

A letter to the Editor

FOR RATHER MORE than 20 years I have believed that the most just and practical solution for the social problems of this country is contained in the policy of separate development.

As a Christian, and despite the views of a large number of churchmen, I am unable to see that this policy, if it is carried out in love and charity to all men, is at all at variance either with Christian tradition or with the teachings of Christ: but, having as its end the avoidance of spiritual, social and physical conflict, it ought to be brought about without violence to the persons or the well-being of those it is intended to benefit.

I am in consequence unable to associate myself with any of the usual vociferous protest groups.

Nonetheless, I feel that the means adopted to make separate development work are sometimes incompatible with true Christianity and that it is the duty of those who cherish the faith to endeavour to correct all departures from proper Christian action.

POWERLESS

Powerless individuals may not be able to do very much, but the example of the Rev. Bernard Wrankmore has shown a way of producing some effect. Though it can only be a poor shadow of his own great effort, I have responded to his appeal, and am abstaining from all food and drink between sunrise and sunset during the Moslem month of Ramadan.

The reaction of those set in authority over of us to Mr. Wrankmore's fast has been disappointing: for a politician to dismiss any activity as "publicity-seeking" is ironical when one considers that no politician can himself be politically effective unless he seeks publicity; and a glance back at the Prime Minister's own period of dissent from the policies of his country could suggest that his disagreeable comment might have been prompted by retrospective envy of Mr. Wrankmore's courage.

I have never heard it maintained that any of the inmates of Koffiefontein were prepared to fast unto death for their convictions.

I should like to suggest that all who feel that they must make some gesture of protest at the failure of the Security Police adequately to protect someone in their care, someone who was, through them, a public responsibility, should for the rest of the month of Ramadan publicly display some token of mourning, such as a black tie or armband. — G. T. NURSE, Cinderella Street, Florida.

Political prisoners' day of mourning

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — Indian leaders in Durban yesterday declared Wednesday, November 10, a national day of mourning in sympathy with South Africa's political prisoners.

A resolution compiled by the Natal Indian Congress urged all Non-White businesses to close.

It was read out at a meeting called in protest against the number of political detainees who have died.

The latest to die was Mr. Ahmed Timol, who plunged from the 10th floor of John Vorster Square after his arrest by the Security Police last week.

The meeting was packed to capacity with people of all races — most wearing black patches as a sign of mourning.

The speakers were Mr. Barney Pityana, general secretary of South African Students' Organisation, (SASO), Mrs. Fatima Meer, Dr. Farouk Meer, and Mr. Rabbi Bhagwandien, executive members of the NIC.

ALARM

All expressed alarm at the growing number of political arrests in the country and branded them as Government "intimidation" tactics.

Mr. Bhagwandien, an executive member of the NIC, said: "If we have to pay the final penalty that Ahmed Timol paid, let us pay it — it is worth dying for."

The full text of the resolution proposed by the congress was: "We call on all oppressed people in South Africa to observe a national day of mourning on Wednesday, November 10, 1971, and to withdraw completely from all spheres of commerce and industry as a sign of protest."

'I was taken for a Govt. man'

Staff Reporter

THE Indian Council member, Mr. Ismail Mayet, who was prevented from speaking at yesterday's prayer service to Ahmed Timol, said last night he belonged to the school of people who believed justice must be seen to be done.

"I can't blame the attitude of those present. I might have done the same in the highly emotional circumstances," he said.

"The comments that I am a Government stooge were not meant for I. Mayet, I think, but for the seat I am holding. The intolerance is understandable under the circumstances. They said it because they thought I was a Government man."

Mr. Mayet said he had wanted to lead a prayer at the meeting and to pass on his condolences to the Timol family.

FRIEND

"I am a close and intimate friend of Mr. Yusuf Timol."

Mr. Timol is a registered partly-blind man with the Coloured and Indian Welfare Association. Mr. Mayet is a founder-member of the 25-year-old association and is its chairman.

He said that after the families of detainees had seen lawyers, he had been inundated with requests and calls for help.

"Many of these people were in a dilemma and confused. They were told by their lawyers that their family members had been detained under a section of the Terrorism Act, and there was nothing anyone could do."

He said the South African Indian Council was a consultative body which had nothing to do with legislation. All it could do was write letters.

He said he had been in contact with the Department of Indian Affairs about the detentions.

Mr. Mayet said he was well known as a community man. He had involvement with sporting and cultural activities, was a member of hospital committees and had made representations on behalf of the community on a number of occasions.

Flood of telegrams planned for Div

STAFF REPORTER

HUNDREDS of telegrams are expected to begin pouring in to the United Party's Johannesburg office from today after a Bryanston housewife started a campaign at the weekend to get people to express their concern at last week's Security Police raids and the death in detention of Mr. Ahmed Timol.

The housewife, who did not want her name mentioned, said: "All I did was to phone 10 people and ask them to send a telegram to Sir De Villiers Graaff, and for each of them in turn to pass the request to 10 others."

"If all goes well, in a few days, Sir De Villiers should be getting telegrams from all over the country."

"We feel he is the best person to whom we can express our concern."

The decision to start the chain action came after nationwide Security Police raids and the death of Mr. Timol, she said.

"We are all ashamed that this sort of thing should have happened, and we want to show our concern."

"People who want to join us should send a telegram as quickly as possible, and word it as they like."

"The response so far has been very promising."