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Pro-Nazi Subversion in South Africa, 1939-1941

Patrick J. Furlong

One of the least discussed topics of recent South African history is the extent to which the pro-Allied Government of General Jan Christiaan Smuts was threatened by pro-Nazi elements in the first half of World War II. As one Ally after another fell to Hitler's juggernaut, soon to be joined by the Japanese onslaught in the Far East, the importance of South Africa in the overall strategic picture increased leaps and bounds. The safety of Suez as a route to the East was highly questionable by late 1941, as Rommel's Afrika Korps threatened the British position in Egypt, while the Axis strengthened its stranglehold on large parts of the mediterranean. Until Russia and the U.S.A. entered the war, South Africa's fabled mineral wealth was naturally also crucial to Britain's surviving a long siege. Even after the Russian entry into the war, the only manageable supply route for Soviet minerals to the West was via the extremely dangerous passage from Murmansk on the usually icebound White Sea, so South Africa's mineral wealth continued to have strategic importance.

The extent of the longstanding interest of the German Foreign Office in so distant a country as South Africa can be gauged from the mass of its captured documentation, which runs to several thousand pages.¹ Although much official South African documentation remains closed for this period, the papers of individuals such as Smuts, his deputy Jan Hofmeyr or his Minister in charge of internal security, Harry Lawrence, include vast amounts of material indicating just

salient features of the threat to the Allied position in South Africa, a threat which at one point could have helped to alter the fate of the world.

Smuts himself tended to play down the Nazi threat in public and official circles. In late 1940 he telegraphed his High Commissioner in London, Sidney Waterson, declaring that the political situation "in the opinion of competent observers is progressively improving."² When as late as February 1942, Smuts was warned by Washington that Hitler had issued orders for a coup in South Africa with a view to Nazi control of that country by the spring, the General blithely dismissed this warning, claiming that there was no reason for alarm since the internal situation was very well in hand.³ Privately, however, the aging Premier was not as sanguine, particularly as it became evident that the Afrikaner Nationalist Opposition saw a Nazi victory as their key to control of South Africa. To some of his closest friends, Smut wrote in July 1940:

The German victories are putting great heart into my Opposition. They are holding meetings all over the country in favour of a separate peace. The Allies are finished, they say, and Smuts will be finished in a couple of months, and thereafter they will seize power and proclaim secession and the republic. There will be a new constitution modelled on that of Italy or Portugal, and an alliance with Nazi Germany.⁴

German interest in South Africa was not surprising. Apart from the more obvious strategic and economic value of the country, there was the desire to regain South-West Africa, then a League of Nations mandated territory. Hitler himself had told South African Transport Minister Oswald Pirow in 1938 that this territory had to be returned.⁵ The very head of the *Auslandsorganisation* (Foreign Organization) of the Nazi Party had grown up in South Africa. Ernest Bohle, son of a fervently pro-Nazi University of Cape Town professor, was commissioned to mobilize Germans throughout the world for the Nazi cause, using overseas German clubs and schools for the purpose.⁶ Seventeen of the first twenty years of his life had been spent in South Africa, which must have had some emotional significance for him in respect of his organization's activities among the substantial German-speaking minority there.⁷

Among the local white population, however, there were other factors conducive to Nazi activity. The Great Depression had simply worsened the dire economic situation of newly urbanized "poor white" Afrikaners, making them easy recruits for racist and especially anti-Semitic campaigns initiated by openly pro-Nazi "Shirt" organizations that had sprung up all over the country since 1933, and soon taken up with considerable fervor by the much larger Official Opposition. This opposition was the "Purified" National Party of Dr. Daniel Malan, a wily politician who had previously dabbled both in the religious ministry and journalism. The anti-Jewish hate campaign of the Greyshirt journal *The Truth* was adopted and extended to other groups by the National Party organ in Johannesburg, *Die Transvaler*. The editor was that icily brilliant theoretician, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, rapidly becoming one of the most powerful figures in the Party, and later the father of "Grand Apartheid".

