

all. 47 [6]  
Box 1

# CRITICISMS OF THE NATIVE BILLS

BY

D. D. T. JABAVU  
AND OTHERS

(PAMPHLET ONE)

PRICE 1/-

**CRITICISMS OF THE  
NATIVE BILLS**

BY

**D. D. T. JABAVU**  
AND OTHERS

*(PAMPHLET ONE)*

PRICE 1/-

## INTRODUCTION.

The Union Government has taken ten years (1925-1935) to evolve its "Native Bills" that are intended to be a permanent model for ruling its subject non-White peoples in the Union and the prospective Protectorates. The majority of the Africans vitally touched by this proposed piece of legislation have not yet seen it as it was published in English only a couple of months ago. They will understand its contents only when the latter are translated into Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana and circulated town by town and village by village in the land. This implies that each headman, blockman and chief will have a copy of these bills in his mother-tongue, and the same done for groups like Advisory Boards and organisations of teachers, ministers, agriculturists, farmers, vigilance associations and the numerous economic and political units falling outside of tribal society. In all probability the Native Affairs Department will need four months to translate and publish these documents in the vernacular languages, and several more months during which to explain them analytically to the Bantu people concerned. The latter will thereafter require time to hold their own meetings for discussion so as to furnish their respective spokesmen with agreed views which will be tabled at a Government conference that will be summoned by the Minister for Native Affairs in 1936 or 1937 under Act 23 of 1920, the "Native Affairs Act" that provides for Government conferences to ascertain Native opinion on all important contemplated legislation affecting Natives. This was the

sensible procedure adopted in 1922 in connection with the promulgation of the 1923 Urban Areas Act; and the present bills are of much greater significance.

Our Government, like all other civilised legislative bodies, is supported by influential daily journals that defend and justify its measures good or otherwise. The case for the inarticulate Bantu is either never heard or is severely handicapped by the lack of a strong press to educate public opinion, and the only public opinion that matters for parliamentary purposes in this country is European public opinion.

This publication is a humble attempt to readjust the balance in order that the weaknesses, the injustice and the defects of the bills under consideration may be better understood. The spearpoint of these bills is universally admitted to be the abolition of the Cape Native franchise. In the name of civilisation it will be a pity if these proposals reach enactment in the statute books in their present form without their framers fully realising the political obliquity that will be reflected therefrom upon South African history. We Bantu are as much exercised as any Europeans about the prestige of South Africa in the eyes of the world of Christendom. Many Whites mistakenly think that to be their exclusive concern. The Blacks may conceivably pity the Union Government when it unwittingly embarks on a policy censured by the rest of modern civilisation, because and only because of not knowing the evil repercussions of such a policy upon the future of South Africa and Africa as a whole. And the future of South Africa will not be a happy one if it is built to-day, even through the pretext of protecting the political

supremacy of the White races, on legislation designed to be unfair to the weaker Black and Coloured races.

In this pamphlet, and other successive numbers of the series, we hope to get together some expressions of views that deserve the notice of our legislators, views excerpted from various publications. Our aim in doing this is to invite co-operation, willing co-operation between the African subjects of the King and the Union Government in the construction and evolution of a policy that will make for future peace, loyalty and contentment among the diverse peoples that constitute the Union of South Africa.

D. D. T. JABAVU

President, Cape Native Voters' Convention ;  
President, South African Native Teachers' Federation ;  
Organiser, Ciskei & Transkei Native Chiefs' Conventions ;  
Chairman, Non-European Conference ;  
Founder, South African Native Farmers' Congress, etc.

Alice, C.P.

August, 1935.

---

## NATIVE BILLS THROUGH NATIVE EYES

BY

D. D. T. JABAVU.

The Government Native Bills embodied in the report and proceedings of the Joint Committee recently issued by the Parliament of South Africa have shocked the intelligence of most thinking Native Africans. It is fortunate for the Government that the masses of our people are not aware of what is going on in Parliament as they do not read the papers. This, however, is no security for the European race ; for the intelligent Blacks have a way of passing on the information and thus act as an agency to create distrust in the rule of White people.

The Bills clearly indicate that the future settled policy of the land is going to be one of repression, or at least the removal of all advantages hitherto regarded as safe for the Native people.

