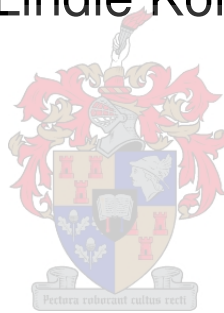


D.F. Malan: a political biography

Lindie Korf



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Supervisor: Prof. A.M. Grundlingh

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Declaration

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2010

Abstract

This study is a political biography of D.F. Malan (1874–1959), the first of the apartheid-era Prime Ministers, and covers the years 1874 to 1954, when Malan retired from politics. It endeavours to provide a warts-and-all account of D.F. Malan which challenges prevalent myths and stereotypes surrounding his public persona and his political orientation. While the overwhelming focus is on Malan's political career, special attention is paid to his personal life in order to paint a multi-faceted picture of his character. The biography is written in the form of a seamless narrative and employs a literary style of writing. It is based on archival research which utilised Malan's private collection, as well as the private collections of his Nationalist contemporaries. Malan takes the centre stage at all times, as the biography focuses on his perceptions and experiences. Malan's views regarding Afrikaner nationalism, which was his foremost political priority, are described, and are related to his views of British imperialism as well as other ideologies such as communism and totalitarianism. This study demonstrates that there is a notable link between Malan's perceptions of race relations and his concerns about the poor white problem. It reveals that Malan's racial policy was, to some extent, fluid, as were his views on South Africa's constitutional position. Debates about South Africa's links to Britain and the nature of the envisioned republic preoccupied Afrikaner nationalists throughout the first half of the twentieth century – and served as an outlet for regional and generational tensions within the movement. Malan's clashes with nationalists such as Tielman Roos, J.B.M. Hertzog and J.G. Strijdom are highlighted as an indication of the internecine power struggles within the National Party (NP). By emphasising these complexities, this study seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the South African past.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie is 'n politieke biografie van D.F. Malan (1874–1959), die eerste van die apartheid-era Eerste Ministers, en dek die jare 1874 tot 1954, toe Malan uit die politiek getree het. Dit poog om 'n onversuikerde beeld van Malan te skets wat heersende mites en stereotipes aangaande sy openbare beeld en sy benadering tot die politiek uitdaag. Die fokus is hoofsaaklik op Malan se politieke loopbaan, maar besondere aandag word aan sy private lewe geskenk om sodoende 'n veelsydige portret van sy karakter te skilder. Die biografie is in die vorm van 'n naatlose narratief geskryf en maak van 'n literêre skryfstyl gebruik. Dit is gebaseer op argivale navorsing, waartydens daar van D.F. Malan se privaat versameling gebruik gemaak is, sowel as die privaat versamelings van sy tydgenote. Malan is ten alle tye die sentrale figuur en die biografie fokus op sy persepsies en ervarings. Malan se denke oor Afrikaner nasionalisme, wat sy vernaamste prioriteit was, word beskryf en in verband gebring met sy opinie van Britse imperialisme, sowel as ander ideologieë soos kommunisme en totalitarisme. Die studie wys op die verband tussen Malan se denke oor rasseverhoudinge en sy besorgdheid oor die armblanke vraagstuk. Dit dui daarop dat Malan se rassebeleid tot 'n sekere mate vloeibaar was. Dit was ook die geval met sy benadering tot Suid-Afrika se konstitusionele posisie. Afrikaner nasionaliste het tydens die eerste helfte van die twintigste eeu baie aandag geskenk aan debatte oor Suid-Afrika se verhouding tot Brittanje en die aard van die voorgenome republiek. Dit was tot 'n mate 'n weerligafleier vir reeds bestaande spanning tussen die onderskeie streke en generasies. Malan se botsings met nasionaliste soos Tielman Roos, J.B.M. Hertzog en J.G. Strijdom word belig as 'n aanduiding van die diepgewortelde magstryd binne die Nasionale Party (NP). Deur op hierdie kompleksiteite klem te lê, poog die studie om 'n bydrae te lewer tot 'n meer genuanseerde begrip van die Suid-Afrikaanse verlede.

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The study of another human being's life is an all-consuming pursuit. One finds oneself living in two different worlds, and along the way one meets mediators who guide one in the to-and-fro journey between this year and yesteryear, and those who are the home one returns to. I was fortunate to have known both.

To my promoter, Prof. Albert Grundlingh, special thanks are due. It was he who gave me the freedom and courage to experiment with a new genre, and who emphasised the importance of using one's imagination when writing history. His interest in, and enthusiasm for, my work was a true incentive and made the writing of this thesis an enriching and fulfilling experience.

Prof. Hans Renders, Director of the Institute of Biography at the University of Groningen, introduced me to the art of biography and the intricacies of the biographer's experiences. The year that I spent at his institute gave this work its spirit and its form.

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History cannot be written without the labours of archivists and librarians, who perform a vital task in preserving historical records and enabling the historian to access these treasures. I would like to give my special thanks to Ms Mimi Seyffert, Ms Marina Brink, Ms Lynne Fourie and Ms Anneke Schaafsma, who preside over the University of Stellenbosch's Special Collections, and to Ms Esta Jones of the Institute for Contemporary History Archive at the University of the Free State, who went to special lengths to bring relevant documents to my attention. I would also like to thank the various staff of the State Archives in Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Cape Town. During my visits to these archives I enjoyed the hospitality of Mr and Mrs Paolo and Rina Cascione, Ms Juanita Koorts and Drs. Gideon and Ronel van der Watt. Thank you very much for welcoming me into your homes.

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Throughout all of these adventures in history and biography, I had the enthusiastic support of my husband-to-be, who encouraged me to cross provincial and national borders in this pursuit. Thank you, Willie, for being my cheerleader and for listening to endless tales of Nationalist intrigues – and for being the home to which I now return.

I want to thank my parents for nurturing and encouraging my dream to become a historian and for doing everything in their power to help me to achieve it. Thank you for accompanying me on this journey, for motivating me to carry on at the most crucial of moments and for sharing in all of the triumphs that emanated from your unwavering faith in me. It is to my parents that I dedicate the result.

I would also like to thank my Heavenly Father for providing me with the dream, the strength to pursue it and the joy that is its reward.

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List of Abbreviations

AB	-	Afrikaner Broederbond
ACVV	-	Afrikaner Christelike Vroue Vereniging
AAC	-	All African Convention
ACF	-	Active Citizens Force
AEK	-	Afrikaner Eenheidskomitee
Art.	-	Article
APO	-	African People's Organisation
ATG	-	Afrikaanse Taalgenootskap
ATV	-	Afrikaanse Taal Vereniging
B.A.	-	Bachelor of Arts
BBV	-	Boeren Beschermins Vereeniging
Col	-	Colonel
D.C.	-	District of Columbia
Ds	-	Dominee
Dr	-	Doctor
FAK	-	Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge
Genl	-	General
HNP	-	Herenigde Nasionale Party
ICU	-	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
IRA	-	Irish Republican Army
M.A.	-	Master of Arts
MP	-	Member of Parliament
NP	-	National Party
NVP	-	Nasionale Vroue Party
OB	-	Ossewabrandwag
Prof.	-	Professor
RDB	-	Reddingsdaadbond
RSB	-	Republikeinse Stewersbond
SAP	-	South African Party (Zuid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Party)
SANP	-	South African National Party
St	-	Saint
UNO	-	United Nations Organisation
UP	-	United Party
U.S.	-	United States of America

Introduction

As he rises from his desk to welcome you, slowly, gravely, you find yourself in the presence of a sombrelly dressed elderly gentleman of medium height and running to weight; a tight-lipped man with powerful head, now bald, and pale: heavy, expressionless, clean-shaven features. He fixes you rather disconcertingly with flickering eyes through his glasses; a slow-moving man of sedentary habits...the general impression is rather formidable. It is one of solemnity, even severity. It does no injustice to the man or his philosophy. Stern Calvinist that he is, in unrelenting warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. Publicly and privately, his reputation is one of uniform patience and courtesy to friend and foe, but he remains distant and unbending. He smiles rarely – and wanly – and the only indulgence he permits himself in his speeches is an occasional exercise in elaborate irony. Nevertheless, in a land of sunshine, where men laugh loudly, none – not even Smuts – enjoys higher prestige among his own people than this stern, implacable, isolated man of God.¹

This image of D.F. Malan has dominated accounts of the first of the apartheid leaders for decades. Not only has it served to characterise his persona, but it has also become a symbol of mythological Afrikaner nationalism and the policy of apartheid. Yet, it begs the question: can such a myth withstand the scrutiny of a biographer?

This biography is a revisionist work in the sense that it treads a path that, in some respects, has been trodden before, but seeks to provide a new interpretation of archival material. It aims at dismantling the stereotypes that surround D.F. Malan – and by producing a more nuanced image of Malan, it hopes to shed some light on the intricacies of Afrikaner nationalism during the first half of the twentieth century. It is not a study of a movement by using a man's life as a lens – although such an approach is valid and had been used by others.² Instead, it is a study of a man, through whom one inevitably becomes acquainted with a movement.

D.F. Malan's perception of a matter, or his experience of an event, was, at all times, the guiding principle in relating this story. Biographies of the people with whom he interacted might approach the same events from a different angle. With regards to the world in which Malan lived

¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document Centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/2472, J.A. Gray, 'South Africa's New Voice', 23 April 1949.

² See for example C. van Onselen, *The Seed is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper, 1894-1985* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997).

and worked, I, to paraphrase W.K. Hancock, did not try to write about Malan *and* his times, but kept my focus on Malan *in* his times.³

This account of D.F. Malan's political career has been treated as a biography first and foremost, which makes use of the methodology of history to provide a nuanced image of an individual who was in a prime position to shape South Africa's history during the first half of the twentieth century. This approach was shaped by a year spent at the Institute of Biography at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, as well as by a range of texts produced by this institution – the most notable being Hans Renders's *De zeven hoofdzonden van de biografie*⁴ and his and Gerrit Voerman's *Privé in de Politieke Biografie*.⁵

Using Carl Rollyson's distinction between 'high biography' and 'low biography',⁶ Renders argues that the difference between a good and a poor biography is not found in its presentation. He argues that biography is a form of literature, and therefore literary writing is mandatory. Instead, the distinction is to be found in the research that precedes the biography's composition. In other words, biographers need to regard themselves as historians, and not as authors or novelists. They may present their material in an imaginative fashion, but their imaginations may not be given free rein that could lead them to digress from their research material.⁷

While a biography is the product of a biographer's interpretation of his or her biographical subject, there is a distinction to be drawn between a 'commemorative' biography (which one would commonly term a hagiography) and a 'critical interpretative' biography. While it is inevitable that the biographer identifies with his or her subject, a critical, interpretative biography will not ignore material that is unflattering to the subject. It is precisely this material that makes the story believable – and the character human.⁸

In writing a political biography, or a biography of a politician, the question of including his or her private life arises. There are arguments for and against, as the study of a politician's private life might tempt the biographer into assuming the role of an amateur-psychologist. On the other hand, it can be argued that public and private life cannot be separated. In D.F. Malan's case, the most important consideration that motivated my decision to include his private life in this study is the mythology that surrounds his persona. The most effective method of dismantling the stereotype

³ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), xii: 'I have tried not to write about Smuts *and* his times but I have had to write about him *in* his times.'

⁴ Hans Renders, *De Zeven Hoofdzonden van de Biografie: Over Biografen, Historici en Journalisten* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2008).

⁵ Hans Renders and Gerrit Voerman, eds, *Privé in de Politieke Biografie* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2007).

⁶ See C. Rollyson, *A Higher Form of Cannibalism? Adventures in the Art and Politics of Biography* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005), 52.

⁷ Hans Renders, *De Zeven Hoofdzonden van de Biografie: Over Biografen, Historici en Journalisten*, 26, 38-40.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

of the dour *dominee* (parson) is by humanising him, and accounts of his interactions with his loved ones fulfils this purpose. A description of Malan's personality and his private life also enables one to understand his otherworldliness, which formed a crucial component of his public persona – and it accounts for the role of his family in relation to his career.

The format and structure that has been chosen is that of a conventional biography. It employs a literary style of writing – which is substantiated by primary material at all times – and takes the form of a seamless narrative. There are no sections or subsections in this text. Instead, it follows a chronological structure which weaves various themes together. Source criticism and theoretical analysis were treated as scaffolding, and were removed once the building was completed so as not to clutter the text or to disrupt the narrative. My approach to Malan was informed, to some extent, by a reading of Max Weber's theory of the charismatic leader, as the pattern of Malan's political career as well as his public image display some remarkable similarities to Weber's description of charismatic authority, which he based on the Biblical prophets.⁹

In order to enlighten this underlying theme, a brief description of Weber's charismatic leader is warranted. Weber described charismatic authority as 'the authority of the extraordinary and personal *gift of grace* (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership. This is "charismatic" domination, as exercised by the prophet or – in the field of politics – by the elected war lord, the plebiscitarian ruler, the great demagogue, or the political party leader.'¹⁰

According to Weber, charismatic leaders are natural leaders who emerge during times of distress. They are outsiders, being neither office holders nor incumbents. They possess special gifts of body and spirit which are regarded as supernatural. In addition, they demand obedience and support by virtue of their mission. Charismatic leaders do not engage in their mission for economic gain, and frequently reject rational, but undignified, economic conduct. For this reason, Weber believed that the prophet provided the ideal metaphor for the charismatic leader: a person who exudes heavenly grace and godlike strength. Such a leader is not concerned with leading his people through the peaceful struggle of humankind against nature, but rather through the violent struggle between human communities.¹¹

⁹ I explored a Weberian interpretation of Malan's leadership in an unpublished conference paper, "An unlikely charismatic leader: D.F. Malan in a Weberian light", presented at the conference *Charisma and emergent Social Movements*, Institute of Biography, University of Groningen, 6 & 7 November 2008.

¹⁰ M. Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills, eds, *From Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1970), 79.

¹¹ M. Weber, 'The Sociology of Charismatic Authority', in S.N. Eisenstadt, ed., *On Charisma and Institution Building* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 18-25.

In practical terms, charismatic leaders are likely to present themselves in religious language – as people who have been given a mission by higher powers. They feel called to their task and dedicate their lives to its service. They also have the ability to play on slumbering dissatisfaction. There is an important dynamic between the leader’s own originality and the appeal to existing beliefs and prejudices. Such a person, who promises calm in a world of chaos, answers an unfulfilled need. There is, however, a tragic element: the charismatic leader’s diagnosis of a problem is often oversimplified, creating the impression that he is more capable of effecting change than reality determines.¹²

While Weber’s theory has played some part in my portrayal of Malan, it is a point that should not be overstretched. Weber’s description of the charismatic leader focuses on the leader’s inner conviction and his public image. It does not account for changing circumstances which might warrant a new approach to a political issue; political leaders who are unable to move with the times disappear overnight. Weber also failed to consider the prosaic realities of power politics and internecine fighting, which are to be found in most organisations, and within political parties in particular. This aspect of Malan’s career received extensive attention in this study, as it is an aspect that has been ignored or underplayed by Afrikaner nationalist historians in their quest to provide a heroic account of Afrikaner history, while accounts of the liberation struggle tend to overemphasise the cohesion and determination of the apartheid government – both of which create the impression that the Afrikaner nationalists were a united front. As this study will show, this perception is far removed from the reality. While this biography seeks to address such perceptions, it is not a study of the perceptions of this year or even yesteryear. It therefore does not explore the impact of Malan’s image on his broad audience. Instead, the focus remains on Malan’s personal experiences and the world behind the scenes.

Previous studies of D.F. Malan mostly served to bolster the uncomplicated image which dominates perceptions of him. The only two biographies that have been written about D.F. Malan are products of his admirers. The first is by Bun Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan: die eerste veertig jaar*.¹³ While the book is thoroughly researched, the author’s sympathy with Malan dominates his treatment of the material, and he was content to provide an exhaustive description of Malan’s life. The book deals with the time-period 1874–1915, as H.B. Thom had reserved Malan’s political

¹² M. Becker, ‘Charisma Tussen Analyse en Overgave, een Inleiding’, in M. Becker, ed., *Charisma: De Fascinatie van Leiders* (Nijmegen: Damon Budel, 2006), 7-18.

¹³ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan: Die Eerste Veertig Jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1969).

career, which commenced in 1915, for his own biography – and jealously guarded over the D.F. Malan collection, which was only made accessible to other researchers after his death.¹⁴

The second book, *D.F. Malan*,¹⁵ was authored by Prof. H.B. Thom, and was written and published towards the end of his life. The book can only be described as hagiographic, especially since Thom went to great lengths to justify Malan's actions. An entire chapter is devoted to proving that D.F. Malan was a true Afrikaner – by virtue of factors such as his ancestry, his religiosity and his love of the Afrikaans language, history and culture.¹⁶

The other criticism that may be levelled at the book is the fact that Thom chose to use a thematic, rather than a chronological, approach. The result is that the book does not distinguish adequately between different time periods. Malan comes across as a static figure, and one observes no development in his approach to the political issues of his day. This study, in contrast, has utilised its chronological structure to reveal Malan's fluidity with regards to matters such as race and republicanism.

Thom relied heavily on D.F. Malan's memoirs – *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my ervarings op die pad daarheen*¹⁷ – which Malan wrote shortly before his death, and which are extremely vague and sketchy. The result is that gaps and inaccuracies in the memoirs are reflected in Thom's biography. Thom also chose to focus on particular aspects of Malan's career – and his biography therefore only begins with the flag crisis. As a result, the first ten years of Malan's political career are not dealt with, while the years from 1934 to 1941 are simply absent.¹⁸

Thom also made selective use of footnotes, which calls the extent of his research into question. Although there are a number of references to the D.F. Malan collection (some sweepingly refer the reader to the collection as a whole), he relied mostly on *Hansard*, the collection of speeches by Malan compiled by S.W. Pienaar and J.J.J. Scholtz under the title *Glo in u volk: D.F. Malan as redenaar*,¹⁹ and articles from *Die Burger*. He also relied on his personal memories – as a personal friend of the Malan family – which may be questionable given the number of years that lapsed between D.F. Malan's death and the writing of the biography, as well as Thom's own advanced age at the time of writing.

Nevertheless, Thom did make a valuable contribution by interviewing surviving members of the Malan family, as well as by preserving notes and letters written by D.F. Malan's two sons.

¹⁴ S.L. Barnard, 'D.F. Malan se Leierskap van die "Gesuiwerde" Nasionale Party, 1934-1939: Waarom die Hiaat in Suid-Afrikaanse Historiografie?', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 20, 2 (December 1995), 117-43.

¹⁵ H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1980).

¹⁶ See the chapter entitled 'Afrikanermens', in H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan*, 41-57.

¹⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my Ervarings op die pad Daarheen* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959).

¹⁸ See H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan*.

¹⁹ S.W. Pienaar and J.J.J. Scholtz, *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1964).

While Thom himself made limited use of this material, it has been preserved in the H.B. Thom collection and served to inform my view of the Malan family.

Thom was well aware of the gaping holes in his biography, and tried to compensate for these by writing another book focussing on Malan's role in the coalition of 1933. He died before the manuscript was finished, however, and M.C.E. van Schoor completed the final chapters.²⁰ Thus, the Fusion crisis, which followed coalition, remained untreated.

Some fragments of Malan's life and career have been examined by a number of post-graduate studies. The most recent are a doctoral study in theology by G.W. Brink, *Daniël Francois Malan (1874-1959). An Ecclesiological study of the influence of his theology*²¹ and a doctoral study in history by M.E. Cornelissen, *Die apartheidsdenke van D.F. Malan en die uitwerking daarvan op wit/bruin verhoudinge*.²² These studies are both narrow in their scope and treatment of Malan.

There are two more studies in theology which did not focus on Malan exclusively: P.G. Thirion, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Riebeeck-Wes 1858-1948. 'n Ondersoek na standpunte wat ingeneem is en invloede wat uitgeoefen is*,²³ which traced the history of the church which both D.F. Malan and Jan Smuts attended as boys and its possible influence on their later careers, and J.S.J. Swart's *Die Kerklike begeleiding van die Afrikanervolk soos wat "De Burger" dit in sy aanvangsjaar stel*,²⁴ which focused on Malan's first year as editor of *De Burger*. K.J. de Beer's M.A. in Political Science, *Dr. D.F. Malan as minister van buitelandse sake*,²⁵ dealt with the period 1948–54, but since De Beer was not permitted to consult the D.F. Malan collection, it could not convey Malan's private opinions of international relations.

Within the post-1994 context, general works of history refer to Malan merely in passing and he is usually characterised as a 'dour, unsmiling man'.²⁶ While a plethora of biographies and autobiographies of African nationalists and other heroes and heroines of the liberation struggle have been published in recent years, biographies that reassess the lives of Afrikaner nationalists are completely absent. The 'old white men' of yesteryear have, in effect, become a neglected and underresearched category at a time when the constraints of Afrikaner nationalism have become obsolete and access to primary material has become unfettered. This biography follows a precedent

²⁰ H.B. Thom (edited and completed by M.C.E. van Schoor), *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1988).

²¹ G.W. Brink, "Daniël Francois Malan (1874-1959). An Ecclesiological Study of the Influence of his Theology" (Unpublished D. Theol. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1997).

²² M.E. Cornelissen, "Die Apartheidsdenke van D.F. Malan en die Uitwerking Daarvan op Wit/Bruin Verhoudinge" (Unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of the Free State, 1999).

²³ P.G. Thirion, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Riebeeck-Wes 1858-1948. 'n Ondersoek na standpunte wat ingeneem is en invloede wat uitgeoefen is" (Unpublished D. Theol. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1993).

²⁴ J.S.J. Swart, "Die Kerklike begeleiding van die Afrikanervolk soos wat 'De Burger' dit in sy Aanvangsjaar stel" (Unpublished M. Theol. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1990).

²⁵ K.J. de Beer, "Dr. D.F. Malan as Minister van Buitelandse Sake" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of the Free State, 1977).

²⁶ C. Saunders and N. Southey, *A dictionary of South African History* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2001), 107.

which has been set within Afrikaner historiography since the 1980's: it seeks to demythologise Afrikaner nationalism through a fresh interpretation of primary sources.

In my treatment of sources, a conscious decision was made to focus on the raw materials, and to use secondary works only for reference purposes, in order to formulate an independent interpretation. In particular cases, however, it was deemed unnecessary to reinvent the wheel when a certain area had adequately been covered by another study, and the reader is therefore referred to these works.

This biography is based on archival research that was conducted at five different centres: the University of Stellenbosch's J.S. Gericke Library, which houses the D.F. Malan collection; the Cape National Archives; the State Archives in Pretoria; the Free State National Archives; and the Institute for Contemporary History Archive at the University of the Free State.

The documents that were consulted at these centres were used to construct the world behind the scenes and for this reason, preference was given to private collections. Such collections shed light on the interaction between the various role players and convey the opinions that Malan's contemporaries held of him. The private collections of Malan's contemporaries were particularly useful, as they served as a counterbalance to the D.F. Malan collection and compensated for the various voids that exist within this collection.

The focus on private collections does mean that the machinations of official bodies, such as the National Party and the nationalist government, received less attention within this study. However, since the genre of biography focuses on the motives and actions of a particular individual, and since these institutions have been the focus of extensive research in other works of history, it was decided that private documents would be more useful and appropriate in fulfilling the aims of this study as it is important to demonstrate direct links between Malan and any particular event or process at all times.

The vast majority of the archival documents are in Dutch and Afrikaans. The decision was taken to use English translations in the text, while the original citations are to be found in the footnotes. While many English-language works that deal with Afrikaner nationalism use Afrikaans terms that are difficult to translate, such as the word *volk*, it was decided to avoid this as far as possible in order to improve readability. The word *volk*, for example, is therefore translated as 'nation', and has to be understood in the nationalist sense of the word. While there have been many debates about Afrikaner identity in a post-1994 context, and while the term 'Afrikaner' is often used in a broader and more inclusive sense, this study employs the term as D.F. Malan understood it: to denote a white Afrikaans-speaking South African.

The reader will observe that, while Malan's perceptions of race are treated, Africans and African resistance movements are notably absent from this account of Malan's life. This is a

reflection of the archival material – an absence of documentation reveals as much about a person's priorities and concerns as does the presence of such material. The Afrikaner nationalists' documents display a preoccupation with internal power struggles and nationalist objectives. They did not discuss African politics in their letters, and they were not in contact with African politicians. It is also clear that African political organisations did not direct themselves at Malan and his Nationalists before their entry into power. Documents pertaining to Africans are therefore almost completely absent from the archival collections that were consulted during the course of this study, and those that are present are of limited value. It reveals the extent to which politicised Africans and Afrikaner nationalists moved in separate realms – and it demonstrates the lack of importance the Afrikaner nationalists attached to African politics. When they discussed Africans, they did so in abstract terms, and this is reflected in the text. To insert African resistance movements into this study would amount to putting words into D.F. Malan's mouth. The intention has been, at all times, to breathe life into a *gestalt* that was derived from the sources.

Chapter 1 – The Early Years: 1874-1900

Danie Malan was a near-sighted little boy. He peered at the world through a thick pair of spectacles, and kept to himself whenever they were endangered by the other children's rough play. His shoulders were hunched, compelling his parents to make him wear a harness to correct his posture.¹

His parents' farm, Allesverloren, located just outside the town of Riebeek-Wes in the Western Cape, was situated on the slopes of Kasteelberg and offered him a panoramic view of the Swartland's plains, which were hemmed by great mountains in the distance: the Elandskloof mountains; the Groot Winterhoek mountains; and the Koue Bokkeveld mountains. In summer it would be unbearably hot, dry, and dusty, forcing the inhabitants to seek refuge in the shade. Autumn would turn the vineyards bright red. Winter brought rain and the vibrant green wheat fields that stretched all the way to the mountains, which were sometimes capped in snow, while spring brought welcome warmth and sunshine, brightening the entire landscape that would still be green from the winter rains. The world there is rugged and silent, leaving the individual feeling infinitesimal. In later years, it was the Swartland's ruggedness that Malan missed most as a student in Holland's tame surroundings.²

The Swartland's inhabitants, as Afrikaners of the Western Cape, formed a class of landed gentry, in contrast to their kin on the frontiers. They did not form a small elite group, but instead consisted of an upwardly mobile – but relatively undifferentiated – broad mass of farmers.³ A number of professionals belonged to this class of Cape Afrikaners – mainly members of the clergy, or the legal and medical professions. Generally, the Cape Afrikaners took part in trade and local government affairs to a far greater extent than those Afrikaners who were frontiersmen.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the Afrikaners of the Western Cape became progressively more anglicised, and were generally tolerant of their British counterparts. In fact, mastery of the English language was regarded as the hallmark of good breeding, seen as giving one entry into polite society. This state of affairs continued well into the 1860s. The 1870s marked a turning point, however, as South Africa's Industrial Revolution began in the wake of the discovery of diamonds. At this time, the Cape Afrikaners became more aware of their blood ties to the

¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 1.

² DFM, 1/1/176, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 13 February 1902.

³ M. Tamarkin, *Cecil John Rhodes and the Cape Afrikaners: The Imperial Colossus and the Colonial Parish Pump* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1996), 26-7.

Voortrekkers, who were locked in perpetual conflict with the British Empire. They also began to realise the extent to which their own cultural traditions had been forced into the background.⁴

The Industrial Revolution left a mark on the Afrikaners in the Cape. It transformed the existing society, not only by stimulating the economy of the Cape, but also by creating social stratification within the Cape Afrikaner community. A class of poor white *bywoners* – tenant farmers whose descent into abject poverty became increasingly rapid – stood in stark contrast to the prosperous class of landed gentry.⁵

It was into this class of landed gentry that Daniël Francois Malan was born, on 22 May 1874. He was his parents' second surviving child – their first three children did not survive their first days. Young Danie had an elder sister, Cinie, who was both brilliant and deeply religious.⁶ His younger brother Fanie was the one who showed an aptitude for farming. Malan himself, always absorbed in a book, tried to avoid as much of the farm work as possible, with varying degrees of success.⁷ His legendary absentmindedness manifested itself early on in his childhood: his mother once found him, lost in thought, pulling on a third dirty shirt over the two he already wore.⁸ He was also prone to falling into ditches since he was either reading while he walked, or too absent-minded to look where he was going.⁹

His father was an imposing man who made money as a successful farmer – planting both wheat and vines – and a money-lender. He was a prominent member of the local community, serving on the local church council and belonging to the Afrikaner Bond, 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr's political party. He filled his eldest son, who was his namesake, with awe – and very probably, feelings of inferiority.¹⁰ Danie Malan was a quiet and serious child who seldom spoke. This earned him the nickname '*Een woord*' (one word) – bestowed on him by his father – due to his monosyllabic replies to any questions.¹¹ It may have been that he was too tongue-tied to find a longer answer. Great was his father's irritation in later years when he bought his eldest son a new horse and found that he had not been to the stables, which were situated right next to the house, to see his gift. 'No, you won't do as a farmer,' he grumbled.¹² Instead of inheriting the farm, as befitted the eldest son of an Afrikaner family, Malan would be sent to study at the Victoria College

⁴ T.R.H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond: The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1966), 2-3, 5-6, 8-9, 11.

⁵ M. Tamarkin, *Cecil John Rhodes and the Cape Afrikaners*, 29; C. Saunders and N. Southey, *A Dictionary of South African History* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2001), 35.

⁶ DFM, 1/9/7, Oumatjie Stoffberg, *Oumatjie Stoffberg Vertel*, 1.

⁷ DFM, 1/1/2799, *Byvoegsel tot Die Burger*, 31 May 1952; DFM, 1/1/2626, *Byvoegsel tot Die Burger*, 3 March 1951.

⁸ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 5.

⁹ DFM, 1/1/2799, *Byvoegsel tot Die Burger*, 31 May 1952.

¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 2.

¹¹ DFM, 1/9/7, Oumatjie Stoffberg, *Oumatjie Stoffberg Vertel*, 5.

¹² DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 1-2: 'Nee, man, vir 'n boer sal jy nie deug nie'.

at Stellenbosch. This was followed by studies at the town's theological seminary, and thereafter at the University of Utrecht in The Netherlands, where he obtained his doctorate.

Little is known of Malan's mother, Anna du Toit. Like her husband, she was of Huguenot stock. Malan hardly ever spoke of her, and the only description that survives of her is one made by a family member who, merely in passing, rather simplistically characterised the mother of such illustrious children as a 'dear humble soul'.¹³ The same family member ascribed the children's exceptional intellectual abilities exclusively to their father's genes. Anna du Toit has become fixed in history by the description of her as quiet, even-tempered, and meticulous, but known all around as a friendly and pleasant farmer's wife.¹⁴

As was typical of Afrikaner families at the time, and beyond into the twentieth century, Malan was not only raised by his parents, but also by their Coloured servants, who were known to the children only by their Christian names – their surnames have faded into the colonial past. An old servant woman called Galatie carried the young Danie on her back, while another, named Nanna, who worked for the Malan family for seventeen years, was a prominent presence during his childhood.¹⁵ There was also an old couple, known as Tom and Lena, who had been born as slaves. They lived in a humble, but tidy, little house on Allesverloren. Malan was often invited in for tea, and he would happily accept. During these early years on the farm, with his parents' servants forming part of an extended, albeit paternalistic, family, Malan believed that the only difference between white and Coloured was to be found in their level of education. Only later did he become convinced that racial differences were inherent.¹⁶

In addition to Cinie and Fanie, Malan had another sister, Mimie, and two younger brothers, Pieter and Koos. Pieter died at an early age: when some of the Malan children went for a picnic on Kasteelberg, a boulder came rolling down the mountain and killed him. To the family, the 10-year-old boy – who always said that he wanted to become a missionary when he grew up – became something of a martyr. Among his belongings they found the few shillings that he had saved for mission-work, and decided to establish the Pieter Malan mission-fund.

¹³ DFM, 1/9/7, Oumatjie Stoffberg, *Oumatjie Stoffberg Vertel*, 1: 'liewe nederige siel'.

¹⁴ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan: Die Eerste Veertig Jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1969), 23.

¹⁵ *The Star*, 12 November 1954.

¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 4-5.



Figure 1: The Malan children

Front: Koos. Seated: Cinie, Danie, Fanie. Standing: Mimie. (D.F. Malan collection)

Religion played a prominent role in the Malan household, which was Evangelical Reformed, and prided itself on its Huguenot ancestry.¹⁷ The most important books in the Malan household were the Bible and John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This was typical of the times, as the Western Cape was swept up by several evangelical revivals during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the town of Riebeeck-Wes was no exception.¹⁸ These revivals, of whom the most prominent leader was Andrew Murray junior, were characterised by prayer meetings at which emotional displays of one's faith was the norm. Saving souls from eternal doom became an obsession, and the emphasis was placed on the individual's relationship with God.¹⁹ The Revival swept through Riebeeck-Wes in the 1870s, and even Andrew Murray himself visited the town to conduct a number of pentecostal services. Following these earlier successes the local minister, A.J. Louw, organised more Revivalist meetings in 1885 and 1886.²⁰ A number of school children gave their hearts to the Lord during these meetings – among them, the young Jan Smuts.²¹ Another such child was Cinie Malan, who made the life-changing decision to serve the Lord at the age of seven.²²

Malan, although deeply religious himself, never spoke of a moment of personal conversion – and as a rule, he always kept his emotions to himself. He did, however, from an early age, believe

¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 3.

¹⁸ P.B. van der Watt, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 1824-1905* (Pretoria: N.G. Kerkboekhandel, 1980), 4, 15-20; P.G. Thirion, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Riebeeck-Wes, 1858-1948: 'n Ondersoek na standpunte wat ingeneem is en invloede wat uitgeoefen is", (Unpublished D. Theol Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1993), 137, 143.

¹⁹ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 208-10.

²⁰ P.G. Thirion, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Riebeeck-Wes, 1858-1948", 137, 143.

²¹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years, 1870-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 10-11.

²² University of the Free State, Institute for Contemporary History (hereafter INCH), PV 141, Oumatjie Stoffberg, file 37, *Oumatjie Stoffberg Vertel*, 3.

that he had a special calling.²³ When he broached the possibility of studying law, his pious parents refused. Lawyers, they told him, got paid to tell lies.²⁴

Malan was a strong scholar – although he was surpassed in brilliance by his sister Cinie and her genial classmate, Jan Smuts, with whom she vied for first place.²⁵ Jannie Smuts was exactly four years older than Danie Malan (their birthdays were only two days apart), and managed to awe and annoy the younger boy. The first impression was created when the schoolmaster, with whom Jan lodged, discovered that his pupil had stayed up all night, refusing to go to bed before he had solved a mathematics problem. More than a half-century later, Malan still told this tale as an impressive example of perseverance.²⁶ His admiration of Smuts was not unqualified, however. He was less than impressed when Smuts, who sometimes taught Sunday School to the younger children, told them about King Arthur and his knights. He explained to his young wards that a knight was called a ‘Sir’ and that knights were still being appointed by Queen Victoria. Pointing to himself, he said, ‘When I grow up, she will make me Sir Jan.’²⁷ Malan used to mimic the way in which Smuts apparently thumped at his breast in a manner that left little doubt that he thought the older boy’s self-proclaimed superiority to be arrogant – both socially and culturally.²⁸

In later years their school master, reflecting on the two prime ministers he had taught, described the difference between them: ‘Smuts was like a Maxim gun and Malan like a Long Tom’.²⁹ The same schoolmaster also gave Malan the nickname ‘Tant Regina’, which meant ‘slow-coach’, because that was what he was: slow in his movements and slow to answer – but always meticulous. While Smuts was always the first with an answer, Malan would quietly ponder his until it was watertight. Their eventual parliamentary styles were the same as their classroom-manner: Smuts was nimble-witted and quick to take a gap, while Malan steamed ahead like a locomotive, undeterred by interjections, building one argument on the other.³⁰

The schoolmaster, Theunis Stoffberg, made a profound impression on the young Malan. In later years, he spoke more often of him than of his father.³¹ Stoffberg was barely eighteen when he went to teach the Riebeek-Wes children, initially lodging with the Malan family, and eventually marrying D.F. Malan senior’s half-sister. D.F. Malan never forgot the young teacher, who was both thorough in his work and humane in his treatment of his young wards: a man who would play with

²³ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 6.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

²⁵ DFM, 1/9/7, Oumatjie Stoffberg, *Oumatjie Stoffberg Vertel*, 3-4.

²⁶ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 47.

²⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years*, 12.

²⁸ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 46.

²⁹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years*, 12.

³⁰ *The Star*, 12 November 1954.

³¹ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 2.

the children in the school yard and, at the same time, maintain discipline and demand their very best in the classroom.³² It was common knowledge that to fail was to let the school down. Malan took this to heart, and obtained a First Class Pass from Master Stoffberg's school. Stoffberg inculcated his class with the motto 'Anything worth doing, is worth doing *well*.'³³ These words stayed with Malan for the rest of his life, and he often quoted them to his children.



Figure 2: Master Stoffberg's school

D.F. Malan is in the third row, second from the right. Behind him, in the fourth row, is Jan Smuts, second from the right. (D.F. Malan Collection)

At the same time, like any normal young boy, Malan got up to mischief – with his brother Fanie as his main partner in crime. Once, the two of them stole tobacco to smoke in secret – an experience that cured Malan of the desire to smoke for the rest of his life.³⁴ He enjoyed taking part in the pranks the children played on unsuspecting townspeople,³⁵ and spent endless hours in the *veld* (countryside), collecting tortoises and kukumakrankas, a wild plant that produces sweet and fragrant fruit.³⁶

Politics played a prominent role in the Malan household. The farmers of the Swartland were one of the first groups in the Western Cape to become politically mobilised in order to defend their economic interests and, as mentioned before, D.F. Malan senior was a member of 'Onze' Jan

³² *Ibid.*, 3.

³³ DFM, 1/1/3272, Hannes Malan, 12 November 1964, *Gegewens oor Kinderjare van Dr. Malan*, 3: 'Enigiets wat die moeite werd is om te doen, is die moeite werd om *goed* te doen.'

³⁴ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 1.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ H. Malan, 'Dr. Malan het Koekemakrankas Gesoek en Skilpaai Aangehou – Hy was lief vir die Natuur!', *Deus Arx Mea*, 14, 25 (October 2003), 14-15.

Hofmeyr's Afrikaner Bond.³⁷ Hofmeyr originally established it as the Boeren Bescherminings Vereeniging (BBV) in response to excise duties on spirits, an issue that affected the wine farmers of the Western Cape. The party was therefore initially driven by the farmers' immediate concerns, rather than by any particular political ideology.³⁸ The wine and wheat farmers regarded themselves as the backbone of Western Cape society and, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, became more and more politically organised in response to fluctuating economic conditions and their squabbles with merchants. They lobbied the Cape government incessantly to protect their interests through measures such as import tariffs and subsidies – and at the same time, became exceedingly suspicious of the African franchise which, they believed, strengthened the English-speaking merchants' hand against them.³⁹ It was in this context that an Afrikaner was defined as 'a person of Dutch extraction, who believed in the advancement of the brandy market, protection to the corn farmer, and the repression of the native.'⁴⁰ The establishment of the BBV marked a transition in Cape Politics: from regional tension between East and West to 'a period of ethnic Anglo-Boer antagonism.'⁴¹

Nevertheless, the Cape Afrikaners were also loyal Victorians – or at least, they admired the person of Queen Victoria. They participated enthusiastically in her annual birthday celebrations and regarded themselves as loyal British subjects.⁴² The Victorian worldview permeated the Western Cape, which encompassed, among other things, Social Darwinism. The Victorians appropriated Charles Darwin's theories to affirm their hierarchical view of the world and its races – with themselves, obviously, at the top of the ladder. The science of the day was used to create a biological racism that confirmed the inherent inferiority of the subject races who, according to the British, lacked culture, while their own 'institutions of civilisation' served as shining examples of their superiority.⁴³ Malan received a thoroughly Victorian education, absorbing the Victorian worldview and manners to such an extent that his son later described him as a 'Victorian gentleman'.⁴⁴

³⁷ H. Giliomee, 'Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1870-1915', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (October 1987), 41.

³⁸ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 106.

³⁹ For a more detailed discussion, see H. Giliomee, 'Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism', 38-63.

⁴⁰ Quoted in H. Giliomee, 'Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism', 58.

⁴¹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 106.

⁴² J.H. Snyman, *Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902*, (Pretoria: Argief Jaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis, 1979), 10-13.

⁴³ C. Bolt, 'Race and the Victorians' in C.C. Eldridge, ed., *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 126-47.

⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 15.

As the public school at Riebeeck-Wes did not cater for matriculants, Malan had to leave his home to go to Stellenbosch in order to complete his secondary education at the Stellenbosch Gymnasium. He arrived in Stellenbosch in 1891, and was fetched from the station by, among others, Jan Smuts.⁴⁵

In Stellenbosch he lodged in a student boarding-house named Tertia, which was situated on the southern bank of the Eersterivier (First River). The students of Stellenbosch dubbed Tertia the house of ‘Giants, Pigmies, Cavaliers, Round-heads and Bondsmen’,⁴⁶ and Malan certainly belonged to the last category. At Tertia he was to share in the camaraderie that typifies the student boarding-house experience: the ever-present Golden Syrup, which left one feeling sticky inside and out, baths in the Eersterivier, and attempts to identify one’s nightshirt by sniffing through the pile that had been thrown on the floor so callously by the owners that morning.⁴⁷

In 1893, two years after his arrival in Stellenbosch, Malan’s mother died (the cause of her death was not recorded), leaving his father to care for the three younger children, Fanie, Mimie, and Koos. Cinie was in Wellington, where she had successfully completed her studies at the Huguenot Seminary. From an early age she had dreamed of becoming a missionary, and had practiced by teaching Sunday School to the children of her parents’ Coloured servants. After qualifying as a teacher, she became private secretary to the seminary’s principal, Miss A. P. Ferguson, and also taught Latin and Mathematics. At the same time, she assisted the Reverend J.C. Pauw, one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Mission Church for Coloured congregants,⁴⁸ with his mission work among Wellington’s Coloured community.⁴⁹

A young man had also expressed interest in her: the 29-year-old missionary A.A. (Andrew) Louw, from the mission station Morgenster in the erstwhile Mashonaland, which later became part of present-day Zimbabwe. Louw was looking for a companion, hopefully a wife, who could assist him in his work at the mission station. To this end, he wrote to his brothers who were studying theology at the Stellenbosch seminary, asking them if they knew of anyone with whom he could take up correspondence. They recommended Cinie Malan, a girl who was ‘beautiful and clever, someone who could just as easily cut apart a sheep’s carcass as solve a geometry-problem’.⁵⁰

At the end of 1892, Andrew Louw wrote to Cinie and asked her whether they could correspond. She agreed, but made it clear that he was not to regard the granting of his request as

⁴⁵ *Die Transvaler*, 13 December 1954.

⁴⁶ *Stellenbosch Students’ Annual*, 1897, 35.

⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 5.

⁴⁸ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel 1* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1968), 638.

⁴⁹ D.W. Krüger, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel 3* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 556.

⁵⁰ J.L. Malan, ‘Sending-spore in Afrika!’, *Deus Arx Mea: Newsletter of the Malan Family Association*, 14, 25 (October 2003), 39: ‘mooi en slim, en iemand wat net so maklik ‘n skaap uitmekaar kan sny as ‘n meetkunde probleem oplos’.

encouragement of any kind.⁵¹ Upon her mother's death, however, she was forced to return to Allesverloren to help her father look after her younger siblings. The father soon realised that this arrangement could only be temporary. His solution was to marry again, in order to provide his children with a mother. Friends 'recommended' Esther Fourie of Beaufort West to him. She was the daughter of a prominent stock farmer in the area, and his junior by twenty-one years.⁵² By virtue of her surname, she was also a Huguenot descendant.

In January 1894, after thirteen months of correspondence, Andrew Louw visited Allesverloren in order to meet Cinie. The two decided right away that they wanted to marry.⁵³ During that same month, D.F. Malan senior asked Esther Fourie for her hand in marriage. They were married in March 1894,⁵⁴ followed a month later by Cinie and Andrew. Cinie then accompanied Andrew back to Morgenster, where they worked together until her death in 1935.⁵⁵



Figure 3: A Malan family gathering
D.F. Malan is in the back row, fifth from the left. (D.F. Malan Collection)

Esther Fourie fitted in well with the Malan family. She treated her husband's children as her own, and soon after her marriage to D.F. Malan senior, gave birth to Essie, followed by Annie, and

⁵¹ J.L. Malan, 'Sending-spore in Afrika!', 39.

⁵² B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 40.

⁵³ J.L. Malan, 'Sending-spore in Afrika!', 40.

⁵⁴ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 40.

⁵⁵ J.L. Malan, 'Sending-spore in Afrika!', 40.

Stinie. A little boy was also born to the marriage, but he died at a very young age. When family gatherings were held and group photographs were taken, Esther insisted that a portrait of her stepchildren's mother also be included.⁵⁶ One such photograph shows D.F. Malan senior in the centre, surrounded by his children and grandchildren, with a portrait of his first wife to his right, and his second wife seated to his left.

Malan befriended his young stepmother's sisters – especially Nettie, who became something of a female 'chum'. To her he would write about girls, tease her about her crushes (whom he would label her 'tik'), and tell her about his studies at Stellenbosch. As was the norm among educated Afrikaners, these early letters were written in English.

After matriculating with honours from the Stellenbosch Gymnasium,⁵⁷ Malan enrolled for a B.A. Mathematics and Science at the Victoria College. His academic endeavours were not always equally successful. A fellow student remembered how, after a particularly difficult mathematics test, Malan compared his test paper to that of a friend and, establishing that he had answered at least three questions correctly, jumped for joy. This act was so uncharacteristic that the said fellow-student remembered the event for the rest of his life, for Malan was always calm and composed – as well-balanced as 'a small scale in the chemistry laboratory'. He did not play any sports, he proudly declared that he had never read a novel and, as far as his friends were concerned, he showed no interest in the opposite sex. 'My mind to me a kingdom is' was his motto.⁵⁸ In fact, Malan later confessed to being painfully shy during these years. His sense of inferiority overwhelmed him to such an extent that he often felt as if countless eyes bore into his back as he walked down the street.⁵⁹

In spite of leaving his male friends with the impression that he was not interested in the opposite sex, to Nettie he felt free to describe the young lady of his dreams:

... my recipe states that my "tik" wears her hair loose, has no "strikkies" [frills] about her, is no slave of fashion, is very kind and good tempered, and has never yet flirted and has a true constant love for none else than for me. You see that my "tik" is infinitely more difficult to be caught than yours, for women are almost all alike. If she has once disappeared among the millions of her sex, the task of extricating her is almost a hopeless one.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ J.L. Malan, 'Die drie halwe susters van Dr. D. F. Malan: Essie, Annie en Stinnie [sic]', *Deus Arx Mea: Newsletter of the Malan Family Association*, 10, 19 (June 1999), 11.

⁵⁷ *Stellenbosch Students' Annual, 1892-1893*, 32.

⁵⁸ G.G. Cilliers, 'Doktor Gawie Vertel...', *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan Uitgawe*, 1955, 22-3.

⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 5-6.

⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/100/2, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 29 July 1895.

In fact, he did try to call on a young lady named Berrie, but his attempts were frustrated by an over-protective chaperone. 'I really don't know why I may not see Berrie anymore', he lamented to Nettie:

It must be either imagination on my part that I have done something, or it must be imagination on Miss Hannay's part that I have done something. I don't think that it is expressly forbidden, but the old lady does not like it. I hear that she is displeased with calling in general, so that mine is no exceptional case.⁶¹

Three years later, Malan tried to take up correspondence with a girl named Maria, and in these letters one can almost see the shy youth blushing as he stumbled over his words:

Have you made up your mind yet about what I asked you the evening before you left? If you do decide to consent, I would not expect you to write every week or every fortnight or even longer, for I am considerate enough to think that you may be wearied and that you have your work and other correspondence besides. If however you have any objection whatever, or any difficulty or even if you have no inclination to do so, you may certainly be so bold as to say so; I will not in anyway be offended and will rest satisfied – not that I am at all indifferent and do not care; far from it! but because I can do it for your sake. I am very glad that you have taken some time to consider. If one does not think twice before you leap, you might afterwards have cause to regret the step you have taken, thereby perhaps grieving both yourself and others.⁶²

He seemed to have received a positive reply, and in his next letter he jubilantly fumbled on:

I feel very highly honoured, to say nothing of being pleased. I fear that you will not always find me very interesting or entertaining. In letterwriting [*sic*], I suppose, as in all other things, experience is needed to bring to perfection and that is just what I cannot boast of. To my homepeople [*sic*], school and College chums I have of course often written, but whether being interesting to them means being interesting to ladies, I don't know. However, you have been kind enough to take this new pupil into your school; he is a little older perhaps than most of your pupils are, and his faults are therefore perhaps a little more deeprooted [*sic*], but I

⁶¹ DFM, 1/1/100, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 10 September 1894.

⁶² University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre (hereafter US Library), G.G. Cillie collection, 205. KF. 2.5, D.F. Malan - Maria, 2 June 1897.

sincerely hope that notwithstanding all the vexation he may give, you may have the satisfaction to see that he is at least progressing. I have one request to make and that is that you would never in any way trouble yourself so as to be able to write to me regularly. You need not write when you are tired or have anything else to do. Write when you feel inclined and have the leisure. Not that I am so presumptuous as to think that you will take trouble or make any sacrifice for my sake, but because you might, having made this engagement, think it your duty. In short, consider writing to me not a duty you have to perform, but a favour you bestow.⁶³

His efforts must have run aground, however, as there is no further sign of correspondence with Maria. Malan eventually decided to keep himself aloof from the opposite sex. He still felt conscious of having a special calling, and decided that girls would only distract him from his life's deeper purpose.⁶⁴

A forum where he had more success in overcoming his feelings of inferiority was the Union Debating society. During these years, nearly all of Stellenbosch's students belonged to either one of the two rival debating societies: the College Debating Society and the Union Debating Society.⁶⁵ Immediately upon his arrival, Malan's welcoming party at the station used the opportunity to recruit him to the latter. In the formal procedure that followed, Pieter Stofberg proposed his membership and Jan Smuts seconded.⁶⁶

The Union Debating Society was a forum where the younger generation of well-educated Afrikaners expressed not only the entrenched interests of their class but also a new form of nationalism, which was less tolerant than that of their elders. This is clearly reflected in the outcome of their debates. In 1895, for example,

The majority of the members approved of the following measures: –

(1) A compulsory Scab Act, (2) Treks are justified by the internal state of the Colony; (3) Compulsory Education; (4) Immigration to be under control of Government.

And disapproved of the following: –

(1) The Taalbond; (2) The appointment of Teachers as Examiners; (3) The Rhodes Cabinet; (4) The House of Lords; (5) the buying up of farms in Western Province by English

⁶³ US Library, G.G. Cillie collection, 205. KF. 2.5, D.F. Malan - Maria, 20 June 1897.

⁶⁴ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 15.

⁶⁵ DFM, 1/1/3271, T.H. le Roux – B. Booyens, 7 November 1964.

⁶⁶ *Die Transvaler*, 13 December 1954.

Company; (6) The appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson as Governor and High Commissioner.⁶⁷

It was, essentially, a training school for aspirant politicians and orators. For Malan's first appearance, he chose to recite a piece called "The Death of Napoleon", in which Napoleon, as he lay dying on St Helena, recalled the greatest moments of his life. It was a reflection of the type of imagery that moved him, and he did his utmost best to recite it as fluently as possible.⁶⁸ The solemnity of his demeanour, however, appeared comical to those in the back benches, who mocked his performance with glee. Jan Smuts recognised the utter dejection that was overwhelming the young Malan. He leaned over to the president of the Debating Society, P.J.G. Meiring – who would later become the editor of *Die Kerkbode* – to whisper in his ear that he knew the young man, who came from his home town, and that while he had a nimble mind, he also had a very sensitive personality. 'Those in the back do not realise that that which Malan is reciting, is his own' he whispered, 'they think that he has stolen it from the *Royal Path of Life*.'⁶⁹ This publication was notorious within the Debating Society as a popular refuge for lazy members who plagiarised their recitals.⁷⁰ Prompted by Smuts, Meiring sought the new recruit after the proceedings to assure him that he had enjoyed his performance – and that it was best to ignore the taunts of his tormentors.⁷¹

The reassurance helped, and Malan did not give up. It was a crucial moment in which his later political opponent prevented his oratorical spirit from being crushed. In 1895, he took part in his first debate, entitled "That this meeting considers that the buying up of farms by a foreign syndicate will prove disastrous to the Cape Colony." He won the debate,⁷² which was hailed as a 'brilliant success. The debating power of the Society has probably never appeared to such distinct advantage'.⁷³

This debate provides the first glimpse of the young Malan's mode of thinking, as he did not keep a diary and left hardly any letters dated prior to 1895. His words would have made any Afrikaner Bond member proud. The speech itself was well-crafted and systematic. Malan made skilful use of metaphors and, instead of basing his speech on emotional and patriotic appeals to his audience, he provided a rational criticism of the possible involvement of foreign capital in the Western Cape by drawing parallels with the Kimberley diamond fields. A foreign company, he told

⁶⁷ *Stellenbosch Students' Annual, 1895*, 43.

⁶⁸ F. Jacobs, 'Dr. Malan en die Debatsvereniging', *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan Uitgawe*, 1955, 16.

⁶⁹ P. Meiring, *Ons Eerste ses Premiers: 'n Persoonlike Terugblik* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1972), 72: 'Hulle daar agter weet nie dat wat Malan daar voordra sy eie is nie...hulle dink hy het dit uit die *Royal Path of Life* gesteel.'

⁷⁰ P.G.J. Meiring, 'Ons Vereniging in die Jare 1885 tot 1891', in *Na Vyftig Jaar. Gedenkboek van die Unie-Debatsvereniging, Stellenbosch* (Stellenbosch: Pro Ecclesia-Drukkery, 1926), 167.

⁷¹ P. Meiring, *Ons Eerste ses Premiers: 'n Persoonlike Terugblik*, 72-3.

⁷² F. Jacobs, 'Dr. Malan en die Debatsvereniging', 16-17.

⁷³ *Stellenbosch Students' Annual, 1895*, 43.

his audience, was interested solely in making profits for its European investors. It would take money out of the country and, like De Beers, churn out millionaires such as Cecil John Rhodes and Barney Barnato on the one hand, and desperately poor labourers on the other, which would land the Western Cape with the same problems as Europe: anarchism and socialism. For that matter, a foreign company – intent on obtaining the cheapest labour possible – could decide to import labourers, which would land the Western Cape with a problem similar to Natal’s ‘Coolie question’.⁷⁴

It is interesting to note that Malan was critical of Rhodes and De Beers at a time when the marriage between Rhodes and the Afrikaner Bond still seemed stable – on the surface at least. The disastrous Jameson Raid and the subsequent dissolution of the political marriage would only take place during the last week of that same year and the first weeks of 1896. Yet, in his speech, Malan alluded to rumours that De Beers used funds, which had not been accounted for, for election purposes. It is known today that S.J. du Toit, the illustrious leader of the First Afrikaans Language Movement and the polemic founder of Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (The Association of Real Afrikaners), was in Rhodes’s pocket.⁷⁵ It was possibly known or rumoured at the time.

Malan’s characterisation of the Afrikaners was ambiguous. He appealed to the members of his audience as members of the same nation, ‘whether this country be our adopted country or our native land’.⁷⁶ Yet, he went on to particularise the Afrikaners as a conservative people who were disinclined towards progress, and endangered by periods of transition:

The Afrikander nation is one very slow and hesitating to accept new things and new ideas. The nation has always been looked upon as extremely non progressive even so that some call it the retrogressive party. A sudden change is now to come and who knows what may be the result. We may compare the slow progress that our nation is making to a cart that is moving slowly forward. A sudden pull is now given to it and it might be that we remain on the cart, but it might just as well be that we lose our balance, tumble over and remain behind altogether.⁷⁷

This was not a young man who advocated change and progress for his people, but one who advocated protection in times of uncertainty. Not only in terms of economics, but in terms of culture as well, with the *Uitlanders* (Foreigners) in the Transvaal as a warning of things to come.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/108, D.F. Malan, *Eerste Debat*.

⁷⁵ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 110.

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/108, D.F. Malan, *Eerste Debat*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

It is interesting to note Malan's anti-capitalism and anti-socialism in a speech written at the age of twenty-one. Afrikaners, as a rule, were ambivalent about capitalism and socialism, but Malan's statement is a very early expression of what became conventional wisdom through the course of the twentieth century. To Malan, capitalism was an evil that plundered the local population and destabilised it by creating economic inequality, which would necessarily lead to socialism and anarchism – as far as he was concerned, the two went hand-in-hand. He also worried about the effect that these foreign evils would have on the Afrikaners' 'national character'.⁷⁹ This was a term that was synonymous with the philosophers Herder and Fichte, who wrote extensively about the uniqueness of every culture as a treasure that had to be respected and preserved at all costs. Philosophy was Malan's other main interest, and it was in this field of study where he was to feel most at ease.⁸⁰

After completing his B.A. Mathematics and Science, Malan had to decide what his next step would be. It is possible that he toyed with the idea of teaching, and in 1896 he even undertook a short stint as headmaster at a boys' school in Swellendam. The school itself was in dire straits, and on the verge of closing. Malan's efforts were not met with much success – he stayed for only one term and in the term after he left, only fifteen of the twenty-one pupils were present at the school's yearly inspection. Of the fifteen, six failed – those who were absent had probably expected to fail as well.⁸¹ It is not known when exactly Malan decided to study theology. He later recounted that he fought an inner battle for three whole months, trying to choose between law and the church.⁸² The former was his own wish; the latter would have pleased his parents. When he finally made his decision, he regarded it as final and did not look back.⁸³ On an undated piece of paper, he listed his reasons for deciding to become a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, making no mention of his previous wishes.⁸⁴ He was fully committed to his chosen path.

He attributed the manner in which he reached his decision to his parents. They were God-fearing and pious and had taught him from an early age that every person had a God-given calling, which meant that one could only be successful in one's career if one had God's blessing. He had long prayed for God to show him the way and first became aware of the particulars of his calling two years before pencilling the said note. Fear had prevented him from contemplating the possibility – possibly due to his ever-present shyness and feelings of inferiority. Now, he decided, he would surrender his own will to follow God's will, and be an empty vessel into which God could

⁷⁹ DFM, 1/1/108, D.F. Malan, *Eerste Debat*.

⁸⁰ G.G. Cilliers, "Doktor Gawie Vertel...", *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan Uitgawe*, 1955, 23.

⁸¹ DFM, 1/1/3276, B. Booyens – M.E. Rothmann, 14 August 1976.

⁸² B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 301.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ DFM, 1/1/84, D.F. Malan, "Beweegredenen".

pour his Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ The note was effectively a letter of submission, a prostration, an undertaking to tread a path of which he, like Moses, was deeply afraid but down which he would nevertheless persevere in order to satisfy the will of God.

In 1896, deeply submissive, Malan wrote his admission exams – which he passed cum laude – and enrolled at Stellenbosch’s theological seminary.⁸⁶ At the same time, he enrolled for a M.A. in Philosophy. In doing this, he moved from one world to another. When Malan had arrived in Stellenbosch in 1891, the town encompassed two worlds. On the one hand, there were the professors of the Victoria College, who were Anglophiles and offered their students a classical education. When, at a college function, Malan stated that South Africa should one day become an independent republic, Professor Tommy Walker, who taught English, shook his head and wondered aloud what was to become of this younger generation.⁸⁷

On the other hand, Stellenbosch was dominated by the theological seminary. When Malan was a student, its professors were N.J. Hofmeyr, J.I. Marais and P.J.G. de Vos. They all had close ties with J.H. Neethling, the local minister. Hofmeyr and his co-founder of the seminary, John Murray, who had passed away by the time Malan was a student, were regarded as orthodox – the seminary owed its existence to their victory over liberal factions in the church. N.J. Hofmeyr and John Murray were members of a small, influential clerical clique, which also included their brothers Servaas Hofmeyr and Andrew Murray junior, as well as J.H. Neethling. All of these men had studied theology in The Netherlands at the University of Utrecht, where they were influenced by the Romantic Réveil movement. The Réveil was a reaction to rational critique of church doctrine, which became a common feature of Dutch theology. In its stead, it advocated a return to ‘pure’ Reformed faith and Calvinist principles.⁸⁸ In addition to this, Hofmeyr, who was a patriarchal figure at the seminary, was influenced by the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher, the German Romantic theologian and philosopher who focussed more on the experience of religion than on doctrine.⁸⁹ This strengthened the idea that faith was an emotional and individual affair. Not surprisingly, these men all played prominent roles in the Evangelical movement and the Great Revival, which had formed such a prominent part of Malan’s world.

There was another dimension to their preaching, however. It was also nationalist in nature. One can reasonably assume that it was the influence of Romanticism, to which they were exposed in Europe and which dominated late nineteenth century thought, that gave them a patriotic approach to theology and faith. Romanticism was closely associated with the rise of nationalism in Europe,

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Stellenbosch Students’ Annual, 1897, 7.*

⁸⁷ F. Jacobs, ‘Dr. Malan en die Debatsvereniging’, 17.

⁸⁸ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 205-6.

⁸⁹ A. Gregory, ‘Philosophy and Religion’, in N. Roe, ed., *Romanticism: An Oxford Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 104-6.

and since Calvinism preaches that everything should be rendered unto God, J.I. Marais concluded that patriotism without piety was of little value.⁹⁰ In the aftermath of the Jameson Raid, Hofmeyr published a book entitled *De Afrikaner-Boer en de Jameson-inval*, in which he explored issues such as the Afrikaners' unique national characteristics, inner divisions within the Afrikaner community, and the idea of a special God-given calling.⁹¹ Thus, at the Stellenbosch seminary, religion was served with a generous helping of nationalism.

This was typical of the times. It was the late nineteenth century, the age of nationalism, state unification, and great empires. The Western Cape, as part of the British Empire, was not isolated from the proclaimed values and rhetoric of the day. As the young Malan's negative comments about European anarchists and socialists demonstrate, the newspapers of the day – which Malan avidly read – were filled with news and views from Europe. His fellow students recalled that he was often late for dinner as he had become absorbed in the newspapers and lost track of time. When he did finally arrive at the dinner table, he would sit down and calmly start discussing what he had read.⁹² Rational discussion was his preferred manner of interacting with his friends. He enjoyed philosophical conversations and would embark on long walks in the area, especially towards the Jonkershoek valley, all the while discussing philosophy with his companions.⁹³ During the course of these discussions, his friends discovered that he would only express his views after he had mulled them over and was convinced that he was right – and to their great annoyance, they found that once he had established his position, it was impossible to convince him otherwise.⁹⁴

The philosophy that Malan studied was dominated by German Idealism. His M.A. thesis, which unfortunately has not survived, dealt with Immanuel Kant. From Kant, it was only a short leap to Hegel and Fichte.⁹⁵ These philosophers were all firmly rooted in the Idealist tradition – which also dominated philosophy in the United Kingdom and the United States at the turn of the century. Idealism held that all reality is shaped first and foremost by the mind.⁹⁶ It could also entail the belief that spiritual values shape reality, which is an important key to understanding Malan's thinking. Throughout his political career, he made it clear that principles should come first and could never be sacrificed for political gain.

There was another important tenet in the thinking of one of these philosophers. Fichte had become synonymous with German nationalism, and drawing on Herder's assertion that language

⁹⁰ G. Thom, 'The Development of Theology at Stellenbosch from 1859-1919' (PhD Thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1989), 274.

⁹¹ F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Wie en wat is die Afrikaner?* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1982), 9.

⁹² B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 51.

⁹³ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 14.

⁹⁴ G.G. Cilliers, 'Doktor Gawie Vertel...', *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan Uitgawe*, 1955, 23.

⁹⁵ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 7.

⁹⁶ E. Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Volume 4* (London: Routledge, 1998), 662.

was an expression of the national soul and the basis for national unity, he called on the German nation to internalise their national spirit through education, and to free themselves from foreign oppression in the wake of the Napoleonic wars.⁹⁷ This rang true with a young man reading his words at the end of the nineteenth century, which was not only the era of nationalism in Europe, but also a time when Afrikaner nationalism was stirring.⁹⁸

The last few years of the nineteenth century was a difficult time for Queen Victoria's loyal Afrikaners. Their main political party, the Afrikaner Bond, was generally tolerant in its thinking and was not always on equally good terms with Paul Kruger's government in the Transvaal which, afraid of a loss of independence in the wake of the discovery of gold on its doorstep, tried to avoid extensive economic co-operation with the Cape. This drove the Afrikaner Bond closer to the arch-imperialist and Rand Lord, Cecil John Rhodes. For a number of years, Rhodes and 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr, the leader of the Afrikaner Bond, were able to maintain a mutually advantageous working relationship. The Bond supported Rhodes's position as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony while, in turn, Rhodes supported their agricultural interests and shared their indignation at Kruger's high railway tariffs, which had an adverse effect on the price of Cape agricultural products transported to the Rand's lucrative gold fields.⁹⁹

The Jameson Raid of December 1895 was to destroy the relationship between Rhodes and the Afrikaner Bond. It left the Cape Afrikaners torn between their loyalty to Queen Victoria on the one hand, and their sympathy for their cousins in Paul Kruger's Transvaal on the other. Rhodes, frustrated by Kruger's measures to exclude him and other Uitlanders from political power – and thus preventing them from shaping the Transvaal government's policies to advance their interests – conspired to create an Uitlander uprising in Johannesburg that would seize control of the Transvaal. Rhodes's friend and admirer, Dr Leander Starr Jameson, was to invade the Transvaal from Bechuanaland, using troops from Rhodes's British South Africa Company. The raid turned into a fiasco, however, after their cover was blown and a Transvaal commando ambushed them and forced them to surrender.¹⁰⁰

Rhodes was the only member of the Cape Cabinet who knew about the invasion, and Hofmeyr – who found out about the Raid the day after it occurred – was furious that he had been made a fool, especially since his supporters now felt that he had erred in his judgement when he

⁹⁷ J.S. McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996), 633-6.

⁹⁸ For a more detailed discussion on the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in the Western Cape, see H. Giliomee, 'Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1870-1915', 38-63.

⁹⁹ T.R.H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 128, 131-2, 140, 143, 144-5, 162.

¹⁰⁰ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 218-9.

decided to work with Rhodes. He immediately repudiated Rhodes, who was forced to resign as Prime Minister on 7 January 1896.¹⁰¹

Naturally, this meant that Kruger was vindicated and could successfully portray himself as the legitimate leader of a wronged and threatened state. In the Cape the newspaper *Ons Land* (Our Country), under the editorship of F.S. Malan, began to write about the Afrikaners' need for spiritual rebirth, and the need to prevent contamination by the 'spirit of materialism which flows in on us from Europe.' P.J.G. de Vos, one of Malan's professors at the Stellenbosch seminary, published a series of articles in *Ons Land* under the title "Nationale Vraagstukken" ("National Questions"). In these articles, he used the Jameson Raid as proof of the Englishman's fundamental disrespect for the Afrikaner, and called on the Afrikaners to recover their self-respect, prize their language, and return to their Bibles.¹⁰² All of this was lapped up by the young Malan in Stellenbosch during his daily reading of the newspapers.

Like those around him, Malan's sympathy with the Afrikaners in the Transvaal was growing. As a boy, he had accompanied his maternal uncle on a trip to the Transvaal – and on this trip, he saw Paul Kruger from a distance. This made a life-long impression on him.¹⁰³ He also read the history books published by George McCall Theal.¹⁰⁴ Theal's work must have been popular amongst the students in Stellenbosch, as it received a glowing review from the *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly*.¹⁰⁵ It was certainly very popular in the two Boer Republics, where it was translated into Dutch and used as school textbooks. The Canadian-born Theal was at first very critical of the Boers, but as he continued to collect archival materials and publish volume after volume on South African history, he 'adopted a conservative, pro-white and in particular pro-Boer, anti-missionary and anti-black standpoint'.¹⁰⁶ The Great Trek received pride of place in his writings, and he glorified the Boers to such an extent that he was accused of being anti-imperialist. As far as he was concerned, people of colour were 'fickle barbarians, prone to robbery and unscrupulous in shedding blood'.¹⁰⁷ To Theal, missionaries and British philanthropists who sided with the blacks were enemies of the whites, who were engaged in the noble task of opening the untamed interior to civilisation and to Christianity.¹⁰⁸ Theal's polarising depiction of the past was to determine Malan's interpretation of South Africa's history for the rest of his life.

¹⁰¹ T.R.H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond*, 162-6.

¹⁰² T.R.H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond*, 167.

¹⁰³ DFM, 1/1/32689, *Danie Malan, Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 13.

¹⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/176, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 13 February 1902.

¹⁰⁵ *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly*, 2, 2 (September 1899), 24-5.

¹⁰⁶ K. Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing* (Johannesburg: Southern Books, 1988), 36.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 36-9.

It was in 1896, in the aftermath of the Jameson Raid, that Malan wrote a contribution for the Union Debating Society's journal, entitled "Our Situation." He bemoaned the 'motley crowd' that was being discharged onto South Africa's shores month after month, with the single aim of seeking their own riches and bringing with them a spirit of materialism. 'We live in time of transition, a period of danger', he wrote.¹⁰⁹ Thus, he asked the question:

How are we to be protected from contagion? In answer to this question of so mighty consequence to us, I find but one answer. Let us stand together, let us preserve our nationality and with our nationality our national character. In the preservation of nationality there are two factors which have an overwhelming influence. The first is the study of the history of the nation. No tie binds a nation so firmly to its own traditions as the study of its history...The other and equally important factor in the preservation of the nationality is the preservation of the language...To preserve then our nationality and national character it is absolutely necessary that we keep in honour our history and our language, holding to our own to the very last, struggling to get our rights acknowledged and granted to the full, not from any sense of race hatred or prejudice to which some will ascribe our activity, but from a true sense of patriotism.¹¹⁰

Malan's high-spirited words not only reflected the Afrikaners' growing sense of national awareness, but also the Cape Afrikaners' growing sense of defensiveness. It was not only Afrikaner nationalism that was on the rise in the Cape Colony. British nationalism, which was embodied by the South African League, was resurgent as well. Cape politics became increasingly polarised as the South African League became an important force in Parliament. When the Afrikaner Bond balked at the cost of building a new battleship as a gift to Queen Victoria, the South African League accused it of disloyalty to the Empire. This did not help the Bond's relations with the Cape's new High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, who was appointed in 1897. When the Bond assured Milner of its loyalty to the Empire and to the Queen, he lamented that he could not take their loyalty for granted. The 1898 election was the first in the Cape's history where two recognisable parties, representing two different ethnic communities, fought each other.¹¹¹ The clouds of war began to gather over South Africa.

¹⁰⁹ DFM, 1/1/117, D.F. Malan, *Our Situation*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ T.R.H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond*, 177, 179, 181.

In Stellenbosch the young Malan, though appearing calm on the outside, was bursting with youthful idealism. While he asserted that he refused to read novels, he was inspired by Victorian poetry. He was especially taken by Henry Wordsworth Longfellow's *Psalm of life*, from which he quoted on more than one occasion:

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.¹¹²

Malan was not only concerned about the fate of the Afrikaner nation, but was also impassioned about the need for individuals to make a difference in the world, a passion which he transmitted to those around him. He began making a name for himself among his fellow-students as a formidable orator, which led at least one of his contemporaries to bemoan the fact that someone with Malan's gift of rhetoric was headed for the pulpit and not the courtroom.¹¹³ Little did this contemporary know that this was precisely Malan's unfulfilled wish – a wish that, had it been granted, would have made his entry into politics, which was where his true passion lay, so much easier. Instead, he was to take a longer route and his slow, but steady progress to the premiership would be compared unfavourably to that of his predecessor, Smuts, who had studied law and whose progress in politics, in keeping with his character, was stellar. As one commentator later described it:

'Jannie', the elder of the two by four years, ...quickly outstripped 'Dannie'[sic] and everyone else...and kept on outstripping them until, at fifty, as General Smuts, he became for the first time Prime Minister of South Africa. It took the dour, plodding 'Dannie' [sic] twenty-four years longer to reach the self-same goal.¹¹⁴

In keeping with his decision, Malan devoted himself to his preparations for a career in the church. He and his fellow theology students were gravely concerned about the fact that their courses were entirely theoretical in nature, and gave them no opportunity to prepare for the practical problems of leading a congregation. Their solution was to obtain practical experience by doing as much mission work as possible, which entailed preaching to the local Coloured community. Malan

¹¹² DFM, 1/1/121, D.F. Malan, *History*, 13 March 1897.

¹¹³ DFM, 1/1/3271, T.H. le Roux – B. Booyens, 7 November 1964.

¹¹⁴ DFM, 1/1/2472, J.A. Gray, *South Africa's New Voice*, 23 April 1949. In fact, Smuts first assumed the position of Prime Minister eight months before his 50th birthday.

was able to make an arrangement with one of the local farmers to preach to his Coloured workers. Every Sunday the farmer would drive his horse-drawn cart into town to collect Malan for the task. In this way, Malan acquired some much-needed preaching experience.¹¹⁵

He was also honing his rhetorical skills and climbing the ranks in the Union Debating Society. In 1895 Malan became the society's secretary,¹¹⁶ and by 1897 he was appointed as its president.¹¹⁷ During that same year, he became the editor of the society's publication, the *Stellenbosch Students' Annual*. Under his direction, the publication was such a success that it became a quarterly.¹¹⁸ He occupied a position that enabled him to speak to his fellow-students, and he therefore did his best to inspire his followers to a higher purpose by exhorting them to abide by the following principles:

Be in the first place a member of the society with a distinct object in view. The aimless man never attains to eminence of any kind, for he is either listless, having nothing to strive after, or he wastes his time and energies on what is unworthy and trivial...aim high. Let your ideals be lofty, let your aspirations be high...they will allure you, will haunt you, will form the driving power of your life...resolve to reach your ideal at any cost. Difficulties, many and great, will come in the way of every member, but the man who thinks dares to speak, and struggles, invariably makes progress, and will triumph at last.¹¹⁹

It was to be a few years before Malan would formulate his own objectives, but the need to do so was ever-present in his mind. As the relations between Milner and Kruger broke down, and war was declared in October 1899, Malan found himself saying goodbye to his Free State and Transvaal friends who were leaving Stellenbosch to fight in the war.¹²⁰

For the rest of his life he was to be haunted by accusations about the war. Why did he not take part? Was he a coward? Did he flee to Holland? The question that one should also ask is this: was joining the war the obvious course of action for a young, well-educated Cape Afrikaner such as D.F. Malan? After all, there were Cape rebels who took part in the war. Why did he not join them?

The Cape rebels hailed from the Northern Cape districts that bordered the Free State. There was no organised Afrikaner uprising in the Cape and, as a rule, the rebels only joined the Republican forces after Boer Commandos occupied their districts. In the districts that were not

¹¹⁵ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 14.

¹¹⁶ *Stellenbosch Students' Annual*, 1895, 43.

¹¹⁷ *Stellenbosch Students' Annual*, 1897, 17.

¹¹⁸ H. Blyghaut, 'Die Unie-Debatsvereniging 1892-1926', in *Na Vyftig Jaar. Gedenkboek van die Unie-Debatsvereniging, Stellenbosch* (Stellenbosch: Pro Ecclesia-Drukkery, 1926), 60.

¹¹⁹ *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly*, 1, (June 1898), 27-8.

¹²⁰ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 59.

occupied, there was strong sympathy for the Boer Republics, but this sympathy did not go beyond moral support.¹²¹

The first invasion of the Cape Colony began on 12 October 1899, the very day after war was declared. By mid-1900, it had run its course. One of the invasion's principal aims was to gather recruits from among the Cape Afrikaners. The Boer Commandos, after occupying a town, would proclaim the area Free State territory, institute Republican magistrates, and command the local population to join their Commandos or face confiscation of their property and banishment from the area. In some districts, the locals were threatened with a hefty fine if they refused to join. Those who possessed the money generally paid these fines, while the poorer members of the community were compelled to join the Commandos. Landowners, as a rule, did not join the Republican forces.¹²²

D.F. Malan, in Stellenbosch – and the land-owning Malan family, in Riebeeck-Wes – was far away from the Northern Cape where these events were taking place. The communities in which they lived chose to make their views known through loyal resistance. Instead of taking up arms, they organised meetings and drafted motions in the hope of influencing British public opinion. Thus, in Riebeeck-Wes, D.F. Malan senior chaired a meeting that drafted the following motion:

Whereas we, the loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen are of opinion (i) that this deplorable and unjust war is the demand of a propaganda of misrepresentations by which the people of Great Britain had been guided, and (ii) that the Republicans are only fighting to retain their independence and liberty, and that (iii) should Her Majesty's Government succeed in conquering the Republicans they could never be subjugated or forced to become loyal subjects. We humbly pray that a speedy stop should be put to the war and upon such a basis that the Republicans retain their independence heretofore.¹²³

In Stellenbosch, a similar meeting was held and a similar motion drafted.¹²⁴ The *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly* of February 1900 carried tales of Boer heroics on the battlefield and a defiant essay which avowed that Milner's stated mission to 'Break the Power of Africanderdom' would never be achieved.¹²⁵ The next issue published both an essay and a poem

¹²¹ J.H. Snyman, *Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902* (Pretoria: Argief Jaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis, 1979), 72.

¹²² J.H. Snyman, *Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902* (Pretoria: Argief Jaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis, 1979), 61-2, 68, 74.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly*, 3, 2 (February 1900), 2-3, 19.

that expressed sympathy for Afrikaner kinsmen to the north in no uncertain terms.¹²⁶ In the wake of these vociferous articles, Milner's aides declared that the *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly* was disloyal to the British throne.¹²⁷

In the midst of this atmosphere was a young man who had reached the end of his studies and needed to decide on his future. 'It is very awkward to be so undecided as to the course to be taken, and so very much may depend on the choice', he lamented to Nettie. 'But I firmly believe that in all this God's hand will guide me aright. In everything He can be trusted.'¹²⁸

The particulars of D.F. Malan's decision to pursue further studies in the Netherlands are not known. What is known is that both he and his younger brother, Koos, left South Africa on 19 September 1900.¹²⁹ Koos was to attend the University of Edinburgh to study medicine while Malan went to the University of Utrecht, the alma mater of his theology professors.

One would expect a young man who was about to see a new continent and a new world to be excited about the prospect. Not Malan. Just as he regarded times of uncertainty as a threat to Afrikaner society, on a personal level he seemed rather gloomy at the prospect of entering the unknown. 'Well, goodbye', he wrote to Nettie, 'don't forget me so very soon. I hope that one day I'll see you again.'¹³⁰

¹²⁶ *Stellenbosch Students' Quarterly*, 4, 2 (May 1900), 12-16.

¹²⁷ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 59-60.

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/147, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 23 August 1900.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

Chapter 2 – The Foreign Student, 1900-1905

It was on a sunny Wednesday afternoon in September that Malan boarded *The Briton* along with his brother Koos and eight other young Afrikaners – all of them bound for Europe in order to pursue their studies. The ship remained moored in Table Bay for another hour after their coming aboard, waiting for the mail to arrive from Natal. When the mail arrived, Malan received a telegram from his friends with these words from Deuteronomy 33:27, ‘Underneath are the everlasting arms.’ This made him feel comforted as he wrote in his diary: ‘Farewell friends, everyone, Stellenbosch, who will always remain dear to me, and beloved, sunny South Africa.’¹ At half past four, the ship steamed out of the harbour.²

At first, the voyage was quite pleasant. The weather was warm and sunny, and even though he was aware of his stomach, Malan was happy that he did not become seasick. He even started a diary – the only one he ever kept, which revealed a young man of intense personal piety – and spent most of the days on deck, reading *The Sign of the Cross* and pondering the similarities between contemporary society and the declining Roman Empire. ‘A new moralising and civilising force...in a living, active Christianity’ was the solution, he decided. ‘May God help us’, he wrote.³

But his fellow South Africans, and especially his brother, soon shattered his moralising bliss. ‘For one educated in a pure and Christian home, the language heard and the acts seen on the ship are simply loathsome and sickening’, he noted in his diary. ‘May God preserve us.’ But it became even worse: ‘The most depressing fact is that the majority of our Africanders on board take the lead in swearing, drinking, and using filthy language,’ he lamented. ‘Oh God: have mercy on our poor people and our young men studying abroad.’⁴

At least he wasn’t completely alone. One of the other young Afrikaners, who Malan simply referred to as Van Schalkwyk, shared his piety. On the first Sunday they attended the divine service which the captain conducted in the first class saloon. It was a Church of England service, and there was no sermon. That evening, therefore, Malan and Van Schalkwyk prayed together in their cabin, which they shared with Koos and another young Afrikaner, Rousseau.⁵

The latter two must have found their cabin-mates rather stuffy as, by the Tuesday of that week, they had moved to another cabin.⁶ The next few days were quiet and pleasant enough. By this

¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), ‘Fotokopie van Dagboek September 1900’, 19 September 1900: ‘Vaarwel vrienden allen, Stellenbosch die altyd dierbaar zal blyven en lief, zonnig Zuid Afrika.’

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 21 September 1900.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 23 September 1900; *Ibid.*, 19 September 1900.

⁶ DFM, 1/10, ‘Fotokopie van Dagboek September 1900’, 25 September 1900.

time the ship was sailing through the tropics, but they were able to cope with the heat. During these days, Malan befriended a West Indian – with whom he played quoits and draughts – as well as a Russian officer, with whom he could talk politics.⁷ By that Friday, however, the peace was shattered. Malan was probably writing about Koos when he lamented to his diary that it was ‘A very unpleasant and sad day. I never knew he too would go in for the sweepstakes. May the merciful God have mercy upon him and us. A big row.’⁸

That Sunday was a disappointment. Malan had been looking forward to a sermon in Dutch, but it was cancelled after some of the other young Afrikaners behaved so badly that the offenders were brought before the captain. Thus, like the Sunday before, Malan and Van Schalkwyk had a pleasant talk about their faith, and prayed together in their cabin.⁹ But as far as his brother and the others were concerned, Malan was despondent: ‘Poor Afrianders I am very sorry for you. A discredit to our nation. On board ship I am almost ashamed to be known as an Afriander. May God preserve our nation to His glory. Have we not deserved his chastisement to the full?’¹⁰

In the evening, mulling over the temptations of the world and the uncertain future ahead of him, he stood on deck and watched a lighthouse on the shores of Cape Verde. He could not help but see some symbolism in the lighthouse on the dark shores of the Atlantic Ocean as he prayed: ‘May God be the light of our lives to reveal to us our straying and to guide us in the night and warn us of the danger and may he pilot our frail vessel in safety through the angry deep to the safe haven of our destination.’¹¹

When the ship reached European waters the sea became stormy, but Malan was able to keep the ever-looming seasickness at bay, and continued to admire more lighthouses that were beaming at him from the coast.¹² On Friday morning, 5 October 1900, the ship docked at Southampton.

The next twenty-four hours turned into a blur for Malan. They took the train from Southampton to London, where they arrived late that same afternoon. From there, they travelled up to Liverpool Station, where Malan said farewell to Koos. Then Malan travelled to Harwich, on the east coast, with the Continental Express. It was already dark when he boarded the *Dresden*, which sailed across the English Channel to Rotterdam. That night the sea was rough, and this time Malan became violently sick. The next morning, the ship docked at the Westerkade in Rotterdam, and Malan was in Utrecht before lunch.¹³ As it became quiet around him and he was finally alone, he was overwhelmed by loneliness and once again turned to God for refuge: “How could I repay the

⁷ *Ibid.*, 26 September 1900; *Ibid.*, 27 September 1900.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 28 September 1900.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 30 September 1900.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 28 September 1900.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 3 October 1900; *Ibid.*, 4 October 1900.

¹³ DFM, 1/10, ‘Fotokopie van Dagboek September 1900’, 5 October 1900.

Lord for all the generosity that he has bestowed upon me?” Lord: guide my ways. I want to entrust my preparation for your work in your hands completely. Let me be a light to your glorification here as well. Amen.’¹⁴

His prayers evidently provided some consolation, as he wrote in his diary: ‘I am a stranger in a strange land, but the Lord is with me and shall support me.’¹⁵ The next day he dared to venture out into the city for the first time and was overwhelmed – not by wonder, but again by loneliness. Once back in the safety of his room, he recorded his first impressions:

As I walked through the streets and the thoroughfares of the City, I felt a sense of absolute loneliness creeping over me. Amid all the noise & activity of the streets, the endless stream of human beings sweeping through the streets, I felt as if I was alone and forsaken. As I scanned the faces as they hurriedly passed me, I knew none nor had I even the faintest hope to meet one I knew. No acquaintance, no home, no friend. Was it a wonder then that my thoughts were not here, but far away in the distant South.¹⁶

For the first week of his time in Utrecht, Malan stayed in the Hotel ‘la Station, since his landlord, Prof. Valeton, could not accommodate him immediately. He continued to explore his surroundings, and was gradually able to absorb more of what he saw. The city of Utrecht was completely different to anything he had ever seen before, and he tried his utmost to describe this new world to his parents:

Utrecht is a beautiful city. The streets are all paved with handbricks and are kept very clean. There are also waterways, which people navigate with small boats. The city is big, a lot bigger than Cape Town; it counts over a hundred thousand inhabitants, and has beautiful buildings. The “Dom” tower is the highest in the Netherlands. There are beautiful avenues and gardens, such as the “Maliebaan” and the Wilhelmina Park. But here, and for that matter, all over the entire country, everything is even – no hillock that is even high enough to be called a “kopje”... People here speak nothing but good Dutch. In order to be understood, I have to try and climb as high as I possibly can. Yes, sometimes I speak so high that I find it very difficult

¹⁴ DFM, 1/10, ‘Fotokopie van Dagboek September 1900’, 5 October 1900: ““Wat zal ik den Heere vergelden voor al Zyne weldaden aan my bewezen?” Heer: bestier Gy myne gangen. Volkomenlyk wil ik myne voorbereiding tot Uw werk in Uwe handen toevertrouwen. Laat my ook hier een licht tot Uwe verheerlyking zyn. Amen.’

¹⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Ik ben een vreemdeling in een vreemd land, doch de Heer is by my en zal my ondersteunen.’

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6 October 1900.

to understand myself. Here, even the small children speak high. And even the dogs and the horses understand only High Dutch.¹⁷

There was one comfort though: in spite of the unfamiliar landscape, buildings, people, and difficulties with the language, Malan found that he was politically at home. 'Our case receives much sympathy here', he wrote to his parents. 'Here there are no Jingos or Jingo Newspapers. People here are even more heated than the Afrikaners themselves. Everyone knows the Transvaal's national anthem and it is sung very frequently.'¹⁸

Malan indeed now found himself in the most pro-Boer country in Europe where, unlike in the Cape Colony, there were no social sanctions on public displays of support for the Boers. Since the outbreak of the Transvaal's first war with Great Britain in 1880, the Dutch had taken a lot of interest in the Afrikaners, whom they regarded as their *stamverwanten* (kinsmen). In hindsight, it is clear that this interest was not so much about feelings of kinship as it was about using the Boers' military feats against a mightier power as a rallying symbol in an effort to revive flailing Dutch nationalism. Some even dreamed of the restoration of earlier imperial glory, and the expansion of the Dutch culture, in which the Transvaal would play its part by merging into a Nieuw Nederland (New Netherlands). These high hopes had waned somewhat by the 1890s, but the Anglo-Boer War unleashed a new outpouring of public emotion in the Dutch that far surpassed the enthusiasm of the early 1880s.¹⁹

Malan witnessed this at first hand. A few days after his arrival in Utrecht, he decided to travel to Amsterdam, where Paul Kruger's birthday was to be celebrated. The sight that met him as he entered the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam was one that he had never seen before: the enormous venue was filled beyond capacity after people had queued in the rain for more than three hours prior to the commencement of the proceedings. Never before had the young man from small-town South Africa seen a church so full. To his astonishment, he also saw people fighting amongst each other for a place. He found the speeches inspirational, and fervently wished that he could write them all

¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/149, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 9 October 1900: 'Utrecht is een mooie stad. De straten zyn allen met 'hardbricks' uitgevloerd en worden zeer schoon gehouden. Er zyn ook grachten (waterstraten), waar men met schuiten op gaat. De stad is groot, een heel end grooter dan Cape Town, telt over de honderd duizend inwooners en heeft prachtige gebouwen. De 'Domtoren' is de hoogste in Nederland. Er zyn prachtige 'avenues' en tuinen zoosals de Maliebaan en de Wilhelmina Park. Doch hier en trouwens ook over het geheele land is het alles gelyk – geen heuvelkje eens dat zoo hoog is, dat men het een kopje kan noemen...Men spreekt niets anders dan goed Hollandsch. Om verstaan te worden moet ik ook dan maar trachten zoo hoog mogelyk te klimmen. Ja, ik spreek soms zoo hoog dat het my erg moeilyk valt my-zelfen te verstaan. Tot de kleine kinderen zelfs spreken hier hoog. En tot zelfs de honden en de paarden verstaan alleen hoog Hollandsch.'

¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/149, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 9 October 1900: 'Onze zaak vindt hier veel sympathie. Hier zyn geen Jingo's of Jingo Couranten. Men is hier zelfs nog soms veel warmer dan de Afrikaners zelf. Het Transvaalsche Volkslied kent iedereen, en het wordt heel dikwyls gezongen.'

¹⁹ B.J.H. de Graaff, *De Mythe van Stamverwantschap: Nederland en de Afrikaners, 1902-1930*, (Amsterdam: Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut, 1993), 2-5, 8.

down. The enthusiasm that he witnessed filled him with hope, as he wrote to his parents, 'It warms an Afrikaner's heart to see so much enthusiasm for our cause.'²⁰

Malan soon discovered that being an Afrikaner in the Netherlands resulted in special treatment. In general, the Dutch did not distinguish between Afrikaners from the Cape Colony and Afrikaners from the Boer Republics, they considered all of them to be Transvalers.²¹ A chance encounter with a Belgian evangelist resulted in an excursion: the evangelist was so excited to meet an Afrikaner that he took Malan all over the city to introduce him to his friends, and promptly invited Malan to visit him in Brussels.²² Malan also visited the elderly poet, Nicolaas Beets. Beets, whose grandson was fighting on the Boers' side, received him warmly, spoke enthusiastically about the Boers' inevitable triumph in their cause, recited some of his poetry, and invited Malan to visit him again.²³

In spite of these warm and enthusiastic receptions, Malan nevertheless felt lonely. Even though the Dutch were very friendly towards him, he could not shake his feelings of alienation. 'This is not my fatherland and these are not my people', he wrote to his parents.²⁴ The weather was also doing its part to depress him:

It is becoming terribly cold here. I am almost always wearing a thick coat. A few nights ago snow fell in the streets – and winter is only just beginning. If only I could have some of South Africa's abundant warmth here. I don't think you would mind giving up a little. It rains here almost always – I cannot stand it. The longing for our glorious climate and lovely sunshine is terrible.²⁵

These feelings of loneliness and depression were compounded by the fact that his family were so slow to answer his letters. By the end of October, they had not even acknowledged a letter that he had sent to them when the ship anchored in Madeira. Mimie was not much of a letter-writer, Mother was too busy, and Fanie and Father were not in the habit – or so he reasoned. He was therefore overcome with joy when he finally received a letter from Cinie. Now, he hoped, he would

²⁰ DFM, 1/1/152, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 18 October 1900: 'Het doet het hart van een Afrikaner goed zooveel warmte voor onze zaak te zien.'

²¹ DFM, 1/1/3271, T.H. le Roux – B. Booyens, 7 November 1964.

²² DFM, 1/1/152, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 18 October 1900.

²³ DFM, 1/1/155, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 31 October 1900.

²⁴ DFM, 1/1/152, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 18 October 1900: 'Dit is myn Vaderland niet en niet myn volk.'

²⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Het begint hier verschrikkelijk koud te worden. Ik ben maar byna altyd in een dikke jas. Eenige avonden viel er sneeuw in de straten – en de winter begint nu eerst. Als ik toch maar een beetje van Zuid Afrikas overvloedige warmte hier kon hebben. Ik denk u zal niet omgeven om een beetje af te staan. Het regent hier maar byna altyd – dit kan ik toch niet uithouden. Het gemis van ons heerlyk klimaat en lieflyk zonneshyn is vreeselyk.'

receive more news from home.²⁶ But it was not only family news that Malan longed for – he was also hungry for news from South Africa. This problem was apparently solved with far more ease than was his pleas for more letters from his family. He wrote to Cinie that:

I keep myself well up-to-date with regards to politics, especially that from South Africa. There is a nice library here, where, for 9 guilders a year, one can read all the local – and many foreign – newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets. I have become a member, and regularly visit it every morning for an hour.²⁷

In these newspapers he would have inevitably read reports and opinions about the war in South Africa, as it was a prominent issue in the Dutch press. In general, the Dutch press took clear sides in the South African conflict. The war was not treated as a mere military conflict, but rather as a colonial, and cultural, struggle between the two white races for ultimate control of the Transvaal. The Boers were given the moral high ground and were heralded as noble and heroic, while the British were condemned as war criminals. Any war crimes committed by the Boers were glossed over or justified.²⁸ Emily Hobhouse's reports on the concentration camps were published as soon as they reached the Netherlands, and the shocking picture taken of a starving Boer girl, Lizzie van Zyl, was widely disseminated – including being printed on postcards. Concentration camp mortality rates were printed on large posters and pasted all over a number of Dutch cities – next to the mortality rate of that particular city, which let the shocking disparity hit close to home. In general, the Dutch accused the British of using the camps as a method to exterminate the Boer race, with the word *volksmoord* (genocide)²⁹ doing the rounds.³⁰

The news, however, was not always reliable, as the British tried to control the flow of information as much as possible. During the first stages of the war, the Dutch used *Ons Land* as their main source of information, since the mail services from the Cape Colony were far more reliable than from the two Republics. *Ons Land* took a clear stance in support of the Boer Republics, and condemned the British army for its scorched earth tactics. This did not last very long, however, as its editor, F.S. Malan, was jailed for libel in early 1901 after printing a letter by a Boer woman which accused General John French of war crimes against civilians. After this, reliable

²⁶ DFM, 1/1/155, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 31 October 1900.

²⁷ *Ibid*: 'Ik houd my hier tamelyk goed op hoogte van zaken ten opzichte van de politiek vooral Zuid Afrikaansche. Er is hier een mooi Leesmuseum, waar men voor 9 gulden per jaar al de binnenlandsche en vele buitenlandsche couranten, tydschriften en pamfletten lezen kan. Ik ben er lid van geworden en bezoek dit elken morgen geregeld voor een uurtje.'

²⁸ J.J.V. Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words: Dutch Pro-Boer Propaganda and the South African War (1899-1902)" (Ph.D thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2010), 165-167.

²⁹ As Kuitenbrouwer points out, this word acquired a more loaded and sinister connotation after the Second World War.

³⁰ Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words", 224-231.

news became ever more difficult to come by.³¹ Malan, for one, was not always certain whether or not the reports coming from the Cape Colony could be taken at face value. He was rather dubious as he wrote to his parents:

Judging from the cablegrams, the Cape Colony must be very restless. It was cabled a few days ago that there is a reign of terror in the Dutch towns, the English dare not open their mouths anymore, that the students of Stellenbosch openly unfurled the Transvaal flag and are openly singing the Transvaal anthem, that the mail train encountered no less than seventy obstructions south of the Orange river, etc. I don't know whether all of this is true, but I immediately thought that it is exaggerated with the aim of getting martial law proclaimed.³²

Malan may have had reasonable grounds for his suspicions, but there was another important dimension to the reports about the Cape Colony. The Dutch hoped that there would be a general uprising among the Afrikaners in the Cape, who would then assist their kinsmen in the north. If this could happen, their combined numbers would not only outnumber the British presence in South Africa, but it would also open up a second frontline. The Dutch press noted the failure of this pipe dream with some disappointment. They blamed the Cape Afrikaners' failure to join their kinsmen on their Anglicised school system – which had earlier served to alienate the two communities on either side of the Orange River. They condemned the Cape's political leaders, especially 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr, for their cautious position – although Hofmeyr, who had in fact tried to prevent the war at the negotiating table, now found himself walking a political tightrope. In all fairness, the Dutch newspapers did take cognizance of the harsh treatment of Cape rebels, who faced, and received, the death penalty for high treason if captured.³³

As more and more reports of British atrocities were magnified by the Dutch press, and the debate about the Cape Afrikaners' position raged on, Malan became more and more agitated, especially after receiving a letter from a friend who expressed similar sentiments. To his sister, he wrote:

³¹ Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words", 172-173; F.A. Mouton, 'A free, united South Africa under the Union Jack: F.S. Malan, South Africanism and the British Empire, 1895-1924', *Historia*, 51, 1 (May 2006), 33-4.

³² DFM, 1/1/156, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 12 December 1900: 'Naar de kabelgrammen te oordelen moet het in de Kolonie vreeselyk onrustig zyn. Er werd gekabeld eenige dagen geleden, dat er in de Hollandsche dorpen een schrikbewind heerschte, de Engelschen mogten hun mond niet meer openen; dat te Stellenbosch de studenten openlyk de Transvaalsche vlag hebben ontplooid, en openlyk het Volkslied zingen, dat de mailtrein ten zuiden van de Oranjerivier niet minder zeventig hinderpalen op de lyn ontmoette enz. Of dit alles waar is weet ik niet, maar ik dacht dadelyk dat dit overdreven is met het doel krygswet geproclameerd te krygen.'

³³ Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words", 172-173, 119-220.

I can write you volumes about the war, because my heart is more than full, but where would I end? I fully agree with a friend who wrote to me that we have to stop talking and protesting, which helps less than nothing, but we now have to *do* something. I add to it that we are not only justified, but that it has become a duty.³⁴

Malan also wrote to his father to express his sentiments on the matter: ‘In any event, I think now that the English are worse than the Kaffirs [*sic*] in going about this war, it is not only justified, but it has also become a duty – for the Colonial Afrikaners, for the sake of humaneness and humanity – to intervene with violence.’³⁵ It is unfortunate that we do not know what the father replied to his son’s hot-headed words. It was most certainly not an encouragement to return to South Africa to take up arms, as there was never a question of Malan abandoning his studies in the Netherlands. Malan certainly did not repeat his pleas for intervention in any of the letters that followed. To Nettie, however, he lamented: ‘With South Africa in such a sad state, I find life to be as bad here, for me at least. Sometimes, when I see how much is suffered, I feel half ashamed of my own comparative comfort and safety.’³⁶

His frustration was not entirely confined to his own feelings of powerlessness. He also became angry with the Dutch state’s resignation to its own impotence on the world stage. It soon became apparent to him that the roaring public support for the Boers was nothing more than that: public support. Dutch diplomatic policies remained unchanged. These policies, framed in the face of necessity, rested on three principles: staying out of the larger European nations’ power politics; maintaining a policy of neutrality in international conflicts; and promoting free trade.³⁷

In short, the Dutch chose to confine themselves to cultivating their own niche in international relations as upholders of peace and international law. It was a far cry from their heydays as a superpower. In the aftermath of the Scramble for Africa – in which the Netherlands did not take part – at a time when colonial possessions determined international status, its last claim to national pride and international status lay in its Indonesian colonies.³⁸ For this reason, there was no question of military intervention in the war. Alienating Britain meant endangering its possessions in the East Indies, as Britain dominated the international trade routes. Furthermore, it

³⁴ DFM, 1/1/157, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 17 December 1900: ‘Omtrent den oorlog kan ik jou boeken vol schryfen want myn hart is meer dan vol, maar waar zou ik eindigen. Ik stem volkomen in met wat een vriend aan my schreef, dat wy nu moeten ophouden met spreken en protesteeren, het baat minder dan niets, nu moeten wy wat *doen*. Ik voeg dit erby, dat wy daartoe niet alleen gerechtvaardigd zyn, maar dat het dure plicht is geworden.’

³⁵ DFM, 1/1/156, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 12 December 1900: ‘Doch in elk geval denk ik dat nu de Engelschen erger dan de Kaffers [*sic*] te werk gaan in’t voeren van den oorlog, het niet alleen voor de Koloniale Afrikaners gerechtvaardigd is, maar tevens dat het voor hen plicht geworden is in belang van de menscheid en de menschelykheid, met geweld tusschen beiden te komen.’

³⁶ DFM, 1/1/166, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 October 1901.

³⁷ B.J.H. de Graaff, *De Mythe van Stamverwantschap: Nederland en de Afrikaners, 1902-1930*, 5.

³⁸ J.C.H. Blom and E. Lamberts, eds, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlanden* (Baarn, HB Uitgewers, 2006), 338-9.

was perceived that Britain's military might served as a deterrent to German and French expansion in the direction of the North Sea, since it was believed that Britain – as a maritime power – would not allow its continental rivals to control the strategically significant Netherlands. The Dutch therefore found themselves in a diplomatic love-hate relationship with the British: on the one hand, the British were a natural ally; on the other hand, they were a superpower that was not to be trifled with.³⁹

In the face of the public's impassioned support for the Boers, the Dutch government's main concern was to avoid confrontation with Britain and, at the same time, prevent public opinion from turning against it.⁴⁰ It succeeded in this aim through a 'masterstroke of publicity'.⁴¹ It offered to assist Kruger to leave the Transvaal and to that end, provided a cruiser, the *Gelderland*, to transport him to Europe. His voyage and his subsequent tour through Europe received mass publicity, and his presence drew crowds wherever he went.⁴²

In reality, the crowds and the publicity only served to mask Kruger's diplomatic failure. Kruger had hoped to appeal to Germany for assistance, but Kaiser Wilhelm II refused to receive him. Unfortunately for Kruger, the Germans and the British had held secret talks during the summer of 1898. The outcome of these negotiations was that they would divide the Portuguese possessions in Africa between them, as it was thought that the Portuguese state was nearing bankruptcy. As part of their cordial relationship, they undertook not to allow the South African issue to cause any further divisions between them.⁴³ Thus, instead of heading for Berlin, Kruger was forced to travel to the Netherlands where, in December 1900, he stopped in Utrecht on his way to The Hague. Naturally, Malan went to the station to see him, where once again, he received preferential treatment. He recounted the scene to his parents:

As an Afrikaner, I received a ticket which gave me access to the platform, and thus I could see him from quite nearby. But there was such an incredibly large and excited mass of people that I was nearly flattened by the Dutch. Shouts of "Long live Kruger, Long live the Boers" were so incessant that the speeches were inaudible, even to the speakers. Nevertheless, everyone went home highly pleased and excited about having had the honour of seeing even a little of the great Boer statesman.⁴⁴

³⁹ B.J.H. de Graaff, *De Mythe van Stamverwantschap: Nederland en de Afrikaners, 1902-1930*, 6.

⁴⁰ C.A.J. van Koppen, "De Geuzen van de Negentiende Eeuw: Abraham Kuyper en Zuid-Afrika" (Proefschrift Th.D, Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht, Utrecht, 1981), 176.

⁴¹ Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words", 204.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 203-204.

⁴³ C.A.J. van Koppen, "De Geuzen van de Negentiende Eeuw: Abraham Kuyper en Zuid-Afrika", 173-4.

⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/156, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 12 December 1900: 'Als Afrikaner kreeg ik een kaartje om op't platform te komen en kon hem dus van heel naby zien. Maar daar was zulk een ontzettende, groote en opgewonden massa menschen, dat ik door die Hollanders byna plat werd gedrukt. Het geroep van Leve Kruger, Leve de Boeren

The public's enthusiasm filled Malan with cynicism. After only two months in the Netherlands, he had observed enough to write to his parents that 'Nothing is to be expected from the European powers. Here, self-interest reigns supreme. Besides, they mistrust each other too much to work together. We will now have to do ourselves what we expect others to do for us.'⁴⁵ In his diary he noted: 'The salvation of South Africa lies in and has to come from South Africa.'⁴⁶

One is tempted to wonder whether this disillusionment was the beginning of D.F. Malan's general aloofness from international politics. Although he was always interested in world affairs, and was at any given time well-informed about international relations, he had no tolerance of foreign involvement in South African affairs and, unlike his predecessor Jan Smuts, did not work to establish a position for South Africa on the world stage. South Africa and her own problems were to be foremost in his mind and international relations would be made subservient to this concern. Smuts was later to say of him: 'He has but one failing, if, indeed, failing it be: that he loves his land so much as to exclude from his reasoning the help his land needs from nations across the seas.'⁴⁷

Despite Malan's preoccupation with the political atmosphere in the Netherlands, he had to concentrate on his reason for being in the Netherlands in the first place: his studies. He was already counting the years and months until he could return to South Africa – by December 1900, he had calculated that he had two years and nine months to go.⁴⁸ Unbeknown to him at the time, his stay was to be longer.

The first hurdle was that the University of Utrecht did not recognise his previous qualifications, so Malan busied himself with preparations for the exams that he had to retake. Most of the work was a repetition of what he had done before, but he resigned himself to it. At least it gave him time to consider his future plans. He was still uncertain as to whether or not he would undertake doctoral studies.⁴⁹ This begs the question why he went to the Netherlands in the first place, and what he would have done if he had not decided to pursue doctoral studies? Unfortunately, this is a question which the surviving documents leave unanswered, but one may speculate that he left for Europe precisely because, even after completing his theological studies, his

was zoo aanhoudend dat de toespraken zelfs voor de sprekers onhoorbaar waren. Nogthans ging elkeen hoogst voldaan en opgewonden naar huis, die maar net de eer had der grooten Boerenstaatsman eventjes te zien.'

⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/156, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 12 December 1900: 'Van de Europeesche mogendheden is niets te verwachten. De zelfzucht voert hier den boventoon. Bovendien wantrouwen ze elkaar onderling te veel om samen te werken. Wy moeten nu maar zelf doen wat wy verwachten dat anderen voor ons doen zullen.'

⁴⁶ DFM, 1/1/10, Fotokopie van Dagboek, "Indrukken: Politiek": "Het heil van Zuid-Afrika ligt in en moet komen uit Zuid-Afrika."

⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/3038, Quoted by Michael Sheldon, "D.F. Malan D.D.: The Man Behind the Iron Mask", 2.

⁴⁸ DFM, 1/1/157, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 17 December 1900.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

ever-present feelings of inferiority left him convinced that he was not adequately prepared to lead a congregation.

Nevertheless, at this stage, he decided to prepare for the doctoral admission exams in case he decided to pursue a doctorate after all. In the meantime, he wanted to make full use of the opportunity to learn as many new things as possible that could be of value to South Africa. He decided that he did not care much for sightseeing – unless it provided him with an opportunity to learn something. He was initially struck by the extensive charity work undertaken in the Netherlands – South Africa, for one, would certainly need similar charitable institutions after the war, as there would surely be much poverty and deprivation in its wake. Malan resolved to make a special study of these institutions during one of his longer holidays.⁵⁰ What he would have found was a society that was changing its approach to poverty alleviation.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century, and also the first decade of the twentieth, was a time of extensive socio-economic change in the Netherlands. Its economy began to industrialise, moving away from trade capitalism to a broader, modern capitalism. The growth of cities and the proliferation of factories served to make the poor more visible than ever before. This resulted in new perceptions regarding poverty. Instead of treating it as something to be left to the charities, poverty became a broader social issue that needed to be addressed through government policies and legislation. Education was regarded as a key solution to the problem, as the Netherlands was a country where a modernising democracy was giving the working class an ever growing political voice. At the same time, the growing power of the middle class meant that society was dominated by bourgeois values, and education was seen as an important means of transmitting these values to the masses.⁵¹ This bears striking similarities to both Malan's, and the general Afrikaner nationalist, approach to the poor white problem in South Africa, which was to occupy an important place on the South African social and political agenda for the first half of the twentieth century.

As part of his 'project', Malan planned to visit the largest orphanage in the Netherlands, as well as a socialist colony, which he thought was quite novel. 'The latter is an attempt to improve society by abolishing all private property. Everyone in the colony works for the common purse, from which each then receives what he needs', he explained in a letter to Nettie.⁵²

This experiment in socialism did not inspire Malan – although it left him well-informed. In later years, he was to publish a lecture on socialism which demonstrated that he had a firm grasp of Karl

⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/157, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 17 December 1900.

⁵¹ J.C.H. Blom and E. Lamberts, eds, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlanden*, 327-9.

⁵² DFM, 1/1/163, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 28 May 1901: 'Deze laatste is een poging om de maatschappij te verbeteren, door alle privaat eigendom af te schaffen. Allen die in de kolonie zyn werken voor de algemeene kas, waaruit dan weer elkeen krygt wat hy noodig heeft.'

Marx's theories.⁵³ The Dutch railway strike of 1903 filled him with revulsion, not solidarity, with the plight of the working classes:

The railway employees suddenly got it in their minds to stop working. The hotbed was in Amsterdam. For a few days, not a single train could reach Amsterdam. The government concentrated troops from other areas in Amsterdam in order to be prepared for all eventualities, but the railway employees flatly refused to serve any train containing a soldier. By cutting off all access, the price of articles escalated – it was as if the city was under siege. It could not go on any longer and – the workers got their way. As if they have the power in their hands! Thus, slowly the workers are becoming the ruling class in all European countries. Over the past few years, the socialists in Germany have increased threefold. If the Kaiser is not careful, he will get it on the head! That in itself would not be bad, only, I would not like to see it happen before he helps England to its downfall. There is indeed every chance of that happening. That it will be *the* clash of the first twenty years is unmistakable.⁵⁴

These words reveal so many aspects of the Afrikaner nationalist politician that was to come. He had a bourgeois mistrust of the mobilisation of the working class, supported England's enemies – not because they merited support but because they would help to punish England – and moreover, he had a keen insight into the intricacies of power politics and their inevitable outcome. The Boers' failure to obtain material support from the European powers taught this young observer an important lesson about the realities of international *realpolitik*, in which national self-interest reigned supreme.

