

The Origin and Development

of the

Cape Progressive Party

(1884 - 1898)

A Thesis presented for the degree of

Master of Arts

by

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Cape Hansard

Debates in the House of  
Assembly, Cape of Good Hope.

M.P.

Merriman Papers

Mil. P.

The Milner Papers (South  
Africa) 1897 - 1899

R.I.P.

Rose Innes Papers.

Walker, History.

A History of South Africa.

Walker, L.d.V.

Lord de Villiers and his  
Times.

Walker, W.P.S.

W.P.Schreiner. A South African.

## Chapter I

(1)

A Progressive Party first appealed to the Cape electorate for support on the basis of a political programme in the general election of 1894, and the circumstances which led to this step being taken on the surface appear to have been the formation of the first Rhodes Ministry in 1890. That Rhodes' assumption of office merely accelerated a movement which could be discerned as far back as 1883, becomes clear when the origin and development of the apparently isolated and inconsequential attempts by English-speaking colonists at political organisation are examined; these sporadic attempts in fact provide the background to the movement which culminated in the formation of the Progressive Party in 1898.

In order fully to appreciate the obstacles which confronted those English-speaking colonists who felt the need for political organisation in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, it is necessary to realise: what political groups existed in Parliament in 1883, what political organisations were active in the country prior to the formation of the Bond; and the nature of the Afrikaner Bond's principles and objects, for in the final instance the Progressive Party's programme was to be determined by the aims adopted by the older Afrikaner Bond party.

In 1883 the Legislative Assembly contained no clearly defined political parties as we understand them today. No organised groups of politicians had contended with each other for the power and spoils of office, proclaiming rival policies and programmes, so that the existence of two political groups in the House - the Ministerialists and the Oppositionists - at

first appears capricious. When, however, it is realised that Responsible Government which had been conferred on the Cape Colony in November 1872, implied the existence of a Responsible Ministry and Opposition, the existence of the two parliamentary groups in fact ceases to be perplexing. After 1872 the Ministerialists and Oppositionists gradually emerged from the amorphous body of members which Molteno, by his choice of colleagues, had deprived of the old party divisions.(1)

From the press we learn, however, that in 1883 "neither the rank and file of the 'ins' nor the 'outs' have bound themselves to a leader with any loyalty, while the leaders have never known how long it would be before they had to stand and witness a 'bolt'".(2)

This lack of loyalty stemmed from the absence of party organisation outside Parliament. As late as 1888 Innes recounts that "Parliamentary candidature,....., was not hampered by party machinery;..... An aspiring candidate had no party nomination to secure, he threw his hat into the ring, formed a committee, secured a secretary, and opened his campaign,"(3)

It is not surprising therefore that in 1883 the two main groups in Parliament were in a constant state of flux, as members were unhampered by party vigilance in the exercise of <sup>their</sup> his votes in the House. In these circumstances it seems likely too that members were moved to oppose or support a measure after gauging the effect such legislation would have on their own particular constituencies, for the electorate in each constituency was the ultimate arbiter of a candidate's fate. Against this background it is therefore not surprising that the strength and membership of the Ministerialists and Oppositionists varied from day to day according to the nature of the legislation which was tabled

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(1) J.H.Hofmeyr, The life of Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr, p.122

(2) Cape Mercury, 17 November 1883.

(3) James Rose Innes, Autobiography, p.77

in the House.

How did this compare with party development in Britain? Distinct political parties had first begun to emerge after the Reform Act of 1832 was passed, (4) although the lines of "Tory versus Whig-Radical were so loosely drawn during that decade that Members could stray from the one fold to the other and back again with impunity, unpursued (though not always unremarked) by their parliamentary leaders," (5)

During Peel's administration - 1841-46 - the modern Conservative Party was born, an event which heralded the coming of the two-party system in British politics. This development was however checked during the Premiership of Palmerston, but resumed again in the period 1868 - 1885. (6) The Reform Act of 1867 had restored "the clear-cut two-party system in the country and in Parliament and ended the dangerous drift toward a system of groups". (7) Gladstone's new Liberal Party was returned with a majority of 116 at the general election of 1868, while Disraeli's new Conservative Party headed the polls in 1874 with a majority of 98, "both without counting the uncertain and fickle support of any group not definitely forming a wing of his own Party." (8) At a time therefore when the Cape Ministry received unreliable support from individual members, "the classic era of the two-party system" (9) (1868-1885) was drawing to a close, in Britain.

Before the Afrikaner Bond was established in May 1883, two avowed political organisations were active in the

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(4) J.A.Hawgood, Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. V No.1, 1951. p.27

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid., pp. 28 - 30.

(7) Ibid. p. 32.

(8) Ibid. p. 32.

(9) Ibid. p. 30.

Colony, J.H.Hofmeyr's Boeren Beschermings Vereniging<sup>(10)</sup> and the Rev. S.J. du Toit's Africander Bond.<sup>(11)</sup> In addition to these organisations there existed numerous Farmers' associations which, though not political in their origin, had gradually come to provide political forums for their members.<sup>(12)</sup> These Farmers' Associations were in fact older than Hofmeyr and du Toit's organisations, for they were established by the British settlers in the 1870's.<sup>(13)</sup> To what extent these associations, which flourished in the Eastern Province, fulfilled the need felt by English-speaking farmers for airing political viewpoints may be judged from a perusal of the Agenda which was drawn up for the Farmers' Congress held at Fort Beaufort in June 1883. The subjects to be discussed included colonial native policy, the forthcoming general election, an agricultural department in the Government, squatting and the revision of the Native Location Act, a compulsory Scab act, the excise duty and compulsory education,<sup>(14)</sup> from which it may be concluded that some of the problems which concerned the members of the Farmers' Associations were in essence political in so far as they were affected by acts of Parliament.

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(10) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.149.

(11) Ibid. pp. 195 - 197.

(12) From a report on the Farmers' Congress held in 1898, it appears that Section 11 of the rules made political discussion permissive. This provision was stated to have been necessary at the time when the Farmers' Associations were first established, because no political organisations existed in the Colony at the time.  
Cape Times, 22.2.98.  
Vide Hofmeyr op. cit., p.144

(13) Hofmeyr states that the first Farmers' Association was formed at Middelburg in October 1873, p.144.

(14) Cape Mercury, 1 June, 1883.

The Farmers' Associations had their counterpart in the Boeren Beschermings Verenigingen which Hofmeyr had succeeded in establishing after the First Sprigg Ministry imposed an Excise of 2s. per gallon on Colonial brandy.<sup>(15)</sup> The object of the Boeren Beschermings Verenigingen was stated to be "to watch over and protect the Farming Interests of this Colony", and would be attained

"1stly. By promoting the election of Members of both Houses of Parliament, who will generally oppose all measures calculated to press unduly on the farming population, - who will resist the imposition of all export duties or other one-sided taxes on articles of Colonial produce or industry, - who will avail themselves of every favourable opportunity for repealing or rendering less oppressive the excise tax on colonial spirits - who, in all proposed legislation on the relations of Masters and Servants, will keep in view the special wants of the farming population, and who will advocate the judicious application of grants out of the public revenue for the development of the agricultural and pastoral resources of the country;

2ndly. By endeavouring to secure the registration as Parliamentary voters of all men interested in the farming pursuits of the Colony and to guard against all abuse of the franchise.

3rdly. By providing proper machinery for informing the farmers of all measures proposed in Parliament, by which their interests may be endangered."<sup>(16)</sup>

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(15) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.147.

(16) Article II of the Rules and Regulations of the Boeren Beschermings Vereniging, Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.643.

From these articles it thus becomes clear that Hofmeyr's Association was first and foremost intended to promote the interests of the farming community and, as no stipulation in the constitution confined membership to Afrikaans-speaking colonists, it is conceivable that the Farmers' Associations and Boeren Bescherminings Verenigingen drew their membership from both European races in the Colony. By 1881, although branches of the Boeren Bescherminings Vereniging had been started in the Eastern districts, these were not affiliated to the central organisation with the result that the Boeren Bescherminings Vereniging "acquired a strongly Western colour".<sup>(17)</sup>

Soon though, it was to be overshadowed by a younger rival, the Africander Bond which S. J. du Toit and his brother had spared no effort to establish.<sup>(18)</sup> This Bond, like the Boeren Bescherminings Vereniging, aimed at the promotion of the farming population's interests,<sup>(19)</sup> but differed from the Vereniging in that it stressed the racial character of the organisation. "The Africander Bond starts from the principle that we as Africanders have our own general as well as special interests," its first principle stated, "which each true Africander is called upon to protect."<sup>(20)</sup> Furthermore, only those colonists who had chosen Africa as their fatherland, would be included in the Bond,<sup>(21)</sup> the implication of course being that colonists who for instance regarded England, Holland, France or Germany as their fatherland would not qualify for membership. The chief political object of the Bond was "to provide, that the various classes of the population are properly represented in the various legislatures, according to their numerical strength, and by such representatives as are in agreement with the principles of the Bond".<sup>(22)</sup>

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(17) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.201.

(18) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.197.

(19) Article II (2) and (6). op. cit., p.196.

(20) Article I (1). op. cit. p.196.

(21) Article I (3). op. cit. p.196.

(22) Article II (4). op. cit., p.196.

The politically conscious English-speaking farmers on the Frontier could have had no serious misgivings about the formation of the Boeren Beschermings Verenigingen in 1878, for its principles were such as they could readily have approved of and supported. The formation of the Africander Bond on the other hand could hardly have been viewed with equanimity, stressing as it did the desire to promote Afrikaner interests. When, therefore, in March 1882, S.J. du Toit issued a programme of principles before the first Congress of the Bond and Vereniging representatives met at Graaff-Reinet to discuss amalgamation, their fears were justified. This programme stated "that the final aim of our national development must be a United South Africa under its own flag"<sup>(23)</sup> so that in addition to having a decidedly racial character, the Bond could be charged with being distinctly disloyal to the British Empire. It is not surprising, therefore, to find after the Graaff-Reinet Congress that the Cathcart Farmers' Association had great difficulty in deciding whether or not it should attach itself to the Africander Bond which had made such rapid strides in the Eastern Province.<sup>(24)</sup>

"In commenting on the problem confronting the Cathcart farmers, the East London Dispatch stated<sup>(25)</sup> that "Whenever English colonists discuss the subject (affiliation to the Bond) in meetings, they are in the same quandary. Very many of them appreciate some of the aims of the Bond, as far as they can understand them, ..... But then they find some of the views developed at Bond meetings so radically opposed to enlightened principles that they can have nothing to do with them;...."

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(23) Ibid., p.208.

(24) East London Dispatch, 9 September 1882.  
The Cathcart Farmers' Assoc. did not arrive at a decision.

(25) Ibid.

The East London Dispatch expressed its own attitude to the question by supporting the statement made at the Cathcart meeting by a member who declared: "I am a man to go in for a South African Union tomorrow, but not an Africander Bond Union. I could not do it as an Englishman - it goes against my birthright." (26)

Of these three organisations the Vereniging alone appears to have shown its strength by securing the return of its candidates to the Legislative Assembly before 1883. (27) In the general election of 1878-79 we find "a strong body of men, who were determined to do their best to secure the removal or alleviation of the hated Excise" returned to the House. (28)

This then was the extent of political organisation in the country when in May 1883, the amalgamation of du Toit's Bond and Hofmeyr's Vereniging was effected at the Richmond Congress. (29) The new Afrikaner Bond which emerged as a national political organisation after 1883 was responsible for the creation of the first political party in the Cape Colony - the Afrikaner Party. That this party would concern itself with encouraging Afrikaners to assert themselves politically, (30) (Art.III) indicated its racialistic character, while the establishment of the Bond party machine assured the Afrikaner Party of a decided advantage over the unorganised English electorate in subsequent parliamentary elections.

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(26) Ibid.

(27) While there appears to be no evidence extant to support the writers' contention that the Farmers' Associations could have influenced the return of candidates they approved of in the 1878-79 general election, the possibility nevertheless suggests itself.

(28) Hofmeyr, pp. 150-151.

(29) Ibid., pp. 205-206

(30) Ibid. p.649.

In order to understand first how the formation of the new Afrikaner Bond effected the attempts of English-speaking electors to organise themselves politically after 1883, secondly to what extent it accentuated or retarded these efforts and, thirdly how it determined the character of the first English political party, it becomes necessary to examine the principle tenets of the Bond.<sup>(31)</sup> Article (I) of the General Constitution recognised "no nationality of any kind, save that of the Afrikaner", and looked upon all who aimed at the welfare of South Africa as belonging to that nationality. The object of the Bond would be "the formation of a South African nationality by the fostering of true patriotism, as preparation for its final destiny : A United South Africa " (Article II) while this object was to be achieved "by encouraging the Afrikaners to assert themselves, both politically and socially, as a nation." (Article III). The Provincial Constitution for the Cape Colony<sup>(32)</sup> circumscribed Art.III of the General Constitution by laying down that the Province would give "effect to the objects described in the general Constitution by:

- (a) attending to the registration of qualified citizens;
- (b) ensuring the election of competent men for civil and state affairs;" (Art.III)

while the Circle Committees would promote the interests of the Province "in connection with the elections for the Legislative Council, ....." (Art. VII)

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(31) For General Constitution of the Afrikaner Bond vide Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 649-650.

(32) Hofmeyr , op. cit., pp. 650-652.

One important issue was however not finally decided at the Richmond Congress, namely whether the Bond would strive for a United South Africa under its own flag or the English flag. Because S.J. du Toit had been able by means of his newspaper, Di Patriot, to publicise his programme and beat up support for his "free Africander flag" principle, (33) the Richmond Congress decided to submit the programme to its branches. (34)

The hesitation which the English farmers had shown with regard to joining the Africander Bond in 1882 must therefore still have obtained after May 1883, and it seems likely that they were reconciled after that date to exerting what political influence they commanded through the medium of their annual Farmers' Congresses. (35) Furthermore in a colony which had hitherto known no clearly differentiated political parties, in constituencies where no permanent political organisations had existed and to an electorate which exercised its vote in favour of personalities and not principles, the formation of the Afrikaner Bond was not likely to evoke any immediate desire on the part of English-speaking colonists for a political organisation. The political power which the Bond was likely to wield had not become apparent and this factor determined the fate of the first attempt made to rouse English colonists in 1883.

The call for the formation of an organisation to oppose the Afrikaner Bond came from the Cape Times in June 1883.

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(33) Ibid., p. 198.

(34) Ibid., p. 208.

(35) It seems significant that prior to 1883, only one Farmers' Congress had been held. (Cape Mercury, 11 June 1883, p.3) After 1883 we find these Congresses meeting annually, a practice which appears to have been deemed necessary to counteract the political influence of the annual Afrikaner Bond Congresses.

After referring to the formation of the Bond and stating that it was "a step in the right direction", the question was asked "But why is there no organisation on the other side?".

It was pointed out that there were "questions coming into the near prospect - Questions of representation, of franchise, of liberty. And, while one section of the community is strenuously working out those questions and laying plans for united action in respect of them, the other section of the community follows a course not of masterly, but of sluggish, inactivity, ....." (36)

Within a week of the article being reprinted in the East London Dispatch, a letter appeared from Rowland A. Bettington, calling on readers to form a "fresh Association.... to be called the South African Union." Bettington suggested as a programme for this Union, (a) the settlement of the native question, (b) moving the capital to one of the frontier towns in order to carry out the above enactment, (c) securing Home Government consent for colonists to manage not only the Colonial, but all other natives, (d) Confederation of Colonial States, (e) the representation of the Confederation of South Africa in the English House of Commons by two members from the Colony and finally, that the Colony was to be an independent but integral portion of the British Empire. (37)

A meeting was thereupon held in the Mutual Hall in East London to consider Scanlen's Representation Bill, the proposed cession of Basutoland to the Imperial Government, "the future prospects and administration of the Colony, and the advisability of forming a South African Union." (38)

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(36) Reprinted in East London Dispatch, 9 June 1883.

(37) East London Dispatch, 13 June 1883.

(38) East London Dispatch, 30 June 1883.

A resolution stating that the Representation Bill was not "suited to the requirements of the Colony, both on account of the large and unnecessary increase proposed in the number of representatives, and also on account of the proposed distribution of new seats, which entirely ignores the right to separate representation of large town and commercial interests, and is therefore utterly unworthy of the support of the public" was carried. On the future of Basutoland a motion was put expressing the view that "this meeting views with apprehension the proposed transfer of Basutoland to Imperial control....." but found only four supporters. The motion on Confederation, however, was carried by "a large majority" and proposed that in order to promote confederation of the various States, "an association be formed to be termed the South African Confederation Union." (38)

In August 1883 a poorly attended meeting approved a draft programme which set out the principles of the S.A. Confederation Union. (39) But the movement had apparently spent itself by the end of the year for we find no concerted effort made by that association to assert itself in the Legislative Council elections in December of that year.

The failure of the South African Confederation Union to develop into an effective political organisation must first and foremost be attributed to the ill-timed launching of the Confederation scheme, secondly to the abstract nature of its programme and finally to the lack of a forceful leader.

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(38) , East London Dispatch, 30 June 1883.

(39) East London Dispatch, 11 August 1883.

The ill-fated Confederation Scheme of Carnarvon was still fresh in the memory of the colonists, and while the Afrikaner Bond admittedly aimed at "A United South Africa", this principle was superimposed on the main object of the Boeren Beschermings Vereniging, namely "to watch over and protect the Farming Interests of the Colony". Then too the principles which the draft programme contained were too ambitious and unrelated to Colonial politics. The promoters of the South African Confederation Union aimed at a confederation of various states (Art. 1), the establishment of a central Senate "in which each of the States shall be represented;...." (Art.4), and "entire independence of action, within the limits of the Union, to be granted by the English Government" (Art.5)<sup>(40)</sup> and were in fact seeking to interest the people of East London in a scheme which should have been sponsored by the political leaders of each of the States it was proposed to Confederate.<sup>(41)</sup> Had these frontiersmen confined their activities to fighting the Representation Bill, for instance, they might have aroused more enthusiasm and received active support from the larger towns in the Eastern Province. The nucleus of a political party might thus have been formed, but this issue never featured in the draft programme of principles. Finally Bettington and his provisional committee failed to enlist the support of any prominent political leaders and neither publicised nor attempted to form branches of the Union outside East London.

The Cape Times had visualised the formation of an organisation to oppose the Bond on questions such as the representation and the franchise, but all it had succeeded in doing

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(40) For draft programme of principles vide Appendix A.

(41) The only meetings which the S.A.C.U. held were in East London.

was to elicit the formation of a group which sought to confederate South Africa. In 1883 the strength of the Bond was not yet apparent and there seemed no necessity for an "organisation on the other side".

(ii)

The power of the newly formed Bond was first clearly demonstrated in the general election of 1884 when election returns showed that this organisation had succeeded in securing the election of "about 33" members who would support J.H. Hofmeyr on "the majority of questions" in the House.<sup>(42)</sup> The Bondsmen thus formed the largest body in the Legislative Assembly, for the remaining members supported either the Scanlen Ministry or the Opposition.<sup>(43)</sup> In this connection the efforts of the East London Dispatch, which had attempted to classify some 65 election returns in March 1884, must be referred to in order to indicate to what extent political groupings in the House were virtually unpredictable. This newspaper claimed that with election contests still to be decided in 9 constituencies, the Ministerialists had already secured 26 seats, the Opposition 28, while some 11 successful candidates were listed as "Uncertain". Several of these "uncertains" were declared to be representatives of the Bond.<sup>(44)</sup> How far off the mark this forecast was may therefore be deduced from the final outcome which proved to be a triumph for the Bond organisation.

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(42) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.243.

(43) Innes, op. cit., p.58.

(44) Reprinted in Queenstown Free Press, 4 March, 1884.

In fact when on the 6th of May Scanlen resigned because of the defeat his Ministry had sustained on the Phylloxera issue, Sir Hercules Robinson called on Hofmeyr to form an administration in view of the fact that he had the strongest following in the House.<sup>(45)</sup> But Hofmeyr declined and suggested that Upington be called upon to assume the reins of office, a suggestion which the Governor acted upon. Upington was enabled to undertake the formation of a Ministry by virtue of the support he received from the Bond,<sup>(46)</sup> and for the next fourteen years it became axiomatic that the Government of the day, in order to carry its proposals, was forced to frame its policy in conformity with the wishes of the Afrikaner Party - the strongest party in the House.

It was during 1884 that yet another unsuccessful attempt was made by the English colonists to form a political association. The events which prompted the formation in the Colony of the Empire League - an English political association - are stated by Charles Leonard to have been the definite form which "Dutch National aspirations" had taken in 1885.<sup>(47)</sup> What were these "Dutch National aspirations"? In September 1884 President Kruger enlarged Montsioa's reserve by proclamation and annexed Goshen to the South African Republic, subject to the consent of Her Majesty.<sup>(48)</sup> In the Cape Colony there were immediate repercussions. The Upington Cabinet, supported as it was by Hofmeyr and the Bond, was inclined to oppose Downing Street interference in Colonial matters, while Cecil Rhodes, apparently supported by a large number of colonists, proposed the introduction of the Imperial factor.<sup>(49)</sup>

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(45) Hofmeyr, op. cit. , p.247

(46) Ibid., p.262.

(47) C.Leonard, The Political Situation in S.A. The Empire League was established in 1884, not 1885 as Leonard implies.

(48) Eric .Walker, a History of South Africa, p.406  
M.T.Peters, The British Government and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.15.

(49) Basil Williams, Cecil Rhodes, p.83

On 18 September T.E.Fuller was summoned by the High Commissioner to Government House<sup>(50)</sup> and informed that "a military expedition for Bechuanaland under Sir Charles Warren was nearly ready to start, but that the English Ministry were hesitating at the last moment, and that unless he were backed up by some demonstration of feeling from the Cape Colony, he feared it would never start". Fuller therefore arranged a demonstration at the Commercial Exchange in Cape Town<sup>(51)</sup> which, according to the press notice, was to be held "for the purpose of eliciting an expression of Public Opinion concerning the position of the IMPERIAL and COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS with respect to the state of Bechuanaland at the present time".<sup>(52)</sup> A news item stated that a movement was on foot "for holding similar meetings throughout the Colony....."<sup>(53)</sup>

At the meeting in Cape Town four resolutions were moved, of which the first and second are noteworthy. The Hon.A.Ebden, M.L.C., called for the intervention of Her Majesty's Government in Bechuanaland, while J.W.Leonard proposed that "any failure on the part of Her Majesty's Government to maintain its just rights under the Convention of London..... would be fatal to British supremacy in South Africa and fraught with disastrous results to all loyal subjects of Her Majesty in this Country".

These resolutions were unanimously carried and a committee was appointed to prepare a petition and present it to the Governor "for transmission by cablegram to Her Majesty the Queen....."<sup>(54)</sup> By 9 October 1884 similar meetings had been held at Aliwal North, Mossel Bay, Queenstown, Kimberley and Beaconsfield, but these appeared to be certain centres.

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(50) On the instigation of Rhodes?

(51) Sir Thomas Fuller, Rt. Hon. C.J.Rhodes, p.48

(52) Cape Argus 24 September 1884

(53) Ibid.

(54) Cape Argus, 25 September 1884.

in the Eastern districts, namely Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, which in the beginning had refused to join the movement. The opinion was expressed that Grahamstown viewed the movement as "anti-Ministerial",<sup>(55)</sup> while Port Elizabeth was alleged to have the "sulks" because Cape Town had taken the lead, and if she could not "play first fiddle", she would not play at all.<sup>(56)</sup>

If initially there appeared to be a certain lukewarmness in respect of the protest movement in the East, the enthusiasm of the people of Cape Town must have encouraged the promoters. On 23 October, 1884, a meeting was again held in Cape Town "for the purpose of adopting a Declaration of Principles for the 'Empire League', which it has been determined to establish in the Colony."<sup>(57)</sup> The adoption of the Declaration of Principles, and a working constitution was moved by Innes and seconded by J.L.M.Brown. A Provisional Central Committee, including inter alia J.L.M.Brown, the Hon. Alfred Ebden, M.L.C., P.J.Stigant, M.L.A. (the Mayor of Cape Town), J.Rose Innes, M.L.A. and Victor Sampson, was appointed and immediately afterwards a Cape Town branch of the Empire League was formed, a committee elected and an annual subscription of ten shillings agreed upon.<sup>(58)</sup> Within a week the second branch was formed in Mowbray, and thereafter six more in the Peninsula.

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(55) Cape Argus, 27 September 1884.

(56) Cape Argus, 6 October 1884.

(57) Cape Argus, 24 October 1884.  
J.Albert Coetzee, Politieke Groepering in die wording van die Afrikanernasie, p.194.  
For the Declaration of Principles, vide Appendix B.

(58) Cape Argus, 24 October 1884. Members of the Cape Town Branch Committee included L.Wiener and C.Lewis (members of the Legislative Assembly), F.J. Dormer (editor of the Cape Argus), F.Y. St.Leger (editor of the Cape Times) and T.J.Anderson (who became Chairman of the South African League's Cape Town Branch in 1896).

Outside of Cape Town, however, the Empire League failed to take root, (59) and even the Peninsula branches ceased functioning after 1884. It therefore remains to account for the failure of the Empire League to develop into an English political association, and in order to do so the aim of this body and the circumstances surrounding its inauguration must be examined.

As to the aim of the Empire League, that was boldly set out in Clause I of the Declaration of Principles and reads as follows: "The fundamental object of this League is to maintain unimpaired the connection which now subsists between this colony and the British Empire".

What had led the founders of the Empire League to imply that the Imperial tie was being impaired in October 1884? Probably the sentiments which Uppington expressed in his statement of Government policy when he met the House on 16 May, 1884. Then he referred to the fact that the Colony should "assume a definite control of those dependencies on our border, over which we have hitherto been in the anomalous position of practically exercising government without the authority of any Act of the Legislature". He expressed the opinion that while the Government had "the strongest feelings of loyalty to the Crown" and the warmest desire to maintain their "connection with the great and free Empire..... the Responsible Ministry of this Colony should be permitted to manage the affairs of the Colony without interference, - interference which may be dictated by political considerations in the Imperial Parliament....." (60)

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(59) Branches were established at Kingwilliamstown, Beaufort West and eventually at Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort and Kokstad, but by December 1884 the Port Elizabeth Telegraph declared that the Empire League had failed outside Cape Town and proceeded to account for the failure. Article reprinted in Cape Argus, 3 December 1884.

(60) Cape Hansard, 1884, pp.20-21.

In all probability it was the explicitly stated intention of the Upington Ministry "to manage the internal affairs of the Colony free from external control" which roused men like Wiener, Ebdon and Innes and prompted them to establish the Empire League in an effort to counter the Government's policy of loosening the bonds between the Colony and the British Empire.

The Bond was responsible for the belief which had prevailed for some time in England that the Colony's inhabitants were "wanting in attachment to their privileges as subjects of Her Majesty the Queen".<sup>(61)</sup> This must be deduced from the tenour of Upington's Bond-inspired statement and the avowed intention of the League to correct the erroneous idea.

How did the Empire League propose to attain its objects? According to the Declaration of Principles, by the establishment of branches within the Colony (clause 3),<sup>(62)</sup> "by the propagation of sound views through the Press and every other Agency which may be available for the purpose; by securing a proper representation of Colonial views in England; and by opposing the election to Parliament or other public office of any candidate who may be unable to give satisfactory assurances of his sincere loyalty to the Throne and the Imperial connection" (clause 10); and by affiliation to the Imperial Federation League, which was then being formed in England "With the grand object of educating public opinion up to the conviction that the time has arrived for the creation of a Federal Parliament or some alternative machinery, which will supersede the imperfect arrangements now existing, for keeping Great Britain and her dependents together" (clause 8).

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(61) Declaration of Principles, Clause 6.

(62) The League intended to confine itself to the Cape Colony and in this respect differed from the Afrikaner Bond which had offshoots in the Transvaal and Free State. Vide Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.209.

But on no account would the Empire League "interfere with party politics within the Colony . . . ." (clause 4), a declaration which indicates that the intention had been to form a political pressure group, not a political party.

That the Empire League failed to develop into an effective political association after 1884, must be attributed to various factors. The movement which started in Cape Town was regarded in the Eastern Province as an attempt to increase the political power of that town.<sup>(63)</sup> East-West rivalry in the Colony was apparently still in existence. The colonists in the Eastern districts viewed the protest meetings concerning the Bechuanaland question as "anti-Ministerial",<sup>(64)</sup> and would have been averse to supporting the outgrowth of these meetings, namely the Empire League. Apart from this affinity which colonists in the Eastern Province felt for the Ministerialists, which therefore led them to distrust an allegedly Opposition movement, there was the fear expressed throughout the Colony that "the formation of such a thorough British Society as the Empire League cannot be otherwise than distasteful to the Afrikaner Bond party, on whose support Mr. Upington was last session wont to rely".<sup>(65)</sup>

But by far the most cogent reason for the Empire League's failure appears to have been the fact that it was used by Rhodes to achieve his immediate object. Once it had served Rhodes' purpose, there appeared to be no reason for it to remain in existence.

In 1884 Rhodes had embarked on his plans for expansion into the interior.<sup>(66)</sup> He looked upon the Bechuanaland territory as the "Suez Canal" of the country,

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(63) Cape Argus, 3 December 1884.

(64) Cape Argus, 27 September 1884.

(65) Cape Argus, 3 December 1884.  
Coetzee, op. cit., p.196.

(66) Williams, op. cit., pp.56 et seq..

"the key of its road to the interior....," and as such the annexation of Goshen by the Transvaal constituted a severe setback to his scheme. The fact that a German protectorate had been formally announced over Damaraland and Namaqualand only five months previously aggravated the situation considerably<sup>(67)</sup> for Bismarck and Kruger seemed to have conspired to cut off the approach to the interior.

In order, therefore, to safeguard the Bechuanaland corridor and ensure the success of his scheme, Rhodes strongly urged the despatch of an expeditionary force by the Imperial Government "to enforce the (London) Convention and establish a protectorate over Bechuanaland; and suggested that Sir Charles Warren, ....., should take command."<sup>(68)</sup> The despised Imperial factor was being invoked<sup>(69)</sup> and it may be assumed that it was in response to a suggestion from Rhodes that Robinson summoned T.E.Fuller and asked him to arrange a demonstration in support of Imperial intervention in Bechuanaland. The Empire League, which was an outgrowth of this agitation was backed by Rhodes for the Cape Times in 1888 declared "It was by the Empire League that Bechuanaland was wrested from the grasp of the Transvaal before and Mr.Rhodes was the prime mover in that enterprise".<sup>(70)</sup> It would therefore appear that Rhodes sponsored the formation of the Empire League in order to get widespread support for his appeal for British intervention. When the Imperial factor, in the person of Sir Charles Warren, was introduced into Bechuanaland in December 1884<sup>(71)</sup> the immediate object had been attained.

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(67) Ibid., p.77 .

(68) Ibid., p: 83.

(69) In July 1884 Rhodes had urged the removal of the Imperial factor from the situation. Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, Political Life and Speeches, pp. xxii-xxiii.

(70) Cape Times, 30 November 1888.

(71) Williams, op. cit., p.83.

The proclamation of British Bechuanaland, south of the Molopo, as a Crown Colony in September, 1885<sup>(72)</sup> completed the episode for Rhodes.

The colonists who attended the protest meetings and expressed their desire for the intervention of Her Majesty's Government in Bechuanaland, had the satisfaction of seeing their wish granted. The attainment of the Empire League's more remote aim, namely the unimpaired maintenance of the Imperial tie, seemed for the present to have been assured and hence their enthusiasm for that political association petered out. It would have required a statement similar to that made by Upington in May, 1884 and an event comparable to the threatened flouting of British supremacy in South Africa, to have sustained the interest of the colonists in the Empire League. These were absent from the political scene immediately after the Bechuanaland crisis.

To Rhodes there seemed no advantage to be had from continued interest in the Empire League. The movement gave no indication of becoming national or effective and he had only sponsored it because the Bond, the only suitable political organisation in the Colony at the time, must have tacitly adopted Hofmeyr's solution of the Bechuanaland problem - the assumption of control by the Transvaal Government.<sup>(73)</sup>

After 1884 "the gradual movement of Rhodes away from Scanlen, towards Hofmeyr" was discernible<sup>(74)</sup> and one might therefore conclude that the Empire League no longer impressed Rhodes as the ideal organisation to nurture in order to achieve his goal - British colonisation in the interior

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(72) Walker, op. cit., p.409.

(73) Hofmeyr, op. cit. p.253.

(74) Innes, op. cit., p.58.

with "the Cape Colony as the dominant <sup>state</sup> of South Africa". (75)

An alliance between Rhodes and Hofmeyr with the solid backing of the Bond organisation, held out greater assurance of success for Rhodes' plans than did the continued tie with the ineffective Empire League. Deprived, therefore, of Rhodes' guiding influence after 1884, the Empire League ceased to function.

The formation of the Empire League can be regarded as the first attempt to organise an anti-Bond movement for its intention was to dispel the erroneous idea that the spirit of loyalty had waned in the Cape Colony by opposing the election to Parliament of any candidate who was "unable to give satisfactory assurances of his sincere loyalty to the Throne and the Imperial connection." (76) The spirit of disloyalty the League saw emanating from the Uppington-Hofmeyr alliance, so that in addition to being anti-Bond, the organisation showed itself to be anti-Government.

(iii)

With the collapse of the Empire League the colony was left with but one political organisation, the Afrikaner Bond. By 1885 the foundations of this organisation had been firmly laid and both in Parliament and in the country it had "leierskap, doelbewuste optrede, 'n mate van party organisasie en funksie binne die volksverteenwoordiging." (77) In fact the Bond stood alone as an organised political group "wat in verband met die belangrikste vraagstukke dieselfde

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(75) Lewis Michell, The Life and Times of the Right Honourable Cecil John Rhodes, p.99.

(76) Declaration of Principles, Clause 10.

(77) J.H.O. du Plessis, Die Ontstaan van Politieke Partye in die Kaapkolonie tot 1885, Ch.17, p.18.

oortuigings gehad het." As yet, however, there could be no talk of an Afrikaner Party, for party discipline and a caucus system were not discernible in Parliament. (78)

The year 1885, according to du Plessis, must be regarded as a definite milestone (grensjaar) as far as the development of political parties in the Cape Colony is concerned, for not only were different political streams or trends to be observed then, but at least one political party (sic) existed, and the foundations of two others had been laid. (79)

The three distinct political streams which were latent in the political scene by 1885 were the Calvinistic republican (Calvinisties-republiekeinse) trend represented by the Africander Bond of S.J. du Toit and Di Patriot, which had been temporarily stifled by Hofmeyr's policy of conciliation; the conciliatory trend which was being pursued by Hofmeyr and the English-speaking colonists under the leadership of Molteno, Upington and Scanlen, "wat geen beswaar gemaak het teen 'n eie nasionaliteit nie, maar wel die Britse vlag wou behou"; and the ultra-Imperialist direction under the leadership of "Rhodes, Leonard en ander", who wanted the entire South Africa under British rule. (80) But not only were these trends apparent by 1885; the basis had been laid for the parties which would fight for Afrikaner nationalism and British Imperialism: the Cape (Kaaplandse) National Party and the Progressive Party. (81)

Du Plessis' analysis of the political scene at the Cape in 1885 is indeed an accurate one and it remains for us to take up the threads of the movement by English colonists in the quest for political organisation.

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(78) Ibid.

(79) Ibid. Ch.19, p.1. Freely translated. Du Plessis after declaring that the Bond by 1885 must be regarded as a political group and not as a political party, (Ch.17, p.18) nevertheless concludes by claiming that a political party already existed by 1885.(Ch.19, p.1).

(80) Ibid., Ch. 19, p.3.

(81). Ibid., Ch.19, p.4, footnote 1.

After the Empire League ceased functioning in 1885, two further attempts were made during the decade to form political groups, the first in Grahamstown in 1886, the second in East London two years later.

The Grahamstown movement started as a protest against the threatened abolition of the Court of Appeal. This measure was embodied in a Bill which in May, 1886, came before Parliament<sup>(82)</sup> and proposed to abolish the Colonial Court of Appeal and confer its power on the Supreme Court. A public meeting to protest against this action was therefore called by J.S. Willcox, the Mayor of Grahamstown, on 1 June 1886, in "compliance with a request from the Chamber of Commerce" as the measure was deemed "to be to the detriment of the Courts of the Eastern Districts and Griqualand West."<sup>(83)</sup>

The citizens of Grahamstown apparently did not view the Bill as apprehensively as did their Chamber of Commerce for "barely 40" attended the meeting. Nevertheless a resolution was adopted recording opposition to the Appeal Court Abolition Bill for the reason that "it degrades the Eastern Districts' Court, and High Court of Griqualand West, into a position inferior to the Supreme Court, and this tends to diminish the credit and usefulness of the Court thus injuriously affected". It was also decided to send copies of the resolution to Mr. Upington, the Grahamstown parliamentary representatives and the Mayors of several towns. But mere protest would not suffice, and it was therefore decided to form a Colonial Association, in order to unite action "for the protection of common interests, and the promotion of legislation for the advancement of the Colony,....."

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(82) Cape Hansard, 1886, p.324.

(83) Eastern Star, 31 May 1886.

A Committee was thereupon appointed "to prepare rules, and correspondence with other colonial towns for the furtherance of the object....." (84).

The day before this meeting was held the Excise Act Amendment Bill obtained a Majority of two votes on the third reading, the Government voting with the Opposition against the Bond members. (85) The passage of this Bill which abolished the Excise on the products of the farmers and thus favoured the wine-farming centres, apparently fanned the flame which had been kindled by the introduction of the Appeal Courts Abolition Bill and the colonists were stated to be looking to the Legislative Council to reject it. (86) But this the Upper House failed to do on 9 June, 1886 whereupon it was duly denounced as "this discrepant, dishonoured and now useless legislative body." (87) The Eastern Star then proceeded to explain how the colonists could prevent a repetition of the events just witnessed in Parliament. They must support an association - the Political Union - which it was intended to launch on 12 June, 1886 in pursuance of the decision taken at the meeting on 1 June, 1886. This Political Union would protect and promote the interests of the "Eastern, Midland and Northern Divisions of the Province" and if there were any who doubted the need for such a body, it was pointed out that "with branches in every town and District in the (Eastern) Province, the electors would soon know how to remedy such political debauchery as the Legislative Council has just been the scene of. The Hons. Bowker and Ross would not have an

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(84) Eastern Star, 2 June 1886.

(85) Cape Hansard, pp.316-7. During the 1886 session the Government was twice defeated - on the percentage reduction of salaries of public officials and the abolition of the Excise - and yet remained in office. Vide Hofmeyr pp.279-8:

(86) Eastern Star, 11 June 1886.

(87) Ibid,

opportunity of 'ratting' again on the Excise or any other question....."(88)

The meeting was duly held and the Committee reported that their endeavour had been "To indicate a basis on which a Political Association might be formed in each locality, which might be useful in guarding the local interests, and promoting the election of suitable representatives to Parliament". It was felt that the time had arrived for united action and "that nothing else than Political Union such as they have sketched out will suffice to protect the threatened interests of the various districts, to prevent a continuance of mischievous legislation, and promote those measures which will tend to the peace and prosperity of the Colony". Views were also expressed that the Political Union could work "in readjusting the representation of the people" and keeping alive an interest in politics, while the "moral cowardice of the Government in not putting down its foot in determined opposition to the loss of £60,000 by the abolition of the Excise, which would have to be made up by taxation" was condemned. The Political Union would be in a position to resist any unfair taxation, such as the recently imposed house-tax and the raising of wholesale licences from £3 to £15. It seemed quite obvious to the meeting that the Bond-supported Upington Ministry was burdening the towns with taxation. (89)

The Committee report was adopted and the Constitution of the Political Union approved. (90) The object of the association was stated to be "to protect and promote the political, agricultural and commercial interests of the "Eastern, Midland and Northern districts of the Colony" (clause

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(88) Ibid;

(89) Eastern Star, 16 June 1886.

(90) For Constitution of the Political Union vide Appendix C.

while membership was to be confined to "residents in the above districts, who shall have..... signified their adherence to the Constitution of the Association." (Clause 3).

A canvass of some portions of Grahamstown was soon undertaken by the association and reports received from Port Elizabeth, the only town specifically mentioned, implied that support for the movement was excellent.<sup>(91)</sup> But this interest was not maintained. The first, and apparently last, business meeting of the Grahamstown Branch of the Political Union was held on July 3rd at which a Committee was elected and a proposal asking the Grahamstown representatives in Parliament to address the constituency was adopted.<sup>(92)</sup> Messrs. Arthur Douglass and J.E.Wood complied, but Dr. W.G.Atherstone, M.L.C. for the South-Eastern Circle, was unable to accept the invitation.<sup>(93)</sup> Less than three months after the Political Union was formed the Executive Committee found it necessary to rescind the resolution limiting a quorum to 15 and substitute for it the provision that "until the bye-laws are submitted members of Committee form a quorum."<sup>(94)</sup> After this date no further reference to the Political Union can be traced.

The short-lived Political Union movement is interesting for the purpose of this study inasmuch as it was the first attempt by English colonists to form a political association in order to counteract specific legislative measures introduced by the Cape Parliament. In this respect it differed from the S.A.C.U. and Empire League movements and the fact that it failed to achieve its objects must be attributed to its desire to promote purely local interests.

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(91) Eastern Star, 23 June 1886.

(92) Eastern Star, 5 July 1886. Richard Solomon, who was later to become a prominent member of the Innes group, was elected to the Grahamstown Branch committee.

(93) Eastern Star, 26 July 1886.

(94) Eastern Star, 18 August 1886.

The attainment of these objects appeared to be assured when in November, 1886 Sprigg assumed office and included in his Cabinet two Eastern Province stalwarts - Schermbrucker and Tudhope.<sup>(95)</sup> The possibility must have <sup>occurred</sup> ~~accurred~~ to the members of the Political Union that the East being so well represented in the Cabinet, there was every chance of its welfare being protected and promoted by the Government. Furthermore it was the First Sprigg Ministry that had been responsible for the passage of the Excise Bill in 1878, and in 1880 proposed a scheme of railway construction which had been distinctly favourable to the Eastern Province.<sup>(96)</sup> There seemed to be every likelihood that the new Government would maintain a position independent of the Bond in Parliament and be amenable to the requests from the East.

The Second Sprigg Ministry, however, proved to be dependent on Bond support<sup>(97)</sup> and this fact was responsible for the attempt made in 1888 to form a Frontier Party.