A master at the art of equivocation, one of Verwoerd's first editorials had set the tone for future Nationalist views of Nazi Germany. He declared that Fascism and Nazism had, although imperfect, done much good for Italy and Germany, but that while this suggested the need to study such experiments, it did not imply aping them. Nationalist politicians, he claimed, sought the interest of their own *volk* (people). It could not be concluded that a politician was pro-Nazi or pro-Fascist if he admired German or Italian leaders for what they were doing for their countries nor even, he added menacingly, if he wanted to apply his own country some of the lessons from Germany and Italy.⁸

This sentiment was only compounded by anti-British feeling, worked up to a frenzy by Nationalist politicians who evoked memories of the deaths of one-sixth of the Boers in British concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War, along with the threat of supposedly "liberal" and "intergrationist" racial policies to the lifestyle and identity of the Afrikaner. When war came, it was not surprising that Malan opted for a neutrality tinged with unmistakably pro-German sentiment, even if personally the "Doctor" had no desire to replace British with German hegemony.⁹ Slightly less unsurprising was the neutralist stand of Prime Minister J.B.M. Hertzog, a "moderate" Afrikaner who had formed the ruling United Party in 1934 by joining the less extremist wing

of the old National Party with Smut's "Imperialist" South African Party. Now he split his party rather than go to war against Germany.

Hertzog bluntly asserted that there was no proof that Hitler wanted to dominate the world; he was merely seeking to rectify the injustices of the Versailles settlement.¹⁰ Until the Munich debacle, such a view was not uncommon, to be sure but such a standpoint after the invasion of both Czechoslovakia and Poland underlined how isolated were the attitudes of Afrikaner Nationalists, whether followers of Malan or Hertzog, among the Dominion countries. In any case, the two factions formed a single "Reunited" National Party in early 1940 in order to present a strong front against participation in the war, while the pro-British Deputy Premier, Jan Smuts, was asked by Governor-General Sir Patrick Duncan to form a pro-war coalition government drawn from non-Nationalists.

The Nationalists' stand did not escape the attentions of Berlin. Here was the only British Dominion in which almost half the enfranchised citizens resolutely opposed entry into the war. It soon became evident that this was also the only Dominion in which there was a real threat of civil war. The Nazis had worked long and hard at developing a strong local party base in South Africa. To this they had added a sophisticated campaign of cultural propaganda, to which was joined a comprehensive spy network and a radio service beamed at South Africa from Zeesen in Germany, a service which drew great numbers of Afrikaner listeners who dismissed their South African news announcers as mere puppets of the B.B.C. Werz, the principal Nazi agent in Lourenco Marques (now Maputo), the capital of "neutral" Portuguese East Africa, stressed this point in communicating with Berlin.¹¹

Nazi infiltration in South-West Africa and the Union itself had been thorough from the time of their accession to power. The documentation for this is massive. In South-West Africa, Nazi documents were seized in 1934, when the very active Nazi Party there was banned by the Union Government, leading to an extensive investigation by a commission of inquiry.¹² After the outbreak of war in September 1939, still more Nazi documents were confiscated in Windhoek, the capital of the territory. Front organizations such as the

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Verband Deutsche Berufsgruppen (Association of German Professional Groups) had taken over the Party's work, and supplemented it inside South Africa, where the Party was still legal.¹³

Intimidation by Nazi officials of German nationals in both countries was used very effectively to provide a disciplined fifth column. Nazi diplomats often doubled as Party officials. Thus Lierau, the apparently lowly Consul-General in Windhoek, was in charge of all Nazi interests in Southern Africa. The German Counsellor at the Pretoria embassy, Stiller, sedulously cultivated links with three promising potentially subversive organizations, the anti-Semitic Greyshirts and Blackshirts, and the much larger Afrikaner "cultural" paramilitary group, the *Ossewabrandwag* (Ox-wagon Guard or O.B.)¹⁴ Propaganda materials were smuggled in and German missionaries brought under the effective control of Berlin.¹⁵

Although the internment of many German nationals and the expulsion of German diplomats upon the outbreak of war terminated much of this activity, its influence survived through the impact of Nazi propaganda on white South Africans, particularly in the Afrikaner community. During the thirties there had been regular lecture-visits by German "cultural" figures, Afrikaner students had travelled to Germany on special tours, and prominent young Afrikaner intellectuals were so deeply impressed by what they saw there that their own works began to reflect National Socialist philosophy.¹⁶ The major German-language paper in South Africa, the *Deutsch-Afrikaner*, promoted anti-British sentiment and a belief in the ethnic brotherhood of German and Afrikaners. One of its main contributors, Dr. Werner Schmidt, argued in 1937 that the German blood admixture in Afrikaner veins was valuable for their "nordic development."¹⁷ By 1938 the Nazi propaganda organization, the *Deutsche Akademie* of Munich, which brought overseas visitors to Germany to observe the fruits of the "new order," had no less than 23 South African Committee members in Germany, compared with only 21 for the entire U.S.A.¹⁸

