted. At the end of January he wrote:

Parliament has been busy all week...Havenga with his small Hertzog band is still in the Malan camp, in

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60. The Forum, 1 January 1949, p.8.

61. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes, 1939-1949, Vol.I, No.237, Hoofbestuursvergadering, 11 January 1949.

62. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, J.J. van Rooyen to A.J. Raubenheimer, 18 January 1949.

spite of his objections to the violation of the Entrenchment clauses in the constitution. But I shall continue to rub it in, and make them feel in their hearts that they are in the wrong camp.<sup>63</sup>

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63. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.283, No.4, J.C. Smuts to M.C. and A.B. Gillett, 29 January 1949.

CHAPTER 7

U.P. REFORMS; THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION,  
JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1949

The first meeting of the U.P. Central Action Committee<sup>1</sup> was held on 14 January 1949.<sup>2</sup> It immediately turned its attention to the re-organisation of the Party. Its first move was to appoint an Advisory Committee on Finance<sup>3</sup> composed of the members of the Central Finance Committee<sup>4</sup> and all the Provincial and General Council Treasurers. Its second was the appointment of a sub-committee to examine Party organisation.<sup>5</sup> The sub-committee was instructed to have its recommendations for improvements in Party organisation ready in time for the February meeting of the Action Committee.<sup>6</sup>

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1. On 6 December 1948 the Central Executive had agreed "that a recommendation should go to all Provincial Head Committees and General Councils that Action Committees be appointed where they do not already exist..." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.171, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1948.
  2. As Chairman of the Action Committee, Smuts appointed J.G.N. Strauss to act for him in his absence. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.3, Meeting U.P. Central Action Committee, 14 January 1949.
  3. Its tasks were (1) to co-ordinate fund-raising; (2) to devise ways of raising revenue; and (3) to provide recommendations on "the broad lines of expenditure". *Ibid.*, No.16, Meeting of Advisory Committee on Party Finance, 15 February 1949.
  4. J.C. Smuts, H. Tucker, J.W. Higgerty, H.F. Oppenheimer and O.A. Oosthuizen.
  5. H. Tucker, Sir de Villiers Graaff, D. Mitchell, L. Ellenberger and M. Steyn.
  6. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.3, Meeting U.P. Central Action Committee, 14 January 1949.

At its first meeting, on 15 February, the Advisory Committee on Finance, after calculating the cost per annum of running the Party at £75 000, unanimously decided to decentralise the financial burden which, until then, had rested on the central organisation.<sup>7</sup> To this end, it made two major recommendations. The first was that the Union Action Committee should appoint a paid senior official, to be designated the Union Financial Organiser, to co-ordinate the raising of funds throughout the Union. The second was that the Provincial Head Committees and General Councils should also appoint Financial Organisers so that they could assume responsibility for raising funds in their own areas. Their freedom to raise revenue was, however, made subject to two conditions. The first was that certain sources of revenue were to be treated as the prerogative of the Union Finance Committee. The second was that the annual budgets of the Provincial Head Committees and General Councils would have to be approved by the Union Finance Committee and that each of these budgets would have to make provision for the payment to Union Funds of a percentage of total receipts. The precise size of the latter was to be settled by agreement between each of these bodies and the Union Finance Committee.<sup>8</sup>

After approving these recommendations,<sup>9</sup> the 16 February meeting of the Union Action Committee then went on to discuss the report of the sub-committee on Organisation.

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7. Ibid., No.16, Meeting of Advisory Committee on Party Finance, 15 February 1949.

8. Ibid.

9. The recommendations were sent, on 12 March 1949, to all U.P. Senators, M.P.s, M.P.C.s, Provincial and General Council Chairmen, Secretaries and Treasurers. They were invited to submit comments before 20 April 1949. L.S. Steenkamp Papers, U.P. 1938-1974, Vol.16, To U.P. Senators, M.P.s, M.P.C.s, 12 March 1949.

The sub-committee had aimed at a "pliable but more highly integrated organisation" with effective control being vested in the hands of the Central Action Committee and administered through the General Secretary.<sup>10</sup> To this end it recommended a substantial increase in the size of the Head Office staff from its then complement of General Secretary, one propagandist, one Women's Organiser and two typists.<sup>11</sup>

In referring to Party propaganda the report stated: "The present arrangements...are considered to be entirely inadequate...it is essential that there should be a Propaganda Department with a trained propagandist in charge..."<sup>12</sup>

Turning from the Central to the Union organisation of the Party, the sub-committee recommended the greater consolidation of constituencies into General Councils and that "the essential role played by these bodies in revitalising the Party organisation be recognised and supported..."<sup>13</sup> Such a consolidation would, of necessity,

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10. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Vol.I, Provisional Report of the Sub-Committee...to make Recommendations Concerning the Organisation of the United Party throughout the Union, 14 February 1949.
  11. The Sub-Committee recommended: (a) General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary; (b) Senior and Assistant Financial Secretaries; (c) Senior and Assistant Organisers; (d) Senior and Assistant Propaganda Secretaries; (e) A Senior Organiser for the Women's Section; and (f) Such clerical assistance as may be approved. Ibid.
  12. Ibid. Referring to the Party's poor coverage in Afrikaans-language newspapers, the Sub-Committee noted that "the existing services in this regard on the Witwatersrand, in the Free State and certain other areas are totally inadequate..." Ibid.
  13. Ibid. See Appendix XIII: The Distribution of United

involve a reconstitution of the Provincial Head Committees. In this regard the sub-committee suggested that the Provincial Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen should continue, as before, to be elected by the Provincial Congress, but that the Provincial Committees should consist of representatives appointed by each of the General Councils in proportion to the number of seats controlled by them. The direct organisational work thus having been taken over by the General Councils, a reduction in the size of the Provincial Executives would, the sub-committee suggested, become possible. These should, in each case, it recommended, be replaced by a small Provincial Action Committee.<sup>14</sup>

No alteration was recommended to the way in which Divisional Committees were constituted, but it was noted that their success depended upon effective Chairmen and Secretaries:

Everything possible should be done in the various areas to ensure that the most effective persons are appointed to these posts. In very many cases it is clear that failure in the past has been due to weakness in this regard.<sup>15</sup>

The sub-committee observed that "the branches of the Party are the kernel of the Organisation. No amount of work at the top can win elections."<sup>16</sup> The report opposed the payment of either Branch or Divisional officials except under exceptional circumstances, holding that "the future success of the Party depends largely upon the building up of a voluntary organisation."<sup>17</sup> This view also governed the appointment of organisers, for the report noted that

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Party General Councils, February 1949.

14. Ibid.  
 15. Ibid.  
 16. Ibid.  
 17. Ibid.

the appointment of an organiser in a constituency all too often leads to the breakdown of voluntary effort. The general principle recommended is therefore that, in general, organisers should aim at stimulating voluntary effort.<sup>18</sup>

In a final observation, the sub-committee also noted

that in the overwhelming majority of cases the office accommodation afforded for officials of the Party was totally inadequate and it is convinced that in order that efficient work should be done it is essential that better accommodation should be made available.<sup>19</sup>

As had been the case with the Committee on Finance's report, the report on re-organisation was distributed among the Party's public representatives and officials for comment<sup>20</sup> before finally being adopted by the Action Committee.<sup>21</sup> Ironically, though, the possibility of a snap General Election slowed the implementation of the recommendations, for Oosthuizen feared that, if they were "to be put into effect, it might well be that the General Election would find the United Party partially disorganised and in a state of confusion."<sup>22</sup> In regard to the imminent Provincial Elections, the report itself had recommended that they be "fought out on the present organisational set-up with a variation only in tactics where such is expedient."<sup>23</sup>

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18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. 182 copies of the report were distributed but only a handful of responses were received. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Tucker, 29 April 1949.

21. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, To Provincial and General Council Secretaries, 1 September 1949.

22. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Tucker, 29 April 1949.

23. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on



On 24 January, soon after the opening of the first long session of the new Parliament, Malan had announced, amid vociferous Opposition protest, that the session would be suspended for thirteen days, from 25 February to 8 March, so that M.P.s would be free to participate in campaigning prior to the Provincial Elections.<sup>24</sup> He had felt himself compelled to adopt this measure, the first time it had ever been done, because the U.P.'s refusal to pair-off meant that Government M.P.s would be unable to leave Parliament while U.P. and L.P. M.P.s would be free to do so.<sup>25</sup>

Smuts on 25 January, accused the Government, in his Motion of No Confidence, of intending to abrogate the existing political rights of the Coloured and African people without an adequate mandate from the electorate and in violation of the entrenched clauses.<sup>26</sup> On the following day Malan

Organisation 1946-1949, Provisional Report of the sub-Committee appointed...to make recommendations concerning the organisation of the United Party throughout the Union, 14 February 1949.

24. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.161.
25. Ibid. A U.P. Senate motion registering disapproval of Malan's action was passed 20 votes to 19 on 22 February. To the U.P.'s submission that the Government had no right to fight the Provincial Elections on national issues, H.N.P. Senator D.W. Schoeman retorted that Smuts himself, after the General Election, had said that "die Verenigde Party nie dood is nie en dat daar op 9 Maart geleentheid sal wees om die uitslag van die Algemene Verkiesing om te swaai." Die Volkstem, 23 February 1949, p.6.
26. J. van der Poel, op. cit., p.279. On 4 January 1949 the Secretary for Native Affairs had told the members of the Natives' Representative Council "that the Government agreed with it that it could serve no useful purpose and accordingly it intended to abolish the Council." Daily News, 4 January 1949, p.1. African riots in Durban on 15 January, directed against that city's Indian population, served to accentuate white fears for their security.

introduced a carefully crafted amendment to Smuts's motion. He proposed the appointment of a Joint Commission of both Houses "to consider the application in detail, particularly in respect of the Native question, of the principle of separation as approved by the electorate."<sup>27</sup> Malan's failure to make mention of any pending legislation on either the Coloured or African franchise and the apparent reasonableness of the offer of a Joint Commission, a cornerstone of Havenga's approach, not only threw the U.P. onto the defensive but also reassured Havenga that the Government was prepared to make concessions to keep him in the coalition. He responded, on the following day, in an equally conciliatory tone:

...all those of us in this House who have always felt and advocated that the decision of fundamental aspects of the colour question should, if possible, take place on a non-party basis, must rejoice in the Government's decision as incorporated in the amendment of the Hon. the Prime Minister.<sup>28</sup>

Smuts, soon afterwards, wrote:

Havenga and his friends are going to vote for Malan's amendment. Of course it has been framed in such a way as to give Havenga an opening to stay in the Government. We shall again move an amendment to Malan's amendment, which will once more make the matter very awkward for Havenga. He is playing an ambiguous role...<sup>29</sup>

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27. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.118. On 22 January Christie had announced his intention to introduce a motion calling upon the Government to institute a National Social Insurance scheme. Rand Daily Mail, 22 January 1949, p.9.
28. House of Assembly Debates, 27 January 1949, Col.168, Quoted in D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.119.
29. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 29 January 1949, p.279.

The counter-motion was moved on 31 January by J.G.N. Strauss.<sup>30</sup> It accepted a Commission of both Houses but with two provisos: That the Commission should confine its activities solely to the "Native Question" and that any alteration of African political rights "shall be subject to a two-thirds majority as provided by the entrenched clauses of the Constitution."<sup>31</sup> On 1 February, neither the Government nor the Opposition having accepted the amendments proposed by the other, the Government's amendment was carried, in a division, by 74 votes to 64.<sup>32</sup>

Once the Government's motion had been accepted all that Smuts could do to deflect criticism that he had refused to co-operate in a non-party approach to African policy, was to go through the motions of attempting to get the Commission, in as far as was possible, appointed on his own terms. Replying to Malan's 5 February invitation to both Christie and himself to join the proposed Commission,<sup>33</sup> Smuts wrote:

Die Kommissie sal nie te doen hê met  
algemene beginsels nie, maar met

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30. When Strauss took Hofmeyr's Assembly seat on 21 January "an uneasy silence fell on the Opposition benches." S.L. Barnard and A.H. Marais: Die Verenigde Party: Die Groot Eksperiment, p.74. M. Kentridge wrote: "A number of us, including Messrs Barlow and P.V. Pocock of Pretoria, while not objecting to the appointment of Strauss as leader in General Smuts's absence, expressed the hope that it would not be a precedent for the future leadership." M. Kentridge, I Recall, p.345.
31. J. van der Poel, op. cit., p.279.
32. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.121. U.P. members had walked out of the House rather than vote for Christie's amendment which had called for a Commission "to examine the Native policy of the various Parliamentary Parties." The Star, 27 January 1949, p.3.
33. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.101, D.F. Malan to J.C. Smuts, 5 February 1949.

besondere details. Dit sal derhalwe nie gaan oor die Konstitusionele kwessie, of met die algemene beginsel van Apartheid, waarop die partye hul respektiewe posisies bly behou soos in die Volksraad uiteengesit...Dit so synde...neem ek namens my Party aan om saam met die ander partye op die kommissie te dien.<sup>34</sup>

Rejecting Smuts's interpretation of the resolution, Malan replied:

Om alle misverstand te voorkom wil ek daaraan herinner dat volgens die besluit van die Raad die voorgestelde kommissie wel te doen sal hê met die 'algemene beginsel van Apartheid'...En aangesien, wat u die 'Konstitusionele Kwessie' noem...spreek dit vanself dat dit uit die aard van die saak nie geag kan word as buitekant die opdrag aan die Kommissie te lê nie, en nog te meer nie nadat 'n poging daartoe deur die Volksraad self afgestem is.<sup>35</sup>

An agreement on participation in the Joint Commission having failed to materialise, both agreed, on 25 February, to the publication of their correspondence.<sup>36</sup>

Under the circumstances, Smuts did well to maintain the U.P. position, vis-a-vis the entrenched clauses, without, at the same time, exposing his Party to Government accusations that it was unwilling to elevate its policy towards Africans "above party politics". In this regard The Forum noted:

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34. Ibid., Vol.282, No.126, J.C. Smuts to D.F. Malan, 20 February 1949. Christie replied that the L.P. was willing to co-operate "provided that the terms of reference are wide enough to deal adequately with and do full justice to the question, and so arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problem", Rand Daily Mail, 26 February 1949, p.7.
35. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.104, D.F. Malan to J.C. Smuts, 25 February 1949.
36. Ibid., Vol.281, No.103, D.F. Malan to J.C. Smuts, 25 February 1949.

...we believe most of this pious talk about putting the Native problem above party politics to be fatuous...Dr Malan and his Cabinet did not make this suggestion for an all-party Commission out of strength but out of weakness. They have not the slightest desire to take the Native problem out of politics - it pays far too handsome dividends for that.<sup>37</sup>

Smuts, for his part, saw the Government's preoccupation with race as a precursor to the economic depression which, he was convinced, was in the offing. A Volkstem report of a speech by Smuts, revealed his line of thought:

Die geraas oor 'Swart Gevaar' is heeltemaal onnodig. Dieselfde taktiek is in 1929 toegepas en dit het 'n finansiele storm oor Suid Afrika laat losbars. Hy is geroep om die land te red van die ramp.<sup>38</sup>

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37. The Forum, 5 February 1949, p.3.

38. Die Volkstem, 14 February 1949, p.6.

CHAPTER 8

THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS, MARCH 1949

Soon after the General Election a leading article in Forward urged "all progressive elements in South Africa to join together in a United Front. Purely party and sectional aims must be set aside."<sup>1</sup> Despite differences of opinion as to the wisdom of electoral alliances, it was resolved, at the first meeting of the L.P. National Executive Council after the election, to approach the U.P. in order to reach an agreement to cover the March 1949 Provincial Council elections.<sup>2</sup> Events surrounding the Johannesburg City Council elections, due on 27 October 1948, served, however, to sour relations between the two parties before negotiations could properly get underway.

The L.P. had dominated the Johannesburg City Council during the war years but, reflecting the decline of the Party at the national level, its representation had shrunk from 18 in 1945, to 6 in 1948.<sup>3</sup> Still, even these few representatives were important for the well-being of the Party as a whole. A leader in Forward observed:

In the wide sweep of political life in the Union, it may not seem a matter of excruciating importance whether or not Labour members are returned to the Johannesburg City Council. But such a judgement would be a hasty one. The Johannesburg Council has, in a very real sense, been the cradle of the South African Labour Party.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Forward, 18 June 1948, p.16.
  2. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 20 May 1948 (Date incorrect on original document).
  3. Forward, 5 November 1948, p.1. Johannesburg City Council elections were, until 1951, held annually. From that year they were held every three years.
  4. Ibid., 22 October 1948, p.5.

Taking the initiative, L.P. delegates met representatives of the Johannesburg U.P. on 5 July 1948 and suggested that an agreement be reached to cover the Council elections on the basis of the status quo of six L.P. seats. The Johannesburg U.P. proved however to be hostile to an agreement and "the suggestion was not even discussed".<sup>5</sup>

A meeting between L.P. representatives and Smuts on 23 July, to discuss a Provincial election agreement, proved to be more amicable but just as unsatisfactory for the L.P. Using the status quo agreement of 1943 as a basis for discussion, the L.P. delegation asked Smuts for twelve seats in the Transvaal, six in Natal and three in the Cape Province.<sup>6</sup> They also raised the question of an agreement to cover the Johannesburg City Council elections.<sup>7</sup>

The key to understanding Smuts's response to the L.P.'s proposals in regard to the Witwatersrand lay in two

5. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of National Executive Committee of S.A.L.P., 23 July 1948.
6. The L.P. held seven Transvaal Provincial Council seats, two in the Cape and two in Natal. At a meeting of the U.P. Central Executive on 26 July it was decided that the Party was not prepared to cede more than four Natal seats to the L.P. and in the Cape Province not more than two. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.152, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 26 July 1948. Agreements to cover the allocation of seats in Natal and the Cape Province were left to the Provincial Executives of the respective parties to negotiate. The U.P. Provincial Executives had though to remain within the parameters laid down by the Central Executive.
7. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, C. Legum to the Editor, Rand Daily Mail, 24 August 1948.

memoranda which the U.P. had prepared in order to clarify the options open to the Party in its negotiations with the L.P. "It is clear", the first memorandum stated, "that, organisationally, Labour is very weak. Numerically its strength is insufficient for it to be able to win a single seat on its own account."<sup>8</sup> The L.P. was strong enough though to split the vote just sufficiently so as to ensure H.N.P. domination of the Transvaal Provincial Council.<sup>9</sup> The memorandum then went on to observe that if, for this reason, there was to be a pact with the L.P., there would be the danger, in several constituencies, of a decline in Party morale. But an even bigger danger, it pointed out, was that, if the L.P. were

to be assigned, say, ten seats, and it is difficult to see how they could be satisfied with less...their demand at a subsequent Parliamentary election will grow, and...they may achieve what is undoubtedly their aim: to hold the balance of power in Parliament.<sup>10</sup>

The second memorandum, while noting that continued electoral arrangements with the L.P., which was "generally regarded as being Communistic", was alienating Afrikaans-speaking supporters, nevertheless supported what it termed a "Commonsense Agreement".<sup>11</sup> The latter was an agreement to cover only those Witwatersrand seats where three-cornered contests might allow H.N.P. victories. In the other seats

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8. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Cg2, Memorandum, United Party - Labour Alignment, n.d.
  9. No arrangement between the U.P. and L.P. on the Witwatersrand: U.P. 27; L.P. 0; H.N.P. 9. Arrangement between U.P. and L.P.: U.P. 21; L.P. 9; H.N.P. 6. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Cg2, Report in regard to Discussion with Labour, n.d.
  10. Ibid., Memorandum, United Party - Labour Alignment, n.d.
  11. Ibid., Report in regard to Discussion with Labour, n.d.



the U.P. and L.P. would engage in "friendly tussles".<sup>12</sup>

Smuts, at the 23 July meeting, thus countered the L.P. proposals with the "Commonsense Agreement" proposal. He refused to be drawn into a discussion on an agreement to cover the Johannesburg Council elections, saying that "they were outside his province."<sup>13</sup> Reflecting the importance of the City Council elections to the L.P., the National Executive Council, on Sachs's initiative, immediately approved a resolution making a Provincial election agreement between the U.P. and L.P. dependent upon an agreement being reached in regard to the Johannesburg Council elections.<sup>14</sup>

The resolution achieved little for a further meeting between the U.P. and L.P. negotiators, on 29 July, saw no movement away from previously established positions.<sup>15</sup> On 4 August, Colin Legum, General Secretary of the L.P., wrote to Oosthuizen outlining his Party's objections to the U.P. proposals:

To fight each other in certain constituencies, and to urge our supporters to vote for the "Agreement" candidate in other constituencies, smacks of political cynicism that cannot be covered even by the widest interpretation of expediency... Nor can we agree to a divorcement of the civic from the Provincial election contests. It would mean that up to the end of October we would be having vigorous contests in Johannesburg, with repercussions all over the country, and from the beginning of November we would

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12. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of National Executive Committee of the S.A.L.P., 23 July 1948.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, A1/Cg2, Colin Legum to O.A. Oosthuizen, 4 August 1948.

be involved in a mutual agreement.

The average voter can't be expected to appreciate this kind of politics.<sup>16</sup>

No satisfactory reply having been received by mid-August, it became apparent to the L.P. Executive that the U.P. was simply prevaricating until the Council elections, in which there was no significant H.N.P. threat, had run their course. The anticipated L.P. eclipse would, the U.P. apparently hoped, oblige a humbled L.P. to accept its terms.<sup>17</sup> The L.P. National Executive had little choice but to call the U.P.'s bluff. On 18 August, it officially suspended negotiations with the U.P. and began the nomination of City Council and Provincial Council candidates<sup>18</sup> irrespective of the possibility of allowing H.N.P. victories on a split vote.<sup>19</sup>

Smuts immediately responded by sending a conciliatory note to A. Heppel, M.P.C., one of the L.P.'s chief negotiators:

...you know how keen I have been to come to some agreement with my Labour friends. The trouble is that their terms are too high for our Party as a whole to agree to...I, myself, favour our recognising their right to contest, with our support, those seats which are without doubt theirs, if they make a similar gesture to us.<sup>20</sup>

Christie, as a result, discreetly reopened negotiations but, as he may have been over-optimistic in his assessment of L.P. prospects in the Council elections, he did not alter L.P. claims. The U.P. Central Executive rejected his

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16. Ibid.

17. Forward, 13 August 1948, p.1.

18. Ibid., 20 August 1948, p.4.

19. Die Volkstem, 19 August 1948, p.1.

20. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.278, No.136, J.C. Smuts to A. Heppel, 19 August 1948.

approach and, awaiting the outcome of the Council elections, made no attempt to follow them up.<sup>21</sup>

In the event, the results of the elections fulfilled U.P. expectations. L.P. representation on the Council fell from six to three.<sup>22</sup> The success of the U.P.'s strategy was not however unqualified. Colin Legum pointed out that the "U.P. did not win a single seat from the Nationalists. Its gains were at the expense of Labour."<sup>23</sup> He then went on to calculate that the L.P. candidates had polled 38 per cent of the total votes cast. On this basis, referring to the Provincial elections, he continued:

There are eighteen seats in which 1 400 votes or so could turn the scale in favour of the Nationalists. Labour can average 1 400 votes in most of these constituencies. And the result will favour neither the U.P. nor Labour.<sup>24</sup>

Neither did the decline in the Party's fortunes necessarily moderate L.P. ambitions. Prior positions tended in fact to harden. The leader of the L.P. in Natal, Senator E.R. Browne, had, in July 1948, said that in

the agreement for the General Election we allowed the United Party to contest certain seats, and then we lost them. We feel that Labour candidates could have won those seats, and we are not going to throw away our chances again.<sup>25</sup>

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21. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.159, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 8 September 1948.
22. Johannesburg City Council Election Results:
- |      | U.P. | H.N.P. | L.P. | Ind. |
|------|------|--------|------|------|
| 1947 | 29   | 5      | 6    | 2    |
| 1948 | 32   | 5      | 3    | 2    |
- Daily News, 28 October 1948, p.1.
23. Forward, 5 November 1948, p.5.
24. Ibid.
25. Daily News, 1 July 1948, p.9.

Having asked the U.P. in Natal for seven seats and having been offered five<sup>26</sup> the Natal L.P. Executive, on 28 October, the day after the Johannesburg City Council elections, abandoned the negotiations and went on to endorse six Provincial Council candidates.<sup>27</sup> It intended to endorse four more soon afterwards.<sup>28</sup> Browne, laying his credibility on the line, was later to assert that, in Natal, "...at least six seats can be won with ease."<sup>29</sup>

The Natal view was also reflected on the Witwatersrand where a hard Socialist core, particularly strong in the L.P.'s Transvaal Provincial Executive, raised the cry, "No Compromise, No Political Trading".<sup>30</sup> The dominant view on the National Executive Council prevailed however, it being argued that "Nationalism was the over-riding danger of the hour; unless Nationalism was destroyed quickly there was no hope for the Labour Movement or the country."<sup>31</sup>

It was for this reason that the National Executive Council, on 28 November, beat a retreat by agreeing to overturn the 23 July resolution making any Provincial pact between the

26. Forward, 1 April 1949, p.4. There is no evidence to indicate why the U.P. in Natal offered five seats instead of the four which had been agreed upon by the Central Executive in July 1948. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.152, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 26 July 1948. The L.P. had won three Natal seats in the 1943 Provincial Elections. Of these it held two just prior to the 1949 Elections.
27. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 1, File 14, J.A. Henry to Dr B. Wilson, 4 November 1948. Umlazi, Umbilo, Berea, Gardens, Durban District and Umkomaas.
28. Ibid. The two Pietermaritzburg seats, Congella and Newcastle.
29. Ibid., Box 7, File 6, A. Hepple to the General Secretary, S.A.L.P., 13 February 1952.
30. Forward, 1 April 1949, p.4.
31. Ibid., 8 April 1949, p.5.

L.P. and U.P. dependent upon prior agreement being reached on the City Council elections.<sup>32</sup> It then immediately re-elected a committee to negotiate with the U.P. "in the interests of protecting democracy and the hard won liberties gained by the Labour movement..."<sup>33</sup>

The 9 December report of that committee made it clear that the L.P. negotiators had come around to accepting the original U.P. terms. The U.P. offered the L.P. immunity in seven Witwatersrand seats.<sup>34</sup> In the case of seats where there was no possibility of an H.N.P. victory on a split vote, the U.P. and L.P. would be free to fight each other. The inclusion, however, in the agreement, of a clause specifically excluding "Communist-dubbed" L.P. candidates standing in the seats covered by the agreement, was seen as a direct infringement of L.P. independence and resulted in its repudiation by the National Executive Council.<sup>35</sup>

But, in undertaking to contest the Provincial Council elections in the Transvaal independently, the National Executive recommended fighting, with only one exception,<sup>36</sup> just those seats which had formed part of the agreement with

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32. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 27, File 4, To the Honorary Provincial Secretary, Transvaal Provincial Executive, from the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 29 November 1948.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., Box 22, File 1, Minutes of Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 9 December 1948. The seven seats were Jeppe, Randfontein, Mayfair, Johannesburg City, Troyville, Germiston and Springs.

35. Ibid., Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the National Executive Council and the Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee of the S.A.L.P., 14 January 1949.

36. Ibid., Minutes of Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 9 December 1948. The Council decided to fight Roodepoort instead of Randfontein. This was a change which the L.P. negotiators had failed to get the U.P. to agree to.

the U.P.<sup>37</sup> This appears to have been a deliberate attempt by pragmatists within the Party, chief among whom was Christie, to sustain the repudiated agreement. On the very day that Christie denied, at a Joint Meeting of the National Executive and the Transvaal Provincial Executive, that secret negotiations between the U.P. and L.P. had been taking place,<sup>38</sup> it was reported, at a meeting of the U.P. Central Action Committee, that "negotiations had been carried on with the purpose of avoiding three-cornered contests with the Labour Party...[and that]...this desirable objective was being attained gradually."<sup>39</sup> Commenting on Christie's denial, Sachs said that he "felt strongly that there had been certain people who had deliberately set out to destroy, politically, members of the Party who were dubbed Communist."<sup>40</sup>

The uncertainty and suspicion within the L.P. in the Transvaal, compounded no doubt by the demoralisation which followed the Johannesburg Council elections, resulted in the Party fielding only three Provincial election candidates, the others having refused to stand.<sup>41</sup>

The U.P. had, in the interim, been making its own preparations for the Provincial elections. Although it had

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37. Ibid.  
 38. Ibid., Box 22, File 1, Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the National Executive Council and the Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee of the S.A.L.P., 14 January 1949.  
 39. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.3, Meeting, U.P. Central Action Committee, 14 January 1949.  
 40. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 22, File 1, Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the National Executive Council and the Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee of the S.A.L.P., 14 January 1949.  
 41. Ibid. The L.P. contested the Jeppe, Johannesburg City and Troyeville Constituencies.

been decided in November 1948, when the U.P. Provincial Executives met in Bloemfontein during the Union Congress, that each Province would draft its own policy according to its own requirements,<sup>42</sup> care was taken to ensure that the "Re-stated Native Policy" was widely distributed.<sup>43</sup> A special Party Letter dealing with current political issues was instituted in an attempt to maintain greater policy coherence by U.P. candidates. The Party also set aside £10 000 for election propaganda.<sup>44</sup>

In view of the number of damaging nomination contests fought prior to the May General Election and because of the poor quality of some of the U.P. candidates in that election, changes were made in the procedures used by the Party to nominate Provincial Council candidates.<sup>45</sup> On 8 September,

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42. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Head Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1948-1963, Vol.I, No.47, Meeting of the U.P. Head Committee, 23 November 1948. In the Transvaal the U.P. retreated from an explicit commitment to bilingual education. It stressed instead that it stood "unequivocally for the training in our schools of bilingual citizens." It reaffirmed its commitment to free hospitalisation, a policy of road development and efficient administration. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1949-1968, No.154, Provincial Council Elections, 1949. Declaration of Policy by the U.P. in the Transvaal.
43. Smuts, during the campaign, stressed the "Re-stated Native Policy", economic issues and what he considered to be "the general retrogression in the country". O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 8 March 1949.
44. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.3, Meeting of U.P. Central Action Committee, 14 January 1949. The Forum later reported that "some of the election pamphlets put out by the Party were obviously written by people with no knowledge of the most elementary principles of psychology and propaganda." The Forum, 19 March 1949, p.16.
45. The first nominations for the elections were made in

for example, the Central Executive Committee granted formal approval to the Witwatersrand, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth General Councils, and also to the Transvaal and Natal Provincial Head Committees, to depart from nomination regulations.<sup>46</sup> Each was required to submit reports on the effectiveness of the system it had adopted.<sup>47</sup>

The nominations on the Witwatersrand presented a unique difficulty however, for twenty-six nominees in twenty constituencies were members of Town Councils, many being members of the Johannesburg City Council.<sup>48</sup> Despite vociferous protests, the Witwatersrand Candidates' Committee decided to approve as candidates only those nominees who were already members of both bodies for, it argued, if

the United Party retains control of the Provincial Council, it will do so only with a very small majority. The situation which has obtained in the past, namely, that many City Councillors could be spared from the Provincial Council from time to time on account of their duties as City Councillors, no longer holds.<sup>49</sup>

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July 1948. In the Green Point Constituency, for example, the Cape Peninsula General Council appointed a Joint Committee, consisting of ten members of the Green Point Divisional Committee and ten members of the General Council, to select a "best man" candidate. The Forum, 24 July 1948, p.10. The U.P. constitution permitted Divisional Committees, if circumstances justified it, to nominate candidates. Ibid.

46. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.159, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 8 September 1948.

47. Ibid.

48. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.275, No.30, Notes regarding Provincial Candidates, 1 November 1948.

49. Ibid.



On nomination day, 2 February, the U.P. nominated 166 candidates for the 171 available seats. The H.N.P. nominated 134 and the L.P. 8. There were 12 Independents. Altogether, 33 U.P. and 9 H.N.P. candidates were returned unopposed.<sup>50</sup> The 33 unopposed seats gave the U.P. what Oosthuizen described as "a flying start of nearly 120 000 votes."<sup>51</sup>

Smuts, at a public meeting in Middelburg shortly before polling day, attempted further to diminish the fifty per cent of A.P. supporters who were expected to vote despite that Party's withdrawal from the contest.<sup>52</sup> "Elke lid van die Afrikanerparty wat vir die Nasionaliste in die Provinsiale verkiesing stem, sal stem vir die uitskakeling van sy eie Party."<sup>53</sup> On the following day, to the electorate at large, he said that a resounding U.P. victory "would prove to the world that the Nationalist Government is but a passing phase."<sup>54</sup> On 8 March, more cautious than he had been in May 1948, Oosthuizen wrote in his diary:

Tomorrow the Provincial Elections will take place. Nobody can say what will happen. There are many uncertain elements. We all do believe that there will be some improvement in the position...The campaign was hard and strenuous. The General carried more than his share. He addressed meetings at Paarl and Hermanus in the Cape. Then at Pretoria, Bronkhorstspuit, Middelburg and Vryheid and Newcastle. His vigour and energy amazed everybody.<sup>55</sup>

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50. Rand Daily Mail, 2 February 1949, p.7.

51. The Forum, 12 March 1949, p.3.

52. Ibid.

53. Die Volkstem, 4 March 1949, p.6.

54. Daily News, 5 March 1949, p.2.

55. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 8 March 1949. In February it was reported that "ex-servicemen in the Party have formed themselves into groups to make themselves available for any service

The election results brought little joy to the U.P. and significantly less to the L.P.<sup>56</sup> Smuts, disconsolate, wrote:

...in spite of exerting our utmost strength we lost seats which I was almost certain we would win...I fear an economic disaster will now hit us which we shall yet feel badly, and it will be largely due to the lost confidence of the outside world on which we are now more dependent than ever before.<sup>57</sup>

The U.P. retained control of the Cape Province and Natal but lost the Transvaal. The H.N.P. strengthened its hold on the Orange Free State.<sup>58</sup> The H.N.P. polled 405 056 votes while

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- required." The Star, 12 February 1949, p.8.
56. Provincial Councils at dissolution:
- |                | <u>Tvl.</u> | <u>O.F.S.</u> | <u>Cape</u> | <u>Natal</u> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
|                | U.P.        | 40            | 4           | 34           |
| 12             |             |               |             |              |
| H.N.P.         | 10          | 18            | 17          | -            |
| L.P.           | 7           | -             | 2           | 2            |
| Dominion Party |             | -             | -           | 1            |
| Independents   | -           | -             | 1           | 1            |
| Vacancies      | <u>7</u>    | <u>3</u>      | <u>-</u>    | <u>10</u>    |
|                | 64          | 25            | 55          | 25           |
- The Star, 1 March 1949, p.5.
- Provincial Councils after March elections:
- |              | <u>Tvl.</u> | <u>O.F.S.</u> | <u>Cape</u> | <u>Natal</u> |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| U.P.         | 27          | 1             | 28          | 22           |
| H.N.P.       | 34          | 24            | 26          | 2            |
| L.P.         | 2           | -             | 1           | -            |
| Independents | <u>2</u>    | <u>-</u>      | <u>-</u>    | <u>1</u>     |
|              | 65          | 25            | 55          | 25           |
- (One Transvaal vacancy: Gezina, an H.N.P. seat), Daily News, 11 March 1949, p.1.
57. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 11 March 1949, p.285.
58. The composition of the new Provincial Council had no immediate effect upon the composition of the Senate. The latter had a life of ten years unless dissolved subsequent to a General Election. The results of the Provincial Elections did however effect the filling of Senate vacancies.

the combined opposition polled 429 512. Making allowance for uncontested seats, the H.N.P. polled a minority of 121 456 votes.<sup>59</sup> It gained its total of 87 seats<sup>60</sup> at an average cost of 5 506 votes while the U.P.'s 78 seats cost an average of 7 236 votes.<sup>61</sup>

In relation to the 1948 General Election, the H.N.P. had to hand North East Rand, Paarl and Bredasdorp back to the U.P. The H.N.P. vote decreased in 29 constituencies, 5 of which were held by A.P. M.P.s, and increased in 19, one of which was held by the A.P. in Parliament.<sup>62</sup> The U.P. vote declined in 4 constituencies and increased in 16. The H.N.P. lost ground, in particular, on the Witwatersrand where they lost North East Rand and had their majorities reduced in five seats.<sup>63</sup> With some justification a leader in the Sunday Times remarked: "...the Nationalists must abandon any thought they had of another quick appeal to the country and fall back on a defensive policy of 'digging in'."<sup>64</sup>

Certainly, the Party's loss of Paarl and Bredasdorp, which was attributed by its organisers to the U.P.'s mass registration of Coloured voters, decisively hardened H.N.P. determination to eliminate the Coloured common roll vote.<sup>65</sup>

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59. See Appendix XIV: Table of Votes Cast and Estimated Votes in the 1949 Provincial Council Elections.

60. Inclusive of the Gezina seat.

61. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, How the Voting Went in the Provincial Council Elections, 1949.

62. This assessment does not include the election results in the Orange Free State and Natal where Provincial constituencies, fixed at 25 each, did not correlate with Parliamentary constituencies.

63. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/2, Press Digest, No.11, p.128.

64. Sunday Times, 13 March 1949, p.16.

65. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.129. The Government, in the interim, relied upon the provisions of the 1948

Although Coloured voters constituted only 8,6 per cent of the total common roll electorate in the Cape Province, there were six constituencies in which they constituted over 20 per cent of the total electorate, thirteen where they constituted between 10 and 20 per cent and fifteen where they constituted between 5 and 10 per cent.<sup>66</sup> Had the Coloured people's voting rights been repealed prior to the General Election, the H.N.P. would have won three Cape seats which it narrowly lost in May 1948 and March 1949, and it would also probably have held Paarl and Bredasdorp, which it won in May 1948 but lost in March 1949. In all probability the Government would also have emerged more firmly entrenched in five of the seats in which its majority was below 1 000 in May 1948.<sup>67</sup>

Furthermore, although the apportionment of Parliamentary seats between the provinces was based on their total white populations, the delimitation of constituencies within the Cape Province was based upon the number of voters on the common roll. Removal of the Coloured common roll vote would therefore have resulted in a substantial alteration in

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Electoral Amendment Act. The Act compelled those Coloured men in the Cape who applied for registration as voters to fill in their application before a magistrate or a police or electoral officer. Many of these officials displayed obvious hostility. This factor, together with the boycott strategy practised by some Coloured political organisations, contributed to the low figure of under 50 000 registered voters out of a total of about 200 000 Coloured men of 21 years and over in the Cape Province. These factors also go some way to explaining the drop in the number of registered Coloured voters from 48 150 in January 1949 to 47 597 in December 1949. Ibid., p.140.

66. Ibid., p.129.

67. Ibid., p.130.

constituency boundaries.<sup>68</sup> The Cape Peninsula, for example, which, in 1949, was represented by one H.N.P. and thirteen U.P. M.P.s, would very likely have lost two seats as a consequence of Coloured disenfranchisement.<sup>69</sup>

Yet it could also have been argued that the loss of Paarl had not been due to the mass registration of Coloured voters by the U.P., but was in fact the result of A.P. and O.B. members either having abstained from voting or having spoiled their ballot papers.<sup>70</sup> Conversely, at Uitenhage, the H.N.P. majority had increased by 415 votes apparently because Dr D.G. Conradie, the A.P. M.P., had advised his followers to vote H.N.P.<sup>71</sup>

Believing their importance to the Government to have been thus demonstrated, some A.P. M.P.s "walked about the lobbies of the House of Assembly...with a jauntier step."<sup>72</sup> Van Rensburg and Havenga, however, took a far more sombre view of the results. They realised that their strategy of withholding support in an effort to wield influence more credibly as the holders of the balance of power had crumbled in the face of the Government's ability, albeit with reduced majorities, to survive without them. Soon after the election, van Rensburg, in a letter to Havenga, wrote:

Uit die verkiesingsuitslae sover is dit duidelik dat Malan baie sterker uitkom as wat hy ingegaan het. Wat gedoen kan word om dit te verhoed, het ek - meen ek met oortuiging te kan sê - gedoen. Maar die sentimentsuitbuiting en die masjien het alles in die pad gestoomroller...Wat

68. Ibid., p.131.

69. Ibid.

70. O.B. supporters spoilt sixty ballot papers in the Paarl constituency. The U.P. majority was 34. Ibid., p.135.

71. The Forum, 19 March 1949, p.9.

72. Ibid.

u gaan doen, weet ek nie, maar ek wil graag u verseker van my respektes en dat ek u - tensypte van die debacle wat ons oorval het - sal ondersteun, as u die stryd wil voortsit.<sup>73</sup>

With an eye to the now seemingly inevitable rapprochement between the A.P. and H.N.P., van Rensburg continued:

Die O.B. wil ek, met goedkeuring van ons Groot Raad wat ek wel eersdaags byeen wil roep, met man en muis eervol ontslaan en van hul eed onthef...So nee, verstaan ek die saak ook.<sup>74</sup>

That Havenga was moving in the direction outlined by van Rensburg was indicated in a June announcement, by the A.P. of S.W.A., that he had granted it permission to unite with the H.N.P. in that territory.<sup>75</sup> The announcement concluded: "...ons spreek die hoop uit...dat hierdie voorbeeld die begeerte by ons mede-Afrikanerburgers in die Unie sal aanwakker om 'n soortgelyke stap te doen."<sup>76</sup>

Despite renewed Natal Mercury appeals for a fresh U.P.

73. N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, H. van Rensburg to N.C. Havenga, 10 March 1949.
74. Ibid. After having presented the proposition to the O.B., van Rensburg reported on 29 May 1949, that it was "eenpariglik en beslis teen enige ontbinding gekant tensy die Ossewa Brandweg se eer eers verseker is...Die Uitvoerende Raad meen dat enige verdere toegewings sonder weersydigheid van die H.N.P. op hierdie stadium heeltemaal verkeerd vertolk kan word en tot geen goeie gevolg kan lei nie." Ibid., Vol.27, H. van Rensburg to N.C. Havenga, 29 May 1949.
75. Ibid., Vol.27, Verklaring uitgereik deur die Dagbestuur van die Afrikanerparty van Suidwes Afrika, 18 June 1949.
76. Ibid. An H.N.P. delegation met Havenga on 13 March to discuss the question of the Coloured vote and Party unification. In regard to the former, Havenga stressed that if the Coloureds were to be placed on a separate roll, then they would have to be given as many representatives in Parliament as whites were entitled to with the same number of voters. D. Scher, op. cit., p.138.

approach to Havenga,<sup>77</sup> "authoritative United Party commentators" not only, with some justification, argued that Havenga would not expose himself to an accusation of having betrayed his coalition partner, but that, even were he to do so, he was likely "to bring in still fewer votes to the United Party than he had done to the Nationalist cause..."<sup>78</sup> The U.P., The Forum reported, had, for its part, "deduced from the Provincial elections that with hard campaigning and principled policies it should be able to return to the government on its own resources."<sup>79</sup>

The qualified confidence exuded in this deduction did little to conceal the extent to which the Provincial election results had exposed the fallacy of the central U.P. myth of May 1948: that the H.N.P.-A.P. victory had merely been an aberration of the electorate, or, as Smuts had said "absentmindedness".<sup>80</sup> The significance of this aspect of the election's outcome did not escape Malan:

I regard the results of the election as highly satisfactory. We can assume that of the 171 seats, 88 went to the Herenigde Nasionale Party standing alone, and only 83 to the Opposition, including all their allies and appendages.

We can, therefore, rightly assume that the United Party has suffered a fresh defeat and that the verdict of the people nine months ago has been confirmed.<sup>81</sup>

One consequence was renewed U.P. introspection.

77. The Forum, 19 March 1949, p.7.

78. Ibid., p.9.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., p.15.

81. The Star, 12 March 1949, p.1. Malan's figures include independents.

An immediate area of focus was the Orange Free State, where poor U.P. organisation and Colin Steyn's failure to play any significant part in the elections in his own province, resulted in his being "written off politically".<sup>82</sup> His lethargy was all the more damaging for the U.P. in the province had been allowed to become what was virtually Steyn's personal fiefdom.<sup>83</sup>

Apart from the damage to his Party's interests, Steyn's inactivity was also inexcusable when measured against the personal sacrifices which Afrikaans-speaking U.P. supporters in the Orange Free State, and for that matter elsewhere in the country, had to endure. In this regard an article in The Forum observed:

The Friend called these Afrikaans-speaking United Party adherents the 'political heroes of South Africa' the other day, and that is the literal truth. Nobody who has not had some experience of life on the platteland...can have any idea of what it means for some Afrikaans-speaking South Africans to belong to the United Party.<sup>84</sup>

But blame for the U.P.'s decay in the Orange Free State was not Steyn's alone. Not one U.P. M.P. had come to the

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82. The Forum, 19 March 1949, p.7. Steyn had had treatment for an alcohol related problem. Interview.
83. The Forum, February 1953, p.8. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.156, A. Nader to J.C. Smuts, 28 March 1949. U.P. Papers, Loose Letter, H.A. Schreuder to J.C. Smuts and C. Steyn, 26 February 1950.
84. The Forum, February 1953, p.8. The U.P. calculated that it had won the support of approximately 40 per cent of the Afrikaans-speaking rural vote in the Provincial Elections. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.20, How the Voting went in the Provincial Council Elections, 1949.



assistance of that Province's U.P. Provincial candidates.<sup>85</sup>  
 Smuts himself later acknowledged this neglect:

Die liewe ou Vrystaat trek te veel in een rigting. Miskien het ons ook 'n mate van skuld daarin. Daarom hou ek 'n aantal vergaderings vanjaar in die Provinsie om te toon dat ons werklik vurig belangstel in hul sake...<sup>86</sup>

An improvement in organisation was, however, only part of what was required if U.P. fortunes were to revive in the rural areas. A letter to Smuts from a U.P. branch chairman in the Marico constituency illustrates this point:

Ons organisasie was goed, seker nog die beste wat ooit hier gesien was, maar uit die aard van die saak was ons organiseerders nog onervare...Ook is in die platteland elke Nasionale ondersteuner 'n organiseerder wie nooit rus nie en is ons mense nog nie bereid om dieselfde te doen nie...

Onder die boere, wat nie sterk Verenigde Party was nie, het ons propaganda dat die finansiële toekoms onder die Nasionale regering donker sal word, min effek gehad, want hulle het dit nog nie gevoel nie.<sup>87</sup>

Smuts, in his reply, sailed dangerously close to justifying A.G. Barlow's cynical observation that, after the Provincial elections, he "preached the counsel of defeat, saying that really it was a good thing we did not win as we should have had 'to nurse the baby' in the terrible economic storm which was coming."<sup>88</sup> Smuts wrote:

Ek stem ten volle met u saam wat betref

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85. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.156, A. Nader to J.C. Smuts, 28 November 1949.  
 86. Ibid., Vol.282, No.63, J.C. Smuts to G. Steyn, 24 August 1949.  
 87. Ibid., Vol.281, No.8, G.E.J. Henny to J.C. Smuts, 16 March 1949.  
 88. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.324.

die oorsake van ons nederlaag. Dit geld ook van baie ander kiesafdelings. Die swaar word nog nie daarbuite gevoel nie. Maar dit kom, en sal sy gevolge hê.<sup>89</sup>

On the day after Smuts wrote this reply, the U.P. Central Action Committee met in order to analyse the Party's performance. Its assessment was less than effusive: "It was generally agreed that both the organisation and the propaganda of the Party during the election had been satisfactory from the point of view of overall considerations."<sup>90</sup> The prime shortcomings noted were of long standing: deficiencies in the registration of voters and in their deletion from the roll, and the fact that "although the existing pro-United Party Afrikaans press was doing its utmost, it was not enough to inculcate the United Party outlook into the minds of potential United Party supporters and voters."<sup>91</sup>

The response of the Action Committee was to appoint two sub-committees, both under the chairmanship of Senator H. Tucker. The first was instructed to study the possibility of setting aside a period each year which could be devoted to intense U.P. political activity.<sup>92</sup> The brief of the second was "to investigate the broadening of the sphere of influence of the United Party Afrikaans press."<sup>93</sup> As an interim measure, and as a precaution against a possible General Election precipitated as a consequence of

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89. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.154, J.C. Smuts to G.E.J. Henny, 22 March 1949.

90. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes, 1949-1950, No.26, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 23 March 1949.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid. Members of the Committee were H. Tucker, Sir de Villiers Graaff, H. Oppenheimer and Marais Steyn.

the anticipated depression, it was decided "that early nominations of Parliamentary candidates in marginal seats held by the Nationalists would be a powerful factor in stimulating the United Party organisation."<sup>94</sup>

At a subsequent meeting, held two weeks later, the Action Committee, in an effort to stimulate fundraising and to increase the Party's membership, unanimously resolved that, immediately Parliament rose, the U.P. would hold a series of meetings throughout the country. Each would be part of a membership and fundraising drive "and arrangements will be made for the drive in each area to culminate with the larger and more important meetings and rallies. These will in turn lead up to a monster rally."<sup>95</sup>

The L.P. had also to weigh its options. In doing so, those who had favoured an electoral understanding with the U.P. found their hand considerably strengthened. D.H. Epstein, M.P.C., wrote that those who had favoured such an agreement had "been justified in our policy by the election itself."<sup>96</sup> One consequence was the shelving of a resolution, at the L.P.'s 38th Annual Conference in early April 1949, aimed at barring any future election pacts with other parties.<sup>97</sup>

94. Ibid. A later U.P. memorandum noted that there were 36 marginal parliamentary constituencies in the Union. The majorities in these constituencies ranged from 890 (H.N.P.-Swellendam) to 4 (U.P.-Brakpan). 11 of these were held by the U.P. and 25 by the H.N.P.-A.P. (Cape 11; Natal 2; Orange Free State 1; Witwatersrand 12; Transvaal rural 8; Pretoria 2). The memorandum suggested the employment of 18 organisers to cover these seats. Their principal job, it recommended, would be to maintain up to date voters rolls. Ibid., No.23, Memorandum: Immediate Organisation of Marginal Seats, n.d.
95. Ibid., Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 5 April 1949.
96. Forward, 1 April 1949, p.4.
97. Ibid., 8 April 1949, p.5.

Instead, in view no doubt of Christie's clandestine negotiations with the U.P. prior to the elections, a compromise resolution was adopted which stipulated that "no arrangement should be made by the Labour Party with any other political party unless sanctioned by a special conference of the Labour Party called for that purpose."<sup>98</sup> That the pragmatists remained in control was evident both in the adoption of this resolution and in the unanimous re-election of Christie as Chairman of the Party.<sup>99</sup>

But the combined setbacks at the Johannesburg City Council elections and at the Provincial elections had dealt Party morale a severe blow. In May 1949 the National Executive Council reported that it was "seriously concerned over the reported apathy of the Johannesburg branches towards the forthcoming municipal elections."<sup>100</sup> As at the end of the Third Quarter 1949, of 21 L.P. branches and 3 affiliated Trade Unions countrywide, only one Union and seven branches were in financial standing with the Party.<sup>101</sup>

One of the reasons for the Natal L.P.'s humiliation in the Provincial elections was its susceptibility to division from within and attack from without because of its official support for an Indian communal roll franchise.<sup>102</sup> With little to unite them, the Party's demoralized supporters in

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98. Ibid.

99. Ibid.

100. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 11, File 10, Office Manager, S.A.L.P., to the Honorary Secretary, Johannesburg District Committee, S.A.L.P., 20 May 1949.

101. Ibid., Box 6, File 2, Financial Standing of Branches of the S.A. Labour Party as at the end of the Third Quarter, 1949. See Appendix XV: Financial Standing of the Branches and Affiliated Trade Unions of the S.A. Labour Party as at the End of the Third Quarter 1949.

102. The Forum, 27 August 1949, p.15.

that Province were reduced to waiting, as Smuts was, for an economic collapse, hoping, as a result, to emerge phoenix-like from the political ruins.<sup>103</sup> Such a fragile hope proved impossible to sustain. In August, "as a result of various reports received about the lack of activity of the Party in Natal", the General Secretary himself went there "in order to discuss ways and means of reviving the branches and committees..."<sup>104</sup>

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103. Ibid.

104. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 1, File 14, General Secretary to A.T. Wanless, 9 August 1949.

CHAPTER 9THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION; THE VEREENIGING,  
MAYFAIR AND BENONI BY-ELECTIONS,  
MARCH 1949 - MARCH 1950

Despite its narrow majority, the Government's position, during the resumed Parliamentary sitting in March 1949, was reasonably secure. As opposed to the one H.N.P. vacant seat of Mayfair, the U.P. had vacant seats in Port Elizabeth North, Kensington and Vereeniging. Moreover Dr T. Osborn, L.P. M.P. for Benoni, and H. Abrahamson, U.P. M.P. for Drakensberg, were so ill that they could not attend the session.<sup>1</sup>

Malan was himself away for three weeks while attending the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, the central issue at which was whether India, as a Republic, would be permitted to remain a Commonwealth member. Malan, reporting to Parliament on 11 May on the Conference's decision to allow India to remain a member, raised republican ire by moderating his stand on the Commonwealth issue even further than he had done in the months prior to the General Election. He said:

Ek het die vrymoedigheid om te sê...dat alle seksies hier in Suid Afrika dit met betrekking tot één saak eens is en dit is dat as dit vir ons moontlik gemaak word deurdat daar geen perke gelê word op ons vryheid nie; ons selfbeskikingsreg nie aangetas word nie; ons dan in die Statebond wil bly.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Die Volkstem, 30 March 1949, p.1.
  2. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.163. On the following day Strijdom delivered a speech in the House in which he obliquely repudiated Malan's position on Commonwealth membership. Although the disagreement between the two on this point was discreetly resolved, it further

Both the Commonwealth Conference decision and Malan's subsequent moderation weakened, as Smuts so clearly recognised, the U.P.'s de facto opposition to republicanism.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Churchill, he wrote:

Since Malan's return, the Nationalists are jubilant, and their next move may now well be a republic within the Commonwealth as a stepping-stone to full secession in due course. You will appreciate how much more difficult it has become to fight this sort of republic after the London decision. I have done my best to make it appear an exceptional accommodation for India, but they maintain stoutly that it is a complete change of general future application.<sup>4</sup>

Smuts had also done his best, on 19 May, to oppose the provisions of Dönges's Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Bill. It was a measure which he had refused, while Prime Minister, to implement. He had nevertheless, in presenting the U.P. attitude toward the Bill, stated as a basic premise that "as daar een ding is waaroor alle Suid-Afrikaaners dit eens is, is dat rassebloedvermenging 'n ewel is."<sup>5</sup> On this basis he

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contributed to the decline in their relationship and to the strengthening of the personal bond between Malan and Havenga. *Ibid.*, p.166. At a 24 May H.N.P. caucus meeting Malan undertook, in view of Havenga's opposition and a possible U.P. appeal to the Privy Council, not to proceed with legislation with respect to the Coloured vote. D. Scher, *op. cit.*, p.138.

3. The U.P. constitution permitted the espousal of republicanism by its members. Programme of Principles and Constitution of the United Party, April 1951, p.2, Clause 2(d).
4. J. van der Poel, *op. cit.*, J.C. Smuts to W.S. Churchill, 21 May 1949, p.296.
5. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages 1924-1969, Gemengde Huwelike, n.d. The 1950 exclusion by Britain, subsequent to his marriage to a white woman, of Seretse Khama from Bechuanaland, may have been due to a private warning

argued that the U.P. would not have opposed the legislation were it to have applied solely to intended marriages between whites and Africans or Indians. Not only could members of these communities be easily defined but, he said, the number of marriages between them was minuscule.<sup>6</sup> However, insofar as marriages between whites and Coloureds were concerned, he fell back on the central recommendation of the Report of the 1938 Commission on Mixed Marriages:

It does not appear that the problem of miscegenation can be solved by legislation directly prohibiting marriages between Coloured and European, but that miscegenation should be combated rather through the influence of public opinion...[and]...by an avoidance of circumstances likely to lead to miscegenation.<sup>7</sup>

The U.P. and L.P. argument that "the only way to maintain white civilisation was to foster European immigration"<sup>8</sup> rather than to pass legislation which would not only prove unworkable,<sup>9</sup> but would cast a slur on Indian, African and Coloured people, made little impression upon a Government "not concerned so much with race purity in the biological

from Smuts. Fearing a demand for incorporation or even a blockade of the territory should Seretse Khama and his wife return, Smuts informed the British Government that the U.P. "would be unable to oppose such a move because of the emotions aroused, for white South Africans were hardly sane on the subject of miscegenation." J. Barber, *op. cit.*, p.113.

6. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, *Immorality and Mixed Marriages 1924-1969, Mixed Marriages*, n.d. Between 1924 and 1932 there were a total of 1021 "mixed" marriages and between 1933 and 1937, 246. Between 1943 and 1946 there were 299 such marriages in the Cape Province and 61 in Natal. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Rand Daily Mail*, 25 May 1949, p.9.
9. The measure was introduced before either the *Immorality Amendment Bill* or the *Population Registration Bills* had been put before Parliament. E.H. Brookes, *op. cit.*, p.180.



sense as with strengthening the barriers against increasing infiltration by the Coloured."<sup>10</sup> The debates on the measure failed to arouse much interest outside parliament and the underlying dilemma of the opposition on the issue accounts for the fact that no divisions were called in either the Committee or Report stages.<sup>11</sup>

Far more vociferous was U.P. and L.P. opposition to the shock introduction by Dönges, right towards the end of the session, of the South African Citizenship Bill. With the help of the guillotine and all-night sittings, he proceeded to force the measure through a "tired parliament with indecent haste."<sup>12</sup>

At face value, the Bill, which provided that British subjects, instead of being able to become Union nationals after two years residence, would have to reside for five, and which deprived Union nationals of Commonwealth status, was neither out of character nor intention with similar legislation which had been passed in other Commonwealth countries.<sup>13</sup> But the real motive behind the Bill's introduction by a Government struggling to secure a safe majority could not be obscured. A leading article in the Natal Mercury observed:

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10. Ibid.  
 11. Ibid., p.181.  
 12. Cape Argus, 11 June 1949. Given only twenty-four hours to prepare their case both the U.P. and L.P. decided to "apply sanctions" by refusing to pair. Rand Daily Mail, 11 June 1949, p.1.  
 13. Dönges said that South Africa was "sixth in the Commonwealth nationality stakes and we must not tarry." A leader in the Cape Times commented: "We are passing legislation which eliminates any reference to 'British Subject' or to a Common Status and in doing so we are far ahead of the Commonwealth." Cape Times, 11 June 1949.

Since the war thousands of British subjects have entered the Union as immigrants...Had this Bill been delayed until next year many of these new arrivals would in the interim have been entitled to full citizenship privileges.<sup>14</sup>

Another not unrelated motive was the prospect of an election in South-West Africa where many Germans, denaturalized during the war, were proving reluctant to accept South African citizenship because this also involved accepting Commonwealth Common Status.<sup>15</sup>

Apart from the Bill's transparent purpose, non-Nationalist ire was also raised by the arbitrary power which the Bill proposed to place in the hands of the Minister of the Interior. He was, in terms of the Bill, to be given authority not only to grant or refuse Certificates of Registration and Letters of Naturalisation but also to deprive citizens of these rights. A leader in the Cape Times remarked that it was "a measure of the Nationalist determination to stick at nothing if the voters' roll is

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14. Natal Mercury, 13 June 1949.  
White Immigration to South Africa: 1946-50

	<u>Total White Immigration</u>	<u>Immigrants from the United Kingdom</u>
1946	11 256	7 470
1947	28 839	20 603
1948	35 631	25 513
1949	14 780	9 655
1950	12 803	5 097

- J. Barber, op. cit., p.51. "Even if the U.P. had remained in power, it would have been forced to put a temporary brake on immigration because the very success of the policy had produced serious housing and employment problems." Ibid., p.50. In August 1948 the Union Castle Company, after consultations with Dönges, agreed to release the South African Government from any remaining financial obligation in regard to immigration and permanently suspended immigration ships. Daily News, 18 August 1948, p.1.
15. Cape Argus, 16 June 1949, p.1.

involved."<sup>16</sup>

The U.P.'s response was to propose instead the retention of Commonwealth Common Status, a two-year residential qualifying period for Commonwealth settlers and the curtailment of the arbitrary powers the Bill proposed to invest in the Minister. Once again placed in an unenviable position the Party failed in its attempts to have the Bill referred to a Select Committee.<sup>17</sup> Oosthuizen, in his diary, wrote that the Bill

was not objected to in principle but some of its clauses are so repressive and reactionary that the Opposition in Parliament, under the able guidance of Strauss,<sup>18</sup> has decided to fight it tooth and nail. The Second Reading was adopted...after a marathon struggle that lasted thirty-three hours fifty-five minutes for one sitting,<sup>19</sup> 77 to 68 votes.<sup>19</sup> Protest meetings,<sup>20</sup> telegrams, letters have been the order of the day.<sup>21</sup>

The guillotine fell on the Committee Stage of the Bill on 21 June after only ten clauses had been discussed. The

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16. Cape Times, 11 June 1949.
  17. Daily News, 18 June 1949, p.1.
  18. Smuts had gone to Cambridge, "in spite of my awkward situation here", to fulfill his role as Chancellor on Degree Day. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.205, J.C. Smuts to the Master, Christ's College, Cambridge, 16 May 1949.
  19. Until then, the longest sitting in the Union Parliament's history. G.M. Carter noted: "The most overworked persons in the House are the Afrikaans-speaking members of the United Party, who comprise about one-third of its representatives. In the Citizenship Bill debate, for example, they carried the burden of the discussion..." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.50.
  20. Mass protest meetings were held in Johannesburg and Durban. Daily News, 14 June 1949, p.1.
  21. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 19 June 1949.

remaining thirty-three clauses were passed without discussion, and twenty-two of the Opposition's amendments were not put before the House.<sup>22</sup> The Opposition moved fifteen amendments in the Senate but none were accepted. Only nine of the Bill's forty-three clauses were discussed in the Senate before the guillotine fell.<sup>23</sup>

At the same time as it was enmeshed in this dispiriting Parliamentary struggle, the U.P. also had to endure defeat at the hands of the H.N.P. in the 18 May Vereeniging by-election. The defeat was particularly traumatic because it was the first by-election since the May General Election which was not won by a candidate of the Party which had been successful in that election.

The by-election had its ostensible origin in the fact that the October 1948 "Re-statement of the U.P. Native Policy" was contrary to both the letter and spirit of Section 6(b) of the Party's Programme of Principles. This section left the question of African political representation to "the free exercise of the discretion of the individual members

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22. Rand Daily Mail, 22 June 1949, p.17. The Bill was adopted after the Committee stage 77 votes to 63. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.56. On the same day, Dr H.F. Verwoerd, Chief H.N.P. whip in the Senate, gave notice of a motion to apply an omnibus guillotine in the Upper House. No guillotine had ever previously been applied in this House. The motion proposed that the guillotine be applied at the discretion of the Minister in charge of the Bill should he declare the measure to be of an urgent nature. Daily News, 21 June 1949, p.1.
23. Rand Daily Mail, 28 June 1949, p.7. The Senate adopted the measure on 27 June by 16 votes to 15. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.56. The subsequent Act had the effect of preventing 48 659 British immigrants from securing S.A. citizenship, had they so wished, prior to the 1953 General Election. Rand Daily Mail, 20 September 1952, p.5.

representing the Party in Parliament."<sup>24</sup>

In a speech delivered in his Vereeniging constituency on 8 January 1949, the U.P. M.P., K. Rood, had struck a "discordant note" when he suggested the removal of African parliamentary representation, attacked the "English Press" for its "ignorance of Apartheid" and complained that there "were too many liberals in the United Party".<sup>25</sup> Without first sending for an explanation, Smuts hit back at Rood during a meeting of the U.P. Transvaal Head Committee on 11 January 1949. He stated that Rood had taken part in the deliberations which led to the drafting of the new policy. Rood subsequently denied this. Smuts concluded his speech by saying that Rood's "was a lone voice crying in the wilderness...and that one should perhaps not take too much notice of it."<sup>26</sup> Rood later replied that what he had said at Vereeniging was what he had "stated in several speeches both before and particularly during the last election" and that, if he had not done so, he might have "suffered the same fate as other United Party candidates in the Platteland."<sup>27</sup>

After initially having agreed, Rood, who was in ill-health and shocked by the attack launched against him by Smuts and the English-language press, decided to ignore a plea by Barlow to face the U.P. Parliamentary caucus which, Barlow felt, "would probably support him."<sup>28</sup> Instead, he decided to leave politics entirely and, on 5 February, resigned his seat in Parliament. Barlow wrote: "The Nationalists made a

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24. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, K. Rood to U.P. Senators and M.P.s, 25 January 1949.  
 25. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.322.  
 26. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, K. Rood to U.P. Senators and M.P.s, 25 January 1949.  
 27. Ibid.  
 28. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.323.

song and dance about this resignation and pretended that Rood had been 'kicked out' of the United Party caucus by the liberals."<sup>29</sup>

Although hardly justified, this claim gathered substance when, on 23 March, Senator J.M. van H. Brink resigned from the Senate<sup>30</sup> after having been expelled from the U.P. caucus on the previous day because he had indicated a willingness to support the repeal of African and Coloured voting rights without the requisite two-thirds majority.<sup>31</sup> Not only did Brink's resignation, once his H.N.P. successor had been elected, give the Government a majority in the Senate, it also made a significant contribution to the "Platteland's" perception of the U.P. as a "liberal" Party. S.L. Barnard wrote: "Brink se bedanking het ernstige reperkussies vir die V.P. gehad. Hy was, as voormalige V.P. leier in die Provinsiale Raad, invloedryk, en bowendien 'n persoonlike vriend van Smuts."<sup>32</sup> Barlow blamed Smuts, asserting that he had "committed a grievous error in allowing our hotheads to expel Senator Brink over the Apartheid question."<sup>33</sup>

The U.P. paid the price at Vereeniging for its earlier neglect of Party organisation, for the constituency was a political fiefdom, albeit on a smaller scale, of the type which Steyn controlled in the Orange Free State. Oosthuizen, a month before polling day, reported to Smuts on the problems to which this situation had given rise:

...the difficulty that we have to face there at the moment is that Kalie Rood had a well paid, but doubtful, election staff and these workers have come to us

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29. Ibid.

30. Cape Argus, 23 March 1949, p.1.

31. Daily News, 22 March 1949, p.1.

32. S.L. Barnard and A.H. Marais, op. cit., p.72.

33. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.405.

and demanded the same rights and wages they enjoyed while in the employ of Rood...we have indicated that we were not prepared to pay the fantastic salaries paid by Rood. His women workers used to get £40 per month. The result of this decision is much dissatisfaction in the Rood camp and they have started a campaign against our officials 'that the Head Office from Johannesburg has come in to fight the election, let them carry on.' The result has been that our voluntary effort has dwindled and is practically negligible.<sup>34</sup>

Oosthuizen also reported another difficulty which the U.P. faced in the constituency:

Our first public meeting was a shambles. Loock concentrated the hooligans of the town in the hall and prevented our speakers from being heard. We are taking adequate steps and have decided to reduce the number of large public meetings and concentrate on small house meetings.<sup>35</sup>

With a Parliamentary by-election due in the Port Elizabeth North constituency on the same day as that in Vereeniging, Smuts, a few days before polling day, wrote: "We shall win in Port Elizabeth but Vereeniging is less certain after all the mischief Kalie Rood has done. There is still apathy in the Party while the opposing Party are going at it hammer and tongs."<sup>36</sup>

The result in Port Elizabeth North saw a sharp decline in the U.P.'s majority,<sup>37</sup> while, in Vereeniging, the Party

34. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.168, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.C. Smuts, 22 April 1949. Rood was a wealthy industrialist.
35. Ibid. Dr J.H. Loock was the H.N.P. candidate. He had crossed over from the U.P. soon after the war.
36. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 13 May 1949, p.295.
37. U.P. 5559; H.N.P. 4147. U.P. majority 1412.

lost, in a record poll, by a margin of sixteen votes.<sup>38</sup> The results, particularly the loss of Vereeniging, came as a severe shock to the U.P. Attention once again came to be focussed on the Party's organisational ability for, in what appeared to epitomize U.P. inefficiency, Vereeniging could have been held had the names of 320 U.P. supporters not been submitted too late, by a Party organiser, for registration.<sup>39</sup> The Cape Argus reported that a "spokesman for the United Party said...that this omission was unforgivable...A voluntary worker described the organisation as the 'usual United Party muddle'."<sup>40</sup>

The damage to the U.P.'s already shaky prestige was severe. At a 24 May meeting the Party's parliamentary caucus demanded, and received Smuts's acquiescence, that the Action Committee convene a commission, as had been done after the 1946 Hottentots-Holland defeat, to enquire into the causes of the defeat.<sup>41</sup>

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Percentage Poll = 80. The U.P. majority against an Independent in May 1948 had been 1832 on a 79,8 per cent poll. The U.P. majority in the Provincial Election had been 2048.

38. H.N.P. 5821; U.P. 5805. H.N.P. majority 16. Percentage Poll = 87,8. The U.P. majority against the H.N.P. in May 1948 had been 1229 on a 84,3 per cent poll. The U.P. majority in the Provincial Elections had been 671. On the day of its Vereeniging victory the H.N.P. suffered its first defeat in a division in the Assembly when a number of its members, who were not in the Chamber, failed to hear the Division Bells. The Forum, 28 May 1949, p.7.
39. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.53, The Report of the Commission of Enquiry Appointed by the Union Action Committee to Investigate the Parliamentary By-election held in Vereeniging on 18 May 1949, 18 June 1949.
40. Cape Argus, 19 May 1949, p.3.
41. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.48, Meeting of the



Reporting on 18 June, the commission's central finding was, as had been expected, that the U.P. had practically no established organisation in the constituency. The report stated that

one individual had for years been permitted to acquire sole direction to such an extent that the General Council for the area must have been out of complete contact with the constituency. Politically Vereeniging was virtually isolated from the rest of the Party in the Union.<sup>42</sup>

The commission found that one of the consequences of the collapse of Rood's political machine was a lack of organisational follow-through by the Party in the period immediately after the Provincial elections. This resulted in the loss of two weeks in which essential registration work should have been done.<sup>43</sup> It was found, moreover, that the U.P. had to confront the consequences of having become a Party dependent for the bulk of its support on the English-speaking urban middle-class. "The worker in industry", the report noted, "has no branch contact on his own level with the Party. The Party used canvassers of a different social class to approach the workers in industry with no effective result."<sup>44</sup>

Together with critical comment on the suitability of the

Central Action Committee, 25 May 1949.

42. Ibid., No.53, The Report of the Commission of Enquiry Appointed by the Union Action Committee to Investigate the Parliamentary By-election held in Vereeniging on 18 May 1949, 18 June 1949.
43. Ibid. In this regard the report noted: "Of almost 2000 more voters at the by-election the U.P. only obtained 317 and the Nationalists the balance..."
- Ibid.
44. Ibid.

U.P. election candidate, which again raised the question of the effectiveness of U.P. nomination procedures, another observation made was that the English language newspapers

het min publisiteit aan die tussenverkieping gegee in teenstelling met wat die H.N.P. koerante verskyn het nl., 'n daaglikse herinnering daaraan met spesiale nadruk op die belangrikheid daarvan.<sup>45</sup>

Smuts, soon after the defeat, had written:

Our people are angry and discouraged and among the Nats there is high jubilation. There will again be bitter criticism of the Party and Ockie and me. I do not know why we are so unlucky and so cruelly punished.<sup>46</sup>

Criticism of Smuts was certainly justified. Not only had he, as head of the Party, tacitly allowed the constituency to become a "personal" seat, but he had also failed to visit the constituency. A U.P. Vereeniging branch member reported:

In the last eleven years we have tried repeatedly to get General Smuts here. Many of our supporters have never seen the General.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, had he dealt with Rood more diplomatically after the latter's provocative January speech, the by-election itself might have been avoided. Acknowledgement of Smuts's error in this regard was implicit in a letter which Rood wrote to him that December:

'n Tyd gelede het Dr Louis Steenkamp met...my volledig my bedanking as

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45. L.S. Steenkamp Papers, 16:14 Elections 1943-1974, Unsigned letter to J.D. Opperman, 10 June 1949.
46. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 22 May 1949, p.301. "Ockie" - O.A. Oosthuizen.
47. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.16, Statement by Mr A.H. Douglas, Vereeniging, n.d.

Parlements lid bespreek. Hy het tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat daar aan my 'n mate van onreg aangedoen was en dat daar bepaald 'n misverstand moet bestaan. Daarna, verstaan ek, het hy die hele saak met u volledig bespreek en as gevolg daarvan het u hom versoek om my die boodskap te gee om u te kom sien om enige misverstand wat daar mag bestaan te verwyder.<sup>48</sup>

Certainly, Smuts's expectation that economic decline would result in defections from the Government were dealt a severe blow by the by-elections. The introduction, by Dönges, a week prior to the by-elections, of stringent import controls, had no apparent effect upon the polls. What did have a profound effect was the struggle then being waged in Parliament. An article in The Forum observed that the "surprisingly clearcut opposition which the Party was then offering to the Mixed Marriages Bill was being misunderstood and castigated in many parts of the country."<sup>49</sup>

In a July letter to Harold Macmillan Smuts wrote: "Here in South Africa things have gone wrong far more than I had believed possible. But here, also, the fight is on, and will continue until once more the cycle changes, and the people see the light again."<sup>50</sup>

In order to avoid a repetition of the mistakes made at Vereeniging, the U.P. Cape Action Committee resurrected a plan which had first been proposed during the war. On

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48. Ibid., Vol.282, No.18, K. Rood to J.C. Smuts, 7 December 1949.

49. The Forum, 28 May 1949, p.7. In 1952 the U.P. accepted the Mixed Marriages Act as part of its official Party policy. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages 1924-1969, Mixed Marriages, n.d.

50. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.240, J.C. Smuts to H. Macmillan, 26 July 1949.

6 July it had appointed a sub-committee to report on the establishment of a Training Centre for Junior Organisers.<sup>51</sup> Reporting on 13 July, the sub-committee recommended a one-year course, made up of six months field work and six months theory, for up to twenty bilingual, preferably university graduate students who were willing to serve anywhere in the Cape Province. It recommended further that a finance committee be established to investigate the financial implications of the scheme, which, it hoped, would be operational by 1 October 1949.<sup>52</sup>

That the lessons of Vereeniging had not been limited to the U.P. in the Cape was illustrated on 17 August, when the H.N.P.'s May 1948 majority of 388 votes was cut to only ten

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51. U.P. Papers, Cape Provincial Action Committee Minutes and Annexures 1948-1951, No.15, Minutes of Cape Action Committee Meeting, 6 July 1949. A subsequent U.P. report stated that "in the past it was a complete waste of time to advertise for a full-time organiser in constituencies. More often than not there were no applicants and if such were forthcoming they were in every way totally unsuited to the job." Ibid., No.47, Joint Financial Report by Organising Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, Cape Provincial Head Office, 11 February 1950.
52. Ibid., No.18, Training Sub-Committee Recommendations, 13 July 1949. A call for candidates was issued on 18 July 1949 and the course commenced, as planned, on 1 October. A February 1950 Report stated: "The Training College...has so far proved very successful...Total expenditure at the end of the training period is expected to be in the vicinity of £2500 to £3000. Ibid., No.47, Joint Financial Report by Organising Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, Cape Provincial Head Office, 11 February 1950. Die Burger initially ridiculed the concept of a Training College but subsequently announced the introduction of a correspondence course for H.N.P. Organisers covering, as J.L. Horak noted, "exactly the same subjects as those which we've announced." A.H. Jonker Collection, File 41, J.L. Horak to Dr A.H. Jonker, 5 December 1949. See J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.153, No.119, Verslag I/s Inligtingskantoor, n.d.

in the Mayfair by-election.<sup>53</sup> Because of its humiliation at Vereeniging the narrow margin of the H.N.P.'s Mayfair victory sent an exaggerated surge of optimism through the U.P. What appeared to afford the U.P.'s showing particular significance was a report in Die Volkstem a day prior to the by-election:

...die Regering het reeds te kenne gegee dat hy dit, net soos hy met die Provinsiale verkiesing gedoen het, as 'n mosie van steun sal beskou om met sy uitgesproke Apartheidsbeleid voort te gaan, indien sy kandidaat die paal haal.<sup>54</sup>

The Cape Argus was almost euphoric at the U.P.'s performance:

From the increase in the number of votes polled for the United Party candidate, it is clear that this time the United Party organisers were a match for their smart rivals. This success will hearten United Party organisations all over the country...Mayfair has shown the way at a particularly apposite time in the Cape. With its plans for an academy for organisers and the decarbonisation of the Party machine locally, the United Party is mobilising its forces on a war footing.<sup>55</sup>

This exuberant praise was not entirely unjustified. A U.P. report on the by-election recounted that, soon after the death of its M.P., the U.P. Divisional Committee for the constituency had established a special Action Committee to assume direct control of all aspects of the campaign. The Divisional Committee took care to co-opt onto the committee

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53. H.N.P. 4468; U.P. 4458. Percentage Poll = 90.  
There were four recounts.
54. Die Volkstem, 16 August 1949, p.1.
55. Cape Argus, 18 August 1949, p.8.

members of other Witwatersrand Divisional Committees so as to ensure the effective co-ordination of the efforts of professional staff and voluntary workers which had been so demonstrably lacking at Vereeniging.<sup>56</sup>

Beginning early, the voters' roll had been brought up to date and was immediately followed by a complete canvass of the constituency. Significant emphasis was placed on "huisbesoek". The U.P. candidate, B.N. Swemmer, a man held in high esteem in the constituency, personally visited nearly 6 000 homes. In addition the Party took particular care to ensure full press coverage of the campaign.<sup>57</sup> Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the by-election was the launching, by the Publicity Committee of the Witwatersrand General Council especially for the by-election, of a publicity campaign using as its central feature an orange tree with the motto "Together We Grow".<sup>58</sup> The logo was, on 10 October 1949, adopted as the official symbol of the

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56. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Vol.I, Witwatersrand General Council, Report on Mayfair Parliamentary By-election, n.d. On 29 June the L.P. announced that it would not be contesting the Mayfair by-election. While undertaking to throw its limited weight behind the U.P., it nevertheless took care to assert its independence: "During the Vereeniging campaign, some of our members appeared on the United Party platform at a public meeting, but in Mayfair, we decided to hold our own public meeting, calling for support against the Nationalist [sic] Party candidate." S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 2, File 7, Annual Report of the National Executive Council to the 39th Annual Conference of the S.A.L.P., 15-16 April 1950.
57. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Vol.I, Witwatersrand General Council, Report on Mayfair Parliamentary By-election, n.d.
58. Ibid., Division of Information, Reports on Organisation 1950-1958, Vol.2, Report of the Witwatersrand Executive for Consideration by the Witwatersrand General Council, 29 September 1950.

Party.<sup>59</sup>

The prevailing mood in the Party allowed a degree of optimism to creep back into Smuts's correspondence: "Ek meen die Party vorder goed met die nuwe metodes, soos Mayfair nou bewys het. Ons sal op daardie weg volhard."<sup>60</sup> The apparent turn in the wheel of fortune appeared all the more significant because the U.P. hierarchy remained convinced that an early election was inevitable. Oosthuizen wrote: "The economic situation is deteriorating rapidly. We all doubt whether the Nat. Government can carry on in the light of the grave difficulties facing it."<sup>61</sup> It was for this reason that Smuts had gone to Johannesburg in mid-August to see the

money bugs in order to hunt for funds for the Party. We shall want a good deal if the election is hastened and comes off next year already. I shall not be surprised if it is sprung on us...they must know that the longer they wait the worse it will be for them.<sup>62</sup>

The growth of formal co-operation between the Party and business interests and mining houses, begun on Smuts's initiative in July 1948, had gained an added impetus in succeeding months as it became apparent that the divorce between economic and political power<sup>63</sup> was unlikely to be a temporary one unless the U.P. received substantial

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59. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.3, Central Publicity Committee of the U.P., 10 October 1949.
60. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.283, No.50, J.C. Smuts to S.J. Tighy, 24 August 1949.
61. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 15 August 1949, p.20.
62. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to M.C. Gillett, 20 August 1949, p.306.
63. M. Wilson and L. Thompson, op. cit., p.486.

assistance. In March 1949, A.J. Edmunds, Chairman of Rand Daily Mail Ltd., had offered the services of the editorial and advertising columns of his group's newspapers<sup>64</sup> to the U.P. to publicise, free of charge, a nation-wide appeal for funds.<sup>65</sup> Motivating his offer, Edmunds wrote:

...while some of the Provincial Council election results were encouraging, the United Party must make even greater efforts if it is to win the General Election which may be sprung on the country at any time.<sup>66</sup>

But, after discussions between the Party Executive, H.F. Oppenheimer and the prominent businessman, E. Gallo, it was agreed that no public advertising campaign would be undertaken.<sup>67</sup> The motivation behind this decision was Gallo's observation "that the first results of his fund-

64. Rand Daily Mail, Sunday Express and Die Weekblad.

65. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.280, No.127, A.J. Edmunds to J.C. Smuts, 17 March 1949. The U.P. had, in its Party publication The Voter, a potential national journal. It was however never developed as such out of fear of antagonising the major English-language press groups. A November 1949 joint meeting of the Advisory Committees on Publicity and Organisation was advised that the "Press considers that The Voter, by carrying advertisement, is in direct competition with them, and it has been made clear that any attempt to build-up The Voter will be regarded as a most unfriendly action." The Committees then went on to agree "that the full co-operation and support of the Press is essential to the Party's well-being and that nothing should be done which might cause the Press to withdraw their support." U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity Minutes 1949-1952, Minutes, Joint Meeting of Central Advisory Committee on Publicity and Central Advisory Committee on Organisation, 7 November 1949.

66. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.280, No.127, A.J. Edmunds to J.C. Smuts, 17 March 1949.

67. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951. Gallo agreed to liaise between the Party and those business and mining interests which had offered assistance.



raising efforts had made it clear that money would be donated readily, whether or not there are advertisements in the newspapers."<sup>68</sup> All that was lacking was a means to ensure a constant and reliable flow of these donations to the Party. This lack, Smuts considered, was "a major weakness".<sup>69</sup>

Subsequent negotiations between representatives of mining and business interests and Party officials resulted in the drawing up of a blue-print to formalise relations between the Party and its major donors. The document, entitled "A National Campaign to Create a United South Africa through the United Party", was approved by the U.P. Central Action Committee on 30 August 1949.<sup>70</sup>

The blue-print, an elaboration of Smuts's July 1948 proposals, provided for the establishment of a National Advisory Committee and a network of regional sub-committees.<sup>71</sup> Manned by prominent individuals in the

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68. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.70, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 4 February 1950.

69. Ibid., Division of Information, Internal Administration File 1950-1952, Brief Comments on Certain Aspects of the Party Organisation, 18 July 1950.

70. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.

