

NAT WAY ONLY

The Natal Mercury Oct 19, 1976

SAYS VORSTER

PORT ELIZABETH — The Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster, last night rejected calls for the Government to revise its labour policies drastically, and warned that if the Government tried to impose major changes on the trade unions the country would face widespread industrial unrest.

Opening the annual congress here of the Association of Chambers of Commerce (Assocom), Mr. Vorster also urged businessmen not to allow their organisations to be used for political purposes unconnected with economic affairs.

The Government, he said, would meet legitimate pleas by the business community with responsiveness, but subtle attempts would be made "in the coming few months" to use business organisations to call for drastic changes to the South African constitutional scene.

The new socio-economic order which would be called for, he added, would do away with the private-enterprise system as it was known today, and would lead to the expropriation of businesses and property as well as destroying the democratic rights of the electorate.

Be on guard

He urged business leaders to be on their guard against such moves.

On the labour question, the Prime Minister said he was surprised at the frequency of calls on the Government to "force open the labour market regardless of the consequences."

The Government, he said, would continue to honour its undertakings to labour.

It had gone to great lengths to meet the aspirations of the business sector in regard to the greater utilisation of labour, and it had said that it had no objection to the use of Black, Coloured and Asian labour in more skilled work — as long as these moves were accepted by the recognised trade unions.

Mr. Vorster said repeated calls were being made for the Government to "take the lead" or "use its influence" to make the trade unions more amenable to changes.

"If they are saying the Government should somehow force the trade unions against their will to do what employers cannot persuade them to do, then this would be the height of irresponsibility."

It would inevitably lead to labour unrest, he said, and apart from harming the economy, would also affect the training which Black workers depended on to such a great extent.

Mr. Vorster, appealed to all South Africans to, at all times display a spirit of confidence in the future of their country.

Unless South Africans were prepared to declare their confidence to the outside world, foreign investors could hardly be expected to invest with confidence in this country.

"South Africa is our product and one of which we can all be proud." — (Sapa.)

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EDITORIAL



OPINION

VORSTER'S FAILURE

WHEN he became Prime Minister just over 10 years ago, Mr. John Vorster committed himself to improving Black-White relations. Five years later he said that for there to be peace in South Africa "you must make it possible for the non-White to get his place in the sun."

Today, five years further on, the Black and Brown men and women of this country are more desperate and despondent than ever. Our angry and disillusioned Brown Afrikaners have rejected the Coloured Representative Council — and the Cabinet Council — and Mr. Vorster himself has brought confrontation with Blacks by stating baldly that their political "place in the sun" is the homelands and nowhere else.

As a consequence urban and rural Africans are uniting in a "political, economic and social programme of action" to bring about the "liberation of the people." Those are the words of Mr. David Thebehali, newly elected "mayor" of Soweto, where Sunday brought more disorder after weeks of bloody rioting and civil disorder had earlier sent Whites scurrying for their guns. A sad commentary indeed on the state of race relations which the Prime Minister once promised to improve.

But, like other promises he has made, all that has survived is the bitter taste of despair. Many have not forgotten his "give us six months and see where South Africa will stand." That impassioned plea, too, has proved as empty as Mr. Voster's commitment in support of South Africa's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Pik Botha, to move away from all unnecessary discrimination.

Mr. Vorster's political credibility has worn thin. It is now as threadbare as his Government's barren policies which provide little hope of equitable solutions to the country's problems.

The charisma of the "pragmatist" — once described as "Africa's man of destiny" — has just about evaporated. Stripped of the verbiage, his policies at home amount to banishing the Blacks to the homelands without any say in the urban areas where White South Africa is almost totally reliant on their labour, and quieting the Coloureds and Indians with concessions which seemingly lead nowhere.

He may, but WE should not continue to believe, that when White Rhodesians have been made

to "lie down in the bed they created for themselves," as cynical Nationalists would have it, and South West Africa has its independence some four million White South Africans will be left in peace to "continue their traditional way of life."

There may be Whites who think they can go on as before, but our Africans and Coloureds do not. They feel they have waited too long for their "place in the sun."

Mr. Vorster, the man who promised them better things, has alienated the Blacks and, in the words of Professor Erika Theron, driven Coloureds to the point where they feel that justice in South Africa is not for them. She told the congress of the Afrikaanse Calvinistiese Beweging in Potchefstroom that, whether or not Coloured adults took part in the recent violence, "they did not accept the present situation any longer."