The attempt to form a political party on the Frontier seems to have originated with Sprigg. At a banquet in East London on 26 September 1888 he declared: "I desire a union amongst the Border districts so that they shall stand together as one and advance the interests of the Border and the Colony generally...."<sup>(98)</sup> The appeal by the senior member for East London appears to have found an immediate response in the press, for two days later the Cape Times could report that a Frontier Party had been formed "with the object of relieving Sir Gordon Sprigg of a galling dependence, and of dividing the Bond itself by a geographical line of cleavage."<sup>(99)</sup>

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(95) These men represented Kingwilliamstown and Uitenhage respectively.

(96) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.181.

(97) Ibid., pp. 306 et. seq..

(98) East London Dispatch, 29 September 1888

(99) Cape Times, 28 September 1888.

In making the appeal to his constituents Sprigg had however been careful lest he antagonise the Afrikaner Bond, for he probably realised how embarrassing the situation might be should his Frontier Party fail to materialise. With this in mind he had first emphatically denied that the Government was subservient to the Afrikaner Bond and then stated that he had entire sympathy with the objects of the Bond. (100) The temerity of his denial led the Cape Times to conclude that the Frontier Party would clearly be "a refuge against the tyranny of the Bond" and would secure to the Sprigg Ministry "a permanent tenure of office." (101)

This Frontier movement was linked with a Tariff and Excise League which L. Wiener, M.L.A., was urging the Frontier districts to form at the time. The League would be pledged to two objects, "a low Customs tariff and an excise duty on spirits." The press hastened to remind its readers that a similar proposal was agitated the previous year and implied that the situation was such that there could be no reluctance in the Eastern districts to support the new movement. (102) Factors which must have prompted Wiener to launch his Tariff and Excise League appear to have been Sprigg's failure to re-impose the Excise during his tenure of office and the adoption by the Customs Conference in January 1888 of a general tariff rate, which "represented a compromise between the Cape and Natal rates", but apparently failed to satisfy Cape commercial interests. (103)

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(100) Sprigg prepared the ground for his Frontier Party appeal at a public meeting held in East London on 24 September 1888. East London Dispatch, 26 September 1888.

(101) Cape Times, 28 September 1888

(102) Cape Times, 14 September 1888.

(103) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 334-337.

The campaign which Wiener was conducting in the Eastern Province in favour of the reform of the Colony's fiscal policy seemed to coincide with Sprigg's East London speeches, which opened the election campaign. This had moved the Cape Times to suggest that Sprigg adopt the principles of Wiener's League,<sup>(104)</sup> a suggestion which was however not taken up.

The formation of the Frontier Party which the Cape Times seemed so anxious to publicise evoked some scathing attacks in the West. Merriman, always to be relied on when an apt description was needed, promptly labelled the movement "the Party of Plunder", "a needy cabal of people binding together in their own interests",<sup>(105)</sup> while the cry was taken up by Stigant, who expressed the opinion that the Frontier Party was formed "for no other purpose than spoil and plunder; to form a compact mass which would bring pressure to bear on the Government and get what they would not otherwise get." <sup>(106)</sup>

As to the fate of the Frontier Party, its failure to materialise, was predicted by the East London Dispatch very soon after its formation had been mooted. Sprigg's appeal was regarded as "a piece of electioneering policy" which would have no time to ripen between the day of its promulgation and the day of the elections". The time factor seemed all-important for the general election was scheduled to take place in January 1889 and by 10th October nothing had been heard of negotiations between Frontier towns, which were essential "for the laying down of the lines of co-operation". For these

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(104) Cape Times, 22 September 1888.

(105) Cape Times' report of Merriman's attack was reprinted in the East London Dispatch, 10 October 1888.

(106) Cape Times, 17 October 1888.

reasons, therefore, the East London newspaper ventured to suggest that the Frontier Party would not become an actuality before the elections took place.<sup>(107)</sup> This statement was amply borne out by subsequent events for by the end of 1888 no organisation had been set up to contest either the Legislative Council or subsequent general election.

It remains for us to ascertain the reasons which prompted Sprigg to make his appeal for "a union amongst the Border districts",<sup>(108)</sup> and Wiener to champion a Tariff and Excise League, and finally to determine why both failed to secure a following.

The extent to which Sprigg appeared to have become dependent on the Bond for support in Parliament is indicated by the sentiments the Cape Times expressed after advocating the adoption of the Tariff and Excise League's principles by Sprigg. It was stated that the League expressed Sprigg's own principles "as they were when he could be said to have principles of his own",<sup>(109)</sup> a remark quite clearly elicited by the measures which passed on to the Statute Book of the Colony in 1887 and 1888. Then the Bond had had the satisfaction of seeing the franchise raised by the passage of the Parliamentary Registration Bill,<sup>(110)</sup> Hofmeyr's motion to exempt enfranchised natives from special laws and regulations, adopted<sup>(111)</sup> a measure which probably boosted the sales of the brandy-farmers' product, and a resolution in favour of Protection passed.<sup>(112)</sup> The latter principle had been tacitly embodied in the Customs Conference agreement between Natal, the Free State and Cape

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(107) East London Dispatch, 10 October 1888.

(108) Sprigg did not refer to a Frontier Party in his speech. This name appears to have originated with the press.

(109) Cape Times, 22 September 1888.

(110) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.310

(111) Ibid., pp.311-312.

(112) Ibid., p.334.

Colony in January, 1888.<sup>(113)</sup> There seemed ample justification, therefore, for the Cape Times' scathing remark and for Sprigg's appeal for a union in the East, an appeal which implied the formation of an organisation to counteract the influence of the Bond in Parliament.

It seems likely too that Sprigg, in making his appeal at East London, envisaged a fair measure of success for such a union, if the Farmers' Associations could be persuaded to back the movement. These associations were well-established, scattered throughout the Eastern districts by 1888,<sup>(114)</sup> and Sprigg, with the example of the Boeren Beschermings Verenigingen to encourage him, probably looked to the Farmers' Associations to form the basis of a political party. Richard Rose Innes' reflections on the political interest displayed by farmers on the Frontier in 1893, were probably relevant to the situation there in 1888, for he declared that "the Farmers alone take a real interest in politics - the men in the towns have not the time...."<sup>(115)</sup>

But the Farmers' Associations, in company with the rest of the electorate on the Frontier, did not rise to the occasion. That they failed to do so must be attributed to the fact that Sprigg's call came too late for any worthwhile organisation to be effected. A further cause for the failure of the movement to materialise must, however, be sought in the sentiments,

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(113) Ibid., p.334.

(114) In June 1883, delegates representing Farmers' Associations in Cathcart, Stockenstrom, Queenstown, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Kingwilliamstown, Stutterheim, Victoria East, Upper and Lower Albany and Bathurst attended the Congress held at Fort Beaufort. East London Dispatch, 27 June 1883. In March 1885, eight Associations, represented by 21 delegates, attended the Cathcart Farmers' Congress, Cape Mercury, 3 March 1885.

(115) R.Rose Innes to J.Rose Innes, ? 1893, No.14 a (R.I.P.)

Sprigg expressed in East London, two days before his appeal was launched. Then he had partially allayed any fears his constituents might have entertained that the new Government, presumably with Sprigg as Premier, would be subservient to the Afrikaner Bond. He denied that there had been any "covenant between the Government and the Africander Bond" and added that his Ministry had always given due consideration to proposals made by the Farmers' Association and the Bond.<sup>(116)</sup> Having been given this assurance by Sprigg, the frontiersmen could hardly be blamed for rejecting his appeal two days later for a party in the East. If the stand their members had taken in connection with the Railway Extension Bill was to serve as an indication,<sup>(117)</sup> the Frontier population could rest assured that the promotion and protection of its welfare in Parliament was entrusted to very able sponsors; a political party could hardly have done better.

Wiener's Tariff and Excise League probably failed to get support first because the men who were concerned with commerce in the East had not realised the full implications of the new tariffs which were to take effect on the 1st January 1889, while the farming community hopefully looked to a new Government, with Sprigg at the helm, to reverse the excise measures on petition by the Farmers' Congress.

In opening his electoral campaign at East London, Sprigg had sought to rally round him a Frontier Party, not so much for the benefit of the Border districts, as for his own

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(116) East London Dispatch, 26 September 1888.

(117) The retention in the Bill of the important lower junction line connecting the Eastern and Midland systems of railway, was ably advocated by the bulk of Eastern representatives. This provision was, however, not included in the Railway Extension Bill as finally passed, for it failed by 2 votes to remain part of Schedule A of the Bill. Cape Hansard 1888, p.278.

political convenience - to make himself independent of the Bond party in Parliament. In February 1889 the Cape Times could state that the policy of the Frontier Party had been "to give strong English support to the Ministry and not to leave the Ministry to rely solely on the Dutch vote." (118) But we have seen that the enthusiasm which Sprigg evoked was very short-lived, and when it became obvious that his desire would not be fulfilled because of the failure of the Frontier Party to materialise, Sprigg took advantage of the declaration made by Hofmeyr in his speech at Stellenbosch on the 31st of October 1888, and accepted support from the Bond leader in order to prolong his lease of office. (119) The loophole he had left himself by praising the efforts of the Bond to stir up the people and rouse them to take an interest in elections and public affairs, (120) had come in very handy, an indication that Sprigg was far too experienced a politician to offend a dominant political group which might be needed as an ally against the Opposition after the general elections.

(iv)

The growing power of the Afrikaner Bond in the country and in Parliament was the factor which motivated English-speaking colonists to effect political combinations in 1884, 1886 and 1888. The earlier attempt by Bettington to form a South African Confederation Union was not intended to establish a political party to oppose the Bond within the limits of the

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(118) Cape Times, 2 February 1889,

(119) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 347-48.

(120) East London Dispatch, 26 September 1888.

Cape Colony, for his ambitious scheme sought to embrace South Africa in his proposed Confederation .<sup>(121)</sup> The Empire League likewise did not aim at the formation of a political party, but differed from the earlier movement inasmuch as it aimed at including the entire Cape Colony in its efforts to rally loyal subjects to oppose the explicitly stated intention of the Upington Ministry to dispense with Downing Street interference in colonial matters.<sup>(122)</sup> Here then was the first attempt to organise on an anti-Bond basis.

In the case of the Political Union and Frontier Party movements, the desire had been to create political associations to promote and protect essentially local interests. The prime movers in the Political Union were motivated by anti-Bond feelings, but only inasmuch as Bond domination of the Second Sprigg Ministry affected the welfare of the districts which the association intended to embrace. On the other hand the Frontier Party movement was intended to provide Sprigg with a party which would counteract the Bond influence in Parliament, though the aim ostensibly appeared to be the protection of the Border districts' welfare.

It remained for the political movement in the following decade to achieve the formation of the Cape Progressive Party which transcended the insular objects of the Political Union and Frontier Party by embodying in its party platform issues which affected the entire colony. It is interesting to note that the first attempts to form English political parties were made in the Eastern districts. This must be attributed to the activity of the Farmers' Associations in the East and the interest the farming community displayed in parliamentary legislation.

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(121) Vide supra.

(122) Vide Supra.

The political awakening which could be discerned in the movements of 1884, 1886 and 1888 brought to the fore some of the future leaders of the Progressive Party. Cecil Rhodes, James Rose Innes and Sprigg, who emerged as leaders of groups within the Progressive Party in the 'nineties, had been active in the formation of either the Empire League or Frontier Party, and they drew their supporters from all three the English political associations as well as from the Farmers' Associations. In this respect, therefore, these early political movements, which on the surface appeared to have been of no avail, were indeed most useful. They prepared the ground for the development of an English political party in the next decade.

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## Chapter II.

The first indications of a coherent opposition to legislation introduced at the behest of the Bond party in Parliament, are to be found during the years 1890-92 when the First Rhodes Ministry was in office. Out of this opposition the first Progressive Party developed in 1893.

In order to understand the circumstances which produced a crystallisation of the tendency which had become apparent in the previous decade, it is necessary to refer briefly to the events which had enabled Rhodes to undertake the task of forming a Cabinet in July 1890.

On the 10th of July, Sprigg had tendered his resignation to the Governor, after his comprehensive Railway scheme, estimated to cost £7,500,000, had been repeatedly pruned down in Committee. (1) Sauer, the Leader of the Opposition, was sent for but declined to take office as his following did not represent a majority of the House (2) and he "could not count on Hofmeyr's support". (3) Sauer therefore recommended that Rhodes be entrusted with the formation of an administration. (4) Rhodes was thus confronted with the problem of finding groups to support him before proceeding to compose a Cabinet.

The uncompleted election returns in December 1888 had indicated that the Bond secured 29 seats, the Ministerialists

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(1) Williams, op. cit. pp. 183-84.  
Innes, op. cit., p.80.  
Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.387.

(2) The Cape Times, 6 December 1888 credited the Opposition with securing 13 seats, the Ministerialists 22 and the Bond 29. Vide also Innes, op. cit., p.80.

(3) Williams, op. cit., p.185.

(4) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.387.

(i.e. Spriggites) 22, the Opposition 13, the Independents 6 and the Rhodes Party 2.<sup>(5)</sup> Assuming that little change in party loyalties had occurred by July 1890, we find Rhodes therefore dependent on Bond and Opposition support to assure him of a majority over the Spriggites. Since 1886 Rhodes had been supporting Afrikaner Party motions, such as the Hofmeyr education motion, the Excise Act Amendment Bill and Parliamentary Registration Bill<sup>(6)</sup> but he had no guarantee in July 1890 that Hofmeyr and the Bond would support a Government of his making. Once Hofmeyr had agreed to support Rhodes' Ministry<sup>(7)</sup> and a caucus meeting of Bond Members of Parliament had unanimously agreed to give Rhodes "'fair play' in the administration of the country and its interests",<sup>(8)</sup> three members of the Opposition - Innes, Merriman and Sauer - were invited to accept portfolios and complied.<sup>(9)</sup> The "Cabinet of all the Talents" was thus constituted, and it was because such Bills as the Strop Bill, the Franchise Bill and Scab Act Amendment Bill were introduced by the Government to placate the Bond party, that a widespread dissatisfaction arose and the Progressive Party was formed in 1893.

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(5) The Cape Times, 6 December 1888 classified as Ministerialists: J.Trower, T.Upington, O'Reilly, A.Ohlsson, J.G.Sprigg, F.Y.Brabant, J.Laing, A.Robertson, J.Wood, G.Luke, B.Barnato, T.Lynch, J.O'Leary, F.Schermbrucker, A. de Smidt, H.Pearson, J.Frost, T.Barry, W.Hockly, P.Myburgh, J.Tudhope, C.Pope and S.Johnson; as Opposition: J.W.Sauer, E.G.Orsmond, C.P. Smuts, J.R.Innes, T.E.Fuller, T.Scanlen, C.W.Hutton, L.A.Vintcent, W.J.Warren, J.X.Merriman, C.Lewis, C.T.Jones and Mackay; as Independents: J.R.C.Luttig, L.Wiener, J.H.Lange, J.A.Basson, T.A.Louw, and J.M. Orpen, while G.Paton and C.J.Rhodes were the sole supporters of the Rhodes Party.

(6) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.380-381.

(7) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.389.

(8) Ibid., p.388. Innes, op. cit., p.80.

(9) Innes, op. cit., p.80. Sauer became Colonial Secretary, Merriman Treasurer, Innes Attorney-General, Sivewright Commissioner, and Faure Secretary of Native Affairs. Hofmeyr op. cit., p.389.

During the 1890 session P.J. du Toit moved the introduction of the Masters and Servants Act Amendment Bill, seeking to provide "that corporal punishment and fines be substituted for punishments fixed by former Acts".<sup>(10)</sup> This Bill was negatived by 35 votes to 23<sup>(11)</sup> but had the unqualified support of Rhodes, Faure and Sivewright. This "Strop Bill" was regarded by S. Cronwright-Schreiner as the first indication of the retrogressive trend in legislation which was to become so characteristic of the Rhodes Ministries.<sup>(12)</sup>

There seemed every likelihood that the Bill would be re-introduced during the following session, for the Bond Congress at Kimberley in April 1891 had demanded that lashes be substituted for imprisonment "in all cases of contravention of the Masters and Servants Acts."<sup>(13)</sup> So we find Merriman writing that Sauer and Innes would "go" if Rhodes was determined "to carry the flogging Bill".<sup>(14)</sup> But the second reading of the Bill was discharged on the motion of J. du Toit during the 1891 session<sup>(15)</sup> and for a while Innes and Sauer could shelve their intention of resigning from Rhodes' Cabinet.

That the Bond had ventured to re-introduce the "Strop Bill" during the 1891 session, must be attributed to the fact that Rhodes had completely identified himself with the Bond policy at the Kimberley Congress by stating, ".... I look upon the Afrikaner Bond as a party I can work cordially with. Your ideas are the same as mine."<sup>(16)</sup> The sentiments thus expressed had "finally cemented" the alliance between Rhodes and the Afrikaner Party.<sup>(17)</sup>

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(10) Cape Hansard, 1890, p.83.

(11) Ibid. p.224.

(12) S.C.Cronwright-Schreiner and Olive Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.12.

(13) Cape Times, 2 April 1891

(14) J.X.Merriman to his wife, 18 March 1891. (M.P.).

(15) Cape Hansard, 1891, p.375.

(16) Vindex, op. cit. p.273.

(17) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.409.

It is probable that after Rhodes had given his unqualified support to the "Strop Bill" and embraced the Bond aims at Kimberley, the need was felt for the establishment of a parliamentary party. We find Fuller relating that he was chairman of the "Progressive party in Parliament".<sup>(18)</sup> As to the date and purpose of its formation we are told that the party, "numbering about twenty-eight, was formed soon after Mr. Rhodes' accession to power, to watch legislation in the interests of Progressive politics, to give Mr. Rhodes fair-play, and, where possible, support on the one side, on the other, to see that the ascendancy of the Bond party and their association with Mr. Rhodes did not affect injuriously the progress of the country and its imperial interests".<sup>(19)</sup> Here then we find a parliamentary party established which, in its intention to safeguard imperial interests, was reminiscent of the Empire League, and, while supporting Rhodes was nevertheless determined to guard against Bond-domination of the Cape Prime Minister. Furthermore, the watchword of the Committee would be "progressive legislation", not merely as it affected the East or West, but in relation to the entire Colony.

In this respect, therefore, the Progressive Committee's aim marked a decided advance on those of either the Political Union or Frontier Party.

The closer alliance between Rhodes and the Afrikaner Bond found expression during the 1891 session when first the Scab Law Amendment Bill was introduced and then the question

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(18) Fuller, op. cit., pp.164-165. Fuller uses this term interchangeably with "Progressive Committee" and in order to distinguish between Fuller's group and the groups which emerged later, the writer has used "Progressive Committee" when referring to this first Progressive group.

(19) Fuller, op. cit., p.165.

of franchise reform was raised. In the previous session Rhodes had voted in favour of a General Scab Act which had been defeated by 34 votes to 20,<sup>(20)</sup> and probably encouraged by the Prime Minister's stand in 1890, Orpen in 1891 moved the second reading of a Bill to amend and consolidate the Scab Acts.<sup>(21)</sup> The Bill was intended to introduce an efficient measure throughout the colony, but proved to be unacceptable to the Bond members. During the debate, Immelman stated that a resolution had been adopted by the Bond Congress that no general Scab Law was desired and that the present Bill aimed at introducing a general law.<sup>(22)</sup> It was thus obvious that the Bond members were committed to oppose the Bill. Warren, however, stated that the Queenstown Farmers' Congress wanted "a general Scab Act and nothing less"<sup>(23)</sup> a demand which probably left the members for the Eastern constituencies with no alternative but to reject any measure which fell short of being general in its application. But the Bond policy triumphed, for Orpen's Bill was withdrawn and the Scab Law Amendment Bill, as eventually passed, made the application of the measure purely permissive.<sup>(24)</sup>

During this session the question of the franchise was debated. Hofmeyr had moved "That the attention of the Government be directed to the question of the amendment of the Parliamentary Franchise in order to secure due weight in the future for the material and educational interests of the country, with a view to legislation during the next session of Parliament".<sup>(25)</sup> The introduction of this motion was the outcome of negotiations between the Bond party and the Cabinet early in the session. Bond members

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(20) Cape Hansard, 1891, p.131.

(21) Ibid., p.84.

(22) Ibid., p.85.

(23) Ibid., p.86.

(24) Ibid., p.224.

(25) Ibid., p.290.

in the House had met and appointed a special committee to draw up a resolution with a view to reforming the existing franchise, because of the enormous increase in the number of native voters. (26) This Bond resolution was submitted to the Cabinet and Rhodes, Sauer, Merriman, Sivewright and Faure had agreed in July, 1891, to a modified version of the resolution being introduced, and in the event of its being carried, the Government would be bound "to introduce a measure of franchise amendment next session." (27) Innes relates that on his return from England he found "that the matter had been discussed in Cabinet, and that the Prime Minister was resolved to make some change." (28)

In the debate which followed on the submission of Hofmeyr's resolution, Sauer stated that he would never support a franchise "which drew a distinction as to a man's colour, he would not take away from a man that which he already possessed", (29) while Merriman refused to support any "differential franchise". (30) Innes expressed the opinion that he held "definite views upon whether the franchise should be altered or not" and that he would "stick to his convictions". (31) Sauer's amendment that the question, whether any legislation was required or not, should be considered, was therefore agreed to by 45 votes to 22. The opponents of the amendment were: Sprigg, Upington, Brabant, Douglass, Frost, Fuller, Griffith, Hockly, Jones, Laing, Mackay, Norton, O'Reilly, Orpen, Palmer, Pearson, Robertson, Scherbrucker, Tamplin, Vincent, Warren and Wiener - chiefly Eastern Province representatives. (32)

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- (26) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.430.  
(27) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.431.  
(28) Innes, op. cit., p.95.  
(29) Cape Hansard, 1891, p.336.  
(30) Ibid., p.340.  
(31) Ibid., p.344.  
(32) Ibid., pp.347-348.

The franchise question apparently caused Innes much heart-searching for we find him writing to Merriman in January, 1892, that he thought the best thing for him to do would be to refuse to have anything to do with any change that would be proposed. (33) He must have been strengthened in this determination by the replies he received from friends on the Frontier to whom he had written for guidance, for with one exception they had all advised him "to accept no compromise". (34) It was even rumoured in the press that Innes intended retiring from office. (35)

Innes, however, was torn between a desire to listen to the dictates of his conscience and friends and the determination not to place the Merriman-Sauer-Innes wing in the Cabinet at a disadvantage. "After thinking the whole matter over", he wrote, "I have come to the conclusion that, if Rhodes will give me leave to state in the House - what is really the fact - that I accept the bill simply as a compromise, and because if I had refused to accept any change, a more drastic measure w(oul)d have been introduced, then I may see my way to consent to a moderate raising of the Franchise; but it must be very moderate, the rights of all existing voters must be safeguarded, and it must be accompanied by a Ballot..." (36) Not only Innes was prepared to compromise on the question of the franchise for Sauer expressed the view that he did not like "meddling with the Franchise" but was prepared "to do something." (37)

An uncomprising attitude with regard to franchise reform had been adopted during the recess by certain newspapers. In November 1891 we find the Cape Times

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- (33) J. Rose Innes to J. X. Merriman, 27 January, 1892. (M.P.)  
(34) J. W. Sauer to J. X. Merriman, 27 January, 1892. (M.P.)  
(35) Julia Merriman to J. X. Merriman, 12 January, 1892. (M.P.)  
(36) J. Rose Innes to J. X. Merriman, 3 February, 1892. (M.P.)  
(37) J. W. Sauer to J. X. Merriman, 27 January, 1892. (M.P.)

summarising the viewpoint expressed by certain of its contemporaries and condemning the indifference demonstrated in the remote East as "the most disheartening characteristic of the common mind." (38) The East London Dispatch had adopted a "calmly philosophical" attitude to the franchise question, while the Grahamstown newspaper, the Kaffrarian Watchman, had suggested a modus vivendi and had discussed the proposals "abstractly". In contrast, though, the Eastern Province Herald was asking its readers whether "a rule founded upon brutality or upon justice and common sense" was to be adopted and in its more unguarded moments was talking "civil war". And elsewhere the opinion ranged "from one extreme to another with perhaps an average or mean on the side of the indifference." (39)

Confronted by this predominantly apathetic array of public opinion, the Cape Times concluded that "We have but one duty, namely to assert a right principle of policy and by that to stand or fall..... unless at large the constituencies take the measure of the proposed tampering with the franchise, and resolve upon a course with reference to it, we may as well reconcile ourselves to a political future dominated by the one interest which has an organised expression and power, and whose representatives are sufficiently far-seeing and resolute of purpose to shape a course for themselves, and to work together towards a definite end." (40)

But the indifference "in the remoter East" was short-lived for at a Bond meeting in Burghersdorp Hofmeyr had outlined his franchise proposals, as a result of which the Cape

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(38) Cape Times, 14 November 1891.

(39) Ibid.

(40) Ibid.

Times could report that East London had fallen into line behind Port Elizabeth and the "protection of the franchise" seemed to be "the proper object of a public agitation". (41) A couple of days later an appeal was made "to organise a movement for the sound control of constitutional reform". The proposal to reform the parliamentary franchise was regarded as an attempt by the Bond to assimilate the Native Policy of the Cape Colony with that of the neighbouring republics (42) and the Eastern Province Herald summed up the issues at stake by stating "The whole policy sought to be carried out is first the disfranchisement of the native, second the flogging of him, third the compelling him to work, . . . ." (43)

Opposition to the Franchise Bill, which introduced the use of the Ballot, a simple educational test and increased the occupation qualification from £25 to £75, leaving the wage qualification of £50 unaltered, and the rights of voters already on the roll protected, was not confined to the press. While the Bill was being debated in the House in 1892, a Farmers' Congress was sitting at Cradock and Sivewright and Frost referred to the final resolution which this body adopted. This resolution stated that "Congress is of the opinion that it is not at present necessary to alter the franchise - . . . - but if any alteration is made, then the qualification should be raised, with an educational test." (44) It may be concluded, therefore, that the proposal embodied in the Bill to raise the occupation qualification from £25 to £75 would not find favour with the members of the Farmers' Associations, though the introduction of an educational test might have coated the pill.

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(41) Cape Times, 17 November 1891.

(42) Cape Times, 30 November 1891.

(43) Quoted in Cape Times, 2 December 1891.

(44) Cape Hansard, 1892, p.184.

When the Franchise Bill was laid before the House, a group of Eastern Province members in the Opposition ranks consistently opposed it. The second reading was carried by 45 votes to 20,<sup>(45)</sup> but by the time the third reading was taken, the number in opposition to the Bill had dwindled to 13.<sup>(46)</sup> Fuller relates that before the Franchise and Ballot Bill was considered in committee, Hofmeyr approached him "as chairman of the Progressive Committee", and stated that while some of the Bond members were not in favour of the Ballot, Hofmeyr supposed that some of the Progressive Committee members did not like raising the franchise. Hofmeyr therefore undertook to get the Bond party to agree to the Ballot being introduced if the Progressive Committee would support the raising of the franchise. Fuller thereupon called a meeting of the Progressives, who "agreed to the proposal with one dissentient."<sup>(47)</sup> Thus it happened that in the division on the third reading of the Franchise and Ballot Bill, only 13 members stood out against it. These were Sprigg, Frost, Hutton, Jones, Norton, O'Reilly, Palmer, Pearson, Schermbrucker, Tamplin, Wood, Douglass and Hockly,<sup>(48)</sup> who, with the exception of O'Reilly, were all members of Eastern constituencies. And so the Bond policy had prevailed; indeed there could have been no doubt as to the final outcome of the issue in the House once the second reading had been carried with a majority of 25 votes and the two major political groups in the House - the Bond party and the Progressive Committee - had agreed to support the measure before the committee stage was taken.

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(45) Ibid., p.186. Brabant, Douglass, Frost, Fuller, Hay, Hockly, Hutton, Jones, Mackay, Norton, O'Reilly, Orpen, Palmer, Pearson, Robertson, Schermbrucker, Tamplin, Trower, Vintcent, Warren and Wiener opposed the 2nd reading.

(46) Cape Hansard, 1892, p.302. Vide supra for "Noes".

(47) Fuller, op. cit., p.180.

(48) Cape Hansard, 1892, p.302.

In reviewing the retrogressive legislation which had been enacted during the years preceding 1895, S. Cronwright-Schreiner gives pride of place to the introduction of the Franchise Act, which, instead of broadening the electoral basis, narrowed it, and then refers to the "Strop Bill".<sup>(49)</sup> The latter was not regarded as seriously as the Franchise Act when Schreiner catalogued the retrograde measures introduced in the period 1890 - 1895 and presumably because it had never been placed on the Statute-Book.

Towards the end of the session of 1892, certain members of the Legislative Assembly felt moved to form a political party - the Progressive Party - an event which the press only became aware of when Arthur Douglass, the senior member for Grahamstown, reported this to his constituents at the beginning of September.<sup>(50)</sup> The Cape Times, understandably, felt slighted at not having been informed of the birth of the Party, and rather pettily expressed the view that Bond slumbers would not be disturbed by the event.<sup>(51)</sup> The identity or number of the Progressive Party members was at that stage unknown, but in referring to Douglass, who was directing the movement, the Cape Times contemptuously stated "... bully Bottom is not the man to be taken seriously as a politician - still less as the spokesman of a political party". The Cape Town newspaper had gleaned certain information connected with the inauguration of the movement, for it could report that "a solemn assembly had been convened on the steps of Parliament and a photographer sent for, presumably to record the event. The whereabouts of the artist's handiwork were unknown at that stage.

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(49) S.C.Cronwright Schreiner, op. cit., p.11.  
Schreiner on 20 August 1895, read a paper in Kimberley entitled "The Political Situation" and this was published in 1896.

(50) Cape Times, 7 September, 1892.

(51) Ibid.

As to the reasons prompting these members to inaugurate the political movement, it appeared that the Government had failed to pass a Bill during the last days of the session to deal with a locust invasion<sup>(52)</sup> and this had angered Douglass and his supporters, the Cape Times reported. To all intents and purposes, therefore, the Progressive Party had been hatched out "of locust eggs" which became "politically fertile in the waning of the session".<sup>(53)</sup>

A fortnight later the photograph was located in the Public Library at Grahamstown and was reported to reveal the fact that Messrs. Robertson, Pearson, Douglass, Innes, Jones, Hockly, Palmer, Norton, de Smidt, Wood, Tamplin, Brabant, Marais, Frost, Mackay, Warren and Griffiths constituted the members of the Progressive Party.<sup>(54)</sup>

The declared object to this party was to resist the tyranny of the Afrikaner Bond in particular, "and in general to promote a policy of progress,<sup>(55)</sup> but the Cape Times was still not reconciled to Douglass being the leader of the party and spitefully commented that "Even as one of the rank and file of a party he is dangerous to his friends; as the guiding spirit of a party he would be a pledge of chronic defeat".<sup>(56)</sup>

That a group in Parliament should have felt obliged to form a Progressive Party at a time when the Progressive Committee was active in parliamentary circles is significant. To state, as the Cape Times facetiously did, that the Party had come into being because of the Government's failure to deal with a locust invasion, served to indicate that that newspaper was unaware of the opposition that parliamentary legislation had roused during 1891 - 92,

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(52) Cape Hansard, 1892, p.386.

(53) Cape Times, 7 September, 1892.

(54) Cape Times, 21 September, 1892.

(55) Ibid.

(56) Ibid.

both in the country and in Parliament, and what is more, failed to realise the significance of the event per se.

The Farmer's Congress at Cradock had taken a definite stand with regard to the franchise question, and while Sivewright could announce in the House that the organisation had been prepared to accept an educational test, should an alteration be deemed necessary, (57) Frost was able to tell members that when the final vote was taken at Cradock in favour of raising the franchise, 26 votes were cast against the proposal and 6 in favour of it. (58)

Furthermore some of the delegates to the Cradock Congress appear to have had ample opportunity for voicing their dissatisfaction with the Ministry in office, presumably because Rhodes had completely identified himself with the aims of the Bond in 1891 and 1892. In 1893 Brabant revealed this during the course of the debate on O'Reilly's motion concerning the dual position of Rhodes. Brabant could also claim that because of this dissatisfaction he and Frost determined to do what they could "towards the creation of an independent party - to purify politics - ..." (59) The ground was thus prepared at Cradock and the Government's failure to deal with the locust invasion late in the session had merely strengthened Eastern Province members of Parliament in their determination to agitate for the formation of a political party.

The fact that it was necessary to inaugurate a new political movement and by-pass the existing Progressive Committee which could have become the spearhead of an anti-Bond party in Parliament must be attributed to the Committee's failure "to watch legislation in the interests of Progressive politics" during the sessions of 1891 and 1892. The likelihood of such a pro-Rhodes Committee providing effective opposition to retrogressive Bond legislation which Rhodes

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(57) Vide supra.

(58) Cape Hansard, 1893, p.186.

(59) Ibid., p.144.

was prepared to support in order to retain Bond support, was remote and forced the discontented members to take the initiative in inaugurating a new political movement.

A need was felt for a political party to oppose the Bond and the delegates to the Farmers' Congress were the first to express it. This was to be expected in a colony where the only politically conscious section of the population outside the Bond were active in the affairs of their Farmers' Associations. It is obvious that these farmers were not prompted by solely egoistic considerations for their dissatisfaction with Government policy was not confined to a demand for progressive agricultural legislation, e.g. a General Scab Act, but included an explicit refutation of the Government's intention to raise the franchise. And it was probably for this reason that Innes joined the new political movement.

The Progressive Party had as its objects the promotion of progressive legislation and resistance to the Bond,<sup>(60)</sup> but from the outset it was to become apparent that while the members of the movement might have been united in their desire to foster such principles, they nevertheless were unable to sink their personal antipathies or prevent the development of two wings within the party. This becomes clear from an examination of correspondence between Innes and Brabant.

As early as January, 1893 the Progressive Party was concerned with the choice of its candidates for the general election of 1894. Innes had apparently written to ask Brabant whether he would support a better candidate against Douglass, how Brabant claimed to have helped Innes' candidates, what Progressive candidates had been selected as being Innes' friends and what Brabant's position was in regard to the Government.<sup>(61)</sup> Brabant's reply to this letter<sup>(62)</sup> is

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(60) Vide supra.

(61) This can be deduced from Brabant's reply to the letter on 7 January 1892. (R.I.P.)

(62) E.Y.Brabant to J.Rose Innes, 7 January 1893. (R.I.P.)

important inasmuch as it reveals the lack of unity in the Progressive Party at this early stage.

The reference to Douglass in Innes' letter is an indication that the spokesman of the Progressive Party was not regarded as a suitable Progressive candidate by Innes and from the point of view of the subsequent development of the Party, provides us with a reason for Innes' hesitation in giving unqualified support to the party in the following months. Brabant refused to support a better candidate than Douglass because he belonged to the same organisation as Brabant did. (63) Furthermore he claimed that Hutton in Fort Beaufort and Hay and Tamplin in Victoria East had been selected as being Innes' friends, while Bosman was adopted as being "one of your party". It becomes quite clear, therefore, that Progressive candidates were in certain cases to be supported by reason of their being personal followers of prominent members of the Party or because they happened to be colleagues in the same organisations. In 1892-93 the Progressive Party seemed to contain two groups: one comprising the Innes party, the other the associates of Douglass and Brabant.

Finally this letter seems to indicate that Innes had taxed Brabant with being a supporter of the Government, a charge which Brabant denied, replying that he supported Rhodes as Premier, which was quite different from supporting the Government. The full implication of Innes' charge can only be appreciated when it is realised that after the Cabinet split occurred in May 1893, Innes repeatedly urged that a party be formed which would refuse to support Bond-dominated Cabinets and consistently strove to introduce the pure and constitutional working of Responsible Government in the Cape Colony. Innes had come to this conclusion while he was a member of a Bond-dominated Ministry.

To all outward appearances the Progressive Party remained merely a name, for in the months following on its inauguration there appears to be no evidence in the press to show that it was developing into a compact, purposeful

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(63) This was probably the Farmers' Associations.

political movement. The inability of Innes to give his whole-hearted support to a movement of which Douglass was the spokesman, probably served to maintain the existence of two separate groups within the Party, a factor which must have inhibited its development.

Before the parliamentary session opened in June 1893 the nucleus of the Progressive Party was still in existence and was stated to comprise Messrs. Frost, Brabant and Palmer, backed by the delegates who attended the Farmers' Congress<sup>(64)</sup> which opened at Grahamstown on 14 March 1893.<sup>(65)</sup> Then it was believed that the First Rhodes Ministry "could not long hold together, after the meeting of Parliament" and the Progressive Party had intended "to form a Ministry..."<sup>(66)</sup> These rather ambitious hopes were not realised for no member of the Progressive Party was called upon to form a Ministry when the Cabinet split in May, 1893.

On the eve of the Cabinet split in May 1893 the Progressive Party did not show any signs of life. Furthermore Brabant's correspondence with Innes indicated that not only were there differences of opinion with regard to what support should be given to the Rhodes Ministry, but that two groups were discernible within the Progressive Party.

Nevertheless it was shown in 1892 that some members of Parliament felt the necessity for organising themselves in order to oppose the legislation which the Bond, with the aid of Rhodes, was putting on the Statute-Books; the Progressive Committee was obviously not going to provide effective opposition to such legislation and hence the steps taken to form the Progressive Party.

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(64) Quoted from Queenstown Free Press by Cape Times, 21 September 1893.

(65) At this Congress Brabant succeeded Palmer as President of the Farmers' Congress. Eastern Province Herald, 17 March 1893.

(66) Cape Times, 21 September 1893.

Chapter III

(1)

The period May 1893 - March 1894 is significant for the purpose of this study, for the reason that the Progressive Party for the first time issued a political programme and appealed for the votes of the electorate. During these years too it became quite obvious that the development of two groups in the Opposition would retard the formation of a compact anti-Bond political party. It had become clear during 1892 that Innes, Merriman and Sauer were drawing away from their colleagues on the score of franchise reform. Innes had even taken the step of identifying himself with a Progressive Party, at the end of that session.

But the final break when it came was not caused by the passage of any Bill; the issue involved the irregular grant of a valuable contract by Sivewright to a personal friend Logan.<sup>(1)</sup> When Innes, Sauer and Merriman voiced their condemnation of Sivewright's conduct and refused to sit with him as a colleague, Rhodes dissolved the Cabinet on 2 May 1893 and set about forming a new administration. In the Second Rhodes Ministry W.P. Schreiner, Sprigg, Frost and Laing replaced "The Trinity" and the "Stainless Knight", and once again a coalition Government was in office. Rhodes, Faure and Schreiner represented the Bond policy in the Cabinet, while Sprigg, Laing and Frost had been drawn from the Opposition benches.<sup>(2)</sup>

Reaction to the acceptance of portfolios by the three former Oppositionists was immediate. The Eastern Province Herald stated that a time of "political chaos" had come, for it had been shown that leading politicians "were ready to take

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(1) Innes, op. cit., pp.96-97.  
Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.443-445.  
S.J. Jenkins. The administration of Cecil John Rhodes as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, 1890-96, pp.36-46.  
P.M. Laurence, The Life of John X. Merriman, pp.142-144.

(2) Vide supra.

office under any terms or conditions, and at any sacrifice of self-respect." (3) This was undoubtedly a reference to the inclusion of Laing and Sprigg in the Cabinet after they had in 1890 and 1892 respectively attacked the dual position Rhodes was occupying as Premier and official representative of the B.S.A. Co. (4)

The press was not alone in voicing its disapproval of Sprigg's acceptance of the portfolio, for W.J. Warren stated that there was "considerable disgust among a section of Sprigg's supporters at his joining Rhodes" (5) W.H. Hockly viewed Sprigg's action as one which was to be deprecated for the reason that an opportunity of "forming a strong party" had been lost. (6) But there were others like Innes and J. Mackay who felt that the situation was decidedly favourable for the creation of a truly progressive party. Innes felt that if members would "unite on a moderate but well defined platform" a great deal could be done by forming a party who, by their united action, would "keep in check the tendency to go on making oppressive laws applicable to the Natives." (7)

Merriman at about the same time wrote to E.H. Walton, then editor of the Eastern Province Herald, and spoke of forming an "independent" party. Walton questioned the advisability of this and asked, "Why not call such a party some other name? Independent of what? The Bond! Surely th(a)t w(oul)d be laying too high a Compliment to bondery. Moreover I believe it w(oul)d be a mistake to make the Association

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(3) Eastern Province Herald, 8 May 1893.

(4) Cape Hansard, 1890, pp.162-164  
Cape Hansard, 1892. pp.115-121.

(5) W.J. Warren to J. Rose Innes, 11 May 1893. (R.I.P.)

(6) W.H. Hockly to J. Rose Innes, 15 May 1893. (R.I.P.)

(7) Innes' views were quoted by W.J. Warren and J. Mackay in letters they wrote to Innes on 11 May, 1893 and 22 May, 1893 respectively.

anti-bond . Why not make it merely liberal and progressive and take all the Bond members who choose to come in." Walton was convinced that the country was "ripe for such an organisation" and that it should be started while the air was "still reverberating from the recent disturbance." He suggested that Innes "get some one in Capetown with means and leisure to take up the work." He suggested Merriman, Jones or Dr.Smuts and referred to the Graaff-Reinet Association probably linking on, while there was every chance of forming a strong committee in Port Elizabeth and in several Eastern Province towns and villages. Walton concluded by saying that starting the movement would be a tedious job, "but it w(oul)d certainly give the opposition in Parl(iamen)t a status if it were known that it had some thousands of organised voters at its back." (8)

The Graaff-Reinet Association was mentioned by Walton as a possible source of support should a new political movement be started, and it is interesting to note that the formation of the Graaff-Reinet Farmers' and Political Association was reported in the Eastern Province Herald soon after the Cabinet split occurred. (9) It aimed to enrol members, frame rules and "enable members to bring their united forces to bear upon any measure of reform which may be decided upon,...."

The decision by the Graaff-Reinet Farmers' Association to expand their organisation and embrace political organisation seems to have been a logical development at a time when no English political associations existed in the East or West. The step the Graaff-Reinet Association had taken was bound to invite criticism from members who wished to see their Farmers' Associations remain divorced from any political movement.

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(8) E.H.Walton to J.Rose Innes, 11 May, 1893.

(9) Eastern Province Herald, 12 May 1893.

On the other hand there were members who approved of the step taken for they regarded their Associations as the natural and logical centre of any political organisation. Thus we find Mr. Lee stating that if the Farmers' Associations form themselves into a political body, a large number of men would resign for these Associations had attracted men of all shades of political opinion.<sup>(10)</sup> Charles Southey, however, felt that if the farmers wanted their resolutions to become the law, they needed a body of men in Parliament who were pledged to work and vote for those resolutions.<sup>(11)</sup> With this view the Eastern Province Herald agreed wholeheartedly, for it stated that until such time as the Farmers' Associations organised themselves politically, they would only be debating societies.<sup>(12)</sup>

In the weeks that followed on the reconstitution of the Cabinet, the possibility of forming a party to formulate a programme before the general election of 1894, was discussed. Walton wrote to Merriman saying that he was anxious to hear "the result of your 'party' meeting," and hoped that the next general election would take place "upon some clear lines -..." He expressed the view that if they could put forward "certain clearly defined principles and objects" he felt convinced that they would win many seats and swell the modest number of their ranks. The question of the leadership of this new party had also occupied Walton's mind, for he stated that he thought Merriman would be the best man for the position, as he imagined Innes would not have the time to devote to the organisation, while Sauer was "too cold to enthuse -..."<sup>(13)</sup>

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(10) Eastern Province Herald, 22 May 1893.