German propaganda thus supplemented and intensified the ever-present anti-British feelings of the Nationalists' followers. Indeed the various pro-Nationalist organizations were lauded regularly by the Nazis. The activities of the

extremist *Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond* (Afrikaner National Student Union), founded by Piet Meyer and future State President Nico Diederichs, both later chairmen of the powerful secret *Broederbond* (Brother's Union) and both key figures in post-1948 South Africa, were given detailed treatment in the *Deutsch-Afrikaner*.¹⁹ Material in Afrikaans was also provided through other organizations like the Afrikaans-German Cultural Union, which aimed its activities at Afrikaner universities in particular.²⁰

A web of intricate links between the Nazis, extreme rightist "Shirt" movements and the more "mainstream" Nationalists had become so complex by the outbreak of war that it became hard to distinguish between them as genuinely autonomous organizations. The 1935 South West Africa Commission had found strong evidence to suggest moral and even financial support for the Greyshirts from the Nazis in Southern Africa. Captured Nazi correspondence in Windhoek supports this. It also suggests Nazi involvement in distributing copies of the Greyshirt journal *The Truth* in South West Africa.²¹

Until conflicts over leadership and policy details led to a rift in the two organizations, Dr. Malan held that all the members of the *Ossewabradwag*, which openly promoted a fascist state and a Nazi victory, were also members of the National Party, since both were needed by the Afrikaner *volk*, supplementing each other.²² Malan himself left no doubt that he favored an immediate peace with Germany.²³ At various points the Greyshirts, although sometimes an embarrassment to the Nationalists, collaborated with the Party for electoral purposes. For example, a former Greyshirt leader, Strauss von Moltke, who had formed his own splinter fascist organization, handed documents stolen from the South African Jewish Board of Deputies offices in Cape Town to anti-Semitic elements in the National Party.²⁴

At least one Blackshirt leader interned by Smuts on suspicion of subversion turned out to be both the leader of an anti-Semitic and anti-Indian "Patriot Movement" and a National Party branch secretary in the Eastern Transvaal.²⁵ German agents, in turn, worked with the active assistance of O.B. members, under protection of its "Commandant-General," Dr. Hans van Rensburg.²⁶

The evidence for this interconnecting Fascist and semi-Fascist web is enormous. Its sheer scope naturally posed a real threat to the Smuts Government, despite the government's practice of increasingly interning not only most male enemy aliens, but also many South Africans suspected of subversion. Most suspected subversives, however, remained free. Smuts did not want martyrs.

The Germans were therefore well-situated to make the most of the insecurity of the Smuts Administration, consolidating a substantial spy network based in Lourenco Marques under Werz, who had been posted there after his expulsion from South Africa in 1939. The Germans disagreed on whether to support all the anti-war Afrikaner groups, or simply to favor the most promising at the time, the O.B. Even the pessimists, however, like Dr. Harold Bielfeld at the Foreign Office, who believed it impossible to overthrow Smuts violently, hoped to tie down as many troops as possible instead of letting Smuts send them overseas.²⁷

In August 1940 the O.B. offered to stage a rebellion against Smuts, placing its 160,000 members and 15,000 soldiers, who had not taken the "Africa oath" of willingness to fight against the Axis anywhere on the continent, at the disposal of Hitler. Only the necessary weapons were required which, it was suggested, could be landed by U-boat off South West Africa ("West Plan") or on an airstrip in Southern Rhodesia (present Zimbabwe), the "North Plan."²⁸ The O.B. "West Plan" was much more developed:

At an hour to be determined by the German High Command, Afrikaners would then blow up all rail and road bridges connecting the Transvaal with Natal. The railway personnel, the Police and 26,000 mine workers and employees have been penetrated as the rest of the State services with Ossewabrandwag members and would go on strike. The latter, viz. mine workers and employees, are already today urging for a strike. English newspapers are going to be blown up. Smuts and his followers are going to be asked to kill themselves. Further dispositions are left to the German General Staff, particularly whether and which bridges are to be blown up.²⁹

The plan did not materialize, probably because of the difficulty in getting sufficient arms to the O.B., although many Afrikaner farmers had their own arms. Also much of the grassroots O.B. membership was reluctant to take up arms, especially after Malan's estrangement from the O.B. at the end of the 1941. Thus, real civil war did not eventuate. An ongoing war of nerves and individual acts of sabotage were, however, instigated by an extremist group within the O.B., the *Stormjaers* (Stormtroopers).