We Black people generally divide the White race in this country, insofar as governing policy is concerned, into Dutch and English, or north and south, or repressive and liberal people. But this division has proved to be erroneous, because there are many important cross-currents that make such an artificial division doubtful. A generation ago, when the Boers ruled the northern republics, the Blacks in those republics were statutorily denied anything like participation in the counsels of the land. Not only was there no equality in Church or State, but there was not even a pretence at consulting the Africans on matters of rule. The Cape Colony, under the sway of the British made a tradition of liberalism by its franchise grant to all races without discrimination. From this conflict of

policy we discern that education spread by leaps and bounds in the Cape, while it was very limited in the republics.

### “ Realised Fears ”

The result was that the Africans distrusted the movement that resulted in the consummation of Union in 1910 lest the Republic policy be introduced into the Cape, as we looked on it as repressive. These fears have been realised in the present Bills, as I hope to show. To-day we cannot say this is a Dutch policy but the policy of the majority of the White race as a whole, for it is supported by the Englishmen of Natal, a province that boasts of its British traditions, by the whole Nationalist Party of Dutch extraction, and by most of the English-speaking people in the Cape Province except a few in the Eastern Province (East London, in particular) and some in Cape Town. And on the other hand some of the most liberal statesmen we have had are of Dutch origin, the historical “ Onze Jan ” Hofmeyr, General Botha and Senator F. S. Malan who, to his credit, is still fighting against the proposed abolition of the Native franchise contained in these Bills.

So that Sir James Rose-Innes is fair in ascribing the repressive policy to the north, and the liberal one to the south, as evidenced by the attitude of our statesmen towards the Native franchise ; for in the Treaty of Vereeniging the northerners insisted on the exclusion of all Natives from the vote and they repeated this in 1909 when the terms of Union were under discussion. The first quarrel in the Union Government concerned the colour bar in the Dutch Reformed Church and ever since the northerners have had their knife in the land rights and political privileges possessed by the Cape Bantu.

In justice to them we may say they have never pretended to be anything else but enemies of the Cape Native vote. In 1925 General Hertzog declared in his Smithfield address on December 13 that it was his intention, as soon as he could, to abolish this franchise. To this he remained true in his 1926 Bills which may be given the doubtful distinction of being the first landmark in the history of the abolition of the Cape Native franchise. The 1926 Bills contained revolutionary proposals that have reappeared in the new ones under discussion. In the former there were to be seven representatives of the Natives in the House of Assembly, whereas in the 1935 Bills of the Coalition group, which we expected to be more sympathetic than those of the unadulterated Nationalist Party, we are to be ruled out altogether of the House of Assembly, the one section of the Parliamentary organisation that matters. Even if I am debarred by law from being a member of Parliament, I certainly am interested by reason of my civilised standard of life, in the voting processes that influence and direct the disposal of State funds in departments like the Native Affairs Department, which this year absorbs £495,493 ; Health (£475,146) ; Higher Education (£870,321) ; Lands (£208,502) ; Child Welfare (£250,695) ; Agriculture (£1,002,260) ; Assistance to Farmers (£2,745,000) ; Pensions (£3,248,425) ; Police (£2,478,250) ; Prisons (£665,431) ; Public Health (£475,146) ; Justice and Courts (£933,274), not to mention Posts and Telegraphs, Public Works, Customs and Excise and Mines which between them account for an expenditure of over £4,000,000. By virtue of the present franchise, the Africans have some say in these matters, though very indirectly and to an infinitesimal degree as compared with

Europeans ; but to expect them to agree to be withdrawn from that position, a position held in trust for the future generations of the northern Africans, is to presume that the common-sense of these people is obtuse and accommodating.

#### **New Cape Departure.**

The Senate has nothing to do with the disposal of the moneys mentioned above and it is mostly a mere rubber stamp or registering machine very much like its prototype, the British House of Lords. No one in England would dare suggest that all people of the lower classes should be represented by four members of the House of Lords. The mere proposal in Parliament would bring about a rebellion like the French Revolution. Yet the citizens of South Africa are here asked in all seriousness to approve of Bills that are no less unjust. This is consistent with the policy of the north, but constitutes a new departure for the Cape. It seems incredible, to one born in the Cape, that these proposals will be incorporated in the statute books of the Union without a protest at least from those Members of Parliament who have a grain of sense of justice, especially those who stand for constituencies with Black voters. This is supposed to be justice according to the principles of General Hertzog and his Nationalist followers.