(11) Eastern Province Herald, 31 May 1893.

(12) Ibid.

(13) E.H. Walton to J.X. Merriman, 6 June, 1893. (M.P.)

Walton's supposition with regard to Innes was correct, for Tengo Jabavu stated that he learnt with sorrow that Innes was determined not to accept the leadership and entreated him not to decline it, even if he did not have the time "to attend to it properly - at any rate on the Eve of the General Election. Yours is a name to fight with." This letter furthermore supports the view held by Walton that Sauer would not be a good person to choose as leader as his name was not popular in the country. (14)

Merriman appeared, therefore, to be the likely leader of the new party by June, 1893.

It has been difficult to determine what following the Innes-Merriman-Sauer group commanded at this stage but it does seem that the Progressive Party had retired into the background when it became apparent that the former Ministers were toying with the idea of forming a new party. The prospect of a link-up being effected between the Innes-Merriman-Sauer group in the West and the Progressive Party in the East must have occurred to the leaders; negotiations must have taken place after the parliamentary session opened on 16 June 1893, for at the end of July the Eastern Province Herald could report that the leaders had failed to organise among themselves. (15)

In Parliament the Bond was still the only political party. For the rest there was merely a "posse of independent members, without leadership and without any definite aims in common." (16) Within the Opposition various groups, however, existed, each of which sought to secure "local advantages", an indication that the spirit of localism was still being maintained. This probably hampered the formation of a political party on a national scale

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(14) J.Tengo Jabavu to J.Rose Innes, 19 June 1893. (R.I.P.)

(15) Eastern Province Herald, 21 July, 1893.

(16) Ibid..

and the Eastern Province Herald looked to the "three leaders of the Opposition" to form a party which would embrace all groups in the Opposition. It was suggested that such a parliamentary party would get support from Scanlen, Solomon, Juta, Tamplin, Hay, Molteno, Jones, Smuts, Mackay, Vintcent would bring in "the farmers' party" consisting of Douglass, Warren, Brabant, Griffith, Orpen, Palmer, Hutton, Hockly and Wood, and later attract men like Fuller, Wiener, O'Reilly, Rautenbach "and others". (17)

Innes, Sauer and Merriman did not act upon the newspaper's suggestion and it was left to the parliamentary members of the Farmers' Associations to take the lead and resurrect the Progressive Party in September, 1893.

The Eastern Province Herald reported the existence of a "farmers' party" in Parliament during the 1893 parliamentary session and further information concerning the "party" was given in a letter to the Editor of the Cape Times in September, 1893. (18) Messrs. Douglass, Brabant, Palmer, Hockly, Trower, Norton and Frost were the members of what was known as the " 'Congress Party' or 'Progressive Party' ". These eight members "on nearly every question" during the 1893 session gave votes so divided as to completely eliminate the party as a political factor. The only occasion on which the Congress or Progressive Party "threw <sup>its</sup> the whole weight on to one side was in the division on the Kowie Railway Bill" and "Had there been a division on the East London Harbour Bill", the letter continues, "no doubt the result would have been similar...." The writer concludes by stating, "Until the Congress members learn to close their mouths at present yawning for the treasures of the realm, and draw up a concise, definite, and defined programme, enunciating the principles which they will pledge themselves

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(17) Ibid..

(18) Cape Times, ep 27 September, 1893.

solidly to support, on such questions as the Labour Question, Native Land Tenure, Education, Scab, and Railway Management, they must be content to be treated as individuals and to be ignored as a party."

It therefore becomes apparent that of the members of Parliament who at the end of the 1892 session decided to form a Progressive Party, a mere handful of these men sought to maintain their identity as a party in Parliament. That they were all active in the affairs of the Farmers' Associations and Congress is borne out by the fact that their party was also referred to as the Congress Party.

The Eastern Province Herald and the Letter to the Cape Times editor indicated that the primary object of this Congress Party was to secure "local advantages". In this respect the Party appeared to be carrying out the aims of the Political Union and Frontier Party of the previous decade.

The fact that the Eastern Province Herald could report the inability of the leaders of the Innes-Merriman-Sauer group and Progressive or Congress Party to organise among themselves with a view to consolidating the new party prior to the 1894 general election was an indication of some fundamental disagreement between the two groups. By the end of September 1893 there was nothing to show why there should have been this disunity.

(ii)

Before dealing with the subsequent development of the Progressive Party it is necessary to refer briefly to certain resolutions which were brought before the House during 1893, for without such reference it is difficult to appreciate the factors which prompted Progressive Party leaders to formulate the political programme they did in September, 1893.

Hofmeyr has described the session of 1893 as being in the main "a tale of attacks and counter-attacks, of charges

and insinuations, of futile, personal contests, in short of everything that is undesirable in public life."<sup>(19)</sup> That this was indeed the case is revealed in the debate which followed on O'Reilly's motion concerning the dual position of the Premier.<sup>(20)</sup> O'Reilly, Brabant and Solomon took advantage of the opportunity to launch bitter attacks on Laing, Frost and Sprigg, while Rhodes had the satisfaction of seeing the motion defeated by 56 votes to 2, O'Reilly and Schermbrucker being the only members voting for it.

Of far more importance though were the educational and constitutional issues which were raised during the session. These were embodied in the resolution providing for industrial education and compulsory school attendance which Hofmeyr brought before the House, and the Constitutional Ordinance Amendment Bill which abolished cumulative voting for members of the Legislative Assembly within the Cape Town electoral division. Hofmeyr's motion<sup>(22)</sup> aimed at the establishment of industrial schools and the introduction of a system of compulsory education, "applied under a permissive Act in different districts", to induce the poorer whites to use the existing educational facilities. A few months previously the Bond Congress had rejected a resolution in favour of compulsory education<sup>(23)</sup> and hence the permissive clause was inserted in Hofmeyr's proposal. The motion was thereupon carried without a division.

The Constitutional Ordinance Amendment Bill did not have the same easy passage, for it was aimed at keeping Ahmed Effendi, a Malay candidate for Cape Town, out of the Legislative Assembly. Hitherto it had been possible for

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(19) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 447.

(20) Cape Hansard, 1893, p.42.

(21) Ibid., p. 48.

(22) Ibid., p. 372.

Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 450-451.

(23) Ibid., p. 450.

electors in the Cape Town constituency to plump their votes, thereby enabling a minority of electors to secure the return of a candidate. It was therefore proposed to abolish cumulative voting in the Cape Town constituency while retaining the system in Legislative Council elections. The Bill was introduced by Orpen<sup>(24)</sup> and vigorously opposed in the debate by Ohlsson, Tamplin, Sauer, Fuller, Innes, Solomon and Hay on the grounds that it created an "infamous precedent", that it constituted a piece of class legislation and that it was introduced on personal grounds.<sup>(25)</sup> The third reading was carried by 30 votes to 15, Sprigg, Brabant, Fuller, Griffith, Hay, Innes, Jones, O'Reilly, Pearson, Sauer, Smuts, Solomon, Tamplin, Warren and Wood opposing the measure.<sup>(26)</sup>

The House was also asked to deal with the Glen Grey Commission's report during this session for a motion was introduced to the effect that "in accordance with the recommendations of the report of the Glen Grey Commission presented to the House during last session, steps be taken for granting individual title to land in the Glen Grey district to all who shall prove themselves entitled thereto, and that such titles shall in addition to the ordinary conditions contain a special clause limiting the transfer of their land without the consent of the Government for three years."<sup>(27)</sup>

■ In the debate on the motion Solomon was most adamant that the natives would prefer a certificate of occupation to individual title under which they would be free to alienate their land. He felt that if it was the Government's intention to grant individual title, then the alienation of their land must be restricted. Merriman also favoured

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(24) Cape Hansard, 1893, pp.200-201.

(25) Ibid., pp. 200 et seq..

(26) Ibid., p. 282.

(27) Ibid., pp. 253 et seq..

giving a ticket of occupation to the natives who could substantiate their claim to the land which they occupied, but felt that the land should only be alienable for three years. Innes, however, voiced the opinion that the people in the Glen Grey district favoured individual title and there the matter rested for no vote was taken.

On September 9th, the parliamentary session ended and a few days later the Eastern Province Herald first acclaimed the resurrection of the Progressive Party. The country, it stated, was ready for the Party while the members themselves were "red-hot upon the matter". The events of the session had opened the eyes of the people "to the absolute need of an organisation which shall represent liberal and progressive thought." The only difficulty at that stage appeared to be "in the selection of a leader". (28)

The Cape Times reported its indebtedness to the Eastern Province Herald "for tidings not only of the birth, or rather resurrection, of the progressive party but of the eagerness of the country to embrace it as the people's own". It was pleased to note that whereas Port Elizabeth, Kingwilliamstown, East London and Grahamstown had always sent members to Parliament who were pledged to a policy of local interest, all this was now to be changed and the country was "entering upon a new phase of political existence". Nevertheless the Cape Times did not share the Eastern Province Herald's enthusiasm and stated "we cannot but fear that our sanguine Port Elizabeth contemporary's wish has been father to the thought of such a quickening as an accomplished fact". (29)

On September 18th the Eastern Province Herald acknowledged the receipt of a circular signed by T.C.J.Hall, the Secretary of the Central Farmers' Association, and E.Y.Brabant,

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(28) Quoted by Cape Times, 15 September, 1893.

(29) Cape Times, 15 September, 1893.

Chairman of the Sessional Committee. This circular laid down the platform of the Progressive Party. It did not, however, refer to the question of leadership, and the Eastern Province Herald at once expressed the opinion that Brabant could not be regarded as a fit leader of the Party. (30)

The attitude adopted by the Eastern Province Herald on September 18th was in marked contrast to its first announcement of the resurrection of the Party and it becomes clear from subsequent reports that this paper had hoped to announce the resurrection of the Party under the leadership of one of the ex-Ministers. The issue of the "slip signed by Brabant" had forestalled <sup>the</sup> announcement of certain political principles by leaders of the Opposition and the Eastern Province Herald appealed to Brabant and his friends to save the situation by placing themselves "under the leaders of the Opposition" for by doing so they could "go to the country in a compact body". (31)

Brabant in March 1894 revealed in the debate on Political Organisation at the Farmers' Congress in East London, the circumstances which led him to issuing the Progressive Party's programme. At the commencement of the 1893 parliamentary session a small group, realising the inability to stand alone, approached "other members" of the House "and they agreed to form the Progressive Party". Innes was approached to lead the party and during the course of negotiations Innes agreed to lead "but imposed unexplainable conditions". By the end of the session the Party was still without a leader and so the programme was issued. (32)

The programme which Brabant and Hall issued on behalf of the Progressive Party at Bedford on 13 September 1893 for the 1894 election, indicates that the party was not solely concerned with local, or for that matter, agricultural interests. (33)

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(30) Eastern Province Herald, 18y September, 1893.

(31) Eastern Province Herald, 6 October 1893.

(32) Eastern Province Herald, 19 March, 1894.

(33) Cape Times, 18 September, 1893.

It stated:

" I Poor Whites

should be dealt with by a system of industrial education gradually approaching compulsory. Cost to be defrayed partly by a local rate or voluntary contributors.

II Labour Question

is purely a matter of supply and demand, but is to a certain extent influenced by the Liquor Question.

III Liquor

The present law should be maintained with further restrictions of sale to natives where practicable.

IV Excise

A tax on Colonial spirits, so adjusted as to fall on the consumer.

V Maintenance of the Constitution.

The Constitution to be preserved intact.

VI Native Land Tenure.

Approve of individual title to natives with safeguards.

VII Scab.

That a General Scab Act is desirable.

VIII Native Policy.

In favour of a policy of firmness coupled with justice.

IX United South Africa.

In favour of a United South Africa. "

In subsequent speeches Douglass and Brabant indicated the relationship between the Party, the Government and the Bond, while Douglass was even prompted to express himself "quite antagonistic to certain members of the Opposition". The Party would give "independent support" to the Government, Douglass announced. (34) Brabant enlarged on this statement when he addressed the East London Farmers' Association. He stated that

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(34) Eastern Province Herald, 22 September 1893.

"All the party wanted to do was to ensure the progressive working of things in general. They had no idea of upsetting the present state of affairs". (35) Brabant also referred to the question of a leader for the Party and reported that the position had been offered to Innes, "but he did not care for it". Eventually, however, Innes had said that "he would leave his decision until after the next General Election". But whereas Innes failed to come out as leader of the Progressive Party, he did not hesitate to outline his programme for the forthcoming election. This he did at Woodstock in October 1893. (36) To Innes the curse of politics in the country was the "spirit of localism". Too close attention was paid to local affairs and there was therefore a want of a broad patriotic platform. He openly admitted the mistake he had made by joining a coalition Ministry and expressed his intention of never doing so again. It was on this occasion that Innes first publicly voiced his disapproval of the Bond's failure to assume responsibility for its policy by refusing to form a Ministry. He maintained that the Bond should be forced either to form a Ministry or take a back seat, "deprived of the balance of power which has been so important a factor in the political life of the country during the past ten years". His object was to get together 20 - 25 men "who would take their stand upon a moderate and progressive platform determined to see that Responsible Government was worked purely and Constitutionally in this country. A party not divided on race lines, but thoroughly devoted to Colonial interests..." (37)

More specifically, this party would pursue a moderate and progressive policy with regard to the native labour problem, not by passing a Strop Bill or making laws for compulsory labour,  
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(35) Cape Times, 27 September, 1893.

(36) Cape Times, 17 October, 1893.

(37) Ibid.

but by dealing with the allied problems of Liquor and Land. Cheap drink demoralised the native labour market and therefore special restrictions on the sale of liquor would be introduced. It was not Innes' intention to abolish locations on the Frontier but to regulate squatting and encourage owners to improve their holdings.

In connection with the native question, Innes maintained that "Class legislation was necessary to govern the Natives" but that "class legislation should not be more harsh than circumstances required, and when class legislation was necessary for the benefit of the natives as well as for the oppression of the natives, it should be given in one case as well as in the other".

Innes advocated the introduction of a system of compulsory education for poor whites, and in order to maintain the dominant role of the Europeans in the colony, white settlers should be encouraged to immigrate. He also desired to see the re-introduction of the excise, the redistribution of parliamentary seats and "generally all legislation of an honest and progressive nature".

In matters concerning South African development, Innes aimed at achieving a common understanding with neighbouring states concerning railway rates and tariffs, possibly joint railway management, the establishment of a South African Court of Appeal and finally proposed to give support to Rhodes' Northern policy.

By December 1893, Innes' relationship with the Progressive Party had still not been clarified, for it was stated '.... up to the present the country has no indication from his colleagues as to whether he spoke (at Woodstock) in his individual capacity or as a member of a party'.<sup>(38)</sup>

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(38) Cape Times, 1 December, 1893.

Innes and Merriman at a banquet on 10 February 1894 revealed that they had contested the general election as the Opposition Party<sup>(39)</sup> and Innes' Woodstock speech presumably announced the platform of this Party. The Innes and Brabant groups would therefore contest the elections independently, and whereas the former was avowedly anti-Government, the latter would give independent support to the Government.

Reference must be made at this stage to yet another political association which was formed on November 3rd, namely the Queenstown Political Association.<sup>(40)</sup> Though this association limited its activities to the Queenstown constituency, it nevertheless serves to reflect the inability of English-speaking colonists to adopt the principle of party government and discard the old system of groups, the members of which were temporarily held together by calculation of the local benefits which could thus be gained.

The Queen's Town Political Association aimed at securing the election of two Progressive candidates, who would act in opposition to the Afrikaner Bond in the House of Assembly. About 100 registered voters, among them Dr. W. Bisset Berry, had adopted the Articles of Association which outlined their political programme.

Article I demanded from their representatives "a full, complete, and unequivocal adherence to the principles of Responsible Government". This the representatives would indicate "(a) by insisting that any body of men claiming authority or power in Parliament shall submit their party to the responsibilities of office; (b) by the resistance of all attempts to convert Responsible Ministers into semblances of permanent directors of

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(39) Cape Times, 12 February 1894.

(40) Eastern Province Herald, 13 November 1893.  
Hofmeyr Papers, Vol. I, Book of press cuttings, p.84.  
Extract undated and newspaper not stated.

departments; (d) by the refusal of Parliamentary support to any member of their own party who accepts office on promise of support from another or opposing party".

Article II expressed the desire for a Railway Union and Customs Union for all the colonies and states of South Africa, while Article III demanded a redistribution of seats. Compulsory and free education "for the really poor" formed the substance of Article IV, while Article V asked for an excise duty on spirits. With regard to the improvement of agriculture, a General Scab Act, laws for the repression of stock-thefts and "for, the fostering of colleges and schools for training youths in the methods of efficient agriculture" were advocated (Art.VI). The Association's representatives were uncompromisingly to reject legislation such as "Strop Bills, Compulsory Labour Bills, and all such kindred attempts at obnoxious class legislation as being ineffectual in their application and brutalising in their tendency" (Art.VII). With regard to native education, representatives would be required to support "any well-recommended scheme for the literary and industrial education of natives under State supervision and direction" (Art.VIII). The debate during the 1893 session on Glen Grey Land Titles influenced the electors of Queenstown when Native Land Tenure came up for consideration, for they declared: "Our representatives must acknowledge the validity of the rights of the natives to the lands they have hitherto occupied by custom on communal tenure; and we shall look to them to vote in favour of some safe and comprehensive plan for settling and for securing individual natives in the occupation of separate and defined plots of such lands; it being a necessary feature in any such plan that it is capable of being gradually assimilated to the land tenure system of the Colony, and of extension, as fit occasion arises, to the lands and people in the several extra-Colonial territories" (Art.IX). Local needs were not to be neglected, for it was stated that they should have their fair and reasonable claims judiciously brought to the

notice of Parliament. Finally representatives were urged to give "their best support to all measures having for their object the promotion of the general prosperity,....."

This manifesto, coming as it did three weeks after Innes had delivered his Woodstock speech, bears a remarkable resemblance to the Innes programme. On the other hand the Queen's Town Political Association demanded due consideration of local needs, an indication that the "spirit of localism", which Innes condemned, was dying hard in Queenstown. But by its insistence on the adherence of its representatives to the principles of Responsible Government, the Queen's Town Political Association serves to indicate the transition stage in the development of a political party of English-speaking colonists. The Queen's Town Political Association, like the Progressive Party, was loth to discard its acceptance of a system of groups and coalitions in Parliament because of the benefits it had conferred on constituencies. On the other hand it subscribed to Innes' demand for the introduction of party government, which in essence denied the retention of groups and coalitions in the House.

The Government programme was announced by Sprigg and Rhodes and indicated that while the former still deemed it necessary to placate the Eastern Province farmers, the latter preferred to formulate a policy which would be acceptable to the Bond. Sprigg announced at East London that it was the Government's intention to make better provision in connection with public health, that the law would be consolidated and simplified, that individual land tenure would be granted to the natives without restrictions and that a tax on diamonds would be introduced when fresh taxation was needed. The Government, however, did not propose to support a Bill for compulsory education which would be applicable to "the whole barbarian population on account of the expense,..." and he was not prepared to say that it was "going to introduce an Excise Bill

next session". He declared himself in favour of a General Scab Act, though. (41)

At Klipdam Rhodes outlined the Government's policy and declared that there should be a Scab Act, but that whether it was to be compulsory and general would be "left to local option". An excise tax was upheld which fell on the consumer, not the producer and the Government's intention was announced to build new railways, after certainty had been established as to the carrying trade of the Transvaal. Finally Rhodes dealt with the labour question and native land tenure and in doing so foreshadowed the introduction of the Glen Grey system. (42)

Election returns in February 1894 indicated that the Government party secured 47 seats, the Opposition 18, while 9 (43) successful candidates could only be described as "unattached". The Government had consolidated its position because of the support it received from the Bond organisation and its own personal following. Rhodes (Barkly West), Frost (Queenstown), Iaing (Fort Beaufort) and Sprigg (East London), who had sat on the Treasury benches in 1893, were all returned and could look to Pearson (Port Elizabeth), Barnato, Lawrence, Haarhoff and Harris (Kimberley) for support. The successful Opposition candidates were Jones (Port Elizabeth), Scanlen (Cradock), Merriman and J.T. Molteno (Namaqualand), Innes and Smuts (Cape Division), Hutton (Fort Beaufort), Wiener, Beard, and Brown (Cape Town), Berry (Queenstown), Tamplin and Hay (Victoria East), Sauer (Aliwal North), J.C. Molteno (Tembuland), Norton (Albany), Palmer (Somerset East) and Vintcent (George).

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(41) Cape Times, 13 January 1894.

(42) Cape Times, 31 January, 1894.

(43) No complete classification of election returns has been found by the writer. The above analysis is based on reports in Cape Times, February 3rd and 12th, and the Eastern Province Herald, 14 February, 1894.

The unattached group consisted of Brabant (East London), I.J. van der Walt (Colesberg), Douglass and Wood (Grahamstown), Fuller (Cape Town), Schermbrucker and Warren (Kingwilliamstown), Robertson (George) and Orpen (Wodehouse).

On the basis of these returns it is possible to make certain observations concerning the tendency which appeared to be developing for constituencies to return candidates holding the same political views to Parliament. In the Albert, Paarl, Stellenbosch, Kimberley, Malmesbury, Caledon, Graaff-Reinet, Worcester, Barkly West, Riversdale, Uitenhage, Swellendam, Clanwilliam and Beaufort West constituencies both the candidates returned were Government supporters. In Namaqualand, Cape Division and Victoria East the Opposition achieved a similar feat, while Kingwilliamstown and Grahamstown had each returned two "unattached" representatives.

The practice whereby constituencies returned candidates of opposing political views was slowly disappearing, from which it must be deduced that the principle of voting for measures and not men was gaining ground in parliamentary elections. It seems that the foundation was being laid for the development of distinct political parties in the constituencies and though the tendency was by no means general, it could be regarded as keeping pace with the development which was taking place in Parliament. Thus it was that the Cape Times could declare "There are, however signs that a healthier state of politics is arising. Though, perhaps, we can never look for a clear and distinct cleavage of parties until a direct appeal is made to the country on a great constitutional question, it cannot be denied that for the most part the contests of the present election have been decided more nearly on clear party lines than those of any previous election since the institution of Responsible Government". (44)

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(44) Cape Times, 12 February, 1894.

With regard to the Progressive Party, the Eastern Province Herald report of the election returns showed that the Party as such did not contest any seat. Brabant and Douglass had stood as "unattached" candidates while their colleague, Palmer, had chosen to support the Opposition.<sup>(45)</sup> The Cape Times on the other hand lumped the Opposition and Progressive parties together and referred to them as the "Progressives".<sup>(46)</sup>

From speeches made by Innes<sup>(47)</sup> and Brabant<sup>(48)</sup> immediately after the election, it appears that these leaders each claimed to have been supported by Mackay and Hockly, who were unsuccessful in the Uitenhage and Somerset East contests respectively, and Berry and Palmer. These rival claims must surely be regarded as an indication that while the Progressive Party had failed to materialise as a political organisation during the general election, some of its members were not averse to supporting the Opposition party.

(iii)

It now remains for us to determine why Brabant had to report "the failure to form a progressive party" to the Farmers' Congress at East London in March, 1894.<sup>(49)</sup> One of the reasons that could be advanced to account for this failure must be nature of the political programme which Brabant issued from Bedford. The party's platform contained only three planks which required no elucidation from its authors, namely those concerning a General Scab Act, the excise on Colonial spirits and the restricted sale of liquor to natives. In connection with these issues the Farmers' Congresses had consistently opposed the Bond policy and the electorate must have been aware of the line the

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(45) Eastern Province Herald, 14 February 1894.

(46) Cape Times, 7 February 1894.

(47) Cape Times, 12 February 1894.

(48) Eastern Province Herald, 19 March, 1894.

(49) Ibid..

Progressive Party intended to take. At an East London Farmers' Association meeting Brabant had explained that the "United South Africa" the Party aimed at achieving would be a general federation with "one court of appeal for South Africa, one railway tariff, one customs tariff, and so on".<sup>(50)</sup> But no subsequent statement was made to explain how the party proposed to deal with the question of compulsory education for those Europeans who did not fall into the category of "poor whites", with the labour question, what safeguards it had in mind when allowing natives individual tenure of land, how it proposed to maintain the constitution intact or for that matter what the exact nature was of its native policy, which sought to couple firmness with justice. It had failed to show where it differed from the Bond in these respects, thus leaving the electorate to speculate on whether there was any actual difference between the two parties. As the Cape Times quite rightly pointed out in criticising its native policy, which sought to couple firmness with justice, the Bond said exactly the same and did this therefore include "the application of a stop...?"<sup>(51)</sup> These points required clarification if the Progressive Party was sincere in its claim to be anti-Bond, but the party's spokesmen failed to supply the details which would have provided the electorate in the East with a clear-cut progressive policy at a time when Walton declared that "... the political harvest was ready for reaping...."<sup>(52)</sup>

In one respect it seems that the framers of the Party's manifesto had been eminently successful - they had avoided committing themselves to anything very definite. This dodge might perhaps have been expedient if the political parties had been consolidated, but was surely the wrong approach in 1893-94

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(50) Cape Times, 27 September 1893.

(51) Cape Times, 18 September 1893.

(52) E.H. Walton to J.X. Merriman, 14 November, 1893. (.M.P.)

when the Bond was the only clearly recognised political organisation in the country.

The Progressive Party could not, however, have failed to gain support solely on the grounds that its programme was decidedly vague.

On October 4th, 1893, the Cape Times described the Progressive Party as being pledged to promote local interests. The parish pump influence on colonial politics was stated to have "developed to a serious extent" during the last few years and this newspaper implied that the Progressive Party in the East had caused the division between progressive groups to be maintained because of its willingness "to accept benefits and grants for their constituents."<sup>(53)</sup> In fact, when speaking at Grahamstown, Douglass had "openly avowed the policy of despoiling the public Treasury,..."<sup>(54)</sup> The "Party of Plunder" was thus still in existence. But the Progressive Party could not have failed to evoke enthusiasm because it aimed to promote the welfare of specific constituencies; on the contrary, this should have recommended it to the electors who were accustomed to choosing representatives to promote local interests. That the Party was unable to succeed even on these grounds, must therefore be attributed to some other causes. The root of the trouble would appear to be the inability of the Progressives to find a competent leader.

By June, 1893 it appeared that because Innes did not have the time to devote to political organisation,<sup>(55)</sup> Merriman and Sauer seemed the only likely alternatives as leaders of the new political party which appeared to be developing. Brabant informed the East London Farmers' Congress after the general election that "They could not follow Messrs. Sauer or Merriman

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(53) Cape Times, 4 October 1893.

(54) Cape Times, 11 October 1893.

(55) Vide supra

for obvious reasons,"<sup>(56)</sup> and though he failed to indicate why this was so, the answer appears to lie in statements made by other men concerning these two politicians. Walton told Merriman that he considered Sauer "too cold to enthuse -..."<sup>(57)</sup>, while Jabavu stated that Sauer was not popular in the country.<sup>(58)</sup> Then too there is the view expressed that Sauer "attacked the (Progressive) movement as anti-Dutch and racial",<sup>(59)</sup> and if this was indeed the case, Sauer was obviously not to be favourably considered as the leader of the Party the Eastern Province politicians were trying to resurrect.

As to Merriman's suitability, Walton stated that he would not have had a following for the reason that his "intellectual energy" positively alarmed "the dull witted gentlemen" who surrounded him.<sup>(60)</sup> But in February, 1894, Merriman referred to the fact that the Opposition party had been opposed in the election by the "party of plunder".<sup>(61)</sup> In view of the fact that Merriman first coined this phrase when Sprigg attempted to form a Frontier Party in 1888, the use of this title in 1894 was undoubtedly intended to describe the Progressive Party which originated in the Frontier districts. If this was indeed the case, Merriman would not only have been averse to leading such a party but Brabant and his supporters would certainly have refused to accept Merriman as their leader.

But while Merriman and Sauer were not acceptable to the Farmers' Congress as leaders of its political party, there was unanimous acclaim for Brabant's statement that "There was only one man they could all follow, that was Mr. Innes."<sup>(62)</sup> The East London Farmers' Congress was therefore informed by its President of his efforts to prevail on Innes to accept the

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(56) Eastern Province Herald, 19 March 1894.

(57) E.H. Walton to J.X. Merriman, 6 June 1893. (L.P.)

(58) J. Tengo Jabavu to J. Rose Innes, 19 June 1893 (R.I.P.)

(59) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 455.

(60) E.H. Walton to J.X. Merriman, 14 November 1893 (L.P.)

(61) Cape Times, 12 February 1894.

(62) Eastern Province Herald, 19 March 1894.

leadership of the Progressive Party. He had interviewed Innes "and urged upon him to take the lead. In the course of their negotiation Mr. Innes agreed to lead, but imposed unexplainable conditions. These (negotiations) went on till the close of the session, and Mr. Innes never seemed to take the lead altogether. Mr. Innes' excuse was his professional work, and after the session he definitely refused to take the position of leader. The result was the general election saw them without a leader and with no one to refer to".<sup>(63)</sup>

What were the "unexplainable conditions" the Progressive Party were unable to accept? Brabant said that "they could not agree with the followers of the three ex-Ministers - - in a blind-fold opposition to Mr. Rhodes",<sup>(64)</sup> from which it must be concluded that the Progressive Party refused to set itself up as a party in opposition to Rhodes. In fact the Party was merely pursuing the path that Brabant had embarked upon in January 1893 when he informed Innes that he supported Rhodes as Premier, which was quite different from supporting the Government.<sup>(65)</sup> To Innes, who wished to see pure party government introduced in the Cape Colony, the stand taken by the Progressive Party denoted a complete denial of this principle. The Party was prepared to support Rhodes in spite of the fact that he was enabling the Bond to achieve the enactment of its policy without assuming ministerial responsibility. It may therefore be deduced that the "unexplainable conditions" Innes imposed were in the nature of a demand that the Progressive Party adopt his main tenet, a demand which the "Party of Plunder" was unable to accept, because of its adherence to the parish pump influence in colonial politics. For this reason Innes, who

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(63) Ibid..

(64) Ibid..

(65) E.Y.Brabant to J.Rose Innes, 7 January, 1893 (R.I.P.)

belonged to the constitutional Opposition, did not "care for" the leadership of the Progressive Party which had "no idea of upsetting the present state of affairs". As the Cape Times pointed out, Innes was "not the sportsman to hunt with a muzzled pack". (66)

Once the Party failed to secure Innes as its leader, it had no option but to entrust the President of the Farmers' Congress with the leadership. How unsuited he was as a political leader may be judged from the incompetent manner in which he acted after it had become evident that Innes would <sup>not</sup> lead the Progressive Party. When in October 1893 Innes outlined his programme at Woodstock, it must have been obvious that henceforth the Party would have to confine its electioneering to the Eastern Province. Brabant and his lieutenant, Douglass, should then have embarked on an intensive election campaign in the Eastern districts where the Party's strength lay, but Brabant contented himself with half-heartedly publicising the movement at the Farmers' Association meetings at East London and Grahamstown (67) and Douglass addressed his constituents at Grahamstown. (68)

At the first of these meetings, Brabant reviewed the parliamentary session of 1893 and would have been content to regard his task as completed, had a question not been put regarding the formation of a political party. In reply he stated that "he had forgotten to mention that <sup>at</sup> a meeting of all interested it was decided to form a political or progressive party." (69) Had Brabant desired to publicise and gain support for the new party, the opportunity presented itself on this occasion, and

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(66) Cape Times, 27 September 1893.

(67) Vide supra

(68) Vide supra

(69) Cape Times, 27 September 1893.

then to judge by the Cape Times' report of the meeting, he had contented himself with a mere reference to the formation of the Progressive Party, and by no means spontaneously.

The fact that Brabant confined his speech-making on behalf of the Party to Farmers' Association meetings must be construed as an indication that while the Bedford manifesto purported to outline the platform of the "Progressive Party", in actual fact it became the programme of the Farmers' Congress party. This conclusion is substantiated by the statement made after the general election by Brabant that they had failed "to form a progressive party" once Innes refused to take the leadership during the recess. This explains why prominent Farmers' Association members like Brabant, Douglass, Wood, Schermbrucker and Warren contested the elections as "unattacheds".

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#### Chapter IV

In the two years preceding the Jameson Raid, the only significant developments in the anti-Bond movement in the Cape were to be noted first in the renewed attempts made by the Farmers' Congress to form a party, in the attitude adopted by the constitutional Opposition regarding such issues as Scab, the Glen Grey Bill and the protection of wheat, and finally in the formation of the South African Political Association by Innes and his followers.

The twelfth annual Farmers' Congress, which opened at East London on 13 March 1894, spent much time criticising the Executive for its failure to form a political party in 1893<sup>(1)</sup> and in this respect S. Cronwright-Schreiner was the severest critic of the Congress leaders, Brabant, Palmer and Warren.

Members were however not to be daunted by the fruitless efforts made during the previous year, for at East London Charles Southey moved "That this Congress is of the opinion the time has arrived when Farmers' Associations should extend their usefulness by adopting a political platform for the purpose of organising a progressive party in Parliament to represent their views. That, with this object, all associations are requested to fully discuss the advisability of political organisation and the form it should take, and instruct their delegates accordingly at next year's Congress".<sup>(2)</sup>

Southey's intention was to follow in the steps of the Graaff-Reinet Farmers' and Political Association, but his

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(1) Eastern Province Herald, 19 March 1894.

(2) Ibid.

proposal, which left the question of political organisation over for a year, did not recommend itself to those delegates who wanted to act immediately. Consequently Hobson's amendment "That this Congress is of opinion that more political power should be assured to give effect to its resolutions, and that, in order to accomplish this, it is necessary that a committee be appointed to draw up a constitution and programme of principles, to report before Congress rises. The committee to consist of the following: Colonel Brabant, M.L.A., Messrs. Palmer, M.L.A., Warren, M.L.A., Cronwright-Schreiner, Sefton, Stretton, Bestall, and the mover"<sup>(3)</sup> was carried.

This Committee duly met but found that the time at its disposal was inadequate for it to carry out its instructions. In its report it therefore suggested that Congress affirm the principles that the time had arrived for the formation of an "Independent Party" in Parliament and in the country, and "that the Central Association constitute itself a political party and advance such legislation as it may consider necessary."<sup>(4)</sup> Further, each branch was advised to take such steps as appeared best for furthering that object, while a committee consisting of Messrs. G.A.Fincham, G.M.Palmer, C.Southey, G.H.Maasdorp, E.Y.Brabant, E.R.Hobson and S.Cronwright-Schreiner was suggested "to draw up and submit to next Congress a programme and plan of operations for the guidance of branch associations in their action and for combining them for any general purposes that may arrive".<sup>(5)</sup>

This then was the substance of the Majority Report, for the Minority Report disagreed with it "in so far that it affirms the principle of the resolution rejected by Congress, putting off the whole subject of organisation for another year". (The Majority Report was however carried).

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(3) Ibid..

(4) Ibid..

(5) Ibid..

Here then we have two opposing views which probably were reflected throughout the Farmers' Associations- one section desiring political organisation, and as speedily as possible at that, and the other section hesitating to take such a step for fear probably that the Farmers' Associations would lose members once the organisation meddled in party politics. That the Farmers' Associations were obviously the most suitable basis in the Eastern Province on which to form a political party, seemed self-evident, and the fact that since 1893 they had increased their membership from 1400 to 1800, while 6 new associations had been formed, was a further recommendation. (6)

The Farmers' Congress did not however confine its discussions to political organisation, for resolutions were carried demanding a Compulsory Scab Act, the re-imposition of excise duties on liquor to be paid by the holders of licences on sales made, and the reduction of the duty on wheat. Redistribution to secure proper representation of the people of the Colony was also desired, a measure which was championed in the same month by the Bond Congress. (7)

From the above report on the East London Farmers' Congress, it may be deduced that while hitherto the members of the various associations had perhaps been content to confine their attempts to influence the policy of the various administrations by petitioning Ministers, the majority of the Associations' members had reached the stage where they were desirous of taking more definite political action by forming a political party within the framework of the existing Farmers' Associations.

To turn from the country to Parliament, we find there an Opposition led by Sauer, ably supported by Innes and Merri- man, and relying on the votes of Scanlen, C.T.Jones, J.T.Molteno,

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(6) Ibid..

(7) Eastern Province Herald, 16 March 1894.

C.P.Smuts, C.W.Hutton, L.Wiener, Beard, Brown, Berry, Tamplin, Hay, J.C.Molteno, Norton, Palmer and Vintcent.<sup>(8)</sup> Within this body there was probably a division with Innes' Moderates making up the one wing and the followers of Merriman and Sauer the other. This division may however only have been apparent in the debate on the Scab Bill, for Innes then referred to the "Moderates" being in favour of the measure, a statement which probably was intended to show that this group, as distinct from therest of the opposition, supported the Bill.<sup>(9)</sup>

The 1894 session was dominated by discussion of the Scab and Glen Grey Bills. The former was introduced by Frost, the Minister of Agriculture, and aimed at stamping out scab by compelling sheep-farmers throughout the Colony to provide dipping tanks.<sup>(10)</sup> The Bill therefore intended to provide those measures which both the Innes group and the Farmers' Congress Party had demanded during the recent election campaign. It becomes clear from a division on a issue such as the immediate application of a Scab law, that in neither the Opposition nor the Farmers' Congress Party the members were clearly divided.

When Rhodes, in order to satisfy his Bond supporters who were strenuously opposed to the measure, proposed, in Committee, that the application of the law be postponed till November 1895,<sup>(11)</sup> Brabant and Warren voted with Beard, Berry, Brown, Crosbie, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Merriman, Palmer, Sauer, Smuts, Tamplin, Van der Vyver and Wiener against the amendment, while Norton of the Opposition and Douglass and Vintcent of the Farmers' Party voted for it.<sup>(12)</sup>

The third reading of the watered-down Scab Bill was agreed to by 42 votes to 23, Merriman, Sauer, Scanlen, J.T. Molteno, Hay and 17 Bondsmen forming the hard core of opposition to the Bill.<sup>(13)</sup>

(8) According to the Eastern Province Herald, 14 February 1894, these were the successful Opposition candidates in the general election.

(9) Cape Hansard, 1894, p.169.

(10) Ibid., p. 92.

(11) Ibid., p. 236.

(12) Ibid., p. 238.

(13) Ibid., p.361.

The Glen Grey Bill, which was introduced by Rhodes in July 1894, sought to reconcile the opinions of two main parties in the House. In the previous session it had become clear that, while the Bond party and Innes and Merriman of the Opposition, desired that natives in the Glen Grey area be given full individual title to land, <sup>(14)</sup> the Opposition - Innes and Merriman included - now suggested "an occupation tenure, safeguarded against European acquisition". <sup>(15)</sup> In essence, therefore, the one group desired legislation which would allow the Europeans to gain possession of land in the Glen Grey area, while the other sought to retain the area for the native population. <sup>(16)</sup>

Rhodes favoured the Opposition policy and in order to placate his Bond supporters, introduced a labour tax for non-landholding natives, who had not worked for at least three months in every year. Furthermore he proposed to withhold the franchise from all natives who exchanged their tribal tenure for quit-rent individual holdings, holdings which they were forbidden to sell or mortgage without official sanction. <sup>(17)</sup>

In the debate on the second reading, Innes condemned the proposed labour tax as "very stringent class legislation," <sup>(18)</sup> while Merriman's proposal in the Committee stage to amend individual title to certificates of occupation, was negatived. <sup>(19)</sup> The third reading was carried with a majority of 35, only Scanlen, Beard, Berry, Brown, Fuller, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Merriman, J.C.Molteno, J.T.Molteno, Sauer, Smuts, Tamplin and Wiener voting against the motion. <sup>(20)</sup> The Oppositionists

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(14) Vide supra.

(15) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.105.

(16) Ibid.

Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.470 et. seq.

(17) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.105. E.A.Walker, W.P.Schreiner, a South African, p.57.

(18) Cape Hansard, 1894, p.410.

(19) Ibid., p.432.

(20) Ibid., p.470.

Norton, Palmer, Warren and Brabant had chosen to support the Minister and the Bond on this issue.

The Opposition during the 1894 session had not succeeded in becoming a compact body as the divisions on the Scab and Glen Grey Bills indicate.

During the recess Innes, Merriman and Sauer addressed various meetings and outlined the policy of the Opposition. These speeches are significant, not only for the reason that Opposition policy was clearly stated, but also because they indicated to what extent the Opposition leaders had come to distrust Rhodes. At Mowbray on 28 January 1895 Innes condemned the action of the Government with regard to the Glen Grey Bill, "and particularly the action of Mr. Rhodes, who not only broke the promises he made in regard to safeguarding the title of the land from the white man, but lost his temper in the House, and in a single night forced through Parliament a Bill affecting directly forty thousand natives and indirectly 750 thousand more;..."<sup>(21)</sup> On the subject of Rhodes, Innes went on to say that the Prime Minister's main and only object in the Colony was "the furtherance of his northern scheme. In regard to all other political matters he was The Most Cynical Opportunist who ever took part in the public affairs of this country".<sup>(22)</sup>

Merriman and Sauer from the same platform supported the views Innes expressed but in addition Sauer indicated the Opposition strength during the 1894 session. While the nominal strength of the Opposition was 22, he maintained that in actual fact only 17 members could be looked upon as virtually in opposition to the Ministry, a statement which was probably borne out by the third reading division list on the Glen Grey Bill. Sauer also listed 10 members as "Independents", of which

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(21) Eastern Province Herald, 30 January 1895.

(22) Ibid.

six called themselves "progressives".<sup>(23)</sup> Unfortunately Sauer omitted to tell his audience who the members of these various groups were. On the basis of the Glen Grey Bill third reading division list and Sauer's general observations at the Mowbray meeting on the Opposition strength, it may be concluded that the Eastern Province Herald's analysis of the election returns on 14 February 1894 were substantially correct.

At Aliwal North on 11 March 1895, Sauer addressed his constituents and once again condemned the labour tax in the Glen Grey Act. He then proceeded to outline the programme of the Opposition which included the development of light railways, the reduction of the cost of carriage on produce to the lowest possible limit in order to assist the farmer to develop the land, the introduction of an excise duty on brandy and beer, an export tax on diamonds, the introduction of an immigration scheme and, finally, the reduction of duties on the necessaries of life.<sup>(24)</sup>

Against this background the next step taken by the Farmers' Congress to organise its members politically must be viewed.