There was, nevertheless, fertile soil among the broad Afrikaner Nationalist community for a resuscitation of militant anti-war activity on a massive scale. This point will be dealt with below, but its immediate import was not lost on Berlin, which did try one lose-or-win venture that came perilously close to destroying Smuts' Government and setting up a real puppet state. This was known as "Operation Weissdorn," led by former South African Olympic boxer and sometime German paratrooper and secret agent, Robey Leibbrandt.³⁰

Leibbrandt was landed by a German yacht in June 1941 with the express purpose of assassinating Smuts and staging a coup d'etat with the help of the most militant *Stormjaers*, a group which Leibbrandt styled the "National Socialist Rebels."³¹ They were ostensibly opposed even to the O.B. leadership, which they considered unreliable, and of course, to less outspoken elements such as Malan's "Constitutionalist" Nationalists, then becoming rapidly estranged from the O. B. over the question of maintaining a multi-party constitutional framework for South Africa. The O.B. leadership, increasingly suspect among militants because its chief, Van Rensburg, had never been interned, in turn decided that Leibbrandt's fanaticism could only hurt their cause. In fact, Leibbrandt planned to execute not only Smuts' associates, but also Malan, Van Rensburg and any other possible rivals.³²

Van Rensburg in any case feared that Leibbrandt would be caught and force Smuts' hand against himself before his waiting game in expectation of a Nazi victory had paid off. There was also rumors that the Nazis favored Leibbrandt over Van Rensburg or Malan as South Africa's future Fuhrer.³³ Van Rensburg therefore disclosed Leibbrandt's presence to the Smuts Government.³⁴

Leibbrandt came very close to killing Smuts, whose security at his farm outside Pretoria was minimal. Leibbrandt gained hundreds, if not thousands of supporters before he was betrayed and captured in a complex series of events that have been treated extensively in Hans Strydom's work on the subject.³⁵ An interesting incident from this tale which is, however, omitted from the standard accounts of the Leibbrandt story, is worth retelling here. The first person to give information on Leibbrandt was Dr. Albert Hertzog, son of the former Premier and later notorious extreme rightwinger both in and out of John Vorster's Government. Hertzog told Jan Taillard, Smuts' man assigned to the case, that he approved of Leibbrandt's "good work" and had contacted him, but was unable or unwilling to indicate his whereabouts.³⁶

Leibbrandt was captured with great difficulty, not least because Smuts distrusted his own Police force, correctly as it happened, and the would-be assassin was sentenced to death. Smuts commuted the sentence on the sentimental grounds that he could not hang the son of a man who had fought alongside him in the Boer War. After the Nationalists' surprise victory in 1948, however, Leibbrandt was immediately freed, without even attending to the legal nicety of obtaining the Governor-General's assent beforehand.³⁷

One of the main reasons for the caution with which Smuts tracked down Leibbrandt was the deep penetration of the security forces by the O.B. Already in May 1939 G.W. Wessels, a rural Smuts loyalist, had written to the General about the threat of subversion in the Defense Force up to the very highest echelons. Reports were circulating about a secret conference in the Orange Free State between either Pirow, the pro-Nazi Defence Minister in the pre-war Government, or General Brink, the Chief of the Army, and officers and retired officers.³⁸

In March of the following year Smuts was warned that perhaps eighty percent of the officers at army headquarters were Nationalist, posing the threat of the a repeat of the 1914 pro-German rebellion by top South African generals.³⁹ Much of the police force was of a similar mind. Alarmist stories by Nationalist politicians of an impending German victory went hand-in-hand with a police report of a plan to subvert the military still more thoroughly by having Malan's supporters join the part-time Active Citizen Force and District Rifle

Associations, staging a coup if conscription were introduced to fight Hitler. In the Botha Regiment alone only a quarter of the men had taken the Africa oath by mid-1940.⁴⁰

Detailed intelligence reports showed that anti-Government and even pro-Nazi sentiment was rife in the ranks of the military. Half of the Thaba Nchu commando, for instance, as well as their Commandant, was considered disloyal.⁴¹ A report on individual officers abundantly features remarks such as "Admirer of Hitler" and "Alleges that he with others in the Air Force are in league to take action against the Government at a sign from a leader."⁴²