Against that background this newspaper can no longer accept Mr. Vorster's bona fides. Too many of his fine words and hints at change have failed to have substance. Too many of his promises remain unkept.

He is not the verligte we thought him to be, nor, in spite of his commanding strength in the National Party, is he prepared to use that strength in the interests of all the people in the land.

Now, with Mr. Vorster and his Nationalists having nothing more to offer in the search for solutions in South Africa, hope lies only with those Whites who are prepared to talk with the Blacks and, like the South Westers at the Turnhalle, are ready to fashion a new future in amity. There is little point in hoping for any change in heart on the part of the Government. Ten years of power in 28 years of domination have not made a new man of Mr. Vorster and there is not the time for the making of another from within Government ranks.

What time there is must be used by all who care at all to re-establish the credibility of Whites. That will require men and women in and out of politics who are committed to change. New leadership must be found untainted by sterile party arguments, for the primary task of that new leadership will be not only to re-establish White credibility, but to convince those Black moderates who are under growing pressure from extremists that there is still some point in talking at all.

New York Bureau

MR IAN SMITH appears to have carefully constructed a strategy in which the United States figures heavily, to go into effect if the forthcoming conference with Black leaders in Geneva breaks down, according to an editorial in the New York Times.

Mr Smith's colleagues, the editorial says, claim that he was told by US Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger, that if he accepted the British-American proposals for a Rhodesian solution but the Black leaders rejected them, the United States would favour the lifting of economic sanctions against the country and would help provide logistical support for the Whites' war effort.

The strategy is said to rely on the notion that the rival Black nationalist groups will be unable to come together on a sensible programme at Geneva and will try to outdo one another in pressing demands unacceptable to Rhodesia's White community.

If that happens, Mr Smith will doubtlessly propose that Britain, as conference chairman, invite other, more moderate, Black leaders to negotiate on behalf of the country's six-million Blacks. These would mostly be the traditional tribal leaders who are on the Government's payroll, some in the cabinet since last April.

Another facet of the strategy is to insist that the five-point British-American programme, which Mr Smith accepted three weeks ago, is a "package" which must also be accepted in its entirety by the Black leaders. But the Blacks have emphatically rejected some aspects, including the provision that Whites will serve as ministers of defence and justice in the interim cabinet.

Rhodesia's Ian Smith could be keeping his cake and eating it believes the New York Times which sees an end to sanctions, US military support and a retention of White initiative if Black leaders cannot reach agreement.

The Smith plan

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as the epitome of reasonableness," the newspaper says, "who courageously accepted a programme leading to Black rule in two years only to have it rejected by unreasonable Black leaders who — he will imply — are probably taking their instructions from Moscow."

According to US Government analysts, Rhodesia's economy is faltering and it is faltering less because of economic sanctions imposed by other countries than because of serious transport difficulties and an increasing outflow of skilled labour.

They predicted that the country's economy would experience "zero growth" this year, despite a good harvest and the opening of several new nickel and gold mines.

The most critical problem for Rhodesia, they said, was the inability to move all its export goods, including chrome, nickel and tobacco, to South African harbours for shipment to world markets.

transport needs over those of Rhodesia.

They added that South Africa could probably eliminate the bottleneck — involving switching facilities — rather easily, if it desired.

But as a result of the tieups, they said, a substantial portion of Rhodesia's annual total of 7 to 8-million tons of exports has had to be stockpiled or warehoused in Rhodesia for lack of transport. There is only one rail line available to Rhodesia, running south to the South African ports, since Mozambique closed the other line last March.