The Farmers' Congress opened at Cape Town on 4th March 1895.<sup>(25)</sup> Cronwright-Schreiner presented the report of the Political Organisation Committee of the Central Farmers' Association "which recommended that as a basis the Central Association should pledge itself to carry out liberal progressive policy and give support to the party in Parliament which shall more nearly give expression to such policy".<sup>(26)</sup>

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(23) Ibid..

(24) Eastern Province Herald, 11 March 1895.

(25) Eastern Province Herald, 6 March 1895.

(26) Eastern Province Herald, 8 March 1895.

The report went on to outline how this support should be given. Movements calculated to hinder progress were to be opposed; only men of liberal and progressive views should be returned to Parliament by the members of the Farmers' Associations, and the representatives thus chosen should insist upon "straightforward methods in politics and upon adherence to the true principles of Responsible Government". Then too it was suggested by the Committee that no member of the organisation should take office in any Ministry "without consulting such members of the Executive Committee of the Central Association as are members of Parliament". This no doubt was intended to prevent a recurrence of an incident such as was witnessed when Frost accepted office in the reconstituted Rhodes Ministry in 1893.

With regard to future policy and parliamentary elections, it was proposed that a Vigilance Committee of the Central Association be appointed from year to year to obtain from all branch Associations an expression of opinion on specific political issues and to communicate with the branches in order to ensure that men who would represent the views of the Central Farmers' Association were returned in parliamentary bye-elections and elections. (27)

This report was adopted by the Cape Town Farmers' Congress but when it is remembered that Fincham deprecated the action of Brabant, Palmer and Warren, who had played leading roles in the formation of the Progressive or Moderate Party during the 1894 parliamentary session, (28) it would appear that the decision was not unanimous. It must be remembered that on a previous occasion members had voiced divergent opinions in this connection and it seems possible that Fincham must have been the spokesman for the dissenting delegates.

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(27) Ibid..

(28) Eastern Province Herald, 6 March 1895.

On closer examination, however, it transpires that Fincham's attack on the three leaders of the Central Farmers' Association was not launched on the ground that he wished to see his association remain aloof from party politics, though it is not denied that this desire was partly responsible for the views he expressed. According to the Eastern Province Herald Fincham was prompted to speak out as he did because Brabant, Palmer and Warren had voted for the third reading of the Glen Grey Bill "in direct opposition to their public utterances"<sup>(29)</sup>. This then seems to have been the real reason for Fincham's attack, but it may be argued in fairness to him that the East London Farmers' Congress in 1894 had given no mandate to its three members in Parliament to take the steps they did during the session of 1894 to form a political party.

Fincham's statement does reveal, however, that Brabant, Palmer and Warren had made yet another attempt to form a political party during the 1894 session, an indication that they had not been daunted by their failures in the past. And what is more, their effort to form a Progressive or Moderate party clearly shows that they were still unable to sink their differences with the constitutional Opposition or range themselves behind Rhodes and his followers.

The decision taken at the Cape Town Farmers' Congress in March 1895, to accept the report of its Political Organisation Committee, thereby agreeing to utilise the existing Central Farmers' Association for political purposes, was a significant event. Indeed, it seemed to be the logical outcome of a movement which started in the 'eighties when the politically conscious farming community in the Eastern Province looked upon their Farmers' Associations as political forums for want of any other suitable organisations. When, as the years went by, no acceptable political combination with other

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(29). Eastern Province Herald, 11 March 1895.

Opposition members seemed possible to counter the growing power of the Bond, the members of the Farmers' Associations were left with no alternative but to turn to their own Associations and use them in order to evolve some mode of corporate action in the political field.

A political party erected within the framework of the Central Farmers' Association, which in 1895 claimed to have branches in no less than twenty-five centres in the Eastern Province, (30) had every hope of becoming a force in colonial politics. It only remained for the leaders of such a party to overcome the obstacles which hitherto had hampered the various attempts to form and reform the Progressive Party.

(ii)

When Parliament met in 1895, Innes maintains that it had become necessary for Rhodes "to strengthen his parliamentary position", (31) for he had returned from England "with the foundation for his new policy of active interference with the Transvaal already laid". (32) That this was indeed the case may be gathered from Rhodes' attempt during the session to consolidate his supporters.

He proposed to amend the Scab Act of 1894 which had been acutely resented by a section of the Bond supporters, though both Sprigg and Frost were vehemently opposed to any amendment. (33) A Bill to make the Scab Act permissive was thereupon introduced by a private member, Weeber, and when the two Ministers denounced it, a caucus was held. (34) There Rhodes "announced that the Government would accept a motion which (revised by himself) provided that the Bill should be withdrawn,

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(30) Eastern Province Herald, 6 March 1895.

(31) Rose Innes, *op. cit.*, p.113.

(32) *Ibid.*, p.112.

(33) *Ibid.*, p. 113.

(34) *Ibid.*

pending a searching enquiry into the working of the Scab Act, with a view to meeting reasonable objections and to fresh legislation next year if necessary".<sup>(35)</sup> When this amendment was put only Beard, Berry, Brown, Fuller, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Palmer, Smartt, Wiener, Tamplin and Jones voted against it. J.T.Molteno, J.C.Molteno, Norton, Sauer and Merriman had deserted the Opposition, while Fuller and Smartt supported it.<sup>(36)</sup>

According to Innes' remarks during the debate on the motion for the second reading, Rhodes had approached "his friends the Progressives" and effected an amalgamation of both Progressives and the anti-Scab party who accepted the terms of compromise. Innes appealed to the Progressives to reject the amendment because they had consistently voted for a stringent, and compulsory Scab Act,<sup>(37)</sup> but Rhodes had done his work well as the division on the amendment showed.

One other issue, namely the protection of wheat, must now be dealt with, for though it does not serve to illustrate Rhodes' attempt to consolidate his position in Parliament at the time, it nevertheless proved to be one of the main planks in the platform of the South African Political Association.<sup>(38)</sup> This Association was to become the extra-parliamentary organisation behind the Innes group which formed the liberal and progressive wing of the Progressive Party in 1898.

The slogan "cheap bread, dear brandy" was to be heard time and again in the statements made by the leaders of the S.A.P.A. before the 1898 election. This slogan was

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(35) Ibid., pp. 113-114.

Cape Hansard, 1895, p.472.

(36) Cape Hansard, 1895, p.476.

(37) Ibid., pp. 472-473.

(38) Vide Infra.

G. le Sueur errs in stating that the South African Political Association was an "organisation of the coloured voters of Cape Colony". Cecil Rhodes, Footnote p.76.

based on the demand that the duties on the necessaries of life - flour, grain and wheat - should be abolished and an excise on spirits be imposed. When, therefore, De Waal moved in May "That the Government be instructed to communicate with the Free State Government the desire of this House that in the Bill about to be introduced to amend the Customs Union Tariff Act of 1889, in so far as it affects the introduction of foreign meat, there should be included some provision whereby the present insufficient tariff on wheat and flour may be increased so as to improve the condition of the agricultural population of the Colony", (39) it was soon to become apparent which members were to support the demand for cheap food. De Waal's motion was opposed by 26 members, namely Sprigg, Sivewright, Scanlen, Berry, Brabant, Crosbie, Douglass, Frost, Fuller, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Laing, Merriman, Norton, Palmer, Pearson, Sauer, Smartt, Smuts, Tamplin, Wiener, Wood, Brown and Vanes. (40)

This division was taken on May 21st and a week later the South African Political Association was formed. (41) When it is realised that the activities of the Association were almost solely confined to an agitation for the abolition or reduction of the duties on flour, grain and wheat in 1895-96, one must deduce that the division on De Waal's motion prompted free-traders, like J.W. Jagger, to form the South African Political Association. (42)

On May 29th the Cape Times reported that a private meeting was held "for the purpose of forming a South African Political Association". At this meeting it was unanimously "Resolved that those present form them (sic) themselves into an association for the study and promulgation of political knowledge with a view to further the adoption of liberal

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(39) Cape Hansard, 1894, p. 68.

(40) Ibid., p. 122.

(41) Cape Times, 29 May 1895.

(42) Hereafter referred to as the S.A.P.A.

measures and principles". Innes was elected president, J.W. Jagger vice-president, R.R. Brydone honorary secretary and George Trill honorary treasurer. It was also decided to postpone the election of further members of the executive "until after the delivery of the presidential address,...". The Executive was empowered to sanction the election of new members and a five shilling minimum subscription was agreed to. (43)

Innes apparently had not been instrumental in forming this Association, for a statement made at a meeting on 6 September 1895 revealed that the question of the formation of the group had first been considered in May, 1895 "and the Hon. J. Rose-Innes when approached, was found to be in full sympathy with the objects of the association ....." (44)

The first public meeting of the S.A.P.A. was held on 20 June 1895 in the Mutual Hall in Cape Town, on which occasion Innes took the chair. The secretary explained that the main object of the founders of the Association was "to arouse public interest in the land in which they lived, in its history, and in the course of public events, with a view to promote fitting and just legislation, and condemning and opposing what was contrary thereto, whether introduced from the benches occupied by the Government or from the benches of the Opposition". (45)

According to the secretary it therefore appeared that the S.A.P.A. was not intended to be the organisation outside Parliament which would sponsor the cause of the Opposition; its aim was to support or oppose legislation solely on its merits.

In delivering his presidential address, Innes stressed the need for "some organisation of this kind in Cape Town and also in the Colony generally..." for "no organised political machinery" existed apart from the Bond. He pointed

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(43) Ibid..

(44) Cape Times, 7 September 1895.

(45) Cape Times, 21 June 1895.

out that it was in order to allow "men of liberal minds and of broad and progressive views" to unite upon a "platform comprehensive enough to include them all, and yet definite enough to exclude those whose bent of mind would render practical co-operation impossible" that the S.A.P.A. had been formed.

Innes then proceeded to explain that Responsible Government implied the existence of parties and that parties could never make their weight felt without organisation. The S.A.P.A. was obviously intended to provide such organisation in the future. Innes referred to the Ministry in office and described it "not as a body responsible for a policy and standing or falling by it, but as a number of heads of departments each managing his own portfolio and pursuing his own course,..." The duty of the Government appeared to be to carry out, not its own policy, but that which would "command a majority, collected if necessary from both sides of the House." (47)

These views Innes had expressed at Woodstock in October 1893 and that he should have reiterated them at the first public meeting of the S.A.P.A. serves to indicate that the Association was intended to form the basis of a liberal and progressive political party. The programme of such a party was further outlined by Innes. The object of the Association was not to "set class against class or race against race" in the Colony. On the contrary, the S.A.P.A. recognised that "the interests of the farmer and the merchant, the producer and the consumer" were identical and that no section of the community could in the long run "prosper at the expense of the remainder". For this reason Innes stated that the Association would support "all liberal measures" and oppose all that were "crude, unjust or harsh". (48)

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(47) Ibid..

(48) Ibid..

There were two questions upon which Innes thought the members of the S.A.P.A. should declare themselves, namely Compulsory Education for Europeans and the "Taxation of the necessaries of Life". In connection with the latter, the speaker referred to the resolution moved by de Waal during the session which urged the Government to arrange with the Orange Free State "for the imposition of a substantial increase to the duty on grain", a resolution which Innes maintained merely sought to protect the farmer. (49)

On the Native Question, the S.A.P.A. President said he felt confident that the Association would support "a native policy which, though firm, shall be moderate and just". Yet another plank was taken from Innes' 1893 election platform when he stressed the need for increased representation in Parliament.

In external affairs the general policy of the S.A.P.A. was stated to be "co-operation with the neighbouring States" for the desire was to do everything possible "to draw <sup>together</sup> the various white communities" in South Africa. Innes felt that this desire was not incompatible with "loyalty to the flag, or attachment to the Empire".

In conclusion, the working programme for the S.A.P.A. was outlined. It was the intention "to obtain and circulate information and statistics bearing upon the questions which from time to time engage public attention; while public meetings and lectures would be arranged "to encourage discussion and publicise the views of" the S.A.P.A. Then too registers (voters' rolls) would be watched and the candidates the Association would support at the parliamentary elections, would have to be men who were generally in accord with the S.A.P.A.'s programme. (50).

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(49) Ibid..

(50) Ibid..

The Executive Committee was soon actively engaged in electing new members for before the first business meeting of the S.A.P.A. was held on 27 June 1895, 200 had been enrolled. (51) In addition, Innes' Presidential address was printed in pamphlet form and was intended to serve as a guide to those centres in the Colony who wished to form similar associations. (52) A constitution was also in the course of preparation during July 1895 and the Cape Times predicted that while the principles of the new association were being embodied in a definite constitution, the number of members was steadily growing. The newspaper also reported that the lead given by Cape Town was being followed by Kimberley, Uitenhage, Port Elizabeth "and other places". (53)

At a meeting, on 20 August 1895 at Kimberley, Olive Schreiner and her husband S.C.Cronwright-Schreiner, came forward as ardent supporters of the S.A.P.A. when they urged that political associations like those at Cape Town and Port Elizabeth be formed. (54) Cronwright-Schreiner on this occasion read a paper entitled "Wanted: A Real Opposition" which was printed in 1896 as "The Political Situation". This address initially merely reiterated the views previously expressed by Innes on such issues as the irresponsibility of the Bond in Parliament, the parish pump in politics, the Franchise Act, the Strop Bill, the Glen Grey Act, the taxation of the necessaries of life and the Scab Act. (55)

Once this was done, Cronwright-Schreiner went on to explain why there had been a retrogressive movement in colonial politics for the past couple of years, and how this movement

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(51) Cape Times, 27 June 1895.

(52) Cape Times, 2 July 1895.

(53) Cape Times, 5 July 1895.

(54) Cape Times, 21 August 1895.

(55) S.Cronwright Schreiner, op. cit., pp. 10-21.

could be stayed. Cronwright-Schreiner recommended the formation of a new Progressive Party within the framework of the S.A.P.A. to combat the retrogressive movement. (56)

But it is not for this reason that his address deserves closer attention, for Innes in effect had expressed the same views. What, however, makes Cronwright-Schreiner's address so significant is the fact that for the first time in the Cape Colony someone attempted to warn the colonists that the policy Rhodes was pursuing in the North was likely to have disastrous results in South Africa.

The Bond and a 'Band of Monopolists' were responsible for the retrogressive movement in recent years, Cronwright-Schreiner stated. The Monopolists wanted complete control of political machinery", notably in the Cape Colony, in order to increase their wealth, to resist taxation upon industries of which they possessed monopolies and to extend their exploitations into adjoining territories. (57) In the Cape Colony the Monopolists had gained control over the "Retrogressive Element in the Bond Party" by the simple expedient "of offering to support those retrogressive measures which without its aid could never have found a place on our Colonial State-book". (58) Furthermore, Cronwright-Schreiner was not convinced by the line frequently taken in this connection that Rhodes was "slowly undermining the Bond and so let him not have interference". (59) He felt the alliance between the Monopolist (Rhodes) and the retrogressive element in the Bond party only served to produce the continual enactment of measures which would have to be undone in the future. This coalition was merely unpicking the progressive

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(56) Ibid., pp. 86 et sq.,

(57) Ibid., pp. 37-39.

(58) Ibid., pp. 40-41.

(59) Ibid., p. 46.

enactments of the past and enabling the Monopolist Party to carry out unhampered financial deprivations in the Cape Colony and the Northern Territories. (60) "It is this coalition" Cronwright-Schreiner maintained, "which, by giving political power to enormously wealthy individuals, is corroding our public life, till the principle that every man has his price and can be squared, if you can only find his figure, is becoming an established dogma". (61) He also expressed the view that the colonists were prepared to connive at the Monopolist Party's intention to annihilate the two states adjoining the Colony for the reason that the ultimate effect of this policy would be to make Englishman dominant throughout South Africa.. (62) Cronwright-Schreiner felt that the Colony would have to pay too dearly for British extension to the North. He rounded off his attack on Rhodes' policy by asking: "Is it for colonisation carried out on such lines as these that the Cape Colony is to be asked to sacrifice its internal political and social welfare. Is it to aid and abet a handful of men in gaining this disastrous control over South Africa and its resources that the Cape Colony is to obliterate itself?....." (63)

Now while it is true that Cronwright-Schreiner perhaps tended to exaggerate the likely effect of Rhodes' policy on the Cape Colony, he did have the foresight to interpret the events which were unfolding in the country during 1895 and to speak out quite unequivocally once he realised the implications of Rhodes' plan. Others in the colony had in the past condemned the dual position Rhodes was occupying as

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(60) Ibid., p.43.

(61) Ibid., pp.43-44.

(62) Ibid., pp. 45-46.

(63) Ibid., p.71.

Premier of the Colony and managing director of the British South Africa Company, and Innes had briefly referred to Rhodes as being solely preoccupied with furthering his Northern Policy.<sup>(64)</sup> But only Cronwright-Schreiner had seen fit to predict how disastrous the results of such a policy would be for South Africa if Rhodes were allowed to pursue his object, unhampered by those politicians in the Cape Parliament who had it in their power to curb any hasty action on the part of their Premier.

On what grounds could Cronwright-Schreiner have based his attack on Rhodes? Rhodes had assiduously been pursuing his plan for union of the States and colonies in South Africa and by the end of 1894 the Transvaal was at last securely hemmed in.<sup>(65)</sup> It remained for this State to co-operate to enable Rhodes to complete his scheme for union.

It seems unlikely that Cronwright-Schreiner was aware of the fateful interview Rhodes had with Kruger at Pretoria in October 1894,<sup>(66)</sup> so that the conclusion he reached in August 1895, that disaster would follow if Rhodes were allowed to pursue his policy, must have been based on other events. There was, for instance, Kruger's appeal for assistance to the Kaiser in January 1895, to indicate the policy the Transvaal President intended to pursue,<sup>(67)</sup> while the breakdown of the Railway Conference in April<sup>(68)</sup> must have convinced Cronwright-Schreiner that the Transvaal would be unlikely to co-operate in Rhodes' larger scheme for union. Then too there had been the appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson as Governor of the Cape Colony in succession to Sir Henry Loch, an appointment which had resulted in a

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(64) Vide supra

(65) Williams, op. cit., p. 250.

(66) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 109.

(67) Williams, op. cit., p. 254.

(68) J. van der Poel, Railway and Customs Policies in South Africa, p. 83.

meeting of protest being called in Cape Town, for the governor-designate was known to be a shareholder in the Chartered Company and a Director of De Beers. (69) Finally in July Rhodes had moved in the House that it was expedient that the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland should be annexed to the Cape Colony. (70)

These probably were the events which weighed so heavily with Cronwright-Schreiner and caused him to issue a warning at Kimberley in August 1895. How did Cronwright-Schreiner hope to prevent the disaster? The scheme he outlined was certainly not designed to effect any immediate check on Rhodes or the Monopolists for he proposed that "a truly Progressive movement in Colonial affairs" be inaugurated. (71)

He believed that there was a truly "Progressive Element" in every town and village and that it had become inoperative because it lacked organisation. A leader was needed - "a progressive J.H.Hofmeyr" (72) and the President of the S.A.P.A. seemed to be the obvious choice as leader of a party (73) which would emerge from the united "Progressive Associations". This Party would adopt as its programme all those measures which Innes had outlined in his Presidential addresses. (74)

For the rest, the views expressed by Cronwright-Schreiner at Kimberley in August 1895 are only of interest inasmuch as they indicated that the establishment of branches of the S.A.P.A. throughout the country could be used as the basis on which to build a new Progressive Party. (75) Innes quite

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(69) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.110.

(70) Cape Hansard, 1895, pp. 557-559

(71) S.C.Cronwright-Schreiner, op. cit., p. 81.

(72) Ibid., p. 91.

(73) Ibid., p. 100.

(74) Ibid., pp. 108-113.

(75) Ibid., pp. 100-108.

probably entertained the same hopes, but failed to drive this point home when he delivered his Presidential address.

Early in September it was revealed<sup>(76)</sup> at the general meeting of the S.A.P.A. that membership had increased to 430, while district committees had been formed in each of the six districts into which Cape Town was divided for electoral purposes. The Cape Times reported that the Committee of the S.A.P.A. had devised a "system for increasing the electoral roll of Cape Town..." and further proof of the activity of the Committee was to be found in the announcement that a circular, "copies of which were being sent all over the town and country", had been compiled in order to enlighten the public regarding the proposed increase of duty on flour and wheat.<sup>(77)</sup> This circular had been drawn up with the assistance of L.Wiener, M.L.A., who in 1888 had attempted to effect the formation of an Excise and Tariff League.<sup>(78)</sup> As to the formation of branches of the S.A.P.A., the Secretary could report that three had been formed in Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Kingwilliamstown, while there had been letters from Kimberley and Worcester "asking for suggestions".<sup>(79)</sup>

Innes then laid before the meeting a draft constitution for the S.A.P.A. The first two clauses were adopted unanimously and read as follows:

"1. That the name of the association be the South African Political Association.

2. That the objects and aims of the association be the promulgation of political knowledge with a view to further the adoption of Liberal measures and principles, such as:

(a) The proper working of Responsible Government in the Colony upon Constitutional lines.

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(76) Cape Times, 7 September 1895

(77) Ibid.

(78) Vide supra

(79) Cape Times, 7 September 1895.

(b) The adoption of a system of compulsory education for Europeans, such system to be introduced whenever practicable at the earliest possible date, and to be gradually extended as the circumstances of the country permit.

(c) The readjustment of the Customs tariff, so as to cheapen the costs of the necessities of life.

(d) The imposition of an Excise.

(e) The prohibition of the sale of liquor to aboriginal natives, and the adoption of a firm but just and sympathetic native policy.

(f) The vigorous development of the internal resources of the Colony.

(g) Increased Parliamentary representation for such districts and centres as are not at present adequately represented, regard being had to population and wealth.

(h) Such other measures as may be presented by the executive to, and adopted by, the association."<sup>(80)</sup>

The third clause proposed "That all persons subscribing to the principles of this association be eligible for membership", and in reply to a question, it was explained that ladies were not excluded from membership, and that the constitution made no distinction with regard to colour. This clause was thereupon adopted.<sup>(81)</sup>

Clauses 4 and 6 concerning the Executive Council were also discussed at this meeting and the whole constitution adopted, but the substance of these, and possibly other clauses, <sup>was</sup> were not given in the Cape Times report of the meeting.

With regard to the selection of candidates for general elections, the President, in reply to a question, stated that the Association, by majority decision, would

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(80) Ibid..

(81) Ibid..

express its preference and that members who were dissatisfied with the choice were expected not to oppose the Association's candidate actively. "If they could not vote for the candidate, they ought to stand aside, for if every member was allowed to vote for whoever he pleased, the Association would soon tumble to pieces". (82)

During September 1895 the S.A.P.A. was actively engaged in conducting a complete canvass of the Cape Town electoral districts in order to ensure the registration of every eligible voter. (83)

In October, Merriman, under the auspices of the S.A.P.A. delivered a lecture on "Finance in its Relation to Politics". Merriman was not a member of the Association but stated that he "felt great sympathy with its aims and objects..." (84) The presence of Brown, Hay, Wiener, J.T. Molteno and C.P. Smuts on the platform on this occasion, indicated that these members of the Constitutional Opposition were also apparently in sympathy with the objects of the S.A.P.A., though there is no evidence on which to base the conclusion that they were indeed members of the organisation at that stage.

Two further public meetings were convened by the S.A.P.A. during 1895. The first was held at the Good Hope Hall "to call for reduced taxes upon the necessaries of life" and here Innes was supported by Wiener, Beard, Brown, Sauer, Hutton and C.P. Smuts. (85) During December F.Y. St. Leger chose to address a meeting on the subject "A Talk on Taxation: Unequal Burdens" and this rounded off the activities of the S.A.P.A. for 1895. (86)

In the last quarter of 1895 the idea had apparently gained ground that a party was forming round Innes, for

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(82) Ibid..

(83) Cape Times, 12 September, 1895

(84) Cape Times, 25 October 1895

(85) Cape Times, 18 November 1895

(86) Cape Times, 13 December 1895.

Cronwright-Schreiner wrote to tell Innes that there were several barristers in Kimberley who were stout adherents to Innes' party and that Innes should therefore try to arrange his visit to Kimberley either "before or after circuit" as these men would be away for about a month. He also suggested that Innes address a public meeting in Kimberley, supported by some of these barristers, and thus establish a group pledged "to support the Cape Town programme..."<sup>(87)</sup> The new party was obviously forming round Innes and was using as its programme the principles embodied in the S.A.P.A. Constitution.

The prospect of a new group or party being formed at this juncture did not appeal to Merriman. "You propose quite fairly and legitimately to constitute a new group", he wrote to Innes,<sup>(88)</sup> "which would I fancy from your sketch hold extreme views - on taxation for instance you would be pure free-traders - you would in practice oppose the meat tax and by so doing you would incidentally strengthen the dear bread lot. You would pin your faith to the existing scab legislation and rigidly oppose any consideration of amendments-<sup>(89)</sup> and by so doing you will in my opinion strengthen the hands of the ignorant section altogether -."

But it was not only the extreme views of such a party that Merriman disapproved of, for he stated that in forming the party, Innes would break up the Opposition, thereby strengthening Rhodes' hand. Then too Innes would form "the nucleus of parties on English and Dutch lines - on natural lines that is - For your stalwarts look at them as you will, are before all things anti-Dutch." Finally Merriman

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(87) S.C.Cronwright-Schreiner to J.Rose Innes, 2 September 1895, (R.I.P.)

(88) J.X.Merriman to J.Rose Innes, 11 October 1895 (R.I.P.)

(89) Rhodes' proposals concerning the Scab Act during the 1895 parliamentary session had evidently prompted Innes to include a General Compulsory Scab Act, in addition to the provisions for fiscal reform, in the S.A.P.A.'s working programme.

predicted that the commercial and town party would be infinitely strengthened "as against the country . (90)

To Merriman who hated the party caucus because it interfered with that freedom of individual judgment which gave to the collective decision of the House, in his eyes, its special value," (91) any party was probably anathema. That such a party should furthermore seek to strengthen the commercial and urban interests as opposed to the country, must have filled the Whig, Merriman, with abhorrence.

On the eve of the Jameson Raid political organisation of the English-speaking electorate in the Colony had reached the stage where the ground had been prepared by the S.A.P.A. in Cape Town and the Central Farmers' Association in the Eastern Province for the formation of political parties. As yet there had been no indication that these two main groups were either prepared to support one another or their separate identities. The political differences between Innes and Brabant during the past three years did not augur well for the future.

The Raid was to prove that the groups they represented were not only divided on the questions of the working of Responsible Government and fiscal policy, but also in the attitude they were to adopt after December 1895 with regard to Rhodes and the Raid.

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(90) J.X.Merriman to J.Rose Innes, 11 October 1895. (R.I.P.)

(91) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 73.

Chapter V

(i)

Prior to Jameson's incursion into the Transvaal on 29 December 1895, there had been no organised political party of predominantly English-speaking colonists, either in Parliament or in the country. While a political party seemed to be forming round Innes, its formation was by no means assured, for Innes was fully aware that such a party would not have the support of Merriman.<sup>(1)</sup> Sauer had given no indication that he would be inclined to join such a party, and for these reasons it may be assumed that Innes was probably hesitating before terminating his relationship in Parliament with these colleagues.

Before the Raid, Innes, Merriman and Sauer had publicly expressed their disapproval of Rhodes' conduct in colonial politics so that it seemed probable after Rhodes' implication in the Raid had been established, that these three former ministers might draw still closer together. But in fact the reverse occurred, for while Merriman and Sauer gradually drifted into co-operation with the Bond party after the Raid,<sup>(2)</sup> Innes and his supporters refused to ally themselves with the party which had been directly responsible for the retrogressive movement in Colonial politics.

News of the Jameson Raid into the Transvaal first appeared in the Colonial press on 31 December 1895 when the Cape Times reported that the struggle in the Transvaal was "the same as the struggle of 1881: only the parts are reversed". The Uitlanders were fighting for the right to govern themselves "to be free men, not to have to obey the laws of other people"<sup>(3)</sup>. Jameson and his men had acted on "a wild-brave-mad-silly impulse, probably due to reports from Johannesburg that the practically

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(1) Vide supra

(2) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 509-510.

(3) Cape Times, 31 December 1895.

unarmed crowd there were going to be fired on".<sup>(4)</sup> In addition a letter from Charles Leonard was published which recounted the grievances of the Uitlander population and stated that the Transvaal government had shown "that it would like to crush Cape Colony; for that reason it puts such heavy duties on the products of the Colony...."<sup>(5)</sup>

Hofmeyr, as spokesman of the Cape Afrikaners, immediately dissociated them from the outrage on the Transvaal by telegraphing to Kruger: "I hope your burghers will acquit themselves like heroes against Jameson's filibusters".<sup>(6)</sup> Sir Hercules Robinson, it was reported, had repudiated the action of Jameson in violating the territory of the South African Republic and recalled him.<sup>(7)</sup> Sauer asserted that Rhodes had plotted the attack on a peaceful Transvaal.<sup>(8)</sup>

Jameson and his fellow Raiders were commanded to retire from the Transvaal and the High Commissioner called upon "all British subjects in the South African Republic to abstain from giving the said Dr. Jameson any countenance or assistance in his armed violation of the territory of a friendly State."<sup>(9)</sup>

It was now left to Rhodes, as managing director of the B.S.A. Company to repudiate the action of the Administrator of Mashonaland, the domain of the Chartered Company, but this he failed to do. On January 1st, the Cape Times reported that Sauer's charge against Rhodes was quite untrue according to the evidence available, but agreed that Rhodes was compromised on the face of things. He had disavowed "the mad business", but was stated not to be able to "disown his friends to the extent that the High Commissioner for H.M.'s Government, very properly has done".<sup>(10)</sup>

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(4) Ibid..

(5) Ibid., p.5.

(6) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 490.

(7) Cape Times, 31 December 1895.

(8) Cape Times, 1 January 1896.

(9) Cape Times, 1 January 1896

(10) Cape Times, 1 January 1896.

According to the Press and Hofmeyr's statement, opinion in the Colony on January 1st was unanimous inasmuch as Jameson was stated to have committed a colossal blunder.<sup>(11)</sup> At Paarl and Graaff-Reinet meetings were held on January 2nd condemning the unjustifiable action of British subjects under the command of officers of the Chartered Company,<sup>(12)</sup> while the Paarl meeting demanded that "a speedy and satisfactory explanation concerning this most culpable action of the head officer of the (B.S.A.) Company" was expected from Rhodes.<sup>(13)</sup>

That Rhodes was at this juncture dissociated from Jameson's blunder becomes evident from Michell's reference to "a litter of telegrams" he had read while visiting Rhodes on January 4th. The majority were from "Dutch supporters asserting their personal regard and continued political support, conditionally on his public disavowal of Jameson".<sup>(14)</sup>

On January 2nd it was rumoured in Cape Town that Jameson had entered Johannesburg and Logan was reported to have invited Messrs. Schermbrucker, Johnson and Col. D.Harris to drink "Jameson's health in champagne at the Theatre Restruant, in Cape Town".<sup>(15)</sup> From this report it may be deduced that, while centres like Paarl and Graaff-Reinet were up in arms because of Jameson's action, there must have been many people in the Colony like Logan, who were prepared to acclaim the Raiders and their leader, despite the High Commissioner's proclamation.

The news of Jameson's surrender at Doornkop did not reach the Colony until January 3rd, by which time Cape Town was stated to be "feverishly Jingo, and resented even the moderate censures of the Cape Times on Jameson".<sup>(16)</sup> A counter demonstration to the "anti-Jameson" meetings was held in Cape Town

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(11) Ibid.

(12) Cape Times, 3 January 1896

(13) Ibid.

(14) Michell, op. cit., p. 277.

(15) Midland News, 7 May 1896. Telegram from Harris to Weil at Mafeking.

(16) Cape Times, 3 January 1896.

and a petition issued from the Cape Times,<sup>(17)</sup> for rumours were spreading in Cape Town that Jameson and his officers were to be shot.<sup>(18)</sup> This petition was addressed to the High Commissioner who at the time was en route to Pretoria and read:

"We, the undersigned Cape Colonists, desire earnestly to represent to Your Excellency that, in the interests of the general reconciliation and peaceful settlement now happily in progress after the late deplorable bloodshed, Your Excellency should treat the release of Dr. Jameson and his Comrades as of more importance than any other conditions which the Government of the South African Republic is about to grant."<sup>(19)</sup>

Within a few days, Garrett relates, the petition "ran through the Colony; Kimberley, Port Elizabeth and East London did the like;....."<sup>(20)</sup> That the petition should have evoked such a response must probably be attributed to factors other than the canard which had originally prompted the Cape Times to issue it. By January 4th it had become known that Jameson had entered the Transvaal in response to a letter of invitation from the Reform Committee,<sup>(21)</sup> and for a while Jameson was probably regarded by a section of the population in the Colony as the champion of the Uitlander cause, who had been left in the lurch by leaders of the Johannesburg rising.

But the publication of the letter of invitation, signed by the leaders of the Reform Committee and relating the probable plight of thousands of "unarmed men, women and children" of British race in the event of armed conflict,<sup>(22)</sup> must have roused some of the English-speaking colonists even more. True there had been no concerted public expression of sympathy with the Uitlander-cause during 1895, but when feeling was running

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(17) Ibid.

(18) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 496.

(19) Cape Times, 4 January, 1896.

(20) F.E.Garrett and E.J.Edwards, The Story of an African Crisis p. 247

(21) Cape Times, 4 January 1896.

(22) Ibid.

high in the Colony early in January and the Uitlander grievances provocatively publicised in the letter of invitation, it seems only natural that British colonists should have ardently supported not only the petition for the Raiders' release but the movement which the petition represented.

By January 8th, the Mayor of Cape Town was able to wire to Sir Hercules Robinson that not less than 10,000 signatures had been received "without any canvassing",<sup>(23)</sup> an indication that the pro-Jameson pro-Uitlander movement had certainly swept the country.

As yet there had been no statement from Rhodes, who the Cape Times stated was sitting among "his Dutch furniture at Groot Schuur..., mute as the Sphinx. Amid the pelt of questions, curses, cheers, charges and denunciations, he sits mute."<sup>(24)</sup> Since January 1st there had been talk that Rhodes would resign the Premiership. Ons Land refused to believe the widely-held view that Rhodes knew nothing of Jameson's intentions until he received the news on December 29th, for it reported "from all sides we hear of weeks of preparation made for Dr. Jameson's journey. In the middle of December (?) a letter was written from Johannesburg in which he was requested to come over. And yet we are asked to believe that Mr. Rhodes knew nothing about it...."<sup>(25)</sup> It seemed obvious therefore that Rhodes must either disclaim any knowledge of the Raid and remain in office, or failing that, resign the Premiership. Hitherto he had failed to issue any public statement.

On January 7th it was known that Rhodes' resignation had been accepted<sup>(26)</sup> and the public was left to draw its own conclusion concerning the connection between the Premier's

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(23) Cape Times, 8 January 1896.

(24) Cape Times, 6 January 1896

(25) Ibid.

(26) Cape Times, 7 January 1896

resignation and Jameson's armed incursion into the territory of the South African Republic.

On the following day the people at the Cape first became aware of the fact that Kaiser Wilhelm had sent Kruger a congratulatory telegram after the surrender of Jameson and his force at Doornkop. (27) While Hofmeyr repudiated the Kaiser's action by cabling to London that "Africander feeling in Cape Colony was opposed to Germany interfering in any way in South African affairs", (28) the Cape Times reported that the telegram had "united all Dutchmen, Englishmen, Afrikaners and all other dwellers in South Africa, against Continental interference." (29) But while opinion in the Colony appeared to be united on the subject of Continental interference, a racial cleavage occurred between the English-speaking colonists, particularly those living in the Frontier districts, and the Afrikaners who were condemning the Raid and upholding Kruger's actions.

At the end of January A.J.Fuller called a meeting at Kei Road which thirteen farmers attended. (30) There it was decided to form an Anglo-African League with the vaguely expressed object of promoting "British and African interests". (31) A further meeting was arranged for February 1st in order to inaugurate the League. (32) By January 21st a provisional committee consisting of "the most important and influential farmers" in the neighbouring districts had been formed to further the desires of the community there. (33)

The meeting on February 1st was duly held and A.J.Fuller, as Chairman, explained that "Recent events had shown them that more cohesion was required amongst Anglo-Africans, for they never knew when they might be called upon to show how far they were united, ..." R. Warren stated that the object of

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(27) Cape Times, 8 January 1896.

(28) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.495.

(29) Cape Times, 13 January 1896.

(30) A. Wilmot, The History of our own times in South Africa, Vol. III, p.321.

(31) Cape Mercury, 21 January 1896.

(32) Ibid.

(33) Ibid.

the meeting was to form "a strong Anglo-African party", a party which would succeed independently of the Bond. "The principle idea he thought was that British ascendancy should be maintained,....". It was thereupon agreed to form an Anglo-African League, of which the first principle would be "allegiance to the British flag," and the second, a federation of South Africa. (34)

That this League was intended to be an organisation which would oppose the Bond in colonial politics, became obvious from the outset. The Cape Mercury reported that to be the object of the League's founders, (35) while A.J.Fuller, speaking at Toise River, pointed out that "They, in the Colony, were being ruled by a minority, and this small minority was the Bond. He did not blame the Bond, but it was they themselves who were to blame for not being united, and it behoved them to form a health alliance amongst themselves...." (36)

The reason why it had become so imperative that an anti-Bond movement should be formed at this time, becomes apparent when it is realised that the Cape Mercury could report that "Colonial Africanders", according to Ons Land, had made up their minds to support the independence of the Transvaal. British supremacy in South Africa was being challenged, hence the decision to form a strong "Anglo-African party" in the Colony. (37)

The League's cause was no doubt promoted when the Central Farmers' Association Congress opened at Dordrecht, (38) less than a fortnight after the Kei Road meeting to inaugurate the movement was held. Indeed it would appear that the Loyal Colonial League drew its supporters mainly from the farmers who were also members of branches of the Central Farmers' Association.

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(34) East London Dispatch, 5 February 1896.

(35) Cape Mercury, 21 January 1896

(36) Cape Mercury, 24 March 1896

(37) Cape Mercury, 15 February 1896. On February 11th Ons Land referred to the impracticability of Chamberlain's "Home Rule for Johannesburg" scheme and this probably incensed the Cape Mercury

(38) Cape Times 17 February 1896.

In 1895 the Central Farmers' Association Congress decided to set up a Political Organisation Committee<sup>(39)</sup> in order to supply its members with the basis of a future political party. To what extent this decision had been implemented before the Raid, is not known. It would appear though from the development of the League and Central Farmers' Association after the Raid that the initiative in matters of political organisation in the Eastern Province henceforth lay with the League.

At Dordrecht, Brabant was re-elected President and a Vigilance Committee, consisting of Brabant, Hockly, Hall, S. Cronwright-Schreiner, Stretton and Bestall constituted.<sup>(40)</sup> After resolution concerning inter alia Scab, Protection and an Excise duty on colonial spirits, was adopted, a motion dealing with the Raid was debated. It was agreed "That this Congress desires to convey to Her Majesty's Government its entire disapproval of Dr. Jameson's raid into the South African Republic, and concurs that a searching inquiry be made into its origin and objects. At the same time Congress wishes to express its opinion that the 'uitlanders' in the South African Republic, many of whom are not only British but South Africans, had just cause of complaint, and that until their legitimate grievances are redressed, the strained situation between the Government and the 'uitlanders' will remain a menace to the peace of South Africa..."<sup>(41)</sup>

On March 28th delegates from an unspecified number of Anglo-African League branches met at Kei Road to frame a Constitution and here it was decided to assume the title "Loyal Colonial League", for it was felt that this name was not subject to the objections "to which the former name was liable..."<sup>(42)</sup>

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(39) Vide supra

(40) Cape Times, 19 February 1896.

(41) Cape Times, 20 February 1896

(42) Cape Mercury, 31 March 1896

On a later occasion, however, Dr. Darley Hartley, who became the movement's first President, related that after the Anglo-African League was formed at Kei Road, the Loyal Colonial League was started in East London, and that these two bodies were amalgamated.<sup>(43)</sup> That the choice of the name Loyal Colonial League was thought more suitable, also becomes clear from Darley Hartley's explanation at the Kei Road meeting that "it must be carefully borne in mind that the ultimate success of such a movement as ours must depend on the counting of heads, and anything which broadens the basis upon which we appeal to our fellow Colonials must be of immense advantage".<sup>(44)</sup>

Before the main meeting took place on March 28th, the Kei Road Committee, three delegates from East London, and three press representatives considered a programme which the East London leaders had drawn up.<sup>(45)</sup> The programme of principles which was subsequently adopted was based mainly on the East London programme.

The "first objects" of the Loyal Colonial League stated:-

"1. This League affirms most strongly its unalterable loyalty to the British Crown, and binds itself to resist to the utmost any attempts that may be made to weaken the connection between this colony and the Mother Country, or to reduce British influence in South Africa generally.

2. It affirms that the true principles of Responsible Government demand : (a) That every elector should regard it as a duty to put aside the personality of individual politicians, and to give his vote only to such candidates for Parliamentary honours as may be in accord with his own political principles. (b) That the Ministry of the Colony should be composed of men who are at one on all broad legislative

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(43) Midland News, 28 May 1896.

(44) East London Dispatch, 1 April 1896

(45) Cape Mercury, 31 March 1896

questions. (c) That it is a mischievous principle for any body of politicians to dictate the legislative policy of the country without assuming in the person of its leaders the responsibility of carrying that policy into effect.

3. That the League will exercise a health influence at all elections for members of Parliament in favour of such candidates as are in accord with its principles and elected by it, and its members pledge themselves not to oppose the League candidate.

4. That the executive of the League shall consist of a president and secretary, who shall be chosen annually by a congress composed of two delegates from each branch of the League.

5. That all members should sign a declaration of principles, and pay a small annual subscription to the funds.

6. That after branches have been established, members can only be admitted by being proposed and seconded, and elected by a majority of the members present at any meeting". (46)

The Loyal Colonial League, like the S.A.P.A., desired to see the introduction of true Responsible Government in the Colony so that it should seem strange at first glance that the founders of the League deliberately set about forming a separate association. Their reason for doing so, however, becomes clear when the activities of the S.A.P.A. from the date of its inauguration until January 1896 are examined.