During a Nationalist congress held at Port Elizabeth in October, 1933, one speaker, Mr. B. R. Hattingh (since dead) was reported to be pleading for a coalition with the South African Party, and to say "We want a White South Africa. We want to solve the Native question and we want to get rid of the Native vote. We can never do these things by ourselves." This was uttered when the

proportion of the Native vote had been diminished from seven to three per cent. by reason of the introduction of the Women's Enfranchisement Act (1930), and it is clear that the animus against the Native vote cannot be due to a fear of its influence but rather to the traditional anti-Native spirit of the north.

#### **Great Lesson of History.**

The proposal now is that the 5,000,000 Africans of the Union shall be represented by four White Senators while the Europeans who are less than 2,000,000 have 150 Members of Parliament plus 40 Senators. We are to have no individual vote but are to be brigaded in electorate colleges consisting of chiefs, headmen, advisory boards and village councils, all of which bodies possess no primary interest in the franchise as such. In other words the stage is set for the period of a generation, after which we are to cease to have any representation in Parliament, to be taxed without representation—a position that lost the American colonies to England. This is a case of the proverb that the great lesson of history is that no lesson is taken from history. South Africa will be in the happy situation that she can dare to repeat the defiance of England to the American colonists without suffering any material damage, thanks to the illiteracy or indifference of the Africans she rules.

The proposed representation in the Provincial Council amounts to two members for 2,000,000 people and that is to end as soon as roads, hospitals and primary education are transferred to other bodies.

But are these the only matters in which the interests of Black and White are intertwined? This is just where the logic of those who put these Bills forward fails ; they

assume that in South Africa the colour of a man's skin separates his economic interests from those of the rest of the population. This would be true if we had complete territorial segregation where one section lived a life independent of another, that is, without interchange of trade or reciprocal service.

The Natives Trust and Land Bill is a step in the right direction, but not more than a step. Its goodness lies in the fact that it will help many Natives to obtain land who are now landless. Purchase of land is always a difficult matter when there is no capital, just as is the buying of a house without ready cash. The proposal will correspond to the benefit granted by a building society to its members for the purpose of securing a home in town. This has long been a crying need in densely populated areas, particularly in the Cape Province, where it is common to find a village of more than 5,000 souls placed in a tiny area, including its commonage, an area in its entirety less than the size of an average White farm.

It is such an insufferable congestion that actually forced one well-known chief in the Middledrift district to emigrate to the Transvaal, far away from the graves of his forebears, to buy land for cash under severe difficulties. Other groups have from time to time been assisted by the Native Affairs Department, which purchased the land to be bought by means of yearly instalments, often in the shape of a local tax.

That is the bright side of the proposal; but when we examine the total amount of land it stipulates, then we meet with the grievance that the extent of 7,000,000 morgen is altogether inadequate to meet the needs of the Africans. Originally, when the Lands Act of 1913 parti-

tioned the land for Whites and Blacks, the Whites were to get seven times the amount of land suggested for our people; but even that amount of land was never released up to the present day, 23 years after. The intended segregation proved an utter failure because of the illogical rush of legislators to pass a law prohibiting the Natives from buying land from certain specified regions without at the same time promulgating a law to throw open corresponding areas to be available for purchase by Africans.

This position resulted in the bitterest grievance the northern Natives ever had against White rule, for it led to merciless evictions of innocent dwellers on land who were thus made homeless wanderers with their families and movable property. Agitation succeeded agitation but the ear of the rulers proved deaf, and the present Bill shows that our legislators are still adamant and are not prepared to implement their own law to carry out their promise.

#### Land Hunger.

Europeans frequently preach to us about the iniquity of failing to keep one's promise, to honour one's plighted word even if one suffers personal loss and inconvenience in so doing. We often wonder how far such moral and scriptural behests hold true for South African White politicians. Land hunger among the Africans is a question above mere academic discussion; it implies life, subsistence, starvation or death; it merits an appeal to one's religion, faith and moral scruples. In this respect this Bill promises us less than what we had in 1912 before Sauer's Act.

The Native Union Council Bill is supposed to fill up the void left by the disfranchisement of the Cape Natives.

