

Boycott Will Hit Workers

Dear Sir,

The reported efforts of the local Labour Party to encourage a boycott of South African products, seems to be another example of muddled Socialist thinking. The first people to feel the effects of a boycott will be the African workers employed in the production of South Africa's exports to this country, who will be faced with unemployment if the demand for their products falls.

I have recently returned from a nine months stay in South Africa and although I found much in the Nationalist Party's programme to criticise, I came away convinced that there is no simple solution to the racial problems afflicting that country.

White South Africans are outnumbered more than four to one by their black fellow countrymen, most of whom still live under tribal conditions and have little knowledge of European ways of life and the complexities of a modern world. Are three hundred years work and progress to be abandoned by allowing control of the country to pass into the hands of a people not ready for it and who incidentally only migrated into Southern Africa about the same time as the European settlers arrived?

The present South African Government has already taken steps to set up Bantu areas where the Africans can learn to run their own affairs separate from the Europeans.

There are many petty restrictions imposed upon Africans, with which I do not agree and I feel are unnecessary. Let us criticise the South African Government by all means, but it must be constructive criticism. If the Socialists have a solution to South Africa's problems, let us hear it. A boycott of South African products helps no one, least of all the African worker.

Yours faithfully,

K. J. COLQUHOUN.
Goldsmith Road, N11.

Attacks "Complacency"

(To The Editor)

Dear Sir,

Many people today display an arrogant complacency about the course of events in South Africa. Unless the South African government can be persuaded to end its policy of apartheid there will inevitably be a terrible racial conflict in the Union. It is hoped that the boycott of South African goods will cause that government to abandon its belief in a political philosophy not far removed from that of the Nazi Party.

Although racial troubles may be matters for government policy it is a democratic duty to protest when civil liberties are suppressed. The world is now too small to allow us to shut our eyes to cruelty, injustice and totalitarianism anywhere in the world.

It is said that the boycott will adversely affect South African workers, but it is precisely these workers (and many other Africans), speaking through the African National Congress, who have asked for the boycott. They know how serious the situation is in South Africa.

The Labour Party's support for the boycott in Finchley, far from being "stupid" or "muddled", shows that it is alive to its responsibilities to our brothers overseas, be they white or black. It remains to be seen how effective the boycott will be, but it surely deserves the support of all citizens who believe in the principle expressed by the poet Donne: "Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee."

The bell is tolling in South Africa today; it is up to all of us to heed its warning notes.

Yours faithfully,
ERIC DEAKINS

Prospective Parliamentary
Labour Candidate,
Finchley.