During 1895 the S.A.P.A. had agitated against the increase of the duties on imported grain. In January 1896 the Cape Mercury could report that "the association lately formed in Cape Town, and of which there is a branch in Kingwilliamstown, has not been favoured with an over-whelming amount of support". (47)

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(46) Cape Times, 4 April 1896

(47) Cape Mercury, 21 January 1896

The reason given for this was that the Bond policy of protection had the support of the entire agricultural population; even "farmers of English descent" were stated to favour the sentiments of the Bond on this issue.<sup>(48)</sup> The Promoters of the League movement, who were drawn from the farming community in the Border districts, were obviously not likely to sympathise with an Association whose main activities in the past months were devoted to agitating for a reduction on the duties of foodstuffs. In fact that Farmers' Congress at Dordrecht had apparently not even discussed the letter received from the S.A.P.A. "inviting co-operation in their efforts to obtain a reduction of the duty and rates on grain".<sup>(49)</sup>

But this was not the only reason for the formation of a separate political organisation by English-speaking colonists. The S.A.P.A. Had given no indication after the Raid that it sympathised with the Uitlander cause. On January 4th J. Wallis Blinkhorn had written to the Cape Times asking "What is the S.A.P. Association doing in the present crisis? Surely that association, if it is true to itself, sympathises with the demands of the 'uitlanders'?" He called on the Executive Committee of the S.A.P.A. to arrange a meeting of members to pass "resolutions supporting the 'uitlanders', as the Bond had not been slow to do and support the Krugerites",<sup>(50)</sup> but no action was taken. To the Frontier farmers who felt that the matter, which was most "important and uppermost in all their minds, viz. the supremacy of British interest in South Africa",<sup>(51)</sup> the S.A.P.A. had given no lead. They therefore took the initiative and formed their own organisation.

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(48) Ibid.

(49) Cape Times, 22 February 1896

(50) Cape Times, 4 January 1896.

(51) Cape Mercury, 24 March 1896.

The Loyal Colonial League was essentially the creation of British colonists on the Frontier who were incensed by the events which had followed on the Jameson Raid, while the S.A.P.A. appeared to be content to ignore the event and pursue its object of promulgating political knowledge in order to promote the adoption of liberal measures in Colonial politics.

One encouraging feature, however, was discernible in the objects which the Loyal Colonial League embodied in its Constitution, namely the decision to strive to introduce pure party government in the Colony. The Farmers on the Frontier had come to appreciate the fact that the Bond minority wielded power in Parliament because their representatives, as well as other non-Bondsmen, had been prepared to give their votes to Government Bills in order to obtain favours for their constituencies. Their decision to oppose this practice indicated that provided they could iron out their differences with the S.A.P.A. on other issues, the prospect of a national political party being formed in the Cape Colony was decidedly favourable.

(11)

In the week following on the Governor's acceptance of Rhodes' resignation, Sprigg "with Hofmeyr's assistance, struggled to form a Ministry".<sup>(52)</sup> Hofmeyr had declined to take office and Chief Justice de Villiers, in response to requests from many colonists, including "Eastern Province politicians" offered to form a Ministry "if Hofmeyr, and failing him Sprigg, were unable to form a Cabinet".<sup>(53)</sup> Sprigg, however, succeeded in getting together a Ministry composed of himself as Premier and Treasurer,

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(52) E.A. Walker, Lord de Villiers and his Times, p. 267

(53) ibid.

Upington (Attorney-General), Sivewright (Commissioner), Te Water (Colonial Secretary) and P.H.Faure (Secretary for Agriculture).<sup>(54)</sup>

Innes describes this "stop-gap administration" as containing three nominal Bondsmen - Te Water, Sivewright and Faure - of which only Te Water was a "Hofmeyr man", for Sivewright and Faure "sympathised with Rhodes".<sup>(55)</sup> Once again a Bond supported Ministry was in office and we find Cronwright-Schreiner stating at the Farmers' Congress at Dordrecht in February that he thought "a Ministry should be the mouthpiece of a party, giving expression to the opinions of that party". The Third Sprigg Ministry did not fulfil those conditions and he maintained that the Bond, as the most powerful body in Parliament, should have taken the reins with Hofmeyr as leader.<sup>(56)</sup>

Before Parliament met in May, it was to become obvious first that the Innes-Merriman-Sauer alliance in Parliament was disintegrating; secondly that the Innes group would not be prepared to support the new Sprigg Ministry; thirdly that the Bond would not give Rhodes political support for his public career which he had stated at Kimberley on January 10th was "just beginning",<sup>(57)</sup> unless he dissociated himself from the Raid. Walker<sup>(58)</sup> and Hofmeyr<sup>(59)</sup> have stated that after the Raid, Merriman and Sauer, who had hitherto been anti-Bond, came to sympathise with this association and steadily moved towards a working alliance with the Bond". As the Bond was a party to the Coalition Government which Sprigg had formed, it followed that these former leaders of the Opposition, would be prepared to support the Third Sprigg Ministry.

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(54) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 508

(55) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 138.

(56) Cape Times, 24 February 1896

(57) Michell, op. cit., p. 279.

(58) Walker L. de V., p. 267

Walker, W.P.S., p. 77.

(59) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 509.

Innes, however, had to be persuaded to do the same and on March 6th Merriman wrote to him stating that there was "a reasonable prospect of succeeding in forming on intelligible lines, a government that might carry into effect much useful work". He, Innes and Sauer had for years been opposing Rhodes, he went on to say, because they thought "his methods corrupt and likely to debauch and demoralize public life" and their worst predictions had been verified by recent events. Now that Rhodes was no longer in power in the Cape House, there seemed to be "a chance of winning back power to Parliament and of showing that Englishmen and Dutchmen can think alike on broad general principles". Merriman therefore appealed to Innes not to allow "personal dislikes to interfere with this great aim" by deserting their "little party" and forming a separate group. If Innes was intend on forming his party, Merriman felt an "English party would be formed and this would result in "a recrudescence of Boerdom with all its prejudices accentuated and an enormous increase of power and influence to the Republics". (60)

Now it does seem probable that the leaders of the S.A.P.A. after the Raid had discussed the subject of support for the Sprigg Ministry for a meeting of the Executive Committee was reported to have taken place before Merriman wrote to Innes in March. (61) The question was however not publicly aired then, but in the light of a letter Innes received from Richard Solomon in reply to his own, (62) it must be concluded that the S.A.P.A. President had sounded the members present at the meeting as to the future policy of the Association.

Innes probably announced his desire to pursue the object of forming a progressive and liberal political party which would form part of the Opposition in Parliament. It then became

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(60) J.X. Merriman to J. Rose Innes, 6 March 1896 (R.I.P.)

(61) On 13 January 1896, Cape Times 14 January 1896.

(62) R. Solomon to J. Rose Innes, 13 February 1896. (R.I.P.)

necessary for Innes to ascertain the views of his supporters and Solomon's reply came back "You may rely on my going with you" (63)

Judging by Merriman's letter to Innes in March, it must be concluded that the latter was intent on forming the new party, concerning which there had been talk in the months immediately preceding the Raid. During the Parliamentary session of 1896, this party made its debut. (64)

With regard to Rhodes, he had not resigned his seat in Parliament, and according to a speech he made at Kimberley on January 10th, he had no thought of retiring from public life. "There is an idea abroad" he stated, "that my public career has come to an end. On the contrary, I think it is just beginning, and I have a firm belief that I shall live to do useful work for this country". (65) Since 1885 his primary object had been "a United South Africa, but as a portion of the British Empire" and though the attainment of this object had suffered a set-back because of the precipitancy of the Raid and the unpreparedness of the Rand, Rhodes obviously had no intention of abandoning his scheme.

It was soon to become clear to Rhodes that he would not have the support of the Afrikaner Bond when he took up the threads of his scheme for a United South Africa. The Bond Congress at Burgersdorp in March 1896 unanimously carried a resolution moved by Adv. F.S. Malan and seconded by the Rev. S.J. du Toit, to the effect that unless Rhodes purged himself of all knowledge of the plot and of favouring the conspiracy and protecting the leaders, it would be impossible for the National Afrikaner Party to work with him on political grounds. (66)

Rhodes had refused to repudiate Jameson's conduct when urged to do so by Hofmeyr (67) and Schreiner. (68)

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(63) Ibid.

(64) Vide infra

(65) Michell, op. cit., p. 279.

(66) South Africa, 21 March 1896, p. 712

(67) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 499-501.

(68) Walker, W.P.S., p. 73.

Their entreaties had failed to elicit from Rhodes the very statement which the Bond demanded three months later.

If Rhodes was still determined that "the base in African for a Federal Assembly or for the development of Africa, with its railway communication, must be Cape Town,..."<sup>(69)</sup> it behoved him to look elsewhere for political support in the Cape Parliament. By March 1896 it had become clear that the Loyal Colonial League with its decidedly pro-British character was developing in the Eastern Province, but at that stage Rhodes was doing everything in his power to protect the Charter<sup>(70)</sup> and later to suppress a rebellion in Matabeleland.<sup>(71)</sup> When at the end of 1896 he was free to devote his attention to the United South Africa scheme, the League was well established and decidedly pro-Rhodes in character. Indeed, it seems likely that some approach from this quarter had been made to Rhodes as early as April 1896 for Michell relates "In view of the approaching opening of the Cape Parliament on 30th April, fresh attempts were now made to induce Rhodes to return to politics".<sup>(72)</sup> One "influential telegram" appealed to Rhodes to be present "at the opening of Parliament, or as soon as possible after. If you be present you can rely on support of all your friends, as well as a large number of waverers, and those at present unfavourably disposed to you....."<sup>(73)</sup>

(iii)

When Parliament met on April 30th, only two of the three political associations of English-speaking colonists were represented in the House, for as yet it was not clear who the representatives of the Loyal Colonial League in the Assembly were.

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(69) *Vindex*, op. cit., p. 406

(70) J. van der Poel, *The Jameson Raid*, p. 156

(71) Williams, op. cit., p. 277

(72) Michell, op. cit., p. 281.

(73) *Ibid.*

The Central Farmers' Association was represented by Brabant, Palmer and Warren, the S.A.P.A. by Innes and probably others. (74)

In March Sauer had resigned as Leader of the Opposition "desiring greater liberty of action," (75) and it became necessary to choose a successor. The Cape Times reported that a meeting of members of the parliamentary Opposition was scheduled to take place on April 2nd to elect a leader and confidently stated that the Opposition "now comprises Messrs. Innes, Merriman, Smuts, Tamplin, Hay, Berry, Beard, Brown, J.T.Molteno and J.C.Molteno". The chances of Merriman's election to the leadership were said to be hopeful. (76)

But Merriman was intent on "becoming an Independent member" (77) and the vacancy caused by Sauer's resignation was not filled until May 12th, when Innes agreed to lead the Opposition. (78) Two days later it was reported that Berry, Smuts, Jones, Beard, Brown, Wiener, Hutton, Hay, Tamplin and J.T.Molteno had "formally pledged themselves to follow their leader". (79) No sooner had Innes accepted the Leadership of the Opposition "than another group, known as the Frontier party" was reported to have made "overtures of amalgamation". (80) This Frontier Party consisted of Brabant, Crosbie, Douglass, T.B. Fuller, Lawrence, Logan, Orpen, Palmer, Scherzbrucker, Warren, Thompson, Wood and Weil, and brought the Opposition strength up to 24. The Midland News, however, predicted that 11 other members were expected to associate themselves "more or less actively with the reconstituted Opposition" and listed Merriman, J.C.Molteno, Frost, Laing, Ryan, Smartt, Robertson, Pearson, Harris and Barnato to substantiate this statement. (81)

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(74) Brown, Hay, Hutton, J.T.Molteno and Smuts were present at S.A.P.A. Meetings in October and November 1895 and during the 1896 session they became members of the Liberal Party which had Innes as its leader. Vide infra.

(75) Midland News, 31 March 1896

(76) Cape Times, 1 April 1896

(77) J.Rose Innes to J.X.Merriman, 15 April 1896 (M.P.)

(78) Midland News, 12 May 1896

(79) Midland News, 14 May 1896

(80) Cape Times article quoted by Midland News 14 May 1896

(81) Midland News, 14 May 1896

This left Sauer of the old Opposition and Schreiner supporting the Government in company with the Bond members of Parliament. It soon became clear that Schreiner "was to command the Bond party in the House" (82) and so in the main, Government and Opposition were divided on racial lines.

While the Opposition appeared to contain three groups, Innes states (83) that he had "accepted the honour of leading the little knot of Liberals who composed the official Opposition" for the " 'progressive' section, torn between sympathy for Rhodes and condemnation of his latest methods, yet unable to coalesce with the Bond, sat loosely upon the Opposition benches." (84) The Liberal Party in Parliament thus came into existence and we find Cronwright-Schreiner commenting on "the backing of ten solid" which the Cape Times gave Innes. He felt that this support was "quite enough for a nucleus, especially as far as I can see, that they are good dependable men. Our strength lies not in numbers to start with. Your acceptance of the leadership - or rather this nucleus of the party I have long desired under you - is the most hopeful thing that has happened for many a day". (85)

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(82) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.139.

Hofmeyr, op. cit., p.515.

(83) Innes, op. cit., pp. 138-9.

(84) Innes errs in stating that the 'progressive' section met under the chairmanship of T.E.Fuller, for he quotes as his source of information Fuller's statement on p.165 of his book on Rhodes. The reference there was to meetings held soon after Rhodes assumed office in 1890.

Then too there is Hofmeyr's statement (op. cit., p.515) that in the session of 1896, the Progressives "consisted of a variety of elements, all bound together by the common band of allegiance to Mr. Rhodes. The chief of these were the Loyal Colonial League,....., and the South African Political Association,..." First, it was not clear who the representatives of the Loyal Colonial League were in Parliament in 1896; secondly, as regards the "common band of allegiance to Mr. Rhodes", the uncomplimentary references by Innes as President of the S.A.P.A. to Rhodes early in 1895, were obviously unknown to Hofmeyr when he made his statement.

(85) S.C.Cronwright-Schreiner to J. Rose Innes, 17 May 1896.  
(R.I.P.).

The new Cabinet soon showed that it had no policy concerning the Raid and though in the speech from the Throne, the incursion was formally condemned and the hope expressed that Her Majesty's Government would prevent a recurrence, no reference was made to "the responsibility of the Chartered Company, or its managing director", in fact the Government made "no concrete proposals of any kind".<sup>(86)</sup>

On May 4th, therefore, Merriman gave notice of a motion "That in the opinion of this House, the exercise of Sovereign rights by a trading and financial Company such as the British South Africa Company, is not consistent with the peace and prosperity of South Africa; that Her Majesty the Queen be requested by respectful address to take the matter into her gracious consideration, and by the revocation or alteration of the Charter granted to the said Company, to make such provision for the government of the Territory comprised therein as may to her seem desirable".<sup>(87)</sup> Schreiner moved an amendment to this motion expressing regret at the Raid and asking that a Select Committee of seven members be appointed to inquire into its origin and character.<sup>(88)</sup> A further amendment was moved by Innes expressing the hope that steps would be taken in the South African Republic "towards the favourable consideration of any legitimate grievances of the population which had settled in that State from the Cape Colony and elsewhere, as might conduce to the peace, unity and welfare of South Africa." <sup>(89)</sup>

It thus became apparent what differences of opinion between Merriman and Innes had prevented them from maintaining their alliance in Parliament. Whereas Merriman demanded

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(86) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 139

(87) Cape Hansars, 1896, p.9

(88) Ibid., p. 52

(89) Ibid., p. 72.

the revocation or alteration of the Charter and ignored the question of Uitlander grievances, Innes focused attention on the "legitimate grievances of the Uitlander population", which he considered to be "the root of the trouble, the existence of which was a menace to the peace of South Africa." (90)

In the debate on the Charter and the Raid, Merriman stated that Rhodes had played "a large and important part" in the conspiracy. The "piratical attack" upon a neighbouring State was condemned and the Chartered Company - the principal culprits - had to be punished. (91) Schreiner, while agreeing with nearly all Merriman had said, felt that it was the province of Her Majesty's Government "to determine the future destiny and future position of the Chartered Company". He wanted a "fuller and more complete investigation than had yet been possible" and therefore proposed the appointment of a Select Committee to enquire into the circumstances as affecting the Cape Colony. (92) Innes, while condemning the Raid and the part played by certain of the Chartered Company's directors and officials, felt that a judicial enquiry was wanted in the present circumstances. In this way the matter would be more effectively dealt with for a Parliamentary inquiry would not provide the solution to the problem confronting the future of the country. (93)

Merriman's motion was defeated by 60 votes to 11, only A.S. du Plessis, Kleyn, Marais, Merriman, Sauer, Van der Vyver, Van der Walt, Van Zyl, Van Wyk, Joubert and J.T. Molteno voting for it. (94) Innes' amendment was supported by 28 members, namely Abrahamson, Beard, Berry, Brabant, Brown, Crosbie, Douglass,

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(90) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.141.

(91) Cape Hansard, 1896, p. 80.

(92) Ibid., p. 89

(93) Ibid., p. 97.

(94) Ibid. pp. 194-195.

Frost, Fuller, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Laing, Lawrence, Logan, Norton, Palmer, Robertson, Ryan, Scherbrucker, Smuts, Tamplin, Thompson, Warren, Weil, Weiner and Wood. (95) Schreiner's amendment was then adopted without division. (96)

On the important question of the Raid, it was revealed that J.T. Molteno of the Liberal Party had supported Merriman, while the Frontier Party had voted solidly for Innes' amendment. In addition, Abrahamson, Frost, Laing, Robertson, Ryan and Norton who, according to the Midland News, belonged to neither the Liberal group nor the Frontier Party, had ranged themselves on Innes' side during the division.

On May 29th the Speaker appointed a Committee consisting of Upington, Innes, Du Toit, Merriman, Schreiner, Jones and Fuller "to inquire into the circumstances as affecting this colony in connection with the preparations for and carrying out of the recent armed inroad into the territory of the South African Republic." (97)

During this session, Fuller moved a resolution that the recommendations adopted by the House during May 1895, for an increase on the duty on wheat, grain and flour "should not be acted upon at the forthcoming Customs Conference; and furthermore, that a material reduction should be made on the present high duties on the other necessaries of life, and that the Government be requested to give effect to this resolution at the said Customs Union Conference". (98) To this motion, A.S. du Plessis moved an amendment that the words "except such articles as are produced here" be added to the motion and in this form Fuller's motion was carried by 43 votes to 22. (99)

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(95) Ibid., p. 195.

(96) Ibid., p. 196.

(97) Ibid., p. 200.

(98) Ibid., p. 624.

(99) Ibid., p. 632.

The Government, Liberal and Frontier members and Sauer inter alia had voted solidly for the motion against the Bond party.

Van der Walt moved that a Bill be introduced "to amend the Constitution so as to give more satisfaction in the representation of the Colony, and especially so that every fiscal division be represented as far as possible by a member." (100) Innes thereupon moved an amendment which sought to omit all the words after "Colony" and this was agreed to. (101)

A Bill to amend the Scab Act, No. 20 of 1894, and make its provisions permissive, was introduced by Van Zyl. (102) The second reading, however, was negatives by 40 votes to 28, Merriman, Sauer and the majority of the Bond party opposing (103) the Government, Liberals, Frontier members and a few Bondsmen. Denied the aid of Rhodes, who during the 1895 session had effected a compromise between Progressives and Bondsmen, van Zyl was unable to alter the existing Scab Act.

(iv)

During the Charter debate on May 15th, Sivewright stated that "the Frontier, rightly or wrongly, had got hold of an idea that the ultimate view of an association like the Afrikaner Bond was to establish a grand Afrikaner nation south of the Zambesi right down to Cape Point, leaving the Imperial Government Simon's Town as a port of call". (104) Now while these sentiments were not re-echoed in the reports on the first Loyal Colonial League Congress, it nevertheless became abundantly clear then that the objects of the Afrikaner Bond were incompatible with those of the League.

On May 26th this Congress opened at Queenstown. It was attended by delegates representing East London, Fort Jackson,

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(100) Ibid., p. 639.

(101) Ibid., p. 642.

(102) Ibid., p. 227.

(103) Ibid., p. 447.

(104) Ibid., p. 124.

Kingwilliamstown, Fort Beaufort, Kei Road, Frankfort, Stutterheim, Queenstown, Whittlesea, Molteno, Barkly East, Keiskammahoek, Bolo, Toise River, Cathcart, Upper Cathcart, Waku, Tylden, Bolotwa, Kimberley, Beaconsfield, Herbert, Vryburg and Komgha. (105) The representatives from the Border districts were clearly the predominant group at this Congress. In addition two delegates from the Port Elizabeth Political Association and one from the Cape Town S.A.P.A. were present. (106)

Darley Hartley was voted to the chair, A.J.Fuller appointed Secretary and Wiggins assistant secretary. After relating the development of the Loyal Colonial League, the Chairman stated that the supremacy of Great Britain was being undermined in the Colony, that he trusted the League would never be racial "in the sense the Bond was" and that the policy of the League generally, was "liberal and progressive", "...". The chief aim of the movement was "to bring about party Government and responsibility". Darley Hartley condemned the Sprigg administration which was "simply truckling to the Transvaal", (107) and in referring to the Chartered Company, stated that he was in agreement with those who said that "if the Cape Parliament were to dictate as to the administration of Rhodesia, the Colony should also dictate as to the administration of the Transvaal". (108) Merriman's motion concerning the revocation or alteration of the Charter obviously did not find favour with the Chairman of the Loyal Colonial League, an attitude which Congress was later to support wholeheartedly. Finally, Darley Hartley stated that Chamberlain appeared to be under the impression "that public opinion in the Colony was entirely in support of the Pretoria Government" for he had been given this impression by Sir

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(105) Midland News, 28 May 1896

(106) Ibid.

(107) Sprigg had refused to support Innes' amendment concerning the redress of legitimate Uitlander grievances during the Raid and Charter debate. Cape Hansard, 1896, p. 103.

(108) Midland News, 28 May 1896.

Hercules Robinson, the Cape Government, the Bond and Sir Jacobus de Wet and it was "for the League to Disabuse Mr. Chamberlain's Mind of this idea". (109)

Congress then proceeded to deal with its agenda. It was decided to consider the Constitution in Committee and once this was done, it was adopted. The Midland News which gave the full report of the Congress proceedings did not reveal the main points of this Constitution, which was stated to cover sixteen type-written pages, but we do know what the provisions concerning electoral procedure were: "So soon as the district Chairman shall become aware of the probable occurrence of a Parliamentary vacancy in the district", it was laid down "he shall forthwith summon the Electoral Committee to meet at a convenient place, and the Electoral Committee shall decide whether it shall (1) Abstain from electoral action. (2) Advise the members of the League as to voting. (3) Select a candidate or candidates. In any case its decision shall be final". (110)

The Midland News reported that "The League has now been christened The South African League" (111) and it was probably in order to conform with the provisions of the Constitution that Blackbeard was elected vice-president, A.J.Fuller, Secretary and treasurer and Whitaker, Blaine and White were elected as members of the Executive. Further, five trustees of the political and electoral fund were appointed.

Congress thereupon considered the resolutions submitted by branches. It was agreed that the customs duty on the necessaries of life be reduced; an excise on spirits be imposed in the Colony; railways should be free from political control; any alteration of the Scab Act be opposed and a Bill

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(109) Ibid.  
(110) Ibid.  
(111) Ibid.

be introduced into the House of Assembly for a redistribution of seats. The suggestion of the Cape Town S.A.P.A.'s delegate that that Association's clause concerning the development of internal resources of the Colony was adopted and Redmond Orpen then moved that "the objects of the Africander Bond are incompatible with those of this League".<sup>(112)</sup> This motion was carried and the question of the Charter then came up for consideration. It was resolved "That Congress is Opposed to any Abrogation of the Charter being of opinion that Rhodesia would quicker develop under the Company's rule than as a Crown Colony, and (that) Congress send a wire of sympathy to Mr. Rhodes".<sup>(113)</sup> This resolution thus reiterated the views expressed earlier on by the Congress Chairman, but the reference to Rhodes here is particularly significant.

The South African League<sup>(114)</sup> demonstrated, quite openly, its pro-Rhodes sympathies at a time when certain documents showing the complicity of the Chartered Company and Rhodes in the Raid had but recently been published by the Pretoria Government.<sup>(115)</sup>

It is not revealed by the report of the South African League Congress why it was deemed necessary to express sympathy with Rhodes, but it may be deduced from the circumstances obtaining at the time this resolution was carried, that the South African League objected to the severe criticism of Rhodes during the Raid and Charter debate in the Cape House. At the time, it is true, Rhodes was very ably dealing with the Matabele rising in the North,<sup>(116)</sup> but the attack on the Charter appears to have been a weighted <sup>up</sup> reason for expressing sympathy with Rhodes than the difficulties he was being called upon to

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(112) Ibid.

(113) Ibid.

(114) Hereafter referred to as the S.A. League.

(115) Midland News, 2 May 1896

(116) Michell, op. cit., pp. 282-283.

deal with in the North.

Two resolutions were moved concerning the relationship of the S.A. League and the S.A.P.A. and the Central Farmers' Association. The first expressed desire that the League approach the Cape Town organisation "With a view of amalgamation" (117) and the second that the S.A. League "work in conjunction with the Central Farmers' Association". (118) Both were adopted but when it was subsequently proposed to invite Innes "to lead their party in Parliament", the Chairman ruled that this was ultra vires. (119)

Finally Congress dealt with subjects of Uitlander grievances and the Cape parliamentary leaders. The League, while desirous of maintaining "friendly and peaceful relations with neighbouring states", was stated to have observed with apprehension "the unfriendly and impossible attitude assumed by the Transvaal Government in dealing with British subjects and Cape Colonists domiciled within their jurisdiction...." (120)

Concerning the parliamentary leaders, Orpen condemned them (and particularly Sauer) for trying to conciliate the Afrikaner Bond; but when Fincham pointed out that Innes could never be accused of truckling to the Bond, his statement was acclaimed. (121)

These then were the subjects discussed by the first S.A. League Congress, which was reported to have been attended by delegates representing 3,500 members.

If we now compare the essential characteristics of the S.A.P.A. and the S.A. League, certain observations can be made. On issues such as the introduction of pure party government into Colonial politics, the excise, the development of the internal resources of the Colony, Scab legislation and increased parliamentary representation, the S.A. League and the S.A.P.A. appear to have been of one mind.

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(117) Midland News, 28 May 1896

(118) Ibid.

(119) Ibid.

(120) Ibid.

(121) Ibid.

It is even possible that the question of the reduction of customs duties on the "necessaries of life" should be included in the above list for the Midland News reported that a resolution to this effect was carried at Queenstown. (122) When, however, it is remembered that the Cape Mercury could report the opposition of the Anglo-African League founders to this measure, (123) it seems more prudent to adopt the view that on this question the S.A. League and S.A.P.A. were not unanimous. On the subject of Protection, the S.A. League probably was in sympathy with the Central Farmers' Association and Afrikaner Bond, even after the Queenstown Congress.

Concerning Uitlander grievances, the S.A.P.A. view, as expressed in Parliament by its President and his Liberal supporters, was supported by the resolution carried at the Queenstown Congress. The one subject on which these two organisations definitely disagreed therefore was in their relationship to Rhodes and ipso facto the Raid.

During the Charter debate on May 13th, Innes had probably voiced the opinions of S.A.P.A. members concerning Rhodes and the Raid. He denounced the advantage "certain directors and officials of the Chartered Company" took of the Uitlander discontent to achieve "certain ends and objects". The Raid was an act of aggression "led by English officers behind the back of Her Majesty's High Commissioner," Innes stated. (124) By implication Rhodes was connected with the Raid and it was the duty of the English section of the population to disassociate themselves "not only formally, but entirely, sincerely and absolutely from the whole of the raid...." (125)

Bearing these statements in mind, it becomes apparent that Innes, and presumably the S.A.P.A., not only disapproved of the part "certain directors and officials of the Chartered

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(122) Ibid.

(123) Vide supra.

(124) Cape Hansard, 1896, p. 93 et sq..

(125) Ibid. p.95.

Company" had in the Raid, but that they would have viewed with alarm the S.A. League Congress' expression of sympathy with Rhodes who had been Prime Minister of the Colony when the Raid took place.

That the S.A. League was to continue to support Rhodes soon became clear when it was shown how eagerly people in the Colony were prepared to support the petition for his reinstatement as managing director of the B.S.A. Company, a position which he had resigned from on June 26th. (126) Meetings were held at Port Elizabeth (127) and Grahamstown, (128) while a meeting at Lady Grey was sponsored by the local S.A. League branch. (129) The mass meeting at Cape Town was stated not to have been promoted by the S.A. League (130) but when it is realised that T.J. Anderson, who presided at that meeting, two days previously had been elected Chairman of the Cape Town branch of the S.A. League, and furthermore was supported on the platform by the executive members of the same organisation, (131) it seems obvious that the S.A. League had indeed backed the demonstration which resolved to put confidence in Rhodes, "that excellent statesman,..." (132)

The extent to which the movement to secure the reinstatement of Rhodes in authority in Rhodesia was supported, is revealed by an analysis of the signatures appearing in the Rhodes' petition which was presented to the Governor in September by Anderson, O'Reilly and H.G. Cadwallader. (133) Almost 9,000 signatures were obtained from people in the Colony, and that at a time when the Report of the Select Committee on the Raid had indicated that Rhodes' complicity

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(126) J. van der Poel, The Jameson Raid, p. 182.

(127) Cape Times, 13 July 1896.

(128) Cape Times, 15 July 1896.

(129) Cape Times, 28 July 1896.

(130) Cape Times, 27 July 1896.

(131) Cape Times, 26 July 1896.

(132) Cape Times, 27 July 1896.

(133) Cape Times, 23 September 1896.

with that inroad "was not consistent with his duty as Prime Minister of the Colony". (134)

Indeed it would appear from the support given to the petition and the S.A. League which maintained its pro-Rhodes character after the Cape Committee had reported on its findings, that Rhodes' conduct in connection with the Raid was approved by a large section of the English-speaking colonists.

The Report of the Select Committee on the Jameson Raid was brought up by Upington on July 17th. (135) The conclusion arrived at in the Majority Report was "that no member of the then Colonial Government with the exception of the then Prime Minister,....., had any knowledge whatever or suspicion of the intention to send an armed force across the border of the South African Republic..... (136) As regards Mr. Rhodes", the Report continued, "your Committee can come to no other conclusion than that he was thoroughly acquainted with the preparations that led to the inroad... but there is no evidence that he ever contemplated that the force at Pitsani should at any time invade the Transvaal uninvited. It appears rather to have been intended to support a movement from within... but your Committee cannot find that that fact relieves Mr. Rhodes from responsibility..... and they are reluctantly forced to the conclusion, upon the evidence before them, that the part taken by him in the organisation which led to the inroad, was not consistent with his duty as Prime Minister of the Country." (137)

Now it seems probable that Schreiner, in moving the adoption of the Report, voiced the opinions of a large section of the colonists, when he stated that while the conduct of Rhodes in connection with the Raid was to be condemned, there was no suggestion that Rhodes' motives were "grovelling or sordid"; (138) Rhodes' aim "was a high one" but he sought to

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(134) Cape Hansard, 1896, p. 603

(135) Ibid., p. 595

(136) Ibid., p.602.

(137) Ibid.

(138) Ibid. p. 668.

attain it by evil means. On the other hand there must have been colonists who were inclined to agree with the Minority Report, signed only by Upington, that while Rhodes was not only without knowledge of Jameson's intention, he in fact did everything in his power to prevent the Raid "when he became aware of Dr. Jameson's illegal act,..."<sup>(139)</sup> After all, they could have argued, the conclusion arrived at in the Majority Report was based mainly on documents contained in the Transvaal Green Book<sup>(140)</sup> and was this in fact a reliable source in the circumstances? The Attorney-General (Upington) had shown quite clearly that he was not convinced by this evidence and to the Leaguesmen who had expressed their sympathy with Rhodes at the Queenstown Congress when the documents were first published by the Pretoria Government,<sup>(141)</sup> there seemed ample reason now to doubt their reliability.

But a far weightier reason for the continued support Rhodes was to receive from the S.A. League would appear to have been the revelation by the Select Committee that Rhodes had been prepared to take active steps to support the Uitlanders. Here then was a man the Leaguesmen could rely on to champion - the Uitlanders in their demand that Kruger and his Raad redress their grievances. Support for Rhodes had become synonymous with support for the Uitlander cause. Consequently the S.A. League movement maintained its decidedly pro-Rhodes character and rapidly obtained the support of all those colonists who sympathised with the Uitlanders. And so we find after July that the League went from strength to strength. By July 25th, Darley Hartley could claim to be "the head of an organisation of 4,500

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(139) Ibid., p. 606.

(140) J. van der Poel, The Jameson Raid, p. 177.

(141) Vide supra.

members and forty-six branches,....." (142) while new branches were even established outside the Colony at Maritzburg<sup>(143)</sup> and Johannesburg. (144)

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(142) Cape Times, 25 July 1896.

(143) South Africa, 15 August 1896, p. 415.

(144) South Africa, 19 September 1896, p. 666.

Chapter VI

(i)

In the light of the strides made by the S.A. League in the Colony, it becomes necessary to determine its relationship to the S.A.P.A., particularly in view of the fact that these two organisations formed the two major groups within the Progressive Party in 1898.

It has been shown that the main source of disagreement between these two political organisations appeared to be the pro-Rhodes character of the S.A. League, as revealed at the Queenstown Congress in May. And yet in spite of this difference, efforts were made by the S.A. League to induce Innes to become its President. In June, Innes received a letter from his brother Richard, in which the question of the S.A. League leadership was mentioned.<sup>(1)</sup> Richard had been sounded by members of the S.A. League as to his brother's likely reply to a proposal that he should become the President of that Organisation. On all sides the opinion was being expressed that "Innes must lead us" but Richard Rose Innes told his enquirers that he believed his brother would never accept the leadership. He felt that as Leader of the Opposition "it would be an act of political folly to become President of the League" for Innes could support the organisation "so much better from outside".<sup>(2)</sup>

A month later A.J. Fuller raised the question of Innes assuming the leadership of the League in a letter to Richard Rose Innes.<sup>(3)</sup> The reply he received was: "I have not written to him (!) nor have I heard from him on the subject.."

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(1) R. Rose Innes to J. Rose Innes, 19 June 1896 (R.I.P. )

(2) Ibid.

(3) A.J. Fuller to R. Rose Innes, w 23 July 1896, (R.I.P.)

and this time he gave as his reason for stating that his brother should support the League "from outside and Independently" the fact that "Hofmeyr was never Bond President. He preferred a 'free hand' and he knows politics from A to Z."<sup>(4)</sup>

Innes' refusal to accept the Leadership of the S.A. League must be deduced from the views he expressed concerning the amalgamation of the S.A.P.A. and the S.A. League on September 5th. He was addressing a meeting of the S.A.P.A. and stated that "while the Association would co-operate with the South African League for common objects, amalgamation was not desirable in the present circumstances.... they should endeavour to unite and cement the various European races. They could not afford to have them split into different camps. Let them divide on principles and measures, not on racial lines".<sup>(5)</sup> Innes was probably not directing his remarks solely at the S.A. League, for the Bond organisation was probably included in his reference to the existing political divisions on racial lines. but it seems likely that the S.A. League's racial character had prompted the S.A.P.A. President to advise against amalgamation. The pro-Rhodes-pro-Uitlander sympathies revealed by the S.A. League in the past months did not recommend that organisation to Innes, and it must be deduced that he had refused to become its leader for these very reasons.

Shortly after Innes addressed the S.A.P.A. meeting on September 5th, the Cape Times could report that a note of "Anglo-Kafir Anti-Bond political alliance" had been sounded in one or two speeches made by Leaguemen, notably one by Darley Hartley.<sup>(6)</sup> The Cape Times condemned these statements

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(4) R. Rose Innes to A. J. Fuller, 25 July 1896. (R.I.P. )

(5) South Africa, 12 September 1896, p. 622

(6) Cape Times, 30 September 1896.

as being "grossly inexpedient" (7), an indication that the racial character of the S.A. League was apparent to all. While there can be no doubt that Innes was obviously averse to becoming the leader of an organisation which was developing along racial lines, his dislike of the S.A. League must also have been based on the decidedly pro-Rhodes character that organisation had assumed since its inauguration. Even before the Raid, Innes had expressed his disapproval of Rhodes' political conduct. (8) In December 1896, when Rhodes was due to arrive in the Colony en route for England, Innes stated quite clearly his condemnation of Rhodes' connection with the Raid, "which was not only politically but morally indefensible,..." (9) He refused to be associated with any pro-Rhodes demonstration, especially as there had been "no work<sup>d</sup> of explanation or regret from Mr. Rhodes" concerning his rôle in the Raid. (10)

It was soon to become apparent that the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League did not only differ in the views they held with regard to Rhodes. The S.A.P.A. in 1895 had been agitating for a reduction on the duties on wheat, grain and flour and this agitation was supported on October 9th when a mass meeting was held to demand the abolition of the duties on flour and meate and the imposition of an excise on brandy. (11) The promoters of this meeting pointed out that the organisation of the meeting had "no connection with any political organisation whatsoever". (12) But the fact that the members of the Cape Town Branch of the S.A. League were prominent at this meeting, when the S.A.P.A. meeting in support of the agitation was held the next evening, (13) is an indication that the two organisations

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(7) Ibid.

(8) At Mowbray, on 28 January 1895, Eastern Province Herald  
4 30 January 1895.

(9) Cape Times, 9 December 1896.

(10) Ibid.

(11) Cape Times, 5 October 1896.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Cape Times, 12 October 1896.

were unable to co-operate on this question. The S.A. League Branch in Cape Town was obviously aware of the antagonism of Eastern Province branches to the agitation, and hence the desire to give the impression that the S.A. League branch in Cape Town was not sponsoring the movement.

Resolutions protesting against the hardships caused by the existing duties on grain, flour and meats and demanding their abolition were adopted at the first meeting. (14) When Sprigg informed the deputation appointed to acquaint him of their sentiments, that he could do nothing in the matter to remove the duties without the authority of the Free State, (15) Innes proposed at the S.A.P.A. meeting that the Government summon Parliament and lay these propositions before it. (16)

The Cape Times now suggested that in order to achieve the objects of the movement, the next step should be to organise, spread campaign literature and provide campaign speakers. It pointed out that the "Corn Laws were repealed largely by a Manchester fund, which sprinkled hot-gospellers all over the land" and announced that it would start a Campaign Fund to which a shilling per head could be subscribed (17) Furthermore the Cape Times proposed to approach the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League to organise the campaign and should these organisations be willing to accept the task, the money raised would be handed over to them. The People's Shilling Fund was started immediately. (18)

By October 27th the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League had agreed "to act on the common sense idea of parcelling out the country; the Association taking the Western Province and

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(14) Cape Times, 10 October 1896.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Cape Times, 12 October 1896.

(17) Ibid.

(18) Ibid.

and the League the Easter,..." (19) Meetings throughout the country were thereupon arranged.

The first indication that the League was not wholeheartedly supporting the Cheap Food Campaign becomes evident from a statement by the Cape Times in November. Then it was reported that the League was "divided against itself on the Food Question;..." (20) and the central machine of that body was therefore not at the disposal of the campaign. That this was indeed the case was admitted by Darley Hartley at the League Congress in Port Elizabeth in February 1897 when he reported that the cheap food question "had threatened the disruption of the League,..." (21)

Here then we find support for the statement that one of the reasons prompting the founders of the League to inaugurate a movement distinct from the S.A.P.A. in the Colony was the opposition felt by Eastern Province farmers to "a reduction on the necessaries of life". (22) The Bond policy of Protection was still favoured by those farmers who probably constituted the majority of the members of the S.A. League.

During 1896 it has been revealed that the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League differed essentially with regard to certain political issues. Whereas the former was pursuing its programme of enrolling new voters and educating public opinion in order to achieve liberal and progressive legislation in the Colony, the latter was more concerned with political issues extraneous to the Colony. The popular appeal of these two organisations was therefore determined by the objects they sought to achieve. Thus we find the Cape Times in September 1896 comparing the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League as follows: "The one seems all head, the other all heart; the former revels in works, the latter walks by faith. The Association is the practical machine

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(19) Cape Times, 27 October 1896.

(20) Cape Times, 20 November 1897.

(21) South Africa, 13 February 1897, p. 351.

(22) Vide supra.

undoubtedly; but the League has the recipe for generating steam." (23)

As to their spheres of influence, the Cape Times maintained that the S.A.P.A. obtained support only in Cape Town. (24) On the other hand the S.A. League's influence was widespread. In October the S.A.P.A. could claim to have 500 members on its roll (25) while the President of the S.A. League three months earlier could report that he was "the head of an organisation of 4,500 members and forty-six branches,...." But over and above these divergencies the S.A. League had assumed a racial character which was absent in the S.A.P.A. In October, Innes referred to this difference when he stated that the S.A.P.A. "had never gone in for foolish action or unconstructive talk.." He thought that the most important thing to be borne in mind at present was that they (S.A.P.A.) should endeavour to do everything in their power to cement the various European races in the country... They could not afford to have Europeans split up into different racial camps,...." (26)

(ii)

Now while it has been shown that the S.A. League had far outstripped the S.A.P.A. in its popular appeal in the Colony, it is interesting to note how this organisation was viewed by English-speaking colonists who were not members of the S.A. League.

Cronwright-Schreiner on July 4th read a paper at a meeting of the Cradock Farmers' Association on "The Political Situation". (27) He stated that the League had no affinity with that organisation which they had all striven for, namely

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(23) Cape Times, 5 September 1896.

(24) South Africa, 3 October 1896

(25) Cape Times, 25 July 1896

(26) South Africa, 3 October 1896, p.13.

(27) Midland News, 7 July 1896.

"a Progressive Party,..." The League merely bore a "superficial resemblance" to it in that it was opposed to the Bond. He felt that the League was "distinctly racial, and, on the whole, an anti-Dutch organisation". It was "not Liberal and Progressive in the true sense of the words", for while its official programme contained "nothing to which a Liberal might not subscribe," its professed liberal tendencies were "belied by the fact that it has practically identified itself with a man who for years has fought against almost every progressive measure" that had been introduced in the Cape Legislature. Cronwright-Schreiner asserted that "Until the South African League disavows the fact publicly that it has any relation whatsoever with Mr. Rhodes, no liberal or progressive man in South Africa can conscientiously join it. He gave as evidence for the assertion that the League had identified itself with Rhodes "the speeches made at the formation of the various branches and to the action of sympathy, and lastly, and above all, to the fact which has been freely stated in the Colonial papers and which has never been contradicted, that, at its inception, Mr. Rhodes was asked to become its President". When the League "distinctly and officially" renounced all connection with Rhodes "and all support of his political methods" and was able to make it clear that it was not an "anti-Dutch party but a distinctly Liberal and Progressive organisation," he for one, and he believed many hundreds of other progressive men in the Colony, would be delighted to join it." (28)

W.H.Hockley was undecided as to whether he should join the League and wrote to Innes for advice. "There seems to be a feeling about here just now that we ought to do something towards joining the Loyal League - and I have been appealed to

to take steps towards that end. Personally I have not felt inclined to do so - so would like very much to know what you think of the matter and whether it is a desirable step to take, just now. My feeling is that we have quite enough with the political association and Farmers (sic.) Congress to work upon.<sup>(29)</sup> Hockley goes on to say that while the League already had so many members and many were flocking to join it, he felt when the excitement had died down, it would collapse. "I have much more faith in something which grows slowly and gathers strength as it goes along," he concluded.