71. Local Committees of businessmen were subsequently established in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria. The work of these Committees was confined to the creation of specialist sub-Committees whose task it would be to lay the foundation for fundraising among the various branches of the professions, trade and industry. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, 1950 July 27 - 1950, August 2, National Campaign to create a United South Africa through the United Party.

business community, the function of both the latter and former committees was to help raise revenue so as "to assist the Union Action Committee in building a unified political machine which would get South Africa back to sane government."<sup>72</sup> To this end, the National Advisory Committee would not only raise revenue from commerce, mining and industry, from which sources the Party organisation would be debarred so as to avoid a duplication of effort, but would also "suggest improvements in the organisation of the United Party."<sup>73</sup>

The National Advisory Committee's initial fund-raising drive in September 1949 was, however, only a qualified success. H.F. Oppenheimer later reported that

people found it difficult to contribute direct to the Party and it had been suggested that it would be desirable to form a Trust to which people could contribute. The Party would be represented on it and leading people should be invited to serve on it.<sup>74</sup>

The suggestion was immediately implemented by the National Advisory Committee after consultation with the Central Action Committee. While the objectives of the United South Africa Trust Fund were closely correlated to the declared policy of the U.P., the agreement with the Party stipulated that "the Trustees will, in each instance, be satisfied that the money will be well and effectively spent."<sup>75</sup> This

72. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.78, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 22 September 1949.
75. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, National Campaign to create a United South Africa through the United Party. Three of the twelve Trustees were members of the U.P. Finance Committee: H.F. Oppenheimer, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; J.W.

stipulation was to assume major significance because the Trust, originally envisaged as an additional agency which would collect only those donations which could not be given directly to the Party, became the sole recipient of all major donations.<sup>76</sup>

During late September an office was opened in Johannesburg shared by Gallo, now official representative of the National Advisory Committee, and two new Divisions of the U.P. Head Office which had been especially established so as to enable the Party to liaise more effectively with the Advisory Committee. Both Divisions had their origin in the reports of the sub-committees on Finance and Organisation which had been submitted to the Central Action Committee in February 1949.

The first was a Division of Information and Publicity. S.J. Marais Steyn was placed in charge of its managing body, the Central Publicity Committee.<sup>77</sup> The second was a

Higgerty and H. Tucker. See Appendix XVI: The Objectives and Trustees of the United South Africa Trust Fund.

76. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
77. The Division was to be responsible for the dissemination of the Party's publicity, propaganda and information. No funds were, however, allocated to propaganda for the first quarter of 1950, for the Party decided to wait "until the political position is clarified after the Voortrekker Celebrations and until the Government shows its hand in Parliament." Ibid., Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Minutes of Meeting, Technical Sub-Committee of the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 14 October 1949. A Technical Sub-Committee was formed on 10 October 1949 to provide expert advice on the practical aspects of Propaganda and Publicity. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity Work 1949-1952, Central Publicity Committee of the United

Division of Organisation with J.L. Horak as its Secretary.<sup>78</sup> Advisory Committees, under the auspices of the National Advisory Committee, were soon thereafter established in order to liaise with each Division.<sup>79</sup> A later U.P. memorandum reported that

the keynote adopted was one of expansion of the organisation in all directions, at the instance of the Advisory Committees and Mr Gallo, who continually made...[the]...point in his discussions: That it was impossible for the National Advisory Committee to raise funds unless the Party expanded its activities and made things happen.<sup>80</sup>

Party, 10 October 1949. Soon afterwards, partly because in May 1948 the information received by Party Headquarters from branches had proved to be of little value, a committee of prominent individuals in newspaper groups and in advertising was established "in order to promote Party publicity...and also to determine the reaction of public opinion to the policies and actions of the United Party." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, National Campaign to Create a United South Africa through the United Party.

78. The Division's brief was to supervise and co-ordinate the reform of the Party's organisation and provide advice to the Central Action Committee on further reforms. Included under these headings was the task of ensuring that voters rolls were kept up to date. So as to achieve this task it was decided that "the structure of the Party should be so developed as to provide for the complete coverage of the Union by General Councils, each to be directly responsible for the organisation of the Party in the area under its jurisdiction." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, The U.P. Division of Organisation. It was also subsequently decided to try to establish, particularly in the rural areas, at least one branch of the Junior U.P. in each constituency. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Vol.I, Conference of Organising Staff, 8 November 1949.
79. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
80. Ibid.

In this regard, Smuts made a significant personal contribution. On 2 September he wrote: "Things are very much on the move politically and I am chattered up (*sic*) with engagements in all parts of the country, many of them not visited by me since fusion days."<sup>81</sup> His son wrote:

He had been doing far too much as the spearhead of the so-called Action Committee, but now he re-doubled his efforts. He was ageing rapidly, and I personally felt that the end was approaching. It filled me with indignation that an old man should be so mercilessly worked.<sup>82</sup>

For its part, the National Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Central Action Committee, devised preliminary plans for a "national tribute" to Smuts on his eightieth birthday, and drew up a "Nine-Point Re-Statement" of the fundamental principles of U.P. policy.<sup>83</sup>

Although formulated in September, the "Nine-Point Re-Statement" was only officially announced on 9 November 1949, when Smuts addressed a joint meeting of the Union Head Committee and the U.P. Parliamentary caucus.<sup>84</sup> Oosthuizen

81. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.265, J.C. Smuts to J. van der Byl, 2 September 1949.
82. J.C. Smuts, *op. cit.*, p.521. Having belatedly discovered that Smuts still held the title Commander-in-Chief of the Union's Defence Forces the Government curtly dismissed him on 7 October 1949. According to the terms of the constitution the title Commander-in-Chief properly belonged to the Governor-General.
83. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, National Campaign to Create a United South Africa through the United Party. See Appendix XVII: Summary of Nine-Point Re-Statement of United Party Policy.
84. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures, 1941-1952, Vol.I, The United Party: Its Re-Statement of Policy, n.d. Smuts's speech was summarised and issued in a pamphlet entitled Together We Grow. Within a year

wrote:

The announcement was warmly applauded and supported in our friendly press. Psychologically, the announcement was considered at the right time. The growing dissatisfaction with the Nat. Government is reaching large dimensions, 'we have them on the run' as the General said at Krugersdorp last week. Their internal difficulties are also increasing. There is talk of us minting our own gold coin again to purchase oil supplies. Petrol rationing is coming.<sup>85</sup>

But the growing confidence of the Party hierarchy in the Transvaal was not reflected countrywide. This was particularly the case after the 18 September devaluation of the British and South African pounds had blunted one of the main pillars of U.P. propaganda.<sup>86</sup> Commenting on the U.P. reaction to devaluation, an article in The Forum observed: "...the devaluation decision left the Party up in the air and without any really helpful criticism. All it could do

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150 000 copies had been printed. Each point of policy was subsequently elaborated in a supplementary pamphlet. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, National Campaign to Create a United South Africa through the United Party. Each of the supplementary pamphlets had an initial print of 15 000, the bulk being circulated to branch Committee members. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.48, Minutes of Meeting, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 5 December 1949. The H.N.P. announced a 10 Point Programme of Action in September 1949. See Appendix XVIII: Ten Point Programme of Action of the H.N.P.

85. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 11 November 1949.
86. The South African Pound was devalued by 30 per cent. This meant an increase in the gold price, in Pound terms, of £3-18s per ounce. Die Transvaler, 19 September 1949, p.1.

was to say 'caution, caution', which is not enough."<sup>87</sup>

Responding to a statement by Senator Tucker that, as a result of its recent initiatives, the U.P. was "now ready to win an election",<sup>88</sup> J.W. Mushet, the U.P. Cape Provincial Chairman, retorted:

I can only say if that is so in the Transvaal, we are not ready here...although pockets have not yet much benefited since devaluation, certain people are in a mood of waiting to see what is going to turn up rather than preparing only for the worst, as they had started to prepare. Part of this preparation was to come and help us. Lately there is a cooling off...Try as we will by voluntary effort, by circulars, by speeches, our people are not getting down to the intensive registration effort we have pleaded for.<sup>89</sup>

Mushet's note having been brought to his attention, Smuts responded personally: "I think it is quite right that Tucker and others should rejoice publicly over the splendid work that has been done. Such rejoicing has its psychological value, especially as we know that anxiety and fear are spreading among our opponents."<sup>90</sup> His optimism was not without apparent substance for, in a 7 December Parliamentary by-election in the safe Harrismith seat, the H.N.P. May 1948 majority was reduced by 577 votes. The Rand Daily Mail enthused: "...if in the next General Election the Government loses the same number of votes in each constituency as it did on Wednesday it would lose eleven seats and go out of power."<sup>91</sup>

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87. The Forum, 1 October 1949, p.6.

88. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.154, J.W. Mushet to O.A. Oosthuizen, 6 December 1949.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid., Vol.282, No.346, J.C. Smuts to J.W. Mushet, 13 December 1949.

91. Rand Daily Mail, 10 December 1949, p.6.

With initial Party reforms in the process of implementation,<sup>92</sup> and assured of regular financial support, Smuts, on 12 February 1950, with the minimum of publicity, sent Oosthuizen to the United Kingdom to report on the structure and functioning of British political parties and on the ways in which they were preparing for the forthcoming General Election.<sup>93</sup> In the interim, he had diplomatically avoided a possible breach with the L.P. which was also in the throes of garnering its limited resources.

A parliamentary by-election, due on 9 November 1949 in the traditionally L.P. Benoni seat, had occasioned conflict between the Benoni branch of the U.P. and the L.P.<sup>94</sup> The U.P. in Benoni maintained not only that the majority of voters in the constituency were U.P. supporters, but that the L.P. organisation in the constituency was so weak that were the U.P. to stand back and allow the L.P. to fight the seat, an H.N.P. victory would be a distinct possibility. These assertions were not unjustified for, despite the fact that Benoni was primarily a working-class constituency in which roughly 64 per cent of the voters could have been expected to support the L.P., the U.P. commanded a majority.<sup>95</sup> An article in The Forum observed:

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92. See Appendix XIX: The Organisational Structure of the United Party, January 1950.
93. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Reports on Organisation 1950-1958, Vol.2, Report and Observations on the Organisation of the Conservative and Labour Parties in the United Kingdom, April 1950.
94. W. Madeley was M.P. for Benoni from 1910 to 1947. Dr T.W.B. Osborn won the by-election for the official L.P. in 1947 and held it until his death in 1949. The result in the 1948 General Election was L.P. 4804; H.N.P. 2431.
95. The Forum, 29 October 1949, p.21. As a result of the divisions in the L.P. since 1946 its active membership in the constituency had shrunk to a mere handful. "Solid" support for the U.P. was put at



That is, perhaps, the measure of the extent to which the Labour Party has become an anachronism in South Africa.

It has become an anachronism for two reasons: Firstly, because the white worker has developed vested interests and has therefore ceased to be genuinely socialist in his outlook; and secondly because the growing army of black workers has become the real proletariat...<sup>96</sup>

Despite vigorous protests by U.P. members in the constituency, Smuts committed the Party to the continued observance of the spirit of the 1948 agreement with the L.P. Justifying his decision, he was reported as saying that

he was of the opinion that it was a fair and proper interpretation that the agreement covered by-elections arising during the life of the present Parliament...Unless there was a break in the Labour Party, his feeling was that he would have to set aside the strong Party representations from Benoni. He wanted to keep the honour of the Party untarnished.<sup>97</sup>

The H.N.P. had also decided against contesting the by-election. It supported instead a virulently anti-Communist Independent. This indirect approach was a vain attempt to

3500 voters, for the H.N.P. at 2750 and for the L.P. at 1500. The floating vote was put at 1750. Fifty-seven per cent of the voters were English-speaking. The U.P. had won the seat unopposed in the 1949 Provincial elections. Ibid., p.17.

96. Ibid., p.21.

97. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.78, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 22 September 1949. This interpretation placed the U.P. in a difficult position for, while the H.N.P. was free to organise in L.P.-held seats, U.P. workers had little incentive to do so.

win over those non-H.N.P. voters who were disaffected by the close association of L. Lovell, the L.P. candidate, with the Springbok Legion.<sup>98</sup>

A few days after the 9 November election victory by the L.P. candidate,<sup>99</sup> the close co-operation between the U.P. and L.P. was again illustrated when they opposed the Second Reading of the Education (Language) Amendment Draft Ordinance in the Transvaal Provincial Council.<sup>100</sup> The Ordinance, which provided for Mother-Tongue instruction in separate schools, was eventually adopted, on 16 November, by 33 votes to 28 after a record thirty-six and a half hour sitting.<sup>101</sup>

But neither the L.P. victory at Benoni nor its prominence in the Transvaal Provincial Education Amendment debate could conceal the Party's structural weakness. Little of

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98. Lovell was only endorsed by the Party after the initial vote had gone against him. The Forum, 29 October 1949, p.21.

99. L.P. 4384; Ind. (H.N.P.) 1943; Ind. 35. L.P. majority 2441. Percentage Poll: 74. L.P. 1948 majority 2373.

100. Although the U.P. Government had subscribed to a policy of Dual Medium Education it had only been, in practice, infrequently implemented. The 1943 Provincial Elections in the Transvaal had been fought on the issue but it had failed to arouse the interest of the electorate. Mother-Tongue instruction in separate schools was however crucial to the H.N.P. T.D. Moodie noted that single-medium Afrikaans schools meant "more than purely pedagogical expedience. Mother-Tongue education was above all the guarantee of Afrikanerdom, and Afrikaans schools held its future life in trust." T.D. Moodie, op. cit., p.239.

101. The debate was the longest in the legislative history of South Africa. It broke the Parliamentary record of thirty-four hours which had earlier been set during the debate on the Citizenship Bill, Rand Daily Mail, 17 November 1949, p.1.

consequence resulted from the establishment, by a special conference towards the end of 1949, of an Organising Committee to consider ways and means of increasing Party membership and propagating L.P. policy.<sup>102</sup> The L.P. Treasurer, in a March 1950 report, observed that the Party's total income from affiliation fees over the previous thirteen months had amounted to only £380.10s.<sup>103</sup> He continued:

This is the only definite income the Party can depend on as being a regular source of income. For the balance of our expenses...we have to depend on the goodwill of members and sympathisers to give us donations...A peculiar position is that people in a position to give us substantial donations, who have done so in the past, refuse to contribute to the Labour Party funds any longer as they claim that the Labour Party is not sufficiently advanced in its political outlook...while the shillings and pence the Party used to obtain in the past from numerous workers has dried up because the workers object to the Party being either near-Communist or Communist inclined.

Today the Labour Party has no press whatsoever and no funds with which to organise...<sup>104</sup>

While the Party in the Transvaal noted that it "has been with considerable effort that we have managed to keep our Head Office open,"<sup>105</sup> the condition of the Party in Natal

102. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 23, File 5, S.A.L.P. Office Manager to the General Secretary, Concession Stores and Allied Trades, 28 March 1950. In October 1949 a Co-ordinating Committee of the L.P. and the 100 000 member S.A. Trades and Labour Council had been established. Forward, 14 October 1949, p.1.
103. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 6, File 2, S.A.L.P. Income and Expenditure Account, 31 March 1950.
104. Ibid. The weekly Forward lost its status as official mouthpiece of the L.P. when it changed ownership in February 1950. Forward, 10 March 1950, p.2.
105. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 23, File 5, S.A.L.P. Office

was even worse.

Soon after the defeats it had sustained in the Provincial elections, the Party offices in Durban had to be closed due to lack of funds. The Natal Provincial Executive, elected three years previously when the last Provincial Conference had been held and down to ten of its original seventeen members, ceased to function towards the end of 1949.<sup>106</sup> The L.P. Natal Parliamentary representatives, safely ensconced in seats secured for them by the Party's National Executive and aware that the Party stood little chance of expanding without U.P. acquiescence, had little incentive to help resuscitate the Party at the local level. Instead, they found it "expedient to turn a blind eye to the sinking ship."<sup>107</sup>

The Party in Natal was, however, given a new lease of life by Raymond Ardé, Durban Estate Agent, voluntary Social Worker and long-standing L.P. member.<sup>108</sup> Through his effort and personal sacrifice, after having, without much difficulty, persuaded the Party at the national level to appoint him Honorary Provincial Organiser, he stirred the Natal L.P. organisation back to life.<sup>109</sup> The National

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Manager to the General Secretary, Concession Stores and Allied Trades, 28 March 1950.

106. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 7, Report to Thirty-Ninth Annual Conference of the S.A.L.P., 15-16 April 1950.

107. Ibid., Box 7, File 4, M. Clark to J. Christie, 2 January 1953. In view of their lack of activity the L.P. National Executive, in September 1950, resolved "that the Public Representatives in Natal be asked to report on their activities in that Province". Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 28 September 1950.

108. He was not held in high esteem by the U.P. in Natal, most members regarded him as a mere eccentric. Interview: V. Raw.

109. S.A.L.P. Papers, Draw 1, File 14, No. 0/162. Ardé

Executive was later to report that Ardé "was bearing the whole burden of expenses for organisation himself."<sup>110</sup>

Reporting on the position at the time, Ardé wrote:

My main difficulty has been that I took over the organisation of a party which had only about twelve members, some of them obstructionists; no office equipment; no Party office; no records that were of any use; and no money at all. The only thing that we had a generous supply of, were debts.<sup>111</sup>

Reviving meetings of the L.P. Durban District Committee, he strengthened it with the "appointment of delegates from the newly formed Berea branch, and from other branches which are being formed..."<sup>112</sup> During February and March 1950 he launched

an intensive propaganda campaign...by means of advertisements, statements and letters to the press, canvassing the public and by circularising leaflets...As a result, many letters from all over the province have been received, and a number of new members enrolled.<sup>113</sup>

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was appointed Honorary Provincial Organiser on 13 January 1950.

110. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 28 September 1950. This meeting of the Executive gave Ardé authorisation to form a Provincial Executive Committee "by the convention of a Provincial Conference, no matter how small." Ibid.
111. Ibid., Draw 1, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 17 March 1950.
112. Ibid., Draw 2, File 7, Report to Thirty-Ninth Annual Conference of the S.A.L.P., 15-16 April 1950. The Umbilo branch had continued to function "satisfactorily" despite the decline of the Party at the Provincial level. Ibid.
113. Ibid., One of Ardé's main publicity platforms was the Durban Parliamentary Debating Society. Interview: V. Raw.

The improvement in U.P. organisation and in its performance in by-elections towards the end of 1949, and the L.P. renewal in Natal in early 1950, apparently justified a revival of opposition optimism. The re-opening, during the course of 1950, of the U.P. leadership question and the H.N.P.'s sweeping electoral victory in S.W.A., were to reveal just how misplaced that optimism was.

PART IVA NEW LEADER: AN INAUSPICIOUS STARTCHAPTER 10THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION; A NEW U.P. LEADER,  
JANUARY - JULY 1950

By the beginning of 1950 Smuts's health had begun to deteriorate markedly. In a January letter to his wife, he wrote:

The pain in my back is still there, and sitting and lying down remain difficult. But it is improving slowly. This afternoon I shall attend our caucus and tomorrow the opening of Parliament. I must go because wild talk is going on about my condition.<sup>1</sup>

On the same day, during an H.N.P. caucus meeting, Malan confirmed, despite numerous earlier ministerial claims to the contrary,<sup>2</sup> that due to Havenga's continued opposition, the Government would not proceed with legislation to repeal Coloured common roll franchise rights during the 1950 session.<sup>3</sup>

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1. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 19 January 1950, p.337. His son wrote: "Every symptom pointed to heart trouble...", J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.524.
  2. The Forum, 28 January 1950, p.6.
  3. Havenga and Malan had issued a joint statement on 12 December 1949 that no legislation affecting the entrenched clauses would be introduced during the next session of parliament. An already drafted Bill would though be published for general information. The H.N.P., the statement noted, would be free, at any time after the end of 1950, to submit this Bill to parliament. Rand Daily Mail, 13 December 1949, p.1.

Despite his strategic retreat on the issue, the Speech from the Throne foreshadowed legislation, in the abolition of the right of appeal to the Privy Council<sup>4</sup> and a Bill to set up a population register, which would serve to prepare the ground for the eventual repeal of those franchise rights. Confirming the accuracy of Opposition forecasts that Malan would cloak his retreat on the issue, the Government's intention to introduce Bills to "suppress" Communism,<sup>5</sup> to provide for comprehensive residential segregation and to amend the Immorality Act, were also revealed in the Speech.<sup>6</sup>

Smuts was nevertheless able to exploit H.N.P. embarrassment over its delay in implementing long-standing policy. During the No-Confidence debate, he was reported as saying that "Apartheid was a fraudulent policy, and that the Government had created a false impression with its General Election promises and had led the people up the garden path."<sup>7</sup> But, although Smuts delivered an effective speech in the No-Confidence debate, the overall performance of U.P. frontbenchers, during the subsequent Budget debates, made a poor impression. An article in The Forum observed:

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4. The Second Reading of the Bill to abolish appeals to the Privy Council, read on 8 February 1950, received the support of both the U.P. and L.P. Only the Natives' Representatives dissented. Lawrence described appeals to the Privy Council as "a slender right that has really become a dead letter." Rand Daily Mail, 9 February 1950, p.1.
  5. T.D. Moodie observed that "each social metaphysical strand within Afrikanerdom was able to employ its own logic and language in defining Communism as a major threat." T.D. Moodie, op. cit., p.251. Smuts told A.G. Barlow that Communism "hardly existed in the country." A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.332.
  6. The Forum, 28 January 1950, p.6.
  7. Rand Daily Mail, 25 January 1950, p.9. The U.P. No-Confidence motion was defeated by 78 votes to 71. The L.P. and Natives' Representatives voted with the U.P. Ibid., 31 January 1950, p.1.



The pathetic and disappointing Opposition attack on the main and railway Budgets reminded one once again of the great strength that used to be wielded by the late J.H. Hofmeyr as a Parliamentary leader and tactician...Since his death the United Party has been without Parliamentary leadership.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless U.P. and L.P. members, together with the Natives' Representatives, put up a vigorous and, within clearly defined parameters, principled opposition to the Government's foray into social engineering. To an H.N.P. member's jibe that "politically you've cut your throats", both the U.P. and L.P. called for a division at the conclusion of the Second Reading debate on the Immorality Amendment Bill<sup>9</sup> for, while speakers from both parties emphasised that they were opposed to miscegenation, they considered that illicit relations, particularly between whites and Coloureds, could not be controlled by legislation.<sup>10</sup> The arguments presented by both the U.P. and L.P. were, however, weakened by the fact that both had agreed to the 1927 measure.<sup>11</sup> It is this that largely explains why the Bill passed the Report Stage unopposed, and the Third Reading without a vote.<sup>12</sup>

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8. The Forum, 22 April 1950, p.8. It was left, for example, to Mushet, who had no experience of the Transport portfolio, to open the U.P. reply on the Railway Budget. The Forum noted: "The Member for Vasco was so much out of his depth that he floundered pathetically and was most unconvincing." Ibid.
  9. The Bill proposed to prohibit carnal intercourse between whites and all other ethnic groups. The 1927 Immorality Act penalized extra-marital relations between whites and Africans.
  10. Rand Daily Mail, 3 March 1950, p.9. The Division was lost 66 votes to 55. Ibid.
  11. E.H. Brookes, op. cit., p.184.
  12. Ibid., p.185.

A far more vigorous opposition struggle was waged against the terms of the Population Registration Bill, a necessary corollary to the Government's other measures designed rigidly to compartmentalize the country's population into racial groups.<sup>13</sup> Introduced on 21 February, the Bill was, said Smuts, "not designed to establish a national register, but a Nationalist register."<sup>14</sup> His undertaking to oppose every stage of the Bill's passage through Parliament was clearly illustrated during the Committee Stage, which was only completed after twenty hours, twenty-five minutes in continuous session through the night. During this time fifty-four divisions were called and eleven closures applied.<sup>15</sup>

Anticipating a similar Opposition strategy in response to the Unlawful Organisations' Bill and the Group Areas Reservation Bill, the Government had, by late April, not yet revealed their contents. The intention was clear: "...the Government hopes to dispose of them during the final hectic weeks of the session when the House sits morning, afternoon and night."<sup>16</sup>

C.R. Swart, however, introduced the Unlawful Organisations Bill on 5 May, some six weeks before the end of the session. The Government's reason for doing so earlier than expected was probably that it hoped to use to maximum advantage the May Day outbreak of rioting which had resulted in eighteen

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13. The Bill provided for the compilation of an "ethnic register" of the population of the Union as soon as possible after the 1951 census. Its provisions did not encompass African women or African men under the age of eighteen.

14. Rand Daily Mail, 9 March 1950, p.7.

15. Daily News, 9 May 1950, p.1.

16. The Forum, 22 April 1950, p.8.

African deaths.<sup>17</sup> Wary of exposing his Party to accusations of being "soft" on law and order prior to the debate on the Bill, Smuts, much to the consternation of some U.P. members,<sup>18</sup> refused to support Mrs Ballinger's L.P. supported motion for an adjournment of the House in order to discuss the riots.<sup>19</sup> Justifying his action, he later said: "...if the United Party had supported Mrs Ballinger's motion, its action might have been misconstrued as criticism of the police and condonation of the action of law-breakers."<sup>20</sup>

Thus fortified, the U.P. caucus, on 13 May, expressed a revulsion of Communism. It then went on to declare its intention to oppose the Bill, on the grounds of its threat to civil rights,<sup>21</sup> unless it was referred to a Select Committee prior to the Second Reading.<sup>22</sup> The unusual step was then taken, "in view of the anxiety that the public feel about the far-reaching provisions of the Bill,"<sup>23</sup> of revealing the U.P. amendment to refer the Bill to a Select

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17. Rand Daily Mail, 3 May 1950, p.1. At its annual Congress in 1949 the A.N.C. had adopted, as part of the "Apartheid Counter-Revolution", a militant "Programme of Action" which had been planned by the Youth League. Three major demonstrations were held in 1950: a Freedom of Speech Convention, May Day demonstrations under Communist Party sponsorship, and, on 26 June, a National Day of Protest against the Bills for Group Areas and Suppression of Communism. M. Wilson and L. Thompson, op. cit., p.461.
18. Rand Daily Mail, 5 May 1950, p.9.
19. Ibid., 3 May 1950, p.1. Swart resorted freely to scare tactics. He said, for example, that he "had not disclosed, even in Parliament, all he knew of Communistic activities in South Africa because he felt that a disclosure would cause a panic." Ibid., 8 May 1950, p.11.
20. Ibid., 5 May 1950, p.8.
21. The Bill proposed to empower the Minister of Justice to presume guilt until innocence was proved.
22. Rand Daily Mail, 13 May 1950, p.7.
23. Daily News, 13 May 1950, p.1.

Committee prior to its being moved in the Assembly.<sup>24</sup> The essence of the amendment was an appeal for the Committee "to bring up an amended Bill that will contain full and adequate provisions for combating and eradicating Communism, while maintaining undiminished our democratic rights and institutions..."<sup>25</sup>

Conveying an impression of reasonableness which caused premature opposition jubilation, Swart agreed to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.<sup>26</sup> The only voice raised in opposition to the move was that of Sam Kahn, a C.P.S.A. member and Natives' Representative for the Cape Western Constituency.<sup>27</sup> But the Bill's referral proved to be a hollow opposition victory for the Committee's brief was simply to draw up an amended Bill. It was not, as had been specified in the U.P. amendment, instructed to take evidence. An L.P. amendment that the Committee be instructed to "consider the extent to which the Bill might endanger the practices and principles of democracy in South Africa", was disallowed by the Speaker.<sup>28</sup>

In view of its brief, and the H.N.P. majority on the Committee, the Bill's diversion did little to alter its substance. It did however emerge from the Select Committee with a new and more explicit name, the Suppression of Communism Bill.<sup>29</sup> A revised Bill, submitted to the

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24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., 19 May 1950, p.1.

27. Kahn had been elected on 22 November 1948. Both of his opponents had lost their deposits. Ibid., 23 November 1948, p.2.

28. The Star, 22 May 1950, p.1. L.P. alarm was occasioned in particular by the fact that the measure could be used against trade union leaders. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.67.

29. The Unlawful Organisations' Bill had made no specific reference to Communism or to the C.P.S.A. In terms

Committee by the acting leader of the Opposition, J.G.N. Strauss,<sup>30</sup> had been rejected 7 votes to 5.<sup>31</sup>

The latter Bill formed the base from which the U.P. launched its attack on the Government's proposals. In view of the Party's original criticism of the Unlawful Organisations Bill, its subsequent argument was not above reproach. Although Strauss's Bill was aimed at preserving the role of the courts, it yet placed the onus on the accused to show that he was not a Communist, and stipulated that Communist activities be declared treasonable and liable to the death penalty.<sup>32</sup>

On 13 June the Government pushed through a measure to limit

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of the new Bill the C.P.S.A. was declared an unlawful organisation and it was made a punishable offense to defend or advocate "the doctrine of Marxian Socialism". Communism was defined so broadly that it included "any doctrine or scheme which aimed at...bringing about social change" by means of "unlawful acts." All the names of members or supporters of the C.P.S.A. were to be compiled into a list by a person designated "the liquidator". "Listed persons" were to be liable to a number of administrative actions without recourse to the courts. A. Lerumo: Fifty Fighting Years, p.81.

30. On 27 May, after having endured the rigours of his nationwide eightieth birthday celebrations and an equally rigorous Parliamentary session, Smuts suffered a coronary thrombosis and had been confined to bed.
31. Rand Daily Mail, 7 June 1950, p.1. Mrs Ballinger and Christie had surprisingly, in view of their attitude during the remainder of the debate, supported Strauss's Bill in the Select Committee.
32. T.R.H. Davenport: South Africa: A Modern History, p.369. Strauss's Bill was a personal not a Party one. "Most United Party members disliked the idea that the burden of proof be put on the accused and tacitly agreed with C.R. Swart, who gleefully took the chance to charge that it was a departure from a sacred principle." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.66.

debate on the Bill to thirty hours.<sup>33</sup> Two days later, when the U.P. amendment to the Second Reading was put to the Assembly, members of the L.P. walked out of the Chamber. Of the three Natives' Representatives, Mrs Ballinger and Kahn abstained from voting while W.H. Stuart crossed the Floor.<sup>34</sup> The U.P. amendment was defeated by 70 votes to 47.<sup>35</sup> When the L.P. amendment to read the Bill "six months hence" was put, every member of the U.P. walked out while the two Durban L.P. M.P.s did not vote for their Party's amendment.<sup>36</sup> The guillotine again fell during the Second

33. Rand Daily Mail, 14 June 1950, p.11. On 7 June 1950 the Johannesburg Bar Council and, on 12 June, the Johannesburg Side Bar Association, protested "the tendency to remove the State and its officials from the control of the Courts." Ibid., 13 June 1950, p.1.
34. Ibid., 16 June 1950, p.1. During the debate Mrs Ballinger warned that the Government's measure would be used "to deprive the growing African national movement of their African leaders." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.67. Twenty African and Indian leaders of the Defiance Campaign were convicted in October 1952 of "Statutory Communism". In 1953 a number of African leaders were banned from membership of the A.N.C. Ibid., pp.72-73.
35. Rand Daily Mail, 16 June 1950, p.1.
36. Ibid. A hastily convened C.P.S.A. Central Committee meeting on 6-7 May, after the terms of the Bill had become known, decided by majority vote, and without consulting the membership, to dissolve the Party. It did this not only on the assumption that the rank and file would not be prepared or able to face the rigours of underground work but also on the assumption that it would keep its property out of the hands of the liquidator and make it possible for Kahn and Carneson to keep their seats in the Assembly and the Cape Provincial Council respectively. The liquidator's argument, which was subsequently upheld in court, was that the Party had not been properly dissolved in terms of its constitution which gave that power only to a National Conference. Furthermore the Government amended the Act in 1951 to extend the definition of "Communist" to include all those who had ever professed Communism. The hardcore of the C.P.S.A. subsequently went underground and re-established Party cells and

Reading debate in the Senate and it passed, on 22 June, with the aid of the President's casting vote.<sup>37</sup>

Dr T.E. Dönges, the responsible Minister, had resorted even more freely to the guillotine during the passage of the Group Areas Bill through the Assembly.<sup>38</sup> This strategy was particularly pernicious when applied to a forty-one page Bill consisting of thirty-nine clauses. During the debate on the Second Reading, begun on 23 May, Strauss, supported by Christie, said: "This Bill, of all Bills, should not be jackbooted through Parliament. It affects vitally and fundamentally inter-racial relations in South Africa."<sup>39</sup>

While both the U.P. and L.P. found no fault with the

district committees. At the beginning of 1953 a National Conference was convened which adopted a programme and rules and the name the South African Communist Party. A. Lerumo, op. cit., pp.82 and 88; B. Bunting, Moses Katane, p.177; T.R.H. Davenport, op. cit., p.369.

37. Rand Daily Mail, 22 June 1950, p.1. On 7 June Verwoerd introduced an amended guillotine motion which made it possible for a Minister, should he at any time declare a Bill to be "of an urgent nature", to limit Senate debate on all stages of a Bill to eleven hours, thirty minutes. Ibid., 8 June 1950, p.7. The measure was passed 64 votes to 49 by the Assembly on 20 June and by the Senate 19 votes to 18. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.68.
38. Under the terms of the Bill the whole of the Union, with the exception of the African areas, was to be a controlled area in which ownership of property and residences would be racially "frozen". The Governor General could declare certain areas to be Group areas limiting occupation or ownership to members of a specified race. As a result of the introduction of the Bill the Indian Government withdrew from a proposed Round Table Conference at which the future of South Africa's Indian population was to be discussed. Rand Daily Mail, 7 June 1950, p.9.
39. Ibid., 27 May 1950, p.9. The Bill passed its Second Reading 69 votes to 61. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.87.

principle of the Bill, they objected to it because of the arbitrary powers which it proposed to vest in the state to deprive individuals of property without compensation and without the right to alternative occupation, and because of the lack of any undertaking in it to consult the communities involved.<sup>40</sup>

After the U.P. and L.P. had made an unsuccessful attempt to get the Bill referred to a Select Committee, events ran their familiar course. In the Assembly, during the Second Reading debate, less than half of the Bill's clauses were discussed, while, in the Senate, during the Committee Stage, only Clause 13 had been reached before the guillotine fell. Both the U.P. and L.P., in protest, voted against all the Bill's undiscussed clauses.<sup>41</sup>

With the end of the parliamentary session approaching and with the Suppression of Communism Bill, the Group Areas Bill and the Population Registration Bill all in various stages of completion, a leading article in the Rand Daily Mail observed:

By next week the guillotine will be operating in both Houses of Parliament on an unprecedented scale...Parliament thus finds itself debarred from full discussion of three of the most contentious pieces of legislation placed

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40. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, (2) Party Letters 1950-1952, Party Letter, August 1950.
41. Ibid. During the Committee Stage of the Bill over fifty amendments were accepted. Over half of these were proposed by Dönges himself. Two Durban U.P. M.P.s, A.H.J. Eaton (Musgrave) and N.D. McMillan (Central), proposed amendments to make the Bill more restrictive. The U.P. voted against these amendments. Rand Daily Mail, 9 June 1950, p.9. Eaton later submitted his resignation to the U.P. caucus but it was not accepted because it was realised that, in proposing the amendment, "he had been sincere." Daily News, 27 October 1950, p.9.



before it in years and which the Government has held back until the last stage of the session.<sup>42</sup>

The close of the session brought particular relief to the U.P. for its final week had seen the Party embroiled on a second front. Having been taken ill and confined to bed on 27 May, Smuts's condition continued rapidly to deteriorate. On 6 June, Oosthuizen wrote: "I was shocked and disturbed to see how much the illness had taken out of him in the short space of a week. He looks terribly old, very thin and his eyes in the back of their sockets."<sup>43</sup>

Obsessed by an article he had read supporting the possibility of a U.P.-H.N.P. merger,<sup>44</sup> Smuts warned that "if there was the slightest whisper in that direction it would mean the disintegration and end of the United Party."<sup>45</sup> There was "'loot' to be had" he said, "and he would like to know who were after the 'loot'".<sup>46</sup> This concern, and the reassurance that Strauss "had enough commonsense not to have any dealings with our enemies,"<sup>47</sup> might have been the motivation behind the message he purportedly sent, via Oosthuizen on 9 June, during one of the "very serious phases" of his illness,<sup>48</sup> to the U.P. parliamentary caucus. Smuts, according to Oosthuizen, said that, in view of his illness and age, it "was his wish that Mr Strauss should undertake the responsibilities and duties which had rested

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42. Rand Daily Mail, 9 June 1950, p.9.

43. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/1, Vol.I, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 6 June 1950.

44. Article not traced.

45. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/1, Vol.I, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 6 June 1950.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 2 September 1950, p.22.

upon him up to the time of his illness. In his opinion the sooner that was done the better it would be for the Party."<sup>49</sup>

J.W. Higgerty, the U.P. Chief Whip, who had been in Johannesburg when Smuts was reported to have given his message,<sup>50</sup> returned to Cape Town with Oosthuizen. Together with Strauss, they immediately summoned a meeting of the U.P. parliamentary caucus. Discussing the 15 June meeting, Douglas Mitchell wrote:

It was the manner in which the aspirant leader had called a special caucus to ratify his position which upset and mystified many members. Those of us who comprised the United Party leadership did not doubt that the Oubaas had selected Strauss to follow him. Whether the disclosure of General Smuts's wishes

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49. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, J.G.N. Strauss File, note re: General Smuts's wish that Strauss should be leader of the U.P., 12 June 1950. Smuts also told A.G. Barlow that he had "decided that Strauss shall act for me...a good man Strauss, a very good man, and I hope you will give him full support when I am away." Barlow wrote: "I could hardly believe my ears. Here was Smuts deliberately choosing the very man who many of us believed had, through his obstinacy over the notorious 'Strauss Meat Scheme' and his lack of political knowledge, done much to lose the General Election in 1948 for our Party." A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.328.

Strauss had, in 1923, been appointed Smuts's Private Secretary. In 1929 he was elected to the Transvaal Provincial Council and, three years later, won the Germiston Parliamentary by-election. He became Minister of Agriculture in 1944. In May of that year he introduced a scheme to regulate the flow of meat to the Union's nine larger urban centres. The scheme proved unpopular because farmers maintained that its application made it pay them to withhold their prime-grade cattle from the urban markets. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.131. A widespread rumour in 1950 was that Strauss was Smuts's illegitimate son. Interview: Mrs M. Coetzee.

50. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note, n.d.

in the manner in which it was done was wise, or whether that was what he had intended are other questions. There were many in the United Party who felt that, whether the instructions were true or not, there should have been no question of the old leader signifying any preference as to who was to succeed him. This view was widely held by important and responsible people. The situation tended to make it extremely hard for Strauss.<sup>51</sup>

The divisions in the caucus which had revealed themselves in May 1948 over the leadership issue were re-opened. De Villiers Graaff reported that he was approached by an M.P. at the meeting who assured him of at least twenty-six votes were he to stand against Strauss.<sup>52</sup> Deeply concerned at the implications for Strauss were it to become known that such an approach had been made to a backbencher, de Villiers Graaff immediately reported the incident to Higgerty. The latter agreed that the only way to defuse the situation was for de Villiers Graaff to second Higgerty's proposal to nominate Strauss as leader of the House.<sup>53</sup> When, however, he proceeded to do so, he aroused considerable antagonism among the frontbenchers, some of whom felt that that right should have been theirs.<sup>54</sup>

De Villiers Graaff's action, while saving both himself and Strauss considerable embarrassment, failed to prevent the introduction of a counter-motion to refuse to accept Smuts's resignation as leader of the House.<sup>55</sup> Heaton Nicholls described what followed:

I was frankly puzzled. Listening to the

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- 51. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.69.
  - 52. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.
  - 53. Not leader of the Party.
  - 54. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.
  - 55. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.436.

speeches, I began to smell an intrigue of the Party machine. Although Strauss's speech disclosed no intention of making use of the opportunity afforded, when one of the other speakers inferred that, if the motion was accepted, Strauss would be able to draw a salary as leader of the Opposition, which today, because of Smuts's absence, was not being drawn, I was shocked. The whole proceeding began to look like a wangle...I got up and said that I considered the motion before the caucus was an unseemly one and that I considered the message we had received from Oosthuizen should be suspect; its character was not in Smuts's nature...The debate drew to an end and the voting for the amendment disclosed only some nineteen supporters and was defeated. A vote was then taken for the original motion and was unanimous.<sup>56</sup>

C. Miles Warren, one of those who had voted against Strauss, wrote:

Strauss was elected leader but fifteen men had become marked men for daring to vote against his appointment. That fatal day was the start of the dissension within the Party. Strauss became so autocratic that he was well nigh unapproachable other than by his chosen coterie.<sup>57</sup>

The controversy was not kept within the bounds of caucus. Immediately the decision became known, Smuts's son wrote a

56. Ibid. The Leader of the Opposition received an extra £1 000 per annum. This brought his total allowance up to £2 000 per annum. Daily News, 15 June 1950, p.1.

57. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note, n.d. Heaton Nicholls mentioned nineteen dissentients. M. Kentridge wrote: "I, as a matter of decency, objected to the indecent haste with which General Smuts who was then on his deathbed had been replaced, and seventeen of us wrote to Mrs Smuts expressing our disapproval." M. Kentridge, op. cit., p.345.

widely publicised letter, on 16 June, repudiating the veracity of the message which Smuts had purportedly given to Oosthuizen.<sup>58</sup> The resulting consternation in the ranks of the U.P. sent both Higgerty and Oosthuizen hurrying to Pretoria. On 17 June, after "deliberating" with him, Smuts's son issued a retraction saying that he was very distressed to learn that his "statement contained an ambiguity which might be construed as casting doubt on the message conveyed to the parliamentary caucus of the United Party."<sup>59</sup> On the same day, he wrote a personal apology to Strauss:

I was very distressed to learn from Higgerty and Okkie of the terrible rumpus my press statement caused in political circles, and especially the fact that it might in some way have damaged your status...the Oubaas and Ouma look upon you virtually as an adopted son of the family...don't worry about our feelings of affection for you."<sup>60</sup>

Soon afterwards, other incidents, equally damaging to Strauss's prestige, occurred. A.G. Barlow, in a 7 July

58. Smuts's son wrote: "There is no question of my father retiring because he feels he will not be strong enough after his illness to continue his active political career..." Rand Daily Mail, 17 June 1950, p.1. Warren wrote that Smuts's son had informed him that he had been at his father's bedside for the whole period of his illness and that the message had never been conveyed. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note, n.d.
59. Rand Daily Mail, 17 June 1950, p.1. In a 19 June statement the Smuts family said that they "know that Mr Oosthuizen is a trusted and faithful secretary, they have the highest regard for him and his integrity and they know that the message conveyed to the caucus carried out the wishes of the General." Rand Daily Mail, 19 June 1950, p.9.
60. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/1, Vol.I, J.C. Smuts to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 June 1950.

speech, not only called for the return of Smuts, upon his recovery, to the parliamentary leadership of the Party, but also hinted that moves were afoot for an alliance with Havenga.<sup>61</sup> A few days later, another U.P. M.P., Adolf Davis, suggested that Havenga might be the only hope for the U.P. because "the leader of the Parliamentary Opposition, Mr J.G.N. Strauss, was not yet sufficiently a national leader to be able to draw the badly needed platteland vote."<sup>62</sup>

The U.P. Action Committee, at its first meeting since the parliamentary session, neatly sidestepped potentially damaging punitive measures against Barlow and Davis by claiming that "caucus was the proper body to take action."<sup>63</sup>

61. Rand Daily Mail, 8 July 1950, p.7.

62. Ibid., 13 July 1950, p.7. Apart from Col. O.L. Shearer (Pmb. City) and B. Henwood (Pmb. N.), Barlow and Davis did not receive any support from U.P. members in Natal where support for an alliance with Havenga had been so strong eighteen months before. Ibid., 20 July 1950, p.9. Havenga, at the Union Congress of the A.P., on 25 July 1950, stated that he would leave the question of the legality of placing Coloured voters on a separate roll without a two-thirds majority to the decision of the Speaker. If the Speaker agreed that it was legal, he said that he would help Malan "om die stemgeregtigde kleurlinge op 'n aparte lys te plaas as 'n sterk begeerte daartoe bestaan." He nevertheless continued to hold that "ek nie my medewerking en ondersteuning kan verleen aan enige voorstelle wat inhou 'n permanente vaspenning van hul getal Parlementêre verteenwoordigers en wat neerkom op 'n vermindering van bestaande politieke regte nie." N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.27, Uniale Kongres van Afrikaner Party, 25 Julie, Uitreksel uit Openingsrede. Because of the lack of A.P. co-operation and the equivocation of some H.N.P. members on the Coloured franchise issue, an article in The Forum noted that "it is known that at least ten members of the present Nationalist team in Parliament are unlikely to secure nomination when the next General Election comes round...It is assumed that these men would join a coalition movement headed by Mr Havenga." The Forum, 5 August 1950, p.17.

63. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action

They were unable to undo, however, the damage that had already been done. Die Volksblad, for example, commented:

Dit is treffende kommentaar op die sogenaamd roerend eensgesinde kousvergadering wat adv. Strauss eenparig tot Parlementêre leier gekies het. Maar hierdie voormanne moet weet dat hulle adv. Strauss se reeds wankele posisie verder ondermyn en dat hulle besig is om hul Party te verlam.<sup>64</sup>

Despite its inauspicious start, Strauss's assumption of the Parliamentary leadership did, in the short term at least, contribute to holding the Party's left and right wings together. While one article in The Forum pointed out that the H.N.P. could "never, on Mr Strauss's past showing, be able to dub his leadership liberal",<sup>65</sup> another remarked that the

prospect of a liberal revolt in the U.P. is more remote at the moment than it has probably ever been. If anything, the intervention of Mr Barlow has strengthened liberal support of the U.P....The liberal wing of the U.P. certainly has no desire to enter into any alliance with Mr Havenga.<sup>66</sup>

Whoever had followed Smuts would have been in an invidious position, but Smuts himself, particularly after the death of Hofmeyr, had made the succession even more difficult.

Committee Minutes 1949-1950, Meeting of the Union Action Committee, 1 August 1950. At the Transvaal U.P. Congress, on 19 September, both Barlow and Davis defused the issue by making it clear that they accepted the caucus decision and supported Strauss as Parliamentary leader. Daily News, 19 September 1950, p.2.

64. Die Volksblad, 12 July 1950.

65. The Forum, 24 June 1950, p.6.

66. Ibid., August 1950, p.17.

Barlow pointed out that to Smuts "there could be no successor; he pointed out one, but he never trained him and in his life he never recognised him as the 'New Leader'."<sup>67</sup>

Douglas Mitchell commented:

There was no natural leader whose claims were based on a personal following in the Party at the time. I don't think there was any former Cabinet Minister or anyone else who had a large enough following to be singled out as heir to the leadership. Taking everything into account, personal qualities, qualifications, age and character, they all tended to concentrate on Strauss. It became obvious he was the only choice.<sup>68</sup>

A leader in Die Transvaler provided what was probably the most insightful comment on Strauss's elevation to what was essentially the role of Smuts's heir-apparent:

Met die oog op die feit dat adv. Strauss tog reeds enige weke as parlementêre leier waarneem en die sitting waarskynlik nog net een week sal duur, is dit immers volstrek onnodig om nou so skielik 'n verandering te weeg te bring wat in die praktyk geen verskil kan maak nie...Veldm. Smuts weet dit baie goed. Hy het dan ook 'n ander doel voor die oë gehad. Hy is maar alte seer daarvan bewus dat die duur hom aangewese opvolger, adv. Strauss, vir baie van sy parlementêre kolleges as leier onaanneemlik is en dat die V.P. wellicht van bô tot onder sal skeur indien dit moet gebeur dat 'n nuwe leier heeltemaal spontaan gekies moet word. Eenheid teen elke prys bied die enigste hoop aan die innerlik verdeelde en sonder Veldm. Smuts leier-arme Verenigde Party.<sup>69</sup>

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67. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.334.

68. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.69. In 1954 Malan decided to retire so as to avoid a situation similar to that which had beset the U.P. W.H. Vatcher, op. cit., p.125.

69. Die Transvaler, 16 June 1950, p.4.



Though an assiduous administrator and skilled debater, Strauss lacked the personality that the leadership position required. While the prospect of a U.P. return to power held the Party together, Strauss, an intensely private individual, proved incapable of duplicating Smuts's ability both to inspire confidence and to reconcile divergent opinion. His conscious attempt to compensate for his deficiencies by adopting Smuts's mannerisms merely served further to weaken his position.<sup>70</sup>

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70. Interviews: L. Gerber, Sir de Villiers Graaff, V. Raw.

CHAPTER 11THE ELECTIONS IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA,SEPTEMBER 1950

The white Union nationals who settled in S.W.A., both prior and subsequent to the official establishment of the mandate in 1919, brought with them the Union's contemporary political divisions.

Formed in July 1924, the National Party of S.W.A. was the first political party to be established to compete for representation on the territory's Legislative Assembly. While allying itself with the National Party in the Union, it was careful to assert its independent status. The party in the territory saw its function as "enkel en eenvoudig om plaaslike belange te bevorder, en terselfdertyd te waak teen enige losbreking van die Unie."<sup>1</sup> In September of that year the Union Party, reflecting the political philosophy of the South African Party, was established. In January 1926 it was renamed the South-West Party, a more appropriate title for a party which strove for local economic development and immigration and aimed to withdraw entirely from Union domestic political issues.<sup>2</sup>

The differences between the two parties were soon outweighed by the political threat posed by the newly enfranchised German-speaking population. It was thus not surprising that, when the latter stood aloof from either party in the 1926 Assembly elections and continued to pursue parochial community interests, the two "Union" parties merged, in January 1927, to become the United National South-West

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1. P.S. Joubert: Partypolitieke Groepering in Suidwes-  
2. Ibid., p.60.

Party.<sup>3</sup>

This union was however a mere marriage of convenience, for, in July 1939, the National Party of South West Africa was re-established as an independent entity.<sup>4</sup> This event was ascribable not only to the U.N.S.W.P.'s rejection of neutrality, but also to the fact that the German-speaking population had, by this time, become both politically splintered and numerically less important. The outbreak of war saw the German-speaking population's political importance further emasculated when the Union Government resorted to internment and, from 1942, denaturalisation.<sup>5</sup>

Contesting the 1940 Legislative Assembly elections on a platform of neutrality and the incorporation of S.W.A. into the Union after "friendly negotiations" with Germany,<sup>6</sup> the N.P. of S.W.A. won only 2 of the 12 seats. The Windhoek Advertiser cautioned against interpreting the result as support for Smuts:

It would be a mistake to construe the result as a victory for the general policy of General Smuts, since a large number of United Party supporters would, if they were resident in the Union, be followers of either Dr Malan or General Hertzog. The result is, however, an endorsement of that portion of the Union Prime Minister's policy in which he stands for the retention, if necessary by force of arms, of Union authority in South-West Africa.<sup>7</sup>

The successful conclusion of the war saw the U.N.S.W.P.

3. Ibid., p.80.

4. Ibid., p.188.

5. Ibid., p.176.

6. Ibid., p.190.

7. Windhoek Advertiser, 28 February 1940. Quoted in P.S. Joubert, op. cit., p.196.

sweep the board in the 1945 Assembly elections by winning all 12 seats.<sup>8</sup> But, lacking a recognised leadership, poorly organised, faced with post-war dissatisfaction and fielding some indifferent candidates, the fortunes of the Party declined rapidly.<sup>9</sup> In a July 1947 by-election it just held the Gobabis constituency. In June and November 1948 it lost Swakopmund and Otjiwarango respectively to the N.P. of S.W.A.<sup>10</sup> An important contributory reason for U.N.S.W.P.'s loss of these seats was Malan's willingness to show greater flexibility than Smuts had in respect of white South-West African representation in the Union parliament.<sup>11</sup>

In January 1948 a joint U.N.S.W.P. and N.P. of S.W.A. delegation had asked Smuts for eight seats in the Union House of Assembly. He had offered four.<sup>12</sup> The new Government, clinging to power by a narrow majority, showed greater enthusiasm for the issue. Calling the question of representation "urgent" the Administrator of S.W.A., on 7 July 1948, arranged a meeting between the Executive Committees of both of the S.W.A. parties in order again to arrive at joint proposals to present to the Government.<sup>13</sup>

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8. The N.P. of S.W.A. contested 11 of the seats. There were 12 420 registered voters 1 600 of whom were on active service. The U.N.S.W.P. won 5 485 votes and the N.P. of S.W.A. 3 162. Just prior to the election the N.P. of S.W.A. established its own newspaper Die Suidwester. P.S. Joubert, op. cit., p.206.
9. The Forum, 7 January 1950, p.8.
10. Ibid.
11. Although Smuts had withdrawn the Union's 1946 application to U.N.O. for permission to annex S.W.A., both his and Malan's subsequent agreement to the representation of that territory's white population in the Union's Parliament amounted to de facto annexation.
12. Rand Daily Mail, 16 January 1948, p.7.
13. Daily News, 8 July 1948, p.1.

The proposals which emerged from the joint committee were, as was only to be expected, extremely favourable to the interests of S.W. African whites. Denying the right of the Union Government to levy direct taxes on the territory, the proposals also repudiated the imposition of provincial status which, the committee asserted, would not satisfy "die spesiale omstandighede van die Gebied."<sup>14</sup> It was on the basis of these "special circumstances" that the proposals asserted the right of S.W.A. to eight seats in the Union House of Assembly<sup>15</sup> and six in the Senate.<sup>16</sup>

These preliminary proposals were considerably modified when final agreement was reached during October 1948 while Malan was on a visit to Territory. It gave S.W.A. six seats in the Assembly and two in the Senate.<sup>17</sup> English-language

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14. D.F. Malan Papers, 1/1/2413, S.W.A., N. Fraser to Kol. P. Imker Hoogenhout, 3 August 1948.
15. The proposals further stipulated: "Sodra die kwota van kiesers soos dit per kiesafdeling in die gebied bestaan, vyftig persent van die neergelegde kwotas soos dit per kiesafdeling in die Unie bestaan, oorsky, sal die Gebied addisionele verteenwoordiging in die Unie Parlement toegestaan word op die Grondslag van helfte van die getal kiesers per kiesafdeling in die Unie, totdat 'n maksimum van twaalf verteenwoordigers in die Volksraad bereik is..." Ibid.  
S.W.A. Population: 1946 Census - whites, 37 858; Africans and Coloureds 322 179. 1951 Census - whites 48 588, Africans and Coloureds, 366 010. J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.58, p.5, No.116, n.d.
16. D.F. Malan Papers, 1/1/2413, S.W.A., N. Fraser to Kol. P. Imker Hoogenhout, 3 August 1948. Four of the Senators were to be chosen on a proportional basis and two were to be nominated "vanweë die spesiale kennis wat hulle van inboorling belange in die Gebied dra." Ibid.
17. Malan agreed to discuss the possibility of four S.W.A. Senate seats with the Cabinet. The question of Financial relations between the Union and the territory was left to a commission to decide. Rand Daily Mail, 22 October 1948, p.1. The commission subsequently allowed S.W.A. to control its own

newspaper comment was extremely hostile to the agreement. A leader in the Rand Daily Mail struck a raw nerve when it noted that "the vote of a German in S.W.A. will be worth three to four times the vote of a South African resident on the Witwatersrand."<sup>18</sup> For its part, a Daily News leader called it a "sordid piece of horse trading."<sup>19</sup> Smuts reportedly said: "So far from the Union annexing South-West Africa, it appeared as though the reverse had occurred."<sup>20</sup>

When members of the Opposition criticized both the size of the proposed S.W.A. representation and the control the territory was subsequently allowed over its own finances, H.N.P. members were able very effectively to retort that, in 1922, Smuts had offered Rhodesia, with an even smaller white population than that of S.W.A.,<sup>21</sup> a very generous financial settlement<sup>22</sup> together with ten seats in the Union Assembly and five in the Senate.<sup>23</sup> A leader in Die Transvaler pointed out:

Met die totstandkoming van die Unie is

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finances, an arrangement that could only be altered at the request of the S.W.A. Assembly. U.P. speakers objected to this provision saying that it was a "far-reaching claim." J.C. Smuts Papers, Volume 389/3, Party Letter to U.P. Speakers Participating in S.W.A., 8 August 1950.

18. Rand Daily Mail, 23 October 1948, p.9. The six S.W.A. seats represented approximately 3 000 voters each as against a 10 366 average for the 34 Witwatersrand constituencies. The Union average was approximately 8 000.
19. Daily News, 5 April 1949, p.6.
20. J.C. Smuts, op. cit., p.516.
21. Rhodesia's population in 1922 consisted of 33 000 whites and 770 000 Africans.
22. Smuts had offered to pay £7 000 000 to the Company for its Rhodesian assets excluding its mineral rights. He also offered a special grant of £50 000 for ten years to make up for customs losses, and a development fund of £500 000 spread over ten years. E.A. Walker, op. cit., p.598.
23. Ibid.

aan die Vrystaat en Natal elk 17 Volksraadsetels gegee hoewel albei slegs 10 of minder so moes gekry het indien hulle op dieselfde grondslag as Transvaal en Kaapland behandel was.<sup>24</sup>

It was also with some justification that an article in The Forum noted:

Democrats in South Africa were angry at the number of seats in the Union parliament allocated to the territory, but one reason was that it would have been quite impracticable for members of parliament in country areas to represent any more space. As it is some constituencies entail five hundred miles of travel...<sup>25</sup>

With the Government having made the re-naturalisation of the almost five thousand Germans denaturalised since 1942 a formality<sup>26</sup> and with two by-elections in the territory having recently been lost, Oosthuizen was informed, in December 1948, that the future of the U.N.S.W.P. looked bleak:

Dit is doodseker dat ons baie veld verloor, en ons hoop om met 'n algemene verkiesing 'n paar setels te wen is nie te rooskleurig nie. Net so is die posisie wat verteenwoordigers in die Unie Parlement betref.<sup>27</sup>

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24. Die Transvaler, 18 February 1949, p.4.

25. The Forum, 12 August 1950, p.6.

26. By August 1950 there were about 3 500 enfranchised German-speakers in S.W.A. Cape Argus, 1 September 1950, p.3. P.S. Joubert wrote: "...aangesien dit die uitgesproke beleid van albei die huidige partye is om toenadering tot die mense te soek en om te poog om hul steun te werf...was daar dus sedert die oorlog van 'n aparte party politieke groep nie meer sprake nie." P.S. Joubert, op. cit., p.176.

27. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South West Africa, Vol.I, L. Taljaard to O.A. Oosthuizen, 24 December 1948.

Smuts's dilemma was illustrated when, on 7 February 1949, he reacted to the introduction of the South-West Africa Affairs Amendment Bill: "The Government is busy digging itself in, but we must avoid giving offence to South-West Africa."<sup>28</sup> It was with this in mind that, on 1 April, with very little to lose, he stole H.N.P. thunder by severely criticising Malan for not having provided the proposed S.W.A. M.P.s with the right to vote on financial matters or on motions of confidence.<sup>29</sup> Malan had been careful to omit both privileges because, despite the auspicious by-election results, the outcome of the elections for the parliamentary seats was by no means a foregone conclusion.<sup>30</sup> Barlow was simply indulging in verbal theatrics when he described Malan's reaction to Smuts's criticism: "I watched Malan and saw a deep smile creep into his eyes...gladness and astonishment spread over his features."<sup>31</sup> Justifying his action, Smuts later, not over sanguinely, wrote: "Die ergste klad op die Wetsontwerp is deur ons toedoen verwyder, en die res sal ook mettertyd regkom. Met 'n goeie kraginspanning behoort ons ons posisie in groot mate te behou."<sup>32</sup>

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28. J. van der Poel, op. cit., J.C. Smuts to Ouma Smuts, 8 February 1949.
29. A.G. Barlow, op. cit., p.325. Act 23 of 1949 accorded S.W.A. M.P.s the same status and powers as those enjoyed by Union members. At the end of April 1949 the Government appointed Dr H.H. Vedder, one of the leaders of S.W.A.'s German-speaking community, and M.C. van Rensburg, Chairman of the N.P. of S.W.A. Congress, as nominated Senators. Their appointment was only to take effect after the S.W.A. elections. Rand Daily Mail, 26 April 1950, p.9.
30. Had the U.N.S.W.P. won all six seats then the Government's majority in the Assembly would have been reduced to one.
31. A.G. Barlow op. cit., p.325.
32. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.282, No.182, J.C. Smuts to Dr F.J. Marais, 26 April 1949.



U.P. assistance to the U.N.S.W.P. had to wait until 31 May 1949 when that Party, sensitive to accusations of surrendering S.W.A. interests to those of the Union, held a special conference to discuss the issue.<sup>33</sup> Relations between the two parties were however close. A letter written four weeks before the conference by an executive of the U.N.S.W.P. to Smuts, made it clear that there was "'n sterk simpatieke houding van die V.N.S.W.P. teenoor u party, en dit is net 'n kwessie van tyd voordat ons geheel en al by u sal aansluit."<sup>34</sup>

It was not thus surprising that the Party, with few resources of its own, agreed to accept U.P. assistance. Publicly it undertook to accept that aid conditional upon the election campaign being waged under its own control and upon its successful parliamentary candidates being "in no respect...subject to the decisions of the caucus of the United Party of South Africa."<sup>35</sup> In fact, in terms of a confidential agreement with the U.P., it acknowledged "in its Union relations, the principle of full co-operation with the Union United Party and its Union organs, especially so far as the Head Committee, the Congress, and the Parliamentary leadership of the Party are concerned."<sup>36</sup> On its part the U.P. acknowledged "in principle its co-operation with the South-West Africa United Party, both in regard to personal and financial assistance for the Party, on the same basis as is received by the provinces in all

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33. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.49, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 25 May 1949.

34. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.281, No.108, Dr F.J. Marais to J.C. Smuts, 3 May 1949.

35. Cape Argus, 9 June 1949, p.9.

36. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Draft Declaration of Relations between the United Parties of the Union and South-West Africa, n.d.

Union concerns."<sup>37</sup> It was unification in all but name.

Subsequent discussions between representatives of the U.N.S.W.P. and Senator Tucker revealed that the former would only be able to raise about £6 000 towards the cost of the elections.<sup>38</sup> Estimating the expenditure on each of the eighteen seats<sup>39</sup> which the Party proposed to contest at £1 500 and the cost of running the Party organisation at £4 000, the total cost arrived at was £31 000.<sup>40</sup> This estimate, Tucker remarked,

we all regarded as being on the high side, although it must be accepted that the expenses of elections in the vast expanses of South-West, including the cost of assistance from the Union in the form of organisers and speakers, will be heavier than normal.<sup>41</sup>

It was on this basis that the U.P. tentatively undertook to pay the U.N.S.W.P. £25 000 to cover its election costs.<sup>42</sup>

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, H. Tucker to J. Higgerty, 11 January 1950.

39. Six Parliamentary seats and twelve Legislative Assembly seats.

40. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, H. Tucker to J. Higgerty, 11 January 1950.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid. When an instalment of £5 000 was paid over in February 1950 the U.P. cautioned that "this whole transaction is naturally one of the utmost secrecy and should throughout be treated as such." Ibid., J.L. Horak to J. Greyling, 21 February 1950. Money was, at times, wastefully spent. There was, for example, no planned use of an aircraft that was placed at the disposal of the U.N.S.W.P. candidate in the Namib seat. Ibid., Election Campaign 1950, A.T. Adams, 25 September 1950.

In September 1949 the Transvaal H.N.P. undertook to send, without cost, two organisers to S.W.A. together with a contribution of £500 to the N.P. of S.W.A. J.G. Stijdom Papers, Vol.153, No.6, Notule van Hoofbestuur Vergadering, 5 September 1949.

Not only did the U.P. undertake to pay the bulk of election expenses but it also, temporarily and reluctantly, took over, in view of the lack of experience and availability of local officials, direct control of the U.N.S.W.P. In September 1949, G.J. Labuschagne, who had been seconded by the U.P. to the U.N.S.W.P., wrote:

I am now sitting here in charge of this organisation, which is by no means a happy position to be in...in order to avoid the Nats saying that an official of the United Party is now taking over the U.N.S.W.P. organisation, F.A. Venter will continue in name as Secretary of their Party.<sup>43</sup>

The major restructuring which the U.P. itself was then undergoing exacted, however, a toll upon its ability to provide a stable and efficient organisation in S.W.A. In October 1949, for example, Labuschagne was recalled to become U.P. Transvaal Provincial Secretary. Oosthuizen informed him:

In the light of these developments, the whole set-up of the organisation in South-West should be re-considered. I fully realise that South-West still requires organisational help from the Union, but it is imperative that, if the organisation there aspires to political stability, it should obtain and appoint its own Secretaries.<sup>44</sup>

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43. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, G.J. Labuschagne to O.A. Oosthuizen, 28 September 1949.

During the period 21 July 1949 to 30 August 1950, 27 prominent U.P. members assisted in S.W.A. for periods ranging from six days to four weeks. In addition 17 paid U.P. organisers were sent for varying periods. Ibid., Election Campaign 1950, Summary of Report on the S.W. African Election Campaign, n.d.

44. Ibid., Correspondence and Reports, 1949-1969, O.A. Oosthuizen to Major G.J. Labuschagne, 10 October

Labuschagne's recall prompted F.A. Venter, the titular Secretary of the U.N.S.W.P., to write a letter of protest to Oosthuizen:

Soos u kan begryp is die huidige onsekere reëling in verband met die organisasie helemal onbevredigend. Dit kom daarop neer dat ons van die hand tot die mond moet leef wat organisasiekragte betref, en dit is helemal seker dat ons organisasie hierdeur ernstige skade sal ly...Die aanstelling van 'n nuwe hoof van die organisasie is as gevolg van omstandighede buite die kwessie omdat ons dood eenvoudig nie 'n plaaslike persoon het wat in hierdie stadium daardie werk op hom kan neem nie.<sup>45</sup>

During his tenure as the U.N.S.W.P.'s de facto Secretary, Labuschagne had provided valuable comment on the way in which the campaign in the territory was progressing. In August he had written:

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that there is a process of 'crossing the floor' among our supporters...that is why we need this team of helpers from the Union. We shall need at least one person per local constituency who will be required to personally contact as many of the voters of that constituency as possible. This means a team of at least eighteen.<sup>46</sup>

In September he wrote:

The Delimitation Commission has now advertised their first sitting for Monday, October 24, at Windhoek...We should therefore expect their

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45. Ibid., F.A. Venter to O.A. Oosthuizen, 5 October 1949.
46. Ibid., G.J. Labuschagne to O.A. Oosthuizen, 6 August 1949.

provisional plan by the middle of November. The figures were made available yesterday, and we have tried our plan - it fits in and our arguments follow very logically...The state of the seats remains the same - four good, one doubtful and one hopeless.<sup>47</sup>

Reporting on the state of the campaign in July 1950, Tucker noted that the registration of voters by the U.N.S.W.P. appeared to have been very thorough.<sup>48</sup> He added that "the U.N.S.W.P. is as confident as ever and regards three Union seats as a certainty, four as likely and five as possible...It is admitted that margins are likely to be very narrow in most seats and consequently I regard the estimate as optimistic."<sup>49</sup>

One of the reasons for his qualification was his observation that the "Nats. are following their usual tactics - colour questions and communism are in the forefront of their campaign."<sup>50</sup> In consequence the U.P. agreed to prepare

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47. Ibid., G.J. Labuschagne to O.A. Oosthuizen, 28 September 1949. The South-West Africa Affairs Amendment Bill entitled Delimitation Commissions in the territory to load or unload constituencies by up to 15 per cent. Daily News, 11 April 1949, p.2. The S.W.A. Delimitation Report was published on 5 May 1950. There was a "slight loading" in the Northern and Central areas. The less populous South was unloaded. Rand Daily Mail, 6 May 1950, p.9.
48. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, Report on South-West Elections, Senator H. Tucker, 29 July 1950. Tucker also wrote: "There are over seventy branches in the territory and in most areas much voluntary assistance is available." Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid. It was the inconsistency, which the U.P. and U.N.S.W.P. did not fail to point out, between its strong anti-Communist stance during the S.W.A. campaign and its reluctance actively to support U.N.O.'s military intervention in South Korea which persuaded the Government, on 4 August 1950, to send

pamphlets on the Citizenship, Mixed Marriages, Immorality, Population Registration, Suppression of Communism and Group Areas Acts for distribution in S.W.A.<sup>51</sup> In addition it undertook, at its own expense, to publish the U.N.S.W.P. supporting Suid-Wes Afrikaner as a bi-weekly instead of as a weekly paper during the two weeks prior to the election.<sup>52</sup>

But the U.P. was never able to shake loose of the H.N.P. accusation that it had opposed the retention of control, by the South-West African Legislative Assembly, of its own financial affairs. In August 1950 the Party vainly attempted to repair the damage by going onto the offensive. It reiterated, in a Party Letter, that it regarded the clause allowing S.W.A. to control its own finances, "as an Entrenched Clause and, as such, is as sacred as the Entrenched Clauses in the Act of Union...The people of South-West Africa have no guarantee that the Nationalist Party [sic] will respect this Entrenched Clause."<sup>53</sup>

More serious was the U.P.'s inability, in view of its internment and deportation policy during and immediately after the war, to attract support from German-speaking S.W. Africans.<sup>54</sup> They constituted, after renaturalisation, about

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an airforce squadron to that country. The Forum, 19 August 1950, p.6.

51. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, Report on South-West Elections, Senator H. Tucker, 29 July 1950.
52. Ibid. The H.N.P. arranged for the distribution of Die Burger in S.W.A. free of charge for a number of months. Ibid., Election Campaign 1950, Impressions, S.W. Africa Elections, C.G. van den Berg, n.d.
53. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, Party Letter to U.P. Speakers Participating in S.W.A. Election Campaign, 8 August 1950.
54. See Appendix XX: The United Party's Post-War Deportation Policy in S.W.A.

15 per cent of the total electorate.<sup>55</sup> A note to Oosthuizen from a U.N.S.W.P. worker pointed out that the N.P. in the territory was "launching a vitriolic campaign, using the antagonism shown towards the Germans during the war as their main weapon. They are dragging out every bit and every thing which has ever been said against the Germans..."<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, soon after coming to power in May 1948, the new Government had encouraged both emigration from Germany to South Africa and the adoption of German war orphans by white South Africans. Malan himself set the example in the latter regard.<sup>57</sup>

With little confidence in its efficacy, the Manifesto of the

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55. One of the reasons why the election was held as late as it was was so as to enable as many Germans as possible to become naturalised. Dönges was reported to have encouraged denaturalised Germans to complete voter registration cards. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, G.J. Labuschagne to O.A. Oosthuizen, 29 August 1949.
56. Ibid., I. Carroll to O.A. Oosthuizen, 12 July 1950. At the U.N.S.W.P. Congress in 1944 it had been resolved that "'n onpartydige kommissie aangestel sal word om vyandsonderdane in Suidwes-Afrika die geleentheid te bied om te bewys waarom hulle nie gerapatrieer sal word nie, en dat hierdie kommissie ook die kwessie met bestrekking tot hul besittings sal ondersoek en nie toegelaat sal word dat geld na Duitsland gaan nie." J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.58, No.3, Memorandum A.H. du Plessis, Nasionale Party van Suidwes-Afrika, June 1950. At the 1945 Congress a motion was introduced requesting the deportation of all Germans in the territory. It was only accepted after it had been watered down so as to apply only to those who had been interned. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Election Campaign 1950, S.W.A. Report, de Villiers Graaff to J.L. Horak, 18 September 1950.
57. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Election Campaign 1950, Report, S.W.A. Elections and Impressions, B. Swemmer to J.L. Horak, 12 September 1950.

U.N.S.W.P. guaranteed the German-speaking population's language and education rights and provided an undertaking that repatriation was a dead letter. It then went on to assert: "The war is over and the white population of South-West Africa is faced by many problems which threaten its actual existence...For this reason the U.N.S.W.Party welcomes the co-operation of the German section in the constructive work that lies ahead."<sup>58</sup> Privately, the Party's officials were not optimistic in regard to support from the German-speaking population: "Ninety per cent of the Germans can be written off. Those who will exercise their vote, will vote Nat. A few of the moderates and business people will support us, but we cannot rely on more support than that."<sup>59</sup> It was largely for this reason that the Party made no special effort to attract the vote of German-speakers. Although a few pamphlets in German were distributed, U.N.S.W.P. workers did not visit German homes.<sup>60</sup>

Strauss, when he visited the territory just prior to the elections, personally conveyed a message written by Smuts to the South-West African electorate. In the message, Smuts, after stating his Party's opposition to U.N.O. trusteeship over the territory, then went on, in what was inevitably seen as a concession to international opinion, to argue that annual reports should continue to be submitted to that organisation.<sup>61</sup> Putting to the acid test the essence of the

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58. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/1, Manifesto, U.N.S.W.P., n.d.  
 59. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, G.J. Labuschagne to O.A. Oosthuizen, 6 August 1949.  
 60. Ibid., Election Campaign 1950, J.G. Killian to J.L. Horak, 25 September 1950.  
 61. Ibid., Report, S.W.A. Elections and Impressions, B. Swemmer to J.L. Horak, 12 September 1950. In July 1950 the International Court at The Hague ruled that



U.P. approach, Smuts's message continued: "The United National South-West Party, like its namesake in the Union, refuses to base its appeal to the electorate on racial ties or ties of blood. It makes its appeal on a social and economic programme..."<sup>62</sup>

On the day before polling day, Smuts was informed by U.P. workers in S.W.A. "that all was going well and that there were hopeful signs of the Germans coming over to us."<sup>63</sup> It was, at the same time, reported that the U.P. Head Office had also been receiving optimistic reports from S.W.A.<sup>64</sup> It was very likely for this reason that Oosthuizen, in summing up his impressions of the campaign, made the same error of judgement he had made prior to the May 1948 General Election. He believed, he wrote,

that at last we would have the opportunity of demonstrating that the Malan Government was on its way out. Strauss had a personal triumph at all his meetings in S. West. These good meetings gave us much satisfaction. Then came the devastating results: a clean sweep of all the Parliamentary seats for the Nats. - not even Windhoek

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the League of Nations Mandate over S.W.A. was still valid and that the South African Government was, therefore, obliged to continue to submit annual reports on the territory to U.N.O. The Malan Government refused, however, to do so. B.M. Schoeman: Parlementêre Verkiesings in Suid Afrika, p.309.

62. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, General Elections, General Smuts's Message to the Electors of S.W.A., n.d. Soon after Smuts had composed the message Oosthuizen wrote: "The Oubaas has 'flu and this has put him back badly. His heart is tired. His mind and body are starting to disintegrate." Ibid., Typed Version of Diary, 2 September 1950.
63. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Election Campaign 1950, Impressions, S.W.A. Elections, C.G. van den Berg, n.d.
64. C. Miles Warren Papers, Narrative, n.d.

for us. In the Legislative Assembly they had it all their own way, 15 to 3. And now they can appoint two additional Senators...Our most cautious prophecies were hopelessly out. The Nats. are growing and their popularity is undiminished. So now we must think and think very hard.<sup>65</sup>

For the S.W.A. Legislative Assembly, the N.P. of S.W.A. drew 12 349 votes and won 15 seats. It gained one seat for every 823 votes cast for it. The U.N.S.W.P. drew 10 033 votes and won 3 seats, one for every 3 444 votes cast for it. For the Union Parliament, 12 434 votes went to the N.P. of S.W.A. The latter won six seats, one for every 2 072 votes cast for it. The U.N.S.W.P. drew 10 033 votes, the same number of votes as its Assembly candidates had drawn, but won no seats.<sup>66</sup>

Despite van der Byl's observation that the election was one where "2 500 votes can turn an election into a landslide...which no organisation, however good, can counter,"<sup>67</sup> it was inevitable that the U.P.'s proxy defeat

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65. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 2 September 1950. On the same day the H.N.P. won the Klerksdorp Provincial by-election with an increased majority of 199 votes over the 1949 result. Die Transvaler, 1 September 1950, p.1.

66. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Newsletters, Newsletter, p.2, October 1950. The Election result increased the Government's House of Assembly majority to 13:

H.N.P.	-	76	U.P.	-	63
A.P.	-	<u>9</u>	L.P.	-	6
		85	N.Reps.	-	<u>3</u>
					72

Vacant seats De Aar - Colesburg and Turffontein. Cape Argus, 1 September 1950, p.3. Senate: Government, 27; Opposition, 21.

67. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Election Campaign 1950, P. van der Byl to J.L. Horak, 14 September 1950.

in S.W.A. would lead to soul searching similar to that which had been a consequence of the 1948 Parliamentary and the 1949 Provincial elections. Commenting on the outcome of the election a leader in the Sunday Tribune observed: "United Party prestige has suffered a serious blow. Nothing is to be gained by glossing over these facts."<sup>68</sup>

Government supporting newspapers took full advantage of the defeat to discredit Strauss. A leader in Die Burger noted: "It is the Platteland Afrikaner vote in relation to which Mr Strauss has been described by his critics as comparatively impotent. And it is that vote in the main that he is confronting in S.W.A."<sup>69</sup> The U.P., in response, rallied solidly behind its acting leader whose position within the Party had also been strengthened by the further discrediting of Colin Steyn. The latter, as had been the case during the Provincial elections, had, due to "personal reasons," taken no part in the S.W.A. election campaign.<sup>70</sup>

The first question which came to the fore as a result of the defeat was whether the U.P. could hope to regain support by continuing to pursue its traditional broad policy. This was pointed out in an unsigned memorandum submitted to the Party's hierarchy:

Dit het heeltemal duidelik geword dat die hoë ideaal van volkseenheid, rassesamewerking en ander hoogvlugtige standpunte geen emosie meer wek by die gewone kieser nie omdat...[hulle]...onder so 'n vurige kleurvooroordeel staan dat enige standpunt wat daardie vooroordeel

68. Sunday Tribune, 3 September 1950, p.8.

69. Quoted in The Forum, 9 September 1950, p.6. Strauss's unpopularity in the rural areas was very likely a consequence of his tenure as Minister of Agriculture.

70. Ibid.

bevredig, resultate moet afwerp.<sup>71</sup>

Van der Byl said:

We did not aggressively attack them on the colour question, but rather spent our time defending ourselves...we must maintain that we are the saviours of white civilisation and that they, by their present action, are dooming it to destruction.<sup>72</sup>

The second question was raised by de Villiers Graaff, who reported that U.N.S.W.P. workers had complained that

while our organisers, with rare exceptions, knew their jobs and were first class, many of the M.P.s and M.P.C.s sent from the Union had little or no idea about organisation, knew nothing about intensive 'huisbesoek' and were not prepared to ask Nationalist speakers questions at meetings. They indicated by comparison that where Nationalist M.P.s were placed in constituencies, they were prepared to take charge of the organisation, do 'huisbesoek' every night and were always ready to question our speakers. Our people, on the other hand, tended to require separate individuals for each of these tasks.<sup>73</sup>

The third factor of vital concern, thrown into even clearer relief by the election campaign, was the Party's lack of

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71. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Election Campaign 1950, 'n Paar Gedagtes oor die Uitslag van die Eleksie in Suidwes-Afrika, unsigned, n.d.
72. Ibid., P. van der Byl to J.L. Horak, 14 September 1950.
73. Ibid., S.W.A. Report, de Villiers Graaff to J.L. Horak, 18 September 1950. Another report noted: "Die stelsel van plaaslike vraestellers soos dit blykbaar in die Unie gevolg word en soos Suidwes ook probeer het, is 'n mislukking en niks meer nie." Ibid., 'n Paar Gedagtes oor die Uitslag van die Eleksie in Suidwes-Afrika, unacknowledged, n.d.

support by a major Afrikaans daily newspaper. In this regard it was reported:

Die plaaslike koerant het sy bes gedoen, maar was uit die aard van die saak nie opgewase teen die stortvloed van propaganda wat deur Die Burger en Die Kruithoring ingegee is nie... 'n sterk Afrikaanse perswese vir die V.P. is seker een van die take wat eerste prioriteit moet geniet.<sup>74</sup>

Neither did U.P. propaganda serve to mitigate the effects of the lack of Afrikaans newspaper support for the Party. The same report noted, despite the reforms of late 1949, that the

propaganda-veldtog in Suidwes het totaal in duie gestort... Deur die Nasionaliste is elke belangrike verwickeling gedurende die eleksie, tot vlak voor stembag, in treffende, goedversorgde pamflette uitgebuit. In hierdie opsig het ons vër tekort geskiet.<sup>75</sup>

In specific reference to the elections in S.W.A. the report observed, with the benefit of hindsight, that it had been a tactical error for the U.P. and U.N.S.W.P. to have maintained ostensibly separate identities:

...baie kiesers het wantrouig geword teenoor 'n party wat die beleid van 'n ander party onderskryf, wat saam met hul sprekers op dieselfde platvorm verskyn het, wat van hulle duisende ponde ontvang het en wat nogtans geweier het om hulle in die parlement met daardie party te vereenselwig.<sup>76</sup>

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74. Ibid., 'n Paar Gedagtes oor die Uitslag van die Eleksie in Suidwes-Afrika, unacknowledged, n.d.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid. In October 1950 the Secretary of the U.N.S.W.P., "in view of the misunderstandings which might arise", declined an invitation to send a delegation to attend the U.P. Union Congress. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.187, Meeting of the Union Action Committee, 27-28 October 1950.

Separation had also led to organisational inefficiencies. Without providing details, de Villiers Graaff reported that three weeks prior to polling day, U.P. officials, at an emergency meeting with the Executive of the U.N.S.W.P., "had a very straight talk to their leaders...which resulted in further requests for assistance through Senator Tucker."<sup>77</sup>

But, if the U.P. had been shocked by the election results, so had the A.P. No longer holding the balance of power, The Forum commented that the Party found itself "in a ludicrous and pitiable plight."<sup>78</sup> Those within the U.P. who had earlier attempted to engineer an alliance with Havenga might well have felt that the U.P. and A.P. deserved their fate for a December 1948 report from the U.N.S.W.P. had stated:

Die Malan-Havenga kombinasie tel natuurlik ook teen ons. Meer as sestig persent van ons Party-lede is ou Hertzoggiete, en as gevolg van die ooreenkoms draai baie van ons party-lede teen ons. Die ou Hertzoggiete dink baie van Mnr. Havenga. As die V.P. in die Unie en die A.P. kan saamspan sal dit ons ook baie help. Kan julle dan nie 'n plan maak nie?<sup>79</sup>

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77. Ibid., Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Election Campaign 1950, S.W.A. Report, de Villiers Graaff to J.L. Horak, 18 September 1950.
78. The Forum, 9 September 1950, p.6. An A.P. attempt to establish branches in S.W.A. had been primarily responsible for the N.P. of S.W.A., in March 1949, deciding to permit members of the O.B. full party membership. Die Volkstem, 23 March 1949, p.1.
79. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, L. Taljaard to O.A. Oosthuizen, 24 December 1948.