Malan steadily became used to this new world. After about seven months in the Netherlands, he could report to Nettie that he was becoming used to the Dutch and their habits, and no longer felt 'like a fish on dry ground.'⁵⁵

⁵³ See D.F. Malan, *Socialism: Lecture delivered before the Graaff-Reinet Literary Society* (Graaff-Reinet: Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 1913).

⁵⁴ DFM, 1/1/210, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 1 February 1903: 'De spoorwegbeambten kregen het plotseling in den zin om het werk te staken. De broeinest was Amsterdam. Gedurende een paar dagen kon geen enkele trein Amsterdam bereiken. De regeering liet troepen van andere plaatsen op Amsterdam concentreeren om voor alle gebeurlykheden bereid te zyn doch de spoorbeambten weigerden rondweg om eenig trein te bedienen waarin 'n soldaat zat. Door't afsnyden van alle toevoer stegen alle artikelen geweldig in prys, 't was of de stad belegerd was. Zoo kon't natuurlyk niet langer en – de werklieden kregen hun zin. Of zy niet de macht in handen hebben! Zoo langzamerhand worden werklieden de regeerende stand in alle Europeesche landen. Gedurende de laatste paar jaren zyn de socialisten in Duitschland verdriedubbeld. Als de 'Kaiser' niet oppast dan krygt hy van hen nog op zyn kop. Dat op zichzelf kan niet veel kwaad, alleen zou ik graag dat't niet gebeurde vóór hy Engeland ten val heeft geholpen. En daar is wel alle kans op. Dat dat *de* botsing van de eerste twintig jaar zal zyn is onmiskenbaar.'

⁵⁵ DFM, 1/1/163, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 28 May 1901: 'als een visch op droog grond.'

It is interesting to note that Malan's stay in the Netherlands coincided with the rise of the Dutch *verzuiling*, or pillarisation. It was a society in which Orthodox Protestant, Catholic, and Socialist factions formed separate pillars – functioning alongside each other without ever mingling. They established separate social and cultural organisations, sent their children to separate schools, attended separate churches and, in short, constituted separate subcultures.⁵⁶ Yet, strangely enough, Malan did not comment on this aspect of society, where voluntary separation was the order of the day. He merely noted that the Valeton family, with whom he lodged, belonged to a particular social circle, and never moved beyond it.⁵⁷ As is typical of any foreigner, Malan's observations were always in relation to his own country, and in his eyes, the Netherlands did not always compare favourably, as he wrote to Nettie:

I've often wondered how it is possible that such a level country intersected by hundreds of canals, with a gray mist usually hanging over the landscape, ever could have inspired such great poets as the Netherlands have produced. And that too in a country where woman, who so often is the object or inspirer of poetry, does not command that position of power and influence in society she has with us. By the way, you know that it is a fact that nowhere in the world does woman occupy such a high position in the public estimation as among the Afrianders. This not only on the ground of my own observation, but on the authority of our great South African historian Theal. So I would advise you not as yet to set on foot or join in a movement for the emancipation of woman.⁵⁸

In contrast to his disdain for the Dutch, Malan's reverence for his own nation continued to grow, as he romanticised and extolled their virtues: 'My experience thus far is that, in spite of their civilisation here, of which they are so proud, our poor old oppressed little nation is in most respects far, far superior to any with whom I have yet come into contact.'⁵⁹

Malan did indeed obtain an opportunity to compare the Afrikaners to the nations on the European continent. In spite of his early assertions that he was not interested in sight-seeing, his first summer in Europe presented the possibility of travelling around the continent. Malan decided to make use of the opportunity. Along with two of his fellow-Afrikaner students, he visited Paris, Switzerland, and a small part of Germany. He was thoroughly impressed by Paris and thought that it deserved its

⁵⁶ J.C.H. Blom and E. Lamberts, eds, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlanden*, 333-6.

⁵⁷ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902.

⁵⁸ DFM, 1/1/176, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 13 February 1902.

⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/163, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 28 May 1901: 'Myn ondervinding tot nogtoe is dat niettegenstaande hun beschaving hier, waarop zy zich zoo beroemen, ons ou arm verdrukt volkje toch in de meeste opzichten verre, verre boven alle anderen staat met welke ik nog in aanraking gekomen ben.'

reputation as the most beautiful city in the world – although, after a while, he had his fill of boulevards, palaces, and triumphal arches. In Switzerland Malan and his friends visited Calvin’s house and church in Geneva, and Malan was able to trace his Huguenot roots. Malan’s enthusiasm for Switzerland’s beauty was boundless, and his description of the scenery revealed the poet buried deep inside him:

...Immediately before us rise the mighty Alpine giants – the Eiger, Monk, and Jungfrau... When the sun sets, the beauty of this scene increases... Slowly the dark shadow of night creeps out of the deep valleys, till it has thrown its black cloak over the whole country around, but high above all the rest still stand out the snow covered tops basking themselves in the rays of the setting sun. The dazzling white becomes softer and assumes a rosy hue, which steadily becomes rosier till the Jungfrau seems to blush, conscious of the admiration she calls forth. Now the last rays disappear and the rosy hue gives place to a pale grey... The silence is almost awe-inspiring. One seems to be lost in thought. Only now and again a sound breaks the stillness... The whole seems to be a mighty temple in which one must worship the great Creator of all.⁶⁰

The dramatic beauty Swiss Alps truly stirred the young man who, once back in Utrecht, in the midst of the Dutch winter, found himself longing for another untouched landscape, far away in the south:

I can hardly, when I look out of my window on the roofs and trees and streets all covered with a thick layer of snow, picture to myself the oakshaded [*sic*] “stoep” of Allesverloren, the green vineyards and orchards laden with the delicious fruit of summer, and the people gasping for breath on account of the heat. To see the trees covered with snow is really one of the finest sights I’ve seen in Europe. This certainly makes up a good deal at any rate for the plain scenery of Holland. Holland certainly is beautiful in summer with its green meadows and shady forests and avenues but in winter it is dull and gloomy. A South African, born and bred in a rugged country cannot but love the wild and romantic Alps, he is almost sure to get poetical, but the tameness of the Dutch scenery soon wearies. I feel that being already naturally rigid, I’m here growing more prosaic every day, living as I do in a prosaic country among a prosaic people.⁶¹

⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/166, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 October 1901.

⁶¹ DFM, 1/1/176, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 13 February 1902.

Indeed, Malan might have grown accustomed to his surroundings, but he was unable to identify himself with the Dutch. Coming from a largely undifferentiated society, he believed that it was impossible for their social order – with a monarchy, and a more rigid class-structure – to produce prominent personalities. He could not become used to some of their social habits, such as drawing up a list of the gifts that they would like to receive on their birthday. He found the society's elaborate set of formal etiquette constricting, designed to turn people into marionettes and to wipe out their individuality.⁶² He poked subtle fun at the comical situations it created, as is evident from one of his letters to Nettie:

I wanted to visit Prof. Baljon this evening. But as the etiquette in this country dictates, it has to take place in a dress-coat – the type of tie is less important, and the hat may also be of any possible or impossible model. But a dress-coat, however, it must absolutely be, even if everything else is absent. Well, this week I excavated the article from the depths of my closet and found, to my shock and dismay that it does not want to contain me any longer – and such a beautiful, attractive, smart, brand-new black linen one at that. Of course I had to go to the tailor immediately, but he could not put me into a new wrapping before the end of the week. Thus Prof. Baljon has to wait another week...⁶³

Malan's friendship with Nettie grew during his years in Utrecht. In her, he discovered a faithful correspondent. Their friendship was cemented when she and her sister, Coosie, travelled to Europe during the summer of 1902. Coosie was suffering from a throat-ailment and needed to seek treatment in Germany.⁶⁴ Malan initially hoped that the two of them could accompany him on a tour of the Norwegian coast, as he was headed to Denmark in order to attend a student conference.

Unfortunately this plan did not materialise. Malan visited the Norwegian coast by himself,⁶⁵ but only after spending a part of his summer with the two of them in Bavaria, where they were staying at the picturesque resort of Reichenhall. Malan was enthralled by the town's beautiful surroundings and could not contain his ardour as he tried to describe it to his sister:

⁶² DFM, 1/10, Fotokopie van Dagboek, "Dec. 5, St. Nicholas feest, Cadeaus enz."; "Indrukken: Maatschappelyk."

⁶³ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904: 'ik wou van avond gaan kuieren by Prof. Baljon. Maar zooals de etiquette in dit land het eischt moet dit geschieden in een manel – het soort van das komt er nou minder op aan, en de hoed mag ook wel van alle mogelyke en onmogelyke modellen zyn. Een manel moet het echter absoluut zyn al onbreekt verder ook alles. Nu ja, ik graaf van de week dit artikel uit de diepte van myn kast, en vind tot myn verbazing en smart dat hy my niet meer bevatten wil – en dit nog al zoo 'n prachtig, mooie, achtermekaar, splinternieuw, zwartlakensche. Dadelyk moest ik natuurlyk naar de lapjesknipper, maar voor't einde van de week kan hy my niet in een nieuw omhulsen steken. Dus moet Prof. Baljon maar nog 'n week wachten...'

⁶⁴ DFM, 1/1/180, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 3 April 1902.

⁶⁵ DFM, 1/1/199, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, n.d. August 1902.

Reichenhall is probably one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. Especially a place not far from here – namely the Hintersee – where we had an excursion, with its lake, mountains, glaciers, forests, moss-covered rocks and clear, refreshing babbling brooks, came as close to my idea of what paradise must have been like if I have ever seen such a place.⁶⁶

The town itself also had its charms. There was the jovial proprietor – in whose hotel they stayed – the red-haired housemaster – who received one mark a week from everyone for doing nothing – Aunt ‘always wis flowers’, and the old portrait-maker, who took their picture.⁶⁷



Figure 4: Malan with Nettie and Coosie in Reichenhall
Back: D.F. Malan, Nettie Fourie, Front: Coosie Fourie (seated) (D.F. Malan Collection)

Much friendly banter seems to have passed between Malan and Nettie. She teased him about his lack of romantic prospects, while he enjoyed extolling the virtues of girls for whom she had shown disdain, and joked about her becoming his housekeeper one day.⁶⁸

One might wonder whether there might have been a serious undertone in Nettie’s teasing. She displayed a particular interest in subjects that interested Malan, and asked him to recommend books to her – and even sent him some money to buy these recommendations for her.⁶⁹ Malan responded enthusiastically, teasing her about possible admirers and praising her intellectual endeavours:

⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/193, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 13 Augustus 1902: ‘Reichenhall is zeker e n van de mooiste plekken die ik ooit gezien heb. Een plaats vooral, niet ver van daar nl. Hintersee waar wy een excursion hadden met zyn meer, bergen, glaciers, bosschen, mosbegroeide rotsen en heldere, frissche kabbelende beekjes komt zoo na aan myn idee van wat het paradys moest gewees zyn als ik ooit een plaats gezien heb.’

⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/220, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 31 July 1903.

⁶⁸ DFM, 1/1/210, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 1 February 1903; DFM, 1/1/225, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, n.d.

⁶⁹ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904; DFM, 1/1/233, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 15 July 1904.

And what is this about your two suitors, Netta? I am becoming very afraid that I might have to miss your good services in my house. And that I wouldn't want, especially since I, now that I have heard that you are studying Calvin, with much profit to myself, can discuss all kinds of things in my own work with you. It has always given me great pleasure to see your interest in all sorts of scholarly subjects, and I must say that talking to you about these things has set me thinking about more than one point.⁷⁰

Yet, at the same time, he dashed any hopes that she might or might not have had. She teased him about his seeming inability to go courting, especially since both his younger brothers were engaged by that time, to which he responded:

With regards to *can*, there may exist some doubt, with regards to *wanting to*, I at least know that there is nothing. One is young only once and when I was a lad of seventeen or eighteen, then, I believe, I at least was poetic enough for it. Now I am as prosaic as possible, I have completely different ideals, am indeed old, and have as little interest in these things as hair on my head – and that says a lot, as by this time, you can well understand. A woman ages until she is twenty-five and, unless she is engaged or married, she never ages again. A man ages until twenty-five. If he has not been rescued by that time, he also ceases to age. If he completely gives up on the matter, he ages again. I am aging again and should you want to know my age, this year I am *thirty*, and ten years later, should I still be alive, I will be *forty*.⁷¹

Nettie was a friend, and no more.

Back in Utrecht, Malan threw himself into his work, but theology was never the only interest in his life, and his years in Europe were not necessarily defined only by his studies. Malan's presence in Utrecht afforded him the rare privilege of meeting the Boer leaders – something which would have been impossible in South Africa – when they visited Europe. By this time, Kruger was living in Utrecht, and Malan used the opportunity to visit him. More than fifty years later, he

⁷⁰ DFM, 1/1/225, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 January 1904: 'En hoe is het dan met jou twee vryers, Netta? Ik begin wezenlyk bang te worden dat ik jou goede dienste in myn huis zal moeten missen. En dat wil ik toch niet graag, temeer omdat ik, nu ik hoor dat jy Calvyn bestudeert, met veel profyt voor myzelven, met jou over allerhande dinge in myn eigen werk kan discusseeren. Het heeft my altyd heel veel plezier verschaft, te sien hoeveel belang jy in allerlei wetenschappelyke onderwerpen stelt, en ik moet zeggen dat het praten over deze dinge met jou, my over meer dan een punt aan't denken gezet heeft.'

⁷¹ *Ibid.*: 'Omtrent het *kunnen* mag er nu wel twyfel bestaan, omtrent het *willen* ben ik ten minste zeker dat er niet is. Men is maar eenmaal jong en toen ek een knaapje van zeventien of achteen was, toen geloof ik, had ik ten minste poëzie genoeg daarvoor. Nu ben ik zoo prozaisch mogelijk, heb nu geheel andere idealen, ben al vrywel oud, en heb in die dinge al even weinig zin, als haren op myn hoofd – en dat is veel gezegd, zoals jy tegen dezen tyd wel kunt begrypen. Een vrouw verjaart tot zy zoowat vyf en twintig is & tenzy sy dan verloofd of getrouwd is, verjaart zy nooit meer. Een man verjaart tot vyf en twintig. Is hy dan nog niet geholpen, dan houdt ook hy op te verjaren. Geeft hy daarna de zaak geheel en al en finaal op, dan verjaart hy weer. Ik verjaar al weer en zoo jy myn ouderdom weten wilt, wel, dit jaar ben ik *dertig*, en tien jaar daarna, zoo ik dan nog leef ben ik *veertig*.'

reminisced (and maybe even romanticised) the scene that greeted him: an old, bent figure, with the Bible open in front of him.⁷² He was also to witness Kruger's decline. As the war reached its final months, Malan wrote to his parents that 'Oom Paul', was very quiet and kept to himself. He only left his house on Sundays to attend the nearby Doppe church. 'His time has passed', Malan concluded.⁷³ Malan found Kruger's last public appearances tragic. Within months after the conclusion of the war, the Boer generals Louis Botha, Koos de la Rey, and Christiaan de Wet visited Europe. Utrecht held a special meeting for them in the Domkerk, which Malan attended. Here he witnessed the passing of the older generation and the rise of the new generation, whom he himself was to succeed:

At the close the "oubaas" himself ascended the pulpit and addressed the generals and the audience... Though he said nothing particular, yet it was a most imposing and pathetic spectacle to see the oldman [*sic*], as strong and mighty in his days, now bowed down with age and disaster stand up before an audience perhaps for the last time. In the evening, the generals addressed a meeting in a large hall, and spoke well and made a favourable impression. De Wet especially spoke well... About the reception in Paris and Berlin you will have read. In spite of the Kaiser and his government, it is freely stated that for the last thirty-two years Berlin has never again seen the like.⁷⁴

Malan now joined the Dutch in their near hero-worship of these men who, after the death of General Piet Joubert and the capture of General Piet Cronje, had stepped forward as the new generation of Boer generals. Christiaan de Wet, in particular, had been the darling of the Dutch press throughout the war. He was hailed as the architect of the guerrilla campaign, and his ability to outwit his adversaries and escape their 'drives' to hunt him down time and again kept the Dutch public enthralled.⁷⁵ The favourable impression that they made on the Dutch public filled Malan with pride and reinforced his belief in the Afrikaners' moral superiority to the European nations:

The generals are making a profound impression everywhere, especially because of their faith and their simplicity. In a society that is paralysed by faithlessness and where they are taught since childhood to feign behind a mask of so-called civilised etiquette, the appearance of three men so world-famous – and yet so unpretentious, so natural, so full of faith and so forceful – is a true wonder. A theology professor wrote from Groningen that he, with all his knowledge,

⁷² D.F. Malan, 'Herinneringe uit my Utrechtse Studentetyd', *Suid-Afrikaners in Utrecht 1762-1954*, 6.

⁷³ DFM, 1/1/179, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 3 April 1902: 'Zyn rol is ook haast afgespeeld'.

⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/204, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 October 1902.

⁷⁵ Kuitenbrouwer, "A War of Words", 206-207.

felt ashamed in the presence of such forceful men who feared God as if it is the most natural thing in the world. The people are therefore mad with enthusiasm wherever they appear.⁷⁶

To Malan, the Boer generals embodied all that was good in the Afrikaner, and they became the embodiment of his own ideals. His admiration of the Anglo-Boer War's heroes was not uncritical, however, and he was also quick to criticise and reject those Afrikaners who did not fit the bill. General Ben Viljoen, for one, was Malan's antithesis of his hero, De Wet:

Ben Viljoen is also in Europe, but is making a less favourable impression. He has written a book about the war. I have had a look at it. It is absorbing, but the author, in as far as he portrays himself in his book, is not to my liking. For one, he comes far too much and completely unnecessarily to the forefront. He prefers to recount tales in which people's admiration for him as a general is laid on thickly. And furthermore he shows himself to be an utterly unreligious man. He ridicules or at least speaks with the greatest thoughtlessness of what was a matter of holy gravity to the Boers. Now he is giving lectures in England and tries to detract from De Wet's fame, why I don't know and has, if the news is true, offered his services to the English to fight against the Somalis.⁷⁷

In his fervour and admiration for the Boer generals, Malan did not spare the Cape politicians and their way of conducting politics in the tolerant and accommodative manner that he had known all his life. Already, in Stellenbosch, the younger generation had shown itself to be less tolerant than their elders. Now, in the immediate aftermath of the war, Malan's words made it clear that his tolerance was gone, as he rejected the ways of the older generation:

In the Cape Parliament our case seems to be doing excellently thanks to the foolishness of the ultra-jingo party. The only thing that I find very hard to stomach is that there is apparently so

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902: 'De generaals maken overall een diepen indruk vooral door hun geloof en hun eenvoud. In een maatschappij die verlamd is door ongeloof en van kindsbeen af geleerd wordt achter den masker van zoogenaamde beschaafde etiquette te huichelen is de verschyning van drie mannen zoo wereldberoemd en toch zoo eenvoudig, zoo natuurlyk, zoo vol geloof en zoo krachtig, een waar wonder. Een theol. prof. schryft uit Groningen dat hy zich met al zyn kennis beschaamd gevoelde in de tegenwoordigheid van zulke krachtige mannen die God vreezden als de natuurlykste zaak van de wereld. De menschen zyn dan ook overall waar zy verschynen eenvoudig dol van enthousiasme.'

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Ben Viljoen is ook in Europa maar maakt een ongunstiger indruk. Hy heeft een boek over de oorlog geschreven. Ik heb het ingezien. Het is boeiend geschreven doch de schryver voor zoover hy zich in zyn boek laat kennen bevalt my weinig. Vooreerst kom hyzelf geheel en al te veel en geheel onnodig op den voorgrond. By voorkeur verhaalt hy episodes waarin de bewondering van de menschen voor hem als generaal breed uitgemeten word. En dan verder laat hy zich kennen als een volslagen ongodsdienstig man. Hy dryft den spot of ten minste spreekt met grootste lichtvaardigheid over wat de Boeren heilige ernst was. Nu houdt hy lezingen in Engeland en tracht de roem van de Wet af te breken, met welk doel is my niet duidelyk en heeft indien het bericht waar is zich aangeboden om voor de Engelschen tegen de Somalis te gaan vechten.'

much sacrificing of principles, so much trading in principles. Of course it is all for sound political reasons, but that does not take away the immorality of it all. But the struggle between politics and principles is as old as Ahab and Elijah, and no one has ever succeeded in uniting the two.⁷⁸

This condemnation of politics as something that was immoral and irreconcilable with principles was not only Malan speaking. It rose largely from the influence of his new mentor in the Netherlands, his landlord Prof. J.J.P. Valeton junior.

Josué Jean Phillippe Valeton was born on 14 October 1848 in Groningen, the son of J.J.P. Valeton, a professor in Hebrew at the University of Groningen. The younger Valeton was appointed to the University of Utrecht in 1876, where he specialised in the history of religion and literature in Israel, as well as the Old Testament. Valeton became a prominent theologian, one of the three leading representatives of the ‘later’ Ethical theologians. It was Valeton who, in a seminal lecture, “Een nieuw begin” (“A new beginning”), declared in 1882 that the apologetic theology of his teacher, J.J. van Oosterzee, had passed on along with its protagonist. Ethical theology – in direct opposition to Abraham Kuyper’s version of reformed theology – was to be the new direction. Valeton himself was soon dubbed ‘*apologeet van de ehtische richting*’ (apologist of the ethical direction), as he published a number of pamphlets on ethical theology. These were not his only publications – he also wrote religious tracts, and pamphlets that dealt with mission work and Old Testament history. His most specialised works concentrated on the Old Testament’s prophets.⁷⁹ In April 1900, six months before Malan’s arrival in the Netherlands, Valeton delivered a lecture entitled “De strijd tusschen Achab en Elia”, (“The battle between Ahab and Elijah”).⁸⁰

In this lecture, Valeton created a dichotomy between politics and religion. According to him, the story of Ahab exposed the difference between worldly and political views and motives on the one hand, and religious, spiritual values on the other.⁸¹ In the history of Israel, Ahab was clearly a shrewd political strategist – especially in his creation of alliances with his neighbours, be it through marriage or through showing mercy to those whom he had defeated in war.⁸² Elijah, in contrast, is portrayed as Ahab’s antithesis: the man of God whose only concern was service to his Creator. As

⁷⁸ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902: ‘In het Kaapsche Parlement schynt het voor onze zaak uitstekend te gaan dank zy de dwaasheid van de ultra-jingo party. Het eenige dat voor my erg stuitend is, is dat er schynbaar aan onzen kant zoveel prysgeven van principe is, zooveel handel dryven in beginselen. Natuurlyk geschiedt dit om goede politieke redenen, doch dit neemt het onzedelyke daarvan niet weg. Maar de stryd tusschen politiek en beginsel is ook ruim zoo oud als Achab en Elia en niemand is er nog in geslaagd ze te vereenigen.’

⁷⁹ M.J. Aalders, “Ethisch Tussen 1870 en 1920: Openbaring, Schrift en Ervaring bij J.J.P. Valeton jr., P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye en I.S. Van Dijk” (PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1990), 16, 26, 35-7, 40-3.

⁸⁰ J.J.P. Valeton jr., ‘De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia: Voordracht Gehouden in de Paedagogische Vereeniging van Christelijke Onderwijzers, te Utrecht 24 April 1900’, in *Oud-testamentische Voordrachten* (Nijmegen: Firma H. ten Hoet, 1909).

⁸¹ J.J.P. Valeton jr., ‘De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia’, 12.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 13-16.

far as Elijah was concerned, politics and the interests of state – which were Ahab’s main concerns – were of no consequence.⁸³ To Valeton, the rivalry between Ahab and Elijah was the personification of the even greater rivalry, ‘it is the battle between politics and religion, between the interests of state and faith, between *opportunism* and *principle*.’⁸⁴

Valeton believed that there was a clear correlation between the story of Ahab and Elijah and the nature of his own society. He argued that if the story was to be retold in plain historical terms, without the moralising influence of Bible teachers, contemporary society would applaud Ahab as the ‘liberal’ man, the man of his times. Elijah would stand in stark contrast to Ahab:

Elijah is the narrow-minded man, one who has but one end in mind, and who sacrifices everything for its sake. Elijah is intolerant and hard, well, yes, great and impressive, but in a manner that inspires respect but also indignation. He sacrifices everything for an idea, human lives are nothing to him, think of the 400 prophets he had executed at Carmel; the interests of the state are also nothing to him. What a man! A gale force wind, a bolt of lightning, all-conquering and all-destroying, to be admired from a distance and when close by, to be avoided as far as possible.⁸⁵

Despite the public’s inevitable disapproval of this hard and narrow-minded prophet, Elijah was clearly the better man – one who did not seek his salvation in the state, but in God, who was eternal and unchanging. As a result, Valeton invoked the old Biblical maxim: it does not help a man to gain the whole world but to lose his soul.⁸⁶

Valeton’s words make it clear that he regarded politics as something dirty, something that could not be reconciled with religion. He created Elijah as the ideal man. Indeed, one who was unbending, unpopular, and isolated, but nevertheless one who was superior to a likeable man, as personified by Ahab. Elijah was a man who was willing to serve his principles without expecting to see the results in his lifetime – his successor, Elisha, was the one who was to bring these principles to fruition, and who would witness their realisation. Although Elisha, in contemporary terms, was the more successful man, one who received more recognition in his own time than his predecessor,

⁸³ J.J.P. Valeton jr., ‘De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia’, 22.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 24-6: ‘het is de strijd tusschen politiek en godsdienst, tusschen staatsbelang en geloof, tusschen *opportunisme* en *beginsel*.’

⁸⁵ J.J.P. Valeton jr., ‘De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia’, 27: Elia is de bekrompen man, de man die maar één ding voor oogen heeft en die alles daarvoor opoffert. Elia is onverdraagzaam en hard; nu ja, groot en geweldig, maar op een wijze die ontzag maar ook verontwaardiging wekt. Voor een idee offert hij alles op; menschenlevens zijn hem niets, denk aan de 400 profeten die hij op den Karmel ter dood brengt; ook het staatsbelang is voor hem niets. Wat een man! Een stormwind, een bliksemschicht, alles nederwerpend en alles verzengend; uit de verte om te bewonderen, van nabij om zoo ver mogelijk uit den weg te gaan!

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

to Valeton he was the lesser man. In Valeton's eyes, Elijah was equal to Moses, the man who had led his people to the Promised Land.⁸⁷

That Malan had made these ideals his own, is unmistakable. He too began to regard religion and politics as two irreconcilable poles. He became convinced that the only way in which one could be successful in politics was by adhering to the compulsion 'to be silent, to cloak, to cover up, *to almost approve of*, and to applaud, the criminal.'⁸⁸ Even worse, in his eyes, were those politicians who played on their supporters' religious beliefs in order to get ahead:

Religious principles on the other hand, according to my insight, should pursue and defend justice and truth in the name of God, and therefore all injustice and crime and sin in friend or foe, in a single individual or an entire nation, should be exposed and condemned. And when one drags religion by its hair into politics in order to obtain political capital, one is sacrificing eternal interests for the temporary – one humiliates religion.⁸⁹

In the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War, as the Afrikaners began their quest to regain political power through constitutional means, Malan began to grapple with the nature of that quest. At this stage, only the Cape Afrikaners were enfranchised – the first elections in the Transvaal and Free State would only be held in 1907. The Cape political tradition of tolerance and accommodation was therefore the only means of political expression, and the only means to power. Malan, however, found it difficult to reconcile this with his now firmly-entrenched belief in non-negotiable principles, and the primacy of eternal interests over temporary ones. He could not refrain from condemning Cape politics, even if it was an avenue to political power. As far as he was concerned, it was no longer a matter of obtaining power – rather it was the manner in which power was obtained, that was important:

That we will regain *political power* is not entirely impossible, but then it will have to take place according to the precedent set by Cape politics – through concessions in terms of nationality, by *hushing* up the existence of the *Afrikaner* nation with its own history, nationality, language, and customs *to death* – and if this precedent is followed – given our nation's well-known inability to stand on its own feet – in thirty years' time there will be little

⁸⁷ J.J.P. Valeton jr., 'De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia', 35-6.

⁸⁸ DFM, 1/1/216, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 4 June 1903: 'zwygen, bemantelen, toedekken, byna goedkeuren, den misdadiger toejuigen.'

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Godsdienstig beginsel daarentegen, naar myn inzicht, moet gerechtigheid en waarheid najagen en in Gods naam verdedigen, en derhalve alle onrecht en misdaad en zonde in vriend of vyand, in een enkel persoon of in een gansch volk, ten toon stellen en veroordelen. En waar men nu den godsdienst by de haren insleept om te helpen politiek winst te verkrygen, daar offert men eeuwige belangen op voor tydelike, daar vernedert men den godsdienst.'

reason, which is now still the case, to speak of an Afrikaner nation. If I have to choose – and it seems to me that our nation is increasingly faced with this choice – between having political power on the one hand, and on the other hand the preservation of our own nationality, which rests on our own national calling and our own history which on our part is not born out of racial hatred nor longs to dominate another nation, but which is the embodiment of a higher principle – a history which may *therefore* never be buried under sweet conciliation talk; if I am given the choice, then I for my part will still choose the latter – nationality *without* political predominance.⁹⁰

To Malan, power was to be obtained without compromise, or not to be obtained at all. At the same time, he was convinced that the Afrikaners faced extinction in the face of British cultural dominance. Somehow, the Afrikaners had to maintain their own nationality. What they needed were men like the Biblical Elijah – much like the one that Valeton described. This idealised image now became Malan's own role model. He now knew that he wanted to devote his life to the preservation of the Afrikaner nation. He confided to a close friend about his aspirations:

Our nation, in spite of the praises of the non-English-speaking world, is substantially deprived of men of principle. We have many reapers who are all too ready to collect the fruits and the honours. But we have few sowers, who know that they will not reap but who nevertheless sow as if they shall reap. Everyone grasps at that which is at hand, he stretches his hand out to what is nearest, he pursues that which he himself can see and can enjoy. Few are content to build, unseen and unknown, the sure and stable foundations of a building whose completion they will not see, to live for an idea, to die for an ideal whose realisation they can prepare for but which they themselves will not see. I have undertaken to myself to use my weak powers to work for the Afrikaner nation and not to budge one inch from my path. To make it clear to the nation that God is also the Sovereign of its history, and that He needs to be recognised as such in the national life – this is as much an extension of God's kingdom as it is to preach the Gospel to the heathens. But lately nothing has become clearer to me than that the man who

⁹⁰ DFM, 1/1/231, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 25 May 1904: 'Dat wy weer *politieke macht* in handen zullen krygen is volstrekt niet onmogelyk, maar dan moet het gebeuren langs den weg door de Kaapsche politiek aangewezen – door concessies op nationaal gebied, door het bestaan van een *Afrikaner* volk met eigen geschiedenis, nationaliteit, taal en zeden *dood te zwygen*; en indien die weg gevolgd wordt zal – gegeven de bekende onzelfstandigheid van ons volk – er over dertig jaar ook weinig reden meer zyn, wat nu nog wel de geval is, van een Afrikaner volk te spreken. Als ik kiezen moet – en het schynt my of ons volk meer en meer voor de keuze komt te staan – tusschen het bezit van de politieke macht aan den eenen kant, en het behoud aan den anderen kant van een eigen nationaliteit, berustende op een eigen volksroeping en op een eigen geschiedenis die onzerzyds niet geboren is uit rassenhaat of smacht om een ander volk te overheersen, maar de belichaming is van een hooger beginsel – een geschiedenis die *daarom* ook niet onder zoet conciliatie gepraat *begraven* mag worden; als ik voor die keuze geplaatst wordt dan kies ik voor myn part nog altyd het laatste – de nationaliteit *zonder* het politieke overwicht.'

wants to work for the Afrikaner nation's ability to develop itself on its own terms, so that it can be an own nation with its own history, language, character and ideals, that would in its own manner embody the Kingdom of God in itself, that that man would be held up by heavy resistance, not least from his own nation. He will be seen as an extremist, a fanatic, one who is petty-minded.⁹¹

It is clear from this that Malan had absorbed Valeton's teachings, and agreed with his viewpoint regarding politics and religion. He wanted to be like Elijah: a man of principle, who was not interested in temporal rewards but only in the eternal, even if it meant that he was not to see the fruits of his labour in his own lifetime, and even if it meant that he was to be labelled an extremist. Malan decided to follow the prophet's example.

It suited his temperament. Although he clearly had leadership abilities, Malan was always quiet, serious, and rather apart from the crowd. When all the Afrikaner students were gathered together in Utrecht, and as students typically do, discussed the merits of their professors, Malan remained silent while his friends became animated about the intellectual splendours of their learned masters. He waited until they had more or less reached the height of their admiration, before finally making his contribution: a good professor was merely a good student. If he was not a good student himself, he could not be a good professor. These words more or less sobered up the conversation, which then ran out of steam.⁹²

However, like any other student, when it came to exam time, Malan fretted about his professors. To Nettie he wrote: 'I am not afraid of old man Valeton – he is too much of a jolly chap to save the most difficult things for me. And of Lamers not too much either. But I shudder before Van Veen and especially Baljon with his bald brow.'⁹³

⁹¹ DFM, 1/1/986, C.V. Nel – D.F. Malan, 2 March 1933: Excerpt from letter: D.F. Malan – C.V. Nel, 9 April 1903: '...Ons volk niettegenstaande den hoogen lof de niet-Engelsche wereld is wezenlyk arm aan mannen van beginsel. Wy hebben vele maaiers die al te gereed zyn de vruchten in te zamelen en de eer weg te dragen. Doch weinige zaaiers zyn er die, wetende dat zy niet zullen maaien, nogtans zaaien alsof zy zouden maaien. Ieder grypt naar hetgeen voor oog en is, strekt zyn hand uit naar het naastby liggende, jaagt naar hetgeen hy zelf zien en genieten zal. Weinigen zyn tevreded ongezien en ongekend de fondament hecht en zeker te leggen van het gebouwe de voltooiing waarvan zy niet zullen aanschouwen, te leven voor een gedachte, te sterven voor een ideaal de verwerkelyking waarvan zy wel kunnen voorbereiden doch zelf niet zien. Ik heb my voorgenomen met myne zwakke krachten te gaan werken voor het Afrikanervolk en van den weg geen duimbreed te wyken. Het volk duidelik te maken dat God ook in zyn geschiedenis koning is, en dat Hy als zoodanig in het volksleven moet erkend werden, is evenzeer eene uitbreiding van het koningryk Gods als om Heidenen het evangelie te verkondigen. Doch den laatsten tyd is niets my duidelyker geworden dan dat de man die daarvoor werken wil dat het Afrikaner volk op zyn eigen grondslag zich zal ontwikkelen, dat het een eigen volk zal zyn met eigen geschiedenis, taal, karakter en idealen, dat het op eigen wyze het koningryk Gods in zichzelf zal verwerkelyken, dat die man op heftigen tegenstand zal stuiten niet het minst van zyn eigen volk. Hy zal aangezien worden als een extremist, een dweper, een kleinzielige.'

⁹² DFM, 1/1/3271, T.H. le Roux – B. Booyens, 7 November 1964.

⁹³ DFM, 1/1/210, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 1 February 1903: 'Voor Oubaas Valeton ben ik niet bang – hy is 'n te 'jolly' ou om de moeilikste dinge voor my te bewaren. Voor Lamers ook niet erg. Maar voor van Veen en vooral voor Baljon met zyn kale knikker sidder ik.'

As Valeton's tenant, Malan knew all too well what a 'jolly chap' the old man was. To his sister, Cinie, Malan described Valeton as: 'very amiable and childlike, and is just as interested in the question of the amount of eggs his hens have laid as in the question of whether the book Isaiah was written by one or two prophets.'⁹⁴

It was in Valeton's living room, however, that Malan's most important theological education took place. Here the two of them would drink their 'customary three cups of tea', and talk.⁹⁵ Malan regarded Valeton as the university's finest theologian,⁹⁶ and absorbed his ideas of ethical theology and higher criticism very readily.

Valeton's practice of theology revolved around his concept of revelation. All knowledge of God was based on revelation: either through the 'general revelation', which was manifested in nature and in history, or the 'exceptional revelation', which was manifested in Israel's history and in the person of Jesus Christ. In that sense, the Bible was a means by which God revealed Himself. Valeton therefore rejected the notion that the Christian faith depended on church dogma or the historical accuracy of the Bible. Faith was based on personal experience and not on academic historical arguments. This personal experience originated from God and could therefore not be separated from Him. Not only faith, but all knowledge of God, originated through His revelation, and therefore God was both the object and origin of theology. For this reason, Valeton was convinced that true theological knowledge was only accessible to the faithful.⁹⁷

Due to the fact that his own faith was rooted in the experience of God, Valeton was able to accept the findings of the historical critical method, which was a controversial issue in theological circles at the time, without regarding it as a threat to the basis of his faith. Although it was not the main focus of his own research, he used it as a tool to study the workings of God's revelation in the history of Israel.⁹⁸

The historical critical method, which is also called higher criticism, did not approach the Bible as a source of supernatural revelation, but as a document that was rooted in time and space and which called for critical study. This meant that advances in the fields of archaeology, linguistics, mythology, and the like, became important tools in studying the religion of Ancient Israel.⁹⁹ Valeton, for example, identified traits that Israel's religion shared with the other Semitic nations. This did not threaten his own faith, however, as Israel's faith differed from the other Semitic nations in one important aspect: it was guided by the Holy Spirit and formed part of the

⁹⁴ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902: 'zeer gezellig en kinderlyk en stelt evenveel belang in de vraag hoeveel eieren zyn kippen gelegd hebben als in de vraag of het boek Jesaja door e n of door twee profeten geschreven is.'

⁹⁵ DFM, 1/1/210, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 1 Febraury 1903.

⁹⁶ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902.

⁹⁷ M.J. Aalders, "Ethisch Tussen 1870 en 1920", 43, 51, 53.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 43, 53.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24, 28.

exceptional revelation to Abraham and his descendants, as it had fallen to them to carry God's message to the nations.¹⁰⁰

These views brought Valeton into direct conflict with Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper was the leading representative of Reformed theology (which has also become known as neo-Calvinism) in the Netherlands, and rejected higher criticism in favour of an uncritical acceptance of the Bible's historical accuracy – everything in the Bible was true and accurate 'because it is written.'¹⁰¹ This was his indignant reply to Valeton's and others' questions on the problematic aspects of Biblical interpretation. Because of Valeton's prominence as a theologian and his role as an articulator of ethical theology, he became the focussed target of Kuyper's attacks in the press. These attacks were part of Kuyper's broader campaign against all established theologians, as he was in the process of establishing the Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam (Free University of Amsterdam), and was using the polemic to attract prospective theology students.¹⁰²

Abraham Kuyper, who became Prime Minister of the Netherlands in 1901, was the antithesis of Valeton's dichotomy between religion and politics. A theologian cum newspaper editor cum politician, Kuyper combined politics and religion throughout his illustrious career.¹⁰³ Kuyper was able to justify this through the principle of 'sovereignty in each sphere', which dictated that society was composed of separate spheres, but that each had to adhere to God's authority. Thus, the spheres of state and politics were also subject to religious principles.¹⁰⁴

At this stage of his life, Malan clearly chose his mentor's side. In later years, although he owned a copy of Kuyper's *Het Calvinisme*, along with a number of other standard works of theology, he never expressed much enthusiasm for Kuyper's theology, and he never had much sympathy for the *Doppers*¹⁰⁵ – members of the South African Reformed Church who embraced Kuyper's neo-Calvinism. But even more importantly: under Valeton's guidance, he embraced the practice of higher criticism, which set him apart from Kuyper and his Dopper adherents.¹⁰⁶ Back in South Africa, the tension between neo-Calvinism and higher criticism would later erupt into the Johannes du Plessis case, which scarred the Dutch Reformed Church and the Stellenbosch seminary in the early 1930s.¹⁰⁷

Valeton's assertion, that all knowledge of God was the product of His revelation, was to find resonance in the topic that Malan chose to pursue for his doctoral thesis. In April 1903, Malan could

¹⁰⁰ M.J. Aalders, "Ethisch Tussen 1870 en 1920", 55-6.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in M.J. Aalders, "Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920", 42: 'omdat het erin staat.'

¹⁰² M.J. Aalders, "Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920", 42.

¹⁰³ See J. Koch, *Abraham Kuyper: Een Biografie* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2006).

¹⁰⁴ See G.J. Schutte, *Nederland en de Afrikaners: Adhesie en Aversie*, (Franeker: Wever, 1986), 146-51, 154-8.

¹⁰⁵ Members of the *Gereformeerde Kerk* or Reformed Church.

¹⁰⁶ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herhinneringe aan my Vader*, 9, 45.

¹⁰⁷ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 415-6.

write to his parents to inform them that he had passed his doctoral exams with flying colours and that he was now a *doctorandus* – the latter part of the word meant that he was not as yet a Doctor, but he was well on his way.¹⁰⁸

With his eyes always fixed on South Africa, Malan had hoped to write a thesis on South African church history, but this was impossible for two reasons: firstly, because similar work was already being undertaken in South Africa by Ds. C. Spoelstra; and secondly, because all of the archival material that he would have needed to consult was in South Africa. He therefore had to settle for a philosophical topic: Bishop George Berkeley's philosophy of idealism. Even though he had always enjoyed philosophy, the prospect of writing a doctoral thesis on such an abstract concept, was a daunting one. He felt ill-prepared for the task, and blamed it on South Africa's 'made in England' educational system.¹⁰⁹ He reasoned that he was taught to memorise countless facts in order to pass countless exams, and that there was little room for the formulation of his own opinion.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, he set about to work on the topic. His first step was to visit London, where he collected material. The city and its people filled him with revulsion:

The city is large and bustling, but dirty. I don't want to live here. Otherwise, there was enough to see that would infuriate an Afrikaner. I have never seen greater audacity from this nation, which believes itself to have a calling to rule, civilise, and Christianise the world. Thus they have, among other things, a museum where they display their loot. There one also finds a S.A. collection. A great part of this consists of family bibles, which they have stolen from our homes. In front one can read the usual family registers. There are no memorabilia of victories, since there were so pitifully few victories. Also on display, apart from Kruger and Steyn's pipes, is the shameful proclamation that damage to the railway line would be avenged by burning down the houses of the guilty and the innocent inhabitants. In conclusion, another reminder of their noble and chivalrous deeds in the Cape Colony – a photograph of the execution of Willie Louw at Colesberg. At the Crystal Palace there are more hideous images, Steyn, Kruger, and Mrs Kruger as "South African knock-them-downs", the target of common Englishmen. Indeed, they forgive and forget.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ DFM, 1/1/212, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 2 April 1903.

¹⁰⁹ DFM, 1/1/217, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 6 June 1903.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ DFM, 1/1/214, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 7 May 1903: 'De stad is groot en woelig maar vuil. Ik wil er niet wonen... Er was verder genoeg te zien voor een Afrikaner om zich bloedig te ergeren. Groter onbeschaamdheid heb ik nooit gezien dan van dit volk, dat meent een roeping te hebben de wereld te regeeren te beschaven en te Christianiseeren. Zoo hebben zy onder anderen dan ook een museum waar zy hun buit ten toon stellen. Daar bevindt zich ook een Z.A. verzameling. Een groot deel hiervan bestaat uit familiebybels welke zy uit onze huizen gestolen hebben. Voor in leest men dan de gewone familieregisters. Gedenkstukken van overwinningen zyn er haast niet, want overwinningen zyn er ook jammerlyk weinig geweest. Verder wordt er getoond behalve pypen van Steyn en Kruger de schandelyke proclamatie dat schade aan den spoorweg gewroken zal worden door het verbranden van de

This was indeed a contrast to the euphoric adoration of the Boers that he had witnessed in the Netherlands. To Malan, British imperialism represented all that was detestable. It was the opposite of cultural pluralism, which he regarded as the ideal. This ideal was cemented in his mind by the experience of the World Conference of the Students Christian Association, which he attended in August 1902 as the representative of the South African branch.¹¹² On his way to the conference, Malan toured through Germany. Just as he had retraced Calvin's steps in Geneva, so he now made use of the opportunity to visit Wittenberg where Luther had initiated the Reformation.¹¹³ The conference itself made a profound impression on him, as he described it to his sister:

As far as nations and languages are concerned, it is a true Babel, but not a Babel that separates and drives apart, but one that reunites under the banner of Christ. The Chinese and Japanese travelled halfway around the world to attend the conference. Amongst others we also have such specimens of humanity as Hungarians, Portuguese, Russians, Norwegians, Swedes, Italians, a Syrian, a Bulgarian, a few Fins, and even an Icelander. The languages that are spoken most are English, German, French, Danish, and Swedish. To me, this meeting is such a beautiful promise for the future of humanity. Every nation is allowed here, and it is also expected from each to follow its own methods, to preserve its own national peculiarities. No dominance by the stronger, or trampling or denying the rights of the weaker. No imperialism or dead uniformity, but federation and rich variety. In this way, God's kingdom of righteousness and peace will come when every nation is itself and no other, and thereby fulfils its God-given place and calling. Yet, all are together and are also bound to one another in the acknowledgement of God's Kingship and in loyalty to him and His service. There is no other unbreakable bond between the nations than this one.¹¹⁴

huizen schuldige en onschuldige omwoners. Ten slotte nog een herinnering aan hunne edele en ridderlyke daden in die Kaap Kolonie – een photographie van de terechtstelling van Willie Louw te Colesberg. In de Chrystal Palace staan nog in afschuwelyke afbeelding, Steyn, Kruger en Mrs Kruger als “South African knock-them-downs”, mikpunte voor liederlyke Engelschen. Inderdaad zy vergeven en vergeten.’

¹¹² DFM, 1/1/182, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 20 May 1902.

¹¹³ DFM, 1/1/183, D.F. Malan – C. Louw, 13 August 1902.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Verbeeld jou eens niet minder dan zeventwintig nationaliteiten vertegenwoordigd. Het is hier nu wat volken en talen betreft een ware Babel, doch niet die Babel die scheidt en uiteendryft maar die weer samenvoegt onder die banier van Christus. Die Chinees en die Japanees hebben de halve wereld omgereisd om de Conferentie by te wonen. Onder anderen hebben wy hier ook zulke exemplaren van de mensheid als Hongaren, Portugeezen, Russen, Noorwegers, Sweden, Italianen één Syrier, een Bulgaar, enkele Finlanders en selfs één Ijslander. De talen meest gesproken zyn Engelsch, Duitsch, Fransch, Deensch en Zweedsch. Deze vergadering is my zulk een schoone belofte voor de toekomst van het menschdom. Ieder volk hier wordt toegelaten en't wordt verwacht ook zyn eigen methoden te volgen, zyne nationale eigenaerheden te behouden. Geen overheersching van den sterkere of vertrapping of miskening van de rechten van den zwakkere. Geen imperialisme en dode uniformiteit doch federatie en ryke verscheidenheid. Zoo moet ook als Gods Koninkryk van gerechtigheid en vrede zal gekomen zyn ieder volk zichzelf zyn en geen ander en daardoor vervullen zyn van God geveve plaats en roeping. Doch allen tesamen zyn

Decades later, when Malan was explaining the apartheid policy to his supporters, it was precisely this ideal that he evoked. Malan's interpretation of the conference was in keeping with the South African Dutch Reformed Church's approach to mission work. It was founded on the notion of a *volkskerk* (national church), a church that would take cognisance of its members' linguistic, cultural, and social peculiarities. It followed this route through the institution of segregated worship in 1857, and the establishment of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church for coloured congregants in 1881, thus establishing the social order that characterised twentieth century South Africa.¹¹⁵

The Dutch Reformed Church was influenced by the assertions of German missionary societies that the nations of Africa and Asia had to be given the opportunity to become Christians within their own cultural framework. This belief, that separate national churches – which respected and preserved their members' mother tongue and traditions – had to be established, can be traced back to the influence of German Romantic nationalism.¹¹⁶ Indeed, respect for the cultural distinctiveness of every nation and the preservation of the mother tongue was the hallmark of the German Romantic philosopher, Herder. Malan never made any reference to Herder himself, but he did read the work of Fichte, who echoed Herder's ideas about language. In this context, language was not merely a means of communication, but an expression of the national soul. It was seen as the key to human happiness, as it united those who understood it, and enabled the self-definition of both the group and the individual.¹¹⁷

To Malan, language became all-important. He fiercely resented British cultural hegemony and the dominance of the English language, which he believed was intended to smother the Afrikaners. He fervently believed that the solution was twofold; it lay in language and education:

If we are going to have any chance at keeping our nationality, then first of all we need to busy ourselves earnestly with the question of education. The English are focussing precisely on that matter in order to deal us the final blow. They will see to it that English is the only medium of instruction in all government schools, and Dutch will only be tolerated as a foreign language. There is no more certain a means to our Anglicisation. If the situation of the past continues in our Colonial government schools, the extinction of our language is as certain as two times two is four. The best we would then be able to be are English Pro-Afrikaners – but that is not what we want. We want Afrikaners. If we can't have Dutch as the medium of instruction in our

dan ook tesamen verbonden in de erkenning van het Koningschap Gods en in loyaliteit aan Hem en Zyn dienst. Geen ander onverbreekbare band tusschen de volkeren dan deze éene.'

¹¹⁵ H. Giliomee, 'The Weakness of Some: The Dutch Reformed Church and White Supremacy', *Scriptura*, 83 (2003), 212-44.

¹¹⁶ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 454.

¹¹⁷ J.S. McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996), 625, 633.

Afrikaner government schools, then it is high time that our schools tear themselves away and stand on their own feet. It will be difficult, but our nationality is worth it. Such Afrikaner schools, independent of the state, with Dutch as the medium of instruction, is what the Transvalers want to establish.¹¹⁸

In his belief that the key to the nation's survival was in education, Malan was echoing Fichte, who asserted the same conviction. Malan's focus on language and culture was typical of classical nationalism, since most nationalisms start out as cultural crusades long before they are political, in the sense of having the means to form their own governments.¹¹⁹

To Malan, however, the true key to Afrikaner identity did not lie in the Dutch language. For the time being, Dutch was far better than English – as a means that the Afrikaners could use to hold their own. The true future lay in the Afrikaans language. Afrikaans was the nation's own; it evoked its love like no other language could.¹²⁰ Malan was adamant that Afrikaans, in spite of the fact that many did not even regard it as a real language and condescendingly referred to it as 'Kitchen-Dutch', had to be elevated to the position of a national language. In a letter to a Dutch newspaper editor, he stated it unequivocally:

Give Afrikaans the status it deserves, as mother-tongue of the nation, the language that can express like no other that which is in the heart of the nation, the language which mirrors the national character. Teach the nation its language, not to despise its own language, not to regard it as a kitchen language, not to be ashamed to write her, to speak her in the kitchen and in parliament, in the stable or in the drawing room, to appreciate her and to love her as an all-important part of its national possessions.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/203, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 9 October 1902: 'Als wy eenig kans zullen hebben ons nationaliteit te behouden dan moeten wy allereerst ons ernstig besig houden met de onderwyskwesie. De Engelschen leggen het erop toe ons juist op dat punt den genadenslag toe te dienen. Het medium van onderwys op alle gouvernementscholen zal daar zullen zy voor zorgen Engelsch en Hollandsch zal alleen als vreemden taal geduld worden. Geen zekerder middel om ons te verengelschen. Blyft het op onze koloniale scholen voortaan zoals't in't verleden was dan sterft onze taal uit zoo zeker twee maal twee vier is. Het allerbeste dat wy dan nog zullen kunnen zyn zal Engelsche Pro-Afrikaanders – doch die willen wy niet hebben. Wy willen Afrikaanders hebben. Indien het Hollandsch medium van onderwys niet kan verkregen worden in Afrikaander regeringscholen, dan wordt het hoogtyd dat onze scholen losscheuren en op eigen beenen gaan staan. Het zal ons wel moeilyk vallen, doch onze nationaliteit is dat overwaard. Zulke Afrikaanderscholen, los van den Staat, met Hollandsch als medium van onderwys willen de Transvalers gaan oprichten.'

¹¹⁹ J.S. McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought*, 620-1, 634.

¹²⁰ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – C. Louw, 5 November 1902.

¹²¹ Quoted in 'Studente-briewe van Dr. Malan Opgespoor: Ons taal is Afrikaans!', *Die Huisgenoot*, 3 April 1959: 'Geef aan het Afrikaansch den status die eraan toekomt, het Afrikaansch de moedertaal van het volk, de taal die als geen ander uitdrukken kan wat in't hart van't volk omgaat, de taal waarin het volkskarakter afgespiegeld is. Leert het volk zyn taal, zyn eigen taal niet te verachten, niet als kombuistaal te beschouwen, niet beschaamd te zyn haar schryven, haar te spreken in kombuis of parlement, in stal of voorkamer, haar te waarderen en lief te hebben als een allerbelangrykste gedeelte van zyn natsionale bezit.'

In the same letter, Malan also stipulated how the relationship between the English and the Afrikaners ought to be:

One can point to the fact that there exists a broad basis – love of South Africa as fatherland and the maintenance of her interests above those of all other countries – on which English and Afrikaners can work together ...What I mean is this: that the government has to acknowledge that S.A. is a country inhabited by two white nationalities who stand independently alongside each other, and that both are free and do not reign over one another...together, Afrikaner and English South Africans form a *South African nation* on the broad basis of ‘South Africa my fatherland’. The nation thus consists of *two* sections or, rather, two different nations, who *do not stand across* one another but *independently next to* each other. You would have noticed that I distinguish between *Afrikaners* and *South Africans*.¹²²

The last statement, that there was a difference between Afrikaners and South Africans is of great significance. At this particular time, Malan used the term in an exclusivist sense – only Afrikaans speakers could be called Afrikaners. The concept ‘South African’ was a broader one, and it was here that Afrikaans and English speakers could meet. This was in contrast to the ideas expressed by Genl J.B.M. Hertzog, the man who was to establish the National Party. Hertzog often caused confusion, as he never made it clear what precisely the term ‘Afrikaner’ entailed. At times he used it in such a manner that it included English speakers who were loyal to South Africa, rather than to Britain.¹²³ While Hertzog was vague and ambiguous in his use of the term, Malan was clear and concise.

At this stage, Malan had yet to meet Hertzog – the man under whom he would serve a large portion of his political career – but they were already bound together by a mutual friendship: that of the former president of the Orange Free State, M.T. Steyn. In the aftermath of the war, Steyn’s ailing health had forced him to seek treatment in Europe. Accompanied by his family, he spent the summer of 1903 at Reichenhall in Germany. By that time, Malan, desperate to make some progress with his thesis, decided not to travel as he had done during the previous two summers, but rather to

¹²² Quoted in ‘Studente-briewe van Dr. Malan Opgespoor: Ons taal is Afrikaans!’, *Die Huisgenoot*, 3 April 1959: ‘Men kan er op wyzen dat er een breed basis is – het liefhebben van Z.A. als vaderland, en het handhaven van hare belangen boven die van alle anderen landen – waarop Engelschen en Afrikaners samen konden werken...Ik bedoel dit: de regeering moet erkennen dat Z.A. een land is door twee blanke nationaliteiten bewoond die zelfstandig naast elkaar staan, en die beide vry zynde een niet over de andere heerschende...Afrikaners en Engelsche Zuid Afrikaners vormen dan gezamenlyk op de breede basis van ‘Zuid Afrika myn vaderland’ *een Zuid Afrikaansch volk*. Dit volk bestaat dan echter uit *twee* secties of liever *twee verschillende volken* die *niet tegen over* maar *zelfstandig naast* elkaar staan. U zult bemerkt hebben dat ik een onderscheid maak tusschen *Afrikaners* en *Zuid Afrikaners*.’

¹²³ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 369-70.

find a quiet place to work.¹²⁴ His chose to return to Reichenhall, where he knew that he would meet the Steyns.¹²⁵

He stayed in the same hotel as the year before, took his meals in the shade of a leafy green terrace, and thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of the proprietor – who was delighted that his guest had returned – and was greeted in the town by the portrait maker, who recognised his former client.¹²⁶ But the highlight of his visit was certainly meeting the Steyns, who promptly incorporated him into the large and extended family. He gushed about his first encounter in a letter to Nettie:

I visited President Steyn and his family and was received very warmly ... Their house is just like any other Afrikaans home. With family members and friends, the family numbers about fifteen. The Pres. said that I should just walk in and out of his house, in true Afrikaner fashion, so that I won't have any shortage of company ... He is cheerful and full of jokes.¹²⁷

A few days later, he wrote to his father with delight:

Pres. Steyn is looking very well. He and his family are very friendly. I visit their house quite often. I ate there today. He is in every respect a great man. Tomorrow (God willing) I will go on an outing in the neighbourhood with some of his companions. Mrs Steyn is a very friendly and modest Afrikaans woman and the President himself is exactly like one of our typical Afrikaner farmers. There is as little formality with him as with the most humble Afrikaner. It is so wonderful to see an Afrikaner *family* again. I believe it is the first time since I left Africa.¹²⁸

Compared to the strict Dutch social etiquette, the informality of the Steyn family was not only a breath of fresh air, but also like a breeze from home. Malan, true to form, certainly would have talked politics with the older statesman. Steyn was a member of the Bittereinder-generation, a leader who had urged his generals to stay in the field as long as possible and exhorted them to the

¹²⁴ DFM, 1/1/217, D.F. Malan – C. Louw, 3 June 1903.

¹²⁵ DFM, 1/1/220, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 31 July 1903.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*: 'President Steyn met familie heb ik bezocht en werd zeer vriendelyk ontvangten...Hun huis is net als eenig ander Afrikaansche. Met familieleden en vriendekring telt het gezin zeker zoowat vyftien. De Pres. zei dat ik maar moest in en uitloop in zyn huis op echt Afrikaansche manier, zoodat ik geen gebrek aan gezelschap zal hebben...Hy is opgewekt en vol grappe.'

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/221, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 5 August 1903: 'Pres. Steyn ziet er heel goed uit. Hy en zyn familie zyn zeer vriendelik. Ik kom er nogal dikwyls aan huis. Vandaag heb ik er gegeten. Hy is in alle opzichten een groot man. Morgen of ga ik (D.V.) eenige tochten maken in de buurt met sommigen van zyne huisgenooten. Mrs. Steyn is een zeer vriendelyke eenvoudige Afrikaansche vrouw en de President zelf is precies een van onsche typische Afrikaansche boeren. Er is net zoo weinig styfheid by hen als by de eenvoudigste Afrikaner. Het is heerlyk weer eens een Afrikaner *huisgezin* te zien. Dit is, geloof ik, de eerste sedert ik uit Afrika ging.'

very last not to sacrifice the Republics' independence.¹²⁹ The friendship that was formed during the summer of 1903 would last for the rest of their lifetimes, and the Steyns would remain a constant source of encouragement to Malan throughout his political career.

It was in the midst of this happy state of affairs that Malan received a worried letter from home. His parents had received a letter concerning his brother Koos's behaviour, and wanted their eldest son to investigate. True to his calm nature, Malan did not pack his bags and rush over to Edinburgh immediately. He had planned on going to Edinburgh after the summer and wanted to spend about three or four months there. Leaving earlier would not be conducive to his work, and a short visit would not be of much value. Thus, he soothingly wrote to his parents that the best they all could do in the interim was to pray for Koos. He would visit Edinburgh according to his original plans and assess the problem. Malan promised to handle the situation tactfully, to find out what was amiss with his brother, and to obtain an estimate of the financial needs of a student in Edinburgh. In his opinion, moving Koos away from Edinburgh to the European continent was not a good option, as students on the continent found their entertainment in bars and gambling houses. In spite of the inevitable bad apples, there were decent Afrikaner students in Edinburgh, and the opportunity to befriend respectable families.¹³⁰

Thus, at the end of the summer, Malan returned to Utrecht to evacuate his room, as he could not expect Prof. Valeton to keep it for him during his extended absence. By the end of September, Malan had arrived in Edinburgh. The reception he received was anything but warm – Malan had hardly landed before his brother began arguing with him. He had come to hear of the letter that was sent to their father, and he regarded his brother's visit as a mission to spy on him and to interfere in his affairs. Koos made it very clear that his older brother was unwelcome – that this was a matter between him and his father, and Malan had no business getting involved. These were heated words, but Malan eventually managed to soothe his younger brother's anger. He made it clear to Koos that he was not there to try and assert authority over him, but simply to assist him with advice and any other help that he might need. Their father had gotten him involved simply because he loved him and was concerned about his youngest son, not because he mistrusted him. Koos eventually calmed down and accepted his brother's assurances.¹³¹

With the tempers cooled, Malan scrutinised his brother for any changes in his demeanour. He thought that Koos had become somewhat more serious than before; that he was more careful with his money, and seemed less inclined to be swept along with the crowd. Koos felt despondent about his studies, and had even contemplated giving up and returning to South Africa to farm. At this point, Malan stepped in with advice that reflected his own choices: Koos had to make a definite

¹²⁹ T.R.H. Davenport and C.Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 225, 233.

¹³⁰ DFM, 1/1/221, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 5 August 1903.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 30 September 1903.

decision and then take hold of it with all his might. If he wanted to be a farmer, he should not wait another day. But if he decided to continue with his studies, he had to persevere in them with determination and enthusiasm. His advice resonated with his younger brother who, after careful consideration, decided to continue with his studies. He now found that he enjoyed his work more than he had realised before.¹³²

It was to be a little while longer before Malan found out what his brother's real news was: he was engaged to a Scottish girl. Although he was not introduced to her right away, Malan knew to whom his brother's positive change in behaviour could be ascribed. There were still a few worrying matters, as far as he was concerned. Koos seldom went to church – claiming that he refused to believe in the religion of those who had condoned and supported the Anglo-Boer War. Malan regarded this as a weak excuse, especially since there were a number of Scottish clerics who had condemned the war. He resolved to do his best to convince his brother to go to church more often – or at least to read a devotional book on Sundays. This was the pitfall, Malan lamented, of being a medical student who studied the human body but not the soul. At least it seemed that the girl was taking his brother to church whenever he happened to visit her on a Sunday evening.¹³³

The reason why Koos had kept his engagement a secret for so long, and did not even make a definite commitment to his beloved, was because he was worried as to what his family's reaction would be to him marrying someone who was Scottish. Malan wrote to his parents to soothe them in this regard. Of course they all would have preferred an Afrikaans girl, but knowing Koos, it was not unexpected that he would have found a wife in Scotland. And if the girl was such a good moral influence on his brother, he contended, it was better that he be married to a Scot than be lost altogether. In his opinion, it was the best alternative to the corrupting student life in Europe, which Malan described in the darkest of terms:

The curse of student life across the entire Europe is that it is isolated from the rest of society. They form an isolated community and find their pleasures exclusively within their own circles. They seldom visit respectable families because they live in rented student rooms where their meals are brought to them, and they become alienated from family life. They find their pleasures in bars, rough student parties and bad company. However, now that Koos has found someone else, a family where he can look for and find good company, there is far less danger of all the rest.¹³⁴

¹³² DFM, 1/1/221, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 5 August 1903

¹³³ DFM, 1/1/223, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 16 October 1903.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*: 'De vloek van het studentenleven over geheel Europa is dat het van de verdere maarschappy afgesloten is. Zy vormen een afgesloten samenleving met hun genoegen in hun eigen kring alleen. In goede fatsoenlyke huisgezinnen komen zy zelden en door "op kamers" te wonen, d.i. gehuurde kamers, waar hun eten hun gebracht word, worden zy van alle huiselyk leven vervreemd. Hun genot zoeken zy dan in bars, in ruwe studenten feesten, en in slecht

Malan was ever so slightly less enthusiastic upon finally meeting the young lady in question. For one, it turned out that she was English, not Scottish. He did not regard her as pretty – at least not in his opinion, but otherwise she did not make an unfavourable impression on him.¹³⁵

With his brother's situation more or less resolved, Malan buried himself in his work. It was not without its frustrations. By January 1904, he lamented to Nettie that he still did not have a single word on paper.¹³⁶ By March, however, after having settled back into Utrecht – this time in new lodgings – his writing was well underway.¹³⁷ He found most of the work intensely boring – ‘as dry as a piece of cork’¹³⁸ – but there were at least moments when it did lighten up and become interesting.¹³⁹

Malan's study dealt with the philosophy of the Irish Bishop, George Berkeley. Berkeley's idealism – or immaterialism, as it is otherwise known – was indeed very abstract and difficult to grasp. His most controversial and notorious assertion was that matter did not exist – which prompted the illustrious Samuel Johnson to kick a stone with all his might, thundering: ‘I refute it thus.’¹⁴⁰ According to Berkeley, one perceived an object only through one's senses and since one's senses were rooted in one's mind, it was impossible to perceive – or ascertain the existence of – anything without the use of a mind. Therefore all existence was by virtue of the mind and nothing could exist independently of the mind. *Esse est percipi*: to be is to be perceived, was Berkeley's grounding principle. This, however, did not mean that an object ceased to exist when one was no longer engaged in perceiving it – in order to exist, it was only necessary that *some* mind perceived it. God's perception guaranteed the continued existence of all objects.

God was central to Berkeley's philosophy. At a time when rapid advances in science made atheism all the more attractive, Berkeley tried to emphasise the world's dependence on God.¹⁴¹ He asserted that all perceptions or ideas originated in God's mind. This was most definitely compatible with Valeton's assertion that all truth originated from God and was revealed by God. That Malan absorbed many of Berkeley's ideas is a certainty. Years later, he would refer to God as ‘an

gezelschap. Nu Koos echter iemand anders heeft, een huisgezin heeft waar hy zyn genoeg en gezelschap zoekt en vind is er voor dit alles oneindig veel minder gevaar.’

¹³⁵ DFM, 1/1/225, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 Januarie 1904.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ DFM, 1/1/229, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 25 Maart 1904.

¹³⁸ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904: ‘zoo droog als ‘n kurkprop’.

¹³⁹ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904.

¹⁴⁰ Quoted in K.P. Winkler, *The Cambridge Companion to Berkeley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1.

¹⁴¹ E. Craig, *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Volume 1* (London: Routledge, 1998), 737, 740, 742-3, 745.

Omnipotent Brain', a great Engineer who had designed the road on which the Afrikaner nation travelled.¹⁴²

In the meantime, Malan felt himself to be swamped by all the reading that he had to do. To Nettie he complained that all the 'isms' were enough to make anyone dizzy – and he had been that for a long time – idealism, realism, immaterialism, nominalism – there seemed to be no end.¹⁴³ The result was that he finally had to make his grudging peace with the fact that his stay in the Netherlands would have to be longer than he had initially hoped.¹⁴⁴

Unlike his relationship with Valeton, Malan did not have a close relationship with his promoter, Hugo Visscher, a political appointment whom Abraham Kuyper had foisted on the university's theological faculty in 1904.¹⁴⁵ He was probably appointed as Malan's promoter shortly after his return from Edinburgh – after Malan had already formulated his thesis topic and conducted most of his research.

Malan found the writing process arduous and the topic so tricky and extensive that he struggled to keep all the loose ends together.¹⁴⁶ In the spring weather he kept his windows as wide open as possible,¹⁴⁷ but the clarity in the air did not give him the same clarity of thought. He was never satisfied by the amount of work that he had completed, and at times found himself struggling to concentrate and unable to get anything done, which made the situation even worse.¹⁴⁸ By the time summer arrived, Malan decided not to go anywhere, but to instead finish his thesis.¹⁴⁹ He simply wanted to go home.

The strain, however, began to take its toll. His handwriting became unshapely and difficult to read. In a letter to Nettie, he was unable to write in proper paragraphs, but merely wrote a list of his main points. One of the points simply read: 'Fifthly: it is hot here.'¹⁵⁰

This time, it was his turn to worry his parents. He tried to dismiss their concerns in a letter in which his characters were noticeably misshaped – a far cry from his highly legible handwriting which is such a pleasure to read, and surely a sign to his parents of his mental state:

You should not think that I am at death's door. I believe that if I had written that I am deadly ill, you immediately would have said: No, nonsense, it cannot be that bad, it is only idle talk. However, now that I write to you saying that I need a bit of rest and want to forget about a

¹⁴² D.F. Malan, 'Boodskap vir die Toekoms', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk, D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 234: 'n Oppermagtige Brein'.

¹⁴³ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904.

¹⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/ 231, D.F. Malan – Steyn, 25 May 1904.

¹⁴⁵ H. Jamin, *Kennis als Opdracht: De Universiteit Utrecht, 1636-2001* (Utrecht: Uitgeverij Matrijs, 2001), 118.

¹⁴⁶ DFM, 1/1/231, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 25 May 1904.

¹⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 15 July 1904.

¹⁴⁹ DFM, 1/1/231, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 25 May 1904.

¹⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 15 July 1904: 'Ten vyfde: Het is hier warm.'

long and monotonous labour for a week or so, now you suddenly think: the man is close to death. Well, luckily there is no reason to be concerned. I went to the doctor for safety's sake and he said that there is nothing radically wrong with me. The only thing is that my nervous system is a bit out of sorts, which, with a bit of care and carefulness and a change, will repair itself. He advised me to go and work outside the city for a while at a place where I can also undergo a cold water cure.¹⁵¹

Malan followed the doctor's orders, and booked himself into a sanatorium near Arnhem for about six weeks. Here he obeyed his caretakers' instructions to get a certain amount of sleep and to go for long walks in the scenic surroundings. He was told what to eat, and was only allowed to work for four hours a day. Malan now realised that it was his obsession to complete his thesis at as early a date as possible that had driven him to this point.¹⁵² His stay at the sanatorium helped, and by early October most of his thesis had gone to the press. In a letter to his parents – in a much calmer tone than the one before, with his characters back to their old, legible shape – Malan expressed his newly acquired wisdom that 'it is much easier to prophesy that one will write a thesis within a particular time span, than to actually do it.'¹⁵³

Back in Utrecht, Malan could finally prepare for the event that he had been looking forward to for more than four years: his return to South Africa. His promotion ceremony took place on 20 January 1905, and was a great success. Malan answered his professors' questions calmly and clearly, and received his degree cum laude.¹⁵⁴ Afterwards he and his friends were received in Prof. Valeton's house, which was regarded as an exceptional gesture. Such was the relationship between mentor and protégé.¹⁵⁵

Malan booked his passage on a German ship, the *Kroonprinz*, the same steam liner that carried President Steyn and his family back home.¹⁵⁶ Once back in South Africa, with his homesickness a thing of the past, he could extol the virtues of his Dutch education. A few years later, Malan wrote a recommendation to other young Afrikaners to study in the Netherlands:

¹⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/235, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 11 August 1904: 'U moet nu niet denken dat ik op sterven na dood ben. Ik geloof dat als ik u geschreven had dat ik doodelyk ziek ben, u dadelyk zou gedacht hebben: Neen gekheid, zoo eng zal het wel niet zyn; 't is maar praatjes. Nu ik echter schreef dat ik 'n beetje rust noodig had en behoefte om een lang en moeilyk en eentonig werk 'n week of wat te vergeten, nu denkt u plotseling: de man is byna dood. Nou, daar is gelukkig geen reden om ongerust te zyn. Ik ben voor de voorzichtigheid by den dokter geweest en hy zegt dat er niets radikaal verkeerd is. Het eenige is dat myn zenuwstelsel 'n beetje uit de haak is, wat met 'n beetje zorg en voorzichtigheid en verandering van zelf terecht komt. Hy raadt my aan voor eenigen tyd buite de stad te gaan werken op 'n plaats waar ik tegelyk een koud water kuur doormaken.'

¹⁵² DFM, 1/1/235, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 11 August 1904.

¹⁵³ DFM, 1/1/238, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 5 October 1904: 'Het veel gemakkeliker gaat om te profeteeren dat men een dissertatie in zooveel tyd schryven zal dan om het werkelyk te doen.'

¹⁵⁴ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan, Die Eerste Veertig Jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1969), 106-7.

¹⁵⁵ DFM, 1/1/3271, T.H. le Roux – B. Booyens, 7 November 1964.

¹⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/240, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 5 January 1905.

As an Afrikaner who can look back upon his own studies in the hospitable Netherlands with appreciation and gratefulness, I am pleased to give a hearty recommendation of its academic training to my compatriots ... In the development of Europe's spiritual life, the Netherlands still occupies a unique position. For the appropriation of Europe's intellectual treasures, it has approximately the same strategic value as it had earlier with regards to the conquering of political power. Situated among the great cultural countries that are leading humanity on the intellectual terrain, Holland is – through both its favourable geographical position and easy access, and its unique knowledge of languages – exceptionally suited to appropriating the entire wealth of European civilisation and knowledge, and to sift and process it. Along with this is the fact the Dutch University offers a dedicated student – who wants to formulate his own position independently, instead of merely receiving it – a variety of intellectual movements that are not matched elsewhere. Holland can truly be called the intellectual panopticon of the civilised world.

For the Afrikaner who wants to use his talents to serve his nation, studies in the Netherlands offer more important advantages that are not to be found elsewhere ... Exposure to a nation that is particularly filled with patriotism and a sense of independence gives ... a healthy impetus to his own national feeling, which the young Afrikaner often experiences in Holland for the first time. And, in what may be the most important aspect of Dutch civilisation, the Afrikaner sees the truth, which we in South Africa have yet to learn, demonstrated so vividly – that a nation can be numerically and politically small and yet, through the judicious and determined preservation of its own character, can occupy an important position in the line of civilised nations.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ A. Welcker and M. De Villiers, *Het Studeren van Zuid-Afrikaners in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1910), xv-xvi: 'Als een Afrikaner, die met veel waardeering en dankbaarheid mag terugdenken aan zijn eigen studietijd in het gastvrije Nederland, is het mij een genoegen om de academische opleiding aldaar aan mijn landgenooten hartelijk aan te bevelen. In de ontwikkeling van het geestesleven van Europa is de plaats en de beteekenis van Nederland nog altijd uniek. Het heeft voor de toeigening van de intellectueele rijkdommen van Europa ongeveer dezelfde strategische waarde als het vroeger had voor de verovering van de politieke macht. Gelegen tusschen de groote cultuurlanden, die op intellectueel gebied de mensheid leiden, is Holland beide door gunstige ligging en door den gemakkelijken toegang, door zijn unieke talenkennis verschaft, bijzonder geschikt om den totalen schat van Europeesche beschaving en kennis zich toe te eigenen, te ziften en te verwerken. Hierbij komt nog het feit, dat de Hollandsche Universiteit aan den ernstigen student, die eigen standpunt niet ontvangen maar zelfstandig veroveren wil, eene verscheidenheid biedt van geestesstromingen, zooals die wellicht nergens elders aangetroffen word. Holland kan met recht genoemd worden het intellectueele panopticum der beschaafde wereld. ...Voor den Afrikaner, die zijne talenten ten dienste van zijn volk stellen wil, biedt de studie in Nederland verder nog belangrijke voordelen aan, die nergens elders gevonden worden...De aanraking met een volk, bij uitstek met vaderlandsliefde en vrijheidzin beziel, geeft... een gezonden impetus aan zijn eigen nationaal gevoel tengevolge waarvan de jonge Afrikaner niet zelden eerst in Holland zichzelf vindt. En, wat misschien nog van het meeste belang is in de Nederlandsche bechaving, ziet de Afrikaner de waarheid, die wij in Zuid-Afrika nog leeren moeten, aanschouwelijk voorgesteld, dat een volk numeriek en politiek klein kan zijn en toch door de oordeelkundige, maar besliste handhaving van zijn eigen karakter een hoogst belangrijke plaats kan innemen in de rij van beschaafde volken.'

His time in the Netherlands had shaped Malan into an articulate young Afrikaner nationalist, the product of a Continental education. He had become an independent thinker who had witnessed the nationalism that dominated the continent before the ravages of the First World War. In this way, his Afrikaner nationalism was shaped by nineteenth century European nationalism. Once back in South Africa, it would be the example that he would endeavour to follow.

Chapter 3 – The Minister of Montagu, 1905-1912

The man who arrived in the midst of the South African summer was now a learned doctor – in a country where the title inspired awe and respect, and where ministers of the church towered over their communities – and yet, somehow, he still felt uncertain about himself. He was thirty years old, but was painfully aware of his inexperience. He was also certain that this was not lost on those around him, especially his father, who mock-sighed in jest: ‘Yes, Danie, you have studied for such a long time that you are almost old enough to retire.’¹ These words were not spoken with harmful intent, but to the recipient, they were painful.²

The family to which he returned was also changed. His father had retired from farming during his absence, and had handed the farm to Fanie, who had since married. Even though Malan knew that he would never have become a farmer, he felt as if a bond between him and his home was forever severed. It filled him with a sense of sadness and loss upon realising that he would in future be a mere visitor in the house of his birth.³

He now had to take his own, independent, steps into the world. The prospect of leading a congregation by himself was still too daunting – he preferred to become an assistant-preacher in a parish where he would be able to learn from the senior minister.⁴ Thus, in May 1905,⁵ after successfully completing the necessary admission exams to enter the Dutch Reformed Church, Malan accepted the position of assistant-preacher in the Parish of Heidelberg, Transvaal, where he lived in the same house as the church’s minister, Ds. A.J. Louw.⁶ Louw was well-acquainted with Malan and his family: he had served as the minister of Riebeek-Wes’ congregation during the 1880s, during which time he had become close friends with Malan’s parents.⁷ A.J. Louw had always taken an interest in the young Malan’s progress, and had therefore invited him to join him in his work shortly after the latter’s return to South Africa.⁸

Malan arrived in Heidelberg right in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the clerical year. It was Pentecost, and Malan was overjoyed at the success of the Pentecostal services, during the

¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 16: ‘Ja, Danie, jy het nou só lank gestudeer, dat jy amper oud genoeg is om af te tree.’

² *Ibid.*

³ DFM, 1/1/203, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 9 October 1902.

⁴ DFM, 1/1/230, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 19 April 1904.

⁵ DFM, 1/1/256, Acte van Toelating tot den Predikdienst, 5 May 1905.

⁶ DFM, 1/1/259, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 21 June 1905.

⁷ P.G. Thirion, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Riebeek-Wes, 1858-1948: ‘n Ondersoek na standpunte wat ingeneem is en invloed wat uitgeoefen is” (Unpublished D. Theol. Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1993), 137, 143; DFM 1/1/260, D.F. Malan, *Herinnerings vir die Heidelbergse Feesviering deur D.F. Malan*.

⁸ *Ibid.*

course of which a number of new souls dedicated themselves to the Lord for the first time.⁹ On 29 July 1905, Malan's own big day arrived: he was officially ordained into the Dutch Reformed Church. None of his family members were able to attend, which saddened him, but his old schoolmaster, Theunis Stoffberg, and his wife were there. The event itself was deemed to be an exceptional one. At the time of Malan's ordination, a church mission's conference was taking place in Johannesburg. The delegates all decided to attend the ceremony, and so it happened that, at the height of the ceremony, Malan knelt in front of the pulpit with an unheard of number of seventeen ministers in attendance to give him their blessing.¹⁰ They formed a crowded half-circle around him, each with his left arm stretched out in order to lay his hand upon Malan's head.¹¹

The community in which Malan now found himself was one which had been ravaged by the devastation of war. A total of 867 of its members had either died in battle, in concentration camps, or in the field.¹² Malan worked with a battle-hardened church council: one of its members had lost an arm, another, both his eyes. The town also had a large orphanage which cared for the children who had been left orphaned by the war.¹³ Upon 'Doctor' Malan's introduction to the Sunday School, the minister's young daughter – under the impression that all 'Doctors' were medics – exclaimed ecstatically: 'But that means that he can treat the orphans free of charge!'¹⁴

The parish of Heidelberg's flock was sparsely distributed along the Vaal River, which meant that Malan had to travel for up to fourteen hours in order to visit congregants who lived on the outskirts of the district. These travels would take him away from the town for up to three weeks at a time. On these far-flung farms he conducted services for people who had last attended the church in town before the outbreak of the war. In a crowded burnt-out wagon house – a remnant of the war – the searing heat literally took his voice away as he was trying to minister to his deprived flock. Here, on the farms, he encountered desperate poverty, especially among the *bywoners*.¹⁵

And yet, in spite of all the hardship that he witnessed, Malan was inspired by the people whom he encountered. To Nettie he wrote:

Please do not hold it against me for saying it so bluntly – we have spoken about this many times. What is the difference between the Transvaal and the Colony? To *be* Afrikaans (not just to *feel* like it), and to speak and to write it (not least the *ladies*), is the *most natural thing*

⁹ DFM, 1/1/259, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 21 June 1905.

¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/262, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 1 August 1905; DFM 1/1/260, Ordening en Bevestiging van D.F. Malan, Heidelberg.

¹¹ DFM, 1/1/3291, C.J.P. Jooste – B. Booyens, 28 May 1974.

¹² DFM, 1/1/260(a), A.E.F. Bosman, "Mev. Anna Jacoba Susanna Bezuidenhout".

¹³ DFM, 1/1/260, D.F. Malan, "Herinnerings vir die Heidelbergse Feesviering deur D.F. Malan".

¹⁴ DFM, 1/1/3291, C.J.P. Jooste – B. Booyens, 28 May 1974: 'Maar dan kan hy mos sommer die weeskinders verniet dokter!'

¹⁵ DFM, 1/1/272, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 30 October 1905.

in the world. People do not even dream about doing it differently. Poor, watered-down, emasculated Colony – the limpness and wretchedness and inability to stand on its own feet, although there is more than enough *lip-patriotism*. Men of character and great deeds can, at present, only be born in the Transvaal and the Free State. The Colonial spirit is too *impoverished* for that.¹⁶

In spite of its devastation, to Malan the Transvaal seemed like a nationalist's paradise. These people were so different to those in the anglicised Cape Colony – they seemed to be the embodiment of his ideal. True to his nature, it was not long before Malan sniffed out kindred nationalist spirits. In the Transvaal, he was able to read Gustav Preller's newspaper, *De Volkstem*. Preller was to become famous for his work as an organiser of the Second Afrikaans Language Movement, as well as for his nationalist publications on Afrikaner history, which he managed to popularise to a phenomenal extent.¹⁷ Like Theal before him, Preller portrayed the Afrikaners' past as a battle between Afrikaner nationalism, British imperialism and black 'barbarism'. Through the course of 1905 and 1906, which partially coincided with Malan's stay in the Transvaal, Preller wrote a series of features on the Voortrekker leader, Piet Retief, which was published in *De Volkstem*. In 1906 these articles were published as a book, under the title *Piet Retief, Lewensgeskiedenis van die grote Voortrekker*. This book took a firm place as one of the first works of prose of the Second Afrikaans Language Movement.¹⁸ It was filled with accounts of atrocities committed against the Voortrekkers, complete with 'battered baby skulls, dead women, and drifting feathers from the ripped mattresses.'¹⁹

It was Preller's work as a language activist that drew Malan to him in 1905. In March of that year, 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr had given a seminal address in Stellenbosch, entitled "Is't Ons Ernst?" ("Are we earnest about it?")²⁰ Taking up the issue of language rights, Hofmeyr questioned whether Afrikaners were really serious when they complained that Dutch was being pushed out of the public space by English, since they made no notable effort to exercise their right to language equality. He

¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/272, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 30 October 1905: 'Neem my niet kwalik dat ik dit zo ronduit zeg – wy hebben er al meer over gesproken. Wat 'n verschil toch in dit opzicht tusschen de Transvaal en de Kolonie? Om hier Afrikaansch te *zyn* (niet *voelen* alleen) en te spreken en te schryven (de *dames* niet het minst) is de *vanzelfsprekendste zaak van de wereld*. Men droomt er niet over anders te doen. Arme, verwaterde, ontzenuwde Kolonie – de papheid en lamlendigheid en onzelfstandigheid zelve, hoewel er meer dan genoeg *lip-patriotisme* is. Mannen van karakter en groote daden kunnen thans alleen in Transvaal en de Vrystaat geboren worden. De Koloniale geest is daarvoor te *arm*.'

¹⁷ See I. Hofmeyr, "Popularising History: The Case of Gustav Preller", *The Journal of African History*, 29, 3 (1988), 521-35.

¹⁸ K. Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing* (Johannesburg: Southern Books, 1988), 66-8.

¹⁹ I. Hofmeyr, "Popularising History: The Case of Gustav Preller", *The Journal of African History*, 29, 3 (1988), 532.

²⁰ DFM, 1/41/8(18), J.H. Hofmeyr, "Is't Ons Ernst?"

echoed Malan's private complaints that much lip-service was paid to the issue, but no action was taken:

“Are we earnest about it?” Earnest about what? Earnest about what we claim so often – that they, that we, truly take the failure to appreciate, the maligning, the contempt, the trampling of, our language to heart, that we bewail it, that we long to elevate our language, to restore it, and to do everything in our power to contribute to it? Or are we, is it with most of us, only artificiality, sanctimoniousness, hypocrisy, merely “theatrics”, a “we’ll-just-go-along-with-it” history? Or are our hearts really in the right place, but we ourselves are too paralysed, too lukewarm, too meek, too taken up by a weak spirit of sluggishness, to do our duty in the matter?²¹

It was in response to Hofmeyr's address that Preller published a series of articles in his newspaper, which were then collated into a booklet entitled *Laat't ons toch Ernst wezen!* (Do Let us be earnest!) While Hofmeyr's address was concerned with the Afrikaners' right to use Dutch, as opposed to English, in the public sphere – and especially in the education and religious instruction of their children²² – the young Preller declared that Dutch was a dead language to Afrikaners in South Africa. While there was certainly much to be gained from a study of Dutch, Afrikaans was the language in which Afrikaners expressed their innermost feelings. Therefore, Afrikaans had to be elevated to a written language.²³ In August 1905, Malan wrote to Preller and requested a copy of the booklet, as the matter was ‘of great importance in view of the future of our nation.’²⁴ After studying it, Malan wrote to Preller with enthusiasm:

For many years – I can say, since I first began to think about our language issue – I have been resolutely convinced that only the elevation of Afrikaans to our written language in South Africa will be able to safeguard the continued existence of the Dutch language, in whatever form. Your important, engaging, and convincing plea about this issue in your pamphlet has

²¹ DFM, 1/41/8(18), J.H. Hofmeyr, “Is't Ons Ernst?”, 5: “Is't Ons Ernst?” Ernst met wat? Ernst met ons beweren, met het beweren van zoo velen, - dat zij, dat wij, de miskennis, verguizing, minachting, vertrapping van ònze Taal werkelijk gevoelen, die betreuren, verlangen onze Taal op te heffen, in eer te herstellen en al wat in òns vermogen is daartoe bij te dragen? Of is het by ons, bij velen onzer, slechts gekunstel, femelarij, gehuichel, slechts “aanstellings”, een “ons-maak-maar-zoo-geschiedenis? Of, is ons hart wel op de rechte plaats, maar zijn wij zelve te lam, te lauw, te pap, te zeer beziel met 'n flauwe Jan-Salie-geest, om in deze onzen plicht te doen?”

²² *Ibid.*

²³ P.H. Zietsman, *Die Taal is Gans die Volk* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1992), 97.

²⁴ DFM, 1/1/261, D.F. Malan – Red. Volkstem, n.d. [August] 1905: ‘van groot belang met het oog op de toekomst van ons volk.’

filled me with an exceptional amount of interest. The movement, which you have inspired anew, has my full sympathy.²⁵

Preller was indeed devoted to the revival of the Afrikaans Language Movement. In December 1905, he established the Afrikaanse Taalgenootskap (ATG) in Pretoria, with D.F. Malan as one of its members. Through this organisation, Malan became part of a new generation of Afrikaner intellectuals and nationalists. The Afrikaner students of the 1890s – who had already demonstrated their distinctness from their elders – had come of age, and now took a clear stance against the older generation which still clung to Dutch and dismissed Afrikaans as too underdeveloped to replace an established language.²⁶ The new generation recognised the potential nationalist power of the Afrikaans language, and it was they who would develop it into a viable replacement for Dutch through what became known as the Second Afrikaans Language Movement.

During that same December of 1905, Malan was preparing for the next big move in his life – he had received a call from the parish of Montagu to become its minister. This meant much soul-searching, as he had to face his doubts all over again: was he, as a young preacher, able to lead a congregation by himself?²⁷ Finally, Malan took the step and, in so doing, crossed an important threshold in his life. He accepted the call to Montagu in much the same manner as he had accepted God's call to the ministry as a young student in Stellenbosch: with intense uncertainty and fervent faith in God's will. This was clearly reflected in his acceptance letter:

Although I have no doubts that God Himself has called me to this work, yet, taking this decision was not an easy step. I am especially hesitant of accepting work of such importance and extent at this stage. I am clearly conscious of my own weaknesses and shortcomings. Therefore I want to state it here emphatically, that I am willing to take up this work, not because of who I am or can become, but trusting only in God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, and leaning on the tolerance and love of the Church Council and the congregation.²⁸

²⁵ DFM, 1/1/267, D.F. Malan – G. Preller, 22 August 1905: 'Al sinds vele jare – ik mag seggen, sedert ik het eerst over onze taalkwestie begon na te denken – ben ik tot de besliste oortuiging gekomen, dat alleen de verheffing van het Afrikaansch tot onze schryftaal het voortbestaan in Z.A. van de Hollandsche taal in welke vorm, redden kan. Uw belangryk, boeiend en oortuigend betoog in uwe brochure over deze zaak heft my daarom byzonder veel belangstelling ingeboezemd. De beweging opnieuw door u bezielde heeft myne volle sympathie.'

²⁶ P.H. Zietsman, *Die Taal is Gans die Volk*, 52-3, 97, 99-100.

²⁷ DFM, 1/1/272, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 30 October 1905.

²⁸ DFM, 1/1/273, D.F. Malan – D.J. Malan, 24 November 1905: 'Hoewel ik er geenszins aan twyfel, dat de Heere Zelf my tot dezen arbeid roept, toch viel het my niet gemakkelyk tot dezen stap te besluiten. Vooral zag ik er zeer tegen op om nu reeds een werkkring te aanvaarden van zoveel belang en van zoo grooten omvang. Van myn eigene zwakheden en gebreken ben ik helder bewust. Ik wil het daarom hier met den meesten nadruk verklaren, dat ik tot

And so it happened that, in December 1905, Malan bid Heidelberg and the Transvaal farewell, and returned to the Cape Colony to visit friends and family before moving to his new home.²⁹

It was in the midst of the sweltering February heat of 1906 that D.F. Malan arrived in Montagu to a welcome that one might have thought would be accorded to visiting royalty, but which was the normal practice when a Dutch Reformed congregation welcomed its new minister. A procession formed of about sixty or seventy horse-drawn carts accompanied Malan into the town. Addresses were given by nearly every constituency within the church. There was a reception, a dinner, and an inaugural service. At the inaugural service, the church building was packed, and necessitated the church council to insist that only those over the age of fifteen would be allowed inside. Nevertheless, about 1,100 bodies managed to squeeze themselves into seats that were only built to accommodate somewhere between 700 and 800.³⁰

The first challenge that Malan faced as minister of his own flock was that, among the addresses that he was given on his arrival, there was a petition from the English-speaking community in Montagu requesting that an English service be conducted one Sunday evening per month, as had been the custom in the past. Malan and his new church council had to consider the petition – which also carried the signatures of persons who were either Afrikaners or who were known to be able to understand Dutch. At the meeting, Malan unequivocally stated his opposition – in principle – to English services for the church's own Dutch-speaking members, and his support for English services for English speakers – in a separate building.³¹ Following the deliberations, Malan drafted two letters: one intended for the English-speaking petitioners, the other for their Afrikaner sympathisers. The English letter cordially refused the request in the interests of the town's poor white community who, on account of their poverty, attended the evening services rather than the morning services, and who did not understand English.³² The second letter, written in Dutch, was also cordial, but ever so slightly harder, and carried the stamp of its author's nationalism. It reiterated the argument that the rights and the interests of the poor white Afrikaners were of the highest importance. In addition, Malan asserted that the nation's language was Dutch, and that its use in the practice of its religion was closely tied to its sense of self-worth and

het opnemen van dit werk bereid ben, niet om wat ik myzelven ben of worden kan, maar vertrouwend alleen op de toegezegde genade Gods en de Kracht des Heiligen Geestes en steunende op de verdraagzaamheid en de liefde van den Kerkeraad en de gemeente.'

²⁹ DFM, 1/1/274, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 4 December 1905.

³⁰ DFM, 1/1/282, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, March 1906.

³¹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan: Die Eerste Veertig Jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1969), 126.

³² DFM, 1/1/281, D.F. Malan – Barry e.a., n.d. [March] 1906.

independence as a nation. Thus, for the members of Montagu's Dutch Reformed Church, there would be no services in English.³³ It was clear that in the eyes of Montagu's new minister, language, religion, and nationalism were not separable.

Malan took up residence in the church's enormous parsonage, which engulfed his newly acquired furniture. His parents, who were present at the auspicious occasion, stayed with him for a while, but as they (and with them, his stepmother's cooking) were preparing to leave, the young, unmarried minister began to wonder where his meals were going to come from. Cooking was beyond his area of expertise. Thankfully, it was arranged that he could take his meals with a lady who lived close to the parsonage.³⁴

The women of Montagu soon discovered that their young minister was a man who possessed a phenomenal power of concentration, accompanied by astonishing absentmindedness. His meals were prepared for him and sometimes a young girl would be sent to deliver them, neatly packed in a basket. She would usually find him hard at work at his desk, oblivious to her knocks on the door. Eventually she would be forced to tiptoe closer, place the basket on the table next to him, and tiptoe out again, her presence having gone unnoticed.³⁵ During these years, Malan never ate much. He had simple tastes, and enjoyed nothing more than a hard-boiled egg and some *moskonfyt*,³⁶ which his mother used to give to him as a treat when he was a child. His congregants also noticed that he consumed large quantities of coffee when he visited them.³⁷

These mandatory house calls nearly overwhelmed him. By August of 1906 he reported to Nettie that his head was spinning from meetings and people, people and meetings. There were always more people for him to be introduced to, and visiting the 230 families in the town consumed all of his time and energy. Once that was done, he had to begin visiting the families scattered across the district. For this purpose, he owned a horse cart and two fine horses – and fortunately the services of a stable attendant to take care of them and the five chickens, as he felt certain that they would all have become emaciated if left only in his care.³⁸

To Malan, house calls entailed travelling with his horse cart through the deserted landscape for days on end, sometimes for up to ninety hours.³⁹ It took him to all corners of the district, where he came into close contact with his human flock as they went about their daily lives. As he described it to Nettie, it was truly Karoo: if one ever had the inclination to hurl something at a dog,

³³ DFM, 1/1/280, D.F. Malan – De Koker e.a., n.d. [March] 1906.

³⁴ DFM, 1/1/282, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, March 1906.

³⁵ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 19.

³⁶ Grape syrup.

³⁷ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 19-20.

³⁸ DFM, 1/1/283, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 August 1906.

³⁹ DFM, 1/1/296, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 10 June 1909.

there would always be a stone within reach, and if one had the wish to prick someone, there was never a shortage of thorns.⁴⁰



**Figure 5: D.F. Malan: the young Minister
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

Malan took his visits to the people of this dry, yet abundant land, very seriously. He preferred to invest time and energy into each, instead of rushing from house to house like many of his colleagues from the neighbouring parishes. In a small notebook, he recorded details about every member of his congregation. When the various parishes met to report on their work, Malan was the only minister who had not managed to visit all of his congregants during the period of a year – to which he reacted with the remark that it was because he had done *thorough* work.⁴¹ Years later, he would write a plea to his fellow ministers not to treat these visits as a routine that satisfied their official consciences, but rather as an opportunity to spend sufficient time with those in doubt in order to lead them to the light. Hurried visits gave the impression of an annual spiritual inspection, with the minister being the spiritual tax collector or policeman from whom his victims hid their sins. Malan felt a true need to bring enlightenment and grace to people who were spiritually ignorant – and the best way, in his view, was to spend time with each. It gave him a deep sense of fulfilment to provide answers to someone’s difficult questions, or to explain a complicated Bible verse.⁴²

⁴⁰ DFM, 1/1/283, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 August 1906.

⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 22-3.

⁴² D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland: Een Reisbeschrijving*, (Stellenbosch: De Christen-Studenten Vereeniging van Zuid-Afrika, 1913), 52-4.

To his flock, he gave the impression of being intellectualistic. His sermons were often too difficult and complicated for them to follow, but his listeners were nevertheless in awe of his abilities. Malan continued to buy books, and studied late into the night. He was particularly concerned with equipping himself for his task, and for this reason made a point of reading books on psychology. In later years, his insight into human affairs and his ability to handle flammable personalities in difficult situations became legendary, and possibly had much of its grounding in his late-night reading.⁴³ Yet Malan did not write or publish much during these years – he absorbed and he practiced.

To outside observers, Malan was clearly a young man of great potential. At the end of October and for the first half of November 1906, Malan attended his first synod meeting, which was held in Cape Town. Here he managed to draw attention to himself – once again due to his nationalist stance on matters of language and religion, which found approval with his audience. His first public appearance was as part of a debate on whether the church's teachers' training school ought to be moved from Cape Town to Stellenbosch. Malan asserted that a larger matter was at stake – that being nationalist principles – which ought to be the first concern when equipping Afrikaner children for their calling to their church and their state. For this reason, Malan argued, Stellenbosch provided a far more suitable environment for the nurturing of such principles than Cape Town. He also emphasised the importance of mother tongue education for the sake of the Afrikaners' national self-respect and continued existence.⁴⁴ In response to Malan's speech, the church's actuary let it be known that he felt proud of the Dutch Reformed Church – especially since it had acquired the services of such a learned young man. He also made the observation that the young ministers who had recently returned from their European studies seemed to be of the opinion that, on both the terrains of education and politics, the Afrikaners had to separate themselves from the English. This, according to the actuary, was a new phenomenon, and deserved the serious consideration of both the church and the nation's leaders.⁴⁵

At the same time that the Dutch Reformed Church's Synod was taking note of the language issue, the Second Afrikaans Language Movement – which Gustav Preller had established in the Transvaal – reached the Cape Colony. Its foremost campaigners were the young J.H.H. (Jannie) de Waal, who was destined to become an important Afrikaans novelist and playwright,⁴⁶ and D.F. Malherbe, who would become a prominent poet and academic.⁴⁷ On 3 November 1906, while Malan was in Cape Town for the Synod meeting, the Afrikaanse Taal Vereniging (ATV) was

⁴³ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 17-18.

⁴⁴ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 136-7.

⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/ 284, *De Kerkbode*, 22 November 1906, 561.

⁴⁶ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel I* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1968), 240-3.

⁴⁷ C.J. Beyers, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel IV* (Durban: Butterworth & Kie, 1981), 358-62.

established in the same city with D.F. Malherbe as its first president, and Jannie de Waal as vice-president. Malan attended the meeting, and was elected to the organisation's management.⁴⁸

Unlike their colleagues in the Transvaal, the young men who founded the ATV in the Cape had to contend with a powerful pro-Dutch establishment, which manifested itself in the Taalbond (which had been revived in the aftermath in the war). The Taalbond was supported by the older generation, and included powerful Afrikaner leaders and intellectuals such as 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr and Malan's Stellenbosch professor, P.J.G. De Vos.⁴⁹ Conscious of the opposition from the older generation, the fledgling organisation took pains to emphasise the advantages of a thorough knowledge of Dutch, and undertook to cooperate with pro-Dutch organisations – in particular the Taalbond. Nevertheless, the new movement's aim was clear: Afrikaans had to be developed into a written language.⁵⁰ It spread across the Cape, with branches being established in twelve towns within a year⁵¹ – in spite of the disapproval of the older generation.⁵²

Within this new generation, Malan stood out from the crowd. Just as the Synod took note of his presence, so his peers too recognised his potential. For this reason, the ATV appointed him as its chairman at the end of 1907. As D.F. Malherbe later recalled, they 'desired to have a man of the church who carried much weight among our ranks, in order to give status to our impoverished existence.'⁵³

Malan's year-long leadership of the ATV was of a symbolic nature. He lived far away from Cape Town and Stellenbosch, where the heart of the organisation was situated, and could not make any noteworthy administrative contribution. He had no training as a linguist or a literary theorist, and could not participate in any of the ATVs spelling commissions that battled to provide the new language with its own spelling and grammar rules⁵⁴ – it was not the reason for his election in the first place. Like many of the ATVs members, Malan had joined due to his sympathy for the cause – he and others like him recognised the nationalist potential of the Afrikaans language. The ATV was the precursor to the more explicitly nationalist organisations which would enter the political scene less than ten years later: it was a breeding ground for a new generation of young Afrikaner nationalists. Malan therefore did not make any contributions to the development of the Afrikaans

⁴⁸ J.H.H. de Waal, *My Herinnerings van ons Taalstryd* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1932), 200-203.

⁴⁹ S. Swart and L. van der Watt, 'Taaltriomf of Taalverdriet?': An aspect of the Roles of Eugène Marais and Gustav Preller in the Second Language Movement, circa 1905-1927', *Historia*, 53, 2 (November 2008), 138, 141; P.H. Zietsman, *Die Taal is Gans die Volk*, 97-8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁵¹ E.C. Pienaar, *Die Triomf van Afrikaans* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1946), 305.

⁵² M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel: 'n Outobiografiese Vertelling* (Cape Town en Johannesburg: Tafelberg, 1972), 167.

⁵³ Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), PV 453, file 3/1/1/1, D.F. Malherbe: 'Huldigingswoord tydens die kranseleggingsplegtigheid by die graf van wyle sy edele Dr. D.F. Malan, in lewe stigterlid en erelid van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, op Sondag 26 Julie 1959, tydens die Halfeeuveesviering van die akademie': 'was begerig om 'n kerkman van gewig by ons te hê om aansien te gee aan ons armlike bestaan.'

⁵⁴ E.C. Pienaar, *Die Triomf van Afrikaans*, 312.

language itself but, in terms of adding moral substance to the movement, he was worth his weight in gold. In 1908, he gave one of the most famous speeches of the Second Afrikaans Language Movement to an audience in Stellenbosch. In response to ‘Onze’ Jan Hofmeyr’s “*Is’t ons Ernst?*”, and Gustav Preller’s “*Laat’t ons toch Ernst wezen!*”, Malan’s address was entitled: “*Het is ons Ernst*” (We are earnest about it).

In his speech, Malan made it clear that his promotion of the Afrikaans language was not for linguistic reasons. His aims were of a purely nationalist nature, as he stated: ‘The Afrikaans Language Movement is nothing less than an awakening of our nation to a feeling of self-worth and to the call to take up a more dignified place in the world’s civilisation.’⁵⁵ This meant that the Afrikaans language had to become a vehicle for the Afrikaner nation’s upliftment:

If our nation’s language can never be the bearer of our own literature and our national culture, what else does it mean but that we will always be regarded by others, and that we will regard ourselves, as a dialect-speaking nation. Elevate the Afrikaans language to a written language, make her the bearer of our culture, our history, our national ideals, and in so doing you elevate the nation who speaks it. Keep the national language at the level of a barely civilised provincial dialect, however, and in so doing you will keep the entire nation at the level of a barely civilised, illiterate, and lowly class of people.⁵⁶

These words were able to strike a deeper chord than the endless debates on spelling and grammar that characterised the language movement. Without offering a solution to the immediate problem of Afrikaans’ linguistic merits, Malan was able to unite his audience behind a broader ideal. In response to Malan’s speech, Gustav Preller wrote: “*Nou is’t ons Ernst!*” (Now we are earnest!).⁵⁷

By shifting the focus away from linguistics, Malan also managed to maintain a conciliatory tone towards the Taalbond, stating that they had different methods of achieving the same goal – and envisioning the day that the two organisations would become one.⁵⁸ This took place within a year of

⁵⁵ D.F. Malan, ‘Dit is Ons Ernst’, in S.W. Pienaar, *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 175: ‘Di Afrikaanse Taalbeweging is niks minder nie dan ‘n ontwaking bij ons volk tot ‘n gevoel van eiëwaarde en tot di roeping om ‘n waardiger plaas in te neem in di wêreldbeskawing.’

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘Als onse volkstaal nooit di draagster kan wees van ons eië literatuur en ons volkskultuur, wat beteken dit anders, dan dat ons altijd deur ander mense aangesien sal word en altijd onself sal aansien vir ‘n dialekt sprekende volk. Verhef die Afrikaanse taal tot skriftaal, maak haar di draagster van onse kultuur, van onse geskiedenis, onse nasionale ideale, en u verhef daarmee ook di volk, wat haar praat. Hou egter di volkstaal op di voet van ‘n half beskaafde provinsiaal dialekt, en u hou daarmee ook di volk op di peil van ‘n half beskaafde, ongeletterde volksklasse.’

⁵⁷ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 149.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 179-80.

his speech, when, in 1909, the tension between the two organisations was diffused in the establishment of the Akademie voor Taal, Letteren en Kunst,⁵⁹ of which Malan became a member.⁶⁰

This passion for the nation and its language permeated every aspect of Malan's life. As the Malan family gathered to celebrate what was to be D.F. Malan senior's last birthday, Malan observed the Babel that reigned among the new generation of Malans. His sister Cinie's two youngest daughters could only speak Chicaranga, which was a Shona dialect. Koos, who had since married his English sweetheart, had just returned to South Africa, and his little son could speak only English. Fanie and Mimie's children, as well as the daughters from D.F. Malan senior's second marriage, only spoke Afrikaans. Nevertheless, the children managed to play together. Malan, the eldest son, and still the only one who did not have his own family, watched their multilingual games and drily remarked to one of his small half-sisters: 'You had better make a plan to teach this little Englishman and these two little Kaffirs [*sic*] some Dutch.'⁶¹

His half-sisters were soon to become a prominent part of his life. To them, he was simply 'Boetie' – who had studied in Holland, and who came to visit them during holidays; Boetie who was serious and withdrawn – and yet enjoyed teasing them; Boetie who would go hiking in the nearby mountains – wearing his tie and tight collar and who would join the children in roaming around the veld in search of kukumakrankas.⁶² Soon after the large family reunion, D.F. Malan senior passed away. About a year after the funeral, his widow, Esther Malan, announced to her daughters that she had finally decided to accept her stepson's offer to move to Montagu, where the girls would be able to attend a larger school. He in turn was desperate for a *pastoriemoeder* (mother of the parsonage), who could assist him with his work in the church, especially among its women – and of course, someone who could manage his household.⁶³ Malan had a particular knack for eliciting the support and involvement of the women in his congregation, who took the tasks normally accorded to the minister's wife upon themselves.⁶⁴ But in spite of this, Malan clearly felt the need for the more extensive support that could only come from a *pastoriemoeder*.

When Esther Malan and her daughters took up residence in Montagu's large parsonage – which used to echo whenever its lone occupant dropped something⁶⁵ – Malan received the support system which he had been longing for. His relief must have been immense. The size of his 1,500

⁵⁹ S. Swart and L. van der Watt, "Taaltriomf of Taalverdriet?": An aspect of the Roles of Eugène Marais and Gustav Preller in the Second Language Movement, circa 1905-1927', *Historia*, 53, 2 (November 2008), 141.

⁶⁰ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 153.

⁶¹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 3: 'Julle sal darem 'n plan moet maak om vir hierdie klein Engelsman en hierdie twee kaffertjies [*sic*] Hollands te leer.'

⁶² DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 1-2.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁶⁴ B.Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 140.

⁶⁵ DFM, 1/1/283, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 August 1906.

member congregation had never ceased to overwhelm him, and his interests clearly stretched beyond the borders of Montagu's district. His church council recognised this and was constantly engaged in searching for an assistant minister to lighten his load – but such efforts were not always successful. Malan continued to crisscross the extensive district on his horse cart – alone on the solitary plains or among the rocky outcrops of the Karoo desert – in order to conduct services for the most far-flung members of his scattered flock.⁶⁶ He liked these services, as he could stand among the people, instead of preaching from the dizzying heights of the pulpit. The informality of the setting meant that he could greet each person by hand, and he did not have to preach in the formal language that the church demanded. He could preach in a language which the simple people understood, the language of plain evangelical truths, such as sin and grace, repentance and faith, forgiveness and redemption. And moreover, he could preach in the language of his heart, Afrikaans.⁶⁷



Figure 6: Esther Malan and her three daughters
From left to right, Stinie, Esther, Annie, Essie. (D.F. Malan Collection)

Now he found that he did not return from his journeys to an empty house; there were people with whom he could share the anecdotes from his visits. It was from one of these visits that Malan returned with another new companion who was to be at his side for the next seventeen years: a Collie puppy named Comet – after Halley's Comet which could be seen in the night sky at the time. Comet shared Malan's bed (and sometimes even his pillow), as well as the milk and biscuits that his sisters left at his bedside to sustain him through his late nights. Comet followed Malan wherever he went – which could be rather problematic. On Sunday mornings he hid as soon as the first church

⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/296, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 10 June 1909.

⁶⁷ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 15.

bells began to ring. He would then sneak in during the service. Sometimes he would quietly lie down by Malan's sisters' feet, and on other occasions sit in front of the pulpit, staring up at Malan as he preached. 'His master's voice', the sisters would whisper to each other. Comet's decision to climb into the pulpit one day ended this endearing display of canine devotion. Thereafter, he had to be locked away early on Sunday mornings, *before* the bells could give him any forewarning.⁶⁸



Figure 7: Comet
(D.F. Malan Collection)

Malan never presumed to be a father to his sisters, but it was inevitable that he would occupy an authoritative role. He took a great deal of interest in their education, and along with their mother, kept a watchful eye on what they read. He never prescribed nor forbade, but every now and then, he would ask Annie 'Are you busy reading an English or a Dutch book?' or 'When was the last time you read a Dutch story?'.⁶⁹

Malan's sisters in turn became familiar with their older brother's extraordinary powers of concentration. Their play seldom disturbed him while he was at work, and he hardly noticed three-year-old Stinie as she roamed around his study and even rode on the back of his chair while he wrote his sermons. But this gift was truly accompanied by intense absentmindedness. If Malan was late for dinner his food was kept warm, and one of his sisters would be appointed to sit with him in order to ensure that he remembered to eat. He could become lost in thought and forget about the presence of his meal.⁷⁰ Visitors noted his eating habits with fascination – especially the manner in

⁶⁸ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 12-13, 15.