Innes was decidedly pessimistic about the political situation, and that this must be attributed to the growing strength of the distinctly pro-Rhodes S.A. League, becomes apparent from his correspondence with Merriman in October. Innes and Merriman had discussed the political situation on October 22nd and on the following day Merriman wrote to him referring to their conversation. "To hear the 'gospel of hopelessness' preached by the chosen leader of the Progressives was very painful - Never despair in politics as long as you believe you are right..."<sup>(30)</sup> From what follows in this letter it may be deduced that Innes was filled with gloom because the S.A.P.A. was not getting the support which the racialistic League was receiving, for Merriman remarked that Innes' association was "running on purely financial lines" and that a political party was not going to be founded merely upon those lines. What was needed was a policy which would rouse the people and Merriman suggested that the party should be formed with the betterment of Poor Whites as its policy. "We ought to make our cry the Elevation of the White -"<sup>(31)</sup> he stated, an indication that he had perhaps not finally broken his political alliance with the Innes group.

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(29) W.H.Hockley to J.Rose Innes, 20 June 1896. (R.I.P.)

(30) J.X.Merriman to J.Rose Innes, 23 October 1896. (R.I.P.)

(31) Ibid.

In his reply to this letter, Innes stated that since January 1st he had held gloomy views as to what was going to happen in the South in general and "in this Colony specially -." He felt that Civil War was not improbable<sup>(32)</sup> and he might have come to the conclusion because of the ever-widening gap which was appearing between the Bond and the S.A.League.

Berry felt that some good could come from the S.A.League "if people of some standing became members of that organisation for then it might be "worked into something more powerful" and run on more liberal lines.<sup>(33)</sup> But Innes refused to accept this possibility. When Berry was approached by some Leaguesmen to use his influence to persuade Innes to become the leader of the S.A.League, he quoted to them what Innes had told him: that hitherto the S.A.League had been run on lines of which Innes "could scarcely approve- furthermore the S.A.P.A. demanded Innes' first consideration, and professional engagements would be in the way of his devoting more time to politics"<sup>(34)</sup>

Now while the views quoted above are obviously those of members of the S.A.P.A., the Cape Times attitude to the League may be regarded as less biased. This newspaper, under the heading "Jingobond" reported that as the S.A.League did not have support in the Western Province comparable to that which it enjoyed in the East, the Secretary of the Cape Town branch of the organisation had written to each of the parliamentary representatives of Cape Town and Cape Division "calling on them to show why they should not join".<sup>(35)</sup> T.E.Fuller replied that he thought it unwise for members of Parliament to join "these outside associations".<sup>(36)</sup>

Brown stated that he belonged to the S.A.P.A., that the objects of that association and the S.A.League were to his

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(32) J.Rose Innes to J.X.Merriman, 25 October 1896 (M.P.)

(33) W.Bisset Berry to J.Rose Innes, 28 November 1896 (R.I.P.)

(34) W.Bisset Berry to J.Rose Innes, 31 December 1896. (R.I.P.)

(35) Cape Times, 10 November 1896

(36) Ibid.

mind identical and he was awaiting the amalgamation of the two bodies. (37) Beard felt that "over the League is the trail of race-feeling" and that the Afrikaner Bond had always seemed to him practically based on a race-feeling, even though this was disavowed by its leaders. He concluded by stating, "while equally disavowed, I cannot <sup>but</sup> feel that the inception and action of the South African League tends in like manner to maintain the unfortunate feeling of separation to which I allude". (38)

The Cape Times then pointed out that the view Beard expressed was held by nine out of every ten people who were not members of the S.A. League, and that for this reason the organisation had been nicknamed "Jingobond". The Cape Times concluded: "The reason,....., why everybody will have it that it means race-feeling, is that nobody can see that it means anything else in particular." (39)

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(37) Ibid.

(38) Ibid.

(39) Ibid.

Chapter VII

(1)

During the course of 1896 there had been sporadic expressions of sympathy and support for Rhodes by S.A. League and independent gatherings. At the end of December Rhodes' arrival in the Colony en route to appear before the Committee of Enquiry appointed by the House of Commons, was the occasion for the S.A. League to arrange further pro-Rhodes demonstrations.

At Port Elizabeth Rhodes received an enthusiastic welcome<sup>(1)</sup> and there he dispelled any idea that he intended to withdraw from Colonial politics. "I shall keep my seat in the Cape House," he declared, "because it is part of my programme to show to the people of South Africa that I don't undertake a career of isolation".<sup>(2)</sup> He was "determined to strive for the closer union of South Africa" of which the Cape Colony was to be the dominant power.<sup>(3)</sup> He showed that he was fully aware of the feeling of revulsion for his share in the Raid, for he maintained "We must carefully cultivate .... the determination to dismiss race feeling. The true idea is not a race idea at all. It is a desire for union -....."<sup>(4)</sup> and in case there were any in his audience who still doubted the necessity for such a union, Rhodes pointed out that in achieving this, a barrier would be raised "against localism, and also against the trouble caused by the intrusion of the foreign element."<sup>(5)</sup>

It was in this speech that Rhodes gibed "at what he called the unctuous recited<sup>ed</sup> of his countrymen" before whom he was soon to appear.<sup>(6)</sup>

It must have been obvious from the ovation Rhodes

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- (1) Ons Land, 29 December 1896.  
(2) Vindex, op. cit., p. 503.  
(3) Ibid., p. 504.  
(4) Ibid., p. 505  
(5) Ibid., p. 506  
(6) Michell, op. cit., p. 302.

received that he could count on the people at Port Elizabeth for support. He nevertheless desired to obtain the assistance of the anti-Rhodes section in the Colony for the furtherance of his closer union scheme, and it was for this reason that he appealed to his audience to dismiss race feeling. He wished to prepare the ground for a rapprochement between existing political groups right at the beginning of his tour.

Rhodes then proceeded by rail to Kimberley and Cape Town, a journey which Williams describes as "more like a triumphal progress than the penitential pilgrimage of a culprit going to meet his judges". (7)

At Cape Town Rhodes received an enthusiastic reception (8) and that evening he was entertained at T.E.Fuller's residence. (9) To this gathering thirty-odd former parliamentary colleagues of Rhodes had been invited and here we are told that the guest of honour "made a more frank reference to his <sup>one</sup> great one mistake than on any other occasion". Fuller quotes Rhodes as saying "I do not so much regret joining in an attempt to force President Kruger into a juster and more reasonable policy, when he had resolutely refused all redress of grievances; but what has been a burden to me is that I was Prime Minister at the time, and that I had given a promise that I would not do anything compatible with the joint position I held as director of the Chartered Company and Premier of the Cape Colony. On every ground I was bound to resign if I took such a course as assisting a revolution against an officially friendly state; and I did not. I can only say that I will do my best to make atonement for my error by untiring devotion to the interests of South Africa". (10)

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(7) Williams, op. cit., p. 278.

(8) Michell, op. cit., pp. 312-313.

(9) Fuller, op. cit., p. 208.

(10) Ibid., p. 209.

It would appear that this atonement for his error had been eagerly awaited by the guests present, for when Rhodes finished speaking, "The whole company rose in response to this welcome declaration". (11)

Unfortunately no such admission was made by Rhodes in public. There were obviously scores of people in the Colony who were waiting as eagerly to hear these words as the guests assembled at Bollihope that evening, people who would have been prepared to support Rhodes' closer union policy if only he would admit the folly of his conduct in connection with the Jameson Raid. Fuller was aware of the value of such a public admission, and asked Rhodes to "make the same avowal" at a mass meeting on January 5th. (12) This Rhodes agreed to do and had indeed started making his apology "but before he had got through the second sentence, it was met with such a hurricane of protesting applause that the remainder of his words, (13) although heard on the platform, were lost to the audience."

On January 5th a banquet was held in Rhodes' honour at which the Mayor, Sir John Woodhead, presided. (14) Fuller, in proposing the toast of the evening, appealed to Rhodes to come back into their midst and remarked that the address which had been presented to Rhodes "had been signed by three-fourths of the registered voters of Cape Town". (15)

The following day Rhodes sailed for England, accompanied by Garrett, the editor of the Cape Times who, according to Walker, was intent on "preaching the Progressive faith to a morose and irritable listener". (16)

In the preceding account of Rhodes' "triumphal progress" through the country, no mention has been made of the attitude of the anti-Rhodes group in the Colony. The Bond

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(11) Ibid.

(12) Ibid., p. 210.

(13) Ibid.

(14) Michell, op. cit., p. 313.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Walker, L. d.v., p. 299

organised no less than one hundred counter demonstrations in one month in order to gainsay the action of that section of the population who by their acclaim of Rhodes seemed to signify that the Raid was condoned. (17)

No such counter demonstrations were organised by the English-speaking colonists. Many, like Innes, remained aloof from these Rhodes ovations for they refused to make obeisance to the man who had "directed and controlled the combination" that made the Raid possible.

Innes probably expressed the opinions of these colonists when he wrote to the Cape Times early in December 1896 (18) and stated why he could not be associated with the receptions. It is true that Innes' views were aired before Rhodes arrived, but they were equally relevant to the situation after January 1897. Innes had been proposed to serve on a Committee early in December 1896, which was entrusted with the task of drafting an address to Rhodes and arranging for his reception. (19) On learning of this he wrote to the Cape Times asking that his name be withdrawn and stated why he felt compelled to adopt that course. (20) While he felt that he fully recognised the value of Rhodes' work in regard to the development of the North, he would willingly join in such a public reception as that which it was proposed to give Rhodes "if it were possible to regard the earlier portion of the year as a closed book and to separate at the present time what has happened in Rhodesia from what has happened in the Transvaal". Innes went on to say that Rhodes was on his way to England to explain before a Committee of the House of Commons his connection with the attack on the Transvaal, "which was not only politically but morally indefensible, which all but plunged South Africa into civil war,

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(17) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 513.

(18) Cape Times, 9 December 1896.

(19) Cape Times, 8 December 1896.

(20) Cape Times, 9 December 1896.

and has caused more trouble and dissension in the colony than anything which has happened since 1881. The feeling which that incident aroused is still running strong," Innes maintained, and we have by no means seen the end of its mischievous results and as yet there has been no work of explanation or regret from Mr. Rhodes.

"Under such circumstances how can we accord him a public ovation unless we tacitly condone his connection with the other matters to which I have referred? Let us be under no misapprehension - both in England and in South Africa, no matter how we word our resolutions or our addresses, these demonstrations will be regarded as a condonation by those who take part in them, of the recent attack upon the peace of South Africa. And the majority of those who join will be actuated, in their hearts, by race sentiments which bode ill for the future of this country. It is therefore out of no personal feeling, whatever, but out of a strong sense of what I consider the right course for all true South Africans, that I cannot directly or indirectly join in the proposed reception."<sup>(21)</sup>

Innes was one of the many leading Cape Town citizens who remained aloof with regard to Rhodes' receptions, judging from a letter Chief Justice de Villiers wrote to Kotze on January 7th. According to de Villiers "Besides Mr. Fuller and the new Knight, Sir J. Woodhead, there is not a man of influence among those who joined in glorifying Rhodes..."<sup>(22)</sup> Kotze need not be disturbed about "the so-called Rhodes ovations," de Villiers wrote, "If your President had appeared in our midst there would have been much more genuine enthusiasm without the expenditure of one-tenth of the money lavished by the friends of Rhodes and, I fear I must add, by the companies under his control."<sup>(23)</sup>

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(21) Ibid.

(22) Walker, L.d.V., p. 286.

(23) Ibid.

Darley Hartley however told the S.A. League Congress in February 1897 that the receptions given for Rhodes "were initiated by branches of the League,..."<sup>(24)</sup> so that it must be concluded that while the money for these pro-Rhodes demonstrations was supplied by the companies under his control, the flag-waggers were members of the League.

That these Rhodes ovations were not devoid of an ulterior motive would appear from de Villiers' reference to the fact that the demonstrations were financed by the companies under Rhodes' control and Walker's statement that the "Cape Progressives and their London friends" were determined to reinstate Rhodes as Premier of the Colony, "provided he would come out into the open as a Progressive".<sup>(25)</sup>

Fuller had paved the way for such a reinstatement by appealing to Rhodes to come back into their midst. Chief Justice de Villiers was considered as Rhodes' only likely rival for the premiership<sup>(26)</sup> and in order to eliminate him, the London Times launched an attack on him on April 5th, two days after Rhodes sailed from England.<sup>(27)</sup> It was reported that de Villiers was preparing "to fight Rhodes for the premiership in a trial of strength between Dutch and English".<sup>(28)</sup> De Villiers' rebuttal came in a speech he, as President of the Legislative Council, delivered on April 9th..."I am the person whom the London Times considers to be the leader of a political party in opposition to Mr. Rhodes and of a party too which aims at overthrowing British supremacy in South Africa," he stated. "The association of my name with such a party is so ludicrous that it may well be dismissed with a smile."<sup>(29)</sup> He then proceeded to give the lie to the Times article, and Walker reports

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(24) Cape Times, 12 February 1897.

(25) Walker, L.d.V., p. 299.

(26) Ibid..

(27) Ibid..

(28) Ibid..

(29) Ibid., p.300.

that his statement was approved of in London and the Colony.<sup>(30)</sup>

Prior to his departure for England, Rhodes had given no public indication that he was prepared to come out as leader of the S.A. League, for it must be assumed that this position had been offered him during his brief appearance in the Colony. At that stage he no doubt still hoped to effect a modus vivendi with the Bond and so it must be concluded that until such time as this avenue had been fully explored, it was unlikely that he would accept the leadership of a political organisation which was avowedly anti-Bond in its sympathies. And so by February 1897 the question of the leadership of the S.A. League had still to be settled. That Innes would not accept this position had now become abundantly clear and so it remained for the S.A. League to await the return of Rhodes from England.

(ii)

On February 11th the second S.A. League Congress opened at Port Elizabeth.<sup>(31)</sup>

In his presidential address, Darley Hartley stated that "the League was founded to organise a party to educate the people in politics" and was based on two principles; one the loyal maintenance of the dependence of the Colony on the British Crown; the other was the formation of a progressive party". He went on to say that so far as internal politics were concerned, "They would take up the lines of what he ventured to call progressive liberalism and modern thought in legislation" in the Colony. "Certain gentlemen in the League were inclined to minimise the internal side of the political question, and desired the League to be merely a patriotic

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(30) Ibid., p. 301.

(31) South Africa, 13 February 1897, p. 351.  
Cape Times, 12 February, 1897.

society..."(32) This was obviously a reference to the enthusiasm recently evinced by Leaguesmen during the Rhodes receptions, an enthusiasm which Darley Hartley by no means sought to belittle. His intention was to evoke the same enthusiasm for matters of a purely Colonial nature.

The President then referred to the receptions of Rhodes. These were stated to have been "initiated by branches of the League, not by the executive" and came from "a conviction in the hearts of the inhabitants of South Africa that Cecil Rhodes was the personification of the unity of the races of South Africa..." He (Dr. Hartley) disagreed with the retrogressive legislation of the Cape Parliament, which Mr. Rhodes was a party to;" but his faults were blotted out by his greater services". (33)

The Secretary's report revealed that there were already 54 branches in the country, and Coetzee points out that, as the delegates represented branches from as far afield as Mafeking, Cape Town and Middelburg,.. "die beweging nie meer 'n 'Frontier Party' was nie,..."(34)

Congress then proceeded to discuss various resolutions, foremost of which was a motion expressing thanks "to Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and other places for the reception given to Mr. Rhodes in view of his work in the North"(35) It was further deemed necessary to make certain alterations to the constitution and this task was entrusted to a committee. (36)

Other resolutions embraced a variety of subjects which deserve attention for the reason that in 1898 the S.A. League President, Brabant, declared the League election platform to be based on proposals agreed to in February 1897 at the Port Elizabeth Congress. (37)

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(32) Ibid.

(33) Ibid.

(34) Coetzee, op. cit., p.202.

(35) Cape Times, 12 February 1897.

(36) For extracts from S.A. League Constitution as adopted in 1897, vide Appendix D.

(37) Proceedings of the Meeting of the Congress of the South African League, 1898, p.5.

With regard to an excise, Berry moved that Congress support an Excise duty on spirits and strongly objected to an amendment which sought to tax Cape wine, as he felt that that industry should be encouraged. (38) Berry's resolution was carried by a large majority. It was further resolved to support closer union between the Cape Colony and Natal, Innes' Liquor Bill, compulsory elementary education of white children, any scheme of redistribution of seats which embraced both Houses (39) and the establishment of an Appeal Court for South Africa. (40) The League would further endeavour "to obtain permission for Civil Servants to join political associations". (41)

As to the question of duties on grain and wheat, this was debated at great length. After discussing various resolutions which sought to secure a reduction of from <sup>25%</sup> 50% to the complete abolition of import duties, Campbell's amendment was finally carried, by an overwhelming majority. This amendment was in the nature of a compromise and urged on the Government "the advisability of reducing the duties on grain and meat by 25 per cent, and to admit flour at the same rate as grain, and the abolition of differential railway rates on foodstuffs". (42)

A Committee, consisting of Messrs. Crosbie, Campbell, Brabant and Orpen was thereupon appointed to discuss the Cheap Food Campaign with Messrs. Brydone and Jagger of the S.A.P.A. who were present at Congress, "on the lines of the League resolution". The following day Brabant was able to report that it had been agreed to divide the Cheap Food Campaign Fund between the S.A. League and the S.A.P.A., "each

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(38) Cape Times, 13 February 1897.

(39) Cape Times, 15 February 1897.

(40) South Africa, 31 March 1897, p.621.

(41) Cape Times, 15 February 1897.

(42) Ibid.

using its own discretion as to how this fund was to be spent." (43)

A resolution was thereupon adopted condemning the Alien's Pass Law (44) in the Transvaal and "urging the protection of Cape Colonists' interests under the London Convention", while admiration was expressed for the courage displayed by Messrs. Sampson and Davies, who were still imprisoned in Pretoria as a result of the Raid. (45)

On the opening day of Congress the question of a coalition of the S.A.P.A. and League was raised. The S.A.P.A. delegates who were present, addressed the meeting on this subject, "expressing their desire to wait until after Congress had decided what action it will take in the matter of coalition". (46) When Congress adjourned, however, no statement was made concerning the coalition. A few days later the Cape Times reported "That the Congress recently closed at Port Elizabeth did not result in the amalgamation of the two political organisations which are aiming at the education of public opinion in a direction differing from that contemplated by the Afrikaner Bond, is greatly to be regretted;..." (47)

The election of office-bearers for the ensuing year resulted in Brabant being unanimously elected President, Messrs. Walton, T.J. Anderson, Blaney and Beard were re-elected vice-presidents and Messrs. Wynne, Geo. Blaine and A.J. Fuller members of the Executive. (48)

It was at Port Elizabeth that a resolution was passed stating that "In the opinion of Congress, it is advisable that those members of Parliament who are members of the League, should take steps to organise themselves into a Parliamentary Party". (49) The formation of the new Progressive

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(43) Ibid.

(44) South Africa, 20 February 1897, p.430.

(45) Cape Times, 15 February 1897.

(46) Cape Times, 12 February 1897

(47) Cape Times, 16 February 1897.

(48) Cape Times, 15 February 1897.

(49) Cape Times, 13 February 1897.

Party, for thus the parliamentary party immediately became known, officially dated from February 12th, the day on which the resolution was adopted. It does seem likely though that the adoption of this resolution was merely giving formal recognition to an accepted fact. There had never really been any complete break in the movement which started at the end of the parliamentary session of 1892, and ever since that date had had supporters in the Cape House, supporters who represented the colonists in Eastern constituencies.

In reviewing the proceedings of the 1897 S.A. League Congress, certain salient features suggest themselves. The majority of the Leaguemen still adhered to the Bond policy of protection of grain, wheat and flour. Support for Rhodes and his closer union policy was reiterated at the Congress while the pro-Uitlander character of the S.A. League was evinced in the condemnation of the Alien's Pass law adopted by the Transvaal Volksraad. And it must be deduced that it was because of these marked tendencies in the S.A. League that coalition between this body and the S.A.P.A. had not been possible. The prospects for such a coalition being effected before the general election of 1898 seemed remote in the light of the essential differences which existed between the two organisations on matters of policy.

Before proceeding to deal with the parliamentary session of 1897, reference must be made to two utterances from S.A. League and Bond quarters with regard to Rhodes. On March 5th the newly elected S.A. League President addressed a meeting of the Cape Town branch of his organisation. The meeting was called to pass a resolution condemning the Judiciary Bill recently enacted by the Transvaal Legislature". (50) Brabant, in his speech, referred to Rhodes' political future in the

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(50) Cape Times, 6 March 1897.

Colony and asked his audience to consider "what position Mr. Rhodes should take up politically when he returned to this country." His view was that "when Mr. Rhodes came back he should be asked what he intended to do. If Mr. Rhodes intended to be of the Progressive party the League was prepared to follow him, but he should object most strenuously to backing up Mr. Rhodes if he went back to his old plan of using the Bond to further his own particular policy..." (51) In other words, the President of the League was prepared to accept Rhodes as leader of the Progressive Party, provided that he cut adrift completely from the Bond. Brabant, and presumably other Leaguesmen, were probably aware of the fact that Rhodes entertained the fond hope of securing the support of both the Bond and the S.A. League organisations on his return to colonial politics, and this the S.A. League was not prepared to tolerate.

Now while the recent counter-demonstrations organised by the bond after Rhodes' departure for England had indicated the opposition of that organisation to the Rhodes ovations, (52) this antipathy was by no means general among Bondsmen. Hofmeyr states that "even an offence like the Jameson Raid" had not completely broken "all the ties of friendship and alliance which had grown up between Rhodes and the Bondsmen", for "among the leading members of the organisation there were several, over whom he had acquired an influence, which they found it impossible to shake off". (53) The Rev. S.J. du Toit is quoted as being among the most powerful of them for Rhodes "had obtained an interest in 'Di Patriot' and the reverend editor was compelled to shape his opinions accordingly." (54) Du Toit was even enabled to start a new paper "Het Dagblad" with Rhodes' assistance and this daily "did much to keep the pro-Rhodes feeling alive among a small section of the farmers". (55)

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(51) South Africa, 13 March 1897, p.618.

(52) Vide supra.

(53) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 514.

(54) Ibid.

(55) Ibid..

Then too there was D.C. de Waal, who was mentioned in the telegram Rhodes received on 8 April 1896, appealing to him to return to politics. This telegram stated: "D.C. de Waal and your friends cannot too strongly urge you to come" (56) (back to politics); in fact de Waal had acted as go-between for Rhodes when the latter feared that Hofmeyr was going to attack his Charter immediately after the Raid. (57)

At the Bond Congress at Malmesbury in March 1897, however, it became palpably clear that men like du Toit and de Waal were in the minority for the following resolution was unanimously carried: "That every consideration of national self-respect, political honesty and good faith compels the Africander National Party no longer to give Mr. Rhodes an iota of political support, either at political gatherings, in the press, at the polls, in Parliament or anywhere else." (58) The Bond had certainly broken off all political relations with Rhodes; and Brabant's fears concerning a mesalliance with that organisation under the leadership of the ex-Premier were probably allayed.

(iii)

Before Parliament met in April two decisions were taken in England which must have indicated that the Imperial Government was intent on securing a settlement of South African affairs.

First there was the announcement that Sir Alfred Milner was to succeed Lord Rosmead as High Commissioner in South Africa, (59) and then on March 6th, Chamberlain drew the

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(56) Michell, op. cit., p. 281.

(57) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 500.

(58) Ibid., p. 514.

South Africa, 20 March 1897, p. 664.

(59) Walker, L.d.V., p. 298.

attention of the South African Republic to its breaches of the London Convention.<sup>(60)</sup> The appointment and despatch, coming as they did just after the two Republics had formed an offensive and defensive alliance,<sup>(61)</sup> must have made it clear that Britain was determined to maintain her Convention rights as well as her paramountcy in South Africa.

In view of these decisions by the Imperial Government it seemed that a redress of Uitlander grievances and the observance of the terms of the London Convention were essential if Kruger's Transvaal was not to become the scene of hostilities in South Africa.

On April 2nd, the session opened and at the outset it was not clear whence the Sprigg Ministry's support would come. There were a few members of the Afrikaner National Party who still supported Rhodes, but by and large that Party had been consolidated as a solidly anti-Rhodes group under the leadership of Schreiner. The Opposition in Parliament which was officially led by Innes, contained two groups, the Liberals or Moderates backed up by the S.A.P.A. organisation and the Progressive Party<sup>(62)</sup> which looked upon Brabant as the parliamentary leader of the S.A. League movement.<sup>(63)</sup>

A motion concerning peace in South Africa was moved on April 15th by du Toit and the sentiments expressed by him were that peace could be best attained "by the faithful and reciprocal observance of all obligations under treaties; conventions or agreements; that means could be devised to obtain an amicable settlement of any differences which may arise in the interpretation of such obligations, and that by the adoption of a policy of moderation, mutual conciliation and

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(60) Ibid..

(61) Ibid..

(62) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 515-516.  
Walker, W.P.S., pp. 96-97.

(63) Vide supra.

fairness in the discussion of and dealing with all differences, the tranquillity of South Africa would be further assured". (64)

To this motion Innes moved an amendment, stating that peace could best be attained "by the strict observance of the terms of the Conventions of London by both parties thereto, by the consideration and redress of legitimate grievances on the part of the Government of the South African Republic, and by a continuance of a policy of moderation on the part of Her Majesty's Government." (65)

The debate which followed was lengthy and animated. Innes was supported by Liberals and Progressives, and vigorously opposed by Merriman. The latter stated that it was with deep regret that "he felt himself obliged to separate himself" from Innes on a vital question like that before them. He refused to accept Innes' declaration that the amendment was a moderate measure, for what it implied was that the supporters of Innes' view were urging Chamberlain to "Go on" whereas du Toit's motion in fact said "Step back, stop". (66)

When the division was taken on the amendment Beard, Berry, Brabant, Brown, Crosbie, Douglass, Frost, Fuller, Haarhoff, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Laing, Lawrence, Palmer, Pearson, Rhodes, Robertson, Ryan, Schermbrucker, Smartt, Smuts, Solomon, Tamplin, Thompson, Warren, Weil, Wiener and Wood voted in favour of it, while the Ministry, Afrikaner Party, Sauer and Merriman opposed it. The amendment was thus defeated by 41 votes to 32. (67)

Innes recalls a memorable conversation he had with Rhodes soon after this debate ended. From the division lists

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(64) Cape Hansard, 1897, p. 79

(65) Ibid., p. 81.

(66) Ibid., p. 122.

(67) Ibid., p. 143.

on Innes' amendments to the Raid resolution in 1896 and the Peace in South Africa motion in 1897, it appeared that the Leader of the Opposition had a substantial backing - 28 in 1896 and 32 in 1897. Rhodes drew his attention to the fact and stated that the members who had supported Innes' two proposals ought to be consolidated. Rhodes would be able to effect that process. What was more, he "enlarged on the extent of the progressive support he could command" and offered to give Innes "a few Dutchmen".<sup>(68)</sup> Innes was left to "think it over" but he obviously did not even consider the thought Rhodes had put to him for he states, "Holding the views I did of the part he had played in the Raid conspiracy, it was impossible for me to enlist under his banner".<sup>(69)</sup> Rhodes and Innes were aware that in both divisions the bulk of the opposition had voted "not anti-Sprigg but pro-Rhodes" and it was to this fact that Rhodes had drawn Innes' attention.<sup>(70)</sup>

Rhodes' attempt to consolidate the 28 to 30 supporters of Innes' amendments in 1896 and 1897, must be viewed in the light of the unanimous decision taken by the Bond at its Malmesbury Congress in March 1897 just before Rhodes returned from England.<sup>(71)</sup> Rhodes realised that he could count on the allegiance of a few Bondsmen in the House, and if he could persuade Innes and about thirty of the members who had supported his amendments to combine forces, Rhodes seemed assured of a majority in Parliament. This majority would enable him to pursue his aim of closer union in South Africa along constitutional lines.

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(68) Rose Innes, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

(69) Ibid., p. 144.

(70) Ibid., p. 143.

(71) Michell, op. cit., p. 316.

Soon after the Peace in South Africa debate concluded, Merriman asked Innes whether he intended to move a no-confidence resolution. Innes' reply was that it was not "practical politics" to do so for "the real Opposition were ranged on the Government side of the House; the majority of those who sat behind me were not really in opposition; a handful at most would follow me across the floor on such a motion".<sup>(72)</sup> Events were soon to show that Innes had in fact gauged the feeling of the members in Opposition on an issue such as no-confidence very accurately.

On April 30th Merriman moved his vote of censure on the Government and gave as his reason for doing so the incapacity of the Government to seek peace and maintain it. The Government had no policy with regard to the vexed questions which demanded their attention, he stated,<sup>(73)</sup> and furthermore he felt "that the main object and effect of their policy during the last few months had been to make it absolutely impossible for any representations they might make to the Transvaal to be listened to, and particularly any representations in the direction of those reforms which they all considered necessary".<sup>(74)</sup>

In the debate which followed the speech of Innes deserves particular attention for in it he gave his reasons for not moving the vote of no-confidence, which he should have done as Leader of the Opposition.<sup>(75)</sup> Innes stated that "nothing would have pleased him better than to have proposed a want of confidence in the gentleman who sat opposite" and while he was contemplating the action he would take, he had been "promised assistance from wholly unexpected quarters" if he decided to move a vote of no-confidence. On thinking the matter over, however, he had

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(72) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 144.

(73) Cape Hansard, 1897, p. 172 et. seq..

(74) Ibid., p. 173.

(75) Ibid., p. 178.

come to the conclusion that "he could not propose such a motion with any hope of success unless he did one of two things - dismount from the platform he had he thought consistently stood upon for some time past, or take to another platform". Because "it was impossible for him to decide upon this step it was impossible for him to come before the House at the present time". He announced that whatever the outcome of the debate might be he intended to resign as Leader of the Opposition. Innes foresaw that he would be accused of bringing a Bond Ministry into office by supporting Merriman's motion, but he contended that a Bond-ridden Ministry was already in office and what he had consistently advocated and still wished to see was a truly Bond Ministry in power, carrying out its own programme. (76)

With regard to the Sprigg administration, Innes attacked the Government for neither leading the country nor the House on a single occasion "throughout one of the most troublous periods in South Africa history". (77)

Brabant then stated his position to be "the most painful of anyone in the House" for while he had constantly spoken and voted against the Government, he intended to vote to keep it in. The policy Brabant supported would be "endangered in the highest degree" if he voted for a motion which would have the effect of putting a Bond Ministry in office. Brabant was supported by Progressive Party members who refused to give Merriman "a blank cheque". (78)

The question was then put and the division resulted in a tie, whereupon the Speaker stated it to be his duty to give his vote for the Noes and thus the no-confidence motion was defeated. (79)

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(76) Ibid., p. 178.

(77) Ibid.

(78) Ibid., p. 184.

(79) Ibid., p. 193.

The vote of censure was supported by six of the Liberal members - Beard, Hay, Innes, J.T. Molteno, Solomon and Wiener - all but six of the Afrikaner National Party members and Sauer and Merriman. The Government was supported by the Progressives, two Liberal members<sup>(80)</sup> - Berry and Jones - and six members of the Afrikaner National Party - de Villiers, D.C. de Waal, Olivier, Louw, Venter and Wege.<sup>(81)</sup> Innes relates that the division lists confirmed his "suspicions as to the names of some of the 'few Dutchmen' whom Rhodes arrogated the right to control" while his anticipation as to the Opposition rump was confirmed.<sup>(82)</sup>

After April 30th, therefore, Innes supported by an independent section of six members, sat on the cross benches, from where he could "give an independent support to liberal measures."<sup>(83)</sup> The Liberal Party which during the 1896 session had numbered eleven adherents had officially ceased to exist.

The divisions on the Peace in South Africa motion and vote of censure revealed how very vague party distinctions in the House were. On the first division the Ministry had voted with the Afrikaner National Party, Merriman and Sauer against the Progressive and Liberal parties. The vote of censure found the previous opponents of the Government in the role of supporters of the Ministry and the Liberal and Afrikaner National parties divided in their attitude to the Sprigg administration. It was then made abundantly clear that pure party government was absent in colonial politics in 1897.

That political parties were still in a state of flux is borne out by the views expressed in South Africa in May 1897. It reported that as a result of the division on Merriman's motion "the Progressive Dutch members, eight (?) of whom

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(80) The Liberals, Smuts, Brown and Hutton did not vote. Tamplin had become a Progressive.

(81) Cape Hansard, 1897, p. 193 .

(82) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 144.

(83) Ibid., p. 145.

voted with the Government" would probably be drawn "into the camp of the Moderate Imperial party, whose policy was expounded by Sir J.Gordon Sprigg."<sup>(84)</sup> Indeed this newspaper, probably prompted by a feeling of relief that the Colony was not to see a Schreiner - Merriman Ministry in office, reported that "Signs exist of a speedy break up of the Afrikaner Bond. A meeting is to be held tomorrow for the formation of a new Moderate Afrikaner party and this will be the beginning of the end of the Afrikaner Bond".<sup>(85)</sup>

Innes was severely criticised by the Cape Times for stating that he wished to see an out-and-out Bond Ministry in office.<sup>(86)</sup> This newspaper felt that when the Transvaal Volksraad met, it would tell Chamberlain that it declined to repeal laws which clashed with the London Convention and in the circumstances it was "nothing short of criminal to render up the strategic position of Cape Colony into the hands of Mr.Sauer, and of a party threatening civil war, in Cape Colony".<sup>(87)</sup> South Africa reported that the S.A.League had passed a resolution urging that the Prime Minister be strongly advised to avoid playing into the hands of Sauer and Merriman, and called on Sprigg to refuse to resign in the existing intense condition of affairs. Such a resignation would only be regarded as an act of treason towards loyal inhabitants of the Colony.<sup>(88)</sup> The S.A.League view was shared by the S.A.P.A. for an executive council meeting, at which Jagger presided, resolved "That in the opinion of this association it is of the utmost importance for the preservation of peace that any Government which may hold office in this Colony should heartily support the Imperial Government in

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(84) South Africa, 8 May 1897, p. 307

(85) Ibid.

(86) Cape Times, 1 May 1897.

(87) Ibid.

(88) South Africa, 22 May 1897, p. 424

maintaining the London Convention and the British Supremacy in South Africa". (89)

After the all-important no-confidence division was taken, the Progressive Party and Innes' group were given an opportunity of showing where their sympathies lay in relation to the duties agreed upon at the Customs Union Convention in January 1897. No reduction had been agreed upon with regard to the duty on meat and flour. It was therefore proposed by Brabant that the duty on corn and grain be reduced from 2s. to 1s. 6d. When the division was called for, Brabant, Barnato, Beard, Berry, Brown, Fuller, Hay, Innes, Jones, Lawrence, Palmer, Schermbucker, Smuts, Solomon and Tamplin (90) voted in favour of the motion, while 56 "nays" opposed it. On the motion of Jones that the duty on flour be reduced from 5s. to 3s. 6d., Schermbucker deserted the Progressive-Independent camp while Herriman supported them. (91)

In order to understand the inclusion of certain planks in the Progressive Party platform during the 1898 election campaign, brief reference is necessary to certain issues which were raised during the 1897 session.

Early in the session, Innes raised the question of a Redistribution of Seats. He asked whether it was the intention of the Government to deal with the question..... before the next General Election" and received the assurance from Sprigg that a Commission would be appointed to report on the matter during the next session. (92)

When the House went into committee on the Estimates, the Progressives and Independents attacked the Government for its handling of the rebellion which had broken out in Bechuanaland in December 1896. (93) This rebellion was

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(89) Cape Times, 4 May 1897.

(90) Cape Hansard, 1897, p.200.

(91) Ibid., pp. 200-1

(92) Ibid., p.4.

(93) Ibid., p. 239.

stated to have been caused by the shooting of cattle which had become necessary in order to counteract the outbreak of rinderpest. Solomon commented on the item of £170,000 for Bechuanaland and East Griqualand disturbances and stated that had the Government dealt with Galishiwe between December 1st and 5th, there would have been no rebellion in the Langeberg at the time. Solomon was supported by Merriman, Sater, Brabant, Thompson, Warren and Tamplin. (94)

During the debate in Committee on the Amended and Additional School Regulations, disappointment was expressed by all parties on the failure of the Government to introduce a comprehensive Education Bill. Merriman and Sater inter alia supported the Progressives in their demand that the £100,000 grant proposed by the Government be modified to enable the sparsely populated country districts to derive the benefit of education. (95)

The session ended on June 24th after a motion by Innes that arrangements be made "to arrange some basis of contribution by this colony towards the Imperial Navy", (96) had been unanimously adopted by the House. (97) Sprigg then departed for England to represent the Colony at the Queen's Jubilee. (98) Innes followed soon after to holiday oversea. (99) In the Colony the political organisations threw themselves into furious preparations for the Legislative Council elections in March 1898.

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(94) Ibid., p. 348.

(95) Ibid., p. 434.

(96) Ibid., p. 376.

(97) Ibid., p. 389.

(98) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 146.

(99) Ibid., p. 148.

Chapter VIII

(i)

In April 1897 Rhodes had returned from giving evidence before the House of Commons Committee of Enquiry into the Raid. He was welcomed by the Progressives<sup>(1)</sup> whom he informed that he had had enough "of physical agitation" and would henceforth<sup>(2)</sup> strive to achieve his ends by constitutional means. The situation in the Transvaal was mentioned when Rhodes told the gathering "Join no party whose direct programme is to keep race feeling alive. Use your time, your energy, and any influence at the polls you may possess, to see that the hopeless system prevailing elsewhere in South Africa shall end. We must as a party be for equal rights and equal laws for every white man".<sup>(3)</sup>

It was in order to form such a party that he had "put a thought" to Innes during the session of 1897 and probably received no reply.<sup>(4)</sup>

But there was Garrett of the Cape Times ready to work for the consolidation of all progressive elements in the Colony so that a united Progressive Front would confront the Bond organisation at the polls when the Legislative Council elections took place in March 1898. That this would prove a difficult task was apparent from the outset for on the questions of support for Rhodes and fiscal reform, the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League differed radically. On the other hand there were issues on which these two organisations agreed, notably the introduction of party government and a redistribution of seats. Then too Innes had showed that he favoured the redress

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(1) Walker, L.d.V., p. 302.

(2) Fuller, op. cit., p. 317.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Vide supra.

of legitimate grievances of the Uitlanders by the Transvaal Volksraad and this augured well for such a coalition. It therefore remained for Garrett to find ways and means of overcoming the two contentious issues. Once this was done there seemed every likelihood of the Progressive forces being consolidated.

Garrett's newspaper campaign which aimed at enlisting Innes and ipso facto his supporters as adherents of the Progressive Party of which Rhodes was to be the leader, started in May 1897.

Rhodes' overtures to Innes had failed to effect the formation of a party which would assure him of support for his closer union plan. The time had come for Garrett to win Rhodes over to the Progressive cause, for as yet he had given no indication that he was prepared to become a Progressive. And so the Cape Times on May 22nd embarked on a scheme to make Rhodes not only a progressive but the leader of the Progressive Party. The first plank in any South African liberal platform "must be the Uitlander Question" the paper declared, "and this is a struggle on which Mr. Rhodes is indeed embarked past recall". It was not expected that Rhodes would "suddenly come out in new colours as the great democrat and free trader" nor as a supporter of an excise, for the Paarl was still a stronghold of the Afrikaner minority which remained faithful to him. On the Cheap Food question the Cape Times felt that it would be quite content if it could "screw him up to that modest '25 per cent' of economic justice" which represented "the high-water mark of Eastern Province 'progressives'". But there were progressive measures such as Education, the Liquor Law for the Transkei, and the compulsory Scab Act which Rhodes had supported "even in his days of Bondage"

which recommended him to the Progressives. If now he would support Redistribution, a progressive platform of four planks was ready to hand with "a party forming to support it, in search of a leader with Mr. Rhodes' qualities". This was Rhodes' chance "and what is he going to make of it?" the leader asked. (5)

But no reply was forthcoming and so Garrett turned his attention to Innes, who soon was to show that he still adhered firmly to the principles he had expounded in 1893 and enlarged on after the Raid.

In 1893 Innes had expressed his intention of giving support to men who would strive in Parliament to bring about progressive legislation. (6) After 1896 he had refused to be associated with any movement that was racialistic or pro-Rhodes. (7) During December, 1897 he demonstrated quite clearly that those were still his sentiments.

It was on the question of J.A. Faure's candidature in the forthcoming parliamentary election that Innes was called upon to decide whether he was prepared to adopt as the S.A.P.A. candidate someone who did not support its programme.

In January 1897 Innes wrote to Faure and asked him what his views were on clauses 2a, b, c, d, e, f, and g of the S.A.P.A. Constitution, (8) clauses which were used as the election platform of the S.A.P.A. in the 1898 Legislative Council elections. In reply Faure stated that he was "for the re-adjustment of the Customs Tariff so as to cheapen the cost on all the necessaries of life other than those produced in this colony" and favoured the imposition of an excise "so long as it falls on the consumer..." On the questions of

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(5) Cape Times, 22 May 1897.

(6) Vide supra.

(7) Vide supra.

(8) J.A. Faure to J. Rose Innes, 19 January 1897. (R.I.P.)

Responsible Government, compulsory education, the prohibition of the sale of liquor to aboriginal natives, native policy and increased parliamentary representation, Faure had not committed himself. (9)

There the matter rested until December when a newly-formed "Rhodesite" Electoral Committee (10) in Cape Town decided to adopt Faure as its candidate in the Legislative Council elections. (11) From what followed it must be concluded that the S.A.P.A. and Electoral Committee had intended to co-operate in securing the return of Progressive candidates in March 1898, but that the question of Faure's candidature caused the S.A.P.A. to break its pact with the Electoral Committee. What is more, Jagger resigned from the S.A.P.A. and joined the Electoral Committee. (12)

According to the Cape Times which announced the resignation on December 3rd, Jagger, besides being a member of the S.A.P.A., was also a member of "a small electoral committee which may be taken, or at least has been taken, as in some sense or another 'Rhodesite' ". Innes had maintained that these two organisations were incompatible and Jagger thereupon resigned from the S.A.P.A.. (13)

But on the following day a letter written by Innes revealed that Jagger had resigned because the S.A.P.A. had refused to adopt Faure as one of its candidates. The reasons given for this refusal were that Faure had "in the past voted anti-Excise and anti-Liquor Bill. He has supported the 2d.