CHAPTER 12

THE U.P. AFRIKAANS-LANGUAGE PRESS:  
COLLAPSE AND REVIVAL, JUNE 1948 - MARCH 1951

The U.P. had long felt that the support of a major Afrikaans-language newspaper was a matter of fundamental importance. J.B.M. Hertzog's attempt to establish one had ended in failure.<sup>1</sup> The Party had thereafter to be satisfied with the support of small regional papers. After the 1939 schism, the U.P. lost the support of Hertzog's paper Die Vaderland but retained control of the venerable Pretoria-based weekly Die Volkstem.<sup>2</sup> It also continued to control Unie-Volkspers, a Cape Town based publishing company which had been established by the Party in 1936. Despite a capital-starved existence,<sup>3</sup> the company not only published a weekly, Die Suiderstem, for distribution in the Western Cape, but had also managed to expand its activities by publishing a number of local papers and magazines.<sup>4</sup>

The May 1948 defeat of the U.P. and, in particular, the

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1. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/20/4/1, W. Teichmann to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 February 1951. See Appendix XXI: The Afrikaans- and English-Language Press in South Africa.
  2. "Die Volkstem het 'n geskiedenis van meer as 75 jaar. Dit was die koerant van President Kruger, genls. Joubert en Schalk Burger, en die mondstuk van genls. Botha en Smuts in die swaar jare na die Boereoorlog." Ibid., 28 December 1950.
  3. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence 1947-1955, Aan Aandeelhouers van Unie-Volkspers Beperk, C.J.S. Strydom, August 1950.
  4. Newspapers: Ons Land (Eastern Cape); Die Vrystater; Die Randse Pers; Vereeniging News; East Rand News; Eastern Transvaal Advertiser; Zoutpansberg Review. Weekly magazines: Die Naweek; Spotlight. Quarterly magazine: Ons Eie Boek. Ibid., Unie-Volkspers Beperk, Report of the Judicial Managers, 18 August 1950.

inroads made by the H.N.P. on the Witwatersrand, lent even greater urgency to the need to establish a U.P. supporting daily Afrikaans-language newspaper. To this end, it was decided, at a 22 June 1948 U.P. Central Executive Committee meeting, to deputize Hofmeyr to make the "necessary enquiries in the right quarters" with a view to securing the establishment of such a paper on the Witwatersrand.<sup>5</sup> In late July, Hofmeyr reported that the Board of Directors of the Rand Daily Mail had decided to proceed with the establishment of an Afrikaans morning paper "on a strictly independent, non-partisanship and business basis. The broad policy of the paper would, however, be in support of the United Party."<sup>6</sup>

By September, the stage had been reached where a dummy run of the proposed paper was ready to be printed. The entire project was however dependent upon the results of an advertising canvass then in the process of being conducted.<sup>7</sup> The results must have been disappointing for, in May 1949, the project was dropped in favour of the cheaper alternative of transferring Die Volkstem from Pretoria to the Witwatersrand.<sup>8</sup> There, in association with the Rand Daily Mail, the Party planned to transform it from a weekly to a daily morning paper.<sup>9</sup> This strategy was the only viable one

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5. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.146, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 22 June 1948.
  6. Ibid., No.152, Minutes of Central Executive Committee, 26 July 1948.
  7. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, General Correspondence 1946-1948, Aa2045, Illegible signature, Rand Daily Mail to J.H. Hofmeyr, 15 September 1948.
  8. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.48, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 25 May 1949.
  9. Ibid., No.70, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 3 August 1949.



available to the U.P. for, by its own estimates, the cost of establishing independently, such a newspaper, was put at £101 750.<sup>10</sup>

This time the advertising canvass was promising<sup>11</sup> and Die Volkstem appeared as a Witwatersrand morning paper on 1 November 1949. But, virtually from the start, vocal criticism was expressed from within the U.P. at the paper's lack of political content.<sup>12</sup> Responding to this criticism, Higgerty said that the

advice the Directors had received was that purely political papers had a limited circulation, that politics should be played down and news items treated in such a way as to increase circulation. When the paper was transferred from Pretoria to Johannesburg its circulation was from five to six thousand, which had now risen to approximately ten thousand.<sup>13</sup>

However, succumbing to the majority opinion on the Action Committee, the paper adopted an openly partisan approach and immediately suffered a decline in circulation.<sup>14</sup> By May

10. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, General Correspondence 1946-1948, Afrikaans Daily Newspapers, Estimates of Costs, Revenue and Capital Requirements, n.d. The project to establish an Afrikaans daily became especially urgent because, at that time, Die Transvaler was expanding its circulation into Northern Natal. The U.P. supporting weekly Die Natalse Afrikaner could not be converted into a daily in order to compete. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.70, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 3 August 1949.
11. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.78, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 22 September 1949.
12. Ibid., No.104, Meeting of Union Action Committee, 21 January 1950.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., No.178, Meeting of the Central Action Committee, 28 September 1950.

1950, its circulation had shrunk to four thousand.<sup>15</sup>

As a result of this debacle, the loss sustained by the newspaper in the eight month period during which it appeared as a daily was £41 000. A cash payment of £12 000, £8 000 by the Party and the balance by the company, left a debt of £29 000 plus monthly losses of £1 000.<sup>16</sup>

Reverting to a weekly on 1 July 1950 and with editorial control restored to the company, circulation again gradually began to climb, reaching 7 500 copies per month by February 1951.<sup>17</sup> But, just as it appeared to be on the road to recovery, the company was struck another blow when an Industrial Inspector's report, suspected of being inspired by the Government, condemned the building housing the company's printing presses.<sup>18</sup> This development made the acquisition of capital to cover the company's debt all the more difficult.<sup>19</sup> With the financial situation of Die Volkstem becoming critical, a private printing company which had long been associated with the U.P., Wallach Publishers, agreed to loan Die Volkstem £30 000, provided the Party guaranteed the monthly loss of £1 000 and liquidated the debt of £29 000.<sup>20</sup> Faced with a decision by the Directors of Die Volkstem to cease publication at the end of February 1951 unless financial assistance was forthcoming, it was

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15. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1949-1969, No.165, Minutes of the Transvaal Executive Committee Meeting, 11 January 1951.
  16. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/20/4/1, W. Teichmann to J.G.N. Strauss, 28 December 1950.
  17. Ibid., 17 February 1951.
  18. Ibid.
  19. Ibid., 28 December 1950.
  20. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, No.175, Meeting of Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1950.

decided in December 1950, in view of the Party's inability to shoulder the debt burden, to allow the cessation of publication to take place.<sup>21</sup>

This decision had not been taken lightly. Strauss, faced with this damaging development so early in his leadership, was warned that:

Die storie sal eenvoudig versprei word dat u net 'n Engelse stedelike party verteenwoordig, dat u vir alles wat Afrikaans is geen tyd het nie, nog minder vir die platteland en die Boere, en dat u daarom die Afrikaanse koerant wat al die ander gebruik het vir meer as 75 jaar, laat doodloop het.<sup>22</sup>

As damaging to the U.P. were the events, virtually simultaneous with those that led to the closure of Die Volkstem, surrounding the demise of the Unie-Volkspers company in Cape Town. The company had originally been founded solely for the purpose of publishing Die Suiderstem. At later stages additional magazines and newspapers had been added to its list of publications. As a result of poor management,<sup>23</sup> escalating costs and the fact that the "papers had a strong political bias, which is not conducive to a large circulation",<sup>24</sup> the company suffered a severe post-war

21. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/5/1, Vol.I, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 15 December 1950.

22. Ibid., File 1/20/4/1, W. Teichmann to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 February 1951.

23. The Judicial Managers later found that the records of the company were in a chaotic state. No attempt had been made for some considerable time to collect renewal subscriptions as they fell due even though the subscribers continued to receive the various publications. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence 1947-1955, Unie-Volkspers Beperk, Report of the Judicial Managers, 18 August 1950.

24. Ibid.

decline in revenue. Towards the end of 1947 it started to issue fraudulent circulation figures for its publications in an effort to obtain higher advertising revenue.<sup>25</sup> When this became known in late 1949, the company, faced with heavy claims for compensation from advertisers, managed to arrive at a compromise arrangement granting advertisers free advertising space until the end of August 1950. This arrangement involved the company in a further loss of revenue, from November 1949, of approximately £3 000 per month.<sup>26</sup> The company's difficulties were compounded by the withdrawal of its Circulation Certificates by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. This development made new advertising contracts virtually impossible to obtain. As a result, the company's total losses for the period 1 July 1949 to 28 March 1950 amounted to almost £75 000.<sup>27</sup>

These politically damaging developments had been further exacerbated by the Cape Chairman of the U.P., J.W. Mushet. He had, in 1949, assumed the Chairmanship of Unie-Volkspers "on the strength of definite undertakings given me, and promises of definite financial support to see the company put back on its feet."<sup>28</sup> In October 1949, without first having received authority from the U.P. Union Finance Committee to do so, he had given an assurance to a firm of paper merchants that the U.P. would stand guarantee for two orders amounting to almost £14 000. When the bills were not met, the firm proceeded to take legal action against Mushet.<sup>29</sup> He later warned Oosthuizen:

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25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.285, No.160, J.W. Mushet to J.C. Smuts, 28 March 1950.

29. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence 1947-1955, O.A. Oosthuizen to de Villiers Graaff, 18 August 1950.

If I go to court I can only plead that I made the statement I did bona fide...In other words I must accuse the Action Committee, the last thing in the world I want to do. And as Chairman of the Party in the Cape I and the Party would cut a sorry figure in Court.<sup>30</sup>

Complaining that "promises have not been kept, financial support has been cut off", Mushet resigned the Chairmanship of the company in March 1950.<sup>31</sup> The contrary was in fact the case, for Smuts had virtually reduced himself to begging for assistance in his attempts to save the company. In a letter to Ernest Oppenheimer he wrote:

Harry is going up to the Rand, and in addition to other tasks, we have asked him to see what can be done to help us out of the financial jam into which the Suiderstem has brought us. The paper cannot be let down without a cataclysmic effect on our Party at the Cape, and by hook or crook we have to prevent its going into liquidation or judicial managership, with all the damaging public disclosures which will follow...I shall be deeply obliged to you if you could help him with advice or otherwise, in whatever way the crisis calls for.<sup>32</sup>

No assistance was however forthcoming, and thus, on 29 March 1950, the Unie-Volkspers Company was placed under judicial management.<sup>33</sup> Referring, in May, to both the company's debt

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30. Ibid., J.W. Mushet to O.A. Oosthuizen, 27 November 1950.
31. J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.285, No.160, J.W. Mushet to J.C. Smuts, 28 March 1950.
32. Ibid., Vol.286, No.152, J.C. Smuts to Sir E. Oppenheimer, 23 February 1950.
33. As a result of the publication of the judicial manager's first report, on 18 August 1950, the Attorney-General instituted an investigation into the past administration of the Company's affairs. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence, 1947-1955, Unie-Volkspers Beperk,

and the money which Mushet had taken upon himself to guarantee in the Party's name, H.F. Oppenheimer wrote:

I see no object in calling a meeting of the Finance Committee to discuss this matter. All members of the Committee are aware that the Party does not have the amount of £14 000 to pay over, even if it wished to do so, and that the United South Africa Trust Fund has decided not to make any donations to the Party for the purpose of supporting Die Suiderstem.<sup>34</sup>

In an effort to save the company, the judicial managers discontinued, at the end of June 1950, publication of Die Suiderstem and introduced a new weekly paper called Die Landstem.<sup>35</sup> Into this paper they incorporated the weekly papers Ons Land and Die Vrystater and the weekly magazine Die Naweek.<sup>36</sup>

This exercise, while serving the interests of the company's shareholders, the majority of whom were Party members, did

Second Report of the Judicial Managers, 9 March 1951. The report, which was issued some two weeks prior to polling day in S.W.A., was given wide publicity in the territory by Die Burger. Ibid., Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Election Campaign 1950, Vol.I, Impressions, S.W.A. Elections, C.G. van den Berg, n.d.

34. Ibid., Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence 1947-1955, H.F. Oppenheimer to O.A. Oosthuizen, 13 May 1950.

35. Mushet, in the light of subsequent efforts to remove him from the Cape leadership of the Party, saw the paper's demise as part of a plot directed against himself. In a letter to Strauss, he wrote: "The Suiderstem I state emphatically could have been saved, ought to have been saved, but for the ...forces that 'up North' were planning my elimination." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/2, J.W. Mushet to J.G.N. Strauss, 1 November 1951.

36. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Unie-Volkspers Correspondence 1947-1955, Unie-Volkspers Beperk,

little to assist the political progress of the U.P. Speaking at a U.P. Cape Head Committee meeting in September, de Villiers Graaff said that "it was essential that the complexion of Die Landstem should be more in the nature of a newspaper in which the extreme political side should be soft peddled."<sup>37</sup> In a suggestion that was later put to the meeting and carried, he went on to say that "the sooner we assist to push the circulation of Die Landstem up to 50 000 as a basis for financial stability, the sooner it would be possible to provide a separate weekly fighting organ."<sup>38</sup>

But, by December 1950, it had become plain that Unie-Volkspers could not be rescued. Higgerty said: "The amount required to save the Unie-Volkspers would be £200 000 and the Party did not have the money."<sup>39</sup> Die Landstem, which by December had a circulation of 37 000 copies, was transferred for a nominal sum to a private company, set up under U.P. auspices, in February 1951.<sup>40</sup> Unie-Volkspers went into liquidation in March.

Compounding the political embarrassment caused by the collapse of both Die Volkstem and the Unie-Volkspers Company, another U.P. publication also fell into financial difficulties during the course of 1949. The weekly broadsheet The Voter had been established in mid-1947 by the

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- Report of the Judicial Managers, 18 August 1950.
37. Ibid., Cape Provincial Head Committee Minutes 1941-1951, Meeting of the Cape Provincial Head Committee, 8 September 1950.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, No.175, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1950.
40. Ibid., No.189, Meeting of Central Executive Committee, 2 February 1951.

Cape Peninsula and Western Province Council of the U.P. Originally published in a bilingual format, it had subsequently been decided to publish it in separate English and Afrikaans issues. The alteration immediately plunged the paper into debt.<sup>41</sup> In February 1950 its editor requested an immediate grant of £1 400 and a subsidy of £1 000 per annum.<sup>42</sup>

Although a subsidy of £200 per month was subsequently provided,<sup>43</sup> the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity "expressed itself deeply concerned over the matter and the Chairman spoke for all members when he said that a magazine with a circulation of 2 000-2 500 was virtually valueless."<sup>44</sup> The same view was echoed at an October meeting of the Committee and, as a result, it was decided to recommend the publication of a weekly "fighting magazine"<sup>45</sup> which would incorporate both The Voter and the Party News-Letter.<sup>46</sup> This decision was ratified at a Union Action Committee meeting in late October 1950.<sup>47</sup>

In response to the Union Action Committee's decision, the Division of Information produced a memorandum on the subject

41. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity 1949-1952, No.79, Minutes of Meeting, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 20 February 1950.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.173, The Voter, 27 September 1950.
44. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity 1949-1952, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 10 August 1950.
45. Ibid., No.245, 5 October 1950. A dummy of the proposed weekly, called Commando, was presented to the Committee.
46. Ibid., No.79, 20 February 1950. The News-Letter had a circulation of between 40 000 and 50 000.
47. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.187, Meeting of the Union



of a political weekly, which it envisaged appearing in separate English and Afrikaans editions, in early November. The memorandum observed:

Since the unfortunate demise of the United Party's two Afrikaans daily newspapers, a quarter-million Afrikaans-speaking voters have been left without a political medium which they can call their own. Over a period of time, it is feared that the absence of Afrikaans dailies must lead to a loss of support to the Party.<sup>48</sup>

Arguing that a political weekly was a viable and effective alternative to an unsustainably expensive daily, the memorandum went on to point out:

It is a striking commentary on the value of such a weekly that the Nationalists, with a powerful and numerous daily press at their disposal, have seen fit to support wholeheartedly a similar political publication, Die Kruithoring. Recently, immediately after it had been decided to cease the publication of the United Party dailies, the Nationalist Federal Council decided to make Die Kruithoring a national instead of a provincial paper as a preliminary to turning it into a weekly.<sup>49</sup>

The memorandum concluded with what, in retrospect, were extraordinarily optimistic assessments. Apart from the possibility of having to employ an assistant journalist, it envisaged the entire production process of the new publications being undertaken by the then extant Division of

Action Committee, 27-28 October 1950.

48. Ibid., Division of Information, Internal Administration File 1950-1952, Memorandum on Proposed United Party Weekly, 7 November 1950. The memorandum envisaged that the new weekly would go primarily to subscribers whereas Die Landstem would be sold directly to the public. Ibid.
49. Ibid.

Information.<sup>50</sup> It estimated costs, at a circulation of 20 000, at £13 541. The income, at that level of circulation, from both subscriptions and advertisements, was estimated at £16 250.<sup>51</sup>

The first edition of 37 000 copies of the new English and Afrikaans weeklies, called Challenge and Ons Blad respectively, appeared on 19 January 1951.<sup>52</sup> The date chosen was deliberate for it enabled the Party to save face by incorporating the name Die Volkstem, which paper was then on the point of closing down, as a subtitle to Ons Blad.<sup>53</sup>

With each marginal constituency being allocated a quota of subscribers, the total paid circulation of the two weeklies, by 27 March 1951, had reached 8 590.<sup>54</sup> As had been hoped,

50. Ibid. In February 1951 Oosthuizen reported that "the Division of Information is no longer a Division of Information. It is in fact a newspaper office..." O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1951.
51. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File 1950-1952, Memorandum on Proposed United Party Weekly, 7 November 1950.
52. The title Ons Blad was first used on an election weekly during the 8 November 1950 De Aar-Colesburg Parliamentary by-election campaign. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.187, Meeting of Union Action Committee, 27-28 October 1950.
53. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/5/1, Vol.I, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 15 December 1950. At the same time as it launched the papers the Division of Information also established a Press Syndication Service. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.187, Report on Division of Information for the Union Executive Committee, 2 February 1951. Die Natalse Afrikaner also closed down with the launch of the papers.
54. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/20/2/1, Political Weeklies, Report to Directors by E. Malan, 28 March 1951. Die Kruithoring's circulation at the time was 7 071 (1948 circulation 11 300), that of Die

about 60 per cent of the subscriptions were for Ons Blad.<sup>55</sup>

The reason why only marginal constituencies had been chosen for the launch was that, quite apart from the necessary propaganda value, in the case of new publications advertising revenue tended to lag behind publication costs, a phenomenon exacerbated where circulation increased rapidly.<sup>56</sup> Despite this precaution, the losses sustained by Ons Blad and Challenge were considerably higher than had been expected. In contrast to the earlier optimistic assessment, it was discovered that "in spite of the fact that it had been anticipated that there would be no difficulty in obtaining advertisements, this had not proved to be the case."<sup>57</sup> As a consequence the Union Finance Committee "decided to regard all revenue as a 'windfall' and not count on it to meet some of the costs of the papers."<sup>58</sup>

Despite the circulation of the papers having risen to just over 21 000 by November 1951,<sup>59</sup> there is little evidence to

Oosterlig was 8 227. The U.P. was not able accurately to state what the circulation of its own newspapers had been. Die Suiderstem's circulation was estimated at about 5 000. It was observed that Die Volkstem's circulation figures "seem to be somewhat vague". Ibid.

55. Ibid., Report to Union Executive, Progress of Political Weeklies, E. Malan, n.d.
56. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, S.J. Marais Steyn to A. de Bruijne, 3 January 1951. The target figure for the end of August was set at 20 000 subscribers. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.197, Report of the Division of Information for the Central Executive Committee Meeting to be held on 8 March 1951.
57. Ibid., Division of Information, Internal Administration File 1950-1952, Report on Meetings of the Central Advisory Committee held during January 1951, 10 February 1951.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory

indicate that they exerted any significant effect upon marginal voters. The unpalatable truth was that the political views expressed in U.P. supporting newspapers were, in general, unacceptable to Afrikaans-speakers. How, for example, could the papers demand the upholding of the Constitution without being said to be contemptuous of the 'volkswil', and how could they support the U.P.'s continued reliance upon the United South Africa Trust Fund and yet counter the accusation that the Party was dependent upon "Hoggenheimer" money?<sup>60</sup>

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Committee on Publicity 1949-1952, No.349, Minutes of Meeting, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 1 November 1951. The smallest Government supporting daily, Die Volksblad, had a circulation of 19 000 - 22 000. The weekly Die Oosterlig had a circulation of 8 000 - 9 000. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.460.

60. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 2, File 76, Memorandum on Propaganda, 5 July 1952.

PART VREFORMED AND AROUSEDCHAPTER 13U.P. RE-ORGANISATION, APRIL 1950 - MARCH 1951

Seriously weakened by the working majority which the H.N.P. had acquired in both Houses of Parliament as a result of the S.W.A. elections and by the volte face of one of his M.P.s on the Coloured vote issue, an action which raised the spectre of further defections,<sup>1</sup> Havenga was obliged to make concessions to his coalition partners. In a joint statement issued on 13 October 1950, Malan and Havenga announced that agreement had been reached between the H.N.P. and A.P. on the separate representation of the Coloured electorate.

In essence the agreement provided for the representation of the Coloured electorate, who were to be placed on a separate roll, by four whites in the House of Assembly.<sup>2</sup> It provided further for one nominated Senator to represent Coloured interests and two elected Provincial Councillors.<sup>3</sup> The agreement included a provision that the 'Coloured Representatives' in the Assembly should at all times be

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1. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.166.
  2. There was one Member of Parliament for every 17 466 whites. The agreement provided for one House of Assembly representative for every 257 500 Coloureds. Ibid., p.176.
  3. These representatives were to enjoy all the rights and privileges of other members of their respective bodies except for the limitation, also imposed upon the 'Natives' Representatives', of not being able to vote during the election of Senators. M. Ballinger, op. cit., p.269.

maintained at the ratio of 4 to 150.

This latter provision, the Coloured representation in the Senate, together with proposals to establish an elected Coloured Representative Council on which appointed representatives from the other provinces would also serve, and the creation of a sub-department of Coloured Affairs, formed the basis of the Government's contention that the agreement did not constitute a reduction in existing rights.<sup>4</sup> B.J. Schoeman, however, pointed out:

In die verklaring is egter nie spesifiek gesê dat die twee provinsiale verteenwoordigers Kleurlinge kan wees nie. Daarop het Havenga aangedring op grond daarvan dat hy geen vermindering in politieke regte van Kleurlinge wou aanvaar nie. In die opsig het hy bepaald sy gewete effens gerek, want dit lei min twyfel dat die ooreenkoms wel op 'n vermindering van regte neergekom het.<sup>5</sup>

Five days after having issued the joint statement, Malan announced the appointment of two new Ministers, Senator H.F. Verwoerd as Minister of Native Affairs and the A.P.'s J.H. Viljoen as Minister of Mines, Education, Arts and Science.<sup>6</sup> A leader in The Star observed:

Mr J.H. Viljoen will enter the Cabinet with a certain amount of embarrassment,

4. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.173.
5. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.179. In an action virtually without precedent J.G. Strijdom had attacked, during an H.N.P. caucus meeting, the agreement's failure specifically to exclude Coloureds from the Cape Provincial Council. Asked by Schoeman whether he would vote against it in Parliament, Strijdom replied: "Nee, die tevredenheid sal ek die Sappe nie gee nie." Ibid., p.180.
6. In June 1950 Malan had offered the Governor Generalship to Havenga. Sunday Times, 18 June 1950, p.1. Upon his refusal, Dr E.G. Jansen, Minister of Native Affairs, was appointed to the office.

remembering the price his leader had to pay for his presence there. The timing of the Cabinet announcement was a cynical admission by the Prime Minister that the Afrikaner Party's share in the appointments depended on the outcome of the Coloured vote negotiations.<sup>7</sup>

Strauss, newly and unanimously elected leader of the U.P.,<sup>8</sup> in his opening speech to the seventh Union Congress of the Party on 21 November,<sup>9</sup> termed the Malan-Havenga agreement "cynical sophistry" and "the nadir of political expediency at the expense of honour and good faith..."<sup>10</sup> What, however, could not be denied was the extent to which Malan's position had been strengthened. The consequent necessity for the U.P., after having largely cleared its Augean press stables, both to expand its efforts and increase its effectiveness became all the more urgent.

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7. The Star, 19 October 1950, p.10.
  8. Smuts had died on 11 September 1950, twelve days after the S.W.A. elections. In a note read to the U.P. Union Congress, Strauss was given the imprimatur of "Ouma" Smuts: "...ek voel seker dat u keuse goed was en dat hy waardig is om ons Party te lei." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Union Congress and Follow-up Campaign 1950-1951, Vol.2, Facsimile of letter from "Ouma" Smuts to J.G.N. Strauss, November 1950.
  9. Strauss's nomination had been approved unanimously at the Cape Congress on 23 October, the Orange Free State Congress on 30 October and the Natal Congress on 6 November 1950. At the Transvaal Congress, on 18 September, he was "given wonderful support". O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 12 November 1950.
  10. During his speech at the Congress Strauss introduced a new concept, the "Four Securities": (1) International Security: opposition to Republicanism and isolationism; (2) Security of White Leadership; (3) Economic Security: a commitment to Capitalism; (4) Security of Human Rights. An Anchor was adopted in January 1951 to symbolize the Four Securities. Challenge, 19 January 1951. p.1.

The roots of the reforms implemented towards the end of 1950 had their origin in Oosthuizen's investigation into the functioning of British political parties. Having returned from his tour in mid-April 1950, the Union Action Committee instructed him to "draw up full and explicit recommendations in regard to the organisational structure and set-up of the Party..."<sup>11</sup>

What structural reforms had thus far been introduced had not lived up to expectation. Gallo, while acknowledging that the Division of Organisation had achieved some measure of success, was extremely critical of the lack of progress made by the Division of Information, particularly as the Trust considered it as being of more importance than the Division of Organisation.<sup>12</sup> He explicitly blamed some of the shortcomings of the Division, situated in Johannesburg, on its physical separation from the Head Office in Pretoria. He also blamed the Action Committee which, he said, had given "absolutely no directive to the Division since it was formed."<sup>13</sup>

It was with these criticisms in mind that the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, in May 1950, sat down to discuss Oosthuizen's report on re-organisation.<sup>14</sup> Because

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11. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.112, Minutes of Union Action Committee, 24 April 1950.
  12. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.111, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 15 April 1950.
  13. Ibid., No.165, 29 May 1950.
  14. Oosthuizen said that he had already "spoken to individual members of the Union Action Committee and he understood that they were in agreement with the broad principles he had suggested." Ibid., No.128, 5 May 1950. Oosthuizen also wrote reports on the Nomination of Election Candidates and on the Junior U.P. See Appendix XXII: History and Organisation of



of the workload imposed on U.P. M.P.s, partly as a consequence of the lack of a Parliamentary research department, Party organisation had suffered while Parliament was in session. In order to provide continuity in the running of the Party, the first of Oosthuizen's proposals was that the Party leader should appoint a Party chairman endowed with full executive powers.<sup>15</sup> Suggesting that Oosthuizen had given little thought to the threat such an appointment would pose to the authority of the General Secretary, the proposal continued: "As the Chief Executive Officer of the Party, the General Secretary would work closely with the Chairman."<sup>16</sup>

Besides continuity of administration the logic of the proposal to appoint a chairman was made apparent in an observation by Senator Tucker that "one of the most striking aspects of the reports on the United Kingdom was that of the close-knit, well organised central control in the political parties there."<sup>17</sup> Pursuing this logic, the report went on to recommend not only the physical centralisation of all the departments of the Head Office organisation under one roof but also the replacement of the Union Action Committee by a smaller Executive Committee. Referring to the latter, the report suggested that "there was a fairly general feeling that the Union Action Committee is too large to be a working body and that...a smaller committee should be established with whom Head Office could work in close contact..."<sup>18</sup>

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the Junior United Party.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid. Oosthuizen also supported the establishment of a Standing Womens' Advisory Committee and a Standing Advisory Committee for candidates. Ibid. See Appendix XXIII: Resumé of O.A. Oosthuizen's Recommendations in Regard to the Nomination of United Party Election Candidates.

Commenting on this recommendation, Gallo lent a businessman's perspective when he said that

it was clear that the Committee agreed that the United Party must be re-organised and drive and efficiency were the first essentials...in reality, it only involved the seeking out and the appointment of eight or ten first class men to see that the re-organised machine would work. The question of provincial representation must not be allowed to slow down the machine. The members of the Executive Committee must be those men best qualified to assist the Party, regardless of where they come from.<sup>19</sup>

Moving on to the next recommendation, a committee member made the observation that particularly noticeable in the report was "the essential importance of a well organised and competent Information Division, combining both research and publicity, in assisting in the definition of the Party's policies and programmes."<sup>20</sup> Agreeing, in the light of the Party's repeated inability accurately to forecast election results, "that the most important section of the Division of Information will be the Research Division, and that this section should be established before any other,"<sup>21</sup> the committee instructed Oosthuizen to produce "an ideal plan

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., No.126. To members of the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 5 May 1950.

21. Ibid., No.128, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 5 May 1950. The need for a Research Division was provided additional urgency in September 1950 when it was noted that "the forecast given by Party officials both for South-West Africa and the Klerksdorp by-election had been completely inaccurate. The Nats. on the other hand had forecast the voting figures with astonishing accuracy." Ibid., No.237, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 7 September 1950.

for the Division of Information."<sup>22</sup>

Subsequent meetings of the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, on 20, 27 and 29 May 1950, settled into what, at times, was acrimonious debate as to where, in view of Oosthuizen's stress upon centralisation, the U.P. Head Office should be established: Johannesburg or Pretoria. The debate, in essence, was about where, in terms of the rural or main urban centres, the Party should concentrate its efforts in order to regain power.

Opening the discussion, on 20 May, Oosthuizen said that the Head Office had traditionally, and as a matter of convenience, been situated in Pretoria. But, he continued:

when it became apparent, about six months ago, that a great deal of help could and would be given to the Party by businessmen in Johannesburg, it had been decided that the Divisions of Information, Finance and Organisation should open their offices in Johannesburg. The situation during the last six months, with...[the General Secretary's]...office in Pretoria and the Divisions' offices in Johannesburg, had not proved successful.<sup>23</sup>

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22. Ibid., No.128, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 5 May 1950. Oosthuizen produced the Memorandum on 1 August 1950. See Appendix XXIV: Diagram of the Functions of the United Party Division of Information. The H.N.P. had established a Propaganda Office in Cape Town in September 1946, in 1947 it underwent a name change becoming the Information Committee. It analysed news reports from a wide variety of sources and established a political library. It later also established a new information service for newspapers and produced Skietgoed, a monthly newsletter which was sent to all Party officials and newspapers. Between its establishment and May 1948, the Committee distributed 194 000 copies of pamphlets in marginal constituencies. J.L. Basson, op. cit., p.548.
23. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central

He then went on to argue that he

considered the main task in front of the United Party at the moment is to restore confidence in the Party amongst the Plattelanders. It was of prime importance that people living on the Platteland should be able to regard the Party as their Party. Johannesburg is always considered, by those living outside it, as being a special city and one not associated in any way with the country.<sup>24</sup>

Responding, Gallo, supported by the other committee members, said that twelve months earlier a skeleton re-organisation plan had been approved by the Union Action Committee and one of the central points in that plan had been that the Head Office should be in Johannesburg. It was on this basis, he said, that he had collected funds for the Party and "unless the Party was prepared to come to Johannesburg and re-organise itself, he had been collecting money under false pretences."<sup>25</sup>

The debate ended inconclusively on 29 May. Oosthuizen remained committed to recapturing the countryside<sup>26</sup> while the remainder of the committee was unanimous that "attention must be directed to the urban areas...neglect of the urban areas by the United Party in the past had lost the Party the 1948 elections. It could not be assumed that the urban areas are safe..."<sup>27</sup> This unresolved issue and the advice of the committee on the rest of Oosthuizen's recommendations

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Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.151, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 20 May 1950.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., No.156, 27 May 1950.

26. Oosthuizen had even suggested that Smuts would be personally affronted were the Head Office to be removed from Pretoria. Ibid.

27. Ibid., No.161, 29 May 1950.

were forwarded to the Union Action Committee for its consideration.<sup>28</sup>

Oosthuizen failed, however, much to the "regret" of the Advisory Committee on Publicity, to arrange a meeting of the Action Committee at the conclusion of the Parliamentary session because the members concerned said that "they simply must return to their homes..."<sup>29</sup>

After having eventually met in August, the Action Committee forwarded the Advisory Committee on Publicity's proposals to the National Advisory Committee for its consideration.<sup>30</sup> Despite the fact that the Chairmen of the Regional Advisory Councils had, at the beginning of August, found the proposals "to be on too small a scale and unambitious",<sup>31</sup>

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28. It was only in April 1951 that the issue of the physical location of the Party offices was addressed. The new U.P. Central Executive Committee decided to maintain the status quo for the "time being". Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.237, Minutes, Central Executive Committee, 20 April 1951.
29. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.185, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 20 June 1950. The Party's functional paralysis while Parliament was in session was a major problem. In Natal, for example, the Provincial Executive met in August 1950, the first time it had done so in five months. At the meeting complaints were voiced that no lead had been provided by the Party on either the Group Areas or Suppression of Communism Bills, that no public meetings had been held and that this had "allowed the Government and our opponents in Durban to take the initiative." Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.64, Minutes, Natal Executive Committee, 8 August 1950.
30. Ibid., Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets, 1950-1956, H. Cooper to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 August 1950.
31. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, Minutes,

the National Advisory Committee responded favourably to them. It noted, for instance, "with pleasure", the proposal to appoint a Chairman of the Party.<sup>32</sup> It then went on to suggest that, as the Advisory Committee to the Division of Information had proved itself to be of benefit, similar small Committees should be appointed to assist the other Divisions as well.<sup>33</sup> Requesting further detailed proposals and the budgets for each Division,<sup>34</sup> the National Advisory Committee's memorandum concluded:

The experience of the Publicity Advisory Committee during the last year has shown that with people attending the Parliamentary session it is not possible to make any progress at all. It is, therefore, essential that the plan envisaged be put into full working order before the commencement of the forthcoming Parliamentary session.<sup>35</sup>

Heeding this advice, Strauss submitted the proposals regarding the establishment and composition of the Central Executive Committee, which was to supersede the Union Action Committee, to the Union Head Committee. There they were

Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 10 August 1950.

32. Ibid., Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets, 1950-1956, H. Cooper to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 August 1950.

33. Ibid.

34. In February 1951 the Division of Information, in order to create an "ideal establishment", submitted a request for £56 500. By making cuts elsewhere the Union Finance Committee granted the Division £25 000 to cover its expenses for six months. Ibid., Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Report on Meetings of the Central Advisory Committee during January 1951, 10 February 1951.

35. Ibid., Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets 1950-1956, H. Cooper to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 August 1950.

unanimously adopted on 21 November and, on the following day, were endorsed by the Union Congress.<sup>36</sup>

Strauss used the opportunity afforded on 6 December, at the first meeting of the Central Executive, to place young and able men of his own choice into key positions of authority in the Party. Four of the eight members he co-opted<sup>37</sup> onto the new Executive were either placed in charge of, or onto the committees of, the Party's old or newly established Divisions.<sup>38</sup> The only members left in the Party hierarchy

36. Ibid., Central Congresses 1934-1950, Vol.I, Extract from the Minutes of the Seventh Union Congress of the U.P., 22 November 1950. The Central Executive was composed as follows:

(1) The Leader (the title was another legacy of Oosthuizen's report), J.G.N. Strauss.

(2) The Chairman of the Union Congress, Dr C. Steyn.

(3) The Four Provincial Chairmen: J.G.N. Strauss, Transvaal; Dr C. Steyn, Orange Free State; J.W. Mushet, Cape; D.E. Mitchell, Natal.

(4) The Chief Whip, J.W. Higgerty.

(5) Two representatives from each Province to be elected by the Union Head Committee.

(6) Not more than eight members to be co-opted on the recommendation of the Leader.

Ibid. Commenting on the Union Congress, Oosthuizen remarked: "It was a good Congress and went according to plan. No surprises except the election of Colin Steyn as Chairman." O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed version of Diary, 26 November 1950.

37. Of the 8 co-opted members, 4 were from the Cape Province, 3 from the Transvaal and 1 from Natal. The Orange Free State already had three representatives on the Executive Committee.

38. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.175, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1950.

(1) Finance Committee: J.W. Higgerty, Chairman; J.G.N. Strauss; H. Tucker and H. Oppenheimer (Cape Prov. co-opted). H. Tucker was later removed when it was decided that none of the 'Spending Departments' should be represented on the Committee. Ibid., No.189, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 2 February 1951.

(2) Division of Organisation: Joint Chairmen,

who remained vulnerable to open criticism were the Orange Free State leader, Dr. C. Steyn, the Cape Provincial leader, J.W. Mushet and ironically, the author of the reforms, O.A. Oosthuizen.

Continuing the reform process, the Central Executive Committee, in February 1951, appointed F. Waring and C. Miles Warren to liaise between the Parliamentary caucus and the newly established Division of Research.<sup>39</sup> This Division would, in its turn, co-ordinate the work of the also newly established Parliamentary secretariat.<sup>40</sup>

The function of the Division of Research was expressed in general terms: to ascertain "for the Party all the relevant facts concerning the problems with which the Party will have to deal..."<sup>41</sup> But its specific purpose, in view of the U.P.'s obvious weakness in both areas, was to collect information for the Party's proposals to be presented to the next Delimitation Commission and to draft long-term policy objectives.<sup>42</sup>

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P.B. Bekker (Transvaal Prov. Rep.) and Sir de Villiers Graaff (Cape Prov. Rep.). No standing committee on Organisation was appointed, instead the Joint Chairmen were authorised to constitute such ad hoc committees as might be deemed necessary.

(3) Division of Information: S.J. Marais Steyn (Transvaal co-opted), Chairman.

(4) Division of Research: H. Tucker (Transvaal co-opted), Chairman.

(5) Division of Fund Raising: A.E.P. Robinson (Transvaal co-opted), Chairman.

(6) Division of Junior Affairs: L. Steenkamp (Natal Prov. Rep.), Chairman.

Ibid., No.175, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 6 December 1950.

39. Ibid., No.189, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 2 February 1951.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., No.221, Division of Research, Progress Report, 6 March 1951.

42. Ibid., No.189, Meeting of the Central Executive



Soon after its establishment, on 6 December 1950, consultations took place between A.E.P. Robinson, Chairman of the Division of Fund Raising, and members of both the National Advisory Committee and the United South Africa Trust Fund.<sup>43</sup> The purpose of the meetings was to determine which sources of revenue would be available to the Division and the Trust respectively so as to ensure smooth co-operation between the National and local organisations of the Party and the Advisory Committees.<sup>44</sup>

It was subsequently decided that each of the three broad categories into which potential sources of revenue had been divided would be allocated to a "force". The first category constituted revenue derived from Party functions and from membership subscriptions.<sup>45</sup> These the existing Party organisation or so-called "first force", would continue to control.<sup>46</sup> Public companies made up the second category and

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Committee, 2 February 1951.

43. Ibid., No.201, Division of Fundraising. Report to the Central Executive Committee, n.d. H.F. Oppenheimer was both patron and party functionary. Although a member of the U.P. Central Finance Committee, he, together with E. Gallo and General I.P. de Villiers, represented the National Advisory Committee and the Trust Fund at the meetings. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. It had been decided, on 14 November 1949, to issue new U.P. membership cards in order both to promote party membership and to attempt accurately to ascertain the size of the active element of that membership. It had also been decided to attempt to adopt, on a nationwide scale, the system of the U.P. Witwatersrand Committee which conducted annual visits to party members. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, Minutes Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 14 November 1949. Very little success was achieved in either aim.

46. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, No.201,

the National and Regional Advisory Committees, the "second force", acting as the Trust's agents, would collect from this source. Into the third category fell small businesses, the professions and farmers. In regard to this latter category it was proposed that the Regional Advisory Committees and the Party's "third force" liaise to determine which potential donors should be approached by each.<sup>47</sup> All funds collected by the "third force" were to be retained by the local fundraising committees of the Party. All revenue collected by the Regional Advisory Committees would be handed on to the National Advisory Committee.<sup>48</sup>

This neat division of interest was not sustainable in practice. In August 1951 a Party memorandum noted that

the United South Africa Trust Fund had absorbed the cream of the commercial and industrial field in its fund-raising efforts...the current situation is that the Division and the Trust have agreed that there shall now be no line of demarcation between the fields open to the United South Africa Trust Fund and the Division, and the two organisations are thus, in a sense, competitors.<sup>49</sup>

As a corollary to its attempt to systematize its revenue

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Division of Fundraising, Report to Central Executive Committee, n.d.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes: Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951. In February 1951 a number of U.P. Provincial and General Councils employed full-time professional collectors. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, Division of Fundraising, Second Report to the Central Executive Committee, 27 February 1951.

collection, the U.P., in December 1950, also, for the first time, introduced a uniform system of budgeting for Party expenditure. Prior to this, the Trust had simply made advances, if funds had been available, as and when the Party requested them. When funds had not been available, "Mr Oppenheimer assisted from his own resources."<sup>50</sup>

The Head Office expenditure for the period January - June 1951 having been estimated at £59 395, the Trust undertook to make contributions to the Party of this sum less any amounts which the Party itself managed to collect through its own fund-raising efforts.<sup>51</sup> The Trust, in addition, undertook to contribute £13 500 to assist General Councils to intensify organisational work in marginal seats.<sup>52</sup> That the Trust Fund had secured most of the sources of available revenue in the "second" and "third" categories, was illustrated in a July 1951 memorandum. Referring to the January - June 1951 estimates of expenditure, the Trustees of the Fund

noted with regret that it had not been possible for the Party to meet any of this expenditure from its own collections, and that the full amount guaranteed by the Trust Fund had accordingly been paid during the six month period to the Party.<sup>53</sup>

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50. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes: Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
51. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Trust Fund 1950 to 1952, H.F. Oppenheimer to J.W. Higgerty, 5 July 1951. See Appendix XXV: United Party First Source Funds Raised During the Year Ended 30 June 1951.
52. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes: Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951. See Appendix XXVI: Summary of the United Party's Organisational Position in January 1951.
53. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Trust Fund 1950 to 1952, H.F. Oppenheimer to J.W. Higgerty, 5 July 1951.

The Party was more successful in resolving the problem of what to do about O.A. Oosthuizen.<sup>54</sup> Patently incapable of matching the ability of Louis Esselen<sup>55</sup> and widely blamed for having contributed to the Party's defeat in 1948, he was, although "a perfect gentleman", also personally disliked by Strauss.<sup>56</sup>

Diplomatic attempts had been made to remove him, despite Smuts's solid faith in him, as early as mid-1949. Senator H. Tucker had, at that time, suggested to him that he "should relinquish the position and come into the Party organisation by another door."<sup>57</sup> In November 1950 Oosthuizen reported that Strauss had told him that "as soon as someone is trained sufficiently to take over my work I should go for a seat in the House and get some Directorships."<sup>58</sup> But it was the appointment of Dr F.J. van Biljon, on 10 January 1951, to the vaguely defined post of what Oosthuizen in his report had entitled, "Chairman of the Party", which really spelled the end of his career.<sup>59</sup>

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54. Oosthuizen had been appointed Organising Secretary of the U.P. on the Witwatersrand in September 1934. He remained in that capacity until December 1940 when he was appointed General Secretary in succession to Louis Esselen.
55. Interview: Professor W.A. Kleynhans.
56. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.
57. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1950.
58. Ibid., Typed version of Diary, 12 November 1950.
59. The appointment was for a period of four years and six months commencing from 1 August 1951. Van Biljon was formerly Under-Secretary for Agriculture, having served for a time under Strauss when he was Minister of Agriculture. Van Biljon was subsequently Secretary of the Social and Economic Planning Council, Chairman of the South African Marketing Board and spent some time as an Economic Advisor to the Anglo-American Corporation. At the time of his appointment he was still apparently associated with the Corporation. A January 1951 letter to him

Van Biljon's designation in his letter of appointment had been kept deliberately vague<sup>60</sup> so as to provide Strauss, who evidently did not even want Oosthuizen as an M.P., the opportunity to lever him from his position as General Secretary with the minimum of damage to the Party. Van Biljon himself, on 24 January, had been told that, as regards Oosthuizen: "I realise only too well how delicate this little problem is."<sup>61</sup>

Strauss's strategy soon became apparent. When, on 22 January, the Cape Argus reported that van Biljon had been appointed as the Party's "Managing Director",<sup>62</sup> a title never previously mentioned to him, Oosthuizen reacted vehemently. He wrote "that the terms in which the announcement were couched were damaging to the position of General Secretary and that my position in fact has now been relegated to that of a clerk in the organisation."<sup>63</sup> The reporter responsible for the article later said that he had used the term "Managing Director" because of the "analogy of a business company which had previously been suggested to me by someone who I am sure knew the facts of this case."<sup>64</sup>

Oosthuizen's strong suspicion that the reporter had

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mentioned consultation with H.F. Oppenheimer "in regard to your operations for his company". J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/17/5/1, Unsigned letter to Dr F.J. van Biljon, 24 January 1951.

60. Ibid., File 1/17/5/1, O.A. Oosthuizen to Dr F.J. van Biljon, 10 January 1951.
61. Ibid., File 1/17/5/1, unsigned letter to Dr F.J. van Biljon, 24 January 1951.
62. Cape Argus, 22 February 1951, p.9.
63. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1951.
64. Ibid., N. Robinson to O.A. Oosthuizen, 24 February 1951.

interviewed Strauss was confirmed when he approached the latter and asked him to issue a statement to the "effect that the position of General Secretary remained unimpaired..."<sup>65</sup> Refusing to be drawn, Strauss told Oosthuizen that he was not prepared to issue a public statement relating to staff matters. He was however prepared, instead, to issue a statement in Oosthuizen's name.<sup>66</sup> Although Oosthuizen protested that this would place him in an invidious situation, a statement advising that his position as General Secretary remained unchanged was nevertheless issued, in his name, on 24 February. The statement brought Oosthuizen little satisfaction though, for a rider was added to it that "Dr van Biljon, of course, will also advise on...the steps necessary to improve the Party and its machinery."<sup>67</sup>

The statement made it clear to Oosthuizen that the facts reflected in the original press announcement were "absolutely correct insofar as they reflect the opinion of Eric Gallo and big business. In other words I think big business has put me in the mud, and Strauss and our people have allowed it to happen."<sup>68</sup> As a result, he decided, at the next meeting of the Central Executive Committee, "to ask Strauss and the Committee to give me an honourable discharge. I think that will open the way up nicely for van Biljon to take the position as Managing Director without any trouble."<sup>69</sup> The Central Executive managed, however, to delay his eventual discharge until a time convenient to themselves. In what proved, not surprisingly, to be an

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65. Ibid., O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1951.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., Press statement, n.d.

68. Ibid., O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1951.

69. Ibid.

unworkable compromise, it was agreed that Oosthuizen would continue to assume all the responsibilities of General Secretary until van Biljon's assumption of duty in August. At that time, while remaining General Secretary, he would assume specific responsibility for Organisation while van Biljon would be responsible for Information and Research.<sup>70</sup>

In the interim, the process of renewal appeared to have brought early dividends. In the 8 November 1950 De Aar-Colesberg parliamentary by-election, there had been "a slight but demonstrable swing in favour of the United Party."<sup>71</sup> In the 13 December 1950 Pretoria East parliamentary by-election, "the first occasion since the General Election on which the Nationalist Party [sic] had made a determined bid for the support of English-speaking South Africans...the Nationalists were beaten by 295 more votes than in 1948."<sup>72</sup> On 28 March 1951, in the Wolmaranstad provincial by-election, the H.N.P. majority was reduced by 560 votes in comparison to the 1949 result.<sup>73</sup>

But these superficially positive results concealed disquieting features. In regard to the latter by-election, fought in what, for the U.P., was a hopeless seat, Oosthuizen had earlier written:

Our people at Wolmaranstad decided to fight the by-election against our explicit instructions. Without any consultation they put up a candidate and

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70. Ibid., Private Correspondence, O.A. Oosthuizen to D.E. Mitchell, 16 November 1951. Oosthuizen was seriously ill during May and June 1951.
71. The Star, 30 March 1951, p.2. H.N.P. 5406; U.P. 3382; H.N.P. majority 2024. Percentage poll 90.3.
72. Ibid. U.P. 6399; H.N.P. 2912; U.P. majority 3487. Percentage poll 83.9.
73. Challenge, 6 April 1951, p.5. H.N.P. 3539; U.P. 1860; H.N.P. majority 1679. Percentage poll, 70,5.

are now appealing to us for money and help. What a cockeyed world!<sup>74</sup>

In regard to the Pretoria East by-election, where Charles Clarke, the M.P. who had made the seat available to Smuts in 1948, had failed to gain the nomination, Oosthuizen wrote:

The effects of the Pretoria East nomination on the Party generally have been unsatisfactory. Through the inexperience of the Secretary and the Committee in running the old-time nomination, much dissatisfaction has been caused within the Party ranks. Quite a number of resignations have been received and promises of monetary support have been withdrawn. I ascribe this state of affairs to inexperience, and I think our Party machine at present is overburdened with inexperienced...young organisers who deal with the public in a way which engenders violent reaction.<sup>75</sup>

In reference to these exposed shortcomings, a meeting of the Central Advisory Committee on Publicity in March 1951, was informed that "once again it was shown that Party organisation generally needed re-organising and revitalising."<sup>76</sup> As a consequence, the Committee was told, "the whole question of Party organisation was to be reviewed thoroughly during recess by the Executive in co-operation with other committees and bodies."<sup>77</sup>

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74. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, O.A. Oosthuizen to H. Miller, 26 February 1951.
75. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/1, Vol.I, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 22 February 1951.
76. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.298, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 8 March 1951.
77. Ibid.



CHAPTER 14

THE BIRTH OF THE WAR VETERANS' TORCH COMMANDO,  
JANUARY - JUNE 1951

The Fourth Session of the Tenth Parliament was officially opened on 19 January 1951 by a new Governor-General and with formalities conforming to a "more specifically South African pattern".<sup>1</sup> Reflecting the Government's freedom to act as a consequence of the Malan - Havenga agreement of October 1950, the primary concern of the Speech from the Throne, "the briefest and least illuminating for many years",<sup>2</sup> was the separate representation of Coloured voters. So little else was foreshadowed that a leader in The Star observed that "once Parliament has disposed of the contentious franchise proposals, it will be hard put to it to find work to do."<sup>3</sup>

But, if the Speech from the Throne provided no surprises, the U.P.'s countering of the H.N.P.'s nomination of J.H. Conradie as successor to J.F.T. Naudé, the former Speaker of the House, with that of their own nominee, A. Trollip, did. The justification for this virtually unprecedented action was twofold.<sup>4</sup> The first was Conradie's

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1. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B1, Parliament Again in Session, 22 January 1951.
  2. Ibid.
  3. The Star, 20 January 1951, p.6.
  4. On only two previous occasions had alternative nominees to those of the Government been put forward. There had, however, never been discussion beyond the speeches of the movers and seconders, and only once, in the Cape Colonial Parliament, was there a division. Cape Argus, 19 January 1951, p.1. In August 1948 the Government had broken with convention by selecting Naude as Speaker without consulting with opposition whips. The selection of Conradie was also made without consultation. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.50.

public commitment to the view that the Government was legally entitled to over-ride the Entrenched Clauses by a simple majority. The second was the declaration by Havenga, during the previous session, that he would abide by the decision of the Speaker as to whether the proposed changes in the provisions affecting the rights of the Coloured electorate constituted a diminution of those rights or not.<sup>5</sup> In the subsequent division, the Natives' Representatives voted in support of Trollip but the L.P.members abstained on the "unintelligible ground that this was a fight between the Government and the United Party."<sup>6</sup> Conradie was elected Speaker by 82 votes to 59.<sup>7</sup>

On 19 January, rather than a conventional motion of no-confidence, Strauss made a direct appeal to public opinion by introducing a motion of censure.<sup>8</sup> In the motion he called for "a moratorium on contentious political questions, and, instead, a concentration of efforts to deal with the living standards and welfare of the people."<sup>9</sup> The subsequent debate occupied the House for five days. At its

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5. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B1, Parliament Again in Session, 22 January 1951.
  6. Ibid.
  7. Daily News, 19 January 1951, p.1. Unlike previous Speakers who usually gave the Government and the official Opposition the same amount of time and allotted extra time to the minority parties, Conradie divided time evenly between the Government and the opposition as a whole. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.50.
  8. A motion of censure would have had the same practical effect as a motion of no-confidence had it been accepted.
  9. The Star, 19 January 1951, p.1. Pursuing a similar line, Christie, on the same day, gave notice that he would move that the Government take the necessary steps (1) To establish a Ministry of Food; (2) To restore minimum cost-of-living allowances for public servants; (3) To ensure adequate housing was available. Daily News, 19 January 1951, p.1.

conclusion, Margaret Ballinger observed:

Although the Government defeated the motion by twelve votes, there could be no doubt as to where the honours of the debate lay...I for one, have never listened to so arid a debate from Government benches in all my years in Parliament.<sup>10</sup>

The terms of the Coloured Franchise Bill were published on 12 February. On 8 March Strauss, supported by Christie,<sup>11</sup> opposed Dönges's motion to introduce the Bill on the grounds that the House of Assembly, sitting by itself, was not competent to receive the motion.<sup>12</sup> Having withheld leave for the Bill's introduction for over a month whilst he considered his ruling, the Speaker, on 11 April, dismissed Strauss's point of order.<sup>13</sup> But, in doing so, he did not touch on that aspect of the Bill which had been raised by Havenga, namely whether it entailed a diminution of the rights of the Coloured people.<sup>14</sup> A leader in the Sunday Express commented: "In ordinary everyday language that means that Mr Speaker told Mr Havenga he was not the keeper of Mr Havenga's political conscience..."<sup>15</sup>

On 16 April, immediately after Dönges's introduction of the Coloured Franchise Bill, Strauss made a direct but

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10. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B1, Government Fails to Meet Challenge, 5 February 1951.
  11. Cape Argus, 9 March 1951, p.7.
  12. Challenge, 16 March 1951, p.2.
  13. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.190. Traditionally, the Speaker sought his advice on such issues from the clerk of the House who was the technical expert on such matters. Conradie, instead, took his advice from his own legal advisers despite being in possession of an opposing opinion by the parliamentary legal adviser. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.51.
  14. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.192.
  15. Sunday Express, 15 April 1951.

unsuccessful appeal to Havenga to withhold his support from the measure.<sup>16</sup> Explaining Havenga's refusal to concede that the Bill constituted any diminution of rights and implicitly exposing the futility of Strauss's appeal, a U.P. M.P., in a letter to A.G. Barlow, wrote:

Boiled down to the dregs it amounts to this, namely that he now has only two things up his sleeve. The first is his shirt and the second is the premiership. He has placed the first on the second, so who on earth will expect the fellow to call off now.<sup>17</sup>

Dönges helped to make Havenga's hollow denial of any intention to diminish Coloured rights more credible when, on 25 April, an amended Bill, the Separate Representation of Voters' Bill, was published.<sup>18</sup> The new Bill permitted those 1 180 Coloured voters already registered in Natal to remain on the common roll. No more were, however, to be registered after the Bill had been enacted.<sup>19</sup>

The Bill, after liberal use of the guillotine had cut short the debate in the Assembly to eighty-six hours,<sup>20</sup> passed the

16. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.197. On 17 April a petition, which had been organised by the South African Institute of Race Relations sponsored Civil Rights League and which protested against the terms of the Bill, was presented to the Speaker. The petition contained 100 000 signatures. Cape Argus, 17 April 1951, p.1.
17. A.G. Barlow Papers, Scrapbook No.2, 1874-1958, P.E. van Rooyen to A.G. Barlow, 16 April 1951.
18. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.198.
19. Rand Daily Mail, 7 March 1951, p.1. In the original measure Coloured voters in Natal were to have been placed on a separate roll and were to have had a share in voting for one of the four Coloured peoples' representatives in the Assembly. The Star, 12 February 1951, p.1.
20. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.198. On 9 May, during the Committee stage, the guillotine had fallen after only 5 of the Bill's 22 clauses had been discussed. Cape Argus, 10 May 1951, p.7.

Third Reading 74 votes to 64, on 14 May.<sup>21</sup> After the Assembly's ratification of the few minor amendments made to it during its passage through the Senate,<sup>22</sup> the Bill received the Governor-General's assent and was published in a Government Gazette Extraordinary on 18 June 1951.<sup>23</sup>

During the debate on the Bill, the Government parties, for the first time since 1948,<sup>24</sup> had resurrected the "Hoggenheimer" theme in order to discredit the bona fides of the U.P. defence of the sanctity of the constitution. The United South Africa Trust Fund was, not without validity, portrayed as "organised money power" committed to the abolition of the colour bar in industry.<sup>25</sup> In support of this assertion, members on the Government benches quoted one of the Fund's primary objects: "To foster, encourage, and protect the ideals of freedom of speech, language, worship and the Fundamental Rights of Man as recognised by the member states of the United Nations."<sup>26</sup> Not altogether convincingly, H.F. Oppenheimer countered by carefully

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21. Cape Argus, 15 May 1951, p.7.

22. The President of the Senate had, on 24 May, ruled that the Senate was competent to deal with the measure. Ibid., 24 May 1951, p.1.

23. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.199. On 29 May C.R. Swart introduced the Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill. Opposed by both the U.P. and L.P., the measure made the provisions of the main Act retrospective and removed the remaining protection of the civil law from "named" persons.

24. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/5, Vol.I, A. Fick to J.G.N. Strauss, 24 February 1951.

25. The Government supporting press emphasised the role of the Trust Fund: "...anyone who reads the United Party Press will only find an occasional reference to the Trust Fund. The reader of the Nationalist Press, on the other hand, must be getting the impression that he reads about very little else." U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, United South Africa Trust Fund 1950-1953, African World, May 1951, p.21.

26. Ibid.

distinguishing the Fundamental Rights of Man, which the Government itself had publicly supported at the United Nations, from the Declaration of Human Rights. The latter, he said, "went far beyond stating the fundamental rights of man, and included undertakings in regard to many other matters which, for various reasons, were not acceptable by South Africa."<sup>27</sup> That this defense was inadequate was illustrated a few months later when it was decided, insofar as it was possible, to break the direct links between the Party and the Fund. Senator H. Tucker was withdrawn as the Party's representative on the Fund's Board of Trustees, while H.F. Oppenheimer, Chairman of the Fund, withdrew from the Party's Central Finance Committee.<sup>28</sup>

A lack of consistency by some U.P. members, particularly those from Natal who had some years earlier virulently opposed granting franchise rights to people of Indian descent, had also weakened the opposition's cause. This was illustrated in the case of J.R. Sullivan (Durban, Berea) who had complained that the Bill proposed to give "all the rights and privileges of the Coloured people" to the Indians in the Cape Province.<sup>29</sup> His fear was that confirmation of such a franchise in the Cape could become a pattern for the Union.<sup>30</sup>

The U.P. had also committed a tactical error in proposing, during the Second Reading debate, the introduction of a Bill of Rights to entrench "the fundamental liberties of the people of South Africa."<sup>31</sup> While sound in intention, the

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27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes: Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.

29. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.235.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., p.237. The U.P. had first stated its

proposal immediately placed U.P. speakers on the defensive, for M.P.s on the Government benches argued that what the Bill of Rights sought to entrench for everybody would inevitably imperil the rule of white South Africans.<sup>32</sup> The U.P.'s rejoinder that the entrenched freedoms would fall within the ambit of the country's laws simply evoked the logical retort that those freedoms already existed within the law of the land.<sup>33</sup>

The effects upon the white electorate of the Opposition's defense of Coloured voting rights was, however, of greater significance than the superficial blemishes in its defense of those rights. The Ceres parliamentary by-election of 2 May 1951 was not a happy omen, for the H.N.P. increased its majority by 472 votes.<sup>34</sup>

The U.P. Central Executive had initially been reluctant to fight a seat where the H.N.P.'s 1948 majority had been 1 946 votes, but "the local organisation was ready for a fight...[and]...the voters' roll was up to date."<sup>35</sup> Reporting a few days after the by-election, Oosthuizen, who was "much struck by the efficiency of our organisation",<sup>36</sup> wrote:

The main issue was again Apartheid...  
Platteland audiences are still  
spellbound by the magic of the

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intention to introduce a Bill of Rights in January 1951. Challenge, 26 January 1951, p.3.

32. The Star, 27 April 1951, p.1.  
 33. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.238.  
 34. H.N.P. 5394; U.P. 2976; H.N.P. majority 2418. Percentage Poll 91.9.  
 35. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.210, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 9-10 March 1951.  
 36. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/2, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 8 May 1951.

word...our policy to fight the removal of the Coloured voters from the Common roll as a moral issue was never shown as such, but it was presented purely as a battle to keep the Coloured voter on the roll to vote for the United Party.<sup>37</sup>

Reporting that U.P. organisers thought that the H.N.P. majority would be reduced by about 200 votes, while H.N.P. organisers felt that their Party's majority would increase by about 150 votes, Oosthuizen went on to write:

...at no stage was there an indication by either the Nats. or our side that their majority would be over 400...Their press is, of course, exploiting our decision to re-entrench the Coloured franchise rights as the main reason.<sup>38</sup>

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37. Ibid. The H.N.P. issued a pamphlet in which it was noted that a June 1947 U.P. Newsletter had stated that the three seats allocated to South African Indians would help create "'n soliede anti-Nasionale blok". U.P. Papers, Division of Information, National Party, Pamphlets and Brochures 1915-1953, Kleurstem nodig vir 'Anti-Nasionale Blok', n.d. In October 1950 the Union Action Committee recommended the convening of a special meeting of the Transvaal Platteland General Council to discuss the implications of the Party's opposition to the removal of Coloured voters from the common roll. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949-1950, No.187, Meeting of Union Action Committee, 27-28 October 1950. No evidence was found to indicate whether this meeting was convened or not.
38. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/2, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 8 May 1951. Rejecting the notion that the U.P. defense of the Entrenched Clauses was based on self-interest, a Party newsletter noted: "The Nationalist-Afrikaner Party holds 28 seats in which there are approximately 21 000 Coloured voters, and the United Party holds 27 seats in which there are approximately 27 000 Coloured voters. But, if there were not a single Coloured in 23 of the seats which the United Party holds, United Party candidates could still win those seats with very large majorities....This leaves us with only 4 seats in the whole of the Union where the Coloured vote can be said to influence the result in an election...." L. Steenkamp Papers, 16:35, Race Relations 1932-1968, Party Letter, New Series No.3,



It was unfortunate for the U.P., and for Strauss in particular, that the transformation of the Party's archaic structure had gone hand in glove with defeat. In terms of the efficiency of its organisation, the Party of early 1951 was a considerable advance on that of May 1948. The realisation of its potential was stunted though by its lack of achievement. Between those dates the Government had deliberately drawn the U.P. into defending positions it knew to be unpopular with the bulk of the electorate. On no occasion had the Opposition been able even effectively to modify the torrent of divisive legislation, let alone prevent it appearing on the statute books.

In the same period it had fought eleven parliamentary by-elections against the H.N.P., but only in Mayfair had it emerged with any substantial degree of credit, and that it had lost. It had also failed to win any of the six S.W.A. parliamentary seats. Moreover, the very urgency of the reforms, part of which had entailed a considerable expansion of the Party organisation, had not allowed the luxury of a sustained attempt to establish a system of grass-roots revenue collection. Instead, the Party had been forced to adhere to and systematize its traditional reliance upon large donors.

The assessment that the growth of white extra-parliamentary political activity in 1951 was, as a result of these factors, a tacit vote of no-confidence in the U.P.'s ability to oppose the Government,<sup>39</sup> is not entirely without validity. But such an assessment is incomplete if it fails

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3 February 1949.

39. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.332.

to recognise that at least some of the initiative behind this activity had its origin within the U.P. It can, in fact, be argued that this initiative, although never coherently directed, was a conscious attempt by the U.P. to mobilize white opinion in the only practical way open to it. But, by its very nature, the strategy was a hazardous one for, not only did it risk fragmenting opposition energy, it also held consequences which could not have been foreseen.

The constitutional implications, rather than the threat to the rights of the Coloured people per se, of the Government's attempt to pass the Coloured Franchise Bill by a simple majority, provoked particular alarm among the predominantly English-speaking whites of Natal. Their alarm kindled the embers of Natal separatism. On 20 March, some two weeks after the Bill's introduction but prior to the Speaker's ruling on the Assembly's competence to deal with the measure, the Natal Provincial Council adopted a resolution, for submission to the Government, warning that

if any legislation is passed affecting the 'Entrenched Clauses' of the South Africa Act, 1909, other than by the procedure laid down in the said Act, it will constitute, in the opinion of this Council, a breach of the spirit of the Act of Union, and is a grave threat to our Constitution and our continued existence as a Union.<sup>40</sup>

On the same day a 2 000 strong protest meeting was held in Pietermaritzburg. Under the chairmanship of the Mayor it adopted a resolution calling upon G. Heaton Nicholls, ex-Administrator of Natal, U.P. Senate Leader and avowed federalist, to form an Action Committee to "take all possible constitutional steps to secure respect for the

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40. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 79, Motion adopted by the Provincial Council of Natal on 20 March 1951. The resolution "received a bare acknowledgement" from the Government. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.441.

Entrenched Clauses of the South Africa Act and to maintain the sanctity of the Constitution."<sup>41</sup>

On the following day, a leader in the Natal Mercury explained the motive behind the growth of this new version of the "Natal Stand" when it observed:

Some people in Natal may think that there is something to be said for the Bill in itself. But even they are not blind to the fact that what the Government wants to do is to use this Bill to establish the precedent that the Entrenched Clauses of the Act of Union have no validity and can be overruled at any time by a simple majority of Parliament...The fight before us is not a fight over the bare issue of the Coloured Franchise Bill. It is a fight for everything we hold precious.<sup>42</sup>

Idiosyncratically suited to the task, Heaton Nicholls, in early April, set about inviting eminent Natal jurists and businessmen to join his Action Committee. Calling themselves the Defenders of the Constitution, they pledged to "send our missionaries into every village and town and district, as the old Covenanters did in Scotland, until there is not a soul who does not understand the issue at stake."<sup>43</sup>

The U.P. Central Executive Committee responded equivocally to Heaton Nicholls's initiative. While it resolved, on 20 April, that it "would not in any circumstances" send official delegates to meet the Defenders of the Constitution, it also decided that no official directives should be sent to its own organisation "in respect of this

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41. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.441.

42. Natal Mercury, 21 March 1951.

43. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.442.

and similar bodies."<sup>44</sup> The meeting then undertook to investigate whether a U.P. initiated protest campaign could be launched "in areas in which such a campaign would meet with assured success."<sup>45</sup> The uninspiring result was a few public protest meetings in Johannesburg and Kimberley. Even in Natal the Party failed to seize the initiative. On 3 May the Natal Provincial Executive Committee turned down a proposal to draw up a nation-wide petition on the grounds of its prohibitive expense.<sup>46</sup> Despite its fear of losing the initiative<sup>47</sup> to groups like the Defenders of the Constitution and the War Veterans' Action Committee which, at that time, was organising a "Hands off the Constitution" torchlight procession through Johannesburg for the night of 4 May, the only U.P. organised extra-parliamentary protest to eventuate was a "telegram campaign" launched by the Party's Witwatersrand office.<sup>48</sup> Even this protest campaign was not vigorously pursued and no attempt was made to adopt the endeavour on a national scale.<sup>49</sup>

Commentators on the War Veterans' Torch Commando have generally emphasised what they considered to have been the movement's spontaneous origin.<sup>50</sup> While spontaneous

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44. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.237, Meeting Central Action Committee, 20 April 1951.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.85, Minutes, Natal Provincial Executive Committee, 3 May 1951.

47. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, Minutes of Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, n.d.

48. Challenge, 27 April 1951, p.1. Voters were asked to cable D.F. Malan: "Hands off Constitution. Demand General Election." Ibid.

49. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/2, Vol.4, Cecil Williams to J.G.N. Strauss, 12 May 1951.

50. Interview: L. Kane Berman,

enthusiasm could well account for the movement's rapid growth into a mass organisation it does not in fact account for its origin.

Although there were a number of organisations representing the interests of ex-servicemen,<sup>51</sup> few acted in isolation from the others. At least until early 1949, an umbrella organisation, the National Joint Ex-Service's Committee, which had been launched in 1946, continued to function.<sup>52</sup> But even these formal organisations were, to an extent, extraneous, for most ex-servicemen were emotionally bound together by the shared experience of military victory and, soon after demobilisation, by the experience of a tacit political defeat.<sup>53</sup> With the parliamentary opposition apparently making little headway, many ex-servicemen participated in the activities of the white extra-parliamentary opposition groups which emerged subsequent to May 1948.<sup>54</sup> These activities usually took the innocuous form of petitions, mass meetings and telegram campaigns.

G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.303.

M. Ballinger, op. cit., p.272.

O. Walker: Sailor Malan, p.169.

51. The most important were the Memorable Order of Tin Hats, the British Empire Servicemen's League and the Springbok Legion.

52. Forward, 19 November 1948, p.5.

53. M. Fridjhon: The Torch Commando: A Study in Opposition Politics in White South Africa, 1951-1953, p.IV.

54. The Civil Rights League, the Students Liberal Association, the National Union of South African Students, the South African Trades and Labour Council, the Guild of Loyal South Africans and various Church organisations. Ad hoc committees such as the Personal Liberties Defence Committee and the Ex-Servicemen's Political Action Committee were also formed. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, A Programme of Action for the W.V.T.C. and Why, n.d.

But what gave them particular significance was that a substantial number of these activities were either instigated or organised by the one ex-servicemen's organisation committed to political action, the Springbok Legion.<sup>55</sup>

Not only had the Springbok Legion made a determined effort to mobilize the ex-service vote in May 1948, it had also, prior to the 1949 Provincial elections, attempted to establish a "broadly based Ex-Serviceman's Committee, independent of any of the present organisations, to work for the U.P.-L.P. candidates."<sup>56</sup> While this umbrella committee does not appear ever to have eventuated, regional political committees were established on the Witwatersrand and in Cape Town and, possibly also, in Bloemfontein and in Port Elizabeth.<sup>57</sup> Subsequent to these elections Legionnaires attempted to establish a united front of extra-parliamentary organisations through a Joint Council of Democratic Organisations.<sup>58</sup> Their efforts achieved little for, though other opposition groups were prepared to co-operate with the Springbok Legion on specific issues, they were wary, particularly since the passing of the Suppression of

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55. Ibid. The Springbok Legion had a larger budget than either the L.P. or A.P. The latter's average annual income between June 1949 and June 1951 was £1 756. H. Oost Papers, Vol.37, p.9, Afrikaner Party, Finansiële Stukke. The Springbok Legion's revenue during 1950 was £5 512. Its main sources of income were public donations and revenue from the sales of its publication Fighting Talk. It set a monthly target of £540 for 1951. Springbok Legion Papers, A617, Finance Committee Minutes 1948-1951.
56. Springbok Legion Papers, A617, Johannesburg Branch 1944-1950, Minutes of Meeting, 13 January 1949.
57. Ibid., Springbok Legion Action Committee Minutes 1945-50, Minutes, Action Committee Meeting, 9 February 1949.
58. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, A Programme of Action for the W.V.T.C. and Why, n.d.

Communism Act, of becoming formally linked to an organisation whose leadership was suspected of communist sympathies.<sup>59</sup> As a result the Springbok Legion concentrated its energies on expanding the network of ex-service political action groups in Vereeniging, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria and South-West Africa.<sup>60</sup> It did not though, as an organisation, either control the groups or run them.<sup>61</sup>

It was not thus surprising, in view of its earlier activities, that the Springbok Legion acted as the catalyst behind the formation, in Johannesburg towards the end of April, of the War Veterans' Action Committee. It was this Committee which planned the 15 to 20 000 strong Johannesburg meeting of 4 May which resolved to transmit a resolution to Malan protesting the attempt to violate the constitution and to call for a General Election.<sup>62</sup>

The U.P. was neither unaware of, nor initially unfavourably disposed to, the Springbok Legion's initiative. In a 12 May letter to Strauss, Cecil Williams wrote:

May I, on behalf of the Legion carry on the conversation I had with you in Cape Town on 18 April, when we discussed the possibility of mobilising extra-parliamentary support for the parliamentary fight against the Separate Representation of Voters Bill and the betrayal of the Constitution.

We are sure you must begin to be pleased with the results so far achieved. I am

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59. Ibid. Cecil Williams, General Secretary of the Springbok Legion, was an ex-member of the Communist Party of South Africa. No evidence was found to indicate that the Springbok Legion was a Communist "front" organisation.

60. Ibid., Microfilm, Memorandum: Torch Commando, F.H. Dixon, August 1952.

61. Ibid.

62. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.304.

thinking of...the Port Elizabeth Ex-Serviceman's meeting,<sup>63</sup> the Torchlight Procession with its demand for a General Election and our most recent plans for the "Torch Commando".

Finally, may I refer to one of your remarks to me on April 18 to the effect that you welcomed our efforts but wanted there to be no 'identification' of the United Party with the Legion. On this point, may we say that we shall do all in our power to avoid embarrassing the Party - as we are avoiding embarrassing the War Veterans' Action Committee...<sup>64</sup>

The U.P. itself had not been a mere passive observer of these events. The organisers of the mass demonstration in Port Elizabeth had been considerably assisted by the quasi-U.P. organisation, "The Fives".<sup>65</sup> The U.P. itself had contributed to both the organisation and financing of the 4 May Johannesburg mass meeting. Vic Clapham, a founder member, in 1941, of the Springbok Legion<sup>66</sup> and Technical

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63. A demonstration, also on the evening of 4 May, which attracted about 6000 people. Ibid.
64. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/2, Vol.4, Cecil Williams, General Secretary, Springbok Legion to J.G.N. Strauss, 12 May 1951.
65. Soon after its 1948 defeat the U.P. in the Cape Peninsula had encouraged the growth of an organisation called "The Fives": each member of a group of five would attempt to establish another group of five. The organisation had been established primarily on the initiative of ex-servicemen who, while not interested in becoming formal Party workers, nevertheless wanted to assist the Party to regain power. By mid-1949 it had spread to Port Elizabeth and had some 300 members. A.H. Jonker Papers, File 40, L. Meiring to T. Handley, 16 June 1949. De Villiers Graaff encouraged the Ex-Serviceman's Political Committees to absorb "The Fives". Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.
66. Clapham had, however, in response to the organisation's takeover by its left-wing, resigned from the Springbok Legion's Executive in 1947 and had allowed his membership to lapse. The takeover caused



Director of the U.P. Division of Information, was an ex officio member of the War Veterans' Action Committee, and the Party not only loaned the Committee £250 for the event,<sup>67</sup> but also stood guarantee for the goods required for the torchlight parade which preceded the meeting.<sup>68</sup>

Both the U.P. and Springbok Legion also played a significant role, behind the scenes, in the preparations leading up to the launch of the Steel Commando. This scheme involved representatives from seventeen towns and cities converging on Cape Town, on 28 May, to present to Malan personally, after a mass demonstration,<sup>69</sup> the 4 May Johannesburg mass meeting resolutions.<sup>70</sup> Vic Clapham, for example, provided full-time Springbok Legion organisers who were in charge of the logistics of the operation, with contacts in the towns along the routes which the convoys were to follow.<sup>71</sup>

A letter written by Clapham to Marais Steyn on 10 May revealed that the prime motives, apart from the arousal of

a significant decline in Springbok Legion membership. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, A Few Remarks on the Problem at Present Facing the W.V.A.C., 5 June 1951.

67. Ibid., Telegram, S.J. Marais Steyn to V.J. Clapham, 25 April 1951.
68. Ibid., V.J. Clapham to the General Manager, African Theatres, 30 April 1951.
69. Both Christie and Mrs Ballinger undertook to "ask their followers in Parliament and outside" to take part in the 28 May demonstration. Cape Argus, 21 May 1951, p.3.
70. The scheme was based upon a march on Brussels, soon after the war, by ex-soldiers. The march had resulted in the resignation of the Belgian Government. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff. Between 18 and 24 May, resolutions condemning the Government's actions in regard to the entrenched clauses were adopted in 48 centres countrywide. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/1, Vols.1 and 2.
71. M. Fridjhon, op. cit., p.13.

public awareness, behind the U.P.'s involvement were fear, on the one hand, that ill-considered actions, possibly inspired by the Springbok Legion, would allow the Government to seize the opportunity to divert attention away from the constitutional crisis and, on the other, that the ex-servicemen might develop into an overweening pressure group:

We have made arrangements for wide national and international news coverage. I am ex-officio on the main committee and on all sub-committees with an eye to the Party's interests...the whole outfit is well-larded with Party supporters, and I don't think we need worry...By the time you get this a Manifesto will have been issued in which the W.V.A.C. is pledged to dissolution on the return of democratic government to S.A. I wrote the Manifesto and had no difficulty in persuading the boys to make dissolution a bull point.<sup>72</sup>

Replying to Clapham's letter, Marais Steyn wrote:

We are doing what we can to swing public support behind these people...Mr Hamilton Russell, M.P. is attending their meetings secretly on

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72. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, V.J. Clapham to S.J. Marais Steyn, 10 May 1951. The Manifesto was issued on 11 May. It called for a General Election to restore democratic government to the country and proposed to use "every constitutional means" to oppose the attack on the Constitution. It concluded: "Within 100 hours of the achievement of our objects we pledge ourselves to dissolve our movement. Until that moment the cause of all free men becomes our cause." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.305. Four days later, however, another Manifesto, similar to the original but omitting any reference to a General Election, was issued. It appears likely that this was due to an instruction from de Villiers Graaff and H.F. Oppenheimer that on no account was an appeal to be made for the Government's resignation as the U.P. was not yet prepared for a General Election. M. Fridjhon, op. cit., P.16.

behalf of Mr Strauss.

The question of finance should not worry you at the moment. Harry Oppenheimer discussed the question with me and his feeling, with which I agree, is that it would be wrong for him to contribute directly to this Committee. The Nats. are already making an attempt to link the whole scheme up with the Trust and Harry personally.

The Division of Information will have to carry the War Veterans' Action Committee for the time being on the clear understanding that it is a loan to them and that we look to them for repayment.<sup>73</sup>

One of the other reasons why Oppenheimer fought shy of direct involvement was because of the prominence in the movement of his former Private Secretary, "Sailor" A.G. Malan. The U.P., wary of the Springbok Legion, wished to pre-empt a possible swing to the left by the War Veterans and it was for this reason that Oppenheimer suggested that the war hero be approached.<sup>74</sup> An early memorandum on Malan's participation in the movement saw his role as merely that of figurehead:

He won't have to do any work of course. This will all be done by a competent committee. Once he has provided his signature for facsimile purposes all he

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73. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, S.J. Marais Steyn to V.J. Clapham, 16 May 1951. In August 1951, Marais Steyn, referring to the War Veterans' Action Committee, wrote: "...when they had their inaugural meetings in Johannesburg, I arranged that our Miss Crosby should be lent to them in order to take the minutes. As a result we are in possession of a full resumé of the discussions and decisions taken at these meetings." Ibid., S.J. Marais Steyn to J.L. Horak, 16 August 1951.
74. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.

will have to do will be to put in an appearance and speak at the really big shows...<sup>75</sup>

However, not only was he to play a far more active role than that initially outlined for him, he also opposed attempts to push him too much to the forefront. In a letter to Oppenheimer, he wrote that any attempt to do so "would tend to create the suspicion that I was seeking the limelight and that I had aspirations to public office both of which you know to be quite untrue and which, in any case, would cheapen me and harm the cause."<sup>76</sup>

U.P. fear of the danger of being too closely associated with the Springbok Legion appeared justified when, soon after the 28 May mass meeting in Cape Town, a clash occurred between the police and a large crowd of predominantly Coloured bystanders.<sup>77</sup> The very real possibility that Springbok Legionnaires had been responsible for inciting the crowd<sup>78</sup> and the speed with which the Government capitalized on the incident, convinced the U.P. and the majority of members on the War Veteran's Action Committee, that the movement's association with the Springbok Legion would have to be terminated.

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75. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, Organisation of Movement, n.d.

76. Ibid., A.G. Malan to H.F. Oppenheimer, 12 May 1951.

77. Because the meeting ended so late the resolutions which the War Veterans had intended to give to Malan immediately after the meeting, were handed to him, instead, on the following day. M. Fridjhon, op. cit., p.18.

78. Ibid., p.20. Oppenheimer later accused Dr J. Loock (H.N.P., Vereeniging) of having been responsible for inciting the crowd. The Government refused to appoint a Commission of Enquiry into the incident. Challenge, 1 December 1951, p.3. L. Kane Berman reported that, during the mass meeting, a number of ex-servicemen had voiced a willingness to storm Parliament. Interview: L. Kane Berman.

In a 5 June memorandum Clapham warned:

United Party resources have been developed to the point where we can effectively propagate our own doctrine. Our great weakness, because of the Afrikaans daily press control situation, is that we cannot effectively counter a short, sharp press campaign of the nature which the Nationalists will unleash against the W.V.A.C. if a single member of our Committee is 'named'....The choice is clear: Get the Springbok Legion members off the Committee - or keep them on [and] sound the death knell of the W.V.A.C. as an effective body and set the United Party itself back a year or so.<sup>79</sup>

A meeting of the War Veterans' Action Committee on 7 June corroborated this view. Voting fifteen to eleven, it charged two of its most prominent founder members, Louis Kane Berman and Ralph Parrott, "with the task of forming a new and smaller Committee on which the Springbok Legion would have no representation."<sup>80</sup> This in effect meant the removal of Solly Sachs and Cecil Williams from the Committee.<sup>81</sup>

With the "crisis period" ended,<sup>82</sup> a National Conference of War Veterans was summoned for 28 June in order to draw up a constitution which would serve to formalise the aims and structure of the movement. Here again, individuals in the U.P. hierarchy played a significant role. In a 3 June note

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79. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, A Few Remarks on the Problem at Present Facing the W.V.A.C., 5 June 1951.
80. Ibid., Meeting of the Johannesburg War Veterans' Action Committee, 7 June 1951.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., A Few Remarks on the Problems at Present Facing the W.V.A.C., 5 June 1951.

to Marais Steyn, A.G. Malan wrote: "In his letter to me, in which he conveys some of his ideas on the movement, Harry suggests I ask you to draw up a draft constitution to put before the Conference."<sup>83</sup> Marais Steyn responded:

I shall, of course, be delighted to help in any possible way...[I]...shall have a talk to Vic Clapham and other friends who are backing you in this...and will then, in the light of your suggestions too, put something on paper and submit it to you.<sup>84</sup>

The memorandum which Malan submitted to the Action Committee a few days before the start of the National Conference, reflected therefore the U.P.'s conception of the role of the new movement. The recommendations carefully circumscribed its activities:

Since we are committed to constitutional methods and since we take our stand on democratic principles, it seems that we have little option but to support the constitutional machinery within our democratic framework and, whether we like them or not, it seems logical that we should support the constitutionally elected opposition parties in Parliament....The formation of another political party would be even more in conflict with our aim...The moment we get ourselves embroiled in party politics we shall get out of our depth and into serious difficulty.<sup>85</sup>

On the same theme, the memorandum then went on to note, with implicit reference to the colour question, that "unity in our ranks is of first importance and, in order to ensure

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83. Ibid., A.G. Malan to S.J. Marais Steyn, 3 June 1951. Both Oppenheimer and de Villiers Graaff were themselves ex-servicemen.
84. Ibid., S.J. Marais Steyn to A.G. Malan, 19 June 1951.
85. Ibid., 1951 National Conference and Constitution, 1952 Congress, War Veterans' Organisation, Paper submitted by Group Captain A.G. Malan, 26 June 1951.

this, we should not introduce contentious matters which do not enjoy unanimous agreement and the full support of all members."<sup>86</sup> No doubt so as better to facilitate the exercise of U.P. influence and with Natal parochialism in mind, the memorandum concluded by proposing a centralised administrative structure for the movement: "Any form of federation which gives the provinces any form of autonomy would emasculate the whole movement. Our fight is on fundamental national issues...."<sup>87</sup>

While accepting these suggestions in broad outline, the constitution which the National Conference of 28-30 June adopted was an interim one only. The final constitution, it was decided, would, in the light of experience, be ratified at the next annual conference.<sup>88</sup> Although assuming the name the War Veterans' Torch Commando and anxious to retain the movement's ex-service character, the Conference proved equally unwilling to exclude those without any service background but who sympathised with its aims. It was partially for this reason that each branch was left free to decide who should be admitted to membership.<sup>89</sup> The primary reason was however to attempt to circumvent the divisive question of colour. Emulating the precedent set by the British Empire Serviceman's League, no mention of "race" was made in the movement's membership requirements.<sup>90</sup>

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86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid., National Conference of War Veterans, Minutes of Meeting, 29 June 1951. The Secretary of the Defenders of the Constitution, which had already collected 10 000 signatures supporting its covenant, attended the Conference as an observer. Reflecting the movement's primary concern with Natal interests and its lack of a mass membership, the Secretary said that he "did not think it would be possible for the Defenders to submerge their identity in that of the War Veterans." Ibid.