Judged from that angle it is open to all the criticism that can be arrayed against the procedure of depriving people of their franchise without having committed treason or rebellion. Another of its objects is to replace the Government Native Conference established under Act 23 of 1920, generally known as the Native Affairs Act; a conference that served as a safety valve for the combined expression of African sentiments on pending legislation—a conference which however was abandoned by the Government just because it refused to grant its approval of General Hertzog's abolition of the Cape African franchise. It is also meant to be a substitute for the Union Council included in the 1926 Bills, but its terms are less generous than those of 1926. In the original Bill there were to be 50 African members, apart from Europeans, but in the new one, only 16—about a third. It is difficult to understand how this serious reduction can be justified when one compares this number with that of the Transkei General Council which serves but a fifth of the Union African population.

This Bill is an experiment already tried, as we have said under the Native Affairs Act, and as such has its good and weak features, namely that it supplies a chance to the Africans to let out steam even if its effervescence be ineffectual, inasmuch as the Council will be purely advisory and thus inferior to the Transkei General Council. This Bill does not take cognisance of the existence of a large African population outside of rural dwellers, with high educational attainments, possession of property and political intelligence. This section can be represented only through the utilisation of the individual vote as it falls outside existing councils.

The overhead personnel of the proposed Council is rather a drawback on account of its multiplicity; its masters are the Secretary of Native Affairs, the Chief Native Commissioners of Natal, Transvaal, Orange Free State, Ciskei and the Transkei, the Provincial Administrators, the Native Affairs Commission, the Minister for Native Affairs and the Cabinet, all of whom must have their finger in the pie. Too many cooks spoil the broth.

The question of the representation of Coloured persons which was tackled in the 1926 Bills is here suspended for reasons we do not know, but it seems as if the Government is here adopting the ancient policy of divide and rule.

Taking the three Bills as a whole, they offer but little surprise in view of the speeches made by General Hertzog during the last eleven years. They are the logical outcome of a policy he has consistently advocated and which the present writer has equally consistently criticised as defective and illiberal.

The Land and Council Bills would have had to be tackled in any case and have been long neglected, but are now only dealt with in a manner that betrays insufficient sympathy with the aspirations of us Black people. The *piece de resistance* is the Bill to abolish the Native Vote, conferred in 1854 by Queen Victoria's British Parliament, now doomed to be abrogated.

No one so far, except a few public spirited statesmen have had the courage to espouse the cause of the Cape Native vote openly. The majority have chosen to buy peace with the Premier at the price of our head on a charger the sacrifice of our franchise.

For us the regime of the old republics is back and the clock has been put back by a century. We regret the loss

of our treasured privilege now to be removed by a process akin to slow poisoning. We thank all those who stood by our cause, till the die was cast and our doom all but sealed. *Eastern Province Herald*, May 9th and 10th, 1935.

---

**Z. R. MAHABANE**

*(Vice-President of the Cape Native Voters' Convention).*

I believe the majority of the African people will wholeheartedly agree with your proposal for the calling of a National Convention for the purpose of taking counsel on the report of the Joint Select Committee of the Union Parliament, just issued.

The proposals embodied in the Report and the Draft Bills constitute a direct challenge to the African community of the Union. How long shall the African people who form the integral and inseparable part and parcel of the population of the Union be contented with a position of political inferiority and political helotry and of exclusion from the civil organism of this land of their birth? The present occasion calls for the summoning of what should prove to be the largest, most important and representative National Convention of chiefs, leaders and other representatives of all shades of religious, educational, economic and political thought among the African people of the four Provinces of the Union of South Africa. This National gathering should be held at a centrally situated locality which should be easily accessible to delegates from all parts and all corners of the Union.

It would also be most fitting that an assemblage of this colossal character should be held this year when South Africa is celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the consumma-

tion of Union of the four Colonies. The Africans should gather together on this occasion, take stock of the position as a race of people in the country, consider the whole Native policy that has been inaugurated since Union and prosecuted during the last period of twenty-five years, study the culmination of this policy as adumbrated in the draft Bills that are now before the country, "reason together" and publish a statement of their views on the whole situation.

The proposed National Convention should be preceded by local District, Divisional or parochial Conferences, the object of which would be to make preliminary pronouncements, suggest items of the Agenda of the National Convention and elect Representatives to the latter.

For the Convenership of the Convention I would suggest that Dr. P. ka I. Seme, President General of the African National Congress, and Prof. D. D. Tengo Jabavu, President of the Cape Native Voter's Association, be the Joint Conveners; the former to canvass the Northern Provinces and the latter the Province of the Cape of Good Hope. The Joint Conveners might appoint Organizers in various Divisions of the areas allotted to them, who would assist them in the stupendous task of organising what should be a huge Demonstration.