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(9) Ibid.

(10) Later known as the Progressive Electoral Committee and subsequently as the Central Progressive Committee. T.E. Fuller was Chairman of the latter and it seems probable that this organisation was indeed formed by a nucleus of those Progressives who during the First Rhodes Ministry belonged to the Progressive Committee in Parliament.

(11) Cape Times, 4 December 1897.

(12) Ibid., 3 December 1897.

(13) Ibid.

duty on meat and an increased duty on grain". In fact Faure had not "stood on a single plank of the S.A.P.A. platform".<sup>(14)</sup>

The Cape Times rightly concluded that what was really at the root of the matter was "the much larger question of the relations of Liberal Progressives in the Colony with the large (probably much larger) section of colonists who may be roughly described as anti-Bond, without being particularly Progressive".<sup>(15)</sup> Certain issues were stated to be shaping themselves as the election approached, issues both external and internal to the Cape Colony and whereas the S.A. League was sound on one set, the S.A.P.A. was equally sound on the other. There were many members of the S.A.P.A. and S.A. League who were sound on both. Where the decision had to be made between candidates sound on both S.A. League and S.A.P.A. platforms and candidates sound on neither, the solution was simple. In all other cases the Cape Times felt that the choice of candidates "must turn on the relative amount of importance to be attached to the two sets of principles, and on practical and personal side-issues".<sup>(16)</sup> Jagger's attitude was obviously supported by the Cape Times, and in view of the fact that Garrett was attempting to attract all anti-Bond sections to the Progressive Party, this championing of Jagger's stand is understandable.

No doubt the question of Faure's candidature showed Garrett that his conquest of Innes was to be no simple matter for Innes was averse to compromise, even at a time when the political future of the Colony seemed at stake.

On December 13th Jagger stated that he had resigned from the Executive of the S.A.P.A. because of Innes' statement that all the reforms desired by that organisation "would come

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(14) Cape Times, 4 December 1897.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Ibid.

some day..."<sup>(17)</sup> These words Jagger felt "would come very appropriately from some philosopher who never leaves his study, but not from an active political leader". Innes was not taking steps to see the men who supported his platform returned to the Legislative Council, the S.A.P.A. was not formed on a sufficiently broad basis, and the lack of funds would prevent that association from doing any effective political organisation outside the Peninsula.<sup>(18)</sup>

Now while it is true that Innes' statement that reforms "would come some day" was only made in a speech after Jagger had resigned,<sup>(19)</sup> it does seem likely that Innes' idealism coupled with the other criticisms of Innes and the S.A.P.A. had in fact prompted the resignation. There was every indication that the coming electoral contest would be a bitter one and that a forceful leader would be required by the party which was to oppose the Bond at the polls. Innes had not impressed Jagger as having the qualities of such a leader and the S.A.P.A., with its limited funds and too clearly defined political platform, was not the organisation which would effectively oppose the Bond in the Colony. It was probably for these reasons that Jagger decided to throw in his lot with the Electoral Committee which was probably better endowed with funds and had a broad enough basis to attract all anti-Bond colonists.

Innes showed that he was not prepared to compromise on the question of Faure's candidature and in his election speech at Simonstown on December 10th he expressed his views on the "Rhodes question".<sup>(20)</sup> Then he stated that it was quite impossible for him to discuss the lines the elections were likely to be fought upon "without saying something of the

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(17) Cape Times, 13 December 1897.

(18) Ibid.

(19) On December 10th at Simonstown.

(20) Cape Times, 11 December 1897.

position occupied in politics by Mr. Rhodes, not only because Mr. Rhodes was a big man and most powerful factor in Colonial politics, but because many of Mr. Rhodes' friends indiscreetly, in his opinion - seemed to be bent upon fighting these elections on Mr. Rhodes' name, making it a personal matter, and their object seemed to be to elect any candidates who would call themselves adherents of Mr. Rhodes, though upon matters connected with essential politics they might be as far asunder as the poles. If they read the press of the country and listened to what they heard, it was quite clear that the extreme men on both sides were determined to divide the whole community and the whole country into two camps, Kruger and Rhodes." In this scheme of things there was no room for moderate men, for politicians who were not "in the service of Mr. Rhodes.... were in the service of Paul Kruger...." (21) Innes refused to be driven into either of these camps " - not by any amount of popular clamour, not by any amount of personal criticism...." Furthermore, if the elections were to be fought on Rhodes and anti-Rhodes lines, "the result would be a great amount of passion and racial feeling and bitterness, which would work incalculable injury in the future". It was neither proper, expedient, nor right "after what had happened during the past two years, to accept any name as a rallying cry" during the coming election campaign. (22)

Finally, on this question, Innes explained that he felt Rhodes should come forward and say that he had large questions to deal with in the North, and enough to occupy his attention there for the present, so that he had no desire to take a prominent part in Cape politics. If he

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(21) Ibid.

(22) Ibid.

did this, Innes said, "he would be doing a real service to the country". (23)

By the end of December 1897, therefore, Innes had shown that in addition to his refusal to compromise on the question of support for a candidate who did not subscribe to a progressive and liberal platform, he would not join the ranks of the pro-Rhodes party who were seeking to fight the elections on racial lines.

On New Year's Day 1898 Garrett once again attempted to induce the S.A.P.A. and Innes to co-operate with the Rhodes party which embraced the S.A. League and Electoral Committee. (24) At the same time Garrett appealed to Rhodes to pledge himself to some planks in the Progressive platform.

The political situation in the Cape Colony was dominated by the Uitlander issue in the Transvaal, Garrett stated. The Rhodes-Kruger antithesis in South Africa had now become the Rhodes-Hofmeyr antithesis in the Cape Colony. The supporters of Krugerism had been driven to the anti-Progressive side, while the Reform Party found itself driven into the arms of Rhodes, "who in April (1897) formulated as his war-cry 'Equal rights for all white men south of the Zambesi'". (25) While Hofmeyr therefore was the leader of the party supporting Krugerism vs. the Uitlanders, Rhodes was looked upon as the leader of the party treating Kruger's Government as the danger-point in the political situation. The aim was to unite the Progressives (Innes' group) with the Rhodes party. (26)

In attempting to achieve this united Progressive front, the desire was not "to merge the Innes wing in the Rhodes party, with Mr. Rhodes as sole and sufficient leader", Garrett

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(23) Ibid.

(24) Cape Times, 1 January 1898.

(25) Ibid.

(26) Ibid.

continued, for Rhodes could never lead the "out-and-out Liberal Progressives". (27) What Garrett desired to see was the Rhodes and Innes wings "as much allied against the Bond, Retrogressive, Republican, Blood-is-thicker-than-common-sense-party," as the Conservatives were with the Liberal Unionists in England. (28)

In order to effect this alliance, it was necessary that Innes "should make it clear that his Simon's Town speech did not mean any adhesion on his part to the 'ostracise Rhodes', one-man-vendetta policy of the official Bond" and secondly, that Rhodes "should pledge himself to some reasonable fraction of the Progressive Platform so well supported by Mr. Innes". (29)

It should not be difficult for Rhodes to accept some of the Progressive planks, Garrett stated, for he was already a Progressive with regard to Redistribution and Compulsory Education. If now he could add to these support for the Innes Liquor Bill and the 25% reduction in duties on bread and meat, there would be nothing to hinder the alliance. Both Innes and Rhodes were stated to be agreed on the dominant issue - "Equal Rights irrespective of Race". (30)

That Innes should have maintained his independence of the Rhodes party, even after this appeal, was to be expected, for the dominant issue which Garrett maintained the two men were agreed upon was not a true reflection of the situation. The "Equal Rights" question for Rhodes had an anti-Kruger basis and while Innes had shown that he sympathised with the demands of the Uitlanders for legitimate rights, he was not prepared to have as one of the planks in the S.A.P.A.

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(27) Ibid.

(28) Ibid.

(29) Ibid.

(30) Ibid.

platform such a racial issue. (31)

During the next three months Garrett concentrated his efforts on Rhodes and by March 5th he could announce that he had succeeded in his conquest of Rhodes. (32) The liberal measures adopted by the Progressive Party would be supported by Rhodes and as a result the Progressive cause would receive "such an impetus among moderate men in the country" as they had never yet received from any political event. (33) On March 12th Rhodes made his debut as the spokesman of the Progressive Party when he supported the Ticket of Three - F.Y. St. Leger, Graham and J.A. Faure - at the Good Hope Hall meeting in Cape Town. (34)

E.T. Cook relates that Garrett's "main objects were to put Mr. Rhodes again in the saddle, and to make him a Progressive. The latter purpose was the more difficult of the two, but Garrett did it". (35) That Rhodes' conversion to the Progressive platform was by no means complete appears from the opinion Garrett expressed to Cook: "... he (Rhodes) is all right, speaking largely on my phrases and with my points", though "not always word perfect". (36)

That the choice of Rhodes as a leader of the Progressive Party was not unanimously approved or desired by English-speaking sections in the Colony before March 1898, becomes obvious from the correspondence of Milner, Brabant and Jagger. Indeed, these three prominent men had been inclined to favour the choice of Innes as leader of the Party.

On July 5th 1897 Milner wrote to Chamberlain:  
"If Rose Innes or some other man who was not mixed up with Rhodes' plans could keep them (the British party) together

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(31) Vide infra.

(32) Cape Times, 5 March 1898

(33) Ibid.

(34) Cape Times, 14 March 1898

(35) E.T. Cook, Edmund Garrett. A Memoir, pp. 134 et. seq..

(36) Ibid., p. 142.

as a counterpoise to any extreme Afrikaner or Dutch party it would a great assistance to the Imperial Government". (37) He realised that everything was pointing to Rhodes becoming the leader of the Progressives, a position which virtually entailed the leadership of all British colonists in South Africa, and this he regarded as "a great pity", for Rhodes, he felt could not unite the English "without giving offence and cause of suspicion to the Dutch". (38) To <sup>Chamberlain</sup> ~~Miller~~ who wanted to bring Escombe and Sprigg "to a joint policy leading towards Federation...", (39) it appeared necessary to convince the Dutch that "while British supremacy must be maintained", due regard would be given to "local feeling and Dutch sentiment,..." (40) This aim could best be achieved if Innes, rather than Rhodes, was entrusted with the leadership of the Progressive Party in South Africa.

From a letter Brabant wrote to Innes after the latter had delivered his election speech at Simonstown on December 10th, it appears that Brabant hoped to induce Innes to take over the S.A. League presidency from him, the acceptance of which would have virtually assured Innes of the leadership of the Progressive Party. He wrote that he for one agreed with "nearly all" Innes had had to say about the future policy of the Progressive Party. "So entirely is this the case that I cannot understand why you do not join the League and take my place in February," and lest Innes should still be in doubt as to the bona fides of the League, he added, "Perhaps you may think that we are nothing but a 'Rhodes Party'. So far from this I have taken every opportunity of insisting upon the League retaining perfect independence, and not allowing itself to be merged into a great

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(37) M.I.P., pp. 71-72.

(38) Ibid., p. 72.

(39) Ibid.

(40) Ibid.

Rhodes party. As you know I am a great believer in Rhodes and his Northern policy but I do not approve .... of his way of carrying it out, and whilst I am President of the League I shall insist upon having a free hand in this respect".<sup>(41)</sup>

Jagger on behalf of the Progressive Electoral Committee voiced the same opinions when he wrote explaining why he had resigned from the S.A.P.A. He denied Innes' allegation that the Progressive Electoral Committee was intent on fighting the elections on Rhodes' name. In fact Jagger believed that Rhodes would take Innes' advice and not take a prominent part in Cape politics, and concluded "... let me say that the leadership of the Progressive party is still open, and as Mr. Innes knows is practically at his disposal. Let him give up his position of aloofness and come down into the fight. Let him exchange the position of a preacher for that of a fighting leader; he would have the advantage of our organisation and we should have the advantage of his moderating influence, of his abilities, and of the confidence in his singlemindedness which is felt by all South Africans".<sup>(42)</sup>

But Innes refused to accept the assurance of the leader of the S.A. League and spokesman of the Progressive Electoral Committee that their organisations were not Rhodes parties and for this as well as the reasons previously stated, he declined the leadership of the Progressive Party. Garrett was thus enabled to provide the Party with the leader of his choice and in doing so was severely criticised by P.A. Molteno. "He (Rhodes) is no real progressive", he wrote to Innes, "and all Garrett's talk is merely so much chaff to catch and use the progressives now that the Bond refused to be used any more by Rhodes - what deterioration it must mean in a man to act as

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(41) E.Y. Brabant to J. Rose Innes, 15 December 1897 (R.I.P.)

(42) Cape Times, 13 December 1897.

Garrett is now doing contrary to all his fine principles once professed in supporting all that Rhodes does".<sup>(43)</sup>

In conclusion reference must be made to Rhodes' initial reluctance to accept the leadership of the Progressive Party. The Cape Times indicated on 22 May 1897 that Rhodes could still count on the support of the Afrikaner minority in Paarl. The implication there was that the Rev.S.J. du Toit and his followers were not to be overlooked as a possible pro-Rhodes influence in the Bond. Du Toit was still a member of the Commissie van Toezicht<sup>(44)</sup> but at the same time, Hofmeyr, relates, he was the strongest champion of Rhodes, "the high priest of Imperialism".<sup>(45)</sup> As editor of Het Dagblad and promoter of the Colonial Union he was actively engaged in securing Afrikaner support for Rhodes,<sup>(46)</sup> and it was probably because the latter was waiting to see how successful du Toit's efforts would be that he hesitated before becoming a Progressive.

Rhodes had probably considered the advantages the Bond organisation would have over its rivals in the 1898 election, and concluded that the prospects of success of such a closely-knit political group and its well-organised party machine were infinitely greater than those of the disunited and inexperienced anti-Bond groups.

If Rhodes' policy of closer union was to succeed he preferred to await developments from Bond quarters for once he had been accepted by that powerful organisation, he could set about enlisting support for his scheme from the English political organisations. Already in November 1897 the Diamond Fields Advertiser could report that there were

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(43) P.A. Molteno to J. Rose Innes, 19 August 1898 (R.I.P.)

(44) Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 519.

(45) Ibid., p. 514.

(46) nWalker, L.d.V., p. 324.

rumours concerning the financial assistance Rhodes was giving to the S.A. League, (47) a report which tends to substantiate the assertion that Rhodes was preparing the ground for a coalition of Bond and S.A. League organisations to further his objects.

What seems likely to have finally decided Rhodes about accepting the leadership of the Progressive Party was the speech Milner delivered at Graaff-Reinet on March 3rd, 1898, two days before the Cape Times reported the conversion of Rhodes. In all probability Milner's speech gave the final impetus to the campaign which Garrett had been waging since July 1897.

On March 3rd Milner was presented with an address by Bondsmen at Graaff-Reinet, (48) in which they protested against the charges of disloyalty made against the Bond and requested him to convey to the Queen the expression of their unswerving loyalty. In reply Milner stated quite clearly what he conceived to be the duty of British subjects of Dutch nationality in their relations towards the Imperial Government and towards the Republics. If the Dutch citizens of the Colony desired to preserve the South African Republics and promote good relations between it and the British colonies, "then let them use all their influence, not in confirming the Transvaal in unjustified suspicions, not in encouraging its Government in obstinate resistance to all reform, but in inducing it gradually to assimilate its institutions, and what is even more important than institutions, the temper and spirit of its administration to those of the free communities of South Africa, such as this Colony or the Orange Free State". (49)

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(47) South Africa, 6 November 1897.

(48) I. Müller, Lord Milner and South Africa, p. 518. Mil. P., pp. 244-246.

(49) Ibid., p. 246

The "pro-Transvaal agitation in Cape Colony was more and more assuming a disloyal character" and the advice Milner gave to the Bond in the Colony on the eve of the Legislative Council elections was to assist the Imperial Government in its demands for reform in the Transvaal, thereby demonstrating its loyalty.

Milner had broken silence. Early in February 1898 Kruger had been re-elected President for a further five years by an overwhelming majority.<sup>(50)</sup> By February 16th Kruger had repudiated the agreement with Chief Justice Kotze as to the power of judges<sup>s</sup> to test any wet or besluit and enforced Law No. 1 of 1897.<sup>(51)</sup> Kotze was dismissed and this, coupled with the fact that appeals under the Aliens' Expulsion Law would now have to go "to the unsympathetic executive",<sup>(52)</sup> indicated the stiffening in the Transvaal Raad's attitude to any outside interference in that Republic. In these circumstances Milner had "warned all whom it might concern that Great Britain was not going to relinquish her paramountcy in Southern Africa from fear of a heavily armed Transvaal and its Colonial sympathizers".<sup>(53)</sup>

The reaction of Cape Progressives to this speech was instantaneous, for Innes relates that it made Milner at once "the real leader of the British section"<sup>(54)</sup> and Walker maintains that it aroused the enthusiasm of the Progressives and convinced the Bond "that the Queen's representative had thrown his weight on the side of their opponents".<sup>(55)</sup>

Two days later Rhodes emerged as the leader of that section in the Colony which was determined to maintain British supremacy not only in the Cape but indeed in South Africa.

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(50) Walker, L.d.V., p. 318.

(51) Ibid.

(52) Walker, W.P.S., p. 103.

(53) Ibid., p. 104.

(54) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.177.

(55) Walker W.P.S., p. 104.

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The Progressive Party had thus been provided with a leader and the task of organising the election campaign was entrusted to the Progressive Electoral Committee and S.A. League with the S.A.P.A. supporting Progressive candidates it approved of. (56) These three organisations were to return Progressive candidates to Parliament in March 1898, but there is evidence to show that co-operation between the S.A.P.A. on the one side and the Progressive Electoral Committee and S.A. League on the other was not wholehearted.

Preparations for the Legislative Council, <sup>elections</sup> went hand in hand with the organisation for the later general elections and so we find Richard Solomon, the holder of the De Beers retainer, writing to Innes that Rhodes had imposed certain conditions which Solomon would have to agree to if he desired to have support for his candidature in the Kimberley contest. (57) Solomon refused to accept Rhodes' conditions for he felt that the only thing that made public life possible was independence and "To sacrifice that to an unscrupulous fellow like R- is paying too dear a price for political honours. I suppose my rejection of his conditions means political extinction", he wrote, "as I cannot stand for Kimberley without De Beers support". (58)

Solomon also made no secret of his distrust of the "so-called Progressive Party". "Their... object is to bring Rhodes back into office and they have the audacity to put forward a programme of measures for which the most of them dont (sic) care one d- and everyone of which Rhodes, their chief, opposed and will oppose again if he can get the support of the Bond". (59) Solomon's dislike of the Progressives was

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(56) Vide supra.

(57) R. Solomon to J. Rose Innes, 24 January 1898. (R.I.P.)

(58) Ibid.

(59) Ibid.

however not confined to Rhodes, for he wrote, "I think one of the most contemptible of their leaders is old Fuller".<sup>(60)</sup>

James Butler wrote asking Innes whether the S.A.P.A. would assist A.Gilfillan, who refused to stand as an S.A.League candidate or accept financial assistance from that organisation.<sup>(61)</sup> Acceptance of support from the Progressive Electoral Committee and the S.A.League seemed to be synonymous with acceptance of their programmes and Solomon and A.Gilfillan were unable to bind themselves to that extent.

On the other hand, the S.A.P.A. did support two candidates of the Ticket of Three which the Progressive Party put up in the Western Circle election. F.Y.St.Leger, Graham and J.A.Faure were adopted as the Progressive candidates and the first two were also adopted as candidates of the S.A.P.A..<sup>(62)</sup>

The questions of a party programme, party funds and a favourable press demanded attention. The S.A.P.A. programme was announced by its President at Simonstown on 10 December 1897. The essential points from this speech reiterated the Association's adherence to clauses 2a, b, c, d, e and g of its Constitution. In addition, Innes urged the introduction of an immigration policy to strengthen the white population in the Colony and the adoption of a native policy which, though firm, must be just. With regard to external affairs, Innes declared himself to be in favour of restoring confidence in the Transvaal by urging the adoption of reforms in a friendly spirit and temperate sense. The progress of Rhodesia should be assisted "in all ways not incompatible with the true welfare" of the Cape Colony.<sup>(63)</sup>

The Progressive Electoral Committee platform was outlined on December 13th by Jagger when he stated that its

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(60) Ibid.

(61) James Butler to J.Rose Innes, 22 April 1898 (R.I.P.)

(62) Cape Times, 23 March 1898

(63) Cape Times, 11 December 1897.

planks were "Compulsory education, Redistribution of Seats, Reduction of taxation on the necessaries of life, The restriction of the sale of liquor to natives, Equal rights for all white men in South Africa and Cordial co-operation with Rhodesia in promoting the progress of that country". (64)

In February 1898 the S.A. League programme was referred to by Brabant when the S.A. League Congress met in Cape Town on February 7th 1898. He stated that their political programme was based on the 1897 Congress resolutions and included compulsory education as far as practicable, improved sanitation of Colonial towns and villages, support of the Innes Liquor Bill or any other measure restricting the sale of liquor to natives, an excise on colonial spirits, a reduction of duties on the necessaries of life, support of irrigation and railway construction and "generally speaking, favouring the expansion of the country and the administration of the affairs on broad and liberal principles". (65) On the vexed question of fiscal reform, South Africa (66) and the Cape Times (67) could report that the League had agreed to compromise on the food duties and that a 50 per cent reduction on duties had been agreed to instead of total abolition.

On March 12th Rhodes outlined what he considered to be the programme of the Progressive Party. The meat duty would be taken off and there would be Government aid with cold storage, if necessary; duties on other foodstuffs would be reduced to such an extent as may prove possible without ruining the farmer, helped as he will be by free admission of his produce to the North, with its protective railway rate; redistribution on a population basis; compulsory education which would be permissive by districts; an excise to be levied.

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(64) Cape Times, 12 December 1897.

(65) Proceedings of the Meeting of the Congress of the South African League, 1898, p.5.

(66) South Africa, 12 February 1898 .

(67) Cape Times, 11 February 1898 . .

(68) Cape Times, 14 March 1898

not on farms but on canteens; support for Innes' Liquor Bill; and an unconditional regular annual vote for the Navy; and closer union between the Cape Colony, Natal and Rhodesia in five years when the latter carried a population. (69)

The policy Rhodes had expounded was stated by the Cape Times to show no jump, no break but a sensible and significant curve. The change in a word, is from a set of views on progress put in the form least offensive to a Bond majority and a Hofmeyr domination, to the same set of views expressed with the precise object of challenging and breaking that domination". (70)

That Rhodes had not completely neglected his faithful Bond supporters at Paarl, becomes obvious when his policy with regard to the duties on food and the excise is borne in mind. The wheat farmer was to be protected, and in this respect the S.A. League viewpoint had also been upheld. The wine-industry was favoured inasmuch as canteens and not the farms were to pay the levy on colonial spirits.

But questions like compulsory education, redistribution, the excise and the Innes Liquor Bill were not the dominant issues in the struggle against the Bond in the 1898 elections. In August 1897 South Africa declared "Everything points to the next general election being fought on the issue of Dutch or English supremacy". (71) In December the Cape Times could report that the electorate was confronted by "the Colonial v. Republican question, the Uitlander v. Krugerite question; the Equal Right v. Domination question". (72) Innes had stated that the whole country was divided into two camps, Kruger and Rhodes, (73) while on New Year's Day Garrett had expressed the opinion that the political situation in the

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(69) Ibid.

Vindex, op. cit., pp.525-528.

(70) Cape Times, 14 March 1898

(71) South Africa, 28 August 1897, p. 461.

(72) Cape Times, 4 December 1897.

(73) Cape Times, 11 December 1897.

Cape Colony was dominated by the Uitlander issue in the Transvaal. (74)

And while Garrett could declare with a view to persuading Innes to whole-heartedly support the Progressive front, that Rhodes' Good Hope Hall speech on March 12th was indeed an indication that the main planks in Innes' platform had been adopted by Rhodes - "all praise to Mr. Innes" (75) in actual fact this was not important. While there might have been agreement between Innes and Rhodes on certain internal questions such as redistribution, a Liquor Bill and the contribution to the Navy, on the all-important question of relations with the Transvaal, these two leaders differed fundamentally.

Rhodes was still imbued with the desire to effect closer union of all the States and colonies in South Africa. The obstacle to his scheme was the isolationist policy of the Transvaal, and so Rhodes on March 12th stated that his aim was to promote the union of the country "without interfering" with neighbouring States, "by sympathy with the new population in the Transvaal and by close association with the Northern State" (Rhodesia). (76) This close association was to include Rhodesia, Natal and the Cape (77) and though Rhodes did not amplify this statement, the implication is clear - the Transvaal and the Free State were to be hemmed in and presumably forced into the union. But the key to such a union lay in the Cape Colony where an election was to be fought against the party controlled by Hofmeyr with Ons Land acting as his mouthpiece. (78) This party supported the Transvaal implicitly and its success in the coming elections

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(74) Cape Times, 1 January 1898.

(75) Cape Times, 14 March 1898.

(76) Vindex, op. cit., p. 538.

(77) Ibid..

(78) Ibid., pp. 532-533.

would keep up "bad feeling in the new community of the Transvaal and in the young State in the North".<sup>(79)</sup> The Cape electorate "must be careful lest by continuing a non-Progressive majority" in Parliament, it drove away Rhodesia and utterly isolated the new population in the Transvaal.<sup>(80)</sup> "Because when the one gets its wealth and the other gets its rights, it is probable that the two will go together", and leave the Cape "at the shank end of the continent",<sup>(81)</sup> Rhodes threatened. In other words, if the Cape electorate rejected Rhodes' scheme of uniting their Colony with Natal and Rhodesia, a union hostile to the Cape Colony would be effected.

Innes on the other hand wished to restore confidence in the Transvaal "by bringing a consensus of South African opinion to bear upon the question in a temperate sense and in a friendly spirit", which he stated "should and must have weight without any desire to interfere with the independence of the country,...."<sup>(82)</sup> Innes did not mention the isolationist policy of the Transvaal or for that matter the support that policy was getting from the Bond; the Rhodes v. Kruger and Rhodes v. Hofmeyr questions were in no way reflected in his election programme. Garrett had chosen to disregard this essential difference between the two platforms.

With regard to the funds at the disposal of the Progressive Party there were rumours in November 1897 that the S.A. League was being financed by Rhodes and Brabant deemed it necessary to refute these allegations. He wrote to the Diamond Fields Advertiser that "so far as he knows, Mr. Rhodes never contributed a penny to the funds of the League. He has never offered any, and has certainly never been asked for pecuniary assistance."<sup>(83)</sup>

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(79) Ibid., pp. 537-538.

(80) Ibid., p. 544.

(81) Ibid.

(82) Cape Times, 11 December 1897.

(83) Quoted in South Africa, 6 November 1897, p. 282.

This might have been true in November 1897 but in January Richard Rose Innes wrote to his brother stating that the elections were to be fought out with "funds supplied by Rhodes"<sup>(84)</sup> and based his conclusion on a letter he had received from C.P.Crewe, the Secretary of the S.A. League asking him to stand against Charles Molteno for Tembuland. Crewe gave the impression of having ample funds at his disposal for he merely drew on "the (Progressive Electoral) Committee" as the occasion arose.<sup>(85)</sup> Now this might not have been conclusive evidence that Rhodes was supplying the Progressive Electoral Committee with funds, but Fuller's statement during the parliamentary session that he himself had asked Rhodes to subscribe to the Progressive Electoral Committee funds and that "Rhodes did so liberally"<sup>(86)</sup> does indicate the true position. Admittedly Fuller added, that large sums had been collected from other sources, several Cape Town gentlemen contributing £100 donations.

On March 30th the Cape Times stated that "The party just organised for the first time against the Bond has been organised partly with Mr. Rhodes's money, let us say, largely". That this was by no means remarkable was explained by this newspaper when it related, "It was fair in one way that Mr. Rhodes should pay to repair a disorganisation largely due to his own discouragement of all anti-Bond forces in the past;"<sup>(87)</sup>...

It must therefore be concluded that the Progressive Party funds were largely subscribed by Rhodes though the amount of his contribution is not known. That the Party's election expenses were no doubt considerable suggests itself; the work of registration, organisation and canvass was necessarily heavy for a new political party.

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(84) R. Rose Innes to J. Rose Innes, 5 January 1898 (R.I.P.)

(85) Ibid..

(86) Cape Hansard, 1898 (first session), p. 187.

(87) Cape Times, 30 March 1898.

The Progressive Party was also assured of press support in the March elections. The Cape Times was an avowed supporter of the Rhodes party, while Walker relates that the Cape Argus group, and "at least one newspaper in each state or colony south of the Zambesi" was controlled by Rhodes and his adherents.<sup>(88)</sup> Furthermore it was known that Het Dagblad had long been financed by Rhodes. There remained the Diamond Fields Advertiser to bring into line and when its editor, Cartwright, heard that Rhodes' supporters were intent on buying that Kimberley newspaper, "and the use of its owner's name till after the elections", he wrote, "We cannot believe that Rhodes approves of these things, for if he does he is simply a second Boss Tweed and must be smashed".<sup>(89)</sup> That Rhodes' supporters were successful in achieving their object, must be concluded from the fact that in March 1898 Cartwright was stated to be leaving for Capetown to start a newspaper there.<sup>(90)</sup>

As to the choice of Progressive candidates, Innes relates that the <sup>t</sup>best applied "was loyalty to the Führer (Rhodes)".<sup>(90a)</sup> Indeed Jourdan credits Rhodes with arranging not only "all the necessary details in connection with the various constituencies"<sup>(90b)</sup> but also with making the final decision concerning Progressive candidates. Rhodes in effect exercised the same function as "the little gang in Camp Street"<sup>(90c)</sup> - the Commissie van Toezicht comprising S.J. du Toit, N.F. de Waal en Hofmeyr - whom he so bitterly attacked in his election speech in March.

And so the Progressive Party machine could enter the field, adequately supplied with funds, a subservient press

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(88) Walker, W.P.S., p. 102.

(89) Ibid., p. 103.

(90) J. Pooley to J. Rose Innes, 16 March 1898 (R.I.P.)

(90a) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 170.

(90b) P. Jourdan, Cecil Rhodes, p. 57.

(90c) Vindex, op. cit., p. 540.

in the strategic centres a popular platform and suitable candidates. Rhodes and his friends had been responsible for providing the funds and press support, while Garrett could claim to have "played a considerable part in shaping the Progressive Party". (91)

On March 16th the Cape Times addressed a message to the electors of Cape Town, three days before the Western Circle election was due to take place. In view of the fact that the return of all three Progressive candidates - St. Leger, Graham and Faure - was desired, the Cape Times appealed to the voters to support these men and thereby secure the defeat of Neethling, the Bond candidate. The Progressives would be assisted if on an occasion like this the S.A.P.A., by implication, would dismiss "the respects and thoughts for an individual", and sacrifice "everything to the Cause". (92)

The Bond platform for the Legislative Council elections was probably outlined by Neethling, candidate for the Western Circle, in speeches at Fransch Hoek and Paarl. Neethling declared himself to be against compulsory education, the imposition of an excise, the Innes Liquor Bill, the contribution of a battleship to the British Navy and a Redistribution Bill which gave the towns an advantage over the country. (93)

As to the final results of the March election, the only comprehensive report of returns appears to be that of Ons Land. But even this newspaper's analysis of election returns is confused. According to Ons Land's classification of the candidates who secured nomination on February 8th, 11 Bond candidates (excluding Neethling) would contest the 23 seats. The remaining 16 were presumably Progressives and

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(91) E.T.Cook, op. cit., p. 134.

(92) Cape Times, 16 March 1898

(93) Ons Land, 15 February 1898

Independents. Ons Land did not classify them. (94)

On March 26th Ons Land announced that 12 Bond candidates had been returned and 11 Progressives and Independents. If, however, the original classification on February 8th is used as a basis for determining the respective successes of the two main parties, 8 avowed Bondsmen and 10 Progressives were returned, leaving 5 Independents to be accounted for. The Bond claimed 4 of these and conceded one to the Progressives, failing to name them. (95)

According to South Africa, "12 Rhodes and 11 Hofmeyr candidates" had "probably been elected", while Walker states that "a hostile majority" confronted Schreiner in the Legislative Council after the fall of the Sprigg Ministry in October 1898. (97) Ons Land's analysis was presumably inaccurate and the Progressives had indeed scored a narrow victory.

(iii)

The first parliamentary session of 1898 opened on May 20th and ended on June 25th, after Schreiner's no-confidence motion was carried by two votes.

Before Parliament met, Sprigg was confronted with the problem of filling the vacancies caused by the resignation of Upington and te Water, the latter because of the stand taken by the Cabinet on the redistribution issue. (97) (a)

Upington's portfolio was offered to Innes who declined it and was promptly taken to task by the Cape Times for not assuming "responsibility for the new programme", (98) True the Ministry was no longer to be Bond-dominated for te Water's resignation had severed the last link between the Government and Hofmeyr. (99) The prospect of having Sivewright

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(94) Ons Land, 8 February 1898.

(95) Ons Land, 26 March 1898

(96) South Africa, 26 March 1898, p. 529 .

(97) Walker, W.P.S., p. 117.

(97)(a) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 167.

(98) Cape Times, 24 May 1898

(99) Rose Innes, op. cit., p.167.

as a colleague probably determined Innes to refuse the portfolio, for it was Sivewright's conduct in connection with the Logan contract that had caused the Cabinet split in May 1893. On May 13th T.L.Graham became Attorney-General and a few days later T.W.Smartt accepted the portfolio of Colonial Secretary.

In the Speech from the Throne, Milner announced that the time had arrived "when the electoral divisions and the number of their representatives should be brought into line with the distribution of the people to-day"<sup>(100)</sup> and that a Bill had been drafted "providing for the better representation of the people in Parliament."<sup>(101)</sup>

The Minister<sup>ry</sup> was to receive support from the Progressive Party<sup>(102)</sup> while Schreiner as Leader of the Opposition was backed by the Bond members, who constituted the Afrikaner National Party, and Merriman and Sauer.<sup>(103)</sup> On the cross benches sat the "Opposition rump" or Moderates, Innes, Berry, Beard, Hay, Hutton, Jones, J.C.Molteno, Solomon, Smuts and Wiener.<sup>(104)</sup>

The solidarity of the Progressive Party was not lost on Sprigg for it becomes clear from the stand he took on the question of a redistribution of seats, that he was prepared to dispense with support of the Afrikaner National Party. This in itself was an indication that a decided crystallisation of political parties was evident during the first session of 1898. Furthermore Sprigg's attitude showed a decided departure from previous Government practice for not since the entry of the Bond into Cape politics in the

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(100) Cape Hansard, 1898 p. 2.

(101) Ibid., p. 3.

(102) Vide infra.

(103) Walker, W.P.S., pp. 106, 108.

(104) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 168.

early 'eighties, had a Prime Minister been able to take a stand with regard to a major issue without having first received the Bond approval for such a measure. Te Water's resignation indicated that Sprigg would not compromise on the question of redistribution.

But before this measure could be dealt with Brabant moved "that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the practical working of the laws relating to the registration of Parliamentary voters and the system of Parliamentary elections, as exemplified by the registration of voters for the late elections for the Legislative Council..." (105)

On May 31st Schreiner gave notice of his intention to move a vote of no-confidence in the Government. Sprigg regarded Schreiner's motion as an attempt to defeat his Redistribution Bill and insisted on taking the Bill first. (106) (107) Schreiner, acting on Hofmeyr's advice, accepted this "lest he should force Moderates to vote against his motion in order to secure something of the desired redistribution of seats thereafter". (108) Events however were to prove that the Moderates, who voted in favour of the Bill, supported the Sprigg Ministry in the no-confidence division because that Ministry was pledged to enact the Bill.

On June 1st Sprigg moved the second reading of the Redistribution Bill and gave statistics to show the changes which had occurred between 1872 and 1898 in the state of the electorate and the necessity for the measure the Government proposed to introduce. (109)

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(105) Cape Hansard, 1898, p.3.

(106) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 24.

(107) Rose Innes, op. cit., pp. 167-168

(108) Walker, W.P.S., p. 110.

(109) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 33

A Commission had submitted a Majority Report signed by Theron, van der Walt, du Plessis and Douglass favouring the addition of fourteen members to the House, while the Minority Report, agreed upon by Sprigg, Innes and Fuller, proposed to increase the membership of the House by twelve members elected by the country constituencies, five by the towns and one by the University.<sup>(110)</sup> It was on the basis of the Minority Report that the Government Redistribution Bill was drafted.<sup>(111)</sup>

Jagger had explained to the public how the Bill would work<sup>(112)</sup> and for this he was attacked by Merriman in the debate which followed on the second reading. To Merriman Jagger epitomised the Progressive Party member who would benefit by the Bill. In fact, Merriman was prepared to say in answer to the question "What was a Progressive....?" that he was "a man who had a shop in St. George's-street".<sup>(113)</sup> The plot of the Bill and the objects of the Progressives were to put Rhodes at the head of the Government again, Merriman stated, and if the Bill obtained a majority it would be a disaster to South Africa.

To Schreiner the Bill appeared to be the first step in the direction of free trade and was labelled as "this Pride's Purge invented by Sprigg".<sup>(114)</sup> He attacked Rhodes, accusing him of exercising an influence which was keeping active racial feeling, and advising him to withdraw from politics for a period, until the sentiments of the parties had quietened down.<sup>(115)</sup>

On June 20th when the division on the second reading was taken, 42 "Ayes" were counted as against 35 "Nayes".<sup>(116)</sup>

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(110) Ibid.,

(111) Wilmot, op. cit., p. 337  
Hofmeyr, op. cit., p. 525

(112) Cape Times, 23 May 1898

(113) Cape Hansard, 1898 p. 116

(114) Ibid., p. 133.

(115) Ibid..

(116) Ibid., p.205.

Abrahamson, Beard, Berry, Brabant, Brown, Crosbie, de Villiers, Douglass, Faure, Frost, Fuller, Haarhoff, Harris, Hay, Hutton, Innes, Jones, Laing, Lawrence, Louw, J.C. Molteno, Norton, Olivier, Palmer, Rautenbach, Rhodes, Robertson, Ryan, Schermbrucker, Sivewright, Smartt, Smuts, Solomon, Sprigg, Tamplin, Thompson, Uppington, Vanes, Warren, Weil, Wiener and Wood had voted against Schreiner, Merriman Sauer and the Afrikaner National Party.

The proposal to increase the membership of the House was vigorously attacked by Ons Land whose views were quoted by Milner in a dispatch to Chamberlain on May 18th. Ons Land regarded the Bill as "an attempt to give preponderant influence to the towns at the expense of the country or in other words to strengthen the British section of the Assembly at the expense of the Dutch".<sup>(117)</sup> That Milner wholeheartedly supported the Bill, can be judged from his statement, "as far as I can see the measure is a just one". To Milner, the real issue behind the fight over Redistribution was not the effect it would have on the strength of the political parties in the Cape Legislative Assembly. He concluded from the debates and the press comments that the issue could be fairly described "as the question whether the independence of the South African Republic or the welfare of the Cape Colony, as a member of the British Empire, should have the stronger claim upon the Executive and the Parliament of this Colony".<sup>(118)</sup>

Schreiner introduced his no-confidence motion on June 14th. He referred to the silent and complacent policy of the Government in January 1896 and during 1897, the

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(117) M.I.P. p. 254.

(118) Ibid., p. 255

unsatisfactory conduct of the Langeberg campaign, the lack of leadership in the Rinderpest outbreak and the lavish Railway expenditure.<sup>(119)</sup> He laid great stress on the relations of the Colony to the Transvaal, for to Schreiner the most serious charge against the Sprigg Government was its failure to show any "sympathy or conciliatory approach" to the Transvaal and Free State.<sup>(120)</sup> He concluded by appealing to Innes to vote on this occasion as he had done in 1897 when Merriman moved a vote of censure.<sup>(121)</sup>

Innes thereupon explained why he intended to vote against Schreiner's motion. He stated that since 1897 the Government had shown less vacillation than before, and that the Redistribution Bill had made him change his vote.<sup>(122)</sup> He proposed to judge measures on their merits and refused to say, as some did, that one who was a Progressive must not vote for a progressive measure because Rhodes supported it.<sup>(123)</sup>

During the course of his speech Innes referred to the position of the Moderates in Parliament. "It seemed that they were between the hammer of the Jingo and the anvil of the Bond," he declared. "It was not a pleasant position. It might end in political annihilation. Those men who occupied that position might be few in numbers, but the stress to which they would be subjected would weld them into a consolidated party, into a temper which might be of great use to the country".<sup>(124)</sup>

The moderates were however not sufficiently welded together when the division on Schreiner's motion was called, for on June 22nd that group split. Berry, Hutton, Jones and Smuts voted with Innes against the vote of censure,

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(119) Ibid., pp. 136-145.

(120) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 141.

(121) Ibid., p. 145.

(122) Ibid., p. 159.

(123) Ibid., p. 161.

(124) Ibid., p. 162.

while Beard, Hay, Solomon, Wiener and J.C.Moltano voted for it. (125) The Ministry, the Progressive Party and five Moderates had failed by five votes to defeat an opposition consisting of Schreiner, Merriman, Sauer, the other five Moderates and the Bond members. The defection of Beard, Hay, Solomon, Wiener and J.C.Moltano had enabled the Opposition to defeat the Sprigg Ministry and these men thereafter were referred to as the Mugwumps and labelled as a millstone round the neck of the Progressive Party by the Cape Times. (126)

Sprigg immediately asked for a vote of £1,000,000 on account which he received and then applied for a dissolution. (127) The country was thereupon plunged into feverish preparations for a general election, the first in which two clearly defined political parties - the Bond and the Progressives - were to appeal to the Cape electorate.

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(125) Ibid., p. 235.

(126) Cape Times, 22 June 1898

(127) Walker, W.P.S., p. 111.

Chapter IX

(i)

The ground was prepared for the 1898 general election at the same time as the Legislative Council contests were organised.<sup>(1)</sup> But the Progressive Party machine had been decidedly improved since March as becomes apparent from the conduct of the campaign.

During the debate on the Redistribution Bill, Merriman had referred to T.E.Fuller as being the Chairman of the Central Progressive Committee.<sup>(2)</sup> Fuller revealed that this Committee was merely an outgrowth of the Progressive Electoral Committee. Furthermore the central organisation had been called into being because it was necessary, with an eye on the forthcoming general election, to counteract the Bond agencies throughout the Colony which had registered the farming districts "up to the hilt".<sup>(3)</sup> The origin of the Central Progressive Committee was in no way connected with Rhodes, Fuller declared.