89. Ibid., 30 June 1951.

90. Ibid. After H.N.P. goading on the issue it was

The constitution, as suggested in the original memorandum, avoided the establishment of provincial organisations. The country was, instead, divided into 13 administrative regions each with its own executive.<sup>91</sup> Each of these regional executives was to be represented on the National Executive by one delegate. Probably in an attempt to accommodate individual and regional jealousies, the organisation's Executive was extraordinarily top heavy. Apart from the regional representatives, a National Director,<sup>92</sup> a Secretary and a Treasurer, the National Executive was to consist of the National President<sup>93</sup> and seven vice-Presidents and the National Chairman<sup>94</sup> and three vice-Chairmen.<sup>95</sup>

- decided, at an October meeting of the Torch Commando National Executive, that "at present no useful purpose would be served by the admission of non-Europeans as members, or the formation of non-European branches in those localities where the non-European cannot exercise the franchise." War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the National Executive, 12-13 October 1951. On 9 November 1951 Coloured ex-servicemen themselves withdrew from what they said was "the white man's fight to re-establish the integrity of his word." M. Fridjhon, *op. cit.*, p.28.
91. Regional boundaries were finally established on 24 January 1952 after having been adjusted so as to include parliamentary constituencies. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Regional Memorandum No.15, 24 January 1952.
92. R. Parrott, the National Director, was the only member of the Executive to be in the full-time employ of the Torch Commando. The other members of the Executive made considerable personal and financial sacrifices during the organisation's two year existence. Interview: L. Kane Berman.
93. A.G. Malan.
94. L. Kane Berman.
95. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, 1951 National Conference and Constitution, 1952 Congress, Constitution, War Veterans' Torch Commando, 30 June 1951.



The national basis of the Executive was, however, more apparent than real for the constitution also laid down that each region should "nominate a member of the Johannesburg Executive Committee as regional alternate...[as it]...was necessary to have an alternate resident in Johannesburg so that the Committee could meet at short notice and have a quorum."<sup>96</sup> The dominant figure on the Johannesburg Committee, Louis Kane Berman, was to use this arrangement to good effect.

The movement's funds were to be derived from subscriptions, donations and "other sources".<sup>97</sup> Each of the Regional Executives was to retain "such percentage of all funds collected by them as the National Executive shall decide..."<sup>98</sup> The National Executive, at its first meeting, held concurrently with the National Conference, immediately set about establishing target amounts which each region was to attempt to submit to it within twelve months. The total figure amounted to £11 200.<sup>99</sup>

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96. Ibid., Minutes, National Conference of War Veterans, 30 June 1951.
97. Ibid., Constitution, War Veterans' Torch Commando, 30 June 1951. Kane Berman reported that the Executive turned down an offer of an £80 000 donation by a group of businessmen because it was feared that the movement might, as a result, lose its independence. Interview: L. Kane Berman. The movement's subscription fee was half-a-crown, but most paid more. Ibid.
98. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, 1951 National Conference and Constitution, 1952 Congress, Constitution, War Veterans' Torch Commando, 30 June 1951.
99. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Minutes of the First Meeting of the National Executive, 28-29 June 1951. In April 1952 it was reported, at a meeting of the National Executive, that regions were "still far behind the targets set", but that, since its inception, the movement "had been kept well within the budget and that an average of

The next task undertaken by the National Executive was to implement a resolution which had been adopted by the National Conference: "...to go and see Mr Strauss and to discuss the possibility of a meeting with the United Party Central Executive Committee."<sup>100</sup>

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£1 000 had been spent per month. The greater portion of this expenditure had been devoted to the Publicity upon which the Commando had been largely built." £4 000 of the movement's income during that period was donated by the United South Africa Trust Fund. Ibid., Minutes of the Financial Discussions at the Fourth Meeting of the National Executive, 24-25 April 1952.

100. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, 1951 National Conference and Constitution, 1952 Congress, Minutes, National Conference of War Veterans, 30 June 1951.

CHAPTER 15

U.P. FINANCES; THE REPLACEMENT OF J.W. MUSHET AND  
O.A. OOSTHUIZEN, JUNE - DECEMBER 1951

In June 1951 the U.P. submitted the estimates of its financial requirements for the period July to December 1951 to the Trust Fund.<sup>1</sup> The estimates, which had been severely pruned, only made provision for expenditure by the Head Office and the Divisions. It therefore excluded any provision for subsidies to the provincial branches of the Party, for any contingencies which might arise or for repayments on the Party's £25 000 bank overdraft.<sup>2</sup> After discussions between representatives of the Party and the Trust Fund had resulted in these figures being cut even further,<sup>3</sup> Oppenheimer, on 5 July, responded officially, on behalf of the Trustees, to the Party's request.

The Trust agreed to make lump sum payments of £25 000 for the Division of Information and £12 500 for the Division of Research. Recognising "that in the time available since the Party's Division of Fund-Raising has been instituted, it had not been possible to raise substantial funds for the purpose of the Party's central expenditure," the Trustees agreed to guarantee any part of the remaining £17 150 estimated expenditure which the Party itself might not be able to raise.<sup>4</sup> Concluding his response, Oppenheimer wrote:

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1. The estimates could not be traced but were evidently considerably in excess of the amount which the Trust Fund agreed to provide.
  2. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
  3. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Correspondence, "B." Horak to O.A. Oosthuizen, 13 July 1951.
  4. Ibid., Trust Fund 1950-1952, H.F. Oppenheimer to J.W. Higgerty, 5 July 1951. In October 1951 this sum

The Trustees very much hope that from the beginning of 1952, it will be possible for the Party itself to finance its normal expenditure...and that the assistance of the Trust Fund will be required only in respect of special activities such as the Information and Research Divisions."<sup>5</sup>

Commenting on the Trust's response to the Party's estimates, J.L. Horak wrote:

The line now of course is that the Trust is an independent body - we no longer have representatives on its Board...We shall, of course, find it difficult to come out on the £54 650 agreed to. But I think we shall manage. We are at any rate being let down gently, and there is no more interference.<sup>6</sup>

The Trustees themselves, later that month, left no doubt as to their independent status. Because H.N.P. propagandists were so successfully exploiting the veil of secrecy surrounding the Fund, the Trustees, on 23 July, not only made public their own names<sup>7</sup> but also released a statement designed to clarify the Fund's purpose. In part the statement read:

The United South Africa Trust Fund is supported by public-spirited persons throughout South Africa who recognise the urgent need in the country's public

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was revised downwards to £14 582, for income was estimated at only £12 582. U.P. Papers, Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.95, Minutes, Executive Committee Meeting, 17 October 1951.

5. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Trust Fund 1950-1952, H.F. Oppenheimer to J.W. Higgerty, 5 July 1951.
6. Ibid., Correspondence, "B." Horak to O.A. Oosthuizen, 13 July 1951.
7. See Appendix XXVII: The Executive and Additional Committee Members of the United South Africa Trust Fund.

life for a permanent organisation which will work actively to eliminate racialism.

The Trust Fund is completely independent of any political party, and is free to assist any organisation likely to further its aims.<sup>8</sup>

What had therefore, in 1949, started as a fund-collecting organisation for the U.P. had, by mid-1951, evolved into an independent organisation collecting funds on its own behalf and able to expend such funds at its own discretion.<sup>9</sup> While U.P. officials conceded that the Party itself "would not have been able to raise a fraction of the moneys which the Trust have, in fact, raised",<sup>10</sup> the existence of the Trust was not an unmixed blessing for there was little prospect of the Party freeing itself from its dependence on it. A U.P. memorandum explained that the Party had

expanded its activities beyond its power to meet them from internal collections, particularly because the Trust, at that time in the name of the Party, had the monopoly of the commercial and industrial fields for some eighteen months...in that time [it] obtained promises of regular financial support to assist the Party over a period of four years, culminating with the 1953 General Election. It is in addition still a competitor in relation to our own "third source" efforts. At the same time, the impression has been created that the Party has millions at its disposal, with

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8. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets 1950-1956, The United South Africa Trust Fund, 23 July 1951.
  9. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
  10. Ibid., Central Head Office, Union Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, No.143, Chairman's Introductory Survey of Party Finances, 30 January 1952.

the inevitable adverse effect on normal internal, first source, fund-raising.<sup>11</sup>

An example of the difficulty facing the U.P. was its vain attempt to establish a substantial, Party derived, General Election Fund. Reflecting the attitude of the other provinces, the Natal U.P. Executive, upon being informed that the Party in the province could expect no financial assistance from central funds, responded that they were unable "to accede to the request for the holding of functions by every branch to raise funds for a General Election Reserve Fund as our available resources do not permit of this."<sup>12</sup>

The Party's relationship with the Trust Fund and its overall level of efficiency became particularly pertinent issues in the second half of 1951. The June announcement by Malan and Havenga that their respective parties were to merge on 22 October, saw the launch of a concerted campaign to discredit the U.P. and its leadership in order to draw to the merged party "errant" Afrikaans-speaking voters. A memorandum, submitted to Strauss<sup>13</sup> in August, observed that

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11. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
  12. Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.89, Minutes of Natal Executive Committee, 11 August 1951. By means of Strydae the H.N.P. raised £34 100 in the 12 months from June 1950 to June 1951. This was £10 000 more than the amount raised during the previous year and £20 000 more than the year before that. Contributions had increased so much that the Party was able to set aside £11 500 for its General Election Fund. Sunday Times, 21 October 1951, p.1. On 17 September the H.N.P. in the Transvaal launched a General Election Fund to supplement its Strydae collections. Die Transvaler, 18 September 1951, p.1.
  13. Strauss had undertaken a "fact-finding" tour of Europe in June 1951 in order to enhance his domestic

the U.P.

is now being described as a failing and disintegrating political force. The Torch Commando, big business and the United South Africa Trust Fund, they allege, are really calling the tune. The Nationalists believe that if they continue to hammer this theme, they will make some impression on what they believe to be vacillating Afrikaner opinion within the United Party.<sup>14</sup>

The Nationalist campaign required the U.P. to respond with a clear set of alternative principles rather than the reactive and defensive statements which had become the Party's wont. To this end, the recently installed van Biljon was charged with the responsibility for drawing up a "firm programme of principles" so that "straight answers to all questions" could be provided.<sup>15</sup> But, partially because the Division of Information's efficiency had become severely impaired by the cramped premises it occupied,<sup>16</sup> van Biljon, who "had approached various persons for their assistance and help,"<sup>17</sup> reported that he "did not anticipate results until next March."<sup>18</sup> Senator Tucker was thus reduced to suggesting, two days after the H.N.P. had increased its majority over the U.P. by 413 votes in the Groblersdal provincial by-election,<sup>19</sup> that the U.P. could capitalise on the "many positive statements of policy" which had, in the past, been

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stature. Interview: L. Gerber.

14. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
15. Ibid., Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 7 September 1951.
16. Ibid., No.345, 11 October 1951.
17. Ibid., 7 September 1951.
18. Ibid.
19. Daily News, 7 September 1951, p.8.

made by various U.P. cabinet ministers.<sup>20</sup> A few days later, at the Party's Cape Provincial Congress, and in the middle of the H.N.P. campaign, Strauss was forced to prevaricate. At "suitable times", he said, the U.P. would

place its attitude and policy on matters of national importance before the people. From time to time it will supplement its legitimate criticism of the present omniscient Government...with clear counter measures which together will constitute a definite policy for the future of South Africa. For the fuller exposition of this policy there is still time.<sup>21</sup>

Although the Party's policy formulation had suffered a dangerous delay, the Cape Congress did witness, in the removal of Mushet from the Chairmanship of the Party in that province, the final stages in the re-invigoration of the Party's leadership. Mushet's lack of vitality and bilingualism and his involvement in the Unie-Volkspers debacle had, for some time, placed his leadership in jeopardy. It had only been a personal undertaking by de Villiers Graaff not to oppose him, which had prevented his removal from the chair at the 1950 Cape Provincial Congress in Port Elizabeth.<sup>22</sup> During the course of 1951, though, he placed himself beyond the pale. He embarrassed the Party on two occasions. After the July revelations by the Trust Fund, he stated publicly that "the United Party does not

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20. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, No.345, Minutes, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, 11 October 1951.
21. Ibid., Division of Information, J.G.N. Strauss 1949-1951, Vol.I, Speeches, Press Cuttings, Text of speech to be delivered by Mr J.G.N. Strauss...at the opening of the Cape Provincial Congress of the U.P. on 22 October 1951.
22. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.I, H. Bezemer to J.G.N. Strauss, 23 September 1951.



need any money from capitalists."<sup>23</sup> In September he raised the ire of Party officials in the Transvaal by telling a reporter, after a tour of that province:

They are making no progress in the Transvaal Platteland, partly because of bad organisation and partly because the English Press does not give the United Party the publicity it gives the Nats.<sup>24</sup>

As a result the decision was taken to remove Mushet, as he later wrote, from the "leadership of my all-my-life Party."<sup>25</sup>

At the October 1951 East London Congress, sensing the way the wind was blowing, he announced that he would not be a candidate for re-election. In an act of pique he also turned down the sop of the Honorary Presidency of the Party in the Cape.<sup>26</sup> De Villiers Graaff was unanimously elected Cape Chairman in Mushet's place.<sup>27</sup>

The removal of Oosthuizen from the post of General Secretary took place virtually simultaneously with Mushet's

23. Eastern Province Herald, 13 August 1951. Die Kruithoring, 6 December 1951.
24. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.I, G.D. Pretorius to (?) Bennett, 5 September 1951.
25. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Resignation of O.A. Oosthuizen as General Secretary, J.W. Mushet to O.A. Oosthuizen, 30 October 1951.
26. Challenge, 27 October 1951, p.10.
27. In early October Strauss had been ordered by his doctor to rest. No publicity was given to the short holiday which he took. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/9/1, Vol.2, S.J. Marais Steyn to S.H. Lowe, 19 October 1951. In November 1951 Strauss stood down as Transvaal Provincial leader and was replaced by Bailey Bekker, another of the party's "able young men". The Star, 8 November 1951, p.10. Strauss found attending large gatherings to be an ordeal. At times prior to the 1953 General Election, but becoming more frequent afterwards, he suffered severe attacks of asthma immediately before such gatherings took place. Interview: L. Gerber.

removal from the Cape leadership. Deputized by Strauss, de Villiers Graaff and Bekker met Oosthuizen in early October to inform him, in the "strictest secrecy", that the confusion consequent upon the duality of control exercised by himself and van Biljon could only be remedied by his agreeing to work under van Biljon's control.<sup>28</sup> While refusing to do so, Oosthuizen nevertheless conceded "that the position had become impossible because van Biljon had latterly asked Strauss that he should be given the right to organise the marginal seats. This he had agreed to without notifying me."<sup>29</sup> After being offered generous severance conditions, he agreed to resign his post as from the end of December. He also agreed to remain available to the Party in an advisory capacity for a six month period.<sup>30</sup>

Oosthuizen's "retirement at his own request",<sup>31</sup> was made public during the first week of December. His letter of resignation, worded in such a way that it "could not be interpreted as deserting the Party",<sup>32</sup> was written for him by de Villiers Graaff.<sup>33</sup>

Upon Oosthuizen's resignation, the Executive Committee resolved to downgrade the post of General Secretary to that of Administrative Secretary, with J.L. Horak as the incumbent. It then went on to resolve that, as from 1 January 1952, van Biljon would be designated the Chief Executive Officer of the Party.<sup>34</sup> With Oosthuizen's

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28. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Correspondence, 1936-1953, O.A. Oosthuizen to D.E. Mitchell, 16 November 1951.  
 29. Ibid.  
 30. Ibid.  
 31. Challenge, 8 December 1951, p.10.  
 32. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Resignation of O.A. Oosthuizen as General Secretary, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 20 October 1951.  
 33. Ibid., Statement by O.A. Oosthuizen, 3 December 1951.  
 34. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/5/1, Vol.2, U.P.

departure the Division of Information could privately, and with some justification, claim that

the United Party since its defeat in 1948 has undergone a very complete overhaul, that much of the dead wood has been cut away and most of the bandwagoners removed, and that...the operative men in the inner councils of the United Party today are young, energetic and aggressive in outlook.<sup>35</sup>

But such a statement needed to be qualified, for the new leadership was relatively inexperienced and suffered significant weaknesses. An article in The Forum observed:

Although he may tailor himself into one by sheer doggedness, Mr Strauss is not a born leader of men. He stands at the head of a group of men who form not so much a party as an assortment of followers of another man, who was undoubtedly a born leader....The most astute of the official advisers and the only one with a weight of political experience equal to that of most senior members of the Nationalist Cabinet, is Dr Colin Steyn, but the rapport between him and Mr Strauss is not great. The other three provincial lieutenants, Sir de Villiers Graaff, Mr Bailey Bekker and Mr D.E. Mitchell are relative chickens in big politics....In Dr van Biljon, Mr Strauss has undoubtedly a call upon one of the ablest brains that has yet bothered itself with South African affairs, but the nous politikos of even this intelligent man is an unknown quantity.<sup>36</sup>

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- Executive Committee Resolution, n.d.
35. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Pamphlets, News-Cuttings, F. Gerard to R. Parrott, 5 February 1952.
36. The Forum, April 1952, p.21.

CHAPTER 16

THE LABOUR PARTY, MARCH - DECEMBER 1951

While the U.P. was restructuring its leadership, the L.P. was entering a new phase of crisis.

Reporting to Christie<sup>1</sup> in March 1951, E.S. Sachs<sup>2</sup> wrote: "I have taken over the treasurership of the Party and found the coffers not only empty but full of holes...There is not even enough money to keep the office going, and that must be remedied immediately."<sup>3</sup> During the thirteen months

1. Christie had only narrowly retained the chairmanship of the Party, 440 votes to 431, at the November 1950 National Conference. He had been opposed by the leader of the Party's left-wing, R.N.B. Smith, Cape Argus, 8 January 1951, p.7.
2. Following his "naming" under the terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, it had been suggested, at an October 1950 meeting of the L.P. National Executive Council, "that the Party should do more than pay lip service to [Sachs]. He should be given the assurance that, should the need arise, members of the Party who are members of the legal profession would be at his service." Sachs declined the offer saying that what he "really needed was the support of the Party's Members of Parliament in the House..." S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 26 October 1950.
3. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 10, E.S. Sachs to J. Christie, 6 March 1951. Sachs had vainly approached the Amalgamated Engineering Union (19 000 members) for funds. He had suggested that in return, "the Party would be glad to have candidates from the A.E.U. for public office." Ibid. The L.P.'s attempt to raise revenue from trade unions had been made particularly difficult by the splits which had taken place within the trade union umbrella body, the South African Trades and Labour Council, since 1947. In April of that year 6 Pretoria trade unions had withdrawn to form their own federation, the 13 000 strong Co-ordinating Council of South African Trade Unions, when their attempt to debar African trade unions from affiliating failed. In 1950 more unions dis-

preceding 31 March 1950, Affiliation fees, "the only definite income the Party can depend upon", had amounted to £380.<sup>4</sup> For the period 1 April to 30 November 1950, total income from both Affiliation fees and Donations amounted to only £550.<sup>5</sup> After expenses the Party, at the end of 1950, had been left with a deficit of £64 and had only £24 in working capital.<sup>6</sup> Not surprisingly, it had been noted at the Party's November 1950 Annual Conference that, as a result of the financial position: "The activities of the Party have been severely restricted. Much of the necessary propaganda work has been curtailed, while the Party struggled to administer its affairs with a small staff."<sup>7</sup>

In February 1951 enquiries as to whether the Trust Fund would be willing to support the L.P. apparently came to nothing.<sup>8</sup> By July, the Party's Head Office was once again threatened with closure.<sup>9</sup> The Party's finances appear to

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affiliated from the S.A.T.L.C., largely over the issue of giving support to "named" trade union officials, to form the South African Federation of Trade Unions. R. Feldman Papers, Trade Unions Must Avoid Disruptive Issues, 13 November 1950. By 1953 S.A.F.T.U. had 23 unions with a membership of 100 000 as compared with the S.A.T.L.C.'s 50 unions with a membership of 83 000. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.72. The Amalgamated Engineering Union was an unaffiliated body.

4. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 2, File 8, Income and Expenditure Account, 31 March 1950.
5. Ibid., Box 6, File 2, Revenue and Expenditure Account, 1 April to 30 November 1950. During this period Affiliation fees totalled £256. The largest annual expense was salaries which amounted to £415. Advertising expenses amounted to £37. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 9, National Executive Council, Report to the Fortieth Annual Conference of the S.A.L.P., n.d.
8. Ibid., Box 3, File 8, C. Clingman to J. Christie, 20 February 1951.
9. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, General Secretary to Honorary Secretary, Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee,

have improved between then and the end of the year however, for the 30 November Balance Sheet showed that, although Affiliation Fees had dropped to £208, Donations had increased dramatically to £759. As a consequence the deficit was brought down to £34.<sup>10</sup> Circumstantial evidence would appear to indicate that the sudden increase in Donations was a direct result of the Torch Commando Executive's injunction to the organisation's members actively to support the opposition party of their choice.

For a possibly not unrelated reason, though Ardé ascribed it "to a great extent, to his having been able to arrange for continuous publicity in the press",<sup>11</sup> the second half of 1951 also saw the Party organisation in Natal being established on a more secure footing. Acting in accordance with the powers earlier conferred upon him by the Party's National Executive,<sup>12</sup> Ardé, immediately after the end of the 1951 parliamentary session, called a general meeting of all Party members in Natal for the purpose of electing a new Provincial Executive. At the meeting Ardé was elected Chairman of the new seventeen member committee.<sup>13</sup>

In October Ardé reported to the L.P. Head Office that the  
ex-Chairman of the Natal Executive is

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5 July 1951.

10. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 10, Revenue and Expenditure Account, 30 November 1951.
11. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 5 August 1951.
12. Ibid., Cabinet 1, File 14, Office Manager, S.A.L.P. to the Honorary Organising Secretary, Natal Provincial Executive Committee, S.A.L.P., 6 October 1950.
13. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 5 August 1951.

unable to supply the Party with a list of contributors as he has lost all the records of the Party. Furthermore, he has informed the Executive Committee that it has not been customary to send receipts to contributors. No trace of the Party's typewriters, minute books, letter files, savings bank books, account books, propaganda matter, etc., has been found.<sup>14</sup>

With an eye no doubt to van Biljon's appointment in the U.P., Ardé undertook to ensure that, in future, the L.P. in Natal would "be run on business lines..."<sup>15</sup>

Despite a plea from Christie that they "actively assist Ardé in his efforts to resuscitate the Party in Natal",<sup>16</sup> no assistance had been forthcoming from the Party's three Natal parliamentary representatives. Their inactivity was probably explicable in terms of the fact that they could afford largely to ignore, and had even come to resent, intrusions by the Party at the national and provincial levels. Once their seats had been secured by the Election Pact, they derived political succour from their constituency organisations and not from the financially emaciated Party.

As a direct consequence of their lack of activity, the Natal Provincial Executive, on 15 November, abolished the position of Provincial Leader of the L.P. in Natal.<sup>17</sup> This step, the Executive reported, had been necessitated because Senator Browne had "only attended one meeting of the Provincial Executive during the last two years and no meetings of the

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14. Ibid., Cabinet 1, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 7 October 1951.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., Cabinet 1, File 14, Office Manager, S.A.L.P. to the Honorary Organising Secretary, Natal Provincial Executive Committee, S.A.L.P., 6 October 1950.

17. Ibid., Cabinet 1, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 16 November 1951.

Durban District Committee or Aggregate Meetings for nearly four years."<sup>18</sup> The meeting also unanimously decided that, in future, all press statements would be made by the Chairman of the Provincial Executive and no longer by Senator Browne.<sup>19</sup>

The timing of Browne's removal from the leadership had as much to do with his obvious lack of performance in that role, as it had with the trauma which the Party as a whole suffered as a result of the defeat of all seventeen of its candidates in the 1 November Johannesburg City Council elections.<sup>20</sup> Ardé wrote: "As far as I have been able to ascertain, the result of the Johannesburg Municipal elections has done a considerable amount of harm to the Party in Natal and has retarded its progress by at least a year."<sup>21</sup>

On the U.P.'s initiative, negotiations for an agreement to cover the Council elections had been opened in July 1951.<sup>22</sup> The negotiations soon stalled however because the U.P. would offer the L.P. no more than five seats to contest. In view of the fact that the L.P. had only three Councillors on the City Council at that time, the L.P. negotiators were being less than realistic when they reported that "although the discussions were friendly enough, it was impossible for us to accept the United Party suggestions which were out of all proportion to the strength of our Party in Johannesburg."<sup>23</sup>

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18. Ibid. Neither Senator Browne nor Mrs E.A. Benson attended the meeting. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Rand Daily Mail, 2 November 1951, p.11.
21. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 1, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 10 November 1951.
22. Ibid., Box 11, File 10, Office Manager, S.A.L.P., to the Honorary Secretary, Johannesburg District Committee, 4 July 1951.
23. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of Quarterly Meeting



A probable explanation for the L.P.'s lack of flexibility was the fear that, as the Council elections from 1951 were to be held once every three years rather than annually as had previously been the case, the U.P. might use the outcome of the elections as an indication as to what attitude it should adopt on the question of a General Election alliance with the L.P.<sup>24</sup> It is very likely that the L.P., using this logic, took the gamble of endorsing the twenty-one City Council election candidates it had already nominated.<sup>25</sup> Seventeen candidates eventually stood and all were defeated by their U.P. opponents. The N.P., unopposed by the L.P., increased its representation on the Council from three to seven seats.<sup>26</sup>

The consensus of opinion in the despondent L.P. settled on three reasons to explain the Party's setback. The first was that the electorate's fear of the Government's authoritarianism had prompted them to vote for one strong opposition party.<sup>27</sup> The second was that the Party's limited financial resources had resulted in poor organisation.<sup>28</sup> The third cause of the defeat was ascribed to the "active support of the Torch Commando for the United Party against the Labour candidates."<sup>29</sup> That the latter was a highly

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of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 31 August 1951.

24. Ibid., Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 31 August 1951.
25. Ibid., Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 5 August 1951.
26. The Star, 2 November 1951, p.10. The U.P. won 34 of the 42 seats. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 1 November 1951, p.1.
28. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Report of a Special Joint Meeting of the National Executive Council, the Transvaal Provincial Executive and the Johannesburg District Committees of the S.A.L.P., 14 December 1951.
29. Ibid. By as late as 15 November 1951 the L.P.

unlikely cause is illustrated by a statement, in reference to the City Council elections, made by Kane Berman in late October: "Where the contest is between United Party and Labour, Commando members will vote whichever way they please."<sup>30</sup>

The maintenance of a credible L.P. public presence was, in fact, to form a cornerstone of the Torch Commando's attempt to remove the N.P. Government. The Executive became convinced that, while Afrikaans-speaking working-class voters could never be persuaded to vote U.P., they might be persuaded to vote L.P.<sup>31</sup> Thus, subsequent to the Council elections, the Torch Commando came out stridently in support of a "common anti-Government Front" because of the fear that the U.P. would "be sorely tempted to press its advantage over the Labour Party and so alienate a large section of the voting public."<sup>32</sup>

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Secretary was still seeking "clarification of the Party's attitude to the Torch Commando." Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 69, D. Ritchie to General Secretary, S.A.L.P., 15 November 1951.

30. The Star, 26 October 1951, p.3.

31. Interview: L. Kane Berman.

32. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, After El Alamein, Charles Bekker, n.d.

PART VITHE ALLIANCE HOLDSCHAPTER 17THE U.P. MARGINAL SEAT DRIVE,  
SEPTEMBER 1951 - JULY 1952

On 25 September 1951, the Hon. N.J. de Wet, former Chief Justice and former Officer Administering the Government, extended his patronage to the Torch Commando. His action assisted substantially in dampening the effect of Government accusations that the Commando was simply a revival of the Springbok Legion and that action deserved to be taken against it under the terms of the Suppression of Communism Act.<sup>1</sup>

While de Wet's patronage thus made the public association of the U.P. with the Torch Commando more politically acceptable, profound difficulties remained in defining the precise nature of the relationship between them. U.P. concern was two-fold. The first was not so much the fear, as expressed by Oosthuizen, that the organisation might develop into a Soldiers' Party,<sup>2</sup> but that it might attempt

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1. Challenge, 10 August 1951, p.2.
  2. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, Minutes 1949-1952, Central Advisory Committee on Publicity, n.d. On 12 December 1951, in reference to the possibility of the Torch Commando becoming a political party, A.G. Malan informed Marais Steyn: "...I can give my assurance that no such step will be taken..." Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, A.G. Malan to S.J. Marais Steyn, 12 December 1951. This view was not unanimously held by the Torch Commando rank and file.

to exert undue influence on the Party itself. Not only had the Torch Commando "launched an ambitious organisational scheme, based upon the appointment of salaried organisers"<sup>3</sup> but the Natal leaders of the movement, in a portent of possible future developments, had issued a statement in which they said that they intended to "vet" U.P. parliamentary candidates.<sup>4</sup> The second, and not unrelated fear, was that the movement would "draw for its membership, and particularly for its finances, upon the same sources as the Party."<sup>5</sup> While the U.P. Executive acknowledged that the Torch Commando had played a significant role in rousing the public's political awareness, even this positive attribute was mitigated by the fact that "that section of the population to which the movement appeals is the United Party supporting section; there is little prospect of its converting Nationalists."<sup>6</sup>

It was with these thoughts in mind that the U.P. Central Executive Committee left the question of the relationship between the two organisations "in the hands of the Leader."<sup>7</sup> An early September meeting between Strauss and two members of the Torch Commando National Executive Committee went some

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At that time it was reported that the Cape Peninsula Region supported the idea of forming a new party. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, After El Alamein, Charles Bekker, n.d.

3. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. In October the membership of the Torch Commando stood at almost 100 000. Sunday Times, 7 October 1951, p.12.
6. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Chairman's Notes, Leader's Executive, 30 August 1951.
7. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.246, Central Executive Committee, 31 August 1951.

way toward allaying the twin fears of the U.P. Not only did the National Executive members, on behalf of the Torch Commando, undertake to assist the U.P. as much as possible, but they also provided an assurance that they did "not intend putting up our own candidates."<sup>8</sup>

Concrete results were soon forthcoming. In mid-September the National Executive offered assistance to the U.P. in registration drives in marginal seats.<sup>9</sup> Later in the month it pressed for the establishment of a "strategic headquarters", in which information on every voter in the Transvaal would be collated and recorded.<sup>10</sup> In early October it was decided that the "closest liaison" between the Party and the Commando would be maintained through regular weekly meetings.<sup>11</sup>

Torch Commando assistance came at an auspicious moment for the U.P., for it was about to launch a major campaign to register voters in marginal seats countrywide. The major emphasis in the campaign though, an emphasis which the National Advisory Committee had, against Oosthuizen's opposition, pressed for in 1950, was to be on the

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8. Ibid., Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, G. Nicholson to the General Secretary, United Party, 8 September 1951.
  9. Ibid., C.D. Prosser to F. van Biljon, 27 September 1951. As early as 4 August the Torch Commando in Durban had launched a "Battle of the Ballot Box" in order to register eligible voters. Cape Argus, 4 August 1951, p.3.
  10. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, J.L. Horak to S.J. Marais Steyn, 29 September 1951.
  11. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.270, Central Executive Committee, 9 October 1951.

Witwatersrand.<sup>12</sup> In defence of this emphasis, Strauss, quoting Smuts, said that the Witwatersrand was the "electoral kingpin" and that "here on the Witwatersrand governments can be made or unmade."<sup>13</sup>

A November U.P. memorandum had provided the justification for Strauss's assertion. It noted that of the 36 Witwatersrand seats, 22 were held by the U.P., 4 by the L.P. and 10 by the N.P. Of these 36 it was estimated that 16 were marginal, 6 U.P., 1 L.P. and 9 N.P. Remarking that these marginal seats constituted "a soft political underbelly, the next election will depend very greatly on which party wins them," the memorandum went on to warn that although the new delimitation might "change the whole position, the hazards are considerable, but we cannot wait...before launching our campaign."<sup>14</sup>

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- | 12. | <u>Area</u>           | <u>No. of<br/>Marginal<br/>Seats</u> | <u>Time</u>          |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
|     | Witwatersrand         | 16                                   | January to mid-Feb   |
|     | Transvaal Rural Areas | 10                                   | Mid-Feb to mid-March |
|     | Pretoria              | 2                                    | January              |
|     | Natal                 | 3                                    | End March            |
|     | Cape Peninsula        | 2                                    | February             |
|     | Cape Rural Areas      | 8                                    | February             |
|     | Port Elizabeth        | 2                                    | March                |
|     | Kimberley             | 2                                    | April                |
|     | OFS Goldfields        | 1                                    | April                |
- Ibid., No.301, Action Programme, December 1951. H.F. Oppenheimer commented that the programme would "much facilitate his task" with the Trustees of the Fund. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/17/5/1, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 22 December 1951.
13. Challenge, 15 December 1951, p.4. On 6 November Strauss had confined his entire speech at the Party's Transvaal Congress to "bread and butter issues." The Star noted: "Coupled with the assertion that the United Party was now going over to an election footing, this suggests that the Party will fight the next general election on economic issues." The Star, 7 November 1951, p.7.
14. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Speeches, Points for Speech by the

The campaign was two-pronged. The first was a scheme to hold 96 major rallies between 18 February and the end of June 1952 in all marginal Witwatersrand seats.<sup>15</sup> The second involved the drafting of the bulk of the Party's organisers in safe Witwatersrand seats into three "Commands", a West, a Central and an Eastern "Command". Each "Command" was allocated a number of marginal seats to cover and was, in effect, a separate General Council.<sup>16</sup> Strauss told the "skeleton crews" left to man the safe seats that they were being asked, "for the sake of the whole campaign, to work largely on your own."<sup>17</sup>

Having formed a separate Johannesburg Region out of the Southern Transvaal Region so that the Johannesburg Regional

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Hon. J.G.N. Strauss to Meeting of Representatives of non-Marginal seats on the Witwatersrand, 28 November 1951. At least 20 000 voters on the Witwatersrand had not yet been registered. The Star, 5 November 1951, p.3. Full registration would have entitled the Witwatersrand to two extra seats in the new Delimitation. Challenge, 15 December 1951, p.4. Registered Voters as at:

	<u>30 June 1951</u>	<u>31 December 1951</u>
<u>Cape Province</u>		
Whites	516 808	538 400
Coloureds	46 870	47 335
<u>Transvaal</u>	647 066	662 875
<u>Orange Free State</u>	128 228	134 604
<u>Natal</u>		
Whites	146 260	151 153
Coloureds	1 192	1 192

U.P. Papers, Cape Province, 1952 Delimitation, Registered Voters as at 31 December 1951.

15. Rand Daily Mail, 12 February 1952, p.7.

16. Challenge, 15 December 1951, p.4.

17. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Speeches, Points for Speech by the Hon. J.G.N. Strauss to Meeting of Representatives of the non-Marginal Seats on the Witwatersrand, 28 November 1951.

Committee could devote its "entire energies to this particular city,"<sup>18</sup> a formal agreement in regard to assistance in marginal seats was arrived at, on 8 November, between representatives of the Torch Commando and the U.P. The former, in the agreement, undertook to supply manpower to be used in "canvassing, registration, deletion, clerical and other organisational work in collaboration with, and to supplement the efforts of, the Party."<sup>19</sup>

The Marginal Seat Scheme, launched on the Witwatersrand on 8 January 1952, had been drawn up by a technical sub-committee under the chairmanship of van Biljon<sup>20</sup> and rested primarily on the application of the block system of canvassing, a system inordinately heavy in terms of its manpower requirements. Initially, the programme went according to schedule. On 30 January van Biljon reported

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18. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the National Executive, 12-13 October 1951. By October 1951 the Johannesburg Region of the Torch Commando had 40 branches and a membership of 25 000. Ibid. The Torch Commando, as a whole, had suspended recruiting until its El Alamein Day Celebrations on 23 October. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, Alamein Day.  
In the interim a "Goodwill Truck" toured the country to fill the gap in publicity. This, according to A.G. Malan, was an "ill-conceived idea" and an "unqualified failure". Ibid., A.G. Malan to S.J. Marais Steyn, 12 December 1951. On El Alamein Day 40 000 people "rallied to the Torches" in Johannesburg, 20 000 in Cape Town, 10 000 in Durban and 6 000 in Pretoria. The Star, 27 October 1951, p.3.
19. U.P. Papers, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Memorandum on Agreement arrived at between Senior Officials of the Torch Commando and the United Party, 8 November 1951.
20. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.280, Central Executive Committee, 4 December 1951.



that the scheme on the Witwatersrand had been launched "with large numbers of voluntary workers, on a scale hitherto unprecedented."<sup>21</sup> In mid-February the Party in the Transvaal reinforced enthusiasm by launching a massive "Work-to-Win Campaign" during which it posted thousands of "Victorygrams" urging supporters to work for the Party.<sup>22</sup> On 19 February, van Biljon was able to report to Strauss that

the progress made with the marginal seat block system on the Witwatersrand is such that it can now be said that at least half of the required number of block workers have already been found and, as things are going now, there is little doubt that a much higher coverage will be forthcoming from within our own ranks....What is relevant in the present connection is that in fact there has been little material support from the Torch Commando...to quote the case of Brakpan, they first offered to take 100 blocks and have actually found workers for none.<sup>23</sup>

But the heavy demands of the block system inevitably began to tell upon the enthusiasm of the volunteers.<sup>24</sup> At the end of April van Biljon reported that "as the marginal seat

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21. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1. Vol.I, F.J. van Biljon to H. Bezemer, 30 January 1952.
  22. Challenge, 23 February 1952, p.8.
  23. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.I, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 19 February 1952.
  24. Referring to the 1952 marginal seat drive's use of the block system, a 1955 U.P. memorandum noted that it "involved too great a degree of sacrifice by voluntary helpers to be completely or permanently successful, but even a thirty per cent efficiency provides a very high standard of pre-election organisation." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Memorandum, General Secretary to Leader's Executive Committee, 14 March 1955.

returns come in, it is evident that our crop of voluntary workers has been quite inadequate, that from the Torch virtually nil,<sup>25</sup> while the entire Cape is hopelessly behind, and the Transvaal more than a month."<sup>26</sup>

By July considerable progress nevertheless had been made. A memorandum noted that in

the Transvaal the first canvass of voters in all marginal seats has been completed; in Natal, the second phase of the scheme, namely, the maintenance of the system, has been reached; in the Cape Province the degree of progress varies from the launching of the block system, in some constituencies, to its maintenance in others; and in the Orange Free State the Bloemfontein and Goldfields areas are being attended to.<sup>27</sup>

The cost of the marginal seat registration drives had been estimated, during the planning stage, at about £46 000.<sup>28</sup> This amount brought the total estimate of the preliminary

25. This was despite a Torch Commando National Executive meeting on 25-26 January which had been called primarily to make co-operation with the U.P. "more practical in all regions." War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Meeting of the National Executive Committee, 25-26 January 1952.
26. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 30 April 1952. In May van Biljon reported to Strauss: "While £2000 has been allocated for Cape Peninsula marginal seats, nothing has been started yet and nothing has been paid. Clearly the General Council is in need of a shake-up on organisation, fund-raising and branch formation." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 10 May 1952.
27. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive, 17-19 July 1952.
28. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.308, Estimate of Election Expenditure, n.d.

General Election costs for 1952 to £175 000.<sup>29</sup> The covering of this additional expenditure had been discussed at a Central Executive meeting in early December. Here H.F. Oppenheimer had stated that the "Trust was assisting at the rate of £100 000 per annum, that it would continue to do so at approximately that rate, and it could, in addition, be reasonably expected to find £100 000 for the General Election."<sup>30</sup> His statement was confirmed at a 9 January 1952 meeting of the Trustees of the Fund, where an amount of £51 655 was approved to cover the entire normal expenditure of the U.P. central organisation from January to June 1952, plus a sum of £11 000 to cover the pre-election expenses of the Division of Information. In addition, the entire cost of the marginal seat scheme was underwritten.<sup>31</sup>

In a review of its own sources of revenue, the U.P. Executive noted that, excluding moneys retained by branches and Divisional Committees, the "First Source" revenue accruing to the Provincial Executives and General Councils amounted to about £120 000 per annum. All of this sum was spent in the unit areas in which it was raised.<sup>32</sup> Estimating revenue from the "Third Source", 1952 being the Division of Fund Raising's first full year of operation, at £25 000, the review concluded optimistically: "All our sources of income should enable us to finance our operations

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29. Ibid., Action Programme, December 1951.

30. Ibid., No.280, Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, 4 December 1951. In the Cape the N.P. General Election Fund, the Dr Malan Fund, was reported to have collected nearly £80 000. Ibid.

31. Ibid., Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets 1950-1956, H.F. Oppenheimer to J.W. Higgerty, 17 January 1952.

32. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, No.143, Chairman's Introductory Survey of Party Finances, 30 January 1952.

with a possible small surplus accruing to Central Funds ex  
'Third Source' revenue."<sup>33</sup>

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33. Ibid.

CHAPTER 18

THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT,  
JANUARY - MAY 1952

The Parliamentary session which opened on 18 January 1952 was the last full session before the General Election.<sup>1</sup> A London Times article noted that

the lines of the main United Party attack on the Government will be of more than usual interest, for they will for the first time disclose the policies suggested by Dr F.J. van Biljon....The Nationalist tactical pattern, judging from comment in the Nationalist Press, will be...to arouse as much suspicion as possible from the relations between the Opposition and big Capitalists chiefly the Oppenheimer Group.<sup>2</sup>

It is not clear whether the strategy adapted by the U.P. was van Biljon's or not, for Strauss, pursuing a line similar to that which he had adopted when he had introduced his motion of censure in January 1951, and which he had resurrected at the Party's Transvaal Congress later that year, made the gravamen of his Party's motion of no-confidence the Government's failure to control the rapid escalation in the cost-of-living.<sup>3</sup>

In the face of an expected renewed assault by the Government on the entrenched clauses, the opening of a "Second Front"

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1. See Appendix XXVIII: State of Parliament, January 1952.
  2. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/17/5/1, London Times, 18 January 1952, p.3.
  3. The Star, 23 January 1952, p.11. Between 1948 and 1952 the "All Items" price index had risen from 76,8 to 96,6. The index had gone up almost 8 points between 1951 and 1952. D. Hobart Houghton, op. cit., p.293.

on an issue which had direct electoral appeal appeared to have considerable merit. Oosthuizen, in early January, had informed Strauss:

My information indicates that the United Party would be most effective if it were to concentrate most of its efforts on economic issues during the forthcoming session. The facts speak so eloquently that there is no real reply from the Government side.<sup>4</sup>

Oosthuizen's advice was later corroborated when a trial opinion survey, commissioned by the U.P. and conducted in four broadly representative Transvaal constituencies between March and May 1952, found that "cost-of-living and financial worries and all that goes with them is by far the greatest problem confronting the voter."<sup>5</sup> The survey did however add, thus placing in question the efficacy of the U.P. strategy insofar as it was aimed at winning support from across the political spectrum, that these concerns appeared with much less incidence among Afrikaans-speaking than they did among English-speaking voters. The survey ascribed this phenomenon to the generally lower living standard of the Afrikaans-speaking electorate, and their willingness to accept the Government line that the cost-of-living in South Africa was very much lower than in other countries.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, that the issue was a delicate one for the Government, was illustrated by the fact that nine Cabinet Ministers took part in the no-confidence debate.<sup>7</sup> Malan, supported by Havenga, countered the U.P. attack by appealing

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4. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 12 January 1952.
  5. U.P. Papers, Internal Administration File, Publicity and Propaganda Methods, Public Opinion Surveys 1949-1966, Trial Opinion Survey: Brakpan, Germiston, Mayfair, Losberg, March-May 1952.
  6. Ibid.
  7. Challenge, 2 February 1952, p.2.

to patriotism, laying stress on the need for national unity in the face of the crisis which the sterling area was then negotiating. An article in Challenge reported that political observers, mistaking a tactic for a policy, "saw in Dr Malan's speech an attempt to secure his place in history as a nation-builder beside his three great predecessors...."<sup>8</sup>

Malan's argument was made particularly difficult for the U.P. to counter because of the official announcement, in early January, that the King and Queen were to pay the country a private visit in order to allow the King to recuperate from his recent illness. Challenge itself reported the mistaken general impression that "the idea of inviting the King and Queen to the Union was a purely spontaneous one on the part of Dr Malan..."<sup>9</sup> A.L. Geyer, the South African High Commissioner in London, who had extended the invitation, had in fact been misinformed, for Malan's original instruction had been: "Daar moes alleen gewilligheid getoon word in geval 'n suggestie van hul kant kom..."<sup>10</sup> The King's death occurred before the proposed visit could take place. Geyer wrote: "Wat 'n genade dat hy nie in Suid-Afrika oorlede is nie. Soos dinge nou verloop het, het Dr Malan al die voordele gekry wat uit die uitnodiging gevloei het...sonder 'n enkele van die nadele, en binne ons Party was daar nadele!"<sup>11</sup>

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8. Ibid. The U.P.'s motion of No-Confidence was defeated by 79 votes to 65. None of the Natives' Representatives voted. The L.P. amendment, calling for the restoration of civil liberties and criticising Government proposals to pass restrictive labour legislation, fell away. Malan's amendment, expressing full confidence in the Government, was approved by 79 votes to 66. Rand Daily Mail, 29 January 1952, p.9.
9. Challenge, 12 January 1952, p.6.
10. A.L. Geyer: Vier Jaar in Highveld, p.89.
11. Ibid., p.91.

The perils which Malan and Havenga's emphasis upon white reconciliation held for the U.P. became more apparent with the passage of time. In February Oosthuizen warned Strauss that Malan was siding with Havenga, on the question of the imposition of austerity measures, against Louw and Strijdom. He reported further that Havenga was prepared, again with Malan's apparent support, to appeal for a showdown on the issue by calling on all moderates, irrespective of party allegiance, to support him.<sup>12</sup> Oosthuizen concluded:

Havenga has been dreaming, as the culmination of his life's work, of the re-establishment and re-juvenation of the old United Party....Let me say without hesitation that this plan, if it is correct, carries with it great dangers to ourselves and it may well lead to a partial disintegration of our own Party.<sup>13</sup>

In April, an article in The Forum observed that Malan and Havenga's emphasis upon reconciliation was

well tuned to the desire for harmony that the Van Riebeeck Festival is fostering in greater measure every day. It makes them men of peace and goodwill and it leaves Mr Strauss and Mr Strijdom, each in his peculiar way, standing for the continuation of strife, division and endless bickering.<sup>14</sup>

Strauss's reluctance, under these circumstances, to distance the U.P. too far from Government policy, goes some way to explaining the Party's participation in the Select Committee which had been constituted, in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, with the implicit purpose of unseating

12. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, O.A. Oosthuizen to J.G.N. Strauss, 5 February 1952.  
 13. Ibid.  
 14. The Forum, 19 April 1952, p.20.



S. Kahn and F. Carneson from the House of Assembly and the Cape Provincial Council respectively.<sup>15</sup> In a belated attempt to maintain internal cohesion in the face of Government legislative initiatives, elements of which held an obvious appeal to significant sections of both the U.P. caucus and the electorate, the Central Executive, on 31 January, established a sub-Committee to draft recommendations on the attitude the Party should adopt to "contentious Nationalist legislation."<sup>16</sup> Hardly had it done so than twenty-five U.P. members, during the Committee Stage of the omnibus Native Laws Amendment Bill, voted with the Government on a clause providing inspectors of labour wide judicial powers over Africans.<sup>17</sup>

Although the longstanding N.P. campaign against the Trust

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15. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/7, Vol.I, National Chairman, Springbok Legion to J.G.N. Strauss, 24 February 1952. The November 1951 banning of The Guardian, under the terms of The Suppression of Communism Act, evoked no official response from the U.P. The Central Executive Committee agreed that a statement on the banning "was not specially called for in view of the fact that the Party's attitude towards the relative legislation had been clearly indicated in Parliament." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.280, Central Executive Committee, 4 December 1951. The Torch Commando was less equivocal. "While setting aside the merits of the case against The Guardian, for which we hold no brief", it nevertheless protested the Government's "flouting of democratic and constitutional methods." Rand Daily Mail, 31 October 1951, p.11.
16. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.296, Central Executive Committee, 31 January 1952.
17. Rand Daily Mail, 12 February 1952, p.7. The U.P. had undertaken to fight the measure "tooth and nail". The Bill was opposed by both the L.P. and Natives Representatives. L. Lovell (L.P., Benoni) pointed out that sections of the Bill had been "taken almost bodily from the Military Discipline Code of the Union Defence Force." Ibid., 5 February 1952, p.11.

Fund had made a considerable impression on the "Platteland", the attack launched against it during the 1952 session failed to gather momentum. This was primarily because the issue had already been squeezed dry, but some credit for the Government's failure must also be attributed to both the Trustees of the Fund and to the U.P. itself. In a 21 January letter to Marais Steyn, H.T. Cooper, the Fund's Secretary, wrote that the Trustees

feel it vitally important that there should be a well organised and effective campaign to oppose the motion.<sup>18</sup> Action has already been taken here, and this will be followed elsewhere, to organise the English-speaking press so that both supporters of the United Party and our donors will be convinced of the merits of our existence, and of supporting us.<sup>19</sup>

The U.P. speakers did not disappoint the Trustees. Oppenheimer, in particular, "in the most effective and courageous speech of his parliamentary career",<sup>20</sup> ensured that the N.P. "'bomb', after giving a few desultory splutters, petered out completely."<sup>21</sup>

Despite the failure of the N.P.'s latest attack on the Trust Fund, Strauss feared the possibility that the Government

18. The essence of the N.P. motion read: "That this House expresses its disapproval of the secret large-scale subsidisation of political parties by certain powerful interest groups as being detrimental to a healthy democratic public life." Oppenheimer's amendment read: "That this House wishes to place on record its approval of the democratic right of South Africans to associate together for the furtherance of any objects not contrary to the law of the land." The Star, 20 February 1952.
19. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, United South Africa Trust Fund, H.T. Cooper to S.J. Marais Steyn, 21 January 1952.
20. The Star, 20 February 1952.
21. Ibid.

might introduce legislation to limit the expenditure of political parties both between and during elections. As a precaution, he appointed a sub-committee to explore the possibility of registering a private company to take over the operation of Challenge and Ons Blad and the Divisions of Information and Research.<sup>22</sup>

The burning issue of the session was, however, what the Government's response would be if the impending decision of the Appellate Division on the validity of the Separate Representation of Voters' Act was in favour of the U.P.-sponsored plaintiffs.<sup>23</sup> It was primarily in preparation for the Court's decision that Strauss, on 22 January, closely associated the aims of the U.P. with those of the Torch Commando. He said:

I have looked at the five points of the programme of the Torch Commando. All these five points are included in United Party policy...when the United Party is returned to power those five points, amongst others, will be implemented by the United Party...<sup>24</sup>

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22. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive, 20 March 1952.
23. The Bill had received the Governor-General's assent on 15 June 1951. The U.P. had soon afterwards advertised for four Coloured voters to act as plaintiffs in an application to the Cape Supreme Court to have the legislation declared invalid. The application was dismissed in October. An appeal had immediately been launched and came before the Appellate Division on 20 February 1952. The U.P. paid legal costs of almost £25 000. D. Scher, op. cit., pp.242-3.
24. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, Extract from Speech in the Assembly by Mr J.G.N. Strauss, 22 January 1952. The first point of the Torch Commando's principles, which in essence embraced the other four, stated: "To uphold the spirit and the solemn compacts entered upon at the time of Union as a moral obligation of trust and honour binding upon

His motive for making the speech lay in the contents of a letter which had been sent to him two weeks earlier by van Biljon. In the letter van Biljon advised, as there was "still a great deal of woolly thinking about the role of the Commando", that the nature of the Party's relationship with the Torch Commando be clarified before the latter's Executive met on 25 January. This, he said, was essential in order to clear the way for close co-operation so as to prevent a duplication of effort by the two organisations in any response they might make to the Appeal Court decision.<sup>25</sup> Implicit also was the fear that the Torch Commando might again seize both the initiative and the limelight as it had done in April 1951.<sup>26</sup>

During the period late January to March van Biljon liaised with the Torch Commando Executive on the question of the most appropriate action to adopt in response to the Court's decision.<sup>27</sup> Fearing initially that if any demonstrations were held they might coincide with the beginning of the Defiance Campaign which the A.N.C. at its December 1951 Conference had planned for 6 April,<sup>28</sup> van Biljon had managed to persuade a reluctant Torch Commando Executive, at its January meeting, not to stage any demonstrations or hold any

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Parliament and the People." Ibid., Torch Commando Principles, n.d.

25. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 8 January 1952.
26. By this time Keith Acutt had joined the Torch Commando National Executive. Kane Berman subsequently considered this a profound mistake "for Acutt was the eyes and ears of Oppenheimer." Interview: L. Kane Berman.
27. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 March 1952.
28. P. Walshe: The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p.293.

public meetings.<sup>29</sup> But, soon afterwards, "on representation from the Johannesburg City Region...[the]...Action Committee reconsidered this decision and felt compelled to take action in the matter....Nine regions whom it was possible to contact personally also agreed...."<sup>30</sup>

Uncertain, because of the Defiance Campaign, as to its own line of action, the U.P. prevaricated in the face of the Torch Commando's arbitrary decision. Pressed by the latter to join its "Operation Supercharge" by holding joint meetings, the U.P. made no firm response.<sup>31</sup> Finally, on 20 March, only hours before the Court decided in the plaintiff's favour, the Party Executive decided to proceed with the organisation of protest meetings on the theme, "This Government Must Go."<sup>32</sup> Not having been informed, the "announcement put the Torch into a flat spin...."<sup>33</sup>

Although arrangements were subsequently made for the holding of joint meetings, except in Johannesburg and Pretoria where

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29. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 March 1952.
30. Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, "Operation Supercharge", 4 March 1952.
31. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 March 1952.
32. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive Meeting, 20 March 1952. It had earlier been decided that if the Court ruled in the Government's favour the Party would stress once again the need for a Bill of Rights. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.301, Action Programme, December 1951.
33. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 March 1952.

it was felt it was possible to hold two demonstrations on the same day, relations between the two organisations became strained. In a letter to Strauss, van Biljon reported:

Maj. Parrott was most critical of the fact that we were trying to steal a march on them...as far as the Torch rank and file is concerned there can be no question that they are convinced that there was a breach of faith by the United Party...<sup>34</sup>

Malan's reaction to the verdict was to issue an explicit threat to place the legislative sovereignty of Parliament beyond any doubt.<sup>35</sup> His threat, reiterated in a joint statement, on 24 March, by the N.P.'s four provincial leaders,<sup>36</sup> threatened further to heighten tension between the U.P. and the Torch Commando, for the latter decided to resume large-scale demonstrations after the 28 March - 15 April Tercentenary political truce.<sup>37</sup> The decision

34. Ibid. No attempt was made to include the L.P. in the joint protest meetings. In part, the official L.P. statement on the Court's verdict read: "The Labour Party calls upon all democratic South Africans to direct their moral indignation against a Government which, the Court has shown, attempted to use its power to destroy the Constitution...It warns the Government that any attempt to attack or sidetrack the decision of the Appellate Court will be...strenuously resisted..." W.G. Ballinger Papers, Official Statement by the S.A.L.P. on the Coloured Vote Case Decision, n.d.
35. D. Scher, op. cit., p.265. On 21 March Die Burger reported that the Cabinet was considering the introduction of legislation which would declare Parliament, or a Committee of it, to be the country's highest court. Rand Daily Mail, 21 March 1952, p.1.
36. In part, the Joint Statement read: "The struggle which has now arisen through the actions of the United Party is nothing less than a revival of the attacks of imperialism on Nationalism...No Court which is responsible to the People can overrule Parliament, which is responsible to the People for all its actions." The Star, 25 March 1952, p.9.
37. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File,

placed the U.P. in a difficult position for, not only would the demonstrations coincide with the A.N.C.'S campaign, but, as van Biljon pointed out to Strauss, the U.P. "could not afford to let the Torch resume the lead." This was particularly so as the Commando had drawn "bigger crowds with worse speakers than ours, despite far more intensive publicity work by us" and was "being inundated with new members."<sup>38</sup> It was considerations such as these which played a major role in prompting the U.P. to agree to the formation of a United Front.

A public statement had been issued, at the conclusion of the 25-26 January Torch Commando National Executive meeting, committing the organisation to the achievement of "an agreement between the opposition parties which will avoid three-cornered contests."<sup>39</sup> The National Executive had in fact already taken tentative steps to achieve that end for it had been reported at the meeting that discussions with the L.P. had revealed that, though it had "little to offer", it was "most anxious for an immediate pact with the United Party."<sup>40</sup> After members of the Torch Commando had acted as intermediaries between the U.P. and L.P.,<sup>41</sup> delegates from

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Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 25 March 1952.

38. Ibid.

39. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Meeting of National Executive, 25-26 January 1952.

40. Ibid. The National Executive Meeting was also significant in that it revised the Torch Commando's earlier undertaking to dissolve following the next General Election. It now stated that "any attempt to predict the future of the War Veterans' Torch Commando after the election is premature." U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, The Election Policy of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, 26 January 1952, A Declaration by the National Executive.

41. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Meeting of National Executive, 25-26 January 1952.

each of the three organisations met in Cape Town in early February.

No doubt wary of a repetition of the internal dissension which had led to the collapse of the negotiations with the U.P. prior to the 1949 Provincial elections, the Transvaal Parliamentary caucus<sup>42</sup> of the L.P. entered the negotiations of February 1952 without informing their Party of what they were doing. When on 8 February, a report in Forward speculated that talks aimed at a united opposition front were afoot in Cape Town,<sup>43</sup> Hepple informed the L.P. General Secretary: "The story is a complete fiction and without the slightest foundation."<sup>44</sup> Despite a leader in The Star, on 22 February, which mentioned "the tentative discussions said to be in progress,"<sup>45</sup> and a report, on 25 February, that a Torch Commando delegation had held talks with both Strauss and Christie, an L.P. spokesman continued to deny that any negotiations were taking place.<sup>46</sup>

On 28 February the persistent reports of talks prompted the Natal L.P. Executive Committee, without any effect, to pass unanimously a resolution requesting the National Executive "to place them in full possession of the facts."<sup>47</sup> If such negotiations were taking place, the Executive requested

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42. J. Christie, L. Lovell, H. Davidoff and A. Hepple. The Natal L.P. members, no doubt because of Mrs Benson's aberrant voting record and their general lack of co-operation in helping to resuscitate the Party in Natal, played no part in either the 1949 or 1952 negotiations.
43. Forward, 8 February 1952, p.3.
44. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, A. Hepple to the General Secretary, S.A.L.P., 11 February 1952.
45. The Star, 22 February 1952, p.10.
46. Ibid., 25 February 1952, p.2.
47. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet I, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, S.A.L.P., 7 March 1952.



further that "at least one Natal Provincial member of the National Executive Council shall be a member of the negotiating committee."<sup>48</sup>

The announcement by Strauss on 16 April that the U.P., L.P. and Torch Commando had "agreed to form a United Front, and to act as one until the fears that now beset the people are removed by the restoration of a democratic government,"<sup>49</sup> came therefore as a shock to the L.P. as a whole. Christie, making little attempt to minimise the gravity of his actions, merely cabled, on the following day, an open-ended and perfunctory statement: "Labour's assent to Joint Declaration of United Democratic Front involves no other commitments except to oust Government..."<sup>50</sup> On the same day the L.P. General Secretary informed Christie that it was

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48. Ibid. The Natal Provincial Executive had unknowingly embarrassed the L.P. negotiators by deciding to contest the Umlazi and Durban County Provincial by-elections against the U.P. This action was taken despite a recommendation against doing so by the Chairman of the Parliamentary caucus. Ibid., Box 7, File 6, A. Hepple to the General Secretary, 13 February 1952.
49. Rand Daily Mail, 17 April 1952, p.1. The Joint Declaration, issued at the launch of the Front, committed the signatories "to uphold the law against lawlessness" and to ensure that the rights of "the less fortunate shall be defended and that the word of the white man, as given by our greatest patriots and statesmen, shall be honoured." U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Declaration by the U.P., L.P. and Torch Commando, n.d. The agreement made no provision for liaison other than by personal contact between the respective leaders. Both the Torch Commando and the U.P. did however provide each other with regional contacts. Ibid., Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, F.J. van Biljon to J.L. Horak, 20 May 1952.
50. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 2, File 76, Telegram, J. Christie to S.A.L.P., 17 April 1952.

with the utmost surprise that we read in this morning's paper that an agreement has been arrived at...everyone is completely in the dark about the whole position...we have been compelled to use all kinds of subterfuge, so as not to disclose our ignorance.<sup>51</sup>

By 23 April the Party's National Executive Council, despite the fact that D.H. Epstein L.P., M.P.C. had spoken at a U.D.F. rally, had still not been fully briefed by Christie. The General Secretary again wrote to him:

Your strange and unexplained silence has thrown us into unnecessary and unwarranted confusion....This obviously must affect the general interests of the Party and those of us who are actively associated with its daily interests and efforts...feel, as a result of your ignoring of them, bewildered and frustrated.<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless the National Executive appears rapidly to have reconciled itself to the fait accompli. At its 23 May meeting, it was noted that "delegates from the Party had met the Executive members of the Torch Commando today. The meeting was a great success, and a meeting of the three organisations was being organised for one day next week."<sup>53</sup> It is very likely that an infusion of funds and assistance from L.P. supporters within the Torch Commando smoothed the way, for, on 15 May, the formation of a Cape Town branch of the Party, together with the likely formation of another three or four branches on the Peninsula, had been announced.<sup>54</sup> At the 23 May meeting it was announced that

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51. Ibid., General Secretary, S.A.L.P. to the Chairman, S.A.L.P., 17 April 1952.

52. Ibid., 23 April 1952.

53. Ibid., Box 21, File 3, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 23 May 1952.

54. Ibid., Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the National

the Party had appointed an organiser at £75 per month with a £25 expense account.<sup>55</sup>

That the alliance with the Torch Commando promised substantial benefits for the L.P. was further illustrated on 17 June when, responding to an L.P. initiative, the Torch Commando Executive stated that it was "more than agreeable" to the establishment of a liaison closer than that which the loose Democratic Front arrangement had originally made provision for.<sup>56</sup>

While the Front brought immediate benefits to the L.P., it had got off to an inauspicious start insofar as the U.P. was concerned. On the evening of Strauss's announcement of the Front's formation, Kane Berman, in the sort of independent initiative which the U.P. had hoped the formation of the Front would prevent, threatened that, if the Government went ahead with legislation to circumvent the appeal court decision, the Torch Commando's next step would be to call a day of protest "to bring the country to a virtual standstill."<sup>57</sup> He then went on to warn darkly that, if the standstill failed to stop the Government, "the Commando would pursue its next course...as good soldiers we must have something in reserve."<sup>58</sup> Although Strauss himself had said,

- Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 15 May 1952.
55. Ibid., Minutes of a Special Meeting of the National Executive Council of the S.A.L.P., 23 May 1952.
56. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 76, R. Parrott to the General Secretary, S.A.L.P., 17 June 1952.
57. Rand Daily Mail, 17 April 1952, p.1.
58. Ibid. D.F. Malan, B.M. Schoeman reported, acknowledged "dat hy die moontlikheid van 'n staatsgreep met behulp van sekere elemente in die weermag nie buite rekening kon laat nie. Hy het hierdie moontlikheid so ernstig benader dat hy Erasmus...gevra het om die nodige voorsorg teen so 'n plan te tref." B.M. Schoeman, op. cit., p.308. In December 1951 the Government had prohibited civil servants from joining the Torch Commando. In May

in announcing the formation of the Front, that "the United Party would fight the Government by constitutional means if the Nationalists kept within constitutional bounds,"<sup>59</sup> he was obliged, on the following day, to repudiate Kane Berman's threats.<sup>60</sup>

The latter's speech did more than severely tarnish his own prestige in the Torch Commando<sup>61</sup> and damage the façade of unity of the newborn Front. It also enabled the Government again to draw a link between the Torch Commando and the Springbok Legion, which, soon after Kane Berman's speech, had made its own call for a national stoppage.<sup>62</sup>

Parliament had reassembled on 15 April, the day before the official announcement of the United Democratic Front, in an emotion-laden atmosphere.<sup>63</sup> Debate quickly descended into acrimony after the Opposition moved that the Assembly should decline to go into Committee of Supply on the Budget until the Government provided an undertaking that it would accept

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1952 members of the Defence Force were similarly prohibited. M. Fridhjon, op. cit., p.46.

59. Rand Daily Mail, 17 April 1952, p.1.

60. M. Fridhjon, op. cit., p.34.

61. Interview: L. Kane Berman.

62. U.P. Papers, Major J.D. Opperman Donation, Pamphlets Vols.4-6, Springbok Legion, Action Stations! A Crisis Call from the Springbok Legion, n.d. The Legion, at its Ninth Annual Conference in May 1952, had passed a resolution requesting that it be permitted to join the United Democratic Front. The request was rejected by Strauss on 30 May. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/5/1, L. Gerber to the National Chairman, Springbok Legion, 30 May 1952.

63. Swart heightened the air of tension by, towards the end of April and without explanation, drafting 250 plainclothed policemen to Cape Town in order to protect Parliament and ministerial homes. Cape Argus, 30 April 1952, p.1. The policemen remained until 25 June 1952. Cape Argus, 25 June 1952, p.9.

the judgement handed down by the Appeal Court.<sup>64</sup> The Rand Daily Mail reported: "With each speech the tension mounts to a new level and the parties are driven further apart."<sup>65</sup> The Opposition motion, having on 21 April been defeated 78 votes to 61, Dönges, taunted in his own Party as "die Minister van Onverrigte Sake",<sup>66</sup> on 22 April, requested permission to introduce the High Court of Parliament Bill "to vest in the democratically elected representatives of the electors...the power to adjudicate finally on the validity of laws passed by Parliament."<sup>67</sup> Strauss, seconded by Christie, immediately moved an amendment, which was soon afterwards defeated 71 votes to 58, opposing leave to introduce the measure.<sup>68</sup> After the Speaker, on 2 May, had ruled against Strauss's assertion that the law required that the Bill be passed by a Joint Sitting of both Houses as it

64. Ibid., 15 April 1952, p.1.
65. Rand Daily Mail, 17 April 1952, p.1.
66. H.B. Thom, op. cit., p.269. Dönges was under intense party pressure to achieve results. Ibid. He had been heavily censured in the H.N.P. caucus two years earlier for having misjudged the extent of the opposition to the Citizenship Bill. Rand Daily Mail, 21 March 1952, p.1.
67. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.275. The enlargement of the Senate was considered too drastic an alternative. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.189. Appeals to the Privy Council had been abolished in 1950. The Bill proposed to vest the power to review any judgement or order of the Appeal Court which invalidated an Act of Parliament in a special committee composed of all members of Parliament. Fifty members were to constitute a quorum and the committee was to be called the High Court of Parliament. The court was to be instructed by a judicial committee of ten members of Parliament, four of whom would constitute a quorum. The court's decisions were to be final and binding. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.275.
68. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.276. Tension was also high outside Parliament. On 22 and 23 April fighting took place at U.P. meetings in Stellenbosch and Alberton respectively. Rand Daily Mail, 23 April 1952, p.9 and 24 April 1952, p.1.

was clearly designed to override the entrenched clauses,<sup>69</sup> the opposition parties, during the thirty-hour long Second Reading debate, consistently opposed the measure.<sup>70</sup> To opposition shouts of "Heil Hitler" and "Skandaal",<sup>71</sup> the division, at the conclusion of the debate, saw the Bill approved 79 votes to 65.<sup>72</sup>

During the Report and Committee Stages, and during the Bill's passage through the Senate, the opposition parties, seeing no room for compromise, did not initiate any debate but simply voted against the Bill's clauses during the divisions.<sup>73</sup> In a final bid to stop the Bill's enactment, the Torch Commando petitioned the Governor-General, requesting that assent be withheld on the grounds that it conflicted with the entrenched provisions of the South Africa Act.<sup>74</sup> The Governor-General rejected the petition and, on 3 June, the Bill received his assent.<sup>75</sup> The U.P., as they had earlier warned, immediately took steps to contest the validity of the Act in court and secured an injunction restraining officials from taking action under any order that the High Court might issue.<sup>76</sup>

While certain that they held the moral high ground, the opposition derived no political benefit from their campaign against the Bill. On 17 May, Malan had, without warning,

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69. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.277.

70. Rand Daily Mail, 9 May 1952, p.1. The debate was the second longest in the history of the Union Parliament.

71. Cape Argus, 9 May 1952, p.7.

72. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.277.

73. Rand Daily Mail, 14 May 1952, p.1. On 14 May Advocate A.H. Broeksma, war-time Advocate General, declined appointment as an acting judge in protest against the Bill. Ibid.

74. Ibid., 31 May 1952, p.1.

75. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.284.

76. E.A. Walker, op. cit., p.833.

placed the reports of the Select Committee on Communism on top of the order paper.<sup>77</sup> His transparent aim in doing so was to associate U.P. and L.P. attacks on the majority report, which indicted both Kahn and Carneson of being Communists as defined in the Act, with their opposition to the High Court of Parliament Bill. After the combined opposition had, on 20 May, voted against acceptance of the majority report, 55 votes to 73,<sup>78</sup> on the grounds that the indictment was made without sufficient evidence, a leader in the Rand Daily Mail observed: "The opposition was perfectly well aware of the false political coin that the Government would mint out of their action, but preferred to stand by democratic principle rather than indulge in political back-peddalling."<sup>79</sup>

The U.P. was not however as principled in its reaction to the events following the 19 May Government order to "Solly" Sachs, also under the terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, to resign as Secretary of the Garment Workers' Union.<sup>80</sup>

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77. Rand Daily Mail, 17 May 1952, p.1. The opposition members had submitted a minority report which concluded that there was insufficient evidence to indict either Kahn or Carneson. Ibid., 24 May 1952, p.1.
78. Cape Argus, 21 May 1952, p.7.
79. Rand Daily Mail, 24 May 1952, p.1. Kahn and Carneson were refused permission to plead at the Bar of the House. Rand Daily Mail, 24 May 1952, p.1. They were expelled from Parliament and the Cape Provincial Council respectively at the end of May. Ibid., 26 May 1952, p.9.
80. Soon after the Suppression of Communism Act had been passed, B.J. Schoeman announced his intention to remove Communists, as defined under the terms of the Act, from trade unions. By 21 July 1953, 53 trade union leaders had been placed on the Liquidators' list. The circumstances surrounding the "naming" of Sachs, who had been expelled from the Communist Party in 1930, prompted the L.P. and the South African Trades and Labour Council to appeal to the British Trades Union Congress, the World Federation of Trade

Having moved for an adjournment to discuss the clashes between trade unionists and police consequent upon Sachs's refusal to obey the order, Strauss, as Smuts had done in May 1950, shrank from criticising the police. Because the excessive violence displayed by the police during a baton charge was an issue of central concern, the Opposition's failure to respond in defence of Sachs made the request for an adjournment an empty gesture.<sup>81</sup>

Caution in not distancing the U.P. too far from the Government's anti-Communist policy subsequent to the debate on the High Court of Parliament Bill may, even if only on the grounds of expediency, have been justified. The U.P. sponsored Trial Opinion Survey, conducted in four broadly representative constituencies during the period March to May 1952, indicated that, although the Government had lost some ground when the Appeal Court had delivered its judgement on 20 March, "later results seemed to indicate that opinion on the part of Afrikaans voters had hardened, and that the Government had recovered lost ground..."<sup>82</sup> The survey went on to show

that a majority of Afrikaans-speakers, eight or nine in ten, sincerely believe that the removal of the Cape Coloureds from the common roll will help to

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Unions, and the National Executive of the British Labour Party, for assistance. The subsequent condemnation of the Government's actions by these bodies merely enabled the N.P. to accuse the members of the United Front of being the new "Uitlanders" appealing for overseas assistance. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.71.

81. Rand Daily Mail, 26 May 1952, p.1.

82. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Publicity and Propaganda Methods, Public Opinion Surveys 1949-1966, Trial Opinion Survey: Brakpan, Germiston, Mayfair, Losberg, March-May 1952, p.35.



preserve white civilisation. About two  
in ten English-speakers also hold the  
same view.<sup>83</sup>

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83. Ibid., p.26.

CHAPTER 19

THE WAKKERSTROOM BY-ELECTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES,  
MARCH - SEPTEMBER 1952

On 25 March 1952, the N.P. M.P. for Wakkerstroom died. A few days later the N.P. M.P.C. for the constituency resigned in order to contest the parliamentary seat. The subsequent by-elections took place in the constituency where Smuts had suffered his humiliating 1924 defeat at a time when it was crucially important for the U.P., by showing that it had stopped the haemorrhage of its rural support, to establish its credibility as an alternative government.

But the contest could hardly have been a less favourable one for the Party. Not only had there been little evidence that the Transvaal rural electorate was waiting for the "opportunity to sound the alarm signal to this Government",<sup>1</sup> but the constituency, because it was a safe N.P. seat, had been largely ignored by U.P. organisers.<sup>2</sup> The by-elections were, moreover, to take place immediately prior to the launch, by the A.N.C., of the Defiance Campaign. Both Malan<sup>3</sup> and Strijdom<sup>4</sup> were able therefore, from a strategically sound position, to assert misleadingly that Wakkerstroom was an ideal testing ground to gauge the electorate's feelings.

It was not without significance that the U.P. failed four times<sup>5</sup> before it finally succeeded in convincing two

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1. The Star, 23 June 1952, p.8.
  2. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/6/1, The Wakkerstroom By-Election, 15 July 1952.
  3. The Star, 19 June 1952, p.1.
  4. Ibid., 24 June 1952, p.5.
  5. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 30 April 1952.

prominent local farmers to contest the by-elections on its behalf.<sup>6</sup> Equally inauspicious was an initial canvass by twenty-two paid organisers. Van Biljon labelled the exercise an ill-organised "farce".<sup>7</sup> A second was more successful but, unlike the position in the larger urban centres, very little local help was received. Van Biljon reported that "such is the apathy in the Party (in the constituency) that at various centres only a few aged pensioners have been seeking and providing any information."<sup>8</sup> In the same report he made comments critical of the poor quality of the U.P.'s pre-election publicity in the constituency.<sup>9</sup> But, in April, Clapham, in a letter of complaint to Strauss's Private Secretary, Louis Gerber, had indicated where the blame lay:

I and others here need a few plain and simple policy facts to go on, but we just don't seem to be able to get the basic material....With Wakkerstroom on our doorstep, we need it more than ever, but I tend to despair of seeing it.<sup>10</sup>

His complaint was particularly apposite in terms of van Biljon's undertaking of the previous September to clarify the Party's principles by March.

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6. Ibid., File 1/19/9/6/1, The Wakkerstroom By-Election, 15 July 1952. The Parliamentary candidate was J. Naude, the Provincial candidate was C. Pieterse. The nominations took place on 19 May. Ibid.
  7. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 13 June 1952.
  8. Ibid. On 7 June "thousands of cheering supporters" had turned out to support Strauss, Christie and A.G. Malan at a giant rally in Johannesburg. The Star, 7 June 1952, p.1. By 9 June membership of the Johannesburg region of the Torch Commando had reached 70 000. The Star, 9 June 1952, p.1.
  9. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 13 June 1952.
  10. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/9/1, Vol.4, V.J. Clapham to L. Gerber, 16 April 1952.

Because the activities of the organisation had become a campaign issue, members of the Torch Commando, in early June, descended in convoy on the constituency in order to show the "perfectly decent-minded and well-meaning persons in the countryside" that they were not "enemies of South Africa whose object is to stage a bloody revolution."<sup>11</sup> Despite the enthusiasm displayed by English-language newspapers for the Torch Commando's foray, van Biljon was appalled. On 13 June, less than two weeks before the launch of the Defiance Campaign, he informed Strauss:

Despite all our efforts, the Torch Commando is now putting up camp at Piet Retief and since they are taking forty women members with them it is more apparent than ever that this move will do us no good.<sup>12</sup>

Referring to the Torch Commando's subsequent activities in the constituency an article in Die Transvaler observed:

Nog hul vergaderings, nog hul huisbesoek het enige sukses behaal. Net enkele persone het na die vergaderings gekom terwyl die huisbesoek al vroeg in die week gestaak is weens die kille ontvangs wat hulle geniet het.<sup>13</sup>

Despite these difficulties, a third U.P. canvas, conducted a few days before polling day, showed support for the Party to be slightly above its 1948 and 1949 levels.<sup>14</sup> It came as a

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11. The Star, 10 June 1952.
  12. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 13 June 1952.
  13. Die Transvaler, 21 June 1952, p.1.
  14. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/6/1, The Wakkerstroom By-Election, 15 July 1952. The canvass showed an N.P. majority of 1 072 votes. There were 582 doubtfuls. Ibid. As a result of a long established and efficient constituency organisation, and confronting less of a lie-factor, the N.P. forecast a majority of 2 000 votes. The Star,

considerable shock therefore when, on 25 June, on an increased voter's roll, the U.P.'s share of the vote fell below that it had received in both of those elections. The N.P. achieved a net gain of 4.9 per cent of the total votes cast.<sup>15</sup>

The jubilant N.P. supporting press interpreted the result not only as a vote of confidence in the Government, but as an endorsement of the High Court of Parliament Act.<sup>16</sup> Comment in the English-language newspapers was bleak. A leader in The Star noted bitterly: "In the welter of distortions and confusions, the majority of the voters remained blind to the fact that their Constitution was being destroyed."<sup>17</sup> A leader in the Rand Daily Mail observed: "...it is a fair deduction that the "Platteland" seats are now lost to the United Party for good."<sup>18</sup> Bailey Bekker, putting on a brave face, said: "There was nothing that the United Party would welcome more than a General Election as soon as possible."<sup>19</sup> Behind the façade the U.P. plunged into an agony of reappraisal.

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|     | 27 June 1952, p.1.   |                        |  |
| 15. | <u>Parliamentary</u>   | <u>Provincial</u>      |  |
|     | N.P. 4 866   | N.P. 4 851             |  |
|     | U.P. 2 740   | U.P. 2 768             |  |
|     | Peoples Party 22   | N.P. majority 2 083    |  |
|     | N.P. majority 2 126  | Percentage Poll: 92.2  |  |
|     | <u>1948 Parliamentary</u>  | <u>1949 Provincial</u> |  |
|     | H.N.P. 4 238   | H.N.P. 4 153           |  |
|     | U.P. 2 962   | U.P. 2 843             |  |
|     | H.N.P.majority 1 276   | H.N.P.majority 1 310   |  |
|     | J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/6/1, The Wakkerstroom By-Election, 15 July 1952.  |                        |  |
| 16. | <u>The Star</u> , 27 June 1952, p.1.   |                        |  |
| 17. | <u>Ibid.</u> , p.10.   |                        |  |
| 18. | <u>Rand Daily Mail</u> , 28 June 1952, p.4.  |                        |  |
| 19. | <u>The Star</u> , 27 June 1952, p.1. On 3 July Malan said: "The position of the National Party has so improved and we are so confident that there is no point in rushing an election. Time is on our side." <u>Ibid.</u> , 3 July 1952, p.1. |                        |  |

The reasons for the magnitude of its defeat were, soon afterwards, summed up in a U.P. memorandum:

...the Nat. candidates and election agents ascribe their success to the existence of the Torch Commando, the Kane Berman 'Day of Protest' statement, and the [to them] obvious tie-up between this threat and the non-European protest movement. They were...able to lump us into a 'bonte opposisie' with the Torch Commando, the Labour Party, Kahn, Sachs, Carneson, the African National Congress...and they claimed that the issue was, 'die siel van die Afrikaner' against all this.<sup>20</sup>

The memorandum concluded with the observation that the result of the by-election

seems to demonstrate, along with previous by-election results, that the present situation does not favour us on the Platteland. We appear to be losing rural Afrikaans-speaking votes, and there is no doubt whatever that the Nats. are getting the lion's share of the young people attaining the vote.<sup>21</sup>

Shocked by the decline in the Party's support, the U.P. Leader's Executive,<sup>22</sup> at a 17 to 19 July meeting, had little choice but to move the Party's platform closer to that of the N.P.

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20. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/6/1, The Wakkerstroom By-Election, 15 July 1952.

21. Ibid.

22. The Leader's Executive consisted of the four Provincial Chairmen and the Chairmen of the Divisions. It had been established because of the difficulty experienced in bringing the full Central Executive together. The Leader's Executive met for the first time on 14 June 1951. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Meeting of Leader's Executive Committee, 14 June 1951.

The meeting's primary conclusion was that while the 4.9 per cent shift away from the Party at Wakkerstroom was very likely representative of the rural areas as a whole, "the shift was probably less" in the larger urban centres because of the support for the Party by some of the "opinion forming media".<sup>23</sup> Since it was also concluded that success in the General Election would depend on regaining the support of Afrikaans-speaking voters, it was considered that "it is this factor which should condition all United Party propaganda."<sup>24</sup> To this end, it was decided firstly, to orient the Party "more in the Afrikaans direction and to praise instead of criticise..."<sup>25</sup> This orientation was to be explained to the press in a "high-level approach."<sup>26</sup> Consideration was even given to repudiating the Rand Daily Mail unless it stopped its "persistent attacks on farmers and the Afrikaners' achievements generally...."<sup>27</sup> It was

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23. Ibid., 17-19 July 1952. In October 1952 Marais Steyn "gave every encouragement" that a means would be found to produce an Afrikaans medium daily newspaper as soon as possible. In the meantime, he announced, it was planned to suspend Challenge and to use the newsprint thus made available for expanding Ons Blad and converting it into a bi-weekly. A.H. Jonker Papers, No.117, Report on Provincial Congress at Muizenburg, 14-16 October 1952.
24. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive, 17-19 July 1952. On 18 June, after a number of private meetings, 40 distinguished Afrikaners, mostly oudstryders, had signed an appeal, directed primarily at Afrikaners, "to turn back from the road along which they had been led over the previous four years." D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.359. Since they possessed no means of distribution of their own the U.P. had undertaken the task for them. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Party Letters 1950-1952, To all Recipients of the Party letter, July 1952.
25. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive, 17-19 July 1952.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.

decided secondly, that since N.P. propaganda portrayed the U.P. as favouring race equality, the Party's "propaganda should, therefore, be dominated by the aim of countering this line."<sup>28</sup> For a not unrelated reason, it was also decided to pursue a "more specific anti-communist line",<sup>29</sup> and to appoint a sub-committee, consisting of Marais Steyn, Dr L. Steenkamp<sup>30</sup> and van Biljon, to draft Party policy succinctly with special priority being given to "Native Policy."<sup>31</sup>

These decisions had an immediate impact on the Executive's perception of the U.P.'s relationship with its United Democratic Front allies. Not only had they proved to be an electoral liability, the constitutional crisis itself, ostensibly the very raison d'être of the alliance, had not proved to be a "vote catcher".<sup>32</sup> With repudiation of its allies hardly a viable option, the Executive explored other avenues.

While Oppenheimer, supported by Mitchell, favoured a merger with the L.P., such were the profound differences in this regard within the Leader's Executive that no immediate decision could be taken on the future relationship between the two organisations.<sup>33</sup> But, in regard to the Torch Commando, it was agreed, in secrecy even from the remainder of the Central Executive Committee, that de Villiers Graaff and Oppenheimer would "explore the possibility of the two

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28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Deputy Leader of the U.P. in Natal.

31. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive Committee, Summary of Decisions, 17-18 July 1952.