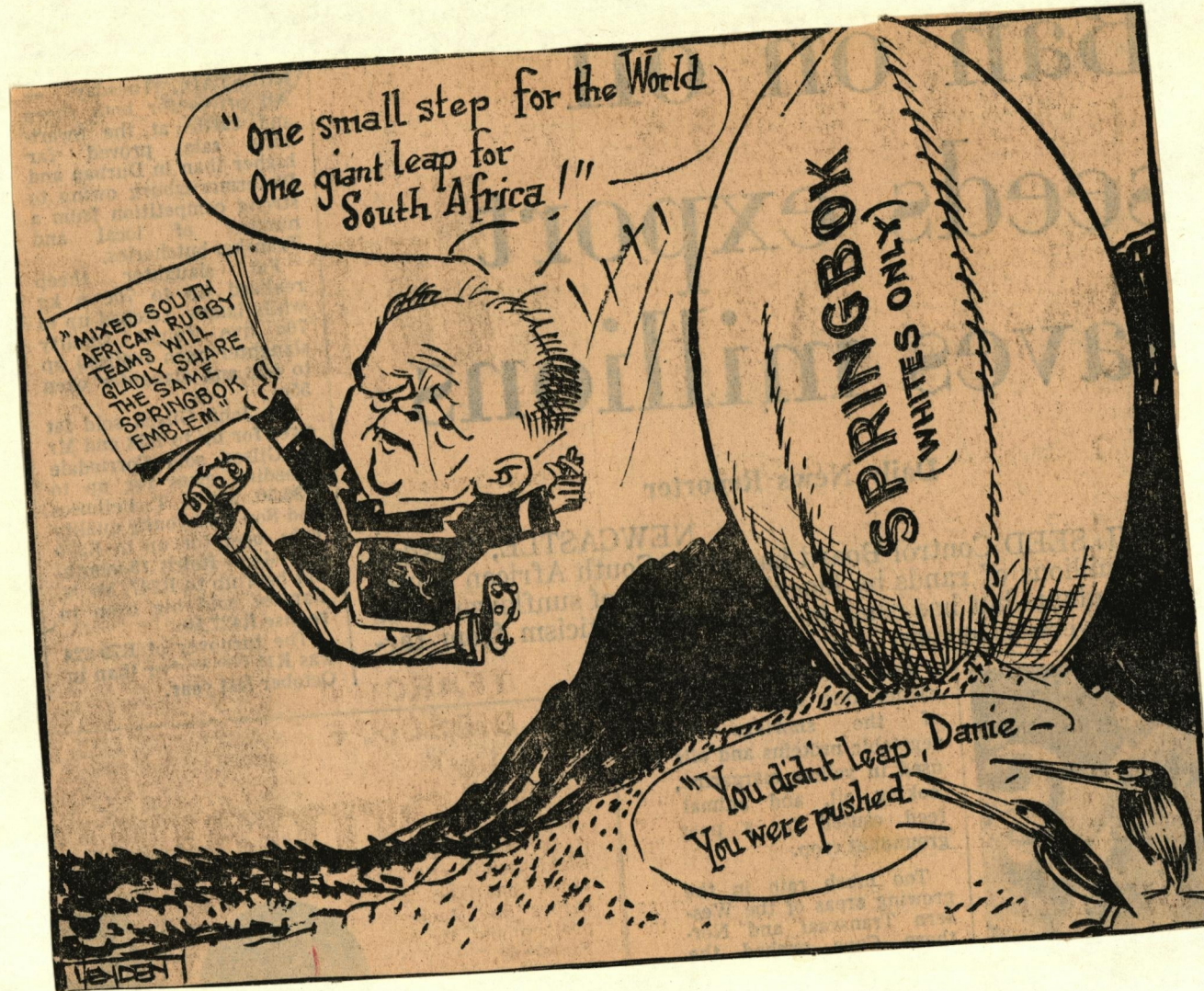
In addition, the analysts remarked, increased Black nationalist guerilla activity has compelled the Rhodesians to move goods only in daylight.

As for the economic sanctions, imposed by the United Nations in 1966, the analysts remarked that about 98 percent of Rhodesia's imports and exports could be regarded today as violations of the sanctions.

The analysts said that while there was no direct evidence of active complicity by American oil companies in this traffic it was obvious that a substantial portion of oil and petrol going to Rhodesia came from South African subsidiaries of Mobil Oil Corporation, Caltex and Shell-British Petroleum.

Prior to the Mozambique transport embargo, Rhodesia also received oil on the rail line through that country.

The traffic in railway tank cars and truck tankers to Rhodesia does not carry company markings, they said. Nor was it a practice, they added, for American intelligence operatives to spy on the activities of American companies, such as oil concerns, overseas.



Dr Kissinger has remained silent on this point, but according to Britain's Foreign Secretary Mr Anthony Crossland, the proposals accepted by Mr Smith were merely "ideas" that could be "a useful basis for further discussion" at Geneva.

"Mr Smith clearly intends to pose at Geneva

The reason is a bottleneck in the South African rail system centered in the Transvaal triangle encompassing Johannesburg, Witwatersrand and Victoria, which was developed as a result of increased activity by business enterprises in that region.