The headquarters of the Central Progressive Committee were in Cotswold Chambers, Church Square, Cape Town<sup>(4)</sup> and Owen Lewis, the Secretary of the Committee, had been brought out from England by Rhodes.<sup>(5)</sup> Innes described Lewis as "an astute election agent.... well versed in electioneering wiles and stratagems"<sup>(6)</sup> and to judge from the number of Progressives who were either unseated because of election petitions or resigned "rather than face the music",<sup>(7)</sup> it would appear that Innes' description was indeed accurate.

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(1) Vide supra.

(2) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 126.

(3) Ibid., p. 187.

(4) J.T.Molteno, Further South African Recollections, p. 48.

(5) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 170.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Walker. L.d.V., p. 325.

Help was also forthcoming from the South African Association in London for South Africa reported that this body was determined to contribute its share to the conduct of the crucial election campaign and sent out a Cornishman - Stokes Philp - to the Cape to organise what was described as "the Loyalist section of the Electors,...."(8)

With regard to the press, "Every English newspaper of importance in southern Africa was on the Progressive side,..." Walker states (9). Financially, the Party was liberally endowed, Rhodes and several Cape Town gentlemen being the chief contributors. (10).

The position occupied by the Innes group in this scheme of things must now be referred to. In the Cape Town constituency it was shown that there was no unanimity between the Association and the S.A. League as to a choice of candidates. Jagger had returned to the S.A.P.A. fold and the inclusion of his name in the list of candidates was the cause for dissension. The S.A.P.A. adopted St. Leger, T.E. Fuller, Brown and Jagger as its candidates for the contest while the S.A. League was prepared to support the candidature of all but Jagger. T.J. Anderson, a member of the League Executive Committee, was preferred to Jagger, (11) and so the election found these two bodies divided on this important question.

Then there were apparently still some colonists who looked to Innes to come out as leader of the Progressive Party. This view, was expressed by Richard Rose Innes when he appealed to his brother to issue a manifesto, if not individually, then as the leader of the S.A.P.A. for there was an idea taking root that Innes would not form a Government on any conditions,

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(8) South Africa, 9 July 1898, p. 82.

(9) Walker, W.P.S., p. 113.

(10) Vide supra.

(11) Cape Times, 2 July 1898

and this had to be refuted - "if only to allow people to see that Rhodes is not the only possible leader". (12) Richard maintained ".... the country is not for Rhodes but for you - only they are waiting and looking to you for a lead. Give us that. This is all we ask for in view of the Coming Election". (13) Moreover, Richard was so convinced that Innes <sup>sh</sup> would speak out soon, that he wrote to him again three days later, stating the inadvisability of such action before Sprigg delivered his address at East London early in July. (14)

Innes, however, issued no manifesto and gave no indication that he intended to make himself available for the leadership of the Progressive Party: Sprigg had officially assumed that rôle . In fact, Innes according to Ons Land on 17 September 1898 had chosen to remain an Independent. As to the other former Moderates, the Mugwumps - Beard, Solomon and Wiener - did not contest any seats, Hay stood as an Independent and J.C. Molteno as an Afrikaner Party candidate. Berry, Jones and Smuts stood as Progressives and Hutton remained out of the contest. That Berry, Jones and Smuts should have chosen to follow Sprigg rather than Innes, must be attributed to the importance they presumably attached to the Redistribution Bill and the need for a consolidation of anti-Bond forces. Innes was not to be browbeaten into joining the Rhodes camp.

Sprigg in his speech at East London declared that it was the intention of the Government to maintain and strengthen the Imperial connection with South Africa; secure the redistribution of seats; introduce compulsory education; reform the mining laws; introduce legislation which would lead to the development of latent agricultural resources of the land;

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(12) R. Rose. Innes to J. Rose Innes, 27 June 1898 (R.I.P.)

(13) Ibid.

(14) Ibid., 30 June 1898.

reform the fiscal policy of the country and contribute to the Navy. (15) In a later statement Sprigg announced that he and Rhodes were agreed that the latter "should not return to the premiership, but should devote his undivided energies to his good work in the north". (16)

On July 19th Schreiner delivered his manifesto speech at Malmesbury. (17) He referred to Sprigg's statement that the election would be fought on the principle of British supremacy and maintained that no true Afrikaners were opposed to British supremacy. "Sprigg's British supremacy meant Rhodes' supremacy", he stated. "The Afrikaners were loyal, and wanted to get rid of men like Rhodes and Sprigg, who were a danger to British supremacy, and who, with their false progressive policy, would ruin the country". (18) The Redistribution Bill was regarded by Schreiner as an instrument which would take the power "completely out of the hands of the country party" and put it into "the hands of the ports and the other large towns". (19) With regard to fiscal policy, he stated that the "welfare of the Colony depended upon their upholding the principle of Protection". (20)

In addition Schreiner advocated "a reasonable contribution" to the Navy; the gradual introduction of compulsory education and "a firm and absolutely just policy towards the vast numbers of aboriginal natives, yet scarcely emerging from barbarism". (21) And in order to prevent Rhodes, recently restored to his seat on the Board of the B.S.A. Company (22) from once again combining the functions of Colonial premier and "virtual dictator of Rhodesia", Schreiner urged the electors to vote for the Bond candidates in the forthcoming election. (23)

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(15) Cape Times, 11 July 1898

(16) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 170.

(17) Cape Times, 20 July 1898.

(18) Ibid.,

(19) Ibid.

(20) Ibid.

(21) Ibid.

(22) Walker, W.P.S., p. 109.

(23) Cape Times, 20 July 1898

While Rhodes may have told Sprigg that he would not return to the premiership and it was accepted that the Progressive Party was officially to be led by Sprigg, this did not prevent Rhodes from speaking in support of Progressive candidates from various platforms. And it was in these speeches that Rhodes revealed that he was in fact the Party leader and what his primary object was in trying to secure a victory at the polls for the Progressive Party.

No one speech delivered by Rhodes can be quoted to show how he viewed the political situation in the Colony and South Africa in 1898. Nevertheless it is possible to arrive at a fair estimate of the situation as he saw it from his speeches at Barkly West on August 3rd, at Longlands on August 4th and at Vryburg on September 3rd. To Rhodes it seemed clear that the white races "would vote for a union of South Africa, of all the states and colonies. The Transvaal, the Free State, the North, Natal and the Cape Colony should, for simplicity of working, work together on a practical basis - they should be one".<sup>(24)</sup> Such a union would be able to deal effectively with police defence, railway tariffs and the native question.<sup>(25)</sup>

This great issue of union would only be achieved, however, if the question of equal rights and justice to both English and Dutch was the basis of any policy.<sup>(26)</sup> And it was Kruger's policy of denying equal rights to the "new population" that was proving the stumbling block to such a union. Rhodes indicated why this was so. In the Transvaal there were, "according to a careful estimate, seventy thousand to eighty thousand of the new population, and eighteen thousand male adults of the old, but if you add the women and

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(24) Vindex, op, cit., p. 565.

(25) Ibid., pp. 565-566.

(26) Ibid., p. 568.

children as regards the old population, you will have to multiply the total by four", Rhodes explained. "There will then be about seventy thousand of the old population but the distinction that you must make is this - the new population consists almost entirely of males and the old population are men with wives and families. Thus you will see that, supposing that the new population have equal rights with the old population as regards votes, there will be one hundred, thousand voters". (27)

Rhodes estimated that there were 100,000 voters in the Cape Colony, in Rhodesia about 10,000 white males, in Natal "a white population of forty thousand, about one in four of whom were voters", in the Free State 15,000 voters and, provided of course that the "new population" were given equal franchise rights, 100,000 voters in the Transvaal. The total of voters in South Africa would therefore be about 235,00 or 240,000 voters and Rhodes stated "... I am sure a margin (would be) in favour of a united South Africa". (28)

Now while Rhodes failed to make the point in his analysis, the implication appears to have been that by securing equal franchise rights for the Uitlanders, they would form the majority of the Transvaal electorate and in that way a Raad in favour of closer union would be constituted.

It was therefore essential that the Transvaal be brought into line, and the Cape electorate had it in <sup>its</sup> power to effect this. The fight in the Colony was to oust the Krugerite Bond. By voting for Bond candidates, Rhodes implied representatives would be returned to the Cape House "who (29) would be prepared to carry out President Kruger's programme; and so it was the duty of the electors who desired closer

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(27) Ibid., p. 564.

(28) Ibid., pp. 564-565.

(29) Ibid., p. 548.

union, both Dutch and English, to vote for the Progressives.

In each of the speeches Rhodes delivered, he appealed to "the Dutch farmer equally with the Englishman" (30) to support him, an indication that he had in fact become the virtual leader of the Party, though Sprigg officially was accepted as such. What is more, the appeals Rhodes directed to the "Dutch" voters is evidence to support the view that "the great amalgamator" was indeed determined that his closer union plan should have support from the two European sections of the Cape population.

In the light of these statements, it becomes clear too why Rhodes so glibly agreed to change the Progressive slogan which he had first formulated in April 1897. Then he had stated that he was in favour of "Equal rights for every white man south of the Zambesi". (31) When some coloured men at <sup>the</sup> Klipdam meeting on August 1st 1898 asked him to amplify this statement, he asked them whether they considered that they should have equal rights too, and on receiving an affirmative reply, stated, "Then I will alter it if you like to (32) equal rights for every civilized man south of the Zambesi".

The elections in the Colony would be fought on the same lines as those in March 1898: Equal Rights vs. Race Domination, Transvaal vs. British supremacy and the Union Jack vs. Die Vierkleur. (33)

Now, while Rhodes neglected to emphasise the value of redistribution to his larger scheme, it must be concluded that he fully appreciated the value of such a Bill which would entrench the town party in Parliament. The Progressives might have desired redistribution solely for the advantage they hoped to secure over the country party in Parliament while Innes and his followers were probably determined to

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(30) Ibid., pp. 571, 593.

(31) Vide supra.

(32) Cape Times, 3 August 1898.

(33) Walker, W.P.S., p. 113.

champion redistribution solely to remedy the existing inequality of representation between town and country. Rhodes on the other hand saw the matter purely and simply as one which would promote his closer union scheme in which the Cape was to play a dominant rôle.

That the Cape electorate was profoundly influenced by events taking place in the Transvaal in the months preceding the general election, may be deduced from the views Milner expressed to Chamberlain. He stated that Schreiner's manifesto and speeches, with their constant reference to loyalty of the Afrikaners, was a device to catch votes and suggested that "the signal has been made to Pretoria to be 'conciliatory'," (34) for the effect was visible in many ways - "in the tone of the Swaziland negotiations, in the temporary suspension of measures harassing to the Uitlanders, and in the reduction in the rate of duty on Colonial tobacco". (35) All this was necessary as "It would be rather awkward if, in the middle of this 'flapdoodle' (election campaign) the Transvaal Government were to be seen violently quarrelling with H.M.'s Government". (36)

Headlam maintains that Transvaal support for the Bond was not limited to the adoption of a conciliatory policy, for he declares that information was received on June 24th, 1898 "of decisions taken by the Executive Council at Pretoria to send more funds to Mr. Hofmeyr's party with the view of securing the success of the Bond in the coming elections". (37) But Hofmeyr maintains that in the Bond papers "there is not a single communication from the Transvaal," to substantiate the charges of Rhodes and his followers that the Bond campaign was "run on Transvaal secret service money,...." (38)

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(34) Mil. P., p.265.

(35) Ibid.

(36) Ibid.

(37) Ibid., footnote 3, pp.264-265.

(38) Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.526-527.

The general election which started in August concluded on September 15th when the Vryburg contest was decided. Ons Land announced the results on September 17th. (39) Four Progressives were returned unopposed: Smuts (Cape Division) Sprigg and Brabant (East London) and Weil (Mafeking). The following Progressives successfully contested 33 seats:- St.Leger, T.E.Fuller, Brown and Anderson (Cape Town), Douglass and Wood (Grahamstown), Sivewright (Stellenbosch), Olivier (Oudtshoorn), Lawrence, Col. Harris, R.Harris and Stead (Kimberley), Walton and Wynne (Port Elizabeth), Croshie (Albany), Berry and Frost (Queenstown), Rhodes and Oats (Namaqualand) A.J.Fuller (Tembuland), Tamplin and Garrett (Victoria East), Iaing and Hockly (Fort Beaufort), Schermbrucker and Warren (Kingwilliamstown), Zietsman (Griqualand East). Rhodes and Hill (Barkly West), Lee and Vanes (Uitenhage), Haarhoff and Fincham (Vryburg).

Of the Afrikaner Party candidates, four were returned unopposed: Du Plessis and Joubert (Albert), Van Heerden and Du Plessis (Cradock). The remaining seats were won for that Party by D.C. de Waal and D.J.Marais (Piketberg) Krige (Stellenbosch), Hoffman and J.S.Marais (Paarl), Schoeman (Oudtshoorn), Schreiner and Smuts (Malmesbury), Searle and Raubenheimer (George), Wienand and J.T.Molteno (Somerset East), Te Water and Smith (Graaff-Reinet), Merriman and De Wet (Wodehouse), Sauer and Botha (Aliwal North), Theron and Du Toit (Richmond), Van Wijk and Van den Vijver (Riversdal), Van der Walt and N.P. de Waal (Colesberg), Beyers and Dempers (Caledon), Wolfaardt and Joubert (Swollen-dam), Graaff and Rabie (Worcester), Oosthuizen and Weeber (Beaufort West), Kuhn and Immelman (Victoria West) Van der Merwe and Van Zijl (Clanwilliam). Innes (unopposed, Cape

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(39) Ons Land, 17 September 1898.

Division) and Sampson (Albany) successfully contested the elections as Independents. Ons Land included them as supporters of the "Government Party" and credited that Party with securing 39 of the 79 seats. The Afrikaner Party had thus defeated its opponents by the narrow margin of 1 seat

Milner analysed the returns and concluded that the Progressives polled 44,403 votes as against 37,901 for the Bond. The Progressives thus had received an overall majority of 6,502 votes. After quoting these figures in a despatch to Chamberlain, Milner stated: "The case for Redistribution is therefore greatly strengthened by this object lesson". (40)

Rhodes was elected in two constituencies and a fresh election was therefore necessitated in the Namaqualand seat which he resigned. The Progressive Party's strength in the House was thus reduced to 38, for it was unlikely that the new election would be completed before October 7th, the date on which Milner had insisted Parliament should be summoned. (41)

Certain important deductions can be made on the basis of the election results. First, only two Independents were returned whereas in 1894 nine "unattached" candidates and eighteen Oppositionists were successful. Secondly, only the Stellenbosch and Oudtshoorn constituencies had adhered to former political practice of each returning two representatives from opposing parties. Here then we see the tendency of parties to crystallize into highly organised bodies, gaining ground rapidly. Thirdly, it becomes obvious that the two political parties in the House would be divided on racial lines. For this the Raid had been responsible. Finally, the Progressive Party's strength was shown to lie mainly in the larger towns; it can

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(40) Mil. P. - p. 275.

(41) Ibid.

therefore be said with justice that it had become primarily an urban party as opposed to the rural Afrikaner Party - or as Schreiner chose to call it - the South African Party.

The achievement of the Progressive Party in the general election of 1898 is noteworthy. The formation of the Party officially dated from February 1897 and up to then very little formal organisation of members had been effected. The S.A.P.A. and S.A. League had admittedly prepared the ground for the election as from 1896, but the bulk of the work remained to be done in the twelve months preceding August 1898. When it is realised that the Progressive Party pitted its strength against the Afrikaner Party, which was backed by a very efficient party machine of fourteen years standing, the final result was indeed a remarkable achievement for the Progressives.

(ii)

It appears from Milner's correspondence that Rhodes had urged Sprigg to put off summoning Parliament until late in October, as Rhodes had been given to understand by Harris that the Progressives stood to gain another seat as a result of certain election returns which were being scrutinised. (42) This would have meant a majority of at least one for the Progressive Party in the House. But Milner refused to allow this for he maintained "that the vote on account was exhausted at the beginning of September and that, at the time when the Vote was obtained, there was a general understanding, and indeed something like a pledge on the part of the Ministers, that Parliament should reassemble at the earliest possible date after the election,..." (43)

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(42) Ibid., pp. 272-273.

(43) Ibid., p. 273.

Milner's attitude was responsible for a "coolness" between him and the Ministers, for he refused to be moved by the "interminable arguments to the contrary" addressed to him "by the nominal (J.G.S.) and the real (C.J.R.) head of the Government -..."<sup>(44)</sup> That Milner would have liked very much to enable Sprigg to escape defeat, is revealed by him, for he stated: "Though I, of course, want Sprigg to stay in, I disbelieve absolutely in the policy of such tactics"<sup>(45)</sup>. He felt that the "Rhodes cum Harris scheme for keeping office per fas et nefas is just the Raid over again. I mean it is the same attempt to gain prematurely by violent and unscrupulous means what you could get honestly and without violence if you would only wait and work for it."<sup>(46)</sup>

Milner was not persuaded by the arguments that the fall of a "loyal" Ministry would result in the Party going to pieces with Rhodes and Company throwing up the game in disgust and ruining the Imperial cause in South Africa. He felt that the situation could best be likened to that of a Captain of a cricket XI saying to the umpire, "Unless you cheat, I won't play" and concluded "What rubbish!"<sup>(47)</sup>

While efforts were being made to persuade the Governor to agree to Parliament being summoned late in October, a scheme was afoot to secure the defection of Bondsmen who had been returned to Parliament. On August 23rd a Cape Times leader, under the heading "Rat to the Progressives", announced that: "Failing a Progressive majority, it is now hoped that even in the event of a Bond majority being returned, it will be impossible for Mr. Schreiner to carry on the Queen's Government, because some of the men now returned

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(44) Ibid.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Ibid., p. 274.

(47) Ibid.

as Bond might be good enough to 'rat' to the Progressive Party". (48) The Cape Times hoped that the Party would not "set too much store by possibilities of this character" for there was "no place in the Progressive ranks for 'ratting' Bond members" unless they were prepared to vote "progressive" on "the one pressing question - that of redistribution of seats". (49)

By September 29th South Africa could report that the Progressive outlook was more promising as four moderate Bondsmen, who were "distrustful of Messrs. Schreiner and Merriman's pro-Transvaal policy", were desirous of joining the Progressive ranks on terms which were "under consideration..." (50)

During the session, Krige, the Bond member for Stellenbosch, threw light on the subject when he stated that he had been approached by certain parties and offered money. (51) A Select Committee of the House was thereupon appointed to investigate the charge. (52) In evidence before this Committee it was revealed that an offer of £3,000 was made to Krige by D.F. and P.J. Bosman shortly after the Stellenbosch election result was announced. This offer was made on condition that Krige would give his political support in the House to the Progressives. (53)

In presenting the Report of the Select Committee Innes stated that it was established that the offer was made to Krige in September on the conditions mentioned above; that the offer was made by D.F. and P.J. Bosman of Cape Town, who were guilty of the offence of attempting to bribe a member of the House as defined by S.7 of Act 13 of 1883;

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(48) Cape Times, 23 August 1898

(49) Ibid.

(50) South Africa, 29 September 1898, p. 76.

(51) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 35.

(52) Ibid., p. 54.

(53) A.15. - 1898, pp. 2-4.

and finally that Krige did not accept the offer and did not receive any bribe, either from the Bosmans or anyone else. The Committee had been "unable to discover any proof as to the complicity of any third person in the transaction". (54)

When this report is examined against the background of the state of parties prior to Parliament meeting in October, it does indicate how important a Progressive majority was deemed to be. Such a majority was particularly important if Rhodes' closer union plan was to succeed but whether Rhodes or his supporters were behind the offer of a bribe to Krige was not established by the Select Committee.

On October 6th a meeting of Progressive members was held and there it was "agreed unanimously to support the Minister's programme for the present session". (55) The formal opening of Parliament was deferred until October 10th because of the inability of the parties to agree to the election of a Speaker. (56) The Opposition succeeded however in voting solidly in favour of Dr. Bisset Berry as Speaker, thereby increasing the majority in the House to two. (57)

Schreiner tabled his motion of no-confidence and on the following day Milner exchanged notes with Sprigg concerning the Cape Times report that the Minority was determined "to accept defeat on one issue and on one issue only - Redistribution". (58) This report was however denied by Sprigg for he replied that the Supply Bill "would continue to stand as the first of the Government Bills, and if it were rejected, he would at once resign". (59)

Schreiner's no-confidence motion was carried by 39 votes to 37 and the division revealed that the Progressives Anderson, Brabant, Brown, Crosbie, Douglass,

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(54) Ibid., pp. iii-v

(55) Cape Times, 7 October 1898

(56) South Africa, 8 October 1898, p. 81.

(57) Walker, W.P.S., p. 116.

Rose Innes, op, cit., p. 172.

(58) Mil. P., p. 279 .

(59) Ibid., p.280.

Fincham, Frost, T.E.Fuller, A.J.Fuller, Garrett, Haarhoff, D.Harris, F.R.Harris, Hill, Hockly, Innes, Laing, Lawrence, Lee, Oats, Olivier, Rhodes, Sampson, Schermbrucker, Sivewright, C.P.Smuts, Sprigg, Stead, St.Leger, Tamplin, Vanes, Walton, Warren, Weil, Wood, Wynne and Zietsman had opposed Schreiner's South African Party in the House.<sup>(60)</sup>

The Progressive Party had stood four-square behind its leaders on this occasion but this solidarity was not to be maintained throughout the remainder of the session.

(iii)

In October a Bond-Moderate Ministry took office under the Premiership of Schreiner. The Cabinet consisted of Schreiner (Prime Minister and Colonial Secretary), Merriman (Treasurer), Sauer (Commissioner of Public Works), A.J.Herholdt (Secretary for Agriculture), R. Solomon (Attorney-General) and de Water (Minister without Portfolio).<sup>(61)</sup> While the Ministers were divided on issues such as redistribution and Protection<sup>(62)</sup> in one important respect they appeared to be unanimous, namely in their avowed opposition to Rhodes.

In the House the return of P.H.Faure, the Progressive candidate for Namaqualand, gave the Government a precarious majority of two,<sup>(63)</sup> while in the Legislative Council a Progressive majority of one confronted the Ministry. This was the unenviable position of the Ministry when Schreiner stated that the second reading of the Redistribution Bill would not be asked for, and that it was

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(60) Cape Hansard, 1898, p.16.

(61) Walker, W.P.S., p. 116.

(62) Ibid., p. 119.

(63) Mil. P., p. 282.

the intention of the Government to bring in "a fair and equitable measure", but not during that session. (64)

In the debate which followed on Schreiner's statement of Government policy, Rhodes explained that there was no possibility "of cordial agreement" between the Government and Opposition, unless arrangements were made for redistribution. (65) He suggested that Schreiner should consider asking for a conference with the Leader of the Opposition "to bring about a settlement of the whole redistribution question". (66) On October 31st Schreiner moved that the order for the second reading of the Parliamentary Representation Bill be discharged, and during the course of the debate D.C. de Waal, a supporter of the Ministry and close friend of Rhodes, moved for a postponement with a view to a conference. (67) This amendment was seconded by Rhodes who stated that he had seen de Waal's resolutions just before the House met, "but had no hand in drafting it". (68) As de Waal's amendment was carried with the aid of the Speaker's vote (69) the House adjourned and a conference arranged between Schreiner, Sauer, te Water, Sprigg, Rhodes and Innes. (70)

A Bill drafted by Schreiner and Innes was introduced and passed as an agreed measure on November 25th. The Parliamentary Additional Representation Bill provided for sixteen new seats, the creation of single member constituencies to a large extent, the increase of members from one to two in Griqualand East, Tembuland and Uitenhage, two to three in Worcester and George, two to four in Port Elizabeth and four to five in Cape Town. In

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(64) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 23

(65) Ibid., p. 31.

(66) Ibid., p. 34.

(67) Ibid., p. 159.

(68) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 161.

Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 173.

(69) Ibid., p. 171.

(70) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 174.

addition it was laid down that the return of additional members should take place before the next ordinary session of Parliament. (71)

The Progressive Party, Innes and Sampson, had stood firm on the question of redistribution and because of the defection of D.C. de Waal, it had been possible to force the Government to introduce the Bill during the 1898 session.

On the question of fiscal policy, the Progressives were not able to present the same determined front. Innes had moved "That this House, while most anxious that the colony of Natal should enter into the Customs Union, is nevertheless desirous of securing terms more suitable to the fiscal and other interests of this colony than those contained in the Draft Convention, more especially in regard to the duties upon the necessaries of life". (72) This motion was defeated by 60 votes to 16, only Anderson, Brown, Brabant, T.E.Fuller, Garrett, D.Harris, F.R.Harris, Innes, Lawrence, Oats, C.P.Smuts, Stead, St.Leger, Tamplin, Walton and Wynne supporting it, while the Progressives Crosbie, Douglass, Fincham, Frost, A.J. Fuller, Hill, Hockly, Laing, Lee, Rhodes, Schermbrucker, Sivewright, Sprigg, Vanes, Warren, Weil, Wood and Zietsman and the Independent Sampson, had chosen to side with the Government on this question.

That the Progressives should have split on the question of a reduction of duties on the necessaries of life, demonstrated quite clearly that the apparent consolidation of the Party during the general election and subsequently on the redistribution issue, did not extend to fiscal policy. Almost half the Progressive Party still adhered to the policy of protection which the Bond and S.A.League organisations

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(71) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 265.

(72) Ibid., p. 64.

supported, while the remainder of the Progressives upheld the free-trade doctrine of the S.A.P.A..

A debate which further revealed the lack of unity in the Progressive ranks was that which followed on Brabant's motion to repeal Section 1 of Act 29 of 1897 - the Pondoland Laws Act. This section gave the Government power to imprison a man for three months at a time without any right of appeal (73) and was intended originally "to deal swiftly with incipient troubles in Native areas,..." (74) Brabant maintained that Section 1 struck at the root of individual liberty (75) and was supported by Tamplin, Brown, Garrett, Innes and A.J. Fuller. The proviso was defended in debate by the Progressives Frost and Zietsman, while Rhodes desired to see Section 1 applied only to native chiefs. (76)

In the division which followed, the motion to repeal the proviso was negatives by 48 votes to 20. Of the Progressives, Crosbie, Faure, Fincham, Frost, Haarhoff, D.Harris, Hill, Lawrence, Lee, Olivier, Rhodes, Sampson, Sivewright, Stead, Weil and Zietsman (opposed) the motion while Brabant, Brown, T.E.Fuller, A.J.Fuller, Hockly, Iaing, Oats, Schermbrucker, C.P. Smuts, Sprigg, St.Leger, Tamplin, Walton, Warren, Wood and Wynne (opposed) it. (77) The Progressive Party had split on this issue.

Judging by the divergencies within the Progressive Party on the questions of fiscal policy and the Pondoland Laws Act, it can be seen that in 1898 party solidarity had only been achieved on the constitutional issue of redistribution. The rigidities of party discipline were as yet not accepted by Progressive members of Parliament. This is in no way surprising when it is realised that the Progressives

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(73) Cape Hansard, 1897, p. 440.

(74) Walker, W.P.S., p. 98.

(75) Cape Hansard, 1898, p. 42.

(76) Ibid., p. 49.

(77) Ibid., p. 112.

had only just embarked on the course which would lead to the establishment of a clearly-defined political party in the House, with its members pledged to support a distinctive political programme.

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### Conclusion

The political movement which culminated in the formation of the Progressive Party in 1898 dated from 1884, for the isolated attempts made during the 'eighties by English-speaking colonists to organise themselves politically, were the necessary preludes to the movement which gained momentum during the following decade. There was clearly a need for a political movement "on the other side" after the Afrikaner Bond became established and in these circumstances it followed that the new movement would assume an anti-Bond character. And so we find the first efforts to counter-act the influence of the Afrikaner Party in Parliament manifested in the aims and objects adopted by the sponsors of the Empire League, Political Union and Frontier Party.

After 1890 opposition to the growing power of the Bond was giving an added impetus when retrograde measures such as the Scab Law Amendment Act, the Franchise Act, the Constitutional Amendment Act and the labour tax and franchise provisions of the Glen Grey Act were put on the Statute-book. And once the anti-Bond electors accepted the fact that only by organising themselves politically, could further retrogressive measures be counter-acted, the stage was set for the formation of a new political party.

Various factors served to retard the development of this anti-Bond party. Initially, the Bond was consolidating its position and unable to make extravagant legislative demands. Hofmeyr's policy of sweet reasonableness, coupled with the fact that the Upington, Sprigg and Rhodes administrations received support in the House from the Afrikaner Party, tended to minimise the need for any anti-Bond party.

Then too the anti-Bond movement was impeded by the fact that the politically conscious colonists were by and large Eastern Province farmers. They were essentially loyal to the Upington and Sprigg administrations in the 'eighties and transferred this loyalty to Rhodes from 1890. And it was because of their approval of Rhodes' policy of Imperial expansion into the interior, that the Farmers' Party was reluctant to form a political party which would be diametrically opposed to the Bond - Rhodes' source of political power. Furthermore, the Eastern Province farmers were in favour of the Bond policy of Protection, only differing on the question of an excise duty on Colonial brandy.

The prevalence of the parish pump influence in Colonial politics was yet another hindrance to the development of a political party on the other side. In 1884 the Queenstown Free Press declared that the country was "under the administration of deputations, petitions, Chambers of Commerce, and farmers' meetings".<sup>(1)</sup> In 1893 the Cape Times indicated that Kingwilliamstown, Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth and East London had sent members to Parliament who were pledged to promote local interests,<sup>(2)</sup> so that it becomes palpably clear how pre-occupied constituents were with local needs. And it was this deep-rooted spirit of localism, linked with the reluctance to upset the status quo, which prevented the formation of an effective political party in 1893.

Had the members for Eastern Province constituencies and the electors they represented been prepared to abandon

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(1) Queenstown Free Press, 17 June 1884.

(2) Cape Times, 15 September 1893.

their pre-occupation with local needs and refused to give independent support to the Bond-dominated Rhodes Ministry, they stood to gain the support of Innes. This would have effected a union of East and West and laid the foundation of a national political party, capable of presenting a determined front to anti-Bond forces. But this was not done and during 1895 Innes turned to the newly-formed South African Political Association to provide him with the nucleus of a political party which would strive to introduce pure party government in Colonial politics.

This step proved to be of primary importance in the future development of the Progressive Party, for it gave rise to the growth of two distinct groups within the Progressive Party; a Liberal or Moderate group intent on developing party government on non-racial lines, and pledged to introduce free-trade, and an Extreme group, content at first to retain the system of groups and coalitions and determined to perpetuate the economic doctrine of protection. This Extreme or Progressive group which formed the nucleus of the Progressive Party after the Raid, eventually adopted the doctrine of party government, but continued to remain distinct from the Liberal or Moderate group because of its adherence to protection and, <sup>the development of a</sup> distinctly racial character.

By 1895, however, it had become apparent that the disaffected colonists accepted the fact that corporate action was necessary to stay the continuation of mischievous legislation. The powerful Central Farmers' Association had decided to set itself up as a political party and accepted the principle of party government. The stage was set for corporate political action by those constituents who had hitherto been reluctant to combine in order to achieve their objects. All that was required to attract other anti-Bond

colonists to the Farmers' Party was some major issue to accelerate the movement and crystallise party divisions. The Jameson Raid provided this stimulus.

The Farmers' Party in a different guise was able to appeal to both urban and rural electors for support in order to maintain British supremacy in South Africa and champion the Uitlander cause. The majority of anti-Bond colonists embraced the South African League and its outgrowth - the Progressive Party. The movement was further consolidated when the important constitutional issue - redistribution - was adopted as a major plank in the Party's political programme. The political power of the Afrikaner Bond could perhaps be effectively challenged if the rapid-growing towns received something like fair representation as against the Bond rural constituencies.

Both in Parliament and in the country the anti-Bond forces were thus prepared to divide on clear-cut political lines. Party organisation during the 1898 general election was responsible for the defeat of all but two independent candidates, a clear indication that pure party government could henceforth be developed and the unhealthy drift towards a system of groups and coalitions stayed. At the end of the nineteenth century the Cape Colony was entering upon the era of two party government, thirty years after its introduction in Britain. The disappearance of Innes' Third Party from the political scene bore testimony to the fact.

But the principle of pure party government was not firmly established in Cape politics immediately after the general election of 1898. This the divisions during the parliamentary session clearly demonstrated. Indeed it seemed unlikely that the rigidities of party discipline would be

established until both Rhodes and Innes ceased to be members of the Legislative Assembly. After the General Election, Rhodes could still rely on a Bondsman like D.C. de Waal to support his demand for redistribution, and Innes had supporters for his fiscal reform policy among the Progressives. While these two politicians remained in Parliament, the consolidation of Progressive forces appeared to be hampered.

In this respect it is interesting to note that the Progressive Party only emerged as a disciplined body in the House after Innes' acceptance of the chief justiceship of the Transvaal and Rhodes' death.<sup>(3)</sup> These two events took place within the space of a few days - in March 1902.

Reference must now be made to the leadership of the Progressive Party and the effect this had on the character of the movement. Innes was regarded as the obvious leader of the Party as far back as 1893 and had he been prepared to accept the position then and undertaken the task of moulding Progressive forces, he could have influenced the future development of the Party markedly. When the Raid occurred he might have been firmly established as leader of the Party and, in that position, able to prevent the Party from adopting a distinctly racial character. But Innes was fundamentally unsuited to play the rôle of a forceful politician; his essentially judicial approach to questions was a handicap and, holding the <sup>vily</sup> tricky liberal and progressive views he did, he was unable to compromise in politics.

Agnes Merriman in 1897 wrote, "It is a 1000 pities Mr. Innes did not go on to the Bench as a Judge, he is no earthly good as a politician".<sup>(4)</sup> No doubt Innes was more suited to be a judge, but how much greater could his influence have been on Colonial and South African politics had he been

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(3) Rose Innes, op. cit., p. 199

(4) Agnes Merriman to Charlotte Barry, 6 May 1897. (M.P.).

able to use his admirable qualities in order to steer the Progressive Party along a more moderate and liberal course.

But Innes was out of tune with the times. The Raid had evoked intolerance and bitterness; a demand for political leadership which would give expression to popular feeling. Innes was clearly unsuited to lead the Party which was avowedly anti-Bond and anti-Kruger. Rhodes, bent on effecting his closer union scheme within the next five years, was therefore left to lead the Progressive Party. The differences in political outlook between Rhodes and Innes is perhaps best illustrated by the following quotation: "All men without distinction are allured by immediate advantages; great minds alone are excited by distant good". (5)

Rhodes became the leader of the Progressive Party and intended to use it to further his scheme of closer union. While Rhodes professed merely to be implementing the desires of all South Africans for a united nation and condemned the racial cleavage in the country, he nevertheless had been responsible for the racial split. What is more he fostered this unhealthy atmosphere by placing himself at the head of the Progressive Party which was avowedly anti-Kruger and anti-Bond. He had it in his power to prevent a widening of the gap between Afrikaner and Progressive Parties, but because the conquest of the Transvaal meant more to him than the welfare of the Cape Colony, he neglected to modify his demands. The ardour with which he pursued his scheme of closer union by constitutional means, demonstrated quite clearly that he was motivated essentially by "immediate advantages".

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(5) Schiller, History of the Thirty Years' War, p. 42  
(quoted by Iwan-Muller, op. cit. p. 326)

The fact that Rhodes was able to assume the leadership of the Progressive Party, while still adhering to the Bond principle of Protection, allows us to speculate on the truly progressive and liberal character of the new party. It would appear that the Party was only progressive inasmuch as it desired to introduce a General Compulsory Scab Act, a compulsory system of education for European children and a redistribution of seats. On the question of Protection the Progressives were only prepared to concede a slight reduction on the duties on foodstuffs, while on a fundamentally liberal issue, such as the freedom from arbitrary arrest, half the Progressives held decidedly retrogressive views. It would seem that with the formation of the Afrikaner and Progressive parties, the spirit of liberation<sup>ism</sup> was slowly disappearing from Colonial politics.

Finally an analogy between the growth of the Afrikaner and Progressive parties suggests itself. Hofmeyr's Boeren Bescherminings Verenigingen served to "awaken political feeling among the Afrikaners in the Colony; the Farmers' Associations played a similar rôle in arousing English-speaking colonists. The Transvaal War of 1877-1881 gave an impetus to the Rev. S.J. du Toit's Afrikander Bond; the Jameson Raid of 1896 provided the Farmers' Party with the rallying cries so necessary to consolidate the English-speaking electorate. Rhodes was to use both the Afrikaner and Progressive Parties in an attempt to achieve his goal.

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## APPENDIX A.

### Draft Programme of the South African Confederation Union.

"The Confederation Union adopts as its principles (with such modifications and additions as may in the course of discussion appear advisable):-

1. A Confederation of the various States, viz.: the Cape Colony in different provinces, the Transvaal, the Free State, and Natal.
2. Local self-government.
3. A uniform system of native administration.
4. A central Senate, in which each of the States shall be represented, the Senate to sit at the capital of the Union, which must be chosen for general convenience.
5. Entire independence of action, within the limits of the Union, to be granted by the English Government.
6. England to retain control over all parts for Imperial purposes. "

- East London Dispatch, 11 August, 1883.

## APPENDIX B.

### Declaration of Principles of the Empire League.

- "1. The fundamental object of this League is to maintain unimpaired the connection which now subsists between this Colony and the British Empire.
2. With this end in view, it is proposed to establish a central organisation at the seat of Government, with Branches throughout the Colony.
3. The League will wholly abstain from intermeddling with the affairs of neighbouring States and will not seek, therefore, to establish any Branch outside the limits and jurisdiction of the Cape Colony and its dependencies.
4. In no way will the League interfere with party politics within the Colony, its one paramount object being to prevent, by every means within its power, a calamity so disastrous as the severance of those ties which now bind this Colony to an Empire as powerful and as free as any which the world has ever seen.
5. With no effectual means of our own to expel foreign aggression.(sic) with a population consisting of many diverse elements not yet sufficiently blended together, the founders of this League are animated by the profound conviction that the liberties of this Colony, not less than its material welfare, entirely depend upon its remaining an integral portion of the British Empire.
6. It is a fact admitting of no dispute that the Colony is at the present moment suffering, and has suffered for some time past, from a belief which prevails in England that its inhabitants are wanting in attachment to their privileges as subjects of Her Majesty the Queen. Mainly in consequence of this belief, the value of public securities has diminished, and is diminishing still, and commercial confidence has been to a great extent withdrawn. It will be the endeavour of the

## APPENDIX B (Continued).

Empire League to correct the erroneous idea that the spirit of loyalty has waned in this portion of Her Majesty's dominions to such an extent as to justify the suspicions which have been aroused.

7. In furtherance of the object with which this League is established, it is not sought in any way to limit the rights of Self-Government which this Colony at present enjoys, but rather to secure for it entire freedom in the control of purely domestic affairs, with some voice, at no distant date, in the Councils of the Empire.

8. With this end in view, the League will be affiliated to the Federation League, now being formed in England with the grand object of educating public opinion up to the conviction that the time has arrived for the creation of a Federal Parliament or some alternative machinery, which will supersede the imperfect arrangements now existing for keeping Great Britain and her dependencies together.

9. Membership of the League will be open to all Colonists without distinction of national origin or colour, the only pledge exacted being a declaration of readiness to aid in the promotion of the objects which are set forth herein.

10. The League will endeavour to attain its objects by the propagation of sound views through the Press and every other Agency which may be available for the purpose; by securing a proper representation of Colonial views in England; and by opposing the election to Parliament or other public office of any candidate who may be unable to give satisfactory assurances of his sincere loyalty to the Throne and the Imperial connection."

- Rose Innes Papers. No. 113.

## APPENDIX C.

Extract from the

### Constitution of the Political Union.

"Object of the Association.

1. The object of this Association is defined to be to protect and promote the political, agricultural and commercial interests of the Eastern, Midland and Northern districts of the Colony.

Formation of the Association.

2. The Association shall be composed of local branches (consisting of not less than ten members each), to be formed upon authority obtained from the Council, throughout the above-named districts.

Qualification of Members.

3. The membership of this Association shall consist of residents in the above districts, who shall have paid to its funds such annual subscription as may be defined by the particular branch with which they are connected, and have signified their adherence to the Constitution of the Association.

APPENDIX C (Continued).

4. Branch Executive Committees.

5. Branch Annual Meetings.

6. Duties of Executive Committees.

"The duties of the Executive Committees shall be (1) to attend to the registration of electors in their respective constituencies; (2) to secure the return of suitable representatives to Parliament; (3) to further the objects of the Association as above defined, having regard also to the interests of their own districts."

7. Branch bye-laws.

8. The General Congress.

9. Council of the Association.

"The Congress at its annual meeting shall elect a Council consisting of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and four members, who shall conduct the general business of the Association, and shall hold office till the next annual meeting of Congress."

10. Contribution to the General Fund. "

- Eastern Star, 16 June, 1886.

APPENDIX D.

Extract from the

Constitution of the South African League, 1897.

"1. Objects:-

Its objects shall be to promote good government within and amicable relations between the various States and Colonies in South Africa, on the lines of the general primary principles hereinafter detailed.

Primary Principle (a).

This League affirms most strongly its unalterable resolve to support the existing supremacy of Great Britain in South Africa, and binds itself to oppose any attempts that may be made to weaken or destroy the supremacy.

Primary Principle (b).

This League holds it to be an essential principle of good government that all inhabitants of any State or Colony, unconvicted of crime, shall be regarded as having an inherent right to equal political and civil privileges, without regard to race, birthplace, or religious belief, subject only to such conditions of education, or ownership or occupation of property, as may be imposed (sic) by the laws of the State or Colony in which they may reside. Provided always that this shall not be held to militate against the right of any State or Colony to restrict the Franchise in the case of Immigrants to those who are natives of countries possessing Parliamentary Institutions." .....

APPENDIX D (Continued).

Provincial Constitutions.  
South African League (Cape Colony).

"1. Primary Principles.

a. The League affirms most strongly its unalterable loyalty to the British Crown, and binds itself to resist to the utmost any attempt that may be made to weaken the connection between this Colony and the Mother Land.

b. Every elector should regard it as a duty to put aside the personality of individual politicians, and give his vote only to such candidates for Parliamentary honours as may be in accord with his own political principles.

c. The Ministry of the Colony should be composed of men who are in agreement with one another on all broad legislative questions.

d. It is a mischievous principle for any body of politicians to dictate the legislative policy of the Colony, without assuming, in the persons of its leaders, the responsibility of carrying that policy into effect.

e. That the members of the League exercise a healthy influence at all election (sic) for members of Parliament in favour of such candidates who are in accord with the principles of the League, and selected by the League, and not to oppose a League candidate." .....

- South African League Book  
of Constitutions, 1897.

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