32. Ibid., Leader's Executive, 18 July 1952.

33. Ibid.



organisations merging."<sup>34</sup> Even if the negotiations on the merger proposals failed, van Biljon pointed out, machinery for national co-ordination between the two would in any event have to be established prior to the elections.<sup>35</sup>

For its part the Torch Commando, despite the precautions the U.P. had taken at its birth, had begun to exhibit an independence of mind which its sheer size allowed it.<sup>36</sup> At its first National Congress, held in Pretoria on 7 July, it not only undertook, despite the negative consequences at Wakkerstroom, to continue to campaign in the rural areas,<sup>37</sup> but also resolved not to disband until its members wished it to do so. The "original statement that the Torch Commando would disband after the defeat of the Government," it was held, "was made not by the War Veterans' Torch Commando but only [by] an ad hoc body."<sup>38</sup> More positive, from the U.P. point of view, was a Congress resolution requesting the U.P. Executive to issue an instruction to its branches to co-operate actively with both the Torch Commando and the L.P.

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34. Ibid. In June 1952 plans had been set afoot by a Women's Action Committee to strengthen the United Democratic Front "by rallying women to more intense political activity." The chairperson of the Committee was Mrs Helen de Waal, daughter of Louis Botha. The Star, 19 June 1952, p.3. The Leader's Executive "undertook to see the promoters with a view to their re-considering the formation of yet another parallel organisation." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Leader's Executive, 18 July 1952.
35. Ibid.
36. In July 1952 it announced a membership of 250 000. Cape Argus, 10 July 1952, p.8.
37. Ibid., 8 July 1952, p.7. Reference to the new campaign as Operation Backveld aroused considerable antagonism on the Platteland. Die Transvaler, 10 July 1952, p.2.
38. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Congress 1952, National Congress, 7 July 1952.

so as to ensure a successful co-ordination of effort.<sup>39</sup>

The ground had therefore been prepared when, on 18 August, de Villiers Graaff secretly met a Torch Commando National Executive delegation and presented to it the initial merger proposals of the U.P. Leader's Executive.<sup>40</sup> Little could conceal the fact that the proposals were aimed at the complete absorption of the Torch Commando by the U.P. Although a new name, the United National Democratic Party, was proposed, the other proposals, apart from the symbolic inclusion of the five principles of the Torch Commando in the new party's programme, involved minimal changes in the platform, structure and leadership of the U.P.<sup>41</sup> So that there would be no future misunderstanding in regard to that area of policy in which the U.P. considered the Torch Commando to be most suspect, the U.P. memorandum proposed that "while merger must take place largely on the basis of mutual trust...it is nevertheless desirable that there should be a mutually agreed statement concerning the political approach of the new party to general Native problems."<sup>42</sup>

The National Executive's response to the U.P. proposals was unequivocal. It wanted more "than a new signboard outside the old firm."<sup>43</sup> Not only would the U.P.'s system of management have to be streamlined "and the channels of

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39. Ibid., Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, R. Parrott to F.J. van Biljon, 4 August 1952.

40. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Findings of a meeting held on Monday, 18 August 1952.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid. The Defiance Campaign had begun on 26 June 1952 and reached a climax in August. Vide supra, Chap.23.

43. Ibid., Essential Requirements in Event of Amalgamation, n.d.

communication cleared", but the L.P. would have to be included in the new party and a Workers' Charter produced in consultation with the Trade Unions.<sup>44</sup>

Before, in all probability, the Torch Commando National Executive had communicated its response to the initial U.P. proposals to the Leader's Executive, the latter, on 21 August, submitted its views on the "mutually agreed statement". These supplementary proposals, clearly reflecting the decisions which the Leader's Executive had taken at its 17-19 July meeting, were not limited to "general Native problems."

The proposals opened with a Declaration of Faith which declared the political, economic and cultural aspirations of both the English and Afrikaans-speaking sections of the population to be "inviolable and to be forever upheld."<sup>45</sup> "Non-European" policy was to be based on the "cardinal principles" of "no admixture of blood" and "complete social separation".<sup>46</sup> The proposals committed the new party to the "maintenance of existing parliamentary representation and

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44. Ibid. At about this time the Torch Commando asked the L.P. to establish closer liaison, at the branch level, between itself and its Democratic Front partners. The Joint Liaison Committee between the L.P. and the Torch Commando, which had been discussed on three occasions since the latter's foundation, had still not been established. S.A.L.P. Papers, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the National Executive of the S.A.L.P., 21 August 1952. On 5 September, at the Transvaal Congress of the U.P., Strauss outlined a ten point "Charter for Workers". It emphasised freedom of association and the protection of Trade Union rights for all workers "as provided for in the Industrial Conciliation Act." The Star, 5 September 1952, p.6.

45. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Draft, 21 August 1952.

46. Ibid.

progress in local self-government for non-Europeans",<sup>47</sup> and to the "retarding of the non-European flow to European areas as increased immigration makes this possible."<sup>48</sup> Social security measures were to be introduced for white workers and communism was to be "uprooted" through recourse to the Courts.<sup>49</sup>

Rumours of the possibility of a merger which had begun to circulate did not evoke any enthusiastic response. A leading article in the Cape Argus observed critically: "The idea...scarcely bears logical examination. It presumes that the Commando is a permanent fixture in our political structure. In fact it has a purpose but no political policy."<sup>50</sup> On 28 August, the U.P. Central Executive, officially informed for the first time of the negotiations, reacted in much the same way. Both Strauss and de Villiers Graaff attempted to convince them otherwise. The former said he felt that "the Torch Commando should do as the Unionists had done in 1921",<sup>51</sup> while the latter warned that if the Government disregarded an adverse ruling on the validity of the High Court of Parliament Act, "the Torch Commando position would be immeasurably strengthened and it might become a difficult organisation with which to

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid. Particularly significant, in view of the resurgence, as a result of the constitutional crisis, of Natal separatism (vide supra Chapter 20) was the insertion in the U.P. memorandum of a proposal that "the mechanics of government should be adaptable to new circumstances and new needs. And so we believe that proper consideration should be given to the possibilities of a government based upon federation."  
Ibid.

50. Cape Argus, 22 August 1952, p.8.

51. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.328, Meeting, Central Executive Committee, 28 August 1952.

work...."<sup>52</sup> But the consensus of opinion on the Central Executive remained against a merger because of the inevitable confusion which would result from such a development so soon before a general election, and because it was feared that rural supporters would be alienated.<sup>53</sup> This latter fear aptly illustrated the Party's dilemma, for it was for this reason that the negotiations had been opened in the first place.

Despite these fears and reservations there was close co-operation between the Torch Commando and the U.P. on the Cape Peninsula where, on 30 July, a Joint Election Committee had been established.<sup>54</sup> With this as a precedent, the Executive fell back on a set of proposals put forward by de Villiers Graaff. These involved the extension, on a national scale, of Joint Election Committees and the de-politicisation of the Torch Commando by requesting it not only to stop issuing propaganda material, but also to prevent its members from taking any specific line in speeches they might make without prior consultation with the

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52. Ibid. On 29 August the Cape Supreme Court declared the High Court of Parliament Act to be invalid. The Government immediately launched an appeal. Rand Daily Mail, 30 August 1952, p.1. A.L. Geyer, the South African High Commissioner in London, warned Havenga that for the Government to ignore the Supreme Court ruling "sou absoluut noodlottig wees. Dit moet tot chaos ly en sal die regering breek." N.C. Havenga Papers, Vol.26, A.L. Geyer to N.C. Havenga, 29 August 1952. The Government's appeal was rejected on 13 November 1952.
53. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.328. Meeting, Central Executive Committee, 28 August 1952.
54. A.H. Jonker Collection, No.118, United Democratic Front, Joint Election Organisation, 30 July 1952. A similar joint organisation was established soon afterwards to cover the remainder of the Province. Ibid.

U.P.<sup>55</sup> The proposals also suggested that "the Party should seriously consider approaching the National Chairman of the Torch Commando (to) advise him that it was felt that as a result of his statement in connection with the Day of Protest, he should step down for somebody else..."<sup>56</sup> Finally, in agreeing to the proposal that the Party's voter card system should not be made available to the L.P., the U.P. went some way towards clarifying its relationship with its other erstwhile ally, for the decision meant that the L.P. would, of necessity, have to be excluded from the Joint Election Committees.<sup>57</sup>

No further word on merger proposals was heard, apart from a cryptic reference, in October, to "certain proposals by Group-Captain A.G. Malan regarding the future of the War Veterans' Torch Commando vis-a-vis the Party."<sup>58</sup> Whatever their substance, the U.P. Central Executive "decided that negotiations on the basis of these proposals should not be proceeded with..."<sup>59</sup>

Eased by an early September undertaking by the Torch Commando National Executive that the organisation itself would not make any nominations for the General Election, and that any of its members seeking nomination would do so only as a member of one of the opposition parties,<sup>60</sup> relations between the U.P. and Torch Commando were such that a Joint

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55. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.328, Meeting, Central Executive Committee, 28 August 1952.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., No.345, Meeting, Central Executive Committee, 13 October 1952.

59. Ibid.

60. The Star, 10 September 1952, p.2.

Liaison Committee was, soon afterwards, established on the Witwatersrand. Referring to co-operation between the two bodies in this region, a Torch Commando memorandum noted: "The United Party now has one organiser per marginal seat and the Torch by the end of this month will have approximately one per four marginal seats."<sup>61</sup>

But, despite a late September U.P. memorandum instructing its Provincial Head Offices to establish liaison committees at the divisional level with the Torch Commando, and to form an Election Task Force in each constituency with "a minimum of delay",<sup>62</sup> close liaison between the two bodies did not take place outside the Cape Peninsula and Witwatersrand regions. In Natal relations between the U.P. and Torch Commando became strained to breaking point over the issue of the "Natal Stand".<sup>63</sup> In the Orange Free State, where Steyn "would blandly state that the U.P. and Torch are working hand in glove",<sup>64</sup> relations between the two organisations were as poor as was U.P. organisation in that province. Torch Commando members complained that "at every point in the negotiations between the Torch Commando and the U.P. in the Free State the initiative has been taken by the Torch Commando and every possible excuse has been made in postponing or avoiding consultations."<sup>65</sup>

While co-operation between the Torch Commando and the U.P. proceeded apace on the Cape Peninsula and on the

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61. War Veterans' Torch Commando Papers, Microfilm, Witwatersrand Organisation, 22 September 1952.
  62. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, J.L. Horak to D.J. Opperman, 23 September 1952.
  63. Vide supra Chapter 20.
  64. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, J. Lynch to de Villiers Graaff, 10 December 1952.
  65. Ibid., J. Lynch to F.J. van Biljon, 11 March 1953.

Witwatersrand, the third arm of the United Democratic Front, the L.P., discovered that it was not only being excluded from the liaison committees with the U.P. but was also being systematically excluded from what were, ostensibly, Democratic Front public meetings. On 18 September the L.P. National Executive Council instructed its delegates on the liaison committee with the Torch Commando<sup>66</sup> not only to insist that the L.P. be represented on the Witwatersrand U.P.-Torch Commando liaison committee, but also to protest the holding of United Democratic Front meetings without L.P. speakers being invited to participate.<sup>67</sup>

On 25 September, at a specially convened meeting, the L.P. National Executive was informed by its delegates on the liaison committee with the Torch Commando that the latter had told them, after they had raised the issue with the U.P., that "the United Party was not favourably disposed to a co-ordinating Committee of the three constituent bodies of the United Democratic Front."<sup>68</sup> The Torch Commando Executive, having undertaken to raise the issue with the U.P. again, the L.P. National Executive was left with little choice but to resolve that, if this further approach brought no concrete results, an intensive and independent propaganda and organising campaign would have to be initiated.<sup>69</sup> "In the meantime," it decided, "the Parliamentary caucus sub-committee, which was appointed to draft policy publications, would prepare drafts for consideration and subsequent publication."<sup>70</sup>

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66. The liaison committee appears finally to have been established in early September.
67. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council, 18 September 1952.
68. Ibid., Minutes of a Special Meeting of the National Executive Council, 25 September 1952.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.



Despite its exclusion from full participation in Democratic Front activities by the U.P., the L.P.'s membership of that alliance continued to bring it considerable benefits. During the latter half of 1952 the membership of the Party more than doubled and ten branches of the Party on the Witwatersrand were either established or revived.<sup>71</sup> In August Ardé reported from Natal that "five more branches are in process of formation in Durban and along the coastal belt. Within the next four weeks we will have about ten branches in Natal."<sup>72</sup> Despite the optimism this expansion engendered in the L.P., the National Organiser of the Party cautioned that

enrolling new members has been found to be comparatively easy. Difficulty is experienced, though, in finding sufficient active members willing to take responsibility for the work entailed in keeping branches functioning satisfactorily. These difficulties, in existing branches, have the effect of tying down the scope of activity of the organisers, thereby limiting the time which should be spent in the formation of new branches.<sup>73</sup>

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71. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 14, National Organiser, Annual Report to 42nd Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953. In October 1952 the L.P. National Executive succeeded in reaching an agreement with the new owners of Forward whereby, from 7 November 1952, it once again became the official organ of the Party. R. Feldman Papers, S.A.L.P. Records, Forty-Second Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953. In early 1953 the L.P. had 722 active members. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.344.
72. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet I, File 14, R. Ardé to the Office Manager, 14 August 1952. Ardé's optimism was unfounded. The number of branches in Natal remained at 5. On the eve of the 1953 election the L.P. had a total of 28 branches. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.344.
73. S.A.L.P. Papers, Cabinet 2, File 14, National Organiser, Annual Report to 42nd Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953.

However, the financial position of the Party remained critical despite donations amounting to £1 159 having been made to it by the end of 1952.<sup>74</sup> This was nearly four times the amount which had been donated during the period April-November 1950.<sup>75</sup> But, congruently, and for the Party, ominously, the revenue received from affiliation fees dropped to £210, £46 below the November 1950 total.<sup>76</sup> Its salary bill which, during the course of 1952, had doubled to £905, left the Party with a deficit, after the payment of other expenses, of £103.<sup>77</sup> In January 1953 the National Treasurer presented a not unfamiliar report: "As Treasurer, I have found nothing to treasure. Now I am at my wits end to know with what to meet the salaries and other preferential claims in the present month."<sup>78</sup>

The desperate shortage of funds led the National Executive to stipulate that each L.P. parliamentary candidate would, before endorsement, be required to furnish a written undertaking to make, if elected, regular financial contributions to the Party. The current parliamentary representatives were each "allocated the task of raising a minimum of £10 per month for Head Office funds."<sup>79</sup>

Problems associated with finance also faced the U.P. and Torch Commando towards the end of 1952.

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74. Ibid., 42nd Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953.  
 75. Ibid., Box 6, File 2, Revenue and Expenditure Account, 1 April to 30 November 1950.  
 76. Ibid., Cabinet 2, File 14, 42nd Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953.  
 77. Ibid.  
 78. Ibid., Cabinet I, File 3, National Treasurer to L. Lovell, 28 January 1953.  
 79. Ibid., Box 7, File 5, National Treasurer to L. Whiteley, 24 February 1953.

A request to the Trust Fund, at the end of September, for a further advance to cover the costs of the marginal seat campaign for the quarter October to December,<sup>80</sup> brought home to the U.P. just how dangerously dependent the Party had become upon the largesse of the Trust Fund. Although the official line on the outcome of the General Election was "that the Party would win if every member and supporter did his duty",<sup>81</sup> the consequences of defeat needed to be confronted. A memorandum dealing with the Party's finances warned that the Trust Fund

with a view to winning the next election, has advised the Party in the building up of a formidable organisation and has undertaken the financing of this organisation....The position in the event of our losing the election would appear to be perilous, and unless some plan to obtain an organised, annual, basic income is devised, it is difficult to see where the money will come from to pay for the local provincial organisations, let alone support the Party Headquarters in Johannesburg.<sup>82</sup>

Not without validity, it was stated in a June 1953 Torch Commando memorandum that, since the organisation's inception, "the question of finance has not really been allowed to assume any real position of priority and has quite correctly been subordinated to the actual tasks of the Commando itself..."<sup>83</sup> This attitude, together with a

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80. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, Correspondence and Pamphlets 1950-1956, J.L. Horak to H.T. Cooper, 30 September 1952.

81. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.345, Meeting, Central Executive Committee, 13 October 1952.

82. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, Memorandum on Finance, L.C. Gay, 28 October 1952.

83. Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Financial Statement, National

decline in its members' initial enthusiasm and an escalation in its expenses as the election drew nearer, pushed the Torch Commando into the U.P.'s position of reliance upon the Trust Fund.

Fund raising had presented the Torch Commando with little initial difficulty. The first target figure of £11 200, which had been set by the National Executive on 28-29 June 1951 in order to finance its activities for a period of six months, was easily raised.<sup>84</sup> Apart from this sum, each region raised additional funds to cover its own requirements.<sup>85</sup> In November 1951 the National Executive launched another fund-raising campaign in order to cover its expenditure for an eighteen month period from January 1952.<sup>86</sup> The target figures for moneys to be levied on the regions totalled £31 800. The National Executive, having budgeted for expenses of £2 000 per month for each of the eighteen months, was thus left with a budgeted shortfall of £4 200.<sup>87</sup>

Though by the end of October 1952 slightly over £20 600 had been raised,<sup>88</sup> a financial statement noted that not only had

Congress, June 1953.

84. Ibid.

85. It is likely that the Torch Commando's fund raising efforts increased U.P. reliance upon the Trust Fund.

86. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Financial Statement, National Congress, June 1953.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid., Regional Contributions to National Executive as at 31 October 1952. See Appendix XXIX: Regional Contributions to the National Executive of the War Veterans' Torch Commando as at 31 October 1952. By the end of the eighteen month period slightly under £25 000 had been collected. Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Financial Statement, National Congress, June 1953.

contributions started to deteriorate since June of that year, but the regions themselves were becoming increasingly reluctant to part with the money they had collected.<sup>89</sup> The statement observed that "from some of the returns it would appear...that far too much money is being left in branch and regional banking accounts."<sup>90</sup>

In view of the decline in revenue, the National Executive suspended indefinitely the launch of a third and even more ambitious fund-raising drive which had as its target the sum of £66 700.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, as a result of the £2 241 excess of expenditure over income for the six months ended 31 December,<sup>92</sup> the National Executive decided to suspend publication of the organisation's newsletter Blikfakkel which, over the same six month period, had shown a loss of £1 078.<sup>93</sup>

It was the Trust Fund which enabled the National Executive to balance its books during the final months of the Torch Commando's existence. During the course of 1952 the Trust Fund had offered to contribute £1 500 per month to the National Executive to enable it to meet its monthly expenditure but there had been no need for the offer to be immediately called upon. In a March 1953 letter to A.L. Kowarsky, the Torch Commando's National Treasurer, Oppenheimer wrote:

Fortunately, up to now, Torch has been

89. Ibid., Financial Statement, 31 October 1952.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid., Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, War Veterans' Torch Commando National Executive, Revenue and Expenditure Account for the six months ended 31 December 1952.

93. Ibid.

able to look after itself to a large extent and has not had to call on the Trust to make these monthly contributions....It is, however, plain that some further assistance from the Trust is required and I am, therefore, going to arrange for the Trust to send you a cheque for £5 000 at once. If, on going into your financial affairs, you find that you require to approach us for further assistance, we will consider this most sympathetically.<sup>94</sup>

Kowarsky replied: "...I am going into our financial position in detail and will then avail myself of your kind offer to discuss with you our estimated expenditure."<sup>95</sup>

If, as seems likely, Trust Fund contributions to the Torch Commando fall under the heading "Direct Donations and Recoupments" in the Torch Commando's final financial statement, total Trust Fund contributions to that organisation amounted to about £18 000, just under one third of the National Executive's Budget.<sup>96</sup> Of this amount about £16 000 was contributed during the Torch Commando's second year of existence.<sup>97</sup>

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94. Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, H.F. Oppenheimer to A.L. Kowarsky, 7 March 1953.
95. Ibid., A.L. Kowarsky to H.F. Oppenheimer, 16 March 1953.
96. Ibid., Financial Statement, National Congress, June 1953. See Appendix XXX: War Veterans' Torch Commando, Financial Statement, June 1953.
97. Ibid.

CHAPTER 20NATAL, APRIL - SEPTEMBER 1952

The Natal Coastal Region of the Torch Commando had responded enthusiastically to the formation of the United Democratic Front. G. Ford, the Regional Chairman, informed Strauss that he was immediately setting about the establishment of a liaison committee between the constituent members of the Front which, in Natal, included the Defenders of the Constitution.<sup>1</sup>

On 2 May, with the constitutional crisis growing in intensity, Natal U.P. Provincial Councillors representing Durban and coastal constituencies met to consider the legal difficulties involved in summoning a special protest meeting of the Provincial Council.<sup>2</sup> Finding these difficulties to be insuperable, the Councillors were obliged to wait until the Council's scheduled meeting on 2 June. Considering it undesirable, "with events moving so rapidly", to frame a resolution for that meeting, the Councillors merely "pledged themselves to fight the Nationalist Government with all the constitutional means at their disposal..."<sup>3</sup> On the same day, the representatives of the four Natal elements of the Democratic Front met to form a liaison committee and to discuss their response to the Government's initiatives.

Douglas Mitchell, Natal leader of the U.P. and head of the Party's delegation at the meeting, had from the outset of the constitutional dispute taken care to repudiate Natal

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1. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2. Vol.I, G. Ford to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 March 1952.
  2. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Statement issued by E.C. Wilks, n.d.
  3. Ibid.

separatism as expressed in a growing demand, particularly from elements in the Natal Torch Commando and in the Defenders of the Constitution, for a new National Convention. He had said: "I warn Natal and South Africa there is no spectacular way out. There is only the hard way - through the ballot box."<sup>4</sup> Thus, though the meeting concluded with a statement by the constituent bodies of the newly-formed liaison committee indicating their intention to work in full co-operation with one another, Mitchell remained intensely suspicious of his allies' intentions. He considered not only that the organisations they represented lacked political substance but also that they harboured political ambitions of their own.<sup>5</sup> He would work with them, he said, "as long as it did not clash with United Party principles but at the same time to veer away from any suggestion of a binding political association which could give them the opportunity to take control."<sup>6</sup>

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4. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.76. Clause 2(a) of the U.P. Programme of Principles stated: "The unitary basis of a United South Africa shall be maintained intact as laid down in the South Africa Act, and no authority or right in conflict therewith or capable of being applied in conflict therewith shall be granted to any province or provinces." Clause 2(b) stated: "The status of the provinces shall be maintained, with the extension, when necessary, and subject to the provisions of sub-section (a) hereof, of provincial powers and functions within the framework of the South Africa Act." Programme of Principles and Constitution of the United Party, p.2, April 1951.
  5. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.77. During the latter half of 1951 some Natal members of the Torch Commando had begun to propagate the idea of forming a new political party. A.G. Malan assured Marais Steyn that "there is nothing more to it than some irresponsible talk by stupid people." U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Correspondence, A.G. Malan to S.J. Marais Steyn, 12 December 1951.
  6. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.78.



Mitchell's attitude was indicative of what Natal U.P. relations with the Torch Commando had been like since the latter's inception. In November 1951 a U.P. report had noted:

In Durban matters are not as they should be...the trouble probably arises to a great extent from the fact that most of the Torch Commando leaders are inexperienced in party politics, and on the other hand the Party leaders, having borne the brunt for so many years, are somewhat intolerant of the 'new boys'.<sup>7</sup>

Strongly disparate personalities also played a role. Towards the end of May 1952, and a few days prior to the meeting of the Natal Provincial Council, Strauss was informed that Mitchell had had personality clashes with Mervyn Ellis, editor of the Natal Mercury, and with Leo Caney, a committee member of the Defenders of the Constitution, and was "never quite at his best with Nicholls...."<sup>8</sup> Strauss was advised "that some form of sympathetic statement from yourself and the provincial leaders of the Party would go a long way towards keeping our Natal U.P. and Torch people happily in the family."<sup>9</sup>

Backed by supportive resolutions adopted at over twenty-five Democratic Front organised meetings in the province,<sup>10</sup> the U.P.-dominated Natal Provincial Council, on 2 June, adopted, without a division and after eight hours debate, a resolution clearly designed to accommodate divergent opinion within the Natal United Democratic Front. Addressed to the

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7. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, J.L. Horak to F.J. van Biljon, 16 November 1951.
  8. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, A. Adams to J.G.N. Strauss, 23 May 1952.
  9. Ibid.
  10. Rand Daily Mail, 23 May 1952, p.9.

Governor-General, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, the resolution requested that Parliament adopt the necessary legislative measures to call into being a National Convention.<sup>11</sup> But, apart from the possible exception of a clause requesting the entrenchment of the existing powers of the Provincial Councils, the resolution had been carefully crafted so as to avoid conceding any substance to Natal separatist aspirations. It simply requested the re-affirmation and entrenchment of "the basic principles of the Act of Union."<sup>12</sup>

Strauss duly sent a "sympathetic statement" congratulating the Provincial Councillors on their "splendid contribution in the fight."<sup>13</sup> He was equally careful though, in his statement, to make clear that Natal's effort was part of a national opposition struggle. "South Africa is with you," he said, "on the road to victory at the next General Election."<sup>14</sup> But events could not so easily be controlled. On the Torch Commando's suggestion, and with the eventual agreement of a reluctant Mitchell, Heaton Nicholls had been instrumental in calling a mass meeting in Durban, on 6 June, in order to endorse the Provincial Council resolution.<sup>15</sup>

At the meeting, though Mitchell did not budge from the view that there "was no way out...[but]...through the ballot box",<sup>16</sup> both Heaton Nicholls and Ford, as he had feared,

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11. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Resolution to be proposed by the United Party in the Natal Provincial Council in June 1952.
  12. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.447.
  13. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, J.G.N. Strauss to E.C. Wilks, 2 June 1952.
  14. Ibid.
  15. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.447.
  16. Rand Daily Mail, 7 June 1952, p.1.

used the emotionally charged atmosphere to rouse enthusiasm for the "Natal Stand". Ford, when he addressed the crowd, received a roar of assent when he asked: "Are you prepared to take the consequences if Natal is forced to stand on her own?"<sup>17</sup> Besides endorsing the Provincial Council's resolution,<sup>18</sup> the crowd also took a pledge, read by Heaton Nicholls, "to preserve the sanctity of the engagements entered upon at the time of Union as a moral obligation of trust and honour."<sup>19</sup> Interpreting the pledge as an undertaking to support a withdrawal by Natal from the Union should the Constitution be "broken by unconstitutional and immoral methods",<sup>20</sup> and considering those who had taken the pledge "as representative of the whole of Natal",<sup>21</sup> Heaton Nicholls wrote: "We knew now beyond all doubt where we were and what we wanted; the people of Natal had spoken with one voice and would not have a republic foisted upon them."<sup>22</sup>

Characteristically ignoring what he termed "legalistics",<sup>23</sup> Heaton Nicholls, two days after the meeting, wrote in a letter to Strauss:

I imagine that this is the first time a resolution passed by a Provincial Council has been addressed to Parliament...instead of to the Government....The resolution will be read, I presume, by the President in the Senate and by the Speaker in the House of Assembly, whereupon a debate can take place and a motion introduced by the Opposition in favour of granting the request of the Provincial Council. Since there is no precedent, it will be necessary to create one.<sup>24</sup>

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17. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.80.  
 18. Rand Daily Mail, 7 June 1952, p.1.  
 19. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.449.  
 20. Ibid.  
 21. Ibid.  
 22. Ibid.  
 23. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.81.  
 24. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, G. Heaton

Strauss was less sanguine. He wrote that he had "little doubt that both the Speaker and the President will be fully within their rights in ruling that the resolution...was not one which [the Provincial Council] was competent to convey either to the House of Assembly or the Senate."<sup>25</sup> Even if there was an element of doubt, he continued, they could "easily put us off until after the end of the session on the ground that they were considering their rulings."<sup>26</sup>

After Strauss had decided that the introduction of a Private Member's motion in the Senate was the only feasible means of bringing the resolution to Parliament's notice, Senator C.F. Clarkson, on 12 June, gave notice of a motion approving the Provincial Council resolution.<sup>27</sup> In the ensuing debate, Verwoerd simply dismissed the resolution as political propaganda.<sup>28</sup> On 18 June Malan, in a special message to voters taking part in the Wakkerstroom by-election, confirmed the Government's rejection of the resolution. Adding fuel to the fire, he also said: "The differences between the two sides are radical and progressively they have become deeper. They cannot be bridged."<sup>29</sup>

- Nicholls to J.G.N. Strauss, 8 June 1952.
25. Ibid., File 2/1/9, Vol.I, J.G.N. Strauss to L.R. Caney, 19 June 1952.
26. Ibid.
27. In the Assembly Private Members' Days had been appropriated for Government business. Mitchell did however place a question on the order paper asking Malan whether he would agree to the Provincial Council's request. Lack of time prevented the question from being put. Cape Argus, 12 June 1952, p.1.
28. Ibid., 20 June 1952, p.8.
29. The Star, 18 June 1952, p.1. On 23 June Malan said that the Government could not consider Natal's request coming as it did from only one of the provinces. Rand Daily Mail, 23 June 1952, p.1.

Carried by a wave of popular indignation, the Natal Provincial Council on 19 June unanimously passed a resolution, the N.P. members having absented themselves, calling for the immediate convening of a Conference

of the Members of Parliament, the Senate and the Provincial Council of this Province to consider, in consultation with the representatives of all organisations dedicated to the preservation of the Constitution, what action can be taken to ensure the maintenance of the democratic state of Union and the removal from office of the present Government.<sup>30</sup>

Because of the constitutional novelty of the resolution, the Provincial Councillors had been careful not to include in it any directive as to who was to convene the Conference. Heaton Nicholls, writing on behalf of the Defenders of the Constitution, attempted to convince the Administrator of Natal, D.G. Shepstone, that in

a constitutional question of this grave character the Executive Committee should not be afraid of setting up a new precedent...[in]...calling the Conference together and endowing it with the necessary constitutional status. This will avoid the irresponsible and unofficial convening of the Conference by the agent of a political party, a proceeding which the Defenders would view with alarm.<sup>31</sup>

Having submitted Heaton Nicholls's view to legal counsel, Shepstone, in his reply to Heaton Nicholls, pointed out that

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30. Rand Daily Mail, 20 June 1952, p.1. The African and Indian Congresses launched the Defiance Campaign on 26 June.
31. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, G. Heaton Nicholls to the Administrator of Natal, 3 July 1952.

the resolution had never been "brought before the Administrator-in-Executive Committee in any shape or form. The motion was introduced and seconded by two members of the Executive Committee purely in their private capacities."<sup>32</sup> Neither the Administrator, the Executive Council nor the Provincial Council, he concluded, possessed the constitutional authority to convene the proposed conference and so give it official status.<sup>33</sup>

On the same day that Shepstone sent his reply to Heaton Nicholls, the Torch Commando, in the highly-charged atmosphere of its first National Congress, unanimously adopted a politically explosive resolution which had been proposed by Ford:

If in her efforts to save Union, Natal is forced to stand alone, the Torch Commando throughout South Africa and South West Africa affirms its readiness to support Natal to the full by whatsoever action the National Executive may deem necessary....<sup>34</sup>

Justifiably anxious about the propaganda value of the resolution to the Government, Strauss persuaded the Torch Commando's National Executive to suppress news of its adoption.<sup>35</sup> Heaton Nicholls later wrote: "it is to the lasting credit of the Torch Commando that his wishes were

32. Ibid., D.G. Shepstone to G. Heaton Nicholls, 9 July 1952.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, 1952 War Veterans' Torch Commando Congress, Natal Resolution, 9 July 1952. Kane Berman supported the federal concept but did not feel that it "had been sufficiently thought through." Interview: L. Kane Berman.

35. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.450. What was made public was a resolution opposing the formation of a "Secession Party" in Natal. The Star, 9 July 1952, p.3.

respected."<sup>36</sup>

In the light of these events, it was with some circumspection that U.P. delegates, on 18 July, met their partners in the Natal Democratic Front in order to place the loose liaison committee onto a more formal and permanent footing. All other avenues having been closed, this approach appeared to be the only one available in order to convene, on Heaton Nicholls's non-party basis, the Natal Conference which had been proposed by the Provincial Council on 19 June. Thus, the meeting, from which Mitchell had been careful to absent himself, saw the birth of the "Natal Council of the United Democratic Front" constituted to "act in a general advisory capacity to the United Democratic Front in Natal...for the furtherance of its objectives."<sup>37</sup> Mitchell's caution in distancing himself from the Council was understandable, for its constitution provided one vote for each of the four delegations and only three votes were necessary for carrying a resolution. Three delegates constituted a quorum and no veto could be exercised.<sup>38</sup> Although the Natal L.P. had tended, up to this time, to support the U.P. position vis-a-vis Natal separatism,<sup>39</sup> the Natal Council clearly posed a threat to Mitchell's determination to maintain the paramountcy of U.P. interests.

36. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.450.

37. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Minutes of a Meeting of the Natal Council of the United Democratic Front, 18 July 1952.

38. Ibid.

39. On 26 June the National Executive Council of the L.P. had adopted a motion to oppose any attempt by Natal to secede from the Union. Afraid of losing support in Natal over the issue, the motion had been adopted "with the proviso that the statement of policy be conveyed, verbally, by Ardé to his committee for private information only." S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council, 26 June 1952.

Once the Council had fulfilled its primary function of convening the Natal Conference, which it immediately set about doing, Mitchell determined to cripple it.

By 22 July the Torch Commando and L.P. in Natal and the Defenders of the Constitution had agreed to participate in the Conference. On 28 July the U.P. Natal Provincial Executive summoned a meeting of the Party's Natal Parliamentary and Provincial Council representatives to decide upon the approach it should adopt.<sup>40</sup> Describing the meeting in a letter to Strauss, Mitchell wrote:

It was soon clear that the meeting wanted a 'Conference' in terms of the Provincial Council resolution. Not a 'Convention' for Natal...G.H.N. was not as bad as usual, but inclined to be provocative. He tried in vain to get support for 'a Natal Convention to be held in the Provincial Council Chambers.'<sup>41</sup> At the end, it was agreed unanimously that...the Conference [was] to deal solely with measures designed to win the next election. All resolutions to be submitted in advance to the United Party...The decisions of the Conference to be 'advisory' and not mandatory.<sup>42</sup> All plans and details for the holding of

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40. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Notes on the Discussion held by the Chairmen of the member bodies of the United Democratic Front in Natal, 31 July 1952.
41. It was reported in the minutes of the meeting that "Senator Heaton Nicholls queried the authority of the Provincial Executive of the Party over Public Representatives whom, he maintained, were responsible to their electors." Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.119, Minutes of Meeting of the Natal United Party Senators, M.P.s and M.P.C.s with the Provincial Executive Committee, 28 July 1952.
42. Mitchell emphasised that those who attended the meeting would do so in their private capacities. Ibid.



the Conference to be decided by the four Chairmen in Committee.<sup>43</sup>

On 31 July Mitchell met the Chairmen of the other three organisations constituting the Natal Council<sup>44</sup> and immediately set about subverting the Council's influence. He insisted that the meeting did not constitute a "Sub-Committee of the Natal Council but an ad hoc Committee of the leaders of the four member bodies...the Council should not enter the sphere of executive action but simply be a liaison and advisory body."<sup>45</sup> He said that his "interpretation of the offer to call the Conference by the Natal Council was that it was an 'offer to assist', but that the Chairmen should actually issue the invitations."<sup>46</sup>

Surprisingly, despite an objection by Ford, Heaton Nicholls agreed to Mitchell's proposals. He was however soon afterwards to object strongly, supported by both Ford and Chutter, when Mitchell proposed, as had been decided at the 28 July U.P. meeting, that the Conference was to be called simply to discuss "ways and means of winning the election."<sup>47</sup> Heaton Nicholls, who had proposed that "the

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43. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/11, Vol.I, D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 30 July 1952.

44. The Torch Commando was represented at the meeting by E.G. Ford, Chairman, Natal Coastal Region, and J.B. Chutter, Chairman, Natal Inland Region, as the organisation did not have Provincial Chairmen. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Notes of the Discussion held by Chairmen of Member-Bodies of the United Democratic Front in Natal, 31 July 1952.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid. In all of the meetings of the Natal Chairmen of the United Democratic Front up to this time, Ardé of the L.P. had tended to support those positions adopted by Mitchell. When differences occurred between the U.P. on the one hand and the Torch Commando and the Defenders of the Constitution on the

proceedings of the Conference should be in the hands of the Conference", argued that the "narrow party basis" would be regarded as a "propaganda trick that would betray Natal."<sup>48</sup>

When, on 5 August, the notice convening the 25 August Natal Conference was issued,<sup>49</sup> the central question of the Conference's purpose remained unresolved. It was primarily for this reason that Mitchell, from the day the notice was issued, launched a series of public attacks on what he considered to be the lack of political realism displayed by those who supported the "Natal Stand". In response, J.D. Robinson, director of the Natal Mercury, complained to Strauss:

I know that Mervyn Ellis gave you an undertaking to do his best to hold the United Front in Natal together...[but] ...Mitchell makes the position most difficult.

If there is to be no advocacy of secession, there should equally in present circumstances be no talk of non-secession. Each is equally undesirable.<sup>50</sup>

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other, he attempted to play a mediating role.

48. Ibid.

49. The Conference was to be open to all of Natal's Parliamentary and Provincial Council representatives. It had however been decided at the U.P.'s 28 July meeting that everyone attending would be asked to sign a document supporting the Provincial Council's 19 June resolution. Twelve nominated members were to represent each of the member bodies of the Natal United Democratic Front. Ibid., Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.119, Minutes of Meeting of the Natal U.P. Senators, M.P.s and M.P.C.s with the Provincial Executive Committee, 28 July 1952. To endow it with a semblance of official sanction the meeting was to be held in the Refectory of the Natal Provincial Council.

50. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, J.D. Robinson to J.G.N. Strauss, 6 August 1952.

Heaton Nicholls's response was to acknowledge that his Chairmanship of the Defenders of the Constitution had become untenable with his membership of the U.P. Submitting his resignation from the Party to Strauss, he wrote:

I do not believe that the U.P. will win the next election and if it does the growth of Nationalist sentiment will speedily overwhelm it, that is why I believe that Natal alone provides the bulwark against the Broederbond state. That belief, however, was subordinated in my mind to maintaining a United Front in Natal which would in no way be inimical to the United Party and could have gone into the election with enthusiasm: but it could only be by harnessing to the U.P. chariot all those who felt like I did about the future.

Mitchell makes it impossible.<sup>51</sup>

On the same day Heaton Nicholls wrote to Mitchell informing him that his attitude amounted "to a declaration, on behalf of the United Party of Natal, that no matter what action the Nationalists may take in their process of destroying the foundations of Union, Natal must submit."<sup>52</sup> After outlining the economic and political viability,<sup>53</sup> as he saw it, of a separate Natal Dominion and the more enlightened colour policy he considered it would pursue,<sup>54</sup> he concluded by

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51. Ibid., G. Heaton Nicholls to J.G.N. Strauss, 6 August 1952.

52. Ibid., G. Heaton Nicholls to D.E. Mitchell, 6 August 1952.

53. Heaton Nicholls maintained that the Commonwealth would not "stand idly by if appealed to and permit the coming republic to make war on that part of the Union which sought only to maintain that common allegiance set out in the Statute of Westminster..."  
Ibid.

54. Heaton Nicholls wrote: "Only by the adoption of the more enlightened ideas and generous impulses of Natal, freed from the base exploitation of racial

informing Mitchell that he could "no longer support the village mind which cannot distinguish between the great British principles at stake, and the puerile manoeuvring of the political party machine."<sup>55</sup>

Even before his receipt of Heaton Nicholls's resignation, Strauss had moved quickly to stem the rising tension within the United Democratic Front in Natal. On 8 August he held "full and frank" discussions with Natal Torch Commando leaders and sent the Party's Chief Whip, Higgerty, to the province to speak to Mitchell "in order to remove all causes of friction and possible misunderstanding."<sup>56</sup> On 9 August, just before the National Executive of the Torch Commando met in Durban to discuss Natal's political "temperature", A.G. Malan, very likely at Strauss's prompting, said: "I wish to reiterate that the Torch Commando deprecates any talk of the formation of a party supporting any secession movement in Natal."<sup>57</sup>

A façade of unity having apparently been restored at last to the Democratic Front in Natal, the receipt of Heaton Nicholls's letter of resignation must have come as a rude shock to Strauss. He immediately sent a telegram to Heaton Nicholls asking him to withhold publication of his resignation.<sup>58</sup> In a covering letter, he pleaded that  
the United Democratic Front must not be

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prejudices for party purposes, will a way be found to save Natal and, indeed, the whole of white South Africa from the disaster which, otherwise, surely awaits it." Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid., J.G.N. Strauss to J.D. Robinson, 12 August 1952.

57. The Star, 9 August 1952, p.1.

58. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, Telegram, J.G.N. Strauss to G. Heaton Nicholls, 12 August 1952.

allowed to break-up. In order to preserve this complete unity, your presence in the United Party is vital and essential...I will see Mitchell after talking the matter over with you in order to clear up all possible causes of friction and misunderstanding.<sup>59</sup>

On the same day, responding to Robinson's letter of 6 August, he wrote: "It is essential that you and Mervyn do all in your power to maintain and promote the smooth working of the U.D.F. in Natal."<sup>60</sup>

In view of Strauss's anxiety at this juncture to maintain equanimity on the Natal front, it would appear unlikely that he was in any way responsible for a letter, signed by twelve prominent Natal businessmen, which appeared in the Natal Mercury on 15 August.<sup>61</sup> The businessmen, as a result of a "serious computation" of the economic sacrifices secession would involve, considered that Natal, as an independent unit, would not be economically viable. Despite an attempt to counter the argument, Heaton Nicholls acknowledged that

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59. Ibid., J.G.N. Strauss to G. Heaton Nicholls, 12 August 1952.
60. Ibid., J.G.N. Strauss to J.D. Robinson, 12 August 1952.
61. Heaton Nicholls wrote that it was rumoured "to have emanated from the United Party office in Johannesburg..." G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.452. The signatories were L.F. Lane, L.B. Siedle, R. Armstrong, F. Evans, B. Halsey, J.P.W. Howden, E. James, J.B. McCarthy, R.B. Butcher, W.B. Grindrod, T.O. Williams and R.F. Johnstone. Rand Daily Mail, 16 August 1952, p.7. In June 1950 V. Raw, U.P. Natal Provincial Secretary, had asked for, and later received, a memorandum from van Biljon on the economic consequences of secession on Natal. In a covering letter to the memorandum, which concluded that secession would result in "sacrifices and hardship", van Biljon wrote: "It is emphasised that this statement is intended for your information, and should be used judiciously without reference to its source." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, F.J. van Biljon to V. Raw, 2 July 1950.

the "stumps were clean-bowled".<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless Strauss and Higgerty, at a 19 August meeting with Heaton Nicholls, failed to persuade him to withdraw his resignation. This was because, Heaton Nicholls later wrote, the discussion made it clear that "Mitchell expressed the mind of Strauss and his advisers, though probably more crudely than they would have done."<sup>63</sup> For the sake of maintaining opposition unity, he undertook however not to make his resignation public.<sup>64</sup>

It appears likely that responsibility for the publication of the businessmen's letter repudiating the economic viability of secession lay with Mitchell. Despite Strauss's attempts to paper over the fissures in the Natal Democratic Front, Mitchell on 20 August not only again launched an attack on the "Natal Stand" but also charged the Natal Mercury and Natal Witness with working against the U.P. in the Front by implicitly supporting that view.<sup>65</sup> As a result, at a 21 August meeting of the Natal Council, he was threatened with repudiation by both the Torch Commando and the Defenders of the Constitution.<sup>66</sup> With the Natal Conference due to meet four days later, Mitchell was obliged to back down and provide an undertaking that he would withdraw the charge when he addressed a public meeting at Amanzimtoti on 26 August.<sup>67</sup>

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62. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.452.

63. Ibid., p.453.

64. Ibid., p.454.

65. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, Minutes of a Meeting of the Natal Council of the United Democratic Front, 21 August 1952.

66. Ibid. Heaton Nicholls did not attend the meeting. The Defenders of the Constitution was represented by L. Caney.

67. Ibid. Mitchell, at the meeting, resisted the attempt by the other organisations to establish a United Democratic Front Fund to sponsor the Conference. It

Heaton Nicholls was naive when he assumed that delegates to the Natal Conference, which met on 25 and 26 August, "would vote according to conscience and would not be bound by party loyalties..."<sup>68</sup> Mitchell, who appealed to the delegates "to close ranks and stand united",<sup>69</sup> could afford to be conciliatory for, with its bloc of 48 delegates, the U.P. was able to outvote the 41 L.P.,<sup>70</sup> Torch Commando and Defenders of the Constitution delegates, many of whom held the view that "Natal should reserve the right to take independent action."<sup>71</sup> That the U.P. view predominated was evident in a resolution adopted at the conclusion of the Conference that the immediate priority of the United Democratic Front in Natal was the winning of the general election.<sup>72</sup> As a sop to those who looked beyond the election, another resolution approved the appointment of a twelve-man committee, three from each constituent body, to investigate and report on "the best means to reaffirm the South Africa Act and to entrench its material provisions...."<sup>73</sup> This was essentially a re-adoption of the

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was eventually paid for, on a per capita basis, by each organisation. Ibid.

68. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.457.

69. The Star, 26 August 1951, p.1.

70. The L.P. delegation proposed the establishment of a commission to investigate the economic viability of secession. Rand Daily Mail, 26 August 1952, p.7. The L.P. swing away from its earlier stance was very likely due to control of the L.P. delegation being assumed by Senator Browne and the Natal L.P. M.P.s.

71. Rand Daily Mail, 26 August 1952, p.7.

72. The Star, 27 August 1952, p.6.

73. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 2/1/10, Vol.3, Report of the Committee of the Natal Conference, n.d. The Committee presented its report on 23 March 1953. It recommended the entrenchment of the composition of the Senate, the authority and independence of the Judiciary and the powers of the Provincial Councils. Ibid. Mitchell, in effect, pigeon-holed the report. In April 1953 he informed Strauss: "The Steering Committee of the Conference met this morning and on

Provincial Council resolution of 2 June.

It appears likely that Mitchell's conciliatory approach at the Conference and his grudging offer of the olive branch to the Natal press at the 26 August public meeting,<sup>74</sup> removed a threat to his position as Chairman of the Natal U.P. This is hinted at in a telegram received by Strauss on 27 August:

Tension considerably eased. Yesterday's speeches give Douglas unique if final opportunity restore friendly relations Mervyn and achieve better co-operation within Front without change in Party Chairmanship. Mervyn would react favourably to prompt approach from Douglas.<sup>75</sup>

The High Court of Parliament sat at the same time as the Natal Conference met. On 27 August it ruled that the judgement of the Appeal Court in the Coloured Voters' case be set aside.<sup>76</sup> This provided Mitchell with another

- my proposal adopted the enclosed document as confidential, and not to be released until after the election, when it will go before the Council of the United Democratic Front for the final decision concerning any publicity to be given to it." *Ibid.*, D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 4 April 1953.
74. Mitchell, on 26 August, said: "The United Front in Natal does not consist of only four organisations with their members, but it should include the press also. Unless the press will stand shoulder to shoulder with my three colleagues and myself the United Front is incomplete." U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Constitutional Crisis and the United Democratic Front 1951-1952, D.E. Mitchell to the Editor, the Natal Mercury, 27 August 1952.
75. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, Leif (Egeland?) to J.G.N. Strauss, 27 August 1952.
76. Strauss had, on 18 June, announced that the U.P. would not take part in the High Court's proceedings. The Star, 18 June 1952, p.1. The L.P. and Natives' Representatives announced soon afterwards that they too would not participate. The Cape Town Electoral Officer was precluded from giving practical effect to the High Court's ruling by



opportunity to mend bridges within the Natal United Democratic Front. On 28 August, he said:

There is a feeling that there is a point beyond which we cannot go, but this is a state of mind and we cannot say in advance after what action by the Government the stage will have been reached when the feeling will arise in the minds of the mass of the people that nothing further can be done....The Government must not think that the people of Natal will allow them to go from excess to excess and further excess without doing something.<sup>77</sup>

On the same day, the Natal Mercury provided evidence that it too was willing to settle its differences with Mitchell. A leading article noted:

At the moment it is clear there is no division in the United Front on principle; there is possibly some divergence of view on the tactics that must be employed to meet the threat that confronts us....For the time being we can agree to differ on that point.<sup>78</sup>

On 18 September, Louis Steenkamp, Natal U.P. vice-Chairman, after having been requested by Strauss to do so, organised a meeting in Durban between Caney,<sup>79</sup> Mitchell and Mervyn Ellis. In terms of the subsequent working compromise which was arrived at, the U.P. undertook to meet four conditions

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an interdict of the Cape Supreme Court pending judgement on the validity of the High Court of Parliament Act. Ibid., 28 August 1952, p.1.

77. Ibid., 28 August 1952, p.1.

78. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.458.

79. Heaton Nicholls had, at the suggestion of the Chairman of the Natal Mercury, left for England soon after the Natal Conference. By going there he hoped to "find out what opinion was held by the British Government on the contractual nature of our Union bonds and their attitude towards the introduction of a republic..." Ibid.

in return for which it would be assured of the Natal Mercury's support "tot tenminste die volgende verkiesing...."<sup>80</sup> The first of the conditions was U.P. agreement to support the summoning of a National Convention "indien dit blyk dat so 'n konvensie nodig is om die verskansings in die grondwet te verseker en om enige ander saak wat ons nodig mag ag, te verskans."<sup>81</sup> The second was at least to acknowledge the existence of that body of opinion which supported the "Natal Stand". In this regard Ford, on 10 September, had said: "I am not asking the United Party to agree with it. I am just asking them to recognise that that school of thought exists."<sup>82</sup> The third and fourth of the conditions was an undertaking by the U.P. to take definite steps "om die nie-blanke vraagstuk uit die party-politieke stryd te haal", and to ensure that those affected by such a policy would be consulted before the policy's formal adoption.<sup>83</sup> As a result of this agreement, Steenkamp informed Strauss, "bestaan daar tans die vriendelikste verhouding tussen Mnr Mitchell, Mnr Ellis en Mnr Caney."<sup>84</sup>

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80. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, L.S. Steenkamp to J.G.N. Strauss, 19 September 1952.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid. In a speech made at Brits on 22 August 1952, Strauss said that when the U.P. was returned to power it "would seek a non-partisan solution of racial questions...and would do it in consultation and co-operation with the non-Europeans..." The audience was described as "thoughtful, but quite silent" after the announcement. The Star, 23 August, p.1. Strauss made similar announcements at the Transvaal Congress of the U.P. on 4 September (The Star, 4 September 1952, p.1) and at the 22-24 September Natal Provincial Congress. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/9/1, Vol.4, Three Points for Mr Strauss's Pietermaritzburg Speech, n.d.
84. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/7/1, L.S. Steenkamp to J.G.N. Strauss, 19 September 1952.

Just over a week later, during the U.P. Natal Provincial Congress,<sup>85</sup> G.W. Hammond M.P.C. (U.P., South Coast), very likely acting on Mitchell's behalf, arranged a meeting between Mitchell, Ford and Chutter to "try to come to some arrangement whereby the seeming differences of opinion between the United Party and Torch could be overcome."<sup>86</sup> At Hammond's suggestion and with Mitchell's apparent support,<sup>87</sup> Ford and Chutter were each offered, subject to their acceptance of U.P. policy, a seat in the next Parliament.<sup>88</sup> Both men, because they were playing for higher stakes, rejected the offer. Hammond later reported: "No progress was made because it was apparent that the Torch leaders could only think in terms of the United Front in Natal

85. At the Congress Mitchell won overwhelming support for a resolution expressing "Natal's determination to stand by its colleagues in all the provinces in the common struggle to uphold the constitution." T. Wilks, op. cit., p.88. Soon afterwards R. Hughes-Mason, vice-Chairman of the U.P. Natal Midlands region, resigned from the Party because of the failure of the Congress to support the "Natal Stand". Die Transvaler, 26 September 1952, p.1. His resignation was followed soon afterwards by that of Chutter.
86. L. Kane Berman Papers, Statement by G.W. Hammond, 18 November 1952. Natal Torch Commando members were not unanimously in favour of Ford and Chutter's views. On 13 September Roy Fenhales, vice-Chairman of the Natal Coastal Region of the Torch Commando, publicly criticised the dissension within the Natal United Democratic Front and said: "There is so much on which we are in agreement that it behoves us to work to bring about our first priority: the winning of the election." The Star, 13 September 1952, p.1.
87. Mitchell, according to Hammond's statement, made no proposals in regard to seats. But, in a covering letter to Kane Berman, Ford wrote: "If I ask Hammond to record that Mitchell agreed with his suggestion that Jim and I should stand he might shear off." L. Kane Berman Papers, G. Ford to L. Kane Berman, 19 November 1952.
88. Ibid., Statement by G.W. Hammond, 18 November 1952.

choosing Parliamentary candidates."<sup>89</sup>

Both Ford and Chutter suspected the likelihood, prompted no doubt by the Wakkerstroom by-election result and by the fear that the Appeal Court would accept the validity of the High Court of Parliament Act, of a coalition between the U.P. and N.P.<sup>90</sup> In as early as mid-August, Ford had successfully approached Heaton Nicholls for his support in the

formation, after the election, or immediately following a coalition between the Nationalists and the United Party, if that occurred first, of a new political party based upon Torch ideals, coupled with a Federal and a progressive non-European policy.<sup>91</sup>

There is also evidence to indicate that both Ford and Chutter met delegates from the Natal L.P. to discuss the formation of the new party and that they suggested "that the Labour Party could have six Natal seats."<sup>92</sup>

89. Ibid.

90. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.454.

91. Ibid., p.456. Ford had also flown down to Cape Town to see Heaton Nicholls before the latter left for England. L. Kane Berman Papers, Explanations are required by the Action Committee..., 12 November 1952.

92. L. Kane Berman Papers, Explanations are required by the Action Committee..., 12 November 1952. It is not clear whether this offer applied to the 1953 General Election or to the 1954 Provincial Elections.

CHAPTER 21

DELIMITATION, MAY 1951 - JANUARY 1953

The first steps in the preparation of the U.P.'s delimitation proposals were taken in May 1951. Delimitation Directive No.1 ordered a preliminary "Delimitation Drive" in each rural polling district and urban block in order "to determine the degree of support which the Party enjoys vis-a-vis the opposing elements...."<sup>1</sup> In June a Union Advisory Committee on Delimitation, consisting of de Villiers Graaff, Bekker, Tucker and the Secretary of the Division of Organisation, was established. Its primary responsibility was to co-ordinate the work of the Party's General Councils and Provincial organisations which were, in their turn, responsible for the preparation of the U.P.'s delimitation proposals.<sup>2</sup> By December 1951 all the General Councils and Provincial organisations had appointed Delimitation Committees, and registration had "been intensified in most safe United Party seats so as to weight them up in order that any excess of voters over quota can be transferred to marginal seats under the delimitation."<sup>3</sup>

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1. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Tenth Delimitation Commission, Correspondence and Memoranda 1951-1952, Delimitation Directive No.I, 14 May 1951. The Transvaal H.N.P. had begun its Delimitation preparations on 31 March 1951 when a circular noted that it was "een van die belangrikste take wat vir elke taksbestuur die volgende paar maande voor die deur staan. Ons het u om gegewens gevra wat nie later as 31 Julie aan Hoofkantoor gestuur moet word nie." J.G. Strijdom Papers, Vol.45, No.288, Aan lede van die Hoofbestuur H.N.P., 26 May 1951.
  2. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973, Meeting of Leader's Executive Committee, 14 June 1951.
  3. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.301, Action Programme, December 1951. In late

Despite the launch of the Marginal Seat Registration Drive at the beginning of 1952, delimitation work did not progress smoothly. Although, for example, the Witwatersrand General Council had launched its marginal seat campaign in January, van Biljon reported in March that resignations and transfers had left Tucker as the only person versed in delimitation work "and he states that he will leave the Senate for the purpose in June. In fact we ought to be hard at it in May."<sup>4</sup> Voicing the old complaint about the difficulty of getting decisions taken while Parliament was in session, van Biljon continued:

In view of all this it seem to me to be imperative that the Central Delimitation Committee be called together during the van Riebeeck recess to take stock of the whole position. In no area I have been to, except Natal and Pretoria, is there active preparatory thinking on delimitation.<sup>5</sup>

Early and effective registration was of particular importance to the U.P. not only because the delimitation<sup>6</sup> was to be based on the roll as at 30 April 1952, but also because of the effect of the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill once it had been enacted. The Bill, which passed its Third

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August it had been reported that good progress had been made with registration drives by the Pretoria General Council and by the Witwatersrand General Council, but that the Platteland General Council's drive had received poor support. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Tenth Delimitation Commission, Correspondence and Memoranda 1951-1952, J.D. Opperman to J.L. Horak, 27 August 1951.

4. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 19 March 1952.

5. Ibid.

6. The members of the Tenth Delimitation Commission were appointed on 26 June 1952.

Reading on 12 June 1952 after it had been "cleansed of most of its objectionable features",<sup>7</sup> provided that the Union quota of voters would be determined by reference to the number of enrolled white voters and not on the census total of adult white citizens as had previously been the case.<sup>8</sup> This procedure would provide rural constituencies, whose inhabitants were easier to register than those in urban constituencies, a still greater advantage than they already possessed over the latter as a result of the loading and unloading of seats.<sup>9</sup>

As a result, U.P. spokesmen, in leading evidence before the Delimitation Commission,<sup>10</sup> tried to persuade its members to

7. The Star, 12 June 1952, p.2.

8. Ibid., 25 June 1952, p.3. In April 1952 the number of white registered voters totalled 1 539 802. Divided by 150 this gave a Union quota of 10 265.35. The number of seats to which each province was entitled was obtained by dividing the number of white voters in each province by the Union quota:

	<u>White Voters</u>	<u>Seats</u>	
		<u>1952</u>	<u>1947</u>
Cape	554 123	54	55
Natal	155 959	15	16
Transvaal	693 108	68	66
Orange Free State	136 612	13	13

In calculating the Provincial quota, however, all voters were taken into account:

	<u>Total Number of Voters</u>	<u>Provincial Quota</u>	
		<u>1952</u>	<u>1947</u>
Cape	601 131	11 132	9 508
Natal	157 149	10 477	8 402
Transvaal	693 108	10 193	8 769
Orange Free State	136 612	10 509	8 909

Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol.CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.

9. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Correspondence and Memoranda, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, n.d.

10. The Commission started its sittings in Pretoria on 30 July 1952. The last sitting was at Cape Town on 2 December 1952. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol.CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.

give due consideration in their deliberations to the Party's estimate that seats in the larger urban centres were from 8 to 12 per cent under-registered.<sup>11</sup> Supporting this contention, the spokesmen pointed out that the growth in the number of registered voters was almost wholly confined to these centres. They noted that between the time the Ninth Delimitation Commission first sat in mid-1947 and the General Election in May 1948,

the average increase in thirty urban divisions was not less than 1 392 voters per division. And this despite the difficulty in getting a voters' list in the industrial areas as complete as that in the rural areas...On the Witwatersrand alone, there were in 34 seats 360 157 voters in May 1948, four years later there were 383 096 voters registered, an increase of 22 939. Considering that in one year alone, between 1947 and 1948, this type of division had shown an average increase of well over 1 000 per division, the present increase of 675 per division in almost four years, is definitely an indication that the Witwatersrand is very much under-registered.<sup>12</sup>

As in 1947, the Party's spokesmen again raised the case of the Orange Free State to reinforce their contention that there should not be a wide divergence in the loading of urban and rural seats. At the most, only four of the thirteen seats in that province could be classified as urban. There was thus an insufficient number of urban seats

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11. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Correspondence and Memoranda, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, n.d.

12. Ibid. In August 1952 Strauss wrote: "Some form of electoral reform will definitely have to be brought in under a U.P. Government, but it is not now the time to make any public statement on it." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.I, J.G.N. Strauss to H. Taylor, 14 August 1952.



to sustain a large enough loading so as to allow the rural seats to be unloaded to the same extent as the rural divisions in provinces where there was a better balance between rural and urban constituencies.<sup>13</sup>

On this basis, and with "complete unanimity"<sup>14</sup> having been reached between its urban and rural representatives, the Party in the Transvaal pressed for the implementation of a system of "graded" loading and unloading.<sup>15</sup> Overall, their recommendations imposed an average load of 6.4 and 6 per cent on Witwatersrand and Pretoria seats respectively with an average unloading of 10.9 per cent on the rural seats. This relatively moderate arrangement also had the virtue of allowing at least one of the two additional seats to which the Transvaal was entitled under the new delimitation to be allocated to the Witwatersrand.<sup>16</sup> Conversely, the N.P.

13. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Correspondence and Memoranda, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, n.d. Where the number of urban seats exceeded the number of rural seats, as in the Transvaal, there was greater scope for unloading the rural constituencies. In 1948 the average load on the 82 loaded seats was 6.7 per cent. The average unload on the 68 unloaded seats was 8.13 per cent. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Tenth Delimitation Commission, Correspondence and Memoranda 1951-1952, Evidence for Delimitation Committee, n.d. 1948 Delimitation:

	<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Loaded</u>	<u>Unloaded</u>
Transvaal	66	43	23
Cape	55	26	29
Natal	16	9	7
Orange Free State	13	4	9

S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 5, File 2, Memorandum Submitted to the Tenth Delimitation Commission on behalf of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, October 1952. See Appendix XXXI: Graph Showing the Percentage by which the Average Number of Votes in a Loaded Constituency Exceeded the Average Numbers of Votes in an Unloaded Constituency, 1910-1948.

14. The Star, 24 July 1952, p.3.  
 15. Rand Daily Mail, 30 July 1952, p.1.  
 16. The Star, 6 August 1952, p.2. Both the Cape and

argued for a 10 and 3 per cent loading of the Witwatersrand and Pretoria seats respectively and a 13.5 per cent unloading of the rural seats. This arrangement would have allowed the allocation of both of the additional seats to the rural areas.<sup>17</sup>

Despite its membership of the United Democratic Front, the U.P. had resisted Torch Commando and L.P. proposals that joint memoranda should be submitted to the Delimitation Commission.<sup>18</sup> The Torch Commando National Executive had thus briefed Adv. A. Suzman to prepare an independent memorandum for submission to the Commission. This memorandum made no proposals in regard to specific constituencies but dealt in principle only with the argument that there was "no justification for the approach adopted by past Delimitation Commissions of automatically loading urban constituencies and unloading rural constituencies. The starting point should be equality as between all electoral divisions."<sup>19</sup> On 29 July the National Executive had, however, in deference to the wishes of the U.P., decided that it "would not complicate matters by presenting the case itself."<sup>20</sup> But, on 4 August, van Biljon was unilaterally informed by the National Executive that

having regard to the extravagant claims  
put forward by the National Party

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17. Natal lost one seat each under the new delimitation. Ibid. See Appendix XXXII: United Party and National Party Transvaal Delimitation Proposals, 1952.
18. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council, 24 July 1952.
19. Ibid., Box 5, File 2, Memorandum submitted to the Tenth Delimitation Commission on behalf of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, October 1952.
20. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Correspondence, R. Parrott to F.J. van Biljon, 29 July 1952.

representatives... [and] ...with the concurrence of both the United Party and Labour Party representatives present, Advocate Suzman accepted our instructions to present his case on our behalf.<sup>21</sup>

U.P. doubts in regard to allowing the Torch Commando to submit a separate memorandum proved justified. The Commission, in its final report, firmly rejected the memorandum's basic contention. The Commission observed:

The statements contained therein were often based on a misconception of the delimitation provisions of the South Africa Act. Furthermore, comparisons were made where no grounds for comparison existed and the document did not take into account the factual circumstances at the present or previous delimitations.<sup>22</sup>

Reflecting the central theme of the Torch Commando's memorandum, both Ardé in Natal and Davidoff in the Transvaal stressed, in their memoranda to the Commission, the importance of the principle of "one vote, one value". They conceded, however, that "following upon the precedent adopted by certain previous Commissions and in view of the permissive provisions contained in Section 40<sup>23</sup> of the South

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21. Ibid., R. Parrott to F.J. van Biljon, 4 August 1952.  
 22. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol. CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.  
 23. Sub-section (3) of Section 40 provided that, in drawing constituency boundaries, "Commissioners shall give due consideration to:  
 (a) Community or diversity of interests.  
 (b) Means of Communication.  
 (c) Physical features.  
 (d) Existing electoral boundaries.  
 (e) Sparsity or density of population.  
 U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Tenth Delimitation Commission, Correspondence and Memoranda 1951-1952, Memorandum to be Submitted to the Tenth Delimitation Commission, n.d.

Africa Act", the Party could not "expect so radical a departure from existing practice at this stage."<sup>24</sup> Insofar as the Transvaal was concerned, the L.P. in a very brief memorandum, therefore bent its principles by recommending an overall load of 5 per cent on the urban seats and an overall 7.5 per cent unloading of the rural constituencies.<sup>25</sup> Acceptance of these recommendations by the Commission would have meant the two additional Transvaal seats being assigned to the Witwatersrand.

The Commission's final recommendations in regard to the Transvaal were, once again, largely a compromise between the plans suggested by the U.P. and N.P. One of the Transvaal's additional seats was allocated to the Witwatersrand. The resulting thirty-five constituencies in this region were given an average loading of 7.6 per cent and the eight Pretoria constituencies one of 5.4 per cent. The twenty-five rural constituencies were unloaded, on average, by 12.9 per cent.<sup>26</sup> Assessing the Commission's plan for the Transvaal in the light of the slightly less favourable overall loading and unloading in relation to that of 1948, Tucker was reported as saying that "a hard fight lay ahead but he certainly did not subscribe to the view of a Johannesburg newspaper that the General Election would now have to be won in South-West Africa and the Cape."<sup>27</sup>

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24. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 5, File 2, Memorandum of Evidence by the S.A.L.P. to be Submitted to the Delimitation Committee at its Sitting in Johannesburg on 6 August 1952.
25. The Star, 6 August 1952, p.2. The Natal L.P. Delimitation proposals could not be traced.
26. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol. CLXXI, No. 5009, 20 February 1953. The Government Gazette, on p.9, lists 67 Transvaal seats instead of 68.
27. Challenge, 11 October 1952, p.1. In 1948 the Witwatersrand seats had a 7.1 per cent loading and the Pretoria seats a loading of 5.4 per cent. The Transvaal rural seats were unloaded by an average of

Insofar as the Orange Free State was concerned, Bloemfontein's two urban constituencies received an average loading of 10.2 per cent. The average unloading on the eleven rural constituencies was a mere 1.8 per cent.<sup>28</sup> Changes to the boundaries of the sole U.P. seat in that province served to make it an N.P. certainty. An article in The Forum observed: "To his credit, Dr Steyn prefers to fight and go down rather than accept a safer seat offered to him in the Transvaal."<sup>29</sup>

In Natal the eight urban constituencies received an average loading of 9.7 per cent while the seven rural seats were unloaded by an average 11.1 per cent.<sup>30</sup> The redrawing of boundaries consequent upon the province's loss of a seat to the Transvaal led to the disappearance of the N.P.-held seat of Klipriver and brought Newcastle within reach of recapture by the U.P. This left one safe N.P. seat, Vryheid, and thirteen safe opposition seats.<sup>31</sup>

With the appeal against the High Court of Parliament Act still pending, the U.P. in the Cape had taken the precaution of presenting two schemes to the Commission, one with Coloured voters on the roll and another from which they had been omitted.<sup>32</sup> Although the Commission's loading of 10.5

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11.9 per cent.

28. The constituencies of Heilbron, Frankfort, Kroonstad, Odendaalsrus and Vredefort could not yet be classified as urban seats but, because of the size of their urban population, they carried loads varying from 4 to .9 per cent. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol.CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.
29. The Forum, January 1953, p.5.
30. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol.CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.
31. The Forum, January 1953, p.5.
32. In November 1952, without providing details, de Villiers Graaff reported that "great difficulty was

per cent on the province's twenty-one urban constituencies and unloading of 7.2 per cent on the thirty-three largely rural constituencies<sup>33</sup> closely approximated the U.P.'s recommendations in both reports,<sup>34</sup> altered boundaries left the Party in the province with only twenty-three, instead of its previous twenty-seven, safe seats.<sup>35</sup>

Despite the Commission's recommendations resulting in a weakening of the U.P. position in at least three of the country's provinces,<sup>36</sup> English-language newspapers were surprisingly positive in their assessment of the final report. A leader in The Star noted:

Our general impression is that the Commissioners have acquitted themselves of an exacting task with success. The fact that no political party can claim any particular advantage, on balance, from the new demarcation is one proof of this. Another indication is that in the delicate work of loading and unloading constituencies...the Commission has shown a conspicuous measure of restraint and moderation.<sup>37</sup>

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being experienced in the registration of Coloured voters." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Head Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1948-1963, Meeting, U.P. Head Committee, 18 November 1952. An important reason might have been Coloured disenchantment with both of the major parties. D. Scher, op. cit., p.364. Very few additional Coloured voters were registered in the sixteen months preceding the 1953 General Election:

On 31 December 1951 47 335 Coloureds were registered. On 2 May 1953 47 849 were on the roll. Ibid.

33. Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol.CLXXI, No.5009, 20 February 1953.
34. U.P. Papers, Cape File, 1952 Delimitation Memoranda, U.P. Memorandum to Cover Plan of Delimitation for the Cape Province: European and Coloured Voters, n.d.
35. The Forum, January 1953, p.5.
36. There was no new delimitation in South-West Africa.
37. The Star, 15 January 1953, p.10.

Even less insightful was a leading article in the Rand Daily Mail: "Of the three parties, the Nationalists made the most extravagant demands and they have accordingly, suffered the greatest rebuffs at the hands of the Commission."<sup>38</sup>

The U.P. Central Executive had, on 13 October 1952, decided to fix 26 January as the deadline for Party nominations and had then delegated authority to the Provincial Executives to fix their own provincial deadlines.<sup>39</sup> Its next logical step, in view of its membership of the United Democratic Front and despite its lack of active co-operation with the L.P., was to open negotiations with that Party in order to reach an electoral agreement.

Negotiations opened on 3 November with the U.P. offering to maintain the status quo.<sup>40</sup> But, because Edenvale had, as a result of the delimitation, become unsafe, and possibly also because it felt its recently increased membership entitled it to more, the L.P. proved reluctant to accept.<sup>41</sup> Instead, its negotiators were instructed to submit that the Party retain its current six seats in the Assembly, with the exception of Edenvale, which the National Executive wanted exchanged for a safe seat, and that it be allowed to fight at least two N.P. held seats on the Witwatersrand.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, in the event of the Senate's dissolution soon after the election, the negotiators were instructed to request a Transvaal Senate seat in addition to the seats the

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38. Rand Daily Mail, 29 November 1952, p.1.

39. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.345, Central Executive Committee, 13 October 1952.

40. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the National Executive Council, 3 November 1952.

41. Ibid., Adjourned National Executive Council Meeting, 13 November 1952.

42. Ibid.

Party already held in that House.<sup>43</sup>

The U.P., however, remained inflexible. Although it agreed, at a subsequent meeting with L.P. representatives, to fight the Edenvale seat, which it stood a better chance of winning than did the L.P., it refused to exchange it for a safe seat. It offered instead the N.P. held constituency of Germiston City. Unless the L.P. acceded to its terms, the U.P. announced, it would nominate candidates to contest L.P. held seats.<sup>44</sup> As it had done before, the tactic worked. Faced with extinction, a special conference of the L.P. accepted, on 30 November, the U.P. offer of the status quo in the Senate<sup>45</sup> and, apart from the exchange of Edenvale for Germiston City, in the House of Assembly.<sup>46</sup>

With the Delimitation Commission having presented its draft plan for all four provinces on 29 November and with an electoral agreement with the L.P. in place, the U.P. set about quantifying the challenge that faced it in the approaching election. By the end of January it had arrived at its assessment:<sup>47</sup>

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- 43. Ibid.
  - 44. Die Transvaler, 20 November 1952, p.3.
  - 45. Cape Argus, 1 December 1952, p.9.
  - 46. R. Feldman Papers, S.A.L.P. Records, Forty-Second Annual Conference, 10-11 January 1953.
  - 47. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Classification of Constituencies, 31 January 1953.



	<u>Safe</u> <u>U.P.-L.P.</u>	<u>Marginal</u>	<u>Marginal</u> <u>Minus</u>	<u>Safe</u> <u>N.P.</u>
Cape	23	8	6	17
Transvaal				
- Urban	21	14	8	4
- Rural	0	4	5	12
Orange Free State	0	0	0	13
Natal	13	1	1	0
South-West Africa	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
	57	29	21	49

With only 57 safe seats and the support of the 3 Natives' Representatives on which to count, the opposition parties needed to win at least 22 of the marginal seats in order to secure a bare majority in the next Parliament. Neither the effects of the new delimitation, nor the trend in by-election results since May 1948, offered any prospect that such a degree of success could be achieved.

CHAPTER 22NATAL, OCTOBER 1952 - JANUARY 1953

By October 1952 relations between the Torch Commando and the U.P. on the Cape Peninsula and on the Witwatersrand, were, as de Villiers Graaff was later to say, "of the happiest".<sup>1</sup> In Natal, however, Ford and Chutter were exerting their best efforts in an attempt to influence opposition nomination contests in favour of candidates who supported the "Natal Stand". Were they to succeed in doing so, they hoped that those candidates who supported such a view would form the kernel of the Natal Party which they both, though they officially denied it, had in mind.<sup>2</sup>

Their modus operandi was to press the role of the Natal United Democratic Front, in which organisation they felt, with some justification, they could count on the support of the Defenders of the Constitution and the L.P., in the nomination of parliamentary candidates. This "Group Scheme" would, according to Chutter, ensure that the

U.P. candidates who are selected will have to be in themselves pretty Natal-minded to stand any chance of success. It will heighten Natal consciousness among all Natal Members of Parliament returned to parliament and might lead to the building of a strong bastion in the event of a national crisis.

Should the U.P. turn it down flat, then

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1. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Head Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1948-1963, No.114, Central Head Committee, 18 November 1952.
  2. Rumours were prevalent in Natal "to the effect that prominent Torch leaders have been holding secret meetings and exchanging secret memoranda in connection with the formation of a new party." L. Kane Berman Papers, Explanations are Required by the Action Committee..., 12 November 1952.

the United Front Group will put up candidates in all safe seats to fight the United Party.<sup>3</sup>

A Natal Torch Commando conference on 25 October,<sup>4</sup> especially called to discuss the strategy, brought to a head the simmering differences between those who supported co-operation with the U.P. on its terms and those who subscribed to the "Natal Option". The result was the strengthening of the position of both Ford and Chutter. Two of the leading U.P. supporters on the Natal Coastal Action Committee resigned on the eve of the meeting.<sup>5</sup> They were followed soon afterwards by five more, including Ford's deputy, Roy Fenhalls.<sup>6</sup> In a subsequent joint statement, the seven said that they had resigned over the issues of lack of consultation and the subordination of national to Natal regional issues.<sup>7</sup>

It is not difficult to see where their objections lay. In order to assist the financing of a new party, the conference secretly decided, "until all other regions had met targets...", not to remit any further funds to the National Executive.<sup>8</sup> It then went on to approve a document, which

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3. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.90.
  4. The proceedings in the Appellate Division in the matter of the Appeal against the invalidation of the High Court of Parliament Act opened on 27 October 1952.
  5. B. Reid: The Federal Party, 1953-1962: An English-Speaking Reaction to Afrikaner Nationalism, p.23. The two members who resigned were Professor H. Pollack and K. McIntyre. Ibid.
  6. Ibid., p.24. Fenhalls maintained that the Ford "faction" had the support of less than half of the Natal Torch Commando. Ford maintained that the majority supported the stand adopted by Chutter and himself. Ibid., p.23.
  7. Die Transvaler, 8 November 1952, p.1.
  8. L. Kane Berman Papers, Explanations are required by the Action Committee..., 12 November 1952.

was to be submitted to both the U.P. and L.P. in Natal, which claimed to set out "most of the points which are causing grave concern...specific answers thereto will do much towards the creation of enthusiastic support for the opposition parties..."<sup>9</sup>

In resumé, the document, signed by Ford in his capacity as a National Vice-Chairman of the Torch Commando, requested both the U.P. and L.P. to co-operate in the establishment, in each constituency, of Joint Election Committees under the control of the Natal Council of the United Democratic Front.<sup>10</sup> The document also requested that each of the election candidates thus chosen be required to sign a pledge in which they undertook to oppose a coalition between the U.P. and N.P., a republic,<sup>11</sup> and any attempt illegally to amend the entrenched clauses in the Constitution. If their opposition to any of these possible developments proved to be unsuccessful, they were "immediately to seek and carry out the instructions of their respective constituencies whether or not the same shall result in unilateral action being taken by Natal."<sup>12</sup>

Aware of the favourable effect on their cause of an Appeal

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9. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.I, Natal War Veterans' Torch Commando Resolution, 25 October 1952.
  10. It had been decided at a 17 September 1952 meeting of the United Democratic Front that "candidates' election committees would control the running of their own elections." Ibid., D.E. Mitchell to E.G. Ford, 11 November 1952.
  11. U.P. principles permitted individual members to espouse republicanism. Programme of Principles and Constitution of the United Party, April 1951, Clause 2(d), p.2.
  12. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.I, Natal War Veterans' Torch Commando Resolution, 25 October 1952.

Court decision in favour of the Government, or of a Government decision to ignore the Appeal Court's ruling in the event of its being unfavourable, the document went on to request the U.P. and L.P. to provide an assurance that nominations would not be made until fourteen days after the release of the Appeal Court's decision. The final request was for both parties to submit to the Natal Torch Commando their policies in regard to "non-Europeans", Soil and Water Conservation and Housing.<sup>13</sup> Both parties were asked to respond to the document before a scheduled meeting on 29 November of the Natal Torch Commando.

Natal L.P. members at the constituency level, ignoring the requests contained in the document, nominated their candidates and forwarded the names to the Party's National Executive for endorsement.<sup>14</sup> But Ardé and some members of his Executive had, since the Natal Conference, become increasingly sympathetic to Ford's views. Risking a split in the Party in Natal,<sup>15</sup> Ardé on 26 November acceded to the Torch Commando requests,<sup>16</sup> noting: "Whilst it is

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13. Ibid. On 10 September Ford, at a Torch Commando meeting, had demanded that the U.P. should state "clearly and honestly its own policy in return for the support of the Torch Commando." He was particularly critical of Strauss's recent statement that "non-European policy" was to be lifted out of the "political arena". This, Ford considered, was "designed mainly as a vote catcher." The Star, 11 September 1952. His views on the latter issue were in stark contrast to those agreed to at the 18 September meeting between Mitchell, Caney and Ellis. Vide infra, Chapter 20.
14. L. Kane Berman Papers, R. Ardé to E.G. Ford, 26 November 1952.
15. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 7, File 4, N.J. Moir to the Secretary, S.A.L.P., 6 January 1953.
16. The vacancy caused by the January 1953 resignation of Mrs E.A. Benson from the L.P. saw Ardé support the candidacy of the prominent Natal Torch Commando member Roger Brickhill. Because of strong opposition from within the Party's constituency organisation,

understandably not the usual practise of my Committee to report or answer to other organisations...it is realised that we are living in abnormal political times and that yours is a people's organisation..."<sup>17</sup>

The Natal Executive of the U.P., at a meeting on 28 October, had responded less favourably to Ford's initiative. Referring to the Torch Commando document, the minutes of the meeting noted that

the matters raised were of a national character and should be dealt with on a national level, especially in view of the fact that the letter was signed by Mr Ford in his capacity as National vice-Chairman. The view was also expressed by a number of members that every effort should be made to avoid any breach.<sup>18</sup>

The initial plan having failed, a breach which might force the U.P. in the province to reassess its position in his favour, was just what Ford hoped to achieve. On 4 November, at Margate, in the heart of Mitchell's constituency, he delivered a stinging attack on party politicians. The obvious target was Mitchell himself. Defining the basic principles of how to become a successful politician, Ford said:

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Brickhill was forced to withdraw his candidacy. Ibid. Ardé himself later stood against the other nominee in the constituency, Len Whiteley, but was defeated in an open ballot. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.346.

17. L. Kane Berman Papers, R. Ardé to E.G. Ford, 26 November 1952.
18. U.P. Papers, Natal Provincial Head Office, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes 1948-1967, No.127, Minutes of the Provincial Executive Committee Meeting, 28 October 1952. The meeting went on to set nomination dates regardless of the Torch Commando requests. Ibid.

The primary rule is self first, party second and country third. Address the public at length; say nothing for fear a positive statement might one day embarrass you. Answer no questions in a direct manner, but answer under, over and around it.<sup>19</sup>

Mitchell refused to rise to the bait. In a letter to Strauss, he wrote:

Most determined efforts are being made to embroil the United Party in Natal in a controversy with the Natal Torch Commando. Such a procedure would doubtless help to heal the breach in the ranks of the Natal Torch...I am entirely convinced that the proper course for us to pursue is to ask National Torch whether they stand behind the Resolution passed by the Natal Torch...<sup>20</sup>

Strauss must have agreed for, with both the Natal Mercury and the Natal Witness condemning any attempt to establish a splinter party,<sup>21</sup> Kane Berman, on behalf of the National Action Committee, wrote to Ford informing him that it had been "most inadvisable" of him to have signed the resolution in his capacity as National vice-Chairman and that he had "no right to ask for the assurances referred to..."<sup>22</sup> Summoned to appear before the National Action Committee,<sup>23</sup> Ford and Chutter, after holding separate meetings of the Coastal and Inland Executives, sent all except £50 of the Natal Coastal Region funds to the National Action

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19. L. Kane Berman Papers, Ford Speech at Margate, n.d.  
 20. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.I, D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 11 November 1952.  
 21. Ibid., 12 November 1952.  
 22. Ibid., L. Kane Berman to G. Ford, 12 November 1952.  
 23. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Minutes of a Meeting of the Action Committee, War Veterans' Torch Commando, 11 November 1952.