The O.B. seems to have had so many members in the police and railways that it was decided that they be organized separately.⁴³ The Nazi Zeesen Radio was particularly pleased with the Afrikaner youth, declaring:

Dissatisfaction among the young men of the Afrikaner people increases daily... The events of the October 10 (the birthday of the Afrikaner hero Paul Kruger), when children refused to go to school, the burning of English flags, the brilliant speeches and the enthusiastic audiences shows for once and for all the immovable line that the Boer people have adopted and will always stick to it.⁴⁴

Censor reports of the time also show the penetration of Afrikaner schools by pro-Zani sentiment.⁴⁵ At the Brakpan Commando School lessons had been opened with the Nazi salute, given by both teachers and pupils. The Assistant Headmaster of a school near Nylstroom, to cite another example, had the school radio tuned continuously into Zeesen Radio and assured the children "that the only truth with regard to the war emanated from that source." He also made a point of giving the Nazi salute when entering a Jewish store in another town.⁴⁶ This kind of grassroots support for the German cause was so all-embracing in some areas that most of the white in entire towns such as Touws River and Lamberts Bay had gone over to the O.B., while the local police were considered so unreliable by government that the few loyalists were fearful of reporting incidents to them.⁴⁷

The sheer scope of the threat to the Allied position in South Africa is therefore borne out clearly by the evidence. Just how dangerous it was at one point can be gauged by the

fact that even comparative moderates in the National Party became closely indentified with the anti-war cause. It was more than just a neutralist stand, as is often pleaded by Nationalist apologists today. General Hertzog, the embittered ex-Premier, performed an especially remarkable *volte-face* when, after leaving his party in defence of English-speakers' rights, he suddenly became a champion of full-blown National Socialism. Hertzog was very sick by then, and probably verging on senility, but his name continued to have a certain magic as the founder of the National Party in 1914.

Angered at being outmaneuvered amidst the endless machinations of party politicians like Malan, Hertzog issued a press statement in October 1941 in which he excoriated "liberal capitalism" and the party system, while praising National Socialism as in keeping with the traditions of the Afrikaner, as a system which simply had to be adapted to South African needs under a dictator.⁴⁸ This led to frenzied activity as the various anti-war factions tried to reunite, as in early 1940. The politicians and would-be dictators were unable to reach agreement, but this certainly was one point when the Smuts Government really feared that all could easily be lost. In the months following Hertzog's pro-Nazi declaration Germany, soon joined by Japan, won victory after victory. Malan, the "Constitutionalist," was given dictatorial powers over his party to meet the "crisis."⁴⁹ United Party Secretary Louis Esselen wrote to Sidney Waterson that Hertzog was ready to be proclaimed savior of the Afrikaner *volk* once the war was lost.⁵⁰ Smuts himself was convinced by the end of 1941 that all that remained to divide his enemies were personality differences rather than principle.⁵¹

As it happened, Hertzog's health declined rapidly and he died in November 1942, convinced that somehow things would get better for his people.⁵² Malan's Nationalists and the O.B. could never agree on a program, nor could the Greyshirts persuade anybody to accept the opportunistic Louis Weichardt as *Fuhrer* under Hertzog's ceremonial patronage. Malan was certainly unwilling to be usurped by anybody as the leader of Afrikanerdom. Unlike his rivals, the "Doctor" was no parvenu, but an experienced politician who had long ago learned to tailor his political message according to the times, readily moving, if need be, from one extreme to the other.

The Germans had once considered Malan so promising a candidate for local *Fuhrer* that Berlin had sent an agent in early 1940 to offer in exchange for his friendship modern Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, with an option on Zimbabwe. Malan never reported this to the authorities, but by his own account displayed extreme caution, acting politely but insisting that his party's policies were well-known.⁵³ He had no desire to go to prison, and so played a careful fence-straddling game until it became clear that Hitler's cause was not especially promising.⁵⁴ It also became obvious that Berlin might favor Van Rensburg or even Leibbrandt over himself; some genuine differences in principle may also have been involved in what became a real vendetta between Malan and the O.B. which coincided with a stalemate overseas. In any case, the extremists rapidly lost support while Malan consolidated his position, being catapulted to power in the historic 1948 Election.