While the parochial Conferences might be held early in July the National Convention might be held on Dingans Day. *Bantu World*, 18th May, 1935.

## A JOHANNESBURG APPEAL.

In the course of an appeal to all African leaders and organisations, a Johannesburg organising committee, consisting of R. V. Selope Thema, M. Matebula, J. R. Rathebe, H. Kumalo, L. L. Radebe and J. S. Kokozela declares that:—"the proposed changes will have far-reaching effect upon the Political and Economic life of our race. The proposed Bills are said to be the foundations of the Union's Native Policy, and they are framed on the principle of territorial and Political segregation; their primary object is to disenfranchise Africans in the Cape in order to prevent the extension of the franchise rights to the African people in the Northern Provinces. Thus they intend to abolish the policy of identity hitherto pursued by the Cape Province and to re-establish the policy of the South African Republic which definitely laid it down that "the people will not admit of equality between White and Black in either Church or State." The bills are toothed and nailed to keep the Africans in a state of subjection for all time.

Surely as a people, we cannot allow such measures to be enacted without letting White South Africa and the world at large know our position and attitude towards a policy which gives us no hope of ever achieving a position of importance in the affairs of civilised mankind. It is because we feel that the future of our race is at stake that we appeal to you to rise above petty jealousies and sacrifice any personal ambition for the race.

The fate of our race hangs in the balance, and we look upon you and others to come to the rescue.

## J. L. DUBE.

(Founder of the Zulu weekly newspaper *Ilanga lase Natal* and the educational institution of Ohlange, Natal; first President of the African National Congress and leader of the Natal Native Congress).

The Government's new Native policy was strongly condemned by the Rev. John L. Dube when he addressed a meeting of the Natal Debating Society the other day. There was no reason why, he said, the vote of the Cape Natives should be abolished. They had done well with their vote and the only two constituencies where numbers counted had sent good men to Parliament.

"Prior to the coming of the White to Africa we had our great leaders—our empire builders—who mean as much to us as Rhodes means to Europeans. We had our Councils and we ran our own government. Yet when we came under the White man we were treated worse than children. We are repressed, not controlled as children should be."

Mr. Dube said that the fear that the Native vote would swamp that of the European was not founded on facts, as was shown by the franchise of the Cape, where only 2 per cent of the electors were Natives.

The Native Trust Bill promised 14,000,000 acres to the Natives and for that they should be glad, because one thing every Native wanted much more than the vote was land. But land had been promised in the past. In 1913 additional land had been promised to the Natives and the Beaumont Commission had decided that 1,000,000 acres should be given to them. They had, however, never got it.

### Unfulfilled Promises.

"How do we know that 14,000,000 acres will be given to us? I do not want to question the honesty of the White

rulers of the country, but we have been promised things in the past and these promises have never been fulfilled."

The Council which was to replace the vote taken from the Cape Native was to be carried on largely by advisory boards and chiefs.

"The Government is trying to replace what it has already disorganised—our tribal system. Our tribal institutions have been disorganised and the power of our chiefs has been taken away. When we kept our men in reserves you told us we were lazy niggers, but when we send them as permanent labourers to the towns you say we are a menace to industry. In this Council enlightened Natives are pushed aside.

#### Useless Senators.

"How many chiefs in Natal know what type of European to send to the Senate to represent them? But the enlightened Native with access to the Native and European Press would be able to decide. If the Government had wanted us to have real representation it should have allowed these European representatives to go into the Lower House. Already we have four Senators, but we never see them and they never speak on our behalf when colour bar legislation is introduced.

"We want to be represented in the Lower House, preferably by our own people, but we feel that that would not be allowed. Only the other day the whole of the Backveld was stirred up because a young Zulu was appointed to assist in Bantu studies in Johannesburg University to teach the sons of the Backveld something they did not know. (*Bantu World* 15th June, 1935).

Strong criticism of the Government's new Native Bills was voiced by the Rev. John L. Dube, the foremost Native

welfare worker in Natal and editor of *Ilanga lase Natal*, at a meeting held in Maritzburg during the week.

Mr. Dube deprecated very strongly the withdrawal of the franchise from the Cape Native, and said that enlightened Native opinion was ignored in the formation of the councils which were to replace the franchise.

The Natives did not want more representation in the Senate. They already had four members and they saw nothing of them. These men remained silent when the colour bar legislation was introduced.