Committee.<sup>24</sup> The transfer of the £7 000,<sup>25</sup> which was to be administered by the Action Committee on behalf of the Coastal Region, was an attempt by the two to circumvent any accusation that they wished to start a new party.<sup>26</sup>

If the two men had hoped to use a constitutional crisis to seize the initiative at their 16 November meeting with the National Action Committee, the opportunity was denied them. On 13 November the Appeal Court, in a unanimous decision, held the High Court of Parliament Act to be invalid. On 14 November the Government tacitly accepted defeat on the issue when Malan announced that he would appeal instead to the electorate to assert the sovereignty of Parliament.<sup>27</sup>

The National Action Committee, at the meeting, failed however to convince either Ford or Chutter to set aside, at least until after the General Election, the "Natal Option". Prompted by the urgency of imposing some degree of unity on the opposition Front in Natal, A.G. Malan, Kane Berman and Parrott agreed to attend a special joint conference of the Coastal and Inland Regions of the Natal Torch Commando on 29 November.<sup>28</sup>

A constitutional crisis, the raison d'être of the "Natal Stand", having been denied him, Ford, in a fit of personal

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24. L. Kane Berman Papers,, Explanations are Required by the Action Committee..., 12 November 1952.
25. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Minutes of a Meeting of the Action Committee, War Veterans' Torch Commando, 26 January 1953.
26. Ibid., 11 November 1952.
27. D. Scher, op. cit., p.361. On 12 February Malan announced that the General Election would be held on 15 April. B. Reid, op. cit., p.37.
28. L. Kane Berman Papers, To all Branch Chairmen, J.B. Chutter, 18 November 1952.



frustration which had apparently been brought to a head by Strauss's opening speech on 18 November at the U.P. Union Congress in Bloemfontein,<sup>29</sup> wrote to Kane Berman on the following day tacitly conceding the defeat of his and Chutter's attempts to achieve the aims of the "Natal Stand" through the United Democratic Front. Referring to the forthcoming 29 November meeting, Ford wrote:

If you succeed in bringing the delegates round to your way of thinking your trip will have been worthwhile. Under such circumstances my resignation<sup>30</sup> will

29. In his opening speech Strauss renewed his appeal to take "this bristling non-European problem out of the political arena." He went on to endorse a policy of complete social separation, the maintenance of the Hertzog legislation of 1936 and the extension of local self-government. The question of political rights for Indian South Africans was, he said, hypothetical because the U.P. had adopted a policy of negotiated repatriation. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, J.G.N. Strauss 1952, Summary of Speech to be delivered by the Leader of the U.P. at the Opening of the Eighth Union Congress of the U.P., 18 November 1952. During the course of 1952 the U.P. had introduced what it termed its White Policy. This was merely a repackaging of Smuts's policy of increasing the number of whites "so that a sense of security on their part will ease the strained relations between black and white." In order to attempt to mollify the fears of the white Afrikaans-speaking electorate the U.P. undertook to limit the number of immigrants to 50 000 per annum. Ibid., J.D. Opperman Papers, Pamphlets, The White Policy of the United Party, n.d. In response to Strauss's speech at the Congress, Ford wrote: "As I read it Strauss's statement mocks and insults the intelligence of civilised people and at best is a weak crib of the Nationalist's pre-1948 policy, including the significant reference to the repatriation of Indians. L. Kane Berman Papers,, E.G. Ford to L. Kane Berman, 19 November 1952.
30. Ford's resignation as Chairman of the Natal Coastal Region, and as a National vice-Chairman of the Torch Commando, was to take effect from 31 December 1952. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Regional Memorandum No.61, 15 January 1953. He resigned from the Torch Commando

cause no heartburn as I will then be clearly out of step both with national and provincial attitudes. I think you will probably succeed because the white-anting has been very thorough...<sup>31</sup>

Recognising that Ford and Chutter had only one course left open to them, Mitchell, at the U.P. Union Congress in Bloemfontein and on the same day that Ford tendered his resignation to Kane Berman, announced the de facto establishment in Natal of the "Federal Party, which had, as its main plank, the break-up of the Union."<sup>32</sup> This party, he said, would get its support from the "bits and pieces and the oddments" in Natal.<sup>33</sup>

Mitchell's prescience was reflected in the secret agreement which was reached at the 29 November Natal Torch Commando meeting.<sup>34</sup> The document encompassing the agreement opened with a number of statements upon which the opposing elements were already agreed. Chief among these, no doubt precipitated not only by events in Natal but also by the Torch Commando's activities during the Wakkerstroom by-election, was the observation that the organisation had become "an embarrassment to the opposition parties...which state of affairs must not in the national interest be allowed to continue."<sup>35</sup> The document then went on to

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- in May 1953. Die Transvaler, 22 May 1953, p.5.
31. L. Kane Berman Papers, E.G. Ford to L. Kane Berman, 19 November 1952.
32. Cape Argus, 19 November 1952, p.1.
33. Ibid.
34. This account of the 29 November meeting, the events surrounding it, and the agreement arrived at as a result of it, differs markedly from that presented by B. Reid, op. cit., pp.25-30. Reid, for instance, asserts that the agreement, the so-called "Green Horror" (it was printed on green paper) was an independent Ford initiative. Ibid., p.25.
35. L. Kane Berman Papers, Torch Commando Resolutions, n.d.

categorise the segments into which the Natal Torch Commando had become divided. The first was made up of those who staunchly supported either the U.P. or L.P. The second, those who were at least prepared to assist those parties until the General Election. The third segment was defined as being made up of those "who are anti-Nationalist but who cannot accept the policies or personnel of the opposition parties."<sup>36</sup> Because, the document noted, the differences between those in the first and third categories had proved irreconcilable, it was decided, firstly, that the Torch Commando in Natal would assume a state of quiescence.<sup>37</sup> This would involve the withholding of all political statements, the withdrawal of the Torch Commando from the Natal Council of the United Democratic Front and the merging of the two regional executives which would thenceforth function on a skeleton basis only.<sup>38</sup> Secondly, it was decided that members of the first category would integrate themselves completely into either the U.P. or L.P., while members of the second category would make themselves available for co-option by those two parties. To this end, members of the second category were to establish a provincial liaison committee. Members of the third category, it was decided, would be represented by a provincial committee and would be free

to interest themselves in the establishment of a group or party formed for the purpose of contesting the next

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36. Ibid.

37. Earlier in November ex-Chief-Justice de Wet, Patron of the Torch Commando, had proposed that "from now until the General Election we Torchmen should act as members of the United Front...In other words that no further demonstrations or public meetings be organised by Torch but that we do our job efficiently as members of the United Front." Ibid., J. Mitchell-Baker to R. Parrott, 25 November 1952.

38. Ibid., Torch Commando Resolutions, n.d.

Natal Provincial Council Election and/or any General Election or by-election following the General Election due to be held in April 1953...<sup>39</sup>

Their activities were, however, to be "undertaken in a manner designed to avoid embarrassment or prejudice to the opposition parties prior to the conclusion of the next General Election."<sup>40</sup>

The document concluded with an agreement that the proposed liaison committee and provincial committee would each be permitted one full-time organiser, and that each would be entitled to draw upon the pooled funds of the Natal Torch Commando for their financial requirements.<sup>41</sup> It was primarily for this reason that the £7 000 earlier submitted by Ford to the National Action Committee was, towards the end of January, returned.<sup>42</sup>

In effect, the document dissolved the Natal Torch Commando. Those who wished actively to assist either the U.P. or L.P. became fully integrated into the respective party organisations. The liaison committee was never established.<sup>43</sup> Ford and Chutter, constituting an informal provincial committee, became the spokesmen for the rump which, in order to maintain a façade of unity, misleadingly retained the name Torch Commando. All that remained was for this rump to arrive at a modus vivendi with the U.P.<sup>44</sup> To this end, the conference had resolved that the Natal and

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39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Meeting of the Action Committee, 26 January 1953.

43. Interview: V. Raw. Chutter continued to speak on behalf of the Inland Region of the Torch Commando.

44. The U.P. had been placed in almost immediate possession of the document. Interview: V. Raw.

National Executives of the Torch Commando would approach the National Executive of the U.P. to "seek to obtain (a) settlement between the Torch Commando and United Party until the election including the recognition of Natal's stand in the United Party Programme..."<sup>45</sup>

In the intervening period between the 29 November Conference and the meeting with the U.P. Executive which had been arranged for 19 December, Ford and Chutter sailed close to breaking both the letter and spirit of the agreement that had recently been arrived at.

At a meeting on 5 December of the Natal Torch Commando, Ford was reported to have said:

As far as the future picture was concerned...there was only one aim in view and that was to get rid of the Nationalist Government. After the election, however, people would be free once more to express their views....Then will be the time to put our house in order in Natal through the Provincial Council elections and subsequently in the Senate so that the voice of Natal can be heard.<sup>46</sup>

Referring to this statement in a letter to Strauss, Mitchell wrote: "Why he publicised the matter seems inexplicable. I wish some of these fellows would keep their mouths shut."<sup>47</sup>

On 8 December Ford and Chutter went on to release a "Message

45. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Notes on a Meeting held on 19 December 1952. On 19 November the U.P. Union Congress had unanimously adopted a resolution to oppose "any movement which has as its ultimate object separation from the Union of any province or part thereof." Ibid.

46. Natal Mercury, 6 December 1952.

47. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.2, D. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 9 December 1952.

to Aspirant Candidates of all Political Parties in Natal." Point 3 of the document reminded these candidates "that the well-being and destiny of the Province must never be sacrificed to secure party gain or the advantage of interests extraneous to the Province."<sup>48</sup>

The meeting between the U.P. Executive and the Natal and National Torch Commando Executives on 19 December initially saw little movement away from previously stated positions. Strauss summed up the U.P. view when he said that "to publicise the Natal Stand regarding a possible republic...would be interpreted as defeatism."<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless the urgency of arriving at some form of accommodation prevailed and both sides exhibited a degree of flexibility when they took up a suggestion by Ford that "the War Veterans in Natal would like Mr Mitchell to make the strongest possible statement without losing support elsewhere."<sup>50</sup> To this end, the meeting decided that Mitchell and Steenkamp would address a Congress of the Natal Torch Commando on 17 January.<sup>51</sup>

A few days prior to the January meeting, A.T. Adams, who had been sent by Strauss to assess the political situation in Natal, presented his report. Referring to the Torch Commando, he wrote:

The resignation of Ford has left the

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48. L. Kane Berman Papers, Message to Aspirant Candidates of all Political Parties in Natal, 29 November 1952. Ford and Chutter attempted, unsuccessfully, to have the message issued as a resolution of the 29 November Conference. Ibid. The message appeared in the Natal Mercury of 8 December 1952.
49. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Notes on Meeting held on 19 December 1952.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.

Torch Commando on the coast of Natal quite leaderless and, despite the fact that the Torch Executive is due to elect a new Chairman on Saturday the 17 February, nobody...has made any attempt to find a new Chairman....The Torch office at Durban, which at one time was one of the busiest in the country, is completely dead....<sup>52</sup>

Referring to the U.P., he wrote:

The apathy, dissatisfaction and frustration prevailing in Durban is worse than I have ever known it....Sullivan appears to be one of the few M.P.s who enjoys no active unpopularity but even for him there is no real enthusiasm. Of the numerous people who mentioned the name of Mr Mitchell, only one had a kind word.<sup>53</sup>

It was in this unpropitious political atmosphere that Mitchell addressed the 17 January conference of the Natal Torch Commando in Pietermaritzburg. Although he repeated his well-worn argument why the U.P., as a national organisation, could not support Natal separatism, both sides again expressed a willingness to compose their differences "in the face of the national need."<sup>54</sup> With Heaton Nicholls, who had recently returned from overseas, acting as arbitrator,<sup>55</sup> the Torch Commando, on the one hand,

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52. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, Memorandum on Visit to Natal by A.T. Adams, 15 January 1953.

53. Ibid.

54. The Star, 5 February 1953, p.3.

55. Heaton Nicholls was however hardly an "Honest Broker". Soon after the meeting he joined the Provincial Committee of the Natal Torch Commando. B. Reid, op. cit., p.35. In mid-January, without providing details, A.T. Adams had warned Strauss: "Fannin, who is very close to Nicholls, is quite convinced that had it not been for pressure from Ellis, Nicholls would have taken action some time ago." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, Memorandum on Visit to Natal by A.T. Adams, 15 January 1953.

reaffirmed the secret resolution expressing solidarity with the Natal Stand adopted at the Torch Commando National Congress in July 1952,<sup>56</sup> and also reiterated its commitment to the Natal Provincial Council's 2 June 1952 resolution calling for a new National Convention.<sup>57</sup> On the other, in the set of resolutions which was subsequently made public, it undertook to support "the nominated candidates of the United Party and the Labour Party...in Natal as its own and pledged its active co-operation in securing their election."<sup>58</sup> This undertaking was however made contingent upon each candidate agreeing, "publicly and unequivocally", to support the Covenant sworn at the mass rally on 6 June 1952.<sup>59</sup> Rounding off this set of resolutions, the Natal Torch Commando, in familiar fashion, stated that it reserved "its right to take separate action...in defence of Natal's undoubted and unchallenged constitutional rights..."<sup>60</sup>

In tandem with the publication of these latter resolutions, Mitchell issued a statement reflecting the U.P. response. He noted, he said, with gratitude "this evidence of the unity of our forces and I welcome this opportunity to re-affirm, on behalf of all United Party candidates in Natal, their previous declaration made in the vow taken at Durban on 6 June 1952..."<sup>61</sup>

Commenting on this elaborate charade, a leader in the Natal

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56. Vide Infra, Chapter 20.

57. Ibid.

58. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.2, Torch (Natal) Resolution, 17 January 1953.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., Statement by D.E. Mitchell, 17 January 1953. The L.P. also acknowledged the Torch Commando resolutions in an identical statement. B. Reid, op. cit., p.34.



Witness observed:

The fact is that the Durban resolution...does not specifically refer to unilateral action by Natal. It might be interpreted in more than one way, and everyone will choose his own interpretation...The main difference between the Torch Commando and the United Party remains unresolved...<sup>62</sup>

The players however acted their parts well. Chutter, in a public notice issued on 25 January, wrote: "Until the election we put our full weight behind the United Democratic Front candidates who accept the 'Maritzburg Resolution..."<sup>63</sup> Privately though, on 30 January, both Ford and Chutter tried to persuade Mitchell to accept a declaration that was less open to such a wide degree of interpretation.<sup>64</sup> But failure to do so did not prevent Chutter, at a Torch Commando rally on 5 February, from stretching the truth by saying: "Our partners on the United Front have accepted the Natal Stand, some with reservations, but it has closed the split in our ranks and Natal stands united as never before."<sup>65</sup>

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62. Natal Witness, 19 January 1953.

63. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, Memorandum, War Veterans' Torch Commando, Natal Inland Region, 25 January 1953.

64. Natal Mercury, 8 June 1954, D.E. Mitchell to the Editor.

65. The Star, 5 February 1953, p.3.

PART VIIPRINCIPLE VERSUS EXPEDIENCYCHAPTER 23THE DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN: LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE  
REACTION, JUNE 1952 - FEBRUARY 1953

The Defiance Campaign, which had begun on 26 June 1952 and reached a climax in August, resulted in three points of contention developing between the Government and its Parliamentary opposition: the apportionment of blame, consultation as against repression and the holding of a judicial inquiry into the riots.<sup>1</sup> The Campaign also served to reveal differences of approach within the opposition itself.

In September 1952 the National Executive Council of the L.P. issued a statement sympathising with the aims of the Campaign which, it considered, was "directed at the unjust laws against the non-Europeans and not against the European population of South Africa."<sup>2</sup> In October it issued another statement which called upon the Government immediately to consult with "the representatives of the non-European people to examine their grievances arising from the oppressive laws."<sup>3</sup>

In similar vein, the National Executive of the Torch

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1. L. Kuper, Passive Resistance in South Africa, p.164.
  2. S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 21, File 3, Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the National Executive Council, 18 September 1952.
  3. R. Feldman Papers, S.A.L.P. Records, 42 Annual Conference, S.A.L.P., 10-11 January 1953.

Commando had, early in September, adopted a resolution calling on the Government "to cease its suicidal policy of fanning the flame of race hatred and to face the problem fairly and squarely by meeting the non-European leaders in conference."<sup>4</sup>

Expressing the U.P. view, Strauss, at a public meeting on 22 August, adopted a legalistic and politically safe line when he said: "Whatever the passive resisters think of the merits or demerits of the 'discriminating' legislation, the laws they are defying were passed by Parliament in a constitutional manner and the defiance is illegal and unconstitutional."<sup>5</sup> It cannot be said, in mitigation of Strauss's condemnation of the Campaign, that it arose only out of electoral necessity, for his view was consistent with the U.P.'s paternalistic policy.<sup>6</sup>

But, despite the A.N.C.'s refusal to recognise them as substantive,<sup>7</sup> there were qualitative differences between the attitudes of the N.P. and the U.P. towards the Campaign. Accusing the Government of having destroyed all avenues of communication, Strauss, on 10 November, issued an appeal to the Government to appoint a judicial commission to investigate the causes of the riots or, failing that, to call a special session of Parliament to debate the issue. Acutely conscious of the "curious dynamic of the South African situation"<sup>8</sup> that the greater the insecurity caused

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4. The Star, 8 September 1952, p.1.

5. Challenge, 8 November 1952, p.4.

6. L. Kuper, op. cit., p.156.

7. On 12 October the A.N.C. in the Transvaal resolved, at its annual conference, that the Defiance Campaign would not be called off if the U.P. won the next General Election "unless the Party showed a more conciliatory spirit in office than it has done in opposition." The Star, 13 October 1952, p.3.

8. L. Kuper, op. cit., p.170.

by its own policies, the more assured the Government's position became, Strauss concluded his appeal with his oft repeated plea "that the whole question of the non-European problem should be taken out of the embittered atmosphere of party politics...in order to find a solution acceptable to all sane South Africans."<sup>9</sup>

Aware, for his part, of the embarrassing conclusions an impartial commission might arrive at and of the political advantage to be derived from a firm response to the Defiance Campaign, Malan later replied that he would only decide upon whether or not to hold an inquiry after the perpetrators of the violence committed during the Campaign had been brought before the Courts.<sup>10</sup> Dönges provided respectability to this point of view by referring to the British Colonial Secretary's refusal to hold an inquiry into the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya until the ringleaders had been tried and punished.<sup>11</sup> Pursuing the same theme, Swart declared on 28 November that legislation would be introduced during the next session of Parliament to allow the Government to suspend civil liberties as was being done in Kenya at that

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9. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/9/1, Vol.4, J.G.N. Strauss's Statement to the Press on Riots, 10 November 1952. Strauss pursued this theme in his opening address to the 18 November U.P. Union Congress. He then went on to charge the Government "with part responsibility for having provoked the recent outbursts of violence...." U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, J.G.N. Strauss 1952, Summary of Speech to be delivered...at the Opening of the Eighth Union Congress of the U.P., 18 November 1952.
  10. L. Kuper, op. cit., p.177. During October and November 1952 riots in the Eastern Cape, which coincided with the Defiance Campaign, claimed the lives of twenty-six Africans and six whites. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.87.
  11. L. Kuper, op. cit., p.177.

time.<sup>12</sup>

But, by the time the new Parliamentary session had, in January 1953, begun, the Defiance Campaign had already passed its peak, the first large-scale convictions of the Campaign's leaders having taken place the previous month.<sup>13</sup> Despite the fact that the crisis was over, and after this was admitted by the Governor-General during his Speech from the Throne when he asserted that the Government had taken "the necessary steps to deal with this lawlessness, and the Resistance Campaign is at present under control",<sup>14</sup> the announcement was made that the Government would introduce a Bill "to make provision for the safety of the public and the maintenance of public order in the Union in case of emergency."<sup>15</sup>

The obviously controversial contents of the Bill were kept a closely guarded secret. This was no doubt done so as to limit the time available to the opposition to attempt to cobble together a united approach. The Government's strategy had much to be said for it. If the U.P. were to approve the measure, the Government, in view of the differences which had already become apparent, could legitimately expect further disruption within opposition ranks. If the U.P. opposed the measure then the Government could "rush to the country with assertions that the Opposition is the enemy of law and order."<sup>16</sup>

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12. Ibid., p.156.

13. Ibid., p.193.

14. The Star, 24 January 1953, p.6.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 12 January 1953, p.1. During the No-Confidence debate the U.P. not only emphasised the Government's role in precipitating the Defiance Campaign, but also stressed "'white' issues such as the unity of the white races...economic development and the cost of living, all issues over which it was

The first public split within the United Democratic Front over the Bill occurred on 27 January when Christie,<sup>17</sup> supported by the Natives' Representatives, opposed the request for leave to introduce it.<sup>18</sup> Strauss, more cautious, responded that his "Party could not act on mere suspicion. Until the Bill was published it would be premature to oppose it."<sup>19</sup>

But, while the details of the Public Safety Bill,<sup>20</sup> which had been published on 28 January, were being "carefully studied"<sup>21</sup> by the U.P., Swart, "electioneering with a vengeance",<sup>22</sup> suddenly introduced the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.<sup>23</sup> The Rand Daily Mail labelled the new Bill "so

- hoped a majority of the electorate would be in agreement." J. Robertson, op. cit., p.95.
17. Christie "deplored the Government's attempt to take on more arbitrary and tyrannical powers and deprecated the panic and hysteria that these measures created." Rand Daily Mail, 27 January 1953, p.1. A L.P. conference, on 11 January, had unanimously passed a resolution calling for a National Convention to discuss "race policy". Another unanimously supported resolution called for the repeal of the Suppression of Communism Act. Ibid., 12 January 1953, p.9.
  18. This strategy had been adopted by the opposition on two occasions since 1948: on the introduction of the Coloured Franchise Bill and the High Court of Parliament Bill.
  19. Rand Daily Mail, 27 January 1953, p.1.
  20. The Bill sought to empower the Government to declare a state of emergency in the face of civil disobedience. Clause 2(1) of the Bill proposed that whenever existing laws seemed to the Government insufficient to 'maintain order', it should be empowered, during a declared emergency, to alter, amend or supplement them as it saw fit. Cape Argus, 9 February 1953, p.8.
  21. Rand Daily Mail, 28 January 1953, p.9.
  22. The Star, 3 February 1953, p.8.
  23. The Bill proposed to circumscribe, through the imposition of extremely harsh penalties, the right to campaign against the country's laws. The Bill

authoritarian and so shocking in its implications, that there is no doubt that it will be flatly opposed."<sup>24</sup> While the L.P. and Torch Commando, in expressing their opposition to both measures, did not prove the Rand Daily Mail wrong, the U.P., equivocating, held meetings stretching over three days in order to decide its response to the Bills.<sup>25</sup> At the conclusion of these meetings, without revealing what decisions had been taken, it hurriedly summoned a 7 February meeting of its United Democratic Front partners.<sup>26</sup>

This meeting, the Rand Daily Mail unjustifiably noted, "ended on a note of complete harmony and understanding among the three groups. The United Front remains intact and the election will be fought with co-ordination and re-doubled vigour."<sup>27</sup> While the Front of necessity remained intact, the only real concession made at the meeting, in the face of the U.P. disclosure that it would support the principle of both of the Bills,<sup>28</sup> was the Torch Commando's acceptance of the principle of the Public Safety Bill. Before accepting the Bill itself, however, it had demanded the incorporation of safeguards into it. A Torch Commando resolution, adopted during the course of the meeting, noted:

We are opposed to giving despotic powers to any government...unless appropriate safeguards are incorporated into the

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created a new crime, that of inciting others to defy the law.

24. Rand Daily Mail, 4 February 1953, p.1.

25. Ibid., 5 February 1953, p.1.

26. The meeting was attended by "about fifty prominent Torch Commando Executives" led by A.G. Malan and Kane Berman, and U.P. and L.P. delegations led by Strauss and Christie respectively. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 9 February 1953, p.1.

28. Quite apart from other considerations the U.P. had been urged to support the legislation by its supporters in the Eastern Cape where much of the rioting had occurred. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.93.

measure of a nature similar to those in the English Emergency Powers Act of 1920 on which this Bill is partially based...<sup>29</sup>

The Torch Commando and the L.P.<sup>30</sup> found it impossible to make any concessions in regard to the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The U.P., for its part, had decided, as it had in regard to the Public Safety Bill, not to oppose the Bill on the Second Reading but to "demand amendments" in the Committee Stage.<sup>31</sup> A few days after the United Democratic Front meeting, the U.P., after explaining that it intended proposing the amendments because the "mesh created by the Bill may be so fine as to catch persons other than resisters,"<sup>32</sup> made public the reasons why it supported the principle of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. "It has to be borne in mind", the statement noted,

that Africans...are not in general possessed of the placidity and patience characteristic of Oriental races...and that there is, therefore, a very real danger of an unexpected transition from passive resistance to violent resistance taking place at any moment...when such a transition does occur Africans are apt to revert to savagery and give rein to sheer blood lust....In these circumstances it is difficult to see on what possible logical ground the principle of the Bill could be

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29. Rand Daily Mail, 9 February 1953, p.1. On 19 February Swart warned that the Government was prepared, if necessary, to use the Public Safety Act against the Torch Commando. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.94.
30. Mrs E.A. Benson, L.P., M.P. (Durban, Umbilo) had resigned from the Party on 9 January intending to fight the seat as an "Independent Defender of the Constitution." Rand Daily Mail, 10 January 1953, p.7. She voted with the U.P. and N.P. in support of the Bills. Cape Argus, 13 February 1953, p.7.
31. The Star, 11 February 1953, p.1.
32. Ibid., 12 February 1953, p.11.



opposed.<sup>33</sup>

The L.P. was unimpressed and expressed itself "gravely perturbed at its partner's sacrifice to party expediency of the civil rights of the people."<sup>34</sup> Kane Berman, in a letter to Strauss written on behalf of the Torch Commando National Executive, expressed similar sentiments. He wrote that he wanted to place

on record our fervid opposition to the principles of the two new Swart Bills. The resolution taken in respect of the Public Safety Bill was taken in an effort to meet a situation created by the United Party's acceptance of the principle of this Bill...We believe...you have surrendered the initiative and have sacrificed the substance for the shadow....While we regret that it is necessary to write to you in this strain we nevertheless assure you of our unqualified support in the coming struggle.<sup>35</sup>

However, on the day after writing the latter, Kane Berman, acting on his own initiative, committed the Torch Commando to independent action. He announced, on the same day as the A.N.C. and S.A.I.C. were holding countrywide protest meetings,<sup>36</sup> that mass Torch Commando protests would be organised if the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was enacted and if the Government rejected safeguard amendments to the Public Safety Bill.<sup>37</sup> Justifying his call, he referred to a

33. Ibid.

34. R. Feldman Papers, S.A.L.P. Records, Relations with the U.P., Conference Declaration, 29 November 1953.

35. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2, Vol.2, L. Kane Berman to J.G.N. Strauss, 7 February 1953.

36. Rand Daily Mail, 5 February 1953, p.1.

37. Ibid., 9 February 1953, p.1. Torch Commando Regional Chairmen, in a 10 February circular, were canvassed on the advisability of conducting demonstrations against the Bills. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Internal

speech he claimed A.G. Malan had made at the 7 February meeting in which he had purportedly agreed to the holding of such protest meetings.<sup>38</sup> Kane Berman also said that it

must be appreciated that unless the Torch Commando takes the lead and the initiative in raising public feeling against these Bills, the lead will be taken by other less responsible organisations, both European and non-European, with consequent harm to the United Democratic Front and the election prospects.<sup>39</sup>

A.G. Malan took immediate steps to repudiate Kane Berman's initiative. In a letter to Strauss he claimed that Kane Berman had been "quite incorrect" to assert that he had agreed to the holding of demonstrations.<sup>40</sup> He continued:

In my view public demonstrations, if considered desirable, should be joint Democratic Front efforts or not be held at all, and should only be called if it is quite clear that public opinion is behind them....I shall do my best to ensure that we consult regularly between now and the election.<sup>41</sup>

In reply Strauss wrote:

I fully endorse the line that you are taking with regard to the unguarded utterances of your Chairman....Apart from the cogent reasons for your attitude, I feel very strongly that the time for protests against steps taken by the Government is past.<sup>42</sup>

Circular, 10 February 1953. The replies could not be traced.

38. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1953, Internal Circular, 10 February 1953.

39. Ibid.

40. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/6/2. Vol.2, A.G. Malan to J.G.N. Strauss, 12 February 1953.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., J.G.N. Strauss to A.G. Malan, 17 February 1953. Kane Berman reported that from this time on he was ostracised by both the U.P. and the majority on

It is doubtful whether Kane Berman's motives in attempting to mobilize public opinion against the Bills were entirely limited to the short-term interests of the United Democratic Front. He was acutely aware of the A.N.C.'s cynicism in regard to the commitment of white liberals to the common society, a major theme at the A.N.C.'s 14 February Cape Provincial Congress,<sup>43</sup> and of the growth in influence, at the expense of liberals, of those whites who were later to establish the South African Congress of Democrats.<sup>44</sup>

The shock of the 1948 defeat and the subsequent death of Hofmeyr, had served temporarily to still the voices of those within the U.P. who wished to see its policy develop in an increasingly liberal direction. Their change of attitude was not only a reaction to Government policy. The emergence of a new U.P. leadership in 1950, together with an overall conservative trend in Party policy occasioned by the necessity of winning over the fast diminishing pool of floating voters, also explains increasing liberal assertiveness.

During the course of 1950 R.D. Pilkington Jordan, U.P. M.P.

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the Torch Commando Executive. Interview: L. Kane Berman.

43. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.97. Patrick Duncan, one of the few liberals to actively participate in the Defiance Campaign, used the logic of this argument to justify his participation. Ibid., p.90.

44. In November 1952 the A.N.C. had encouraged the formation of an organisation which whites could join and which would coordinate its activities with those of the Congresses. T. Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945, p.69. Members of the Springbok Legion figured prominently in the establishment, in late 1953, of the South African Congress of Democrats. Interview: R. Arenstein.

for Rondebosch, legal advisor to the Party and former close associate of Smuts, considering that the "time for insincerity and subservience to causes of expediency is past",<sup>45</sup> drew up a manifesto which proposed the abolition of the colour bar in industry and the revival of the Cape liberal ideal of "civilized rights for all civilized men".<sup>46</sup> Despite the fact that the original intention was to limit the circulation of the manifesto to a group of eleven U.P. M.P.s, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, convinced that it was "positive dynamite", gave Pilkington Jordan a "dressing down" and tried unsuccessfully to have it withdrawn.<sup>47</sup>

Ironically, the most important consequence of the manifesto was the arrangement of a meeting, at the home of H.F. Oppenheimer, "for the specific purpose of the formation of a Liberal Group within the United Party."<sup>48</sup> Miles Warren reported that the group formed as a result of the meeting "represented the bulk of those who walked out of the Party in Bloemfontein in 1959..."<sup>49</sup>

When the existence of the group was later drawn to Strauss's attention, he was reported to have said that "there was nothing to worry about as they had sworn loyalty to him."<sup>50</sup>

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45. F. Waring Papers, Working File, Vol.I, Liberal Group, Principles and Aims, 16 April 1953.  
 46. Ibid.  
 47. Ibid.  
 48. C.M. Warren Papers, Memorandum on Appointment of Strauss and 1953 U.P. Rebellion, n.d.  
 49. Ibid.  
 50. F. Waring Papers, Working File, Vol.I, Liberal Group, Principles and Aims, 16 April 1953. Soon after the 1953 General Election, Pilkington Jordan, in a letter to Strauss, wrote: "Whatever weight I have with what may be termed the liberal wing will be flung with all my force against anything likely to lead to any rift in the Parliamentary ranks of the Party." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/2/1, Vol.2, R.D. Pilkington Jordan to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 April 1953.

If this report is correct then the logic of Strauss's statement was that it was from the conservative wing of the Party, the wing to which Strauss himself belonged,<sup>51</sup> from which most of the opposition had been expressed to his designation as Smuts's successor. Significantly, an article in The Forum, written at the time of Strauss's succession to the leadership, noted that that opposition was

based more on personal rivalries than on any dislike for the political principles of Mr Strauss, but it may have the interesting effect of driving Mr Strauss to align himself more closely than he has hitherto done to the liberal school.<sup>52</sup>

Just as an overriding concern for the maintenance of a common front served to mask latent differences within the U.P., so the same imperative governed the actions of liberals operating outside the Party. Having played a primary role in the establishment, in January 1952, of the South African Liberal Group,<sup>53</sup> O.D. Wollheim,<sup>54</sup> in June, informed J. Sutherland, editor of Port Elizabeth's Evening Post:

For the time being we do not desire any publicity whatsoever and for this reason have not written to you or to other

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51. Interview: Professor W.A. Kleynhans.  
 52. The Forum, 18 February 1950, p.16.  
 53. Based in Cape Town the Group initially consisted of about 35 members. Composed chiefly of intellectuals and professional people, the members of the Group committed themselves to a ten point programme advocating the extension of political rights on a non-racial basis and to alleviating hardships arising from the colour bar. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.62.  
 54. A South African Institute of Race Relations stalwart he had served as its Honorary Regional Representative in East London and had been on its Executive Committee since 1940. E. Hellman and H. Lever: Race Relations in South Africa 1929-1979, p.8.

known liberals in the press before. We all feel very strongly that the present moment is not the right one for coming out into the open since the political situation is so delicate that publicity could easily have unanticipated results.<sup>55</sup>

Despite a late September joint press statement by twenty-two liberals in which they advocated, at a time when Defiance Campaigners were shouting "Freedom in our Lifetime", a revival of the Cape Liberal tradition, the Liberal Group remained determined to avoid publicity until after the 1953 election.<sup>56</sup>

There was, however, no general agreement as to the strategy the Group should adopt subsequent to the election.<sup>57</sup> The formation, in January 1953, of a South African Liberal Association to co-ordinate the activities of the Cape Town Group with similar Groups in Johannesburg, Pietermaritzburg and Durban,<sup>58</sup> served to intensify the debate between those who wished to see the Association emerge as a political party making an unequivocal stand on principle, and those who wished to remain a "Ginger Group" capitalising upon the existence of a liberal wing in the U.P.<sup>59</sup>

Despite these differences over long-term strategy, there was unanimous agreement that, prior to the General Election, the façade of opposition unity should be maintained. Although the Association was thus precluded from formally protesting against the terms of the Public Safety Bill and the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, its members were nonetheless free to

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55. O.D. Wollheim Papers, Chairman, Interim Committee to J. Sutherland, 9 June 1952.

56. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.91.

57. By December 1952 the Cape Town Group had 126 members. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., pp.109-110.

protest, as individuals, against the Bills or to establish alliances with other organisations with comparable values and aims.<sup>60</sup> It may well have been with the former strategy in mind that Kane Berman, a member of the Johannesburg Liberal Group,<sup>61</sup> had in February 1953 pressed for the mass protest meetings against the Bills.<sup>62</sup>

The beleaguered L.P., whose members, supported only by the Natives' Representatives,<sup>63</sup> were fighting an unequal battle against the Bills in Parliament, was an obvious ally for those who thought like Kane Berman.<sup>64</sup> At its Forty-Second Annual Conference, on 10 January, the Party had in fact further liberalised its race policy. It had done so because its 1946 policy, "while progressive by South African standards...avoided a definite stand on vital issues."<sup>65</sup> Concomitantly it accepted a resolution calling for a National Convention representative of all of the country's people.<sup>66</sup> To this end Christie, in a letter to A. Quintin Whyte, Director of the S.A.I.R.R., wrote on 26 January:

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60. Ibid., p.95.

61. W.G. Ballinger Papers, BC347, Johannesburg Liberal Group, 10 February 1953.

62. In June 1952, O.D. Wollheim wrote: "The Torch Commando is only 25 per cent liberal (I mean in the Cape) and they are only being held together by the dramatic stunts they indulge in...I do not think that they will ever make a political force. Our Liberal Group can draw from them, but that would be about all." O.D. Wollheim Papers, Chairman, Interim Committee to J. Sutherland, 9 June 1952.

63. Margaret and William Ballinger had been responsible for establishing the Johannesburg Liberal Group, J. Robertson, op. cit., p.91.

64. Ibid., p.95.

65. R. Feldman Papers, S.A.L.P. Records, The S.A.L.P.'s Dilemma, 8 May 1953. See Appendix XXXIII: Resumé of the South African Labour Party's Race Policy, January 1953.

66. Ibid., Chairman, S.A.L.P. to A. Quintin Whyte, S.A.I.R.R., 26 January 1953.

Our Committee is desirous of meeting representatives of your Executive to explore the possibility of your collaborating with us, or if found more advisable, for your Institute to take over the initiative of convening the National Convention, and for us to collaborate with you in this all important work.<sup>67</sup>

It was not thus surprising, given the close relationship that existed between the Liberal Association and the S.A.I.R.R.,<sup>68</sup> that, early in April, L.P. M.P.s agreed "to co-operate as closely as possible with the Association."<sup>69</sup>

This alliance did not weaken the argument of those within the Liberal Association who were convinced that it should become a political party. Members of this group were in fact unimpressed by the possibility of a link-up with the L.P. In June 1952, Wollheim, referring to the L.P., wrote:

From what I have seen they are much more liberal than they were before, but I am quite certain that they will never gain any sort of overall support. Any really liberal political group must have the support of the intellectuals and I cannot see the present Labourites getting this.<sup>70</sup>

In the interim, Swart's Bills inexorably proceeded, due in no small measure to the lack of any U.P. opposition to them, on their passage through Parliament. Reporting on the

67. Ibid.

68. In September 1952 Quintin Whyte had approached Alan Paton about the possibility of establishing a "Moderate Liberal Party". A. Quintin Whyte Papers, A. Paton to A. Quintin Whyte, 1 October 1952. O.D. Wollheim, Chairman of the Association's Interim Committee, was also the Institute's Regional Representative in East London.

69. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.95.

70. O.D. Wollheim Papers, Chairman, Interim Committee to J. Sutherland, 9 June 1952.



Second Reading debate on the Public Safety Bill, an article in the Cape Argus observed:

Members of the United Party and the National Party were more interested in the Prime Minister's announcement that the General Election would take place on Wednesday April 15, made at the beginning of the day's sitting, than they were in the debate...On the Government side only back-benchers took part in the debate, and it was obvious that the handful of members in the House paid little attention to what they had to say.<sup>71</sup>

No count was taken in the division at the conclusion of the debate as fewer than ten members supported the L.P.'s motion to reject the Bill.<sup>72</sup>

During the Committee Stage, the N.P. rejected all of the safeguards which the U.P. sought to insert in the Bill. An L.P. amendment calling for the postponement of the Bill for six months was similarly rejected.<sup>73</sup> Attempting to justify the U.P.'s continued support for the Bill, Colin Steyn said that the Party "was disappointed that the Government had not accepted its amendments. It did not, however, consider that their rejection justified opposition to the Third Reading."<sup>74</sup>

The procedure was repeated in the case of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The L.P. and Natives' Representatives vigorously opposed the measure while the U.P. continued to support it despite having failed to get the safeguards that it proposed accepted. The politically embarrassing fissure which the Bills had exposed within the United Democratic Front, and which the N.P. supporting press exploited to

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71. Cape Argus, 13 February 1953, p.7.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., 17 February 1953, p.7.

74. The Star, 16 February 1953, p.1.

maximum advantage, explained the obvious relief with which the opposition greeted Malan's 24 February announcement that Parliament would, at the end of the following week, be prorogued.<sup>75</sup>

Summing up the session a journalist on Dagbreek en Sondagnuus observed that the general expectation had been that the session would be bitter and that the atmosphere would be heated to "election temperature".<sup>76</sup> But the reverse had occurred:

I cannot in my 25 years experience of the Press Gallery remember a session where fundamental party differences remained so much in the background, debates completed in such uninterrupted calm and members propaganda addresses sat through and listened to so patiently and almost nonchalantly.<sup>77</sup>

At the close of the session, members of the three parties represented in Parliament made a point of shaking Malan's hand. A leader in The Star, echoing the H.N.P.'s criticism prior to the 1948 election in regard to Smuts's reluctance to settle the succession issue in the U.P., observed:

The gesture may well have been valedictory, an acknowledgement that a long and not undistinguished political career is drawing to its end....In these circumstances the position of the National Party in the coming election is unsatisfactory...voters are to be asked to reinstate his Government without knowing who the Prime Minister would be during the greater part of the crucial five years that lie ahead.<sup>78</sup>

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75. Die Transvaler, 25 February 1953, p.1.

76. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 182, Press Digest No.9, 5 March 1953, Dagbreek en Sondagnuus, 1 March 1953.

77. Ibid.

78. The Star, 25 February 1953, p.10.

Having surrendered the opportunity to oppose the Government by its expedient support of both the Public Safety and Criminal Law Amendment Bills, the U.P.'s attempt, during the election campaign, to elevate the question of the N.P. leadership to an election issue was to provide small compensation.

CHAPTER 24

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, FEBRUARY - APRIL 1953

The election campaign was already in full swing when the Parliamentary session ended.

In view of the coronation later in the year, Malan, in delivering his Party's election manifesto at Stellenbosch on 5 March, kept the question of a republic in the background.<sup>1</sup> Giving pre-eminence to race policy, he rejected Strauss's repeated appeals for a round table conference on the issue as mere "bait to the electorate." "From Babel", he said, "there has never come anything but greater discord. Mr Strauss cannot so conveniently shift his responsibilities."<sup>2</sup> Taking care to emphasise that the question of the sovereignty of Parliament would be settled "on constitutional lines", he then went on to ask for a renewal of the 1948 Apartheid mandate.<sup>3</sup> "It was meant to last", he said, "not to be valid for only one election."<sup>4</sup>

Responding, on 10 March, to Malan's "pathetic rehash of all the hackneyed slogans",<sup>5</sup> Strauss made the first of a number of vain attempts to elevate the question of the N.P. leadership to an election issue by ascribing Malan's rejection of a conference on race policy to the influence of

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1. Rand Daily Mail, 23 January 1953, p.1.
  2. Cape Argus, 6 March 1953, p.4.
  3. Ibid. Of all the N.P. leaders, Strijdom was the one who, during the election campaign, gave the most emphasis to the issue of the sovereignty of Parliament. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.194.
  4. H.G. Lawrence Papers, The S.A. Parliamentary Elections: A General Survey, 6 April 1953.
  5. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, J.G.N. Strauss 1953-1954, Vol.3, Strauss's reply to Malan's Manifesto Speech, 10 March 1953.

Strijdom.<sup>6</sup> He then went on, in an act of transparent cynicism to resurrect the Hofmeyr issue:

Do you remember how they accused Mr Hofmeyr of being a kaffir-boetie because he spent £3 million on Native education? Do you know that this Government today is spending almost £8 million on Native education? But you will never hear any responsible United Party leader call their fellow South Africans of the National Party kaffir-boeties and traitors to white civilisation because of this.

Do you remember how the Nationalists vented their hatred on Mr Hofmeyr because a Native was lecturing at the University of the Witwatersrand? Do you know that today there are three Natives lecturing at the Witwatersrand university?<sup>7</sup>

Particularly noteworthy in Strauss's reply to Malan's manifesto speech was the absence of any reference to the Coloured franchise issue. The same omission, which, in the words of a political commentator, had "allowed the 'crisis' element to disappear from this question just when they had the Government Party badly in a corner,"<sup>8</sup> had also been made during the pre-election Parliamentary session. This omission, like the U.P.'s support for the Swart Bills and the content of Strauss's reply to Malan's 5 March speech, are explicable in terms of the Leader's Executive post-Wakkerstroom decision that, since N.P. propaganda portrayed the U.P. as favouring race equality, "the propaganda should, therefore, be dominated by the aim of countering this line."<sup>9</sup> The logic of this policy became especially clear in

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6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 182, Press Digest No.9, 5 March 1953.

9. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Leader's Executive Committee, Minutes and Correspondence 1951-1973,

Strauss's response to the 23 March Appeal Court judgement on the Lusu case,<sup>10</sup> in which he affirmed that, when returned to power, the U.P. would continue the N.P.'s policy of station and train segregation.<sup>11</sup>

In early March, contriving to counter the U.P.'s strategy of blurring race as an election issue, Malan had cancelled all police leave until after the General Election had taken place. Carefully juxtaposing statements by members of the Springbok Legion and Kane Berman, he justified this action by saying:

There are elements in the United Front who talk about bringing the country to its knees by means of a general strike, and of co-operating with the non-Europeans to that end...<sup>12</sup>

Malan found it more difficult to counter the effectiveness of U.P. speeches broadcast by the S.A.B.C.<sup>13</sup> In mid-February,<sup>14</sup> after negotiations between the S.A.B.C., N.P.

- Leader's Executive, 17-19 July 1952.
10. The Appeal Court ruled that Apartheid on the railways was illegal if the separate facilities provided were not of an equal standard. D. and J. de Villiers: Paul Sauer, p.101.
  11. The Star, 26 March 1953.
  12. Rand Daily Mail, 14 March 1953, p.1.
  13. Gideon Roos was appointed Director-General of the S.A.B.C. by the Government in 1949. Wilkens and Strydom observed: "...there was no Broeder in line who could possibly be appointed on merit. The man they appointed appeared to have credentials, although he was not a Broeder....But they misread him. He insisted on scrupulously fair reports and comment, not favouring one party over the other." I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, op. cit., p.126. Radio was a medium which the U.P. had failed effectively to utilise in 1948.
  14. Also in February the U.P. launched a Pay Envelope Campaign. The Campaign, which involved the insertion of propaganda material in the pay envelopes of employees, was soon dropped because employers proved reluctant to co-operate. U.P. Papers, Division of

and U.P., it had been agreed that the S.A.B.C. would allocate to each party two evening slots of a quarter hour each, on both the English and Afrikaans services, on twelve occasions between 9 March and 14 April. That the subsequent U.P. broadcasts achieved some measure of success,<sup>15</sup> particularly in the use of the slogan "Vote for the Right to Vote Again", is illustrated in a circular which Malan sent to his Ministers urging them to counter more effectively the content of the U.P. speeches. The purpose of the radio broadcasts, he wrote,

was onder meer om veral die gemis aan 'n eie Engelse pers<sup>16</sup> aan te vul en propoganda van ons teëparty teen te gaan wat betrekkinge tussen die twee taalgroepe vergiftig en ons stryd bemoeilik. Nou vind ons dat die sprekers van die United Front besig is om ook die radio te gebruik om die Engelssprekendes vir ons as Nasionale Afrikaners bang te maak, maar aan die ander kant ook dat ons aan ons kant nog nie die radio gebruik het om dié misleiding aan die kaak te stel nie.<sup>17</sup>

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- Information, Internal Administration File, Pay Envelope Campaign, 11 February 1953.
15. Commenting on the radio broadcasts, G.M. Carter wrote: "The Nationalists, all of whose speakers were cabinet ministers, were not only more forceful and persuasive on occasions, but also clearly demonstrated their greater mastery of both languages." G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.192. Colin Steyn, one of the U.P.'s more effective speakers, did not take part in the radio broadcasts. The Forum May 1953, p.24.
  16. The N.P. in the Cape Province published, prior to the election, an English-language news-sheet called National News. An N.P. report, subsequent to the election, noted: "Dit ly geen twyfel dat hierdie poging 'n waardevolle bydrae gelewer het tot die sukses wat met die verkiesing behaal is." D.F. Malan Papers, Verslag Inligtingskomitee van Nasionale Party vir die jaar 1 Julie 1952 tot 30 June 1953.
  17. Ibid., Circular to Cabinet Ministers, 17 March 1953.

Unable to finance the publication of Ons Blad as a bi-weekly<sup>18</sup> and denied access to advertising space in the major Afrikaans-language daily newspapers,<sup>19</sup> the U.P. had again, as in 1948, to rely upon pamphlets as the mainstay of its propaganda campaign. The Division of Information, in December 1952, allocated £13 065 for the printing of 2 185 000 pamphlets covering the entire range of U.P. policy.<sup>20</sup> The N.P. in contrast printed only 716 500 pamphlets at a total cost of £2 714.<sup>21</sup>

Because so few of the key personnel in the U.P. Division of Information had any practical political experience much of the propaganda material which the Division produced was of little value. It was primarily for this reason that U.P. workers, at the constituency level, refused to distribute

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18. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resume of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and others from the U.P., n.d.
  19. Dagbreek en Sondagnuus was the only substantial Afrikaans-language newspaper which would accept U.P. advertisements. On 10 April The Star ran an Afrikaans-language supplement.
  20. Of the twenty titles, six dealt with race policy and six with labour and cost-of-living issues. Total Division of Information expenditure for the election was estimated at £49 000. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, Nos.356 and 358, Division of Information, Estimates of Expenditure, 2 December 1952. G.M. Carter estimated that, in total, the U.P. printed 3 237 000 pamphlets. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.466.
  21. 136 000 copies of the pamphlet 'V.P. se Politieke Plan met Naturelle en Indiers' were printed. Of the twenty-three remaining titles, five dealt with race policy, four with labour related issues and three with Communism. The total expenditure of the N.P. Information Committee was £8 351. D.F. Malan Papers, Verslag Inligtingskomitee van Nasionale Party vir die jaar 1 Julie 1952 tot 30 Junie 1953.



it.<sup>22</sup> An article in The Forum later observed:

Thousands of pounds were wasted on posters, pamphlets and leaflets. Most of these served only to irritate the converted and amuse the unconverted. One poster placing the United Party leader with Generals Botha, Hertzog and Smuts was regarded as [being in] bad taste and was strongly resented in the countryside.<sup>23</sup>

As had been the case in 1948, when poor administration had prevented their effective distribution, so, after the 1953 General Election, thousands of undistributed pamphlets filled U.P. storerooms.<sup>24</sup>

The weakness of the Division of Information was only one of the reasons for van Biljon's unhappiness with the state of the U.P.'s electoral preparedness. In mid-February, in tendering his resignation to Strauss, he complained that Strauss, like Smuts, was unable to delegate authority:

In the past few weeks I have more and more come under the distressing but lasting impression that my work in the Party has failed to achieve the co-ordination and drive it was intended to...I am afraid I must confirm my intimation that, after the election, I cannot possibly stay with the Party organisation. It is against my nature to be an ineffective sinecure [sic] anywhere.<sup>25</sup>

As far as Strauss was concerned worse was to come. After a

22. Interview: V. Raw.

23. The Forum, May 1953, p.24.

24. Interview: Professor W.A. Kleynhans.

25. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 14 February 1953. L. Gerber, an attorney, who had been employed as Strauss's personal secretary, was given barely any substantive work to do. Instead, he spent three demeaning years running errands for the Strauss family. Interview: L. Gerber.

short trip to S.W.A.,<sup>26</sup> where he assured voters that a U.P. return to power would not endanger the territory's autonomy nor lead to changes in its parliamentary representation,<sup>27</sup> he learnt that Heaton Nicholls had finally resolved to sever his links with the U.P. In mid-March Heaton Nicholls had informed Mitchell that he had

found it very awkward during the last session to carry on as though I was still a member, but I did this out of...a desire not to create division. But my resignation will be made known immediately the election is over.<sup>28</sup>

After having told Heaton Nicholls that he had assumed his resignation had been tacitly withdrawn,<sup>29</sup> Mitchell then informed Strauss that he felt

26. Malan briefly visited the territory in early April. The Star, 10 April 1953, p.10.
27. The U.N.S.W.P., having paid £26 700 for the purchase of the Afrikaans-language newspaper Die Suid-Wes Afrikaner, was financially hard-pressed in early 1953. From its own resources it was able to maintain a central office, an organising secretary and two field organisers. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South-West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, F.J. van Biljon to H. Cooper, 26 June 1952. The U.P. provided a subsidy of £8 600. This sum not only covered half the election costs of the U.N.S.W.P.'s six candidates but also enabled the Party to employ two additional organisers and to buy two cars. Ibid., J.L. Horak to L. van Vuuren, 5 March 1953. The Executive of the U.N.S.W.P. believed that the Party had a "sporting chance" in the Karas, Midlands and Windhoek constituencies. Ibid., F.J. van Biljon to H. Cooper, 26 June 1952.
28. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 March 1953. Heaton Nicholls had spoken in the Senate in support of the "Swart Bills". Ibid., Natal Subject File, Union Federal Party and G. Heaton Nicholls, The "Swart Bill" Allegations, n.d.
29. Ibid., Central Head Office, Leader's File, Correspondence 1951-1953, D.E. Mitchell to G. Heaton Nicholls, 18 March 1953.

very strongly indeed that we cannot await the result of the election and allow Nicholls to announce his resignation himself...in the event of the election being against us, it will be taken as a 'go-ahead' signal by certain elements to form a new political organisation to fight us in the Provincial election next year...I do not think we will lose one single vote as a result of an early announcement, and the Mercury is now so committed that it cannot possibly change on the eve of election day.<sup>30</sup>

Rejecting this advice on the grounds that it would "give the Nats a heaven-sent diversion which they appear to need badly,"<sup>31</sup> Strauss nevertheless accepted Mitchell's subsequent suggestion to have "Sailor ready to repudiate them at once if they move."<sup>32</sup>

Soon afterwards, Strauss had to react to the possibility of an N.P. instigated scheme to associate the opposition with the threat of communism. On 29 March he was told that members of the Natal L.P. Executive had informed the political correspondent of the Natal Mercury that the Government was planning to announce, just prior to the election, the "naming", in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, of twelve of the members of the L.P. Executive as well as of certain members of the Torch Commando.<sup>33</sup> Strauss ignored the advice that all United Front candidates should take immediate steps to disavow Communism.<sup>34</sup> Instead, on 6 April, the L.P. National

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30. Ibid., D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 17 March 1953.  
 31. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/1/3, J.G.N. Strauss to D.E. Mitchell, 22 March 1953.  
 32. Ibid., D.E. Mitchell to J.G.N. Strauss, 27 March 1953.  
 33. Ibid., File 1/14/3/1, Memorandum for J.G.N. Strauss, 29 March 1953.  
 34. Ibid.

Executive Council issued a statement asserting that the Party had consistently opposed Communism and warning "the electorate that the object of the Nationalists in raising the Communist bogey is to stampede the public into voting for them."<sup>35</sup>

Little could however be done to stop the insidious damage wreaked on the opposition's cause by Etam's cartoons in Die Transvaler. Mid-way through the election campaign, in a speech on defence matters, Strauss had referred to a "bloomer" committed by Erasmus. From that time onwards Etam drew caricatures of Strauss wearing a pair of "bloomers" which grew progressively larger until, on election day, they reached just below his eyes. B.J. Schoeman wrote: "Dit was die ergste en die mees effektiewe spottery met 'n leier wat ek in die politiek beleef het."<sup>36</sup>

The cartoons possibly help to explain the political risk Strauss took when he agreed to hold, on 11 April, as the climax to his election campaign, what was punted to be "the biggest meeting of any sort yet held in South Africa..."<sup>37</sup> Vic Clapham, chief organiser of the meeting, warned: "Our target must be a minimum of 50 000, with an aim for 100 000 at Zoo Lake...we dare not court an anti-climax and place Mr Strauss personally and the Party generally in an

35. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.14. The L.P. published its election manifesto on 2 April. It pledged the Party to free the country from fear and want by the reduction of the Cost-of-Living, the provision of affordable homes and adequate pensions for all, the protection of Trade Unions, the development of peaceful race relations and the maintenance of the Constitution. Ibid.
36. B.J. Schoeman, op. cit., p.194. See Appendix XXXIV: J.G.N. Strauss Cartoons.
37. The Star, 23 March 1953, p.1.

untenable position on the eve of the election."<sup>38</sup>

In the event, to N.P. glee and English-language newspaper silence on the issue, only 8 000 people attended the meeting.<sup>39</sup> Devoting the bulk of his speech to the U.P. proposal for a "people's conference on the colour question...to take the whole issue out of party politics",<sup>40</sup> Strauss said that this

Volkskongress will not lay down policy, or dictate to Parliament. I see it rather as a means of placing the finger of the rulers on the pulse of the people; I see it as a method of tapping the collective wisdom of the white men of Africa.<sup>41</sup>

He returned to this theme in an eve-of-election radio broadcast. Rejecting Apartheid, not, he said, because he disagreed with it, but because it was an impracticable proposition, he nevertheless went on to say that "the Natives must accept the fact that in the mass they were immature and unfitted to participate in the control of the political, economic and social development of the country."<sup>42</sup>

Malan, in his broadcast speech, was under no compulsion to equivocate. Regarding the election as the last chance for South Africa to remain a "white man's country", he said that the "people had to choose between the Apartheid policy of the National Party...or whether it was going to put into

38. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Rally for Victory, 31 March 1953.

39. Die Transvaler, 13 April 1953.

40. Rand Daily Mail, 13 April 1953.

41. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, J.G.N. Strauss, Vol.2, J.G.N. Strauss's Zoo Lake Speech, 11 April 1953.

42. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.15, 23 April 1953.

power the Opposition which had always bitterly fought Apartheid and had rejected every Apartheid law."<sup>43</sup>

On 15 April the electorate, 35 000 of whom were generally assessed as floating voters,<sup>44</sup> went to the polls. At the end of the Tenth Parliament the N.P. had held a majority of 13 seats over the U.P., L.P. and the 3 Natives' Representatives.<sup>45</sup> Nomination day, on 14 March, had seen 20 unopposed nominations, 18 U.P.<sup>46</sup> and 2 N.P.<sup>47</sup> 276 candidates were nominated in the remaining 136 Union and S.W.A. seats. Of this total, 135 represented the N.P., 130 the U.P.<sup>48</sup> and 6 the L.P. There were 5 Independent candidates as opposed to 55 in 1948.<sup>49</sup>

The N.P. nominated candidates in every seat in the Orange Free State and S.W.A., in 47 of the 54 Cape seats, in 59 of the 68 Transvaal seats and, much to the U.P.'s surprise, in 12 of the 15 Natal seats.<sup>50</sup> The N.P. thus conceded only 19

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43. Ibid.

44. Die Transvaler, 13 April 1953, p.1.

45. The term of office of the Natives' Representatives was not affected by the dissolution of the House of Assembly.

46. 8 in the Transvaal, 7 in the Cape and 3 in Natal. The Star, 14 March 1953, p.1.

47. H.G. Lawrence Papers, The South African Parliamentary Elections: A General Survey, 6 April 1953.

48. Two Torch Commando executives, Ralph Parrott and Charles Bekker, had resigned their membership of that organisation in order to stand as U.P. candidates in the Mayfair and Brakpan constituencies respectively. Neither was elected. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.327.

49. V.L. Shearer Papers, Press Digest No.11. Of the 5 Independents, 4 were Independent Nationalists and one a liberal. Ibid.

50. Ibid. 3 H.N.P./A.P. candidates had been nominated in Natal seats in 1948. In 1953, for the first time, the N.P. contested Durban seats, nominating candidates in 5 of the city's 7 constituencies. These nominations were merely an exercise in "flag flying". K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.56.

seats as opposed to the 48 conceded by the H.N.P./A.P. in 1948.<sup>51</sup>

The United Democratic Front had nominated candidates in all but two constituencies; Malan's Piketburg seat and Gordonia, the seat held by J.H. Conradie, Speaker of the House of Assembly.<sup>52</sup> This strategy was motivated by a number of considerations. The first was to tie down the N.P. organisation as much as possible.<sup>53</sup> The second was "to obtain a true reflection of anti-Government strength in view of the statement by the Prime Minister...that the nation would be asked to decide on the constitutional issue."<sup>54</sup> Conradie's seat was not contested because of the Parliamentary convention that the Speaker "should refrain from party political activity."<sup>55</sup>

Surveying the opposition's prospects, Oosthuizen wrote in his diary:

The Nats are very confident and so is a substantial section of our Party.<sup>56</sup> As for myself? A miracle can save us but not we ourselves. Reasons: 1) No Government has ever been removed under two periods in office. 2) The Nats have an unbroken record of growth and Party progress since they took office. No reverses.<sup>57</sup>

Despite an assurance by Strauss, at the October 1952 Cape

51. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.56.
52. The Star, 14 March 1953, p.1.
53. Interview: V. Raw.
54. The Star, 5 January 1953, p.2.
55. Rand Daily Mail, 3 January 1953, p.5.
56. De Villiers Graaff reported that the defeat came as a severe shock to the Party's "old timers". Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.
57. O.A. Oosthuizen Papers, Typed Version of Diary, 15 March 1953.

U.P. Congress, that in the event of an opposition election victory there would be no Torch Commando representatives in the U.P. Cabinet,<sup>58</sup> a Torch Commando delegation met de Villiers Graaff, just prior to the election, to discuss the possibility of such representation. Echoing Oosthuizen's view, de Villiers Graaff dismissed the matter as being entirely academic for he considered that the United Democratic Front stood no chance at all of winning.<sup>59</sup>

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58. Cape Argus, 16 October 1952, p.8.

59. Interview: Sir de Villiers Graaff.



PART VIIITHE PARTING OF THE WAYSCHAPTER 25THE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

"The appeal to reason" in the view of a leading article in the Rand Daily Mail, "failed."<sup>1</sup> The N.P. won 8 additional seats<sup>2</sup> bringing its total of members in the House of Assembly up to 94. The U.P. lost 7 seats,<sup>3</sup> its number of members in the House sinking to 57. The L.P. lost one seat bringing its total down to five.<sup>4</sup> The N.P.'s majority therefore rose from 13 to 29.<sup>5</sup> Particularly noteworthy was its increased representation in urban areas. The N.P.

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1. Rand Daily Mail, 17 April 1953, p.8.
  2. The N.P. gained 9 seats from the U.P./L.P. but the U.P. regained Vereeniging from the N.P. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.15, 23 April 1953.
  3. Two U.P. Senators, J.G. Carinius in the Cape and H. Tucker in the Transvaal, had resigned from the Senate in order to fight Assembly seats. Both lost. The Senate vacancies were subsequently filled by N.P. candidates. Die Transvaler, 30 April 1953, p.1.
  4. John Christie died on 10 April. There was therefore no election in the Johannesburg City constituency. The L.P. won the 24 June by-election. B.M. Schoeman, op. cit., p.345.
  5. House of Assembly Representation after the 1953 General Election (former strength in brackets):
 

	<u>N.P.</u>	<u>U.P.</u>	<u>L.P.</u>
Cape	30(28)	24(27)	-(-)
Transvaal	43(37)	22(25)	2(4)
Natal	2(3)	11(11)	2(2)
Orange Free State	13(12)	-(1)	-(-)
S.W.A.	<u>6(6)</u>	<u>-(-)</u>	<u>-(-)</u>
Totals	94(86)	57(64)	4(6)

Johannesburg City vacant. The 3 Natives' Representatives have been excluded. Cape Argus, 18 April 1953, p.7.

increased its number of representatives from 8 to 13 on the Witwatersrand, from 6 to 7 in Pretoria and from 1 to 3 in Cape urban seats.<sup>6</sup>

The total Union and S.W.A. electorate at the time of the election numbered 1 623 424. Those registered in the 135 seats actually contested numbered 1 383 138.<sup>7</sup> Of the latter 1 218 435 or an impressive 88 per cent voted.<sup>8</sup> In S.W.A. the percentage poll was a remarkable 91,4 per cent.<sup>9</sup> This turn-out can be ascribed not only to a politically aroused electorate, but also to the effectiveness of the electoral machinery of both of the major parties.

The large number of postal votes submitted was also a tribute to the efficiency of both the U.P. and N.P. The latter appears, however, to have been the prime beneficiary. Valid postal votes in the 1948 election amounted to 4,26 per cent of the total vote, in 1953 the percentage was 13,8.<sup>10</sup> In 1948 the U.P. won 8 seats, the A.P. 1 seat and the H.N.P. 10 seats where the valid postal vote was larger than the majority of the winning candidate. In 1953 the U.P. won only 4 such seats while the N.P. won 34.<sup>11</sup>

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6. Pamphlet Collection, Institute for Contemporary History, Verkiesing van 1953: Volledige Uitslae in alle kiesafdelings in Unie en Suidwes, pp.51-54.
7. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.62. S.W.A. voters have been included in the total.
8. Ibid. In 1948 the percentage poll was 80,3 per cent. Ibid., p.36.
9. S.W.A.: Votes received
- |                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| N.P.                          | 13 305        |
| U.N.S.W.P.                    | 10 021        |
| N.P. majority                 | 3 284         |
| N.P. percentage of total vote | 57,3 per cent |
| 1950 N.P. majority            | 2 401         |
10. P.S. Joubert, op. cit., p.284.
10. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.147.
11. Ibid.

Of the total vote in the 135 contested seats, the U.P., L.P. and U.N.S.W.P. drew 610 268 votes while the N.P. attracted 598 357. The opposition parties thus received 11 911 more votes than did the N.P. in these seats.<sup>12</sup> Assuming that 87,9 per cent, the Union poll, of the 238 111 voters in the uncontested seats would have voted had they been able to then 189 366 votes can be allocated to the 19 uncontested Democratic Front seats and 19 933 votes to the two uncontested N.P. seats. Allowing the N.P. 1 500 votes per seat in the former and 2 000 per seat for credit of the Democratic Front in the latter,<sup>13</sup> provides a total of 765 113 Union votes for the Democratic Front and 629 485 Union votes for the N.P. The Democratic Front majority of 135 628 votes is reduced to 132 344 if the votes cast in S.W.A. are included.

Taking all of the Union and S.W.A. contested and uncontested seats into account, it can realistically be assumed that the U.D.F. was supported by about 54,9 per cent of those who either voted or would have cast their vote.<sup>14</sup> On this basis, the Democratic Front won one Union seat for every 12 341 votes cast in its favour while the N.P. won each of its Union seats at a cost of 7 153 votes. In S.W.A. the U.N.S.W.P. drew 42,7 per cent of the vote but won no seats.

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12. The balance of the votes was made up of 8 520 spoilt papers and 1 290 votes drawn by the Independents. K.A. Heard, *op. cit.*, p.62.
  13. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.3, A Survey of Voting in the 1953 General Election, n.d.
  14. Heard estimated that the U.P./L.P. would have drawn about 53,3 per cent of the total vote in May 1948. K.A. Heard, *op. cit.*, p.42. The increase in support shown for the U.P./L.P. in 1953 was very likely due to the absence of splinter parties and to a decline in the number of Independents standing in that election.

Although the system of loading and unloading contributed to the distortion between electoral support and parliamentary representation, the effect was limited. Of the Democratic Front's total of 62 seats,<sup>15</sup> 45 had over 11 000 registered voters compared with 25 N.P. seats in the same category. At the other end of the scale, 42 of the N.P.'s seats had fewer than 10 000 voters compared with only 6 Democratic Front seats in that category.<sup>16</sup> Taking only contested seats into account, the N.P. won 30 of the 65 loaded constituencies while the U.D.F. won 9 of the 65 unloaded constituencies.<sup>17</sup> The ratio between the average quotas in these loaded and unloaded constituencies was 11493:9589 or 119,85:100. However, illustrating the limited effect of loading and unloading, the ratio between the average quotas in the Democratic Front loaded and unloaded constituencies on the one hand and the N.P. loaded and unloaded constituencies on the other, was only 11 188:10 210 or 109,57:100.<sup>18</sup>

But, comparing the votes cast for each of the two parties in the contested seats, reveals a different picture:<sup>19</sup>

	Democratic Front	N.P.
Victorious Votes	51.1%	80.5%
Defeated Votes	48.9%	19.5%

These figures show that the concentration of Democratic Front electoral support in the coastal urban areas and on

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15. Heard, excluding Johannesburg City, lists 61. K.A. Heard, *op. cit.*, p.67. Johannesburg City had 10 576 registered voters.

16. *Ibid.*

17. J.B. Bowker Papers, uncatalogued, Memorandum on the 1953 Election, Framed and Issued by the Electoral Reform League, 20 January 1958.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

the Witwatersrand was a major handicap in the alliance's quest for office. This phenomenon is revealed even more clearly when the estimated and actual votes for the Democratic Front and N.P. in 41 Democratic Front seats in five urban centres are compared:<sup>20</sup>

Democratic Front votes	= 320 364
N.P. votes	= <u>85 577</u>
Democratic Front majority votes	= 234 787

Geographically concentrated, the surplus Democratic Front votes were rendered ineffective, during the next delimitation, in making less vulnerable the thin surplus of 65 619 votes in the 21 U.P. constituencies in the rural and peri-urban areas.<sup>21</sup> With its support concentrated in predominantly urban constituencies containing primarily English-speaking voters, it became even more apparent than before that the only avenue to power for the U.P. lay via whatever inroads it could make into the Afrikaans-speaking electorate.<sup>22</sup>

The predominantly Afrikaans-speaking Coloured electorate could avail the U.P. little. In an 87.9 per cent poll, 42 059 Coloured people voted or would presumably have done so had they not been registered in uncontested seats.<sup>23</sup> Of

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20. Ibid. Cape Town, 13; Port Elizabeth, 3; East London, 3; Johannesburg, 14; Durban, 8. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Percentage of Urban and Rural White Population who were Afrikaans or English-speaking.

	1936		1946		1951	
	<u>Afr.</u>	<u>Eng.</u>	<u>Afr.</u>	<u>Eng.</u>	<u>Afr.</u>	<u>Eng.</u>
Urban	41,0	52,6	47,8	48,5	50,0	45,8
Rural	84,0	13,7	82,4	15,3	81,9	15,8
Total	55,9	39,1	57,3	39,4	56,9	39,3

K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.227.

23. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.3, A Survey of Voting in the 1953 General Election, n.d. (Figures have been modified). 47 849 Coloured voters were registered in the Cape Province but the seven uncontested Cape seats contained 8 718 Coloured

this total, about 17 319 were registered in rural constituencies, where the vote was equally split among the parties, and about 24 740 were registered in urban constituencies. In the latter, 90 per cent may have been expected to vote U.P.<sup>24</sup> On this basis it may be calculated that the U.P. would have received 30 926 Coloured people's votes while the N.P. would have attracted 11 134. In the contested seats, the U.P. won only one, Hottentots-Holland, with a majority smaller than the total number of Coloured voters registered in the constituency.<sup>25</sup>

Afrikaans-speaking whites constituted about 61 per cent of the total white population of the Union. But, because so many English-speakers were aliens or resided in urban areas where registration was not as comprehensive as it was in rural districts, Afrikaans-speakers, in fact, constituted about 66,3 per cent of the electorate.<sup>26</sup> On this basis, and estimating that about 5 per cent of the English-speaking electorate voted for the N.P., 305 883 white Afrikaans-speakers, or just over one-third of the white Afrikaans-speaking electorate, may be assumed to have voted for the Democratic Front.<sup>27</sup>

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- voters. Only 39 131 Coloured voters were therefore in a position to vote. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.376.
24. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.3, A Survey of Voting in the 1953 General Election, n.d. (Figures have been modified.)
25. D.M. Scher, op. cit., p.377.
26. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.3, A Survey of Voting in the 1953 General Election, n.d.
27. The Organising Secretary of the U.N.S.W.P. reported: "Die sogenaamde 'derde taalgroep' het weer blokvas teen ons gestem. Die oorgroot meederheid Afrikaanssprekendes het wel vir ons Party gestem." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, South West Africa, Vol.I, Correspondence and Reports 1949-1969, Organising Secretary, U.N.S.W.P., to J.L. Horak, 1 May 1953.
- Both Neuman and Stultz failed to take the underregistration of urban areas into account when

A feature of the election was the important role played in it by the younger voters. Allowing for deaths, about 215 000 white South Africans, about one-third of whom were English-speaking, turned 21 between May 1948 and early 1953.<sup>28</sup> On an 87,9 per cent poll 189 000 voted or would have voted in 1953.<sup>29</sup> Not without some justification U.P. analysts assumed that approximately 85 per cent or 107 100

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they estimated the support of white Afrikaans-speaking voters for the U.P.-L.P. in the 1948 General Election at 20-25 and 18 per cent respectively. S. Neuman, op. cit., p.79. N.M. Stultz, op. cit., p.152.

In view of the poor U.P.-L.P. voter registration prior to the 1948 General Election a not unrealistic assumption can be made that 66,3 per cent of the 1 173 168 voters (K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.42) who voted, or would have voted in 1948 had they been in contested seats, were Afrikaans-speaking. If it is also assumed that the 85 347 (Ibid.) rejected votes and votes given to the Independents and splinter parties were equally divided between English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking voters, and that 5 per cent of the English-speaking electorate voted for the H.N.P.-A.P., then 290 277 or 39,5 per cent of the estimated 625 328 votes received by the U.P.-L.P. in 1948 were cast by white Afrikaans-speakers.

28. About 69 500 white voters had died between the 1948 and 1953 elections and about 20 000 foreign nationals had been naturalised during that period. According to the May 1946 Census the age groups of those white voters who turned 21 between 1948 and 1953 was composed as follows:

Age on	<u>20</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>16</u>
7 May 1948					
English-speaking	14 330	14 325	14 727	14 804	15 000

Afrikaans-speaking	26 019	26 378	28 031	28 138	28 400
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Ibid., Division of Information, The Mine Workers' Union and the U.P. 1948-1954, Memorandum: How Did They Vote. Attached to letter H. Gleisner to S.J. Marais Steyn, 3 July 1953.

29. Ibid.

of the 126 000 Afrikaans-speaking whites between the ages of 21 and 26 voted or would have voted for the N.P.<sup>30</sup> To this total they logically added 15 per cent, or about 9 500, of the equivalent English-speaking electorate's votes. On these assumptions, they credited 116 550 of the 189 000 votes in the 21 to 26 years old category to the N.P.<sup>31</sup> On a Union-wide basis, this would have meant an increase in N.P. support, between 1948 and 1953, of 777 votes per constituency. The corresponding Democratic Front increase would have been 483 votes.

However, a conservative estimate could be made that, in 1953, 60 per cent of the young Democratic Front supporting vote, as opposed to 20 per cent of the young N.P. supporting vote, was tied up in uncontested seats. On this basis, N.P. support would have increased by 691 votes per constituency between 1948 and 1953 in the 135 contested constituencies, while the corresponding Democratic Front increase would have been 215.<sup>32</sup> The differential is not inconsiderable when it is considered that it constituted 4,6 per cent of the total vote cast in the contested seats and that the N.P. held 18 seats with majorities of between 1 and 999 votes.<sup>33</sup>

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30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid. (Figures have been modified.)

33. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.68.



CHAPTER 26THE AFTERMATH, PART I : NATAL,APRIL - JUNE 1953

In a joint statement issued two days after polling day, Ford and Chutter, on behalf of the Torch Commando in Natal, unilaterally declared: "With the end of the election campaign, the member organisations of the United Democratic Front resume their liberty of action."<sup>1</sup> Heaton Nicholls was more circumspect. He appears to have hoped that he could persuade Mitchell, before announcing his own resignation from the U.P. and retirement from politics, to agree to take the lead in forming a Natal Ginger Group within the U.P. Parliamentary caucus and to leave provincial politics to a Natal-based party. He subsequently wrote:

I personally was tired and wanted to shut the door on politics. Natal required a leader. I felt Mitchell had the confidence of a large section of the people of Natal and he had the necessary youth and vigour. If only I could get him 'to see the light'...<sup>2</sup>

On 19 April, however, "an apparent leakage in Johannesburg which could only have come from United Party circles"<sup>3</sup> pre-empted the original plan for the announcement of his resignation. He nevertheless went ahead and met Mitchell

1. B. Reid, op. cit., p.39.
2. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.460.
3. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.15. Heaton Nicholls refused to resign from the Senate because, he wrote, he had never considered himself to be a "Party Senator". In his opinion the prime obligation of the Senate was "to maintain the Constitution". Natal Mercury, 25 June 1953, G. Heaton Nicholls to the Editor. He finally resigned from the Senate soon after the 1954 Provincial Elections for he considered the results of those elections to have been a vote of no-confidence in his leadership of the Union Federal Party. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.480.

secretly, on 21 and 24 April, in an attempt to convince him of the virtues of the "Natal Stand".<sup>4</sup>

Confronted by Mitchell's total rejection of the concept of "saving South Africa by saving Natal",<sup>5</sup> an apparently revitalised Heaton Nicholls felt himself "at last free from all party shackles".<sup>6</sup> On the day following the Natal U.P. Head Committee's adoption of a resolution reaffirming the Party's adherence to the Act of Union and its "undaunted faith and trust in our Leader Mr Strauss...",<sup>7</sup> Heaton Nicholls delivered at a Pietermaritzburg Services' Club Luncheon Forum what he later called a "political reconnaissance survey".<sup>8</sup> In what came to be known as the "Sordid Marriage Speech", he said:

The division between the races is now definite, complete and final. It is now impossible for any combination of opposition parties to defeat the Nationalists...let us have a new conception of Union. Let the Transvaal and the Free State and part of the Cape, if it feels like it, have their republic; and let the English-speaking people, who desire to maintain their allegiance to the Crown and the Commonwealth, continue their old tradition.<sup>9</sup>

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4. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.460. Mitchell took care to inform Strauss of the meetings. T. Wilks, op. cit., p.98.
  5. The Forum, June 1953, p.13.
  6. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.463.
  7. U.P. Papers, Natal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes 1951-1967, No.6, Minutes of a Meeting of the Natal Provincial Head Committee, 28 April 1953. On 26 May the U.P. caucus in the Natal Provincial Council approved a motion to request the Government to provide an assurance that if it intended to establish a republic it would not do so without first conducting a referendum in Natal. The Star, 26 May 1953, p.1.
  8. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.464.
  9. L.S. Steenkamp Papers, Files on People, Vol.2, Full Text of Senator G. Heaton Nicholls's Speech, 29 April

The Natal Mercury<sup>10</sup> and the Natal Witness<sup>11</sup> supported the speech, but a leading article in The Daily News joined Mitchell<sup>12</sup> in condemning it. The article concluded:

There are forces, external and internal, which will yet save South Africa, for people in their hundreds of thousands in the rest of the Union are at one about the principles upheld in Natal.<sup>13</sup>

According to Heaton Nicholls, he had played no part in the formal organisation of the Union Federal Party.<sup>14</sup> The first opportunity he had of reading its proposed policy statement was on the evening, in early May, when he tentatively accepted Ford's invitation to become its leader.<sup>15</sup> His lack of first hand involvement possibly explains why, on 11 May, the day after his leadership of the newly launched Party had been announced, he reaffirmed his belief in the main points of his Pietermaritzburg speech and subsequently had the entire speech published.<sup>16</sup> This, not unnaturally, led to the popular assumption that the speech reflected the policy of the Party.<sup>17</sup> However, Ford, who became the Natal Chairman of the Party, subsequently denied that a new federal constitution was contemplated. What was proposed, he said, was the extension of powers by the Central Government to the Provincial Council along the lines which had been contemplated in the Hollander Memorandum of 1933.<sup>18</sup>

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1953.

10. Natal Mercury, 1 May 1953.
11. Natal Witness, 1 and 4 May 1953.
12. The Star, 30 April 1953, p.2.
13. The Daily News, 30 April 1953.
14. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.465.
15. Ibid., p.466.
16. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Union Federal Party and G. Heaton Nicholls, Extracts, 6 July 1953.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. The Hollander Memorandum, adopted at the 1933 Natal Provincial Congress of the South African Party, proposed that the powers of the Provincial Councils

When Heaton Nicholls fell into line with this view on 2 July<sup>19</sup> he not only exposed himself to attack from his political opponents, but also sowed confusion in the ranks of his own Party. U.P. spokesmen pointed out that the Hollander Memorandum "was completely dependent on a friendly government being in power which would voluntarily grant such powers. Surely not even the Federals hope to become the ruling government party in the foreseeable future."<sup>20</sup>

As a representative of a party committed to the reconciliation of white South Africans, Mitchell was naturally opposed to a party which, according to a leader in the Rand Daily Mail, showed "sectional thinking comparable even to that of the Nationalists themselves."<sup>21</sup> In a letter to Barlow, he wrote that the Union Federal Party was

the Dominion Party under a new name but carrying the same load of bitterness which it will inject into our public life....My policy must be to attempt to reduce that bitterness to a minimum and, as far as possible, keep the controversy which is due to break out within the bounds of decency according to South African standards.<sup>22</sup>

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- not only be entrenched but that they be extended to include control of the Provincial Public Service, Police, Native Affairs, Health, Agriculture and Education in all its branches. E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: A History of Natal, p.273.
19. U.P. Papers, Natal Subject File, Union Federal Party and G. Heaton Nicholls, Extracts, 6 July 1953.
  20. Ibid. The Party nevertheless made rapid initial progress. By the end of June 50 branches had been established. Natal Mercury, 2 July 1953.
  21. Rand Daily Mail, 1 May 1953, p.8. On 15 June E. Louw, Minister of Economic Affairs, issued a warning to Natal's industrialists that they could expect no co-operation from him unless they "marked time" over political developments in the province. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.472.
  22. A.G. Barlow Papers, Scrapbook No.5, 1923-1958, D.E. Mitchell to A.G. Barlow, 8 June 1953.

In at least one significant respect, Mitchell was mistaken in identifying the Union Federal Party with the defunct Dominion Party. This was because the former made a conscious attempt to include in its principles a cautiously liberal race policy.<sup>23</sup> An article in The Forum noted that the reason for this policy's adoption was

not merely to give expression to the rather vague and undefined idealism that motivated the Torch Commando. It was also a direct result of accusations levelled at the 'Natal Stand' movement that it was concerned, not with human rights generally, but only with the rights of English-speaking people, and that therefore it was a sectional response to Afrikaner Nationalism rather than a stand on basic principle.<sup>24</sup>

However, in coating the "sour taste of Liberalism" with the "sugar of federation",<sup>25</sup> the Party was, in essence, making two appeals which, to a white electorate as conservative as that in Natal, were perceived to be in direct conflict:

...there are those to whom the idea of a federal state of Natal managing her own affairs is distinctly attractive but to whom the idea of gradually extending rights and privileges to non-Europeans is repellent. There are others who are genuinely attracted by the Party's more liberal approach to the colour question but who will have nothing to do with any 'breaking up' of the Union.<sup>26</sup>

Despite its limitations, the Party's race policy was sufficiently liberal to draw the attention of the Liberal

23. See Appendix XXXV: Resumé of Principles of the Union Federal Party Adopted by the Provincial Convention, 14-15 August 1953.
24. The Forum, June 1953, p.13.
25. Ibid., p.15.
26. Ibid., p.14.

Party which, after some equivocation by those in the Liberal Association who would have preferred, instead, to have strengthened the liberal wing of the U.P., had been formally established on 9 May.<sup>27</sup> In a 15 May interview, Margaret Ballinger said: "From the statements that have appeared from the Federal Party it is clear that there is a great deal of common ground and there is obviously room for discussions."<sup>28</sup>

The formal consolidation of the political views of the liberal wing of the Torch Commando in the Union Federal Party's programme of action dealt the coup de grâce to the Torch Commando as a whole. Only two days before the 10 May launch of the Party, the Torch Commando National Executive had agreed, after formally withdrawing from the United Democratic Front, to recommend at the movement's June National Congress that the Torch Commando should continue in existence.<sup>29</sup> The timing of the announcement of the birth of the Union Federal Party so soon after the Torch Commando National Executive meeting, together with the fact that its founders were almost exclusively leading members of the Torch Commando,<sup>30</sup> inevitably gave rise to the impression

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27. J. Robertson, op. cit., p.110. The office-bearers of the Party were: President, Mrs V.M.L. Ballinger; Vice-Presidents, Leo Marquard and Alan Paton; National Chairman, Dr O.D. Wollheim; National Vice-Chairman, Leslie Rubin.
28. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.19, p.200. The primary difference between the two parties was that the Liberal Party's membership was not exclusive.
29. R. Feldman Papers, Section of Torch Succumbs to Federalism, 11 May 1953. On 22 April the U.P. Central Executive had decided that the seed for the Torch Commando's disbandment "should be diplomatically sown". U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive Committee, 22 April 1953.
30. L. Kane Berman, National Chairman of the Torch Commando; T.A. Hewat, a National Vice-President;

that the Party was the political offspring of the Torch Commando.<sup>31</sup>

It is quite possible that the founders of the Union Federal Party did not see their initiative as being in any way in conflict with the National Executive's decision to continue the Torch Commando. A.G. Malan, freed from any obligation to the United Democratic Front, certainly created that impression when he, on 14 May, said:

The Torch Commando has always supported any political party that subscribes to its principles and this attitude remains unchanged. Our members are free to join any political party which conforms to this requirement....The Torch Commando office-bearers associated with the Union Federal Party have made it plain that they are acting in their individual capacity....I see no reason for anyone to resign from the Torch Commando at this stage and I appeal to all office-bearers to refrain from doing so.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, on the following day, the Torch Commando's Patron, N.J. de Wet and two National Vice-Chairmen, G.E. Brink and A.J. de la Rey, resigned from the organisation.<sup>33</sup>

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E.G. Ford, former Chairman, Natal Coastal Region; A.R. Selby, a National Vice-President; J.B. Chutter, Chairman, Natal Inland Region; J.T. Durrant, a National Vice-President. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.18, p.185, 14 May 1953.

31. The Star, 16 May 1953, p.3.

32. V.L. Shearer Papers, File No.183, Press Digest No.19, p.201, 21 May 1953. In November 1953 members of the Liberal Party approached A.G. Malan to join the Party. Though expressing sympathy with the Party's programme, he wrote: "A repetition of the frequent absences and lack of farming supervision that characterised my Torch career would place me in the bankruptcy court..." L. Marquard Papers, A.G. Malan to L. Rubin, 10 November 1953.

33. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.19, p.201, 21 May 1953.

