

30th October, 1971.

DAILY MAIL

It's anti security

IT IS NOT TRUE that the jackboot actions of the Security Police are necessary in the interests of State security.

In fact it would be difficult to imagine anything that could have done the cause of national security more harm in such a short time as this week's mass raids, followed so soon by the death of one detainee and the mysterious indisposition of another.

Coming on top of all the other deaths in detention and the allegations of ill-treatment — given credence by the State's reluctance to have public inquiries and its eagerness to settle claims out of court — these events will greatly reinforce the image abroad of South Africa as a ruthless State authority. And this will aid the terrorist movements.

For months now these movements have been pushing the argument that their tactics of violence are justifiable because the method employed by the State to oppress Non-Whites also amount to violence.

A boost

We in South Africa may dismiss this argument as spurious, but in fact it is gaining increasing acceptance abroad — as our Government well knows. It is precisely this that has persuaded a number of respectable bodies to give at least moral support to the guerrilla movements: the Swedish Government, the British Labour Party, the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Presbyterians Church, the Joseph Rowntree Social Trust, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands and, only this month, a group of Dutch MPs.

Now the process has been given a gratuitous boost.

Internally, too, the conduct of the Security Police generally and this week's events particularly are contrary to the basic precepts of anti-guerrilla strategy.

Time and again our leading expert on anti-guerrilla warfare, General C. A. Fraser, has stressed the importance of maintaining the loyalty and co-operation of the indigenous population. "Once you lose their confidence," he has warned, "you lose the war."

Which is a dire warning indeed — and our Cabinet is known to take it most seriously.

Aggravated

Yet in the face of it our Security Police have succeeded in fostering a feeling among our Non-White population that is not exactly one of love. The Imam's strange death hardly endeared them to the Muslim community. Nor will this week's events have helped rela-

No need for inquiry — Vorster

STAFF REPORTER

IN A GENERAL Press statement, issued yesterday, the Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster, said the Security Police were at present engaged in a comprehensive and serious investigation which was connected with terrorism and sabotage.

"In the process persons have been detained for questioning in terms of the legal powers vested in the police for this purpose by Parliament. It can be expected that more persons will be detained in the course of the investigation," he said.

Mr. Vorster said it was the legal duty of the police to contain terrorism and sabotage and they would perform this task notwithstanding the agitation by certain newspapers and persons "to foment feelings against the police and make their actions suspect".

"The pattern is known and abusive language has been the same over the years as often as the police have had to act in this regard."

He said there was a significant difference between the actions of certain newspapers and persons when members of the police were killed or maimed by terrorists and when people were detained under the law and in some isolated cases unfortunately committed suicide or died as a result of natural causes.

STRICT

"The police have strict orders to act within the provisions of the law. Despite extreme provocation and considering the seriousness of the matter, they do so."

"The police have proved abundantly that they do not hesitate themselves to act against any member of the force who makes himself guilty of any contravention."

"The public must take note of the fact that our enemies will, in the times ahead, attempt to undermine us with greater hatred and venom than even before. Between them and our safety stand the police."

Mr. Vorster added that the procedure required by law in the case of death, whether it occurred in police custody or otherwise, had always been complied with and would be in the future.

"I therefore find no necessity for appointing a special judicial commission to investigate any particular case."

As soon as the investigation had been completed, the relevant documents would be submitted to the Attorney-General for further action.

Graff warned

DURBAN. — The leader of the Opposition, Sir De Villiers Graff, warned the Prime Minister last night that his refusal to appoint a special judicial enquiry into the death of a detainee would not satisfy present public disquiet and shock, which has arisen after repeated deaths of people in custody.

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Yet in the face of it our Security Police have succeeded in fostering a feeling among our Non-White population that is not exactly one of love. The Imam's strange death hardly endeared them to the Muslim community. Nor will this week's events have helped relations with the Indians. Indeed it will not have escaped the notice of our indigenous population as a whole that all 17 of the detainees who have died while in the care of the Security Police have been Non-Whites.

This dangerous state of affairs has been aggravated by the consistent refusal to order public inquiries into these deaths, which gives the impression that there is something to hide.

It has been aggravated, too, by the failure of the authorities to issue full and prompt public statements, which gives the impression of indifference and which allows rumours to sweep like wildfire through the townships.

Security is primarily a matter of eliminating grievances — and jack-boot actions don't do that.

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