Ironically, once in power Malan's "moderates" rapidly welcomed to the bosom of the Party his erstwhile "extremist" opponents and freed Leibbrandt and Eric Holm, the man behind Zeesen Radio. O.B. figures like John Vorster rose to the highest positions in the land, Weichardt became a Senator, Van Rensburg rejoined the Party and Strauss von Moltke became Party leader in South-West Africa. The apartheid state was ushered in with massive social engineering and increasingly draconian legislation. Smuts died in 1950; leaving his party to slowly fade into dissension and oblivion.

In some respects, therefore, it did not matter that Smuts could escape a coup in 1939-1941. Is this episode therefore of merely antiquarian interest? It is debatable whether a Nazi victory in South Africa would have produced an even more vicious regime than what in fact materialized. More important, however, is that direct Nazi control of South Africa in the opening stages of the war could have helped to make the world a very different place, threatening the very existence of the Western democracies.

Inside South Africa the Nazis failed in the short-term, but the remarkable success of the pro-Nazi or at least anti-war campaign there planted a fertile seedbed for the future authoritarianism of the apartheid state. The constant deprecation of liberal democracy and individual freedoms, alongside the near-hysterical exaltation of a racist and

volkisch group ethic and recourse to strong-arm tactics for political purposes, were assuredly not without their long-term effects. The failure of Smuts to act decisively against the Nazis' minions prefigured the failure of the United Party to check the march of apartheid when it was still possible to do so. Nationalist leaders like Myburgh Streicher and Marais Steyn ended their days in Parliament. Thus those who would have been hanged for war crimes in Europe were able in South Africa, in Verwoerd's ominously prophetic words, to apply some of their heroes' ideas to their own country.

¹ Just as material on the South African "Jewish Question" runs to two hundred pages for 1936-1942 in the U.S. National Archives microfilm series of captured German Foreign Office documents. Much has not been filmed. (T-120, Reel 4357: 215205-215405).

² Waterson Collection, University of Cape Town Archives, A3.9.8, Cypher telegram, Smuts to Waterson, 27 November 1940.

³ J.C. Smuts Papers, State Archives, Pretoria, Vol. 150, Cypher telegram, Close to Smuts and reply, 13 and 14 February 1942.

⁴ Smuts Papers, Vol. 63, Smuts to Gilletts, 10 July 1940. National Party officials described the war policy as "idiotic" (*dwaas*) and claimed "gigantic" audiences at their protest meetings. See J.G. Strydom Papers, State Archives, Vol. 46, "Verslag van Hoofbestuur," 1940 Transvaal National Party Congress.

⁵ Memorandum by an official of the Foreign Minister's personal staff: Conversation at the Berghof between the Fuhrer and Mr. Pirow," 24 November 1938, in *Documents on German Foreign Policy Series D Vol. 4* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of State, Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 339.

⁶ For a detailed account of Bohle's activities, see Donald McKale, *The Swastika Outside Germany* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977).

⁷ The author wishes to thank Robert Shell for sharing his knowledge of this community with him. Even today, Hitler's birthday is celebrated by certain sections of the Cape Town German community.

⁸ *Die Transvaler*, 4 October 1937.

⁹ The author wishes to thank Prof. J.P. Brits of the University of South Africa for discussing this subject with him.

¹⁰ *House of Assembly Debates*, Vol. 33, 4 September 1939, cols. 22-23.

¹¹ German Foreign Office Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Box 237 Folder 540, Secret telegram, Werz to Foreign Office, 9 November 1939.

¹² U.G. 16/1947, Report of Commission to Recommend for Deportation, pp. 3-4.

¹³ H.G. Lawrence Papers, University of Cape Town Archives, E3.212-E3.215, Memorandum by Administrator of South West Africa, 30 August 1940, with enclosed German documents.