Although the resignations were in ostensible protest over the association of Kane Berman and his colleagues with the Union Federal Party,<sup>34</sup> a more likely reason for their submission was simply recognition that the Torch Commando had run its course. The Press Digest noted that

the spirit of protest out of which the Commando arose has already been canalized in new channels, and some of the leading Torchmen themselves are already committed to programmes much more specific and therefore much more controversial than the original broad and simple objectives of their organisation.<sup>35</sup>

In June, despite waning interest and mass desertions, 177 delegates at the Torch Commando's third National Congress decided to attempt to soldier on. Rejecting a plea by Chutter that the National Executive should delegate its powers to the regional executives, the Congress reiterated the Commando's policy of non-alignment with political parties.<sup>36</sup> One of the Congress's final actions before adjourning was to adopt a resolution refuting the charge that the Commando had in any way been responsible for sponsoring the Union Federal Party.<sup>37</sup> The question soon, however, became an academic one as the Torch Commando rapidly withered on the vine.<sup>38</sup>

At much the same time, the Action Committee of the Defenders

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p.202.

36. T. Wilks, op. cit., pp.101-102.

37. Ibid., p.102.

38. A vain attempt was made to resuscitate the Torch Commando in February 1956. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952, J. Lang to Leo (?), 7 February 1956. Kane Berman held funds in a Torch Commando Account until the early 1980s. He finally disbursed the money to charities. Interview: L. Kane Berman.



of the Constitution forced the resignation of Heaton Nicholls as its Chairman on the grounds that his leadership of the Union Federal Party was in conflict with its non-political principles.<sup>39</sup> Heaton Nicholls commented: "They had not worried when I was a Senator in the United Party! Most of the Committee I had chosen to form the Defenders of the Constitution were, of course, United Party supporters."<sup>40</sup> No Chairman was ever elected to replace Heaton Nicholls, for he pointed out to the Committee that it would hardly have been honourable for them to do so when they were there by virtue of his having selected them on what he considered "the instructions of a personal mandate."<sup>41</sup> The organisation became defunct soon afterwards.

The L.P. had emerged from the General Election with five seats, the same number which it held in 1910, the year in which the Party had been established.<sup>42</sup> Although it was generally conceded that "on its own the Labour Party could, at present, not retain a single member,"<sup>43</sup> at its annual congress in November it recognised both the widening divergence between its own policy and that of the U.P. and the necessity, in the face of its ongoing decline, of gambling on an independent stand. Committing itself to the long-standing policy of its left-wing because "a succession of electoral agreements over a period of years has tended to

39. G. Heaton Nicholls, op. cit., p.469.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., p.472.

42. On 1 May A. Hepple, ideologically in the same mould as Christie, became leader of the L.P. Forward, 1 May 1953.

43. R. Feldman Papers, The S.A. Labour Party's Dilemma, 8 May 1953. During the election campaign the L.P. had issued no Party propaganda and had no funds with which to assist its candidates. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.345.

create a false impression of identity of interests and even of policy in the public mind between the contracting parties," it resolved to build up "a strong and militant Labour Party, completely independent of any ties with the U.P. or any other party."<sup>44</sup>

In Natal, where U.P. workers had been largely responsible for managing the L.P.'s election campaign<sup>45</sup> and where the Union Federal Party offered an ideologically not unattractive political home, disillusionment ran deeper. In early May R. Ardé,<sup>46</sup> the Party's Natal Chairman and S. Green, it's Secretary, resigned. Senator E.R. Browne also resigned soon afterwards. All three joined the Union Federal Party.<sup>47</sup>

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44. R. Feldman Papers, Memoranda re Annual Conferences 1951-1953, Conference Declaration, 29 November 1953. In April 1953 the U.P. Central Executive Committee decided, in regard to the L.P., that the U.P. would not "bind itself in regard to future elections." U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive Committee, 22 April 1953.
45. Interview: V. Raw.
46. Ardé resigned because, he said, the L.P. National Executive was controlled by an "extremist element". Soon after his resignation, and prior to his joining the Union Federal Party, he established the South African Democratic League which, he hoped, would become a "pressure group in economic matters and in the furthering of good race relationships." The Star, 7 May 1953, p.3.
47. B. Reid, op. cit., p.40.

CHAPTER 27

THE AFTERMATH, PART II: THE U.P.

The danger of a schism within the U.P. was considerably enhanced by the result of the General Election. Whichever way it turned it seemed to face the certainty of division and defeat. A leading article in The Star neatly summed up the Party's dilemma:

There comes a moment in most democracies when an Opposition must accept the verdict of the electorate and modify its policies accordingly. South Africa once again proves the exception. The Opposition, conscious that its policies reflect the wishes of a large majority of voters, would betray its trust if it trimmed them to suit a minority which yet wields effective power.<sup>1</sup>

Malan had moved quickly to seize the strategic moment. In a post-election declaration<sup>2</sup> and in an 18 April broadcast speech, he did his utmost to re-expose and widen the cracks that had developed behind the U.P.'s facade of unity since the death of Smuts. Deftly using the Coloured franchise issue, he said, in his 18 April speech, that he

would not be unwilling to discuss, with a view to co-operation, the colour question with any section of the Opposition which might be willing in all sincerity to accept our Apartheid policy in principle....I address myself mainly to those, and there are many, who on the merits of the case are not opposed to the separate representation of the Coloured people in Parliament. In fact they are in favour of it. They object only to any procedure in connection with it which does not comply with the two-

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1. The Star, 16 April 1953, p.10.
  2. D.F. Malan Papers, 1/1/2903, Na-Eleksie Verklaring, 17 April 1953.

third majority provision as laid down in the entrenched clauses of the South Africa Act....It is fortunate that the National Party has now obtained a majority not far short of that required by the entrenched clauses if they should remain constitutionally valid. Only twelve or thirteen more supporters are required and these could be provided by those who, on the merits of the Coloured separate representation question, feel as we have just described.<sup>3</sup>

Responding to Malan's invitation, Strauss emphatically denied that there were any "Quislings in our ranks who would be prepared to sell their souls to make it possible for him and his Government to attain their disgraceful ends."<sup>4</sup> With an eye to the Party's right wing, he nevertheless took care to remain conciliatory, saying that Malan should instead approach the U.P. as a whole and "ask us for our co-operation in an attempt to find a common solution....I can assure him that if that approach is sincerely made...we shall be ready to seek agreement on a fair and honourable basis."<sup>5</sup>

Obviously concerned about the appeal of Malan's siren call, Strauss told the U.P. Central Executive Committee on 22 April that it "was absolutely essential at this stage that there should be complete and undivided loyalty among

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3. Ibid., 1/1/2905, Broadcast Speech, 18 April 1953. At first sight the Government would only have needed to appoint 15 additional Senators to provide it with a two-thirds majority. In fact, as the size of the Senate increased so did the required two-thirds of the total strength of the Assembly and Senate sitting together. Forty-five additional Senators would have had to have been appointed to achieve a two-thirds quota. The Star, 17 April 1953, p.1.
  4. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.15, p.154.
  5. Ibid.

our members."<sup>6</sup> The committee then, without waiting for an analysis of the reasons for the United Front defeat, went on to discuss the hoary topic of winning over the support of Afrikaans-speaking voters. This raised the very issue that was to cause the split which Strauss feared.

After once again appointing a sub-committee to investigate the establishment of an Afrikaans-language newspaper,<sup>7</sup> the Central Executive resolved to appoint another, but this time, secret, sub-committee to investigate and report on the best means of attracting white Afrikaans-speaking voters.<sup>8</sup> Bailey Bekker, the Transvaal leader of the Party, because he was privately convinced that the primary reason for the Party's inability to attract those voters was Strauss's failure of leadership, refused, when nominated, to serve on the committee. In a later resumé, he explained to Strauss that he had

pleaded at the Central Executive meeting not to rush this suggestion and in any event that you should wait until the Candidates Committee and other reports had come to you, and that it was not realistic to tackle the problem in this way. In my view the matter was

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6. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive Committee, 22 April 1953.
  7. Reporting on 21 May the sub-committee recommended that the U.P. in the Cape should establish its own newspaper while, in the other provinces, it recommended that a Trust Fund be established to finance an Afrikaans-language press. *Ibid.*, 21 May 1953. The fund, the Verenigde Afrikaner-Persfonds, was established on 8 June 1953. *Ibid.*, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Verenigde Afrikaner-Persfonds 1953-1957, Constitution, 8 June 1953. The Trust failed to raise sufficient capital and was dissolved in 1956.
  8. *Ibid.*, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive Committee, 22 April 1953.

tactfully left by the Central Executive in your hands.<sup>9</sup>

Although Bekker assumed that the secret sub-committee had been suspended, Strauss had, in fact, instructed it to proceed.<sup>10</sup> His action resulted in yet another nominated member, Blaar Coetzee, refusing to serve on it.<sup>11</sup>

Matters came to a head when, on 18 May, during a private meeting between the two, Bekker informed Strauss that he no longer had any faith in his leadership. Pressed for reasons, Bekker accused Strauss of overplaying his hand "by building Mr Strauss and not the team of the United Party." Strauss had, he said, "tried to run a Smuts machine without General Smuts."<sup>12</sup> When asked who he had in mind as an alternative Party leader, Bekker replied: "de Villiers Graaff would get my support."<sup>13</sup>

Three days later, after Strauss had invited members of the U.P. Parliamentary caucus to be "open and frank" about the causes of the Party's defeat, Bekker was supported by

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9. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, P. Bailey Bekker to J.G.N. Strauss, 18 May 1953.
  10. The committee presented its report in August 1953. It noted that Afrikaans-speakers considered the U.P. to lack "zeal, not only in relation to Afrikaans culture and language, but also in regard to actual steps for the fulfilment of our principles of unity and South Africanism." L.S. Steenkamp Papers, United Party 1938-1974, Special Sub-Committee, Recruitment of Supporters, n.d.
  11. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d.
  12. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, P. Bailey Bekker to J.G.N. Strauss, 18 May 1953.
  13. Ibid. There was also, at that time, tension in the U.N.S.W.P. between those who wanted to unite with the U.P. and those who, because of their opposition to Strauss's leadership, did not. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 183, Press Digest No.17, 7 May 1953, p.178.

Dr A.H. Jonker, F. Waring and B. Coetzee when he criticised Strauss's management of the election and his "extravagant" use of Party funds.<sup>14</sup>

At a meeting of the Central Executive immediately after the caucus meeting, Bekker provided a comprehensive list of the reasons for his dissatisfaction with Strauss's leadership. He said that policy statements of which he knew nothing had been made and that he had not been consulted either in regard to the handling of the finances of the Transvaal U.P. nor in regard to the formation of the United Democratic Front. Accusing Strauss of having allowed the Trustees of the United South Africa Trust Fund to dictate to the Party, he called the appointment of a Party Chairman "irregular" and said that he still did not know who paid van Biljon's salary. Not only had Strauss, he continued, allowed Marais Steyn to mislead the 1952 Transvaal Congress of the Party in regard to the conversion of Ons Blad into a bi-weekly newspaper, but he had, after the election and in secrecy from the Party, appointed a committee to investigate ways of popularising the Party among the Afrikaans-speaking electorate. Finally, Bekker accused Strauss of discrediting the Party by "overreaching himself" in making promises to the electorate.<sup>15</sup> He then went on to inform the Central

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14. C. Miles Warren Papers, Memorandum on Appointment of Strauss and the 1953 U.P. Rebellion, n.d. Blaar Coetzee later wrote: "How much money was spent on useless pamphlets which were never distributed? How much money was spent on the so-called 'Research Department' which produced absolutely nothing?" The Forum, December 1953, p.51.
15. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d. The N.P., prior to the election, produced a list of 52 promises made by the U.P. and predicted that their fulfilment would cost taxpayers an additional £100 000 000 per annum. K.A. Heard, op. cit., p.56.

Executive that, as leader of the Party in the Transvaal, he felt in honour bound to take his criticism of the running of the election campaign to the forthcoming Transvaal Congress.<sup>16</sup>

Both de Villiers Graaff and Mitchell, anxious to prevent the public exposure of differences within the Party hierarchy, immediately and successfully proposed that Bekker's complaints be omitted from the minutes of the meeting. As personal friends of both Strauss and Bailey Bekker, they then stated their preparedness to act as mediators.<sup>17</sup> Although their offer was accepted, three months of negotiations failed to achieve reconciliation.

For his part, during the resumed parliamentary session in July, Strauss took the tactical precaution of corresponding with Malan with the ostensible purpose of testing the N.P.'s attitude towards inter-party negotiations on race policy. De Villiers Graaff reported that the correspondence was simply a subterfuge by Strauss to retain the support of the Party's right-wing:

Hy hoop dat uit die briefwisseling met die Eerste Minister niks gebore sal word nie, behalwe die kans om uiteindelik aan die regtervleuel te kan sê: 'Ons het die Regering genader soos julle verlang, maar dit het niks opgelewer nie. Nou moet julle by ons staan in die nuwe stryd wat nodig geword het.<sup>18</sup>

If this was Strauss's intention, the plan misfired. The

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16. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d.

17. Ibid.

18. S.L. Barnard and A.H. Marais, op. cit., p.85.



correspondence broke down when Malan insisted that any negotiations would have to be on an individual and not a party basis.<sup>19</sup> Waring, who on 19 July, together with Barlow, had met Malan to discuss the Coloured vote issue without prior consultation with Strauss, then gave a press interview in which he alleged that the breakdown had been due to Strauss's "lawyers approach".<sup>20</sup> The atmosphere worsened when, on 20 August, Strauss summoned P.V. Pocock, S. Tighy, B. Durrant, Bekker, Barlow, Jonker, Coetzee and Waring to his office for what they later called "interrogation" over an alleged approach by them, which they strenuously denied, to Havenaga.<sup>21</sup>

On the following day, Strauss, who by this time had become determined to bring the leadership issue to a head, threw down the gauntlet at a Central Executive Committee meeting when he demanded that, if the 21 May "charges" which had been laid against him by Bekker were allowed to continue unanswered by the Executive, he would regard this as a motion of no-confidence in himself.<sup>22</sup> The Executive thereupon, after Bekker had walked out of the meeting, dutifully examined his charges and repudiated each of them.<sup>23</sup> Because leaks from the parliamentary caucus had

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19. D.F. Malan Papers, 2929, J.G.N. Strauss to D.F. Malan, 23 July 1953.
  20. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d.
  21. C. Miles Warren Papers, The Picking-Out of Men from the U.P. in 1953.
  22. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, Memorandum on Meeting with U.P. Central Executive, n.d.
  23. The Committee found that on each count Bailey Bekker had himself been a party to the decisions taken. In regard to his claim of being misled in regard to the bi-weekly publication of Ons Blad, the Committee found that the undertaking had clearly been contingent upon finance being available. U.P.

been so extensive, it was felt that any further attempt to conceal the discord within the Party would prove counter-productive. The findings of the Executive were, therefore, released to the press and Bekker was informed that "it would be inimical to the interests of the Party that you should raise these matters at the Transvaal Congress."<sup>24</sup>

On 25 August the U.P. caucus met, having been summoned in an attempt further to consolidate support behind Strauss. It proved as divided as it had been in June 1950. Again, however, no clear rival to Strauss emerged. Miles Warren reported that

there were many men in the caucus who had no confidence in Strauss and said so at caucus. There was a section that was strongly of the opinion that Sir de Villiers Graaff should be groomed for leadership but being young thought Harry Lawrence should lead the Party for the time being. There were some people who were of the opinion that Colin Steyn might be a suitable man for the position but this was not a popular idea.<sup>25</sup>

As had happened when Strauss had been elected Parliamentary leader of the Party in June 1950, the caucus, although supporting a motion of confidence in him, did not do so unanimously. Five members, Barlow, Coetzee, Bekker, Jonker and Waring, voted against the motion while Vernon Shearer abstained.<sup>26</sup> Barlow had indicated his acceptance of

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Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d.

24. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, J.W. Higgerty to P. Bailey Bekker, 22 August 1953.
25. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note by Miles Warren, n.d. Lawrence was not bilingual.
26. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others

Strauss's leadership in advance, and Shearer did so soon afterwards, but the other four did not.<sup>27</sup>

A U.P. memorandum observed that after these events

had cleared the air...the expectation was that the Party team would get into stride again, working together loyally as a unit, and for a time it seemed that this would be achieved as the four dissident members continued to participate in caucus meetings and in debates on behalf of the Party.<sup>28</sup>

This proved a vain expectation for the rift in the Party was soon reopened. Speaking in the House of Assembly on 18 September, Strauss criticised Malan's transparently opportunistic delay of the Third Reading of the South Africa Act Amendment Bill, designed once again to remove Coloured voters from the common roll, in the hope that the U.P. would fragment sufficiently to provide a two-thirds majority.<sup>29</sup> Taking the floor soon afterwards, Waring, in effect, repudiated Strauss when he said: "I, for one, would like to place on record my appreciation of the delay which the Hon. the Prime Minister has granted in this matter."<sup>30</sup>

Events moved quickly thereafter. On the same day that he delivered this speech Waring was expelled from the U.P. caucus. On the following day, 19 September, Jonker resigned from the Party caucus in protest at Waring's expulsion and, on 22 September, Bekker followed suit. On the same day as the latter resigned, Coetzee was expelled from the caucus

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from the U.P., n.d.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

for having voiced an objection to Waring's expulsion.<sup>31</sup>

Seated separately in the House of Assembly, the four ex-U.P. caucus members voted independently and, in an act which put the stamp on their rebellion, accepted the independent representation which the Government offered them on the Select Committee appointed to consider the South Africa Act Amendment Bill.<sup>32</sup> On 9 October the U.P. Transvaal Head Committee gave Bekker, Waring and Coetzee seven days in which to express their confidence in and loyalty to Strauss, or face expulsion from the Party.<sup>33</sup> On 17 October they replied that they had "on no occasion departed in any way from the principles and policies of the Party" and protested "against any attempt to expel us from the Party merely on an issue of personal confidence."<sup>34</sup> They were expelled on 19 October.<sup>35</sup> Concurrently, and in similar fashion, the U.P. Cape Head Committee expelled Jonker.<sup>36</sup> On 28 October, after having expressed solidarity with the expelees, Barlow was also expelled from the Party on the grounds of disloyalty.<sup>37</sup>

De Villiers Graaff, referring to the "rebels", later wrote

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- 31. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, Huishoudelike Moeilikhede in die V.P., Hoof trekke in Kronologiese Volgorde, n.d.
  - 32. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Files on People, P. Bailey Bekker, Resumé of the Events which led to the Expulsion of P. Bailey Bekker and Others from the U.P., n.d.
  - 33. Ibid.
  - 34. Ibid.
  - 35. Ibid.
  - 36. P. Bailey Bekker Papers, File 1, A Grave Miscarriage of Justice: A Brief Summary of the U.P. Crisis by Dr A.H. Jonker, n.d.
  - 37. U.P. Papers, Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1969, Meeting of the Transvaal Executive Committee, 28 October 1953.

that he knew that

several of them are still indulging in the pipe dream of a possible coalition with Havenga. Oddly enough, Bailey Bekker's reason for quarrelling with Strauss was just what it was reported to have been in the press namely, a personal affair. I know because I tried for over three months to patch it up before the public got to hear about it. Now, of course, there are others with Bailey and some of them are trying to give the impression that their real difference is one based on colour and the alleged liberalisation of the Party.<sup>38</sup>

Contrary to de Villiers Graaff's insistence the overriding concern of the "rebels" was white unity.<sup>39</sup> They felt that the growing dependence of the U.P. upon the predominantly English-speaking urban areas, with a consequent growth of liberal influence upon it, would prove inimical to this unity.

Their fears appeared to be well founded. The election had resulted, possibly as a consequence of the considerable Torch Commando influence on the Cape Peninsula and on the Witwatersrand, in the strengthening of the Party's liberal wing from about 11 to 19 members, "12 of them holding extreme views with 7 not quite as hot on the subject."<sup>40</sup> A number of the members of this wing had "virulently attacked" Party policy during the 25 August caucus debate prior to the vote of confidence in Strauss.<sup>41</sup> On the following day,

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38. Ibid., Loose letter, de Villiers Graaff to A.V. Zinn, 3 February 1954.

39. See Appendix XXXVI: Principles of the Bailey Bekker Group.

40. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note by Miles Warren, n.d.

41. Ibid. J. Cope, Mrs H. Suzman, B. Friedman, R.D. Pilkington Jordan and Mrs B. Solomon. Ibid. In January 1954 Mrs Suzman wrote: "I would be the last

during the Second Reading debate on the Separate Amenities Bill, five of them abstained from voting, without subsequent retribution, while the rest of the U.P. members voted in favour of the Bill.<sup>42</sup> Mrs H. Suzman subsequently proved to be one of the main sources of the caucus leaks which had revealed details of the right-wing rebellion to the press, an action which served to make any possible settlement of the Party's differences that much more difficult.<sup>43</sup>

In November 1953 Shearer explained that the opposition of the rebel group to the liberal wing of the Party was not primarily due to opposition to liberal principles per se, but to the fact that the liberal element was an impediment to the re-creation of a centre party capable of uniting the majority of the two white languages groups:

There is no doubt that the great majority of the thinking people believe that a new era in South African politics can be written if, for want of a better description, the Conservatives and Liberals can be split into two camps, it being recognised that in the Conservative camp there will be the getting together of all the moderates in both major political parties....It will be appreciated that all of us have liberal feelings to the extent of improving the lot of the non-whites but we cannot subscribe to the academic approach which is unrealistic and

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person to deny that there are U.P. M.P.s and supporters who feel that the time has come for a clear, unequivocal statement on the Party's non-European policy, and that the slogan 'taking the colour problem out of the political arena' has lost its meaning....Unless the U.P. is prepared to give way on vital principles there is little chance of coming to agreement with the Nationalists." The Forum, January 1954, p.41.

42. A.H. Jonker Papers, No.53, Statement by Dr A.H. Jonker, 15 October 1953.

43. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note by Miles Warren, n.d.

impracticable.<sup>44</sup>

The fratricide within the U.P. had a profoundly deleterious effect upon its performance during the post-election parliamentary session. In September Strauss was reported as saying that

the Party had gone through a hard and testing time during the last General Election and that recrimination was the child of defeat. He regretted that the United Party had not put up the fight in Parliament recently as well as it might have done owing to certain family difficulties.<sup>45</sup>

The political correspondent of the Cape Times reported that the Party had had "little leadership in the House beyond the brilliant virtuosity of Mr Lawrence, doing a sort of Beau Geste performance at the deserted front-bench enclosures."<sup>46</sup> Lawrence had, in fact, done more than "hold the fort" for Strauss. He had also, together with de Villiers Graaff and Oppenheimer, "battled with Flather...to convince him that his support of the 'rebels' was ill-advised and against the public interest."<sup>47</sup>

No intervention could reconcile Miles Warren, one of those who had voted against Strauss at the June 1950 Caucus meeting, to Strauss's leadership. In December he resigned from the U.P. caucus. He afterwards explained that he had done so "as a protest against what Mr Strauss was doing...my

44. V.L. Shearer Papers, File 30, V.L. Shearer to Louis (?), 21 November 1953.
45. U.P. Papers, Cape Provincial Head Office, Minutes and Annexures 1952-1954, Minutes of a Meeting of the Cape Provincial Head Committee, 3-4 September 1953.
46. Quoted in J. Lawrence, op. cit., p.228.
47. H.G. Lawrence Papers, Summary of Interview with J.G.N. Strauss at Deale's Hotel, East London, 19 October 1954. Horace Flather was editor of The Star.

conscience would not allow me to see a great Party undermined and consigned to the wilderness."<sup>48</sup>

Profound disappointment at the election result and a consequent decline in enthusiasm among U.P. supporters, would inevitably have deleteriously affected the Party's revenue and organisation. But defeat followed by rebellion wrought particularly severe damage. In April 1953 a memorandum for the Finance Committee had observed that the joint reserves of the Party and the Trust Fund stood at almost £95 000. After recommending that £20 000 be set aside for the 1954 Provincial elections, a fifth of the provision for the 1953 General Election, the memorandum estimated that, with the remaining £75 000 and an anticipated annual income of £25 000,<sup>49</sup> the central Party organisation would have a three year annual income of £50 000.<sup>50</sup> In 1952 the central organisation's income had been £107 000.<sup>51</sup> Noting that "it is clear that very considerable retrenchment is necessary", the memorandum went on to recommend, in view of the £32 000 expended in 1952 on the Party's newspapers, that

the retention of Challenge can neither be afforded nor justified. It is

48. C. Miles Warren Papers, Note by Miles Warren, n.d.
49. In May 1953 the Standard Bank provided the U.P. with an overdraft of £25 000. H.F. Oppenheimer was the guarantor. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Correspondence with the Standard Bank 1941-1964, J.L. Horak to the Manager, Standard Bank of S.A., 9 July 1954.
50. Ibid. Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, Notes for Finance Committee, 30 April 1953.
51. Ibid. Conversely, N.P. income increased. Stryddag contributions in the Transvaal, which, in 1949, had amounted to £14 308, increased from £34 014 in 1952 to £52 341 in 1953. U.P. Papers, Division of Information, National Party, Nasionale Party van Transvaal, Agenda en Beskrywingspunte vir die 1953 Kongress vanaf 22 September 1953.



assumed that it will be closed at once. Ons Blad must, if at all possible, be retained in reduced size as a bi-monthly newsletter, at least until an Afrikaans press is started.<sup>52</sup>

On 19 January 1954, a memorandum reported that, with the considerable reduction in staff levels, more reliance had had to be placed on voluntary workers but "to date there has been very little activity on the part of our voluntary organisation and ways and means must be found to create the necessary enthusiasm."<sup>53</sup> At the end of that month, with the departure of van Biljon from the post, the position of Chief Executive Officer was abolished and J.L. Horak assumed the resurrected title of General Secretary.<sup>54</sup>

Dissatisfaction with Strauss's leadership, the debilitating

52. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, Notes for Finance Committee, 30 April 1953. Between January and June 1953 1 190 subscribers withdrew their subscriptions from Ons Blad. There was an addition of only 250 new subscribers during the same period. In August 1953 a proposal to convert Ons Blad into a weekend newspaper was turned down. Ibid. Statement dealing with the Possibility of Converting Ons Blad, 22 August 1953.
53. Ibid., Transvaal Provincial Head Office, Head Committee Minutes 1949-1967, Vol.2, Report for the Provincial Head Committee, 19 January 1954.
54. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive, 28 January 1954. Although he had indicated his desire to resign in February 1953 van Biljon struggled to find alternative employment. He reported that potential employers "put it quite bluntly that they knew I was with Oppenheimer and son before coming to the Party, and why don't I go back there? I have a stock reply about Malan's attacks on them which makes it difficult but I don't think it goes down so well." J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/17/5/1, F.J. van Biljon to J.G.N. Strauss, 30 July 1953.

effects of the 1953 Party "rebellion" and a shortage of funds were major contributors to the 20 per cent decline in U.P. support, as opposed to a 9 per cent drop in N.P. support, in the 1954 Provincial Elections.<sup>55</sup> One U.P. memorandum noted that "defeatism, frustration and apathy, especially in the urban areas, were rampant."<sup>56</sup> Another noted that

almost everywhere it was necessary to reduce expenditure on propaganda and on field organisers and other staff to an absolute minimum, while the Nationalists have maintained their staff establishments...when two sets of Parliamentary-Provincial General Elections are lost in succession, the position of the vanquished party becomes indeed difficult.<sup>57</sup>

Symptomatic of the decline in U.P. fortunes was the rapid deterioration of its Youth Organisation, the number of active branches declining, between early 1953 and October 1954, from 155 to 74. The number of dormant branches rose, during the same period, from 26 to 98.<sup>58</sup>

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55. The decline in U.P. support is also explicable in terms of the split in the opposition vote and in the dramatic increase in the number of uncontested N.P. seats. Of the 172 provincial constituencies, 45 were won unopposed by the N.P. and 30 by the U.P. In the remainder there were 15 U.P.-Union Federal Party and 2 U.P.-Independent contests. There were also 2 three-cornered fights between the U.P., N.P. and L.P. and 3 three-cornered fights between the U.P., Union Federal Party and Liberal Party. Only the N.P. and U.P. emerged from the contest with representatives in the Provincial Councils. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/8/1/1, Vol.3, Some Observations on the Results of the Provincial Council General Elections, 1954.
56. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, Central Executive Committee, 10 September 1954.
57. J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/6/1, Memorandum: General Secretary to Leader's Executive Committee, 14 March 1955.
58. U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Executive

It was noted at a July 1954 Finance Committee meeting that, even if all reductions in expenditure were effected,

the expenditure for the last three months of 1954 will remain at £3 356 per month...any material reduction would necessitate a contraction of the Head Office services to something near its 1948 establishment, and the setting of a limit to the load which could be borne as a result of the continued publication of Ons Blad.<sup>59</sup>

While income for the year ended 30 June 1954 amounted to £71 283, £49 399 of which had been a final donation by the Trust Fund,<sup>60</sup> it had sunk, at the end of June 1955, to £38 572, only £16 213 being made up of donations.<sup>61</sup> The excess of expenditure over income for the year totalled £21 464.<sup>62</sup>

On 6 November 1955 the Central Finance Committee decided

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Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957. Memorandum on State of the Youth Organisation, October 1954.

59. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, No.265, Central Finance Committee, 8 July 1954.
60. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central U.P. Fund, Financial Statements 1952-1962, Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 1954.
61. At a 22 March 1955 Central Finance Committee meeting it was reported that "Mr Oppenheimer advised that he had some £15 000 available for the Party." Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, No.282, Record of Proceedings: Central Finance Committee, 22 March 1955.
62. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central U.P. Fund, Financial Statements 1952-1962, Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 1955. The Division of Organisation had been closed soon after the 1953 General Election. The Divisions of Fund Raising, Junior Affairs, Research and Information absorbed almost £20 000 of the total expenditure for the year ended 30 June 1955. Ibid.

"that monthly expenditure should be reduced from the level of approximately £3 600 to about £1 500 by the cessation of publication of Ons Blad and other economies..."<sup>63</sup> With the final collapse of its hopes of establishing an Afrikaans-language newspaper, the U.P. Executive was reduced to agreeing to the publication of a News-Letter, at a net monthly cost of approximately £200, "to substitute in some measure for the cessation of Ons Blad."<sup>64</sup>

The continued decline in the Party's fortunes served to make Strauss's position as leader progressively less tenable. In October 1954 Lawrence, on behalf of a number of newspaper editors, prominent businessmen and Higgerty, the U.P.'s Chief Whip,<sup>65</sup> met Strauss in an unsuccessful attempt to persuade him to resign the leadership. In his record of what he told Strauss, Lawrence stated that he

had constantly been faced with the question what we, the Party, were going to do about the leadership...there was a strong feeling that he could not lead us to victory, as evidenced by apathy and the drying-up of financial support, and I had come to the conclusion that, however unfair it might be, the country would not accept him as leader.<sup>66</sup>

By September 1955 Lawrence had become more forthright in his criticism:

...I consider that those of us who spend so large a proportion of our time

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63. Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Finance Committee, Minutes and Annexures 1949-1959, No.284, Record of Proceedings: Central Finance Committee, 10 November 1955.
64. Ibid.
65. J. Lawrence, op. cit., p.230.
66. H.G. Lawrence Papers, Summary of Interview with J.G.N. Strauss at Deale's Hotel, East London, 19 October 1954.

defending him against his critics have the right to ask him to take cognisance of this fact and to examine if there is any way in which he can lighten our task.<sup>67</sup>

Tormented by increasingly frequent asthmatic attacks which prevented him from attending Party meetings,<sup>68</sup> Strauss struggled on until November 1956 by which time it had become clear that he was no longer capable of leading the Party.

His replacement by de Villiers Graaff failed to stem the decline in the Party's fortunes. Bland, but far more personable than either Smuts or Strauss, de Villiers Graaff was to prove just as incapable of returning the U.P. to power as were his two predecessors.

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67. Ibid., Facing Facts in the United Party, 15 September 1955.  
68. Interview: L. Gerber.

PART IXCHAPTER 28CONCLUSION

Poor organisation was primarily responsible for the U.P.-L.P. alliance's loss of the May 1948 General Election. Of particular importance in this regard was the U.P.'s inability adequately to register voters or, where necessary, delete them from the voters roll. The consequent under-registration of urban voters, and the relative ease with which the H.N.P. was able to remove U.P. supporters from the roll, not only reduced the possible total of urban constituencies but also exacerbated the effects of the weighting of the urban vote, the geographic concentration of U.P.-L.P. support in the urban areas and the mismanagement of the U.P.'s 1947 delimitation proposals.

After the election the H.N.P.-A.P.'s hold on power was tenuous. The alliance's overall majority in the House of Assembly was only 5 seats while 19 of its M.P.s had been elected with majorities of under 400 votes. To recover this lost ground required of the U.P. a disproportionate effort. It had, from a far more heterogeneous base of support than that of the H.N.P., not only to implement organisational reforms so as to evince an efficiency equal to that of that Party, it had also to clarify what it intended to achieve by its pragmatism so as to present to the electorate more attractive and viable policies than those being proposed by the Government. Its difficulties did not end there. The consequences of its poor organisation prior to 1948 could not immediately be arrested. The Vereeniging by-election and Unievolkspers debacle were clear illustrations of this.

It was in the reformulation of its race policy so as to retain its existing support and yet attract marginal, and primarily Afrikaans-speaking, voters that the U.P. faced its greatest dilemma. The successful implementation of Smuts's pre-1948 race policy had demanded that the U.P. remain in office for at least one more term. Though not immediately apparent, Smuts's policy did possess an underlying coherence. What at least was clear was that the Party endorsed African urbanisation and economic integration. Smuts can hardly be blamed though for demurring from providing clarity on the social and political consequences of these developments. To have attempted to do so would have riven his Party and spelt electoral suicide. He did not intend though passively to await evolutionary forces. The crux of his policy was to create, through immigration, a white population sufficiently large so as to provide a sense of white security. Only this, he felt, would allow his Party's pragmatism to bear fruit.

The immediate and drastic curtailment of immigration by the new Government thus left the U.P. without the main plank in its race policy. Unable, through fear of alienating Afrikaans-speaking voters, to give sufficient emphasis to the importance of immigration, the Party was faced with a poor choice of alternatives. The first was progressively to give ground. The September 1948 Re-Statement of Native Policy and the November 1948 re-adoption as Party policy of Indian repatriation were early indicators of this trend. The second was to take cover in the call to "take the colour problem out of the political arena." The contradiction implicit in the latter stratagem could not be concealed. It was clear that the proposal would find Government approval only if the U.P. was prepared to give way on vital points of principle. Yet it was just in this area, in its regard for constitutionality, that the U.P. was generally most clear in

its opposition to the Government. The U.P.'s tendency to give ground and yet demand the protection of individual rights and the observance of constitutional guarantees thus made the Party an easy target for Government manipulation.

The U.P. attempted to compensate for the deficiencies in its race policy by focussing on the cost-of-living issue, on white unity and on economic development. This strategy proved equally unrewarding. Not only did the economy, despite recurrent foreign exchange crises, continue rapidly to expand but Malan proved ready to substantiate the apparent sincerity of his conciliatory appeals for white unity by, for example, committing his Government to the retention of Commonwealth membership and by extending an invitation to the King to recuperate in South Africa.

Seen against this background, the U.P.'s organisational reforms took place in a vacuum. While the reforms, particularly those which enabled the Party more effectively to register and delete voters, succeeded - as the 1953 election results confirmed - in bringing more of its supporters to the polls, they could not in themselves bring in converts to the Party. Moreover, not only did re-organisation inhibit the U.P.'s ability to provide stable and continuous support to its ally in the crucial S.W.A. elections, it also involved an expansion of the Party's structure beyond its ability to finance itself without the assistance of the Trust Fund. While the latter raised funds far more efficiently and quickly than the Party itself would have been able to do, it not only served to perpetuate the pre-1948 organisational cleavage between the Party and its grass-roots support but also exposed the Party to the undeniable and damaging accusation that it was dependent upon "Hoggenheimer" money. Without substantive and credible policy alternatives, the attempt to run the U.P. on



"business lines" proved incapable of preventing a continuation of that sense of drift which had permeated the Party prior to the 1948 General Election.

At a time when the Government supporting Afrikaans-language press was undergoing rapid expansion, the U.P. was unable to establish a viable Afrikaans press of its own. With only a minority of Afrikaans-speaking readers finding its political views palatable, there is no evidence to suggest that Ons Blad exerted any significant influence upon marginal voters. The lack of a substantial Afrikaans-language press left the U.P. without a counter to the N.P.'s ability, because of the nature of its control of the major Afrikaans-language newspapers, to launch short, sharp campaigns on selected issues.

These weaknesses served to re-emphasise the importance to the U.P. of the quality of its leadership. Apart from Smuts, the only significant political figure able to rival the experience and prestige of the H.N.P. leaders was Havenga. Only he could have attracted the marginal vote to the U.P. Hence the gravity of Smuts's 1947 error of repudiating Havenga's offer to heal the 1939 schism. Smuts's December 1948 attempt to woo Havenga back was tacit acknowledgement of this error. It was also, as were subsequent attempts by some U.P. members to similarly woo Havenga, symptomatic of a widespread perception in the U.P. that Strauss was no substitute.

Not only was Strauss in the unenviable position of being compared with Smuts, but his already questionable prestige as a former minister in Smuts's war-time Government suffered further as a consequence of both the circumstances and timing of his de facto assumption of the Party's leadership. The mystery surrounding Smuts's death-bed letter of

appointment damaged Strauss's credibility while, soon afterwards, the suspicion that he would not be able to attract the crucial Afrikaans vote appeared confirmed by the U.P.'s proxy defeat in S.W.A. Nor was his ability to attract that vote enhanced when, in early 1949, he was forced to suspend publication of the venerable newspaper, Die Volkstem. Strauss deserves considerable credit for the manner in which he rejuvenated the Party's leadership and reformed its organisation. But his conscious attempt to compensate for his deficiencies by adopting Smuts's mannerisms and highly personal style of running the Party merely provoked personal antagonism and thus fuelled the factionalism that was latent within the Party.

The perception among the opposition electorate that the U.P. was proving no match for the N.P. is an inadequate explanation for the establishment of the Torch Commando. It ignores the urgency of the U.P.'s need to establish a highly-motivated, voluntary organisation which could match that of the N.P. It also ignores the significant role which the U.P. played in the formation and subsequent direction of the Torch Commando.

While the Torch Commando undoubtedly revitalised the U.P.'s voluntary organisation, its utility beyond that particular purpose was limited. Its members, and the issues which aroused them, inhibited the organisation's role as a non-partisan defender of constitutionalism. The N.P. was easily able to paint it as a mass ex-servicemen's movement established to oppose a mass Afrikaner movement. The Torch Commando's role was thus, by its very nature, limited to mobilising the traditional opposition vote. Whatever advantages the U.P. derived from the Torch Commando's efforts in this regard were negated by the consequences of the separate agendas of a number of the movement's leaders.

The N.P. was, for example, able very effectively to use the Natal separatist movement for what it was: a vote of no-confidence in the U.P. because of its transparent inability to win the next General Election. Kane Berman's attempts to adopt a more militant opposition posture, including a display of solidarity with the Defiance Campaigners, enabled the Government to portray the U.P. as unfit to defend white interests.

One of the results of the Torch Commando's mobilisation of the opposition electorate was that it enabled the L.P., for the first time since its 1946 schism, to increase its membership and revenue as well as to implement organisational reforms. But these limited improvements availed the Party little for its electoral agreement with the U.P., while providing a short term advantage, was ultimately to prove detrimental to the interests of both. The reasons were twofold. Firstly, the lack of trust between the two parties, and the consequent lack of co-operation between them, prevented the establishment of an efficient opposition organisation in the Witwatersrand constituencies held by the L.P. These seats were thus made vulnerable to N.P. inroads. Secondly, the U.P. was embarrassed by being associated with controversial figures in the L.P.'s left-wing. It attempted to limit the damage by imposing restrictions upon the L.P.'s right to field left-wing candidates. This move had the effect of weakening the L.P. because it was a significant contributor to the tension between the Party's parliamentary caucus and its National Executive, dominated as the latter was by inflexible ideologues.

Despite this tension, the L.P., which had a much more clearly defined support base than the U.P., was able to adopt a much more consistent stand than the latter on

matters of principle. This was particularly apparent in January and February 1953 when the U.P., as a consequence of its loss of support at Wakkerstroom, the Defiance Campaign and an unfavourable delimitation, de-emphasised its support for the retention of the Coloured common roll franchise and came out in support of the Public Safety Bill and the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The L.P. not only opposed these Bills but, in response to the Defiance Campaign, also further liberalised its race policy.

The U.P.'s support for the Bills failed to halt the ongoing swing of marginal voters away from the Party. While it received 54,9 per cent of the total and estimated vote in the April 1953 General Election its support among the 66,3 per cent of the electorate made up of Afrikaans-speakers fell from the approximately 39,59 per cent it had received in 1948 to just over one-third. What was particularly important in this regard was the U.P.'s loss of support among young Afrikaans-speaking voters. That this was a significant weakness was evident in the fact that this group had increased by approximately 691 per contested constituency between 1948 and 1953, as opposed to an equivalent English-speaking increase of only 215 per contested constituency during the same period.<sup>1</sup>

The difficulties which the U.P. faced after the 1953 General Election were infinitely more acute than those which it confronted in May 1948. A substantial reason for this was a general feeling that never again would the parliamentary opposition be able to mount such a concerted effort. The result was demoralisation and a consequent collapse of financial contributions to the opposition parties.

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1. Vide infra, Chapter 25.

With the benefits of its structural reforms largely negated by the effects of the sharp decline in immigration, the Citizenship Bill, by the N.P.'s S.W.A. representation and by the latter's ability to manipulate white fears and dispense patronage, it became clear that only policy changes significant enough to attract the support of substantial numbers of marginal Afrikaans-speaking voters would enable the Party to return to power. But, isolated in primarily urban, English-speaking constituencies, how could it do so and yet retain the loyalty of its existing supporters? The intractability of this problem was to cripple and ultimately fragment the Party. The schism it experienced in 1953 was merely a prelude to this later development.

Although not clearly recognised at the time, those white South Africans who rejected political impotence or absorption by an N.P. which was striving, on its own terms, to form a common white front, had only one place they could look for allies: across the colour line. Seen from this perspective, the increase in the size of the liberal wing of the U.P. from 11 to 19 M.P.s as a result of the 1953 election and the policies of the Liberal, Labour and Union Federal Parties were but the first hesitant steps towards an eventual rapprochement between the South African parliamentary opposition to the left of the Government and those extra-parliamentary forces which were already assuming their place as the real opposition to the National Party.

## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX I

REGISTERED VOTERS ACCORDING TO  
RACE, 1909 - 1953

YEAR	CAPE				NATAL				TRANSVAAL	O.F.S
	WHITE	AFRICAN	ASIAN	COLOURED	WHITE	AFRICAN	ASIAN	COLOURED	WHITE	WHITE
1909	121 336	6 637	783	13 611	29 259		186		97 772	38 261
1921	156 501	14 282	2 429	24 361	34 041	2	45	389	140 583	47 461
1929	167 184	15 780	1 737	23 881	42 584	1	16	329	151 604	49 357
1931	352 658	12 271	1 680	24 698	87 671	1	15	326	311 466	98 384
1935	382 103	10 628	1 401	23 392	91 762	1	10	343	349 400	101 089
1937	396 237	-	1 462	25 238	98 026	1	8	333	391 850	105 413
1945	493 910	-	1 849	52 285	126 427	1	2	787	584 929	119 257
1948	515 041	-	-	47 329	138 458	-	-	1 163	628 355	121 827
1953	547 078	-	-	47 677	164 852	-	-	1 337	711 045	137 880

K.A Heard : General Elections in South Africa, 1943 - 1970. p.4.

SOUTH AFRICANS POPULATION

	AFRICAN	WHITE	COLOURED	INDIAN	TOTAL
1911 Census:	4 018 878	1 276 319	525 466	152 094	5 972 757
1951 Census:	8 535 341	2 643 187	1 102 323	365 524	12 646 375

G.H Calpin (ed.) : The South African way of Life, p. 159

APPENDIX II

U.P. AND H.N.P. NOMINATION PROCEDURES

The absence of a formal membership and strict Party discipline obliged the U.P. to rely upon the Candidates Committee or Electoral College system to select its election candidates. This procedure was not only cheap but also prevented destructive rivalry between candidates. However, the system not only discouraged branch activity, the Committees being perceived as "the mouthpiece of the oligarchy",<sup>1</sup> it also ran counter to the marked preference of U.P. members in the rural districts and in Pretoria for direct participation in the selection of candidates.<sup>2</sup>

Where the ballot system was applied rival candidates were frequently obliged to fight a miniature election within the Party. This procedure not only, at times, cost more than the actual election, it also distorted the U.P.'s membership figures because the aspiring candidates frequently placed friends and relatives on the Party roll.<sup>3</sup> The system also aroused personal enmities which made it difficult for the defeated candidates and their supporters to work for the successful candidate<sup>4</sup> and encouraged the former to stand as Independents.<sup>5</sup> Referring to this nomination method, a leader in the Rand Daily Mail observed: "Few holds are barred in these struggles, and many a man who would be most valuable to the Party refrains from standing for nomination because he is not prepared to face the unnecessary and painful ordeal."<sup>6</sup>

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1. W.A. Kleynhans: South African Political Problems, p.166.
  2. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.289.
  3. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.163.
  4. Ibid., p.162.
  5. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.289.
  6. Rand Daily Mail, 5 July 1948, p.6.



Because of its formal membership the H.N.P., especially after 1948, was able to rely upon the ballot system as the chief method of nominating its candidates. In the Cape Party all nomination proposals were sent to the Provincial Head Office. Each of the proposals was supported by a requisition from a majority of the members of a branch. The Head Office then circulated the names of all nominees to all branch committees. Thereafter a general conference of some 150 to 200 delegates was called. If, after a ballot vote, the successful candidate failed to gain the unanimous support of the conference delegates the question was returned to the branches where the ordinary members voted to decide the issue.<sup>7</sup> Only rarely, however, did the latter option have to be applied.<sup>8</sup>

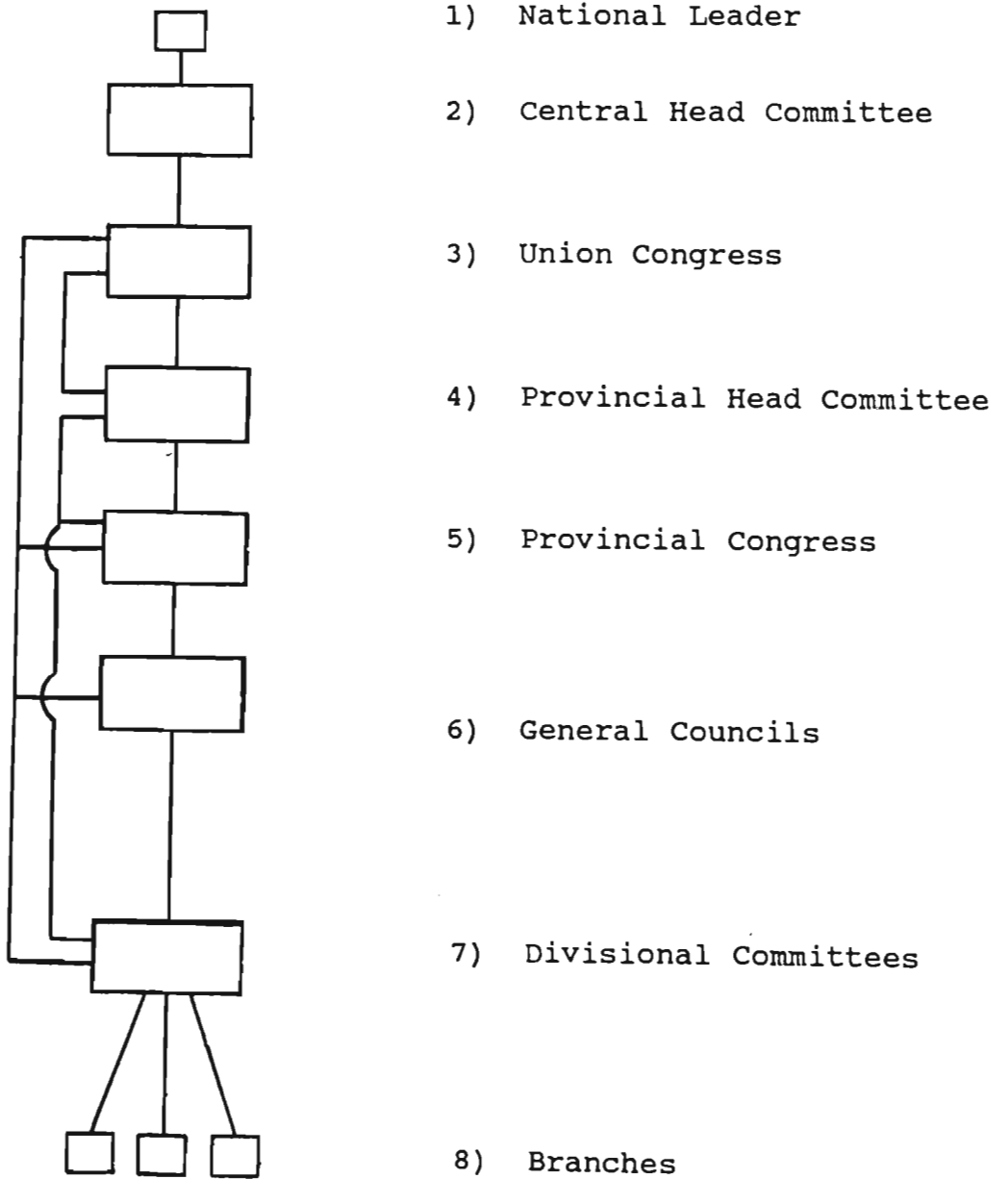
The H.N.P., as a vehicle of ethnic solidarity, was able to apply Party discipline more strictly than was the U.P. in order to retain the co-operation of unsuccessful aspirant candidates and their supporters.<sup>9</sup>

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7. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.223.
  8. Ibid., p.224.
  9. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.167.

APPENDIX III

U.P., H.N.P./N.P. AND L.P. STRUCTURES

A) U.P. STRUCTURE



## 1. National Leader

The National leader was chosen by the Union Congress at its biennial sessions. From time to time he received powers to act in the name of the Party and even to make important policy decisions when the Union Congress was not sitting. These decisions were, though, subject to subsequent approval by the Congress.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Central Head Committee

Comprised a) the National leader; b) Ministers, Deputy Ministers, ex-Ministers and ex-Deputy Ministers who were members of the Party; c) the 4 Provincial Chairmen; d) 10 members from each province chosen by the Provincial Head Committee; e) The Union Treasurer; f) members of the Central Executive Committee.<sup>2</sup>

The Head Committee's task was to convene the Union Congress and prepare the agenda for it from the resolutions submitted by each Provincial Head Committee, Divisional Committee or General Council. It had to implement the decisions of the Union Congress, it had control over the finances of the Party and it maintained Party discipline. On 21 February 1941 the Central Head Committee created the Central Executive Committee in accordance with the former's constitutional power to appoint subcommittees with extensive powers. The prime function of the Executive Committee was to ensure the efficient organisation of the Party in the

- 
1. W.A. Kleynhans: South African Political Problems, p.108.
  2. D. Worrall (ed.): South Africa: Government and Politics, p.248.

four provinces.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Union Congress

A Union Congress had to be held at least once every two years. It comprised a) the members of the Central Head Committee; b) all U.P. Senators, M.P.s and M.P.C.s; c) Representatives from the Divisional Committees, the numbers were fixed by the Central Head Committee; d) the Chairmen of the General, Women's and Youth Councils. The Union Congress elected a Chairman and vice-Chairman of the Congress and the National leader.<sup>4</sup> The Congress was the highest authority in the Party. The Party's objectives and principles as well as its constitution, could only be altered by a decision of an ordinary or special Union Congress.<sup>5</sup>

### 4. Provincial Head Committee

Comprised a) the Chairman and vice-Chairman of the Provincial Congress; b) Senators, M.P.s and M.P.C.s in the province; c) one representative from each Divisional Committee; d) the Chairman of each General Council, Women's Council and Provincial Youth Council and e) the Provincial Treasurer.<sup>6</sup>

The provincial organisations of the U.P., with the exception of those in Natal and the Orange Free State, lacked authority and even function. The Head Committees tended to serve merely as channels of communication between the General Councils and the Union Head Office.<sup>7</sup>

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3. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.108.

4. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.248.

5. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.107.

6. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.248.

7. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.286.

5. Provincial Congress

Held annually. It comprised a) members of the Central Head Committee; b) Senators, M.P.s and M.P.C.s in the province; c) as many delegates from each Divisional Committee or Branch as the Provincial Head Committee determined.<sup>8</sup>

6. General Councils

In terms of Article VIII(a) of the Party's 1934 Constitution the Central Head Committee could, on the recommendation of a Provincial Head Committee, delegate advisory or co-ordinating powers over a number of constituencies to a General Council.<sup>9</sup> The Witwatersrand General Council was the most important of the Councils. In 1952 it co-ordinated 38 constituencies and had the power "to make, rescind, amend or supplement regulations in order to carry out its activities, provided these regulations did not conflict with the Constitution of the Party or of the Constitution of the Witwatersrand General Council."<sup>10</sup> The most independent of the Councils was the Cape Peninsula General Council. In terms of Clause 4 of its 1946 Constitution it had the right "to exercise in the Cape Peninsula all the functions of a Provincial Head Committee in terms of the Constitution of the Party."<sup>11</sup>

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8. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.248.

9. U.P. Papers, Programme of Principles and Constitution of the United Party, p.7, 1951.

10. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.97.

11. L.S. Steenkamp Papers, United Party 1938-1974, Part I, Confidential Memorandum, Cape Peninsula General Council, n.d.

7. Divisional Committees

There was at least one such Committee in every constituency. It comprised the Chairman and Secretary of each Branch and one other delegate per Branch. The powers of the Divisional Committee within each constituency were considerable. Among other tasks it fixed the annual financial contribution each Branch had to make.<sup>12</sup>

8. Branches

The Party provided for Mixed, Men's, Women's and Youth Branches. Membership was restricted to whites over the age of 16 years.<sup>13</sup> A minimum of 20 members was required before a branch could be formed.<sup>14</sup>

Branch Committees consisted of the Chairman, one or two vice-Chairmen, and not less than 5 members selected at the Branch's annual meeting.

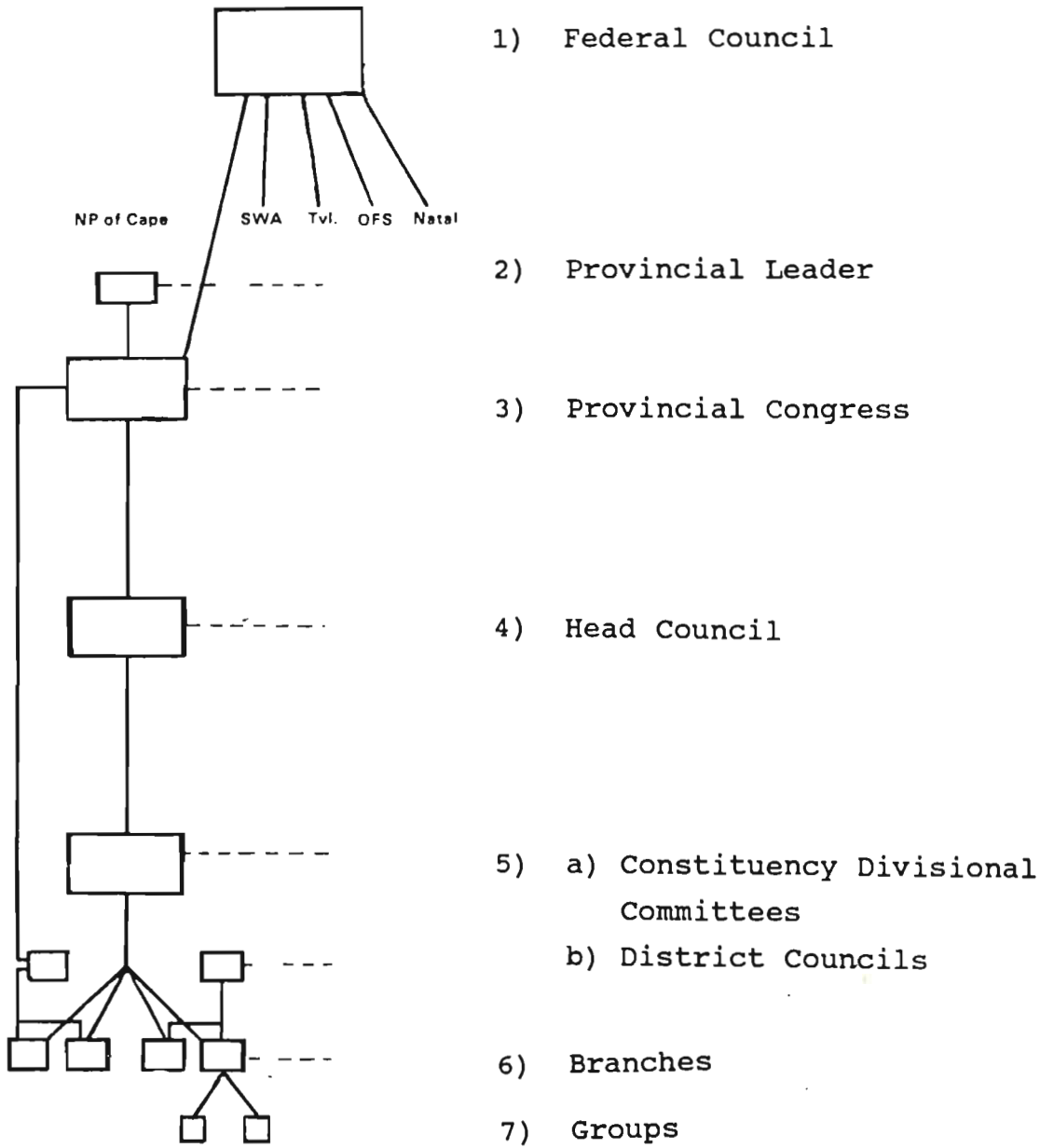
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12. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.248.

13. Ibid.

14. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.285

B) H.N.P./N.P. STRUCTURE



1. Federal Council

Met at least once a year. It comprised a) the Leader of the Party's Parliamentary caucus; b) 7 delegates from each Provincial Congress; c) one representative from the Nasionale Jeugbond.<sup>1</sup>

The Party was a federal organisation. The Federal Council could recommend amendments to the Party's principles or changes in organisation, but such alterations would come into effect only when they had been approved by the Provincial Congresses. The Federal Council could convene national congresses to discuss matters of special importance. This could only happen, however, after the Provincial Head Committees had given their consent. All decisions of these special conferences were advisory only.<sup>2</sup>

2. Provincial Leader

Chosen by the Provincial Congresses. The H.N.P./N.P. National leader was chosen by the Party's Parliamentary caucus.<sup>3</sup>

3. Provincial Congress

Met annually. In the Cape Province it comprised a) Members of the Head Council; b) Delegates from District Councils: 1 delegate for 500 and less members, an extra delegate for every subsequent 500, with a maximum of 6; c) Members of the Federal Council; Senators and M.P.C.s had the right to attend but could not vote.<sup>4</sup> In the Transvaal every branch

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1. D. Worrall (ed.): South Africa, Government and Politics, p.247.
  2. W.A. Kleynhans: South African Political Problems, p.106.
  3. Ibid., p.107.
  4. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.247.



had the right to send one or more delegates to the Provincial Congress. This meant that between 1 000 and 2 000 delegates attended Provincial Congresses in the Transvaal as opposed to only about 250 delegates in the Cape Province.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4. Head Council

The composition of the Cape Head Council differed slightly from the Head Committees in the Transvaal and Natal. The Cape Head Council consisted of a) the Provincial leader; b) 2 Deputy Chairmen of the Congress; c) the Congress Secretary; d) all Cape Ministers; e) Members of the Provincial Executive Committee; f) one man and one woman representative from each of seven geographic regions and 6 co-opted members.<sup>6</sup> In the Transvaal one member from each constituency which had an H.N.P./N.P. organisation was entitled to attend.<sup>7</sup>

The main function of the Head Council and Head Committees lay in their competence to exercise all the powers of the Provincial Congress on behalf of the Congress when it was not in session.<sup>8</sup> The Council and Committees were so large however that they could only meet infrequently. The actual control of the provincial affairs of the Party lay, therefore, in the hands of a Steering Committee. In the Transvaal the Steering Committee met monthly. Eight of its 14 members were chosen because of the offices they held, the other 6 were appointed to represent particular interests.<sup>9</sup> In the Cape, the Steering Committee was organised on a more informal basis, and consisted of those members of the Head

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5. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.226.
  6. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.247.
  7. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.224.
  8. W.A. Kleynhans, op. cit., p.104.
  9. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.225.

Council available for decisions at a given time.<sup>10</sup>

5(a) Constituency Divisional Committees

Each branch was granted representation on the Divisional Committee in accordance with its size. A maximum of 10 branch representatives was allowed.<sup>11</sup>

5(b) District Councils

Comprised the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary and elected representatives from each branch in the district. Not usually established in urban areas.<sup>12</sup>

These bodies were charged with the supervision, control and co-ordination of all branch activities. Prior to elections they constituted themselves into Election Committees.<sup>13</sup>

In areas where there was a recognised grouping of urban constituencies, such as on the Witwatersrand, the Cape Peninsula and in Pretoria, Advisory Councils co-ordinated activities. These Councils met once every three months.<sup>14</sup>

6. Branches

The Party in the Transvaal required at least 10 members per branch while, in the Cape Province, the minimum was 25 members. The Party in the Cape stipulated a maximum of 500 members per branch.<sup>15</sup> Membership was restricted to whites of 18 years of age (17 in Natal) and over.<sup>16</sup> In 1952 there

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10. Ibid.

11. D. Worrall, op. cit., p.247.

12. Ibid.

13. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.223.

14. Ibid., p.224.

15. Ibid., p.222.

16. Ibid., p.220.

were 1 200 N.P. branches in the Transvaal and 400 in the Orange Free State.<sup>17</sup>

7. Groups

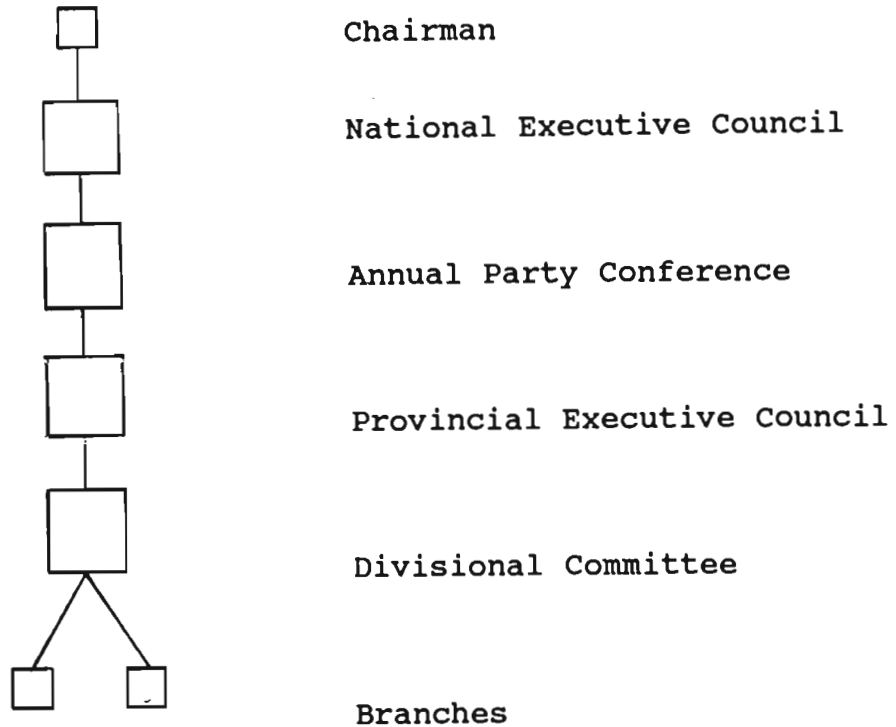
In mid-1951 Branches were sub-divided into Groups. At the head of each Group was a Group Leader, elected annually at a branch meeting by members of the Group or Branch.

The Leader was required to personally contact each member of his or her Group at least once every three months to keep them informed of Party activities and to ensure their active participation. The Leader was also directly responsible for canvassing for new members. It was at this level that the N.P. was able to maintain continuous and active propaganda.<sup>18</sup>

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17. Ibid., p.223.

18. Ibid., p.222.

c) L.P. STRUCTURE

L.P. Branches were controlled by Divisional Committees where numbers made this possible. The Divisional Committees were co-ordinated by Provincial Executive Councils elected by delegates to a Provincial Congress or, if these were lacking, by the provincial members of the National Executive Council.

The supreme organ of the Party was the Annual Conference, which was attended by delegates from each branch. The Chairman of the Party was elected annually by this Conference. Where the Conferences exercised its chief power, however, was in its formation of the Party's programme. Between Conferences, the Party was officially controlled by the National Executive Council. The latter consisted of 25 members elected at the Annual Conference and responsible to it. A small Head Office kept the Party's

records and acted as a central bureau.

The Party's constitution stated that not more than one-third of the National Executive Council might consist of M.P.s. It also declared that the Council, in consultation with the Parliamentary candidates, should define the Party's election strategy. In practice however the Parliamentary caucus was largely independent of Executive control.

G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.345.

APPENDIX IV

BACKGROUND TO THE SPRINGBOK LEGION

In December 1941 three Union Defense Force servicemen's organisations, representing primarily the interests of the non-commissioned ranks, fused to form the Springbok Legion. Sharply differentiating themselves from other service organisations, the three groups constituting the Legion insisted

that, if the ex-volunteers of World War II were to avoid the fate of 1914-1918 veterans, they must be able to influence directly the politics of the country in order to influence state action which would favour the proper rehabilitation of the ex-volunteer.<sup>1</sup>

The principle of "political action" was not limited to the rehabilitation of white ex-volunteers only, for the members of the Legion "felt very strongly that the co-operation amongst South Africans of all races on the battlefield should be carried over into civilian life."<sup>2</sup>

The Legion's principles and ex-volunteer character inevitably brought it into conflict with the H.N.P. On 18 September 1945 members of the Springbok Legion, after a mass meeting in Johannesburg, clashed with delegates to a special congress of the H.N.P. which had been called to discuss the "communist danger". The fighting resulted in 160 people being injured.<sup>3</sup>

The "communist" label which was attached by the H.N.P. to

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1. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B2.14.23, The Political Orientation and Activity of the Springbok Legion, n.d.
  2. Ibid.
  3. J.H. Hofmeyr Papers, Election Propaganda, Ons Stryd: Waarteen en Waarom, Springbok Legion, n.d.

the Legion gained greater credence when, in 1946, the movement's left wing captured control of its National Executive. Though, from that time, the Legion suffered a decline in membership,<sup>4</sup> its remaining members consistently denied that the organisation was a Communist Front. When, in June 1947, H.N.P. and a number of U.P. speakers in Parliament accused the Legion of having communist sympathies, a member of its National Executive explained to Mrs Ballinger:

We believe in racial co-operation and national harmony. With its complex multi-racial character, we believe that our country will progress only when we break away from the old racial antagonisms and hatreds, and when the different national groups will work together for the common good. We believe in the preservation and expansion of democratic principles and practice in our country. We believe in the Four Freedoms of the United Nations Charter, and the maintenance of world peace through the United Nations Organisation....This policy is no more, and no less, than a liberal democratic one such as is advocated by liberal political parties overseas. It is very far removed indeed from communist policy, but it has long been the practice in South Africa to stigmatise any liberal or progressive proposals, especially regarding the non-Europeans, as communist or communist inspired.<sup>5</sup>

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4. G.M. Carter wrote that the Legions membership "rose to about 3 000." G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.311. In mid-1947 the Legion claimed that it had "succeeded in organising 25 000 ex-soldiers around [our] progressive platform." V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B2.14.23, J. Cowitz to V.M.L. Ballinger, 28 June 1947.
5. V.M.L. Ballinger Papers, A410/B2.14.23, J. Cowitz to V.M.L. Ballinger, 28 June 1947.

APPENDIX V

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE NATIVE LAWS (FAGAN)  
COMMISSION AND A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE  
COMMISSION'S FINDINGS

- (1) The terms of reference of the Commission were: To inquire into and report upon:
- (i) The operation of the laws in force in the Union relating to Natives in or near urban areas, and in areas where Natives are congregated for industrial purposes other than mining;
  - (ii) The operation of the Native Pass Laws and any laws requiring the production by Natives of documents of identification;
  - (iii) The employment in mines and other industries of migratory labour; its economic and social effect upon the lives of the people concerned; and the future policy to be followed.

The members of the Commission were: Mr Justice Fagan (chairman), Messrs A.S. Welsh, K.C., A.L. Barrett and A.E. von Maltitz.

The Forum, 3 April 1948.

- (2) It was the view of the Commission that: "A course of events that can no longer be changed has made South Africa the common home of races differing so radically from each other that there can be no question of assimilation, yet economically and territorially so intertwined that they are simply compelled from moment to moment to regulate their contacts, to bridge their differences, and to settle their disputes." The suggestion made by the



Commission, therefore, was that there should be a non-ideological approach based upon a pragmatic day-to-day assessment of the problems with an attempt to obtain an equitable resolution of such problems. It was recognised that the "policy which we have chosen as our guiding principle is very vague and general", but it was felt that it had the advantage of an elasticity which "leaves us ample scope for judging each particular problem in the light of its own circumstances and for trying to find the most appropriate treatment for it."

H. Lever: South African Society, p.297.

No recommendations were made in regard to franchise rights.- Dr A.B. Xuma, President of the A.N.C., considered that the Commission's Report was a "typical South African political and legalistic document which recognises the facts of the situation but avoids recommending the obvious remedy. It merely wants to palliate the system within the framework of existing policy."

P. Walshe: The Rise of African Nationalism, p.286.

APPENDIX VI

SUMMARY OF H.N.P. RACE POLICY, 1948

Die huidige ongesonde stelsel wat toelaat dat Kleurlinge in Kaapland saam met blankes as kiesers geregistreer word en saam met die blankes vir dieselfde kandidate stem, sal afgeskaf word en die Kleurlinge sal deur drie blanke lede in die Volksraad verteenwoordig word. Hulle sal gekies word deur die Verteenwoordigende Kleurlingraad. Hierdie lede sal nie kan stem oor: (a) kwessies van vertroue, (b) oorlogsverklarings en (c) verandering van politieke regte van die nie-blankes nie. 'n Staatsdepartement van Kleurlingsake sal in die lewe geroep word.

In die Provinsiale Raad van Kaapland sal hulle deur drie blankes, gekies deur die Verteenwoordigende Kleurlingraad, verteenwoordig word.

Vir Kaapland sal 'n Verteenwoordigende Kleurlingraad in die lewe geroep word, wat sal bestaan uit verteenwoordigers gekies deur die Kleurlinge met die huidige kwalifikasies vir stemreg op 'n kiesafdelingsgrondslag, die hoof van die Departement van Kleurlingsake en verteenwoordigers deur die Regering benoem.

DIE NATURELLERESERWES

Die naturellereserwes moet die ware vaderland van die naturel word. Daar moet sy onderwysinrigtings staan en daar moet die betere dienste vir die naturel beskikbaar gestel word, in teenstelling met die huidige beleid wat dit in die stedelike lokasies beskikbaar stel. Prestige en aansien moet op alle terreine aan die naturelle in die reserwe gegee word, sodat hulle toonaangewend sal wees en as mondstukke

van die Bantoe kan optree.

'n Groter verskeidenheid van ekonomiese bedrywighede sal geleidelik tot stand gebring word om groter produktiwiteit en stabiliteit vir die reserwe te bewerkstellig en vir hierdie doel sal plannekomitees in die lewe geroep word.

#### NATURELLE IN STEDE

Die Party besef die gevaar van die toestroming van naturelle na die stede en onderneem om die blanke karakter van ons stede te bewaar en op kragtige en doeltreffende wyse te sorg vir die veiligheid van persone sowel as eiendomme en die vreedsame lewe van die bewoners.

Alle naturelle moet in aparte woonbuurte geplaas word en saamdromming in ons stedelike gebiede moet teengegaan word. Die naturel in ons stedelike gebiede moet beskou word as 'n "besoeker" wat nooit op enige politieke regte of gelyke maatskaplike regte met die blanke in sy gebiede sal kaan aanspraak maak nie.

#### POLITIEKE VERTEENWOORDIGING

Afgesien van die drie blanke Senatore wat die Regering volgens die grondwet benoem, weens hulle besondere kennis van naturellesake, sal die naturelle in die Senaat verteenwoordig word deur vier blanke Senatore, gekies deur die verskillende naturellerade. Hierdie sewe Senatore sal 'n staande komitee oor naturellesake uitmaak.

Die Naturelleverteenwoordigers sal nie kan stem oor:

- (1) kwessies van vertroue in 'n regering
- (2) oorlogverklarings
- (3) verandering van die politieke regte van nie-blankes nie.

Die verteenwoordiging van naturelle in die Volksraad en Provinsiale Raad sal afgeskaf word.

Die Kommissie oor Naturellesake sal vervang word deur 'n kommissie van deskundiges oor naturellesake. 'n Doeltreffende etnologiese instituut sal opgerig word.

#### BELEID TEENoor INDIERS

Die Party huldig die beskouing dat die Indiers 'n vreemde en uitheemse element is, wat nie assimileerbaar is nie. Hulle kan nooit eie aan ons land word nie en moet dus as 'n immigrante-gemeenskap behandel word.

Die Party aanvaar as grondslag van sy beleid die repatriasie van soveel Indiers as moontlik is en stel voor 'n deeglike ondersoek na die uitvoerbaarheid van so 'n beleid op groot skaal, in samewerking met Indië en/of ander lande. Met die oog op die erns van die vraagstuk moet Suid-Afrika gewillig wees, indien nodig, om groot finansiele opofferings vir die bereiking van hierdie doel te maak.

Geen Indier-immigrante sal in die land toegelaat word nie.

Solank Indiers nog in die land is sal 'n besliste beleid van apartheid tussen blankes en Indiers op all terreine toegepas word, en ook sover moontlik tussen die Indiers en ander inheemse nie-blanke groepe.

Die Wet op Grondbesit van Asiate en Stemreg aan Indiers van 1946 sal dadelik in hersiening geneem word.

U.P. Papers, National Party, Pamphlets and Brochures 1915-1953, Nasionale-Party se Kleurbeleid, n.d.

APPENDIX VII

VOTES CAST IN CONTESTED SEATS, MAY 1948

Region	Regist. Voters	Votes cast	% poll	Spoilt	%	U.P./L.P.	%	N.P./A.P.	%	C.P.	%	C.G.	%	S.A.P.	%	Inds.	%	Major.	%
CAPE																			
Cape Town area	119 501	91 998	77,0	726	0,8	66 037	71,8	10 345	11,2	1 009	1,1	1 392	1,5	2 223	2,4	10 266	11,2	55 692	60,5
Port Elizabeth	44 851	36 264	80,9	285	0,8	20 987	57,9	11 500	31,7	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 492	9,5	9 487	26,2
Border	50 704	39 521	77,9	267	0,7	28 506	72,1	-	-	-	-	3 451	8,7	2 241	5,7	5 056	12,8	17 758	44,9
Rest of Cape	279 290	243 334	87,1	2 069	0,9	100 665	41,4	135 261	55,6	-	-	-	-	-	-	5 339	2,2	34 596	14,2
Total Cape	494 346	411 117	83,2	3 347	0,8	216 195	52,6	157 106	38,2	1 009	0,2	4 843	1,2	4 464	1,1	24 153	5,9	59 089	14,4
TRANSVAAL																			
Johannesburg	125 003	86 477	69,2	630	0,7	56 287	65,1	18 299	21,2	774	0,9	2 257	2,9	831	1,0	7 129	8,2	37 988	43,9
Mitwatersrand	186 657	148 667	79,6	841	0,6	77 184	51,9	59 739	40,2	-	-	2 605	1,8	267	0,2	8 037	5,4	17 451	11,7
Pretoria	78 956	61 790	78,3	298	0,5	31 254	50,6	30 192	48,9	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	0,1	1 062	1,7
Rest of Transvaal	193 119	161 204	83,5	1 023	0,6	64 093	39,8	96 052	59,6	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	0,02	31 959	19,8
Total Transvaal	583 735	458 138	78,5	2 792	0,6	228 818	49,9	204 276	44,6	774	0,2	5 132	1,1	1 098	0,2	15 248	3,3	24 542	5,4
NATAL																			
Durban/Pieter-																			
maritzburg	93 870	68 022	72,5	394	0,6	50 347	74,0	1 793	2,6	-	-	3 859	5,7	5 169	7,6	6 460	9,5	48 554	71,4
Rest of Natal	46 126	37 515	81,3	231	0,6	22 533	60,1	11 962	31,9	-	-	1 626	4,3	1 163	3,1	-	-	10 571	28,2
Total Natal	136 996	105 537	75,4	625	0,6	72 880	69,1	13 755	13,0	-	-	5 485	5,2	6 332	6,0	6 460	6,1	59 125	56,0
Total O.F.S	120 466	100 536	83,5	629	0,6	29 544	29,4	68 141	67,8	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 222	2,2	38 597	38,4
Total Union	1 338 543	1 075 328	80,3	7 393	0,7	547 437	50,9	443 278	41,2	1 783	0,2	15 460	1,4	11 894	1,1	48 083	4,5	104 159	9,7

K.H. Heard : General Elections in South Africa, 1943 - 1970, p. 40.

APPENDIX VIII

TABLE ILLUSTRATING THE INCREASE IN NUMBERS ON THE  
VOTERS' ROLL IN SELECTED URBAN AREAS  
BETWEEN 1947 AND MAY 1948

	<u>No. on</u> <u>Roll</u> <u>1948</u>	<u>No. at</u> <u>Delimitation</u> <u>1947</u>	<u>Increase</u>
1. Bloemfontein City	10 642	10 017	525
2. Bloemfontein District	11 268	9 858	1 410
3. Kroonstad	10 136	8 962	1 174
4. Alberton	11 879	9 402	2 477
5. Edenvale	11 279	9 236	2 043
6. Hospital	11 897	9 480	2 417
7. Kempton Park	11 598	9 483	2 115
8. Krugersdorp	11 210	9 331	1 879
9. Maraisburg	13 355	9 288	4 067
10. Nigel	11 109	9 532	1 577
11. Roodepoort	11 085	9 466	1 619
12. Springs	11 111	9 760	1 351
13. Vereeniging	11 416	9 089	2 327
14. Cape Flats	11 225	10 124	1 101
15. East London North	11 312	10 673	639
16. Paarl	11 094	9 733	1 361
17. Parow	12 464	9 847	2 617
18. Port Elizabeth Central	11 144	10 388	756
19. Port Elizabeth District	11 522	10 179	1 343
20. Port Elizabeth North	11 227	10 397	830
21. Port Elizabeth South	11 297	10 370	927
22. Vasco	11 058	10 266	792
23. Wynberg	10 984	10 474	510
24. Kimberley City	10 926	10 397	529
25. Mowbray	10 869	10 205	664

26. South Peninsula	10 818	10 139	679
27. Uitenhage	10 958	9 609	1 349
28. Worcester	10 790	9 601	1 189
29. Durban Point	9 818	9 151	667
30. Durban Umlazi	10 058	9 231	<u>827</u>
			41 761

U.P. Papers, Division of Information, Internal Administration File, Evidence for Delimitation Commission, August 1952.

APPENDIX IXTHE SOUTH AFRICAN CABINET, JUNE 1948

Dr D.F. Malan, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

N.C. Havenga, Minister of Finance.

Dr E.G. Jansen, Minister of Native Affairs.

J.G. Strijdom, Minister of Lands and Irrigation.

C.R. Swart, Minister of Justice.

P.O. Sauer, Minister of Transport.

S.P. le Roux, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

E.H. Louw, Minister of Mines and Economic Development.

Dr A.J. Stals, Minister of Health, Welfare and Education.

Dr T.E. Dönges, Minister of the Interior and of Posts and Telegraphs.

F.C. Erasmus, Minister of Defence.

B.J. Schoeman, Minister of Labour and Public Works.



APPENDIX XRE-STATEMENT OF THE Native POLICY OF THE UNITED PARTY

1. In accordance with its Programme of Principles, the Party recognises European paramountcy and re-affirms the principle of Christian trusteeship towards the Native peoples as a permanent part of the population.
2. The Party's Native Policy is based on a recognition of the factual position, more especially -
  - (a) the differences between Europeans and Natives.
  - (b) the existence, in addition to the Natives in the Reserves, of a settled Native population on farms and in urban areas.
3. The Party therefore stands -
  - (a) for the maintenance of a policy of social and residential separation and the avoidance of race intermixture, and
  - (b) for the development, while taking account of the facts of difference referred to, of the Native peoples in their own and the country's interests.
4. Such development shall take place -
  - (a) in the Native Reserves as the national and cultural base of the Native races, with a view to the increase of their carrying capacity, the spiritual and material advancement of the peoples dwelling there, the promotion of their progressive self-government, and the establishment of village centres provided with facilities for the development of appropriate handicrafts and industries.
  - (b) in European areas, both urban and rural, in such manner as will take account of the increasing part played by the Natives in the economic life of those areas, and more especially by the elimination of slums and shanty towns, and the creation, where necessary, of separate Native townships for permanent residence, provided with proper health, educational, social and transport services, which shall progressively be administered by the Natives themselves, under European guidance.
  - (c) by the provision of the necessary training

facilities to enable Natives to play their part in the service of their people.

5. In respect of Native political rights, the United Party stands for the maintenance of the 1936 Settlement, with the provisions made by it for the existing representation of the Natives by Europeans in the Senate and the House of Assembly, the Cape Provincial Council, and for the establishment of the Natives Representative Council. It favours, further, the development and expansion of the function and usefulness of the Council in relation to Native areas, under the general authority of Parliament.
6. The Party also stands for -
  - (a) a system of labour registration and exchanges for the regulation of the flow of labour to the various areas and services requiring such labour, with due regard to the needs of agriculture.
  - (b) a system of regulated Native industrial organisation under Government supervision, and
  - (c) the improvement and simplification of the Native Pass Law system.

While the Party recognises the continued need for migrant labour in certain industries, it considers that in so far as Natives are required in industry, agriculture, or domestic service, and can be suitably accommodated in separate Native townships, or in connection with their employment, they should be free to take up such employment subject to the system of labour registration as referred to above.

7. In general, and as an overall objective, the Party aims at maintaining and promoting goodwill and understanding in racial relationships in the abiding interests of the country as a whole.

Appended to the Re-Statement of Native Policy was a Statement in Regard to the United Party's Policy Towards the Coloured People.

1. The policy of the United Party in relation to the Cape Coloured people is based on the recognition of the special position which the Coloured people occupy in our multiracial society and of the desirability of raising the standards and improving the living conditions of the Coloured people.

2. In regard to political rights, the United Party re-affirms the principle laid down by General Hertzog "that the Coloured people are not to be deprived of their existing political rights and (the United Party) will resist any proposals to change their franchise in a manner that would diminish these rights."
3. In regard to economic status, the United Party will continue to foster wider opportunities for employment and stands for the principle that Coloured people at the Cape shall not by reason of their race or colour be debarred from engaging in any form of industrial occupation or employment, and for the provision of facilities for their vocational training. The United Party will take steps to ensure that they will be provided with proper amenities in connection with their employment in factories.
4. In regard to social status, the United Party, recognising that the maintenance of social separation is in accordance with the desire of both Coloureds and Europeans, stands for the improved and increased provision of housing, educational, social and health amenities for the Coloured people, in such a manner as to stimulate, on a voluntary basis, the development of separate Coloured residential areas, with powers of local self-government for such areas and the conduct of the various administrative, civic and other services in such areas by Coloured people themselves.