⁶⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 9: "Lees jy nou 'n Engelse of 'n Hollandse boek?"; "Wanneer het jy laas 'n Hollandse storie gelees?"

⁷⁰ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 11, 32-3.

which he perforated his beloved hardboiled egg with the tip of his knife, instead of decapitating it, as was the custom.⁷¹

Malan regularly received illustrious visitors, such as the seminary's professors Marais, Moorrees, and De Vos, as well as other prominent clergymen.⁷² In 1911, his church council managed to find him an assistant preacher, the young Dr E.E. van Rooyen, who would later be appointed to the Stellenbosch seminary in 1920. Like Malan, Van Rooyen was quiet and studious and, like Malan, he had promoted from a Dutch university – the Free University of Amsterdam – with a philosophical topic: Hume's Scepticism. When Prof. J.W. Pont, who had known both men during their respective times of study in the Netherlands, heard that they lived under the same roof, he wondered aloud: 'What would they have been silent about!'⁷³ On Mondays, the family would picnic in the veld, and Malan himself found it comic that Van Rooyen would slip away in order to study.⁷⁴ Van Rooyen was also an advocate for the use of Afrikaans as opposed to English and Dutch, and would later participate in the translation of the Bible into Afrikaans.⁷⁵ In spite of this common interest, in later years the two men would be on opposite sides of the theological spectrum when the Johannes du Plessis case threatened to tear the church apart – with Van Rooyen as one of Du Plessis's main accusers.⁷⁶

Van Rooyen represented a leaning in the Dutch Reformed Church's theology towards Abraham Kuyper's Neo-Calvinism, while Malan was a liberal theologian – precisely the type whom Van Rooyen and his allies wanted to exorcise. Malan, as one of the last South African theological students to have graduated from the University of Utrecht – which was considered a liberal institution – and the protégé of one of Kuyper's main theological opponents, practiced a theology that was similar to that of Du Plessis. Like Du Plessis, Malan was sympathetic towards the theory of evolution, and believed that some Biblical events, such as the story of Jonah, were symbolic and did not actually take place. Malan similarly practiced Higher Criticism. These theological practices brought charges of heresy upon Du Plessis, which were driven by graduates from Kuyper's Free University of Amsterdam, as well as those from Princeton, which also taught a fundamentalist approach to the Scriptures and rejected the distinction between sanctifying knowledge and those passages which were purely historical.⁷⁷

⁷¹ G.B.A. Gerdener, "Herinnerings uit die Dekade van Dr. Malan se Diens in die Kerk", *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan-uitgawe*, 1955, 37.

⁷² DFM 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 6.

⁷³ G.B.A. Gerdener, "Herinnerings uit die Dekade van Dr. Malan se Diens in die Kerk", *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan-uitgawe*, 1955, 37: 'Wat zullen zij gezwegen hebben!'

⁷⁴ DFM 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 6-7.

⁷⁵ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1953).

⁷⁶ G.J. Schutte, "Meer dan Theologie Alleen. Neo-Calvinistiese Perspektiewe op Kerk en Samenleving in Zuid-Afrika. Opmerkinge by die Du Plessis-saak", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 46, 3 (September 2006).

⁷⁷ G.J. Schutte, "Meer dan Theologie Alleen. Neo-Calvinistiese Perspektiewe op Kerk en Samenleving in Zuid-Afrika. Opmerkinge by die Du Plessis-saak" Olivier, 'Die NG Kerk versus Du Plessis' in G. Hofmeyr, ed., *NG*

During Malan's years in the church, Du Plessis organised theological symposiums which were considered controversial by the Dutch Reformed Church's rank and file. Malan took part in at least two of these symposiums – one of which was held in Montagu.⁷⁸ In a paper that he delivered on Higher Criticism, Valeton's influence was indisputable. Malan was clearly an ethical theologian who believed that the history of Israel's religion was God's means of revealing truth to His followers. Malan asserted that not all tales in the Bible were historically true – the tale of Jonah was an allegory, for instance, in which the fish symbolised the Assyrian mother and Jonah represented Israel, swallowed by the larger power because it had been unfaithful to its calling. As far as Malan was concerned, there was an important distinction between fact and truth: the story of Jonah, like Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* may not have been factual, but it was spiritually true. Malan could see no reason why the Holy Spirit would not have made use of tools such as allegories, legends, and myths, to convey religious and moral truths – and why the fact that such tales were not literally true diminished their value as part of God's revelation. He believed that it formed an important part of the study of theology, which had to change along with the times - especially as new methods and new truths were presented by contemporary scholarship. If not, theology was at risk of becoming a field that was merely of antiquarian interest. Therefore, according to Malan, Higher Criticism - which was a product of the field of Literary Criticism - made an important contribution to the study of the Old Testament.⁷⁹

In spite of these assertions, however, the sermons that Malan presented to his congregation did not contain such exposés, even though his congregants initially complained that his sermons went over their heads.⁸⁰ His surviving sermons were more of a moralistic nature, although they were certainly not lacking in clarity and argument. Two of them, in particular, drew much attention and approval. One, which was delivered at the end of 1908, was directed at the youth, with the rather provocative title, "A plea for ignorance and hate". It pleaded with the youth to avoid sin by remaining ignorant of evil and, if they did encounter evil, to hate it vehemently. Malan counselled against youthful experimentation with all things immoral, as the consequences of such experimentation ruined young lives.⁸¹

In September 1910 he delivered another popular sermon, entitled "Where is your brother, Abel?" The title of the sermon was taken from God's question to Cain, who had just murdered his

Kerk 350: Eenhonderd Bakens in die Geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 1652-2002 (Wellington: Lux Verbi BM, 2002); DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 76-7.

⁷⁸ G.W. Brink, "Daniel Francois Malan (1874-1959). An Ecclesiological Study of the Influence of his Theology" (Unpublished D.Theol. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch 1997), 201-3.

⁷⁹ DFM, 1/1/299, D.F. Malan, 'Referaat gelewer by geleentheid van 'n teologiese symposium gehoude te Montagu ongeveer 1910.'

⁸⁰ G.B.A. Gerdener, "Herinnerings uit die Dekade van Dr. Malan se Diens in die Kerk", *Die Stellenbosse Student: D.F. Malan-uitgawe*, 1955, 34.

⁸¹ DFM, 1/41/12(7), D.F. Malan, *Een Pleit voor Onkunde en Haat: Een Preek Jonge Mensen door Dr. D.F. Malan, Montagu*, Christen-Studenten Vereniging van Zuid-Afrika, Stellenbosch, Desember 1908.

younger brother, Abel, to which Cain had famously replied ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ The scope of this sermon went from the avoidance of sin to its prevention. Malan, himself the son of a wine farmer, was deeply concerned about the exceptionally high levels of alcoholism he observed in the wine-producing district of Montagu – especially amongst its Coloured community. The Swartland, where he had grown up, was also known for its wines, but the farmers there took care to ensure that excesses did not take place. He soon identified the culprit when he noted – with growing alarm – that as the number of local canteens serving alcohol increased, so too did the number of incidents reported to the local police. He thus saw a correlation between the availability of alcohol and its adverse effects. He placed the blame for the situation squarely on those who signed the necessary petitions that lobbied the municipality to open new canteens, rather than on the individuals who were addicted to alcohol. Since these petitioners were necessarily white, and those who suffered from alcoholism were mostly Coloured, Malan also recognised a racial dimension to the problem:

If God has placed the body and soul of another in our hands, then He also has the right – and he also will demand – that body and soul from our hands. No, I’ll go even further and declare that our own salvation depends for a large part on the manner in which we deal with the salvation of another. Let us not forget that God places a high, priceless value on every human soul. It is more valuable to Him than all the gold and silver in the entire world. He has imprinted upon it His own image, His mark of ownership. It is worth the love of His heart. He was ready to pay for it, yes for the soul of the poor drunken Coloured lying next to the street, a high price, the highest price ever to be uttered by human lips, the blood of the eternal Son. Can He be anything other than filled with a holy solemnity about the salvation of such a soul? Can He demand anything other than a strict account from everyone who had it in his power to save or ruin a soul?⁸²

Through the Cain and Abel metaphor, Malan made it clear that the white community in Montagu was indeed their Coloured brothers’ keeper. For this reason, according to Malan, white petitioners had to take responsibility for their position of power. They had it within their power to provide already weakened alcoholics with even more temptation – or to limit the temptation and, in

⁸² DFM, 1/1/309a, “Uittreksel uit een toespraak van Dr. Malan op de Stellenbossche Conferentie”: ‘Indien God het lichaam en de ziel van een ander in onze hand geplaatst heeft, dan heeft Hij ook het recht en dan zal Hij ook beide ziel en lichaam van onze hand eischen. Neen, ik ga verder en verklaar dat dan ons eigen zaligheid voor een groot deel moet afhangen van de wijze, waarop wij omgaan met de zaligheid van een ander. Laten wij niet vergeten, dat God op iedere menschenziel stelt een hoogen, onbetaalbaren prijs. Zij is Hem meer waard dan al het goud en al het zilver der gansche wereld. Hij heeft daarop afgedrukt Zijn eigen beeld, Zijn eigendomsmerk. Zij is waard de liefde van zijn hart. Hij was gereed daarvoor te betalen, ja voor de ziel van den armen dronken Kleurling liggende langs te straat ‘n dure prijs, de duurste prijs, die ooit menschenlippen hebben genoemd, het bloed van de eeuwigen Zoon. Kan Hij anders, dan over de zaligheid van zulk ‘n ziel vervuld zijn met een heiligen ernst? Kan Hij anders dan strenge rekenschap afeischen van iedereen, die het in zijn macht had om die ziel te redden of te verderven?’

so doing, to aid a struggling soul.⁸³ There was another important component to Malan's thinking: social ills had to be fought by authoritative measures from the top – it could not be left to the individual to fight them on his own. In this one recognises a mindset that believed that most problems could be solved by the appropriate regulations, and it was to characterise his solutions to many difficult questions.

Malan's appeal, which linked his congregation's Christian conscience to their racial status, struck a deep chord. His views were received enthusiastically. A direct result of the sermon was a draft petition by his congregation to close a number of the town's canteens. The petition was successful, and elicited added measures such as a limitation on the hours during which alcohol could be sold.⁸⁴ Malan himself, who had expected an angry rebuttal from his wine-producing flock, was astonished by the overwhelmingly positive response.⁸⁵ The experience must have diminished his initial fear of tackling sensitive issues – a valuable lesson indeed for a future politician.

At this stage, Malan did not realise that these sermons were paving his way to the political platform. The less educated among his flock might have struggled to follow him at first, but to a discerning listener, Malan's sermons were an oratory feast, for which they were willing to travel a good distance. M.E. Rothman (M.E.R.), who would become a well-known Afrikaans author, heard Malan's sermons in Montagu. She recalled Malan's sermons as befitting Matthew Arnold's description of style: 'Have something to say, and say it as clearly as possible.' He had the ability to keep his audience spellbound for longer than an hour, and his oration would neither weaken nor waver for a moment. The reason for this was the incalculable amount of time Malan spent in formulating his arguments. He even refused to address a simple prayer meeting unless he had had the time to prepare. The notes to his sermons were to become collector's items among his many admirers.⁸⁶ One of these was Andrew Hofmeyr, the nephew of Malan's Stellenbosch teacher, N.J. Hofmeyr, who practiced law in Montagu. He made copies of Malan's sermons and sent these to his brother, Willie Hofmeyr. Willie Hofmeyr was a partner in a Cape Town law firm, and knew Malan as a fellow founding member of the ATV.⁸⁷ It was to be Willie Hofmeyr who would later persuade Malan to enter politics.

In the meantime, however, Malan limited himself to the matters of the church – which inevitably reflected the matters of state. The four colonies moved closer together and in 1910 became the four provinces of the Union of South Africa. By mid-1912, the political parties that represented the Afrikaners in the Cape, the Transvaal, and the Free State – the Afrikaner Bond, Het

⁸³ DFM, 1/1/309a, "Uittreksel uit een toespraak van Dr. Malan op de Stellenbossche Conferentie".

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel: 'n Outobiografiese Vertelling*, 216.

⁸⁷ N.J. le Roux, W.A. Hofmeyr: *Sy Werk en Waarde*, 5-6, 35-6, 64.

Volk, and Orangia Unie respectively – had dissolved themselves in order to join the Zuid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Party (South African Party, or SAP), which had been founded in November 1911. The SAP represented a new ideal: the unification of Afrikanerdom into a single party – although its membership included a few moderate English speakers.⁸⁸ The unification of the colonies prompted the church to consider its own unification across the new provincial borders. The debate concentrated most of its energy on the position of Coloured congregants in the Cape Province. Although the Mission Church had been established in 1881 to provide for segregated worship,⁸⁹ Coloured members still had the right to belong to the Dutch Reformed Church. This right, however, did not extend beyond the borders of the Cape Province, and the northern provinces balked at the idea of even one or two Cape Coloured members participating in the national Synod. On this point, church unification broke down,⁹⁰ and would only be achieved after Malan's death.

Malan himself was in favour of the unification of the church, since he regarded it as part of the broader unification of the Afrikaner nation itself. The political unification of South Africa was therefore a dream come true and, initially, it filled Malan with cautious hope. In the light of this victory for Afrikaner unity, the failure of church unification was a genuine disappointment to him. As far as he was concerned, Coloured representatives in the Synod were in such a minority that their presence was negligible, and therefore their continued presence did not constitute a threat to the Northern provinces.

In a letter written in May 1912, he lamented the outcome, which he believed was as a result of poor timing – '[n]otwithstanding the new Union, the nation is far from realising that it is now truly one.'⁹¹ Indeed, the reality was that, among Afrikaners, provincial loyalties ran much deeper than the new loyalty to a united South Africa in which English and Afrikaans speakers formed a single nation. This provincial loyalty was manifested in a near hero-worship of prominent personalities who were seen to represent that particular area. Especially in the Northern provinces, the heroes of the Anglo-Boer War enjoyed an unrivalled amount of respect. Thus, the Transvaal was a Botha-Smuts stronghold, while the Free State adored ex-President Steyn and J.B.M. Hertzog. In the Cape, admiration for its former Prime Minister, John X. Merriman, still ran very deep.

A new generation of Afrikaners was on the rise, however. They had not experienced the Anglo-Boer War, and therefore did not have as strong a loyalty to its icons. They began to challenge Botha's attempts at conciliation between Afrikaners and English speakers. Botha recognised this and it worried him. What worried him even more was the fact that the younger

⁸⁸ O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I* (Pretoria en Cape Town: H&R-Academica, 1975), 99.

⁸⁹ H. Giliomee, 'The Weakness of Some: The Dutch Reformed Church and White Supremacy', *Scriptura*, 83 (2003), 221.

⁹⁰ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 199-205.

⁹¹ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 206: 'Nietteenstaande de Unie begriipt het volk nog lang niet dat het nu werkelyk één is.'

generation seemed to form an alliance with the most powerful of all Afrikaner institutions, the Dutch Reformed Church. He saw fit to warn Smuts against this impending threat:

Jannie, you and I will now make a stand somewhere – that is certain, for it seems clear that there is underhand collusion against our principles and moderate policy ... The young Afrikaners, and especially our Church, are now going too far; we must turn them back before it is too late, for it cannot go on like this.⁹²

Unfortunately for Botha, the wave of Afrikaner nationalism within the church, and among the younger generation, continued to swell, with Malan headed towards its crest. In 1911, the students of Stellenbosch organised a language conference to celebrate the Union constitution's entrenchment of equal language rights for both Dutch and English, which marked a departure from the hegemony of English in the pre-Union colonies. At this conference, Malan gave a moving speech, entitled "Taal en Nationaliteit" ("Language and Nationality").⁹³

In his address, Malan distanced himself from the convoluted problems of linguistics once again and, instead, made language part of a broader nationalist ideal. As far as he was concerned, all of the problems that were being experienced by the Afrikaner community were the result of their national identity and language not being acknowledged, and because they were made to feel that theirs was an inferior culture. Malan believed that the situation was especially acute in schools, where the Afrikaners' language and history were hushed into a corner. This had a detrimental effect on the Afrikaners' character, he reasoned, since a nation which had lost its national self-respect could not hope to have a strong character. For this reason, when he pleaded for the upliftment of the Afrikaans language, he was pleading for so much more – he was pleading for that which he regarded as most holy in every person.⁹⁴

The speech revealed Malan's interwoven worldview as he continued to intertwine all that was dear to him: language, nationalism, and religion. Language, to him, was more than just a means of communication:

The language is the membrane that binds everything that belongs to a nation together and makes it one. It is the peel around the fruit, the skin around the body, the bark around the tree;

⁹² W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 43-4: 'Jannie jij en ik zal een staan ergens nu maak dit is zeker, want voor mij lijken het duidelijk, dat er een onderhandsche zaamwerkery is tegen ons beginselen en moderaten politiek...De jonge Afrikaners en vooral ons Kerk gaan nu te ver, wij moet hen omkeeren voor het te laat is, want zoo kan het niet voortgaan.'

⁹³ D.F. Malan, "Taal en Nationaliteit", *Wij Zullen Handhaven: Studente Taalkonferentie*, Stellenbosch, 1911, 34-41.

⁹⁴ DFM, 1/1/303, D.F. Malan, "Taal en Nationaliteit", Stellenbosch, 1911, 40-1.

it is not only there to bind together and to include, but also to fence off the outside and simultaneously to make all healthy growth and expansion possible.⁹⁵

To Malan, nationalism was a living, growing organism, with language as its cohesive. This was deemed to be of a holy nature, as the nation only existed because God had willed it so. To Malan, this was crystal clear: God revealed himself in history and proved time and again that disintegration, rather than integration, was the natural order. The tale of the Tower of Babel was an expression of this deep psychological and historical truth. Humanity was diverse, and imperialism, which sought to wipe out this diversity by imposing a single culture as hegemon, was directly opposed to God's will. Christianity brought unity, but not at the expense of cultural diversity, he argued – indeed, Christianity honoured and elevated it. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak various languages – and an integral part of Luther's Reformation was the translation of the Bible into the local German vernacular. Based on this evidence, Malan therefore declared to his audience: 'My nationalism rests, in the last instance, on a religious foundation.'⁹⁶

Malan knew that, to realise these ideals, forceful personalities and men of character were needed. To Malan, manhood was synonymous with adulthood and a steadfast character. This was an ideal which he strove to achieve in his life, and which he used to inspire others. Years before, when he was a student at Stellenbosch, one of his professors, J.I. Marais, had lamented the dearth of true men. His words had set Malan thinking, and it was in answer to this that he formulated his description of a true man, which he included in the speech:

What is a man? A man is someone with inner strength, someone who is not like the tide, moved and swayed by every wind, but who can assert himself in any environment. A man is someone who can leave his mark on others, because he has his own character. He is someone who has convictions, who knows what he wants, who is aware that he stands for something. A man is someone who knows that there are principles he must hold on to no matter what the cost, and who would, if necessary, willingly give his life for these principles. That is a man.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 37: 'De taal is het omhulsel, dat alles, wat tot een volk behoort, samenbindt en tot één maakt. 't Is de schil om de vrucht, de huid om het lichaam, de bast om de boom, die er is niet alleen om samen te binden en in te sluiten, maar ook af te sluiten van wat buiten is en tegelijk om alle gezonde groei en uitbreiding mogelijk te maken.'

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: 'Mijn nationaliteitsgevoel berust in de laatste instantie op een godsdienstige grondslag.'

⁹⁷ DFM, 1/1/303, D.F. Malan, "Taal en Nationaliteit" in Stellenbosch, 1911, 40: 'Wat is een Man? 'n Man is 'n persoonlikheid, iemand die niet als de vloed door iedere wind bewogen en omgevoerd wordt, maar die zich in ieder omgeving handhaven.'n Man is iemand, die zijn stempel op anderen kan afdrukken, omdat hij een eigen karakter heeft. Hij is iemand, die een oortuiging heeft; die weet wat hij wil; die zich ervan bewust is dat hy voor iets staat. 'n Man is iemand, die weet, dat er beginselen zijn waaraan hij moet vasthouden, het koste wat het wil en die voor die beginselen, indien nodig, gewilliglik het leven geeft. Dit is 'n man.'

In reaction to the speech the chairman of the conference, Prof. A. Moorrees, rose and pointed to Malan exclaiming, ‘There is a man!’⁹⁸ To which the audience responded with thunderous applause.⁹⁹

Malan clearly appreciated the force of a powerful personality as a vehicle for historical change. He believed that the world was a better place because a Luther had brought about the Reformation¹⁰⁰ – or because an Elijah had defied an Ahab. Even though he did not maintain any contact with his acquaintances in the Netherlands, Prof. Valeton’s voice was still echoing in Malan’s ears, and the image of the prophet Elijah was still in his mind’s eye. A mere two months after his moving description of a true man, he was back in Stellenbosch to expand on the ideal in an address entitled “De Profeet Elia en zyne beteekenis voor den tegenwoordigen tyd” (“The Prophet Elijah and his relevance to the present day”).¹⁰¹ The address bore a striking resemblance to Valeton’s “De strijd tusschen Achab en Elia” (“The battle between Ahab and Elijah”).¹⁰² Malan, like Valeton, recounted the power struggle between Ahab – the clever statesman who saved Israel through his shrewd alliances, but at a terrible cost – and Elijah, who would rather perish than compromise the truth as determined by God.¹⁰³

The manner in which Malan recounted the tale resonated with his audience. He utilised the political catchphrases of the day, and thereby transformed his address into a barely veiled criticism of the Botha-government. Ahab’s political alliance with the nations around him was ‘conciliation politics’, and ‘racial hatred’ had to be dissolved by ‘forgiving and forgetting about the past’, glossing over cultural peculiarities and fundamental differences and instead focusing on commonalities. In Israel’s case, the cost of ‘conciliation’ was the destruction of its national religion and the loss of the nation’s moral compass, since conciliation necessarily encompassed the importation of foreign gods. This, according to Malan, was an extremely serious matter, as a nation’s god dictated the nature of its morals and ideals – and therefore its future. Malan believed that the future was determined by ideals – ideals ruled the world and shaped the history of both nations and individuals.¹⁰⁴ His emphasis on the importance of ideals was a powerful reminder of the Idealist philosophy he studied as a student – his words echoed those of Berkeley, Hegel, and Fichte. It was to form an essential component of his political career: he would become a powerful

⁹⁸ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 192: ‘Daar is een man!’

⁹⁹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 192.

¹⁰⁰ D.F. Malan, ‘Taal en Nationaliteit’, in *Wij Zullen Handhaven: Studente Taalkonferentie*, Stellenbosch, 1911, 38.

¹⁰¹ DFM, 1/1/308, D.F. Malan, “De Profeet Elia en zyne beteekenis voor den tegenwoordigen tyd”, 16 Junie 1911.

¹⁰² J.J.P. Valeton jr., ‘De Strijd Tusschen Achab en Elia: Voordracht Gehouden in de Paedagogische Vereeniging van Christelijke Onderwijzers, te Utrecht 24 April 1900’ in *Oud-testamentische Voordrachten* (Nijmegen: Firma H. ten Hoet, 1909).

¹⁰³ DFM, 1/1/308, D.F. Malan, “De Profeet Elia en zyne beteekenis voor den tegenwoordigen tyd”, 16 Junie 1911, 6-15.

¹⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/308, D.F. Malan, “De Profeet Elia en zyne beteekenis voor den tegenwoordigen tyd”, 16 Junie 1911, 10-12.

transmitter of ideals – ideals that were never to be compromised. In Malan’s opinion, the Israelites under Ahab were a nation who had achieved political independence at the cost of their unique national character and personality, their God, and therefore their conscience. To Malan, such compromise was symptomatic of a weak character. In contrast to the perceived spinelessness of the Israelites and their leader stood the prophet Elijah, whom Malan called the ‘man of steel.’¹⁰⁵ Alone and unarmed, he did not flinch in the face of Ahab’s power and Jezebel’s fury.¹⁰⁶

Malan described Elijah as a man who possessed the greatness that only a child of the desert could. He believed that history preferred men of solitude, men who were taught by the desert’s empty plains and eternal sky to be silent and listen to God’s word, who were filled with a sense of eternity.¹⁰⁷ Thus said the minister of Montagu – who himself had spent countless hours traversing the Karoo desert, who as a child had spent endless hours in the veld, and who had longed for the ruggedness of this world while the cities of Europe bustled around him. It was inevitable that he identified with Elijah and admired the prophet’s fearlessness. He felt that his world was dominated by the spirit of Ahab: politicians were more concerned about public opinion and grabbing votes than they were about principles; his nation paid lip-service to their principles and refused to assert their rights. What was needed was the reawakening of the spirit of Elijah – and, as he addressed his audience, he expressed the hope that it contained young men who were willing to pick up the prophet’s mantle.¹⁰⁸ At this point in time, Malan was not ready to take the mantle upon himself, and still clung to Valeton’s idea that politics – especially the politics of his own country – was devoid of principles.

Through these public appearances Malan’s prominence within the Afrikaner community was growing, and there were whispers that, in time, he would become a professor at the Stellenbosch seminary.¹⁰⁹ He was already proving himself to be an ardent patron of Stellenbosch and the ideals which the town represented.

During these years there was considerable restlessness within the ranks of the Victoria College. The Union government had received a considerable sum of money from two Randlords, Julius Wernher and Otto Beit, for the establishment of a teaching university in Cape Town, to be located at Groote Schuur, Cecil John Rhodes’s former estate. This was in keeping with a vision that Rhodes had expressed in the 1890s, but which had to be shelved due to his complicity in the Jameson Raid. The possibility of a university being established at Rhodes’s former estate was perceived as a direct threat to the Victoria College, which would be forced to close and hand all her students to the new

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 17-19.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 21-2, 29, 32-5.

¹⁰⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 25.

institution. In order to prevent this, a vigilance committee was established in 1911 to keep an eye on any developments affecting the College, and to voice concern and opposition if these developments threatened the College's existence.¹¹⁰ Malan became a member of this committee. He did not doubt that Rhodes was a visionary, who dreamed in terms of worlds and centuries, but as far as he was concerned, Rhodes and his legacy left a stain on the Afrikaner psyche.¹¹¹ An educational institution built on his estate, in keeping with his vision, would certainly not have been an exception. In Malan's opinion, Rhodes's greatness was doubtful; his success had been achieved by bending both law and justice:

He is not truly great who achieves success by bending the law. It is he who can suffer for eternal principles who has the power to die for the sake of truth. And Rhodes could not do that. The Afrikaner will always see innocent blood cleaving to his greatness.¹¹²

As Afrikaners we have sprung from a generation that has, more than any other in the history of the world, fought and suffered for eternal principles. Therefore, among all the nations of the world, we have to be known as the nation with the most elevated, purest ideals, with the most steel in our blood. It is good that we distance ourselves for ever, especially where the university training of our sons are concerned, from the demoralising influence that has gone into our political and social lives from the man who made a mockery of justice.¹¹³

As a member of the vigilance committee, Malan took part in deputations that visited both the Minister of Education, F.S. Malan – whose newspaper, *Ons Land*, Malan had devoured as a student – as well as the entire Botha Cabinet. In 1913, the committee drafted a memorandum concerning the issue which drew a lot of press attention.¹¹⁴ The memorandum itself, written in Malan's handwriting, carries his stamp: the document asserted that there was so much more than just an educational institution at stake. The true issue was the interests of the Afrikaner nation and the ideals that Stellenbosch represented:

¹¹⁰ H.B. Thom, ed., *Stellenbosch 1866-1966. Honderd Jaar Hoër Onderwys* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1966), 62-4.

¹¹¹ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 17.

¹¹² *Ibid.*: 'Want werkelyk groot is niet hij die success behaalt door het recht te buigen. Het is is hij die voor eeuwige beginselen lijden kan, die de macht heeft om voor de waarheid te sterven. En dat kon Rhodes niet. De Afrikaner zal wel altijd aan zijne grootheid zien kleven het onschuldig bloed.'

¹¹³ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 45-6: 'Als Afrikaners zijn wij gesproten uit een geslacht dat meer dan eenig ander in de geschiedenis der wereld voor eeuwige beginselen gestreden en geleden heeft. Onder al de natiën der wereld moesten wij daarom bekend zijn als het volk met de hoogste, reinste idealen, met het meeste staal in ons bloed. Het is wel dat wij ons voor altijd losmaken, vooral ook waar het de hoogere universitaire opleiding van onze zonen geldt, van den demoraliseerenden invloed die op ons politiek en maatschappelijk leven uitgegaan is van den man die met de rechtvaardigheid gespot heeft.'

¹¹⁴ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my Ervarings op die Pad Daarheen* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 15.

Stellenbosch ... has been intimately bound to the spiritual, moral and national life of the Dutch-speaking section of the nation for years. It is the place where the Afrikaner nation can best realise her ideals, and from whence she can exert the greatest influence over South Africa. She is the best fulfilment of a deep-seated need that the nation has found thus far. She represents an idea. Therefore, she has become not merely an educational institution, among other things, to the nation, but the symbol and the guarantee of its own powerful, growing national life, which seeks expression.¹¹⁵

This idealisation of Stellenbosch as a breeding ground for the Afrikaners' national ideals contained another dimension: the separation, even insulation of the Afrikaner youth in order to protect them from English influences. The same memorandum dwelt on the negative implications of forcing the Afrikaner youth to study in Cape Town where, at such a fragile stage in their lives, they would lack the supportive and nurturing environment provided by Stellenbosch and the Dutch Reformed Church, and be left to fend for themselves in an environment dominated by English speakers. This would disturb the balance between the two sections of the population, as the one would inevitably achieve an unfair advantage over the other and, in the Cape Peninsula, it would be the Afrikaners who suffered.¹¹⁶

The definition of the broader South African nation, and the position of English and Afrikaans speakers within it, formed an important component of Malan's thinking. In the context of the Botha-government's conciliation politics, the language movement, and the university issue, he identified two clashing ideals. Both ideals acknowledged that the South African nation consisted of two nationalities (black people were not regarded as members of the nation). One of these ideals advocated the amalgamation of the two nations into one – which would inevitably be English. The other, which, as far as Malan was concerned, was the only true ideal, held that:

... in South Africa there are two nationalities and so it always ought to be; that both will be entirely free and that each will have an equal opportunity to maintain and develop that which is its own. This is the best manner for the greater South African nation to become one, a moral

¹¹⁵ DFM, 1/1/318(10), Memorandum aan Zyne Hoog Ed. den Minister van Onderwys op last van de Commissie van Waakzaamheid in zake de Universiteitskwesie opgesteld, 7-8: 'Stellenbosch ... is sinds jaren innig verbonden met het geestelyk, zedelyk en nationaal leven van het Hollandsch-sprekende gedeelte van het volk. Zy is de plaats waar het Afrikaner volk zyne idealen het best kan verwerkelyken en van waar uit het de grootste invloed op Zuid Afrika kon uitoefenen. Zy is de beste vervulling die het volk nog gevonden heeft eenen diepgevoelde behoefte. Zy staat voor een idéé. Zy is daarom voor het volk geworden nie 'n bloote opvoedingsinrichting onder andere, maar het symbool en de waarborg van zyn eigen krachtig, groeiend, uitdrukking zoekend nationaal leven.'

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 8-11.

union, founded on a common love for a common fatherland, but it will be a unity that consists of a duality – a dual-unity.¹¹⁷

These words were very different from those uttered by Jan Smuts four years earlier: ‘The great task was to build up a South African nation ... In a South African nation alone was the solution ... Two such peoples as the Boers and the English must either unite or they must exterminate each other.’¹¹⁸ Malan’s solution, an order in which the two language groups would be ‘separate but equal’, was based on an assumption that cultural equality did not exist as yet. As far as he was concerned, English was still dominant and, furthermore, was hostile towards the Afrikaners and their language. These years were indeed marked by deep divisions and a general animosity between English and Afrikaans speakers, with the language issue presenting an exceptionally explosive dilemma.¹¹⁹

The situation also manifested itself in the press. In the immediate aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War, two distinct interest groups were engaged in buying up press organs in order to propagate their political views. On the one hand the British High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, used state funds to buy the loyalty of a number of newspapers that would propagate the imperial idea – and exploited martial law and censorship to stunt the growth of an opposition Afrikaner press – while on the other hand, Botha and Smuts were able to utilise funds from the Netherlands to counter Milner’s attempts to silence the Afrikaner press. In spite of these machinations, the press appeared to unite briefly - in the midst of the euphoria brought about by Union and the prospect of conciliation between the two camps - but its partisan nature soon re-emerged as the division within the country manifested itself within the Botha Cabinet.¹²⁰

Botha, in an attempt to counter the deep divisions in the country, chose individuals from all four provinces to serve in his Cabinet. His and Smuts’s sympathies, however, were closer to the ideals of the English-speaking Unionist party than to those of the other extreme end of the Cabinet, Genl J.B.M. Hertzog.¹²¹ As early as 1907, Botha and Smuts had begun to move to the centre, and reached out to English speakers. This was based on their growing awareness of the wider world of international power politics, and within this context, the British Empire offered both security and

¹¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/303, D.F. Malan, “Taal en Nationaliteit”, *Wij Zullen Handhaven: Studente Taalkonferentie*, Stellenbosch, 1911, 39-40: ‘... er in Zuid-Afrika twee nationaliteiten zijn en dat er altijd behoren te zijn; dat ieder geheel vrij zal zijn en een gelijke gelegenheid zal hebben om wat eigen is te handhaven en te ontwikkelen. Zó kan het grote zuidafrikaanse volk het best een eenheid worden, een zedelijke eenheid, gegrond in een gemeenschappelijke liefde tot een gemeenschappelijk vaderland, maar het zal een eenheid zijn bestaande in een tweeheid – een twee-eenheid.’

¹¹⁸ Quoted in H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 358.

¹¹⁹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 267-8.

¹²⁰ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1990), 19-33.

¹²¹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 267-8.

beneficial trading links. Furthermore, they realised that they could only achieve rapid economic growth if they obtained the trust of English speakers of both British and Jewish descent, who wielded most of South Africa's capital.¹²²

For this reason, there was hardly any difference between the policies of Botha's SAP, and the Unionist Party. Both parties advocated the concept of a single South African nation, a non-doctrinaire native policy, white – but not Asian – immigration, economic development, and imperial preference. Neither party advocated special protection for the Afrikaners, a stance which aggravated Hertzog. It was through Hertzog's intervention that the National Convention – at which the terms of the Union were negotiated – accorded equal status to both Dutch and English in all public business, and provided for a bilingual civil service. As far as he was concerned, language equality could only be achieved when both languages were used as a medium of instruction in schools. As a Cabinet Minister in the former Orange River Colony, he had established such parity in that Colony, despite being labelled a 'racialist' by English speakers who saw no reason for their children to learn Dutch. Hertzog's educational policy had brought about a clash between two conflicting principles: the right of parents to choose the language in which their children were educated versus the right of society to expect its children to be bilingual. Botha, for his part, felt frustrated with Hertzog for stirring up the language issue,¹²³ but managed to outmanoeuvre Hertzog when the new Union's education policy was formulated. Hertzog's system of absolute parity was abandoned in favour of one that made mother tongue instruction for the first six school years compulsory in three of the four provinces, and gave parents the right to choose the medium of instruction thereafter. In Natal, the choice was left entirely to parents.¹²⁴

Back in Montagu, Malan – as chairperson of the local high school's school committee – made a point of asserting the rights of Afrikaans children to be educated in Dutch. As far as he was concerned, mother tongue education existed only on paper in a system that was dominated by English. In response to a government questionnaire, Malan made it clear that school inspectors had to be bilingual, and requested that the Department of Education conduct all correspondence with the Montagu school committee in Dutch, since it was the language most spoken and understood by the committee, and because, 'according to Art. 137 of the South Africa Act, Dutch is one of the official languages of the country.'¹²⁵ The Department replied that the practical application of the law was

¹²² H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 357-8.

¹²³ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 267-8; H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 273-4.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 170: 'volgens Art. 137 van de Zuid-Afrika Wet het Hollandsch een der officieele talen van het land is.'

rather difficult, as not all civil servants were able to write in Dutch, to which the school committee replied that the situation had to be addressed as soon as possible.¹²⁶

When it came to education, Malan's concerns went beyond the language issue. At a time when poverty among Afrikaners was becoming more and more acute, his pastoral visits to his flock revealed the extent to which parents still ignored the 1905 law that made education compulsory – and to make matters worse, the limited extent to which the authorities enforced the legislation. It therefore became one of his main concerns to make compulsory education a reality in his district – and especially to the children of the town's poor.¹²⁷ The poor white problem was to become one of Malan's most pressing priorities. During his studies in the Netherlands he had displayed sensitivity to the issue of poverty,¹²⁸ and his work as a minister made the poverty of his flock a daily reality which he witnessed at first hand as he entered the houses of his congregants. It made a deep and lasting impression on him, an impression made even deeper when he later encountered some of the most deprived Afrikaners: those who lived beyond the borders of the Union.

These were also the years when mission work gained increasing prominence within the Dutch Reformed Church. Malan himself came from a family in which mission work was held in high regard – his sister Cinie worked as a missionary in Rhodesia, and the family still treasured the memory of his deceased brother who, at the age of ten, had wanted to become a missionary. Malan displayed a formidable ability to inspire his congregation's fundraising efforts, and was able to motivate them to give generously to mission work. The result was that the parish of Montagu paid the salary of Ds. George Murray, a missionary in Mashonaland, and later progressed to supporting Ds. J.G. Strijdom, a missionary in the Sudan. This meant that, by 1911, the Montagu parish was making the highest per capita contribution to mission work in the entire Cape Province. Malan linked these fundraising efforts to fundraising for the community's own poor and thus, as the amount of money donated for mission work rose, so too did donations for poverty relief.¹²⁹

When Malan took part in a large Missions conference in Stellenbosch in April 1912, he was approached and interviewed by one of the Synod's committees about the possibility of visiting Dutch Reformed congregations that were scattered throughout the two Rhodesias. Malan declared that he was able and willing to undertake the journey.¹³⁰ He would also write letters on his progress to *De Kerkbode*, the Dutch Reformed Church's periodical in the Western Cape. These letters inevitably took the form of a travel diary, and became popular reading – to the extent that they were also published by *Ons Land* and *Onze Courant*, Graaff-Reinet's local newspaper. The letters were

¹²⁶ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 170.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 167-9.

¹²⁸ DFM 1/1/157, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 17 December 1900.

¹²⁹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 127; 165-6; 195-6.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

exceptionally well-written, and made for such gripping reading that they were collated into a book which went through two prints.¹³¹

Malan left Montagu on 18 July 1912 in order to wander further north than he had ever been. He was accompanied by David Burger, one of his church's deacons.¹³² Together the two men would undertake what was to become a great adventure. It was to be filled with bad coffee, endless hours on trains, bumpy roads, carts drawn by donkeys who determined their own pace and working hours, a horse who was kind enough to bring variety to a hundred mile journey by practicing every trot known to his kind, mosquitoes that devoured them in the open veld and, above all, the breathtaking beauty of the African bush.¹³³ But as he left the town in the full darkness of the night, still glowing from the hearty and spontaneous farewell in the local hall, Malan wondered whether he was to return to Montagu in order to continue his work there, or to bid it farewell.¹³⁴ A mere three days before his departure, the church council of the parish of Graaff-Reinet had addressed a letter to him in which it called on him to join their minister, Ds. P.K. Albertyn, in his work.¹³⁵ The letter was accompanied by a personal letter from Albertyn, in which he implored Malan to accept the position. He made it clear that one of their most important reasons for calling him to the position was because

...we in these parts need a strong man on the terrain of language and nationality ... our nation desperately needs you in these parts! Dear brother come, COME and help us! If you want to be the preacher and the student, I would willingly do the greater part of the pastoral visits.¹³⁶

Albertyn foresaw that Malan was headed for great things – he assumed that Malan would become a professor in the not too distant future, and was happy to make whatever sacrifices were necessary in order to acquire the services of a man with Malan's talents.¹³⁷ To Malan, always overwhelmed by the pastoral burden he carried by himself while his heartfelt passions and interests stretched far wider than the borders of his district, this offer must have sounded like manna from heaven. True to his nature, however, it was not an offer at which he jumped. He would mull it over while he journeyed beyond the borders of his country. As he travelled to Bulawayo, he was followed by a letter from the Montagu church council, imploring him to remain with them – unless

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 222-3.

¹³² D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 6.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 10, 36, 44, 47, 58, 64, 67.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³⁵ DFM, 1/1/312, P.K. Albertyn *et al.* – D.F. Malan, 15 July 1912.

¹³⁶ DFM, 1/1/311, P.K. Albertyn – D.F. Malan, 15 July 1912: '...wy in deze deelen een sterk man noodig hebben op het gebied van taal en nationaliteit ... Ons volk heft u in deze deele brood nodig! Ou broer kom, KOM en help ons! Als jy de prediker en de student wilt wezen, zal ik gewilliglyk het grootste deel van het besoek werk willen doen.'

¹³⁷ DFM, 1/1/311, P.K. Albertyn – D.F. Malan, 15 July 1912.

it was God's will that he left for Graaff-Reinet.¹³⁸ Malan did not come to a speedy decision, but he did not keep his church council in suspense for too long. By mid-August, he sent them a telegram to inform them that he had decided to accept the call to Graaff-Reinet.¹³⁹

God's will was also foremost in Malan's mind as he contemplated his own future and that of the continent he was traversing. While on the train to Bulawayo, he spread a newly updated map of Africa open in front of him. It was so different to the one he had studied as a schoolboy. Earlier cartographers had filled the blank spaces on the continent with meticulous drawings of lions, elephants, crocodiles and snakes. Now these fearsome creatures had been replaced by the names of mountains, rivers, lakes, and towns which could intimidate only the schoolboy who had to memorise them. Nevertheless, Malan felt that he was heading into a dark continent where uncivilised millions could not tell their right hand from their left – and these people were now the responsibility of the European nations who had painted their colours on the map. To Malan, the map resembled a cake from which the various colonial powers had each taken a bite. They carried the salvation of Africa's inhabitants on their shoulders, and would have to account to God on judgement day about what they had done for the land and the people for whom Christ had given His blood. Which ideal would be triumphant? Would it be Africa, with her earthly treasures, for Europe? Or would it be Europe, with the eternal Gospel, the intangible wealth of Christ, for Africa? Malan was convinced that the answer to the question lay with the church.¹⁴⁰

These musings revealed Malan as a child of his time – a product of a Social Darwinist, Victorian mindset – who saw the world in terms of a hierarchy of civilisations. To Malan, racial differences were God's creation, they were inherent, the natural order – and they went without questioning. Racial conflict was the result of the natural order being disturbed, and could be avoided by maintaining the status quo. By virtue of their skin colour and European heritage, white Afrikaners belonged to the Western civilisation, and were therefore inherently superior to black Africans, whom Malan regarded as primitive. To him, Africans belonged to the heathen nations, who were only now fortunate enough to be hearing the message of Christ for the first time. But Malan also believed that Africans had a natural and deep-rooted respect for the bearers of civilisation, which was why they addressed white men as 'baas' or even 'Inkosi' – the same name they used to refer to God. Malan was convinced that Africans had even more reverence for the Afrikaners than for the English; for example, they recognised that Paul Kruger was a greater man than Cecil John Rhodes.¹⁴¹ Within this context, the Afrikaners had a special, God-given calling,

¹³⁸ DFM, 1/1/313, A. Hofmeyr *et al.* – D.F. Malan, 27 July 1912.

¹³⁹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 213.

¹⁴⁰ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 5-8.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 13, 51.

‘The Afrikaner has power over the Kaffir [*sic*]. But truly, we would not have possessed this power if it had not been given to us from above. Has God not embedded it with a high and holy calling for our nation?’ Malan asked.¹⁴²

Malan’s idealism about racial relations revealed a deep naïveté about the nature and dynamics of interracial relations. Up to that point in his life, the demographics of the era dictated that his interaction with people of other races were limited to the Coloured community of the Western Cape. In this context, it was a paternalistic relationship in which he was always in a position of power – first as a farmer’s son who knew Coloureds only as servants, and later as the man who addressed alcoholism in the Coloured community by exhorting his white congregation to use their position of power responsibly. His knowledge of African people, in contrast, came from books and the tales told by his sister and friends who lived in the north. In a world far removed from the racial conflict of the interior Malan had been able to build his ideal. This ideal was confirmed as he travelled through the north, as the traveller is always insulated from the realities of Utopia’s everyday life as experienced by the inhabitants.

So it happened, therefore, that he became enamoured with the places he visited and the people he met. Everything and everyone was so unlike the city with its uniform people, who hold uniform opinions and have uniform habits, who practiced uniform occupations, wear uniform clothes, and live in uniform houses. Here, in the wilderness, there was diversity and uniqueness of personality, an unspoiltness of character. He was overwhelmed by the hospitality and generosity of the people who stood ready to welcome this man of the church with open arms. On his first night in Rhodesia, he slept in an old Voortrekker house, complete with antelope horns mounted on the walls and animal skins on the floor. He held a service outside under the trees, and as the hymns rose into the African heaven, he felt as if he had been transported back to the days of the Voortrekker leaders, Piet Retief and Andries Pretorius – a time when simplicity, hospitality, and sincerity was still the foundation of the Afrikaners’ national character, as he believed it to be.¹⁴³

As he travelled further into Rhodesia, Malan discovered some more worldly challenges to his elevated ideal of the Afrikaners. The communities in Rhodesia were thinly scattered and well out of reach of the church and its sanctifying community. Many had fallen prey to the ‘worldliness’ around them and stopped attending church altogether, while others attended the services of other denominations simply because it was too difficult to reach the nearest Dutch Reformed Church, in the process becoming estranged from their own denomination. Malan was disconcerted by the amount of ‘mixed marriages’ between Afrikaans-speaking members of the Dutch Reformed Church

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 14: ‘De Afrikaner heeft macht over den Kaffer [*sic*]. Maar voorwaar, wij zouden deze macht niet hebben zoo zij ons niet van boven gegeven ware. Zou God daarin voor ons volk niet weggelegd hebben eene hooge en heilige roeping?’

¹⁴³ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 10-11.

and members of the English-speaking churches. He believed that it weakened the bond between congregant and church, and that children born to such a marriage had no bond to the church at all.¹⁴⁴

It was the first time that Malan used the term ‘mixed marriages’ – and in a religious context. Interracial marriages, which later were to become known as ‘mixed marriages’ in apartheid jargon, between whites and Coloureds also took place in Rhodesia – and Malan found it abhorrent. He was convinced that Afrikaners were not a party to such unions – only English speakers ‘debased’ themselves as such. Malan ascribed it to the Afrikaners’ inherent aversion to such a shameful lifestyle, but the few exceptions to the rule concerned him deeply, and constituted an omen that the Afrikaners were also threatened by the spectre of racial mixing which, up to that point, had been kept at bay by the church.¹⁴⁵

Upon his arrival in Bulawayo, Malan was astonished by the city’s intricate racial hierarchy. It had a large Afrikaans-speaking Coloured community who refused to mix with the Africans or to share a church with them. For this reason, a separate Coloured church was being constructed – which means that their joining the ‘white’ church was not considered either. Coloured employers insisted that their African servants address them as ‘baas’ and ‘nooi’, or Mr and Mrs. ‘What an indescribably complicated social state of affairs we have in our fatherland!’¹⁴⁶ Malan exclaimed. To this was added the problem of white poverty, which also had an impact on interracial relations. Malan was shocked to discover that the Dutch Reformed Church’s orphanage in Bulawayo was filled beyond capacity, and had gotten to the point where it had to refuse entry to about twenty children. The result was that three of these children were taken in by a Coloured family. When the news of this situation reached the Dutch Reformed Minister, ‘compassion moved the good minister’s heart to take them into his own cramped dwelling. They are now accommodated in the parsonage’s bathroom, which is a small corrugated iron structure in the backyard.’¹⁴⁷ These words were written without any reflection – the undesirability of white children living with a Coloured family was so overwhelmingly self-evident as to blur the squalor of their new living conditions. To Malan, raising funds to alleviate such a desperate situation was the most important issue at hand, and the image of the three orphans cramped into a corrugated iron bathroom in the heat of the African sun was sure to move the more privileged Dutch Reformed congregants in the Western Cape to action.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁴⁶ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 20: ‘Wat een onbeschrijflijk ingewikkelden maatschappelijken toestand hebben wij niet in ons vaderland!’

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 22: ‘bewoog de barmhartigheid het hart van den goeden predikant om ze op te nemen in zijne eigene beknopte woning. Zij zijn nu gehuisvest in de badkamer van de pastorie, een zinkgebouwtje in de achterplaats.’

The appeal for funds was to become a prominent part of his letters to the Western Cape, as Malan found the Dutch Reformed congregations in a desperate situation. In addition to being widely dispersed, they were also too poor to maintain full-time ministers of their own, and received only the most sporadic of spiritual nourishment. Added to this, however, Malan saw another threat looming over their heads. Their environment not only posed the danger of these people being lost to their church, it also posed the danger of their children being lost to their nation. In Southern Rhodesian schools Dutch was barely tolerated, while in Northern Rhodesia no state funding was given to a school that taught any Dutch. The result was that Afrikaans-speaking children had to attend English schools where, according to Malan, they never heard the gospel in their own language and, to make matters worse, were taught to despise the language of their church and therefore their church itself.¹⁴⁸ In Malan's thinking, language, church, and nation were so indistinguishable that disregard for one was disregard for all. This desperate situation was exacerbated by the fact that many of these schools were Catholic, which meant that Afrikaner children were falling prey to the menace of the ever-encroaching 'Roomsche Gevaar' (Roman Catholic Peril) as it made its way southwards from the Catholic colonial powers in Central Africa. Malan was convinced that the only way to withstand this threat was by establishing a buffer in the form of a strong, Protestant, Afrikaner community in Rhodesia – and only the concerted efforts of a well-funded Dutch Reformed Church in Rhodesia could bring this about.¹⁴⁹ Thus, Malan's appeals to his readers' purses not only spoke to their spiritual conscience, but to their nationalist conscience as well – bolstered by the threat of Catholicism.

Malan travelled further north and deeper into the Catholic heartland. He visited congregations in Northern Rhodesia and finally crossed the border into the Belgian Congo. He was headed for the train's final terminus, the newly-built city of Elizabethville (current-day Lubumbashi), where a few Afrikaner families had settled. The jungles of the Congo made him feel claustrophobic – the trees were so dense that he could see no further than a few metres at a time and in the thick growth he had no hope of determining his direction. Here, in this wilderness, the possibility of getting lost was a real threat. In Malan's estimation, such a place, infested with tropical diseases and tsetse flies, was no place for an Afrikaner. He was therefore less than impressed with the Afrikaners who had wandered so far to the north.¹⁵⁰

These Afrikaners were a different breed. They were always trekking, not for any particular reason, but because it had become a religion to them. To Malan, it was a perversion of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination – the belief that whatever happens is God's will. They justified their

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁴⁹ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 23.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 36-7.

nomadic lifestyle by claiming that they were following the Spirit's call into the interior. Malan was sceptical as to whether this 'Spirit' originated from God. The Afrikaners of the Congo did not fill him with any romantic notions harking back to the times of the original Voortrekkers. Trekking taken to such an extreme was nothing but detrimental, Malan wrote:

Here it is certainly not always easy to distinguish between the spirit and the flesh. This at least is certain, that the trekker often suffers great, almost irreparable damage to his most elevated interests. They live completely beyond the influence of the Gospel for months and years, the children grow up uneducated, and the people gradually become averse to regular or hard work. People even run the risk of losing the Bible and family devotions completely. Because, as someone said to us, if one has to trek before daybreak in order to escape the heat, and if in the evening the wind blows out the candles in the wagon-tent, soon there is no question of Bible study.¹⁵¹

Malan's disapproval dripped from every page. It is clear that he regarded any spiritual labour among these people as an attempt to plug a dam wall that had already burst. His travel letters at the time of his visit to the Afrikaners of the Congo did not contain any of the usual appeals for funding. He clearly believed that they ought not to be there in the first place, and already belonged to the class of the poor whites. In his eyes, money was not the solution to this particular problem. Poor whiteism was a cause of grave concern to Malan, as he believed it to have a direct impact on the Afrikaners' God-given calling – as well as their continued existence. It had the potential to disturb the precariously-balanced racial hierarchy.

Malan regarded poor whiteism not so much as a poverty of flesh than as a poverty of spirit and mind, when all sense of adulthood and even self-respect had been lost. The only remedy, as far as he was concerned, was to rebuild their character.¹⁵² It formed a crucial driving force behind Malan's preoccupation with language rights, as he constantly made it clear that language was directly related to national self-respect and, in turn, self-respect was directly responsible for character. The white poverty that he encountered in the two Rhodesias was different, however. He dubbed it 'pioneer's poverty'. It was a temporary situation, caused by disasters such as the rinderpest or East Coast

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 42: 'Het is hier zeker niet altijd gemakkelijk om geest en vleesch van elkaar te onderscheiden. Dit ten minste is zeker, dat de trekker dikwijls groote, bijna onherstelbare, schade lijdt aan zijne hoogste belangen. Voor maanden en jaren blijft men dikwijls geheel buiten invloed van het Evangelie, de kinderen worden ongeleerd groot, men word langzamerhand afkeerig van geregeld of zwaar werk. Zelfs loopt men gevaar om zijn Bijbel en den huisgodsdienst geheel af te sterven. Want, zooals een ander aan ons zei, als men's morgens vóór dag trekken moet om de hitte te ontwijken, en als 's avonds in de wagentent de wind de kaars doodwaait, dan kom er al spoedig van 'boekevatterij' niets terecht.'

¹⁵² D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 48.

Fever, which had depleted cattle stocks, or the trial and error that accompanies the establishment of a new settlement. Pioneer's poverty did, however, pose the danger of converting to poor whiteism, as the above-mentioned disasters prompted people to take up the nomadic lifestyle of transport riding or, even worse, hunting, as a temporary remedy to their difficult situation. If the temporary remedy became a permanent one, family life – with its tender and elevating influence – became lost, one's sense of responsibility was weakened, children received no education – or if they did, merely a smattering – and moreover, people lost the habit of working hard and regularly on a daily basis. When transport riding no longer offered a living, or when all the game had been shot, they found themselves unfit for anything else. 'There is no doubt that the poor white problem was born in the back-tent of the transport wagon, and mostly behind the butt-end of a Mauser,' Malan declared.¹⁵³

It was essential to solve the poor white problem in order to fend off the 'Swart Gevaar' (Black Peril). Malan believed that those whites who tried to ward off the advance of the African by denying them the right to vote, or by denying them access to education, failed to grasp the essence of the problem. The racial balance was based on Europeans' inherent superiority and Africans' inherent respect for them. As long as Europeans acted in a manner that was worthy of that respect, African advancement, which was a natural process, did not have to be feared, as whites' inherent superiority would always assure them an elevated position. But if this respect was destroyed by the appalling behaviour of poor whites, no measure of the denial of education and political and social rights could save the white race from what was to come:

The violent exclusion of civil rights, which even the most unworthy white may enjoy, will in this case make the eventual revolution only more inevitable and bring it about more rapidly, with the outcome even more ill-fated. If, through his behaviour, the white loses the respect of the native, it means, in any case for South Africa – the Deluge. For this reason alone, if for no other, the South African nation ought to have the highest spiritual and moral standing and be the most civilised nation in the world. From this point of view, the solution of the poor white issue is also the solution to the native issue.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 49: 'Het lijdt geen twijfel dat de arme blanken kwestie in de achter-tent van den transportwagen, en meestal nog achter de kolf van de Mauser, geboren wordt.'

¹⁵⁴ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 50: 'De geweldadige uitsluiting van burgerrechten, die zelfs de meest onwaardige blanke mag genieten, zal in dit geval de uiteindelijke revolutie alleen des te zekerder en sneller aanbrengen, en ze des te noodlottiger laten zijn. Indien door zijn gedrag de blanke het respect van den naturel verbeurt, beteekent dit in ieder geval voor Zuid-Afrika – de zondvloed. Om deze reden alleen, indien om geen andere, behoort het Zuid-Afrikaansche volk het geestelijk en zedelijk hoogst staande en het best opgevoede volk van de wereld te zijn. Uit dit oogpunt beschouwd is de oplossing van de arme blanken kwestie ook de oplossing van inboorling kwestie.'

Therefore, Malan implored his readers to shift their focus. Instead of feeling threatened by Africans, they had to feel threatened by the degradations of their fellow-whites:

The Black Peril would not exist if it were not for a White Peril that is a hundred times greater, which undermines and destroys the black's respect for the white race. That the Kaffir [*sic*] is wicked, is in the first instance not the Kaffirs' [*sic*] fault, it is in the least not the fault of mission work, it is the fault of the many whites who live worse than Kaffirs [*sic*].¹⁵⁵

In his travel diary, Malan pleaded incessantly that the Dutch Reformed Church expand its work in Rhodesia, and that it build Dutch-language schools. There was, however, also a new, and crucial, turn in his thoughts. He had grown up in a political home, devoured newspapers since his student years, written reams and reams of political opinions to his family and friends, and made rousing speeches on the most politicised issue of his day – that being the language movement. Politics was like oxygen to him and yet, under Valeton's influence, he had pushed it away and dismissed it as dirty. While in Rhodesia, however, it became more apparent to him than ever that it was policy decisions made at government level that determined the nature of society. National upliftment could only be truly successful if the government supported the issues that were close to the nation's heart, such as the education of its children in the language and faith of its national church. The church could only be successful in its task if the very highest echelons of the state were infused with its ideals. For the first time, Malan began to envision a place for religion in politics:

With reference to the increasing secularisation of our nation, as is evident from the deliberate exclusion of God's name from the Union-constitution, and furthermore with reference to the Christian education of our nation, the University issue, the Sunday issue, etc., the time might come when there will be an independent Christian-national party in our Parliament, who can give a guarantee to the nation that its holiest principles will under no circumstances be turned into tradable commodities.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 51: 'Het zwarte gevaar zal er niet zijn als er niet was het honderdmaal grooter witte gevaar, dat het respekt van den zwarte voor het witte ras ondermijnt en vernietigt. Dat de Kaffer [*sic*] slecht is, is niet in de eerste plaats de schuld van den Kaffer [*sic*], allermint van de zending; het is de schuld van de vele blanken die erger dan Kaffers [*sic*] leven.'

¹⁵⁶ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 70: 'Met het oog op de toenemende ontkerstening van ons volk, zooals blijkt o.a. uit de opzettelijke weglating van den naam van God uit de Unie-Constitutie, en verder met het oog op de Christelijke opvoeding van ons volk, de Universiteitskwestie, de Zondagskwestie, enz., zal de tijd misschien ook komen dat er in ons Parlement zal zijn een onafhankelijke Christelijk-nationale partij, die aan het volk het waarborg geven kan dat van zijne heiligste beginselen onder geene omstandigheden handelswaar gemaakt zal worden.'

This vision was closer than he realised. It was still a few months before Hertzog's dismissal from the Botha Cabinet, and more than a year before the National Party was to be founded – but deep in the back of Malan's mind, a door that had been shut for many years began to open.

It was Malan's belief that the fate of the two Rhodesias was closely tied to the fate of the Union of South Africa. In his opinion, Rhodes's Chartered Company constituted a corrupt fiefdom over which the Company lorded with no regard for its inhabitants – but its days were numbered, as its charter was about to expire. Malan believed that it was best for Rhodesia to join the Union of South Africa, but saw that the Chartered Company was using its newspapers to sow suspicion against the Union – and especially against its Afrikaner population and their assertion of their language rights. Even if an amalgamation did not take place, the fates of the three territories would remain tied. The two Rhodesias' abundant land made them a natural destination for emigrants from the Union. It was a place where Afrikaners could maintain their national identity, which would in turn constitute an eternal tie between them and the rest of their nation, and its church, in the Union. Afrikaners in Rhodesia, however, did face grave difficulties in the face of the Rhodesian governments' hostility to their language and, of course, the Roman Catholic Peril. What they needed was their own Elijah, their own leader, who would act as their champion.¹⁵⁷ 'The *one* great need of the Afrikaners in both Rhodesias is a leader around whom they can gather, a man, who is strong and principled and who will take up the cudgels for them,' Malan declared.¹⁵⁸

It became clear to Malan that the Afrikaners in Rhodesia not only needed the funds and the prayers of their kin in the south, but they also had to insist that their own government act in their interests. In terms of race relations, it was also of utmost importance that the government in Rhodesia provide an environment for its whites to be elevated, as they were destroying all the good work done by the missionaries – or at least the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church.¹⁵⁹

Many whites complained that missionaries who educated the Africans stirred up racial tensions, as educated Africans had no respect for whites. For this reason, they were opposed to Africans receiving any education whatsoever. Malan tried to make it clear to them that it was impossible to halt African education – it was inevitable that Africans would strive to elevate themselves:

But even if, for the sake of the majority of the white race, a hostile attitude towards the education of the Kaffir [*sic*] could be justified, with the natives undeniably striving higher, such opposition would in any case be powerless. You cannot hold the waters of the Zambezi

¹⁵⁷ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 6, 84-5.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 33: 'De ééne groote behoefte van de Afrikaners in de beide Rhodesia's is een leider, om wien zij zich kunnen scharen, een man, die sterk en beginselvast is en die voor hen in de bresse wil staan.'

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

back with your hand. You cannot place a damper on Mount Etna. The only remedy is more, and especially better, education for the white so that he can, also without violence, maintain his superiority. Knowledge is power.¹⁶⁰

Malan did not feel threatened by, or hostile to, African education – as always, he shifted the focus back to the Afrikaners. He took pains to assure his readers that the worrisome ‘cheekiness’ of which they complained was nowhere to be found at the Dutch Reformed mission station in Southern Rhodesia, Morgenster. Instead, upon visiting the mission station where his sister laboured, he was overwhelmed by the Africans’ courtesy. He tried to explain to his audience, in the best possible terms, that there was nothing negative about Africans learning English. Black missionaries who worked among their own people in their own language also needed spiritual nourishment – and since there were no such books in their own language, they had to be able to read English in order to fulfil such an important need. Furthermore, speaking English enlarged an African’s earning potential, and improved the manner in which he was treated:

The English are, as a rule, no experts in learning foreign languages and therefore, if he knows English, he can earn more. And besides, if he can understand his master he can do what is expected of him, then he does not have to be cursed or beaten or kicked, as so often happens.¹⁶¹

Like his comments on the children who lived in the minister’s bathroom, these words were written without any reflection – but they were written to an audience who could empathise with the situation. Malan did make it clear, however, that mere knowledge of the English language did not constitute an education, and was openly hostile to American and British missionaries who laced the Gospel with a good dose of cultural imperialism. As far as he was concerned, the education that they provided was designed to tear the African away from his nature and his nation. It would destroy his self-respect and in doing so, his character and ultimately, his future. Self-respect was of crucial importance, as it was the only way to elevate a human being, regardless of colour. This was Malan’s true motivation behind his language activism:

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 76-7: ‘Maar al zou ter wille van de meerderheid van het blanke ras een vijandige houding tegen de opvoeding van den Kaffer [*sic*] ook gerechtvaardigd zijn, daar is, waar de naturellen onmiskenbaar naar boven streven, zulk tegenstand in ieder geval machteloos. Gij kunt niet de wateren van de Zambesi met uw hand tegenhouden. Gij kunt niet een domper zetten op de Etna. Het eenige redmiddel is meer en vooral beter opvoeding voor den blanke zoodat hij, ook zonder geweld, zijne meerderheid kan handhaven. Kennis is macht.’

¹⁶¹ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 77: ‘De Engelschen zijn als regel geene experten in het aanleeren van vreemde talen en daarom, kent hij Engelsch, dan kan hij meer verdienen. En bovendien, als hij zijn meester verstaan kan dan kan hij doen wat van hem verwacht wordt, en dan behoeft hij niet gescholden en geslagen en geschopt te worden, zooals zoo dikwijls gebeurt.’

The struggle for the language is a struggle for self-respect and character, and therefore also for the spiritual and material independence of the nation. The satisfactory solution to the language issue is, far more than labour-colonies and industrial schools, also the solution to the poor white and poor coloured issue.¹⁶²

He was therefore adamant that black and Coloured children, like white children, should receive mother tongue education during their first six years of schooling. Thereafter, the parents could choose the medium of further education. Such education, however, should not be aimed at producing African or Coloured imitations of Englishmen,¹⁶³ but had to be tailored to each nation's particular character and calling:

What has to be done is that the governments of Southern Africa should not, as has been the case up to this point, leave the education of the coloureds to the whims of the Mission societies, even less should they force a wrong and disastrous system on the Mission societies but, taking account of the coloured's destiny as a labourer, determine a particular native-education policy and embody it in law.¹⁶⁴

It was 1912, and yet Malan already envisioned the Verwoerdian system of Bantu-education that was to be implemented by his government in 1953. His view of Africans reflected the conventional wisdom of the time, but these conventions would become the staple of apartheid mythology and discourse more than thirty years later – almost as if they passed from common knowledge to law of nature.

While in Rhodesia, Malan used the opportunity to visit the ancient ruins at Khami, and at Great Zimbabwe, and was intrigued by the way in which the stones were arranged to form beautiful patterns. As he told his readers, these ruins were a mystery. The identity of their original inhabitants remained unknown, and one could only guess when they were built and for what purpose. Africans were obviously not capable of such architecture – these were clearly the remnants of an old

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 79: 'De strijd om de taal is een strijd om het zelfrespekt en het karakter, en daarom ook om de geestelijke en stoffelijke zelfstandigheid van het volk. De bevredigende oplossing van de taalkwestie is nog veel meer dan arbeidskolonieën en industriele scholen de oplossing ook van de arme blanken en de arme kleurlingen kwestie.'

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 79-80.

¹⁶⁴ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 79-80: 'Wat gedaan moet worden is dat de Regeeringen van Zuid-Afrika de opvoeding van kleurlingen niet, zoals tot hiertoe, overlaten moeten aan de willekeur van de Zendinggenootschappen, veel minder een verkeerd noodlottig stelsel aan de Zendinggenootschappen opdringen maar, rekening houdende met de bestemming van de kleurling al arbeider, een bepaalde naturellen onderwijs-politiek moeten neerleggen en in een wet belichamen.'

civilisation that came from the outside world, probably because it was drawn to the gold mines that remained scattered throughout the area, and was either destroyed or left on its own accord. In all probability, the ruins scattered throughout Rhodesia were the remains of the ancient civilisation of the half-mythical civilisation of Monomotapa, which even Van Riebeeck had hoped to discover.¹⁶⁵

Malan also recounted the conventional wisdom that South Africa's various population groups arrived at the same time. He wrote that, as Khoi-Khoi and African migrants made their way south, they and their cattle stocks were halted in Central Africa by the ever-vicious tsetse-fly. At this point their paths separated, with the Khoi-Khoi migrating along the west coast and the Africans migrating down the east coast to finally arrive in the Cape at about the same time as the European settlers. This explained why black people were found mostly in the eastern half of South Africa, and Coloured people in the west.¹⁶⁶ These theories were later dispelled by archaeological research, but the apartheid thinkers held fast to them until late in the twentieth century. Like Theal's history books, these theories formed part of Malan's perception of South African history: in his mind there was no true aboriginal race which had a 'first claim' to the land – and in his paternalistic worldview, Africans were incapable of 'high' forms of civilisation. Paternalism permeated his perceptions of Coloureds and Africans, but it contained no hatred. At Morgenster he met an old African man named Makoa who filled him with deep admiration. As Malan wrote to his readers, Makoa was the one of the most beautiful people he had ever met. He suffered from leprosy and had lost some of his fingers and one of his legs to the disease – yet he remained at the bedside of another leper, caring for him and talking to him about everything he had read in the Bible. When the patient died, Makoa refused to leave him alone after all the time they had spent together, and remained with the body all night.¹⁶⁷ Malan wrote:

Makoa is but a poor, crippled Kaffir [*sic*]. And he is a leper. But on the day he shall hear: "I was ill and you visited me; I was imprisoned and you came to Me. Because as much as you have done unto one of the least of them, so you have done unto Me."

Returning from a sick person, a fellow-brother once said to me: "She has a beautiful face, as beautiful as I have seldom seen. But it is not the beauty of nature. It is the beauty of grace." Makoa is one of the most beautiful of all people. He has the beauty, not of nature, but of grace.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 16, 73.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁶⁷ D.F. Malan, *Naar Congoland*, 2.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: 'Makoa is maar een arme verminkte Kaffer [*sic*]. En hij is melaatsch. Maar in dien dag zal hy het hooren: "Ik ben krank geweest en gij hebt Mij bezocht; Ik ben in de gevangenis geweest en gij zijt tot Mij gekomen. Want zooveel gij dit dit gedaan hebt aan één van deze Mijne minste, zoo hebt gij het Mij gedaan." Komende van een kranke zei een mede-broeder eens aan mij: "Zij heeft een mooi gezicht, zoo mooi als ik weinig gezien heb. Maar het

Malan was also overwhelmed by the beauty of the country that he visited. He had seen the capitals of Europe but remained unimpressed. Only the Swiss Alps and the lakes of Bavaria were able to move him. Here in the African bush, however, he was enchanted. Its beauty was a revelation of God's greatness. Every place was more beautiful than the next, from the Matopos Mountains to the fertile valleys and the majesty of the Victoria waterfalls. The Zambezi River overwhelmed him; it was a 'regal river', the 'pride of Africa'. Its clear and living waters, with its 'dark-green, bushy banks and shady islands present a scene *so* picturesque and *so* romantic as to rival any other in the world.'¹⁶⁹ The Zambezi stayed with Malan long after he left. He was to return one day, with his bride.

Morgenster was the last stop on Malan's long journey. Here he could visit his sister in her own surroundings for the first time. One of the missionaries, Maria van Coller, recorded her impression of Malan in her diary: 'Despite outward appearances, Dr Malan is cheerful, sympathetic (very). Can laugh heartily, reason heartily, especially with women.'¹⁷⁰

Malan finally returned to Montagu at the beginning of November 1912. In his absence, his travel descriptions to *De Kerkbode* had made him a celebrity, as they had evoked a stream of letters and articles. Malan and the Afrikaners of Rhodesia were at the forefront of public interest.¹⁷¹

Malan now had to take the next big step in his life: from Montagu to Graaff-Reinet. There were long discussions between him and his stepmother – her following him was not a foregone conclusion. Finally, however, she decided to accompany him to his new congregation, and thus the entire Malan family joined in the preparations.¹⁷²

is niet de mooiheid der natuur. Het is de mooiheid der genade." Makoa is een van de mooiste van alle menschen. Hij heeft de mooiheid niet der natuur maar der genade.'

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 24: 'donker-groene, bosch-begroeiende oevers en de schaduwrijke eilanden bieden een tooneel *zoo* schilderachtig, *zoo* romantisch als men ergens in de wereld zal aantreffen.'

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 222: 'Dr. Malan is in weerwil van uiterlike voorkomen, opgeruimd, symphatiek (uiterst). Kan lekker lach, lekker redeneer, vooral met vrouwmense.'

¹⁷¹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 222-3, 228-9.

¹⁷² DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 14.

Chapter 4 – From the Pulpit to the Podium, 1912-1915

The last days of 1912 were tumultuous ones. During this time, Malan took leave of his Montagu congregation, which gave him a farewell to rival his welcome. A large open-air gathering was held, speeches were made and, like six years earlier, the church benches groaned under the excessive weight of the scores who came to listen to their minister's farewell sermon.¹ Once these rituals were carried out, Malan left for Cape Town and Stellenbosch where, as a member of the Dutch Reformed Church's examination board, he examined proponents before they were granted entry to the ministry.² He then boarded a train to Pretoria, as he had been invited to give a Dingaan's Day speech at De Wildt, a sleepy settlement to the north-west of the city, on 16 December.³ As Malan travelled north, however, he was unknowingly riding into the clouds of a gathering political storm.

The Botha Cabinet had barely managed to weather a very rocky year. In May 1912, there had been a Cabinet crisis after the Minister of Railways, J.W. Sauer, had failed to coordinate his budget with the Treasury. As a result, the Treasurer, H.C. Hull, had resigned. Then, in the last months of the year, Genl J.B.M. Hertzog had embarked on a campaign of highly belligerent public speeches – in which he had ruffled a whole range of feathers – concerning topics ranging from the language issue through to South Africa's sovereignty.⁴ The issue of sovereignty was a particularly sensitive one, and therefore the imperial connection formed a central tenet of Botha's conciliation policy, as it was, of course, a matter close to the hearts of South Africa's English-speaking population. According to the constitution, South Africa had a single government. It was not a sovereign, independent state, however, since with regards to foreign relations, South Africa was bound to the decisions of the English king – who, in turn, acted on the advice of his British ministers in all matters of war and peace. Hertzog attacked this state of affairs, asserting that South Africa ought to have the right to determine her own international destiny – and that its interests had to come first at all times.⁵ 'South Africa first' became the slogan with which Hertzog was associated.

Notably, Hertzog did not lobby for the imperial connection to be ended, but supported it only insofar as it was beneficial to South Africa.⁶ He was, however, adamant that South Africa had to be governed by men who were filled with the South African spirit and who truly loved the

¹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan: Die Eerste Veertig Jaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1969), 225-7.

² *Ibid.*, 227.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 268-9.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Taal, Suid-Afrika eerste – Nylstroom, 5 Okt. 1912', in F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Oberholster, eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2: Maart 1910-Maart 1913* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1977), 265.

country. According to him, only persons with these characteristics were worthy of the name 'Afrikaners'.⁷ It was at this point that Hertzog's use of the word 'Afrikaner' caused confusion. He used the word 'Afrikaner' interchangeably with 'South African', and it is only by scrutinising the context within which he used the term that one may determine whether he is referring to a white Afrikaans speaker of Dutch extraction, or to a citizen of South Africa whose loyalty is to South Africa in the first instance, and to the Empire in the second. For example, Hertzog stated that it was possible for someone to be a good Afrikaner within a day after arrival in South Africa – but also that in most cases it was unlikely to happen even after twenty or thirty years. An example of the latter was the case of Sir Thomas Smartt, the leader of the Opposition who, as far as Hertzog was concerned, posed as an Afrikaner but in truth belonged to a class of foreign fortune-seekers.

According to Hertzog, the majority of the foreign fortune-seekers, as he termed them, were English speakers whose foremost loyalties lay with the Empire and who lived in South Africa in order to enrich themselves. He therefore openly stated his opposition to the policy of conciliation – which was used by Botha to appease such people – and in its stead, pleaded for a spirit of South African nationalism, which he believed was the only way to bring about a true feeling of fraternity. He did, however, make it clear that he felt a closer affinity to his fellow Dutch speakers than to the English. This was because he believed that Afrikaners of Dutch extraction had a deeper sense of South African nationalism than their English-speaking counterparts, since their ancestors had arrived in South Africa two centuries earlier.⁸ He also regarded the language struggle as a manifestation of this nationalism.⁹ Therefore, in Hertzog's mind, South Africans of Dutch extraction were almost automatically Afrikaners, while English speakers could qualify as such. As a judge in Steyn's Free State administration, Hertzog had formed a life-long friendship with an English-speaking civil servant named Jack Brebner. He was also impressed by the so-called *mak Engelse* (tame English), who served the President and the Republic with admirable loyalty,¹⁰ and who even fought on the side of the Boers during the Anglo-Boer War.¹¹ Such men served to prove his point.

This muddled view was very different to Malan's clear and straightforward assertion that English and Afrikaans speakers belonged to two distinct and separate communities, which in turn formed part of a broader South African nation. This was not too different from Hertzog's famous

⁷ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Taal, Suid-Afrika Eerste – Nylstroom, 5 Okt. 1912', in F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Oberholster, eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2: Maart 1910-Maart 1913*, 265; J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionalisme – De Wildt, 7 Des. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 283.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁹ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Taal, Suid-Afrika Eerste – Nylstroom, 5 Okt. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 266.

¹⁰ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: A.P. Boekhandel, 1943), 52, 56.

¹¹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1987), 38.

‘two-stream’ policy, which was based on the idea that ‘English and Dutch-speaking Afrikaners’ formed two streams that flowed alongside each other.¹² Compared to Malan’s argument, however, Hertzog’s idea was rather fluid – as was his definition of an Afrikaner, which was like a fashion that failed to take off within the broader South African discourse.

In general, Hertzog was notorious for his inability to express himself lucidly. Journalists battled to quote him correctly and, as a result, he constantly complained that his views were misrepresented.¹³ This was exacerbated by the fact that Hertzog was about as diplomatically skilled as an army tank and as subtle as a cannon – he did not flinch from naming names, and launched personal attacks on his opponents. He also publicly criticised the policies of the Cabinet – of which he was a member – amongst other things stating that ‘conciliation’ and ‘loyalty’ (to the Empire) were ‘idle words, that fooled no one.’¹⁴ Compared to Malan’s later orations, Hertzog’s speeches were crude. In his youth he had considered a career in the church, but instead opted to study law – a course of study that he pursued at the Victoria College and later at the University of Amsterdam.¹⁵ In him, the church lost a firebrand.

His audiences, however, were spellbound – not by his rhetoric, but by the force of his personality, which had the power to sweep up a crowd. A Dutch journalist once wrote:

How can it be that this Afrikaner leader makes such a deep impression on his audience? He is in no way a powerful orator, and neither is he a good speaker. Slowly, his poorly constructed sentences come out; his voice almost colourless. And yet the people listen with rapt attention from beginning to end. From the first moment, Genl Hertzog has you, and he does not let you go before he said his last word; then you too cheer along in the ardent tribute that is paid to him. Only later do you explain to yourself that it was the staunch will, the holy conviction, and, especially, the man’s great honesty, that swept you along.¹⁶

At a meeting in Nylstroom in October 1912, in response to an accusation by a member of the opposition that he wanted to make Afrikaners the masters of South Africa, Hertzog shot back

¹² J.B.M. Hertzog, ‘Toespraak: Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionalisme – Vrededorp, 13 Nov. 1912’, in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*: 280.

¹³ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, 136.

¹⁴ J.B.M. Hertzog, ‘Toespraak: Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionalisme – De Wildt, 7 Des. 1912’, in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 287: ‘ijdele woorden, die niemand bedriegen.’

¹⁵ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 37.

¹⁶ Quoted in C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 308: ‘Hoe kom dit dat hierdie Afrikaner-voorman so ’n diep indruk op sy gehoor maak? ’n Magtige redenaar is hy geensins, selfs nie eens ’n goeie spreker nie. Langsaam kom die nie mooi gevormde sinne daaruit; byna sonder kleur is die stem. En tog luister mens van die begin tot die einde met gespanne aandag. Van die eerste oomblik af het genl. Hertzog jou vas en hy laat jou nie los voordat hy sy laaste woord gesê het nie; en dan juig jy mee in die geesdriftige hulde wat aan hom gebring word. Eers later gee jy jou rekenskap dat dit meer die vaste wil, die heilige oortuiging en veral die groot eerlikheid van dié man is wat jou meegesleep het.’

with the words: 'In S.A. the Afrikaner is the master and will remain so.'¹⁷ The directness of the delivery blunted the subtle meaning of the word 'Afrikaner', and there was a resulting outcry amongst English speakers around the country. Botha, who was in the English-dominated Natal at the time, felt the full brunt of the anger, and envisioned all his efforts at winning the English-speaking constituency over to his side going up in smoke. In a letter to Smuts, he described the damage: 'The whole Natal feels insulted about it – in newspapers, clubs, streets, houses, or wherever one goes. There is unprecedented excitement which, as you can understand, is doing us much, very much harm.'¹⁸

Hertzog stuck to his guns, but tried to clarify his statement. After this incident, he took more care to use the term 'South Africans', rather than 'Afrikaners',¹⁹ and was at pains to explain that in his use of the word 'Afrikaner', he was not referring to a particular language group.²⁰ Nevertheless, by reiterating his argument – albeit now in a more clarified form – he essentially continued to fire one salvo after another. He continued to make similar speeches in Smithfield, Johannesburg, and finally at De Wildt, on 7 December 1912.²¹ Here he reiterated the statements that he had made earlier, including those pertaining to the imperial connection. A journalist reported on Hertzog's speech that:

As far as the Speaker is concerned, imperialism is good, but only insofar as it is beneficial to South Africa. If it clashes with the interests of South Africa, then he is definitely an opponent of it. The Speaker is willing to stake the future of his political career on this doctrine. His feeling on the matter is that the first question one should always ask when it comes to national affairs is this: does South Africa benefit or not, and if not, it is the duty of every decent Afrikaner to say: I want nothing to do with the matter.²²

These words appear to have been the last straw that broke the camel's back. Hertzog became a hero to the Afrikaner community, but a villain in the English press – a position that was extremely ironic. In spite of his belligerent behaviour, this polarisation was not what he had sought – his aim

¹⁷ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Taal, Suid-Afrika Eerste – Nylstroom, 5 Okt. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 265: 'In Z.A. is de Afrikaner baas en zal hij baas spelen.'

¹⁸ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 111.

¹⁹ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Siviele Dienswet en Bantoebeleid – Smithfield, 14 Okt. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 274-6.

²⁰ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Afrikaners – Johannesburg, 26 Okt. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 277.

²¹ See *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*, 264-87.

²² J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Suid-Afrikaanse nasionalisme – De Wildt, 7 Des. 1912', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 2*: 283: 'Imperialisme is voor spreker net goed, voorzover het dienstig is voor Zuid-Afrika. Waar het in botsing komt met de belangen van Zuid-Afrika, is hy er een besliste tegenstander van. Spreker is bereid zij toekomstige loopbaan als politikus te laten afhangen van deze leer. Zijn gevoelen is, dat de eerste vraag, die men zich te allen tijde moet stellen, waar het geldt landzaken is: word Zuid-Afrika erdoor gebaat of niet en wanneer dit niet het geval is, dan is het de plicht van elke rechtgeaarde Afrikaner te zeggen: ik wil met de zaak niets te maken hebben.'

had been to unite the two groups in a shared sense of South African nationalism. Hertzog was now, however, the official champion of Afrikaner nationalism instead.

The Cabinet was thrown into turmoil. On 9 December, a mere two days after Hertzog's controversial speech, a by-election was scheduled in the predominantly English-speaking Grahamstown. The SAP candidate standing in the by-election was dealt a crushing blow by his Unionist opponent – this was deemed a sign that Botha's policy of conciliation was unsuccessful. A member of the Cabinet, Col Leuchars from Natal, informed Botha of his resignation on the following day, Tuesday 10 December 1912.²³ To Leuchars, Hertzog's comments on the imperial connection were tantamount to declaring that he (Hertzog) would milk the Empire for all that it was worth and then discard it once it was dry. A number of meetings took place in the next few days, all of which failed to reconcile the warring parties. Botha clearly wanted Hertzog to offer his resignation, but the latter refused. By Friday 13 December, a few hours before Malan's train arrived in Pretoria, Botha had notified his Cabinet that he would resign.²⁴

Malan stepped off the train in Pretoria, but as he had to wait for the train to De Wildt, he decided to use the few hours he had at his disposal to pay a visit to Ds. H.S. Bosman, the minister of Pretoria's Dutch Reformed Church. Upon seeing Malan, Bosman grabbed him by the arm and pulled him into his study. He there related to Malan that he had just received a call from Botha, who had informed him that he would dissolve his Cabinet in order to reconstitute it without Hertzog. The news would only break to the rest of South Africa the next morning, and then it seemed that the whole world was in turmoil – not least at De Wildt where the crisis had started, and where Malan was to speak.²⁵ Malan felt as though he was as close to the pulse of South Africa's fate as he could possibly be.

A few days later, on his way back from De Wildt, Malan had to change trains in Pretoria again. This time he met with Ds. A.J. Louw, with whom he had served as assistant-minister in Heidelberg more than six years earlier. Louw knew Botha personally, since the latter had been a member of his congregation years before in Vryheid, Natal. Malan and Louw both served on the vigilance committee that kept watch over the Victoria College's interests, as the threat of the planned University of Cape Town continued to loom. Malan's presence in Pretoria was an opportune moment for the two of them to meet in order to discuss the university question. Together they decided to pay a visit to the Secretary of Education, George Hofmeyr²⁶ – the older brother of

²³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 315; A.N. Pelsler, 'Die De Wildt-toespraak Van Generaal Hertzog In Die Lig Van Latere Gebeure', in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, 1965), 260.

²⁴ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 315-8.

²⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 16-17.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

Andrew Hofmeyr, Malan's friend and congregant in Montagu, and Willie Hofmeyr, Malan's fellow language activist.²⁷

Hofmeyr's office was situated on Church Square in Pretoria, in the same building as Botha's offices. As Malan and Louw entered the building, they bumped into Botha himself. Botha, delighted to see his former shepherd, invited them to his offices, where he began telling them about the crisis and the 'impossible' Hertzog, who he had been forced to get rid of. While he spoke, Malan remained silent, as he did not know Botha well enough to feel comfortable in expressing an opinion. Louw, however, stated what both men were clearly thinking: 'But General, is it not your "exaggerated conciliation-politics" that are the true cause of this problem?'²⁸ Botha must have felt taken aback by the question, but he assured them that he would maintain his policy to the bitter end.

While they were there, Botha's phone rang. It was Mrs Botha calling from their farm in Standerton, wanting to know when her husband would be home. 'This trifling matter that is currently keeping me occupied will be settled by tomorrow or the day after ... then I will come home to rest', he assured her.²⁹ As they left Botha's office, Malan was bursting with indignation: as far as he was concerned, this was most certainly not a 'trifling matter', it was the fate of a nation hanging in the balance – South Africa's future depended on it.³⁰ Unbeknown to him, this series of events had set a process in motion that would change his own life within a mere eighteen months.

Malan returned to the Cape to join his stepmother and sisters on their annual holiday at the Strand – while Pretoria continued to convulse. A young lawyer named Tielman Roos organised a protest meeting in favour of Hertzog, which was attended by about 5,000 people. The organisers, upon realising that their chosen venue, Pretoria's Prince's Park, did not have a stage, decided to rent market trolleys. When they spotted a large mound of earth that had been delivered to the park's gardeners, however, they decided to cancel their order. Closer inspection revealed that the mound of earth was, in fact, a heap of manure, but by then it was too late to remedy the situation. Thus, on 28 December 1912, Hertzog's supporters were treated to a mixture of organic stench and fiery endorsements of their champion's nationalism.³¹ The highlight was provided by the hero of the Anglo-Boer War, Genl Christiaan de Wet, who declared to his audience: 'I would rather be on a dung-hill among my people than on a glittering platform among foreigners.'³² Thereafter the crowd proceeded to Hertzog's house, availing themselves of nearly every possible means of transport.

²⁷ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1953), 4-5.

²⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 17: 'Maar Generaal, is die werklike oorsaak van al die moeilikheid nie u "oordrewe konsiliasie-politiek" nie?'

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 18: 'Hierdie sakkie wat my nou besig hou, sal my môre of oormôre afgehandel wees... dan kom ek huis toe om te rus.'

³⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 18.

³¹ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos – Political Prophet or Opportunist?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1987), 29-30.

³² Quoted in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I* (Pretoria en Cape Town: H&R-Academica, 1975, 114: 'ik wil mij liever op een mesthoop onder mijn volk bevinden dan op een schitterend platform onder vreemdelinge.'

Genl De Wet led the procession on horseback, followed by about 100 equestrians, who were in turn followed by cyclists and pedestrians, as well as six trams carting women and the elderly.³³

A similar scene played itself out among the rocky outcrops of the Little Karoo desert, around a month later. Malan's reception in Graaff-Reinet was scheduled for 1 February 1913 and, as was the case in Montagu, the event was a spectacular one. On the day before his official confirmation into the local church, a crowd gathered to welcome him to the searing heat of the Karoo as he stepped off the train. Songs were sung and addresses were given. Thereafter, a procession of horses, followed by cyclists, some carts and, finally, a number of motor cars, accompanied him into the town. The result was a cloud of dust that nearly suffocated the participants, and ensured that they were covered with dirt by the time they reached the crowd awaiting them at the town's parsonage. The motor cars in particular were deemed to be the prime culprits of this unpleasant state of affairs. Once in town, more addresses followed from, amongst others, the Sunday School, and the Afrikaner Christelike Vroue Vereniging (ACVV) – a charity organisation driven by Afrikaner women.

In responding to the addresses, Malan emphasised the role of the Christian women in the congregation – and the vital position they occupied in the Bible. In his experience, women were always ahead of the men – for example, women were the first to have witnessed Jesus' resurrection. Time and again, Malan told his audience, he had found that women held the key to answering to the missionary call, as well as the solution to the poor white problem.³⁴ Malan was no longer the shy and timid minister that he had been a few years earlier. By this time, experience had taught him some valuable lessons. He knew that it was the womens' cake sales and church bazaars that generated the funds for mission work and charity. It was they who assisted the minister as he tried his utmost to ease the poverty of his poorest congregants. Without their labours and their support, his task was insurmountable.

That evening, there was a reception in the town hall. Seating had been arranged for an estimated 800 to 900 people, but there were countless others who endured the entire evening on their feet.³⁵ Malan's new colleague, Ds. P.K. Albertyn – who had lived in the same boarding house as he during their student years in Stellenbosch³⁶ – took the opportunity to tease Malan about his bachelor status while, on a more serious note, the mayor expressed the hope that Malan would be a strong leader in his new community – not only in spiritual affairs, but also in political matters. Malan's predecessor, Ds. A.F. Louw – whom Malan knew well since his elder sister, Cinie, was

³³ O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I*, 114.

³⁴ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 233.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 234-5.

³⁶ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/314, P.K. Albertyn – D.F. Malan, 19 August 1912.

married to Louw's brother, Andrew – took the opportunity to take leave of his parish.³⁷ Louw could not resist firing a few parting shots at the town council, who had failed to deliver a proper water supply to the town and allowed the town to be overrun by prickly pears: 'If he knew that it would have remedied the situation, he would have liked to toss a prickly pear under each council member's blanket every three months.'³⁸ When Malan finally received an opportunity to speak, he assured his new congregation that, in spite of the dust and the prickly pears, Graaff-Reinet had made a favourable impression on him.³⁹

Malan was certainly ready to tackle the state of affairs in Graaff-Reinet. Months before his arrival, Albertyn had briefed him on the situation. The town had a large poor white community, and three poor white schools were under the church council's control. Albertyn was, however, more worried about the state of language in Graaff-Reinet's schools, and wanted Malan's support in enforcing the law with regards to mother tongue education. To this end, he would ensure that Malan was given a position on the school councils since, at the local boys' school, Dutch did not receive its rightful place. The situation was even worse at the local girls' school due to its principal, Miss Murray – the sister of the Church's moderator, Dr Andrew Murray Jr. According to Albertyn, she was:

...a beautiful and loyal member of our church, but very English in her views. She has been the head of the institution for more than 30 years and she has had an immense influence on the Anglicisation of staff and children. My dear fellow, it is just awful! Otherwise, as far as religion is concerned she has had a very wholesome influence on the entire institution and takes care, insofar as it is possible, to appoint only religious teachers.⁴⁰

Albertyn's words were a telling reflection of the era, when a minister of the church could write to another to voice his concerns – none of which were spiritual and all of which were nationalist. It was indeed a time when language, nationalism, and religion were inseparable.

Malan's eventual meeting with Miss Murray and her institution took place on a far more personal level than Albertyn might have expected. The eldest of his three sisters, Essie, had

³⁷ D.W. Krüger and C.J. Beyers, eds, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek, Deel III* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 555-7; C.J. Beyers, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek, Deel IV* (Durban: Butterworth & Kie, 1981), 333-4; B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 235.

³⁸ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 235: 'Wist hij dat het helpen zou, zou hij wenschen ieder drie maanden een Turkschevijg onder de kombars van ieder raadslid te werpen.'

³⁹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 236.

⁴⁰ DFM, 1/1/314, P.K. Albertyn – D.F. Malan, 19 August 1912: '...schoon trouwe lid van onze kerk, zeer Engelsch in hare beschouwingen. Zy staat al reeds meer dan 30 jaren aan het hoofd van de inrichting, en haar invloed heft ontzettend veel gedaan om staf en kinderen te verengelschen. Man, dit is een naarheid! Overigens heft zy, wat de godsdienst betreft een zeer heilzamen invloed op de gansche inrichting, en doet moeite om alleen, zoover mogelyk, godsdienstige onderwyzeressen aangesteld te krygen.'

matriculated in Montagu and was now studying in Stellenbosch. Annie, however, entered high school in Graaff-Reinet, and Stinie would attend school for the first time. On Stinie's first day, she was delivered into the care of her new teacher. She promptly pulled away and marched back to her mother, who was conversing with Miss Murray, and stubbornly declared: "They have to give me one who speaks Afrikaans; otherwise I am not staying here!"⁴¹ Malan gave a deep and satisfied laugh, his approval evident.⁴²

Malan soon became a member of the various school committees, and by April 1913 had established a committee – which he led – to investigate the number of Dutch- and English-speaking children in Graaff-Reinet's schools compared to the medium of instruction. The committee found that English was the medium of instruction in all of the schools, even in those that did not have a single English-speaking pupil. The only school that did have a significant number of pupils coming from English-speaking homes was the girls' high school. The committee's recommendations, therefore, did not touch upon Miss Murray's institution, but instead advised that the law dictating mother tongue education be brought to the attention of the primary and poor white schools.⁴³

Malan's sister Annie was therefore left in peace, as her brother did not cause any tensions at her new school where religion was prominent. In order to ensure that her wards regularly attended church, Miss Murray required that each girl submit a 'Sermon Report' once every two weeks. Annie tried her best to base her reports on Ds. P.K. Albertyn's sermons, as her brother's sermons – like his political speeches in later years – were far too long for her liking. When she could not avoid her brother's sermon, she resorted to pleading, 'Dear Brother, please not another St Paul's oration. I have to write a Sermon Report today',⁴⁴ to which Malan could not help but to burst out laughing. 'If you have to take notes, there will at least not be any danger of you falling asleep and dropping out of the window', he teased her.⁴⁵

Annie and her sisters' religious education was supplemented at home. Their brother did not give them any systematic instruction, but instead kept them on their toes by asking them Bible trivia in passing, at dinner, or during family devotions. This would send them scrambling for the answer.⁴⁶

Revival meetings were fashionable – particularly among the youth – in Graaff-Reinet during these days, for which Malan had little sympathy. He used big words that the girls did not yet

⁴¹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 10: 'Hulle moet vir my een gee wat Afrikaans praat, anderste bly ek nie hier nie!'

⁴² *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴³ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 257-8.

⁴⁴ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 20: 'Boetie, asseblief tog nie weer 'n Paulusrede nie. Ek moet vandag weer "Sermon Report" skryf.'

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 20-1: 'As jy moet aantekeninge maak is daar ten minste nie gevaar dat jy aan [die] slaap raak en uit die venster val nie.'

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

understand, such as ‘emotional’, and the like.⁴⁷ He and his stepmother did not forbid the girls to attend, but when Esther held family devotions for her daughters while these services were taking place, Malan expressed his approval. Likewise, Malan did not advise his flock against these meetings – but chuckled in private when their curiosity got the better of them. A few of his congregants were very curious to see what it looked like when these pentecostal groups were ‘filled with the Holy Spirit’. They therefore decided to spy on one of the meetings, but when they peered through the window and saw people on their haunches hopping around and croaking like frogs, they fled the scene.⁴⁸

Malan disapproved of public displays of emotion in general. He never gave his own emotions free reign, and consequently found excessive displays of sorrow at funerals particularly difficult to bear. In Graaff-Reinet, it was not unusual for mourners to throw themselves onto the coffin, wailing loudly. Malan did not intervene in these dramatic scenes, but used his sermons to instruct his flock in the ways of grief – he maintained that the deepest grief was concealed within oneself. It was the manner in which he carried his own sorrows and, in time, it became the way of the people of Graaff-Reinet as well. The graveside performances diminished to a trickle, and later disappeared.⁴⁹

Church ministers were, in general, deemed to be intimidating characters, and Malan’s stern demeanour made him even more so. His habit of wearing his clerical garments every day of the week made him an imposing and, to the town’s children, terrifying figure. His appearance in the street would usually send them running for cover behind the nearest wall.⁵⁰ Within his own family, however, he was the one who had to be prevented from preaching in his slippers, since he could easily forget to replace them with his shoes.⁵¹

For the family, these were happy years. The parsonage was large and comfortable, with a big garden and its own tennis court. From time to time Malan would join his sisters for a game of tennis – all the while wearing his tie and tight collar. They also went for frequent picnics or walks in the surrounding mountains. The women in his family doted on him, and carried out the smallest of tasks for him. They would lay out his clothes and, especially on Sundays, took painstaking care to ensure that everything was in place: cufflinks, starched collar, shirt, shoes, and gown. They also woke him from his daily afternoon naps at exactly the appointed time. In all these things, he came to rely on them.⁵²

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 20-3.

⁴⁸ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 24-5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵² DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 14-19.

There was still no question of a change in his bachelor status. Malan still felt conscious of having a larger calling, and his celibacy was directly linked to its fulfilment. To some degree he identified himself with St Paul, who had remained unmarried in order to do the Lord's work. In his congregational work his stepmother, Esther, was a pillar of strength. In Graaff-Reinet her labours, as well as that of the women of the congregation, were particularly indispensable, as the town had a very large poor white community.⁵³

Soon after his arrival, Malan was shocked to discover that the white poor lived alongside the Coloured people in a neighbourhood which carried the repulsive name 'The Black Horde'. His housecalls to these white families revealed a tale of degradation that worsened with every generation. Some of these families were related to prominent Afrikaners and still sought to live in accordance to what they believed to be their true rank. The children, on the other hand, had no memories of former glory. It vexed Malan to witness how those who grew up playing with the children of their Coloured neighbours became absorbed into the Coloured community – with some even marrying Coloured people and leaving the Dutch Reformed Church for the Mission Church. He could not let the matter rest and decided to seek assistance. He began to speak to the town's notables and found an ally in Mr Archer, an English-speaking member of the town council. Together they called the white community to a public meeting in the town hall order to address this state of affairs. As far as Malan was concerned, the only solution was to proclaim the neighbourhood a Coloured area and to forbid whites from buying any land in this quarter or to occupy a house in this neighbourhood. Coloureds, in turn, would not be allowed to buy or occupy land in the white neighbourhood. Malan did not contemplate the possibility of forcing people to move – his scheme was directed at the transferral of property. Thus, when a white family decided to sell their house in the Coloured neighbourhood, they would have to sell it to a Coloured buyer and then move to the white area. In time, the lamentable situation would be remedied and everyone would live amongst their own kind.⁵⁴

When Malan explained his plan to the people of Graaff-Reinet, the audience in the packed town hall gave him their enthusiastic support. With the backing of the town's white community, Malan made representations to the town council – and ran into a brick wall. While the town council was in complete agreement with the merits of his case, it did not possess the legal power to implement his plan. Only the central government possessed such power – and approaching it with such a scheme and convincing it to legislate accordingly would only be an exercise in futility.

⁵³ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 21-2, 24.

⁵⁴ *Hansard*, 31 May 1950, Cols. 7939-7940.

Malan was forced to abandon his campaign.⁵⁵ Instead, he continued to labour among the poor and his anxiety about their condition would grow unabated.

In those days it was the custom among Afrikaner farmers to present their minister with a gift of fresh produce whenever he visited them. Throughout the years, Malan would quietly take these gifts to families whom he knew had nothing to eat. He did not, however, believe in charity that addressed only the body and not the soul. Soon after his arrival in Graaff-Reinet he had discovered that the parsonage was something of an oasis for beggars who had in the past always received three pence from his predecessor, Ds. A.F. Louw, when they knocked on the door. For this purpose, Louw had always ensured that he was well stocked with three pences. In this manner, along with the parsonage Malan also inherited its frequent callers, whom he regarded as something of a nuisance. He therefore devised a plan to remedy the situation. The parsonage's garden had a water pump which had to be operated by hand in order to fill a tank, so whenever someone called at the door, they received three pence only after filling the tank. The number of visitors soon dwindled.⁵⁶

Malan had witnessed poverty in the Netherlands – and the rise of the socialist movement across Europe – but as far as he was concerned, socialism could not provide the answer to the poor white problem that he had witnessed during his travels in Rhodesia and Congoland and which was now, quite literally, knocking at his door. He did have a firm grasp of Karl Marx's theory, and recognised its value and relevance to the context of his day, but he thought it to be deficient. His objection to socialism was the fact that a single question was deemed adequate: 'What shall we eat and what shall we drink and wherewithal shall we be clothed? Notwithstanding the great value it apparently attaches to every human being, it humiliates and debases humanity by its supposition that man can live by bread alone.'⁵⁷

To Malan, who believed that the world was ruled by ideals, the character of every individual was at the heart of every matter. The fact that socialism ignored this made it incompatible with Christianity, in spite of assertions that the two complemented each other:

While Christianity concerns itself with the making of individuals fit to deal with the environment which each new age presents, Socialism only deals with the improvement of the environment. While Christianity counts on character to bring about economic transformation, Socialism counts on economic transformation to bring about character. It is content to cleanse the outside of the cup and the platter. Its programme has rarely a word to say of any change of

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Col. 7940.

⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 22.

⁵⁷ D.F. Malan, *Socialism: Lecture delivered before the Graaff-Reinet Literary Society* (Graaff-Reinet: Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 1913), 29.

character. It fails to recognise the fact that poverty has other causes besides those that can be traced to a perverted social order.⁵⁸

Socialists claimed that Christ himself was a socialist prototype, since he was a working man and a champion of the poor, who showed a disdain for earthly riches.⁵⁹ To Malan, however, Christ's methods were not the same as those advocated by socialists. Christianity changed the world from within, 'Christ did not approach the life of His age through external organisation or mass movements or force of numbers, but through interior inspiration and the force of personality.'⁶⁰

This example, set by Christ, was to be the method that Malan would follow throughout his political career. Malan would never be an organiser or an administrator. His role would be to inspire his listeners through his rhetoric, to infuse his followers with his ideals, and then to leave them to implement these ideals and turn them into a reality. Changing individual hearts and minds was his key to changing the broader society.

Malan was by no means blind to the changes in South African society. In the aftermath of a major strike by white mine workers on the Witwatersrand in July 1913, the Graaff-Reinet Literary Society invited Malan to give a lecture on socialism. He obliged them with a nuanced and well-researched oration and, to the surprise of his audience, delivered it in impeccable English.

It was clear that Malan regarded socialism in South Africa as part of a broader international movement. The industrial unrest in Johannesburg was therefore not a spontaneous reaction to peculiar local circumstances but, instead, was part of a larger wave that had finally reached the South African backwaters – which themselves had been transformed through the country's own industrial revolution. The mining industry had sprung up during the past fifty years, and was controlled by a powerful group of capitalists who were now challenged by an even more powerful group of workmen intent on procuring as much of the profits as possible. The fabric of South African society had changed; its simplicity and relative lack of class distinctions had disappeared.⁶¹ In its stead, '[d]istinctions between the rich and the poor, the landed proprietor and the landless poor have become more definite throughout the length and breadth of the country.'⁶²

It should be recalled that Malan was the son of a farmer, and had spent his career in the church. He was neither a capitalist, nor a worker, and could not identify with either group. Instead, as during his student years in the Netherlands, he was a disapproving spectator. This did not mean, however, that he was blinded to the power and resonance of socialism in his society. Every era was characterised by its own pressing question, and Malan believed that his age was dominated by the

⁵⁸ D.F. Malan, *Socialism: Lecture delivered before the Graaff-Reinet Literary Society*, 30.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁶² D.F. Malan, *Socialism: Lecture delivered before the Graaff-Reinet Literary Society*, 5.

social question: 'The chief question of the age is no longer about what a man must do to save his soul, but as to what can and must be done to save humanity.'⁶³

Malan agreed with the socialists that every individual formed part of a broader society and, as such, carried a social responsibility to contribute to the welfare of all. In contrast, however, he placed more value on the individual than did the socialists. He believed that socialism was smitten with what would become one of the greatest maladies to plague the twentieth century: uniformity and, as a result, mediocrity.⁶⁴ This clashed with his Romantic and nationalist regard for diversity.

It is evident that he was openly hostile to one of socialism's most notorious offshoots: anarchism. As far as he was concerned, its spiritual and intellectual leader – the expelled Russian aristocrat Bakunin – had contributed to one of the greatest blots on modern civilisation, namely the assassination of royal personages. To Bakunin, all forms of authority – be they spiritual or temporal – were evil and had to be destroyed; every man had to be his own law.⁶⁵ Malan abhorred violence, and therefore found anarchism, and even industrial unrest, repugnant.⁶⁶ Malan's Murray-evangelical upbringing meant that he, as a Cape Afrikaner, was inculcated with a special reverence for authority. The total destruction of authority was unthinkable in his eyes but, unlike his elders, he was able to question authority if he believed it to be unjust. His time to question authority was drawing nearer.

Through the course of 1913, not only was there industrial unrest on the Witwatersrand, but political tensions were also running high throughout the country. Hertzog was gaining support, and during this year he tried his best to force Botha's hand. He wanted nothing less than a general election to settle the quarrel between them⁶⁷ – in all probability he was hoping to unseat Botha. For this reason, therefore, he continued to reject any attempts at reconciliation, and his language only became harsher. As a result, the division between the two leaders began to manifest itself in the outcomes of the various provincial party congresses. The congresses of the Cape, Natal, and the Transvaal – which in particular was Botha's own stronghold – passed motions of confidence in favour of their Prime Minister, but the Free State came out in support of Hertzog, passing a motion of confidence in his favour by 47 votes to 2.

The situation came to a head at the SAPs national congress in November 1913. At this congress, Hertzog delivered a sharp attack on Botha, and refused to cooperate with a committee that was appointed to mediate between them. Throughout the year, he and his supporters had clamoured for Botha's resignation in favour of a candidate approved by both himself and Botha. Botha, in turn,

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5, 27.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁷ O. Geysler and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I*, 116-32.

had refused to relinquish the premiership. Finally, the issue was put to the congress for a vote. Botha and the government received 131 votes, while Hertzog gathered ninety ballots. It was a significant number, with most of them coming from the Free State followed by the Cape, but Hertzog was nevertheless defeated. He turned and walked out of the hall, followed by the majority of his supporters. One of the last to leave was Genl Christiaan de Wet, who gave two small bows to the chairman and Genl Botha, with a dramatic ‘Atju, atju’ to each.⁶⁸

The wheels were now set in motion for Hertzog to establish his own political party. In December 1913, Ds. W. Postma published a concept programme of principles for the new organisation. This programme contained a provision that would play a significant role in the future history of the envisioned National Party (NP). It suggested that each province establish its own party, and that these parties be joined together on a federal basis.⁶⁹ This not only meant that the yet to be constituted NP would in fact consist of four separate parties, but it also left room for provincial loyalties to remain a significant factor in South African politics.

During the first half of 1914, then, the NP was established; first in the Free State, and thereafter in the Transvaal.⁷⁰ The Cape also had powerful Hertzog sympathisers in the form of Prof. H.E.S. Fremantle, an English-born nationalist politician,⁷¹ and the attorney H.S. van Zyl.⁷² A vigilance committee was established in Cape Town in April 1913 to guard over Hertzog’s principles in the Cape. A number of its members were Afrikaans language activists – and therefore members of the ATV in the Cape – including J.H.H. de Waal and Willie Hofmeyr. Other prominent Stellenbosch personalities such as H.J. Bergh and Bruckner de Villiers also served on the vigilance committee.⁷³ These people would all come together to establish a division of the NP in the Cape Province but, like their fellow nationalists in the north, the events of August 1914 would affect them in a manner that would both delay and stimulate the development of the new movement.⁷⁴

The day on which the First World War erupted was one of those days that would be ingrained into everyone’s memories, so that they could later recall exactly where they were and what they were doing. It was on 4 August 1914, as he was walking down a street in Graaff-Reinet, that Malan was stopped by a member of his congregation – who had been hurrying after him – to let him know the news that a war had broken out. At that moment, he still could not guess what a watershed it would cause in his own life, and the history of his country.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I*, 127, 131-2.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 134-55.

⁷¹ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel I*, 315-7.

⁷² C.J. Beyers, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel V* (Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1987), 887-8.

⁷³ O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I*, 157-60.

⁷⁴ O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel I*, 156.

⁷⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 19.

After all the uproar Hertzog had caused about South Africa's relationship with the British Empire, the war brought the issue into sharp relief. Once Britain had declared war, South Africa was automatically at war as well. It was then up to the government to determine the extent of its participation.⁷⁶ The Union government cabled Britain that its newly-established defence force was willing to assume the duties usually performed by the Imperial troops – who were still present in South Africa – in order that they could be released for service in Europe. The British government accepted the offer, and requested in turn that the Union seize German South West Africa, so as to gain control of Swakopmund and Lüderitzbucht – as well as the territory's wireless stations. German South West Africa, with her ports and wireless stations, was strategically significant since her extensive coastline flanked an important sea route. These facts, however, hardly mattered to the Afrikaner community⁷⁷ – the idea of fighting in Britain's war a mere twelve years after the Anglo-Boer War had ended was extremely unpopular. Botha insisted, however, that it was a matter of 'duty' and 'honour' to fulfil the Union's obligations to the Empire. His repetition of British propaganda – that it was a war fought in defence of small nations' independence – was laughable in the eyes of Afrikaners, whose memories of the two sovereign Boer republics being crushed by the very same Britain were still fresh.⁷⁸ They had little regard for the embarrassment Botha might suffer at the next Imperial Conference if he could not match the other dominions' ardent loyalty to the Empire.