#### Sceptical.

The promise of 14,000,000 acres of land made in the new Bills was viewed very sceptically by Mr. Dube.

"Past commissions have promised 1,000,000 acres to us, but we have never had them. How do we know that this 14,000,000 acres will be given to us?"

"I do not want to question the honesty of the White rulers of this country, but we have been promised things in the past and those promises have never been fulfilled."

Mr. Dube said that the Natives wanted their own representatives in Parliament, but the present European feeling would not allow this.

"Only recently the whole of the backveld was stirred up because a young Zulu with a university degree was appointed to assist in Bantu studies at Johannesburg, yet this man had been appointed to teach the sons of the backveld something they did not know."

The problem of the Zulus was a very difficult one.

"If we only work six months in the year we are called lazy niggers, and if we come into towns and work for the

whole of the year we are a menace to industry." he said. (*Umteteli wa Bantu* 15th June, 1935).

---

#### MAJOR VAN ZYL.

Speaking at Sea Point on the 7th May, 1935, Major G. B. van Zyl, M.P., said that he was opposed to the taking away of the Native vote and would fight hard for the retention of this franchise in the Cape.

Major van Zyl, who was addressing the monthly meeting of the Sea Point branch of the United Party at the St. James's Hall, explained the provisions of the Natives Trust and Land Bill, and said that the Select Committee did not wish to be unjust to the Natives and realised that they could not force Natives out of the towns until the Government had provided land for them to occupy. (*Cape Argus*).

---

#### R. H. GODLO.

(*President of the Locations Advisory Board Congress, and Recording Secretary of the Cape Native Voters' Convention*).

Commenting on the Select Committee's report on the Native Bills in an interview with a representative of the *Daily Dispatch*, Mr. R. H. Godlo, president of the Locations Advisory Board Congress and recording secretary of the Cape Native Voters' Convention, said:—

"The contents of the committee's report has shocked the entire Native community, and if I may say a few words in addition to the views which have already been expressed by leaders of the Bantu race I would venture to state, without fear of contradiction from any quarter, that the proposed abolition of the Cape franchise will be unacceptable to the Natives.

"It is quite clear that the title given to the Bill—'Representation of Natives in Parliament'—is enough to mislead our friends overseas. The report does not provide for any representation of the Bantu people. As has already been pointed out from time to time, the Natives hold that the Native franchise right is inalienable and can only be taken away as a penalty in extreme cases, such as treason.

"In my opinion, some of the measures in the Bills can be conceded separately and quite independently of each other. For instance, the land question has been crying out for adjustment ever since the two races first met at the Fish River. The Union council provision is but a natural development of the council system, which has developed from small experimental local councils to general councils and has no connection whatsoever with the Cape franchise. *Daily Dispatch*, 6th May, 1935.

---

#### W. G. BALLINGER.

In an interview about the Native Bills, Mr. W. G. Ballinger (adviser on Native industrial and co-operative organisation) said:

It is as yet too early to discuss in detail the Native Bills. It is, however, interesting to note the cleavage of opinion as revealed by the published extract of the Select Committee minutes.

If Liberalism is to be interpreted by the status quo, or in other words the retention by non-Europeans of the Cape franchise, then members of the Select Committee who are of British origin are reactionary. The voting reveals that eight voted for and fifteen against the retention of the Cape franchise. The significant fact is that of the

eight who stood for retention five were Afrikaners and only three British. Of the fifteen who voted for its abolition by process of attrition, four were British. Had those four been true to what is claimed as British Liberalism, the Cape franchise would have remained.

I for one am not surprised at the balance of voting. My experience of southern Africa has taught me not to look for Liberalism, essentially or even primarily, among the English section of the community. I have learned that the percentage of Liberal Afrikaners is at least equal to that of the British. The conviction and active courage with which they stand by their views is often an example to the luke-warmness and pusillanimity of the professing Liberals of British stock.

The proposal to have four Europeans as senators representing Native interests in the Senate has revealed, according to the minutes, what looks like a startling volte face on the part of Mr. Heaton Nicholls. He apparently proposed an amendment to the proposition to the effect that the senators could be non-Europeans, but subsequently withdrew it before it was even seconded. Since publication of the Bills, Mr. Nicholls has claimed that they are in line with British policy in other parts of Africa. It is a claim which, if taken seriously, should lead to some stocktaking in other quarters. It will be resented as an aspersion on British administration

Mr. Nicholls must also have been indulging in the gentle art of leg-pulling when in an interview he asserted that the Bills will be found to be acceptable to Black and White and would lead to a rush of Protectorate Natives anxious to join the Union. It is far more likely that the

Bills will be used as clinching reasons why the Protectorates should not be transferred to the Union.

