Need to hold an election —now

IT HAS and shall continue to be said that detention without trial is strictly in the interests of State security.

An equally popular saying amongst Government supporters is that liberal minded people in Western countries become ignorant tools of the well-organised communist indoctrination machine. Both these suggestions may be true to a degree, but in South Africa, matters have suddenly taken a different turn.

The issue is no longer one of "detention without trial" but has been overshadowed by the more dramatic "death and torture in detention without trial."

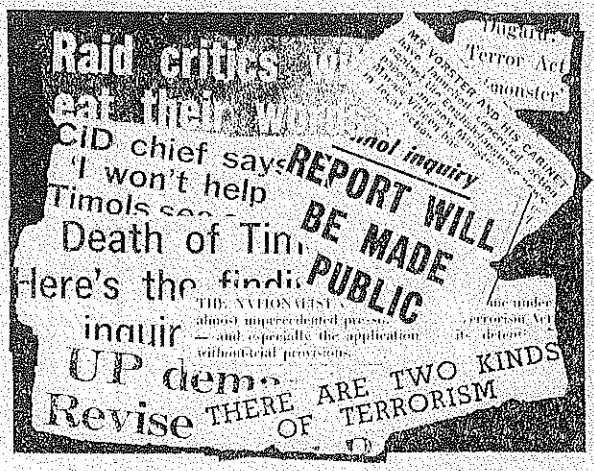
The history of our young nation reveals without doubt prolonged periods of struggle for both survival and status by the various population groups.

In this respect, let us turn to the struggle of the Afrikaner people and language to gain status. These people, the victims of concentration camps, lack of recognition and general abuse in the early days of our history, through determination courage and love for the fatherland have gained recognition and respect as a group that has made a substantial contribution to the stability and development of our country. It is quite factual to state that South Africa is today ruled by an Afrikaner Government.

Let us South Africans, the vast majority of whom are level-headed and fair minded, protest in the strongest possible way against the shocking developments of the past week, made even more disgusting by a report two days after the death of Ahmed Timol which states that the Minister of Justice had no knowledge of the incident.

It is now apparent that imprisonment and detention is not realy the concern of the Department of Justice any longer.

Now is the time for us, the fair minded anti-communist people of South Africa, to call for a general election to allow us to remove the National Party from power. This call cannot brand us as communist tools, ignorant liberals, etc., but merely as champions of justice and western democracy — two vital factors sought by the Afrikaner people in their struggles during our early history. — EDMUND ELIAS, Halfway House.



Must we fear to speak up?

AS A 16-year-old school pupil, my immediate reaction was that the recent raids related to Father Wrankmore's appeal for people to fast through Ramadan in support of his call for a judicial inquiry into police detention.

As news came through of the 20 people being held under detention, this seems to add weight to the fear of Father Wrankmore's supporters about police detention.

Is it not strange that what seemed to be a passive protest for a humane attitude towards fellow citizens in detention should be answered by the Government detaining 20 more people?

What is it that allows a country, supposedly democratic in constitution, to be able to do away with the civil rights of people by which no judicial court can establish a means of civilised inquiry?

What is it that allows parents, brothers, sisters and friends to be eaten away with fear for the safety of their detained fellows whom they cannot reach?

Are these things which members of a 20th-century society must close their eyes to, and treat as natural and inevitable? Must we, as humans, sit back and say, "They deserved it"?

Or must we be ridden with guilt, fear and anxiety, not knowing whether we are to think what is happening is wrong; not being able to say openly that we believe justice and liberty are being violated?

Why must we feel so helpless, feel that our words are useless, and eventually stop speaking because the words are only ringing meaningless in an emotional chaos.

I fear for these people and their families, and I identify in a natural human manner to the emotional human distress which these people must feel. But what can I do? I can only use words, empty words of sadness. — ERICA EMDON, Forest Town, Johannesburg.

Eternal apathy

I MUST express my shame at this moment at being a medical student.

Two of my colleagues have been arrested and detained for unknown reasons and in an unknown place.

They have not been given the basic democratic rights accorded to the most hardened criminals. Now one of them is in hospital in a serious condition in circumstances known only to the Security Police.

We as medical students have not spoken a word of protest.

It seems that our eternal apathy will only be broken when we are taken away in the early hours of the morning. — MEDICAL STUDENT, Westcliff, Johannesburg.

● Since this letter was written, a statement of protest, signed by third-year medical students, has been published.

Plea to the silent ones

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED wish to record our increasing alarm and disquiet over the recent Security Police actions concerning political detainees, and Government inaction to undertake any form of official inquiry.

We find it particularly disturbing that there are people in a position to voice opinion and take constructive action yet seem either too frightened or too affluent to do so.

We therefore appeal to all South Africans (especially the abovementioned) to commit themselves to opposing such inhuman activities which can only continue to do this country, and its people irreparable harm.

To be silent now is to condone. — C. I. VON CHRISTIERSON, K. THYCESEN, N. S. WHITELY, Johannesburg.

UP voted for this law

WHAT HAVE the United Party to protest about? They are in favour of detention without trial, they voted with the Government on such issues as the 90-day and 180-day Bills.

When it came to the Terrorism Bill they went so far as to suggest that Mrs. Suzman might be in favour of terrorism.

After this scurrilous campaign they have the temerity to protest.

One would also hope that they will mention their support for the drugs Bill. Their astonishing behaviour in supporting this legislation, which also contains provisions for detention without trial, should be explained by the new champion of freedom and justice, Mr. Mike Mitchell.

The United Party has nothing to protest about. They should hang their heads in shame for what they have done to South Africa, and resolve to support Mrs. Suzman whenever she fights for the rule of law. — PETER SOAL, Westdene, Benoni.

Count me in

I, TOO, wish to stand up and be counted with Rev. Wrankmore. — VALMA BANKS, P.O. Northrand.

Sometimes Jac

Come domin

MRS. WALLOP, by Pe Vries. London: Collan

THE TROUBLE with P Vries is that he keeps busy laughing that so tion is diverted from once of his story.

And this tale is jam the very warp and comedy.

We find the Negro improbable name of ski—which he later c Pilsudski. There i middle-class Conno predilection for Malaj

The situations he dreams up include an devotee of Yoga who taken to hospital beh lotus position, and a who caught a deadly a faith healer.

The heroine, the ...

Carlicks
Carlton Centre
PAUL IRWIN