Around the country, therefore, tensions began to escalate. Deneys Reitz wrote to Smuts – who was the Minister of Defence – that dissent was brewing among the Hertzog sympathisers in the Free State: 'They stand in groups on every street corner inveighing against the Government, and even the Commandant declares that he will support the burghers in resisting any commandeering orders.'⁷⁹

Hertzog was indeed opposed to South Africa's participation in the war, but did not wield the same amount of influence in Parliament as in the rural Free State – Parliament approved the invasion of German South West Africa by 92 votes to 12; more substantial opposition came from an unexpected corner – the head of the Union Defence Force, Genl C.F. (Christiaan) Beyers, a former Anglo-Boer War hero. Beyers's resistance was shared by two other important officers, J.C.G. (Jan) Kemp and S.G. (Manie) Maritz, also both Anglo-Boer War generals.⁸⁰ In response, Botha gave the assurance that nobody would be commandeered to take part in the South West Africa Campaign, only volunteers would participate in the offensive. This did little to stay the resentment against

⁷⁶ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 380.

⁷⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years, 1870-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 378-81.

⁷⁸ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 380.

⁷⁹ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 593.

⁸⁰ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years, 1870-1919*, 379-81.

South African participation in the war – especially as, in practice, the promise was not kept.⁸¹ Further dissent came from another pair of former Anglo-Boer War generals, who each carried an immeasurable amount of moral authority within the Afrikaner community: Genl Christiaan de Wet and Genl Koos de la Rey. De la Rey, however, was under the spell of an Afrikaner prophet from Lichtenburg, ‘Siener’ (Seer) van Rensburg. Nevertheless, his reputation was so revered that he had it within his power to call thousands to arms. Botha and Smuts did their utmost to prevent him from doing so by meeting with him and talking to him at length⁸² but, as events subsequently played out, with little success.

On 15 September, Beyers resigned from his position as head of the armed forces. That night, he and De la Rey travelled to Johannesburg, where they planned to conspire to commit high treason. As they approached the city, however, they spotted a police roadblock ahead of them. In that moment, they decided to drive their car through the roadblock, despite shouted orders for them to stop. Shots were fired, and Genl Koos de la Rey was killed. It later transpired that the roadblock was not set for them, but that the police were hunting for the notorious Foster gang – the first band of South African criminals to make use of a motorcar in order to escape from the scenes of their crimes.

The shock of De la Rey’s death delayed the planned rebellion.⁸³ Yet, Smuts, the Minister of Defence, knew that betrayal was still brewing within his own camp. He finally uncovered it in the person of Genl Manie Maritz, who was conducting secret negotiations with the Germans. On 9 October, Smuts forced Maritz to admit to his treasonable intentions. Maritz was cornered, and as a result crossed the border with his entire regiment, where he promptly joined the German forces.⁸⁴

Botha appealed to ex-President M.T. Steyn to exert his influence to avert the impending rebellion, but Steyn declined to do so.⁸⁵ A group of ministers in Cape Town, however, issued an open letter in which they appealed to their flock to respect the decisions of the earthly authorities, and called on all ministers to council against treason. According to them, rebelling against the government was in violation of the Treaty of Vereeniging and, as such, was a sin committed against God – it would only lead to ruin and destroy all those involved.⁸⁶ Malan, upon reading this open letter, was convinced that the government was behind the statement and was using the church to further its own ends.⁸⁷

⁸¹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 284.

⁸² H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 381.

⁸³ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 284.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 382.

⁸⁶ DFM, 1/1/334, “Open brief aan de predikanten van onze kerk.”

⁸⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 29-30.

Despite these efforts to prevent an uprising, Beyers and De Wet came out in open rebellion to lead direct clashes with government forces. De Wet lost his own son to a government bullet – the result of which meant that for him, there was no point of return.⁸⁸

With the Imperial troops already on their way to Europe, Botha and Smuts had to rely on the Union's own defence force – which had been established a mere two years earlier – to quell the Rebellion. The new army, however, was understaffed and ill-equipped to deal with the situation, so Botha was left with no alternative but to call on the Active Citizens Force (ACF). He realised that pitting an English-speaking force against Afrikaner rebels would remove the lid from the simmering racial tensions, and had the potential to erupt into another Anglo-Boer War. For this reason, therefore, he decided to make use of rural, Afrikaans-speaking volunteers to engage the rebel forces.

Apart from being former war heroes, the rebel leaders were relatively wealthy farmers from the Northern Free State and the Western Transvaal. De Wet ran a poor white settlement in the vicinity of his farm in Heilbron, and offered financial rewards to those who would help him. In this way, the rebels' ranks were supplemented by an army of poor whites. In some parts of the Free State, therefore, the Rebellion degenerated into a looting-expedition, with the shops belonging to the rebels' creditors being plundered. The looting, however, is hardly remembered; the fact that the Rebellion was almost exclusively a fight between Afrikaners dealt a traumatic blow to the collective Afrikaner consciousness.⁸⁹

The Rebellion was not to last. The rebels were poorly organised, and they had little food and ammunition.⁹⁰ One by one the rebel leaders fell, and in so doing, joined the Afrikaner nationalist hall of fame. De Wet was captured on 1 December 1914. Beyers drowned on 8 December when his horse was shot under him as he tried to escape across the Vaal River. By January 1915, Kemp was finally forced to surrender after attempting to cross the Kalahari Desert to join Maritz. Maritz himself escaped into Angola. The greatest martyr of the 1914 Rebellion, however, was not to be an Anglo-Boer War hero, but a young officer named Jopie Fourie.⁹¹ Fourie had served in the ACF, failed to resign and, while still wearing his uniform, led a band of rebels that inflicted casualties on government troops.⁹²

⁸⁸ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 284.

⁸⁹ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 382-3.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 383.

⁹¹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 285; C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1990), 80.

⁹² W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek Deel I* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1976), 311-2.

Back in Graaff-Reinet, Malan and his stepmother Esther followed the news closely, and as the events unfolded the mood in the household became sombre.⁹³ As with the Anglo-Boer War twelve years earlier, Malan was far removed from the battlefield, and viewed the conflict in purely idealistic terms. For this reason, therefore, Malan was astonished at what he considered to be a lack of human intuition displayed by the Botha-Smuts-government. In his opinion, no amount of diplomatic or strategic merit could justify the folly of forcing a population, which had barely recovered from the trauma of the Anglo-Boer War, into a battle alongside their former enemies which was raging six thousand miles away. The wounds and the memories were still too fresh, and to expect the Afrikaners to forget their deep-seated sense of having been wronged was, in his opinion, a psychological impossibility. That the rebels' inner protest manifested itself outwardly was only too comprehensible.⁹⁴

In a letter to the young N.J. van der Merwe, who was collecting information about the Rebellion, Malan made it clear that the government's decision to invade German South West Africa was only the spark that ignited the powder keg. It was inevitable that a revolt would have taken place, but not as a result of racial tensions between English and Afrikaans speakers. As far as Malan was concerned, the Afrikaners – in both theory and practice – did not begrudge the English speakers that to which they were entitled. No one in their right mind thought of South Africa as a country where only the Afrikaners had the right to exist; nor could it be said that the Rebellion was an outpouring of hatred against the British flag. While the Afrikaners could never love the flag, the flag neither hindered their freedom nor their independent development. There was no reason to hate the flag – and in normal circumstances, Malan believed, no one did.⁹⁵

Malan also dismissed the idea that the Rebellion was an outcome of the various leaders' personal rivalries. Personality clashes might have contributed to the tensions, but they were merely a manifestation of a deeper clash of principles. In his opinion, therefore, the Botha-Hertzog dispute was clearly a clash between two opposite ideals.⁹⁶

Malan believed, instead, that the gunpowder that fed the explosion had been accumulating for quite some time. This gunpowder was Botha's conciliation politics. Conciliation had, rightly or wrongly, given the Afrikaners the impression that there were forces at work to undermine their nationalism. Botha had never stated unequivocally that his ideals left room for Afrikaner nationalism, which had inevitably led to suspicion on the side of the Afrikaners. This suspicion had given way to division and, finally, to the rupture that was the 1914 Rebellion. Since one section of the South African nation had the distinct impression that its identity, and therefore its existence, was

⁹³ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 23.

⁹⁴ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 19.

⁹⁵ Free State Archive Repository (hereafter VAB), Dr. N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110:2.1-4, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 2 December 1914.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

under threat, the path was cleared for a rebellion to take place. In fact, many regarded a rebellion as the only means to self-preservation.⁹⁷

By the time Parliament had decided to support the government's wish to invade German South West Africa, it no longer represented the views of the electorate, according to Malan. In his view, the government had displayed a lack of integrity when it had failed to call for a general election once it had realised that it had lost support and legitimacy in the Free State. It was little wonder, then, that the Free State had become a den of dissent. If the war had been one of defence, there would have been little doubt that both sections of the white population would have become a united front, but since the invasion of German South West Africa smacked of imperialism, it evoked aversion and resistance.⁹⁸

Malan was convinced that the Imperial government in Britain would have understood the unique situation in South Africa. He was equally convinced that, with such understanding, they would not have insisted on the use of South African armed forces in the invasion of her neighbour. To him, anyone could grasp that it was impossible to compare South Africa to Australia, New Zealand, or Canada. As far as the war was concerned, the populations of the other white colonies were not divided on the matter. In South Africa, however, the opposite was glaringly obvious. England had never gone to war against any of the other colonies, while in South Africa a mere twelve years had passed since the conclusion of a bitter and bloody war against a section of its population that had a long history of struggle against the Empire. The Germans knew that they could exploit the situation to their own strategic advantage if they expressed support to any anti-government resistance in South Africa. If civil war broke out in South Africa, England would have to send troops to the south. This would in turn necessitate deployment of the British navy along the extensive German South West African coast, which would diminish British presence in European waters even while the chances of the Germans invading South Africa were extremely slim.⁹⁹

Malan believed that the government in South Africa had two options. On the one hand, it could follow the motto of the French Revolution: Liberty for both sections of the population, Equality, and Fraternity. If the government showed that it was willing to stand or fall by the principle of freedom and equal rights for both nationalities and languages, it would soon regain the trust of the entire population, from which fraternity would certainly and spontaneously develop. On the other hand, it could continue along its present route. The outcome would be an imperialistic SAP, composed mostly of English speakers and Afrikaners blinded by party loyalty, while those who loved the Afrikaner nation and who chose to work for its language rights would be stigmatised

⁹⁷ VAB, Dr. N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110:2.1-4, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 2 December 1914.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

as revolutionaries. This latter option would tear the Afrikaners apart, and ultimately lead to their demise.¹⁰⁰

To Malan, there was only one organisation which could prevent this envisioned disastrous division of the Afrikaner nation, and that was the church. It was imperative, therefore, that the various Dutch-speaking churches moved closer together across the nation, and acted independently of any political party: they had to take a clear stance in the recognition of God's hand in the Afrikaners' history, and strive to achieve the ideal of a single South African Reformed Church which was united, nationalist, and evangelical.¹⁰¹ With this in mind, Malan and his fellow-ministers became increasingly alarmed as the clashes on the battlefield echoed within the churches – there was every possibility that the 1914 Rebellion could tear the church apart.

At the time of the 1914 Rebellion, Malan's colleague, Albertyn, was in Europe. In his absence, Ds. A.F. Louw was in Graaff-Reinet assisting Malan with his duties. Shortly after the outbreak of the Rebellion, Louw received a cryptic letter from his brother, James, a minister in Boksburg, a suburb to the east of Johannesburg. He was intensely worried by the state of affairs, but martial law prevented him from writing too much. All that he could do was to write to his brother in Graaff-Reinet and ask that he come and see for himself – and to bring Malan with him. Malan, however, had to fulfil his duties as an examiner of the church's proponent's exam in Cape Town. Only after the examinations would it be possible for him to visit the troubled north.¹⁰²

It is possible that, during his stay in Cape Town, Malan paid a visit to Willie Hofmeyr's offices. He knew Hofmeyr's brothers, Andrew and George, and would have met Willie through their mutual membership of the ATV. During these tense times, Hofmeyr's office was a mecca for nationalist sympathisers who came to discuss the affairs of the day. Hofmeyr was an avid Hertzog supporter who lambasted the Western Cape's most prominent Dutch newspaper, *Ons Land*, for its pro-Botha stance in a stream of critical letters to the editor. In person, Hofmeyr exuded tact and energy. He did not have a stage personality and fared rather bleakly on a public platform, but in personal conversations and small groups he was able to inspire and mobilise like few others. During these last months of 1914, he was weaving his magic within the convoluted circles that formed the upper crust of Afrikaner society in the Western Cape – including mooted the idea of a new Dutch-language newspaper that would be an advocate of Hertzog's nationalism. He discussed the idea with Malan – who was clearly in favour, as he expressed an interest in buying shares to help fund the endeavour.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ VAB, Dr. N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110:2.1-4, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 2 December 1914.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 19.

¹⁰³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 80-3, 96.

As soon as he had concluded his examination of prospective ministers to the church, Malan returned to Graaff-Reinet, as his presence was required for a meeting of the local church council, which took place on 5 December.¹⁰⁴ Once this business was complete, he boarded the train to meet Louw at Colesberg. The 1914 Rebellion was winding down as the train carrying the two men snaked its way northwards, into the aftermath.¹⁰⁵

Malan and Louw's first stop was in Bloemfontein, where they celebrated Dingaan's Day on 16 December.¹⁰⁶ It was now a mere two years since Malan had delivered his speech at De Wildt, on the tail of the political veld fire that Hertzog had ignited in that same place. Now, once again, Malan would be drawn into the heart of a brewing political crisis. It was on that same day, 16 December 1914, that Jopie Fourie was captured and taken to Pretoria.¹⁰⁷

The situation in Bloemfontein was disquieting. Malan and Louw met with a prominent Dutch Reformed cleric, Dr (Vader) Kestell. Kestell was gravely concerned that a schism would take place within the church. There were already church councils who were placing the rebels under censure, while other councils were doing the same to those who had fought the rebels. For this reason, therefore, Kestell regarded it as a matter of utmost urgency: the church had to intervene and provide its flock with firm guidance in this confusing situation. How this was to be done, though, he did not know.¹⁰⁸

Malan and Louw left Bloemfontein and travelled on to Boksburg where they met James Louw, who had written and asked for them to come. Here they discovered the same state of affairs as they had observed in Bloemfontein. One of the rebel leaders, Genl Muller, was a member of James Louw's congregation. In order for him to receive a visit from his shepherd, special permission had to be granted by the Minister of Defence – Jan Smuts. To this end, the three men decided to go to Pretoria and visit Smuts at his office in Paul Kruger Street that Friday morning, 18 December 1914. Their request to visit Genl Muller was dismissed. Instead, Smuts took the opportunity to vent his frustration about the impossible situation in which he found himself: it felt to him as if the Afrikaner nation had lost its integrity and had taken on a new character – he did not know them anymore.¹⁰⁹

Malan had not seen Smuts for years, but there was still a sense of boyhood familiarity between the two men. Unlike two years before, when he had felt silenced by Botha's presence, Malan knew that he could speak out to Jannie, who had once – many years ago – taught him Sunday

¹⁰⁴ NG Kerk Archives (hereafter NGK), G 760, Graaff-Reinet Notule 1908-1922, "Gewone Kerkeradsvergadering Gehouden 5 Desember 1914", 243.

¹⁰⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 20.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, 312.

¹⁰⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 20-1.

¹⁰⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 21.

School, and who had been the first familiar face to greet him on the station on his first day in Stellenbosch: such an accusation against the Afrikaner nation could not simply pass. With this in mind, he raised his voice:

General, in the case of an individual such a speedy and radical change might well be possible, but not in the case of a nation! But, may I ask you this question? While the nation ought to have stayed the same, is it not you and Genl Botha who have changed? ¹¹⁰

These words prompted Smuts to end the discussion with an assurance that he would continue on his chosen path.¹¹¹ Malan was soon to discover just what that path was. The government realised, only too painfully, how unpopular its decision to invade German South West Africa was amongst the Afrikaners. In order to contain the political damage, it was decided that the rebels would be punished as leniently as possible. The case of Jopie Fourie, however, presented them with a dilemma, as he was responsible for the death of government troops whilst he was still a serving member of the government forces.¹¹²

After his interview with Smuts, Malan did not return to Boksburg. Instead he stayed with his friend, George Hofmeyr, the Secretary of Union Education. They were still at the dinner table when they were interrupted by two visitors. Malan's initial elation at seeing his two university friends, Dr J.H.F.E.R.C. Gey van Pittius and Dr F.C.A. Grünberger – both of whom had studied with him in the Netherlands – evaporated when he learned the reason for their visit. Gey van Pittius was Jopie Fourie's attorney, and had represented him at his trial, which had begun that morning. The trial had been concluded, and he was now awaiting the sentence. Gey van Pittius was convinced that the sentence would be death – if there was to be any chance of saving Fourie's life, it had to be done that night. The signs were that the execution would take place as soon as the sentence was given. The news that Malan was in the city had reached them, and Gey van Pittius and Grünberger wanted Malan to draw up a petition to plead for clemency. They would distribute the petition around the city during the course of the night in order that a special deputation could deliver it to Smuts the next day, Saturday. Malan agreed to this on condition that Jopie Fourie's own minister, Ds. H.S. Bosman – who had two years earlier related to Malan the news of Botha's intended resignation – gave his approval. Bosman not only approved, but asked to serve on the deputation.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 'Generaal, vir 'n individuele mens is so 'n spoedige en radikale verandering miskien wel moontlik, maar by 'n volk as geheel kan dit nie! Maar mag ek aan u hierdie vraag stel? Waar die volk dieselfde moes gebly het, het u en genl. Botha nie miskien verander nie?'

¹¹¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 21.

¹¹² H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 383.

¹¹³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 21-2; W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, 312.

Throughout the night and the next morning, therefore, the petition did the rounds. Hundreds signed it. Late that afternoon the deputation – consisting of Malan, Ds. Bosman, Dr Gey van Pittius, Dr Grünberger, Ds. Chris Neethling and Mr Jan Joubert, the son of the late Genl Piet Joubert, who was killed during the Anglo-Boer War – set out for Smuts's house in Irene. On the outskirts of the city, they had to report to a military guard that controlled all movements into and out of Pretoria. Malan later suspected that the guard phoned Smuts to warn him of their visit.¹¹⁴

They arrived at Smuts's house to find that he was not home – they were told that he had gone for a long walk in the veld. The deputation was not invited into the house, but in spite of the lack of hospitality, elected not to leave – they would wait for Smuts's return. Smuts, however, did not return. They were, instead, informed that a motor car had collected him in the veld and had taken him back to Pretoria. Malan was convinced that he was being lied to. Smuts's little son was playing outside, and he told them – with the honesty and innocence of childhood – that his mother was in the house, putting the baby to sleep. When Malan asked to speak to Mrs Smuts, however, he was told that she was not home either. The staff clearly did not want him to enter the house, and nor could he obtain a satisfactory explanation as to how the house staff knew that a car had collected Smuts in the veld, when he had not returned to his house to tell them so. Eventually the deputation left, but Malan felt certain that Smuts had been inside all along and was hiding from them.¹¹⁵

Back in Pretoria, the search for Smuts turned into a wild goose chase. Ds. Bosman phoned the Prime Minister's office, which informed them that Smuts was at the Pretoria Club, where he often slept. The Pretoria Club, on the other hand, told them that Smuts was at his office. Their hands were tied. When Smuts was later challenged in Parliament as to his whereabouts on that particular day, he replied that he had been out walking – the deputation did not make an appointment with him, and he did not avoid them.¹¹⁶

The deputation eventually went their separate ways. Chris Neethling went to Fourie, where he spent the entire night while Fourie wrote letters to his family and his attorneys. Fourie also addressed letters to Genl Louis Botha, and the Afrikaner nation.¹¹⁷ Malan stayed at Bosman's house, as he had agreed to give a sermon at his church the next day.

At about five o'clock the next morning, however, he was woken by Bosman, who had quietly crept into his room to tell him the news. He had been called to the Central Prison – and found that Jopie Fourie had just been shot.¹¹⁸ Malan was enveloped by a sense of shock, which he felt was hanging over the entire city. Nevertheless, he had to get up in order to give the sermon as he had promised. He could not pretend that the execution had not taken place, and yet, at the same

¹¹⁴ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 22-3.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹⁶ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years*, 392.

¹¹⁷ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, 312.

¹¹⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 23-4.

time, he dared not add a spark to such a flammable situation. Rummaging through the collection of sermons which he always carried with him on such trips, his eye caught a sermon on Psalm 29 – ‘God in the thunderstorm.’ There was no need for him to try to relate the words to the situation. In such an environment, it was obvious.¹¹⁹

Jopie Fourie was now a martyr – and Jan Smuts a villain. This was enhanced by Chris Neethling’s account of Fourie’s courage as he went to his death. The words he had spoken to Neethling rang in Malan’s ears, and became prophetic: ‘The small tree that is planted today and being watered with my blood, will grow and become large, and will carry delightful fruit for our nation.’¹²⁰ The letters that Fourie had written during that last night, as well as the account of his final moments, would be circulated and published throughout the country. His portrait took pride of place in many Afrikaner homes, alongside that of Genl Beyers. In the political arena, Fourie’s name would be wielded like a whip by Botha and Smuts’s opponents for the next decade.¹²¹ To Malan, there was nothing coincidental about his presence in Pretoria at this fateful time. A heavenly mind had willed it so.¹²²

On the Monday following these tumultuous events Malan went to Johannesburg, as he had been invited by a group of ministers to attend their weekly meeting. The meeting was dominated by the situation in the church, as well as the events of the previous morning. The idea expressed by Vader Kestell in Bloemfontein – that the church had to intervene and guide its flock – found strong resonance. It was decided that the Council of Churches – of which Malan was a member – had to meet in Bloemfontein, and that a general ministers’ conference needed to convene. All this had to take place with the utmost of urgency, as it was feared that Fourie’s execution was going to be the first of many. More names, including those of Generals Kemp and Maritz, were being mentioned.¹²³

From the meeting, Malan was given the task of collecting the signatures of ten members of the Council of Churches – which would enable the calling of a special meeting – and with issuing the invitation to a ministers’ conference.¹²⁴ As far as Malan was concerned, it was not merely church unity that was at stake, but the unity of the Afrikaner nation as a whole. His belief was that it was the church’s calling to act as a binding factor that would mould the Afrikaners into a people. If the church was divided, this would legitimise the existing political divisions, which would in turn contribute to the further destruction of Afrikaner unity. These fears – along with the necessity for

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24-5.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*: ‘Die boompie wat vandag geplant en met my bloed benat word, sal groei en groot word, en heerlike vrugte vir ons volk dra.’

¹²¹ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, 312.

¹²² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 21-2.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 26-7.

¹²⁴ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 27.

the church to develop a coordinated and consistent response to its members who had taken up arms against their government – formed the essence of Malan’s draft appeal for a special meeting of the Council of Churches, as well as a ministers’ conference.¹²⁵

Malan obtained the necessary signatures and approval for the proposed meetings without any difficulty. All that was left to be done was the formulation of an agenda. Dr Andrew Murray Jr – who had retired to Wellington – expressed his support for a ministers’ conference, and suggested that a set of concept-resolutions be prepared in order to guide the discussions. This idea found general approval, and Malan was deemed to be the best person to formulate these resolutions. Despite his protestations to the contrary, the task was entrusted to him.¹²⁶

This was yet another of those times when the weight of a situation threatened to overwhelm Malan. He again had to fight the feelings of self-doubt which did their best to swamp him. He had always been a slow and meticulous thinker, but this particular state of affairs called for intense reflection. His family went to the Strand for their annual holiday, and he joined them there – but this time he sought solitude, spending hours among the sand dunes, contemplating the events, and mulling over the task that he had been given.¹²⁷

The result was a mission statement for the church – a declaration of its God-Given calling. As a student in Utrecht years before, Malan had declared that he wanted to make it his life’s task to work for the Afrikaner nation, teaching it to recognise God’s hand in its fortunes. At that time, he had had no idea of how he would achieve this – especially as he was headed for a career in the church and the avenue of party politics was therefore shut to him. His proposals of January 1915 revealed the extent to which he had assimilated this awareness of a personal calling into his view of the church’s national calling – it showed how he had fulfilled his undertaking from the pulpit. In his view, the church had become the vehicle for God-ordained Afrikaner nationalism and unity, and as such, it had an obligation and a calling. This therefore necessitated the clear definition of its role, as well as that of its ministers, in public life. With this in mind, Malan believed that the church had to abide by two principles:

- 1) That our Church, apart from her general calling as a Christian church, has also received a more particular calling from God with regards to the Dutch-speaking Afrikaner nation, to whose existence she is so intimately bound, and therefore that it should always be regarded as her duty to be national herself, to guard over our particular national interests and to teach our nation to see God’s hand in its own history and development and, furthermore, to

¹²⁵ DFM, 1/1/341, “Versoekskrif gerig aan die Raad der Kerken ... onderteken deur P. Nel [e.a.]. Opgestel deur Dr. Malan”, 15 January 1915.

¹²⁶ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 27.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

keep the realisation of a national calling and destiny alive within the Afrikaner nation, as in it is located the spiritual, moral, and material progress and strength of a nation.

- 2) That our Church will be best able to fulfil her calling to God's Kingdom and our Afrikaners' national existence when she as a church, and her ministers, in their official capacity, will strictly remain outside the party-political battle ground, except when religious or moral principles are at stake or when such action is unequivocally justifiable by the interests of God's Kingdom.¹²⁸

It was crystal clear: the Dutch Reformed Church was the church of the Afrikaners, and had to act in their interests; nationalist identity and religious denomination were one. Malan had also left an important back door open for the church to become an actor in the political arena – the church had to maintain a moral high ground, and her ministers had to refrain from participating in party politics in their *official* capacity – but if extenuating circumstances called, they would be justified to defend the interests of God and the nation.

Malan reiterated the principle that earthly authorities were ordained by God, and that the church therefore had to regard it as her Christian duty to respect and maintain law and order in all the various spheres of life, be it in the state, the church, or in family life. For this reason, it was important to reiterate that 'one may not resist the lawful authorities for the sake of one's conscience, other than for very substantial and justifiable reasons.'¹²⁹ This was a very important statement, and it betrayed Malan's sympathy for the rebels. This perspective permeated the entire document, but was disguised by moderate and rational language. Malan called on both the government and the church to investigate the grievances that made the 1914 Rebellion possible in the first place. He also noted that, until such time as it knew and understood the causes of the Rebellion, the church had to refrain from censuring the rebels.¹³⁰ This emphasis on determining the causes of the Rebellion – and placing the onus on the government to determine what they were and to address them in order to

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/342, D.F. Malan, "Concept Voorstellen ter Overweging te worden Voorgelegd aan de Predikanten Conferentie te Bloemfontein", February 1915: 1) 'Dat onze Kerk behalve hare algemeene roeping als Christelijke Kerk, ook nog van God ontvangen heeft eene roeping meer bijzonder ten aanzien van het Hollandsch-sprekend Afrikaner volk met welks bestaan zij op zulke innige wijze verbonden is, dat het daarom ook altijd als haar picht beschouwd moet worden om zelve nationaal te zijn, om te waken voor onze bijzondere nationale belangen en om aan ons volk te leeren in zijn eigen geschiedenis en wording de hand van God te zien en verder om bij het Afrikaner volk levend te houden dat besef van nationale roeping en bestemming waarin gelegen is de geestelijke, zedelijke en stoffelijke vooruitgang en kracht van een volk.' 2) 'Dat onze Kerk hare roeping beide voor het Koninkrijk Gods en voor ons Afrikaner volksbestaan het best zal kunnen vervullen wanneer zij als Kerk en hare evangeliedienaren in hunne officieele hoedanigheid zich streng houden zullen buiten het strijdperk van de partij-politiek, tenzij godsdienstige of zedelijke beginselen op het spel staan of de belangen van het Koninkrijk Gods zulk optreden beslist rechtvaardigen.'

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*: 'men om des gewetens wil zich tegen de wettige overheid niet verzetten mag anders dan om zeer gewichtige en gegronde redenen.'

¹³⁰ DFM, 1/1/342, D.F. Malan, "Concept Voorstellen ter Overweging te worden Voorgelegd aan de Predikanten Conferentie te Bloemfontein", February 1915.

reflect the nation's will¹³¹ – was grounded in Malan's personal conviction that the Rebellion was provoked by the government, and that it had to carry the blame and responsibility for remedying the unfortunate situation. In weaving this conviction into the document, Malan revealed himself to be a master of subtlety who understood the art of constructing phrases that were open to interpretation.

The concept resolutions as drafted by Malan were a departure from the open letter that had been issued by the group of Western Cape ministers prior to the outbreak of the Rebellion. Where they had urged an uncritical acceptance of earthly authorities as part of God's word, Malan asserted that the government also carried responsibility in this relationship. His position was that, if the citizens were to obey their political leaders, the leaders had to in turn be willing to investigate their own deeds, determine the causes of any real or imagined grievances, and address these grievances in a spirit of fairness and accommodation.¹³²

Through the course of these musings among the Strand's sand dunes, Malan occasionally broke away to visit friends in the vicinity. On 19 January, he arrived at Willie Hofmeyr's offices in Cape Town. It was about six weeks since they had last seen each other – when Hofmeyr had spoken about his intention to establish a nationalist newspaper to rival *Ons Land*. While Malan had travelled through the rubble left by the Rebellion, Hofmeyr had set the wheels of the new paper in motion. On 18 December, that same Friday when Malan had seen Smuts in his offices in Pretoria, Hofmeyr had led a small meeting of sixteen influential men in Stellenbosch, who had decided to establish a press company to publish the envisioned newspaper. Among them were his nephew, J.H.H. (Jannie) de Waal, H.J. Bergh – the manager of the local district bank – and Bruckner de Villiers – the brother-in-law of one of Stellenbosch's wealthiest men, Jannie Marais, the local Member of Parliament. Some of the details were still undecided – such as whether the newspaper was to be published daily, three times a week, or even weekly – and who was to be the editor. The founders had, however, already found two wealthy backers – Jannie Marais, and his brother, C.L. Marais, had undertaken to buy 5,000 and 1,000 £1 shares respectively. The founders continued to raise money by selling shares – and on this particular day, Malan decided to buy fifty shares himself.¹³³ It is possible that Hofmeyr might have used the occasion to broach the idea of Malan becoming the paper's editor.

Hofmeyr had, by this time, long-standing admiration for Malan. He had come to know the inner workings of Malan's mind through the copies of his sermons that his brother Andrew had sent him from Montagu.¹³⁴ In later years the writer M.E. Rothman – who was critical of both Hofmeyr

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 30-1.

¹³³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 80, 93, 95-6, 99, 107.

¹³⁴ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 64.

and Malan – detected a congeniality of spirit between the two men.¹³⁵ Apart from this personal affinity to Malan, however, Hofmeyr was a shrewd businessman and political strategist. He knew that, within a society like theirs – where academic qualifications and ministers of the church were held in high regard – a man of Malan’s moral and intellectual stature could not fail to inspire the trust of potential readers and investors. It mattered little to him that Malan had no journalistic experience: unlike that of an experienced but unknown journalist, Malan’s name would endow the paper with a status that would bring it the financial rewards necessary to succeed. For this reason, therefore, Hofmeyr also envisioned that Malan would embark on a political career. If Malan could become the leader of the nationalists in the Cape, their endeavour would grow along with his success which, Hofmeyr believed, was a certainty: the paper’s fortunes would be tied to Malan’s.¹³⁶ At this stage, though, Malan’s mind was firmly fixed on the crisis within the church. He did, however, write a letter of recommendation for the new paper which could be used in a prospectus to attract more shareholders.¹³⁷

The meeting of the Council of Churches, along with the ministers’ conference, took place in Bloemfontein on 27-29 January 1915. An exceptionally large number of Dutch Reformed ministers converged on the city in order to attend the conference. At this time the country was under martial law, with such meetings generally forbidden, but this gathering went ahead. To Malan and the ministers attending, it was a clear demonstration of the church’s power: the government knew better than to challenge the most powerful of Afrikaner institutions. The first session was an open one, and dealt only with religious matters. Thereafter, the Council of Churches was to meet behind closed doors, with no members of the public or the press in attendance. The Council had barely seated itself, however, when two unknown persons approached them and requested to attend the meeting. It transpired that they were sent by Generals Botha and Smuts, who wanted first hand information about the proceedings. The chairperson of the meeting, Ds. Pienaar of Uitenhage, was known to be a personal friend of Genl Botha. On this particular morning, however, he barely maintained his composure in the face of such blatant interference from the state. To the two informants, he thundered:

Look here ... tell your masters that the Church is free, and is not subject to any government or other worldly power. You attended the open meeting, which you were allowed to do, like any

¹³⁵ M.E.R. *My Beskeie Deel, 'n Outobiografiese Vertelling* (Cape Town en Johannesburg: Tafelberg, 1972), 220.

¹³⁶ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 721-2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 110.

other. But the rest is held behind closed doors, and you will definitely not be allowed to attend. And now I am telling you: Get out!¹³⁸

The two men scampered and the meeting tried to resume, but tensions were running high. The government's attempt to insert their representatives into the meeting was deemed as an endeavour to intimidate those present, and at least one of the ministers was sufficiently discouraged. With a warning that these were dangerous circumstances and that they had to be careful, he decided to withdraw. He left the building with the others' laughter ringing in his ears.¹³⁹

When the meeting finally resumed, it was decided to issue a request to the government not to execute any more rebels. Malan's concept resolutions were accepted unanimously, and in this way determined the church's stance on the matter.¹⁴⁰ Most importantly, a schism was averted, and everyone could return home with the church intact – and with a new actor on the national stage: Dr D.F. Malan.

Many of the subtleties in Malan's resolutions were lost on Botha, who was nevertheless worried about the animosity towards his government that he could sense was brewing within the church. With this in mind, he wrote to Smuts:

The parsons' resolution is not so bad, but I should like to know what was discussed behind the scenes. It is certain that many of them are underground rebels and it is such a pity that servants of God go out of their way to do so much to help mislead our people.¹⁴¹

Malan returned to Graaff-Reinet, but the wheels that would bring him into the political arena had begun to turn. Early in February, the founders of the envisioned newspaper circulated its first prospectus. The new newspaper was to carry the name of *De Burger*,¹⁴² and according to its mission statement,

“*De Burger*” wants to be a Dutch newspaper of good quality, independent of government or party control, with a *democratic, Christian-national inclination*, a newspaper that will strive for the recognition of solid and clear principles on every terrain of our society...“*De Burger*” wants to reflect the opinion of our nation with regards to all issues that affect our country, and

¹³⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 28: ‘Kyk ... sê aan julle base dat die Kerk vry is, en nie staan onder enige regering of ander wêreldlike mag nie. Die ope vergadering het julle, en kon julle soos enige ander bywoon. Maar die res word met geslote deure gehou, en julle sal beslis nie daarin toegelaat word nie. En nou sê ek aan julle: Maak dat julle wegkom!’

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 28-9.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴¹ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 237.

¹⁴² The Citizen

he will be foremost in the free and thorough discussion of all remedies that might be used or suggested in solving such problems.¹⁴³

The prospectus was written by Prof. J.J. Smith of the Victoria College.¹⁴⁴ His choice of words, however, were strikingly similar to the letter that Malan had written to N.J. van der Merwe a mere two months before, and additionally contained a concept which Malan had explored in his speech ‘Taal en Nationaliteit’, which he had delivered in Stellenbosch in 1911. It was a strange coincidence indeed as, up to that point, Malan and Smith had not yet made each other’s acquaintance.¹⁴⁵

According to the prospectus, *De Burger*’s motto would be that of the French Revolution: ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.’ It was envisioned that the principle of Liberty was needed for both sections of South Africa’s white population to each develop in their own way according to their respective national characters; Equality was to be exercised in their treatment, and in the practice of their equal rights; and Fraternity would develop between the Dutch and English elements as a spontaneous result of such a course of action.¹⁴⁶ In other words, it would only be through the recognition and reverence of each other’s rights that there could ever be unity between English speakers and Afrikaners – ‘duality for the sake of unity.’¹⁴⁷ This was the concept that Malan had introduced in 1911 – which was in contrast to Botha’s vision of a single South African nation, as well as Hertzog’s ‘two-stream’ idea. In his speech in 1911, Malan had stated that it was best if the South African nation became ‘a moral union, founded on a common love for a common fatherland, but it will be a unity that consists of a duality – a dual-unity.’¹⁴⁸

Malan was evidently more involved with the establishment of *De Burger* than he would ever admit. His support for such a nationalist endeavour was only too natural – given his well-known sympathy for the nationalist cause and his promotion of language rights – but the resolutions that he had written for the Bloemfontein conference demonstrated his belief that, while ministers of the church needed to promote the Afrikaners’ national interests, they were to refrain from party politics.

¹⁴³ Quoted in C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 112: “‘*De Burger*’ wil zijn een Hollandse koerant van goed gehalte, onafhankelijk van regerings- of partijbeheer, en met een demokratiese, kristelik-nationale strekking, - een koerant die zal ijveren voor de erkenning van vaste en duidelijke beginselen op elk gebied van onze samenleving... “*De Burger*” wil de meningen van ons volk betreffende alle vraagstukken van gewicht voor ons land weergeven, en hij zal ook zelf voorgaan in de vrije en degelijke bespreking van alle middelen, die er mogen aangewend of aan de hand gegeven worden ter oplossing van zodanige vraagstukken.’

¹⁴⁴ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 111.

¹⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/366, J.J. Smith – D.F. Malan, 24 April 1915.

¹⁴⁶ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 112.

¹⁴⁷ Quoted in C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 112: ‘de tweeheid dus ter wille van de eenheid.’

¹⁴⁸ DFM, 1/1/303, D.F. Malan, ‘Taal en Nationaliteit’, *Wij Zullen Handhaven: Studente Taalkonferentie*. Stellenbosch, 1911, 39-40: ‘een zedelijke eenheid, gegrond in een gemeenschappelijke liefde tot een gemeenschappelijk vaderland, maar het zal een eenheid zijn bestaande in een tweeheid – een twee-eenheid.’

Promoting a newspaper that would further the Afrikaners' interests therefore fitted well with this calling, becoming the editor of such a newspaper was not, to Malan, a consideration.

Others disagreed. Within days of his return to Graaff-Reinet from Bloemfontein, Malan received a letter from the chairwoman of the ACVV, Elizabeth Roos, who was jubilant that he had been offered the editorship of the envisioned newspaper:

As I have gathered, with great delight, that the supporters of the newspaper which is to be established have decided to ask you – for the sake of our Church and Nation – to take the editorship upon yourself, I too would like to attempt, however feebly, to move you to not refuse this request. Both Church and Nation need your services at this time, and in a far wider direction than that in which you have served her, with your many talents, thus far.¹⁴⁹

Roos might have gotten slightly ahead of herself since no formal offer had been made to Malan, but it is clear that the founders of the new paper, and Willie Hofmeyr in particular, had their hearts set on Malan becoming its editor.

The men who joined forces to establish the new press company all hailed from the Western Cape, and from Stellenbosch in particular. In addition to this, many things were common to the group: they were from old, established Afrikaner families that had been intermarrying for generations, and were therefore all related to one another, either through blood relations or by marriage; they had attended the same schools, studied at the Victoria College and, in later years, shared professional or business interests; many belonged to the ATV; finally, many of their wives added to the intricate network through their common membership of the ACVV.¹⁵⁰ In short, this group of businessmen were from the same landed gentry class to which Malan belonged.

It is possible to discern two distinct interest groups among the founders of the newspaper. On the one hand, there were NP sympathisers and businessmen who would focus on the paper's political and financial interests while on the other hand, there were the academics who wanted to use to the paper to achieve their cultural, literary, and linguistic ideals.¹⁵¹

Willie Hofmeyr was the driving force behind the initiative, but he soon ran into unforeseen difficulties with his nephew, J.H.H. de Waal. De Waal was one of the founders of the ATV – which organisation Malan had been chairman of for a year – and had published the first novel in

¹⁴⁹ DFM, 1/1/343, E. Roos – D.F. Malan, 4 February 1915: 'Daar ik met groote ingenomenheid vernomen heb dat de ondersteuners van het te stichten nieuwsblad besloten hebben U WelEerw'de te verzoeken ter wille van ons Kerk en Volk het Editeurschap op u te nemen, wil ook ik een poging aanwenden, hoe zwak dan ook, u te bewegen dit versoek toch niet van de hand te wyzen. Beide Kerk en Volk hebben uwe diensten thans noodig, en dat in een veel wydere richting als waarin u haar tot hertoe met uwe vele talenten gedient heeft.'

¹⁵⁰ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 81.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 85.

Afrikaans.¹⁵² He was also the only man among the founders of this new paper who possessed any journalistic experience. He was, however, out of step with the rest of the group. It is possible that he was hoping to become the new paper's editor, since he had been forced to vacate his editorial chair at *De Goede Hoop* – a monthly periodical – due to his pro-Hertzog sentiments. This was indeed a period when martial law and press censorship were in force, and editors had to be careful of expressing criticism of the authorities. Newspapers that were opposed to the government lost their advertisers and were being forced to close down: establishing a new one, especially one that clearly advocated Afrikaner nationalist interests, in such an environment seemed foolhardy.¹⁵³

During early 1915, the founders met several times to report on their progress and to decide on their next course of action. The meeting of 10 February 1915, however, was devoted to quelling De Waal's temper tantrum. He had learned that, since their previous meeting on 25 January, Malan had been approached by a small deputation intent on offering him the editorship.¹⁵⁴ It is unclear whether the deputation had visited Malan in the Strand, while he prepared to leave for Bloemfontein, or in Graaff-Reinet after his return from the ministers' conference. Regardless, De Waal was furious. He formally requested permission from the new company's directors to inform wine farmers, who had been approached to buy shares, that Malan would most probably not have their interests at heart.¹⁵⁵ This was a perversion of Malan's well-known 1910 sermon on alcohol abuse, in which Malan had made it clear that he was the son of a wine-farmer, and was not opposed to the production and consumption of wine: rather, his grievance lay with the exploitation of the existing alcoholism within the Coloured community for the sake of economic gain.¹⁵⁶ This was, unfortunately, a subtlety that could easily be ignored and twisted to portray Malan as a religious crusader against the use of alcohol – there had been ministers before him who had done so. Malan's supporters knew that the threat made by De Waal could be detrimental, since wine farmers formed an influential and moneyed constituency within the Western Cape. They therefore hastened to assure the meeting that it was not a formal deputation that had visited Malan, but merely a group of interested individuals who had acted in their private capacity. Willie Hofmeyr made it clear to the meeting that he had advised Malan that they were approaching him as such, and that no formal offer had been made.¹⁵⁷ For Malan's part, he had dismissed the possibility of leaving the church. Hofmeyr, however, was not easily discouraged.

¹⁵² C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 83.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 80, 83-5.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/309a, "Uittreksel uit een toespraak van Dr. Malan op de Stellenbossche Conferentie."

¹⁵⁷ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 115-6.

Indeed, Malan's focus remained fixed on the church and its woes. Following the Bloemfontein Conference, his resolutions needed to be ratified by the Synods of each of the four provinces. The Transvaal Synod, however, decided to modify his resolutions before adopting them. Since the Transvaal was Louis Botha's stronghold, this did not come as a surprise. On his copy of the *De Kerkbode* – the Cape Dutch Reformed Church's news magazine – that contained the modifications, Malan scribbled: 'That Transvaal Synod Commission! My reply to this is in *Ons Land*.'¹⁵⁸

Malan was furious, since the modifications concerned one of the pillars of his argument. According to Romans 13:1-7, all worldly authorities had been instituted by God and therefore, disobeying them constituted a sin. Malan, had made it clear, however, that in return for this obedience, the government also had a responsibility towards its citizens who, in extenuating circumstances, could challenge its authority.¹⁵⁹ In this regard, Malan had written that, 'according to God's Word, the Authorities have been ordained by God and therefore ... one may not resist the lawful authorities for the sake of one's conscience other than for very substantial and justifiable reasons.'¹⁶⁰

The Transvaal Synod, however, had elected to edit this sentence. It was kept intact up to the statement that the lawful authorities may not be resisted. They removed the qualification that one may not challenge the powers that be other than for very substantial reasons, and replaced it with a partial extract from Article 36 of the Belgic Confession of Faith, so that it read:

...one may not resist the lawful authorities, but everyone, of what state, quality, or condition he may be, has to subject himself to the authorities, to show due honour and respect to them, and to obey them in all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God, to supplicate for them in their prayers, that God may rule and guide them in all their ways, and that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.¹⁶¹

In essence, the attempt was made to shift the focus back to the citizen's duty to obey the government, but in actual fact it failed dismally. As Malan pointed out, the clumsy use of an edited version of the Belgic Confession of Faith resulted in a contradictory statement: on the one hand, the

¹⁵⁸ DFM, 1/1/345, "Besluiten van den Raad der Kerken", *De Kerkbode*, 18 March 1915: 'Daardie Transvaalse Synodale Kommissie! My antwoord daarop in "Ons Land"'.

¹⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/342, D.F. Malan, "Concept Voorstellen ter Overweging te worden Voorgelegd aan de Predikanten Conferentie te Bloemfontein", February 1915.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: '...volgens Gods Woord de Overheid van God verordend is en ...dat men om des gewetens wil zich tegen de wettige overheid niet verzetten mag anders dan om zeer gewichtige en gegronde redenen.'

¹⁶¹ DFM, 1/1/345, 'Besluiten van den Raad der Kerken', *De Kerkbode*, 18 March 1915; <http://mb-soft.com/believe/txh/belgic2.htm> (Accessed: 6 May 2009), "Belgic Confession of Faith – Text": '...dat men zich tegen de wettige overheid niet verzetten mag, maar dat een ieder, van wat betrekking, kring of stand hij zij, schuldig is zich aan de overheden te onderwerpen, hun eer en eerbied toe te dragen, en hun gehoorzaam te zijn in alle dingen, die niet strijden tegen Gods Woord; voor hen biddende in hun gebeden, opdat hen de Heere bestieren wil in al hun wegen, en dat wij een stil en gerust leven leiden in alle godzaligheid en eerbaarheid.'

Transvaal Synod had tried to reassert its submission to worldly powers by stating that one may not resist the authorities, while in contrast the Belgic Confession of Faith itself stated that obedience stretches only as far as the government's actions are not 'repugnant to the Word of God', which is what Malan had originally been conveying in far more concise and accurate terms. 'One does not need to possess a particularly large measure of the gift of reason to see that this is a logical contradiction',¹⁶² Malan wrote in a letter to the editor of *Ons Land*. In retaliation, he pointed out that the Belgic Confession of Faith, along with the church's other confessional documents, was based on the doctrines of John Calvin. Therefore he reasserted his statement – that the powers that be could indeed be challenged under extenuating circumstances – by quoting from Calvin's Institutes.¹⁶³ Calvin had written:

But there is always one exception to that obedience which, as we have established, is due to the authority of superiors, and it is this that must be our principal concern: we must never allow ourselves to be diverted from our obedience to the one to whose will the desires of every king must be subjected, to whose decrees all their commands give place, and before whose majesty they must lay down their own insignia. Would it not be an absurdity to give contentment to mere men by obeying them, but thereby to incur the wrath of him on whose account alone any human being at all must be obeyed? The Lord is the king of kings. When his sacred mouth has spoken, it alone and no one else is to be heard. We are subject to those who have been placed over us, but only in him. If they command anything against his will, it must be as nothing to us. And in this instance we must ignore all that dignity that magistrates possess. There is no injustice in compelling it to be subordinate to the true, unique and supreme power of God.¹⁶⁴

In this way Malan made it clear that the Calvinist faith did not dictate blind obedience to secular authorities. He also demonstrated that not only was such deference to the powers that be contrary to the faith, but also to the course of history. The Transvaal Synod, Malan contended, had not only effectively condemned England's Glorious Revolution and the independence of North America, but they had also succeeded in excommunicating their own ancestors – the Dutch Protestants, who had conducted an eighty-year war to liberate themselves from the Spanish, and the French Huguenots, who had fought a hundred-year battle for the sake of their faith. 'Our Dutch and

¹⁶² DFM, 1/1/345, D.F. Malan, "Ope brief in Ons Land", 3 April 1915: 'Men behoeft niet in byzonder hooge mate de gawe der redeneering te bezitten om te zien dat dit eene logische contradictie is.'

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ J. Calvin, 'Calvin: On Civil Government [*Institutio Christianae Religionis*, Book IV, chapter 20]' in H. Höpfl, ed., *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 83; DFM, 1/1/345, D.F. Malan, "Ope brief in Ons Land", 3 April 1915.

Huguenot ancestors excommunicated by their descendants in South Africa. How ironic!’¹⁶⁵ Malan exclaimed. In his worldview, God directed the history of the nations: wars, rebellions, revolutions, and regime-changes formed an integral part of history – and insisting that all these changes in the established order were sinful defied all reason.

It was not only the question of mindless obedience that frustrated Malan: he was also angered by the fact that the Transvaal Synod had removed the government’s accountability to its citizens when it chosen to erase the last six words of Malan’s resolutions.¹⁶⁶ Once again, the onus was placed on the citizens to follow their leaders, without regard for the leaders’ responsibility to the citizens. In contrast, Malan’s resolutions asserted that lasting peace and order could not be restored if the government used nothing but force to counter dissent. Instead, the government and the nation had to investigate the causes of the Rebellion, and on the basis of this enquiry, take action ‘in the spirit of fairness and accommodation to the nation’s will.’¹⁶⁷

To Malan, there was only one possible cause for the Transvaal Synod’s about-turn – which destroyed the church’s unified response to the 1914 Rebellion. He was convinced that the Transvaal Synod was dancing to the government’s tune. The church’s independence had been undermined, and it was driven to irrational actions because it was seeking its guidance from an editor’s chair, and its blessing from the Cabinet.¹⁶⁸ It was clear that the crisis was far from over, and that it permeated the highest levels of both church and state.

While Malan was defending the right to oppose the government, Willie Hofmeyr and his supporters succeeded in outmanoeuvring De Waal. At a meeting on 30 March 1915, three days before Malan’s defiant and frustrated letter was published in *Ons Land*, it was decided to offer Malan the editorship of *De Burger*, with an annual salary of £700. They also decided to appoint a manager, Fred Dormehl, to take care of the paper’s administration, at a salary of £600, and an assistant-editor, Meindert Wartema, for £420 per year. Willie Hofmeyr was given the task of approaching Malan with the formal offer.¹⁶⁹

Hofmeyr knew that the task ahead of him would not be an easy one. It was very clear that Malan believed that his calling to serve the Afrikaner nation was being fulfilled through his work in the church. The church was the most powerful of all the Afrikaner institutions, and was the only one to have survived the Anglo-Boer War. It was little wonder then that Malan regarded it as the

¹⁶⁵ J. Calvin, ‘Calvin: On Civil Government: ‘Onze Geuzen en Hugenote voorouders in de ban gedaan door hunne nazate in Z.A. Wat ‘n ironie!’

¹⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/345, “Besluiten van den Raad der Kerken”, *De Kerkbode*, 18 March 1915.

¹⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/342, D.F. Malan, “Concept Voorstellen ter Overweging te worden Voorgelegd aan de Predikanten Conferentie te Bloemfontein”, February 1915: ‘...in den geest van rechtvaardigheid en van tegemoetkoming aan den volkswil.’

¹⁶⁸ DFM, 1/1/345, D.F. Malan, “Ope brief in Ons Land”, 3 April 1915.

¹⁶⁹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 118.

organisation most capable of realising his ideals. Added to this problem was Malan's personality: those close to him knew that it was not in his nature to depart from a path once chosen. Convincing him to change his direction was therefore no trifling matter, but Hofmeyr was hopeful.¹⁷⁰

Before leaving Cape Town, Hofmeyr received word from his brother, Alec – who practiced law in Willowmore – that Malan's dismissal of their first, informal, offer was not unaccompanied by some measure of internal struggle. Hofmeyr therefore went to Willowmore, where he collected Alec, as well as Ds. J.R. (Johnnie) Albertyn, P.K. Albertyn's younger brother, to assist him in his campaign.¹⁷¹ The three men piled themselves into Alec Hofmeyr's Ford, and set off for Graaff-Reinet.¹⁷²

It was late in the afternoon when they arrived at Malan's parsonage. Malan did not break away from his work until the next morning, after breakfast, so they were made to wait before they could speak to him. Then the four men walked into the parsonage's large garden, where they would not be disturbed. They spent hours there walking back and forth, sitting down, and standing up again.¹⁷³

From the start it was clear to all concerned that it was not merely the question of a newspaper editor that was at stake. This was only a means to an end – a bridge to a political career.¹⁷⁴ Hofmeyr wanted to establish a Cape branch of the NP, with Malan as its leader.¹⁷⁵

The discussion was to last for several days. Initially Malan was silent, and simply stared into space while they spoke. He hardly asked any questions, and from time to time excused himself to visit ill members of his congregation. Only on the third day did he erupt, protesting 'You don't know what you are asking of me!'¹⁷⁶ Then it all came pouring out: those three months he had spent as a young student in Stellenbosch, conflicted and torn between a career in law and a career in the church, finally choosing the one and turning his back on the other. He made it clear that he was content in the church, and had devoted all of his energies to its work. Now, he protested, they had turned his world upside down again.¹⁷⁷

Malan's main objection to the possibility of accepting Hofmeyr's offer was that he did not have the necessary training, and neither was he suited to being the editor of a paper. He was not a writer, and moreover he was a slow thinker who needed time in order to contemplate a subject before formulating an opinion. How could he, with such handicaps, be placed at the head of a

¹⁷⁰ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 67.

¹⁷¹ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 299.

¹⁷² C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 139.

¹⁷³ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 66-7.

¹⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/353, D.F. Malan – A.J. Louw, 14 April 1915.

¹⁷⁵ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 66-7.

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 301: 'Julle weet nie wat julle vra nie!'

¹⁷⁷ B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 301.

newspaper – let alone a daily paper?¹⁷⁸ Malan's pleas sounded like those of Moses in front of the burning bush. How could he lead a nation, Moses asked God, if he stuttered when he spoke?

Like God with Moses, Hofmeyr did not take no for an answer, and gave a solution to every objection. He argued that Malan had proven his talents with regards to the written and the spoken word, and that, during such tumultuous times, a sober thinker was more needed than ever: it would be a guarantee of healthy and well-considered leadership. He also assured Malan that there would be willing and able people to assist him with this daunting task.¹⁷⁹

Malan's greatest reservation, however, was whether or not leaving the pulpit represented God's will. The question also remained – did the nation want him as their leader? According to Hofmeyr, Malan concluded their conversation with these words: 'But who says that the nation desires me as their leader? You say so, but you represent a small group. And I would never force myself upon the nation. Can you give me any proof that the nation wants me?'¹⁸⁰ Hofmeyr promised to deliver the necessary proof, but added the proviso that, if he brought this proof, Malan had to accept it. Malan asked for time to think about the matter.¹⁸¹

The visitors finally departed from Graaff-Reinet with no idea as to the outcome of Malan's final decision.¹⁸² They left behind them a man who was once again consumed by a sense of inner crisis. Long evenings followed where Esther Malan would sit in an armchair at the fireplace in the large dining room, while her stepson paced round and round the table. One evening Malan's sister, Annie, realised that the dining room had become eerily quiet. She cautiously opened the door and discovered her mother and brother kneeling at the fireplace, both deeply absorbed in fervent prayer.¹⁸³

After a few days, letters gradually began to arrive at the parsonage, soon turning into a flood. Willie Hofmeyr was using his influence and his extensive network to provide the proof that he had promised. Both secular and church leaders were asked to write to Malan, and they responded like an army that had waited for battle and was jubilant at being unleashed.

It was the letters from fellow men of the cloth that moved Malan most. Ds. D.S. Botha from Stellenbosch, a man for whom Malan had immense respect, wrote:

Oh, that God might give us a man to instruct us and guide us in these dark days wherein so many are blinded and led astray – a man who fears God, who understands the Church's

¹⁷⁸ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 66.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 67: 'Maar wie sê die volk wil my as leier hê? Jy sê dit, maar jy verteenwoordig maar 'n klein groepie. En ek sal my nooit aan die volk as leier wil opdring nie. Kan jy my enige bewys lewer dat die volk my wil hê?'

¹⁸¹ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 67.

¹⁸² B. Booyens, *Die Lewe van D.F. Malan*, 301.

¹⁸³ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 23-4.

calling, who loves the nation and in addition to that, who has enough intellect and knowledge to be at the helm of matters regarding the state! Such a man is *Our Nation's* greatest need in the present day. Who is this man? Brother, I believe that you are such a man!¹⁸⁴

More letters followed, most carrying the same tone. The letter-writers were, however, fully aware of the risks involved, and the treacherous path that lay ahead. For example, in the same letter, Ds. Botha envisioned the dangers presented by the political arena: '... the question is; will a life in politics not weaken your spiritual life? Politics could shave off a Samson's hair.'¹⁸⁵

These reservations would have brought Prof. Valeton's old caveat – that politics is devoid of principle and irreconcilable with religion – back to Malan's mind. Years before, he had written to his sister that '... the struggle between politics and principles is as old as Ahab and Elijah and no one has ever succeeded in uniting the two.'¹⁸⁶ He had spewed fire at the mere idea of religion being a tool in the political arena – he had additionally written to his father that '... when one drags religion into politics by its hair in order to obtain political capital, one is sacrificing eternal interests for the temporary, one humiliates religion.'¹⁸⁷

The big question was, in essence, would Malan now attempt to reconcile these two careers which, up to this point in his life, he had regarded as opposite poles? He was not only being asked to change his career – one which he had pursued with solid conviction – but he was also being forced to review his views and opinions regarding the relationship between politics and religion. He was no longer a student in awe of his professor, however, and in the preceding years he had come to realise the extent to which the state controlled the instruments that determined the fate and well-being of its citizens.

Malan gave the matter all the serious consideration that he had promised to devote to it. It moved him to pick up his own pen to seek the advice of those whom he held in high regard and who had given him guidance years before. He began by writing to fellow ministers, such as Ds. A.J. Louw¹⁸⁸ – under whom he had begun his career as an assistant-minister in Heidelberg – and Ds.

¹⁸⁴ DFM, 1/1/348, D.S. Botha – D.F. Malan, 5 April 1915: 'Och dat God ons een man gewe om als redakteur het volk voor te lichten en te leiden in deze donkere dagen waarin zoo velen verblind zyn en verleid worden – een man die God vrees, de roeping der Kerk begrypt het volk lief heeft en daarby verstand en kennis genoeg heeft om met wys beleid aan het roei van zaken op staatkundig gebied te staan! Zulk een man is op den huidigen dag de grootste behoefte van *Ons Volk*. Wie is die man? Broeder, ik geloof dat jy zoodanige man zyn.'

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*: '...de vraag is, zul het leven op politiek terrein u geestelyk leven niet verzwakken. De politiek zou Simsons haar kunnen afscheuren.'

¹⁸⁶ DFM, 1/1/205, D.F. Malan – Cinie Louw, 5 November 1902: 'de stryd tusschen politiek en beginsel is ook ruim zoo oud als Achab en Elia en niemand is er nog in geslaagd ze te vereenigen.'

¹⁸⁷ DFM, 1/1/216, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malan senior, 4 June 1903: 'waar men nu den godsdienst by de haren insleept om te helpen politiek winst te verkrygen, daar offert men eeuwig belangen op voor tydelike, daar vernedert men den godsdienst.'

¹⁸⁸ DFM, 1/1/353, D.F. Malan – A.J. Louw, 14 April 1915.

A.F. Louw,¹⁸⁹ with whom he had travelled northwards to investigate the repercussions of the Rebellion. He not only asked for their personal advice, but also requested that they would inform him of the opinions of their fellow-ministers.¹⁹⁰

Ds. A.F. Louw obliged by writing to his confidantes in turn, in order to ask for their opinions. His brother, J.M. Louw responded with a letter which clearly reflected the dilemmas that Malan was facing at a time which they all regarded as tumultuous:

I am grateful that in this instance I must write to you, and not to Dr D.F. In principle, I am certainly opposed to someone leaving the ministry in order to accept another position. But, there can also be exceptions ... There is much that anyone can predict, for example this: if D.F. becomes editor of “De Burger”, it means that, apart from his great and wholesome influence which he will have over our nation from the very beginning, he will go to Parliament after the next elections and be the *leader* of a *strong* party. It is also precisely what our nation needs at the moment, namely a leader of the Afrikaner opposition. *Hertzog* is *not* that. Many cannot and will not find it in themselves to follow him, while there are large numbers who would readily follow a man such as D.F. ...yet, can the *Church* do without him, and will his conscience not plague him? I truly do not know what to say, and can only shrug my shoulders. Is this not indeed a time for our poor nation to pray, and to pray also for a man like D.F.!, so that he may receive the necessary light from above in order that he may know precisely what he must do!¹⁹¹

Malan also wrote to ex-President M.T. Steyn. This letter in particular revealed the depths of his inner struggle, as he weighed all of the arguments for and against his entry into politics. He had rejected the first offer to become editor of *De Burger*, and would have done the same with the second, had it not been for the stream of letters from fellow-ministers imploring him to serve the nation by means of the press. It was not merely the editorship of a newspaper that was at stake. What truly concerned him was the radical career change that would come about if he were to leave

¹⁸⁹ DFM, 1/1/372, A.F. Louw – D.F. Malan, 1 May 1915.

¹⁹⁰ DFM, 1/1/353, D.F. Malan – A.J. Louw, 14 April 1915.

¹⁹¹ DFM, 1/1/372, J.M. Louw – A.F. Louw, 29 April 1915: ‘Dankbaar ben ik, dat ik in dit geval aan u, en niet Dr. D.F., moet schrijven. Tegen ‘t beginsel, dat iemand de Evangeliebediening zal verlaten, en een ander betrekking zal aanvaarden, ben ik beslist. Doch, daar kunnen ook uitzonderingen zijn...Daar is veel dat eenigeen kan voorspellen, by. dit: wordt D.F. editeur van “De Burger”, dan beteekent dit, af gezien van den grooten en heilzamen invloed, die hij uit het staanspoor als editeur op ons volk zal uitoefenen, dat hij bij de eerst volgende electie naar ‘t Parlement zal gaan, en de *leider* van een *sterke* partij zal wezen. Dit is dan ook presies wat ons volk thans noodig heeft, nl. een leider van de Afrikaneroppositiesectie. Dit is *Hertzog niet*. Met hem kunnen en zullen velen het niet vinden, terwijl er groote getallen zijn, die ‘n man als D.F. gereedelyk zullen volgen...doch kan de *Kerk* hem missen, en zal zijn geweten hem niet kwellen? Ik weet waarlyk niet wat om te zeggen, en moet maar slechts de schouders ophalen. Wat is het een tijd om voor ons arm volk te bidden, en te bidden ook voor ‘n man als D.F.!, opdat hij het noodige licht van boven mag ontvangen om weten precies wat hij doen moet!’

the church in order to pursue politics. Up to this point in his career, he had regarded the church as the most effective vehicle for achieving his nationalist ideals. ‘Will I not serve our nation better inside, rather than outside the Church?’ he pondered. ‘Is the Church not in the last instance the *one*, eternal organisation, that binds our nation together, and which is therefore the best guarantee of our national future?’¹⁹²

Steyn clearly recognised Malan’s anguish, and was therefore very prompt with his answer. His letter, written in a fatherly tone, was sympathetic to Malan’s fear of change, but nevertheless counselled him to take the leap of faith:

You can still work for your church, and maybe do even more for her. As the editor of a paper, you will be able to speak to the nation from day to day ... But if the editorship was the only reason for leaving the service of the Church – then, I would not be in favour of it. There exists, however, a much greater reason for going into politics – you can see how divided our people are and how they are crying out for a man to unite them, you can see how the Afrikaners in the Cape Colony are searching for a leader to guide them along the correct path. There is only one who could do such work, and you are that man. My advice is thus: accept the editorship, but also prepare yourself to become a Member of Parliament after the next elections. I do not have the slightest doubt that if the Afrikaners in the Cape Province know that you will take the political leadership upon yourself, they will gather around you with near-unanimity. For my part, I do not conceal the fact that this path will bring you much hardship. You will have to hear much about the ‘Dutch Predikant’ and all his sins and shortcomings, but hardships and accusations may never hold us back when the goal we strive for is so great and so noble.¹⁹³

Steyn was not the only one to argue that Malan would still serve the interests of the church from the editor’s chair. The young nationalist-theologian, Tobie Muller, also wrote to Malan to

¹⁹² VAB, President M.T. Steyn collection, A 156, 1/1/9, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 17 April 1915: ‘kan ik ons volk niet beter dienen binnen dan buiten de Kerk?’; ‘...is de Kerk ten slotte toch niet de ééne, altyd-blyvende organisatie, die ons volk aan elkaar bindt en daarom de beste waarborg voor onze nationale toekomst.’

¹⁹³ DFM, 1/1/355, M.T. Steyn – D.F. Malan, 19 April 1915: ‘U kan nog blyven arbeiden voor Uw Kerk en misschien nog meer voor haar doen. U kan als editeur van een blad van dag tot dag tot het volk spreken en veel doen in kwesies als opvoeding, arm blanken enz voor ons volk...Maar als de editeurschap de enigste reden moet zyn voor het verlaten van de Kerkdienst – dan zou ik er niet voor zyn. Maar er bestaat nog een veel grotere rede om in de politiek te gaan – U ziet hoe ons volk verdeelt is en hoe het roept naar een man om hen te vereniging, U ziet hoe de Afrikaners in de Kaap Kolonie zoeken naar een leider om hen langs de rechte weg te leiden. Er is alleen een die dat werk kan doen en U is de man. Myn raad is dus neem de editeurschap aan, maar maak U ook gereed by de eerst volgende verkiezing lid van het Parlement te worden. Ik heb niet de minste twyfel dat als de Afrikaners in de K.P. weten dat U de politieke leiding op U zal nemen, zy zich byna eenparig om U zullen scharen. Ik verberg voor my niet het feit dat de weg voor u vele moeilikheden zal opleveren. U zal veel moeten hooren van die “Dutch Predikant” en al zyne zonde en tekortkomingen, maar moeilikheden en verwyten mogen ons niet terughouden waar het doel waarnaar wy striven zoo groot en edel is.’

express his concerns about the state of affairs within the church. By leaving the church, Malan could remedy the situation, as:

The spinelessness of our church and the meekness with which a part of it adopts its doctrine and practice from the government press and the *Kerkbode* – which is sympathetic to the government, can only be remedied by a Christian national paper, which will keep the church and nation mindful of their fundamental principles.¹⁹⁴

The concepts of nation and church were so convoluted that they had become indistinguishable. In reply to Malan's letter seeking his advice, Ds. A.J. Louw wrote from Heidelberg that he wanted to add to Vader Kestell's description of the relationship between the Afrikaners and their church: '... "the unity and the continued existence of our church is tied to that of the nation; and vice versa." The Church is in fact the nation. If this statement is correct: then I am not prepared to say – that leaving the Church to serve the nation is wrong.'¹⁹⁵

The letters continued to stream in from all directions, and they all had a common theme: these were treacherous times and the Afrikaner nation needed a leader who was beyond reproach to guide them through it. As far as each of the writers were concerned, there was only one man who could save them: D.F. Malan.¹⁹⁶ The language was flowery and the praises were many – in effect, they unintentionally painted a picture of Malan as a messiah figure. As one of the letters expressed it, 'the greatest immediate need of our nation today is a pure *Christian-National* people's paper, under the editorship of a man who will generally be acknowledged to have the ability to think for the nation and to lead the nation.'¹⁹⁷

One of the letters that moved Malan most was smuggled from Bloemfontein's central prison.¹⁹⁸ It was signed by the rebel-leader, Genl Christiaan de Wet, and ninety-six of his fellow-interned rebels. It implored Malan to accept the editorship of *De Burger* and to take his place as one of Afrikanerdom's new leaders: 'The God-fearing Generals Beyers and De la Rey are no longer with us, their place must be taken by men who will be willing to suffer with our nation and for our

¹⁹⁴ DFM, 1/1/365, T.B. Muller – D.F. Malan, 24 April 1915: 'Die slapheid van onse kerk en die gedweeheid waarmee 'n deel daarvan sijn leer en praktijk oorneem van die regeringpers en van 'n regeringsgesinde "*Kerkbode*" kan best genees word deur 'n Xe nationale blad, wat aan kerk volk hulle grondbeginsels voor oë hou.'

¹⁹⁵ DFM, 1/1/373, A.J. Louw – D.F. Malan, 3 May 1915: "'de eenheid + 't voortbestaan v. onze Kerk hangt samen met die van 't volk; + vice versa.'" De Kerk is gansch het volk. Is deze stelling korrekt: dan ben ik niet bereid te zeggen – dat het verlaten van de Kerk om het volk te dienen verkeerd is.'

¹⁹⁶ See for example DFM, 1/1/439, J.E. de Villiers jr. – D.F. Malan, 5 April 1915; DFM, 1/1/352, Dreyer – D.F. Malan, 12 April 1915.

¹⁹⁷ DFM, 1/1/363, J. Reyneke – D.F. Malan, 23 April 1915: '...de grootste onmiddelijke behoefte van ons volk vandag is 'n zuiver *Christelik-Nationaal* Volksblad, onder de redaktie van 'n man die algemeen erkend zal worden als instaat om voor het volk te denken, en het volk te leiden.'

¹⁹⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 33.

nation.’¹⁹⁹ Such a call, from the man whom Malan had admired with near hero-worship while still a student in Utrecht, struck a deep chord. Ultimately, the barrage of letters served their purpose: Malan began to contemplate the possibility of leaving the church.

By 20 April 1915, Willie Hofmeyr was able to report to the founders of the new paper that Malan was giving serious consideration to their offer, and wanted to know what exactly was expected from an editor. The founders, in turn, confirmed that if Malan were to become a Member of Parliament, he would not be expected to relinquish his post as editor. De Waal formulated Malan’s duties as such: he had to write editorials, choose which correspondence to publish – since in court he was legally responsible for such decisions – and he was entitled to determine the content of the paper.²⁰⁰

Hofmeyr then wrote to Malan to reassure him that they were in the process of appointing an assistant-editor, Wartema, and a sub-editor, Steinmeyer, both of whom they had poached from *Ons Land*. They would in turn be responsible for the paper’s contents and layout – and would even assist Malan with the editorials. In short, Malan had nothing to fear.²⁰¹ It appears that, by early May, Malan was leaning in the direction of *De Burger*. On 6 May, Hofmeyr sent him a telegram to assure him that everything was falling into place: a printing press had been bought, offices had been rented, and the manager and assistant-editor had been appointed. In return, Hofmeyr enquired from Malan as to when his colleagues would return.²⁰² In all probability, Malan was waiting to share his decision with Albertyn and the ministers of the neighbouring parishes, before making it public.

By 12 May, Malan began to reply to his letter-writers with the news that he had decided to accept the position as editor of *De Burger*, and that he was prepared to enter politics.²⁰³ He approached the new cross that he had to bear with the same determination and devotion that he had given to the ministry. Like so many years before, he had submitted to God’s will:

After much prayer for guidance from the Lord – and I may say, struggle – I have come to the decision to take the editorship of “De Burger” upon myself. I trust that I will serve the Lord, in whose service I shall always remain, and our nation and Church, better than ever before. I hope that the paper will deserve the name Christian-national in every respect.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ DFM, 1/1/377, C.R. de Wet e.a. – D.F. Malan, 8 May 1915: ‘De Godvruchtige Generaals Beyers en de la Rey zijn daar niet meer vandaag, hunne plaatsen moeten worden ingenomen onder ons volk door mannen die bereid zullen zijn met ons volk en voor ons volk te lijden.’

²⁰⁰ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 132.

²⁰¹ DFM, 1/1/359, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 21 April 1915.

²⁰² DFM, 1/1/376, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 6 May 1915.

²⁰³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 142.

²⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/380, D.F. Malan – J.E. de Villiers, 12 May 1915: ‘Na veel biddend opzien tot den Heer – en ik mag zeggen, stryd – ben ik tot het besluit gekomen om het redakteurschap van “De Burger” op my te nemen. Ik vertrouw dat ik langs dien weg den Heer, in Wiens dienst ik altyd blyf, en ons volk en Kerk nog beter zal kunnen dienen dan ooit tevoren. Ik hoop dat het blad van naam van Christelyk-nationaal in alle opzichten ten volle zal verdienen.’

Malan's decision was greeted by a new stream of letters, this time to congratulate him on his decision. Willie Hofmeyr wrote to him: 'I knew that the matter of the editorship would weigh heavily upon your heart, and I am overjoyed to hear from you that you are now at peace after having taken your decision.'²⁰⁵

Not everyone was equally ecstatic, however. The editor of *De Kerkbode*, G.S. (Geo) Malan – whom Tobie Muller had accused of toeing the government's line – wrote to express his bitter disappointment. In his letter, G.S. Malan referred to a conversation earlier that year, during which Malan had told him that he would not accept the editorship. He had assumed Malan would stand by that decision but, realising that there was nothing to be done about Malan's turnabout, and because he was certain that Malan's intentions were noble, he could only convey his best wishes for the difficult task ahead.²⁰⁶ Andrew Hofmeyr from Montagu, in turn, was dubious about the newspaper's success. He counselled that, if the endeavour failed, Malan's career would be ruined, and that once Malan entered the political arena, there would be no possibility of leading a congregation again. He also conveyed that his doubts were shared by many around him. In addition, he related that the people of Montagu were deeply divided between Hertzog and Botha supporters – with the latter being in the majority – and as a result, Malan's decision to enter politics on Hertzog's side had elicited mixed reactions from his former congregation:

Your decision came as a shock to almost all the people here. To some, it was a shock of joy, but for the great majority it was indeed a shock of disappointment. I trust with all my heart that you made the right decision. I know that you would not have come to a decision without a lot of prayer and the conviction that this is what you must do. I cannot imagine this being a matter of your own will and desire. The fact that your conscience is not bothering you, but that you are at peace with yourself, is a great comfort...²⁰⁷

Indeed, in his typical fashion, Malan had only arrived at his decision after weighing all the arguments for and against his entry into politics. He would have been forced to consider Prof. Valeton's assertion that principles and politics were irreconcilable, as well as to examine his own arguments regarding a citizen's right to challenge the authorities. More than anything else, he had to

²⁰⁵ DFM, 1/1/391, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 18 May 1915: 'Ik wist dat de zaak van het redakteurschap uw zwaar op het hart zou liggen en ik ben zeer verblyd van u te vernemen dat u na uw besluit vrede heeft.'

²⁰⁶ DFM, 1/1/384, G.S. Malan – D.F. Malan, 17 May 1915.

²⁰⁷ DFM, 1/1/401, A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 19 May 1915: 'Jou besluit was 'n skok vir byna al die mense hier. Vir sommige was dit wel 'n skok van blydskap, maar vir die groote meerderheid was dit wel 'n skok van teleurstelling. Ik vertrou van harte van harte dat jou keuse die regte was. Ik weet dat jy nie sou besluit het sonder veel gebed en sonder die oërtuiging dat jy dit moes doen. Ik kan nie dink dat dit 'n saak is van jou eië wil en begeerte. Die feit dat jou gewete jou nie kwel maar dat jy vrede het is 'n groote gerustelling...'

work out whether such a step would fulfil his personal calling to serve the Afrikaner nation or not. It is clear that Malan was able to reconcile all of these conflicting arguments, and emerged with a synthesised worldview. At his farewell sermon to the Graaff-Reinet congregation, held on 13 June 1915, Malan imparted his personal mission statement to the congregation he was leaving behind. As his sister, Annie, described it, it was one of his St Paul's orations, and a confession of faith.²⁰⁸

In the sermon Malan directly tackled the incompatibility of politics and principles, and through that, the relationship between the religious world and the secular world. He departed from his old assertions that the two could not be united, thus breaking away from the influence of his mentor in order to take his own, independent stance.

In illustration, Malan recounted to his congregation the tale of the debate which had raged in the days of the early Christian church, as to whether or not a Christian could eat food that had been sacrificed to an idol: there were those who argued that it contaminated the Christian, while others argued that since idols were, contrary to Christ, dead and impotent, eating such meat could not hold any sway over them. The matter was finally taken to St Paul, who confirmed that sacrificed meat was, indeed powerless, and that Christians could eat what they liked. The proviso was that, only if their doing so gave offence to others, should they consider not eating such food.²⁰⁹

In essence, Malan reasoned, the debate centred around two disparate assumptions. On the one hand, there were those who assumed that beyond God's Kingdom lay the territory of Satan, and that Christians who moved on both terrains were, in fact, trying to serve both God and Mammon. On the other hand, the assumption was that, since God was the omnipotent creator of all, His Kingdom had no confines. Malan argued that St Paul came down on the latter side of the argument: that all Christians were free to serve God according to their own conscience; that no other had the right to pass judgement over them; and that the boundaries between the secular world and the Christian world did not exist. In short, everything belonged to God.²¹⁰

From this, Malan deduced three arguments in favour of his decision: that not only did the nation's spiritual, and religious, life have to be rendered to God, but also its broader national and political life; that extenuating circumstances may arise which could prompt one to serve God outside the walls of the church; and that God had to be glorified in the national life.²¹¹

Taking up the first point, Malan argued that the nation was in danger of drawing too definite a line between religion and politics. He believed that there was a misunderstanding that, on the one side of the line one was treading on hallowed ground, while on the other side, one found oneself in

²⁰⁸ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 26.

²⁰⁹ D.F. Malan, 'Dan Kom Ek Om' in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1964), 9-10.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

²¹¹ D.F. Malan, 'Dan Kom Ek Om' in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk*, 11.

an unholy area, and furthermore, that on the one side, one served God, while on the other, one was a servant of the world. Religion and public life were therefore two separate issues, in the mind of the nation. Malan assured his listeners that he believed in the separation of church and state:

I do not want to deny for a single moment that church and state are two separate institutions and that the affairs of the church and the affairs of the state may therefore not be confused with one another. Each has received its own directive from God. The state may therefore never purely be an instrument of the church for purely ecclesiastical purposes. And in turn, the church may never be a puppet of the state, a subdivision of politics.²¹²

Nevertheless, Malan reasoned, this did not diminish the fact that both church and state had to submit to God. When engaging in politics, the nation had to take God into account with the same amount of gravity as it did in church, he argued. Everything had to be rendered to God, '[i]n other words, the nation must stand before God's countenance with all the branches of its national life.'²¹³

It was for this reason, Malan explained, that the New Testament described the state as a 'servant of God'. To this end, Malan posed the question:

How, in reality, can the government ever be a servant of God as long as the nation's opinion of it lowers politics to something unholy, a terrain where one cannot serve God – especially if the nation relieves itself of its bound duty to see to it that it has a government that keeps God in mind above all else?²¹⁴

Such a belief was to the nation's own detriment, Malan argued, since he believed that the answer to all the problems facing it was grounded in acknowledging God's supremacy in its national life. Therefore, acknowledging God was the first step to resolving issues such as education, the poor white problem, racial tensions between English and Afrikaans speakers, and the government's lack of accountability to its citizens. As long as God was not given His due, public

²¹² *Ibid.*, 12: 'Nou wil ek vir geen oomblik ontken dat kerk en staat twee aparte inrigtings is en dat kerksake en staatsake daarom nie met mekaar verwar moet word nie. Elk het sy eie opdrag van God ontvang. Die staat mag daarom nooit bloot 'n werktuig van die kerk word vir bloot kerklike doeleindes nie. En die kerk op sy beurt mag nooit 'n speelbal van die staat, 'n onderafdeling van die politiek word nie.'

²¹³ *Ibid.*: 'Die volk moet met ander woorde met sy ganse volkslewe in al sy vertakkinge voor die aangesig van God staan.'

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 13: 'hoe kan die owerheid ooit in die werklikheid dienaars van God wees as die volk 'n beskouing daarop nahou wat die politiek verlaag tot iets onheiligs, tot 'n terrein waarop 'n mens God nie kan dien nie, veral as die volk hom van die dure verpligting onthef om toe te sien dat hy 'n owerheid het wat bowe alles God in gedagtenis wil hou?'

life would descend into a hunting ground for dishonesty and self-indulgence. Then, he concluded, politics would indeed become a demoralising force.²¹⁵

For this reason, Malan stated, there had been times when men of the cloth had left the church in order to battle national problems from a Christian perspective. Malan was able to recite a long list of such men, amongst them Abraham Kuyper from the Netherlands.²¹⁶ Mentioning Kuyper's name was the greatest departure from the views Malan had held as a student, since Kuyper had been Valeton's theological opponent – the man who had left the church to become a newspaper editor, political party leader, and finally prime minister. Valeton had lashed Kuyper with his tongue, and aligned him with the likes of Ahab, as opposed to Elijah. Malan had held on to this image for years, but now he had readied himself to become the Elijah who would conquer Ahab's world for the Kingdom of God.

In Malan's mind, the Afrikaner nation was being torn apart by the greatest crisis it had ever faced, and he felt that he had to leave the church and join the ranks of those who had immersed themselves in the political arena with the Bible under their arms. It was therefore in pursuit of the great ideal that was still eluding the Afrikaner nation: that of a single, united church that he was taking this action. He believed that, as long as there were such intense political divisions within the Afrikaner nation, the church could not hope to become united: political sympathies would dictate the election of church councils and the appointment of parsons, while the church itself would have to confine itself increasingly to purely ecclesiastical matters in order not to give offence. Therefore, he argued, it was imperative that the unity of the Afrikaner nation be restored: if not, the Afrikaners were in danger of ceasing to exist.²¹⁷ To him, the question of his nation's continued existence was at the heart of the matter:

A nation is like an individual. The question whether our nation has the right to exist is an enormous one. There is, however, an even deeper question that lies at the root of it, and it is this: do we acknowledge God's hand in our nation's history? That we exist as a nation, that we have become a nation through the course of the years, is it the work of God or is it the work of man? Is there an eternal Godly idea behind our national existence, which gives our national life a destiny and a calling, or is it all futile, blind fate? It is a question that warrants deep consideration. But not only that. Everything depends on the answer of this question. Acknowledge and glorify God in our creation and our existence, and our entire national life receives great value and purpose and strength and holiness. On the other hand, break away from history, or treat history in an untrue, dishonest or faithless manner, in other words,

²¹⁵ D.F. Malan, 'Dan Kom Ek Om', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 13.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

remove God from it, and the entire national life sinks with it into the depths of indifference and lack of character.²¹⁸

In essence, Malan was leaving his congregation in order to preach to the entire nation, albeit on the terrain of politics. He wanted to teach the whole nation to acknowledge God in all their institutions, and to recognise His hand in their history: that they existed as a nation because God had willed it so. If he succeeded in this task, his greatest ideal would be achieved:

...the entire Afrikaner nation will stand before the face of God, just as we so dearly wish to see it, Christian and national and free. And then it will be united in its innermost being. But it will be a unity that is, above all, to the glory of God.²¹⁹

Malan knew that the road ahead of him was uncertain, but he had reconciled himself to it. He was truly at peace and ready to accept the implications of his decision, whatever they may be. In this respect, he once again looked to the Bible for inspiration and found it with a woman, Esther. When she had to plead with her husband, the king, not to wipe out her people, the Israelites, she knew that she was taking her life into her own hands, but she was willing to risk it. Thus, Malan took leave of his congregation with these words:

The step that I have taken, to use the powerful means of the press to speak about these things to both parties in our nation, is one that has grave implications for me. I do not need to assure you that no one realises this better than I do. In more than one respect, it is a step into the dark. Nearly everything is being put in the balance. But for our nation, and above all, for the glory of God, I want to do it. If it is given to me to achieve something along this way that is for the good of our nation, however little it may be, then God alone should receive the honour.

²¹⁸ D.F. Malan, 'Dan Kom Ek Om', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 16: 'Met 'n volk is dit soos met 'n enkeling. Die vraag of ons volk reg van bestaan het, is ontsettend. Daar is egter nog 'n dieper vraag wat aan die wortel daarvan lê. En dit is dit: Erken ons in ons volksgeskiedenis die hand van God? Dat ons as 'n volk bestaan, dat ons in die loop van die jare 'n volk geword het, is dit God se werk of is dit mensewerk? Is daar agter ons volksbestaan 'n ewige Godsgedagte wat aan ons volkslewe bestemming en roeping gee, of is dit alles 'n doellose, blinde noodlot? Dit is 'n vraag om diep oor na te dink. Maar nie net dit nie. Dit is 'n vraag van die beantwoording waarvan alles afhang. Erken en verheerlik God in ons wording en ons bestaan, en ons ganse volkslewe verkry daardeur hoë waarde en doel en krag en heiligheid. Breek aan die ander kant met die geskiedenis of behandel die geskiedenis op 'n onware, oneerlike of ongelowige wyse, verwyder met ander woorde God daaruit, en die ganse volkslewe versink daarmee in die diepte van onverskilligheid en karakterloosheid.'

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 17: '...die ganse Afrikanervolk voor die aangesig van God staan, juis soos ons so vurig verlang om te sien, Christelik en nasionaal en vry. En dan sal hy in die diepste van sy wese één wees. Maar dit sal 'n eenheid wees bowenal tot verheerliking van God, terwyl die volk met sy ganse nasionale lewe staan voor die aangesig van God.'

If I have to fall in my attempt, then I still need to do it. And then I say, like Esther of old: “If I perish, then so be it.”²²⁰

In the front pew sat his sister, Annie. It was the closest to hero-worship she had ever been in her young life.²²¹ This self-sacrificing rallying cry marked the turning point in his life. Malan was ready to conquer the unknown with the single-minded sense of purpose that he had always given to each new direction in his life. He was in no danger of becoming a pillar of salt.

²²⁰ D.F. Malan, ‘Dan Kom Ek Om’, in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 17: ‘Die stap wat ek gedoen het om deur die kragtige middel van die pers oor dié dinge tot beide partye in ons volk te spreek, is vir my persoonlik baie ernstig. Ek hoef u nie te verseker dat niemand dit dieper besef as ek self nie. In meer as een opsig is dit ‘n stap in die duister. Byna alles word in die weegskaal gelê. Maar vir ons volk, en bowenal om die ere Gods, wil ek dit doen. Indien dit my gegee sou word om langs dié weg iets te doen – hoe weinig ook – wat tot heil van ons volk sal strek, dan moet God daarvoor alleen die eer ontvang. Indien ek in die poging moet val, dan moet ek dit tog doen. En dan sê ek met Ester van ouds: “As ek omkom, dan kom ek om.”’

²²¹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 26.

Chapter 5 – The Apprentice, 1915-1918

It was in the midst of the rainy Cape winter that *De Burger* first appeared. Its editor called it ‘a child of sorrow and of hope.’¹ If it had not been for the troubles that had befallen the nation, he wrote, it would not have existed. And yet, he believed that its birth was a sign that hope had not been extinguished by the darkness of the night. The newspaper would endeavour to reunite the torn and divided Afrikaner nation, and it would do so on a Christian basis – one which recognised God’s hand in the Afrikaners’ history. As long as the nation accepted that God had determined its course in the past, it could seek solace in the knowledge that God was watching over it in the present.² As he wrote these words, the new editor might have felt comforted himself. He had always looked to God for guidance during times of uncertainty, and he must have been doing so as well in the new, unfamiliar present.

D.F. Malan was now forty-one years old and, once again, he was a novice. The preceding two months would have made it abundantly clear. It was an election year, and he had hardly announced his entry into politics when the first letters asking him to make himself available as a candidate in a number of constituencies began to arrive. The nationalists from Cradock were the first to jump at the opportunity, followed closely by Swellendam and Beaufort West. Each painted Malan’s prospects in the rosiest of terms – Cradock and Beaufort West even going so far as to assure him of a victory.³ Swellendam also made a convincing case, but its constituency included Malan’s former parish, Montagu. In spite of a glowing letter from the nationalists of Montagu, who asked that Malan ‘give his customary grave consideration to the matter,’⁴ private letters from friends in Montagu warned him that the community was still divided into two camps according to their sympathies for Botha and Hertzog respectively, with the former certainly in the majority.⁵ Indeed, during these years, the divisions between the Botha and Hertzog camps ran extremely deep, as the writer, M.E. Rothman later reminisced:

In every town and on every farm there were Hertzog men and Botha men. There were few rural schools where the children were not divided into a Hertzog group and a Botha group.

¹ *De Burger*, 26 July 1915: “‘De Burger’ is een kind van de smart en van de hoop.’

² *De Burger*, 26 July 1915.

³ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/470, Jordaan – Malan, 1 June 1915; DFM, 1/1/477, Louw – Malan, 3 June 1915.

⁴ DFM, 1/1/465, Thomson – Malan, 29 May 1915: ‘Ons begeer nou net dat die saak uw gewoonlike ernstige oerweging [*sic*] sal gee...’

⁵ DFM, 1/1/461, Badenhorst – Malan, 28 May 1915; DFM, 1/1/489, Van Huysteen – Malan, 9 June 1915.

Mothers taught their small sons to say: I am a Hertzog man! Even [*sic*] if they could barely speak.⁶

Malan, however, did not seem to belong to a particular camp. His camp was nationalism, and it just so happened that Hertzog was deemed to be the leading representative of nationalism in South Africa. Whether Malan was in fact a convinced Hertzog man himself is doubtful. His motives for entering politics were certainly not to advance Hertzog's career, nor would his newspaper serve that purpose, as he declared in its first edition:

In the awakening of our sense of national unity lies our salvation. "De Burger" wants to strengthen and guide this sense. And, although under the current circumstances, it cannot be done without tempest or struggle, yet it does not want to do so for the benefit of a single person or a party, but only for the nation's sake.⁷

Malan would soon learn, however, that politics in South Africa could not be separated from the personalities of its leaders. Initially, there was some pressure on him to bring about reconciliation between Botha and Hertzog, but Malan had enough insight to realise that such an endeavour would be an exercise in futility – others, with more authority than he, had failed. Establishing a new centrist party with himself as leader, was also not an option: it would have caused new divisions, and such a party, being centrist, would not be able to take a strong and definite stance on matters of importance. In such a climate, therefore, Malan realised that he had to choose sides. He wanted to approach his new political career in the tried and tested manner of the church: it had to be a matter of determining and following the 'correct' principles. Therefore, because he agreed with Hertzog's principle of 'South Africa first' and was opposed to Botha and Smuts's conciliation politics – which he deemed to be the cause of divisions within the Afrikaner community – Malan decided to side with Hertzog.⁸

Malan was now ready to enter the political fray. After receiving the letters seeking his candidature, he wrote to Willie Hofmeyr to clarify the matter of pursuing a political career while being a

⁶ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel, 'n Outobiografiese Vertelling* (Cape Town en Johannesburg: Tafelberg, 1972), 169: 'Op elke dorp en plaas was daar Hertzogmanne en Bothamanne. Daar was min plattelandse skole waar die kinders nie in 'n Hertzogklomp en 'n Bothaklomp verdeel was nie. Moeders het hulle seuntjies geleer sê: Ek is 'n Hertzogman! as hulle nog skaars kon praat.'

⁷ *De Burger*, 26 July 1915: 'In de ontwaking van ons nationaal eenheidsgevoel ligt ons onze redding. Dit gevoel wil "De Burger" sterken en leiden. En hoewel onder de heersende omstandigheden hij dat niet doen kan anders dan in strijd en storm, toch wil hij dat nooit doen ten behoeve van een persoon of een partij maar alleen om des volks wil.'

⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my Ervarings op die Pad Daarheen* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 42-3.

newspaper editor. Hofmeyr's reply was positive. He had not discussed the matter with his fellow-directors explicitly, but repeated what he had told Malan during his visit to Graaff-Reinet: that the directors would not block his path to Parliament.⁹ The letter revealed the extent to which the drive to bring Malan onto the political stage was driven by Hofmeyr's private motives – the fact that he had convinced Malan to enter politics without the formal consent of his fellow-directors was astonishing. With the interests of the newspaper in mind, Hofmeyr counselled Malan to choose a constituency that was located close to Cape Town – in his estimation, Malmesbury would be ideal.¹⁰ Malan, for his part, does not appear to have given much countenance to standing for election in the district of his birth – perhaps he decided to heed the Biblical maxim that a prophet is seldom welcome in his hometown. For that matter, neither did he pay any attention to the lone letter requesting him to stand for election in his former parish of Graaff-Reinet.¹¹

The choices available, therefore, were Cradock, Swellendam, or Beaufort West. It soon became clear that he was being asked to stand for election in Beaufort West so as to settle the competing claims of local nationalist candidates. If Malan stepped up to the plate, all of them would be forced to relinquish their claims. This would mean that none of them would be able to claim a victory – but they would not have to concede defeat either.¹² The same was the case in Swellendam.¹³ Cradock, on the other hand, appeared unbridled in its enthusiasm. The organisers wrote several letters to Malan over a three week period, each time assuring him of their fervent wish to have him as their candidate, and demonstrating the enormous unpopularity of their incumbent Member of Parliament, the Minister of Agriculture, H.C. (Harry) van Heerden. In addition, the local candidates were willing to relinquish their claims in favour of Malan, while the nationalists established a formal branch of the NP and kept Malan abreast of its swelling membership.¹⁴ In reality, however, the picture was not as rosy as they led Malan to believe. One of the organisers admitted to a prominent nationalist in confidence: 'And privately I may report to you that we have no local person strong enough to challenge Harry van Heerden. We do not want a defeat.'¹⁵

On a provincial level, the establishment of the NP was even more complicated. Even though Hofmeyr and his army of letter-writers assured Malan that he was the only man capable of leading

⁹ DFM, 1/1/473, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 2 June 1915.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ DFM, 1/1/443, Mohr – D.F. Malan, 23 May 1915.

¹² DFM, 1/1/463, Steytler – D.F. Malan, 28 May 1915; DFM, 1/1/507, Louw – D.F. Malan, 28 June 1915.

¹³ DFM, 1/1/461, Badenhorst – D.F. Malan, 28 May 1915.

¹⁴ DFM, 1/1/407, Jordaan e.a. – D.F. Malan, 19 May 1915; DFM, 1/1/407, Reyneke – D.F. Malan, 19 May 1915; Jordaan – D.F. Malan, 20 May 1915; DFM, 1/1/441, Van der Walt – D.F. Malan, 22 May 1915; DFM, 1/1/470, Jordaan – D.F. Malan, 1 June 1915; DFM, 1/1/481, Jordaan – D.F. Malan, 5 June 1915; DFM, 1/1/485, Marais – D.F. Malan, 7 June 1915.

¹⁵ Cape Archives Repository (hereafter KAB), H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A608, 7, W.A. de Herb – H.E.S. Fremantle, 21 May 1915: 'En privaat mag ik u melden dat wy geen plaatslyke persoon sterk genoeg hebben om Harry van Heerden te bestryden. Wy willen geen nederlaag uitlokken.'

the deprived nation, the political arena was certainly not void of vested interests and established careers – few of which knew what to make of this clergyman who was joining their ranks.

The most prominent of these men was the English-born Prof. Henry Eardly Stephen Fremantle, the son of an Anglican bishop, and the product of an Eton and Oxford education. After a successful academic career in England, he had been appointed as a professor in English and Philosophy at the South African College (which would later become the University of Cape Town) in 1899. In 1903, he left academia to enter Parliament as the SAP candidate for Uitenhage, and also became the co-editor of the *South African News*. A mere four years after his entry into politics, Fremantle had successfully become bilingual.¹⁶ He was a Victorian liberal who, at the time of the Anglo-Boer War, was convinced that the dispute between the two sides was the result of mutual ignorance. He felt that the issue could be remedied by a thorough knowledge of each other's history, and in the aftermath of the war, he persevered in this belief.¹⁷ When the rupture between Botha and Hertzog took place, Fremantle sided with Hertzog.¹⁸

As the federal branches of the NP took shape in the Free State and the Transvaal, Fremantle aspired to the leadership of a Cape branch.¹⁹ For this reason, he was monitoring Malan's actions very closely. In late April, while Malan was still locked in the depths of his indecision, Fremantle wrote to a friend to moot the idea of a conference to establish a Cape branch of the NP. His friend's response was positive, and advised Fremantle that it ought to take place sooner rather than later.²⁰ By 5 May, Fremantle reported to his diary: 'Saw Willie Hofmeyr. It seems that dr. Malan will come in as editor of the Burger. Hofmeyr wants him to take the lead in the Cape and brush aside the dubious like Van Zyl.'²¹

Malan's decision to enter the fray was reported in the newspapers on 19 May. Fremantle, who was arranging the said conference, would have felt the challenge only too dearly. A nationalist from Middelburg wrote to him about the news: 'I saw in yesterday's E.P. Herald that Dr Malan of Graaff-Reinet has accepted the Editorship of "De Burger" and that they mention him in relation to the National Party; good news, not so? It seems as if the wretched Hertzogites are not all *veldschoen* wearers and 'backvelders' after all.'²² On the day of Malan's public announcement, Fremantle

¹⁶ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek: Deel I* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1968), 315-6.

¹⁷ H. Phillips, 'The South African College and the Emergence of History as a University Discipline in South Africa', *Historia*, 49, 1 (2004), 5-6.

¹⁸ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek: Deel I*, 316.

¹⁹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1990), 137.

²⁰ KAB, H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A 608, file 7, J. Smith – H.E.S. Fremantle, 10 May 1915.

²¹ Quoted in F.J. van Heerden, 'Die Geboorte van die Nasionale Party (1913-1915)', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I: Agtergrond, Stigting en Konsolidasie* (Pretoria: Academica, 1975), 169.

²² KAB, H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A 608, file 7, H.J. van der Walt – H.E.S. Fremantle, 20 May 1915: 'Ik zie gisteren in de E.P. Herald dat Dr. Malan van Graaff-Reinet aangenomen heft als Editeur van "De Burger" en dat zy hem ook noemen in verband met de Nationale Party; mooi zo niet waar? Dit lyk of de armzalige Hertzogieten toch nie alle veldschoen dragers en "backvelders" is.'

issued invitations to a conference in the town of De Aar on 9 June, at which he hoped to establish a Cape branch of the NP.²³ It was impossible for Malan to attend, as he was still tied to the pulpit – his farewell sermon would only take place four days later, on 13 June.²⁴

Hofmeyr was furious. ‘What is the meaning of Fremantle organising a conference in De Aar?’ he asked Malan. ‘Various people, whom he has invited, have asked me about his intentions wanting to know who has organised the conference and whether or not it is advisable to attend. Truly, the time has come to bring an end to the confusion and the scattering of nationalist power.’²⁵

As Malan was preparing for his new career, he received a letter from Hertzog. He did not join the earlier stream of letters that were aimed at inducing Malan to enter politics, in spite of having been asked to do so. Instead, he refrained from doing so as he did not want to bear the responsibility for the enormous sacrifice that Malan had to make. Once the decision was taken, however, he wrote to Malan to express his joy at the ‘manly and self-sacrificing’ step that he had taken.²⁶

In his letter, Hertzog welcomed Malan into the nationalist fold. He expressed his gratitude that a newspaper which would exude a healthy, nationalist spirit was to be established, as it would give the Afrikaners a voice. He also encouraged Malan to enter Parliament, and communicated his hope that Malan could contribute to the upcoming elections. Hertzog bemoaned the state of affairs in the Cape, since he felt that, compared to the Free State, there was hardly any organisation among the nationalists – without adequate organisation, he feared bitterly disappointing election results. He mentioned that he was planning a visit to the Cape Province in mid-July, and asked Malan to join him as he travelled to a number of constituencies.²⁷ Hertzog clearly hoped to spend some time with Malan, so as to become acquainted with him and to take him under his wing. Up to that point, the two men had never met, but they did share a mutual friendship with ex-President M.T. Steyn.²⁸ Unfortunately, *De Burger* was scheduled to be launched in mid-July, and it was therefore not possible for the joint tour to take place. Hertzog additionally took the opportunity to warn Malan against the Western Cape politicians’ tendency to preach moderation. As far as Hertzog was concerned, there was no room for moderation – the Dutch-speaking population had suffered enough

²³ KAB, H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A 608, file 7, Van der Walt – H.E.S. Fremantle, 22 May 1915; G.J. Steyn – H.E.S. Fremantle, 26 May 1915.

²⁴ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 149.

²⁵ DFM, 1/1/476, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 31 May 1915: ‘Wat is de bedoeling van Fremantle om een kongres aan De Aar te beleggen? Verscheiden personen die hy daarheen heeft uitgenodigd, hebben my naar zyn bedoelingen gevraagd en willen weten wie het kongres heeft belegd en of het geraden sou zyn hetzelfde by te wonen. Waarlik, het word tyd trachten een eind aan de verwarring en de verbroekeling van de nationale krachten te maken.’

²⁶ DFM, 1/1/459, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 27 May 1915.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: A.P. Boekhandel, 1943), 57-8.

as a result of moderate and conciliation politics. He believed that men who spoke of moderation were in politics simply for the luxury of the position.²⁹

During this time, Hertzog was in contact with Fremantle – who had advised him of his envisioned conference at De Aar, and who promised to visit Malan to discuss matters with him.³⁰ It was arranged, therefore, that Fremantle would visit Malan in Graaff-Reinet on 25 May.³¹ The events that unfolded over the next four months, however, made it clear that Malan did not support Fremantle's De Aar endeavour.

It is apparent that Malan realised that he was entering a political minefield. Instead of allowing himself to be co-opted by any particular set of interests, Malan chose to look to Hofmeyr for guidance. Hofmeyr, in return, facilitated Malan's entry into Cape Town's political circles.³² Following Hofmeyr's advice, therefore, Malan corresponded with H.S. van Zijl – a Cape Town politician who had already held a meeting with the intention of establishing a National Party in the Cape. The correspondence was so amicable that Van Zijl invited Malan to join him in organising a second meeting to be held later in June, once Malan had arrived in Cape Town.³³

In the meantime, the Malan household had been turned on its head. Esther Malan was not enthusiastic about raising her daughters in Cape Town and, since she was financially independent, she was considering moving to Stellenbosch, which she believed was a more favourable environment. Long discussions followed.³⁴ By this time, it was doubtful whether Malan could do without his stepmother, a fact that was well-known to family friends, one of whom wrote from Beaufort West to congratulate Malan on his decision, and to caution him to look after his health:

I am constantly overjoyed that you are in the hands of a sensible and capable housewife. God bless her. She means a lot to the country, and will deserve the gratitude of the nation if she keeps you under her thumb with regards to sleep and food. I can hear your funny little laugh...³⁵

Esther Malan's role definitely went beyond household tasks. She was an intelligent woman, and had become a source of silent support to Malan. His was a reserved personality, but it is clear that he felt comfortable enough to confide in her. During such an uncertain time in his life, he

²⁹ DFM, 1/1/459, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 27 May 1915.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ KAB, H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A 608, file 7, De Villiers – H.E.S. Fremantle, 20 May 1915.

³² DFM, 1/1/480, W.A. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 5 June 1915.

³³ DFM, 1/1/482, H.S. van Zijl – D.F. Malan, 5 June 1915.

³⁴ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 26-7.

³⁵ DFM, 1/1/463, Steytler – Malan, 28 May 1915: 'Ik verblijd me er gedurig over dat je in handen bent van een verstandige en knappe huisvrouw. God zegene haar. Zij beteekent al te veel voor't land, en zal den dank van ons volk verdienen als zij u goed onder duim houdt wat slapen en eten betreft. Ik hoor uw eigenaardig lagje...'

clearly needed her support and friendship more than ever. It is evident that she realised this too. One day, when Annie returned from school, her mother greeted her with the news: ‘My child, I really don’t want to let you grow up in the Cape, but at the moment Boetie needs me almost more than you do. We will therefore move to the Cape with him, and do our best to ensure that you and Stinie don’t become anglicised.’³⁶ To the Malans, who placed such a high premium on rural life, moving to the city was part of the sacrifice. In later years Malan would tease his sisters that Essie, who had spent her entire childhood in a rural environment, was beyond reproach. This was only half-true of Annie, who had spent part of her upbringing in the city. Young Stinie, who had spent the majority of her life in Cape Town, however, was beyond redemption. Picnics in the Karoo were replaced by hikes up Table Mountain and Lion’s Head – and kukumakranka-hunts on Signal Hill – while Malan still wore the customary tie and collar.³⁷

The family therefore moved into 11 Woodside Road in Tamboerskloof. Annie and Stinie were placed in the Good Hope Seminary, and thereafter attended the University of Cape Town. A year after the move Essie, who had by then completed her studies in Stellenbosch, rejoined the household while she worked as a teacher in Cape Town. Whereas Esther had played the role of pastoriemoeder in Montagu and Graaff-Reinet, she now had to fulfil the role of hostess to her stepson’s ever-increasing political acquaintances.³⁸

While Malan was moving his entire household to Cape Town, the political process steamed ahead. Fremantle held his conference on 9 June, where he was elected as the provincial chairman of the new NP. In their absence, Malan and Hofmeyr were elected to the Provincial Council. On 23 June, the meeting called by Van Zijl and Malan took place in Cape Town. Van Zijl told those present that the aim of the meeting was not only to welcome Malan as the editor of *De Burger*, but also as the leader of the Cape nationalists. Malan, in turn, gave his first political speech, in which he called for a ‘new beginning’.³⁹ The group appointed a Herenigingskommissie (Reunification Commission), with Malan as its chairman and Van Zijl as his deputy.⁴⁰

Malan and Van Zijl went on to hold meetings together, throughout the Cape Peninsula and the surrounding area. Malan, however, struggled to find his feet on the political platform. He did not know how to handle interjections, and became extremely uncomfortable when the audiences

³⁶ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, ‘D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het’, 27: ‘My kind, ek wil tog nie graag vir julle in die Kaap laat opgroeï nie, maar Boetie het my op die oomblik amper meer nodig as julle. Ons sal dus maar saam met hom Kaap toe trek en goed prober sorg dat jy en Stinie nie verengels nie.’

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27, 37.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

³⁹ P.R. Botha, ‘Hier is hy nog’, in J.P. Scannel, ed., *Keeromstraat 30* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1965), 9.

⁴⁰ F.J. van Heerden, ‘Die Geboorte van die Nasionale Party (1913-1915)’, in O. Geysler and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I: Agtergrond, Stigting en Konsolidasie*, 168.

crowded around him after his speeches. At a meeting in the Strand, he was swamped by a gaggle of schoolgirls – which made him blush violently.⁴¹

The Cape Province now had two competing nationalist groups, creating a situation in which neither could claim legitimacy. From Stellenbosch, the elderly statesman, John X. Merriman, whose contempt for the nationalists knew few boundaries, wrote to Smuts of his observations:

Those Hertzog people make a great noise, but do look at the sorry spectacle they cut when they come to business! There are ... different lots: 1. the De Aar party; 2. the Cape Town party (called the Seccotine⁴² party from their cementing aims). These two are mutually destructive. Fremantle is the only man of political ability in the whole lot. Anything more feeble than the speeches of those two intellectuals, Malan the Rev. and van Zyl H, I never heard. There is scarcely a man of substance among them...⁴³

The only remedy to the stalemate was amalgamation, which would take place within three months. The Cape Town group wrote to Fremantle, as chairman of the De Aar conference, to request that a joint conference take place. They made it clear that they regarded the establishment of both groups as preparatory initiatives, since the delegates to both meetings had been invitees. A new party's name, constitution, and principles could only be determined by a representative national congress. Thus, they requested that a new conference be arranged for 8 September.⁴⁴ They had their way: the conference would take place in Middelburg on 15 September.⁴⁵

At the same time, 30 Keerom Street, where the offices of *De Burger* were to be situated, was abuzz with activity. Despite the fact that Hofmeyr had assured Malan that the financial success of the enterprise was secure, the organisation was run on a shoestring. In addition, its establishment did not take place without resistance. Minister F.S. Malan, the former editor of *Ons Land*, wrote to the enterprise's main financial backer, Jannie Marais, to dissuade him from the endeavour. When Marais refused, F.S. Malan and his allies – who had powerful connections in the publishing industry – were able to pressure the Remington Company into withdrawing from its provisional contract to print *De Burger*. The founders of the newspaper were consequently forced to find another means of printing their paper.

⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, 'Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger', *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

⁴² A fish glue

⁴³ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 301.

⁴⁴ KAB, H.E.S. Fremantle Collection, A 608, file 7, W. le Roux – H.E.S. Fremantle, 1 July 1915.

⁴⁵ *De Burger*, 16 September 1916.

They decided that it was best to buy their own printing press. Such an object was a scarce commodity, and importing a press presented a number of technical challenges – not to mention the fact that it was wartime. Fortunately for *De Burger*, the search for a printing press coincided with the failure of a Johannesburg paper, the *Transvaal Leader*. Under strict secrecy, for fear of further sabotage – especially since the *Leader* belonged to the *Cape Times* Ltd. – the directors of *De Burger* were able to purchase its printing press. The transaction would not have been possible without Jannie Marais, who supplied the funds. It was also concluded just in the nick of time. The deal was sealed by 5 May – and on 30 May, Marais, whose health had been deteriorating, died.⁴⁶ In his will, he left £100,000 for the establishment of a university at Stellenbosch.⁴⁷ As a member of the vigilance committee that had fought for the survival of the Victoria College, Malan must have been overjoyed by that development.

The directors of *De Burger* were able to secure the offices of another failed newspaper, the *South African News*, which were situated in Keerom Street. Once again, the transaction was conducted under strict secrecy and via third parties. When the printing press arrived, it was possible to install it in a building that had been built specifically to accommodate such a piece of equipment.⁴⁸ The first appearance of the paper was delayed by more than a week, however, as an important component broke while the press was being transported from Johannesburg to Cape Town, and had to be repaired along the way. Once in Cape Town, the press was reassembled and tested – a process which in itself was time consuming – it had to be run at top speed for several days and nights consecutively, in the process making a deafening noise.⁴⁹

The journalists arrived somewhat later. In order to save as much money as possible, they were appointed as close to the appearance of the paper as was humanly possible. This was an era when it was common practice for aspiring newspapers to appoint the editorial team months in advance, which would then hone and practice its craft before the first publication.⁵⁰ In contrast, Wartema, the sub-editor, was only appointed on 15 June, and Steinmeyer arrived on 1 July. The rest of the team began their work on 15 July, eleven days before the first issue appeared, and a few more were appointed after *De Burger*'s appearance.⁵¹ Of the sixteen men who made up the editorial team, only two, Wartema and Steinmeyer, had any experience of working for a newspaper.⁵²

In spite of being established by Afrikaner nationalists, four of the sixteen men – including the two experienced newspapermen – were Dutch. As the newspaper was to appear in Dutch, this

⁴⁶ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 125-31.