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- ¹⁴ Lawrence Papers, E3.9, "Very Confidential Memorandum Relating to Nazi Activities in the Union of South Africa," 28 October 1939, pp. 1, 3-5.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁶ For details of the ideological impact of National Socialism, see my earlier paper, "National Socialism and the National Party of South Africa" (ASA Collected Papers, 1985 Annual Conference).
- ¹⁷ Lawrence Papers, E5.44.2, White Book Nazi Activities and Nazi Propaganda in the Union of South Africa from the year 1933 until the Outbreak of War in September 1939, Vol. III, pp. 316-317.
- ¹⁸ Morris Alexander Papers, University of Cape Town Archives, C.File 29, Reprint from *Forward*, 7 March 1938, "German Nazis Organise in South Africa," p. 3.
- ¹⁹ Lawrence Papers, E5.44.2, *Nazi Activities*, p. 307.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 291-298.
- ²¹ Alexander Paper, List IV File 24, "The Greyshirts are South African Nazis: What the South West African Commission Revealed," ca.1936, pp. 1-2.
- ²² *Ons Party en die O.B.: Sameweking Misluk* (collected party statements) (Cape Town: Cape National Party, ca. 1941), pp. 4,6. See also *Die Transvaler*, 25 March 1941.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ Alexander Papers, S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies File 7, Legal Opinion by R. Millin and I. Isaacs, 30 March 1937, p. 1.
- ²⁵ *Die Burger*, 1 February 1940. See also Alexander Papers, S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies File 4, "Daily Press Report," 2 February 1940, p.1.
- ²⁶ Lawrence Papers, E5.47, "Strictly Confidential Report on the Affidavit of Dr. Luitpold Werz," by Lt. George Visser, 25 November 1946, p. 2. Werz's 36-page affidavit gives a very detailed account of the activities of this network.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.3.
- ²⁸ Smuts had confiscated most private firearms very early in the war, because of reports about the unreliability of the part-time military forces, the Commandoes and the District Rifle Associations.
- ²⁹ Lawrence Papers, E5.47, Affidavit by Luitpold Werz, 14 September 1946, p.30.
- ³⁰ The best general account, although rather journalistic, is Hans Strydom, *For Volk and Fuhrer: Robey Leibbrandt and Operation Weissdorn* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1982).
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ³² H. G. Lawrence, "The Leibbrandt Trap," in *Sunday Times Colour Magazine*, 1 April 1973, pp. 14-15.
- ³³ Strydom, *For Volk and Fuhrer*, p. 146.
- ³⁴ Lawrence, "The Leibbrandt Trap," pp. 14-15.
- ³⁵ See relevant chapters of *For Volk and Fuhrer*.

- 36 Lawrence Papers, E3.267, Maj. Jan Taillard, "The Leibbrandt Case," 5 September 1942, p.1.
- 37 G. Brand van Zyl papers, University of Cape Town Archives, Unpublished "Reminiscences," Vol. 5, p. 86.
- 38 Smuts Papers, Vol. 60, G.W. Wessels to Smuts, 16 May 1939.
- 39 Smuts Papers, Vol. 61, J. Coetzee to Smuts, 17 March 1940.
- 40 Smuts Papers, Vol. 61, Col. B.C. Judd to L. Esselen, 10 February 1940; Vere Stent to Smuts, 17 June 1940.
- 41 Smuts Papers, Vol. 132, Memorandum from Commandant-in-Chief, Burger Commandoes, 17 November 1939.
- 42 Smuts Papers, Vol. 132, Memorandum "Most Secret: Security of Our Own Forces," no date.
- 43 Lawrence papers, E3.234, O.B. Secretary Bloemfontein to P.K. Zondagh, no date.
- 44 Lawrence Papers, E3.103, Zeesen Broadcast transcript, 2 November 1939, p.11.
- 45 See for instance Lawrence papers, E3.80, Censorship Summary, "Subversive Activities in Schools of the Union," 30 January 1941.
- 46 Lawrence Papers, E3.80, "East Rand School Position" and "Statement by Mr. L.D. Turner" in Censorship Summary, 30 January 1941.
- 47 Lawrence Papers, E3.80, Intelligence Report, 13 December 1940, in Censorship Summary, 30 January 1941.
- 48 J.B.M. Hertzog papers, State Archives, Vol. 34, "Persverklaring," 22 October 1941.
- 49 *Die Burger*, 4 June 1941.
- 50 Waterson Collection, A3.9.57, L. Esselen to Waterson, 20 August 1942.
- 51 Duncan Papers, University of Cape Town Archives, D1.35.60, Smuts to Sir Patrick Duncan, 30 October 1941.
- 52 C.M. van den Heever, *General J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: A.P.B. Bookstore, 1946), p.298.
- 53 This interview is dealt with in immense detail in S.C. 5/1946, Report of the Select Committee on German Foreign Office Documents (Conduct of Member), which investigated Malan's involvement in this incident.
- 54 See P. Furlong, "National Socialism and the National Party of South Africa" for details of Malan's ambivalent approach.