

# ADVANCE WAS MURDERED BY NATIONALISTS

## —Says Brian Bunting

THE proclamation published in the Government Gazette last week prohibiting the printing, publication and dissemination of "Advance" reads as follows:

"Under and by virtue of the powers vested in me by section 6 of the Suppression of Communism Act as amended I do hereby prohibit the printing, publication and dissemination in the Union of South Africa and the territory of South-West Africa of the publication called 'Advance'.

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN."

The proclamation was signed on October 12 by the Governor-General, Dr. E. G. Jansen, and countersigned by the Minister of Justice, Mr. C. R. Swart.

That is all. Just a few words, and a paper read and cherished by tens of thousands of South Africans is murdered by the Nationalist Government.

### NO EXPLANATION

Why? The Gazette gives no explanation. The Suppression of Communism Act gives four grounds on which a publication may be banned. When the Guardian newspaper was banned, the proclamation issued by the Governor-General stated the grounds on which action had been taken against it. True, the Guardian had previously disputed those grounds, and denied the charges levelled against it by the Minister's committee of three; but at any rate, the Guardian had some idea of what the Government had against it.

Not so Advance. From beginning to end of this sordid business, the Government has given absolutely no indication of why it has taken action against the paper. Our offices and the homes of many people connected with Advance were raided by the police on August 31. Many of the documents removed during those raids are still in the possession of the special branch of the police, but still neither we nor the public at large have any idea of what the police were looking for, or of what they found.

### GOVERNMENT HAS NO CASE

What could they have found

New Age has invited Mr. BRIAN BUNTING, former editor of Advance, to contribute an article on the suppression of his paper. In this hard-hitting article he points out that those who fail to take up the challenge of the Nationalists and who blind themselves to the present dangers are themselves aiding and abetting the Government on its march to an outright police state.

which in any way justifies the suppression by force of a legally registered newspaper which, since it came into existence in 1952, has committed no offence against the law? Where is the evidence of treason, sedition, incitement or what have you? The very reluctance of the Government to bring its charges into the open, to subject them to the scrutiny of the people, to submit them to the arbitration of a judicial tribunal, is convincing proof that it has no case. Advance has committed no crime except that of consistently opposing the apartheid policies of the Government, and voicing the aspirations of the oppressed peoples of South Africa.

That the Government can suppress the precious freedoms of the people without good cause we already know. To those who deport and banish the leaders of the people who proscribe and excommunicate those who are in any way active in the liberatory struggle, who raid and intimidate, who rule through the special police and accept the insinuations of the informer as the truth—to men such as these the freedom of the Press has no meaning and it costs nothing to ban Advance.

### ROAD TO DICTATORSHIP

But men and women who love freedom must not accept the outrages of the Nationalist Government lying down. It does not matter if 100 people have been banned before, each new banning must be resisted with all the force of public opinion. It doesn't matter if the

Guardian has been banned before, the banning of Advance must be fought to the bitter end.

Those who accept tyranny because they have become conditioned to it, who blind themselves to crime because others and not they themselves are the victims—these are either slaves or the accomplices of the Nationalists.

The road to outright Nationalist dictatorship and the republican police state can be paved with the compromises and acquiescence of those who were too indifferent or too frightened to fight back.

Where then are the editorials in the "Opposition" Press condemning the suppression of Advance? The Cape Argus, the Cape Times and other newspapers which were so eloquent in their defence of a free Press when the Guardian was banned in 1952, today preserve a discreet silence and pretended that nothing untoward has happened. Where are the protests of the political leaders who boast they stand for the preservation of Western democracy against the assaults of totalitarianism? In the "Opposition" camp, all, all is silence.

### COURT ACTION

In the belief that the banning of Advance was illegal, we intend to seek redress in the courts. But we are not so naive as to believe that, with a Government as contemptuous of law as it is of democratic rights, Press freedom can be preserved in the courts alone.

As the final guarantors of basic human rights, we turn, as we have always turned, to the masses of the people, to the African miners, to the Indian industrial workers, to the Coloured artisans, to the farm workers, to their European allies—freedom, peace and security can only be won through the liberatory movement. The answer to the tyranny of Swart, Strydom and Co. lies in the organisation and unity of the people in militant struggle against fascism.

Let us go forward, into the New Age, with unwavering determination and confidence in the justice and final triumph of our course.