⁴⁷ *The Cape Argus*, 5 June 1915.

⁴⁸ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 131.

⁴⁹ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1946), 142.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 158.

⁵² J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 144.

was not a disadvantage. Among the Afrikaner team members were men who had taken part in the 1914 Rebellion. The 24-year-old P.R. Botha, for one, was only too grateful for the meagre salary that accompanied his appointment, as his participation in the Rebellion had cost him his position as a teacher. In reference to the size of the salaries, the paper's manager, Fred Dormehl, often told his young recruits that working at *De Burger* brought them valuable experience – the sacrifices which each had to make, including being poorly paid, were to be regarded as 'school fees'.⁵³

Likening *De Burger* to a school was an apt comparison indeed. Not only did the editorial team consist of novices, but some were even new to Cape Town – where they were expected to gather their news. They had to be taught how to decipher cablegrams and to report on cases in magistrates' courts, as well as debates and meetings – all within the space of ten days.⁵⁴

Their editor, however, did not partake in the rush, and indeed showed little interest in the appointment of staff and the allocation of responsibilities. Even before his introduction to Wartema and Steinmeyer, Hofmeyr had prepared them for the fact that Malan would not be involved in the paper's administration – it was one of his conditions to accepting the editorship, as he did not feel himself to be qualified for such a task. Throughout his years as editor of *De Burger*, Malan kept to this condition.⁵⁵

On Saturday 24 July, a small coterie of guests gathered around the printing press for its official opening. Speeches were made by Hofmeyr, Dr Tobie Muller, Fred Dormehl and Mrs Elizabeth Roos, the chair of the ACVV, who expressed the hope that Malan would soon be able to add the title 'saviour of the nation' to his name.⁵⁶ In his speech, Malan spoke of the Afrikaner nation's need to pour out its heart – and thus the deeply-felt desire for a paper that represented its feelings. He expressed hope that *De Burger* would provide the bond around those who belonged together, and pointed to the sacrifices that had been made to bring the paper into existence. In his opinion, however, there was one person who was truly the soul of the entire movement – Willie Hofmeyr.⁵⁷

On Monday morning 26 July 1915, the inhabitants of Cape Town awoke to the shouting of eager newspaper sellers. 'Burrer!' and 'Burtsjer!' – and a few more variations of the name – echoed throughout the city. The editorial team had not slept the previous night – a large, half-page advertisement had arrived a few hours before the paper was to go to press: the only solution was to

⁵³ P.R. Botha, 'Hier is hy nog', in J.P. Scannel, ed., *Keeromstraat 30*, 8, 10.

⁵⁴ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 142-6.

⁵⁵ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, 'Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger', *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

⁵⁶ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 157-9: 'redder des volks'.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 160.

add another two pages to the paper, which meant that more content had to be devised while the clock was ticking.⁵⁸

Malan's first editorial appeared on page four. It was addressed 'To everyone, who loves our nation.'⁵⁹ It was in this article that Malan called the fledgling paper 'a child of sorrow and of hope.'⁶⁰

Malan was every bit as inexperienced as his staff, and then even more so. During the first months, he even continued wearing his clerical garments.⁶¹ He needed to be seen to be guiding the newspaper along a path – a path that was completely unfamiliar to him. The same was expected from him on the political terrain – during an election year. To simultaneously give each the attention they required was impossible – and ultimately he would become the absent father to the 'child of sorrow and of hope.'

If Malan was an absent father, he was also an embattled one. His exit from the church caused unforeseen reverberations which followed him onto the political terrain. Naturally, it was to be expected that his decision would evoke a public debate on the relationship between church and state. His farewell sermon was published in Graaff-Reinet's local newspaper, *Onze Courant*, and was later printed as a pamphlet.⁶² It also appeared in *Ons Land* on 29 June.⁶³

A crucial part of Malan's argument – as to why he was leaving the church – was because he wanted to promote and protect its unity by working to reunite the divided Afrikaner nation.⁶⁴ His alertness to political currents, as well as his involvement in the church's response to the Rebellion, had led Malan to fear that the prevailing political divisions would play themselves out in the church. He reasserted this view during one of his first appearances on the political platform.⁶⁵

Shortly after his arrival in the Western Cape, he addressed an audience in Somerset West, where he painted a gloomy picture of the church's future if the situation was not remedied:

A dividing line has appeared between Afrikaner and Afrikaner. The two parties stand opposite one another; the chasms are becoming deeper, the feelings more bitter. This is not only the state of affairs on the political terrain; we all know how the dividing line has penetrated our churchly lives. If there is one bond which binds us as a nation, it is our church. Due to divisions on the political terrain, the church stood on the verge of schism six months ago. If

⁵⁸ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 147-50.

⁵⁹ *De Burger*, 26 July 1915: 'Aan allen, die ons volk liefhebben.'

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: 'een kind van de smart en van de hoop.'

⁶¹ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, 'Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger', *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

⁶² C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 187.

⁶³ *Ons Land*, 29 June 1915.

⁶⁴ D.F. Malan, 'Dan Kom Ek Om', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1964), 15.

⁶⁵ DFM, 1/1/509a, "Uittreksel uit 'Ons Land' 17 Julie 1915."

the church had not kept her balance at the time, there would have been a rupture, and once the rupture had permeated the church, the division within the nation would have been irreparable. And the opposite applies, if the rupture within the nation is not healed, I cannot see how the church can remain united in the long run. If our nation is divided into two camps about the great issue, which cuts into each of our hearts, namely our nation's right of existence, then I cannot see how our church can remain one...⁶⁶

Malan's words stirred the doyen of the Dutch Reformed Church, Dr Andrew Murray Jr. Murray, who was living in retirement in Wellington, was revered as the icon of the nineteenth century church; his status was second to none. Malan's sermon prompted him to write an open letter to *Ons Land*, which was published on 17 July, nine days before the appearance of *De Burger*. In it he condemned Malan's assertion – which he had expressed in both his farewell sermon and in his Somerset West speech – that churches the world over felt a natural inclination to be one in doctrine, confession, and political opinion.⁶⁷ In response, Murray enquired as to the origin of this desire: 'And where does the "natural inclination" come from? From God's Spirit or from the sinful nature, from the flesh?'⁶⁸

To Murray, it was clearly the latter of these two options. He could not understand why Malan would assume that political differences necessarily implied divisions within the church. The church was, after all, a spiritual body that contained many different nations who may have hated one another at a particular time, but which were nevertheless bound together by the Holy Spirit. Murray argued that differences of opinion were not sinful – every nation in the world contained conservatives who sought certainty in the tried and tested, and liberals, who believed in progress. He also stated that these differences played an important role in refining an individual's thoughts, thus enabling each party to contribute to the eventual outcome. Rather than disparate points of view, Murray argued, it was the sins of 'own will' – as opposed to God's will – and 'lack of love' that brought about divisions.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/509a, "Uittreksel uit 'Ons Land' 17 Julie 1915.": 'Er is een verdelingslijn gekomen tussen Afrikaner en Afrikaner. De twee partijen staan teenoewer elkander; de kloof word al dieper, het gevoel word bitter. Dit is niet alleen de toestand op politiek gebied; wij allen weten hoe die verdelingslijn is doorgedrongen tot ons kerklik lewe. Als er één band is, die ons volk bindt, dan is het onze kerk. Die kerk heft wegens die verdeeldheid op politiek gebied zes maanden geleden op die rand van scheuring gestaan. Als die kerk toen haar balans niet behoude had, was er scheuring gekome, en als die scheuring eenmaal in die Kerk komt, dan is die onder het volk onheilbaar. Maar omgekeerd, als die scheuring onder het volk niet geheeld word, dan zie ik niet in hoe onze kerk op die duur één kan blywe. Als ons volk in twee kampen verdeeld word over die grote kwestie, welke ons alleen ter harte gaat, n.l. het bestaansrecht van ons volk, dan zie ik niet in hoe onze kerk één kan blywe...'

⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/509a, "Uittreksel uit 'Ons Land' 17 Julie 1915"; D.F. 'Malan, Dan Kom Ek Om', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: D.F. Malan as Redenaar*, 15.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: 'En van waar kom die "natuurlike neiging"? Uit die Geest van God, of uit die zondige natuur, uit het vlees?'

⁶⁹ DFM 1/1/509a, "Uittreksel uit 'Ons Land' 17 Julie 1915".

In response to Malan's interpretation of Calvin – which stated that all terrains, including the political, had to serve God – Murray countered that the church indeed had a role to play in relation to the state: as an educator. Its task was to prepare its congregants for their role as citizens. In every other respect, the servants of the church had to refrain from politics.⁷⁰

Murray rubbed more salt into the wounds by articulating the role of a minister of the church in relation to his congregation. Ultimately, it was an unveiled condemnation of Malan's actions. According to Murray, a minister had to sacrifice himself and his own freedom in order to lead and teach his congregation:

Once the minister understands that he is a servant to his congregants, then he will realise how dear a calling it is to abstain from everything that might cost him their trust or their love. And later, he will understand that, through self-denial and communion with God in prayer, and also through the preaching of the Word and the demands of love, he will be able to exert more influence over politics than if he were to take an active part in promoting a party.⁷¹

These words must have cut through Malan's flesh. Leaving his congregation had been one of the most difficult decisions he had ever made. While a minister, he regarded his service to the church as a calling, and as such had abstained from the bonds of a normal family life. It had furthermore been his fervent belief that the relationship between a spiritual shepherd and his flock was the same as between a husband and a wife.⁷² He had understood his calling as a minister only too clearly – hence the extended internal battle before reaching his decision. Now, Murray portrayed him as misguided. The letter was a gift to the SAP, who immediately sought permission from Murray to publish it as a pamphlet.⁷³ Smuts wrote to Merriman that 'Dr. A. Murray's letters will ... be scattered broadcast.'⁷⁴ Indeed, the letter was soon spread throughout the country as an electioneering document, a powerful and authoritative rebuttal to Malan's reasons for leaving the church.⁷⁵

Malan chose not to respond to Murray's letter. He knew better than to challenge the man who had attained something akin to god-like status within the church, however much he privately disapproved the deification of mere mortals. As a child, he had witnessed how the older generation

⁷⁰ DFM 1/1/509a, "Uittreksel uit 'Ons Land' 17 Julie 1915".

⁷¹ *Ibid.*: 'Als de leraar het eerst verstaat, dat hij teenover alle leden van zijn gemeente hun dienaar is, dan zal hij gevoelen welk een dure roeping het is om zich te onthouden van alles, waardoor hij hun vertrouwen of hun liefde zou verliezen. En hij zal het later verstaan dat hy in de selfverloochening, en de omgang met God in het gebed, en ook in de prediking van het Woord en van de eisen der liefde, meer invloed op de politiek kan uitoefenen, dan waar hy hijzelf een werkdadig deel nam aan de bevordering van een party.'

⁷² DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 37.

⁷³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 188.

⁷⁴ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 311.

⁷⁵ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 188.

refused to tolerate any criticism of ‘Mister Morrie’ – as he was called. S.J. du Toit had once dared to imply that Murray’s doctrine was not purely Reformed – it had evoked a storm, which Du Toit barely survived.⁷⁶

The incident taught Malan a valuable lesson. He went on to establish himself as a Christian nationalist politician and, throughout his career, although his speeches would carry religious themes, he was more careful when making such explicit statements about the church as an institution.

The following months were a steep learning curve. The political platform was as far removed from the pulpit as heaven was from hell. Malan had to learn how to deal with insults hurled at him by political opponents – and in the wake of the Murray-letter, they were usually aimed at his greatest weakness. As Steyn had predicted, he became the ‘Dutch Predikant’ and as such, the object of mockery.⁷⁷ Botha led the pack – in his speeches, he referred to ‘mushroom-ministers and mushroom politicians.’⁷⁸ There was little doubt as to whom he was referring. He also accused Malan directly of being unfaithful to the promise he had made when entering the church. Malan, for his part, regarded these accusations as intensely hypocritical, as it was well-known that Botha himself was not very religious.

Encouraged by their leader’s example, more SAP politicians joined in the campaign. Joël Krige, who would become the Speaker of Parliament, declared that ‘Dr Malan has left the cross of Jesus Christ to enter politics. He wants to go to Parliament, but once there, his fur will fly. In six months both he and his *De Burger* will have gone to the dogs.’⁷⁹ Malan chose not to respond to any of these accusations – he regarded them as low blows, and refused to sink to such a level.⁸⁰ At the same time, he had not yet learned how to reverse such a situation in order to hinder his opponents from gaining political capital against him.⁸¹ Only in later years was he able to halt an attack with a dry, yet pithy, remark.

Malan’s pithiness was slowly rising to the surface, but it still had to be nurtured and refined. His early speeches sounded like sermons and, in an environment where fiery exhortations were

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 78.

⁷⁷ DFM, 1/1/355, M.T. Steyn – D.F. Malan, 19 April 1915.

⁷⁸ *De Burger*, 16 September 1915: ‘paddestoel-predikanten en paddestoel politici.’

⁷⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 35-6: ‘Dr. Malan heeft ‘t Kruis van Jezus Christus verlaten om zich in de politiek te begeven. Hij wil naar ‘t Parlement doch daar zullen zijn haren waaien. Over zes maanden zullen beide zijn *De Burger* en hij naar de maan zijn.’

⁸⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 36.

⁸¹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 192.

common, they must have seemed out of place. Thus, his first election speech to the Cradock constituency, which he gave on 4 August 1915, was described as ‘A sober but incisive address.’⁸²

In spite of the fact that the speech was aimed at attracting potential voters, Malan refused to make a personal attack on his political opponent – the incumbent Minister Harry van Heerden. In his attempt to avoid the mudslinging that was synonymous with politics, Malan not only stood in contrast to the SAP hounds, but also in contrast to Hertzog, whose insults to his opponents were an indispensable ingredient to his speeches. Malan began his first electioneering speech with an assurance to his audience that he respected the person of his opponent. Harry van Heerden, according to Malan, was ‘a man with a noble character and healthy Christian principles ... The only objection to him is that he has taken the wrong boat...’⁸³

Unable to address any of the particular problems that concerned the constituency – since it was his first visit there – Malan chose to focus on the broader national and international issues. He began by addressing the poor white problem and education, which were matters that had long been close to his heart.⁸⁴ The main focus of the speech – his first election speech – however, was the relationship between nationalism and imperialism. It revealed the manner in which he approached the status quo:

Every Afrikaner should, in my view, have a three-tiered political outlook. He must have an imperial, a general South African, and an Afrikaner political outlook. He must, in other words, have a clear comprehension of South Africa’s relationship with the British Empire, the relationship between the different nationalities [English and Afrikaans] within the country and his ideals for the Afrikaner nation. For every Afrikaner is an Afrikaner, and is a subject of the British Empire.⁸⁵

According to Malan, imperialistic politics brought two opposing worldviews into conflict with one another: imperialism and nationalism. Imperialists viewed the colonies as extensions of the mother-country while, in contrast, nationalists believed that the interests of the colonies had to be placed before those of the Empire. Malan made it clear that he was opposed to imperialism, and regarded it as contrary to the interests of both South Africa and the British Empire as a whole. He

⁸² *De Burger*, 12 August 1915: ‘Een bezadigde maar pittige rede.’

⁸³ *Ibid.*: ‘een edel karakter en gezonde christelike beginselen... De enige objektie tegen hem is dat hij in een verkeerde schuitje gegaan is...’

⁸⁴ *De Burger*, 12 August 1915.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Ieder Afrikaner moet m.i. een drieërlei politiek politiek hebben. Hij moet hebben een Imperiale, een algemeen Zuidafrikaanse en een Afrikaner politiek. Hij moet met andere woorden een duidelijk begrip hebben van de rechte verhouding waarin Zuid-Afrika staat tot ‘t Britse Rijk, van de verhouding waarin de verschillende nationaliteiten in dit land tot elkander staan en van het ideal dat hij zich voorstelt voor het Afrikaner volk. Want ieder Afrikaner is Afrikaner, en is onderdaan van het Britse Rijk.’

was not opposed to the imperial connection, however, as he distinguished between imperialism and the Imperial government. As far as he was concerned, South Africa was treated well by the Liberal government in England, which had come into power after the Anglo-Boer War. The Afrikaners – in his view – therefore had no quarrel with the British government, but rather with their own government, which had sacrificed their interests for the interests of others. Malan regarded imperialism as an ideology that was incompatible with the spirit of nationalism – which was even stirring in England, as it began to acknowledge the rights of the Welsh and the Irish through Home Rule. Thus, he regarded the British Empire as being comprised of various nationalities:

I imagine the British Empire to be like a tree which provides existence to many young trees. They in turn are each rooted in their own soil. They have their own, independent lives. For a long time they stand, as indeed they have to, under the protection of the original, larger tree. But this is not to hinder their independence, but to nurture it. And if the original tree falls away, then the younger ones are there to continue with its life.⁸⁶

The concept of various nationalities coexisting under the same umbrella was particularly relevant to South Africa, since Malan regarded it as home to two nationalities: the English speakers, and the Afrikaners. In his worldview, Africans did not feature as a nationality, and were therefore completely absent from his analysis of South Africa's intercultural relations. Malan believed that both English and Afrikaans South Africans had the right to national existence, and that the only way to do justice to both was by practicing political fairness. By forcing conciliation upon the nation, however, Malan believed that the government had dropped fairness by the wayside. Instead, if fairness had been practiced, and if the government had worked to establish full equality between the two population groups, conciliation would have been the spontaneous result. Malan believed that this practice could not continue any longer. '... the politics of the last few years, whereby the one hand offers equal rights to the Afrikaner nation – for the time being only on paper – while the other hand takes his independent national existence away from him, is wrong and ill-fated,' Malan told his audience.⁸⁷ As far as he was concerned, this was the South African government's failing. He believed that it was behaving as if there was only one nation in South Africa, and therefore did not

⁸⁶ *De Burger*, 12 August 1915: 'Ik stel mij het Britse Rijk voor als een boom die 't bestaan geeft aan zovele jonge boompjes. Deze staan met hun eigen wortels in hun eigen aarde. Zij hebben hun eigen zelfstandig leven. Lang staan zij en moeten zij staan onder bescherming van de oorspronkelijke grotere boom. Maar deze is er niet om de zelfstandigheid te verhinderen maar aan te kweken. En als de andere boom eenmaal wegvalt dan zijn de jongere daar om zijn leven voort te zetten.'

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*: '...de politiek van de laatste jaren waarbij met de ene hand gelijke rechten aan het Afrikaner volk aangeboden wordt – voorlopig nog maar op papier – en met de andere hand zijn eigen zelfstandig national bestaan hom ontnomen wordt, is ook verkeerd en noodlottig.'

want to acknowledge Afrikaner nationalism. It preached equal rights, but refused to practice it. It was still up to the Afrikaners to capture their rights.⁸⁸

In order to attain their rights, Malan was convinced that it was imperative that the Afrikaner nation be united. He believed that friction between the two nationalities was wrong, but friction amongst Afrikaners meant the certain death of their own nation. Uniting the divided nation had to be a part of every statesman's political confession of faith. In this, Malan began to formulate a principle that was to become one of his own articles of faith: 'We want ... that there be unity between those who come from the same house and who belong together.'⁸⁹ Malan's description implied that he regarded the Afrikaners as a family in whose veins the same blood flowed. He called the English 'neighbours', while he described the Afrikaners as 'brothers'.⁹⁰

Malan extended the familial metaphor to describing the bond between the nation and its government. He believed that the discord between the Afrikaners and the Union government was as a result of the former's unfair treatment at the hands of the latter. Thus, in his mind, the situation had become so unbearable that the Afrikaners had been forced to take up arms and rise up in rebellion the previous year. The trust between the two sides had broken down, and it was irreparable because:

The relationship between a government and its nation is somewhat similar to a marriage between a man and his wife. There has to be mutual trust and love. But as you know, sometimes there is estrangement. If one asks the husband what is amiss, he places the blame on his wife, and might name all kinds of trifling matters. If one asks the wife, she does the same with regards to the husband. But the true cause often remains hidden. It is this, that they have lost their love for each other. And that is most important. The government has reached the point where it no longer trusts the nation, and the nation does not trust the government either. Maybe the only solution to all the discord and bitterness is that they divorce each other.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *De Burger*, 12 August 1915.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Wij willen...dat er eenheid zal zijn tussen degenen die van het zelfde huis zijn en die bij elkander behoren.'

⁹⁰ *De Burger*, 12 August 1915.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*: 'De verhouding tussen ene regering en het volk is iets dergelijks als een huwelijk tussen een man en zijne vrouw. Er moet wederzijds vertrouwen en liefde bestaan. Maar gij weet, somtijds komt er verwijdering. Vraagt men dan aan de man wat er aan scheelt dan werpt hij de schuld op de vrouw en noemt soms op allerlei nietigheden. Vraagt gij aan de vrouw, dan doet zij hetzelfde met de man. Maar de ware oorszaak blijft dikwijls verborgen. Het is dit, dat zij hun liefde voor elkaar verloren hebben. En dat is het voornaamste. De regering is nu zover gekomen dat zij het volk niet meer vertrouwt en het volk vertrouwt de regering niet meer. Misschien is nu de enige oplossing van al de tweedracht en bitterheid dat zij van elkander scheiden.'

Malan had transferred his matrimonial metaphor from the church to the state. The responsibility that he had felt as a minister towards his congregation was the same as the responsibility that he now felt towards the nation. He had, in effect, remarried.

There was another obvious similarity between his life as a minister and his life as a politician – once again, Malan found himself on the road. The only differences were that his small horse-drawn cart and the empty plains of his district were now replaced by motor cars, trains, and the wide expanses of the Cape Province. He now had to travel from town to town to deliver political speeches as the election loomed ever closer. During the month of August, he visited Cradock, Middelburg, Richmond, Murraysburg, Wellington, Paarl and Caledon. In September, he toured through Tulbagh, Oudtshoorn and Middelburg. *De Burger* became his election instrument, reporting on his visits and printing his speeches.⁹² From Stellenbosch, Merriman followed his movements, and grumbled to Smuts:

Malan the Rev. is still hard at the bellows blowing up the coals of race hatred. I think he must be an avatar of that sainted man the Rev. S.J. du Toit. It is absurd to hear a Frenchman ramping about our *dierbare moedertaal* [precious mother-tongue], really sometimes I can find it in my heart to excuse *Le Roi Soleil*.⁹³

Interestingly, the readers of *De Burger* did not realise that its editor's tours through the province necessarily meant that the editorials they were reading every morning could not have come from his pen. The reality was that the sub-editor, Wartema, wrote many of the editorials and, after his departure, they were written by his successors. Since none of the editorials were credited to a particular author, though, the secret remained well-kept.⁹⁴

Whether Wartema was necessarily the most suitable person for such a task, was an entirely different matter. The overpowering smell of brandy which emanated from his office was most certainly not conducive to his work.⁹⁵ At one point, he seems to have been carried away by *De Burger's* revolutionary motto, 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.' On 16 October, *De Burger's* editorial appeared under the heading "Op naar de Bastille!" (To the Bastille!)⁹⁶ The content of the article

⁹² *De Burger*, 12 August 1915; *De Burger*, 14 August 1915; *De Burger*, 26 August 1915; *De Burger*, 27 August 1915; *De Burger*, 28 August 1915; *De Burger*, 31 August 1915; *De Burger*, 8 September 1915; *De Burger*, 11 September 1915; *De Burger*, 13 September 1915; *De Burger*, 16 September 1915.

⁹³ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 307; (In calling Malan a Frenchman, Merriman is referring to his Huguenot ancestry. *Le Roi Soleil* was the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which prompted the emigration of French Protestants – and which brought the Malans to South Africa).

⁹⁴ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 215.

⁹⁵ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 723.

⁹⁶ *De Burger*, 16 October 1915.

which followed was not nearly as belligerent as its title, but the damage was done. Malan was not in the city at the time, but soon after his return, there was a knock on his office door, followed by a military officer in full regalia – which included a sword at his side. Ignoring Malan’s invitation to sit down, he ceremoniously read from a document in his hand: it was a warning from the attorney-general. In the light of the offending article, Malan was advised that a second misstep would have legal consequences. The situation was so surreal that Malan could hardly react:

With such a formidable apparition at my door, representative of such a formidable authority, it would have been inappropriate, but also futile, to argue or to explain. With a barely suppressed smile and an “I heard!” from my side, and with a clanging of the sword and a retreat from his side, the apparition disappeared from my threshold.⁹⁷

During the first months, however, Malan could not attend to the troubles at *De Burger*. He had to establish his leadership over the nationalists in the Cape Province while fending off the challenge presented by Fremantle. In the Cape Peninsula, it was clear that Malan was the undisputed leader. Fremantle, who had initially regarded Van Zijl as his most likely rival, now saw that Malan had taken over the reins.⁹⁸ At this point, though, it appears to have become overwhelmingly evident to him that challenging Malan could mean his own demise. Although Malan was a political novice, it was nearly impossible for an English speaker to counter his moral weight within the Afrikaner community. Fremantle therefore had to reconsider his position. In his diary he recorded a conversation with his friend, C. Fichardt, who tried to persuade him not to relinquish his claim to the leadership. Fichardt told Fremantle that he:

...disbelieves in dr. Malan and says the north is determined not to let him take my place, but impresses on me the necessity of keeping my temper and not appearing to push myself...I do not mind taking second or third place, provided I am not pushed aside...and provided my supplanters can do the work and I like Malan and am aware that he has many things which I lack, but as to politics he has at present an entirely dark hour and what he has done in organisation is wrong.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 39: ‘Met so ‘n gedugte verskynsel in my deur, verteenwoordigende so ‘n gedugte owerheid, sou dit onvanpas, maar dan ook nutteloos gewees het om te redeneer op om dit uit te lê. Met ‘n kwalik verborge glimlag en ‘n “ek het gehoor!” van my kant, en met swaardgekleter en ‘n terugtog aan sy kant het die verskynsel van my deurdrumpel verdwyn.’

⁹⁸ F.J. van Heerden, ‘Die Geboorte van die Nasionale Party (1913-1915)’, in O. Geysler and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 170.

⁹⁹ Quoted in F.J. van Heerden, “Die Geboorte van die Nasionale Party (1913-1915)”, O. Geysler and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I: Agtergrond, Stigting en Konsolidasie*, 172.

Fremantle now focussed his energies on preventing his being brushed aside. This meant that he would not challenge Malan directly and, in doing so, remain a member of the leadership. Malan, for his part, did not trust Fremantle at all. Years later, he described Fremantle as a political opportunist, ‘an energetic but somewhat unstable personality and, besides that, ambitious.’¹⁰⁰

It was with some apprehension, then, that both men must have approached the Middelburg congress, at which the Cape branch of the NP was to be established. Each had to ensure his own survival, and therefore the proceedings became a well-orchestrated love-fest. *De Burger* enthused that it opened with a number of good omens: the delegates were many, they were enthusiastic, and the weather cooperated.¹⁰¹

Fremantle managed to orchestrate the proceedings in such a manner that it seemed as if Malan and his Cape Town supporters were joining the established party. He declared that there were two categories of delegates present: those who emanated from the De Aar conference and those who were part of the Reunification Commission and that, according to the party’s constitution, the two groups were initially required to meet separately. Only after half an hour could the joint conference be officially opened. The delegates from the Reunification Commission therefore had to leave the hall, while Fremantle was elected chairman of those remaining behind. They were still in the process of reading the minutes of the De Aar meeting, and the NPs leadership list, when the proceedings were interrupted by loud applause greeting Malan’s reentry into the hall.¹⁰²

Fremantle immediately proposed a change in the constitution to allow the delegates of the Reunification Commission to become members of the NP – thereby allowing them to attend the proceedings and making the meeting truly representative. Soon after, the Malan-supporters re-entered the hall. Thunderous applause erupted when Malan and Fremantle shook hands, which was followed by a hymn and a prayer.¹⁰³

Fremantle addressed the audience, recounting the growth of the NP since Hertzog’s dismissal from the Cabinet. He told his listeners that he had been offered the leadership of the Vigilance Committee that was established in the wake of the event, but had refused as he felt that a true-born Afrikaner should occupy such a position. For the same reason, therefore, he tendered his resignation as chairman of the current proceedings, and suggested that Malan be appointed in his

¹⁰⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 43: ‘n bedrywige maar ietwat onstabiele persoonlikheid, en daarby ambisieus.’

¹⁰¹ *De Burger*, 16 September 1915.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

stead. This was greeted by yet more applause, and Malan took the chair. Fremantle was appointed as vice-chairman.¹⁰⁴

Malan thanked Fremantle for all of his sacrifices and the hard work that he had put in in the interests of the Cape. ‘There is no longer any one among us who doubts his motives, in spite of what the opposition might say,’ he told the audience. ‘People know that he has become one of us. We welcome people of English descent most warmly.’¹⁰⁵

Malan likened the proceedings to the meeting in 1889 at which ‘Onze’ Jan Hofmeyr’s BBV amalgamated with S.J. du Toit’s Afrikaner Bond. It contained two sections – the one more radical than the other – but differences of opinion were solved within the party.¹⁰⁶ Not only did Malan cite the precedent as a model for dissolving the differences between the two factions within the organisation, but he was also intent on establishing the party as having a seamless tradition of respectable and legitimate authority, as opposed to its prevailing label as a band of dissident rebels.¹⁰⁷

On the second day of the conference Fremantle suggested that there should be a National Party for the entire Union, while each province ought to have its own organisation. He proposed that the party be named De Nasionale Partij van de Kaap-Provincie (The National Party of the Cape Province). Thereafter, a committee was appointed to oversee the party’s organisation. Fremantle was elected to head this body, but in a hotly debated move – which ensured that organising power would still be concentrated at Malan’s end – Willie Hofmeyr was appointed as the new party’s organising secretary.¹⁰⁸

Throughout the proceedings, Malan remained in the background. It was mostly Fremantle who proposed motions and answered delegates’ questions. To his diary, Fremantle confided:

Malan is quite lost in practical politics and knows nothing, but is good at moderating my strong language. He ... no doubt has ability and will, I hope, do well ... I wish Malan had a heartier manner. I respect him rather than fear him, and he will not be my brother as dear old Barrie [Hertzog] and Christiaan [de Wet]. But I have the greatest possible admiration for his character. He is, however, inclined to say that the organisation should be Dutch and the party in the house English and Dutch – wrong two streams policy.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ *De Burger*, 16 September 1915.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Er is niemand meer onder ons die zijn beweegredenen in twijfel trekken, niettegenstaande wat de tegenstanders ook mogen zeggen. Men weet dat hij met ons een geworden is. We heten mense van engelse afkomst van harte welkom.’

¹⁰⁶ *De Burger*, 16 September 1915.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in F.J. van Heerden, ‘Die Geboorte van die Nasionale Party (1913-1915)’, in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 173.

The conference ended with Fremantle disconcerted that the Hertzog-line would not necessarily be toed, and with the power firmly concentrated in Malan's hands. With regards to the upcoming elections, it was a relief. The fact that there had been two centres of power until a month before the polls had not helped the NPs campaign.

The Nationalists in the Cape Province were extremely optimistic about their electoral prospects, and canvassed in earnest. In the process, *De Burger* became a blatant propaganda tool. It reported on meetings, carried advertisements for Nationalist candidates, and published the NPs election manifesto. The cartoons of the illustrious D.C. Boonzaaier also did their part – one of these was even aimed at persuading the Coloured voters of Stellenbosch to vote for the NP candidate.¹¹⁰



**Figure 8: The founding conference of the Cape National Party, Middelburg 1915
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Simultaneously, the mudslinging intensified. In another widely disseminated letter to *Ons Land*, Malan was accused of trying to bring politics into the church.¹¹¹ Murray, who might have felt that his first letter to *Ons Land* did not have the desired result, wrote a second letter – this time addressed to *De Burger* – in which he reiterated his earlier statements. *De Burger* decided that it did not want to be accused of suppressing Murray's views, and therefore published the entire letter –

¹¹⁰ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 193-4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 195.

eight days before the polls.¹¹² It could not have advanced its editor's chances, but denying its existence would have been worse.

Election-day finally arrived on 20 October. In the Cape Province, Hertzog's prediction that poor organisation would translate into disappointing results became a reality, as there had been a mere three months of campaigning. Out of the fifty-one constituencies that comprised the Cape Province, only seven nationalist candidates were elected.¹¹³ Malan was not among them – neither were Fremantle and Willie Hofmeyr.

The news came as a shock to Malan's supporters, crowded around Cradock's public office during the early morning hours of Friday 22 October, from where the announcement was made. Malan had achieved 1,200 votes, while Minister Harry van Heerden had received 1,488.¹¹⁴

The local correspondent to *De Burger* nevertheless asserted that barely 500 Afrikaners could have voted for Van Heerden, compared to the 1,200 who voted for Malan. He therefore declared it a moral victory and, recalling dramatic scenes from the Great Trek, assured his readers that, in spite of Malan's defeat, the Nationalists would not give up hope:

Even if the men want to, their wives would never permit it. After the murders at Weenen and Blauwkrans, the Afrikaner women refused resolutely to leave the land, so drenched in blood, before the blood of the innocent newborns had been avenged. Also today, the Afrikaans women will not allow their men to leave the battlefield in the hands of the enemy, of that we are deeply convinced.¹¹⁵

On the face of it, the results would have come as a blow to the fledgling NP. However, within days, *De Burger* published an analysis of the election results, which demonstrated that the Nationalists had in fact gained a formidable amount of ground within a short period of time. Due to the constituency system, which favoured the distribution of votes rather than the total, the party's relative success at the polls did not translate into parliamentary seats. Nationally, the SAP received approximately 90,000 votes, the NP won 75,000 and the Unionists 48,000. Yet, the SAP won 58 seats and the NP only 27. In the Cape Province, the NP won 4,000 more votes than the Unionists, but gained seven seats as opposed to the latter's forty.¹¹⁶ The NP could comfort itself that it had

¹¹² *De Burger*, 12 October 1915.

¹¹³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 197.

¹¹⁴ *De Burger*, 30 October 1915.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Al wilden de mans het, hun vrouwen zullen dit nooit toelaten. Na de moord van Weenen en Blauwkrans, weigerden de Afrikaanse vrouwen beslist om het met bloed gedrenkte land te verlaten, voordat het bloed van de onschuldige zuigelingen gewroken was. Vandaag ook zullen de Afrikaanse vrouwen hun mans niet toelaten om het slagveld in handen van de vijand te laten blijven, daar zijn wij in onze zielen overtuigd van.'

¹¹⁶ *De Burger*, 26 October 1915.

taken these strides during war-time, while being strapped for cash in the face of the SAPs well-endowed election machine.¹¹⁷

As the organising secretary, Willie Hofmeyr also pointed to the limited time and resources at the Nationalists' disposal. Yet, he was convinced that the encouraging number of votes that the NP had achieved in the Cape were directly related to the appearance of *De Burger* which, he believed, filled an important void.¹¹⁸

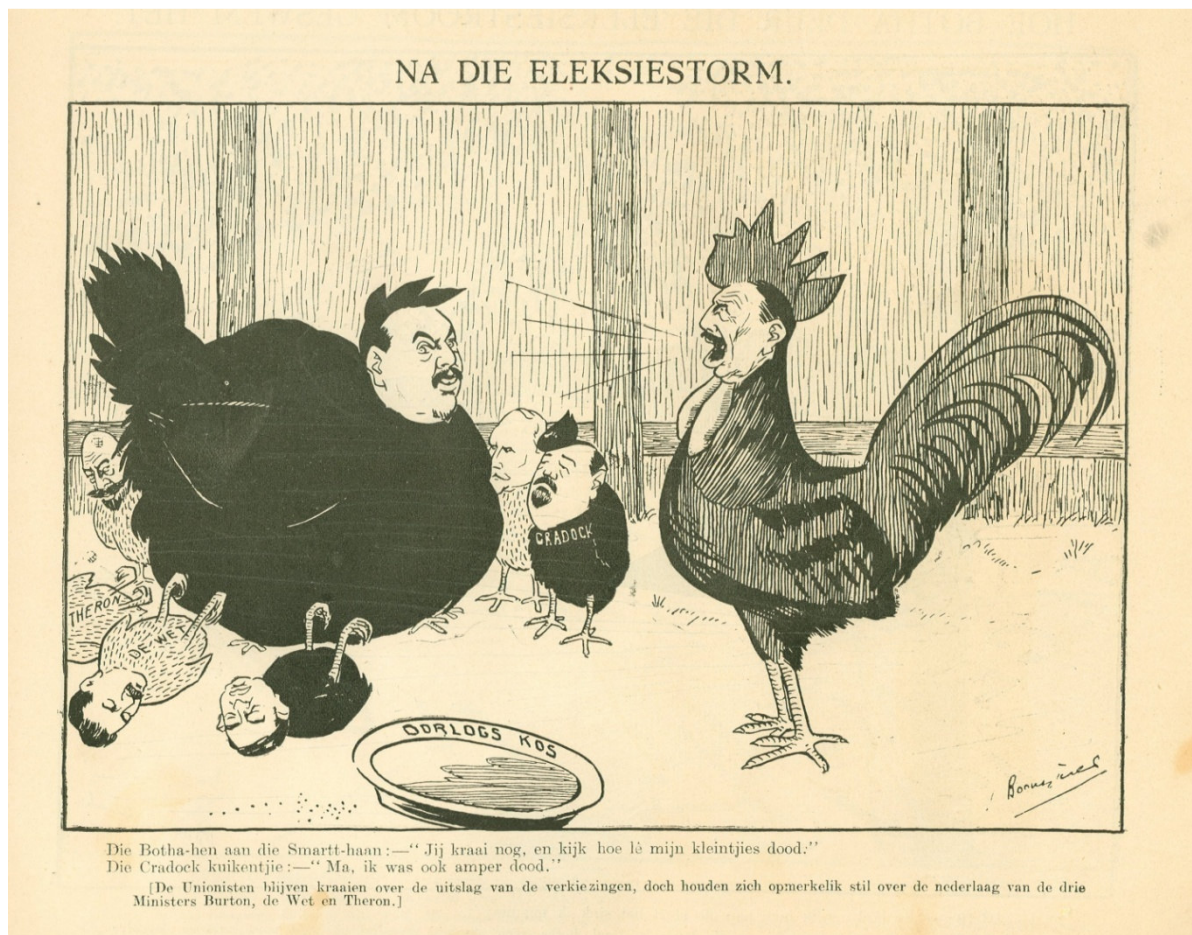


Figure 9: AFTER THE ELECTION STORM

De Burger's cartoonist, D.C. Boonzaaiër, gives an optimistic picture of the National Party's defeat.

The Botha-hen to the Smartt-rooster: "You are crowing, but just look at my dead chicks."

The Cradock-chick: "Mom, I was nearly dead too."

(The Unionists continue to crow about the election results, yet they are remarkably quiet about the defeat of the three Ministers, Burton, De Wet and Theron.)

The mundane realities of organising and fighting elections did not temper *De Burger's* claims that the nationalist movement was 'a spontaneous movement among the people, sprouted

¹¹⁷ *De Burger*, 27 October 1915.

¹¹⁸ *De Burger*, 3 November 1915.

from the heart of the Afrikaner nation ... the natural expansion of this movement in such a short time is a telling example of the beautiful revival of the nationalist spirit in South Africa.’¹¹⁹

The man around whom this all revolved did not make any public declarations. It was his first election, and his first defeat. Changing his path, however, was not in his nature. He did not leave the church for the sake of a newspaper, but for the sake of a cause. His defeat therefore did not prompt him to concentrate on his newspaper instead. His focus remained on his political career – as his editorial staff was only too aware.

During his first years as editor, Malan was in the habit of arriving at *De Burger*’s offices at around 10:30 A.M. every morning, walking down the long corridor to his office without looking left or right – in order to avoid greeting any of the journalists. The long hours and low salaries led to an exceptionally high turnover of staff during *De Burger*’s early years – but if Malan could avoid meeting the new appointments, he did – meeting new people was not a source of excitement, but one of discomfort, which he avoided as much as possible. He thus limited his contact with the editorial staff to a few of its members.¹²⁰ Malan refused to have anything to do with Wartema – around whom the smell of alcohol drifted: after a while, he would only communicate with his sub-editor through Steinmeyer. Wartema, for his part, was overwhelmed by his role as *de facto* editor-in-chief. After a year, he was replaced by the young Henry Allen Fagan.¹²¹

The hours that Malan spent in Keerom Street were rather limited. He would receive visitors at his office, and by 12:30 P.M. would depart for the Koffiehuis, a local cafe which, during these years, was the common meeting place for Cape Town’s Afrikaner politicians, usually accompanied by Willie Hofmeyr or others. Thereafter, he would return home to write his editorial.¹²²

Malan had a gift for language, and clarity of argument and style, but this was never produced with speed – he needed time to formulate his words. In writing his editorials, he followed the same pattern that he had used when writing his sermons: every sentence would be written slowly and carefully, and be read aloud before the next was written.¹²³

Within the context of a busy newspaper office, this caused foreseeable tensions – although his staff would never have dreamt of confronting him about it. Instead, they would set the editorial page last, and once that was done, they would phone him to hear whether or not he was on his way.

¹¹⁹ *De Burger*, 27 October 1915: ‘een spontane volksbeweging uit het hart van het Afrikaner volk gesproten...en de natuurlike uitbreiding van deze beweging in zo korte tijd is een sprekend bewijs van de prachtige herleving van de nationale geest in Zuid-Afrika.’

¹²⁰ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, ‘Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger’, *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

¹²¹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 723.

¹²² DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, ‘Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger’, *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

¹²³ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 30.

Malan refused to let them fetch the article from his house, but insisted on walking from Tamboerskloof to the office in Keerom Street to deliver his article – he did not own a car during these years. The newspaper had a Model-T Ford for deliveries, but since its driver only came on duty after one o'clock in the morning, the new mode of transport could not alleviate the situation. Thus, Malan often arrived well after midnight¹²⁴ with his dog, Comet, at his side.¹²⁵ He would disappear into his office to read his article a final time before delivering it into the hands of the night-editor.¹²⁶

On one particular night, he hurried through the streets of Cape Town in such haste that he forgot to replace his slippers with his shoes. The night staff noted with astonishment that, while he was still wearing his waistcoat, his hat, collar, tie, and jacket – without which he was never seen – were missing. Steinmeyer followed him as he left the building, but Malan was walking at such a pace that he could not catch up with him. The constable doing his rounds in Long Street, upon seeing such a suspicious spectacle, began to pursue him as well. Steinmeyer had more success in catching up with the policeman than in catching Malan, and was able to prevent his editor's arrest while Malan hurried home, completely unaware of his near-brush with the law.¹²⁷

Although Malan had little contact with the staff, and made hardly any contribution to the paper's management, he did realise that as its editor he was deemed responsible for its content. It was his name that was attached to the publication, and it was his name that drew the subscriptions. Those who appointed him, and those who worked for him, appreciated the status that he gave to *De Burger*: without it, the paper had little chance of success.¹²⁸ In effect, D.F. Malan was a 'brand name'.¹²⁹ This created its own frustrations. From time to time, editorial decisions taken in his absence could create difficult situations. One such incident, early in 1916, compelled him to apologise to ex-Pres. Steyn: 'I would not have placed the report in *De Burger*, which comes from our own correspondent in DeWetsdorp, without any further investigation, especially since there was no Reuter's telegram about it. Unfortunately I was away from the house on a short holiday.'¹³⁰

Nevertheless, the paper did reflect its editor's values. It published sermons and other religious content to such an extent that it became a viable alternative to *De Kerkbode*, thereby being considered suitable for Sunday reading. It also attracted the talents of young Afrikaner intellectuals

¹²⁴ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, 'Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger', *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

¹²⁵ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 12.

¹²⁶ DFM, 1/1/3027, J. Steinmeyer, 'Toe die Konstabel Dr. Malan Wou Gryp: Vertellings uit die Ou Dae by Die Burger', *Die Byvoegsel*, 22 May 1954.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 721-2.

¹²⁹ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 215: 'handelsmerk'.

¹³⁰ VAB, President M.T. Steyn collection, A 156, file 1/1/9, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 15 January 1916: 'Het bericht in "de Burger" dat van ons eigen korrespondent te DeWetsdorp afkomstig is, zou ik niet zonder verder onderzoek geplaast hebben, temeer omdat er geen Reuter telegram daaromtrent was. Ongelukkig was ik echter op een korte vakantie van huis.'

– fresh from their studies on the European continent – who volunteered as columnists. Through their efforts, *De Burger* became an important vehicle for the Second Afrikaans Language Movement. It was careful not to alienate conservative readers who preferred to receive their news in Dutch, but the new intelligentsia were allowed to write their contributions in Afrikaans.¹³¹ The letter columns were also particularly lively. With more than a hint of sarcasm, Merriman enquired of Smuts: ‘Do you ever see that bright morning star of journalism *De Burger*? The correspondence columns are most instructive, far more so than the bleatings of the Rev. Editor.’¹³² As its strength during these early years lay in its opinion columns and its correspondence, rather than in its news reports, *De Burger* was a ‘viewspaper’, rather than a newspaper.¹³³

Malan, for his part, used *De Burger* as a platform from which he could preach to the nation about the issues that prompted him to leave the church. The poor white issue was, as usual, very high on his list. In June 1916, the Helpmekaar (Mutual Aid) organisation in the Cape, which was established to collect money to pay the fines of those who had participated in the 1914 Rebellion, suggested that a conference be held on the poor white issue.¹³⁴ With this prospect in mind, therefore, Malan published a series of articles on the topic that were later collated and printed as a booklet.¹³⁵

The series of articles drew on his encounters with white poverty while a minister of the church, and demonstrated the sense of urgency that he felt in bringing the issue to the attention of a wider audience. Malan recounted a scene that he described as a familiar one throughout South Africa – one which he would have encountered during his isolated travels through his districts:

Anyone who is familiar with some of the larger parts of our country will also know the sight that so often can be met on our dusty roads – the dilapidated half tent-wagon with the tatters fluttering in the wind, and harnessed to it a team of six or eight emaciated, tottering donkeys. After a few years’ experience, one does not need to enquire anymore to know that the white driver with his listless posture and the neglected woman with her dull eyes are probably not members of a church, and are either completely unable to read and write, or can only do so poorly, and that the half-a-dozen uncombed and unwashed children have never seen a church from the inside – let alone a school ... They are the nomadic wandering type. Of every industry they know something. They do not have a firm understanding of anything. They are

¹³¹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 138, 183-4.

¹³² W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 312.

¹³³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 183.

¹³⁴ Helpmekaar Studiefonds Archive, Kongresnotules Helpmekaarvereniging van die Kaapprovinsie, 1916-1925, Notule Helpmekaar Kongres 28-29 Junie 1916, 6 (Thank you to Dr. Anton Ehlers for this reference).

¹³⁵ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk. De Oorzaken Daarvan en de Redmiddelen* (Cape Town: De Nationale Pers, 1917).

willing to do all kinds of work. None of which they can do well. Thus, they move from farm to farm, complaining bitterly about anyone who gave them work and accommodation on his farm, while the employer, in turn, complains bitterly about their unreliability, dishonesty and rudeness, and assures you emphatically that he would rather work with coloured people a hundred times over.¹³⁶

Such people were *moeg geboren* (born tired), always in search of jobs and trying to keep body and soul together through begging. Only someone who participates in the ACVVs charity work, or who has lived in a parsonage, has any notion of the extent of the beggars' ranks, Malan assured his readers – every knock on a door and every undeserved sixpence carves away at the little self-respect that such a person might have had left.¹³⁷

Yet, Malan insisted, these people were 'our flesh and blood.'¹³⁸ They were Afrikaners, fellow-descendants of the Dutch and the Huguenots. The divisions between rich and poor, however, were becoming so stark within the Afrikaner community that, in some places, such people were not greeted by hand any longer, and they were certainly never received in the houses of the wealthier Afrikaners. He argued that they needed assistance, but also the friendship of their fellow-Afrikaners. Only by establishing a personal bond with such a person, could his or her poverty be addressed.¹³⁹

To Malan, the poor white problem was an Afrikaner nationalist cause. He fervently believed that a nation was an organic whole – if one part of the body suffered, the rest would also be affected. For this reason, therefore, Afrikaner poverty had to be addressed.¹⁴⁰

Malan's approach to the issue of poverty was nuanced and balanced. He was able to distinguish between different forms of poverty, and proposed a variety of solutions ranging from the tangible to the intangible. He classified the poor into three categories: those who suffered from physical disabilities, illness or old age; those who were unable to find employment due to economic

¹³⁶ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk. De Oorzaken Daarvan en de Redmiddelen*, 7: 'Iedereen die met zekere grote delen van ons land bekend is, kent ook het verschijnsel dat men dat men zo dikwels aantreffen kan op ons stoffige wegen – de versleten halftent wagen met de flarden wapperende in de wind, en bespannen met zes of acht magere, waggelende donkies. Na de ondervinding van enige jaren behoeft men haast geen navraag meer te doen om te weten dat de blanke drijver met zijn lusteloze houding en de verwaarloosde vrouw met hare doffe ogen waarschijnlijk geen lidmaten zijn, en òf in het geheel niet, òf anders uiterst gebrekkig lezen en schrijven kunnen, en dat de half-dozijn ongekamde en ongewassen kinderen nog nooit een kerk, laat staan een school van binnen gezien...'t Is de nomadiese of de swerverstyp. Van iedere bezigheid kennen zij iets. Van niets verstaan zij alles. Alle soorten van werk zijn zij bereid om te ondernemen. Geen enkel werk doen zij goed. Zij trekken daarom van plaats tot plaats, klagen bitter over iedereen die ze op zijn plaats werk en huisvesting verschaft heft, terwijl de werkgever weer op zijn beurt bitter klaagt over hun onbetrouwbaarheid en oneerlikheid en onzeggelijkheid en met nadruk verzekert, dat hij honderdmaal liever met bruine mensen werkt dan met hen.'

¹³⁷ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 7.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 8: 'ons vlees en bloed.'

¹³⁹ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 8, 29.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

conditions beyond their control, such as natural disasters, war or fluctuations in the international economy; and, finally, those who were poor due to their unwillingness to work. Each category necessitated different solutions: those who were physically unfit had to be assisted through classic philanthropy; those who wanted to work, but could not, had to be assisted to find employment, coupled with job-creation; the only solution to those who refused to work, was coercion. This last group had to be rehabilitated, he felt, in a number of ways: through education and the teaching of skills, through spiritual upliftment, and through an adjustment in their attitude to work.¹⁴¹

Where possible, Malan believed that newly urbanised poor whites had to be resettled on the land – to be provided by the government, or even expropriated from large companies. It was not, however, merely a case of putting such people on the land, as their inability to sustain themselves had already been proven. They also had to be taught the necessary work ethic and skills in order that they could farm efficiently.¹⁴² As the population was expanding, though, it was impossible for the land to provide a living for everyone. It was therefore inevitable that many Afrikaners had to be absorbed into the industrial labour force – and once again, the necessary skills and work ethic were imperative.¹⁴³

Work was Malan's overarching maxim – 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread' was the Biblical principle to which he held firmly. Those who worked would inherit the earth's riches. This, however, brought the Afrikaner poor whites into direct competition with the country's African and Coloured populations.¹⁴⁴

Up to this point, Malan's speeches and writings did not refer to Africans – they featured only in relation to the white poor. It was through the lenses of the poor white problem that Malan viewed South Africa's race relations. He took note of the fact that the Afrikaners were not the only inhabitants of South Africa – they also rubbed shoulders with the 'coloured races', who lived in 'barbaric or semi-barbaric' conditions. In the interests of the Africans' development, and for the sake of the Europeans' 'civilisation' and 'moral' standards, it was imperative that the different races remain separate from one another on a social level.¹⁴⁵ This social order was, however, being challenged. The Africans had what the poor whites lacked: willingness to work, and an eagerness to learn, which meant that they were quickly climbing up the ladder of civilisation, while the poor whites were sinking lower and lower. In Malan's eyes, this could only be to the detriment of the finely-balanced racial order – if the process was not changed, South Africa would no longer be a

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 9-11, 16-18, 20-1.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 21-2.

¹⁴³ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 25.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴⁵ D.F. Malan, 'De toestand van achteruitgang en de oorzaken daarvan', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P. , *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelijk Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916* (Cape Town: De Nationale Pers Beperkt, 1917), 12.

white man's country.¹⁴⁶ Instead, the resulting interaction would lead to disrespect on the part of the 'lower' race, which would give way to familiarity and, finally, miscegenation. Thus, poverty amongst the white people in South Africa was not merely a pitiful condition, as it was in other countries, but it was a social issue, with far-reaching repercussions.¹⁴⁷

The battlefield, therefore, was in the labour market, where Africans were undercutting whites because their needs were fewer and because they were willing to work for less. Malan believed, however, that this situation would not last. Africans were becoming more 'civilised' and would eventually claim higher wages in order to support their newly acquired Western lifestyles.¹⁴⁸

The majority of the population earned their livelihoods by performing either skilled or unskilled labour. The poor whites regarded the second category as 'kaffir [*sic*] work' and instead tried to claim either positions where they could supervise African labourers, or skilled positions – for which they did not have the required training or competence – while Africans dominated the unskilled sector and were quickly advancing in the direction of the skilled sector as well. Malan had only one solution to this: the poor whites had to work, no matter how menial and no matter how small the wage. They had to be able to compete with Africans for both skilled and unskilled employment, at the same wages that Africans were being paid. Malan had no doubt that the whites would triumph in such a race. In this instance, his Victorian Social Darwinist mindset left him with little doubts as to the white labourer's inherent superiority. He recommended only a single measure in order to advance the race: segregated workplaces. Employers had to appoint either black or white workers. As long as the white worker did not have to labour side by side with the African worker, his sense of social superiority would not be threatened, and he would be a more efficient labourer and would even be willing to perform tasks that he otherwise would have refused.¹⁴⁹

Malan felt vindicated in his argument by pointing to the American South. The South experienced similar conditions to South Africa – where a black majority performed the manual labour that an impoverished white minority refused to touch. Once the American poor whites had changed their attitudes to work, they were able to claim the labour markets for themselves, and in so doing, the poor white problem disappeared.¹⁵⁰

Thus, at this stage, Malan did not advocate a colour bar, or differential wages. He accepted African advancement and Westernisation as an inevitable reality. Insofar as it affected the Afrikaner poor, he only advocated segregation in the work place, education and training for the poor whites,

¹⁴⁶ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 26-7.

¹⁴⁷ D.F. Malan, 'De toestand van achteruitgang en de oorzaken daarvan' in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 12.

¹⁴⁸ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 27.

¹⁴⁹ D.F. Malan, *De Achteruitgang van Ons Volk*, 12-13, 27.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

spiritual upliftment which would be provided by the church, and a new attitude towards work. What was needed was a fair competition, which he believed the whites were predestined to win.

Following the publications of his articles, Malan was asked to address the Cradock conference on the poor white problem, which was held in October 1916. Here he provided a summary of the articles that had been published in *De Burger*.¹⁵¹

At the same conference, the former president of the Orange Free State, F.W. Reitz, and Malan's erstwhile professor, J.I. Marais, delivered speeches in which they pleaded for comprehensive racial separation.¹⁵² At this point in time, however, they did not use the word 'segregation' as yet, but pleaded for 'Afskeiding' (separation) – in schools, churches, workplaces, trains, and the laws of the land.¹⁵³ Reitz argued that this did not imply inferior amenities or the denial of any rights, to the contrary:

I will not begrudge him, if he has earned it – a house as spacious as mine; a school as graceful, a seat in the train as comfortable – if he has the money left over for it – a parliament as free and as talkative. I do not promote this because I despise him, but because I am convinced that a respectable black man has as little desire to impose himself on my company as I would have to impose myself on his and “birds of a feather flock together” is the best, the safest and the most honest relationship between people who differ from each other to such an extent, not only in terms of colour, but also in many other respects. Separation is what I am insisting on. No suppression, insults or contempt. Give, for my part, the coloured and his children the same opportunities and privileges as I want for me and my children, but separately. Let him climb, if he wishes to and is able to, but up another pole than mine, and I will not rub any fat onto his pole.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ D.F. Malan, 'De toestand van achteruitgang en de oorzaken daarvan', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 10-14.

¹⁵² F.W. Reitz, 'De Arme Blanke en de Naturel - Toespraak', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 15-18; J.I. Marais, 'De Arme Blanke en de Naturel - Toespraak', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 18-19.

¹⁵³ F.W. Reitz, 'De Arme Blanke en de Naturel - Toespraak', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 15-18.

¹⁵⁴ F.W. Reitz, 'De Arme Blanke en de Naturel - Toespraak', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 17: 'Ik wil hem gun, als hij dit verdien het – dat sijn huis net so gerieflik als mijne is, sijn skool net sierlik, sijn sitplek in die trein net so gemaklik – al hij die geld daarvoor oor het – in sijn volksraad net so vrij en net so spraaksaam. Dit vorder ik nie omdat ik hem verag nie, maar omdat ik oortuig is dat 'n fatsoenlike swart man net so min begerig is om sig in mijn geselskap in te dring als wat ik sou wees om mij in sijn geselskap in dring en “soort bij soort” is die beste, die veiligste en die eerslikste verhouding tussen mense wat so danig van mekaar verskil, nie alleen wat kleur betref, maar ook in baing ander opsigte. Afskeiding is wat ik op aandring. Geen verdrukking, belediging, of minagting nie. Gee, vir mijn part, die kleurling en sijn kinders dieselfde kanse en voorregte als wat ik

Both Reitz and Marais spoke of the American South in glowing terms – Marais even referred to Booker T. Washington and other educated black men like him, who worked to uplift their own people.¹⁵⁵ Malan was, therefore, not alone in tying the poor white problem to South Africa's racial order. Poverty threatened the Victorian Social Darwinist racial hierarchy which South Africa inherited from the nineteenth century. Racial separation was the key to preserving it, and thus the topic became part of the political discourse.

Malan's successful use of *De Burger* with regards to the poor white problem paved the way for his second successful campaign: the Helpmekaar movement. Its establishment and fundraising efforts in the Cape progressed at a snail's pace and was initially confined to small groups of women. Frustrated by their limited means, they approached Malan in December 1915. He heeded their requests, and used *De Burger* to organise a meeting in Cape Town – with the aim of drawing men into the fundraising effort. Malan accepted the role of convenor, but refused to organise the meeting. When the meeting decided to appoint a committee, Willie Hofmeyr and H.S. van Zijl were elected as members, while Malan continued to remain uninvolved. Instead, he made use of *De Burger* to call for funds and cooperation between the various Helpmekaar branches. The movement expanded through the Cape Province, and by June 1916 the Helpmekaar of the Cape Province was formally established. Malan chaired the meeting, but was not elected to the organisation's management. The task was instead given to H.S. van Zijl, who was appointed as its chairman, and Willie Hofmeyr as vice-chairman.¹⁵⁶ Thus, Malan began to establish a pattern that he would perfect as the Nationalist leader: he used his status to draw people to a cause, but did not become involved in the tedious administration. His task was the dissemination of ideals – and to this role he held fast.¹⁵⁷

Malan lent his status to the Helpmekaar in the same way as he had done with *De Burger*. He, along with other prominent personalities such as H.S. van Zijl and even Hertzog on occasion, opened Helpmekaar bazaars and fundraisers. It was an Afrikaner version of celebrity worship for the sake of a good cause.¹⁵⁸

vir mij en mijn kinders verlang, maar afsonderlik. Laat hem klim, als hij dit wens en kan, maar teen 'n ander paal als mijne, en ik sal geen vet aan sij paal smeer nie.'

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 18; J.I. Marais, 'De Arme Blanke en de Naturel - Toespraak', in Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916*, 19.

¹⁵⁶ A. Ehlers, "Die Helpmekaarbeweging in Suid-Afrika: die Storm- en Drangjare, 1915-1920" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1986), 44-50.

¹⁵⁷ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 84.

¹⁵⁸ A. Ehlers, "Die Helpmekaarbeweging in Suid-Afrika: die Storm- en Drangjare, 1915-1920", 109-10.

In August 1917, the movement reached an important turning point that would transform it from a stream to a flood. It was decided to set 10 November 1917 as the official Helpmekaar day in the Cape Province. By this date, a target-amount of money had to be collected. The other provinces quickly followed suit. *De Burger* named it ‘Onze Grote Afrikanerdag’ (Our Great Afrikaner day), and called for renewed efforts to raise funds for the rebels, who were ‘flesh of our flesh’. The floodgates were opened by a letter from J.E. de Villiers from Paarl. He was willing to donate £500 to the Helpmekaar if 500 individuals or organisations were to donate £100 pounds each. The Helpmekaar’s management was taken aback by the offer, with some dismissing such a scheme as far-fetched, but Malan published the letter in *De Burger* on 5 September, and promoted the plan through a stream of articles. As an added incentive, Malan offered that those who raised £100 would have their names published in *De Burger*. The £100 list caught the public’s imagination, and after three weeks, the list contained fifty contributors. Thereafter, it grew by the day. On 29 September, *De Burger* published 100 names – ten days later, the list had grown to 200, and by mid-October, it had doubled to 400. Malan foresaw that the target of 500 would be reached before 10 November, and began writing that the contributions did not need to stop once the original target was reached – by the time the list reached 753, Malan began to call for 1,000 contributors.¹⁵⁹

Helpmekaar-fever also gripped the Malan household. Their house in Tamboerskloof was given the name ‘Helpmekaar’ and one day, while sitting around the table, Malan and Esther announced to the girls that the family also had to raise a £100 – they could not merely preach to others, they had to set an example themselves. The girls were all eager to contribute, and undertook not to eat dessert for a month, to do without meat and butter on certain days of the week, and to donate some of their savings. They decided, however, that their dear Boetie would also have to join in their Helpmekaar-induced diet by sacrificing his beloved hard-boiled egg and moskonfyt at least a few times a week. Malan first had a good laugh before he could say ‘Top!’ (Fine).¹⁶⁰ Thus, their names were added to the list as ‘Dr. D.F. Malan en Huisgenote’ (Dr. D.F. Malan and Home Companions).¹⁶¹

As the list grew, so too did the stream of Malan’s articles – which recorded the growing number of donations throughout the country. The comparisons that he made between the contributions made by the various provinces, districts, and institutions, fuelled the competition to be added to the list. Malan called the phenomenon the work of God. The contributions were to be

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 126-7, 130, 132, 135, 143, 137.

¹⁶⁰ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 27, 31-2.

¹⁶¹ DFM, 1/41/8(8), “Notule van die Derde Kongres van die Helpmekaar Vereniging van die Kaap Provinsie gehou te Victoria West, op Woensdag en Donderdag 22 en 23 Mei 1918”, 11.

regarded as tithes. By 2 November, the list had grown to 1,000 – double the targeted amount, and by 10 November, the rebels' debts had been wiped out and their patrons were euphoric.¹⁶²

The movement gave Malan and the NP an indeterminable amount of political capital. Botha and the SAP regarded it as a nationalist campaign, and condemned it as such – thus cementing the perception that the nationalists and the Helpmekaar were synonymous. The fact that there was a striking correlation between the districts that made the highest contributions to the fund and the constituencies where the NP had gained the most votes in the 1915 election proved that Botha's assumption was correct. Much of the success of the Helpmekaar's campaign, however, was ascribed to Malan's articles in *De Burger* – he was clearly able to shape public opinion and to direct the crusade.¹⁶³ As a result, his power within the Cape Province became formidable.

Malan's career within the NP was somewhat more complicated. He was not blind to his followers' faults, and fully realised that a movement born out of such concentrated anger at the government, and which prided itself on its spontaneity, had its downfalls. Malan was also aggravated by the lack of discipline displayed by the Nationalist rank and file. While it was comprehensible that their feelings would be 'warm' and 'spirited', it was important that they were governed by some modicum of common sense. If not, their nonsensical actions and statements, however enthusiastic they may be, would only serve to revitalise and arm the opposition. The fact that the NP leadership did not provide a united response to the chaos extant among its supporters made matters even worse.¹⁶⁴

It is clear that, by early 1916, Malan did not feel part of the party's inner circles – or at least, he did not believe that there was cohesion between its four federal branches. 'I increasingly feel the need for the different sections of the National Party to understand each other better and to come to an agreement about the manner in which our cause has to be advanced,' he lamented to ex-Pres. Steyn.¹⁶⁵ Steyn, for his part, foresaw another dimension to Malan's feeling of alienation from the rest of the NP. In his attempts to approach his political career on the basis of principles, rather than personalities, Malan's speeches and editorials in *De Burger* had characterised the divisions in South Africa as a clash between two ideologies: imperialism and nationalism, rather than a clash between Botha and Hertzog.

Within the reigning political atmosphere, and even within the party itself, this was out of place. During one of his last visits to Cape Town Steyn spoke to Malan about the matter, in the

¹⁶² A. Ehlers, "Die Helpmekaarbeweging in Suid-Afrika: die Storm- en Drangjare, 1915-1920", 136-8, 143.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 134-5, 145.

¹⁶⁴ VAB, President M.T. Steyn collection, A 156, File 1/1/9, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 15 January 1916.

¹⁶⁵ VAB, President M.T. Steyn collection, A 156, File 1/1/9, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 15 January 1916:

'Ik gevoel al meer de noodzakelykheid dat de verschillende secties van de Nationale Party elkander beter zullen verstaan en tot overeenstemming zullen komen omtrent de wyze waarop onze zaak bevorderd moet worden.'

subtlest of tones. He advised Malan that, when writing articles pertaining to Hertzog, he should place more emphasis on the personality aspect. He did not explain the reason for his advice, but Malan surmised what lay behind it. He suspected that Fremantle was the culprit who, as one of Hertzog's confidantes, had whispered in his ear that Malan – in not following the common approach and by not fighting for Hertzog's person – was trying to establish his own power base, away from Hertzog, with a view to undermining his leadership. Malan followed Steyn's advice and shifted his focus back to personality politics, but he was brimming with the notion that he was being undermined.¹⁶⁶ Steyn died soon after, in November 1916.¹⁶⁷ Malan no longer had an elder statesman to whom he could turn for advice – he now had to determine his own path.

It remained essential that Malan improve his own position by entering Parliament. When, at the end of 1916, a vacancy in the Victoria-West constituency appeared, Malan poured all of his energies into capturing the seat. This time, he focussed on efficient organisation.¹⁶⁸ He was once again drawn into the harsh realities of political mudslinging – when a local SAP supporter accused him of having been a 'handsupper' during the Anglo-Boer War, Malan threatened legal action for defamation of character.¹⁶⁹ At the polls, Malan came within an inch of victory. The SAP candidate claimed a majority of sixteen votes, which Malan contested on the basis of a number of irregularities.¹⁷⁰ Finally, however, he had to concede defeat. Rumours were then passed around that he was tired of politics and wanted to return to the church,¹⁷¹ but Malan did not respond to these rumours – he was as silent in the aftermath of his second defeat as after the first.

Soon after this, Malan received invitations from the Nationalists of Calvinia to stand for election within their constituency, since the local Nationalist candidate, W.P. Louw, had decided to resign from his position.¹⁷² Louw, who was the father of eight children from his first marriage and another thirteen from his second, found it difficult to balance the demands of a parliamentary career with that of his farm and his large household. It was with the support of his voters that he invited Malan to take his place. He invited Malan to his farm, where he was introduced to the entire family. Among them was a girl of thirteen, the young Maria – the fourth child from her father's second marriage. She paid little attention to the stern visitor – but many years later, their paths would cross

¹⁶⁶ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 44.

¹⁶⁷ W.J. de Kock and D.W. Krüger, eds, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel II* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1972), 727.

¹⁶⁸ DFM, 1/1/541, W.A. Hofmeyr – J.E. Louw, 10 January 1917.

¹⁶⁹ DFM, 1/1/547, "Verklarings", Le Roux, Jordaan, Van der Merwe; DFM, 1/1/551, C.J. Strijdom – Strobos & Louw, 8 February 1917.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume III*, 444.

¹⁷² DFM, 1/1/536, Rekwisitie.

again.¹⁷³ Finally, in the by-election that was held in January 1919, Malan won by 488 votes and was able to enter Parliament as the representative of Calvinia. He would remain safely in this seat until 1937.¹⁷⁴

During this time, a new movement was stirring within the NP. The war had presented an irresistible opportunity to the ingenious leader of the NP in the Transvaal, Tielman Roos. He was the leader of the Nationalists in a province where republicanism was not only an integral part of the political culture, but also a living memory. Thus, when the leaders of the United States and Britain declared that they were fighting in the trenches for the restoration of smaller nations' right to self-determination; he seized the gift that was being presented to him. In January 1917, the head-committee of the Transvaal NP issued a manifesto stating that Britain had to include the two former Boer Republics among the small states whose right to independence had been violated. The manifesto was sent to the Governor-General, with the request that it would be submitted to the British government. The latter replied, a year later, that it would only be willing to negotiate with the Union government on such a matter.¹⁷⁵

Other Nationalists, Fremantle among them, protested against the statement, as it had been issued without consultation with the party's Federal Council. Roos was unperturbed, however, and instead began to preach republicanism in public. He and his head-committee in the Transvaal decided to use public speakers and newspapers to propagate their ideal. The NPs Federal Council tried to bring some order to the situation by issuing a manifesto which gave its members guidelines in dealing with the republican issue. In the manifesto, it was communicated that, while the Federal Council supported the Transvalers' statements, republican feelings should be guided along the proper channels in a disciplined fashion, and that any change in the Union of South Africa's constitutional status would only take place along a constitutional route, all the while respecting both sections of the population. Furthermore, in view of the deep divisions within the country, members of the party were requested not to make any active propaganda for a republic as yet.¹⁷⁶ It was, in effect, an attempt to contain a fire without dousing it completely, as the issue could deliver some political capital for the party.¹⁷⁷ Yet, the dust around the 1914 Rebellion had hardly settled, South Africa was at war, and martial law and press censorship were in place. Such statements as made by Roos, however, teetered close to the edge of subversion. It was yet another case of the party's lack of discipline which so aggravated Malan.

¹⁷³ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag* (Cape Town: Malherbe, 1965), 27-8.

¹⁷⁴ R. Weide and S. Weide, *Die Volledige Verkiezingsuitslae van Suid-Afrika 1910-1986* (Pretoria: Private Publication, 1987).

¹⁷⁵ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos – Political Prophet or Opportunist?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1987), 53-5.

¹⁷⁶ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos – Political Prophet or Opportunist?*, 56-7.

¹⁷⁷ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 187-8; J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos - Political Prophet or Opportunist?*, 57.

The instigator, Tielman Roos, also aroused Malan's chagrin. Roos was in every respect his opposite. A pot-bellied populist, Roos shone on the political platform, where he and his audience could feed off each other's energy. Formal politics, in contrast, bored him. In Parliament he played truant, and in later years, as a Cabinet Minister, diligence was not his trademark. His speeches were more comprehensible than those of Hertzog, but they lacked substance. His wit and his ability to play the everyman endeared him to his admirers, and during these early years, he possessed the close bond with Hertzog that Malan lacked.¹⁷⁸ Malan's contempt for Roos would, however, grow with the years. While Malan approached politics as a holy mission, to Roos it was merely a game. As a result, Malan characterised him as 'Keen-witted, jovial and extremely energetic...But loyalty to principles and singleness of purpose was certainly not Tielman's foremost characteristic. You may learn where he started, but you never knew where he would end.'¹⁷⁹

By September 1917 Roos, who seemed to be encouraged rather than deterred by the storm that his republican campaign had evoked in Parliament and the Cape Province – which did not share the republican heritage – decided to propose a resolution calling for the independence of South Africa at the next Transvaal party congress, along with the establishment of an independence society, which would be an autonomous body, removed from the NP.¹⁸⁰ Roos informed Hertzog of his intentions, and asked whether the Free State could take the lead in the matter.¹⁸¹

Malan was about to leave for his party's provincial congress when he learned of Roos's plan, and was sufficiently alarmed to send a panicked telegram to Hertzog: such a proposal should only be made by the party's Federal Council, he insisted. Malan feared that the issue was explosive enough to destroy everything that the Nationalists had built during the past five years – it would strengthen the opposition and tear the party apart. He assured Hertzog that the Cape National Party would oppose the proposal and begged him to reject it too. He argued that a resolution calling for independence contradicted the party's constitution, Hertzog's leadership, the position of the parliamentary party, and the manifesto issued by the Federal Council, which had urged Nationalists not to propagate a republic.¹⁸²

Hertzog's reply was intended to soothe Malan while driving him safely into a corner. He sympathised with conditions in the Cape, where talk of independence could alienate the NPs potential supporters. Thus, he agreed that it would be better for the Cape if the Transvaal refrained

¹⁷⁸ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos – Political Prophet or Opportunist?*, 46-50, 112-3.

¹⁷⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 112-3: 'Skerpsinnig, joviaal en uiters bedrywig...Maar beginselgetrouheid en koersvastheid wat stellig nie Tielman se vernaamste karaktertrek nie. Jy mag te wete kom waar hy begin, maar jy kan nooit weet waar hy gaan eindig nie.'

¹⁸⁰ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos – Political Prophet or Opportunist?*, 57-8.

¹⁸¹ Central Archive Repository (hereafter SAB), Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 84, T. Roos – J.B.M. Hertzog, 26 September 1917.

¹⁸² SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 84, Telegram: D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 29 September 1917.

from passing a resolution calling for independence. Yet, he reminded Malan, the Transvaal had its own unique interests and conditions. The notion of independence could send those in the Cape into a panic, but in the Transvaal, it was an admirable ideal – and propagating it would be to the Transvaal party’s advantage. Thus, Malan would have to convince the Transvaal that the resolution would be to the detriment of the NP as a whole.¹⁸³

Hertzog disagreed with Malan’s assertion that only the Federal Council had the right to pass such a resolution – it could advise on the matter, but it did not have the right to usurp the power of the four Head-Committees, and additionally could not determine which proposals ought to be submitted to a party conference. He also disagreed with Malan’s claim that a call for independence clashed with the party’s constitution.¹⁸⁴ The constitution acknowledged that the relationship between the Union of South Africa and the United Kingdom was based on good faith between the two nations.¹⁸⁵ As far as Hertzog was concerned, no part of the constitution prohibited the party from employing constitutional means to alter the relationship between the two countries. Instead, the party merely acknowledged that it accepted the state of affairs that the outcome of the Anglo-Boer War had imposed on South Africa, and would not try to alter it by any unlawful means. If the constitution was to be interpreted so as to exclude the possibility of independence, the party would soon have no members left.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, as far as Hertzog was concerned, the Federal Council’s manifesto urging members to refrain from propagating a republic was merely a show of courtesy to the English-speaking citizens’ sensitivities at a time of war. The furious response, in which the opposition went so far as to make propaganda against a republic, was proof that their courtesy was not reciprocated, and therefore voided the Nationalists’ good intentions. Thus, the Transvaal could not be blamed for wanting to pass a resolution calling for independence.¹⁸⁷

Hertzog lamented that he found Malan’s allusion to a rupture within the party very regrettable – it would certainly not endear him to their friends across the Vaal River. He believed, in contrast, that matters would not go that far – so long as the different provinces respected each other’s autonomy. There was no compulsion forcing the Cape party to support the Transvaal – but if they did not want to work with the Transvaal, they would have to declare themselves to be opposed to independence as such. Hertzog found it doubtful that Malan would be able to move his party to such lengths – it would certainly be impossible in the Free State – and if the matter were indeed to split the party, the Free State would side with the Transvaal.¹⁸⁸ In effect, Hertzog had thrown down

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Institute for Contemporary History Archives (hereafter INCH), Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/1/1, “De Nationale Partij: Beginsels, Constitutie, Statuten”, 3.

¹⁸⁶ SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 84, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 29 September 1917.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ SAB, Genl. JBM Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 84, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 29 September 1917.

the gauntlet to Malan. He did not force him to support the Transvaal – but insinuated that if he opposed them, he would be out in the cold.

Finally, he advised Malan that if he insisted on dissuading the Transvaal from calling for independence, it would be better not to attack the issue, but rather to point to the implications for the party as a whole.¹⁸⁹ In this, Hertzog showed his support for the principle of independence and also channelled Malan's anger along a more diplomatic route. In so doing, he minimised the probability that the younger politician would instigate a rupture within the party.

Malan, for his part, must have realised that he had to tread carefully – but he refused to give up. In his address to his party conference he spoke of the spirit of independence which was such an integral part of the Afrikaners' value-system – especially as they were the descendants of freedom-loving European nations and since their history reminded them of the former Boer Republics. He called to mind that it was evident that the furnace of war had awoken the yearning for freedom across the British Empire, with many feeling that the younger trees had to learn how to grow without the shadow of the older tree. Every nation wanted its right to existence to be acknowledged, no matter how small it was. It was also the yearning of every true Afrikaner.¹⁹⁰

Malan asserted that the question had to be asked whether or not the time was ripe for independence. To that question, his answer was an unequivocal 'no'. He believed that premature propaganda would harm the case far more than it could hope to benefit it, and that independence had to be based on the will of the majority of the population. In the present conditions, such a majority would be unthinkable.¹⁹¹ Malan had found his position on the tightrope and would hold on to it for the rest of his career. Realising that rejecting the possibility of a republic would be tantamount to committing political suicide; he learned to tout the issue without ever purchasing it himself. He was beginning to play the political game with subtle skill.

By August 1918, however, the tensions between Malan and Fremantle had reached boiling point. Fremantle was furious when his letters to *De Burger*, which objected to Malan's editorials, were not published, and accused Malan of trying to create a 'purified' party in which only Afrikaners would be welcome, and challenged Malan to deny it. He also accused Malan of not reciprocating his frankness – he was desperate for an open and explicit discussion between the two of them.¹⁹² It was clear that Fremantle wanted Malan to reveal the cards that he suspected Malan of concealing. The latter's reserved demeanour must have aggravated Fremantle. The fact that his farm was so far from Cape Town, where Malan was building his powerbase, added to his increasing feelings of frustration, as he wrote to Malan: 'It is such a pity that this place is so far away from

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Notulen van het Derde Kongres van de Nationale Partij van de Kaap Provincie, gehouden te Graaff-Reinet op Dinsdag, 2 Oktober 1917, en volgende dagen", 28.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² DFM, 1/1/571, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 11 August 1918.

you. Otherwise I would have said that it would be best to discuss everything here, with the help of the music of my pigs. Do you realise that you have never been under my roof?¹⁹³

The issues of independence and republicanism added more fuel to the fire. In early August 1918, the NPs Federal Council – of which both Malan and Fremantle were members – met in Bloemfontein. The issues were once again laid on the table, and at last a compromise was reached. It was decided that the party would distinguish between independence as a principle on the one hand, and republicanism as a form of government on the other. It would promote the principle of independence, while leaving the form of government for the majority of the population to decide.¹⁹⁴ Thus, the council declared its unanimous support for Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George's assertion that every nationality possessed the right to self-determination. It demanded that the principle be applied to South Africa as well, in order that the country could claim complete freedom and independence along with the right to determine its form of government. The Federal Council decided that it would request its four branches to seek the implementation of these principles by constitutional means.¹⁹⁵ The party's more nuanced approach was one to which Malan could reconcile himself. It also gave him a clear party-line to toe.

With all the nuances that characterised his thinking, Malan was able to harness the issue of independence to his advantage, and in so doing, he brought the Cape Province into lockstep with the rest of the NP. It was a formidable achievement, and it certainly would have demonstrated his worth to Hertzog.

On the last day of August 1918, Malan gave one of the biggest speeches of his career. It solidified his position as one of the NPs stalwarts. Speaking to a meeting in the town of Malmesbury, Malan tackled the question of South Africa's independence. The announcement of his speech caused jitters among the local Nationalists, especially since the subject drew a large crowd – it was deemed to be a volatile situation. Before Malan delivered his speech, he and his fellow Cape leaders had formulated a resolution that expressed the meeting's support of the ideal of independence. They had to find a prominent local Nationalist to propose the resolution. The first man whom they approached read it, and refused. A second volunteer had to be found. He accepted the task with some apprehension.¹⁹⁶

Malan knew that his speech would come across as a radical change from his previous position, and countered his previous position with the arguments that Hertzog had used in his letter eleven months before: the Nationalists had moderated their wish for independence out of

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*: 'Jammer dat deze plaats zoo ver van u af is. Anders zou ik zeg dat de beste zou wees om alles hier, met de hulp van de muziek van mij varke, te bespreek. Weet u dat u nog nooit onder mij dak gekom het?'

¹⁹⁴ SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 85, J.B.M Hertzog – H.E.S. Fremantle, 20 October 1918.

¹⁹⁵ D.F. Malan, 'Die Onafhanklikheid van Suid-Afrika', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk*, 22.

¹⁹⁶ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 59.

consideration for their English-speaking compatriots. The latter, however, had not returned the courtesy and, in their vehement condemnation of the republican ideal, had displayed an utter disregard for their Afrikaner counterparts' sensitivities. There was therefore no reason for the kid gloves to remain on.¹⁹⁷

The question of independence was extremely contentious in the Cape, where the inhabitants had a long tradition of living under British rule. It was therefore a great achievement that Malan was able to transform the ideal of independence in such a manner that the inhabitants of the Cape could make it their own. The Afrikaners were republicans at heart, Malan told his audience, and this characteristic was not limited to the Northern Afrikaners, but formed part of the Cape heritage as well, as the history of the republics of Swellendam and Graaff-Reinet had demonstrated so clearly. Throughout the nineteenth century, prominent figures in the Cape, including 'Onze' Jan Hofmeyr, foresaw the possibility that South Africa might one day become independent.¹⁹⁸

Malan stressed the moderate aspects of the NPs approach to independence – a stance that was more acceptable to his followers. He did so by highlighting the distinction between the ideal of republicanism on the one hand and the ideal of independence on the other:

...if I say that South Africa has to be a republic, then I mean that it has to adopt a particular form of government. But if I say that it has to be independent, then I mean that it has to be free to determine its own form of government at any given time, be it whether it wants to maintain the British connection, become a free republic, or be an independent kingdom. In other words, independence means that South Africa's fate has to be kept in no one else's hands but those of the South African nation, at all times and without any preconditions. It is not quite correct to speak of republican propaganda. It should be called independence-propaganda, whereby it is meant that freedom of national choice will at all times be the inherent and inalienable right of South Africa.¹⁹⁹

Thus, there was no commitment to a republic, but instead, to the ideal of independence. This was a stance that Malan and Hertzog shared throughout their political careers. Hertzog would also

¹⁹⁷ D.F. Malan, 'Die Onafhanklikheid van Suid-Afrika', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk*, 20-1.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 19-20, 24-5.

¹⁹⁹ D.F. Malan, 'Die Onafhanklikheid van Suid-Afrika', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk*, 22-3: '...as ek sê dat Suid-Afrika 'n republiek moet wees, dan bedoel ek daarmee dat hy 'n sekere bepaalde regeringsvorm moet aanneem. Maar as ek sê dat hy onafhanklik moet wees, dan bedoel ek daarmee dat hy vry moet wees om te eniger tyd sy eie regeringsvorm vas te stel, sy dit dan ook dat hy by die Britse konneksie wil bly of 'n vrye republiek of 'n onafhanklike koninkryk wil word. Onafhanklikheid beteken met ander woorde dat die lot van Suid-Afrika ten volle en te alle tye onvoorwaardelik in die hande sal wees van niemand anders nie as van die volk van Suid-Afrika. Om te praat van republikeinse propaganda is daarom nie heeltemal juis nie. Dit moet heet onafhanklikheidspropaganda, waardeur bedoel word dat die vrye volkskeuse te alle tye die inherente en die onvervreemdbare reg van Suid-Afrika sal wees.'

pursue the ideal of independence, which did not necessarily entail a republican form of government. In later years, Malan would defend it against the more radical elements in his party. Within the context of 1918, however, he took a more nuanced approach – one that the Cape could support without any qualms, and one which would not alienate the English-speaking community nearly as much as the republican extreme.

By the time Malan had tackled the issue of the national flag, he had his audience eating out of his hand. To an English speaker it was a source of pride, and understandably so, he told his listeners, but to an Afrikaner, the Union Jack was a stark reminder of the humiliation of the Anglo-Boer War. Thus, the flag could hardly unite the two sections of the population. Malan's solution was the institution of a new flag which would represent the new independent country. It would be a symbol that would inspire the patriotism of both English speakers and Afrikaners – thus wiping out tension between the two communities and bringing an end to the battle between nationalism and imperialism, he argued.²⁰⁰ Eight years later, the naïveté of his words would become painfully apparent.

In the greatest departure from his earlier assertions, Malan now declared that the time was indeed ripe for South Africa to claim her independence. The First World War was an event of cataclysmic proportions – it initiated a watershed, a moment in which the fates of nations were decided. It also brought the principle of independence to the forefront, and at such a turning point in history, it was a duty to answer to the call of the ideal. A child could not become a man as long as he remained under his parents' roof; a tree could not grow and bear fruit if it was not transplanted from the protective branches of the mother tree. And likewise, no nation could reach its destiny if it was not fully independent.²⁰¹

It was a formidable oration and by the time that Malan had finished speaking, the audience was on its feet. The man who had first refused to propose the resolution in favour of independence tried to regain the honour, but the second man, with the prospect of applause ringing in his ears, refused. The resolution was carried unanimously.²⁰²

From this meeting, Malan carried the momentum forward, with *De Burger* publishing more articles about the issue. This was too much for Fremantle. The issue of independence challenged his adherence to the nationalist cause severely. Suddenly, he was the one who was on the wrong side of the party-line. When the Federal Council drew up a petition to the king requesting South Africa's independence, Fremantle wrote an addendum that was so out of step with the rest of the document that Hertzog sought to exclude it.²⁰³ Hertzog rejected Fremantle's continued attempts to shape the

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 31-2.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 34-6.

²⁰² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 59-60.

²⁰³ DFM, 1/1/572, J.A. Haarhoff – D.F. Malan, 21 August 1918.

party's policy on the matter, but maintained the position to which the Federal Council had agreed.²⁰⁴ Fremantle became more and more frustrated with his position in the party, and proceeded to direct his anger at Malan.

The fact that Malan did not accept his opinions, but maintained his own, infuriated Fremantle. He was indeed being brushed aside, as he had feared, by a leader who determined his course by himself. He visited Cape Town in October 1918 and sent word to Malan that he wanted to see him. When Malan was not to be found at his office, Fremantle's dam wall burst. In his helplessness, there was nothing left but to pull up his typewriter and to write an angry letter to Malan, the tone of hysteria rising higher with each page:

Your editorial today deals with the issue of the British Empire and a republic. I have spoken to you about the matter privately and in the Central Committee. Your article proves that you haven't taken the least notice of the point that I have brought to your attention and which I regard as of the greatest of importance ... When you were appointed chairman of the National Party of the Cape Province, on my suggestion and even against the rules of our party, and I was appointed as vice-chairman, I regarded my position as that of your friend and your primary adviser. Together, we have more experience and knowledge than separately, thus I thought, and I still think, that the compromise was the right one, in the interest of our party, and I am still under the impression that it was the party's wish when our appointments were made. In Middelburg, in 1915, people asked us to shake hands. I not only gave you my hand, but I put my entire heart and brain at your disposal. But from the start you had a completely different attitude. You did not think it worth your while to take my advice into account, or even to understand it, and you made me feel that I was a stranger in your eyes, and therefore unwanted.²⁰⁵

Fremantle continued to hurl one accusation after the other at Malan: Malan had displayed contempt for the English; he was working exclusively for the benefit of the Dutch-speaking section of the population, without any regard for the feelings and interests of the English section, instead of

²⁰⁴ SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 85, J.B.M. Hertzog – H.E.S. Fremantle, 20 October 1918.

²⁰⁵ DFM, 1/1/576, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 3 October 1918: 'Uw inleidingsartikel van dag behandelt die kwesie van die Britse Rijk & een republiek. Ik het privaat met u daarover gepraat & ook in de Sentraal Komitee. Uw artikel wijst dat u nie die minste notitie geneem het van die punt die ik onder uw aandacht gebreng het & die ik van die grootste belang acht... Toe u eerst, op mij voorstel & zelfs tegen die regels van ons partij, aangesteld was als Voorzitter van de Nationale Partij van de Kaapse Provincie, & ik aangesteld was als Vice-voorsitter, het ik mij positive beskouwd als die van uw vriend & eerste raad-gever. Zaaam het ons meer ondervinding & kennis dan apart; dus dacht ik & denk nog, dat die skikking die rechte was in die belang van die partij, & ik verkeer nog onder die indruk dat dit die oormerk was van die partij met onse aanstellinge. Te Middelburg in 1915 het men ons verzoek om aan mekaar die hand te ge. Ik het u nie alleen mij hand gege, maar mij gehele hart & brein tot uwe beskikking gestel. Maar van begin af het u een geeltemaal ander houding geneem. U het dit nie die moeite waard geacht om mij raad in rekening te neem, of zelf te verstaan, & u het mij gelaat voel dat ik in uw oog een vreemdeling & ongewenst is.'

advancing the interests of both groups as members of the broader South African nation. In so doing, Malan was alienating foreigners and English speakers who were willing to cast their lot with South Africa. Those who came near him would experience what he had experienced: ‘a silent: “Out of my sight, I said, Englishman.”’²⁰⁶

Fremantle was convinced that Malan’s ideals with regards to Afrikaner nationalism and the relations between the two sections of the white population were wrong. Instead of drawing a line between Afrikaners and English, a line had to be drawn between those who were loyal to South Africa and those who were not – it had to form the basis for cooperation.²⁰⁷ Fremantle had, in fact, stumbled over the subtle, but crucial difference between Malan’s nationalism and that of Hertzog. Fremantle could identify with Hertzog’s two-stream policy, which made little distinction between Afrikaners and South Africans, but Malan’s narrower, exclusively Afrikaner nationalist, approach did not leave room for an Englishman in the Afrikaner camp. Thus, although his accusations were fuelled by his own frustrated ambitions, they were not too far off the mark.

In Fremantle’s eyes, the situation was made even more intolerable by what he still regarded as Malan’s political inexperience – he was convinced that Malan was a lesser politician than himself. Under Malan’s leadership, and contrary to his advice, the party focussed on intangible ideals, instead of practical politics. He was willing to give Malan the benefit of the doubt – it was possible that he might not have been malicious, only misguided:

With regards to your person, while I feel that you do not understand the English well enough to take their feelings into consideration, and that you still need many more years of political experience and infinitely more knowledge of a range of political matters before you are able to get along without the advice and assistance that you are currently unable to accept, I do not believe that you would do any harm to the English part of the population on purpose.²⁰⁸

Fremantle was angry enough to take the dispute to the rest of the party. Hertzog’s reaction, however, must have been a disappointment. Hertzog made it clear that he would have advised Fremantle against sending such a letter – and added that Fremantle did not have the right to accuse the party of harbouring an ‘anti-English movement.’²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘een stil-zwijgende: “Voort, zeg ik, Engelsman.”’

²⁰⁷ DFM, 1/1/576, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 3 October 1918.

²⁰⁸ DFM, 1/1/576, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 3 October 1918: ‘Wat u persoonlik betref, terwyl ik voel dat u die Engelse nie grondig genoeg verstaan om met hun gevoel rekening te hou, & nog vele jare van politieke ondervinding achter u moet krijg & oneindig meer kennis van versheie politieke sake moet win voor dat u goed klaar kan kom zonder zulke raad & hulp als u nie nu gewillig is om aan te neem, geloof ik daarom nie dat u die Engelse deel van die bevolking opzettelik enig onrecht zou aandoen.’

²⁰⁹ SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 85, J.B.M. Hertzog – H.E.S. Fremantle, 20 October 1918.

Malan, for his part, regarded Fremantle as irrational. In reply, he wrote that no assurance or argument from his side would make any difference. To which Fremantle replied, rather haughtily:

In this case, it is absolutely true. Where there ought to be cooperation and it is lacking from your side, arguments and assurances will not help. I am under the impression that you do not take my opinions with regards to the relations between South Africa and England into account...²¹⁰

In effect, it was Fremantle who had revealed his cards to Malan. Ultimately, this conversation was a struggle for the party's leadership. Fremantle had always regarded Malan as a lightweight and thought that he could steer him in the desired direction. By 1918, however, Malan was skilfully riding the independence-wave, and was confident enough to take an autonomous stance, while ignoring all protestations. Fremantle now learned what Malan's university friends had discovered decades before: once Malan had taken a definite stance, the possibility of changing his opinion was nearly impossible. In this, Malan revealed himself to be an autocrat. Once he had made his decision with regards to a matter, the discussions were at an end.

Malan's Malmesbury speech, and his subsequent dispute with Fremantle, marked the end of his apprenticeship. He had become a fully-fledged politician. He could adapt with regards to a point of policy, turn a hostile audience into his ardent supporters, and defeat his political opponents. It was the end of Malan's beginning, and the beginning of Fremantle's end.

²¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/577, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 19 November 1918: 'In deze geval is het net zoo. Waar er behoort samenwerking te wees & dit ontbreekt aan uw kant, help argument & verzekeringe nie. Ik verkeer onder de indruk dat u mij opinies inzake die houding tussen Zuid-Afrika & Engeland nie in aanmerking neem...'

Chapter 6 – Man of the Party, 1919-1924

In March 1919 D.F. Malan found himself standing on the deck of a ship, watching Table Mountain receding into the distance once more. The wave of enthusiastic support for independence had literally washed him and his companions out to sea.

The First World War had finally ended in November 1918 and a peace conference was called. Louis Botha and Jan Smuts would be South Africa's official representatives. Before leaving for Europe, Botha had issued a final warning against the republican propaganda being trumpeted from Nationalist platforms throughout the country: a republic could only be achieved if both white races were in favour of it – and it was clearly not the case. Pursuing it at the present time would only lead to bloodshed.¹

The Transvaal Nationalists, with Tielman Roos in the forefront, were undeterred. In October 1918, the Transvaal Congress of the NP decided that it had to send a deputation to the peace conference to plead for independence.² It was the same tactic Roos had used earlier to force the entire NP to adopt the ideal of independence, and which had given him room to propagate republicanism. Once again, it had the desired results. In November 1918, Hertzog announced to the press that the NP would hold a joint conference in Bloemfontein that coming January, with the purpose of electing delegates for such a deputation. Both Roos and Hertzog called for funds to be raised for the mission.³ At the same time, however, Roos let it be known that he did not believe that the deputation would achieve any success – but that it was nevertheless important that the NP exploit the opportunity to plead its case.⁴

Thus, the so-called 'Independence congress' took place in Bloemfontein in January 1919. In their respective speeches, Roos and the representative of Natal, A.T. Spies, extolled the virtues of an independent republic, while Malan and Hertzog confined themselves to speaking about sovereign independence. The deputation was duly elected. Hertzog would lead it, while Malan and Advocate F.W. Beyers served as the Cape's representatives. The rest of the deputation consisted of A.D.W. Wolmarans, A.T. Spies, E.G. Jansen, N.C. (Klasie) Havenga, Hjalmar Reitz, and J.H. Gey van Pittius.⁵

¹ D.J.J. Coetzee, 'Die Onafhanklikheidstrewes van die Nasionale Party', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, eds, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I* (Pretoria: Academica, 1975), 332-3.

² *Ibid.*, 333.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 336-7.

Roos, surprisingly, was not amongst them. As the representatives of the four provinces gathered separately to elect their delegates, he shocked his followers by announcing that he was not available, citing both ‘public and private reasons’. These reasons were never published, but it was possible for those in attendance to speculate what the private reasons were: his wife was very ill – and would die sixteen months later.⁶ The public reasons, however, remained a mystery. Both sympathisers and opponents of the NP regarded it as yet another trick played by the master-magician – Roos had pushed the apple cart down the hill, but had no intention of climbing on it himself.⁷

It was obvious to anyone that the deputation’s mission would be a symbolic gesture that would yield no results – which made Roos’s well-timed escape even more poignant. From London, Jan Smuts – who had just completed a pamphlet on the League of Nations – wrote to his wife in amazement:

I see the Nationalists are agitating to send a deputation to the Peace Conference to ask for independence! Of course the Conference will not receive them, nor accept any petition from them, as they have other difficulties to meet. It really looks to me as if the Nationalists are a bit mad, otherwise I cannot conceive how they can act so foolishly.⁸

Malan shared these sentiments wholeheartedly, but there was no escape for him. By this time he had learned that it was important to act as a member of a unified front. He did not expect the deputation to return to South Africa carrying her independence in its pocket – and he knew that the rest of the delegation was aware of this too.⁹ However, the gesture did carry the promise of political capital.

Malan thus arranged to leave his newspaper in the hands of his already-overworked assistant-editor, Henry Fagan. Fagan would also move into his house for the duration of his absence ‘as the sponsor of good order and the safety of the house.’¹⁰ Malan hoped that the change of scenery, and by implication the female treatment that he was accustomed to receiving, would revive Fagan, who was teetering close to the brink of exhaustion.¹¹

⁶ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos - Political Prophet or Opportunist?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1987), 59.

⁷ O. Pirow, *James Barry Munnik Hertzog* (Cape Town: Howard Timmins, n.d.), 80; J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1946), 193.

⁸ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 29-31.

⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my Ervarings op die Pad Daarheen* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 61.

¹⁰ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/602, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 22 April 1919: ‘om vir die goeie orde en die veiligheid van die huis borg te wees.’

¹¹ DFM, 1/1/602, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 22 April 1919.

The deputation thus left South Africa on 4 March 1919.¹² In Oswald Pirow's words, its 'trials and tribulations' in reaching Paris and its return to South Africa 'contained many of the elements of good comic opera'.¹³

They had originally booked passage on a ship belonging to the Union-Castle-Company, which would leave for England in January 1919. Upon their arrival in the harbour, however, the company's agents asked the deputation not to board the ship. Tipped off by the inhabitants of Cape Town, its staff – and in particular its stokers – threatened to go on strike if the ship transported any 'traitors of the British Empire'.¹⁴

To Malan, this would have come as no surprise. Through the course of the war, *De Burger's* offices were stormed numerous times by British loyalists – both local and foreign. The attacks usually coincided with the Allies' setbacks or victories – of which the most notable was Armistice. *De Burger*, as representative of Afrikaner nationalism, was labelled a pro-German 'enemy paper'. Through the course of the war, it had also been forced to weather an advertising-boycott, since firms in Cape Town had feared that any association with *De Burger* could cost them their English-speaking customers.¹⁵ To English speakers, the Afrikaners' opposition to the war necessarily meant that they were pro-German. The same pattern would later be repeated during the Second World War.

For the time being, the NPs delegation was stranded. The Admiral of the British fleet at Simonstown offered them passage on one of the British warships. Upon his invitation, the delegation inspected the ship, where the facilities were described to them in the starkest of terms: they would have to take their own servants, their own cook, their own food, and consume their meals on the deck – which could become rather unpleasant in stormy weather; it was possible that the sailors could strike – which meant that shots might be fired; the ship might also receive orders from its command to sail elsewhere – and the deputation might never reach England. Not wishing to chase their food around the deck, with bullets flying overhead, all the while sailing in the wrong direction, the deputation – suspecting that the Admiral might have gotten cold feet or might have had his knuckles rapped by his superiors – graciously declined the offer.¹⁶

Three weeks later a Dutch cargo ship, the *Bawean* – which sailed between the Dutch East Indies and New York – docked in the harbour. It agreed to take the deputation to New York, from where they could board another ship to Europe. The ship was not equipped to carry passengers, but the crew were willing to sacrifice four of their huts to accommodate the deputation. The deputation,

¹² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 60.

¹³ O. Pirow, *James Barry Munnik Hertzog*, 80.

¹⁴ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 195-6.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 166-7, 171-4.

¹⁶ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 196.

for its part, did need to provide extra food. The result was that they boarded the vessel with two live oxen in tow.¹⁷

As a group of land-based Afrikaners, finding their sea-legs was a challenge. Klasie Havenga became seasick while Camps Bay and Sea Point were still within sight, followed shortly by Jansen and Reitz. Malan was able to last somewhat longer, but did not escape entirely. Soon, however, everyone was able to occupy themselves with reading, learning French, holding meetings, strolling around the deck and trying their hand at tossing pennies into a chalk-drawn circle.¹⁸

The passage to New York took four weeks. When the ship reached the Gulf Stream, it ran into a severe storm that lasted three days. Even the well-weathered captain seemed disconcerted. When the waves began to wash across the deck, and the sailor in the look-out had to remain at his post for an additional three hours as it was too dangerous for him to climb down, two of the deputation's members began debating whether, if the ship were to sink, they would put up a struggle by treading water or just resign themselves to their fate and surrender to the waves.¹⁹ Malan would never forget the sight:

The waves were like mountains. The front end of the ship rises high in the air, and as the wave passes by, it falls into the depths again with all its' weight, and at a speed that would make you think that that in itself is enough to let the ship sink. With its head down, the ship once again pushes into the new, advancing wave.²⁰

When the storm had finally passed, everyone was filled with 'a feeling of relief and gratitude that the Lord had preserved us.'²¹

The sight that met them as they finally sailed into New York's harbour was overwhelming. To Malan, it was the most beautiful harbour he had ever seen, and his awe grew as he saw more of the city. He tried to describe it in a letter to his sister, Essie, but could only explain that everything was in the superlative. He was not acquainted with the word 'skyscraper' and wrote that the 'houses' were enormous – the largest of which was 800 ft high and counted fifty-five floors. The delegation found accommodation on the fourteenth floor of the Pennsylvania Hotel – the most beautiful and comfortable hotel Malan had ever stayed in.²²

¹⁷ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 197.

¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/598, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 31 March 1919.

¹⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 61.

²⁰ DFM, 1/1/598, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 31 March 1919: 'Die golwe was soo's berge. Die voerpunt van die skip rys hoog in die lug en als die golf voorby trek dan val dit weer naar die diepte met zyn volle gewig en met 'n snelheid dat jou laat denk dat dit op zichzelf reeds genoeg is om die skip te laat zink. Zoo met zyn kop naar benede stoot die skip dan weer in die nieuwe aankomende golf.'

²¹ *Ibid.*: 'n gevoel van verlichting en dankbaarheid dat die Heer ons bewaar het.'

²² DFM, 1/1/598a, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 8 April 1919.

The hotel's bustling ground floor reminded Malan of Adderley Street in Cape Town, while the crowded streets were beyond his frame of reference. He was astonished to witness unbroken lines of motor cars as far as his eyes could see.²³

A number of New York's influential residents were interested in meeting the deputation – a gesture which they appreciated. They were, however, overwhelmed by journalists from the city's numerous newspapers who wished to interview them and take their picture. These requests became so incessant that the deputation began to flee from them as politely as they possibly could.²⁴



Figure 10: The Independence Deputation.
D.F. Malan is in the first row, second from the left. To his right is JBM Hertzog.
(D.F. Malan Collection)

Malan and a few others also made use of the opportunity to take the six-hour train journey to Washington D.C. To Malan, this was one of the most beautiful cities he had ever seen. Its broad streets, tasteful houses, abundant trees, and sprawling lawns impressed him. They visited the White House, where they were received by President Wilson's secretary.²⁵

The deputation was fortunate to find passage on another Dutch ship, the *Noordam*, which left New York on 9 April – the captain of the *Bawean* had used his influence to good effect.²⁶ The trip to Europe was far more comfortable than the previous voyage. The sea was calm, and this time they were on a well-equipped passenger ship. In addition, the majority of their fellow-passengers were Americans. Malan enjoyed their company – not only because they belonged to the upper echelons of their nation, but also because they displayed enthusiastic sympathy for the deputation's mission. Malan was convinced that if they were to propagate South Africa's independence to the

²³ DFM, 1/1/598a, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 8 April 1919.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

American public, the majority would support them in their endeavour – especially since they were well-disposed towards Irish nationalism. He noted that the American Congress had recently passed a resolution in favour of Ireland’s independence, with 242 votes in favour and a mere 41 opposed. If the Americans could be equally well-informed about South Africa, they would certainly do the same for them, he believed.²⁷ Of all the Americans on board, one in particular made a profound impression on Malan:

Aboard the *Noordam* there was also a Miss Rankin, the first and only woman thus far to have become a member of the American Congress. It is interesting to note that the motion in favour of Irish independence was, in the first instance, introduced by her. She is exceptionally talented, a good speaker, and does not at all have the peculiarities that one normally associates with a “suffragette”. It seems the women in S.A. may now even get the vote!²⁸

The ship finally docked at Plymouth, where the deputation disembarked. Jansen and Wolmarans remained behind, as the former was slightly ill and needed to rest. It was agreed that the two of them would travel on to Amsterdam, from where they would leave for Paris. The rest of the delegation left for London. Once in London, Malan was able to witness the psychological devastation that the war had wreaked on the British population. He still disliked London – and after the glories of New York, even more so – everything seemed smaller and old-fashioned. The city was crowded as a result of the army’s demobilisation, the café’s were dirty, and the population was down-cast. To Malan it was a sign that the nation’s former grandeur had passed. Others had now taken over the reins of world-leadership – and it was clear that the British knew it too.²⁹

Upon arriving in London, the delegation wrote to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, to request an interview.³⁰ Lloyd George, however, was in Paris.³¹ His officials sent the deputation’s letters on to him, and in return, he sent word that he would receive them as soon as his duties at the Peace Conference allowed him time, but that, for the moment, it was impossible. He did however request a written statement of the deputation’s aim, and the points they wished to discuss.³²

They heeded his request and submitted a written statement, in which they asked for the restitution of the two former Boer Republics, explaining that they were supported in their claim by

²⁷ DFM, 1/1/601, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 22 April 1919.

²⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘Op die “Noordam” was ook Miss Rankin, die eerste en eenigste vrou, die nog tot hiertoe lid was van die Amerikaanse Kongres. ‘t Is interresant om te weet dat die motie ten gunste van die Iersche onafhanklikheid in die eerste instantie voorgesteld geworde is deur haar. Zy is byzonder talentvol, ‘n goeie spreekster en het heelmal nie die eigenaardighede die ‘n mens gewoonlyk verbind met ‘n “suffragette”. Die vroue in Z.A. kan nou maar die stemreg kry!’

²⁹ DFM, 1/1/601, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 22 April 1919.

³⁰ DFM, 1/1/600, Gey van Pittius – Lloyd George, 19 April 1919.

³¹ DFM, 1/1/603, H.C. Thornton – Gey van Pittius, 23 April 1919.

³² DFM, 1/1/607, Fry – Gey van Pittius, 27 April 1919.

the representatives of the Cape and Natal. They noted that they realised that this would mean the fragmentation of the Union, but they were willing to raise the possibility of independence for the Union as a whole. In the case of the entire Union being granted its independence, they stated, the Free State and the Transvaal were willing to relinquish their individual claims. If not, they foresaw the possibility of the Cape and Natal also pursuing the possibility of individual independence, which then created the possibility of the four independent states reconstituting the Union.³³ The delegation's request, in pandering to a range of regionally-based interests, opened so many constitutional cans of worms as to make it nearly impossible to contemplate. They effectively prepared the ground for the rejection that they expected to receive.

After submitting the written statement the deputation decided to leave for Paris, where they hoped to obtain the coveted interview with Lloyd George.³⁴ They arrived in Paris on 1 May, and promptly wrote to Lloyd George that they would meet him at his earliest convenience.³⁵ They decided to deliver the letter to Lloyd George's secretary by hand, who assured them that he would immediately bring it to Lloyd George's attention. However, they received no response.³⁶

In the interim, Hertzog also wrote to Woodrow Wilson to request an interview with him. He wanted to discuss the implications that the League of Nations would have for South Africa's right to self-determination.³⁷ Wilson's secretary, however, informed him that the President's busy schedule made such a meeting impossible.³⁸

The deputation was forced to wait for a response from Lloyd George. Paris was abuzz with people on political missions of various forms, and this afforded them the opportunity to rub shoulders with kindred spirits from other parts of the world. They soon found common cause with a delegation of Irish Americans, a delegation from Ireland itself, as well as an Egyptian delegation. Their relations became so warm that they held a joint dinner party one evening.³⁹ Malan described the group as political beggars at the table of the rich.⁴⁰

The constitution of the proposed League of Nations was also doing the rounds. It filled Malan with suspicion about the possible outcome of the peace negotiations. The document effectively ignored the principle of self-determination, a topic that had been so prevalent during the course of the war. Malan was convinced that it enabled England to block their path to

³³ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 31-43.

³⁴ DFM, 1/1/607, Gey van Pittius – Fry, 29 April 1919.

³⁵ DFM, 1/1/608, Gey van Pittius – Lloyd George, 2 May 1919.

³⁶ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

³⁷ DFM, 1/1/609, J.B.M. Hertzog – Woodrow Wilson, 14 May 1919.

³⁸ DFM, 1/1/610, Close – J.B.M. Hertzog, 16 May 1919.