The analysts, from the State Department and other agencies, said it was clear that the South African Government had given priority to its own

Of crucial importance to Rhodesia is the daily import of about 50 000 barrels of oil and petroleum products by rail and road from South Africa.

Last August there were reports in the press that Mobil Oil Corporation and other oil companies had secretly plotted to supply petroleum products to Rhodesia in violation of the United Nations sanctions.

The other new factor in the Rhodesian economy, the outflow of skilled White labourers and professional people has become noticeable in the last eight months, they said.

A year ago, they said, there was a monthly inflow of about 1 000 White immigrants to Rhodesia. There has been a turnabout, they said, and now about 1 000 Whites are leaving Rhodesia — mostly for South Africa — each month.

SIR, — Mr M. B. Naidoo in his letter (The Daily News, October 8) takes an Indian woman of Chatsworth to task for considering that Rhodesian Africans are not yet ready to take over Rhodesia.

He says Africans in Rhodesia and South Africa can rule things and will come up to expectations if given the opportunity.

Under the Kissinger plan Rhodesian Africans have been given the opportunity to work towards peaceful majority rule,

but the four factions of the A.N.C., instead of taking advantage of the opportunity, uniting and putting the welfare of all the peoples of

Letters to the Editor

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Black rule worries

Rhodesia first, continue to quarrel bitterly among themselves and jockey for power.

The pattern in nearly every Black state in Africa has been the same: violence, civil wars, coups, ending in dictatorships with their accompanying suppression of peoples and deprivation of freedom of speech and the press. In the process Asians have been thrown out of Africa and the Whites in Angola and Mozambique have left because they saw no future in remaining.

Bearing all this in mind hardly inspires Whites, Asians and Coloureds with confidence and the woman of Chatsworth can therefore hardly be blamed for being apprehensive.

OLD TIMER,
Pinetown.

Race ripple hits Lesotho

19 OCT 1976

By Allen Pizze
The Daily News
Africa News Service

South Africa's racial problems are making life somewhat complicated in neighbouring Lesotho.

When the June riots broke out the South African Minister of Water Affairs, Mr Braam Raubenheimer, was in Maseru discussing the possibilities of the water scheme near Oxbow, in the Maluti Mountains.

The Lesotho Government felt it could hardly "sup with the devil" at such a time, and so asked Mr Raubenheimer to leave, it is said here in Maseru.

Curtailling of discussions on Oxbow was untimely for the Lesotho Government. They want to get the giant scheme out of the planning stages and into motion as soon as possible.

When the idea of selling the Oxbow water and power to South Africa was first mooted the asking price by Lesotho was too high. With South Africa's fast-rising need for electricity and the problems over Cabora Bassa however, Lesotho feels

Pretoria may soon be forced to be more amenable to bargaining over Oxbow.

But being a Black nation they cannot deal while their brethren across the border are rioting.

The riots also affect the 200 000 Basotho who work in the South African mines. They are liable to be imbued with the radical political ideas of the wave of Black unrest — something which the Jonathan Government, based as it is on less than complete popular support, does not want brought into the already lively Lesotho political atmosphere.

South African unrest also shifts the focus of world attention away from the overall political scene where Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan would like to make his mark.

While he realises there is little chance of being considered a major statesman in Southern Africa, Chief Jonathan would nevertheless like to play a more prominent role.

He is reportedly somewhat miffed by the

fact that he is not included in the "frontline states" meetings, because as he sees it Lesotho is "behind the lines".

With 150 years experience in dealing with "the Boers" he feels Lesotho could give valuable advice on the thinking of the Vorster Government.

Besides that, leading a Government regarded as a major force in the area would make it considerably easier for him to hold power back home, by boosting his prestige.

The issues of the so-called "Conquered Territory," which Lesotho would dearly like to discuss in earnest with Pretoria, also fall by the wayside as long as there is internal trouble for the South African Government.

The territory includes a large slice of the Orange Free State from the Caledon River almost to Welkom, Bloemfontein and Thab N'Chu and are lands the Basotho claim were granted to Moshoeshe I, founder of their nation, and then stolen by Boer and British around the turn of the

century.

The areas claimed includes some of the Free State's finest farmlands, something of great value to Lesotho, only about 12 percent of whose land is arable.

There is little reason to think Chief Jonathan really expects South Africa to cede the land to him, but if the issue was at least under discussion some other concessions could possibly be wrung.