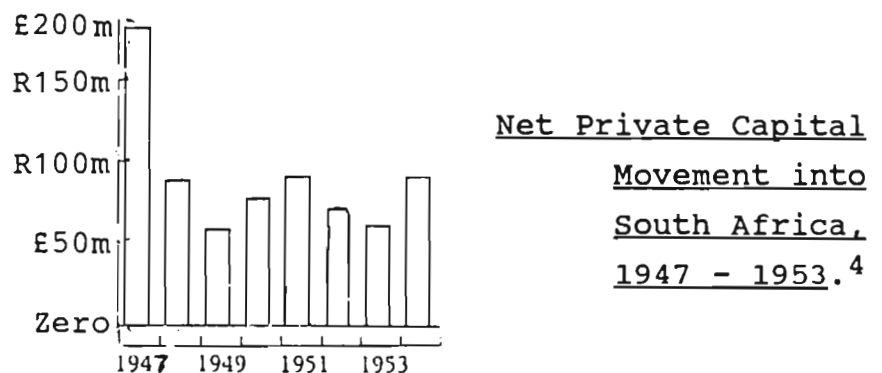
J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.277, No.99, A Re-Statement of the Native Policy of the United Party, n.d.

APPENDIX XI

THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, 1948-1953

As a developing country South Africa was a debtor-borrower. The deficit on the current account, which between the years 1946 - 1953 averaged £112.5 million per annum, was generally covered by the sale of gold and by the inflow of foreign investment capital.<sup>1</sup>

In the years immediately following the Second World War the capital inflow was large. This was particularly the case in 1947 when, partly because of fears of a capital levy in Britain, it reached £178,5 million.<sup>2</sup> The average annual capital inflow during the years 1947 to 1954 was £88 million.<sup>3</sup>

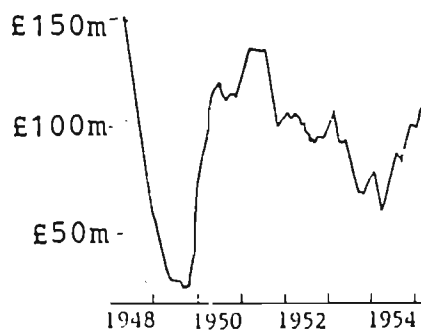


Despite the high level of foreign investment there were balance-of-payments crises during the periods 1948-9 and 1953-4.

The crisis of 1948-9 was due to imports in excess of the country's export earnings so large that a capital inflow of £178,5 million, £86,5 million and £75,5 million

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1. D. Hobart Houghton: The South African Economy, p.181.
  2. Ibid., p.183.
  3. Ibid.
  4. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson (eds): The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol.II, p.40.

respectively, in the years 1947, 1948 and 1949 was inadequate to offset the deficit in the balance-of-payments.<sup>5</sup> The escalation in imports was due in part to pent-up consumer demand, to the importation of capital equipment for the development of the Orange Free State gold mines and to general industrial expansion.<sup>6</sup> The 1949 devaluation of the South African pound, in concert with devaluation by other countries in the sterling area, restored the position by discouraging imports from the non-sterling area and by raising the price of gold. As a consequence the country's reserves of foreign exchange rose during 1950 by about £71 million.<sup>7</sup>



Gold and Foreign  
Exchange Reserves,  
1948 - 1954.<sup>8</sup>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Revenue (£'000)</u>	
1945	20 141	
1946	18 016	
1947	11 366	
1948	6 321	<u>State Revenue</u>
1949	7 407	<u>from Gold and</u>
1950	11 875	<u>Uranium Mining</u>
1951	22 680	<u>1945-1953.</u> <sup>9</sup>
1952	22 915	
1953	16 219	

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5. D. Hobart Houghton, op. cit., p.184.  
6. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson, op. cit., p.38.  
7. D. Hobart Houghton, op. cit., p.184.  
8. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson, op. cit., p.38.  
9. D. Innes, Anglo-American and the Rise of Modern South Africa, p.257.

However, the continued high rate of investment in both the private and public sectors of the economy not only further stimulated inflation but had, by 1953, again brought pressure to bear upon the country's foreign exchange reserves.<sup>10</sup> The late 1953 imposition of monetary and fiscal restraints relieved the pressure upon the reserves.<sup>11</sup>

<u>Year Ending</u> <u>June</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Establishments</u>	<u>Total Employment</u> <u>(Thousands)</u>	<u>Value of</u> <u>Net Output</u> <u>(£ millions)</u>
1945	9 316	361	138
1946	9 642	379	152,5
1947	9 999	397	173,5
1948	11 376	434	200,5
1949	12 060	473	228,5
1950	12 517	498	256
1951	12 983	543	311
1952	12 887	576	350
1953	13 260	596	387,5

Growth of Private Manufacturing Industry, 1945-1953.<sup>12</sup>

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10. D. Hobart Houghton, op. cit., p.184.

11. Ibid., p.184.

12. Ibid., p.286.

<u>Year</u>	<u>G.D.P. at Market Price (£ millions)</u>	<u>Real % Increase on previous year</u>
1946	875,5	-
1947	966	5,4
1948	1 068	8,6
1949	1 145	2,4
1950	1 331	5,7
1951	1 454,5	8,5
1952	1 558	2,7
1953	1 768,5	5,2

Gross Domestic Product 1946-1953.<sup>13</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Wholesale - All Goods</u>	<u>Retail - All Items</u>
1945	58,4	68,7
1946	59,8	69,7
1947	62,7	72,6
1948	67,0	76,8
1949	70,7	79,6
1950	75,7	82,8
1951	86,5	88,9
1952	99,2	96,6
1953	100,0	100,0

Indices of Prices 1945 to 1953.<sup>14</sup>

(Base = 1953 = 100)

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13. Ibid., p.274.

14. Ibid., p.293.

APPENDIX XIIMEMBERS OF THE UNITED PARTY ACTION COMMITTEE,  
DECEMBER 1948

Chairman: J.C. Smuts

Members of the existing Central Executive:

Senator A.M. Conroy,	Chairman, Cape Provincial Head Committee
Dr C.F. Steyn, M.P.	Chairman, Free State Provincial Head Committee
P. Bailey Bekker, M.E.C.	Vice-Chairman, Transvaal Provincial Head Committee
Leo R. Caney	Chairman, Natal Provincial Head Committee
Senator H. Tucker	Chairman, Witwatersrand General Council
R.J. du Toit, M.P.	Chairman, Cape Peninsula Council
J.W. Higgerty, M.P.	Chief Whip and Hon. Union Treasurer

Co-opted members:

Natal:

D.E. Mitchell, M.P.	
Dr Louis Steenkamp M.P.	Vice-Chairman, Natal Provincial Head Committee

O.F.S.

Louis Ellenberger	Hon. Treasurer, O.F.S.
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Cape:

J.W. Mushet, M.P.

Vice-Chairman, Cape Provincial  
Head Committee

Sir de Villiers Graaff, M.P.

Harry Oppenheimer, M.P.

F.W. Cooper

Chairman, Border & North-  
Eastern  
Districts General CouncilTransvaal:

H.C. de Klerk

Chairman, Pretoria General  
Council

J.G.N. Strauss, M.P.

A.E.P. Robinson, M.P.

Officials:

O.A. Oosthuizen

General Secretary

S.J. Marais Steyn, M.P.

Assistant General Secretary

U.P. Papers, Central Executive Committee Minutes and  
Annexures 1941-1952, Vol.I, No.171, Meeting of the Central  
Executive Committee, 6 December 1948.

APPENDIX XIIITHE DISTRIBUTION OF UNITED PARTY GENERAL COUNCILS,  
FEBRUARY 1949

	<u>General Council</u>	<u>No. of Constituencies</u>
<u>Transvaal</u>	(66 seats)	
	Witwatersrand	36
	Pretoria	8

The remaining seats were controlled by the Transvaal Provincial Office. By July 1950 a Platteland Council had been formed to control these seats.

<u>Cape Province</u>	(55 seats)	
	Peninsula	14
	East London & Border	9
	Port Elizabeth	8

The remaining seats were controlled by the Cape Provincial office. By July 1950 a Kimberley General Council had been formed which controlled 5 of these remaining seats.

Natal (16 seats)

Because the Zululand and South Coast constituencies could not conveniently be included in the existing Durban, Midlands or Northern Districts General Councils, the organisation of these Councils had, by July 1950, undergone considerable change:

Natal South Coast	10
Midlands	3
Rural Districts	3

Orange Free State (13 seats)

All of the constituencies were controlled by the Provincial office.

U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Vol.I, Provisional Report of the Sub-Committee Appointed by the Action Committee to Consider Whether Changes are Necessary and to Make Recommendations Concerning the Organisation of the United Party Throughout the Union, 14 February 1949.

J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, 27 July 1950 - 2 August 1950, The United Party Division of Organisation, n.d.

## APPENDIX XIV

TABLE OF VOTES CAST AND ESTIMATED  
VOTES IN THE 1949 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

	United Party	H.N.P	Labour Party	Indepen- dents	Totals
<u>Transvaal</u> : 23 contested seats. Ermelo credit to H.N.P.	168 061	184 700	10 172	3 112	366 045
<u>Cape Province</u> : 38 contested seats.	154 962	148 584	6 373	7 704	317 623
<u>Natal</u> : 17 contested seats.	45 436	14 650	2 335	6 318	68 739
<u>Orange Free State</u> : 23 contested seats.	25 002	57 122		37	82 161
	393 461	405 056	18 880	17 171	834 568
<u>UNCONTESTED SEATS ALLOWANCE TO UNITED PARTY:</u>					
2 Seats O.F.S. not contested 750 per seat.	1 500				
8 seats Natal obtained unopposed 3 500 per seat.	28 000				
12 seats Cape obtained unopposed 5 000 per seat.	60 000				
5 seats Cape not contested 1 500 per seat.	7 500				
14 seats Transvaal obtained unopposed 5 000 per seat.	70 000				
2 seats Transvaal not contested 2 000 per seat.	4 000				
<u>UNCONTESTED SEATS ALLOWANCE TO H.N.P.:</u>					
2 Seats O.F.S. obtained unopposed 2 500 per seat.		5 000			
16 seats Natal not contested 500 per seat.		8 000			
12 seats Cape where U.P. unopposed 1 000 per seat.		12 000			
5 seats Cape obtained unopposed 4 500 per seat.		22 500			
4 seats Cape Peninsula not con- tested 500 per seat.		2 000			
14 seats Transvaal not contested 1 000 per seat.		14 000			
2 seats Transvaal obtained unopposed 5 000 per seat.		10 000			
1 seat Transvaal not contested 500 per seat		500			
	564 461	479 056	18 880	17 171	1 079 568

U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Central Action Committee Minutes 1949 - 1950,  
How the Voting went in the Provincial Council Elections, 1949

APPENDIX XV

FINANCIAL STANDING OF THE BRANCHES AND  
AFFILIATED TRADE UNIONS OF THE S.A. LABOUR PARTY  
AS AT THE END OF THE THIRD QUARTER 1949

<u>Branch/Union</u> <u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliated</u> <u>Strength</u>	<u>Quarters</u> <u>Paid</u>	<u>In</u> <u>Standing</u>
Benoni Branch	50	1st quarter	No
Bez-Valley-Kensington	20	do	No
Cape Town	15	do	No
Concession Stores	100	none	No
Doornfontein	52	1st quarter	No
Durban Central	101	1st do	No
East London	20	1st do	No
Fordsburg	25	1st do	No
Germiston	20	1st do	No
Krugersdorp	10	none	No
Malvern	20	3rd quarter	Yes
Motor Industry Employees' Union	800	2nd do	No
Norwood	10	4th do	Yes
Port Elizabeth	15	2nd do	No
Randfontein	15	4th do	Yes
Rosettenville	10	none	No
Springs	10	1st quarter	No
Troyeville	12	1st do	No
Umbilo	10	4th do	Yes
Vereeniging	60	none	No
von Brandis	15	3rd quarter	Yes
Yeoville	40	4th quarter	Yes

Garment Workers' Union	1,000	4th quarter	Yes
Hillex	15	3rd do	Yes

S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 6, File 2, Financial Standing of Branches of the S.A. Labour Party as at the End of the Third Quarter 1949.

APPENDIX XVITHE OBJECTIVES AND TRUSTEES OF  
THE UNITED SOUTH AFRICA TRUST FUND

To assist in the building up of a United Democratic South African Nation on the basis of the accepted constitution of the Union of South Africa and the elimination of racialism and other factors tending to the disruption or the abandonment of democratic principles.

To assist in encouraging goodwill and co-operation on a basis of full equality between the various sections of the European population of South Africa.

To promote under European Leadership full understanding, co-operation and goodwill between all the races who make up the population of the Union.

To foster, encourage and protect the ideals of freedom of speech, language, worship and the fundamental rights of man as recognised by the Member States of the United Nations.

To encourage and promote the economic development of the Union under private enterprise in the best interests of the people of the Country.

To encourage and assist in the best use being made of the natural resources of the Union, in particular by encouraging and supplementing measures to conserve water and to combat soil erosion.

The Fund shall consist of all moneys and property which may be donated to the Fund from time to time, and shall be vested in the Trustees. The Trustees are:

H.F. OPPENHEIMER (Chairman)

P.M. ANDERSON

E. GALLO

R.B. HAGART

J.W. HIGGERTY

C.E. JAMES

C.H. LEON

C.S. MCLEAN

G.E.D. ORPEN

E.B. PAGDEN

SENATOR THE

HON. H. TUCKER

J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/7/1, 27 July 1950 -  
2 August 1950, National Campaign to Create a United South  
Africa Through the United Party, n.d.



APPENDIX XVIISUMMARY OF NINE-POINT RE-STATEMENT OF UNITED PARTY POLICY1. A United South Africa Under the Act of Union

Under the provisions of the South Africa Act, the King is expressly declared an essential part of the parliamentary system of the Union. The United Party is opposed to the elimination of the King from our Constitution and its change into a republican form of government.

The United Party also stands by the solemn pledges, as given under the Constitution, for the maintenance of the rights of the Natives and Coloured peoples. That question which is now paramount in the party struggle in South Africa, is dealt with and is definitely settled in the terms and provisions of the South Africa Act, and the Union is bound by very solemn pledges to which all four old colonies agreed. On both these points the United Party opposes the republican and the "apartheid" propaganda today of the Nationalist Party. That is Point Number One, first in priority, and in importance in the policy of this Party, and it is based on the most solemn document in the history of South Africa.

2. A United South African Nation

National unity must be the rampart behind which the democratic freedoms of the people will be entrenched.

Absolute equality between the European races is essential to national unity.

3. The Freedom and Dignity of the Individual

To the United Party the individual, each man and each woman, is all-important. The State is but a means through which the greatest fulfilment and happiness can be achieved. Our Party is opposed to "Stateism", the regulation and domination of the State in the affairs of the people. And from this fact, that to us the individual citizen is the basic element in the formation of the nation, follow a number of consequences. For instance, there follows: freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association under the law, limited only so far as it is necessary to protect the similar freedoms of each individual.

The Party will oppose all secret societies whose object is to impose sectional, racial or other domination, and to undermine the Constitution or the free democratic administration of the land. Where such societies exist their affairs will be inquired into and a stop will be put to their mischievous activities after due inquiry.

4. White Leadership with Justice

As against the negative, repressive "apartheid" policy to which the Government is pledged. The United Party stands for white leadership in South Africa as being essential in the true interests, not only of the Europeans, but also of the non-Europeans in South Africa. While it is opposed to equality, it is equally opposed to this purely negative policy of "apartheid".

The Party will bring about and maintain residential and social separation between the races of different colour, but accepts the fact that the non-European is part of our community and essential to the economic

progress of South Africa, and is entitled to his just reward. The United Party will continue positive measures for non-European welfare, in education, in health, in housing, in making provision for his betterment in his reserves and urban settlements in European areas, and also in the fair measure of self-government and self-administration which will be continuously extended to them.

The United Party has always been anxious to keep the Native question out of the arena of party politics, and would still welcome a national agreement which would eliminate this question from the present unfortunate party warfare. But the United Party cannot agree to any settlement which would vitiate the sacred pledges and provisions of the South Africa Act on this point. Unless, therefore, the Nationalist Party agrees to abide by the South Africa Act and drops this attack on it in its apartheid policy the United Party sees no chance to come to a settlement with them on this issue. On this issue the South Africa Act binds us and binds us finally and conclusively, and we must stand by the South Africa Act.

5. The Western Way of Life

Of the Western nations, those within our Commonwealth of Nations are nearest in spirit and outlook and interests to South Africa, and the United Party recognises the special bonds between us. It will maintain them and oppose all attempts to loosen them.

6. Housing, Employment and Security for the Breadwinner and his Family

The first essential for such security is a state of full employment for all. But when misfortune strikes

the family through sickness, old age, loss of the bread-winner or other causes beyond individual control, the State must step in with its helping hand.

The second essential is health and housing for the family.

7. Improving Standards of Life Through the Efficient Development of All the Nation's Resources

The United Party believes that the economic resources of South Africa are only beginning to be tapped.

It accepts that the principle of private enterprise should operate to the benefit, not only of the employer, but also of the workers. It will encourage healthy trade unionism among the workers, free from political domination, and free to further the interests of the workers.

8. A True South African Culture

Both racial constituents of our nation will be assisted to lead a full life, finding expression in varied cultural activities in a spirit of healthy co-operation, as equal contributors to a broader and richer South African culture.

By the education together of our children as South Africans and the creation of a common South African sentiment and patriotism, the Party will strive to create a situation such that the spiritual riches of both Afrikaans- and English-speaking South Africans will come to be regarded by all the people as their common possession.

9. Maintenance of Confidence in South Africa

It is the policy of the United Party to restore the confidence of the outside world in South Africa - confidence, the loss of which has led to the economic and financial setback from which the country has been suffering since the Nationalist Government came into power.

U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Vol.I, The United Party: Its Re-Statement of Policy, n.d.

APPENDIX XVIIITEN-POINT PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE H.N.P. (TRANSVAAL)

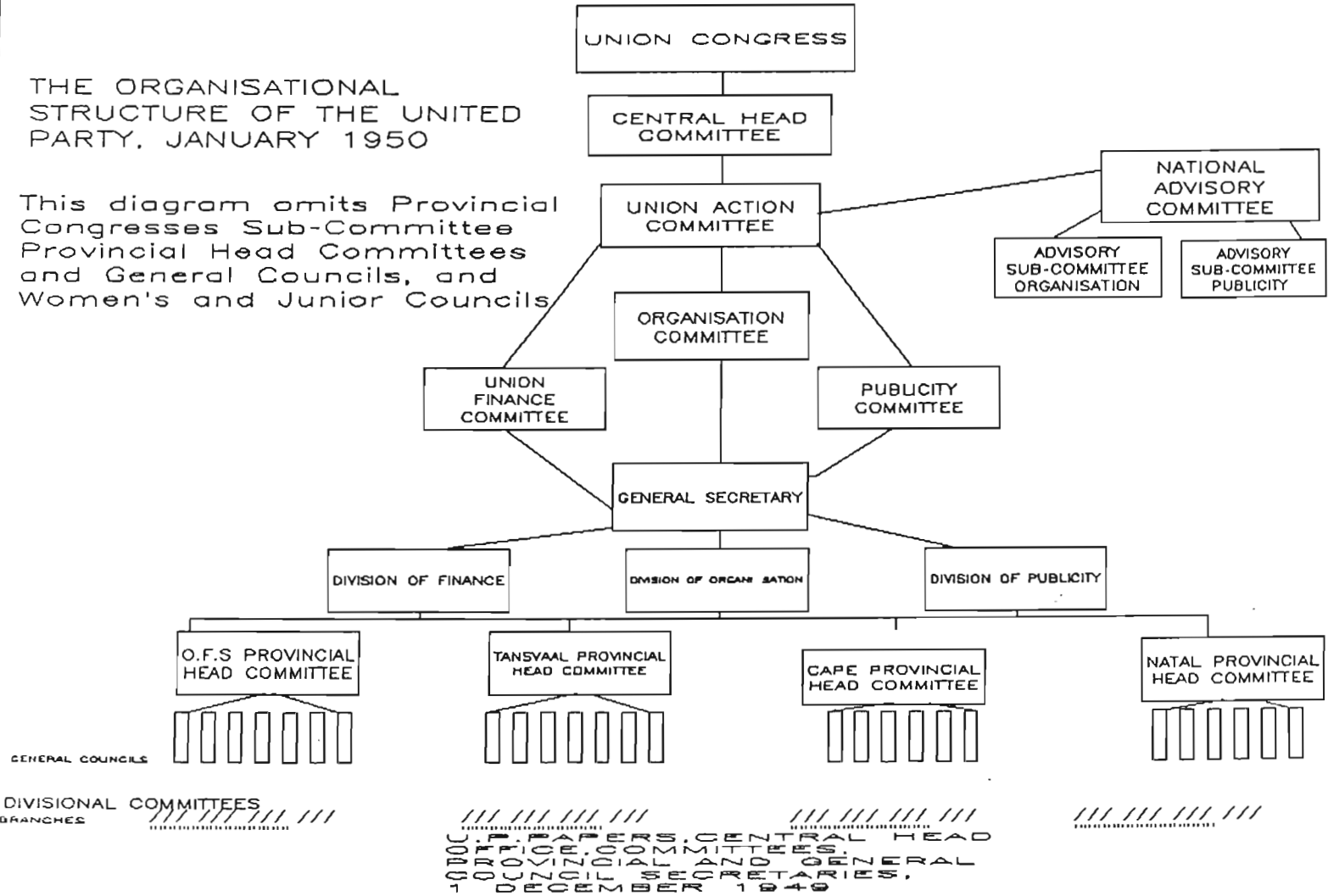
1. Stable government.
2. Apartheid and White Baasskap.
3. Anti-Communist action without the paralysing and undermining intervention of opponents.
4. A firm attitude towards outside interference.
5. Honesty, fairness and decency in politics, which must be maintained at a high level.
6. Economic development
7. Equal rights for English and Afrikaans-speaking.
8. Fighting alongside England and other African Powers for the defence of Africa.
9. Co-operation with the West against Communism.
10. Inflexible dedication to the complete independence and self-determination of South Africa as expressed in the Republican ideal.

The Forum, 16 September 1950, p.6.

APPENDIX XIX

THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED PARTY, JANUARY 1950

This diagram omits Provincial Congresses Sub-Committee Provincial Head Committees and General Councils, and Women's and Junior Councils



APPENDIX XXTHE UNITED PARTY'S POST-WAR DEPORTATION POLICY  
IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

"During the war, when the highest degree of security was essential, many German Nationals were interned. After the war a general demand arose that all those who had been active Nazis should be deported so that they could never become the spearhead of renewed Nazi activity in South Africa.

All political parties in Parliament - the Nationalist too - agreed that active Nazis had to go. The Nats., of course, so qualified their agreement that it was quite worthless. They especially attacked the Government on the procedure followed in deciding the fate of these Germans.

This question of procedure is therefore all that is at issue.

The fact is that the procedure followed was most lenient. The Government could have deported, had it so wished, every German National in the Union. Instead it appointed a judicial committee to consider each case individually and to determine which were to be deported.

The Deportation Commission, under the Chairmanship of Mr Justice de Villiers, was appointed on March 1, 1946. It had to recommend for deportation, with his dependants, any enemy alien who was a leader or who took a leading or active part in the Nazi-organisation, or whose actions promoted foreign interests against the Union, or who had elected to return to Germany and whose presence in the Union or South West Africa was in the opinion of the Commission



incompatible with the safety of the Union against a recurrence of Nazism.

After the appointment of the Commission an Act of Parliament was passed - No.52 of 1946 - which authorised the Government to deport those internees, and only those, whom the Commission might recommend for deportation.

The Commission took the broadest and most favourable view of its discretion to refrain from recommending deportation, as appears from its report. Thus the political confusion and misunderstanding in connection with dual nationality, birth, or long residence in South West Africa, or contribution to its development, old age, youth, illness, marriage to Union Nationals - all were taken into consideration as mitigating circumstances.

Altogether 5 270 cases were submitted to the Commission, but 3 100 were completely absolved. The remaining 2 100 received closer scrutiny as they were at least prima facie guilty. The measure of the Commission's leniency appears from the fact that of these 2 100 only 254 were recommended for deportation. The others were to remain in the Union on temporary permit and subject to police surveillance. They were to be subject to deportation if ever their subsequent behaviour necessitated such action.

=====

The Government accepted the Commission's recommendations but reserved the right to extend mercy in exceptional cases. The report was debated in Parliament on June 3, 1946, and those who wished to appeal to the Cabinet for special consideration were given until August 15, 1947.

More than 236 of the 254 availed themselves of this concession. Each appeal was fully examined and considered, but only 19 were considered to merit grace and they were placed on the suspended list. It must be emphasised that the 19 internees who have been taken off the deportation list were not guiltless. Their reprieve was an act of mercy because of very special circumstances. It is not in any instance to be regarded as a vindication or an acquittal.

The whole question of deportation has now dragged on for almost two years. The actions of the Government have throughout been determined by justice tempered with humanity. It is contrary to the public interest that there should be any further delay. During this month 244 German Nazis will report for deportation and the Government has finally decided that no further exceptions can be made without reducing an essential measure for the safety of the State to a farce."

J.C. Smuts Papers, Vol.389/3, General Election, Party Letter No.5, Deportation of German Nazis, October 1947.

APPENDIX XXITHE AFRIKAANS AND ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The diverse complexion of those sections of the South African press catering, between 1948 and 1953, for white English or Afrikaans-speaking readers can be explained in terms of the different origins of English and Afrikaans-language newspapers.

Most of the English-language papers were established in the latter part of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century. They modelled themselves on Fleet Street, championed the cause of British imperialism and, controlled in the main by mining and commercial interests, served "as the direct instruments of financial and commercial power."<sup>1</sup>

While the not uncritical support of these newspapers for the U.P. was, for the latter, a "fortunate accidental asset",<sup>2</sup> the relationship between the bulk of the Afrikaans-language press and the parties which supported Afrikaner exclusivity was particularly close. This was so because the Afrikaans-language dailies were

a peoples' press, springing originally out of the same drive for self-expression as did Hertzog's National Party, and financed solely by local Afrikaans capital, much of it contributed by thousands of small shareholders.<sup>3</sup>

The majority of the Afrikaans-language newspapers were, as a result, opinion journals rather than newspapers.<sup>4</sup>

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1. D. Geldenhuys: The Diplomacy of Isolation, p.182.
  2. A.H. Jonker Papers, File 116, Political Organisation, n.d.
  3. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.38.
  4. Ibid.

While the startling difference in presentation between English- and Afrikaans-language papers prevented each from playing a significant role in integrating the two communities, there was, nonetheless, a small, shared readership. Surveys, for example, in the early 1950s in the Johannesburg area, indicated that 1 to 4 per cent of English-speakers normally read an Afrikaans daily while 20 to 40 per cent of Afrikaans-speakers read an English paper.<sup>5</sup> The differences in size of the latter percentages in relation to the former were because Afrikaans-speakers were more often bilingual than were English-speakers and because the tendency of the Afrikaans press to concentrate on domestic to the virtual exclusion of foreign news,<sup>6</sup> made the English-language papers more newsworthy.

It was also very likely for these reasons, and because the English press' predominantly urban readership was more accessible than was the largely rural readership of the Afrikaans press, that the circulation of the former far outstripped the circulation of the latter. The Star, the Rand Daily Mail, the Cape Argus, the Cape Times and the Natal Mercury each had a larger circulation than the most widely read of the Afrikaans newspapers, Die Vaderland.<sup>7</sup> In terms of total circulation the 5 Afrikaans-language dailies together sold some 138 000 to 153 000 copies each day while the 13 English-language dailies sold between 586 000 and 617 000 copies.<sup>8</sup>

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5. Ibid.

6. J. Wessels: Die Samehang van Koerant en Politieke Party, p.115.

7. G.M. Carter, op. cit., p.40.

8. Ibid.

Apart from the broad division between the English- and Afrikaans-language press there were also differences between the papers within each group.

Despite their affiliations, the Argus and Rand Daily Mail newspapers enjoyed considerable editorial independence. The Rand Daily Mail, in particular, was usually outspokenly liberal on those issues affecting Africans.<sup>9</sup> The privately-owned Natal Mercury, while claiming to be politically independent, was a staunch defender of what it considered to be Natal's interests.<sup>10</sup>

In the Afrikaans-language press stable Die Transvaler, Die Vaderland and Die Burger differed in a number of ways from each other for each tended to reflect the political views of its board of directors. D.F. Malan and C.R. Swart were on the board of Die Nasionale Pers, which owned Die Burger while J.G. Strijdom, C.R. Swart, F.C. Erasmus, T.E. Dönges and H.F. Verwoerd were on the board of Die Voortrekker Pers, which owned Die Transvaler. N.C. Havenga was chairman of Die Afrikaanse Pers, which owned Die Vaderland.<sup>11</sup>

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9. Ibid., p.41.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., p.39.

APPENDIX XXI

CIRCULATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS

DAILIES	PLACE	TIME	APPROXIMATE CIRCULATION 1952-1953	READERSHIP SURVEY JAN - FEB 1951 PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS (OVER 16) READERS IN EUROPEAN POPULATION	URBAN-RURAL DISTRIBUTION 1953	AFRIKAANS, ENGLISH AND OTHER READERS			GROUP AFFILIATION
						A.	E.	O.	
1. Die Burger	Cape Town	a.m.	34- 40,000	20,6 % in Cape Province	25-75 %	90%	10%		Nasionale Pers Beperk
2. Die Transvaler	Johannesburg	a.m.	36- 39,000	16,7 % in Transvaal	48-52 %	99%	1%		Independent
3. Die Vaderland	Johannesburg	p.m.	41- 43,000	18,1 % in Transvaal	65-35 %	99%	1%		Independent
4. Die Volksblad	Bloemfontein	p.m.	19- 22,000	36,7 % in Free State					Nasionale Pers Beperk
5. Die Oosterlig	Port Elizabeth	p.m.	8- 9,000						Nasionale Pers Beperk
		T, F							
6. Cape Times	Cape Town	a.m.	56- 60,000	23,5 % in Cape Province		(1949) 26,3% 28,3%	71,3% 69,8%	2,4% 1,9%	Independent
							Weekend		
7. Cape Argus	Cape Town	p.m.	88- 94,000	26,7 % in Cape Province					Argus Group
8. The Star	Johannesburg	p.m.	138- 145,000	39,4 % in Transvaal	84-16 %				Argus Group
9. Rand Daily Mail	Johannesburg	a.m.	108- 113,000	34,5 % in Transvaal	88-12 %	21,8% (1950)	65,4%	12,8%	With Sunday Times and Express
10. The Pretoria News	Pretoria	p.m.	14- 15,000						Argus Group
11. The Friend	Bloemfontein	a.m.	10- 11,000	19,2 % in Free State					Partially owned by Argus Group
12. Diamond Field Advertiser	Kimberley	a.m.	5- 5,500						Argus Group
13. The Natal Mercury	Durban	a.m.	45- 48,000	51,9 % in Natal	66-34 %	10%	90 %		Independent
14. The Natal Daily News	Durban	p.m.	53- 55,000	52,1 % in Natal					Argus Group
15. The Natal Witness	Pietermaritzburg	a.m.	12- 12,500	13,0 % in Natal					Independent
16. Daily Despatch	East London	a.m.	17- 18,000	8,0 % in Cape Province					Independent
17. Eastern Province Herald	Port Elizabeth	a.m.	22- 23,000	9,7 % in Cape Province					With Evening Post
18. Evening Post	Port Elizabeth	p.m.	18- 19,000						With Eastern Province Herald
19. Sunday Newspapers:									
1. Dagbreek en Sondag Nuus	Johannesburg		100- 104,000	15,7 % in Union					Independent
2. Sunday Times	Johannesburg		285- 290,000	36,6 % in Union	82-18 %	27,6%	58,3%	14,1%	Same Management as Rand Daily Mail
3. Sunday Express	Johannesburg		107- 108,000	16,5 % in Union					Under Sunday Times
4. Sunday Tribune and Sunday Post	Durban		95- 96,000	9,4 % in Union					Argus Group

Carter : The Politics of Inequality, p. 460.

APPENDIX XXII

HISTORY AND ORGANISATION OF THE JUNIOR UNITED PARTY

Neither the South African Party nor, when it was established in 1934, the U.P. had any constitutional provision for a separate youth organisation. The need for such a body soon became apparent though with the establishment, by the G.N.P., of the Nasionale Jeugbond in 1938.<sup>1</sup>

However, although the Cape U.P. established a Junior U.P. Front in 1941 no similar effort was made in the other provinces.<sup>2</sup> It was only after its General Election defeat that the U.P., at its 1948 Union Congress, promulgated the first Union Constitution for a Junior U.P.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this initiative the Junior Party's development was slow. It was only in November 1949 that a directive was issued stating that U.P. organisers

should pay special attention to the establishment of a strong organisation of the Junior United Party, particularly in the Platteland, and that the aim should be at least one Junior branch in each constituency.<sup>4</sup>

Although considerable progress was subsequently made in Natal, the U.P. Union Action Committee, in July 1950, was obliged to delay the convening of a Junior U.P. Conference because of "the uneven development of the Junior Party in the various Provincial and General Council areas...."<sup>5</sup> By

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1. Challenge, 26 April 1952, p.15.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. U.P. Papers, Division of Organisation, Reports on Organisation 1946-1949, Conference of Organising Staff, Decisions and Actions Arising Therefrom, 8 November 1949.
  5. Ibid., Division of Information, Reports on

February 1951, however, the situation had improved considerably. A U.P. memorandum noted:

In the Transvaal<sup>6</sup> and Natal<sup>7</sup> the Junior movement is firmly established...the Cape<sup>8</sup> has established a number of Regional or Area Councils and the Free State<sup>9</sup> has yet to follow the patterns of its Senior Regional development [sic]....The total number of Junior members in the Union is approximately 14 000 and the total number of Junior branches 154.<sup>10</sup>

This progress had, though, been made with only the minimum of investment by the senior Party. The memorandum continued: "At present there are only two paid Junior U.P. organisers in the whole Union. Each province has only one clerical worker employed solely for Junior work."<sup>11</sup>

It was primarily for this reason that the original impetus proved impossible to maintain. At an October 1951 U.P. Central Executive Committee meeting it was reported that though steady progress continued to be made in Natal and in the Cape Province, the Junior organisation in the Orange Free State was in danger of disintegration and that in the Transvaal a deterioration had set in.<sup>12</sup>

Organisation 1950-1958, Memorandum: Junior United Party, 20 July 1950.

6. Branches: 73; members: 7 400  
Ibid., Central Head Office, Central Executive Minutes and Annexures 1941-1952, No.225, Division of the Junior United Party as at 28 February 1951.
7. Branches: 19; Members: 1 300.  
Ibid.
8. Branches: 50; Members: 5 000.  
Ibid.
9. Branches: 12; Members: 400.  
Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., No.270, Central Executive Committee, 9 October 1951.



But, by mid-1952, lost ground in the latter provinces had been largely recovered and the overall number of Junior U.P. branches had stabilised at 186.<sup>13</sup> Of these branches 80 were in the Cape Province, 72 in the Transvaal, 25 in Natal and 9 in the Orange Free State.<sup>14</sup> Some 45 per cent of U.P. Youth members in the Transvaal and almost 80 per cent in the Cape Province were Afrikaans-speaking.<sup>15</sup>

The ostensible purpose of the largely independent U.P. Youth was to raise funds for the Party and to perform election duties. In fact most of the organisation's meetings served a primarily social function.<sup>16</sup>

In contrast the Nasionale Jeugbond was closely integrated with the H.N.P./N.P. organisation. The Chairman of the Jeugbond Executive Committee was always a member of the Party's Provincial Executive Committee. Two members of the senior Party were permanently on the Jeugbond Executive and the Provincial Secretary generally attended all important meetings.<sup>17</sup> Far more than the U.P. Youth, the Nasionale Jeugbond was both a more effective means of recruiting the services of young people and of training them.<sup>18</sup>

- 
13. Ibid., Central Executive Minutes and Annexures 1953-1957, No.10, Division of Youth Affairs, n.d.  
 14. Ibid.  
 15. G.M. Carter: The Politics of Inequality, p.294.  
 16. Ibid.  
 17. Ibid., p.229.  
 18. Ibid.

APPENDIX XXIII

RESUME OF O.A. OOSTHUIZEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS IN REGARD  
TO THE NOMINATION OF UNITED PARTY ELECTION CANDIDATES

"The Party has always found nomination of candidates one of the most difficult of its tasks, and it is a matter of regret that certain nominations have undoubtedly caused seats to be lost to the Party. The question, therefore, of the nomination of candidates in England and the system in vogue amongst the Parties there, received my full attention.

HOW TO GET THE BEST CANDIDATES

To ensure that the United Party can put up the best type of candidate the following procedure in regard to the nomination of candidates is recommended:

That a STANDING CANDIDATES' COMMITTEE for the selection of Parliamentary and Provincial candidates be appointed by each of the Provincial Head Committees.

The purpose of these Committees will be to assess the suitability of men and women who are desirous of being approved as candidates.

It is recommended that the composition of each Provincial Standing Candidates' Committee be as follows:

- (a) The Provincial Chairman of the Party to act as Chairman.
- (b) The Chairman of the Party (Central Office) or any deputy nominated by him from among the members of the Action Committee.

- (c) The Chairman (General Purposes) or his deputy nominated by him.
- (d) The Chief Whip of the House of Assembly.
- (e) The Parliamentary Whip representing the Province.
- (f) The Provincial Council Leader.
- (g) The Provincial Treasurer.
- (h) The Chairmen of General Councils within the Province.

APPROVAL OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES BY THE STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Each Provincial Standing Candidates' Committee for the selection of Parliamentary and Provincial Council candidates in the four Provinces will meet at a date to be fixed by the Action Committee to consider the names of persons who have been submitted to it for approval.

Secretaries of Provincial organisations and Secretaries of General Councils, shall keep a register of persons who have expressed a desire of becoming United Party candidates for the House of Assembly, Senate and Provincial Councils.

No member of the Party will be debarred from sending his or her name to a Divisional Committee for submission to and approval by the Standing Candidates' Committee in each Province.

Union Congress to agree that no constituency shall permit the participation in a nomination contest of any person

before he or she has been approved by the duly constituted Provincial Standing Candidates' Committee for Parliamentary and Provincial Council candidates.

#### PROCEDURE FOR SECURING APPROVAL OF A CANDIDATE

Divisional Committees will submit through appropriate bodies to the Provincial Standing Candidates' Committee the names of persons whom they consider should come up for approval as aspirant candidates.

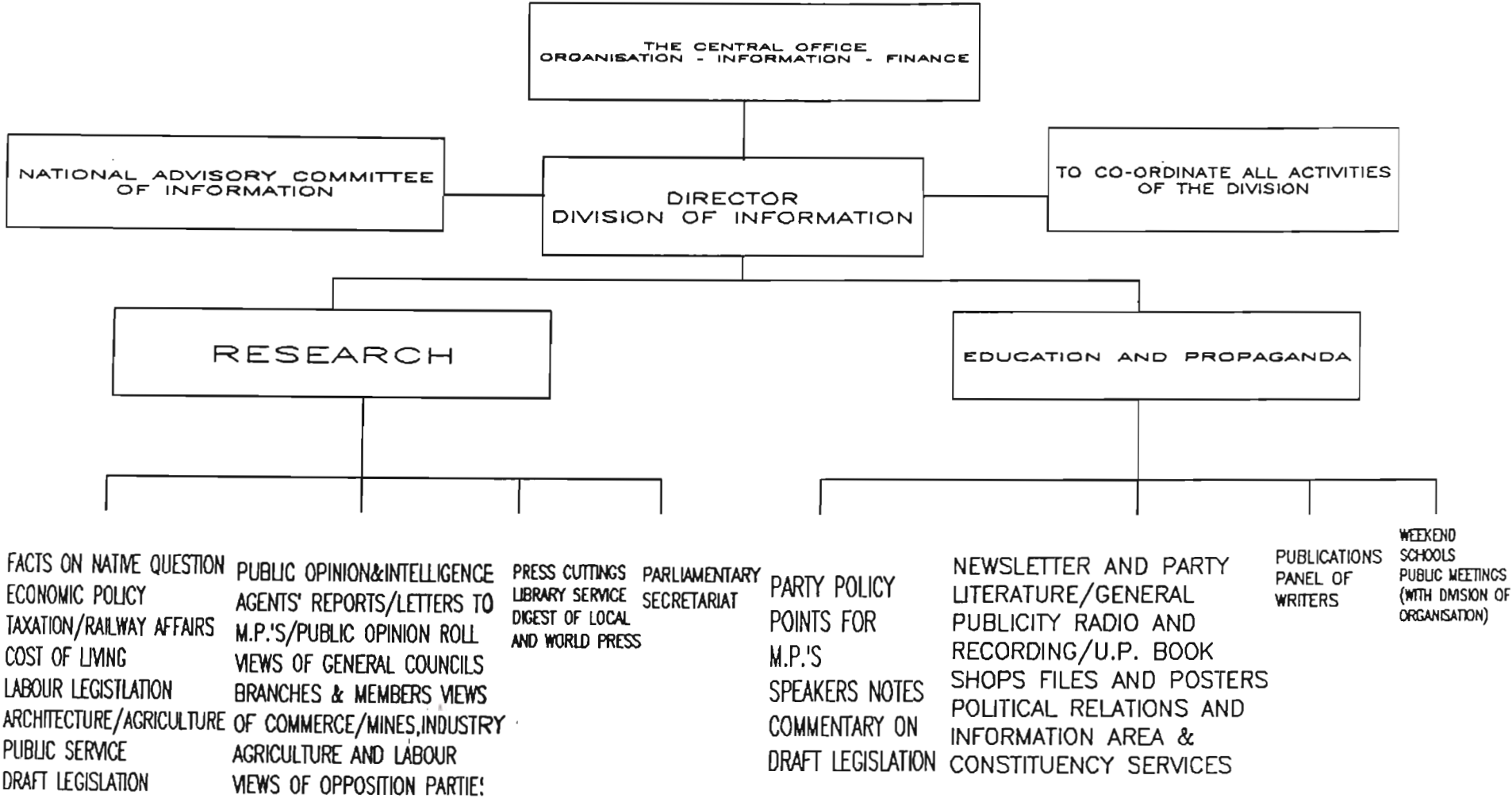
The Provincial Standing Candidates' Committee shall also have a right to add names of persons whom they consider suitable.

#### THE NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Where there are two or more candidates in the field the nomination procedure to be applied in the constituencies should be as simple as possible and it is recommended that this be done in a series of joint branch general meetings to be held in the constituency concerned, to which only United Party members in good standing be invited. Candidates will be asked to address the joint meetings and after their protagonists have tried to persuade the meeting on the qualities of one or the other, a vote will be taken by ballot."

U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, Committees, No.142, Memorandum: The Nomination of Candidates, 27 July 1950.

THE CENTRAL OFFICE  
ORGANISATION - INFORMATION - FINANCE



THE CENTRAL OFFICE  
ORGANISATION - INFORMATION - FINANCE

## APPENDIX XXV

United Party First Source  
Funds Raised During the  
Year Ended 30 June 1951.

Head Committee or General Council	No. of Constituencies	First Source		
		Funds raised during year ended June 30, 1951	Average Revenue per constituency	Estimated average Revenue per constituency for current financial year.
<u>CAPE PROVINCE</u>				
Cape Platteland	19	£ 22 155	£ 1 166	-
Cape Peninsula	14	£ 6 467	£ 462	£ 757,
Northern Cape	5	£ 4 398	£ 880	£ 1 460
Eastern Province	8	£ 2 631	£ 329	£ 675
Border and North Eastern Districts	9	£ 3 990	£ 447	£ 745
<u>TRANSVAAL</u>				
Witwatersrand	36	£ 27 623	£ 768	£ 777
Platteland	22	£ 9 887	£ 450	£ 681
Pretoria	8	£ 1 875	£ 234	£ 568
<u>NATAL</u>	16	£ 10 117	£ 632	£ 911
<u>ORANGE FREE STATE</u>	13	£ 2 768	£ 213	£ 818
		£ 91 911	£ 613	-

J.G.N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/5/1, Volume 2, U.P Division of Fundraising, Statistics, n.d.

APPENDIX XXVISUMMARY OF THE UNITED PARTY'S ORGANISATIONAL POSITION  
IN JANUARY 1951

The Transvaal and Natal were completely covered by General Councils. In the Cape Province there were four General Councils. The remaining 19 constituencies were administered by the Cape Provincial office. In the Orange Free State, General Councils had been established to cover the Goldfields area (2 Provincial constituencies with portions of two others) and the Bloemfontein area and surrounding districts (7 Provincial constituencies). Three Regional Councils covered the remainder of the province.

In the Transvaal the Provincial Secretary was also Secretary of one of the General Councils. Under the direction of the Transvaal Head Committee he merely performed general co-ordinating duties in respect of the work of the other General Councils. In the Cape Province, the Provincial Head Committee and its Secretariat carried out direct organisational work in regard to the 19 seats not covered by General Councils, and co-ordinating and advisory functions in respect of the 4 General Councils. In Natal and the Orange Free State the Provincial Head Committees exercised direct supervision and control of the General and Regional Councils to a much greater degree than in the other provinces.

Rural constituencies tended to have a greater number of branches than those in urban areas. The urban U.P. branches had, however, on average, a much larger individual membership.

UNIT:	No of con-stituencies.	U.P./Lab.	Nat/A.P.	Safe.	Marginal	Hopeless	Mixed Branches.	Men's Branches.	Women's Branches.	Junior Branches.
Witwatersrand:	36	26	10	19	15	1	228	26	48	30
Transvaal Platteland:	22	-	22	-	12	10	511	1	4	20
Pretoria:	8	3	5	3	4	1	32	-	7	14
Orange Free State:	13	1	12	-	1	12	192	-	-	11
Natal Coast:	10	10	-	10	-	-	42	6	10	9
Natal Midlands:	3	3	-	3	-	-	25	-	-	3
Natal Rural:	3	-	3	-	3	-	52	1	1	7
Cape Provincial area:	19	2	17	-	8	11	167	-	4	24
Cape Peninsula:	NO RETURNS PROVIDED		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Border & N.E. Districts:	NO RETURNS PROVIDED		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Province:	8	4	4	4	2	2	13	-	6	1
Northern Cape:	5	1	4	1	2	2	82	-	1	-



	Total	Organizational Staff	Average No. of Branches per Constituency	Average Membership per Constituency	Approx. % Ratio of Members to Vote
Witwatersrand:	332	15	9,2	1555	13
Transvaal Platteland:	536	4	23,2	1213	14
Pretoria:	53	2	6,6	807	8
Orange Free State:	203	5	15,6	2789	?
Natal Coast:	67	1	6,7	672	?
Natal Midlands:	28	-	9,3	1330	11
Natal Rural:	61	2	20,3	1912	24
Cape Provincial area:	195	15	10,2	1532	15
Cape Peninsula:	-	-	-	-	-
Border & N.E. Districts:	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Province:	20	3	2,5	-	-
Northern Cape:	83	3	16,5	2065	21

J. G. N. Strauss Papers, File 1/19/9/5/1, Vol 1

Statistical Summary of Organisational Position

in January 1951, J. L. Horak, April 1951.

APPENDIX XXVIITHE EXECUTIVE AND ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
OF THE UNITED SOUTH AFRICA TRUST FUNDEXECUTIVE

C.S. McLean	General Mining
H.F. Oppenheimer	Anglo-American
P.M. Anderson	Union Corporation
R.B. Hagart	Anglo-American
C.H. Leon	Elephant Trading Co.
E. Hunt	Williams, Hunt
A. Ohlson	Metropolitan Vickers
J. Thompson	James Thompson
R. Steyn	Stewart Steyn & Co.
H. Rissik	Van Hulsteyn, Feltham & Ford
G.V. Richdale	Central Mining
M.G. Deacon	Anglo Vaal
T. Coulter	African & European
John Schlesinger	African Films
John Voelcker	African Explosives
G. Mackenzie	Northern Trust
W.A. Hodgson	Williams, Hunt
E. Eriksen	Eriksen Motors
W. Colero	Williams, Hunt
G.H.R. Edmunds	Howard Pim & Hardy
D.H. Ollemans	Argus Co. Ltd.
W. Redford	African Realty Trust
Gen. I.P. de Villiers	
E. Gallo	Gallo (Africa) Ltd.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

E. Orr	John Orr & Co.
G. Reichman	Anglo African Shipping
H. Spool	Imperial Cold Storage
S. Steel	Steel & Barnett
J. Ferguson	Ferguson Bros.
R. Frankel	Jacon Frankel
I.W. Jacobson	Marrowes
G. Richdale	Central Mining
M.J.G. Roy	Alliance Building Society
D. Martin	B. Owen Jones
P.M. Anderson	Union Corporation
D. Laing	Farrow, Laing & Fearnhead
I. MacNab	Prudential
M. Lipschitz	Stock Exchange
J.G.M. McIntosh	Goldby, Panchaud & Webber
W.D. Wheeler	Anglo-American
D.M. Davidson	East Rand Engineering
G.S. Barlow	Thomas Barlow & Son
J.H. Vivian	J.H. Vivian
G. Williams	Alpheus Williams
G. Bateman	Edward L. Bateman
S. Cohen	O.K. Bazaars
L. Kadinsky	Diamond Cutter
B.L. Bernstein	Anglo Vaal
P. Jones	
Sir G. Albu	General Mining
P. Berman	Atlas Clothing Manufacturers
J. Robinson	Charter Holdings
J. Scott	Strathmore Investments
E. Kahn	Kahn & Kahn
R. Sieff	R. Sieff
J. Hurwitz	L.K. Hurwitz & Co.
D. Hayden	General Chemical Corporation

K. Richardson	J.C.I.
D. Maisels	Barrister
D.C. Beckingham	Anglo-American
K. Acutt	Anglo-American
K. Rosenberg	Robor
J. Minaar	Currie Motors
H. Shacklock	H. Shacklock
Ian Haggie	Haggie, Son & Love
P. Goldberg	Goldberg & Ziphort
E.I. Rogoff	E.I. Rogoff (Pty) Ltd.
W.A. Ritchie	Jeweller
L. Schaffer	V.H. Matterson
M. Gordon	Solicitor
D. v.d. Bijl	Stock Broker

U.P. Papers, Central Head Office, United South Africa Trust Fund, List of the Executive and Additional Members of Committee of the United South Africa Trust Fund, January 1951.

APPENDIX XXVIIISTATE OF PARLIAMENT, JANUARY 1952HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

	<u>U.P.</u>	<u>N.P.</u>	<u>L.P.</u>	<u>Native Reps.</u>	<u>No. of Seats</u>
Cape	27	28	-	3	55
Transvaal	25	37	4	-	66
Natal	11	3	2	-	16
Orange Free State	1	12	-	-	13
South-West Africa	-	6	-	-	6
Total	<u>64</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>156+3</u>

SENATE

	<u>U.P.</u>	<u>N.P.</u>	<u>L.P.</u>	<u>Native</u>
Cape	4	3	1	2
Transvaal	3	4	1	1
Natal	6	1	1	1
Orange Free State	1	7	-	-
South-West Africa	-	2	-	-
Total	<u>14</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>

N.P. Elected:	17	U.P.:	14
Nominated:	<u>10</u>	L.P.:	3
	<u>27</u>	Native:	<u>4</u>
			<u>21</u>

APPENDIX XXIX

WAR VETERANS' TORCH COMMANDO  
REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL EXECUTIVES  
AS AT 31 OCTOBER 1952

	1st Target £	2nd Target £	Total £	Total Amount Received £
Cape Northern	400	800	1 200	1 800
Cape Western	2 000	3 000	5 000	4 000
Cape Eastern	1 400	2 000	3 400	2 400
Cape South Western	100	300	400	250
Cape Platteland	-	-	-	-
Cape Border	1 000	1 500	2 500	4 500
Natal Inland	800	2 000	2 800	1 300
Natal Coastal	1 600	4 000	5 600	5 600
O.F.S. Northern	300	500	800	96.13.4
O.F.S. Southern	200	500	700	700
Transvaal Northern	400	1 000	1 400	235.2.10
Transvaal Central	300	3 000	3 300	1 300
Transvaal Lowveld	400	800	1 200	475
Transvaal Southern	600	2 000	2 600	1 100
Johannesburg	1 800	10 000	11 800	8 000
South-West Africa	200	400	600	100
	<u>11 500</u>	<u>31 800</u>	<u>43 300</u>	<u>31 856.16.2</u>

U.P. Papers, Division of Information,  
War Veterans' Torch Commando 1951-1952,  
Regional Contributions to National Executive  
as at 31 October 1952.

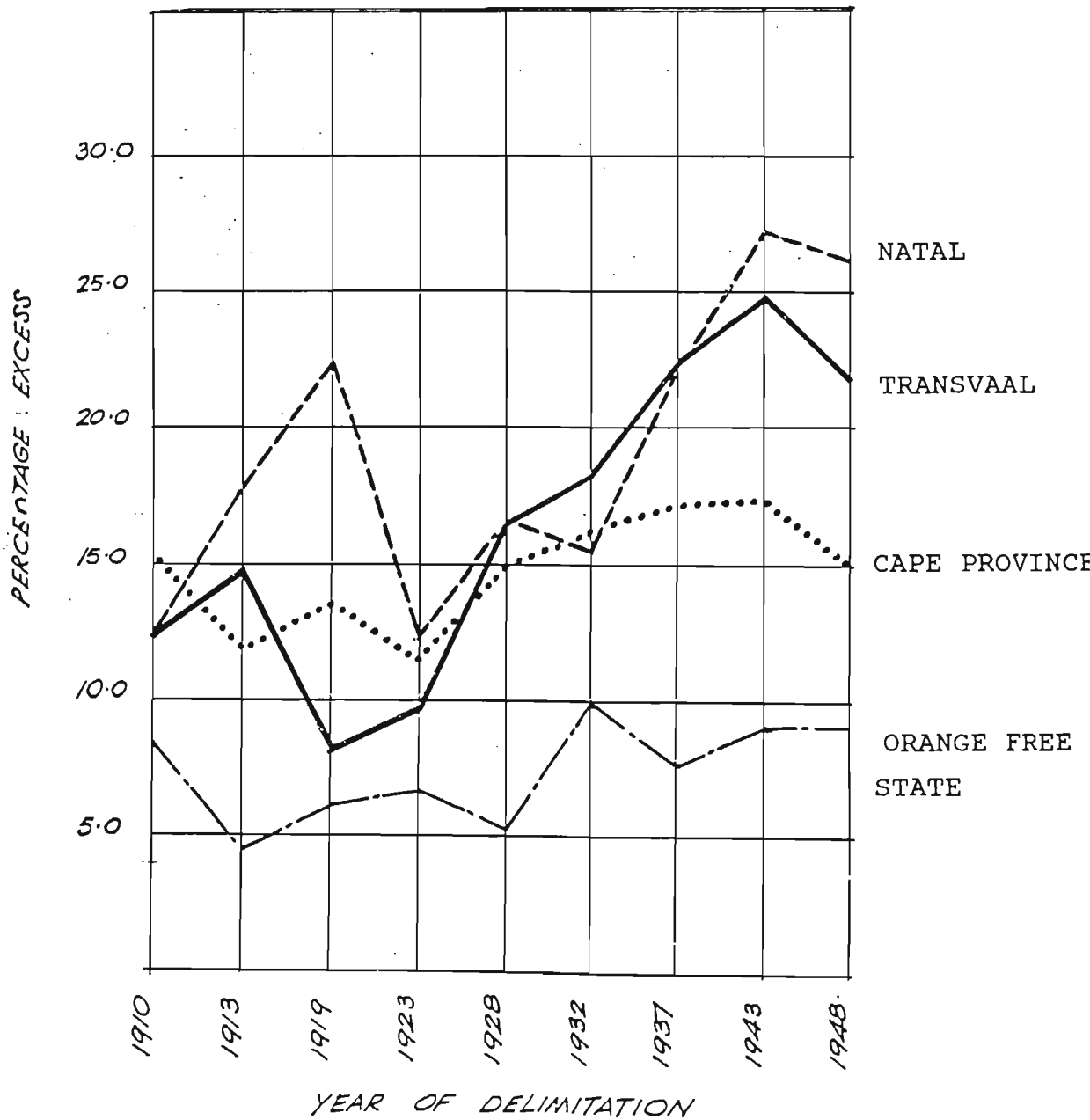
APPENDIX XXXFINANCIAL STATEMENT, WAR VETERANS' TORCH COMMANDO,JUNE 1953

	<u>1st</u> <u>Year</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			
Field Organisers, Salaries, Allowances & Travelling Expenses	£ 5 644	£12 698	£18 342
Administrative and General Expenses	3 123	5 657	8 780
Administrative Salaries, Conferences and Travelling Expenses	4 474	5 174	9 648
Publicity, Printing and Advertising	6 492	3 057	9 549
Election Expenses and Operations Room	439	2 345	2 784
Blikfakkel	515	315	830
Steel Commando, Capetown	655	-	655
Operation Torchlight	187	-	187
Donations	-	116	116
	£21 529	£29 364	£50 893
Surplus	1 973	2 187	4 160
	£23 502	£31 551	£55 053
<u>Income</u>			
Regional Contributions	£21 182	£14 879	£36 061
Direct Donations & Recoupments	2 000	16 000	18 000
Donations towards election expenses	-	500	500
Surplus on Budget Account	319	-	319
Miscellaneous Income and Donations	-	172	173
	£23 501	£31 551	£55 053

U.P. Papers, Division of Information, War Veterans'  
Torch Commando 1951-1952, Financial Statement,  
National Congress, June 1953.

APPENDIX XXXI

GRAPH SHOWING THE PERCENTAGE BY WHICH THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF VOTES IN A LOADED CONSTITUENCY EXCEEDED THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF VOTES IN AN UNLOADED CONSTITUTENCY

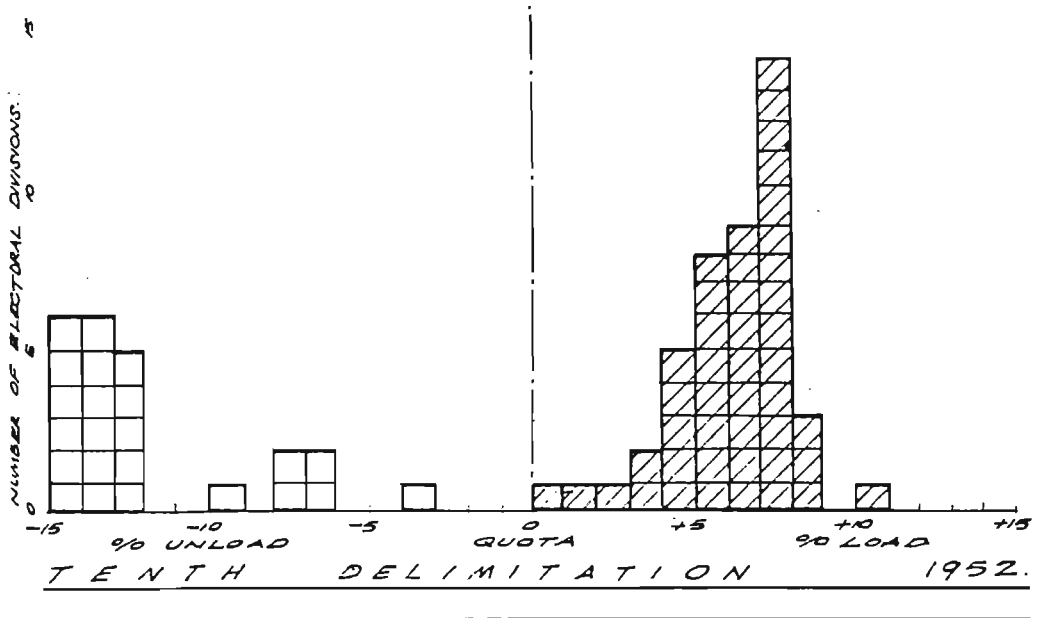


S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 5, File 2, Memorandum Submitted to the Tenth Delimitation Commission, 1952, on Behalf of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, October 1952.

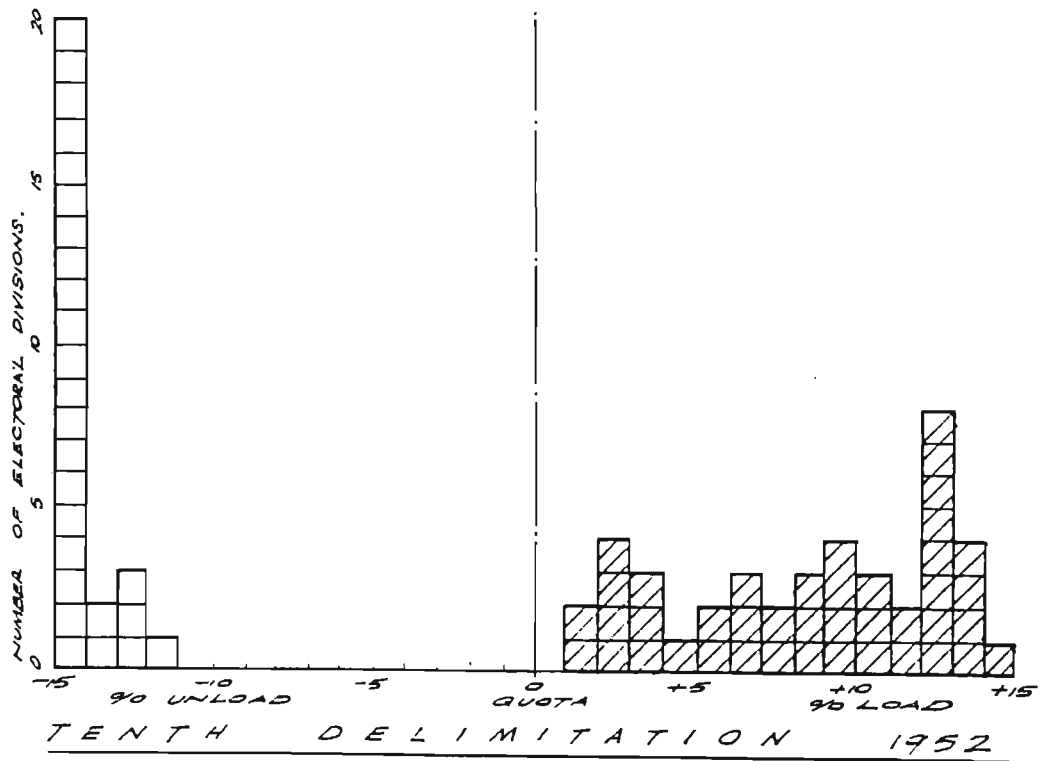


UNITED PARTY AND NATIONAL PARTY  
 TRANSVAAL DELIMITATION PROPOSALS, 1952

UNITED PARTY PROPOSED PLAN.



NATIONAL PARTY PROPOSED PLAN



S.A.L.P. Papers, Box 5, File 2, Memorandum Submitted to the Tenth Delimitation Commission, 1952, on Behalf of the War Veterans' Torch Commando, October 1952.

APPENDIX XXXIIIRESUMÉ OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR PARTY'S RACE POLICY,  
JANUARY 1953AN APPEAL TO COMMONSENSE AND HUMANITY

The South African Labour Party makes an earnest appeal to the European electorate of South Africa to discard prejudice and fear in dealing with the non-Europeans.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

The Labour Party believes that one of the roots of racial friction is economic exploitation. A social system has been created in the Union, fortified by a network of repressive laws, so as to provide Native labour at the cheapest rate, and so as to keep it cheap and docile.

The following programme is intended to diminish the evils of economic exploitation and to create the basis for goodwill and co-operation.

HELP THEM TO HELP THEMSELVES

The traditional methods adopted by workers to improve their conditions of work and wages is through the institution known as the trade union.

1. The Labour Party advocates the inclusion of all workers in the definition of "employee" in the Industrial Act.

Existing trade unions shall have the unfettered right to decide whether to admit non-Europeans to membership or to leave them to form their own trades unions in any industry or trade.

### INCREASE NATIONAL WEALTH

If the total wealth produced by all workers in South Africa remains the same, the share of one group cannot be increased without taking something away from other groups.

But if the total is increased, then there can be a larger slice for everyone.

2. The Labour Party, therefore, advocates the training of non-Europeans to play their part according to each man's ability in factory, farm and mine, with the following safeguards:

- (a) To ensure that European workers need not fear ousting from their jobs - security of employment at standard rates of pay shall be guaranteed by law.
- (b) To ensure that employers do not exploit non-European labour - no employer shall be permitted to pay a lower rate for the same work on the ground of colour.

### FREE LABOUR

3. The Labour Party advocates the abolition of all criminal penalties presently attaching to Africans in relation to their right to obtain the best employment and to their free movement to do so.

### HOMES

No housing and bad housing are one of the scandals of our urban areas. Disease, crime and disorder are the social symptoms.

4. The Labour Party advocates a plan to provide decent houses at reasonable rentals in all urban areas over a five year period as priority No.1 in Municipal Budgets. Government funds should be allocated accordingly.

#### LOCAL RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION

The emphasis placed by the main political parties on the negative aspect of housing, namely, segregation, results in slums and shanty towns for our Africans. The Labour Party places the emphasis on the positive aspect - the building of much needed houses.

Local residential segregation can be achieved by the erection of townships for non-Europeans without the necessity of tyrannical legislation of a negative kind.

5. To implement a policy of local residential segregation one has the choice of using the policeman or the builder. The Labour Party prefers to use the builder.

#### REHABILITATION OF THE NATIVE RESERVES

A little over a third of the African population live in the reserves, which constitute about 10% of the land of the Union.

Every official report speaks of these areas as congested, denuded, overstocked and eroded.

It is futile, therefore, to talk of returning the rest of the African population to the reserves which cannot even support the present numbers who live there.

6. The Labour Party advocates a planned policy, adequately financed, of irrigation, soil conservation, training in modern and mechanised farming, establishment of home

industries and model villages, not in order to bring back millions to the reserves, but to improve the condition of the present population and to make them efficient producers of food for themselves, as well as for the needs of the rest of the country.

#### AFRICANS ON FARMS

European farmers complain of the shortage of African labour. This complaint is not new.

All economic surveys are clear that Africans on farms receive the lowest wages and the least amenities compared to Africans employed on mines and in factories. In order to offset these disadvantages, the traditional method has been to pass laws to make it more difficult for Africans to get employment in mining and industry. Master and Servant laws bind the African to the farm. Farm gaols are set up for this purpose, but none of these restrictive laws really help because none of them tackle the real cause of the difficulty.

The answer lies in more efficient farming - more mechanised farms, and better trained African agricultural labourers who could demand better wages and better amenities.

#### 7. The Labour Party advocates

- (a) That the proper training of African agricultural labourers be a state responsibility going hand in hand with the encouragement of improved farming methods.
- (b) The turning of farm gaols into free agricultural training centres.

- (c) Fixing a minimum wage for farm labourers.
- (d) Abolishing the present provisions of the Master and Servant Ordinances.

#### EDUCATION

8. The Labour Party advocates the following in regard to non-European education:

- (a) Primary education should be made free and compulsory in the large urban centres for the great majority of non-European children from the age of 7 to 14 as part of a long-term plan of development, particularly with a view to combating juvenile delinquency.
- (b) The school curricula should be revised to meet changing needs.
- (c) The closer integration of general vocational instruction into the curriculum of the ordinary schools should receive early consideration.

This programme implies inter alia:

- (i) Greatly increased funds for non-European education, especially African education, an indispensable investment in the economic future of the country as a whole.
- (ii) A greatly expanded educational building programme.
- (iii) Early provision for training more teachers and for attracting larger numbers to the profession by an improvement of working conditions.

### POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The question of the right of representation of the non-Europeans in South African can no longer be evaded by the Europeans. It is futile for one section of the population to attempt to legislate for the whole population without giving the other section some voice in the formulation of measures designed for the order and good government of the whole of South African society.

The Labour Party is opposed to the diminution, curtailment or disqualification of any franchise rights presently enjoyed by any section of the population, with special reference to the Coloured, African and Asiatic voters in the Cape.

The Labour Party therefore declares that, as a matter of principle, it accepts the universal franchise for all adult literate inhabitants, but, realising the need for the implementation of the franchise for the non-Europeans in stages, it advocates the following franchise reforms:

#### Coloured Voters

- (i) The provisions applicable to the Coloured voters in the Cape should be extended to the other provinces for Parliamentary, Provincial and Municipal elections.
- (ii) The franchise to be applicable to both males and females.
- (iii) No disqualification on the grounds of colour shall debar Coloured candidates from election to Parliament, provincial councils or town councils.

African Voters

- (i) At present, Africans in the Cape, on a literacy and property test, elect three members of Parliament to represent them in the Union Parliament. This right should be extended to permit of the election of three members of Parliament for the Transvaal, and two each for Natal and the Orange Free State.
- (ii) Similar representation to be available for the provincial councils, i.e. three each for the Cape Province and the Transvaal, and two each for the Orange Free State and Natal.
- (iii) Eight Senators should be elected, two from each province; the present four nominated senatorships shall be abolished. Elections for Senators should be the same as for members of Parliament and members of provincial councils.
- (iv) Qualification for African voters for the Transvaal, Natal and the Orange Free State to be based on literacy - Std. V.
- (v) Franchise rights to be available for males and females.
- (vi) In municipalities, Africans residing in their separate wards should elect a number of town councillors equivalent to, say, 10% of the total number of councillors for each municipality.
- (vii) African candidates should not be disqualified on the ground of colour from being elected as the representatives of their people.



Asiatic Voters in the Cape, Transvaal and Orange Free State

In the Cape, Asiatics have the same franchise rights as Coloured persons. These rights should be extended to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as provided for under "Coloured Voters" above.

Asiatic Voters in Natal

Our present laws confine Natal Indians to that province. This results in a concentration of Indians which aggravates racial prejudice and causes the Europeans to withhold franchise rights from them. The South African Labour Party is opposed to laws restricting the movement of Indians in the Union.

- (i) Under existing circumstances, we propose that Indians in Natal should have the right to elect three members of Parliament, three members of the Provincial Council and two Senators.
- (ii) Franchise rights to be available to male and female.
- (iii) Indian candidates should not be disqualified on the ground of colour from being elected as Indian representatives.
- (iv) In municipalities, Indians should elect members of town councils to say, an equivalent of 10% of the total number of town councillors for each municipality.

South-West Africa

Coloured people, Asiatics and Africans of South-West Africa should be treated on the same basis as laid down in the proposals for the four provinces of the Union.

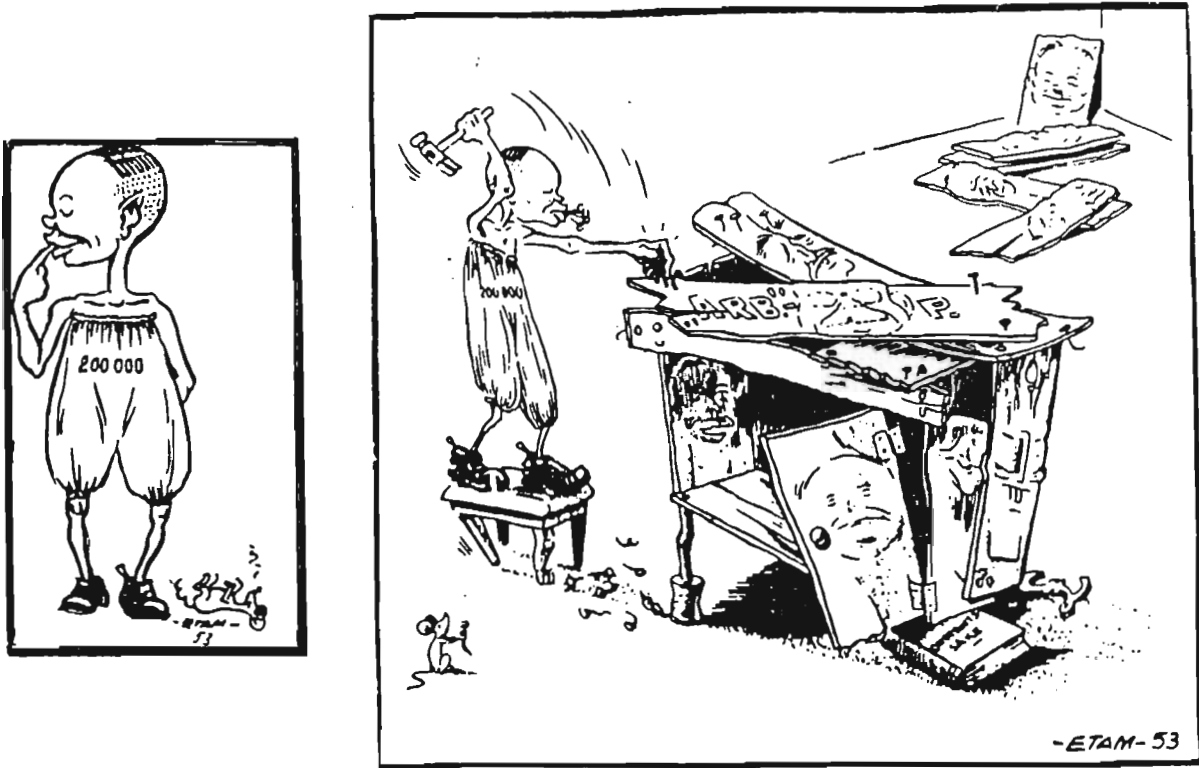
Conclusion

Our programme is transitional and is not intended to remain static. As socialists, we recognise the continuous and progressive development of human society. On this basis, we accept that our policy will be subject to such revision as the progress of the non-European in the cultural and industrial spheres may justify.

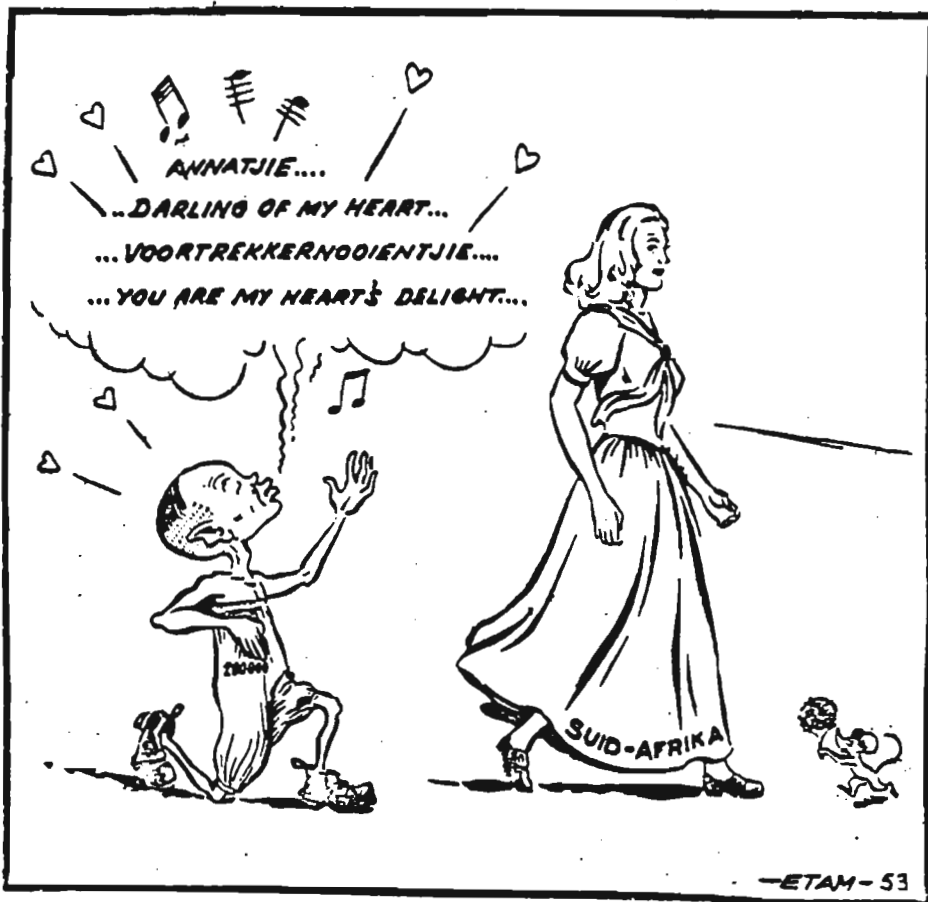
W.G. Ballinger Papers, A410/E1.58, Non-European Policy of the South African Labour Party, 10 January 1953.

APPENDIX XXXIV

J.G.N. STRAUSS CARTOONS



B.J. Schoeman: My Lewe in die Politiek, p.193.  
The numbers are the Torch Commando's claimed membership.



Die Transvaler, 16 March 1953.

APPENDIX XXXV

RESUMÉ OF PRINCIPLES OF THE UNION FEDERAL PARTY

ADOPTED BY THE PROVINCIAL CONVENTION

14 - 15 AUGUST 1953

We believe that the following are the main principles upon which the future well-being of South Africa may be secured:-

1. National Aim

To create in South Africa opportunities for people of all races and religions to enjoy fullness of life and liberty under the protection of the law, to enable our country to play an honourable and constructive part in World Affairs and to promote Western Civilisation among the peoples of South Africa.

2. The United States of Southern Africa

We seek to provide a Constitution-Structure and way of life acceptable to neighbouring States, Colonies and Protectorates as a basis for Federal Union of the States and Territories of Southern Africa in partnership and co-operation.

3. To re-shape within the Act of Union the present quasi-Unitary System to one of Federal Union

Our immediate policy is to entrench the material elements of the contract of Union and, within that framework, to reshape the present quasi-Unitary system to one of Federal Union by redistribution of powers from the Central to Provincial Governments, giving a far greater measure of autonomy to the Provinces, especially in matters which directly concern the life of the citizen, the general principle of which found an earlier expression in the Hollander Memorandum.

4. The Right of Provinces in given Circumstances to determine their own Futures

We shall work for the maintenance and assertion of the right of the people of any Province of the Union, in the face of any actual, attempted or projected violation of the letter or the spirit of the Constitution, to remain a part of the Commonwealth of Nations under the Crown, a Province so to act in the following, amongst other eventualities:- a weakening of our allegiance to the Crown; the setting aside of the entrenched clauses; the denial of the testing power of the Courts; the abolition of the Provincial Council system or the reduction of Provincial powers; the abolition of full protection or of recognition of the equal rights of both official languages.

5. The State and the Citizen

The maintenance of a Western democratic form of Government and of Parliamentary institutions; the protection of the basic liberties of all the people and the freedom of the individual, and of his right to appeal to the Courts against any arbitrary act of the Executive; the retention by Parliament of direct control over, and the limitation of the Executive's powers; the elimination of all forms of totalitarianism whether Fascist or Communist.

6. Racial Accord

The promotion of racial accord among Europeans with unyielding resistance against any attempt at the domination of one group by the other.

Racial harmony between European and non-European is as essential as that between European and European; a progressive rather than repressive non-European policy in line with Western traditions and Christian teachings on race relationships.

The abandonment of fear as the guiding principle, and the adoption in its place of courageous policies, offers the only hope in the field of non-European affairs. The policies that have so far been pursued hold out no genuine prospect of permanently peaceful relationships among the peoples of South Africa.

We believe that the immediate aim in the field of non-European affairs should be the rapid improvement of living conditions, welfare services, education, and economic opportunities; thus striking at the roots of crime, disease and political discontent.

We adhere to the principle that the franchise already extended to the non-European should in no way be curtailed or by any means rendered less effectual. The South African born non-European should be accorded a right of expression in the organs of Government

We recognise the fact of the increasing economic integration of the non-European peoples in the economy of South Africa.

#### 7. Non-European Policy

We recognise that non-European policy is the concern of the individual provinces.

#### THE NON-EUROPEAN POLICY FOR NATAL OF THE UNION FEDERAL PARTY (NATAL)

We believe that the South African born non-European should be accorded a right of expression in the organs of Government, commensurate with his degree of civilisation, as follows:-

- (a) The immediate introduction of a system of limited direct group representation in the Provincial Council for Natives and Indians, provided that they have taken the oath of allegiance to the Crown in South Africa.
  
- (b) Subject always to due safeguards against disproportionate representation of any one section of the non-European population, the long term policy to be taken in steps over a considerable period of years, is the ultimate placing of those non-Europeans who have passed suitable tests of a high standard upon the common roll of voters.

We accept the desirability of residential and social segregation between Europeans and non-Europeans, to be obtained on a fair and equitable basis and wherever possible by the encouragement of voluntary population movements through housing and town planning schemes designed to that end and to the establishment of the foundations of a sound family life.

We believe that those Natives who have attained a high degree of civilisation should be entitled to exemption from those laws designed for the protection of backward peoples.

U.P. Papers, Natal, Union Federal Party, Principles, 14-15 August 1953.

APPENDIX XXXVIPRINCIPLES OF THE BAILEY BEKKER GROUPNATIONAL UNITY

All major parties in South Africa may say that they strive for National Unity. The cold and hard fact remains, however, that the two sections, English and Afrikaans South Africans, are drifting further apart in different political homes.

Notwithstanding all the pious statements about National Unity, and the undoubted sincere desire for Unity, the simple fact remains that the National Party is for all practical purposes an exclusively Afrikaans party while the United Party is fast becoming an exclusively English speaking party.

This is unhealthy for South Africa. Firstly it has made our politics a bitterly racialistic affair and secondly because it will condemn English-speaking South Africa to a permanent political minority with NO effective say in National affairs.

SOUTH AFRICA cannot afford to lose the experience and contribution of English-speaking citizens in her national affairs.

We shall strive in practice, to give a political home to all moderate English and Afrikaans-speaking men and women who put the interests of South Africa first and we will exclude all the Jingoists and Extremists in both language camps.

WE BELIEVE THAT WITHOUT NATIONAL UNITY THERE IS NO FUTURE



FOR SOUTH AFRICA AND THEREFORE WE MAKE IT PRIORITY NO.1.

NATIVE AFFAIRS

No party which means well for South Africa can afford to be vague and speak with two voices on this most important of all South African problems.

We say, therefore, clearly where we stand:

- (1) In principle, we stand for traditional South African apartheid, or separate development of Europeans and Bantu.

We may differ on the methods of application, but we support the principle. We say that every apartheid measure must be considered on its merits.

- (2) We oppose complete territorial apartheid as not being practical politics.
- (3) We will always have a considerable number of the Bantu amongst us. For them separate, but adequate housing is the first priority, together with his general economic, physical and spiritual uplift.

As to his political rights, we stand for NO extension of such rights beyond the basis of the 1936 legislation.

In their own townships the Natives must gradually be given civic responsibilities.

- (4) A national home for the Bantu, with the possibilities of full development is the crux of positive

apartheid. This ideal, initiated in 1917 by General Botha, extended by Generals Hertzog and Smuts in 1936, is still the great test of the European's sincerity in applying practical apartheid. In this spirit we stand for the large-scale development of the existing Reserves.

It is here that political rights for the Bantu can be extended, under the guidance of the European.

#### THE COMMONWEALTH

We stand firmly by our relationship to the Commonwealth of Nations. In this dangerous world in which we live, our association with the Commonwealth is of vital consequence to South Africa.

We believe that a Republic is not practical politics as there are far more pressing problems facing us.

If, however, the Prime Minister can persuade English and Afrikaans-speaking men and women to ask for a republic by a substantial majority, we would honour it and respect the wishes of the people.

#### THE CONSTITUTION

We uphold the constitution and will countenance no change unless it is brought about as prescribed by the constitution.

We will demand that the status and prestige of our courts remain inviolate.

COMMUNISM

We shall fight Communism and assist the Government in outlawing it.

V.L. Shearer Papers, File 35, The Bekker Group and What it Stands For, n.d.

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