³⁹ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁴⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 64: The leader of the Egyptian delegation, Saad Zaghloul Pasha, would become a Prime Minister of Egypt. Of the Irish delegation, Seán T. O'Kelly would become the second President of the Irish Republic.

independence, and that, if England could make a convincing case that South Africa's independence was an issue which was limited to her jurisdiction alone, the organisation's Assembly and Council would have to step back. Even if the League were to intervene, Malan surmised, it would only be able to do so after a unanimous decision was reached. It was clear to Malan that England would be able to prevent unanimity by twisting the arms of the smaller powers – such as Belgium, Brazil or Portugal – into supporting her. If South Africa succeeded in gaining her independence along a route that was different to the one that they were pursuing at present, England would be able to draw on the support of the League to crush the aspirations of the smaller nation.⁴¹

Malan did not attach much value to South Africa's membership of the League. As long as her relationship with England was unclear, such membership meant very little. If it meant that South Africa could determine her own foreign policy, subject only to the League, it would indeed represent progress and enhanced status. On the other hand, if their affiliation to the League depended on their subservience to England, they would appear to have more freedom than before while, in fact, their position of enslavement had worsened.⁴²

After nearly three weeks in Paris, the deputation became frustrated. Its secretary, Gey van Pittius, tried to visit Lloyd George's private secretary on two separate occasions to ascertain when they could expect an answer, but was unable to locate him on either of the occasions. This fed a growing suspicion that he was being evaded.⁴³ Gey van Pittius therefore wrote to request a meeting with Lloyd George within the next eight days,⁴⁴ to which there was no acknowledgement. By 2 June, a month after their arrival in Paris, Gey van Pittius was instructed to write a final letter. This time, he notified the Right Honourable Prime Minister that since the interview he had promised to give them was not being granted, the deputation was preparing to leave the city.⁴⁵

With their hopes of meeting Lloyd George disappearing, and the possibility of returning home without any results, the delegation also decided to direct a letter to the Peace Conference. They requested to be informed whether the guiding principle of self-determination was being followed at the conclusion of the war in the same manner as it was during course of the war. On this note, they also wanted to know whether there was any possibility for the representatives of other small nations, whose freedom had been deprived by force of arms, to lay their claims of restitution before the Conference.⁴⁶

There was disagreement within the delegation about this step. Some, Malan among them, believed that they would not receive an answer, while others were encouraged by the Irish

⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*; DFM, 1/1/611, Gey van Pittius – The Secretary to the Rt. Hon. The Prime Minister, 19 May 1919.

⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/611, Gey van Pittius – The Secretary to the Rt. Hon. The Prime Minister, 19 May 1919.

⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/612, Gey van Pittius - The Secretary to the Rt. Hon. The Prime Minister, 2 June 1919.

⁴⁶ DFM, 1/1/613, Gey van Pittius – The Secretary-General of the Peace Conference, 2 June 1919.

precedent. There seemed to be some sympathy for their case – especially from the Americans. If the Irish could be allowed to address the Peace Conference, it would open a door for the South Africans as well.⁴⁷ Ultimately, the hopes of both deputations would be dashed. As Smuts had predicted, the deputation never received a response.⁴⁸

Their threat to Lloyd George, however, did produce the desired results – they received an answer the next day stating that Lloyd George was prepared to meet them two days later, on 5 June.⁴⁹ They met at his office in the Rue Nitot. He entered the room and greeted each by hand – half-stiffly and, in Malan’s estimation, half-nervously. Hertzog was asked to state their case, which he did in a monologue lasting nearly an hour,⁵⁰ interrupted occasionally by Lloyd George asking him to clarify a point. Hertzog’s address consisted nearly entirely of an emotional appeal against the daily humiliations that Afrikaners had to endure at the hands of British supremacists:

They pride themselves always in contra-distinction to us. They say “We are Britishers” ... they look upon themselves as superior and they claim for themselves, only too often, superior privileges and for anything that is British ... When you differ from them on any point of politics of the day you may be absolutely sure that you are immediately decried as pro-German or German agents. If you discuss a question as to the right of self-determination, you are decried from every platform as a traitor, sedition-monger, whatever that may be, and so on.⁵¹

It was a tale of frustration: how British supremacists tried to impose laws and measures passed in England onto South Africa; how their air of superiority bred mutual contempt, the result being a polarised society; that South Africa’s national life could only be restored to health once its English-speaking population forsook its dual loyalties and chose to be faithful to South Africa as their only ‘Fatherland’.⁵² Hertzog’s address revealed the nationalist framework of his argument: that an independent state would foster undivided loyalty and patriotism, and in so doing, create a vigorous society. In addition, he argued that the connection with Britain had to be removed in order for resident English speakers to become good South Africans – and for them to cast their lot in with their Afrikaner compatriots. In effect, he tried to convert Lloyd George to his political philosophy

⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁴⁸ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 62.

⁴⁹ DFM, 1/1/614, Davies – Gey van Pittius, 3 June 1919.

⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁵¹ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 50.

⁵² DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 50-5.

of ‘South Africa First’ and a broad South African nationalism. Finally, Hertzog arrived at the deputation’s request:

...we are here for the independence of the Transvaal and the Free State. But even as far as the whole of South Africa is concerned, it is going to be more to her interest for the future to do that, to restore the independence of the Transvaal and the Free State and eventually to allow the whole of South Africa to be independent. It will be far more to her interest to do this than to allow this feeling of hostility which is now centralised in South Africa to extend gradually until it becomes a general feeling of real bitterness.⁵³

Thus, they were there to ask that the wrong done to the two Boer republics in 1902 be undone. The members of the deputations from the Cape and Natal were merely there to support the former republics in their claim, and to reiterate that they would not stand in their way.⁵⁴

Once Hertzog had finished speaking, Lloyd George had only two significant questions. In the first place, he wanted to know whether the deputation was aware of the sentiments of their country’s African inhabitants, and secondly, he enquired about the number of Afrikaner ministers in the Cabinet.⁵⁵

Hertzog stumbled over the first question: as far as the African population’s views were concerned, he only knew what he read in the press. He had read that there was a meeting in Bloemfontein before the deputation left the country where, according to the newspapers, opposition to the Free State’s restoration was expressed – and he could thus assume that the African population was opposed to independence. Lloyd George informed him that an African delegation from South Africa had arrived in Paris – or was about to arrive.⁵⁶ It is evident that Hertzog was unaware of this – African politics was hardly something that he, or the rest of the delegation, for that matter, had considered.

Lloyd George’s second question forced Hertzog to admit, somewhat resentfully, that *unfortunately* the majority of the Cabinet consisted of Afrikaners. Lloyd George reacted with surprise:

THE PRIME MINISTER: “Why do you say unfortunately? They are very distinguished Dutchmen.”

⁵³ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 55-6.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 56-8.

⁵⁵ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁵⁶ F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Obersholster, eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1977), 94.

GENERAL HERTZOG: “I say unfortunately, because of their politics.”

THE PRIME MINISTER: For three years I was persecuted because I was a pro-Boer, so I know some of these great leaders; General Botha I knew and General Smuts also...⁵⁷

After this display of partisan politics, it was clear that the meeting had entered a cul-de-sac. Lloyd George excused himself – he had postponed a meeting of the Big Four in order to see the delegation, and he could not keep them waiting any longer. He promised to deliver an answer in writing.⁵⁸

Lloyd George kept his promise. Two days later, a verbatim copy of the interview was sent to Gey van Pittius, together with a written response.⁵⁹ In Malan’s estimation, the written response skirted the points that they had raised, and as for the rest, it was a repetition of the superficial statements that were common currency in South Africa.⁶⁰

In reality, Lloyd George dismissed the deputation as being unrepresentative, and made it clear that he had only met with them because General Botha had asked him to do so.⁶¹ He wrote that:

It is quite clear from your statement, as well as from the Resolutions which you have submitted, that you do not claim to speak for the whole people of the Union, nor even for the whole people of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, nor even for the whole of the Dutch-speaking people of those provinces. You represent the wishes of a party whose adherents are almost entirely drawn from the older Dutch-speaking population of South Africa, and whose policy, as a recent vote in the Union Parliament showed, is supported only by the representatives of the National Party. Further, as you informed me, the native population of South Africa is definitely against independence, and wishes to remain within the British Empire.⁶²

Lloyd George emphasised that the deputation had not asked for independence because the British government had interfered in any of South Africa’s internal affairs – they were calling for independence on account of internal squabbles and, by drawing the British government into the

⁵⁷ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 59.

⁵⁸ F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Obersholster eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4*, 95.

⁵⁹ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 73.

⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁶¹ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 74.

⁶² *Ibid.*

fray, they were in fact facilitating outside interference. Lloyd George pointed out that the country's English-speaking inhabitants respected and obeyed the Union government – and voted for its Afrikaner leaders. He argued that they were therefore also entitled to consideration. Lloyd George also reiterated his admiration for Botha and Smuts, as well as their government's endeavour to build a new country in which the memories of war and injustice were swallowed by a larger and more generous South African spirit. He also reminded the deputation that the Union, and its constitution, had come about as a result of the endeavours of the South African population and their elected representatives.⁶³

Lloyd George's statement was a condemnation of the deputation's case. However, he gave them a single paragraph which they were able to subsequently take out of context, and utilise to gain political capital. Lloyd George wrote that:

...the status which South Africa now occupies in the world...is surely no mean one. As one of the Dominions of the British Commonwealth the South African people control their own national destiny in the fullest sense. In regard to the common Imperial concerns they participate in the deliberations which determine Imperial policy on a basis of complete equality.⁶⁴

To Lloyd George, these words were intended to demonstrate that the deputation did not have a case. To the deputation, however, it was a lifeline. They did not return home empty-handed, as they could use the passage as proof that the British government regarded South Africa as a fully independent country⁶⁵ – this could be used as a counter-argument to Smuts's declarations of membership and loyalty to the Empire. The nature of South Africa's position within the British Empire would become a difference of opinion around which more turning points in South Africa's history would be coiled.

There was nothing left for the deputation to do other than return to South Africa. They decided to draft a reply to Lloyd George's arguments, but, since their first priority was to find passage on a ship to South Africa, were unable to do so immediately.⁶⁶

Hertzog left for The Netherlands on the same day as the interview.⁶⁷ Malan and Reitz decided to use the opportunity to visit Provence in the south of France. This trip evolved into a

⁶³ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 74-7.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁶⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 62-3.

⁶⁶ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 84.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

Huguenot pilgrimage to the village of Merindol, as it was from this village that the South African Malans originated. A local café owner acted as their guide to the area, and showed them a nearby ravine where the Huguenot's had hidden from persecution. He told them that the name 'Malan' was one that was still known in the area, although there were no Malans left. Malan and Reitz stayed in the village – which had a population of 840 inhabitants and was still Protestant – while the neighbouring villages were Catholic. They were also received by the mayor, who told them that the name 'Malan' could indeed be found in several of the old archive's documents. They were regaled with the tale of a Huguenot woman with the name Malan, who had been buried alive on account of her faith. After a landslide later uncovered her skeleton, she had been reburied in the local churchyard with the greatest of piety.⁶⁸

Malan was inspired. From Avignon, he sent a postcard to a friend who also carried a Huguenot surname: 'Many greetings from one of the most interesting old cities in Europe. There is much that reminds us of the history of our Huguenot ancestors, and which give us courage for the struggles of today.'⁶⁹

From Provence, Malan and Reitz travelled to Amsterdam, where they were reunited with the rest of the deputation. Here Malan received word that his assistant-editor, Henry Fagan, had received an offer from the University of Stellenbosch to become its first professor of law in the newly-established faculty.⁷⁰ The work at *De Burger* had sufficiently overwhelmed him so as to affect his health: the death of the newspaper's manager, Fred Dormehl – whose life was claimed by the Spanish Influenza epidemic of the previous year – as well as Malan's extended absence, had taken their toll. Insiders noted that Fagan was, in reality, the paper's editor since his appointment.⁷¹ Malan tried to discourage Fagan from leaving the paper – in his estimation, a life in academia, in contrast to a newspaper's office, provided limited opportunities for serving the nation. Nevertheless, he used his time in Amsterdam to interview Dr H.D.J. Bodenstein as Fagan's replacement.⁷² Bodenstein would subsequently be appointed in Fagan's place, but in the face of the extensive workload – largely due to the fact that he also had to do Malan's job – he too only lasted for a short period of time: one year.⁷³

For the remainder of the time in Europe, the deputation devoted all of its energies to finding passage on a ship. The Union Castle liners – as well as the Portuguese ships – were, one after

⁶⁸ DFM, 1/1/617, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 13 June 1919.

⁶⁹ DFM, 1/1/616, D.F. Malan – W. de Villiers, 9 June 1919: 'Baing groete uit een van die interresantse ou stede in Europa. Daar is baing wat ons herinner aan die gesiedenis van ons Hugenote voorouers en wat moed gee vir die stryd van vandaag.'

⁷⁰ DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁷¹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Bepersk, 1990), 724-5.

⁷² DFM, 1/1/618, D.F. Malan – H.A. Fagan, 16 June 1919.

⁷³ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 724-5.

another, fully booked.⁷⁴ Finally, on 21 June, the deputation was able to board two Dutch ships bound for Batavia, as modern-day Jakarta was known at the time. From Batavia, they would be able to board a ship to South Africa. As the ships were both very crowded, the deputation had to be divided – Hertzog, Havenga and Wolmarans travelled on the *Prins der Nederlanden*, which left Amsterdam’s harbour a few hours after the *Oranje*, carrying the rest of the deputation.⁷⁵

The journey became a second adventure. Their fellow passengers were mostly Dutch officials, and their families, bound for their posts in the Dutch East Indies. They were all very ‘sympathetic and pleasant’, which made the journey all the more enjoyable to the delegation. While sailing along the French coast, they received reports that the Germans had signed the peace agreement. The realisation that the war was finally over evoked a general feeling of relief among all those on board.⁷⁶ Once he learned the terms of the peace treaty, however, Malan was convinced that the Peace Conference had been an utter failure. The deputation’s failure was dwarfed by – and in his esteem, was a result of – the greater blunder committed by the victorious nations.⁷⁷

The journey afforded Malan the opportunity to see the coasts of Portugal, Spain and North Africa, for the first time. He was profoundly unimpressed by Lisbon, but found Gibraltar very interesting. The Rock gave him the impression of a bee-hive: hollowed out and stuffed with soldiers and cannons. Crossing the Mediterranean reminded him of St Paul’s passage to Rome. For the same reason, he looked forward to passing through the Suez Canal and crossing the Red Sea, as these parts of the voyage would certainly bring the Israelites of old to mind. As they neared Egypt, the heat became unbearable. They cooled themselves with electric fans, and ate copious amounts of ice cream. At Port Said they disembarked for a few hours, so that they could boast of having been to Egypt. They would have liked to visit Cairo, but were prevented by martial law.⁷⁸

By this time, Malan was well-acquainted with his fellow-Nationalists’ flaws and quirks. Beyers had astonished the rest of the deputation with his vast collection of clothing, to which he added in every city they called. When he utilised the short visit to Port Said to buy yet more clothes, his companions were filled with mirth.⁷⁹

Havenga used the opportunity to post an acknowledgement of receipt of Lloyd George’s reply. As the delegation was not travelling together, their planned rebuttal would have to wait for their arrival in Batavia. This was duly sent – but no response was ever received. In the rebuttal, the

⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/617, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 13 June 1919.

⁷⁵ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 84; DFM, 1/1/619, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 25 June 1919.

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/619, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 25 June 1919.

⁷⁷ Institute for Contemporary History Archives (hereafter INCH), Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partijkongres, Kaap-Provinsie. Notule, Vierde Kongres, gehou te Paarl op 2 Oktober 1919 en volgende dae”, 26.

⁷⁸ DFM, 1/1/619, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 25 June 1919.

⁷⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 35.

deputation rejected Lloyd George's arguments. As far as they were concerned, it was a matter of principle, and a question of right and wrong. The principle of self-determination was of primary importance, while no competing claims or current conditions ought to stand in the way of rectifying the wrong done in 1902. When the Union had been formed, the two former republics had never been given the option of independence, and therefore their membership of the Union did not void their legitimate claims to restoration. Furthermore, restitution was not incompatible with both sections of the white population building a new country together. With regards to the African population, Hertzog denied that he had admitted that the Africans wanted to remain in the British Empire. In fact, he had only recounted what he had read in the papers about a meeting at Bloemfontein – which had implied that the African population of the Orange Free State were opposed to its restoration. Furthermore, the deputation expressed that they could not see why the interests of Africans had any relation to their own claim, especially when the British Empire itself denied Africans the right to self-determination – whom they deemed incapable of governing themselves.⁸⁰

On 26 July – more than a month after their departure from Amsterdam – the travellers arrived in Batavia. Decades later, Malan would entertain his children with tales about their three weeks on the island. Steam rose from the soft volcanic soil, adding to the suffocating heat and intense humidity. It was also a mosquito-paradise, forcing the travellers to sleep under thick mosquito-nets – only to be woken by an iguana-like creature that came into their hut in pursuit of the mosquitoes. The beast's nocturnal visits caused no small amount of panic among the members of the delegation, as they were terrified by its fearsome noises. The local cuisine also posed some hidden dangers. After he had finished a particularly well-cooked plate of meat, Beyers tried to enquire from the waiter what he had eaten. 'Quack, quack, quack?' he asked – to which the waiter shook his head and replied 'Woof woof.'⁸¹

On 16 August, the deputation left for Durban. While they were still at sea, Louis Botha – whose health had been failing him – died.⁸² They arrived on 3 September, after a six month absence from the country. On that same day the new Prime Minister, Jan Smuts, constituted his new Cabinet.⁸³ Their return therefore coincided with the beginning of a new era in South Africa's history.

Their welcome to Natal – traditionally a bastion of English nationalism – was anything but warm. From Durban's harbour, they were taken to Pietermaritzburg, where a reception was to be

⁸⁰ DFM, 1/41/13(76), *Verslag van die Onafhanklikheidsdeputasie aan die Hoofdkomitees van die Nasionale Partij*, September 1919, 84-5.

⁸¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library (hereafter US library), Document centre, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9., Hannes Malan – H.B. Thom, 28 July 1980, 4.

⁸² W.K. Hancock, *Smuts I: The Sanguine Years, 1870 - 1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 556.

⁸³ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 4-5.

given in their honour. When the local inhabitants heard of the event, however, they stormed the hotel armed with eggs and other similar projectiles. The deputation had to be smuggled out through a back door and taken by car to a station a few miles away, where they could board a train.⁸⁴

Once back in Parliament, the Nationalists used their chosen paragraph from Lloyd George's statement to ask Smuts whether or not he agreed that South Africa possessed full independence. His answer was an unambiguous 'no'. As far as Malan was concerned, the constitutional battle line was now clearly demarcated.⁸⁵

Beneath their feet, another movement was stirring. Since 1915 there had been sections within both the NP and the SAP that wanted the two camps to bury the hatchet by reuniting. This was particularly prevalent in the Cape Province⁸⁶ where Malan had preached Afrikaner unity, and made a very public and well-publicised entry into politics in pursuit of this ideal – albeit that he had chosen to achieve this on the basis of the principles propagated by Hertzog's NP.⁸⁷

The leaders of the two parties, however, showed themselves to be somewhat less amenable to the possibility of amalgamation than their followers – but also had to tread carefully so as not to alienate them. This matter was raised at both parties' congresses.⁸⁸ When the Nationalists' independence deputation, and Jan Smuts – now the new leader of the SAP – returned to South Africa during the last quarter of 1919, they found a number of their parties' local branches engaged in a courtship. A few months prior – while the Nationalist leaders were trying to find passage back to South Africa – members from both parties had met in Somerset East with the aim of deliberating on the possibility of reunion without the interference of their leaders. South Africa's constitutional position was the most contentious issue under discussion, but the meeting decided to set that aside for the time being. Instead, it drafted a basis for agreement, and arranged that a second meeting be held in Paarl during the first week of October. The annual congresses of the Cape National Party and the SAP were to be held at the same time, which they felt would facilitate the negotiations.⁸⁹

A month after his return to South Africa, Malan therefore found himself drawn into the reunification movement. At this stage, he expressed his sympathy for the yearnings of those who wished to be reunited, and displayed a willingness to explore the possibilities.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ J. Steinmeyer, *Spykers met Koppe*, 198; D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 63.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ D.J.J. Coetzee, 'Mislukte Herenigingspogings tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Party en die Nasionale Party', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 353-64.

⁸⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 42-3.

⁸⁸ D.J.J. Coetzee, 'Mislukte Herenigingspogings tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Party en die Nasionale Party', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 353-64.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 363-5.

⁹⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Nasionale-Partijkongres, Kaap-Provinsie. Notule, Vierde Kongres, gehou te Paarl op 2 Oktober 1919 en volgende dae", 25.

The representatives from both parties duly met in Paarl on 3 October. The discussions collapsed, however, as a result of the independence-question. The Nationalists wanted the new party to keep the door open to the possibility of full, sovereign independence, and in the interim, wanted the right to make propaganda for a republic, while the SAP members could not reconcile themselves with republican propaganda. In the aftermath of the failed congress, Malan made it clear that he blamed Smuts for the failure of reunification.⁹¹

After his return from Europe, Malan's own position was strengthened. The six months spent with the leading Nationalists from the other four provinces apparently gave him entry to the inner circle – and, it appears, served to weld the Nationalist leadership closely together. At the annual party congress, Malan was re-elected as chairman of the Cape National Party. While his election was unopposed, Fremantle – who had not participated in the tour around the world – however, was not as fortunate. For the first time since 1915, other candidates were nominated for the post of vice-chairman. Fremantle therefore lost his position to F.W. Beyers – who had accompanied Malan to Europe as a member of the independence deputation.⁹² To Malan, it must have been a relief to finally have a vice-chairman who supported him. Fremantle, for his part, struggled to maintain his dignity in the face of defeat. It is evident that Beyers, and the other Afrikaner members of the executive, were loyal to Malan and disliked Fremantle – and Fremantle knew this. Soon after his defeat, Beyers accused him directly of being bitter about losing the leadership of the party to Malan in 1915. In a later letter to Malan, Fremantle sniffed at the allegation. In his selective memory of the events of 1915, it was he who had willingly ceded the leadership to Malan. As far as he was concerned, all of his outbursts in the past had been provoked by others.⁹³ Fremantle's days in politics, however, were numbered.

In December 1919, Smuts announced that a general election would be held on 10 March 1920. In his own estimation, his prospects were gloomy.⁹⁴ He realised that the election was going to be fought on the issue of independence which, by that time, would have been a prominent political debating point for more than two years. Smuts and his followers therefore focussed on the dire consequences that secession would have for the country.⁹⁵ To Smuts, the republican movement was 'a racial anti-British movement.'⁹⁶ The fact that the younger generation seemed to be attracted to nationalism – and what he deemed to be its accompanying vices of

⁹¹ D.J.J. Coetzee, 'Mislukte Herenigingspogings tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Party en die Nasionale Party', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 366-7.

⁹² INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Nasionale-Partijkongres, Kaap-Provinsie. Notule, Vierde Kongres, gehou te Paarl op 2 Oktober 1919 en volgende dae", 8; *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹³ DFM, 1/1/631, H.E.S. Fremantle – D.F. Malan, 12 December 1919.

⁹⁴ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 36.

⁹⁵ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 28.

⁹⁶ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 36.

narrowness and selfishness – was a particularly grave cause for concern.⁹⁷ However, the Nationalists – and in particular Malan and Beyers – outmanoeuvred his assault by preaching moderation. They insisted that independence would come someday, but that they would not force it on the electorate – it would only occur once it was supported by a majority of the white population. The electorate, for its part, was more concerned with bread-and-butter issues: the cost of living had been rising steadily, which did not bode well for the government.⁹⁸

After the disappointment of 1915, the results of the 1920 elections were a triumph for the Nationalists. They emerged as the strongest party, in possession of the greatest number of voters and parliamentary seats. They did not, however, win an outright majority. The NP captured 44 seats, while the SAP got 41. The majority of these seats came from the rural constituencies, where the NP had increased its support at the expense of the SAP. In the cities, the Unionists were cut back to twenty-five seats – they lost most of their constituents to the Labour Party, which was victorious in twenty-one voting districts. Independent candidates were able to secure three seats. Thus, none of the parties secured sufficient seats to form a government – a coalition had to be formed.⁹⁹

Smuts, intent on keeping his position as Prime Minister, so as to prevent ‘a short period of Nat rule with infinite resulting mischief,’¹⁰⁰ approached the other parties with the suggestion that they form a national coalition government, consisting of all four parties. Both the Nationalists and the Labour Party rejected this.¹⁰¹ The Nationalists were now eyeing the prize – which was so near and yet so far. Hertzog wrote to Smuts to propose a coalition between the NP and the SAP that would be limited to cooperation at a parliamentary level – thus, amalgamation between the two parties was out of the question. The two parties’ parliamentary members would elect the Prime Minister – which effectively meant that Hertzog would replace Smuts. Finally, the question of independence took centre stage yet again: the Nationalists undertook not to promote independence in Parliament, as long as the SAP agreed not to discourage it either.¹⁰² Smuts found it unacceptable. It meant that, while the Parliament would of necessity be required to maintain a truce on the issue of secession, the populace would continue to fight amongst themselves. As far as he was concerned, such a situation would inevitably lead to the collapse of the proposed coalition.¹⁰³ At this point, the

⁹⁷ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 10-11.

⁹⁸ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 29.

⁹⁹ D.J.J. Coetzee, ‘Mislukte Herenigingspogings tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Party en die Nasionale Party’, in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 368; W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 30.

¹⁰⁰ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 38.

¹⁰¹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 31.

¹⁰² DFM, 1/1/637, *Samenwerking tussen N.P. en Z.A.P.*, J.B.M. Hertzog – J.C. Smuts, 26 March 1920.

¹⁰³ DFM, 1/1/637, *Samenwerking tussen N.P. en Z.A.P.*, J.C. Smuts – J.B.M. Hertzog, 30 March 1920.

negotiations between the two parties again broke down.¹⁰⁴ It was impossible for the Nationalists to abandon the principle of independence after having conducted such a well-publicised mission to the Peace Conference in pursuit of the ideal. Retracting their earlier stance would shatter their credibility.

The deadlock following the election gave the reunification movement new impetus. In various towns across the country, members of the SAP and NP held joint meetings, in spite of their leaders' disapproval of what they perceived to be a fragmentation of the political landscape. The movement culminated in another joint congress – this time to be held in at Robertson in May 1920. As was the case with the previous congresses, the independence issue was hotly debated. A Reunification Commission was elected to organise an even larger congress, which was to be held in Bloemfontein in September 1920. Predictably, the negotiations between the two parties failed due to the issue of independence. This time it was final.¹⁰⁵ The grass-roots movement was foiled. *De Burger* published the proceedings of the conference and later collated it into a booklet, which it distributed among the populace to demonstrate the irreconcilability between the two political poles.¹⁰⁶

After each side had finished blaming the other for the failure of the endeavour, Smuts entered into an agreement with Sir Thomas Smartt's Unionists, who dissolved their party in order to be absorbed into the SAP. Another general election was called for February 1921. As with the year before, it was fought on the issue of secession. The Nationalists were forced onto their back feet and were reduced to defending themselves against accusations that they wanted to secede from the British Empire. This time, Smuts was victorious.¹⁰⁷ He captured 75 seats, thus giving him the outright majority that he needed to govern. The NP managed to gain an extra seat, thus returning to Parliament with 45 representatives, but the Labour Party lost all of the ground that it had gained during the previous year – it made the mistake of praising the communist experiment in Russia at a time when reports of Bolshevik atrocities were filtering through to the South African public.¹⁰⁸

The failed attempt to amalgamate the parties of Smuts and Hertzog in 1920 would become a poignant contrast to the events that would take place fourteen years later, when it would be Hertzog who was fighting for his political life.

Malan, for his part, was at last rid of a thorn in his side. His nemesis, Fremantle, had finally fallen by the wayside. He could not reconcile himself to the possibility of full secession from

¹⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/637, *Samenwerking tussen N.P. en Z.A.P.*, J.B.M. Hertzog – J.C. Smuts, 31 March 1920; DFM, 1/1/637, *Samenwerking tussen N.P. en Z.A.P.*, J.C. Smuts – J.B.M. Hertzog, 3 April 1920.

¹⁰⁵ D.J.J. Coetzee, 'Mislukte Herenigingspogings tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Party en die Nasionale Party', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 371-3.

¹⁰⁶ DFM, 1/41/1(4), [n.a.], 'Het Herenigingskongres. Oorzaken van de Mislukking van Hereniging' (Cape Town: De Nasionale Pers, 1920).

¹⁰⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 32-4.

¹⁰⁸ O. Pirow, *James Barry Munnik Hertzog*, 82.

Britain, and at the Bloemfontein congress, finally resigned from the party.¹⁰⁹ After corresponding with Smuts, he joined the SAP, hoping to take as many anti-secessionist Nationalists with him as possible.¹¹⁰ Whether he succeeded in doing so was extremely doubtful – his exit was hardly noticed.

Malan now began to cultivate his parliamentary career. His office at *De Burger* was completely abandoned in favour of Parliament. The public, however, remained blissfully unaware that *De Burger's* editorials were now being written by the technical editor, Frederik Rompel – a Dutch Catholic by birth, married to a Jewish wife, who had been assimilated into the Afrikaner community.¹¹¹ Rompel and his colleague, Louis Hiemstra, were appointed to *De Burger* in 1921. Together, they would improve its quality, and transform it from a ‘viewspaper’ into a newspaper.¹¹²

In February 1922, Malan gave notice that he would introduce a private member’s bill, entitled the Local Option Bill.¹¹³ It aimed at providing local areas with the power to control the sale of alcohol by means of a direct ballot vote. Malan was clearly trying to broaden the precedent that he had set while a minister in Montagu, into a countrywide law. There was, however, no room for his bill in the 1922 parliamentary session, and it had to wait until the following year.¹¹⁴

In introducing his bill, Malan made it clear that it was aimed at that particular class of drunkard who would not drink if it were not for the fact that he was constantly tempted. In drafting the bill, Malan employed exactly the same thinking as in his Abel-sermon of 1910. At the time, he had believed that it was the duty of those who had the power to control the availability of alcohol to act as their brothers’ keepers. Limiting the availability of alcohol would also limit the occurrence of drunkenness. Now, in 1923, he tried to introduce a law that would enable voters to hold referendums to determine whether or not liquor licences were to be granted in their municipalities. Malan reiterated the fact that he was the son of a wine farmer and made it clear that he was not advocating prohibition. As in 1910, he studied the crime statistics, and was able to point to the overwhelming amount of cases that were related to drunkenness. He had also studied similar laws in Canada, Australia and Scotland – and chose to base his bill on the example of the latter.¹¹⁵

Malan’s bill did not carry the support of his own party – its nature and content was not political, and transcended party-lines. Thus, some of his most vehement opponents came from the Free State, a Nationalist stronghold, but also the only provinces that had no such liquor regulations in place. In the debate that followed, C.G. Fichardt, the Nationalist MP for Ladybrand, warned that

¹⁰⁹ W.J. de Kock, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek, Deel I*, 316.

¹¹⁰ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 55-6.

¹¹¹ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, ‘n *Outobiografiese Vertelling* (Cape Town en Johannesburg: Tafelberg, 1972), 213-5.

¹¹² C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 726-7.

¹¹³ *The Cape Times*, 18 February 1922.

¹¹⁴ *The Cape Times*, 24 January 1923.

¹¹⁵ *The Cape Times*, 9 February 1923.

Malan's bill would lead to wet and dry spots throughout the country. He foresaw that, for example, the inhabitants of Sea Point would have to go to District Six if they were in need of a drink. The debate failed to reach a conclusion and was postponed for three weeks.¹¹⁶

This gave Malan the opportunity to mobilise his old networks, on whose support he could count with regards to this matter. He wrote to Ds. A.F. Louw – his predecessor in Graaff-Reinet who had accompanied him to Pretoria in the aftermath of the 1914 Rebellion. Louw heeded the call, and drafted three circulars. One was sent to 140 ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape, imploring them to organise public meetings where resolutions in favour of the bill could be passed. These had to be sent to the Premier, the local MP, and to Malan himself. The more resolutions, letters, and telegrams, the better. Louw urged them to act quickly – these appeals had to reach the appropriate people before the bill was debated again.¹¹⁷

Louw also took the matter to the Synod of the Free State Church, which expressed its support for Malan's bill. Along with his colleague, Ds. P.J. Boshoff, Louw wrote a circular letter to the Free State's MPs informing them of the Synod's position, and imploring them to support the bill. It was delivered with a good dose of clerical admonition:

To our amazement and bitter disappointment, we have heard that there are a number of members of the House representing the Free State who are opposed to the Bill. How men, who represent a country such as the Free State, with its history and needs, and who seek the happiness of the country, and to uphold its honour, can refuse the population the right to determine, a) how many drinking places they will tolerate in their area; and b) whether they will prohibit all such places and c) if they will put a stop to the entire liquor trade in their country, is beyond our comprehension.¹¹⁸

In supporting Malan and his bill, the church was at risk of being accused of overstepping its boundaries and meddling in politics. In the parliamentary debate, Fichardt also expressed his resentment at letters that he had received from ministers of the church. He did not object to letters from his constituents, but he believed that ministers ought to limit themselves to influencing public

¹¹⁶ *The Cape Times*, 9 February 1923

¹¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/688, Meyer for A. Louw – D.F. Malan, 6 March 1923; DFM, 1/1/688, "Omsendbrief aan Predikante van die Vrystaat", 21 February 1921.

¹¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/688, "Omsendbrief aan Volksraadslede van die O.V.S.", 23 February 1923: 'Tot onze verbasing en bittere teleurstelling verneem ons nou dat daar 'n aantal lede is van die Raad wat die Vrystaat verteenwoordig en tog teen die Wetsontwerp is. Hoe manne wat 'n land soos die Vrystaat, met sy geskiedenis en behoeftes, verteenwoordig; en die voordeel en geluk van die land soek, sowel as sy eer moet hoog hou, kan weier om die bevolking die reg te gee om te beslis, a) hoeveel drink-plekke hulle in hulle eie omgewing sal gedoog; en b) of hulle al sodanige plekke sal verbied en c) of hulle die hele handel in drank in hulle land sal stop set, gaan bo ons begrip.'

opinion, and should not lobby an MP directly.¹¹⁹ It could indeed be regarded as objectionable that Malan, as a former minister of the church, was now using the church as a lobby group. Louw, however, countered such arguments by stating that:

We do not want to become involved in party-politics. Nevertheless, we do want to give our whole-hearted support to politics that is to the benefit of our country, but if we identify politics that is to the detriment of our nation in its happiness, morality and religion, we will fight it tooth and nail. You would probably despise us if we didn't.¹²⁰

Louw and his colleagues were not deterred by complaints such as those made by Fichardt. Another circular letter was sent to all of the ministers in the Free State Church, which informed them that their local MPs were opposed to the bill. The Free State clerics were asked to use their influence – be it via personal interviews, public meetings, resolutions, letters, and telegrams – to sway the wavering politicians.¹²¹

The politicians, in turn, were rather unhappy about the bombardment. The circular letter that was directed at them led to complaints that the church was trying to threaten them. In response to their complaints, Malan wrote to Louw again and advised him to continue holding public meetings and to publish their resolutions. He was certain that his clerical campaign had placed some of the Free State MPs in an impossible position, as they had expressed their opposition to the bill without taking full cognisance of their constituents' wishes – now that pressure was being brought to bear, they found themselves compromised. He suspected that they would do their best to be absent when the bill came to a vote. Others, Hertzog among them, would not be swayed.¹²² Indeed, Hertzog declared to the House that 'he would fight the measure as hard as if it had been introduced by a member sitting anywhere else in the House instead of the hon. member sitting next to him.'¹²³

In spite of the church's lobbying, Malan's bill was defeated by four votes.¹²⁴ Hertzog insinuated that Malan was being 'used' by prohibitionists, whose true aim was the eradication of the liquor trade in South Africa.¹²⁵ Although the accusation might have been false, it demonstrated the extent to which Malan still stood in an alliance with the church and was attentive to its concerns.

¹¹⁹ *The Cape Times*, 9 February 1923.

¹²⁰ DFM, 1/1/688, "Omsendbrief aan Volksraadslede van die O.V.S.", 23 February 1923: 'Ons wil ons nie met party-politiek inlaat nie, nogtans politiek wat tot voordeel van ons land is wil ons van harte ondersteun, maar politiek waarvan ons sien dat dit ons volk in sy geluk, sede, en godsdiens aantas gaan ons met hand en tand bestry. U sal ons ook seker verag as ons dit nie doen nie.'

¹²¹ DFM, 1/1/688, "Omsendbrief aan Predikante van die O.V.S.", 16 February 1923.

¹²² DFM, 1/1/688a, D.F. Malan – A.F. Louw, 3 March 1923.

¹²³ *The Cape Times*, 2 March 1923.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 March 1923.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 March 1923.

This was not the case with Hertzog. It was clearly in Malan, and not Hertzog, that the proponents of Christian Nationalism found their champion.

On the party-political front, the NP was biding its time. It had been outmanoeuvred by Smuts during the previous election, but this state of affairs could only be temporary. They began to gather possible allies – and in so doing, tried to remedy their unpopularity among the Cape Province’s black and Coloured voters. By the end of 1922, Malan began to blame the SAP for the NPs poor image among black and Coloured voters. He believed that his opponents portrayed the NP as the Africans’ natural enemies – and themselves as their natural friends and protectors – by convincing black and Coloured workers that it was the Dutch who had enslaved them, who had begrudged their emancipation, and who would enslave them again if the Nationalists were to come into power.¹²⁶ Widening its appeal beyond the Afrikaner community and appealing to voters of colour seemed to be one of the party’s priorities as it entered the 1920s. To this end, therefore, the Cape National Party even requested Hertzog to travel to Queenstown in order to address the town’s African voters, as it could determine the outcome of its by-election, which was held in December 1921.¹²⁷ Hertzog, for his part, did make a concerted effort to win the favour of Coloured voters. During the latter half of 1921, he began to make positive statements about Coloureds’ political rights. These seemed promising enough to prompt the Kimberley branch of the African People’s Organisation (APO) – a Coloured political party – to approach Hertzog and Malan with a view to co-operation. Their letters were received warmly, although no notable collaboration resulted from the correspondence. Malan undertook to pursue the matter within the NPs Central Committee.¹²⁸

The outcome of these deliberations became apparent by the end of 1922. Hertzog set a trend by addressing Coloured audiences, and continued to do so in 1923. He asserted that Coloureds had reached such a level of civilisation so as to render them on an equal level with whites – but this was limited to politics and economics, and excluded the social sphere. He was opposed to *sosiale gelykstelling* (social levelling), and believed that Coloureds had to regard themselves as a separate race. He was also adamant that segregation had to be applied to the black population – only thereafter could the extension of the Coloured franchise beyond the Cape Province be contemplated. As long as the black and Coloured franchise remained, in his estimation, an unaddressed issue,

¹²⁶ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Sewende Kongres, gehou op Malmesbury op 31 Oktober en 1, 2 November 1922”, 18.

¹²⁷ SAB, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Box 26, File 85, C.W. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 21 November 1921; C. Marais, ‘n Politieke Magsverskuiwing’ (1921-1924)’, in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 511-2.

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/649, Truter and Du Toit – J.B.M. Hertzog, 29 October 1921; DFM, 1/1/650, J.B.M. Hertzog – Truter and Du Toit, 30 October 1921; DFM, 1/1/651, Van Wijk – D.F. Malan, 31 October 1921; DFM, 1/1/652, Du Toit – D.F. Malan, 4 November 1921; DFM, 1/1/653, D.F. Malan – Du Toit, 16 November 1921.

Hertzog refused to throw his weight behind women's votes, even though he declared that he supported it in principle.¹²⁹

This was a departure from his statements in Parliament in 1922, when women's franchise was debated. At the time, Hertzog had supported the advancement and equality of women, but made it clear that he doubted whether women's franchise as such would be beneficial to the broader community – and bemoaned the loosening of family bonds. In his view, the vote did not accord with a woman's calling as a mother and her position in the family. His concerns with regards to the racial order were the most pressing¹³⁰ – there was a prevalent fear that granting women the vote would lead to universal suffrage, which would enable blacks and Coloureds – and ultimately their wives and daughters – to gain the vote in the three northern provinces.¹³¹

By 1923, the question of the women's franchise became – as *The Cape Times* drily described it – a 'Hardy Political Annual'.¹³² Bills to enfranchise women had been served in 1914, 1920, 1921, and 1922 – along with a number of motions to the same effect.¹³³ In 1923, a bill for women's franchise was served before the House yet again – and was defeated by a single vote. The vote was not strictly divided along party lines – John X. Merriman was jeered as its most vehement opponent – but the Nationalists opposed it en masse. Up to this point, they had perceived the campaign for women's enfranchisement as being dominated by the English-speaking women – who took their inspiration from the women's suffrage movement in England. Afrikaner men and women remained aloof – anything that was 'made in England', and proposed by the SAP, was dismissed out of hand.¹³⁴ The Nationalists were also motivated by a mixture of traditional perceptions of women and fear of the African franchise. While Malan did not participate in the debate, he was among those who voted against the bill¹³⁵ – it could not have improved his popularity within his female-dominated household. While a number of parliamentarians asserted that women did not want the vote, the women in Malan's home did not belong to that category. Indeed, Esther Malan was at the forefront of the Nationalist women's movement, and a strong proponent of women's franchise.¹³⁶ Through the course of 1923, women in the Free State, Natal and the Cape established women's

¹²⁹ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Onderhoud met Kleurlinge: Gelykheid – Aliwal-Noord, 1 Des. 1922', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4: April 1918-Junie 1924* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1977), 234; J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Beleid Teenoor Kleurling en Bantoe – Aliwal-Noord, 1 Des. 1922', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4*, 235; J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak op onthaal deur Kleurlinge: Regte van Kleurlinge – Kimberley, 11 April 1923', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4*, 247-9; J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Nasionalisme en Nasionaliste – Durban, 22 Okt. 1923', in *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 4*, 278.

¹³⁰ *The Cape Times*, 24 March 1922.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 1 February 1923.

¹³² *The Cape Times*, 1 February 1923.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 24 March 1922.

¹³⁴ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 225-6; L. Vincent, 'The Power Behind the Scenes: The Afrikaner Nationalist Women's Parties, 1915-1931', *South African Historical Journal*, 40 (May 1999), 62.

¹³⁵ *The Cape Times*, 1 February 1923.

¹³⁶ DFM, 1/8/1, "Anna Preller, D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 40.

national parties – thus following the example set by the women of the Transvaal, who had formed such a party in the wake of the 1914 Rebellion.¹³⁷

It was impossible for the men to ignore the movement. During the parliamentary debate on the women's franchise, the members of the NP were reminded a number of times that they owed their seats to the organisational and fundraising efforts of the women in their constituencies. The fact that the bill was defeated by a single vote made it apparent that it was only a matter of time.¹³⁸ The Nationalist leaders clearly could not afford to be left behind.

In spite of his enthusiastic endorsement of Jeanette Rankin and the women's franchise while on his way to Europe, Malan was initially at odds with his stepmother about the idea of a women's political party. However, he was eventually won over to her side.¹³⁹ In May 1923, a mere three months after they had defeated the women's enfranchisement bill in Parliament, the leaders of the NP composed a press release, in which they called on women to become politically organised and to join the women's parties in order to strengthen the NP as a whole. Of the eight men, D.F. Malan among them, who signed the document, seven had voted against women's franchise in Parliament. The eighth was not present when the vote was tabled.¹⁴⁰ Now, they declared that:

The time to argue the theoretical question of whether or not women should participate in politics is over as far as we are concerned. Whatever we may feel about this, their active participation in the broader terrain of national life is a worldwide phenomenon that has become a reality even in the most developed nations; we must thus take due account of this in our own country. All the more so because, as the history of South Africa has abundantly shown, women have from the start and throughout the most critical of times, fought closely alongside their men, have suffered and worked for the survival and well-being of our people.¹⁴¹

They urged that women be included in the political debate – especially when there were women's issues on the table. They did not go as far as to endorse women's franchise, and made it

¹³⁷ L. Vincent, 'The Power Behind the Scenes: The Afrikaner Nationalist Women's Parties, 1915-1931', *South African Historical Journal*, 40 (May 1999), 55-6.

¹³⁸ *The Cape Times*, 1 February 1923.

¹³⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 40.

¹⁴⁰ *The Cape Times*, 1 February 1923; DFM, 1/1/691, *Die Vroue Moet Organiseer! Oproep van N.P. Voormanne*, 1 May 1923.

¹⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/691, *Die Vroue Moet Organiseer! Oproep van N.P. Voormanne*, 1 May 1923: 'Die tyd om te redeneer oor die teoretiese kwessie of die vrou aan die politiek moet deelneem of nie, is o.i. verby. Hoe ons ook al daarvoor mag oordeel, is haar aktiewe optrede op die breekterre (sic) terrein van die volkslewe 'n wereldverskynsel (sic), wat sig reeds in die volste mate by die meeste beskaafde volke geopenbaar het, en waarmee ons ook in ons eie land ernstig rekening sal moet hou. Dit is temeer die geval omdat, soos die geskiedenis van Suid Afrika ten oorfloede bewys, die vrou van die aanvang af aan en deur die mees kritieke tydperke heen, in die nouste verband met die man gestry, gely en gewerk het vir die behoud en die welvaart van die volk.'

clear that the debate was still open. As it was an issue that affected women directly, however, they asserted that it was important for them to be politically organised, otherwise a decision might be reached without their input. Even more importantly, the Nationalist leadership was concerned that the franchise might be sprung on women while they were still unorganised and politically ‘underdeveloped’ – they feared that this could do the Nationalist’s cause an infinite amount of harm, especially since they noted that their political opponents had already taken steps to canvass female support. Thus, it was an attempt by the Nationalists to harness the bandwagon while it was still possible, and to mobilise the support of a rising political force. ‘We need the help of the national-minded woman. There is no one better than she to build our young and growing nation on the firm foundations of honesty, justice, loyalty and true patriotism, and to protect it from the dangers that threaten us’, they wrote.¹⁴²

Esther Malan now became the driving force behind the establishment of a women’s party in the Cape. When the Nasionale Vroue Party (NVP) held its first congress in December 1923, her stepson was one of the dignitaries to address the predominantly female audience. Malan praised the contribution that women could make to politics – especially since he believed that they were idealistically orientated. Adam was created out of dust and therefore, material concerns were his main driving forces in the political arena, he proclaimed. However, since women were not created from dust, but from another person, they were not tied to such lowly concerns. They would bring idealism into politics and, in doing so, raise it to a higher level. He was also optimistic about the contribution that women would make towards addressing the poor white problem – especially since they were already at the forefront of the issue.¹⁴³

Esther Malan was elected as the party’s chairperson, and would continue to serve in this capacity until her death.¹⁴⁴ The leadership of both the men and women’s NPs in the Cape therefore now emanated from the same household in Woodside Road, Tamboerskloof.

In this way, the NP began to broaden its base. The crisis that erupted on the Witwatersrand early in 1922, however, brought with it the most lucrative promise of co-operation up to that point. The post-war recession of 1921 had forced mine owners to cut their costs. They had elected to do this by cutting the wages of white workers, and abandoning the Status Quo Agreement of 1918 – a move that would enable them to replace 2,000 white workers with cheaper African labour. In January 1922, however, the white mine workers came out on strike. When, by mid-February, Smuts

¹⁴² DFM, 1/1/691, *Die Vroue Moet Organiseer! Oproep van N.P. Voormanne*, 1 May 1923: ‘ons [het] die hulp nodig van die Nasionaal-gesinde vrou. Niemand kan beter as sy ons jong en groeiende nasie op die vaste fundamente van eerlikheid en troue vaderlandsliefde opbou en dit teen die gevare, wat dreig, beskerm.’

¹⁴³ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 227-8.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 226.

clearly sided with the employers, the strike became violent. By March, the military, including the air force, had been called in to crush the strike.¹⁴⁵

The crisis provided Tielman Roos with the opportunity to shine – appearing before charged crowds had always been his forte. In addressing striking workers, therefore, he was in his element. He politicised the strike, and encouraged the workers – many of whom were newly urbanised Afrikaners – to use the ballot box to banish Smuts from government – all the while skilfully moderating their explosive tempers. When striking workers approached him with a proposal to form a republic, however, Roos retreated, insisting that a republic would only be achieved through constitutional means and not by a revolution.¹⁴⁶

During the course of the strike, Roos and his lieutenants liaised with members of the Labour Party. This action ultimately paved the way for closer cooperation between the two organisations. In Parliament, the two parties joined forces against the government, whom they bombarded with questions about its handling of the strike.¹⁴⁷

Throughout this period, Malan remained in Parliament. Debates on the strike were heated, tempers flared, and insults were shouted. Compared to the volatility of his colleagues and opponents, Malan's statements were delivered in remarkably moderate tones. When police opened fire on strikers in Boksburg, Malan proposed that the House adjourn to discuss the matter, and that an independent inquiry investigate instances where the police were accused of provoking public violence. He was concerned that the public might cease to view the police as guardians of law and order, and instead regard them as instruments of the Chamber of Mines. This suggestion inflamed Smuts, who regarded Malan's request as a demoralising attack on the police. Soon, the members of the House were at each other's throats again – although in a more figurative sense than was the case on the Rand.¹⁴⁸ In the week that followed, while the House remained in turmoil, Malan remained relatively quiet – apart from his continued insistence on an inquiry to investigate violence between the police and the public.¹⁴⁹ When conditions on the Rand deteriorated to the level where martial law was declared, Malan – who was acting Leader of the Opposition in Hertzog's absence – expressed his party's support for the government's right and duty to maintain law and order – but also made it clear that the Opposition would fulfil its role as a watchdog. They would monitor the situation closely, and would blow the whistle if the government abused its power by using the military to suppress the strike instead of restoring and maintaining peace.¹⁵⁰ He proposed that the

¹⁴⁵ J. Krikler, *The Rand Revolt: The 1922 Insurrection and Racial Killing in South Africa* (Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2005), 46-8.

¹⁴⁶ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 85-7; C. Marais, 'Die Nasionale Party en die Staking van 1922 aan die Witwatersrand', in O. Geyser and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 462-3.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 445-8.

¹⁴⁸ *The Cape Times*, 2 March 1922.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7 March 1922; *Ibid.*, 8 March 1922; *Ibid.*, 10 March 1922.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 March 1922.

House adjourn, in sympathy with the suffering on the Rand – but made it clear that this sympathy was not directed at any particular party to the conflict. His motion was defeated.¹⁵¹

On the whole, Malan did not become embroiled in the vicious attacks on Smuts and his government that were wielded by his fellow-Nationalists and the Labour Party. He did, however, briefly lash out when the government accused the NP of being responsible for the troubles on the Rand. He accused Smuts of alliance with the Chamber of Mines, and dismissed his claim that the Nationalists were tied to Bolshevism as yet another attempt to attack his opposition.¹⁵² At the time, however, it was Hertzog and Roos's condemnation of Smuts that had the biggest impact.¹⁵³

Malan's relatively moderate stance could be tied to his ambivalence to the capitalist-socialist dichotomy, a view which he had expressed since his student years. He preferred to view the world as a battle between nationalism and imperialism. Malan was anti-capitalist in the sense that it created class-differentiation – of which he disapproved. However, he was also opposed to socialism, which he regarded as a subversive force that threatened legitimate authority, and which was also disrespectful to cultural and individual uniqueness.

In the aftermath of the Rand Revolt, the NP – and in particular Tielman Roos and his newly-found Labour allies – emerged as the crisis' greatest beneficiaries.¹⁵⁴ In contrast, Smuts's image was shattered.¹⁵⁵ This, however, was not sufficient for Roos – he now began to covet the even greater prize of electoral cooperation with the Labour Party. During the strike, he had declared that the Farmer and the Worker had to unite and act against Smuts and Money – and revelled in his position as the 'uncrowned King' of the united Nationalist-Labour front on the Rand. On his own initiative, Roos now began to meet with prominent Labourites. In so doing, he reprised his role as the NPs chief catalyst by creating a situation in which the leaders of the two parties, Hertzog and Col F.H.P. Creswell, were given no alternative but to meet. Both were rather resentful of the situation which Roos had foisted upon them, but were well-disposed towards each other, with the result that the discussions bore fruit.¹⁵⁶

These negotiations continued throughout the course of 1922. As was the case with the SAP two years before, the issue of secession formed a prominent part of the talks. The members of Creswell's Labour Party were predominantly English-speaking – and were therefore opposed to

¹⁵¹ *The Cape Times*, 15 March 1922.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 13 April 1922.

¹⁵³ C. Marais, 'Die Nasionale Party en die Staking van 1922 aan die Witwatersrand', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 454-7; W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 86-8.

¹⁵⁴ C. Marais, 'Die Nasionale Party en die Staking van 1922 aan die Witwatersrand', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 462-3.

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in C. Marais, 'Die Nasionale Party en die Staking van 1922 aan die Witwatersrand', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 456.

¹⁵⁶ C. Marais, 'Toenadering en Samewerking tussen die Nasionale Party en die Arbeidersparty', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 472-7.

severing the bond between South Africa and Britain. Hertzog soothed their fears by making it clear that the NP's ambiguous programme of principles enshrined the principle of independence, and not any particular form of government. Thus, the party was not committed to republicanism, and since independence could be achieved within the British Empire, it did not necessarily imply secession. He gave the assurance that the NP would abide by its undertaking that any change in South Africa's constitutional position would be subject to a referendum. It was also agreed that neither party would attempt to alter South Africa's Dominion status, and that the two parties would remain independent. While making these promises to the Labourites, Hertzog and Roos had to take pains to assure their voters that the party had not abandoned the Republican ideal.¹⁵⁷

From the Nationalists' point of view, the Labour Party's socialist principles posed the greatest danger of alienating their voters – many of whom were rural landowners, frightened by the prospect of nationalisation. The SAP capitalised on this fear by accusing the NP of colluding with communism and Bolshevism. Creswell tried to alleviate the situation by attempting to persuade his party to drop the socialist clause from its constitution. He failed in the endeavour, but the clause was reformulated so as to weaken the socialist dimension of the party's principles.¹⁵⁸

When he first heard about the possibility of a coalition with the Labourites, Malan was apprehensive. He feared that such a coalition would force the NP to compromise on its principles. This was a step that he refused to take – and he declared so in public. Once the basis of the agreement made it clear that the parties would remain autonomous, however, Malan found it sufficiently agreeable so as to throw his full weight behind it.¹⁵⁹

Malan now became the party-man. He did not find it difficult to reconcile himself to the Labourites' socialism. Although he was never a socialist himself, cooperation with the Labour Party appealed to his anti-capitalist sentiments. Since its inception, his newspaper had published the anti-capitalist cartoons of the famed cartoonist D.C. Boonzaaier, whose Hoggenheimer character – a wealthy Jewish capitalist – was portrayed as the true power behind the scenes. In Boonzaaier's cartoons, Hoggenheimer was set on impoverishing the Afrikaner in his pursuit of money, and in this quest, dictated to Cabinet Ministers and newspaper editors alike. Malan himself regarded these cartoons as extremely valuable.¹⁶⁰

At the Cape National Party's congress of November 1922, Malan delivered a speech that could have been taken from a Boonzaaier cartoon-book, and which would have made any socialist proud. He railed against the SAP-press which, according to him, twisted and misrepresented the NP's principles, and duped the country's English-speaking population 'by means of poisoned

¹⁵⁷ C. Marais, 'Toenadering en Samewerking tussen die Nasionale Party en die Arbeidersparty', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 476.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 483-6.

¹⁵⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 73.

¹⁶⁰ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide*, 350, 363, 367.

sources of information, controlled by monopolistic bloodsuckers.’¹⁶¹ He made it clear that he felt closer to the Labour Party than to the company ‘Smuts-Smartt-Hoggenheimer and Co.’¹⁶² He knew that the feeling was mutual, as Labourites had come to realise that they had more in common with the NP – which was also anti-capitalist – than with the capitalist-controlled SAP, which had shown its true colours during the 1922 strike. Thus, the two parties were united by common interests, and by the nation’s life-or-death battle against ‘capitalistic-monopolistic hegemony.’¹⁶³



Figure 11: HOW IT IS DONE

D.C. Boonzaaier's take on the balance of power:

Genl BOTHA: – (enters while Hoggenheimer is busy dictating to one of his loyal editors): – “What is he going to write this time?”

HOGGIE: – “Well, I am going to tell him to launch another attack against the Dutch Afrikaners. The chaps...”

Genl Botha (interrupting him): – “Oh no, Hoggie, we have to be more careful. If you talk about “Nationalists” instead of “Afrikaners”, everything will be in order.”

(The capitalist press, which is, of course, strongly pro-Botha, has recently been more vehement, arrogant and insulting in their attacks on the Dutch Afrikaners. In order to escape the accusations of sowing racial hatred, the word “Nationalists” is used, instead of “Afrikaners”.)

¹⁶¹ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Sewende Kongres, gehou op Malmesbury op 31 Oktober en 1, 2 November 1922”, 14: ‘deur middel van vergiftigde bronne van informasie, beheers deur monopolistiese bloedsuiers.’

¹⁶² INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Sewende Kongres, gehou op Malmesbury op 31 Oktober en 1, 2 November 1922”, 15: ‘Smuts-Smartt-Hoggenheimer en Ko.’

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

Malan also took the opportunity to address the nature of the coalition. He assured his followers that cooperation between the two parties would remain within the boundaries set by their respective principles. Cooperating with the Labour Party was, in itself, nothing new. Smuts himself had cooperated with the Labourites in the old Transvaal government, and in the aftermath of the 1920 election he had offered the Labour Party a place in the Cabinet. In England, Gladstone had done the same, and in so doing had brought prosperity to the farmers of England and Ireland. Malan likened his own party to that of Gladstone by declaring that ‘The National Party with its aspirations to greater freedom, and its battle against imperialism, militarism and capitalistic-monopolistic domination is in the last instance the great Liberal Party of South Africa.’¹⁶⁴

Malan assured his followers that the NPs agreement with the Labour Party was different to the amalgamation between the SAP and the Unionists. As far as Malan was concerned it – like similar coalitions in England and Canada – was the result of wartime-inebriation. Canada was sensible enough to dismantle its coalition once the war was over. England did the same, after it realised that coalition prevented it from solving any problems in a ‘manly’ fashion, and ‘after Mr Lloyd George, in his attempt to please everybody and to propagate all possible principles in speedy succession, lost his reputation for political honesty and became the greatest and most distrusted political opportunist of the present time.’¹⁶⁵ In the same manner, the SAP coalition contained all of the disadvantages and vices implicit in such an arrangement. It did not represent any particular principles. Instead, it was a political ‘hold all’ that deceived its voters, and succeeded in attracting both mining magnates and ordinary labourers – in effect, ‘the protectionist lamb laid itself down next to the free market-wolf, both hoping to receive the rays emanating from Genl Smuts’s sun.’¹⁶⁶ The SAP had shown itself to be politically immoral – and in old-style *dominee* fashion, Malan expressed the hope that the Ministers’ political immorality was not repeated in their personal lives. Malan condemned the government for failing to protect the country’s fledgling industries or to address the poor white problem. In spite of assertions that South Africa now occupied an elevated position on the international stage, he accused the government of not having done anything to express this new status – such as giving South Africa her own flag or enshrining South African citizenship in the laws of the land.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 15: ‘Die Nasionale Party met sy aspirasies naar groter vryheid en sy stryd teen Imperialisme, militarisme en kapitalistiese-monopolistiese oorheersing is, ten slotte die groot Liberale Party van Suid-Afrika.’

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 16: ‘nadat mnr. Lloyd George in sy poging om alle mense te plesier en alle moontlike beginsels in spoedige opvolging die een na die ander te bepleit, alle reputasie vir politieke eerlikheid verloor het, en geword is die grootste en mees gewantroude politieke deurglipper van die teenswoordige tyd.’

¹⁶⁶ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/2/1, ‘Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Sewende Kongres, gehou op Malmesbury op 31 Oktober en 1, 2 November 1922, 16: ‘Die proteksionistiese lam het eweneens vir hom neergelê naas die vryhandel-wolf, albei natuurlik in die hoop om beskyn te word deur die son van genl. Smuts.’

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

Malan clearly did not regard a national flag or separate South African citizenship as incompatible with the country's position within the British Empire. On this point, he reached out to English speakers by soothing their fears about republicanism. As far as he was concerned, republicanism was merely a bogeyman which the SAP used as an election tactic. The NP was not a republican party – even its mission to the Paris Peace Conference had not been in pursuit of a republic: it was only a plea for the restoration of the former Republics' violated rights, and for the Cape and Natal's right to self-determination. After the Peace Conference had ridden roughshod over the Allied statesmen's earlier promises, the NP had decided to close the chapter on separate independence for each of the four provinces. Instead, it now supported the principle of self-determination for the Union as a whole. This did not, however, entail republicanism, or necessarily imply secession from England.¹⁶⁸

Malan accused the SAP of portraying the NP as an anti-English party. On the contrary, he declared, the NP stood for a set of principles, and not for a particular section of the white population – it acknowledged that English-speaking South Africans had as much claim to South Africa as their Dutch-speaking counterparts. Malan had taken a page from Hertzog's book, as he now promoted the principles of 'South Africa First' and South African nationalism as a solution to the existing tensions between the two language groups.¹⁶⁹

Roos, for his part, was not as diplomatic. It was his penchant for throwing the cat among the pigeons that had originally led to the republican movement, and herded the Nationalists and the Labourites into the same camp. Now, however, he found it difficult to reconcile his two creations. It was easy for Malan to downplay republicanism to a Cape audience. In the Transvaal, however, where republican sentiments ran deep, such a move could prove alienating. Roos and his deputy, P.G.W. Grobler, therefore assured the Transvaal congress that they would continue to propagate a republic outside of Parliament – and Roos even added that the agreement with the Labour Party was limited to the elections, and would end once the polls had closed. This caused consternation in the Labourites' camp, and nearly derailed the negotiations. *De Burger* doused the flames by asserting once more that the NPs programme of principles did not favour any particular form of government. Finally, Creswell stepped in to assure Hertzog that he would not abandon the agreement. There were, however, many who bristled at Roos's lack of discipline.¹⁷⁰ Malan himself could not resist taking a swipe at Roos: at his own party congress he declared that the incident served as a valuable lesson – hopefully 'it will help individual Nationalists to realise the necessity of remaining within

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 14, 17-18.

¹⁷⁰ C. Marais, 'Toenadering en Samewerking tussen die Nasionale Party en die Arbeidersparty', in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 494-6; J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 100.

the boundaries of their own independence-principle.’¹⁷¹ In contrast to Roos’s agitation, Malan now spoke of the day when English speakers will sit side by side with the Afrikaners in the NP.¹⁷²

Malan’s amorous, albeit qualified, advances towards the Labour Party and its English-speaking supporters were tied to one of his most important political driving forces. His anti-capitalism was fuelled by his concern about the poor white problem – and in 1923, this concern was driven to new heights.

In July 1923, a second conference was held on the poor white problem, this time in Bloemfontein. Once again, Malan attended, and delivered a speech. Hertzog did the same.¹⁷³ Malan was furious that, unlike the previous congress in Cradock in 1916, not a single Cabinet Minister was present.¹⁷⁴ The SAPs absence – and the NPs presence – at the conference meant that the latter had effectively positioned itself as the political patron of the poor whites.

In contrast to 1916, Malan’s speech was not based on his own experiences as a minister, but on a careful study of the country’s census-statistics. It revealed a picture which shocked and galvanised him. Malan discovered that the migration of poor whites from the countryside to the cities had turned from a trickle into a flood. Between the years 1911 to 1921, 70,000 whites had left their rural existence behind to find a refuge in the cities. This was a clear sign of economic desperation. He was convinced that this trend had to be countered by: improving conditions in the countryside; eliminating the exploitation of farmers and consumers by middlemen who made undue profits; education for those who were already in the city; and addressing unequal competition between white and black by encouraging employers to employ either one or the other.¹⁷⁵

Other speakers decided that the unfair competition with cheap African labour was at the heart of the matter. Hertzog therefore advocated job reservation for white labourers in factories and mines,¹⁷⁶ while Dr N.J. van der Merwe, who believed that it was impossible to convince employers to sacrifice cheap black labour, advocated industrial segregation on all public works, as well as a

¹⁷¹ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Agste Kongres, gehou op Oudtshoorn op 26, 27 en 28 September 1923”, 21: ‘sal dit help om individuële Nasionaliste die noodsaaklikheid te laat beseef om te bly binne die perke van hul eie onafhanklikheidsbeginsel.’

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁷³ INCH, P30.7, *Gesamentlike Kongres oor die Arme Blanke Vraagstuk in die Raadsaal te Bloemfontein op 4 en 5 Julie 1923* (Bloemfontein: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1923).

¹⁷⁴ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug. ‘n Nabetrugting van die Arm-Blanke-Kongres, 1923, en van die Offisiële Sensusopgawe* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1923), 6; Inwendige Zending Kommissie der Ned. Geref. Kerk, K.P., *Het Arme Blanken Vraagstuk. Verslag van het Kerkelik Kongres, gehouden te Cradock, op 22 en 23 November 1916* (Cape Town: De Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1917).

¹⁷⁵ D.F. Malan, ‘Dorpwaardse Stroom’, in *Gesamentlike Kongres oor die Arme Blanke Vraagstuk in die Raadsaal te Bloemfontein op 4 en 5 Julie 1923* (Bloemfontein: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1923), 6-9.

¹⁷⁶ J.B.M. Hertzog, ‘Wat die Staat kan doen’, in *Gesamentlike Kongres oor die Arme Blanke Vraagstuk in die Raadsaal te Bloemfontein op 4 en 5 Julie 1923*, 4-5.

minimum wage for white workers.¹⁷⁷ After much heated discussion – as the issue of segregation was considered by some to be ‘dangerous’ – the conference decided to adopt the principle of industrial segregation based on territorial segregation, while acknowledging that the African is a human being, created in God’s image, and therefore the maintenance of the European’s rights and privileges may not be conducted in such a manner that wrong may be done to the African.¹⁷⁸ Thus, the pattern of tying race relations to white poverty – which had also marked the Cradock conference in 1916 – was taken further by the Bloemfontein conference of 1923.

A week after the conference ended, Malan began to publish a series of editorials in *De Burger* in which he explored the issues raised by the conference. In his tone, there was a hitherto unknown sense of agitation and even anger. He attacked the government, which did not have any plans to address the poor white problem; farmers’ taxes were rising, whereas mining magnates received tax relief and military assistance to force their labourers to work for less, whilst imported newspaper editors – who were left cold by the poor white problem – advocated immigration. These characters dismissed the poor white issue as exaggerated, and treated poor whites as inferiors.¹⁷⁹ Their haughtiness and lack of compassion filled Malan with a previously unexpressed feeling of suppressed aggression, as he wrote: ‘May the Lord forgive us the urge to take such people by the neck and to push their heads under water for an hour – and damn the consequences.’¹⁸⁰

His own stance had changed since 1916. Where he had previously distinguished between those who were poor as a result of circumstances beyond their control, and those whose position was due to spiritual depravity, he now classified all white poverty as the result of external circumstances, and rejected any arguments that poverty was the result of mental deficiency.¹⁸¹

Malan believed that the conditions which created poverty had to be addressed, and reiterated the arguments that he had articulated at the conference. If equal language rights were implemented in practice, it would create employment for Afrikaners in commerce as well as in the civil service, as bilingualism was the only comparative advantage that the Afrikaner community possessed.¹⁸² Education was an imperative – not only general education, but also vocational, which would prepare young Afrikaners for commerce, industry and agriculture. Improving farmers’ prosperity was also essential, in order to slow the process of urbanisation. Farmers had to learn how to approach farming as a science – those who tried to farm as their ancestors had were the ones who

¹⁷⁷ N.J. van der Merwe, ‘Kompetisie tussen Blank en Gekleurd’ in *Gesamentlike Kongres oor die Arme Blanke Vraagstuk in die Raadsaal te Bloemfontein op 4 en 5 Julie 1923*, 11-15.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁷⁹ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 5-6, 8.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: ‘Die Here vergewe ons die lus om sulke mense by die nek te vat en vir ‘n uur lank kop onder water te druk – laat die gevolge wees wat dit wil.’

¹⁸¹ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 11-12.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 12.

lost their land. Farmers also had to stop their habitual bickering, and learn to work together through cooperations – while the middlemen who made undue profits from their labours, had to be fought. Although Malan decried urbanisation, he did not advocate its complete reversal. Instead, he made a case for the education of urbanised Afrikaners in order that they could play a prominent role within the urban community: only once conditions in the rural areas had improved would it be possible to contemplate returning some of these Afrikaners to the land. Malan believed that the church had an essential role to play in educating Afrikaners in both rural and urban areas. It had to encourage its congregants to read newspapers and relevant periodicals, and bring educational opportunities to their attention.¹⁸³

The Bloemfontein conference's decision to support the principle of segregation gave Malan cause to reflect, and led him to conclude that it was indeed situated at the heart of the matter. In his mind, Afrikaner urbanisation bore parallels to the Great Trek – and he articulated it such terms. However, he believed that the troubles accompanying the new trek were far more acute, and on a much larger scale. The census figures showed that whites and Coloureds were fleeing from the rural areas, only to be replaced by even larger numbers of black Africans. In Malan's opinion, the flight was caused by the lack of fair competition since black people, in their 'uncivilised' or 'half-civilised' state, had very few needs. It was therefore impossible for 'civilised' whites and Coloureds to compete against them. Therefore the whites and Coloureds were faced with the options of either sinking to the same levels of depravity, or taking their wives and children and moving to the cities. The flight from the countryside was therefore a flight away from hunger or barbarity – or both.¹⁸⁴

Even though none of them had been stabbed by an assegai and no shots had been fired, Malan believed that they had to be regarded in the same light as the 'bloodstained refugees in the land of Dingane' of two or three generations ago.¹⁸⁵ However, the same 'black tidal wave' which flooded the countryside had also reached cities, and was 'engulfing' them one by one. Thus, the whites and Coloureds fleeing from the 'advancing assegai-less hordes' reached the cities only to run into another 'black horde'.¹⁸⁶ Here, they could not count on finding employment in the mines – which formed the backbone of the economy – as the mines avoided appointing white workers – and were aided in this by the Smuts-government's gunpowder and lead. Instead, they had to compete for the remaining occupations – for which they were ill-prepared – in an unfamiliar environment and

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 12-15.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5, 7-8.

¹⁸⁵ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 8: 'bloed bevlekte vlugteling in die land van Dingaan.'

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 9: 'As daar één ding is, wat hieruit duidelik blyk, dan is dit die skrikwekkende feit, dat om hul lewensbestaan en hul beskawing te behou die blanke, gevolg deur die kleurling, van die platteland af wegvlug, voortgedrewe deur die aanstormende assegai-lose hordes van naturelle, alleen maar om in die stede op dergelike sterk aangroeiende swarte hordes te stuit.'

with unsympathetic employers who were prejudiced against them. The only solution to the problem was territorial and industrial segregation.¹⁸⁷

Malan was writing these words at a time when the Smuts-government was accusing the National and Labour parties of Bolshevism. Malan dismissed the accusation as an attempt to grasp at straws – but he agreed that Bolshevism was a threat to South Africa, even though its centre was located in Eastern and Central Europe. However, he asserted that it was not to be found within the Nationalist-Labour coalition. Instead, he believed that it was rearing its head within organised black labour.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, the 1920s were the era during which the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) organised rural African labour, and transformed it into a mass movement.¹⁸⁹ Equating organised black labour with Bolshevism was stretching the facts, but nevertheless, farmers found their workers' new-found assertiveness disconcerting.¹⁹⁰ It was the first time that Malan equated African political aspirations with communism, but it would certainly not be the last.

In spite of his anti-capitalism, Malan would not even contemplate the possibility of overthrowing the system and replacing it with socialism. He revered private ownership, and regarded it as an effective bulwark against Bolshevism. As far as he was concerned, it was not in the Afrikaners' nature to till communal soil. In contrast, communal farming was an essential component of African land ownership, and thus, in his esteem, it was Bolshevist.¹⁹¹

Malan identified a strong sense of solidarity and a level of organisation amongst Africans which the poor landless white would not be able to emulate, even if he tried. Malan believed that this solidarity was born out of centuries of tribal life and communal land ownership, which was now being broadened by the mingling of tribes in the newly-conquered countryside and in the mines. Malan regarded this expanded solidarity as a threat, as he took cognisance of the transformation of African society: 'The tribal chief gradually makes way for the political leader and the agitator and the general Natives Congress. The winged feet of the Kaffir [*sic*] messenger and the fires on the hilltop as a means of spreading news, makes way for the Bantu-newspapers.'¹⁹² Malan believed that tribal disputes were a thing of the past as, across the country, Africans were being united by their shared interests – which were decidedly opposed to those of the white man, with whom they had nothing in common.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 9-10, 12.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁸⁹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 313-6.

¹⁹⁰ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 411, 457.

¹⁹¹ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 18.

¹⁹² D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, die stamhoof maak langamerhand plek vir die politieke leier en die agitator en vir die algemene Naturelle-Kongres. Die gevleuelde voet van die Kaffer-bode [*sic*] en die vure op die heuweltoppe om nuus te versprei, maak plek vir die Bantoe-koerante.'

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 19.

Whites had appropriated the right to be landowners, employers, law makers, and rulers – and had reserved certain occupations for themselves. To Malan, it was clear that Africans were intent on breaking this white preserve. Africans in the Cape had learned how to use their voting rights as leverage – and elsewhere, African labourers had acquired the powerful tool of strike action. It was impossible for the rural poor white to do the same – how could he strike against a farmer who was his kinsman? And what use would strike action be as long as there were Africans who were willing to work for lower wages?¹⁹⁴

In Malan's opinion, both white and black were hungry for land – but while landless whites wanted to become landowners, Africans were merely interested in expanding, since the Reserves had become too small to accommodate them. Malan believed that Africans' hunger for land, being communal in nature, was essentially Bolshevist. In contrast, satisfying the land hunger of the whites – who yearned for private ownership – was the best defence against it.¹⁹⁵

Malan fed his argument by exploiting the SAPs arbitrary use of the term 'Bolshevism'. If it was to be taken at face value, he argued, organised rural labour in Western Europe could be deemed Bolshevist as well. In that case, it supported his assertion that organised labour in the countryside was dangerous, while private ownership was its most effective antidote. To support his argument, Malan cited the example of small European countries in both Western and Eastern Europe where the land was divided amongst small peasant farmers. In these countries, such as Denmark, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, Belgium, Romania, Lithuania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Hungary, there was hardly any organised agitation in the countryside because, unlike England, Spain, Italy and Germany, there were no powerful landlords to cause, and to serve as the target for, such demonstrations.¹⁹⁶ The same had to be done in South Africa.

Malan was convinced, however, that the Smuts-government did not have the 'moral courage' or 'patriotism' to implement segregation, since it was dependent on African voters – whose numbers were expanding across the Cape Province. Some feared that the lack of segregation would lead to the extension of the African vote to the other three provinces. As far as Malan was concerned, the matter of the African franchise was not the correct question, as:

...a country's fate is not determined by a piece of paper. It is determined by economic factors and intellectual movements. In the long run, one can hold back Native franchise as much as

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

you can hold back the Zambezi with a broom; or as much as you can pick up the morning sun with your bare hands and fling it across the farthest horizon, back into the night.¹⁹⁷

It was not a matter of political participation – the true issue was the survival of civilisation. In Malan’s view, English speakers had as much a part in this civilisation as Afrikaners, and as much interest in preserving it. Following the example set by Hertzog, Malan added a third group to the civilised camp: the Coloureds. In his estimation, it was impossible – and unnecessary – to apply segregation to the Coloured community. The Coloured had taken on the white civilisation, ‘He wears the same clothes, and eats the same food as the white, and also lives in a brick house, and maintains his church, and sends his children to school,’ Malan wrote.¹⁹⁸ This ‘admirable’ rise to civilisation had rendered the Coloureds unfit for competition against cheap African labour. This meant that the poor white problem was accompanied by a poor Coloured problem. Thus, Malan believed that Coloureds needed the same protective measures as the whites.¹⁹⁹ In a segregated order:

...the coloured population will, because of the fact that they have taken on the white man’s language and civilisation, be treated as Europeans and in the same manner be protected industrially and politically against unfair competition and degradation. Because they have taken on civilisation by themselves, they have ceased to be a threat to the civilisation, and along with the white man, they carry its burden, and will, once they have been properly informed, become its protectors through their votes.²⁰⁰

The fact that Coloured people still needed to be ‘properly informed’ made it clear that Malan still viewed them through a paternalistic lens. His assertion that Coloureds belonged with the white community was a far cry from his subsequent campaign in the 1950s to remove Coloured voting rights. Although Malan’s statements were more subtle and ambiguous than Hertzog’s, it is safe to assume that his welcoming of Coloured people into the ‘civilised’ fold also did not

¹⁹⁷ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 19: ‘Ons antwoord is, dat die lotgevalle van ‘n land nie bepaal word deur ‘n stuk papier nie. Dit word bepaal deur ekonomiese faktore en deur geestelike strominge. Naturelle-stemreg sal op die lange duur net so min kan teengehou word as dat jy die Sambesie kan keer met ‘n besem, of dat jy met jou twee hande die opgaande môreson kan beetpak en oor die verre horison teruggooi in die nag.’

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 20: ‘Hy gaan net so gekleed, en eet dieselfde kos as die blanke, en woon ook in ‘n steen huis, en onderhou ook sy kerk, en laat ook sy kinders skoolgaan.’

¹⁹⁹ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 20.

²⁰⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Agste Kongres, gehou op Oudtshoorn op 26, 27 en 28 September 1923”, 17: ‘sal die kleurling-bevolking as gevolg van die feit dat hul die witman se taal en beskawing aangeneem het, as Europeane moet behandel word, en op dieselfde manier industrieel en politiek beskerm moet word teen onbillike kompetiese en verlaging. Daar hul self die beskawing aangeneem het, het hul opgehou om ‘n bedreiging vir die beskawing te wees, dra hul saam met die witman die laste daarvan, en sal hul al hul behoorlik ingelig is, met hul stemme die beskerming daarvan word.’

necessarily mean that they were automatically members of the Afrikaner nation. Rather, they had become part of a broader concept – that of Western civilisation in general. This implies that Malan’s conception of segregation was based on culture – which happened to coincide with skin colour – rather than skin colour in itself. The fact that Malan now believed that it was possible to climb the ladder of civilisation by means of education was a departure from earlier statements, in which his assumption that whites were inherently superior to people of colour was implicit. It is clear that he still viewed the world in terms of a hierarchy of civilisations, but that the hierarchy was not determined by biological difference, or eugenics, but by education.

In the light of Coloureds’ preferential status Malan, like Hertzog, made it clear that segregation applied only to Africans. He soothed the fears of those who felt that segregation clashed with their Christian conscience. It revealed the extent to which he had absorbed racial segregation into his religious worldview, in the same manner that he had previously made nationalism a God-ordained order:

The segregation of the native, which is absolutely necessary if the white civilisation in South Africa is not to go under in the near future, does not have to offend our Christian feeling, and cannot and may not, in our own interests, mean that we simply chase the Kaffir [*sic*] back behind his own border, and then leave him to his own devices. If it was the Lord’s intention that we never distinguish between people on the basis of race or nationality, then He would have made all people’s skin colour the same and he would have allowed them to complete the Tower of Babel and to keep their single language. But that would have been a monotonous world. If, on the other hand, He intended that race and colour would preclude mutual interest and human rights, then he would have made as many Adams as there are colours. And we are made to understand very clearly that there was only *one* Adam. And if his outward appearance changed at a later stage in order to accord with his inner being, then he was not even a white man.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 20-1: ‘Die segregasie van die naturel, wat absoluut noodsaaklik is as die blanke beskawing in Suid-Afrika nie binne ‘n afsienbare tyd te gronde sal gaan nie, behoef nie stuitend te wees vir ons Christelike gevoel nie, en kan en mag, in ons eie belang, ook nie beteken dat ons net die Kaffer [*sic*] agter sy eie grense terugja, en hom dan daar aan sy eie lot oorlaat nie. As die Here bedoel het dat ons nooit op die basis van ras of nasionaliteit ‘n onderskeid mag maak tussen mens en mens nie, dan sou Hy wel die vel van alle mense van dieselfde kleur gemaak het en Hy sou hul toegelaat het om die toring van Babel klaar te maak en om hul een enkel taal te behou. Maar dit sou dan ‘n eentonige wêreld gewees het. As Hy aan die ander kant weer bedoel het, dat op grond van ras of kleur ons wederkerige belangstelling en menslike regte aan mekaar moet ontsê, dan sou Hy net so veel Adams geskape het as kleure. En ons word tog baie duidelik te verstaan gegee, dat daar maar net één Adam was. En as sy uiterlike in sy later stadium moet geakkordeer het met sy innerlike, dan was hy nie eens ‘n witmens nie.’

Malan believed that, as long as there were whites in South Africa who wanted to remain there, and remain civilised, segregation would be necessary. This was, however, accompanied by the obligation to provide Africans with a proper means of living, to evangelise them, and to assist them to become civilised. According to Malan, this was what the Bible taught – and common sense made it clear that failing to do so would lead to the white civilisation's own demise. However, Africans could not be removed from the white areas while their own areas did not provide them with a decent existence and a future. Therefore, Malan asserted that segregation had to be implemented gradually, and it had to be accompanied by agricultural training in order to make farming in the native Reserves sustainable, as traditional farming practices exhausted the soil. It was thus, according to Malan, little wonder that economic pressure compelled Africans to search for a living elsewhere – and in so doing, to flood the 'white areas'. Countries like Denmark, which possessed limited agricultural land, had succeeded in increasing its output through effective farming methods. Malan was convinced that the same could be done in South Africa, where the Reserves – some of which contained pieces of South Africa's most fertile soil – had the potential to support their populations through better education and methods.²⁰²

African education was a crucial matter in Malan's estimation. For the sake of the whites' preservation, general education and civilisation had to be promoted amongst the Africans. It would generate new occupations in their own areas, and in so doing, create opportunities for educated Africans who, due to the lack thereof, tended to become 'agitators'. Malan believed that it was the lack of education that constituted the greatest threat to white civilisation. As he explained to his readers:

...the Kaffir [*sic*] as such is not the enemy of the white man and his civilisation. Neither is his education and his civilisation the enemy, insofar as he is capable of appropriating it to himself. To the contrary, it is precisely his lack of civilisation, and as a result, his limited needs and his Kaffir [*sic*] wage, that is impoverishing, degrading and driving the white man away.²⁰³

Malan's reasoning was clear. He had drawn his hierarchical perception of race into the economic arena. Africans' 'lack of civilisation' enabled employers to pay them low wages which whites and Coloureds would not accept, since these wages could not sustain their Western lifestyles. Although Malan did not want to do away with the capitalist system that facilitated this abuse, he

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁰³ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 21: 'is die Kaffer [*sic*] as Kaffer [*sic*] nie die vyand van die blanke man en sy beskawing nie. Die vyand is stellig ook nie sy opvoeding en sy beskawing insover as hy in staat was om dit vir hom toe te eien nie. Inteendeel, dis juis sy onbeskaafdheid en gevolglik sy weinige behoeftes en sy Kaffer-loon [*sic*], wat besig is om die blanke te verarm, te verlaag en te verjaag.'

was opposed to its alternative – communal ownership – and wanted to protect the farmers’ right to private property. It was only the abuses of the system that filled him with revulsion. To him, the solution was two-fold: provide landless whites with land; eliminate wage differentiation by removing cheap African labour through segregation. Segregation would then be used to transform African society so as to render low wages unacceptable to Africans as well. Thus, Malan believed, the transformation of society was the most powerful and effective means to eliminate capitalist exploitation. Malan’s scheme to educate and ‘civilise’ Africans until they no longer posed a threat to the whites begs the question whether he regarded segregation as a temporary or a permanent order. Malan did, indeed, draw his argument to its logical conclusion, and in doing so, reiterated his arguments of 1912 and 1916:

There is still a group of whites who seek the welfare of their race in placing obstacles on the Kaffir’s [*sic*] road to education and civilisation. Therefore, they curse the missionary. Such people do not know what they are doing. They cannot hinder it. By thwarting the missionary, they choose – through their deeds – a civilisation for the African that is devoid of God, instead of a civilisation on the basis of Christianity. They fight their peace and curse their own salvation. For if the native lives in his own area as a civilised man, and cannot compete with the white in the labour market or through cheap production in an unfair manner; then he has truly ceased to be a threat to the white. And then, if needs be, the segregation-borders might even be thrown open again, without the white having to move an inch.²⁰⁴

It is significant that Malan was able to contemplate an end to segregation. However, this was so vague and shrouded in the mists of the very distant future as to remove it from reality. It is interesting that Malan, in envisioning the expansion of ‘civilisation’, did not mention the question of miscegenation – it was something that he had condemned in his earlier writings, but at this crucial point, it was absent. It is possible that he assumed that nationalism would maintain the God-ordained boundaries within a civilisation – as the Western civilisation, for example, was composed of various different nationalities. But at this crucial point, blood was not the issue.

Malan did not shy away from the question of whether segregation was practically feasible. As an opposition-politician, it was easy for him to ignore the mundane realities of governance when

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Daar is nog altyd ‘n seksie van blankes, wat die heil van hul ras soek in die lê van struikelblokke in die weg van die onderwys en die beskawing van die Kaffer [*sic*]. En daarom vervloek hul die sendeling. Sulke mense weet nie wat hul doen nie. Verhinder sal hul tog in geen geval nie. En deur die sendeling te dwarsboom, verkies hul met die daad vir die naturel ‘n beskawing sonder God, in plaas van ‘n beskawing op die basis van die Christendom. Hul baklei met hul vrede en vervloek hul eie redding. Want as die naturel in sy eie gebied as ‘n beskaafde man lewe, en nóg in die arbeidsmark nóg deur goedkoop produksie op ‘n onbillike manier met die blanke kan kompeteer, dan, en dan eers, het hy werklik opgehou om vir die blanke ‘n gevaar te wees. En dan kan desnoods selfs die segregasie-grense weer oopgegooi word, sonder dat die blanke dan ‘n duimbreed hoef te wyk.’

devising such a scheme, and to condemn SAP politicians who shrugged their shoulders when faced with the matter. As far as Malan was concerned, it was a matter of principle. There were only two options: segregation on the one hand, or murder and suicide on the other. They had gotten to the point where ‘Bolshevist Kaffir [*sic*] labour’ had brought the whites into a competition with each other: the one was murdering his own race by dismissing the other, or forcing him to live on African wages. This could only lead to the Deluge.²⁰⁵

Malan did not foresee any difficulties with regards to territorial segregation. Industrial segregation could be built on the measures which the Smuts-government had already instituted: there was already a colour bar in the mines, which dictated that black workers were not allowed to rise above a particular level. This colour bar could be expanded across to other industries – and would not be unfair, as long as whites were excluded from similar occupations in the native areas.²⁰⁶ This bears a striking similarity to the later apartheid reasoning behind the homelands. Malan did not dwell on the reality that South Africa’s industries were clustered in the so-called white areas: there were hardly any industries in the native areas from which whites could be excluded in the first place – and furthermore, the number of whites in these areas was so negligible as to render his argument unrealistic.

Malan also approved of the system that dictated that mines needed a licence in order to recruit African labour. He advocated the expansion of both these regulations and the pass system, as determined by the Urban Areas Act of 1923, which Parliament had passed earlier that year. The principles enshrined in this legislation could be expanded so as to ensure that no employer could appoint a black person within the white area without a license.²⁰⁷

The Bloemfontein conference had suggested that a Poor White Council be established. Malan envisioned coordination between such a council and the Natives Council to ensure that only a certain number of black labourers would be allowed within a particular area, after the existing white and Coloured labour had been absorbed and proved insufficient. Thus, while better conditions were being created within the native Reserves, and as white and Coloured labour expanded, black labour could be limited and segregation could be drawn to its completion, step by step.²⁰⁸

The fact that Malan advocated the expansion of existing measures was significant. It was the first time that he had formulated a systematic proposal for segregation, and it was built on an established order. The proposals bore a startling similarity to the subsequent Verwoerdian expansion of influx control – as well as the labour bureaus that his government would create to

²⁰⁵ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*, 21.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ D.F. Malan, *Die Groot Vlug*.

regulate African labour in the 'white areas.'²⁰⁹ There was also a startling continuity between the first poor white conference's plea for *Afskeiding*, the second conference's resolution in favour of segregation, and the formulation of the policy of apartheid. The differences were also notable. Malan's perception of racial order was more fluid in the 1920s, and his willingness to implement the system gradually stood in stark contrast to the urgency which characterised the eventual implementation of apartheid.

At his party conference in September 1923, Malan presented his segregationist scheme to his followers. He warned them that segregation could not be separated from their obligations towards the Africans. It was not a silver bullet that would rid the white population of the dangers encompassed by Africans' lack of civilisation and low standards of living. If it was not accompanied by Christianisation, civilisation, and improved agricultural knowledge and farming methods, 'segregation will simply lead to further exhaustion of the soil and the accumulation of a population without a proper livelihood in the native areas, and it will only serve to create hotbeds of dissatisfaction and unrest on our borders.'²¹⁰

In advocating these measures to 'save' South Africa for the European civilisation, Malan attacked their neglect by Smuts due to his preoccupation with international affairs. In his view, there had to be an end to ideas of saving the world: South Africa had to focus on her own affairs, and avoid involvement in the affairs of other nations. Malan regarded the League of Nations as a dead letter, and was convinced that the isolationist policies of Canada and the United States were the best guarantee for world peace.²¹¹

South Africa therefore had to follow their example – especially since she was faced with the grave difficulty of sectional domestic politics, which were manipulated by the interests of Johannesburg's mining magnates.²¹² 'We will have to appropriate as much of our country's natural wealth for our needs as our patriotism and common sense dictates, and we will have to fight monopolistic parasites and selfish, greedy mining magnates,' Malan told his audience.²¹³ Malan's adherence to the principle of private property seemed to be limited to the countryside – and to that which would be of direct benefit to South Africa. He was vehemently opposed to the idea of mining dividends – which were achieved at the expense of the South African labourer – being paid to

²⁰⁹ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 390; H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 511.

²¹⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Agste Kongres, gehou op Oudtshoorn op 26, 27 en 28 September 1923, 17: 'sal segregasie alleen maar lei tot verdere uitputting van die grond en die ophoping van 'n bevolking sonder 'n behoorlike lewensbestaan in die natuurlike gebiede, en sal dit alleen dien om op ons grense broeineste te skep van ontevredenheid en onrus.'

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

²¹² INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Nasionale-Partykongres, Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Agste Kongres, gehou op Oudtshoorn op 26, 27 en 28 September 1923 ., 18.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 17: 'Ons sal soveel van die natuurlike rykdom van die land vir die land se behoeftes moet toeëien, as ons vaderlandsliefde en ons gesonde verstand dit gebied, en sal monopolistiese parasiete en selfsugtige, gierige mynmagnate moet beveg.'

foreign investors. Instead of allowing its natural wealth to be sent out of the country, the government ought to appropriate it in order to lighten its pressing debts.²¹⁴ Malan could not have spoken more endearing words to his Labour allies. He had positioned himself as the politician for both the farmer and the worker.

By the close of 1923, the NP stood ready to pounce on the Smuts-government. Hertzog wrote to Malan that he foresaw a general election within the coming year. Tensions in European politics concerned him deeply – he was convinced that a new war would break out by the next summer, which would drag South Africa into the whirlwind. It would provide Smuts with the opportunity to call another wartime election, as the inevitable swell in patriotism would be in his favour. The Nationalists therefore had to be careful not to anger pro-British sentiments.²¹⁵ In retrospect, it is clear that the First World War had taught them that such high-spirited emotions could turn the tide of public opinion against them, and in so doing, flood their chances.

They were prepared for the coming battle. By January 1924, the election agreement with the Labour Party was sealed – and would become known as the Pact. The Nationalists' undertaking not to pursue the issue of secession deprived Smuts of one of his most important electoral weapons, while the events which had taken place since the 1921 election had strengthened the Pact's hand. The opportunity to attack came sooner than they might have thought, though, and under entirely different conditions. After the disaster of the Rand Revolt, the SAP began losing one by-election after the other. By April 1924, its majority of twenty-two parliamentary seats had been whittled down to eight. The defeat of a prominent SAP candidate by an unknown Nationalist in the Wakkerstroom by-election on 5 April 1924 was the final straw. Without consulting his Cabinet or caucus – who would afterwards accuse him of impatience – Smuts decided to announce a general election.²¹⁶ 'Challenge of Pact parties had to be accepted and we must now fight it out', he wrote.²¹⁷ He did not, however, have much confidence in his own chances. 'I hope to win; if not, I shall be strong enough to be a check on the wreckers, I hope,' Smuts wrote to a friend.²¹⁸ To another, he confided that he would welcome a spell of political rest – and he could foresee that he would receive it.²¹⁹

Through the course of the next two months, the lethargy of his party-machine saw to it that Smuts's wish for rest was fulfilled. In contrast, his opposition was well-organised, enthusiastic, and hungry for victory. They attacked the government as irresolute and incompetent, and Smuts was

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

²¹⁵ DFM, 1/1/692, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 21 November 1923.

²¹⁶ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 159-60.

²¹⁷ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 224.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 225.

²¹⁹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 161.

once again the man whose ‘footsteps dripped with blood’.²²⁰ Hertzog promised a government that was sympathetic to farmers, and would also provide protection for the industries. He undertook to solve the ‘Native’ issue by protecting ‘civilised’ labour in the white areas while fostering the development of Africans in their ‘own’ areas. Unemployment, and the poor white problem, would be addressed through the establishment of a Department of Labour. Hertzog also advocated a revision of the tax structures, which would eliminate tax breaks for the mines. In future, the mines would make a rightful contribution to the welfare of the country. At the same time, the government would provide them with the same protection as the industries.²²¹

Malan – who had to celebrate his fiftieth birthday in the midst of the election campaign – refuted Smuts’s allegations that the Pact was created in darkness and in shame, and in return attacked his amalgamation with the Unionists. Malan portrayed the Nationalists and the Labourites respectively as the party of the nation and of the ordinary people, while Smuts was painted as the champion of millionaires, who felt nothing for the farmers.²²²

In spite of some initial jostling in a few constituencies, where Nationalist and Labour candidates were less amenable to sacrificing their prospects in favour of the other than was the case with their leaders, the outcome of the election was a triumph for the Pact. The NP won 63 seats, the SAP was reduced to 53, and the Labour Party claimed victory in eighteen constituencies, while there was a single independent candidate who gained enough votes to enter Parliament. The NP had not gained an outright majority by itself, but the Pact-agreement provided it with the coveted prize. Together, the two parties had a majority of twenty-seven.²²³ Smuts, who had failed to be re-elected in his own constituency, wrote to a friend in London that he would finally receive the rest that he had hoped for.²²⁴

On 30 June 1924, the new Prime Minister, J.B.M. Hertzog, named his Cabinet. It contained two Labourites – Col F.H.P. Creswell and T.C. (Tommy) Boydell, while Tielman Roos became the Minister of Justice, and D.F. Malan the Minister of Interior Affairs, Education and Health.²²⁵

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 162.

²²¹ C. Marais, ‘Die Nasionale Party en die 1924-Verkiesing – Die Pakt aan die Bewind’, in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 557.

²²² *Ibid.*, 561-2.

²²³ C. Marais, ‘Die Nasionale Party en die 1924-Verkiesing – Die Pakt aan die Bewind’, in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 567-8, 574, 578.

²²⁴ W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 228.

²²⁵ C. Marais, ‘Die Nasionale Party en die 1924-Verkiesing – Die Pakt aan die Bewind’, in O. Geysers and A.H. Marais, *Die Nasionale Party Deel I*, 581.

Chapter 7 – The Compromising Corridors of Power, 1924-1932

The men who walked to the Prime Minister's office after having been sworn in as Cabinet Ministers were a mixed lot – 'republicans and sinners', as one of those who was present described them. Half of them had been in jail, and none – save for the Prime Minister himself – had any Cabinet experience.¹

As they approached the office, Malan and the other ministers saw Jan Smuts standing there, waiting for them – it was his painful task to personally hand the office over to his successor. He shook hands with a few of them, and hurried out of the room.²

After some informal talk, the new ministers each left for their own departments, where they were introduced to their civil servants.³ It is not known how Malan's first meeting with the bureaucrats played itself out. As a party-leader and newspaper editor, he had remained aloof from administration – his task had always been to indicate a clear direction while leaving the technicalities to the administrators. Such an arrangement would have pleased any bureaucrat – and especially the officials of the Department of Health, who discovered a new champion in their minister. Malan soon gained a reputation in Cabinet as being its best and most tenacious fighter.⁴ Hertzog, the Prime Minister, played the role of the gentleman, exuding a 'natural personal charm and courtesy that made him most endearing.'⁵ Havenga, as Minister of Finance, held the purse strings tightly – and was deemed to be Cabinet's 'permanent Opposition'. He was also Hertzog's right-hand man – the first and last word always rested with the two of them. Convincing Havenga to part with his money was a near-impossibility: his financial regime was one of austerity, and he demanded that ministers cut their budgets down to the bone. Tommy Boydell often told him that 'the difference between him and Micawber was that while Micawber was always waiting for something to turn up, he was always waiting for something to turn down.'⁶ In the face of the challenge presented by Havenga, therefore, Malan's efforts to obtain more money for health services were impressive. On one occasion, Havenga demanded that each minister cut large sums from his financial estimates – the total budget had to be reduced by at least a million pounds. When the ministers returned, each had done as he was ordered – except for Malan. After consulting with the heads of his departments, he concluded that he needed at least £300,000 more than he had originally estimated. As Tommy Boydell described it:

¹ T. Boydell, *My Luck was in* (Cape Town: Stewart Publishers, 1947), 209.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 211.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 212-3.

Havenga nearly took a fit. The rest of us laughed. But Dr. Malan did not laugh. He was angry. Said it was no laughing matter that thousands of mental cases should have no accommodation and thousands of sick people should die because they could not get medical or hospital treatment. He would not take the responsibility of cutting his draft Estimates down by one penny. These services had already been starved too long. There was tremendous leeway to make up. What was spent the previous year mattered nothing. The only thing that mattered was how much was now needed.⁷

Malan won that round – his was the only budget that was not cut. When the others joked that in the future they would also fight reductions by increasing their estimates, Havenga shook his head and warned them not to try.⁸

It was his position as the Minister of the Interior, however, that gave Malan the opportunity to pursue his nationalist priorities – which in turn gave rise to his greatest ministerial battles. Where his focus of the previous few years had been on tangible issues – such as the poor white problem and segregation – he could now shift his attention back to the more intangible matter of building a South African nation. The material issues were now mostly the domain of his Cabinet colleagues and, as he triumphantly told his followers, the poor white issue, and therefore the preservation of the white race, was finally a government priority: the Pact-government would endeavour to open the doors for the ‘civilised’ labourers who had previously been pushed out by ‘uncivilised’ labourers and their ‘uncivilised’ wages; they would also focus on improving conditions in the Reserves in order that African migration would naturally slow to a halt; as Minister of Education, Malan would see to it that industrial, agricultural and technical education would be encouraged in order that white workers would be worth their wages, and not merely be paid a bonus by the virtue of their skin-colour; and industries would be nurtured and protected in order to create employment.⁹

But, Malan warned – as he shifted back into the manner of a minister of the church – a nation, like an individual, could not live from bread alone. In order to build a strong and a united nation, and for South Africa to take its place among the other nations, the nation had to possess self-awareness. Malan believed that South Africa had to claim her nationhood, as well as her equality with England and the other dominions – but that this was impossible as long as South African citizenship was not even a legal concept, and the country did not have its own flag. Malan assured

⁷ T. Boydell, *My Luck was in*, 214.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Negende Kongres gehou op De Aar op 7 tot 10 Oktober, 1924”, 28.

any possible sceptics that one could possess these symbols while remaining a British subject – Canada and Ireland had done so. Thus, within months of taking office, he announced that he would introduce legislation to address what he deemed to be an urgent need: providing South Africans with a defined nationality and a national flag.¹⁰ The two went hand-in-hand as, in his opinion, one first had to establish a nationality before one could establish a national flag to symbolise it.¹¹

Malan was on a mission to provide South Africa with all of the patriotic paraphernalia revered by nationalists around the world. In making the case for a national flag, he proved his colours as a true nationalist of the nineteenth century mould. At the height of the flag crisis that would ensue, he declared that:

A flag is not a mere cloth; a flag symbolizes national existence, a flag is a living thing; it is the repository of national sentiment. A flag is able to create the greatest enthusiasm; a flag is able to move to tears; a flag can stir the deepest springs of action, and it can inspire to the noblest efforts. For a flag a nation can live; for it it can fight and it can die.¹²

Malan was initially optimistic about his chances of success. He had first mooted the idea of a national flag in public during his much-acclaimed Malmesbury speech in 1918, which had drawn an overwhelmingly positive response. When the NP and SAP had discussed the possibility of reunification in 1920, the idea of a new flag had been debated – and well-received by the SAP, despite the fact that it balked at the idea of independence from the British Empire.¹³ Malan did not realise that Smuts's amenability to a new flag in 1920 could be ascribed to the moderate stance that the leaders on both sides – Malan included – had taken in order to prevent alienating their followers. Now, in 1924, Smuts's position had changed dramatically as he needed to consider the sentiments of a considerable component of former Unionists in his party – which had not been a factor during the Reunification movement.¹⁴ Instead of taking cognisance of these realities, Malan assumed that his campaign would be a popular one – especially after a moderate English newspaper, *The Sunday Times*, had held a competition for flag designs.¹⁵

As Parliament opened for the 1925 session, Malan therefore had every reason to be confident: he now had it within his power to transform his nationalist mission into legislation. On 18 February, he introduced a motion that a committee be appointed to investigate the desirability of

¹⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Negende Kongres gehou op De Aar op 7 tot 10 Oktober, 1924”, 25-9.

¹¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 103-4.

¹² *Hansard*, 25 May 1926, Col. 4030.

¹³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 103.

¹⁴ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980), 3-4, 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

the 'Afrikaans version of Dutch' replacing Dutch – as spoken in the Netherlands – in all of the business of Parliament, as well as in legislation. In the past, such motions had been made by private members, and had therefore not been given priority. Now, he felt, he could introduce it from the government benches, and ensure that it received the same amount of attention as all other government business. In the motion, Malan outlined that he wished to broaden the definition of Dutch – as contained in the South African constitution – to distinguish between the two different strains: Afrikaans, as spoken in South Africa, and Dutch, as spoken in the Netherlands. He advocated that in future, the term 'Dutch' had to be understood to be Afrikaans. This did not entail an amendment to the constitution, but merely a guideline as to how the constitution had to be interpreted. After some amicable debate – in which the politicians did their best to assess the linguistic merits of a language that was still deemed to be in the process of development – his motion was carried unanimously and passed on to the Senate, which also gave its unanimous approval.¹⁶ The result was a report which recommended that the constitution be amended in order to prevent any disparities in the interpretation of Dutch as Afrikaans or Dutch as spoken in the Netherlands. The outcome was a triumph for Malan, and a moment that any politician would savour. A joint sitting of both Houses passed his bill unanimously.¹⁷ While still glowing from his uncontested victory, Malan expressed a particular appreciation for the fact that the 'English-speaking friends' in both Parliament and the Senate had not obstructed his path, but instead had attended the debates and voted for his legislation.¹⁸ The bill was signed into law by the Governor-General on 22 May¹⁹ – Malan's birthday.

The smoothness of the process would have confirmed the naïve assertions which Malan made shortly after taking office. He now declared that the ascent of the Pact-government had finally laid tensions between Afrikaners and English speakers to rest.²⁰ The fact that it was the English-speaking Labour Party that had made the victory possible would have served as potent evidence of this assumption. In formulating his legislation to establish a South African flag, Malan did not display the same amount of credulity. The bill that he introduced in January 1925 focused on codifying a South African nationality, and contained a clause that gave the Governor-General the right to prescribe a flag design. This effectively meant that the design was in the government's hands. It was Malan's intention to appoint a commission to advise him on possible flag designs. His

¹⁶ *Hansard*, 18 February 1925, Cols. 67-96; University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/705, "Wetsontwerp op offisiële tale, 7-8 Mei 1925".

¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/705, "Wetsontwerp op offisiële tale", 7-8 Mei 1925.

¹⁸ D.F. Malan, "Afrikaans as Amptelike Taal", in S.W. Pienaar, *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1964), 185.

¹⁹ DFM, 1/1/706, "Wet No. 8 van 1925": 'Wet. Om twijfel aangaande de betekenis van het woord "hollandse" in Artikel honderd seven en dertig van de Zuid Afrikan Wet 1909, en elders in de Wet waar dat woord voorkomt, weg te nemen.'

²⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Negende Kongres gehou op De Aar op 7 tot 10 Oktober, 1924", 28.

overarching concern in creating such a body, however, was to bypass the Opposition, as he believed that ‘the dangers of a party-political approach in and outside Parliament would thus be avoided while, at the same time, in a closed, but representative, circle, there would be a calm atmosphere which is more conducive to consultation.’²¹ The Opposition-press was not fooled, and cried foul. *The Cape Times* condemned the clause ‘which proposes to give the Government the right to thrust upon the people of South Africa any kind of design it may select without any reference to the wishes of the people.’²² As Malan had feared, the press began to debate the proposed flag – and the position that would be occupied by the Union Jack. One section of the population would not stand for its inclusion in the new design, while the other section refused to sacrifice it on the Pact-government’s altar.²³

The public storm which ensued demonstrated to Hertzog the folly of forcing through such an emotional measure without any public consultation, and prompted him to approach Smuts with a view to cooperating with the opposition. It was in Smuts’s best interests to delay matters as long as possible, so as not to alienate either side of his party.²⁴ As a result of Hertzog and Smuts’s negotiations, Malan was persuaded to withdraw his bill – but he tenaciously clung to his mission. Shortly before the end of 1925s parliamentary session, Malan announced to the House that he would reintroduce the bill the following year, in order to provide room for consultation. When his bill served before the House again, it would be to advise the House on a design that could be agreed to by the nation’s acknowledged leaders.²⁵

Parliament closed its shutters three days after his speech, followed by the Cabinet Ministers’ annual migration to the north. Once back in his office in the Union Buildings, Malan began to arrange the necessary steps to be taken in order to satisfy Parliament that the new flag was representative. He soon discovered that Smuts was doing his best to delay the process. The public was invited to submit designs, but, as a result of Smuts’s recommendation, the period allowed for submissions became a month longer than Malan had intended. Nevertheless, designs soon came pouring into the department’s offices.²⁶

Malan’s efforts were further disrupted by a severe attack of rheumatism. This was not the first time – he had suffered a similar attack in 1922. At that time he had been left almost completely paralysed, with the greatest damage being done to one of his legs, leaving him immobile for weeks. He had been nursed back to health by his ever-devoted sisters – who read the newspaper to him,

²¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 104: ‘die gevare van ‘n party-politieke benadering in en buite die parlement sou langs langs daardie weg vermy word, terselfdertyd sou daar egter in ‘n geslote maar verteenwoordigende kring en in ‘n kalmer atmosfeer ‘n genoegsame mate van raadpleging wees.’

²² Quoted in H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928*, 10.

²³ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928*, 10-11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12-14.

²⁵ *Hansard*, 21 July 1925, Col. 7179.

²⁶ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928*, 17.

since at first he could not hold it himself – and the eternally-faithful Comet had kept him company.²⁷ Once he had recovered sufficiently, he had recuperated at the Caledon Baths.²⁸ This time, however, there was no ardent household to rush to his assistance. They remained in Cape Town while Malan was required to live in Pretoria during the parliamentary recesses. Esther still remained a pillar of support – with whom Malan could discuss his legislation and his frustrations with colleagues²⁹ – but her health had begun to fail: she would not be able to fulfil this role for much longer. Malan was therefore treated in a Pretoria hospital for most of October. As before, his leg provided the most trouble, and walking again was a slow and painful process.³⁰ He was released from hospital at the beginning of November, on the firm understanding that he could attend to urgent government matters and would then leave for the Caledon Baths – with his private secretary in tow.³¹

He could not as yet walk to his offices in the Union Buildings as was his habit, and had to be driven by car. Nevertheless, he was able to devote himself to his work once again – interrupted only by the requisite visits to the hospital for more therapy to his leg.³² Malan now devoted himself to appointing a commission of politicians, and another one of experts, to review the flag designs that had flooded his department's offices. Hertzog wrote to Smuts on his behalf to remind him of their agreement during the parliamentary session, and to invite his recommendations with regards to the commission of experts.³³ As was to be expected, Smuts delayed the appointment of the commission by replying that he first had to consult his friends on suitable nominations – and promptly wrote to Sir Thomas Smartt to ask for suggestions, and to advise him to have a casual talk with Prof. Eric Walker – whom Malan and Hertzog recommended to the expert-commission – in order to determine whether the historian from Cape Town was 'sound'.³⁴

In January 1926 Parliament reopened, and was beset by a flurry of bills from Cabinet Ministers who were busily implementing the Pact's aims. Malan constituted his Select Committee – which consisted of representatives from the NP, the Labour Party, and the SAP – to discuss the matter of the flag. The committee met intermittently from February to May,³⁵ but for the first few months of 1926, Parliament's overwhelming focus was on a series of bills introduced by Hertzog, which

²⁷ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 33.

²⁸ DFM, 1/1/660, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 2 July 1922.

²⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 40.

³⁰ DFM, 1/1/709, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 16 October 1925.

³¹ DFM, 1/1/708, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, [n.d.] October 1925; DFM, 1/1/710, D.F. Malan – Essie Malan, 11 November 1925.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 260-1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 262-4.