“ I am afraid Natives will not be enthusiastic for the Select Committee's proposal of a Native representative council of twenty-two with purely limited advisory functions and comprised of the Secretary for Native Affairs as chairman, five Union Native commissioners, who are all Europeans, four Natives nominated by the Governor-General, and twelve elected Natives. It is obvious that a council so constituted cannot function as it ought to do and cannot approve or criticise effectively a department which has as its head the chairman of such council. Furthermore, nominated persons on a council which is part elected are virtually tied to the Administration ” *Reuter*, Johannesburg, 6th May, 1935.

#### THE TRANSVAAL CONGRESS.

An important gathering held under the auspices of the Transvaal African Congress took place last Thursday and Friday at Pimville Native Township, Johannesburg, over 100 delegates attending from all parts of the Province.

The Congress discussed Native grievances, the Native Bills, and the problem of the Protectorates. The following significant resolution was passed :

“ That this meeting unanimously resolves that a national convention of all African chiefs, leaders and organisations, namely, the African National Congress, Native Advisory Boards' Congress, Ikaka la Basebenzi, Communist Party, Cape Voters Association, Bantu Union, Bantu Women's League, African Vigilance Associations, Independent I.C.U., United I.C.U., I.C.U. yase Natal, Interdenominational African Ministers' Association, Joint Council of

Native Ministers, African Dingaka Association, Non-European Conference, African People's Union, and other bodies, as well as representatives from Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland, be held at Bloemfontein on December 16, 1935, to consider the Government's new Native policy and the incorporation of the Protectorates."

Mr. T. M. Mapikela, the veteran speaker of the African National Congress, moved this resolution as an unopposed motion after a most appealing speech to African leaders and masses to unite, and to bury all political differences in this time of national crisis. He said that too much fault-finding and criticism impeded the forward march of the African. As a result they were losing even the meagre rights they once had. It was time to put the African house in order.

Among the many Reef leaders who met in conference were Messrs. L. T. Mvabaza, C. S. Mabaso, D. T. Mveli Skota, C. Dunjwa, the Reverends S. Mdolomba, J. Mdelwa Hlongwane and Twala, all representing the T.A.C.; G. S. Mabeta, Western Native Township, African Vigilance Association; E. Mahlanza, Benoni, African Vigilance Association, S. P. Mqubuli, the Native Advisory Boards' Congress; J. B. Marks and J. Ngedlane, the Communist Party; M. M. Kotane and A. Chuenyane, Ikaka la Basebenzi; I. B. Muroe, I.C.U.; and representatives of other bodies.

Mr. Matseke, President of the T.A.C., presided. *Umteteli wa Bantu*, 8th June, 1935.

#### BISHOP OF PRETORIA.

The Right Rev. Wilfrid Parker, Bishop of Pretoria, has some interesting things to say of the Prime Minister's

Native Bills in the June number of "The Kingdom." Writing with his usual forcefulness and candour, His Lordship states:

"When Fusion was accomplished I confess to having felt some alarm lest liberal treatment of the Native problem might be sacrificed as part of the price paid."

"It seems that my fears were well grounded, for I am bound to say, with sorrow, that certain of the important proposals in the Bills are reactionary, and will make neither for peace nor happiness. I wish with all my heart that I could say otherwise."

The really serious point was that underlying the proposals—yet most obvious, was the refusal to regard the Natives as citizens of the Union, or at any rate to grant them any but the most meagre citizen rights. This was shown by the proposed gradual disenfranchisement of the Natives of the Cape.

To take away the right to elect a member of the House of Assembly was a very serious matter, for it could not be doubted that a vote meant power. Indirect representation in the Senate was farcical; from the point of view of the Native such representation was useless; to argue about it was mere waste of breath. The only representation which was of any real value must be in the House which alone wielded sovereign power.

#### Interests The Same.

To suggest that Natives were to be represented only in other ways seemed to imply that the interests of Europeans and Natives were fundamentally at variance. The Bishop did not believe this to be true; rather the reverse. The interests of both sections were really the same.