³⁵ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980), 18.

aimed at establishing the segregated racial order which the NP had envisioned before its ascent to power. The measures contained in these bills filled Jan Smuts with aversion, as he wrote to a friend:

The more I see of politics the more I love my studies. And the work in Parliament is doubly unpleasant just now. We are to have a joint sitting of both houses over the Colour Bar Bill, the senate having once more rejected the bill. After that the Asiatic Segregation Bill will come on, as dangerous and unpleasant a measure as has ever been before our parliament. Then Hertzog will bring forward his Native segregation bills. This will become a most unhappy country with policies such as these. And yet for the moment these policies are popular and the Nat-Labour Pact is no doubt scoring heavily and entrenching themselves in public opinion. I feel profoundly unhappy over it all, and I am not free of blame either.³⁶

While Hertzog battled to rearrange the position of blacks in South Africa, the 'Asiatic issue' was given to Malan to address. He had made a start in 1925, when he had tried to stiffen segregationist measures that were proposed by the Smuts-government. He had soon learned, however – as his predecessors had done – that dealing with the Indian community was different to dealing with Africans. At the Imperial Conferences of 1921 and 1923, the Indian government had pushed for civil rights for Indians in the Dominions – and had focussed their attack primarily on South Africa, where they deemed the treatment of Indians to be the most unjust. As Prime Minister at the time, Smuts had refused to give in to their pressure. He had feared that the extension of Indians' rights might upset South Africa's precariously balanced racial order, since it would be impossible to deny similar rights to blacks and Coloureds. Given the Africans' overwhelming numbers, Smuts was convinced that this would spell the end of South Africa. Yet, Smuts was unable to ignore segregationist demands from his own party's ranks – which were deemed more moderate than calls from others within the party for full repatriation to India.³⁷

The SAP fell from power before the proposed measures could be enacted, but the segregationists within the SAP would not give up – and found an unexpected ally in their political enemy. As soon as the Nationalists took their place on the government benches, Mr J.S. Marwick – the SAP representative for Illovo (Natal) – submitted a petition to the House which lobbied the government to formulate segregationist legislation pertaining to Indians. Using exactly the same terminology and arguments that Hertzog and Malan had used with regards to Africans, Marwick and his English-speaking supporters decried the fact that the Indians in Natal outnumbered the white population, that they had a lower standard of living than the whites, that they were rapidly

³⁶ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 285-6.

³⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 144-9; T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 279-80.

taking up residence in white neighbourhoods and buying large tracts of rural land, and that they were pushing whites out of trade and the general labour force, since they were willing to work for lower wages. In the face of these threats, the petitioners requested that the government clarify its policy regarding the Indian section of the population.³⁸

It fell upon Malan to respond to their petition. At this early stage, he did not venture any opinions on the matter, but agreed with the Natalians that the Asiatic issue had become so acute that it could not be ignored any longer. He also pointed out that South Africa had a greater number of Indians within her borders than did any of the other Dominions – in addition to a complicated ‘native issue’. He promised to investigate the matter, but warned that the problem had been allowed to develop up to the point where radical solutions were no longer an option. The vast majority of Indians were born in South Africa – and international law prohibited the government from deporting them. In the meantime, he undertook to increase incentives for Indian repatriation.³⁹

Reflecting on the Natalians’ ardent plea for segregation, Malan regaled Parliament with the joke about two men who, while walking down the street, spotted a Scotsman wearing exceptionally long pants. When the one enquired from the other about this strange sight, his companion explained to him that it was evidently the fervour of a new convert. The Natalians reminded him of this Scotsman – since it was they who had imported the Indian labour for more than sixty years.

Malan simply could not resist the urge to preach to the converted: if it had not been for the fact that the people of Natal had allowed themselves to be dominated by imperialism, they would not have been ruled as a Crown Colony for so long. They could have prevented detrimental overseas decisions, he told them, if they had chosen to cast their lot with the interests of the rest of South Africa much earlier. He believed that the problem was also due to the fact that Natal had allowed itself to be dominated by large capitalist interests – in particular those of the sugar planters. Natal, and South Africa as a whole, was now paying the price. Nevertheless, Malan assured the petitioners that the matter would not be treated as a party-political issue, and that he would return to Parliament during the next session armed with new legislation and a well-defined Indian policy.⁴⁰

The response to Malan’s speech must have been a remarkable sight indeed. For a brief moment, Malan and the Natal jingoes shared the same hymnbook when the arch-imperialist, Heaton Nicholls rose to thank Malan for responding to the Natalians’ grievances in such a satisfactory manner, and congratulated Malan on his statesmanship. Nicholls had only one reservation: he regretted the fact that Malan did not express himself in favour of repatriating the entire Indian population as his colleague, Tielman Roos, had promised before the election. It appeared to him,

³⁸ *Hansard*, 19 August 1924, Cols. 609-17.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 618-24.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

therefore, that the government was not speaking with one voice on the matter.⁴¹ This would not be the last time that there would be noticeable discrepancies between Roos and Malan's public statements.

Malan did as he had promised, and immersed himself in the statistics relating to the Indian population. These convinced him of the Natalians' case. He based the legislation – which he proceeded to formulate – on that presented by his predecessor, F.S. Malan, but developed even stricter measures. It was built on the assumption that the Indians were a foreign element and that the only solution to the problem was a reduction of their numbers. He would not, however, consider violent measures to achieve this reduction.⁴²

Word must have reached India that Malan was preparing this legislation as, on 8 April 1925, the government of India sent a letter to the South African Governor-General. This was not the first time that the Indian government had found it necessary to write to South Africa concerning such legislation, but while their previous letters to the Smuts-government had carried a tone of frustration, they now – in addressing themselves to the Pact-government – made ample use of the clean sheet that had been handed to them. They composed an epistle which exuded courtesy and made subtle use of nationalist terms which would have appealed to the Hertzog-government. In it, they made no demands or judgements, but merely requested that the two governments hold a conference on Indian matters – as had been suggested by the Secretary of State for the Colonies during his visit to South Africa in 1923 – and that it could be at a place of the South African government's choosing. Additionally, they did not presume to suggest any particular points of discussion. The carrot was not, however, unaccompanied by a stick – the letter made it clear that the government of India did not address itself to the South Africans only for the sake of the welfare of the Indians in Natal – it was also for the sake of a good relationship between the two countries.⁴³

The South Africans were not fooled by the language of diplomacy. To Malan, it was clear that the letter's vagueness disguised the fact that the Indian government wanted to discuss his bill – before it could be passed by Parliament.⁴⁴ Hertzog responded to the letter in equally honeyed terms (the letter was replied to at a Prime Ministerial level, although the South African reply was probably formulated by Malan's office, since he was the minister in charge of the matter). Hertzog declared his government's willingness to hold discussions with the Indian government – and welcomed any helpful suggestions from their side. He stated that the South African government rejected the idea of a formal conference, explaining that practically all parties in South Africa were already unanimous in their agreement that Indians had to be repatriated, and that any further Indian immigration needed

⁴¹ *Hansard*, 19 August 1924, Col. 624.

⁴² *Hansard*, 23 July 1925, Cols. 7328-31.

⁴³ DFM, 1/1/664, Secretary to the Government of India – Governor-General, 8 April 1925.

⁴⁴ *Hansard*, 17 February 1926, Cols. 671.

to be stopped. It was also stated that they were concerned that public opinion in South Africa would view any conference – which did not open the way for effective repatriation – with suspicion, and as a manifestation of foreign interference.⁴⁵

These letters heralded the beginning of an extensive exchange between the two governments that lasted for a year. It was a tug-of-war conducted in the politest of terms. Malan's bill became a bargaining chip which he wielded to extract concessions from the Indians. Initially, the Indians were encouraged by the friendly tone of Hertzog's first letter, and expressed a willingness to explore repatriation – although they warned that the majority of the Indian population in South Africa were born there and would therefore hardly want to leave the country of their birth for an India they did not know. They expressed a wish to explore methods other than repatriation – including fair segregationist measures (although they did not use the word 'segregation' as such).⁴⁶

Their letter contained a generous measure of goodwill, but before responding to it, Malan introduced his bill to Parliament. He chose to introduce it a few days before the end of the 1925 session – which made it impossible for the House to debate on it before it closed its doors. Malan's explanation for this action was that the parliamentary recess afforded members the opportunity to read and reflect on the bill.⁴⁷ However, there was another dimension to his decision. By introducing his bill before any negotiations with the Indians took shape, Malan managed to dictate the terms of the discussions. His speech to Parliament was as much an address to the opposition benches, who had requested such a bill, as it was a message to the Indian government. Malan told the House that he had been approached by the Indian authorities, and declared that the introduction of his bill did not foreclose any future negotiations: instead, it would 'aid' such discussions.⁴⁸

A copy of the bill, and Malan's speech, was sent to the Indian government,⁴⁹ followed two months later by a letter in which the South African government expressed its amenability to a conference – in return for Indian assistance with repatriation. A land-resettlement scheme in India, or one of its adjacent territories, would be considered most acceptable.⁵⁰

The Indians were forced onto the back foot. It had never been their intention to hold a conference with the exclusive aim of assisting South Africa to devise a more effective scheme to expedite the removal of the Indian population. At the most, they were willing to discuss smoothing out the chinks in the existing system. In addition, they balked at the arguments and measures contained in Malan's bill. They still hoped for discussions, but were convinced that these necessitated a better knowledge of local conditions. To this end, therefore, they requested to send a

⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/665, J.B.M. "Hertzog, Minute No. 511", 13 June 1925.

⁴⁶ DFM, 1/1/666, Viceroy – Governor-General, 14 July 1925.

⁴⁷ *Hansard*, 23 July 1925, Col. 7330.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ DFM, 1/1/667, Governor-General – Viceroy of India, 28 July 1925.

⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/669, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute No. 828", 23 September 1925.

deputation to South Africa to investigate the position of Indians in the country. They also asked South Africa to delay the passing of Malan's bill, in order to give the deputation the opportunity to formulate recommendations.⁵¹

Malan was driving the Indians into a corner. He was not interested in a conference that would hinder him in his drive to reduce the Indian population in South Africa, and therefore refused to delay his legislation. The South African government, however, decided to grant permission for a delegation from India to visit it in order to investigate local conditions – on the understanding that the members of the delegation would exercise discretion.⁵² It also agreed to supply the deputation with the necessary transport facilities, and heeded their request for a special train-saloon with its own kitchen, in case the foreign visitors had any difficulty in securing hotel accommodation.⁵³

The Indians did not give up hope on the possibility of a conference between the two governments, and repeated their plea that Malan's legislation be delayed until their deputation had the opportunity to report on its findings.⁵⁴ Ultimately, it became a race against time for the Indian delegation to secure the necessary information and formulate their recommendations before Malan's bill passed through Parliament since, with its adoption, their chances of influencing South African's policy regarding Indians would disappear. They were given some breathing space by assurances that, while the bill would still be presented in the coming session, Parliament's due processes would take up some time. This would provide the delegation with enough room to complete its business. They were also offered the opportunity to make representations to the Select Committee which would review the bill.⁵⁵

By January 1926, the Indian delegation had prepared its interim report. In its estimation, the white population's fears of Indian encroachment were exaggerated, and based on perceptions, not facts. They recommended a fresh commission of enquiry into the Indian situation, which would provide more accurate estimates on which to base legislation. They also renewed calls for a round-table conference between the two governments.⁵⁶

As before, Malan refused to give way. He and Hertzog realised, however, that they had to tread carefully in order not to sour diplomatic relations between the two countries. They had refused the Indian government's request for a conference and for a commission of enquiry, and were in danger of appearing dictatorial in the eyes of the Indian populations of both India and South Africa.

⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/670, Viceroy – Governor-General, 9 October 1925; DFM, 1/1/671, Viceroy – Governor-General, 12 October 1925.

⁵² DFM, 1/1/672, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute No. 971", 9 November 1925.

⁵³ DFM, 1/1/675, Viceroy – Governor-General, 28 November 1925; DFM, 1/1/677, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute 1046", 8 December 1925.

⁵⁴ DFM, 1/1/674, Viceroy – Governor-General, 26 November 1926.

⁵⁵ DFM, 1/1/ DFM 1/1/677, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute 1046", 8 December 1925.

⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/679, Viceroy – Governor-General, 10 January 1926.

Some form of concession had to be made.⁵⁷ They therefore undertook to delay the parliamentary process further by sending the bill to committee before its second reading in the House. In this way, they provided the Indians with more time and scope to present their case to the Select Committee.⁵⁸ The Indian government was notified that Malan would present the correspondence between the two governments to Parliament.⁵⁹ The Indians were disappointed that their requests were denied yet again, but expressed their gratitude for the concessions that the South African government were willing to make.⁶⁰ The nature of Malan's announcement to Parliament, however, caused consternation in the Indian camp.⁶¹

Malan provided Parliament with a narrative of the correspondence that had been conducted since the previous year, and declared that he had initially been willing to take part in a round-table conference, so long as there were benefits to both parties. He made it clear that he had been prepared to make concessions in return for Indian cooperation with the accelerated repatriation of the local Indian community. Since the Indian government refused to discuss the idea, however, he refused to hold a conference, since it appeared that all of the concessions would be made by South Africa.⁶²

Malan had played his cards. His statement was clearly intended to bring the Indians back to the table – on his terms. A new letter-exchange – on whether there had been a misunderstanding all those months ago – followed. The Indians were adamant that it had not been their intention to hold a conference that dealt exclusively with accelerated repatriation, but they were still not averse to a conference where repatriation, along with a number of other matters, could be examined. They were, however, anxious that Malan's statements had prejudiced public opinion against them before they could present their case to the Select Committee.⁶³

Malan denied any misunderstanding on his part, but accepted the Indians' assurances that there had been some confusion. He repeated his earlier assertion that he was willing to hold a conference if it would advance the case of repatriation, but warned that he could not delay his legislation any longer – unless he was able to give the public the assurance that it was for the sake of a conference which would hold definite advantages for them.⁶⁴

The Indians were not to be forced into a corner that easily. They still refused to partake in a meeting that was based entirely on Malan's terms. But instead of continuing the debate via

⁵⁷ *Hansard*, 17 February 1926, Cols. 672-3.

⁵⁸ DFM, 1/1/680, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute 79", 4 February 1926.

⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/682, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute 106", 12 February 1926.

⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/681, Viceroy – Governor-General, 9 February 1926.

⁶¹ DFM, 1/1/683, Viceroy – Governor-General, 20 February 1926.

⁶² *Hansard*, 17 February 1926, Cols. 670-6.

⁶³ DFM, 1/1/683, Viceroy – Government-General, 20 February 1926.

⁶⁴ DFM, 1/1/684, J.B.M. Hertzog, Minute 194, 10 March 1926.

telegraph, which was proving to be most unsatisfactory, the Indian government suggested that Hertzog and his ministers meet with the leaders of the Indian deputation in South Africa.⁶⁵

The Indian delegation proved to be the trump card. Their meeting with Hertzog and Malan was so successful that the pair was persuaded to loosen their grip on the principle of repatriation. They explained to the Indians, however, that the true matter was the survival of Western civilisation in South Africa, and that there was no denying that white South Africans felt threatened by what they deemed to be Indian encroachment. They explained that public opinion would therefore not tolerate a conference that was not aimed at protecting their way of life. Thus, as long as the conference would not be viewed as an attempt by a foreign power to interfere in South Africa's affairs – and as long as the Indians were willing to discuss all possible methods to resolve the issue – they were willing to hold it. In a major departure from his earlier stance, Malan undertook to suspend his legislation until the conference had reached a conclusion.⁶⁶ The Indian government in turn expressed its sympathy for South Africa's concerns about the preservation of Western civilisation, and undertook to discuss all possible methods relating to its conservation. They were confident that the conference would enable them to reach a solution agreeable to both parties.⁶⁷

Malan now had to ask Parliament for its approval that proceedings on the bill be suspended until the two governments had concluded their negotiations. The section of the SAP that had petitioned Malan for the segregationist legislation remained quiet as Jan Smuts rose to give the government his support and his blessing in their endeavour.⁶⁸ This time, it was the Indians who praised Malan for his statesmanship and his 'high minded courage and rectitude'⁶⁹ in suspending his legislation.⁷⁰

While all of this was taking place, there was another development playing itself out which would affect the course of Malan's life. The date is not certain, but it was most probably soon after his return to Cape Town for the 1926 parliamentary session that Malan, now recovered from his rheumatism-attack, was invited to attend one of those receptions that were so frequently held by Cape Town's political elite. His hosts had more in mind than the mere pleasure of his company when they seated him next to an attractive young brunette, but they had erred by seating an old friend on his other side. Malan – the weathered old bachelor – hardly noticed the young woman at his side. Instead, he turned his back to his new acquaintance, and spent the entire evening talking politics with his male companion. Given the tumultuous parliamentary session of that particular

⁶⁵ DFM, 1/1/685, Viceroy – Governor-General, 26 March 1926.

⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/686, J.B.M. Hertzog, "Minute 291", 13 April 1926.

⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/787, Viceroy – Governor-General, 17 April 1926.

⁶⁸ *Hansard*, 23 April 1926, Cols. 2718-23.

⁶⁹ DFM, 1/1/721, C.F. Andrews – D.F. Malan, 10 May 1926.

⁷⁰ DFM, 1/1/720, G.S. Bajpai – D.F. Malan, 26 April 1926; DFM, 1/1/721, C.F. Andrews – D.F. Malan, 10 May 1926.

year, there was certainly much to discuss. The lady in question did not, however, go entirely unnoticed.⁷¹

Her name was Mattie van Tonder – born Martha Margaretha Sandberg, on 13 April 1897. Those who met her were struck by her spontaneity. She exuded warmth and openness, and was at ease in any company.⁷² Her optimistic and extroverted demeanour concealed the sorrow which had been a constant companion in her young life. The young Mattie had lost her father when she was barely two years old – but her mother had remarried soon after. Her upbringing was essentially rural, as she and her three siblings had been raised in the Karoo, in the vicinity of Carnarvon.⁷³ She had decided to train as a nurse, and to this end the minister of her local church wrote a testimonial to confirm that she possessed all of the virtues of the age, declaring that ‘she is of good moral behaviour, irreproachable in her conduct and neat and diligent.’⁷⁴

Mattie began her training in Cape Town in 1919, but her studies were interrupted when it became apparent that her mother suffered from cancer. She returned home to nurse her mother, but this did not last long, as her mother died soon after. In the meantime, Mattie had met a young farmer from the Free State, Willem Daniel van Tonder, who owned a farm near Dewetsdorp. The two became engaged, but before the wedding could take place, a freak accident injured him severely. This time, it was her fiancé whom Mattie had to nurse. In a display of loyalty which impressed all those around her, she decided to keep her promise to marry Van Tonder, despite the fact that the accident had left him a near-invalid. The marriage lasted little more than four years before Van Tonder finally died, in February 1925.⁷⁵ Mattie was now a widow, at the age of twenty-eight. She inherited the farm – which endowed her with financial independence – and decided to return to Cape Town. She took up residence in Sea Point – where her sister lived, and where she had studied nursing years before. She had not yet given up the idea of completing her training.⁷⁶

Soon after her arrival in Cape Town, she was absorbed into the social circles of the local Afrikaner elite. Given the fact that she was a likeable, young and attractive widow of means, this was not surprising. It was even less notable that she caught the eye of Cape Town’s matchmakers, who could not reconcile themselves to Malan’s highly unconventional bachelor status.⁷⁷

This remarkable woman finally melted the ice. It is possible that, at this juncture, Malan believed that his ascension to the Cabinet was the culmination of his God-given calling. He was

⁷¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, (hereafter US library), Document centre, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., “Interview notes: Danie Malan”, 27 February 1978.

⁷² H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., “Interview notes: N.J. du Preez”, 2 December 1979.

⁷³ *Die Burger*, 27 December 1930.

⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/569a, “Getuigskrif vir MME Zandberg”, 20 January 1918: ‘sy van goed zedelik gedrag is, onbesproke in haar wandel en net en vlytig.’

⁷⁵ H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1980), 310; *Die Burger*, 14 February 1925.

⁷⁶ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., “Interview notes: Danie Malan”, 27 February 1978; *Die Burger*, 27 December 1925; DFM, 1/1/734, D.F. Malan – Ester Malan, 11 September 1926.

⁷⁷ H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan*, 309-11.

unaware of the troubles that were to come, and he was now in a position of power that enabled him to perform the work that he had set out to do in 1915. The need to remain aloof from the opposite sex had disappeared, and consequently, he did not waste any time.

By April 1926, it became known that Malan was about to relinquish his bachelor status. The inhabitants of his hometown, Riebeek-Wes, let it be known that they had become exceedingly worried about him, as his stepmother – who had looked after him for so many years – was beginning to suffer from ill health and could no longer fulfil the task, and all hope of him ever marrying had long since disappeared. Their surprise at the news of his engagement was therefore accompanied by great joy.⁷⁸ His choice also met with general approval, as it was declared by those who knew her that Mattie was ‘a true Afrikaner daughter’.⁷⁹



**Figure 12: Mattie
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

It was announced that the wedding would take place on 16 June 1926 – a little more than a week after the end of the year’s parliamentary session. Malan was, however, not left to revel in his

⁷⁸ *Die Burger*, 27 April 1926.

⁷⁹ *Die Burger*, 15 June 1926: ‘’n egte Afrikaanse dogter.’

bliss. Less than a month before his wedding, in May 1926, the flag issue exploded onto the scene with a vehemence that shocked all of the parties involved.

Following the Easter recess, the Select Committee – which he had established earlier that year – had foundered on the rock that was the Union Jack. Malan and his allies wanted a ‘clean’ flag which would not contain symbols pertaining to the past, while the SAP insisted that English speakers would not accept a flag without a Union Jack. In return for keeping the Union Jack, they were prepared to concede to the inclusion of the old Republican flags. Malan – given his background as a citizen of the Cape – did not feel any loyalty to the flags of the Free State and the Transvaal, while the other Nationalists’ enthusiasm for the Republican flags was dwarfed only by their aversion to the Union Jack. By 7 May, the Committee was dissolved. Malan refused to surrender, however, and pressed his party caucus to proceed with the Flag Bill – despite the fact that the preliminary discussions could not reach an agreement. Observers took this as a sign that he did not want to lose face – a second withdrawal of the bill might appear indecisive,⁸⁰ and it would have been augmented by the recent withdrawal of his Indian bill. To Malan, delaying the process beckoned the danger of the scheme being abandoned entirely. He was convinced that the old Unionist element within the SAP would not give way an inch in a matter that was of such importance to the Afrikaners. The fact that they, in turn, regarded the Flag Bill as yet another move – in a series of moves – to weaken South Africa’s bonds to the Empire, and felt threatened by what they perceived to be the ‘Afrikanerisation’ of South Africa – which stirred their ever-present fear of secession⁸¹ – was something for which Malan would not have had any sympathy. Waiting for their support was something that he deemed to be a waste of time. Instead, he hoped to mobilise the support of his English-speaking Labour colleagues – with their backing, he could avoid attempts to label his mission as being racist.⁸²

When Malan finally rose in Parliament, on 20 May, to introduce his bill, he ran into a brick wall. Jan Smuts was the first to decry the fact that Malan was forcing the bill through, without bipartisan support, and in the face of overwhelmingly negative public opinion. In his opinion, the time for a new flag was far from being ripe – it was best to wait a few more years.⁸³

Malan fought back. For the past few years he had adhered to Hertzog’s ideal of broader South African nationalism, and had preached unity between English and Afrikaners: the new flag was to be the embodiment of this ideal. He wanted to put an end to occasions where the Union Jack

⁸⁰ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928*, 18-20.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 22-3.

⁸² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 110.

⁸³ *Hansard*, 20 May 1926, Cols. 3775-8.

was flown – to the exclusion of Afrikaners – and to those where the old Republican flags were waved – to the exclusion of English speakers:

What we therefore want in South Africa is a flag which breaks with the past, and which looks only to the future. This is what the new design will be. It is not connected with the past, so that the two sections of the people are united in a common nationhood, a common national feeling...Hon. members of the South African party say that I am breaking with the past, but if there is one thing they have been saying ad nauseam for years in South Africa, it is that the two sections in South Africa must forget the past, must shake hands and look to the future. To-day they come for party purposes and say we must not forget the past, but must have a flag which refers to the past.⁸⁴

Malan had had enough of consultation with the other side. As far as he was concerned, the discussions failed because of the SAPs maliciousness, and he would therefore proceed without them, come what may. He therefore declared to Parliament that:

I fear that as long as we have a South African party here – I hope it will not be for many years more – whose only weapon is the raising of race hatred, we shall not come to an agreement. The only way to get to an agreement is to do as we are now doing: Get the greatest possible agreement, and carry on with it. That is the only way to get a national flag for South Africa. I fear that the South African party is playing the role of a dead fly in the ointment.⁸⁵

The flag crisis was the first major crisis of Malan's political career. It revealed a trait that would manifest itself during some (but not all) of the later crises that would follow: once Malan had decided on a desirable end, he would not be deterred by dissent. He was willing to conduct discussions – but only if they advanced his cause. If not, he would not flinch from authoritarian measures to achieve what he was convinced was for the greater good.

Predictably, Malan's attempt to put his foot down created an uproar. Pro-Union Jack demonstrations were held in Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and a range of other centres, with much of the hatred directed at Malan himself. 'God help Dr. Malan if he comes to Johannesburg!' one of the Witwatersrand's impassioned protesters exclaimed.⁸⁶ Press commentary also reached a fever pitch. The party which stood to lose most from the crisis was the Labour Party, as they had supported Malan throughout the process. Its English-speaking members might have

⁸⁴ *Hansard*, 20 May 1926, Col. 3791.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Col. 3792.

⁸⁶ Quoted in H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 35.

shared the Nationalists' aversion to capitalism, but they did not share the ethnic colours in which the Nationalists shrouded capitalism in South Africa. Thus, while the Nationalists explicitly regarded capitalism as the domain of Jews and British imperialists, the English-speaking labourer still took pride in the Union Jack. During the crisis, the representatives of the Labour Party came dangerously close to being branded traitors by their own voters. In a bid to limit the outrage, Creswell appealed to the Cabinet to delay the Flag Bill for another year. In this, he had the support of Roos and Hertzog: Hertzog, in particular, would have resented a divisive issue such as the flag, since his government's position depended on the Labour Party, and because it came at a time when he needed support from both sides of the House to obtain the two-thirds majority required to pass his Native bills. Malan therefore found himself driven into a corner by his own Cabinet colleagues. He finally relented – on condition that the bill could be reintroduced at the beginning of the next parliamentary session, and that it would be supported by the Labour Party. This was agreed to.⁸⁷

Thus, on 25 May, Malan announced to the House that the government would not proceed with the bill during the present session. Nevertheless, like a pit-bull he clung tenaciously to his idea of a clean flag – one which would contain neither the republican flags nor the Union Jack. The greatest concession he was willing to make was that the Union Jack be flown alongside the new flag on public holidays that pertained to the British Empire.⁸⁸ The debate that followed was angry, bitter and filled with interjections from both sides of the House.⁸⁹ It also convinced Smuts that the flag issue could be the beginning of the Pact-government's end:

I expect that a grave blunder of the Pact in regard to the flag question will turn people's minds to their other first-class blunders also, and that in the end all moderate people will turn from them in disgust... I await developments with amusement and utter contempt for the chief actors in this sorry melodrama.⁹⁰

It was thus, while the flag crisis was simmering, that Malan wed Mattie van Tonder. In keeping with the political mood, the day was dark and rainy. This did not, however, deter the crowd that gathered outside the Groote Kerk in Adderley Street. The occasion drew several notables, including the widow of President Steyn, and the wife of former President Reitz. The reporter from *Die Burger* described the ceremony as 'strikingly simple but very impressive.'⁹¹ After a small reception at the Queens Hotel in Sea Point, the couple visited the nursing institution where the bride

⁸⁷ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 34-42.

⁸⁸ *Hansard*, 25 May 1926, Cols. 4035-6.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Cols. 4036-4076.

⁹⁰ J. van der Poel (ed.), *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 201-2.

⁹¹ *Die Burger*, 17 June 1926: 'treffend eenvoudig maar baie indrukwekkend.'

had once studied, in order to present her bouquet to the nurses. Thereafter, they were accompanied to the station, where they boarded a train to the north.⁹²

Malan took his bride to the Victoria waterfall, where the Zambezi River had made such a profound impression on him so many years ago. The age difference between Malan and his new wife was twenty-three years – but he seemed to be less aware of this than she was: she was very upset when he insisted on climbing down the cliffs on a ladder that stretched into the depths.⁹³

There is no doubt that this was one of the happiest times in Malan's life. He loved teasing his young wife about her exasperated attempts to reform his absentminded bachelor ways, and wrote to his sister that:

My wife's training in obedience is going well. I have high hopes of one day persuading her, on the basis of the marriage formulary, that it is a man's innate and inalienable right to a) be late at mealtimes b) to appear at the table without a dress-suit, even if he is the only one and even if the world comes to an end c) to leave his hair as nature intended d) to wear brown socks with black clothes or a crooked black tie with brown clothes. It is going slowly but I believe that we are making progress.⁹⁴

As a post-script to this letter, he added: 'Under strict orders I have to add that you will not recognise me when I return to the Cape.'⁹⁵ Indeed, the members of their intimate circle noted that Malan's gravity was somewhat tempered by his marriage.⁹⁶ The two appeared to be complete opposites – he, serious and she, merry – but their friends believed that their different temperaments complemented each other. In reality, however, Mattie felt somewhat intimidated by her husband's age and intellectual stature. Although she was notably intelligent herself, she could not match Malan's level of education. On more than one occasion, she said that she would be like a daughter to him.⁹⁷ She was not interested in politics,⁹⁸ and would confine herself to their home. Their household would soon expand, however, as by September 1926, Malan wrote to his stepmother that Mattie was very 'seasick'.⁹⁹

⁹² *Die Burger*, 17 June 1926.

⁹³ INCH, Sound Archive, PV 193, "Interview with Ds. D.F. Malan junior", 8 June 1977, Cape Town, tape No. 122.

⁹⁴ DFM, 1/1/728, D.F. Malan – Annie Malan, 5 July 1926: 'My vrou word mooi tot gehoorsaamheid "getrein" [*sic*]. Ek het goeie hoop om haar nog eendag te kry tot die erkenning op grond van die huweliksformulier van die aangebore en onvervreembare reg van 'n man a) om laat te kom by die maaltye b) om sonder "dress-suit" aan tafel te verskyn al staan hy alleen en al val die hemel c) om sy hare te laat staan soos hul natuur dit verkies d) om bruin sokkies aan te trek by swart klere en 'n skewe swart das by bruin klere. Dit gaan stadig maar ek glo dat dit vorder.'

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Op strenge order moet ek byvoeg dat jul my nie sal ken as ek weer in die Kaap kom nie.'

⁹⁶ *Die Burger*, 27 December 1930.

⁹⁷ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., "Interview notes: Danie Malan", 27 February 1978.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, "Interview notes: N.J. du Preez", 2 December 1979.

⁹⁹ DFM, 1/1/734, D.F. Malan – Ester Malan, 11 September 1926.

As was the case before his wedding, Malan was not left to bask in his happiness after his return from his honeymoon. During his absence, Tielman Roos had been up to his old tricks. By this time, Malan and Roos could barely tolerate one another – as was well-demonstrated by a small incident when papers pertaining to Malan’s department landed on Roos’s desk. Roos wrote a note to his secretary, the young J.F.J. (Hans) van Rensburg, to ‘Send it to the old bungler’.¹⁰⁰ Van Rensburg did as he was instructed – but forgot to remove the offending piece of paper. When he finally confessed his misdemeanour to his boss, Roos reflected for a moment ‘and then said nonchalantly that it was high time his colleague realised that he was nothing but a bungler.’¹⁰¹

Roos felt that he was losing his prized position as one of Hertzog’s confidantes, and resented Malan – and Havenga – who he believed were displacing him.¹⁰² So, while Malan was out of the country, Roos began making speeches in which he declared that Malan’s flag left him cold. When Malan complained to Hertzog about this, the Prime Minister agreed that this show of collegial disloyalty was uncalled for.¹⁰³ Hertzog’s patience with Roos was also frequently tried, as Roos often made public statements that embarrassed his colleagues, and was loath to attend Cabinet meetings¹⁰⁴ – Roos was certainly not the most industrious member of the executive.¹⁰⁵ To Malan, the rest of the flag battle now became a power struggle with Tielman Roos. For Roos, it was not only a golden opportunity to exploit a charged situation – which had always been his forte – but it also gave him a chance to endear himself to his allies in the Labour Party, who were becoming agitated by Creswell’s loyalty to Malan and Hertzog on an issue that was certain to cost them votes. Roos, always the nimble political strategist, also recognised the potential of a new friendship with certain sections of the SAP¹⁰⁶ – which became a real possibility later that year, in the aftermath of the Imperial Conference.

The Imperial Conference of 1926 was one of the triumphs of Hertzog’s career – even if his efforts to clarify South Africa’s constitutional status at this forum were based on the work done by Smuts five years before. The Balfour Declaration, which was drafted by the conference, possessed what that lone paragraph in Lloyd George’s letter to the independence deputation had lacked: an unequivocal and authoritative confirmation of the autonomy and equality of the British dominions. Smuts and Hertzog still differed on whether the Balfour Declaration gave the dominions the right to remain neutral if Britain were to go to war. This difference prepared the ground for their final conflict thirteen years later, but for the moment, members from both sides were happy to proclaim

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos - Political Prophet or Opportunist?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1987), 127.

¹⁰¹ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 127.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁰³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, pp 113-4.

¹⁰⁴ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 127.

¹⁰⁵ T. Boydell, *My Luck was in*, 281-5.

¹⁰⁶ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 138; D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 116-7.

their ardent admiration for Hertzog's achievement. Hertzog declared that he was now completely satisfied with South Africa's constitutional status – which meant that the English community's fears of secession could finally be laid to rest. Roos's public support for Hertzog delivered the final prize, as the leader of the republicans now threw his weight behind South Africa's much touted independence within the British Empire.¹⁰⁷

With the issue of secession – which had wrecked the NP and SAPs attempts at reunification in 1920 – removed, Roos could now dream of a possible reorganisation of the political landscape. He deemed the time to be ripe for the establishment of a Centre party – built on the remnants of the NP and SAP – which would not be crippled by ideology, but which would be driven by bread and butter issues. Such a realignment, which would bring the two largest political parties together under the same roof, promised to be politically more lucrative than the Nationalists' coalition with the Labour Party, whose fortunes were on the wane. The greatest obstacle to Roos's political Utopia was Malan's divisive Flag Bill.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, the flag crisis now devolved into a straight contest between Malan and Roos. While Hertzog was attending the Imperial Conference, Roos used his position as acting Prime Minister to advocate the postponement of the Flag Bill, while Malan countered him with public speeches in which he declared his determination to proceed. It became imperative for each of the two men to capture Hertzog for their respective positions. On the morning when Hertzog's ship sailed into the harbour, Malan made sure that he was at the docks by 6 A.M. in order to be the first on board to greet Hertzog – and to whisper in his ear that he should not say anything about the flag issue before he had the chance to speak to him. It was enough to keep Hertzog quiet for a day.¹⁰⁹

Hertzog – still glowing from his success in London – as it turned out, was more amenable to postponing the bill. This was strengthened when he was approached by a deputation of English speakers who lauded him for the satisfactory settlement of South Africa's constitutional status, and professed their willingness – as well as that of many other SAP supporters – to cast their lot with the Nationalists – if the Flag Bill was to be withdrawn. Hertzog considered this to be an excellent offer and, supported by Roos, was willing to grant the request.¹¹⁰

Malan and Beyers were invited to a meeting at Groote Schuur, at which Roos spoke of the Labour Party's growing insignificance. Implicit in this was his scheme to seek a new political alliance. Finally, Hertzog let the cat out of the bag, and advised Malan of his intention to withdraw the Flag Bill. For the first time in his career, Malan threatened resignation – a move that produced

¹⁰⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 200-6; T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 302-4.

¹⁰⁸ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 80-1.

¹⁰⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 117-9.

¹¹⁰ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 86-7.

the desired effect.¹¹¹ Hertzog clearly had no wish for a Cabinet crisis to destroy the peace, as Malan's power in the Cape Province was undisputed: his resignation could cause a rupture within the NP. Hertzog was therefore persuaded to support the Flag Bill – but Malan would ultimately lose the battle for the clean flag. It now became a war of concessions, with Malan trying to make as few as possible – and Roos trying to make as many as possible in order to gain as broad a base of support as he could.¹¹²

The flag issue revealed a fundamental difference between Malan and Roos. When it came to Nationalist ideals Malan would forge ahead, come what may, for the sake of a principle – and would do his best to convert others to his ideal. He sought to lead the nation to the place that he deemed best – in the same manner as the prophets of Israel, who brought the nation back to a state of righteousness. Roos doubtlessly identified an opportunity to outshine his Cabinet colleague – and to be the hero of the day. His ability to recognise the opportunity, however, was based on his greater sensitivity to the various sentiments throughout the country. Therefore, Roos sought solutions through compromise and accommodation.¹¹³

Malan's refusal to compromise on an issue of nationalist importance stood in stark contrast to his willingness to negotiate racial matters. On 17 December 1926 – a mere three days after his threat to resign – the round-table conference with the Indian government commenced. Hertzog opened the proceedings, to much acclaim from the Indian delegation. Thereafter, Malan took the chair in the negotiations, which lasted nearly a month.¹¹⁴ From the beginning, the deliberations were marked by an atmosphere of moderation, which impressed all those involved. The conference was ultimately able to reach a consensus on several points, culminating in the Cape Town Agreement. It affirmed the South African government's right to maintain Western standards of life – as well as recognising that Indians living in South Africa who wished to adopt this way of life had to be enabled to do so.¹¹⁵ The South African government undertook to subsidise the voluntary repatriation of Indians, but also made the concession that the wives and under-aged children of Indians already living in South Africa could join them. The expansion and funding of educational opportunities for Indians within the Union would also receive special attention. In return for these agreements, Malan withdrew his original legislation, and undertook to not introduce any legislation dealing with Indian

¹¹¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 120-1.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 112-40.

¹¹³ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 151.

¹¹⁴ DFM, 1/1/749, "Proceedings of Conference between Representatives of the Government of India and Representatives of the Government of the Union of South Africa", Cape Town, Wednesday, 12 January, 1927, 219.

¹¹⁵ T. Boydell, *My Luck was in*, 247.

matters for the next five years without consulting the Indian government.¹¹⁶ In its place, he introduced the Immigration and Indian Relief (Further Provision) Bill, which embodied the Cape Town Agreement. It became law in July 1927.¹¹⁷

The amicability around the conference table was transported into the corridors and gardens around Parliament, where the delegates strolled between sessions. Within a short period of time, acquaintance blossomed into friendship.¹¹⁸ By the time the proceedings drew to a close, both sides could happily serenade the other. Malan lauded the leader of the Indian delegation, Sir Muhammad Habibullah, for his statesmanlike manner, and enthused that the agreement had:

...led to the formation of a close bond of personal friendship between the members of the delegation of the Union and the members of the delegation from India...we are going to form the golden links between the two countries...Between South Africa and India there lies what you generally call the Indian Ocean. Why it should be called the Indian Ocean, I do not know; it is perhaps because our forefathers crossed that ocean to exploit India. Some of us have thought that subsequently Indians have crossed the same ocean to exploit us. Now, we from our side are not going to change that name; we shall still call it the Indian Ocean, but when the waves of that Ocean lap our shores it will remind us of a friendly nation on the other side. And perhaps the day will come when you on your side will pay us the compliment and will speak of the same Ocean as the African Ocean and when its waves lap your shores you will be reminded of a friendly nation on this side.”¹¹⁹

Habibullah in turn praised the South Africans, and paid Malan the compliment of a keen observer: ‘the impression that has been formed in my mind about you, as Chairman of this Conference, is that you combine in yourself at once the godliness of a clergyman, the intellect of a journalist, and the diplomacy of a Minister.’¹²⁰ Malan’s glow was enhanced the following day when he received a letter of congratulation from the Governor-General, who thanked him for the successful conclusion of the conference.¹²¹

In contrast, there was a mixed response from the press, from both the opposition and Nationalist stables. While a few newspapers praised the Cape Town Agreement, the majority

¹¹⁶ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971* (Cape Town: C. Struik (Pty) Ltd., 1971), 119-20; J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934: I* (Bloemfontein: Instituut vir Eietydse Geskiedenis, 1980), 425-6.

¹¹⁷ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 126.

¹¹⁸ T. Boydell, *My Luck was in*, 247-8.

¹¹⁹ DFM, 1/1/749, “Proceedings of Conference between Representatives of the Government of India and Representatives of the Government of the Union of South Africa”, Cape Town, Wednesday, 12 January 1927, 218.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹²¹ DFM, 1/1/750, Earl Athlone – D.F. Malan, 13 January 1927.

condemned it. The same pattern repeated itself among the members of the NP and the SAP.¹²² Malan defended himself by giving the assurance that the concessions made in the Cape Town Agreement were nothing more than an inducement to obtain the Indian government's assistance in repatriating as many Indians as possible.¹²³ This had little impact. Segregationists on both sides of the language divide regarded Malan's departure from his original legislation as a victory for the Indians,¹²⁴ and the Agreement terminated Malan's fleeting popularity with Natal's English-speaking segregationists. All that was left was a lingering image of him as the hated enemy of the Union Jack. His new friendship with the Indians lasted somewhat longer. Directly after the conference, and in the years that followed, the Indian delegates wrote letters of friendship to Malan in which they invited him and his wife to visit India, and also conveyed the warmest greetings to Mrs Malan.¹²⁵ The timing of these invitations, however, coincided with the expansion of the Malan family, which made it impossible for them to accept.¹²⁶

In April 1927, Malan welcomed the birth of his first son. He was 53-years-old when the fourth Daniël Francois Malan was baptised. As was to be expected, the entire family doted on the long-awaited namesake.¹²⁷



**Figure 13: The new parents
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

Unfortunately for the new parents, however, there was no time to savour the joy, as Danie Malan's birth was followed by a fresh eruption of the flag crisis. Within four months of his arrival, his father would be forced to tour the country to state his case on the flag issue. In this, he was

¹²² J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934*, 427-30.

¹²³ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 120.

¹²⁴ J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934*, 427-30.

¹²⁵ DFM, 1/1/751, M. Habibullah – D.F. Malan, 17 January 1927; DFM, 1/1/852, M. Habibullah – D.F. Malan, 29 July 1929.

¹²⁶ DFM, 1/1/853, D.F. Malan – M. Habibullah, 30 July 1929.

¹²⁷ DFM, 1/1/770, C. Hofmeyr – Essie and Annie Malan, 20 August 1927.

always a few steps behind Roos, whose appetite for political meetings seemed to be insatiable.¹²⁸ Mattie found it difficult to be left behind in their house in Bryntirion, where the couple lived during their annual stay in Pretoria, as she wrote to her mother-in-law:

With us, things are also still going first class. We were just very lonely while Doctor was away, because we just can't begin to feel at home here... Little Danie is becoming all too big and clever, only he is not yet as fat as I would like. He loves his daddy so much. It is wonderful how he remembered Doctor. I thought that he would have forgotten him, since he was away for 9 days.¹²⁹

There was the odd occasion when Mattie's loneliness was relieved. In November 1927 Malan, armed with a Thermos flask of hot coffee, strapped himself into the passenger seat of a small aircraft to become South Africa's first Cabinet Minister to travel by air from Cape Town to Pretoria. He did not tell Mattie of his planned adventure, but merely wired her that he was on his way from Cape Town – she would have assumed that the trip would be taken by train. The flight took ten hours, and the plane landed in Pretoria in the midst of a thunderstorm. Malan was as delighted as a schoolboy, and hurried home to surprise his wife. The nurse who opened the front door nearly dropped his baby son in surprise.¹³⁰

These were small joys to be savoured as, in the months following his son's birth, it rapidly became apparent that the flag issue had torn the division between Afrikaners and English speakers wide open and destroyed all the goodwill that might have existed at the end of the previous year. By the time that the bill served before Parliament in May 1927, the anger was uninhibited. It could reasonably be said that Malan was now one of the most hated men in South Africa.¹³¹ Smuts ascribed the lamentable situation to his 'unbending obstinacy'.¹³² There was even talk of Natal seceding from the Union, while the mood in the country was likened to the time of the Jameson Raid and the outbreak of the First World War.¹³³

Omitting the Union Jack from the new flag, at such a time, seemed like complete folly. Sensing this, the Cabinet overruled Malan and made the concession to include the Union Jack and

¹²⁸ See Appendix I in H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 283-5.

¹²⁹ DFM, 1/1/769, Mattie Malan – Esther Malan, 17 August 1927: 'Moet [*sic*] ons gaan dit ook nog eerste klas. Ons was net baie eensaam toe dokter [*sic*] weg was, want ons kan maar nog nie thuis hier word nie... Klein Danie word ook al net groot n [*sic*] slim, net hy is nog nie so vet soos ek graag wil he. Hy is so lief vir sy pappa. Wonderlik hoe hy dokter onthou het. Ek het gedink hy sal hom vergeet daar hy 9 dae weg was.'

¹³⁰ E. Robins, *This Man Malan* (Cape Town: S.A. Scientific Publishing Co., 1953), 86-7.

¹³¹ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 123-4, 134-47, 153-5.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 124.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 151-4, 156.

the old Republican flags in the new flag's design.¹³⁴ This was followed by debates on the Union Jack's prominence in the new design, and the status of the Union Jack in relation to the new flag. Malan fought the amendments to his bill tooth and nail, but was defeated not only in Cabinet, but also in the parliamentary caucus.¹³⁵

It was, in effect, a vote of no confidence, and Malan now had every reason to resign. The amendments not only provided for a flag that was the complete opposite of what he had campaigned for since 1925, but it also removed his envisioned limitations, which would have restricted the display of the Union Jack to designated public holidays.¹³⁶ Yet Malan instead clung to his ministerial position – if only to deprive Roos of the ultimate victory. He was convinced that his resignation would simply play into Roos and his supporters' hands:

Without having to bear any of the responsibility for it, the Flag Bill would have been wrecked, which is of course what they wanted; Roos and Hertzog would have been portrayed as leaders who foresaw insurmountable obstacles with statesman's vision, and who therefore insisted on a timely and honourable withdrawal, while I insisted – with short-sighted stubbornness and threats of resignation – to plod forth, but when the party finally became entangled in an impossible situation, I threw in the towel and ran away from my responsibility.¹³⁷

Malan's last hope was to hold Hertzog to an undertaking that the government would determine the use of the Union Jack. As Minister of the Interior, it would therefore be under his control. He succeeded in this endeavour. By this time, the amended bill was being bounced back and forth between the Nationalist-dominated Parliament and the SAP-controlled Senate. The parliamentary session came to an end, however, before an agreement could be reached.

During the four-month recess which followed, Roos continued to make public statements in which he let it be known that he was willing to make more concessions to the Opposition. He had clearly not given up hope of a realignment of the parties. Malan's efforts to curb his statements failed, while Hertzog refrained from taking a clear stance on the matter.¹³⁸ In addition, tempers continued to flare. In Bloemhof – where Smuts was due to address a bazaar – violence broke out

¹³⁴ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 159-60.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 164-9.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 169-71.

¹³⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 127: 'Sonder dat hulle enige verantwoordelikheid daarvoor sou dra, sou die Vlagwetsontwerp verongeluk het, wat hulle natuurlik wou hê; Roos en Hertzog sou voorgestel geword het as leiers wat met staatsmansblik onoorkomelike moeilikhede vooruitgesien het, en daarom op 'n tydige en eervolle terugtrekking aangedring het, terwyl ek met kortsigtige styfhoofdigheid en selfs met dreigemente om te bedank, daarop gestaan het om voort te sukkel, maar waar die party nou uiteindelik in 'n onmoontlike posisie verward sit, daar gooi ek nou tou op, en hardloop weg van my verantwoordelikheid.'

¹³⁸ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 171, 177-8.

between NP and SAP supporters.¹³⁹ A few days later Malan addressed a meeting in Durban – a jingoist hotbed where the Labour Party was suffering most for its loyalty to him. As Tommy Boydell later recounted, there was a small section of the population who lived by the slogan: ‘God Save the King, but for God’s sake don’t forget to Damn the Dutchman.’¹⁴⁰ In the light of such sentiments, Malan could not refuse the embattled Labour Party’s request to explain the matter to its supporters. Shortly before his arrival, however, a plot was uncovered that would have blown heaps of pepper – which had been concealed in the ceiling and in the walls – into Durban’s Town Hall, while the lights would be extinguished and the fire alarm be rung, in order to create a stampede. Attempts by sailors to disrupt the meeting were foiled by even stronger Labourites, who ejected them from the entrances.¹⁴¹ The Labourite Minister, Tommy Boydell – whose constituency was in Durban – was assaulted by eggs and sputum upon leaving the hall. He could flippantly boast that the projectiles missed their target – but he lost his seat in the next election.¹⁴²

Never before was the time as ripe for compromise. Behind the scenes, there were manoeuvres to bring Hertzog and Smuts together. The Dominion’s Secretary hinted at it, while the Governor-General openly encouraged it. Once again, Roos did not disappoint, and stepped up to the plate. In a letter to a Johannesburg newspaper Roos let it be known that the details of the Flag Bill were still up for negotiation, and resumed his campaign for a new centrist party – which would not necessarily include Hertzog, and certainly none of the ministers from the Cape Province. His willingness to compromise created renewed expectations within the SAP camp.¹⁴³

It also infuriated Malan, who wrote to Hertzog to complain about Roos’s dishing out of promises on behalf of the government without having consulted the Cabinet, or even himself – as the minister responsible for the bill.¹⁴⁴ Hertzog’s reply, however, was cool. It is clear that he too had come to regard the matter as a rivalry between Malan and Roos – and he had lost his patience. He told Malan that his grievance should be discussed in Roos’s presence, and warned that Malan not act in haste before it was resolved. As a parting shot – in order to demonstrate Malan’s pettiness – Hertzog wrote: ‘Please allow me to remind you once more what is at stake. I cannot think that you would like to see a national issue wrecked for the sake of a personal grudge – right or wrong.’¹⁴⁵

If there ever was a time when Malan would have felt certain that it was he who stood alone against his Cabinet colleagues, this would have been that moment. The Cabinet meeting which

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 198-201.

¹⁴⁰ T. Boydell, *My Luck’s Still in* (Cape Town: Stewart Publishers, 1948), 66.

¹⁴¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 130: ‘oor die koppe van die gehoor terug getransporteer en by die ingange weer uitgegooi.’

¹⁴² T. Boydell, *My Luck’s Still in*, 72, 78.

¹⁴³ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 210-5.

¹⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/772, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 13 October 1927.

¹⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/773, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 14 October 1927: ‘Laat my toe jou nog eens daaraan te herinner wat op die spel staan. Ik kan nie denk jy ‘n volksaak sou wil sien verongeluk ter wille van ‘n persoonlike grief – reg of verkeerd.’

followed would have confirmed it. Hertzog and the other ministers failed to take a definite stand. What Malan had hoped would have been a rebuke of Roos's actions turned into a gentle, fraternal, reprimand. Roos, for his part, declared that he would resign if the Cabinet passed a motion of no confidence in him. This was not even contemplated, and once again, it was Malan who had to clench his teeth and remain silent. By this time, he was convinced that there was a plot to sideline him in the final conclusion of the flag matter, and he was determined to prevent this.¹⁴⁶

Roos, however, would outsmart him – and in doing so, break the deadlock. By this time, Roos was also convinced that the flag issue had become a political life-or-death battle between him and Malan – either one of them would have to resign, depending on the outcome.¹⁴⁷ If the government did not make the concessions that he had promised, Roos would be discredited and made to look a complete fool. On the day that Malan reintroduced the Flag Bill, Roos and his supporters quietly approached prominent members in the SAP benches in order to conduct separate negotiations. Roos's triumph was in clinching the support of the Governor-General, who was all too willing to act as a mediator between Hertzog and Smuts. In approaching the Governor-General, Roos had Hertzog's tacit approval, and before Malan's bill could appear before the House for its second reading, Smuts and Hertzog had met to discuss a compromise. Malan was only informed afterwards, at a Cabinet meeting.¹⁴⁸ He was quick to take stock of developments and decided to remain aloof from the discussions that followed. He wished to make it clear that he had been bypassed, and would therefore not carry any responsibility for the agreements that might be reached. Furthermore, he did not want to compromise himself by making any spur-of-the-moment suggestions. When Hertzog reported to Cabinet a second time on the agreements that he and Smuts had reached, however, Malan could not contain himself any longer, as the proposals which Hertzog laid out on the table were nearly identical to the concessions that Roos had promised in the press. Malan labelled the compromise a 'complete capitulation',¹⁴⁹ and refused to support it. Hertzog was furious. He interrupted Malan, and declared that if he would not abide by the measures, he would resign as Prime Minister. Malan was not taken aback. He refused to give way, and replied in equally heated terms that it was up to *him* (Malan) to resign. It was the Prime Minister's prerogative to determine the Cabinet's policy, and if any of the ministers could not abide by it, it was their duty to resign. At this crucial moment, a number of the other ministers – including the three Labourites – rallied behind Malan.¹⁵⁰ Instead of accepting Malan's resignation, Hertzog was beaten back, and the meeting ended without any conclusion.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 132.

¹⁴⁷ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 147.

¹⁴⁸ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 229-32.

¹⁴⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 135: 'algehele kapitulasie'.

¹⁵⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 134-6; H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 235.

¹⁵¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 134-6.

The failure to defeat Malan in Cabinet probably sent a chill from the political wilderness down Roos's spine. He now had to demonstrate his indispensability and, within hours after the tumultuous Cabinet meeting, held a speech in which he called for reunion and a reorientation of the political parties – yet again. To his listeners and the press, weary from a battle that had been raging since 1925, these were sweet syllables indeed. Hertzog and Smuts would have had to take note of the political force that Roos had become. His exit could not take place without throwing the entire political landscape into turmoil. They therefore now hammered out a new agreement on the flag's design and the use of the Union Jack.¹⁵²

When Hertzog brought it to Cabinet, Malan waited until all his colleagues had spoken before he gave his verdict. It was clear which way the wind was blowing – and it was no longer in his favour. He gave his support, save for a few reservations on some technical matters. There was an audible sigh of relief – Malan's included. Only one small victory would he savour: when the details were hammered out, he insisted that only the new flag, without the Union Jack, be flown from the Castle in Cape Town, to be saluted by passing warships. It was up to Malan to organise the inauguration of the new flag – which took place on 31 May 1928. He chose not to give any speeches himself, but instead, with Mattie at his side, stood on a platform outside Parliament, watching the hoisting of the new flag. His victory was tainted with bitterness, however, and he silently undertook to record his version of the events, while they were still fresh in his memory, in order to present his case to the historians of the future.¹⁵³

The flag crisis did the Pact-government an immeasurable amount of harm. Claims that the nation could be united by a common South African nationalism would now have sounded ridiculous. Malan's numerous attempts to force Hertzog's hand by publicly declaring his refusal to compromise could not have endeared him to his Prime Minister, who had yet to receive the necessary support for his native bills. At the same time, there was little reason for Malan to trust Hertzog, after the latter had refused to discipline a meddling colleague and especially after he had taken the matter out of his hands – without any prior consultation – in an initiative masterminded by the same political busybody. The divisions among the Nationalists had been laid bare for all to see.

From Bloemfontein, the nationalist newspaper editor, A.J.R. van Rhyn, wrote to Malan to inform him that both Roos and Hertzog's prestige had suffered. The Free Staters were beginning to sense that Hertzog was prone to influence, and not as steady in his course as he was before. As a

¹⁵² H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 236-7.

¹⁵³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 102-3, 136-40: While this account of Malan and the flag crisis has made extensive use of Malan's memoirs, the thorough and definitive study by Harry Saker has been used as the dominant source. In keeping with the purpose of the biography, the focus had been on Malan's personal experience of the crisis. For the sake of clarity, however, this version of the events has been extensively abbreviated. For a blow-by-blow account of the flag crisis, see H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928*.

result, they were beginning to shake off their blind loyalty to their leader, and the day would come when they would not follow him any longer. Roos's popularity was also on the wane:

The old folk here are still heated and dissatisfied about the flag, even those who were formerly your bitterest opponents (The Roos-people who thought it was a good tactic just to compromise) now admit that, if it were not for your immovable attitude, our party would certainly have met its demise...Our friend T. Roos is so dead in the Free State...Many go as far as to say: 'We have to kick him out of the party'...I have also met people from Potchefstroom, and they assure me...that he has lost all of his influence in a great part of the Transvaal. He has finished playing his part, and now the people want Genl H. to talk. They expect a declaration from him, and he remains quiet. It is also making the nation suspicious...one thing is certain. The man who can stay the course will be the man of the future.¹⁵⁴

In the minds of his opponents, however, Malan's image was cemented as that of 'a stubbornly obstinate politician who was the incarnation of extreme Afrikaner nationalism and as an "intemperate fanatic"'.¹⁵⁵

The bitterness of the flag crisis was accompanied by the private sorrow of losing an anchor. By November 1927, Esther Malan's health had deteriorated to the extent that she finally passed away. Her death left a void in nationalist women's circles.¹⁵⁶ It was also the end of a formidable presence in Malan's life.

In the aftermath of the flag crisis, Roos continued his campaign for a reorganisation of the political landscape and the establishment of a new centrist party – he only fell silent after he failed to receive any support from his fellow-Nationalists, and was publicly rebuffed by Smuts, without whom he could not have hoped to succeed.¹⁵⁷ Malan was unequivocal in his rejection of the possible amalgamation of the NP and SAP. He could not condemn his Cabinet colleague on a political platform. Instead, he railed against capitalist interests within the SAP who were eager to regain

¹⁵⁴ DFM, 1/1/786, A.J.R. van Rhyn – D.F. Malan, 2 December 1927: 'Die ouspan hier is maar nog baie warm en ontevrede oor die vlag en selfs u bitterste teenstanders van vroeër (Die Roosmense wat gemeen het dis goeie taktiek om maar toe te gee) erken nou dat as dit nie vir u rotsvaste houding was nie ons party sekerlik ten gronde sou gegaan het...Ons vriend T. Roos is so dood in die Vrystaat...Baie gaan so ver as om te sê: 'Ons moet hom uit die party smyt'...Ook het ek mense gekry uit Potchefstroom en hulle verseker my...dat hy al sy invloed in 'n groot deel van Tvl. verloor het. Hy het sy rol uitgespeel en nou wil die mense net hê genl. H. moet praat. Hulle verwag 'n verklaring van hom en hy sit stil. Dit maak ook die volk wantrouig...een ding is seker. Die man wat koers hou gaan die man van die toekoms wees.'

¹⁵⁵ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 272.

¹⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/785, M.E.R., "Wyle Mev. Malan: 'n Vertroude Leier is die Afrikaanse Vrouens ontval".

¹⁵⁷ H. Saker, *The South African Flag Controversy*, 248-9.

power and were therefore pushing for the unification of the two parties, hoping that ‘principled nationalists’ would break away, as would inevitably happen, leaving the field open for them. To Malan, co-operation with a party which had fought the nationalists’ endeavours to endow South Africa with treasures such as independence within the British Commonwealth, not to mention a national flag, was unthinkable.¹⁵⁸ Thus, he declared, ‘I am not in favour of the unification of the two parties. The National Party is good enough for me, and if its principles remain healthy...it ought to be enough for everyone who loves South Africa.’¹⁵⁹

His ascension into the corridors of power taught Malan a crude lesson about the *realpolitik* of power. His attempts to practice politics on the basis of nonnegotiable principles were frustrated at every turn. Nevertheless, he refused to modify his political approach, and still declared that the NP represented a set of principles.¹⁶⁰ He was battered, but not beaten.

As 1928 drew to a close, the NP began to comb its dishevelled feathers in preparation for the following year’s general election. Malan’s attempts to unite the nation on the basis of a common South African nationalism, as preached by Hertzog, had proven to be disastrous. A different issue had to be used to unite South Africa’s voters behind the Pact.

By 1929, Hertzog had still not succeeded in achieving the required two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of Parliament to have his segregationist legislation enacted. Since 1925, he had been trying to secure Smuts’s cooperation, but it had not produced the desired results.¹⁶¹ Smuts initially prided himself on the fact that he fought the measures every step of the way,¹⁶² despite the fact that the SAP was divided on the issue.¹⁶³ Even members of the NP differed on the measures contained in the bills, and on the nature of segregation in general. Around this time, Malan declared that, when women were eventually enfranchised, he would like to see the vote extended to Coloured women as well. Some of the other Cape Nationalists agreed with Malan that the fortunes of the Coloured community were tied the white population – an opinion shared by Hertzog, who indicated that he was willing to extend the franchise to both white and Coloured women. Representatives from the northern provinces, however, did not approve of these ideas. Throughout the process, Tielman Roos made disparate remarks – which did little to improve Hertzog’s fortunes. In addition, when the bills

¹⁵⁸ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die dertiende kongres gehou op Oos-Londen van 4 tot 7 September 1928”, 26-7.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 26: ‘Ek is nie vir die vereniging van die partye nie. Die Nasionale Party is vir my goed genoeg, en as hy beginsel-gesond is...dan behoort dit genoeg te wees vir elkeen wat Suid-Afrika lief het.’

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁶¹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 211-16.

¹⁶² J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 291, 389.

¹⁶³ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 214-5; J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 288, 294.

were examined by parliamentary committees the process, which Hertzog was by now desperate to bring to its fulfilment, encountered more delays.¹⁶⁴ Thus, when 1929 arrived, it not only heralded an election year, but also a short parliamentary session during which Hertzog intended to pass his bills. There were signs that Hertzog's attempts to implement segregation would become an election issue.¹⁶⁵

When, in January 1929, Jan Smuts gave a speech in which he expressed the ideal of a federation of British African states,¹⁶⁶ Hertzog seized the opportunity to issue a repudiation, which ultimately became known as the 'Black Manifesto'. It decried Smuts's idea of drawing the British colonies in Africa together by pointing to the overwhelming numbers of Africans, when compared to the small numbers of white inhabitants. The implication was that Smuts's policies would open the African floodgates, which would swamp the white citizens of South Africa and their children – as well as their children's children.¹⁶⁷ Both Malan and Tielman Roos signed the document,¹⁶⁸ which set the tone for what became known as the Black Peril election. Hertzog's bills foundered yet again in the short parliamentary session which preceded the election, but at the polls, the victory belonged to the Nationalists.¹⁶⁹ While the SAP captured the most votes, the Nationalists benefited from the electoral system, which handed it more rural constituencies.¹⁷⁰ 'Hertzog's black bogey worked wonders in the backveld, and the people were stampeded. Even so we are a clear majority of the electorate over all other parties, and it is our electoral system which has beaten us,' Smuts wrote to a friend.¹⁷¹ Hertzog was thus returned to office with a clear majority. A similar pattern would be repeated nineteen years later.¹⁷²

Unknown to Malan, the greatest significance of the 1929 election was that it marked a changing of the guard. A new cast of characters were mounting the stage, and they would grow in significance during the coming years. In the short term, Malan was temporarily relieved of a severe irritant. After all the havoc wreaked by the Flag Bill, the Cabinet had been rocked by yet another crisis in November 1928 – this time when Tielman Roos decided to become involved in a power struggle between the three Labour Party ministers. It culminated in a row between Hertzog and Roos, during the course of which Roos blamed his conduct on Malan, who he believed was isolating him in

¹⁶⁴ J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934*, 372-5.

¹⁶⁵ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 366.

¹⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/822, "Smuts oor Federasie in Afrika."

¹⁶⁷ Central archives repository (hereafter SAB), J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A32, Box 29, File 94, "General Smuts' speech at Ermelo – South Africa a White Man's land or a Kaffir [*sic*] land?"

¹⁶⁸ *Die Burger*, 29 January 1929.

¹⁶⁹ J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934*, 375-92.

¹⁷⁰ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 216-7.

¹⁷¹ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 410.

¹⁷² W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 216-7.

Cabinet. Roos threatened resignation, which Hertzog refused to accept, with a general election looming on the horizon.¹⁷³

Roos's health was ailing and, in February 1929, he was forced to seek treatment in Germany. He therefore could not return to South Africa to fight the elections, but was re-elected nevertheless. With his health showing no sign of improvement, Roos tendered his resignation, which Hertzog accepted – no doubt with some relief. Upon his eventual return to South Africa, Roos was appointed as a judge in the Appeals Court.¹⁷⁴ His place in the Cabinet was taken by his young admirer, Oswald Pirow – who soon transferred his loyalties to Hertzog.¹⁷⁵ There was another change in the Cabinet which was significant to Malan. His loyal friend and supporter, F.W. Beyers, resigned soon after the Pact took office, and was replaced by another Cape politician, A.P.J. (Attie) Fourie.¹⁷⁶

In the following year, white women were finally granted the vote, after the customary heated exchanges on the subject. Hertzog, who took it upon himself to introduce the bills, exclaimed in exasperation that 'as sensible men we must use our common sense a little.'¹⁷⁷ Malan did not take part in the debate, but this time he, and the majority of the Nationalist MPs, voted in favour of the bill.¹⁷⁸ The immediate impact on the NP was the amalgamation of the men's and women's parties – a step that was applauded by the men, while the women were rather hesitant. As some had feared, their organisational independence came to an end, as they were effectively absorbed by the men's party. In the decades that followed, Afrikaner women would disappear from the political scene.¹⁷⁹ For the next few years, however, all the party's official bodies had to reflect an equal representation of men and women. Men would serve as chairpersons, while the position of the deputy had to be given to a woman.¹⁸⁰

The development that would have the greatest impact on Malan's political career, however, was the rise of the Young Turks. Through the course of the 1920s, a new generation of politicians began to enter the NPs ranks. From the Free State, Dr N.J. van der Merwe – one of the late President M.T. Steyn's sons-in-law who, like Malan, left the Dutch Reformed Church to enter

¹⁷³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: AP-Boekhandel, 1943), 569-72.

¹⁷⁴ J.P. Brits, *Tielman Roos*, 168-70, 174.

¹⁷⁵ O. Pirow, *James Barry Munnik Hertzog* (Cape Town: Howard Timmins, 1957), 136, 140-1.

¹⁷⁶ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Veertiende Kongres gehou op Ceres van 2 tot 5 September 1929", 26-7.

¹⁷⁷ *Hansard*, 11 April 1930, Col. 3124.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ L. Vincent, 'The Power Behind the Scenes: The Afrikaner Nationalist Women's Parties, 1915-1931', *South African Historical Journal*, 40 (May 1999), 63-4.

¹⁸⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/3/2/2/1/1, "Notule Hoofbestuur: Vergadering van die Hoofbestuur van die Nasionale Party, 21 Mei 1930"; INCH, *Ibid.*: "Notule Hoofbestuur: Vergadering van Hoofbestuur gehou in Kaapstad op 28 Mei 1930"; *Ibid.*: "Notule Hoofbestuur: Aantekeninge van 'n gesamentlike vergadering van die Daelikse Bestuur en die Hoofbestuur van die Vroue Nas. Party, K.P., 6 Junie 1930"; INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie: Notule van die Vyftiende Kongres gehou op Somerset-Oos van 1 tot 4 Oktober 1930".

politics in 1924 – became a member of Malan’s inner circle.¹⁸¹ It was N.J. (Nico) van der Merwe who walked Mattie down the aisle on her and Malan’s wedding day.¹⁸² The young attorney, C.R. (Blacky) Swart, who was also from the Free State, would become another Nationalist stalwart.

In the Cape Province, another group of young attorneys would become prominent members of the Cape National Party. Eric Louw, who was first elected to Parliament in 1924, was posted to Washington as South Africa’s trade commissioner in 1925, and also served in London, Lisbon and Paris, until his return to South Africa in 1937 to cast his lot with Malan.¹⁸³ During the latter part of these years, he corresponded with Malan, and kept him informed of developments in Europe and the U.S. F.C. (Frans) Erasmus became secretary of the Cape National Party in 1929, and entered Parliament in 1933. He would forge a close working relationship with Malan, and became one of his most loyal supporters.¹⁸⁴ Stephen le Roux entered Parliament in 1923,¹⁸⁵ while the young Paul Sauer, who was certainly the most colourful and entertaining character in the group, was elected in 1929.¹⁸⁶ Most significantly, the 1929 election brought another future leader into the party, J.G. (Hans) Strijdom from the Transvaal.¹⁸⁷ Strijdom formed a close bond with Swart and Louw which stretched across three provinces. In due course, some of these men would become members of Malan’s inner circle, and together they became a powerful force within his party. They were generally critical of Hertzog, and regarded Malan as the opposite pole. Thus, when Hertzog’s actions were unpopular, they directed themselves to Malan. It was slowly becoming a trend, which was not limited to the NPs younger politicians. When, by the end of 1929, Hertzog stated in public that the time was not yet ripe for a South African to be appointed as Governor-General,¹⁸⁸ disillusioned members of the public wrote to Malan, declaring that they were turning to him as their leader.¹⁸⁹

Indeed, there was growing alarm within Afrikaner nationalist ranks that Hertzog was beginning to practice the conciliation politics of Botha and Smuts.¹⁹⁰ Following the Balfour Declaration, Hertzog not only repudiated the republicans in his party, but in 1928 he also set out to amend the NPs programme of principles. Up to that point, the programme of principles safeguarded the republican ideal, but Hertzog now insisted that the document had to accept and maintain South

¹⁸¹ C.J. Beyers, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel V* (Pretoria: Raad vir Geestewetenskaplike Navorsing, 1987), 851-3.

¹⁸² *Die Burger*, 17 June 1926.

¹⁸³ C.J. Beyers, ed., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel V*, 497-501.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 261-3.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 475-6.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 716-20.

¹⁸⁷ D.W. Krüger and C.J. Beyers, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Deel III* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977, 785-93).

¹⁸⁸ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd* (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1987), 321.

¹⁸⁹ DFM, 1/1/857, R. Kloppers – D.F. Malan, 29 October 1929; DFM, 1/1/858, D.G. Cillié – D.F. Malan, 5 November 1929.

¹⁹⁰ DFM, 1/1/858, D.G. Cillié – D.F. Malan, 5 November 1929.

Africa's sovereign independent status within the British Empire. While the Cape National Party had, predictably, few qualms in passing such an amendment, the Transvaal was less amenable, while in the Free State there was open dissent – notably from ministers of the church, who used their influence to set local NP branches against the amendment, and former clerics who had since become politicians, such as Ds. L.P. Vorster and N.J. van der Merwe. Hertzog was furious. Even though Van der Merwe declared a few days before the Free State's party congress that he would abide by Hertzog's leadership, with the result that the amendment was passed by all of the party congresses, Hertzog's hitherto unquestioned authority in the Free State was somewhat tarnished.¹⁹¹

The situation worsened when, on the eve of Hertzog's departure for the 1930 Imperial Conference in London, it became known that N.J. van der Merwe – and a number of other republican MPs – had established a watchdog organisation called the Republikeinse Bond (Republican Bond). Hertzog repudiated the group in an angry speech. While *Die Burger* regarded Hertzog's words as abrasive, *The Cape Times* rejoiced at Hertzog's declaration of war against the republicans in his party.¹⁹²

The Opposition-press was less enthusiastic about Malan's moderate stance on the matter.¹⁹³ Despite being the leader of the least republicly-inclined of the provinces, Malan did not follow Hertzog's example in rebuking the republican elements in the party. Instead, he made it clear that he was opposed to the formation of organised interest groups within the NP, as he regarded it as a trend that could fragment the party and undermine its unity. He could, however, understand why republicans felt the need to form an interest group. Since Hertzog's return to South Africa in 1926, with the Balfour Declaration in hand, there had been diverse interpretations of the constitutional status with which South Africa had been endowed, giving rise to fear and doubt. In order to quell any uncertainties, Malan made it clear that he believed in the divisibility of the British crown, that South Africa was fully independent, and that the country possessed the right to remain neutral in the event of war.¹⁹⁴ The very fact that Malan endeavoured to provide an authoritative interpretation proved, however, that South Africa's constitutional status was far from being a clear-cut matter.

The result of his moderation on the republican matter was that Malan gradually became the champion of those who felt that Hertzog had somehow been intoxicated by his visits to Imperial Conferences, and was beginning to betray the Afrikaner nationalist cause.¹⁹⁵ Hertzog's return from the Imperial Conference early in December 1930 did nothing to improve matters. The conference

¹⁹¹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewende en Stryd*, 318-22; J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934:1*, 171-81.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 182-6.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁹⁴ INCH, Cape National Party, P27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie: Notule van die Vyftiende Kongres gehou op Somerset-Oos van 1 tot 4 Oktober 1930", 26-9.

¹⁹⁵ DFM, 1/1/892, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 8 December 1930.

had announced that the Statute of Westminster – which would give further clarity to the Dominions’ constitutional status – would be presented to the British Parliament the following year. This added fuel to Hertzog’s fire, who declared to the Free State’s party congress that South Africa’s constitutional position – which had always caused divisions between Afrikaners and English speakers – was no longer a matter of contention. He envisioned that the two language groups could now work together, as a united South African nation, to tackle matters such as the country’s economic position and segregation. For this reason, he therefore issued a fresh condemnation of the republican movement, as its endeavours only served to alienate the English community further.¹⁹⁶ Predictably, Hertzog’s statements caused an outcry in republican ranks. The Opposition-press began issuing predictions that the NP was about to split, but this, however, did not happen. N.J. van der Merwe, who was deemed to be the leader of the republican movement in the Free State, refused to lead a rebellion, and instead counselled his followers to maintain the party’s unity.¹⁹⁷ Yet, in private, Van der Merwe wrote to Malan that:

I was very sorry that you were not here for the congress. The Afrikaners here are dumbfounded that our old General is preaching the unadulterated Botha-Smuts conciliation here...It would have been good for you to have met the Afrikaner intelligentsia here, and seen how they feel. Of course I do not want to force the position in order to cause any form of a break.¹⁹⁸

It was clear that Van der Merwe did not want to establish himself as Hertzog’s rival. Instead, he identified another contender, and pledged his loyalty to him.

Whether Malan realised that a new chapter would soon be at hand, is unknown. In 1929, the most important addition to the new generation was his son, Johannes Laurens (Hannes), named after his maternal grandfather and born slightly more than two weeks after the election.¹⁹⁹ Mattie felt a mixture of pride and sorrow as she cradled her newborn son. For some inexplicable reason, she was certain that she would not live to see her children grow up.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewende en Stryd*, 326-7.

¹⁹⁷ J.H. le Roux and P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 2: Die Eerste Bewindsjare, 1924-1934-I*, 189-90.

¹⁹⁸ DFM, 1/1/892, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 8 December 1930: ‘Ek was baie jammer dat u nie hier met die kongres kon wees nie. Die Afrikaners hier is dronkgeslaan dat ons ou Generaal...die onvervalsde Botha-Smuts konsiliatie hier verkondig...Dit sou vir u goed gewees het om ‘n biekie met die intelligentsia van die Afr. hier in aanraking te kom en te sien wat daar gevoel word. Ek wil natuurlik vir geen oomblik die posisie forseer nie om op enige ‘n breuk te veroorsaak.’

¹⁹⁹ DFM, 1/1/853a, Mattie Malan – E. Schoeman, 29 August 1929; H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan*, 313.

²⁰⁰ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, “D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het”, 42.



**Figure 14: The Malan family
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

The arrival of the youngest addition to the Malan family meant that Malan had to refuse yet another invitation from his Indian acquaintances for him and Mattie to visit.²⁰¹ By the close of 1929, the correspondence between Malan and the Indian government had resumed. The implementation of the Cape Town Agreement and the resultant legislation – the Immigration and Indian Relief Act – was not proceeding as smoothly as the two parties had hoped. The South African government judged its success by the number of Indians who were repatriated, while the Indian community measured its efficacy by the improvement of their conditions. On the one hand, the numbers of emigrants dropped every year, as news spread that the adjustment to life in India was extremely difficult for those who were born in South Africa, while on the other hand, progress was being hampered by Natal’s provincial authorities. Being opposed to the agreement, they were dragging their feet with the implementation of the housing, sanitation and educational relief schemes – Malan even had to resort to threats to achieve any progress on their part. By 1929, Malan deemed the Cape Town Agreement to have been a failure.²⁰²

During that year, it was also brought to Malan’s attention that Indian traders on the Witwatersrand were contravening both property and trading laws – in many cases by exploiting loopholes in the existing legislation. Malan appointed a committee to investigate the matter and to formulate new legislation to address it – and duly informed the Indian government about the steps he had taken. He also made use of the opportunity to voice his dissatisfaction at the declining numbers of Indian emigrants – in the hope of initiating fresh discussions on the matter.²⁰³

²⁰¹ DFM, 1/1/853, D.F. Malan – M. Habibullah, 30 July 1929.

²⁰² B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 126-31.

²⁰³ DFM, 1/1/860, Governor-General – Viceroy, 29 November 1929.

The resulting correspondence between the two governments followed the same patterns as before, with the exception being that it was no longer a tug-of-war. The Indian government thanked Malan for informing them of his intentions,²⁰⁴ and suggested amendments to his committee's terms of reference²⁰⁵ – which Malan refused. However, he did make provision for both the Indian community and the Indian government to present evidence to the committee.²⁰⁶ Malan finally presented the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure (Amendment) Bill to Parliament in May 1930. It closed loopholes in the existing legislation, and contained a number of restrictive measures – measures which caused an outcry, both within the South African Indian Community, and in India.²⁰⁷

This time, the Indian government did not pressure Malan to alter his legislation – past experience would have taught them the difficulty of altering his course – but they knew by now that their powers of persuasion were more effective when practiced in person. G.S. Bajpai, who had taken part in drawing up the Cape Town Agreement, therefore counselled representatives from the Indian government that, in approaching the South African government, 'representations should take the form of an appeal to the friendliness of Ministers rather than of arguments based on law or even equity.'²⁰⁸ The Indian government therefore proposed that its representatives meet with Hertzog at the Imperial Conference to be held in London during the European autumn of 1930.²⁰⁹ Malan was probably unhappy about this move to discuss his legislation with Hertzog at a time and a place when he would not be present, but knew that this was ultimately a matter for Hertzog to decide. All he could do was to point out that his new bill fell outside the boundaries of the Cape Town Agreement, since it dealt with existing legislation. He welcomed new deliberations regarding repatriation, but stated that, since his legislation was bound by parliamentary procedures, discussions in London would, in his opinion, be of little value.²¹⁰ The Indians acknowledged his communication cordially – but were clearly set on informal dialogue in London.²¹¹ Malan could not prevent this, which meant that the matter was no longer in his hands. He would have to wait for Hertzog's return from the conference.

The Indian representatives' meeting with Hertzog was an amicable one. When Hertzog pointed to the declining numbers of repatriates, the Indians replied that it would be best if Malan and Hertzog visited India in order to assess the efficacy of the scheme at their end – which implied

²⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/860, Viceroy – Governor-General, 13 December 1929.

²⁰⁵ DFM, 1/1/860, Secretary for the Interior – Secretary for External Affairs, 17 January 1930; DFM, 1/1/860, Viceroy – Quyamana, 2 February 1930.

²⁰⁶ DFM, 1/1/860, Governor-General – Viceroy, 7 February 1930.

²⁰⁷ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 132-3.

²⁰⁸ Quoted in B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 133.

²⁰⁹ DFM, 1/1/860, Governor-General – D.F. Malan, 14 August 1930.

²¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/860, D.F. Malan – Governor-General, 15 August 1930; DFM, 1/1/680, Minute no. 307.

²¹¹ DFM, 1/1/860, Governor-General: "Minute no. 15/1443".

that they wanted the South African government to grasp the practical difficulties posed by such an initiative. It was agreed that Malan had to be persuaded to travel to India. The Indian representatives also suggested that South African Indians be assisted to emigrate to Tanganyika, as a solution to concerns about the Indian climate. This willingness to explore new avenues of repatriation, however, was a bargaining chip in return for amendments to the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill. Hertzog did not make any promises, but the Indian representatives were clearly encouraged by the meeting.²¹²

December 1930 brought about a turn of events which made Hertzog's homecoming – with his renewed declaration of war on the republicans, as well as his news about his meeting with the Indian representatives – the least of Malan's worries. He and Mattie had begun to look forward to the arrival of their third child,²¹³ but by the time the Malan family arrived in Cape Town at the end of November 1930, Mattie was ill. She paid no heed, and was only taken to hospital after others insisted. She was admitted to the same institution where she had once trained as a nurse, and was diagnosed with a 'poisoning of the blood, which gradually impairs the heart.'²¹⁴ According to family members, she suffered from rheumatic fever.²¹⁵ Throughout December, her condition worsened – two days before Christmas, Mattie felt so weak that she asked that her children be brought to her, in order that she could take leave of them. During this time, Malan was called away from her bedside by an urgent Cabinet meeting in Pretoria, but there was a general sense of optimism when she appeared to rally the day before Christmas. On Boxing day, however, Mattie suffered a relapse. Malan was contacted, and immediately took a plane back to Cape Town – this time it was not a flight of fancy, but one of distress. From the airfield, Malan went straight to the hospital, where Mattie died, fifteen minutes after his arrival.²¹⁶

Those who were closest to Malan witnessed his devastation. There was a single question that he kept repeating, while tears welled up in his eyes: 'What is to become of my poor children?'²¹⁷ The funeral took place within two days of Mattie's death, and was conducted in the same church where the couple had shared their wedding vows four years earlier. Even though it was a private funeral, all of the flags at government buildings were flown at half-mast. Among the scores of flowers sent by family, friends and notables were wreaths from the Indian government's agent in South African, the Cape Indian Congress and the South African Indian Congress.²¹⁸

²¹² B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 133.

²¹³ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., "Interview notes: N.J. du Preez", 2 December 1979.

²¹⁴ *Die Burger*, 27 December 1930.

²¹⁵ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1(7), Notes compiled by Hannes Malan, December 1979.

²¹⁶ *Die Burger*, 27 December 1930.

²¹⁷ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., "Interview notes: E. du Toit, 14 November 1979"; H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan*, 314: 'Wat word van my arme kinders?'

²¹⁸ *Die Burger*, 29 December 1930.



Figure 15: Mattie's coffin is carried from the Groote Kerk in Adderley Street (D.F. Malan Collection)

Only on the evening after the funeral did Malan finally break down, and sobbed like a small child with his head resting on his sister Annie's shoulder. His sorrow at the loss of his spouse was intertwined with his feelings of complete helplessness at the prospect of taking care of two small children, the youngest of whom was merely eighteen months old. Thankfully, there was a solution at hand. Nettie Fourie, his stepmother's younger sister with whom Malan had corresponded many years ago, came to live with him in order to look after the children.²¹⁹ It was a curious and somewhat ironic fulfilment of their careless banter during Malan's student days, when Malan had teased Nettie about prospective suitors who might prevent her from becoming his housekeeper one day.²²⁰ Nettie had never married and now, indeed, became Malan's housekeeper. She and the children, as when Mattie was alive, moved with him between Cape Town and Pretoria as the parliamentary sessions dictated. Malan doted on his small children, and could not bear the thought of any harm coming to them. He actively took part in evening bath and bedtime rituals – which were often interrupted by long absences as he travelled around the country on political tours.²²¹

Malan's tours would have revealed a land where political clouds were gathering, while rain clouds remained absent. By the years 1931 and 1932, the country was firmly in the grip of the Great Depression. Her decision to remain on the gold standard, while other international currencies were devalued during the aftermath of Wall Street's collapse late in 1929, brought further devastation to a country where a drought was wreaking havoc on a farming community already crippled by low

²¹⁹ DFM, 1/8/1, Anna Preller, "D.F. Malan soos ek hom geken het", 43-4.

²²⁰ DFM, 1/1/225, D.F. Malan – Nettie Fourie, 6 January 1904.

²²¹ DFM, 1/1/901, Nettie Fourie – Stinie Malan, 28 July 1931.

commodity prices and a strong South African pound. Both mining and farming interests clamoured for the devaluation of the South African currency through the abandonment of the gold standard, yet Hertzog and Havenga held fast.²²² The scene for the next turning point in their fortunes was being set.

In the interim, however, Malan's energies were focussed on renewed discussions with the Indian government. Its representatives' informal talks with Hertzog at the Imperial Conference had produced desired results. The Indian government lodged a formal request for the postponement of Malan's bill at the end of January 1931.²²³ Two months later, Malan gave notice that his bill would be postponed in order to accommodate a new Round Table Conference between the two governments.²²⁴

The conference was held in Cape Town in January 1932. While the personal amicability between Malan and his Indian acquaintances did not suffer,²²⁵ the conference itself was a disappointment. Malan declared that the Cape Town Agreement had failed, as the Indian population had not decreased since its conclusion, but had in fact increased at a rate higher than that of the white population's growth – the number of emigrants had barely managed to offset the quantity of immigrants entering the country. He did not believe that the Indian government carried any of the blame for this situation, but noted that the Cape Town Agreement had been doomed from the beginning, as it had never received support from the local Indian community.²²⁶

The delegates to the conference therefore devoted themselves to devising new repatriation strategies. Most of their energies were focused on exploring the possibility of assisting Indian emigration to other parts of the world, as had originally been suggested to Hertzog. As was to be expected, however, these discussions proved fruitless.²²⁷

Deliberations on the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, in contrast, were more successful. Upon Malan's suggestion, his proposed bill was not examined by the conference. Instead, the two governments agreed to negotiate directly about its contents. As a result of these negotiations, the harshest measures contained in the bill were removed before it was enacted by Parliament.²²⁸

²²² T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 317-8; J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewende en Stryd*, 439-40.

²²³ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 133.

²²⁴ DFM, 1/1/680, Secretary for the Interior – Secretary for External Affairs, 30 March 1931; DFM, 1/1/680, Viceroy – Governor-General, 9 April 1931.

²²⁵ DFM, 1/1/978, Sir Fazli Hussein – D.F. Malan, 20 February 1933; DFM, 1/1/996, Sir Maharej Singh – D.F. Malan, 30 March 1933.

²²⁶ DFM, 1/1/925, "Opening statement by Dr. Malan on behalf of the Union Delegation", 12 January 1932.

²²⁷ B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860-1971*, 134-6.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 136-7.

Unknown to Malan, it was to be another seventeen years before he would have any further direct dealings with the Indian government. The bell was about to toll with the news that his days in office were numbered.

Chapter 8 – Coalition and Fusion, 1932-1934

The Christmas season of 1932 brought ill tidings of the year that was to come. As could be expected, the judicial Bench was a place of excruciating boredom to one who possessed a temperament such as that bestowed on Tielman Roos. It took a mere six months for him to begin complaining of his plight, prompting his disciples to seek his return to politics. Hertzog refused to contemplate Roos's reappointment to the Cabinet, which meant that the old master of political opportunity had to continue languishing on the Bench while the chorus of voices pleading for his political pardon continued to grow.¹

Yet Roos, being both desperate and unscrupulous, did not hesitate to explore every possible avenue of escape. He even went so far as to write friendly letters to Malan, and to pay his former nemesis some visits – something he had hardly ever done while they were colleagues. Malan could guess that Roos wanted to return to politics – as an opponent of Hertzog's – and was trying to gather possible supporters.² The growing polarisation between Malan and Hertzog would have made Malan a natural ally – if their history of personal animosity could be forgotten. Malan, however, was not about to wipe the slate clean. Instead, he informed Hertzog about Roos's latest manoeuvres.³ In this, Malan was not alone. Other Cabinet Ministers began streaming into Hertzog's office with similar reports. By February 1932, Hertzog summoned Roos to his office in order to put an end to his intrigues. It would prove to be an exercise in futility.⁴

The government's growing unpopularity was the answer to Roos's prayers. While the Depression ravaged South Africa's economy, Hertzog and Havenga held firmly to the gold standard, refusing to heed calls for it to be abandoned. Even after Britain had stepped away from gold, they remained in their fortress. It was a heaven-sent gift to Tielman Roos. By March 1932, a petition calling on him to step into the fray and to force the government off gold began to circulate. Roos kept careful watch over its progress. Realising that all hope of reconciliation with Hertzog was lost, he began to pay some quiet visits to Smuts. The Cabinet, which kept itself informed of his movements, became concerned. Finally, the bomb exploded on 16 December. Following the NPs defeat in a by-election in Germiston, Roos addressed a gathering in his old Lichtenburg constituency – and announced that he would resign from the Bench. Within a week, he had done so and announced his return to politics, all the while preaching of the need to abandon the gold

¹ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog* (Cape Town: Howard Timmins, 1957), 139-40.

² D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 146-7.

³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: AP Boekhandel, 1943), 575.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 574-80.

standard and to constitute a 'National Government'.⁵ It was his old gospel of a Central Party once again.

The immediate result was a flight of capital, and the ministers – who were scattered around the country for their annual holidays – returned hurriedly to Pretoria. They knew only too well that Roos had sufficient support in Parliament to deprive the government of its majority, and ultimately, to hand power back to Smuts.⁶

To Malan, the direction to be followed was clear: Roos had committed political treason. His advice to his friend Albert Geyer, the editor of *Die Burger*, was to attack Roos and warn the nation to remain vigilant. This was too belligerent for Attie Fourie, who insisted that Hertzog had to determine their response to Roos's latest crisis. Once the Cabinet was assembled in Pretoria, however, they were flustered. On 28 December the government abandoned the gold standard, but formulated its announcement so vaguely that there was some initial confusion over whether or not the event had actually taken place. It was a deliberate, and desperate, attempt to save face – the government did not want to appear as though Roos had succeeded in forcing it off the gold standard. It was a futile exercise in semantics, which fooled no one.⁷

As the New Year arrived, the question on everyone's lips was whether Hertzog would honour his undertaking of the previous year – that the government would resign if gold was abandoned. As was the case with the initial announcement, the issue was dodged by more semantic nitpicking, and the government clung firmly to its position.⁸

Upon his return to Cape Town, Malan found two letters waiting for him. They were both from Hjalmar Reitz, his old Independence Deputation travelling-companion, who was known to be one of Roos's most devoted followers. Given his previous failures to elicit Malan's support, Roos did not dare to approach Malan himself, but he knew that he could not play his political game of chess without its bishop. Reitz was to be his (Trojan) horse. Reitz therefore wrote on behalf of Roos, asking Malan to meet his old political adversary.⁹ Malan's reply was an excommunication. Not only would he not even consider meeting Roos, but he was also incensed at the idea that Reitz could think that he was for sale. 'Betrayal, as history has shown, never carries anything but a twin

⁵ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 140-5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 145; Cape archives repository (hereafter KAB), A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 2-4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/968a, H. Reitz – D.F. Malan, 22 December 1932; DFM, 1/1/968a, H. Reitz – D.F. Malan, 24 December 1932.

set of fruit. The first, and immediate, one is sweet. The second, and eventual, one is bitter. Those who want to eat the first will inevitably have to taste the second on their palate,' he wrote to Reitz.¹⁰

While writing this unflinching and merciless letter, Malan could not know that the very foundations of the building were starting to crumble. Roos's idea of a 'National Government' found approval from a number of quarters, and Hertzog was shortly thereafter visited by a deputation asking him to form a coalition with Smuts. He rejected the idea immediately – but in the back of his mind, a seed was planted which would soon begin to germinate.¹¹

When Parliament opened on 20 January, rumours about Roos's manoeuvres abounded. His attempts to form an alliance with Smuts were not proceeding as planned, since the SAP was divided on whether it wanted to cooperate with a branded political opportunist. Roos's insistence on occupying the premiership also dampened the prospect's attractiveness. The NP held its breath, as a successful alliance between Roos and the SAP spelled the end of its tenure on the government benches. As anticipated, Smuts's annual motion of no confidence in the government, which he introduced on 24 January, contained a call for a 'National Government' to be formed. The NP caucus met on that same day and, following a resolution proposed by Hertzog, decided to reject the motion and to ban anyone who tried to bring about a coalition government from the party-caucus.¹² Back in the House, Hertzog's reply to Smuts's motion reeked of sulphur, and with biting sarcasm, he rejected the idea of coalition. The rest of the Cabinet, and the Nationalist MPs, followed suit.¹³ The next day, however, while the debate continued, Hertzog – who was outside in the lobby – beckoned to Oswald Pirow and told him that he urgently had to get hold of Havenga. He wanted Pirow and Havenga to speak to Patrick Duncan, Smuts's chief lieutenant, to tell Smuts not to close the door for cooperation in his final reply to the debate. They got hold of an astonished Duncan, and told him of Hertzog's request.¹⁴ J.H. Hofmeyr, Smuts's other lieutenant, conveyed the message to Smuts, who gave heed. When the debate finally ended on 1 February, instead of retaliating to the insults that had been hurled at him for more than a week, Smuts renewed the call for unity.¹⁵ Upon reading Smuts's mellow reply, *Die Burger's* parliamentary reporter told his editor that 'something is brewing. Don't attack Smuts too viciously, one of these days the NP will be working with him!'¹⁶

¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/968a, D.F. Malan – H. Reitz, 7 January 1933: 'Verraad, soos die geskiedenis hom altyd ken dra nooit anders as 'n tweeling vrug nie. Die eerste en onmiddelijke is soet. Die tweede en uiteindelijke is bitter. Dié wat die eerste wil eet, die moet en sal onverbiddelik ook die tweede in sy verhemelte moet smaak.'

¹¹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 5-6.

¹² *Ibid.*, 6-7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁴ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 148-9.

¹⁵ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 247.

¹⁶ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 8: 'daar broei iets. Moenie Smuts te skerp aanval nie, een van die dae werk die NP met hom saam!'

Things were indeed brewing behind the scenes – and had been doing so for more than a week. Upon being despatched to negotiate with Smuts, Pirow was astonished at his leader’s about-turn, but soon came to the conclusion that his angry speech in the House had been another one of his infamous outbursts. It must have been Roos he had been railing against, Pirow reasoned, not Smuts.¹⁷ By now, Hertzog’s temperament was notorious. One moment he would be the old-world gentleman, exuding refined manners and great personal charm, while he could fly into a rage in the next – and calm down just as abruptly.¹⁸ Yet, he exuded honesty and earnestness,¹⁹ and inspired such devotion and loyalty in his followers that it amounted to a cult of personality. No one ever doubted the nobility of his motives. It also meant that Hertzog received unconditional forgiveness for his faults – and he certainly knew it. Paul Sauer described Hertzog’s political style as that of ‘a rhinoceros, or at least a hippopotamus...if a hippopotamus walks from one river to another, he walks in a straight line, and anything that gets in his way, he pushes aside or tramples under his feet. If he comes across someone’s hut, he walks straight through it.’²⁰ Hertzog had sensed that his own political river was about to run dry, and was now determined to cross to another watering hole. In this, he would not be deterred. A coalition between the SAP and Roos was a direct threat to his position, and had to be prevented at all costs.²¹ He therefore had to outmanoeuvre Roos – and the best way to do so was to lure the SAP away from his rival by making a more tempting offer. While Roos could promise the SAP his support in the next election – which was likely to unseat the government – Hertzog could offer them a place in the government. It was less lucrative than an election victory, but its outcome was more certain.

Immediately after Pirow’s approach to Smuts’s confidantes, rumours of a coalition between the SAP and NP began to do the rounds. Malan too heard these rumours, and when he was eventually summoned to Hertzog’s office, he discovered that they were true. He was evidently as taken aback as Hertzog’s confidantes – which was interpreted by Hertzog as a sign of hesitation. He therefore did not take Malan’s assurance, that he was opposed to a coalition, very seriously.²² The following day, 26 January, Hertzog called the Cabinet to a meeting. By this time, Malan was unequivocal in his condemnation of a possible alliance with the Opposition – which had since materialised in the shape of an offer from Smuts. The Cabinet was divided – but the majority sided with Hertzog. Malan’s opposition evidently angered Hertzog – he was convinced that the division was of Malan’s doing – who announced that he would henceforth act on his own, in his capacity as

¹⁷ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 149.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 137; D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 35.

¹⁹ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel, 'n Outobiografiese Vertelling* (Cape Town and Johannesburg: Tafelberg, 1972), 175.

²⁰ D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer*, 35: ‘renoster, of ten minste 'n seekoei...as 'n seekoei van die een rivier na die ander loop, dan loop hy in 'n reguit lyn, en enigiets wat in sy pad is, stamp hy, trap hy plat. As hy iemand se pondok kry, loop hy dwarsdeur.’

²¹ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933.

²² O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 150.

a leader.²³ As far as he was concerned, consultation with the Cabinet only spelled the danger of arming Malan with propaganda tools against coalition.²⁴

In a move that was clearly aimed at minimising Malan's influence, Hertzog decided to call his Cabinet Ministers to him, one by one, to gauge their attitude about coalition. The Prime Minister was not too far off the mark when he feared that his Minister of the Interior would make propaganda against his plans. He swore the Cabinet to secrecy, but he could not stop the rumours, which alighted anew when, on 30 January, the SAP caucus decided to reject any cooperation with Roos, but authorised their leader to explore other possibilities of coalition. Smuts's conciliatory speech in Parliament on 1 February added more fuel to the fire.²⁵

The rumours spread from the parliamentary lobbies to the SAP-press. This prompted Geyer to ask Malan whether it was advisable for *Die Burger* to write an article that warned the public against coalition. Without divulging any information, Malan told him that such an article was not only advisable, but imperative. All he could say to Geyer was that 'you would be surprised if you knew who are all in favour.'²⁶

It was to be some time before Geyer realised that Malan was hinting at Hertzog. The appearance of Geyer's article on 3 February infuriated the Prime Minister, who promptly summoned one of *Die Burger*'s journalists to Groote Schuur to take a press statement. Hertzog declared that he knew nothing of any coalition plans or negotiations, and blamed the rumours on Tielman Roos's manoeuvres. The statement appeared in *Die Burger* on 6 February.²⁷ Upon reading it, Colin Steyn – the son of the late president – exclaimed 'Hertzog is lying; I know from experience how he can lie!'²⁸ Steyn had guessed correctly. At the same time that he was denying any knowledge of coalition in the press, Hertzog was arranging with one of the Free State MPs to ask him a question about coalition at the next caucus meeting, which was scheduled for 7 February – the day after his denial was published.²⁹ Reading from notes that he had prepared before the meeting,³⁰ Hertzog told the caucus that he could not ignore Smuts's offer, and would invite the Leader of the Opposition to discuss the possibility of cooperation. The announcement caused a stir amongst his listeners. Although he had been disconcerted by Hertzog's willingness to consider cooperating with Smuts, Malan was under the impression that the division in the Cabinet had forced

²³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 592.

²⁴ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 150.

²⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 8, 13a; *Die Burger*, 25 February 1933.

²⁶ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 10: 'jy sal verbaas wees as jy weet wie almal daarvoor is.'

²⁷ *Die Burger*, 6 February 1933.

²⁸ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 13: 'Hertzog lieg, ek weet van ondervinding hoe hy kan lieg!'

²⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike herinnerings uit die koalisiestryd: Die ineenstorting", 13.

³⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 153.

Hertzog to drop the matter – he was clearly unaware of the fact that Hertzog had been using the interim to consult with his Cabinet colleagues. This was the first time since the Cabinet meeting that Malan had heard Hertzog raise the matter again. Many of the caucus members were opposed to Hertzog's plan – which he immediately ascribed to Malan's meddling. Instead of giving Hertzog the support that he had expected to receive, the caucus decided that he had to consult with the Cabinet and present a draft plan at the next meeting.³¹

Hertzog was furious. As soon as the meeting was over, he decided that he would not be hindered by either a divided Cabinet or a divided caucus. He would, instead, act as the party's leader, and take full responsibility for the negotiations he wanted to initiate with Smuts. His most faithful lieutenants, Havenga and Pirow, approved – knowing full well that their disapproval would not have made any difference.³² Thus, instead of consulting with the Cabinet, as instructed, Hertzog announced to his ministers that he would proceed with drawing up a basis for negotiating with Smuts which would be released to the press – and would welcome the support and advice of those who were in agreement.³³ Malan received his words in stony silence. Soon, a new set of rumours – of an imminent split in the Cabinet – began to circulate.³⁴

The next caucus meeting was held on 14 February. Hertzog announced that he would act in accordance with his responsibility as a leader, and initiate talks with Smuts. He argued that he could not foresee the possibility of the NP surviving the next election on its own steam – which effectively meant that control of the country would be handed to Smuts and his Natal jingoes, who Hertzog claimed were the most powerful group in the SAP, in spite of their relatively small numbers. Coalition, on the other hand, would liberate Smuts from the jingoes in his party, and present an opportunity for all Afrikaners – both Afrikaans- and English-speaking – to work together. He reasoned that the nation would never forgive them for shirking their duty merely because Malan and the caucus disagreed.³⁵

Malan was not beaten back. He also rose to address the caucus, declaring that he was against coalition in principle, especially as coalition with Smuts's SAP would mean the neglect of the Afrikaners' language rights. He was especially incensed by this change of direction so soon after the caucus had taken a decision to ban any member who tried to achieve a coalition. Hertzog, however, was immovable. Threatening resignation, he informed the caucus that his proposal would

³¹ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 593; KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 10-11, 13-13a.

³² O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 151.

³³ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 13-13a.

³⁴ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 152.

³⁵ DFM, 1/1/982, "Korte aantekening van Hertzog se toespraak voor Koukus NP toe hy sy voorneme om Koalisie deur te sit aangekondig het (deur Ds. C.W.M. du Toit)"; *Die Burger*, 6 March 1933.

be handed to the press for publication that afternoon, and a second copy sent to Smuts.³⁶ The caucus were not, however, told its contents, and the matter was not brought to a vote.³⁷ Instead, Hertzog declared that he would lay the matter before a party congress – which could choose a new leader if they disagreed with him.³⁸

Malan, who must have been bristling with impotent anger, seized upon one of the most powerful weapons in his arsenal: his unfettered access to *Die Burger*. Geyer was called to his office in the parliamentary buildings – where the anti-coalition MPs had assembled. Malan’s plan was to release a press statement of his own to be published simultaneously with Hertzog’s. Geyer was pained to inform him that Hertzog was one step ahead: he had obviously foreseen such a plan – and therefore his private secretary had informed *Die Burger* that the statement would only be delivered to its office late that evening – on condition that it would not be shown to anyone. It was therefore impossible for Malan to attack the contents of Hertzog’s proposal. Frustrated, but undeterred, Malan wrote a news article for *Die Burger*.³⁹ It appeared on the front page – next to Hertzog’s press statement. In it, Malan exposed the divisions within the Cabinet and the caucus for all to see, and presented a damning account of Hertzog’s authoritarianism. The country was informed that neither the caucus nor the entire Cabinet had even seen the document, and therefore neither body had given its approval.⁴⁰ Such an audacious step to undermine Hertzog could not have endeared Malan to his Prime Minister.

Hertzog’s proposed basis for agreement itself, however, was a masterstroke. It contained seven principles – each based on an issue which had more or less been settled between the two parties during the previous years, and phrased ambiguously enough to leave remaining points of contention open to interpretation.⁴¹ Smuts was now given the cue to come out into the open. Within hours after receiving the basis (and before it appeared in the press), he wrote to Hertzog that he was willing to discuss cooperation between the two parties. The next day, while the members of Parliament were still pouring over their newspapers, the two leaders met. The meeting was a friendly one, and it was agreed that they would meet again, accompanied by their respective lieutenants, Duncan and Havenga.⁴² Through the course of the next week, the two parties continued to meet. The most contentious point of discussion was the issue of legislation concerning Africans –

³⁶ DFM 1/1/982, “Korte aantekening van Hertzog se toespraak voor Koukus NP toe hy sy voorneme om Koalisie deur te sit aagekondig het (deur Ds. C.W.M. du Toit)”; C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 594.

³⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 14.

³⁸ DFM, 1/1/982, “Korte aantekening van Hertzog se toespraak voor Koukus NP toe hy sy voorneme om Koalisie deur te sit aagekondig het (deur Ds. C.W.M. du Toit)”.

³⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 14-15.

⁴⁰ *Die Burger*, 15 February 1933.

⁴¹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 15.

⁴² C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 595.

Smuts did not want it to be included in the basis of agreement, while Hertzog insisted. Finally, a compromise was reached by adopting a diluted version of Hertzog's original formula.⁴³

While the negotiations were proceeding apace, there was some grumbling in the lobbies – which quietened considerably when it became known that the two leaders had agreed that the parties would not contest each other's seats in the next election. The MPs were therefore guaranteed re-election. To Malan, who was intent on preventing a coalition between the two parties, this provision provided the greatest headache. He had no illusions about the average MPs most pressing priority – few would risk their seat, and the parliamentary salary that accompanied it, if they could help it. Persuading them to follow him, instead of Hertzog, would be an exercise in futility. Again, therefore, Malan assembled his confidantes – Willie Hofmeyr, Stals, N.J. van der Merwe, Haywood and Geyer, to tell them of his next plan. He had decided that, for the time being, he would submit to coalition – but under protest. In so doing, he would take up the role of a watchdog. His fellow-politicians approved, while Geyer – the newspaper man – left his office in disgust at such an underhanded ploy.⁴⁴

Malan clearly realised that he was powerless to halt the process. Once Smuts and Hertzog had reached their agreement, the Cabinet Ministers were called in again – one by one – to determine whether or not they supported their leader. Malan voiced his opposition again – but it was ignored.⁴⁵ In retaliation, he employed the same tactic as before – and this time he was not frustrated in his attempt. When Hertzog and Smuts's seven points of agreement appeared in *Die Burger* on 24 February, it shared the front page with a manifesto – drafted by Malan and issued on behalf of himself and the twenty-nine members of the caucus who were opposed to a coalition. Wedged between the two statements was a news article which informed its readers that the NPs caucus was deeply divided. It had passed a resolution which stated that, while there were members who were opposed to coalition, the caucus pledged its support to General Hertzog. The anti-coalitionists abstained from the vote.⁴⁶

Malan's statement brought all of the dirty laundry out into the open by pointing out that, like Hertzog's initial decision to negotiate with Smuts, the agreement between the two leaders had been reached without the formal approval of the Cabinet, while the caucus had never authorised Hertzog to negotiate with Smuts in the first place. Malan, in short, refused to accept any responsibility for an agreement from which he had been excluded. He stated that, since he was faced with a *fait accompli*, he would abide by the coalition – under protest – while reserving the right to protest against the principle of coalition, and with the aim of safeguarding the NPs principles. In response

⁴³ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 156-7.

⁴⁴ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 16-18.

⁴⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 153-4.

⁴⁶ *Die Burger*, 25 February 1933.

to fears that he would break away from the party, Malan gave assurance that he would not do so unless he was forced by the actions of the other side. Following his damning criticism of the Prime Minister's conduct, and given Hertzog's infamous intolerance of criticism, Malan's pledge not to allow the quarrel to be reduced to a personal vendetta⁴⁷ would have been lost on Hertzog and his supporters.

Inevitably, Malan's attitude caused a stir. The *Rand Daily Mail* devoted an editorial to "The Judas Kiss of Dr. Malan".⁴⁸ Undeterred, Malan gave a speech in Worcester, during which he lambasted Hertzog's leadership style. In illustrating that Hertzog had presented the caucus with an accomplished fact and forced them to choose between coalition and his leadership, Malan explained that:

If I understood him correctly, I think he is planning on going to the congresses and saying: "Approve of what I have done, and if you do not, it is a sign of no confidence in me, and I must resign." I say unequivocally that this is not consultation. If this is Genl Hertzog's idea of leadership, I have to differ from him, because a leader's actions need to be in touch with his followers.⁴⁹

Malan was at a disadvantage, and he knew by now that a lack of strategy would enable one to be outmanoeuvred. At this stage, Hertzog had the advantage: he could promise MPs an unopposed re-election, and he knew how to utilise the cult of his personality. In his next announcement to the caucus, Hertzog set the tone for the party congresses which were to come: Nationalists would be placed in a position where 'they are faced with the choice of either approving Coalition or repudiating General Hertzog's leadership'.⁵⁰ Malan believed that it was imperative not to alienate those Nationalists who were secretly opposed to Coalition, but were inhibited by their fear for their seats and of Hertzog.⁵¹ At the same time, it was of grave concern to safeguard the positions of Malan's followers. The Cape National Party sent a delegation to Hertzog and succeeded in extracting an assurance from him that they would retain their party's nomination, and

⁴⁷ *Die Burger*, 25 February 1933.

⁴⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, 27 February 1933.

⁴⁹ *Die Burger*, 3 March 1933: "As ek hom reg begryp het, meen ek is hy van plan om na die kongresse te gaan en te sê: 'Keur goed wat ek gedoen het, en as julle dit nie doen nie, beteken dit wantroue in my en dat ek moet bedank.' Ek sê beslis dat dit nie raadpleging is nie. As dit genl. Hertzog se opvatting van leierskap is, moet ek van hom verskil, want 'n leier moet in voeling met sy volgelinge handel."

⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/990, D.F. Malan – J.S. Smit, 8 March 1933: 'hulle voor die keuse gestel word om óf Koalisie goed te keur óf anders die leierskap van Generaal Hertzog te repudieer.'

⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/990, D.F. Malan – J.S. Smit, 8 March 1933.

that they too would be able to stand unopposed in the next election in accordance with the agreement that had been reached with Smuts.⁵²

The tension was now transferred to a special party congress which the Cape National Party decided to convene at De Aar, on the Ides of March. Hertzog could already smell betrayal in his camp. Two weeks before the congress, seven of his Free State MPs, led by N.J. van der Merwe, visited him to declare their opposition to Coalition. In a statement that smacked of Malan's watchdog-plan, they gave the assurance that they respected Hertzog's person and would abide by Coalition, while guarding against the dangers that such an arrangement inevitably contained.⁵³ Hertzog refused their request to publish the correspondence, as their letter put their view in too positive a light, and did not place enough emphasis on his opposition to their opinion.⁵⁴

As the De Aar conference drew nearer, Hertzog acted increasingly like a bull in a china shop. Despite the fact that Malan had exposed his technique of playing on his followers' personal devotion to him, Hertzog continued to make it clear that he would resign if the party congresses did not approve of his decision – in order 'to...make way for the ringleader of the anti-cooperation policy.'⁵⁵ It was no longer a case of choosing between Hertzog and coalition. Hertzog's insinuations gave the impression that a palace coup was at hand: his faithful followers had to choose between him and Malan.

It had truly become a battle between the two men, while the others watched from the sidelines. In Cabinet, Malan now stood alone in his opposition to coalition. His faithful ally, Charlie Malan, had died suddenly on 5 February,⁵⁶ and with his death, one of the few men who possessed the ability to mediate between Malan and Hertzog disappeared.⁵⁷ Attie Fourie, Malan's fellow-minister from the Cape, was dithering: he told Hertzog that he would have supported him if it were not for his loyalty to Malan as his provincial leader,⁵⁸ while to Malan he denied that he had ever said such a thing – and asked to be given an opportunity to address the De Aar conference in order to repudiate Hertzog's false claim.⁵⁹

⁵² Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/3/2/2/1/1, "Notule Hoofbestuur: Notule van vergadering van die Daelikse Bestuur gehou te Cape Town op 27 Februarie 1933"; *Ibid.*: "28 Feb. 1933 – MEMO van Komitee wat namens die Hoofbestuur met Genl. Hertzog onderhandel het in verband met die Koalisie".

⁵³ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, N.J. van der Merwe et al – J.B.M. Hertzog, 1 March 1933.

⁵⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, J.B.M. Hertzog – C.R. Swart, 9 March 1933.

⁵⁵ *Die Burger*, 6 March 1933: 'om...plek te maak vir die voorman van die anti-samewerking-beleid.'

⁵⁶ *Die Burger*, 6 February 1933.

⁵⁷ W. du Plessis, 'James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens', in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 62.

⁵⁸ *Die Burger* 6 March 1933.

⁵⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 25.

To those who arrived in De Aar on 14 March, the tension was palpable. The town was awash with rumours – especially in front of the hotel where a crowd of delegates had gathered. Here they were busily engaged in scores of simultaneous conversations – the sound of which must have resembled the humming of a beehive – and Malan’s inner circle was no exception. One of the main rumours was that Hertzog’s northern lieutenants had put him up to force a break with Malan. Everyone present therefore anticipated a confrontation.⁶⁰

It was clear to all that the disagreement over coalition was a provincial clash. Apart from the Cape, the other Nationalist strongholds were certain to be a clean sweep for Hertzog: those in the Transvaal who were opposed did not have any leaders to organise their dissent, while the Free State – where the opposition to coalition was stronger than in the Transvaal – was firmly under the spell of Hertzog’s personality. In the Cape, however, there was not only widespread opposition to Hertzog’s scheme, but also a leader to head the charge. For his part, Hertzog was confident that the Free State and Transvaal would support him and, prior to the De Aar conference, Hertzog had declared in public that he anticipated the Cape Congress to follow their leader’s example by expressing their misgivings, but that it would nevertheless give him their grudging but unconditional support.⁶¹

When the two leaders entered the hall on morning of 15 March, they received the customary applause. The Cape’s lone coalitionist MP, Louw Steytler, felt particularly aggrieved that Hertzog only received the same polite applause as Malan and, waving his arms, prompted the audience to give Hertzog a standing ovation – to which they politely acquiesced.⁶² It had been arranged that Malan would give the opening speech, followed by Hertzog. Attie Fourie would have the last word.⁶³

Malan, for his part, was not unsettled by Hertzog’s presence. When he delivered his speech, he did it with his characteristic calmness, but did not moderate his criticism of Hertzog’s conduct. He revealed to his listeners that it was Hertzog who had initiated the coalition-talks while Parliament was still debating Smuts’s motion of no confidence. The negotiations were therefore not a reaction to Smuts’s conciliatory reply to the debate on 1 February, as Hertzog had tried to lead the public to believe – the machinations behind the scenes had begun long before that. Step by step, Malan addressed and refuted every angry accusation that Hertzog had flung at him during the previous weeks, and reiterated his criticism of Hertzog’s authoritarian methods. He stated

⁶⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 25, 19-20.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 19; *Die Burger*, 6 March 1933.

⁶² KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 21.

⁶³ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/3/2/2/1/1, Notule Hoofbestuur: “Notule van Spesiale Hoofbestuursvergadering gehou op De Aar op Dinsdag 14 Maart 1933”.

unequivocally that it was not his intention to split the party, placing special emphasis on the cost of the previous great political split – that of 1913, when Hertzog had broken away from Botha. It was a not-too-subtle hint that it was Hertzog who had the history of being a political warmonger rather than a negotiator. Malan also attacked Hertzog's claims that he was acting as a leader, and would as such take responsibility for his actions. He declared that, while it was indeed the leader's duty to lead, responsibility had to be shared between the leader and the party. Malan disputed Hertzog's assertion that coalition would bring Afrikaners in both parties together while liberating Smuts from the Natal jingoes: Smuts had made it clear on numerous occasions that he would not abandon his jingoes. As far as Malan was concerned, there was no hope of achieving any Afrikaner nationalist priorities while in a coalition with the entire SAP, as this particular section had consistently undermined all of his attempts to pass legislation to extend the Afrikaners' language rights. Malan did not mention the flag crisis – he did not need to. Finally, Malan exhorted his followers to remain true to their ideals: 'We are in a dark night and I ask you: let your ideals be your star and keep your eyes fixed on that star. If you keep to your course, you will not become lost.'⁶⁴ Malan then concluded his speech by introducing a motion to determine the conference's stance on coalition. The introduction contained everything that Hertzog had expected it would – but it was delivered in such biting language that his victory was turned into humiliation:

The congress declares that, in principle, it is opposed to coalition with the Opposition. Since coalition has already been made an accomplished fact, and its possible rejection by the party-congress might be equated with no confidence in Genl Hertzog and a rejection of his leadership – which in turn will lead to grave divisions – this congress decides to abide by it.⁶⁵

The rest of the motion gave an outline of how the anti-coalitionists had to conduct themselves: That they would support and respect the government, while guarding over the NPs principles. Finally, the motion expressed its confidence in Hertzog.⁶⁶ To those who were present, Malan's speech was another of his great orations.

Hertzog, in contrast, was livid, as Malan had clearly studied all of his arguments in favour of coalition, and refuted every one of them. The proverbial rug had been forcefully pulled from under

⁶⁴ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933: 'Ons is in 'n donker nag en ek vra u: laat u ideale wees u ster en hou u oog op die ster gerig. As u koers hou, sal u nie verdwaal nie.'

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Die kongres verklaar hom in beginsel teen koalisie met die Opposisie. Aangesien sodanige koalisie egter reeds 'n voldonge feit gemaak is en 'n moontlike verwerping daarvan deur die partykongres gelyk mag word wantroue in genl. Hertzog en verwerping van sy leierskap wat op sy beurt weer tot ernstige verdeeldheid moet lei, so besluit hierdie kongres om hom derhalwe neer te lê daarby'.

⁶⁶ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933.

his feet. Therefore, when it was his turn to speak, his speech was nothing more than an incoherent rant. The journalists who had to report his words stumbled about as much as the speaker.⁶⁷

As he had done previously, Hertzog insisted that the NP would not be able to win the next election – and again used Natal’s English-speaking community as the bogeyman. His audience was told that, if the SAP gained unfettered power, these people would see to it that Natal became an English province where Afrikaners would not have any language rights. Hertzog was still raving about Malan’s accusation that he had acted autocratically when his speech was interrupted by the arrival of the lunch hour. It was decided that he would resume his speech after lunch.⁶⁸

The delegates were noticeably dejected as they streamed out of the hall. Everyone now believed that the rumours were true: Hertzog had indeed come to De Aar to destroy Malan’s dissent. As a result, they felt torn between their loyalty to Malan as their leader and their wish to preserve the party’s unity. If they accepted Malan’s strongly-worded motion, they knew that Hertzog would walk out. For this reason, many thought that Malan’s motion would be defeated if brought to a vote. To Albert Geyer, it was clear that another compromise had to be found. He knew Malan well enough to know that, unlike Hertzog, he never made threats – but if his motion was defeated, it would be he who would resign – which would also tear the party apart. Back in his hotel room, which he shared with Stephen le Roux, Geyer came to the conclusion that another motion – which would in essence be the same as Malan’s, but in more diplomatic language – had to be drafted. Le Roux, who walked into the room while Geyer was mulling the idea, agreed, and together they drafted a new resolution. With the new formula safely in Le Roux’s pocket, they returned to the hall, where proceedings resumed.⁶⁹

The lunch hour did nothing to improve Hertzog’s temper. At best, his mood had deteriorated.⁷⁰ When he resumed his speech, he fell back on the tactic he knew best: over and over he repeated his threat to resign if the congress did not approve of coalition. His attacks were no longer limited to Malan, however: he now attacked the entire Cape congress, and insisted on its unqualified support:

I will not be satisfied by an ambiguous decision. I either have the trust of the nation and the party that I lead, or I don’t. As far as I am concerned, I will insist that a decision has to be

⁶⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die ineenstorting”, 22.

⁶⁸ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933; KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 22.

⁶⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 22-4.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

unambiguous and unconditional, and if you do not comply, you will have to excuse me when I say that, as far as the Cape is concerned, I cease to be the leader.⁷¹

To add insult to injury, Hertzog stated that he would remain the leader of the Free State, Transvaal and Natal for as long as they wanted him.⁷² He had successfully taken the role of the victim upon himself to make it appear that it was the Cape who disowned him, and not vice versa. Unfortunately, Hertzog had severely misjudged his audience. His cult of personality did not have the same power to the south of the Orange River as it did on its northern banks, and the Nationalists of the Cape Province were certainly not used to being threatened by their leader. ‘We are not children, after all, for Hertzog to treat us like this,’ one would afterwards grumble to another.⁷³

The growing hostility towards Hertzog was hardly moderated when Attie Fourie finally received his turn to speak. He had been given the opportunity on the premise that he intended to address claims about his loyalty. His loyalty quickly became apparent, as he implored the congress to preserve the party’s unity by supporting Hertzog.⁷⁴

With the speeches finally out of the way, some of the delegates began asking Hertzog questions, while others gave impromptu addresses. The overwhelming consensus was that the party’s unity had to be preserved. Yet, the observers’ eyes were drawn to Malan where he sat on stage, surrounded by his closest confidantes – Willie Hofmeyr, Karl Bremer, Paul Sauer, Stephen le Roux, Alet de Villiers, C.W.M. du Toit and Albert Geyer. None of them had had the chance to speak to Malan during the lunch hour, and their thoughts were now concentrated on the same matter: how to convince Malan to modify his draft resolution. The audience suggested one resolution after the other – none of which received approval – and even Malan began to realise that his resolution had to be modified. He tried to suggest an amended version, to which Hertzog reacted with such venom that the delegates became restless. Hertzog reiterated that he would not accept anything but unconditional support, and rejected all other resolutions offered by Malan’s supporters with the same vehemence: to observers, it was clear that he was struggling to control his anger. He picked up his hat, and sat with it in his hands as if he would walk out of the hall at any moment. Through the afternoon his words became increasingly belligerent – but with every outburst, he lost another possible supporter. The situation degenerated to the point where one of the delegates lost all reverence for the Prime Minister and shouted loudly ‘It is not true!’ to one of Hertzog’s

⁷¹ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933: ‘Ek gaan geen genoeë neem met ‘n dubbelsinnige besluit nie. Ek het óf die vertroue van die volk en die party wat ek lei óf ek het dit nie. Wat my betref sal ek daarop staan dat ‘n besluit ondubbelsinnig moet wees en onvoorwaardelik en as u dit nie doen nie, moet u my verskoon as ek sê dat ek, wat Kaapland betref, ophou leier te wees.’

⁷² *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933.

⁷³ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 28: ‘Ons is mos nie kinders om deur Hertzog so behandel te word nie.’

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 25; *Die Burger*, 16 March 1915.

accusations,⁷⁵ which jolted everyone back to their senses. Karl Bremer called one of Hertzog's lieutenants, Tom Naude, aside and, as he later recounted to Geyer, asked him directly:

“Did you come here with the intention to split?” “Because”, he added, “I can tell you this, if the old man continues in this vein, you will have your way. And then the majority of our Cape MPs will come crawling to you just to keep their seats, but seven of the strongest will remain with Dr.”⁷⁶

Naude assured Bremer that a rupture in the party was not their intention, and went over to speak to Hertzog, who appeared to calm down. Only at this point did Stephen le Roux, who had remained silent while one motion after the other was suggested and rejected, retrieve his and Geyer's resolution from his pocket, where it had since become crumpled. Tom Naude read it to Hertzog, while Le Roux read it to Malan. It was clear to all that the two leaders had reached the point where they were desperate to break the deadlock. To everyone's relief, both agreed to the resolution – yet, the deadlock could not be broken without some measure of melodrama. The resolution could not be presented in its scrawled and crumpled state, and had to be rewritten. The adrenaline must have been pumping through the veins of those on the stage. Malan's confidantes were certain that the audience – who did not know that the scurrying on the stage meant that an agreement had finally been reached – was about to reach boiling point. Stephen le Roux hurried to rewrite his and Geyer's resolution, and as Geyer described it:

Hastily he grabs a piece of paper and begins writing. His pen is dry! With feverish haste, Alet comes running with another. It will not write either. Again leaves to search for another. She finds a pencil and comes, breathless with excitement, with the cry: “Here, write, but hurry, hurry, they are splitting!” With the pencil still in his one hand and the piece of paper in the other, Stephen runs out onto the stage; another speaker has just sat down; Stephen strains forward, reads his motion and, with tears rolling down his cheeks, he makes an impressive little impromptu speech.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 27: ‘Dit is nie so nie!’

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 28: ‘Het julle hierheen gekom met die bedoeling om te breek?’ ‘Want’, het hy daarby gevoeg, ‘ek kan dit sê, as die Oubaas so voortgaan dat julle jul sin kry. En dan sal die meerderheid van ons Kaaplandse Volksraadslede voor julle kom kruip om tog hul setels te behou, maar sewe van die sterkstes sal saam met Dr. uitstaan.’

⁷⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting”, 29: ‘Haastig gryp hy ‘n stuk papier en begin skryf. Sy pen is droog! Met koorsagtige haas kom Alet aangehardloop met ‘n ander. Dié wil ook nie skryf nie. Weer weg om ‘n ander te soek. Sy kry ‘n potlood en kom, uitasem van opgewondenheid, met die uitroep: ‘Dè, skryf, maar maak gou, maak gou, hulle breek!’ Nog met die potlood in die een hand en die vel papier in die ander, hardloop Stephen agter die skerms uit; ‘n ander spreker het net gaan sit;

Malan rose with the words 'I accept the motion!'⁷⁸ He was rewarded by thunderous applause. All eyes turned to Hertzog. He and the chairman exchanged a few whispered words, whereupon the chairman rose to announce that 'General Hertzog has authorised me to say that he also accepts the motion!'⁷⁹ Hertzog nodded to the audience.⁸⁰

The crisis was over, but Hertzog had unknowingly fallen into a trap. Malan's statement may have been strongly worded, but it gave Hertzog the congress's support and merely counselled the Cape's Nationalists to act as watchdogs. The tactful wording of Geyer and Le Roux's motion, however, disguised the fact that it equipped the watchdogs with teeth. It read:

This congress, although it does not pronounce its approval of coalition as such, submits to the agreement as reached between Genl Hertzog and Genl Smuts; and expects of the Nationalists in the Cape Province that they will support the cooperative government in good faith as long as the cooperative government protects and preserves the National Party's principles.⁸¹

It set a condition for the government: if it did not uphold the NPs principles, the Nationalists of the Cape would be justified in withdrawing their support. Malan studied it in the train on the way back to Cape Town and, along with his lieutenants, grasped the fact that they had achieved a clear victory. In the Cape, at least, the balance of power was tilted in their favour.

Malan would not have had any illusions about the limits of his power. Hertzog may have been beaten in the Cape Province, but his tour through the north was a triumph. Transvaal's provincial congress gave its unanimous approval to coalition, while the Free State and Natal gave their support after a majority of delegates voted in favour of similar resolutions, which also included motions of full confidence in Hertzog.⁸²

The pieces were in place, therefore, for Hertzog to form his new government. The chances of Malan being included were slim. Shortly after the De Aar congress, Malan declared in public that

Stephen beur vorentoe, doen sy voorstel en, terwyl die transe oor sy wange rol steek hy 'n impromptu-toespraak af wat indrukwekkend was.'

⁷⁸ A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 29: 'Ek aanvaar daardie voorstel!'

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Generaal Hertzog magtig my om te sê dat hy ook die voorstel aanvaar!'

⁸⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 29.

⁸¹ *Die Burger*, 16 March 1933: 'Hierdie kongres, hoewel dit nie sy goedkeuring oor koalisie as sodanig uitspreek nie, lê hom neer by die ooreenkoms soos getref tussen genl. Hertzog en genl. Smuts; en verwag van die Nasionaliste in Kaapland dat hulle die samewerkende regering in goeie trou sal ondersteun solank die samewerkende regering die Nasionale Party beginsels, beskerm en behou.'

⁸² H.B. Thom, *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1988), 135.

he was not amenable to serving in a coalition Cabinet.⁸³ Thus, when Malan returned to Pretoria a few days later, it was to put his affairs in order. He was not kept in suspense for long. On 25 March, he received a letter from Hertzog to inform him that the new Cabinet would soon be constituted. The letter was tersely polite and, after thanking Malan for his work as a Cabinet Minister, Hertzog concluded with the words: 'Furthermore, I wish to give you the assurance that it grieves me deeply that circumstances have made any further cooperation in the Ministry impossible.'⁸⁴ In equally strained language, Malan replied to Hertzog that 'I too would like to assure you of my heartfelt regret that circumstances have made our continued cooperation in the Ministry impossible.'⁸⁵ He informed Hertzog that he would be able to hand his departments to his successor within two days.⁸⁶ He did not attend the following day's Cabinet meeting, and did not wait to see the new Cabinet inaugurated. Instead, on Wednesday evening 29 March, Malan boarded the train to Cape Town. It was the evening before Hertzog tendered his resignation in order to form a new government. To *Die Burger*, it was a poignant moment: Malan lost his Cabinet position while still on the train. He left Pretoria as a minister and arrived in Cape Town as a Member of Parliament.⁸⁷

The new Cabinet contained few surprises. As had been agreed, it contained six NP and six SAP members. Hertzog retained his position as Prime Minister, while Smuts became his deputy.⁸⁸ The Nationalist ministers consisted entirely of those who had supported Hertzog.⁸⁹ Attie Fourie was among them – he had certainly earned his place after his support for Hertzog at the De Aar congress.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, he was still torn by his conflicting loyalty to both Malan and Hertzog: he wrote to Malan explaining that he had remained in the Cabinet in order to continue his good work uplifting the farming community and the poor. He begged Malan to continue regarding him as a colleague, and promised to use his influence to temper Hertzog's resentment of *Die Burger*.⁹¹ It was a case of the tail endeavouring to wag the dog.

Malan returned to his house in Cape Town, from where he watched political developments closely. Apart from the Cape Province, the greatest anti-coalition struggle took place in Hertzog's own camp. Although the NP and SAP had agreed not to oppose each other in the various constituencies, securing a nomination from one's own party for the coming elections was not a foregone conclusion: in many cases, a candidate's nomination depended on his support for

⁸³ H.B. Thom, *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie*, 136; *Die Burger*, 29 July 1933.

⁸⁴ DFM, 1/1/993, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 25 March 1933: 'Verder wens ik u die versekering te gee, dat dit mij innig spijt dat omstandighede verdere samewerking in die Ministerie onmogelik gemaak het.'

⁸⁵ DFM, 1/1/994, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 27 March 1933: 'Ook ek wil graag verseker van my innige spyt dat omstandighede verdere samewerking tussen ons in die Ministerie onmoontlik gemaak het.'

⁸⁶ DFM, 1/1/994, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 27 March 1933.

⁸⁷ DFM, 1/1/998, A.P.J. Fourie – D.F. Malan, 1 April 1933; *Die Burger*, 28 March 1933.

⁸⁸ Central archives repository (hereafter SAB), J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A32, Vol. 31, File 101, Cabinet List.

⁸⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 156.

⁹⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Ineenstorting", 25.

⁹¹ DFM, 1/1/998, A.P.J. Fourie – D.F. Malan, 1 February 1933.

coalition.⁹² It was therefore no small victory for the Free State's young anti-coalitionists when they succeeded in retaining their candidacies in their respective constituencies. It was with relief, therefore, when C.R. Swart wrote to N.J. van der Merwe to congratulate him with his nomination. They had both had to fight an uphill battle, which Swart was certain was due to meddling from 'higher circles'.⁹³ It is clear that Malan recognised these young Free State Nationalists as potential allies whom he had to nurture. He sent letters of congratulation to both Van der Merwe and Swart,⁹⁴ in which he congratulated each on their nomination which they received despite adversity:

I know that you achieved victory in the face of suspicion that was cast against you publicly, as well as public and secret subversion, also from the highest authority. To me it is a sign that the heart of the old Free State is still healthy in its core, and that the reaction to what has happened is certain to come. Time is on our side.⁹⁵

All the candidates now began to prepare for Election Day, which was scheduled for 17 May. Malan's election to his own constituency was not unopposed. Since the 1929 election, Malan had had to put up with the antics of Dr W.P. Steenkamp, a local politician who had his eye on Calvinia's constituency, and who regarded it as his highest calling to be a thorn in Malan's side.⁹⁶ He had never opposed Malan in an election, but had represented the neighbouring constituency of Namaqualand.⁹⁷ The 1933 election, however, was the first election in which women could exercise their right to vote, and stand as candidates. Steenkamp's wife, Mrs A.C.S. Steenkamp, therefore opposed Malan as an independent candidate, while her husband defended his own constituency – also as an independent – against a Nationalist candidate.⁹⁸ The Steenkamps certainly did not endear themselves to the Nationalists. Both *Die Burger* and Malan were rather disturbed at him having to fight an election battle during what was supposed to be an unopposed election – and that against a woman whose accusations against Malan were identical to those made by her husband. As a result,

⁹² H.B. Thom, *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie*, 138.

⁹³ Free State archives repository (hereafter VAB), N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, C.R. Swart – N.J. van der Merwe, 11 April 1933.

⁹⁴ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 15 April 1933; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 15 April 1933.

⁹⁵ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 15 April 1933: 'Ek weet dat jy die oorwinning behaal het in die aangesig van openbare verdagmakery en openbare en geheime teenwerking, ook van die kant van die hoogste gesag. Dis vir my 'n teken dat die hart van die ou Vrystaat nog kerngesond is en dat die reaksie op wat gebeur het, seker gaan kom. Die tyd is aan ons kant.'

⁹⁶ DFM, 1/1/837, W.P. Steenkamp – A. Steenkamp, 21 March 1929; DFM, 1/1/838, A. Steenkamp – W.P. Steenkamp, 2 April 1929; DFM, 1/1/839, A. Steenkamp – D.F. Malan, 3 April 1929; DFM, 1/1/842, I. Frank – D.F. Malan, 7 May 1929; DFM, 1/1/845, J. van Wyk – D.F. Malan, 20 May 1929.

⁹⁷ R. Weide and S. Weide, *Die Volledige Verkiegingsuitslae van Suid-Afrika 1910-1986* (Pretoria: Private Publication, 1987).

⁹⁸ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1983), 106.

Malan dismissed her as her husband's pawn, while he, his supporters in Calvinia and *Die Burger* made it clear that her 'biting' attacks on him were unbecoming for a woman.⁹⁹ Mrs Steenkamp was, nevertheless, able to mobilise the constituency's SAP supporters to such an extent that there were genuine fears that Malan could lose his seat. Calvinia's Nationalists appealed to the SAP to honour its undertaking not to oppose incumbent candidates. The prospective drama of Malan being defeated by SAP supporters, in defiance of an election agreement, prompted Smuts to visit Calvinia in order to urge its voters to cast their ballots for Malan. Although Smuts made it clear that Malan had not requested his assistance, his visit was interpreted by many as a response to an emergency signal from Malan. In reaction to these rumours, *Die Burger* wrote that Malan was clearly in trouble. If he did not ask for Smuts's help, his party would have done so on his behalf.¹⁰⁰ In spite of this mini-drama, Malan retained his seat by a clear majority – although his margin shrank when compared to the previous election.¹⁰¹

In the weeks following the election, Malan was quiet. He did not release the customary statement provincial leaders normally made after the results were announced.¹⁰² In a speech to those who gathered to celebrate his fifty-ninth birthday, however, he declared that it was time for the Nationalists to be chastened and return to their ideals.¹⁰³

The new Parliament only sat for a few weeks, and went into recess on 22 June. It was one of the most uneventful parliamentary sessions on record, and dealt mostly with financial affairs.¹⁰⁴ The anti-coalitionist camp, however, was disconcerted. Not only were they upset at the new government's sympathetic treatment of the mining magnates – who had made enormous profits due to the abandonment of the gold standard – but a range of voices began to chime in favour of a fusion between the two parties. By mid-June, both Malan and *Die Burger* began sounding the alarm against such a process.¹⁰⁵

Malan believed that the time had arrived for the watchdog to start barking. It was therefore arranged that he would write a weekly column in *Die Burger*. It would be placed next to the editorial with the title "Op die Wagtoring" ("On the Watchtower"), and would be published under his name. The first instalment appeared on Saturday 8 July 1933.¹⁰⁶ Ultimately, it was Malan at his best. He had direct access to the public, time to formulate his thoughts, and no party-line to toe. For

⁹⁹ *Die Burger*, 22 April 1933; *Die Burger*, 28 April 1933.

¹⁰⁰ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 106-7; H.B. Thom, *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie*, 141.

¹⁰¹ R. Weide and S. Weide, *Die Volledige Verkiegingsuitslae van Suid-Afrika 1910-1986*.

¹⁰² H.B. Thom, *Dr. D.F. Malan en Koalisie*, 142.

¹⁰³ *Die Burger*, 23 May 1933.

¹⁰⁴ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 114.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 110-7.

¹⁰⁶ *Die Burger*, 8 July 1933.

the first time in years, he was able to think in terms of pure, unadulterated ideals. The columns were not only pieces of political commentary: they became the articles of his political faith. They also revealed the ideological differences between Malan and Hertzog. At a time when Hertzog was reading Oswald Spengler and gradually losing his faith in the democratic system, and Afrikaner intellectuals were pointing to the promising prospects of totalitarianism in Central and Eastern Europe, Malan held firm to his belief in Western European democracy.¹⁰⁷

Malan was, however, inevitably drawn back into the political fray. In August, the first of a second round of provincial congresses were held. This time, the issue was not coalition. Hertzog had declared that coalition as such could only be temporary, as there were still some divisions. He argued that these hindering divisions had to be erased by ‘add[ing] to together what belongs together. Afrikanerdom in South Africa, the English-speaking and the Dutch-speaking, the Nationalist and the SAP – Afrikanerdom belongs together and ought to be added together.’¹⁰⁸ The Transvaal congress gave its blessing to a fusion between the two parties.¹⁰⁹

Attie Fourie, meanwhile, was becoming more and more disconcerted at the direction in which the political situation was developing. Hertzog’s unequivocal support for fusion – and Malan’s equally unyielding opposition to it – could only lead to calamity for the Party. He wrote to Malan to ask whether he would be willing to meet with Hertzog in a final attempt to reach an understanding. If Malan’s reply was positive, he would approach Hertzog with a similar suggestion.¹¹⁰ Malan’s response was gloomy: he was willing to engage in a last-ditch effort to prevent a split in the party, but he did not hold out much hope.¹¹¹ He could foresee that Hertzog would use the same tactic to have fusion accepted as he had in the case of coalition. It would be a matter of choosing between fusion and his leadership. There was, however, a glimmer of hope – not everyone in the Free State was amenable to being forced into such a situation. Malan had begun to receive invitations from Free State constituencies, requesting that he speak to audiences there. He regarded it as a sign that there was some underground resistance to Hertzog’s mission.¹¹² Nevertheless, he prudently chose not to enter the lion’s den, as it would have given Hertzog too much ammunition in his claims that Malan was actively undermining him.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ *Die Burger*, 15 July 1933.

¹⁰⁸ DFM, 1/1/1019, “Toespraak gehou deur Generaal Hertzog op die Nasionale Party kongres te Pretoria, op 9 Augustus 1933”: ‘bymekaar te voeg wat bymekaar hoort. Die Afrikanerdom in Suid-Afrika, die Engelssprekende en die Hollandsprekende, die Nasionalis en die Sap – die Afrikanerdom hoort bymekaar en behoort bymekaar gevoeg te word.’

¹⁰⁹ *Die Burger*, 2 September 1933.

¹¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/1020, A.P.J. Fourie – D.F. Malan, 11 August 1933.

¹¹¹ DFM, 1/1/1021, D.F. Malan – A.P.J. Fourie, 14 August 1933.

¹¹² INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, File 3/1/11, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 12 August 1933.

¹¹³ *Die Burger*, 2 September 1933.

Malan's fears were confirmed, and Attie Fourie's hopes dashed, when the Natal congress followed the Transvaal's example and gave its support to fusion.¹¹⁴ It added fuel to Hertzog's fire – he now openly began to rail against the enemy of fusion: D.F. Malan.¹¹⁵ Malan, for his part, refused to be drawn into Hertzog's portrayal of the disagreement as a personality clash.¹¹⁶ Attie Fourie quietly dropped his scheme of arranging a meeting between the two leaders.¹¹⁷

At the beginning of September, Hertzog embarked on a tour of the Free State. His speeches were belligerent and contained heated attacks on Malan, but, as Malan scrutinised his statements,¹¹⁸ a consistent picture began to emerge from the numerous contradictions that characterised any of Hertzog's speeches. It seemed to Malan that Hertzog was reaching for the elusive mirage of reunion¹¹⁹ which they had all failed to capture in 1920, and which Tielman Roos had continued to preach throughout the decade. Others recognised it as well. From the Transvaal, the young J.G. Strijdom wrote to C.R. Swart that, while Hertzog was portraying the matter as a personal dispute between himself and Malan, it appeared as if Hertzog intended fusing only with the Afrikaner section of the SAP – the Natal jingoes would be excluded from a new party.¹²⁰ It represented a ray of hope. If it was a matter of reunion (*hereniging*) rather than fusion (*samesmelting*), Malan could see himself contemplating the possibility. He began making some conciliatory noises in his newspaper column. He made it clear that he believed in nationalism and that he did not believe in fusion – but he also believed that there were sections of the SAP with whom the nationalists could reunite, once nationalism had been safeguarded.¹²¹

With these encouraging new possibilities, a delegation of the Free State's Head Committee, led by N.J. van der Merwe, visited Malan to moot the possibility of reopening negotiations with Hertzog. Malan's reply was positive: it was not his concern to preserve the NP as such – rather, it was nationalism that he wanted to protect. Nationalism would not be threatened if it was merely a reunion of like-minded Afrikaners and not the fusion of two parties – one of which contained a section that was hostile to Afrikaner nationalism:

If I understood Gen. Hertzog's statements in the Free State correctly, he wants reunion and he has rejected fusion. In other words, he wants to bring together only those who, through their inner convictions, belong together, regardless of race or language. He therefore refuses to unite indiscriminately with all the sections within the SAP, as it exists today. If this is the

¹¹⁴ *Die Burger*, 2 September 1933.

¹¹⁵ *Die Burger*, 26 August 1933.

¹¹⁶ *Die Burger*, 2 September 1933.

¹¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/1031, A.P.J. Fourie – D.F. Malan, 25 September 1933.

¹¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/1023, "Genl. Hertzog oor samesmelting in die Vrystaat."

¹¹⁹ *Die Burger*, 16 September 1933.

¹²⁰ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 14 September 1933.

¹²¹ *Die Burger*, 16 September 1933.

case, I am of the opinion that there is no fundamental difference between me and Gen. Hertzog and, in the general direction that he wants to follow; I can give him my full unreserved support.¹²²

Armed with a copy of Malan's letter, the Free State deputation went to visit Hertzog. Hertzog was delighted that Malan had finally accepted his point of view – that of a union between the two parties.¹²³

It was an unfortunate turn of phrase and of semantics, which ultimately came down to the difference between two letters: an *h* and a *v*.¹²⁴ *Hereniging* (reunion) harked back to the failed attempt of 1920 to reunite those who had once belonged to Louis Botha's SAP before Hertzog's departure in 1913 created a political split in Afrikanerdom. *Vereniging* (union), however, was synonymous with fusion. It entailed the amalgamation of the two parties – one of which now contained the former Unionists who, until 1920, were Botha's official Opposition, and had become part of the SAP in 1920 after Smuts and Hertzog's half-hearted attempt at reunion failed. Thus, when Malan expressed his willingness to consider reunion, it was based on the idea of a united Afrikaner nation, which briefly existed between 1910 and 1912. To Malan – intent on safeguarding Afrikaner nationalism – the English-speaking imperialists could not have any place in a reconstituted party. Smuts, on the other hand, was consistent in his assertions that he would not abandon his former Unionists. As far as Malan was concerned, the issue of the Unionists had to be dealt with before any talks between the two parties could proceed.¹²⁵

In its interview with Hertzog, however, the Free State deputation failed to cut to the ideological core of the problem. Instead, they wanted Hertzog's assurances that republican propaganda would be allowed within the new party, and that the right to secession and neutrality would be upheld. Hertzog was certain that members' rights to propagate any form of governance would be respected, and regarded the matter of secession and neutrality as one of purely academic value, since it had been solved long before. He did not want to include it in his negotiations with Smuts as the inclusion of the question of secession and neutrality in the new party's programme of principles would imply that he doubted whether these rights existed: it would reopen a debate that he was intent on avoiding. The deputation was content with his answers, and both parties left the

¹²² DFM, 1/1/1026, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 16 September 1933: 'As ek Gen. Hertzog se verklaring in die Vrystaat goed verstaan dan wil hy aan die ander kant hereniging hê en het hy samesmelting verwerp. Hy wil m.a.w. by mekaar bring alleen wat kragtens innerlike oortuiging by mekaar tuishoort, afgesien van ras of taal. Hy weier daarom om te verenig met alle elemente sonder onderskeid binnekant die SAP, soos die vandag bestaan. As dit die geval is, beskou ek dat daar geen fundamentele verskil tussen my en Gen. Hertzog bestaan nie en dat in die algemene rigting, wat hy wil volg, ek hom met volle vrymoedigheid kan ondersteun.'

¹²³ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 167.

¹²⁴ W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 62.

¹²⁵ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

interview feeling satisfied that the misunderstanding between Malan and Hertzog would soon be a thing of the past.¹²⁶ Hertzog himself was so relieved at the prospect of his troubles being at an end that he and his private secretary feasted on spaghetti that evening – much to the chagrin of Mrs Hertzog, who was offended that they preferred such an outlandish dish to the food she had prepared.¹²⁷ Attie Fourie wrote to Malan that ‘The sun rose more brightly for me this morning, after I learned that you and the general discovered that the difference that apparently existed between you, does not exist after all.’¹²⁸

That neither the Free State’s Head Committee nor Hertzog grasped the ideological current in Malan’s words is clear. A few days after the delegation’s visit, Hertzog wrote to N.J. van der Merwe:

I have read the copy of Dr Malan’s letter...to you, with regards to the issue of Union, and do not see any reason for placing upon it an interpretation that differs from that which you presented to me...namely that Dr Malan no longer objects to Union, as long as it can take place on a satisfactory basis of party principles...I am glad to find that Dr Malan is now ready, not only to support me in my endeavour to bring about such a Union, but also to actively cooperate in finding a satisfactory basis for union. I therefore assume that no obstacles would be placed in the way for the Congresses at Port Elizabeth and at Bloemfontein to approve of Union in principle...I am convinced that, without the sacrifice of any cardinal principle, by either the National Party or the South African Party, an acceptable basis for Union can be laid down, on which a party can be based in which the Nationalist, no less than the SAP member, can feel completely at home...¹²⁹

Van der Merwe, who clearly did not realise that fusion and union were synonyms, while union and reunion were antonyms, sent Hertzog’s letter to Malan, noting that cooperation with the

¹²⁶ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 605-7.

¹²⁷ W. du Plessis, “James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens”, in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 62-3.

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/1029, A.P.J. Fourie – D.F. Malan, 23 September 1933: ‘Die son het sommer vir mij helderder opgegaan vanoggend, na ek verneem het dat u en die generaal gevind het dat daar nie die verskil bestaan het tussen u en hom, wat oënskynlik bestaan het nie.’

¹²⁹ DFM, 1/1/1032, J.B.M. Hertzog – N.J. van der Merwe, 26 September 1933: ‘Ek het die kopy brief van...Dr. Malan aan jou, in verband met kwessie van Vereniging, gelees, en sien geen rede om daar ‘n interpretasie op te sit anders dan die deur jou aan my voorgelê...n.l. dat Dr. Malan nie langer beswaar het teen Vereniging mits dat dit kan geskied op ‘n bevredigende basis van party-beginsels...Ek is bly om te vind dat Dr. Malan tans gereed is om my nie alleen te ondersteun in die poging om so ‘n Vereniging tot stand te bring, maar ook aktief mee te werk om ‘n bevredigende basis vir vereniging te verkry. Ek neem dus aan dat daar geen moeilikheid in die weg gelê sal word vir die Kongresse te Port Elizabeth of te Bloemfontein om in beginsel te besluit tot goedkeuring van Vereniging...Ik voel my daar oortuigd van dat sonder prysgeving van enige kardinale beginsel, hetsy deur die Nasionale Party hetsy deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Party, ‘n aanneembare basis tot Vereniging kan neergelê word waarop ‘n party gegrond kan word waarin die Nasionalis nie minder dan die Sap sig volkome tuis sal gevoel...’

general had become possible once again. Everything would now depend on the basis for a new party, which still had to be negotiated.¹³⁰ Van der Merwe also wrote to Hertzog to thank him for his letter and to assure him that it would do much to clear the air between him and Malan in time for the Cape's congress, which was to be held in Port Elizabeth the following week.¹³¹

Van der Merwe's optimism was premature. Upon receiving Hertzog's letter, Malan felt disillusioned. Hertzog's reference to *union*, as well as his assertion that neither party would have to sacrifice anything, were in direct contradiction to the statements which he had made in the Free State, as well as to the spirit in which Malan had written his letter. In a private note to Van der Merwe, Malan dashed all possible hopes:

He [Hertzog] uses the word union and thereby he apparently means fusion, and completely ignores his Free State statements, on which basis I gave my support and cooperation. His aim is, naturally, to lure us in as far as he can and then to isolate us as republicans who want to use an academic issue to frustrate the nation's unity. I again warn all of you to be careful. Is it then not sufficient to hold Hertzog to his own statements in the Free State, and to ask him to remain faithful to himself and to his Free Staters?¹³²

In a formal letter, which Malan wrote for Van der Merwe to use as an answer to Hertzog's letter, he expressed his regret that Hertzog's letter had brought them nowhere. He pointed out that Hertzog's assertion that a new party could be constituted without any sacrifice of principle on either side contradicted his statements in the Free State, as well as Malan's clear condition that cooperation could be achieved only amongst those who shared the same inner (nationalist) convictions; that Hertzog was aiming at union, or fusion, which was precisely what Malan had opposed in principle ever since the idea was first mooted.¹³³

Malan sent Van der Merwe a telegram to tell him that Hertzog's letter was unsatisfactory, and informed him that his reply was underway¹³⁴ – since Van der Merwe was the mediator, all correspondence had to be addressed to and from him. The day after he posted the letters, Malan had to board the train for Port Elizabeth. Van der Merwe waited for Malan's letter, and when it did not

¹³⁰ DFM, 1/1/1033, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 27 September 1933.

¹³¹ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, N.J. van der Merwe – J.B.M. Hertzog, 27 September 1933.

¹³² VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, [30 September 1933]: 'Hy [Hertzog] gebruik die woord vereniging en bedoel blykbaar daarmee samesmelting, en ignoreer volkomenlik die Vrystaatse verklarings van hom, op grond waarvan ek my ondersteuning en samewerking toegesê het. Sy doel is natuurlik om ons in te lei sover as hy kan en om ons dan af te hok as republikeine, wat 'n akademiese kwessie wil gebruik om die eenheid van die volk te dwarsboom. Ek waarsku julle weer om op te pas. Is dit dan nie genoeg om Hertzog vas te koppel aan sy eie verklarings in die Vrystaat nie en hom te vra om getrou aan homself en aan sy Vrystaters te bly nie?'

¹³³ DFM, 1/1/1034, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 29 September 1933.

¹³⁴ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 30 September 1933.

arrive, he sent an anxious telegram to Malan's train to inform him that the letter had not reached its destination.¹³⁵ In a moment of absentmindedness, Malan had addressed the letter to Van der Merwe's Bloemfontein address instead of to his farm outside the city, where Van der Merwe was staying at the time. By the time the letter reached its addressee, the Port Elizabeth conference had already begun.¹³⁶

The mood in Hertzog's train as it steamed towards the conference was therefore optimistic, its occupants blissfully unaware of the latest turn of events.¹³⁷ In Malan's train compartment, where his inner circle had gathered, the atmosphere was resolute. After discussing the issue at length, Malan summarised the stance that they would take: 'Now, this is our point of departure: Fusion is, in principle, wrong.'¹³⁸ In preparation for the congress, the Head Committee decided not to submit any motion about fusion, instead drafting a resolution in which its members expressed their faith in the NP and declared that they would not support any party that did not embody its character.¹³⁹ It was released to the press even before the congress began.¹⁴⁰

Hertzog only got word of the change of direction a few hours before the commencement of the proceedings, as his train pulled into the station: Attie Fourie stormed into his compartment to tell him that Malan was dead-set against union. There was very little time for Hertzog to react. Accompanied by Fourie, he booked into his hotel and left shortly thereafter for the congress. When Hertzog walked into the hall at around 9:30 A.M. that morning, he stepped into a hornet's nest.¹⁴¹

Frans Erasmus had carried out his job, as organising secretary, well: it was the largest congress held in the Cape Province up to that date. At least three trains full of delegates unloaded their human cargo onto the streets of Port Elizabeth, where Nationalists – wearing their distinctive party-ribbons on their lapels – gathered in small groups to discuss the issue that weighed on everybody's minds.¹⁴² The old Feather Market Hall was packed to capacity – and unbearably hot. The audience's hostility to Hertzog was almost tangible.¹⁴³

¹³⁵ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 2 October 1933.

¹³⁶ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 29 September 1933, note by Van der Merwe inscribed on the original letter.

¹³⁷ W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 63; A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 125-6.

¹³⁸ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 218: 'Nou, ons gaan uit hiervan: Saamsmelting is in beginsel verkeerd.'

¹³⁹ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/3/2/2/1/1, "Notule Hoofbestuur: Notule van Hoofbestuurs-Vergadering op 3 Oktober 1933 te Port Elizabeth om 10-uur v.m."

¹⁴⁰ *Die Burger*, 4 October 1933.

¹⁴¹ W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 63; A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126.

¹⁴² *Die Burger*, 4 October 1933; *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

¹⁴³ W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 63; A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126; *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

The morning's proceedings were devoted to administrative matters and the customary reception of messages from the other provinces. The barrage of interjections that rained down upon the speakers from the three northern provinces was an ominous indication, however, of what would follow that afternoon, when Malan and Hertzog rose to address the conference respectively.¹⁴⁴

After months of writing and reflecting on his nationalist ideals, D.F. Malan was at his oratorical best. His speech to the conference became another one of his classic addresses, interrupted only by loud cheers from the audience. He took them back to the precedents of 1913 and 1920, when there had also been irreconcilable divisions within political Afrikanerdom. He explained that the current situation was not, as many thought, a clash between personalities: instead, it was in fact a battle between nationalism and imperialism. Reunion foundered on the two parties' irreconcilable views about sovereignty – and also because the SAP wanted to move to the political centre. The result of a move in this direction was its amalgamation with the Unionists, whereby it had become a heterogeneous conglomerate. Malan rejected the notion of a political middle ground; only those who were not satisfied by pure unadulterated nationalism were attracted to centrism. He also rejected Hertzog's assertions that the NP was on the verge of collapse, pointing to the fact that the party's membership had grown despite the political turmoil. In his view, only one thing could account for this:

My explanation is that we believe in Nationalism and in the future of the party and the nation...the NP represents Nationalism, and the time for Nationalism will never come to an end. It [the NP] expresses the fact that the nation possesses a soul and that the nation lives within it [the NP]...Nationalism is the spirit of the nation, the course that we must keep, the doctrine that a nation is not an economic whole, but has a national soul...¹⁴⁵

Given the force of the nationalist spirit, Malan would not contemplate the dissolution of the NP into a party that did not embody this spirit – but he was willing to draw all those who shared in the nationalist spirit into the fold. It was on this point that he explained to the congress what the difference between reunion (hereniging) and fusion (samesmelting) was: 'Reunion has historical meaning. To us it means bringing together those who, through their inner convictions, belong

¹⁴⁴ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 'My uitleg is dat ons glo in Nasionalisme en in die toekoms van die party en die volk...die NP staan vir Nasionalisme, en Nasionalisme se tyd is nooit uitgedien nie. Dit is die uitdrukking van die feit dat die volk 'n siel het en dat die volk in hom leef...Nasionalisme is die gees van die volk, die koers wat ons moet hou, die leer dat 'n volk geen ekonomiese geheel is nie, maar 'n volksiel het...'

together. This meaning of the word reunion excludes the fusion of parties who bring heterogeneous elements with them.¹⁴⁶

Finally, Malan addressed the question of leadership. He did not attack Hertzog directly, but in outlining the course that he endeavoured to take as leader of the Cape National Party, the contrast was obvious. He made it clear that he was opposed to fusion, in principle, but that he was willing to seek reunion, as he had defined it. As long as it was a matter of reunion, and as long as the new party embodied nationalism, there was no danger of him initiating a split. Furthermore, the party belonged to the nation, and not to its leader. While it was the leader's task to lead, it had to be done in cooperation with, and based on an understanding of, the nation. In a rallying call that drew the crowd to a standing ovation, Malan concluded that he had made many sacrifices for the party – and when he asked his followers to bring their sacrifices to the table, he was not asking anything that he would not be willing to sacrifice himself. 'To the sacrifices that will be demanded of me today, I do not set any limits. As leader, therefore, I do not say "Go!", but "Come!"'¹⁴⁷

As was the case in De Aar, Malan's eloquent address took the ground from under Hertzog's feet even before he could rise to state his case.¹⁴⁸ It was therefore no surprise that, this time, he was even more belligerent than before. The hostile audience and Malan's unequivocal rejection of fusion was not what he had expected before his train drew into Port Elizabeth's station that morning, and therefore he felt angry and betrayed.¹⁴⁹ His opening lines were therefore an attack on both Malan and the audience:

I have just been accused, directly and indirectly, of playing false to the National Party, the Nationalist nation of South Africa. I just want to tell you, if you demand it, there is only one way that is open to you, namely, to tell me so...Before I leave this congress, I want to know if you think that I am lying...My leadership is only based on trust, and if it is absent, it is your duty to tell me, and then I will know what to do. You will not have to put up with me any longer.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933: 'Hereniging het 'n historiese betekenis. Dit beteken vir ons by mekaar bring van hulle wat deur innerlike oortuiging by mekaar hoort. Hierdie betekenis van die word hereniging sluit uit samesmelting van partye wat heterogene elemente met hulle saambring.'

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Aan die offers wat vandag van my geëis sal word, stel ek geen grens. As leier sê ek dus nie "Gaan!" nie, maar "Kom!"'

¹⁴⁸ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

¹⁴⁹ W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 63; A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126.

¹⁵⁰ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933: 'Ek is so-ewe hier direk en indirek beskuldig geword van vals te speel teenoor die Nasionale Party, die Nasionale volk van Suid-Afrika. Ek wil u net sê, as u dit eis, is daar net een weg vir u oop, nl. om my dit te sê...Voor ek die kongres verlaat, wil ek weet of u dink ek lieg...My hoofleierskap is net gebaseer op vertroue, en as dit ontbreek, is dit u plig om my dit te sê, en ek sal weet wat om te doen. U sal nie langer met my opgeskeep sit nie.'

The remainder of his speech consisted of an incoherent reiteration of all of his arguments in favour of fusion. He attempted to illustrate that the NP was rotten to the core and had no hope of remaining in power, which meant that the Pact-government's good work would be undone. Furthermore, the jingoes of Natal were once again turned into a bogeyman – they were presented as a direct threat to the Afrikaans language, whose influence could only be diluted if the parties amalgamated. Hertzog dismissed his and Smuts's differing interpretations of South Africa's right to neutrality as purely academic.¹⁵¹

The shouts from the audience revealed how well Erasmus had stacked the cards in Malan's favour. At every crucial point in Hertzog's speech the delegates booed and interjected, while members of the public – who had since entered and listened from the back of the hall – cheered and applauded.¹⁵² Erasmus himself was 'the political general...He almost pokes his finger in General's [Hertzog's] eye and jeers at him. They *jeered* him! *Hounded* him!'¹⁵³

Hertzog fought back. 'I will also insist that the congress does not give me an ambiguous answer, that it states clearly what it wants!' he cried.¹⁵⁴ Finally, he exploded about what he believed to be Malan's betrayal. He had been shown a letter that Malan had written to N.J. van der Merwe, in which he had said that he supported reunion, and would cooperate in drawing up a basis for a new party, he told the audience. He (Hertzog) had replied to Van der Merwe to express his joy that Malan supported union and was willing to cooperate in establishing a new basis. 'Now I hear that Dr Malan cannot do it any longer.'¹⁵⁵

'Dr Malan calls it "reunion" and you call it "union"', Erasmus interjected, while the audience shouted 'hear, hear.'¹⁵⁶

"Why all this contemptible nitpicking?" Hertzog retorted.¹⁵⁷

It was in that moment that the misunderstanding and the differences became clear. While Malan hammered on ideology and terminology, Hertzog wanted to negotiate an agreement between the two parties in order that the Afrikaners could remain in power. The ends were the same, but the means differed.¹⁵⁸ 'Before we can achieve the victory, we first need to regain the courage to be

¹⁵¹ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Quoted in A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126: 'die politieke generaal...Hy steek sy vinger so byna in Generaal se oog en jou hom uit. Hulle't hom gejóú! Gehóón!'

¹⁵⁴ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933: 'Ek gaan ook daarop staan dat daar geen dubbelsinnige antwoord van die kongres kom nie, dat hy duidelik sal sê wat hy begeer!'

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Nou hoor ek dr. Malan kan dit nie meer doen nie.'

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*: 'Dr. Malan noem dit "hereniging" en U "vereniging"'

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Waarvoor hierdie veragtelike wyse van kibbelary?'

¹⁵⁸ M.E.R., *My Beskeie Deel*, 257-8.

defeated,' Malan had written in his newspaper column a few months before.¹⁵⁹ It harked back to his student days in Utrecht, when he had declared in a letter to President M.T. Steyn that power had to be obtained without compromise, or not at all.¹⁶⁰ Hertzog, on the other hand, was convinced that power was the key to achieving one's goals. He had once dismissed less ambitious politicians with the remark that if one did not practice politics with the intention to rule, it was better to join a cultural organisation.¹⁶¹ To Hertzog, it was a question of power as such, while Malan would only be satisfied by uncontaminated power.

In that noisy, stifling hall, it finally came down to a battle between the two men. The crowd's hissing became so vehement that Hertzog's lieutenants wanted to take him away in order to spare him further degradation – but Hertzog refused to leave.¹⁶² Instead, he watched as the congress gave its unanimous approval to the Cape Head Committee's motion in favour of the NP as the embodiment of nationalism. In contrast, Attie Fourie was hounded when he tried to introduce a motion – drafted by Hertzog – which expressed its support for coalition. The debate on the difference between union and reunion was resumed – which meant that 22:30 P.M. arrived without Hertzog's motion having been brought to a vote. It was decided to adjourn until the next morning.¹⁶³

To Hertzog, it brought an end to more than thirteen hours of humiliation. When he and Malan parted for the night, the words exchanged were icy.¹⁶⁴ Throughout the entire day, Malan had done nothing to temper the humiliation Hertzog received. This time, in contrast to De Aar, Malan's victory was unambiguous. There could be little doubt about the following day's outcome.

Hertzog would not stay for a second humiliation. Without telling the Cape Head Committee,¹⁶⁵ he told his private secretary to pay his hotel bill – he would not have *them* pay for it – and to order the station master to have his train compartment attached to the first train to leave the station. It was late, and the station master was no longer at his post, but there was no question of disobeying of the Prime Minister's orders – or of convincing him otherwise. The station master was located and the orders were carried out – but not without some difficulty, as the compartment had to be retrieved from a far corner where it had been stored.¹⁶⁶ The delegates awoke the next morning to the news of Hertzog's disappearance. Rumours flew, but most concluded that Hertzog could tell

¹⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/1017, "Op die Wagtoring: Op Moedverloor se vlakke", 22 July 1933: 'Voordat ons die oorwinning kan behaal moet ons eers terugkry die moed om te verloor.'

¹⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/231, D.F. Malan – M.T. Steyn, 25 May 1904.

¹⁶¹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV18, file 3/1/12, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 21 December 1933.

¹⁶² W. du Plessis, "James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens", in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 63; A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126.

¹⁶³ *Die Burger*, 5 October 1933.

¹⁶⁴ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126.

¹⁶⁵ *Die Burger*, 6 October 1933.

¹⁶⁶ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 126-7.

that the wind was not in his favour and had left.¹⁶⁷ Hertzog had indeed escaped a sound beating. When his motion for fusion was finally put to a vote the next morning, it was defeated by 142 votes to a mere thirty in favour. Among the thirty dissenters was, notably, Attie Fourie. Following the vote, a commission was appointed to determine the procedure for reunion.¹⁶⁸

Back in Pretoria, Hertzog issued a press statement declaring that he considered the break between him and Malan to be final. Malan replied via *Die Burger*, stating that he could see no reason for a split in the NPs ranks – the Cape had, after all, accepted Hertzog’s Free State declarations, and had based its resolutions on these statements. That Malan was now deliberately holding Hertzog to his (Malan’s) interpretation of the Free State speeches – and ignoring Hertzog’s statements to the contrary – was clear.¹⁶⁹

The battlefield was now transferred to Bloemfontein, where the Free State held its provincial congress on 11 October. It would be followed two days later by a meeting of the Federal Council. After Hertzog’s overwhelming defeat at the hands of his provincial leader, the atmosphere was subdued and bewildered. Hertzog told his congress that he had disowned the Cape National Party, that he was no longer their leader and did not carry any responsibility for them. Hertzog submitted the same resolution to the Free State congress that Fourie had submitted to the Cape congress on his behalf, with the words: ‘The congress must accept union, or reject it. They must choose between me and someone else.’¹⁷⁰

This argument did not have the same amount of force as six months before, however. N.J. van der Merwe rose to oppose Hertzog’s ultimatum, pointing to the fact that the coalitionists had tied the issue to their leader’s personality. Many delegates had been instructed by their branches to reject coalition – but could not perform their task as they did not want to give their revered leader ‘a slap in the face.’¹⁷¹

The debate which followed did not reach a conclusion by the time proceedings were adjourned that evening, and it seemed to those present that the Free State congress was headed for a rupture. However, before matters could reach such a point when it resumed its proceedings the next morning, Van der Merwe suddenly withdrew his motion. The congress’s subsequent approval of Hertzog’s motion was tainted by the fact that three anti-fusionists were elected to the Free State’s Head Committee: N.J. van der Merwe, C.R. Swart and J.J. Haywood.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷ *Die Burger*, 6 October 1933.

¹⁶⁸ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Agtiende Kongres (Port Elizabeth 1933)”, 22-3.

¹⁶⁹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd* (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1987), 546-7.

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, Perskor, 550: ‘Die kongres moet vereniging aanvaar of verwerp. Hulle moet kies tussen my en iemand anders.’

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 552.

¹⁷² J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, 551-2.

Thus, when the Federal Council met on 13 October, Hertzog – despite appearances – stood on shaky ground. Hertzog tried to free himself from the semantic creeper in which he had become entangled by asking the representatives from Transvaal and Natal whether fusion – which their respective congresses had endorsed – meant the same as union – which the Free State had approved of the previous day. They affirmed that this was their understanding. Hertzog then asked Malan to clarify what he meant by reunion to which he obliged, but his explanation was completely lost on Hertzog and his supporters. In essence, matters boiled down to the decision taken by the Cape’s congress: it had passed a resolution stating that it would preserve the party. This meant that the Cape National Party would not have anything to do with drawing up a basis for a new party, and for the same reason, there could be no form of negotiations between them and Smuts.¹⁷³ It meant, effectively, that Malan and his followers would not take part in the rest of the Federal Council’s deliberations. Hertzog therefore conducted the rest of the meeting as if Malan was a fly on the wall. The contents of a new party constitution were not discussed, however. Instead, Hertzog obtained the council’s permission to draw up a constitution himself (while any suggestions would be welcomed), which would later be presented to the Federal Council and the various party congresses.¹⁷⁴

Each returned to where they came from, while Hertzog began to compile the basis for a new party. Simultaneously, he began to prepare legislation which would give more clarity to South Africa’s murky constitutional position.¹⁷⁵ By thrashing it out in Parliament – and not with Smuts – he believed that he could keep the negotiations between the two parties on an even keel: he would not allow fusion to fail.

Back in Cape Town, Malan received a letter of support from an unlikely quarter – his defiant resistance to Hertzog was increasingly transforming him into the champion of those who were dissatisfied with Hertzog for one reason or another.¹⁷⁶ The Republican Bond wrote from Johannesburg to request that Malan have the republican ideal – which entailed a sovereign independent republic, free from the British Empire and the Crown – adopted into the Cape National Party’s constitution.¹⁷⁷ Malan’s response was clearly calculated to maintain his non-committal stance about republicanism, but at the same time in a manner so as not to alienate potential allies. He replied that his party’s constitution already made provision for the rights to secession, neutrality and the right to make republican propaganda. He noted that, while he did not regard republicanism as practical politics for the present moment, he believed that the republican ideal had to be kept

¹⁷³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 608-9.

¹⁷⁴ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 554-5.

¹⁷⁵ O. Pirow, *J.B.M. Hertzog*, 169.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 154.

¹⁷⁷ DFM, 1/1/1036, F. Horak – D.F. Malan, 19 October 1933.

alive. To this end, he was open to re-negotiating his party's stance on republicanism.¹⁷⁸ Malan thus began to draw Hertzog's republican enemies into his fold.¹⁷⁹

In the meantime, the Free State's young anti-fusionists were growing restless. They knew that Hertzog was busy drawing up a new party constitution, and were unsettled by the idea that they would be powerless to halt its adoption – or at least to influence its contents. They therefore tried to pressure Malan to assist them in having some bearing on the process. To this end, C.R. Swart and A.J. Werth approached Hertzog's son, Albert Hertzog, who was known to differ from his father in matters of politics. Albert Hertzog agreed to use his influence – and asked that Malan draw up a programme of principles – in his own handwriting. With this in hand, he felt that he might be able to sway his father to compose a constitution that would be more favourable to the anti-fusionists.¹⁸⁰ Malan, however, suspected that it could be a trap, and refused. Without accusing Swart of any underhandedness, he laced his reply with metaphors about 'snares' and 'tricks'.¹⁸¹

N.J. van der Merwe also wrote, separately, to Malan, begging him to at least draw up a basis of reunion in order that he could contribute to the final discussions on the new party's programme of principles. 'Refusal to present something from your side will be exploited by Hertzog to the utmost in order to convince the nation that your assertions about reunion do not mean anything, and that you are merely intent on creating obstructions to every attempt at cooperation,' he pleaded.¹⁸²

But Malan, who had just returned from a short tour of some of the Cape's constituencies where he received rapturous support in the towns he visited, was convinced that the tide was turning in his favour,¹⁸³ and remained immovable. 'From everything that has happened, you would have noticed that I am opposed to fusion *in principle*...[therefore] you will understand that I cannot directly or indirectly cooperate with drawing up a basis for fusion, unless I sacrifice my whole position,' he replied.¹⁸⁴ Here, for the first time, Malan revealed the fact that his principled stance was backed by clever strategy. Malan had by now felt enough of the brunt of Hertzog's stampede to know that he (Hertzog) would not be deterred from his course. Despite the fact that he publicly flaunted Hertzog's Free State statements as a basis for reunion, Malan knew that forcing Hertzog to

¹⁷⁸ DFM, 1/1/1037, D.F. Malan – F. Horak, 27 October 1933.

¹⁷⁹ DFM, 1/1/1040, F. Horak – D.F. Malan, 7 November 1933.

¹⁸⁰ INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, A. Hertzog – C.R. Swart, 30 October 1933; INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, C.R. Swart – D.F. Malan, 1 November 1933; INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, A. Hertzog – C.R. Swart, 13 November 1933.

¹⁸¹ INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 16 November 1933: 'strik', 'uitorlê politiek'.

¹⁸² DFM, 1/1/1043, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 14 November 1933: 'Weiering aan u kant om iets voor te lê sal deur Hertzog ten uiterste geëksploiteer word om vir die volk wys te maak dat u beweringe omtrent hereniging niks beteken nie en dat u net daar op uit om obstruksie te maak teen elke poging om samewerking te bewerkstellig.'

¹⁸³ INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 16 November 1933.

¹⁸⁴ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 26 November 1933: 'Uit alles wat vooraf gegaan het, sal jy opgemerk het dat ek *in beginsel* teen samesmelting is...[dus] sal jy verstaan dat ek nie direk of indirek kan meewerk aan 'n samesmeltingsbasis nie, tensy ek my hele standpunt prysgee.'

keep to these was an exercise in futility: he was certain that Hertzog's single-minded pursuit of fusion with the SAP was due to a deeper ideological shift:

If the matter has to be considered from a tactical point of view, as you and many others apparently prefer to do, then everything depends on the end goal, and on the extent to which we and Hertzog truly have the same aims. It is here, I think, that you and I differ. You believe that Hertzog wants reunion. I am of the opinion that he wants a Central Party. Havenga, I think, interprets him most accurately in this matter. He wants (and as far as Havenga is concerned, rather on the NP side) to cut off so-called extremists and, by shifting the basis to the SAP side, open the door to the SAP. In other words, Hertzog wants a Central Party due to a definite shift on his side, especially due to the influence of the Imperial Conferences. You will remember, from our conversations before the era of coalition, that this was my impression already in 1926, after Roos mooted the idea of a Central Party for the first time.¹⁸⁵

Hertzog's aggression towards dissenters confirmed Malan's suspicion that he intended to shift to the centre. Nobody knew precisely what Hertzog wanted to achieve – but Malan was certain that reunion and party unity were not amongst his goals. He was therefore convinced that it would be political suicide to cooperate in drawing up a party constitution when its aims were still so murky. In tactical terms, he was confident that the Cape was in a strong position. The same, however, could not be said of the Free State:

It seems to me that you allowed the initiative to slip from your hands. In a war, or in a political struggle, this is fatal. If you have dug yourself into a strategic position, it no longer matters who makes the first move, as, in reality, you maintain your initiative and the question of attack or defence is a matter of circumstances. But if you do not dig yourself into such a position from the beginning, all the advantages belong to your enemy. I think that you will see how we [the Cape] are still able to attack the principle of fusion or a Central Party – and at the same time maintain our right to ultimately judge the extent to which the new basis has been

¹⁸⁵ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 26 November 1933: 'As die saak uit die taktiese oogpunt moet beskou word, soos jy en baie ander dit blykbaar doen, dan hang alles daarvan af wat die einddoel is, en in hoever ons en Hertzog nou eintlik werklik dieselfde beoog. Dis hier, dink ek, dat ons twee verskillend oordeel. Jy meen dat Hertzog hereniging wil. Ek beskou dat hy 'n Sentraal Party wil hê. Havenga, dink ek, vertolk hom ook hier die beste. Hy wil (en wat Havenga betref, liefs aan NP kant) s.g. ekstremiste uitskakel en wil deur die verskuiwing van die basis na die SAP kant toe die deur oop-sit vir die Sappe om in te kom. M.A.W. Hertzog wil 'n Sentraal Party hê as gevolg van 'n definitiewe omswenking aan sy kant veral onder invloed van die Imperiale Konferensies. Jy sal jou wel kan herinner uit gesprekke wat ons in die vóór-Koalisie tydperk met mekaar gehad het, dat dit my indruk was reeds in 1926 na Roos vir die eerste maal die Sentraal Party idee geopper het.'

calculated to achieve *reunion* and not the other – and how powerless you are on your side, when the fusionists and Centralists want to toy with you.¹⁸⁶

It became clear that Malan's tendency to take a stance from which he refused to budge was not merely a case of pig-headed stubbornness, as many of his opponents believed. Instead, Malan knew that his success in political combat lay in his having a position to defend. By November 1933, Malan was convinced that the power struggle between him and Hertzog had indeed escalated into a war – and he used the metaphors of the battlefield to describe each side's manoeuvres.

Hertzog and his lieutenants regarded the Cape Province as an anti-fusion fortress against which they had to lay siege in order to succeed in their mission. For this reason, Hertzog, Havenga and Pirow decided to embark on a tour of the Cape constituencies to convince its inhabitants of the virtues of coalition.¹⁸⁷ Malan called it an invasion, and declared that they would mount a powerful defence against the intruders. As far as Malan was concerned, Hertzog's decision to march into his territory was a sign that a split in the party was at hand. Malan also saw great significance in the fact that Hertzog launched his campaign even before the basis for the new party had been revealed – and that Smuts, in contrast to Hertzog, had even succeeded in convincing his Natal jingoes of the merits of fusion.¹⁸⁸ A reorientation of the political landscape was finally at hand.

When the two erstwhile Anglo-Boer War heroes and their helpers rode into the Cape in December 1933, the Cape Nationalists were ready for them. Erasmus sent a list of forty-four pestering questions to each branch which members could use to confront Hertzog and his ministers. Fusionists and anti-fusionists both carted crowds of supporters to each of the meetings,¹⁸⁹ but Hertzog was only able to receive motions of confidence with the help of SAP supporters – members of the NP voted against him. At the same time, Malan's "Watchtower" articles grew more and more belligerent. Generally, there was a consensus that a split in the party was finally at hand. Malan and his circle were convinced that it would take place as soon as Parliament reopened in January:

¹⁸⁶ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 26 November 1933: 'Dit lyk vir my asof jul die initiatief uit jul hande gegee het. In 'n oorlog of in 'n politieke stryd is dit noodlottig. As jy jouself in 'n strategiese posisie ingegraaf het kom dit daar nie op aan wie daarna die eerste beweging maak nie, want dan behou jy in die werklikheid nog jou initiatief en die vraag van aanval of verdediging is 'n saak van omstandighede. Maar as jy jou nie eers in so 'n posisie ingegraaf het nie, is al die voordele jou vyand s'n. Ek dink jy sal voel hoe ons hier nog altyd kan aanval teen die beginsel van samesmelting of van 'n Sentraal Party en tegelyk ons reg kan behou om uiteindelik te oordeel in hoever die nuwe basis bereken is om *hereniging* te bewerkstellig, en nie die ander nie, en hoe magteloos jul aan die ander kant staan, as die samesmelters en Sentraliste 'n spel met julle wil speel.'

¹⁸⁷ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais (eds), *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, 559.

¹⁸⁸ INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 16 November 1933.

¹⁸⁹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, 559-60.

Hertzog was certain to ban them from the party caucus. After discussing the matter at length, they concluded that it would indeed be to their advantage if Hertzog obliged.¹⁹⁰

By mid-January, Hertzog's draft programme of principles was still a mystery. He had quietly handed a copy to Smuts in December,¹⁹¹ while those who did not belong to his inner circle continued to speculate. In addition, the anti-fusionists in the Free State finally gave up the hope that it might, against all odds, be a basis for reunion rather than union.¹⁹² When a prominent civil servant – who had worked under Malan while he was still Minister of the Interior¹⁹³ – resigned early in January because bilingualism in the civil service was being diluted, N.J. van der Merwe's wavering opposition to fusion – which had been a source of immense irritation and frustration to his fellow anti-fusionists¹⁹⁴ – finally came to an end. He now took the lead as the most senior politician among the young Free State dissenters. Together, they organised a conference in Bloemfontein on 19 January, at which they established a vigilance committee to guard over the preservation of the NP,¹⁹⁵ and in so doing, effectively threw down the gauntlet to Hertzog.

Malan was overjoyed at the fact that Van der Merwe had taken his advice and finally took a definite stance. The Free State's opposition to Hertzog would now be more organised and effective. Malan, in turn, was ready to supply Van der Merwe with more tactical advice. As he had pointed out to him before, the difference between the fusionists and anti-fusionists was the result of the two parties adhering to different ideals. In the past these irreconcilable differences had inevitably manifested themselves whenever South Africa's constitutional position was debated. To both sides – Nationalists and Unionists – all other matters were secondary to the issue of South Africa's relation to the British crown, and it was futile to attempt to fuse the different sections of the nation before this fundamental difference was dissolved. Hertzog and his ministers had begun to dilute the ideal of secession from the British Empire in their speeches – a definite sign that they were courting Smuts's Unionists. Reunion was therefore most certainly not on the cards.

With a view to the anticipated clash in the caucus, Malan advised Van der Merwe that it was time to start deliberating on a programme of action – especially with regards to economic policy.¹⁹⁶ Malan clearly foresaw that the establishment of a new party was on the cards. Throughout the country, anti-fusionists began to prepare themselves for the coming collision. From the Transvaal,

¹⁹⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Storm voor die Stilte", 1-2.

¹⁹¹ SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A32, Vol. 97, File 97, "Verloop van Gebeurtenisse re Basis van Beginsels."

¹⁹² KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Storm voor die Stilte", 1-2.

¹⁹³ DFM, 1/1/1050, P.J.H. Hofmeyr – DF. Malan, 7 January 1934; DFM, 1/1/1054, P.J.H. Hofmeyr – D.F. Malan, 23 January 1934.

¹⁹⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/12, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 21 December 1933.

¹⁹⁵ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewen en Stryd*, 566-7.

¹⁹⁶ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 12 January 1934.

the young J.G. Strijdom wrote to his friend, C.R. Swart, that the anti-fusionists from the Transvaal, Free State and Cape Province had to meet in order to form a united front.¹⁹⁷ Up to this point, there had only been pockets of resistance to Hertzog's scheme, with the Cape having been the most powerful.

The anti-fusionists were not the only ones who could see smoke rising from the volcano – Tielman Roos picked up the scent of a possible opportunity. Hertzog and Smuts's decision to sideline him the previous year by negotiating directly had washed him out to sea. He had spent most of his time treading water, and had finally begun to feel some land under his feet when, at the end of 1933, Smuts invited him to become part of the coalition.¹⁹⁸ Smuts's motives for this were unclear. Among the many possibilities, he could have foreseen that Roos's presence would widen the chasm between Malan and Hertzog, thereby eliminating all chances of Malan's presence in the new party frightening off his Unionists.

Roos, however, could always be counted on to have a plot brewing in the back of his mind. On 2 January, Malan received a letter warning him that Roos was planning on drawing him (Malan) into the fused party in the hope of eliminating Smuts and Hertzog, and becoming the power behind Prime Minister D.F. Malan's throne.¹⁹⁹ Indeed, a few days later, Roos himself knocked on Malan's door. The fact that he no longer tried to work through a mediator was a sign of his desperation to obtain Malan's friendship. The offer, which Malan had been warned of, was now spread out on the table: if Malan could join in the fusion, their combined powers would make them the senior partners. They could first get rid of Smuts, later Hertzog, and finally rule the country together. Predictably, Malan sent the aspirant Brutus packing with the words: 'I am not willing to offer anyone my friendship with my one hand while the other hides a dagger behind my back, which I intend using to stab him to death directly thereafter. My friend is my friend. He is not my friend and enemy simultaneously.'²⁰⁰ Roos left – and would soon disappear from the stage entirely. Not even his death a year later would soften Malan's damning condemnation of his character.²⁰¹ But Malan, with his eyes glued to the trap from which he had escaped, stumbled straight into the next, more cunning one.

Attie Fourie could not reconcile himself to the coming break in the party. At the Congress in Port Elizabeth he had sided with Hertzog, but refused to abandon his hope to lead the Cape into the light. A few weeks after the Port Elizabeth congress he issued a circular letter, which was sent to

¹⁹⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/13, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 14 January 1934.

¹⁹⁸ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 568.

¹⁹⁹ DFM, 1/1/1049, L. du Rand – D.F. Malan, 2 January 1934.

²⁰⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 150: 'Ek is nie bereid om aan enigiemand my vriendskap met my één hand aan te bied terwyl ek in my ander hand agter my rug 'n dolk vashou waarmee ek van plan is om onmiddelik daarna hom 'n doodsteek te gee nie. My vriend is my vriend. Hy is nie my vriend en vyand tegelykertyd nie.'

²⁰¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 151.

every branch in the Cape Province, in which he tried to justify his loyalty to Hertzog and appealed to the Cape's Nationalists to follow his example and put their trust in the Prime Minister.²⁰² Hertzog's unsuccessful invasion of the Cape demonstrated Fourie's failure to convert its Nationalists to Hertzogism. Now, with the opening of Parliament at hand, Fourie needed a better ruse to bring Hertzog and Malan together. He knew that he could not approach Malan personally – by this time he had been utterly discredited in the anti-fusionist circles. Another mediator therefore had to be found – one who was completely uninvolved in the political struggle. Fourie did not have to look very far. He and Malan shared a friendship with the Italian diplomat, Natale Labia. Labia had represented Italy in South Africa since 1917, and was married to a South African woman. He had been instrumental in securing a shipping agreement between the South African and Italian governments,²⁰³ and in so doing had bypassed British interests, much to the fury of the jingoes – and to the delight of the Nationalists, Malan included.²⁰⁴ Malan did not doubt Labia's goodwill towards the Afrikaners and, when Labia began sending him dinner invitations, had no reason to decline. Every visit was followed by a new invitation. During the course of these dinners, Labia began speaking to Malan about the political situation. He gently insisted that Malan speak directly to Hertzog – this had not taken place since February of the previous year. Given the disaster following the Free State's deputation's attempt to provide Hertzog with an interpretation of Malan's views – and the general confusion about the difference between union and reunion – this might have made sense. Malan sensed that there was something, or someone, behind Labia's insistence – and guessed that it was Hertzog himself who was seeking reconciliation. Labia confirmed his assumption when he told Malan, although not in so many words, that Hertzog wished to have an interview with him.²⁰⁵

Malan's inner circle first got the notion that something was amiss on Thursday evening, 25 January. A group of anti-fusionists gathered at Malan's house to deliberate on the coming parliamentary session, which was due to commence the next day. As before, the discussions were based on the assumption that the party was certain to split. Thus, when Malan made a remark, in passing, that matters could be different if Hertzog's basis was indeed a basis for reunion, Geyer was disconcerted. One of his friends was due to have an interview with Malan the following day, and took the opportunity to clarify the matter with Malan. He received the assurance that he (Malan) was intent on forging ahead. Upon hearing this, Geyer dismissed his suspicions.²⁰⁶

²⁰² DFM, 1/1/1039, A.P.J. Fourie, "Omsendbrief aan lede van alle Distriks- en Takbesture van die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie", 3 November 1933.

²⁰³ A. van Wyk, *Die Keeromstraatkliek: Die Burger en die Politiek van Koalisie en Samesmelting, 1932-1934*, 139-40.

²⁰⁴ *Die Burger*, 16 September 1933.

²⁰⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 1.

²⁰⁶ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Die Storm voor die Stilte", 2.

Two days later, on 27 January, while Malan was faltering under Labia's spell, Attie Fourie approached Hertzog with the news that Malan wished to speak to him in order to explore the possibility of solving their dispute about union. Hertzog, having been burned before, was wary. He conveyed to Attie that he would only consider an interview between the two of them if Malan approached him directly, without any intermediaries: his request had to be submitted in writing – in order to eliminate any misunderstanding – and Malan had to agree to the conversation being limited to the matter of *union*.²⁰⁷

Labia must have succeeded in persuading Malan that Hertzog's use of the word *union* was open to interpretation, and that the procedure dictated was proof that he wished to have a discussion with Malan. Malan certainly did not know of Attie Fourie's involvement.²⁰⁸

On Monday 29 January, the day before the first caucus meeting, Malan therefore wrote to Hertzog. He might have been brought to this point by skilful manipulation, but underlying it was his desire to know that he had not left a single stone unturned to preserve the party's unity – and by implication, nationalist Afrikanerdom. Thus, writing in his personal capacity, Malan directed himself to Hertzog:

I am certain that you, as do I, feel the weight of the serious situation in which we Afrikaners find ourselves at present. I therefore assume that you, as do I, would not like to leave anything undone that might prevent a final break which, as such, would result in many years of divisions and the regression of our national cause.²⁰⁹

With this in mind, Malan asked Hertzog whether they might meet in order to discuss the matter in 'a spirit of joint responsibility and of friendly candidness.'²¹⁰ He hinted that it was possible for such a talk to eliminate a possible misunderstanding – maybe they did not differ that much.²¹¹ It was Labia who took the letter from Malan's hands and delivered it to Hertzog at Groote Schuur that evening, along with assurances that Malan had a sincere desire to find a solution to the dispute.²¹²

²⁰⁷ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 610.

²⁰⁸ See KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring".

²⁰⁹ DFM, 1/1/1055, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 29 January 1934: 'Ek is daar seker van dat u net soos ek, baie diep die ernstige posisie voel waarin ons Afrikaners op die oomblik verkeer. Ek neem daarom aan dat u net soos ek niks ongedaan sou wil laat nie, wat moontlik nog 'n finale breuk sou kan verhinder met al sy jarelange nasleep van verdeeldheid en agteruitsetting van ons volksaak.'

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 'n gees van gesamentlike verantwoordelikheid en van vriendelike openhartigheid.'

²¹¹ DFM, 1/1/1055, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 29 January 1934.

²¹² C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 610.

The first caucus meeting was scheduled for the next day, but Hertzog did not attend. Contrary to custom, a motion of confidence in Hertzog was submitted²¹³ – his presence during this discussion would certainly have facilitated the long-awaited confrontation. Instead, Hertzog delayed the battle and replied to Malan’s letter. He responded that he too was hopeful that the split in the party could be averted – and that Malan might still be persuaded of the necessity of a union between all Afrikaners, both English- and Afrikaans-speaking.²¹⁴

The phrase ‘English- and Afrikaans-speaking Afrikaners’ harked back to the confusion of terms which had facilitated the split between Botha and Hertzog in 1912, but Malan knew that underlying Hertzog’s muddled use of the word ‘Afrikaners’ was his belief in South African nationalism. It was a line that he (Malan) had followed throughout the 1920s, and it was the basis of his argument for a national flag. If this was indeed the basis of Hertzog’s argument for fusion then, to Malan, it was also possible that Hertzog’s *union* was identical to Malan’s *reunion*. Malan regarded it as an encouraging sign. He replied the following day that:

You describe your mission as one that is aimed at “uniting the Afrikaners – both Dutch- and English-speaking – belonging to both parties in *a single* new party, on an appropriate basis of Nationalist principles.” Apart from any terminology which may have been used to indicate our different positions, I regard it as a sufficient indication [of our] missions so as to make the proposed deliberations both possible and necessary.²¹⁵

It was arranged that they would meet at Groote Schuur on 4 February, the following Sunday morning.²¹⁶

Hertzog might have stayed away from the caucus meeting in order to avoid a confrontation with the Cape Nationalists, who were utterly unaware of the correspondence that their leader had initiated, but he was still bent on rooting out dissent in his own camp. With this in mind, therefore, Hertzog secretly met with the pro-fusionist Free State MPs. Together, they decided to expel the three anti-fusionist Free Staters – N.J. van der Merwe, C.R. Swart and J.J. Haywood – from the caucus.²¹⁷ To Malan, it would have served as a sign of the gravity of the situation. To those who did

²¹³ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd*, 569.

²¹⁴ DFM, 1/1/1056, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 30 January 1934.

²¹⁵ DFM, 1/1/1057, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 31 January 1934: ‘U beskrywe van u strewes as een wat bedoel is “om die Afrikaners – Hollands- en Engelssprekend – behorende tot die twee partye te verenig in één nuwe party op ‘n gepaste basis van Nasionale beginsels.” Afgesien van enige benamings wat daar gebruik mag gewees het om ons verskillende standpunte aan te dui, beskou ek dit as ‘n genoegsame aanduiding [van ons] strewes om ons voorgestelde bespreking moontlik en uiters wenslik te maak.’

²¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/1057, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 31 January 1934; DFM, 1/1/1058, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 31 January 1934.

²¹⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, D. Spies – C.R. Swart, 2 February 1934; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, File 3/1/11, C.R. Swart – J.B.M. Hertzog, 9 February 1934.

not know about the manoeuvres behind the scenes, it was the first of the expected cracks in the vase.

Hertzog told Smuts, and his closest confidantes, about the peace overtures from Malan's side,²¹⁸ but Malan, in contrast, did not say a word to his inner circle.²¹⁹ He waited until the Sunday morning to put Hertzog to the litmus test that he had outlined to Van der Merwe a few weeks before: he would question him about his stance on South Africa's constitutional position.²²⁰ It was not a question of Malan being a republican or even having a desire for South Africa to secede from the Empire. Rather, it was a case of determining whether Hertzog was motivated by nationalism or centralism. If he disowned the ideals of republicanism and sovereignty, it was a sign that he was courting the Unionists and therefore shifting to the centre. If not, it truly meant that Hertzog was trying to bring the like-minded together.

When Malan reported to Groote Schuur that Sunday morning, the atmosphere between the two men was what both had hoped for: friendly and candid. From the start, Malan made it clear that it was not his intention to discuss the envisioned party's programme of principles as a whole. Instead, he wanted clarity on a particular aspect. Would the programme of principles protect the rights to propagate a republic, secession and neutrality, and to eliminate appeals to the British Privy Council, as well as the principle that the next Governor-General had to be a South African? If it did, it would be possible for him and his party congress to support union.²²¹

Hertzog's answers were nearly identical to those he had given to the Free State's deputation: while it was not a matter that he had discussed explicitly with Smuts, he could not foresee that either of them would object to a party member's right to propagate whichever form of government they preferred. Hertzog was adamant that the government already possessed the right to abolish appeal to the Privy Council – and it would soon address that through legislation. He had also told Smuts and his colleagues of his intention to recommend the appointment of a South African for the next Governor-General vacancy. Finally, Hertzog made it clear that South Africa did possess the right to secession and neutrality. At the 1930 Imperial Conference, he had drawn attention to the fact that this was his interpretation of the Statute of Westminster, and it had not been disputed. Including these rights in a political party's programme of action would imply that he doubted their existence. Malan tried to debate this last point with Hertzog, but the latter was adamant. Malan eventually accepted Hertzog's arguments. Both men were satisfied and, informing Hertzog that he would now consult with his friends, Malan left.²²²

²¹⁸ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 612-3.

²¹⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 1-2.

²²⁰ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 612-5.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 612-3.

²²² *Ibid.*, 612-4.

It was only later that afternoon, after the Sunday lunch- and rest-hours – such revered customs in Afrikaner homes – had passed, that Malan phoned Geyer and Erasmus with the request to visit him that evening. Mrs Mabel Jansen, who headed the resistance in the Transvaal, visited him earlier that afternoon, and he related the situation to her. Geyer arrived first. Erasmus, who could not be located at first, arrived somewhat later. While they waited for Erasmus, Malan began to tell Geyer the whole story: how Hertzog had approached him via Labia, how they had exchanged letters, and finally of his visit to Groote Schuur that morning.²²³

Geyer was astounded. After a week of political turmoil, during which the caucus had debated a motion of confidence in Hertzog's absence, followed by the expulsion of the three Free State dissenters – and all accompanied by strongly-worded editorials from his pen – Malan's sudden and unexpected turnabout was the last thing he had expected. He could not believe that Hertzog would have approached Malan – and was even more aghast when, after Malan had shown him the letters, he realised that it was *Malan* who had first written to Hertzog. Upon reading the letters, he thought that Malan's wording was naïve and foolish. They were interrupted by Erasmus's arrival whereupon Geyer, in no mood to hear the story for a second time, departed.²²⁴

When Malan and Geyer spoke on the phone the next day, Geyer told him that his change of direction was a betrayal of the three Free Staters, and that it was wrong to initiate negotiations with Hertzog without consulting his friends. Did he intend to tell Willie Hofmeyr? Geyer wanted to know. It was arranged that the inner circle would meet the following day.²²⁵

Other members of the inner also began to suspect that something was amiss. It was the day before the next caucus-meeting, and they were all expecting to meet with the same fate as the three Free Staters. Yet, for some inexplicable reason, Malan did not seem to be appropriately belligerent, but kept speaking about Hertzog's basis.²²⁶

The following day's anticipated caucus-battle was deferred yet again. As with the previous week, Hertzog was absent, and therefore no confrontation took place.²²⁷ Later that afternoon, however, Malan's followers met in Erasmus's office. Geyer was gradually becoming more and more annoyed with Malan – it was becoming apparent to him that Malan was speaking to each member of the inner circle separately, which meant that he was able to sway each in his favour.²²⁸ It smacked of Hertzog's conduct with his Cabinet the year before.

²²³ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 1-3.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 570.

²²⁸ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 5.

The meeting revealed that those who were opposed to Malan's initiative were in a minority. Only Geyer and Jannie de Waal – who had always been the voice of dissent since the establishment of *De Burger* – heckled Malan about his decision. Their criticisms chafed him so much that Malan declared that he was willing to end the negotiations if they did not want to support him, to which Geyer replied – not with a little spite – that another turnabout would just look foolish. In terms of one particular aspect, however, Geyer and De Waal guessed the truth. They would not believe for a moment that it was Hertzog who had initiated the negotiations: the most likely culprit was Attie Fourie, who was a frequent visitor to Labia's house. They were certain that Labia would not be able to produce any proof that Hertzog had asked him to approach Malan.²²⁹

Malan nevertheless held fast. He regarded it as his duty to do everything in his power to prevent a split in the party – the congress expected it of him too. Willie Hofmeyr and Karl Bremer approved of his actions. On a strategic level, Hofmeyr was convinced that it gave the Cape Nationalists the opportunity to claim the moral high ground: if they formulated their demands in such a manner that Hertzog refused to accept them, it would be his prestige – and not theirs – that would suffer.²³⁰

Malan went from the meeting with his confidantes to a second meeting with Hertzog. In contrast to his altercations with his friends, Malan's talk with Hertzog was as friendly and pleasant as before. For a second time, Malan requested that the right to secession and neutrality be included in the programme of principles, and Hertzog explained to him why he could not comply with the request. Malan once again accepted Hertzog's arguments, and it was arranged that he would present the matter to the Cape's Head Committee, who would contact Hertzog the following week.²³¹

When Malan related the second meeting to his friends, he ran into a barrage of criticisms from Geyer and De Waal once more – they were particularly incensed at the fact that he accepted Hertzog's arguments concerning neutrality and secession. As before, Malan exclaimed that he was willing to end the discussions – and likewise his offer was dismissed: Geyer even went so far as to tell him that he was being childish. After the meeting was over Geyer decided, sulkily, not to attend any more of these gatherings.²³²

It is clear that Malan himself was going through an inner crisis at this time. His Young Turks did not distinguish between the pursuit of Afrikaner nationalism and breaking away from Hertzog, while to Malan the two were not necessarily mutually exclusive. The door to the political wilderness had swung open, and as he stood on the threshold he too began to realise the difficulty of

²²⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 5-6.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

²³¹ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 615.

²³² KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 6.

achieving one's ideals without any power in one's pocket. Uplifting the poor whites was still one of his priorities, and the government was the key to achieving this. When Malan raised this argument, however, Geyer was able to counter it with his own "Watchtower" articles of a few weeks before, which made his sudden change of direction even more poignant.²³³

While it seems that the majority of Malan's inner circle still supported him, the dissenters were extremely vocal – and gathering support. They had a bloodhound's ability to sniff out their opponents' weaknesses, and soon discovered that even those who stood behind Malan harboured some qualms. *Die Burger's* entire editorial team rallied behind Geyer, with the consequence that Malan could no longer rely on one of his most powerful political weapons.²³⁴ The party's own jester, Paul Sauer, made the situation abundantly clear when he wandered through the Koffiehuis – apparently looking for someone. When asked who he was looking for, he replied 'For a man who can stay the course!'²³⁵

De Waal carried the fight forward to the Cape's Head Committee meeting, where he was able to muster at least one ally – C.W.M. du Toit. Together, the two of them ensured that the discussions, which began at 4.00 P.M. that afternoon, carried on until 1.15 A.M. Finally they were overruled, and the committee deliberated on a letter to Hertzog, which Malan had drafted earlier.²³⁶

The next week consisted of a correspondence between the Head Committee and Hertzog. The letters were signed by F.C. Erasmus in his capacity as party-secretary, but in reality, Malan drafted them before they were typed and sent to Hertzog.²³⁷

Three matters were at stake: South Africa's constitutional position; the procedure to be followed for the establishment of a new party; and the fate of the three Free State parliamentarians. Hertzog gave his assurances that the ban on the three Free Staters would be lifted if he and the Cape Nationalists were able to reach an agreement. The question of South Africa's constitutional position followed the same route as the interviews between Malan and Hertzog: Hertzog regarded these as juridical matters rather than party-political, and promised that all the unresolved aspects would be clarified in due course. Without the Cape Head Committee raising the issue of neutrality and secession as such, Hertzog reasserted his refusal to include these matters in the party's programme, as it would cast doubt on their existence.²³⁸

²³³ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 6-7.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4, 11.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 10: 'Na 'n man wat kan koers hou!'

²³⁶ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/3/2/2/1/1, "Notule Hoofbestuur: Notule van vergadering van die Hoofbestuur gehou in Kaapstad op Vrydag 9 Februarie 1934."

²³⁷ See copies of the letters in Malan's handwriting, along with the typed versions in INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1.

²³⁸ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, F.C. Erasmus – J.B.M. Hertzog, 9 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 12 February 1934;

The Cape Nationalists were, however, less interested in thrashing out whether South Africa's constitution should be clarified by legislation or party-political programmes than they were in the procedure for determining the principles of a political party.²³⁹ Hertzog responded that the new party's principles would be determined by the leaders of the two parties, and presented to the respective party congresses for approval. Thus, because the NPs congresses would have to endorse the programme of principles, Hertzog gave his assurance that its contents would be acceptable to all Nationalists.²⁴⁰

Malan could find no fault with this, but Willie Hofmeyr's legal mind identified a divergence.²⁴¹ He did not have to mention that, given Hertzog's propensity for bullying party congresses into accepting unpopular measures, this procedure was no guarantee that the principles would be acceptable. Up to this point, Malan – the former shepherd of souls – had accepted the possibility that there might have been a confusion of terms. For this reason, therefore, he had used South Africa's constitutional position to test the purity of Hertzog's ideals, as he had believed that this held the key to determining whether Hertzog planned to amalgamate with the entire SAP, or only the like-minded sections.²⁴²

Hofmeyr, who – like Hertzog and Smuts – was a trained lawyer, believed that the true test of Hertzog's intentions lay in the procedures. Hertzog knew only too well that the Cape's congress had ruled out the dissolution of the NP and had therefore forbidden any negotiations between the Cape and Smuts. Nevertheless, his procedure did not aim at the preservation of an enlarged NP, but instead at its dissolution in order to establish a new party. If the Head Committee agreed to this, they would be acting against its congress's orders.²⁴³

At first, Malan did not grasp the discrepancy between Hertzog's procedure and that determined by the Cape's congress. When Hofmeyr tried to explain it to him, the conversation devolved into a heated argument. This time, the Head Committee sided with Hofmeyr. Malan became so angry that, when the committee decided to appoint a small group to draft an answer to Hertzog's letter, he refused to be a part of it. Later that evening, however, he was coaxed into joining the group as they reviewed their reply to Hertzog. Malan arrived, rather sullenly, but soon

INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, F.C. Erasmus – J.B.M. Hertzog, 13 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 14 February 1934.

²³⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 11-12.

²⁴⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 12 February 1934.

²⁴¹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 12.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

understood the point that he had failed to grasp that afternoon. It changed the matter entirely. Both his mood and the harmony were restored.²⁴⁴

In the letters which followed, the Cape Head Committee made it clear that their congress had prohibited them to cooperate with Hertzog in his negotiations with Smuts. They were only allowed to advise the NPs Federal Council on a programme of principles, which could then be presented to the various provincial congresses for approval. Hertzog acquiesced to their request that the Federal Council draft the new party's principles – where they would be able to make a contribution. Hertzog made the proviso, however, that, in the case of a disagreement between him and the Federal Council, he would be allowed to submit an alternative party-basis to the various congresses. The Head Committee did not question the proviso – which effectively provided Hertzog with an escape clause – but instead agreed to it. Peace was restored.²⁴⁵ The day after the last letters were exchanged, Hertzog wrote to the three Free State MPs to inform them that their ban had been lifted.²⁴⁶

The correspondence was published amidst an atmosphere of general relief. There were, however, some Nationalists who wondered what Jan Smuts's next move would be. Reconciliation between Malan and Hertzog was certainly not in his interest, and his and Hertzog's freedom to bargain was hampered by Hertzog's consent to allow the NPs Federal Council to draft the new basis. 'Smuts is the most competent politician in the country, on the terrain of politics a true Genl De Wet when it comes to escaping from difficult positions. He is in a corner, but he had not yet been captured,' Geyer noted in his diary.²⁴⁷ The Nationalists would receive their answer within a mere three days.

A Cabinet meeting was held the same morning on which the correspondence between Malan and Hertzog appeared in the press. Smuts waited until the meeting had ended to speak to Hertzog, and it was agreed that the two of them would meet later that afternoon. Smuts was clearly upset about the procedure which had been agreed to in the correspondence – he felt that he had been sidestepped, as it would now be the Federal Council, not he and Hertzog, who would compile a basis. He had decided to direct a formal letter to Hertzog, in which he would inform Hertzog that he, Smuts, could no longer negotiate a union between the two parties. Hertzog could not understand

²⁴⁴ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 12.

²⁴⁵ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 12 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, F.C. Erasmus – J.B.M. Hertzog, 13 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 14 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, F.C. Erasmus – J.B.M. Hertzog, 15 February 1934; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/11/1/1/1, J.B.M. Hertzog – F.C. Erasmus, 15 February 1934.

²⁴⁶ INCH, C.R. Swart Collection, PV 18, file 3/1/11, J.B.M. Hertzog – C.R. Swart, 16 February.

²⁴⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 14: 'Smuts is die bekwaamste politikus in die land, op die terrein van politiek 'n ware genl. de Wet om uit moeilike posisies te ontsnap. Hy is in 'n hoek, maar hy is nog nie gevang nie.'

Smuts's grievance: in the correspondence with the Head Committee, he had left a back door open to compile his own basis if he disagreed with the Federal Council's – he was still as free as ever.²⁴⁸

Smuts was also unhappy that the publication of the correspondence had made Hertzog's opinions about the constitutional position public – it would cause a stir within SAP ranks. Hertzog however pointed out that he had not written anything that he had not stated in public during the course of the past year, or that was not being dealt with by Cabinet and Parliament at that very moment. Smuts was clearly dissatisfied, and informed Hertzog that he would have to consult with his party. This made Hertzog aggressive: if the SAP could not accept his stance on South Africa's constitutional position, he would regard it as a clear sign that Smuts's supporters were not ready for union yet. If that was the case, he would simply draft a programme of principles, without consulting with Smuts, which the NP would then present to the SAP as a basis for union. Smuts left after this outburst, but he was not one to be driven into a pen that easily.²⁴⁹

On the following day, a Saturday, Smuts's secretary arrived at Groote Schuur to deliver a letter to Hertzog, along with a message that Smuts intended to hand it to the press that very afternoon. Hertzog could well guess at the contents, and without even opening it, he shot the messenger with the reply that Smuts could do as he liked. Hertzog's bravado evaporated, however, as soon as he opened the letter: it was written in such a belligerent tone that it would be impossible for him to draft a dissimilar response,²⁵⁰ and ultimately, with it would mean the end of fusion. It was now Hertzog who was driven into a corner where he had to choose between Malan and Smuts. He chose Smuts.

About half-an-hour later, Hertzog's telephone rang. It was Louis Esselen, one of Smuts's confidantes, to tell him that, if he so wished, Smuts might be amenable to delaying the letter's release. Hertzog replied that it would indeed be better to wait. Fifteen minutes later the phone rang again, with the news that Smuts had delayed the letter's publication until Monday. Hertzog was left to ponder his options for a few hours, before giving his secretary instructions to phone Smuts with a request to come to Groote Schuur the next morning.²⁵¹

Groote Schuur's entrance began to resemble a political revolving-door. It was precisely two weeks to the minute, after Malan had first visited Groote Schuur to negotiate with Hertzog, that Jan Smuts arrived to claim his prize.²⁵²

Hertzog told Smuts that he did not object to the contents of the letter, only to its form. If the letter was published, the cooperation between the two parties would have to be ended, as he would

²⁴⁸ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 617-9.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 619.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² Both meetings were held at 10:30 A.M. on Sunday 4 February and Sunday 18 February respectively. See C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 612, 619.

look foolish if he kept Smuts in the Cabinet after the publication of such an aggressive letter. Smuts reacted with surprise, and assured Hertzog that it was never his intention to break off relations – to the contrary, he had sought to find a bridge between them. He asked to have the letter back in order to compose a new one, and apologised profusely for having formulated his words so clumsily.²⁵³ It was precisely the same tactic Smuts had utilised the year before when Parliament had debated his motion of no confidence in the government, while he and Hertzog were quietly negotiating behind the scenes. Then, he had ended the debate with the words ‘Perhaps I am to blame...Perhaps I have handled the subject unskilfully...I did not want to start a general indictment of the government or a general dogfight.’²⁵⁴ Geyer was right when he called Smuts the most skilled politician in the country.

Smuts left to write a new letter. When it was delivered to Groote Schuur that evening, it was, in Hertzog’s own words, ‘a new creation!’²⁵⁵ After Hertzog had drafted a reply, both letters were sent to the press late that night.²⁵⁶ Geyer was the first member of Malan’s circle to receive word of the sea change – *Die Burger*’s offices phoned him at 11:45 P.M. to tell him that they had just received a set of correspondence from Reuter, that it was between Hertzog and Smuts, and that it was very different to the correspondence between Hertzog and the Cape’s Head Committee. Geyer was, to some degree, relieved that it was too late for the newspaper to write a response to the youngest turn of events.²⁵⁷

The rest of the Nationalists woke up the next morning to read that Hertzog had given Smuts his assurance that the procedure, as hammered out between him and the Cape Head Committee, was merely the process that was to be followed within the NP, and that he had every intention of continuing with the negotiations in the same manner as before. With regards to the issues of neutrality and secession, Smuts and Hertzog agreed that their interpretation differed on this point, but that there was no reason why this had to preclude their working together, and no need for it to be included in the new party’s programme of principles.²⁵⁸ After Hertzog had assured the Nationalists that there was no doubt that secession and neutrality were non-negotiable rights, his agreement with Smuts to disagree on a matter of ‘interpretation’ proved that Malan’s attempt to put him to the test had failed utterly. The Cape Nationalists now found themselves outmanoeuvred and trapped in the fusionist fold. At the Koffiehuis, Malan’s supporters sat around dejectedly, while

²⁵³ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 620.

²⁵⁴ Quoted in W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 247.

²⁵⁵ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 620: ‘n nuwe skepping!’

²⁵⁶ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 620.

²⁵⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 16.

²⁵⁸ J. van der Poel (ed.), *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 573-6.

Geyer, Sauer and C.R. Swart mocked them with glee in the old ‘I-told-you-so’ fashion.²⁵⁹ With a mixture of mockery and contempt, Smuts wrote to a friend that:

...you will be amused to hear that I have had this week a most hectic time politically. General Hertzog took it upon himself to make peace with Dr Malan and to conclude the peace in an exchange of letters which left the poor South African party in the air. My little plan seemed all gone and I was beginning to make other plans for the future. But then I tackled the General with the result that he left the Doctor in the air, and again returned to unity with the South African party. A right-about-face in one week! That is how we carry on in South Africa. What Dr. Malan is now thinking of it all Lord only knows.²⁶⁰

Indeed, only the Lord knew the contents of Malan’s thoughts. He was not in Cape Town when the news broke, having departed a few days before to tour the Transvaal. He thus found himself holding badly attended meetings in a fusionist stronghold, while trying to recover his balance. His speeches were strongly worded, and were aimed at holding Hertzog to his undertaking to the Cape’s Head Committee. He assured his audiences that there was a misunderstanding between Smuts and Hertzog concerning the procedure which had to be followed. According to Malan, Hertzog could negotiate with whomever he liked, but he remained accountable to the Federal Council. Pointing to his own correspondence with Hertzog, however, Smuts repudiated this in a press conference.²⁶¹

Hertzog – entirely oblivious to the notion that such utilisation of his wiggle-room within a matter of days as he had employed might be interpreted as a show of bad faith, and even treachery – was angered by Malan’s speeches. He regarded it as a sign that Malan’s peace overtures were insincere, and that he was now merely biding his time until he could wreck fusion when the Federal Council and the congresses met to approve the programme of principles.²⁶²

Thus, with the trust returned to its formerly shattered state, few harboured any illusions about the truce. The big confrontation, which everyone had expected would occur in January, had once again been delayed. That someone would finally have to break away was a certainty.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 16.

²⁶⁰ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 577.

²⁶¹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 18-19.

²⁶² C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 629.

²⁶³ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume V*, 577; KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 19.

The next presumed battlefield was in Parliament. The Status and Seal bills, which would finally clarify South Africa's constitutional position by appointing the South African Parliament as the country's highest legislative authority, and the Union government as its highest executive authority, were introduced at the end of March. In case of war, South Africa's participation would depend entirely on the government's advice to the Governor-General. The government's stance, in turn, would be determined by Parliament's support.²⁶⁴

The removal of the King's power was certain to be unpopular with the former Unionists, a fact which provided a golden opportunity for Malan and his anti-fusionists to drive them out of the alliance. Malan pinned all his hopes on this possibility. The bills were worded in such an ambiguous manner, however, that there was a real possibility that the majority of the SAP might accept them - which would spell the end of the Malanites' tenure in the NP.²⁶⁵

Simultaneously, other disconcerting signs were appearing. There were indications that poor- and working-class Afrikaners were beginning to leave the NP to cast their lots with the Labour Party. In Krugersdorp, an NP candidate lost a by-election to an Afrikaans-speaking Labourite – the latter won with ballots cast by Afrikaans-speaking mine workers. To Malan and his supporters, this alarming news – along with similar reports from across the Witwatersrand – raised the stakes.²⁶⁶

Much to the Malanites' consternation, Smuts succeeded in holding his ship together despite a near-mutiny in the jingo ranks.²⁶⁷ Malan, who suddenly took ill and had to be submitted to hospital (the nature of his illness is unknown), could not attend Parliament to lead the charge against the SAP. Instead, he had to undergo an operation, and was reduced to receiving streams of visitors to his hospital bed – which hampered his recovery. Once out of hospital, he had to remain at home, all the while growing increasingly anxious about the SAP's cohesion. He gave instructions to Erasmus to threaten Hertzog with a party split if some of the vague aspects in the legislation were not clarified, but Hertzog managed to evade the attempt to drive him into a corner. In the meantime, Malan's inner circle began to grumble about their state of limbo. While some still did their best to make the best of an abysmal situation, all were now agreed that it had been a mistake to return to Hertzog's fold. Malan himself put on a bold face. The new party could hardly last a year or two, he told his followers. As soon as the next great political crisis arrived, the Unionists would split, and the nationalists would once again control the party.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 256-7.

²⁶⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 19, 21.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 21, 25.

²⁶⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 256.

²⁶⁸ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 25-6, 28-9, 35.

By the end of April, Malan – who was still not fully recovered – visited Hertzog, and it was probably on this occasion that Hertzog handed him a draft of the party programme which he was drawing up in consultation with Smuts, and asked for his comments.²⁶⁹ Malan was taken by surprise. In the correspondence between Hertzog and the Head Committee, it had been agreed that the Federal Council would draft a basis, since the Cape congress had expressly forbidden any negotiations with Smuts. The fact that he was being presented with a document which he could have nothing to do with was yet another glaring breach of trust – to which Hertzog was entirely oblivious. To make matters worse, the document had been drafted in stealth, before the Cape Head Committee – under the impression that it would be allowed to contribute to the discussions at the Federal Council – had begun to formulate its recommendations to the Federal Council.²⁷⁰ They were headed for yet another *fait accompli a' la Hertzog*.

Malan did not say a word to his inner circle, but instead became increasingly irritable – a hitherto unfamiliar trait, which left his friends unsettled. Geyer ascribed it to Malan's growing realisation that his peace with Hertzog had been a blunder – and Malan was not one to admit mistakes. Added to this was the fact that Malan had not had a day's rest since his operation – for the first time in his life, he had difficulty sleeping. The tension between Malan and his followers therefore mounted.²⁷¹

By early May, a mutiny was brewing in the inner circle, and a small group gathered to discuss the situation. Some had grown so agitated that they were not far from contemplating a break with Malan.²⁷² Before matters reached such a point, however, they decided to visit Malan and to ask him, as their leader, to give them direction.²⁷³ This would, however, necessarily entail breaking away from Hertzog. Malan was not ignorant of the growing discontent in his ranks, and decided to call a meeting of the Head Committee to clarify the situation. He too needed to know whether or not he still had the support of his followers.²⁷⁴

The group visited Malan two days before the Head Committee met, and were shocked by a rare outburst. Malan angrily interrupted those who tried to speak, and peppered them with angry accusations. He felt betrayed by rumours that his friends were calling him a coward, and was

²⁶⁹ SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A32, Vol. 97, File 97, “Verloop van Gebeurtenisse re Basis van Beginsels.”

²⁷⁰ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)”, 14.

²⁷¹ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 30-1, 35.

²⁷² N.J. le Roux, W.A. Hofmeyr: *Sy Werk en Waarde* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1953), 107-10.

²⁷³ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 31-2.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 31-3; N.J. le Roux, W.A. Hofmeyr: *Sy Werk en Waarde*, 107-10.

furious at their failure to muster a united front against the SAP. To him, it seemed as if the entire group, himself included, were headed for disaster.²⁷⁵

The confrontation was heated, but it was probably at this juncture that a turning point was reached. In spite of all that had transpired between them, Malan still felt a residual loyalty to Hertzog and had hoped – against all odds – that his and the Cape Nationalists’ presence in the new party would dilute Smuts’s influence. To Malan, the stakes of causing a break in Afrikanerdom were so high that he shrank from considering them – he would rather practice his tried and tested method of patience, and let the Federal Council decide on the course that was to be taken. His supporters were adamant that a break would inevitably take place, however, and felt that it was better to walk away sooner, and preserve the NP, rather than later, when they would have to shoulder all the blame and responsibility for the rupture, while forming a new party.²⁷⁶

By the time they parted, the outcome was uncertain, but to everyone’s relief Malan had regained his composure by the time that the Head Committee met, two days later.²⁷⁷ He had finally reached the point where he had reconciled himself to the coming break with Hertzog. It had been a source of tremendous inner conflict. In spite of all that had transpired, Malan was still convinced that Hertzog’s motives were pure – although he would not say the same of Smuts. Both he and his supporters realised, however, that the price for blind loyalty was too high.²⁷⁸ Jannie de Waal would reminisce later that ‘Willie Hofmeyr and I had to drag the parson from fusion by the hem of his gown. It took an entire night to keep him out of it.’²⁷⁹ These words, which were subsequently paraphrased in several ways, became a badge of honour that was passed around Malan’s inner circle. Similarly, Paul Sauer’s admirers would boast, many years later, that Sauer had kept Malan from fusion by the ‘seat of his pants’.²⁸⁰

Malan had indeed reached the point where he was willing to lead his followers where they wanted to go. After he told them all that he knew of the political situation, Malan and his Head Committee devised a battle plan. They would, while respecting their agreement with Hertzog, honour the wishes of the Port Elizabeth congress. Hertzog’s submission of a programme of principles to Malan a few weeks before made it clear that the Federal Council would not draft the document, as had been agreed, but would instead merely consider the basis composed by Hertzog and Smuts. The Cape Head Committee therefore decided to draft its own programme of principles

²⁷⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 32-4.

²⁷⁶ N.J. le Roux, W.A. *Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 109-10.

²⁷⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 34-5.

²⁷⁸ N.J. le Roux, W.A. *Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 107-10.

²⁷⁹ US Library, M.E.R. collection, 55.K.H.5, D.W.R. Hertzog – M.E. Rothman, 14 July 1975: ‘Willie Hofmeyr en ek moes die predikant aan sy manelpunte uit samesmelting sleep. Dit het ‘n hele nag gekos om hom daaruit te hou.’

²⁸⁰ D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer*, 51: ‘Paul het ou Doktor so-te-sê aan sy broek se stert uit Samesmelting gehou.’

which could also be submitted for deliberation. The entire Head Committee would accompany Malan and his fellow-representatives to Federal Council meeting in order to be available should any advice be needed. It was agreed that a small deputation, headed by Malan, would discuss the matters with Hertzog and release a statement to the press. With the harmony restored, and the commander back at the head of his troops, the committee expressed its appreciation of Malan's courageous effort to reach an agreement with Hertzog, and promised its unwavering support for his endeavour to carry out the decisions reached at Port Elizabeth.²⁸¹

Hertzog himself was growing restless. On 8 May, he asked Malan to come and see him at his office, as he had not received any response to the draft programme of principles that he had given to Malan, and was anxious to hear his comments. To Hertzog's dismay, Malan told him that the Status Act, which had since been passed, had done little to clarify the constitutional position.²⁸² Hertzog and the other NP ministers (apart from Pirow, who had to introduce the legislation) abstained from the debate,²⁸³ which meant that little was said that could have alienated the SAPs jingo-section. Malan was certain that the new party would not consist of the like-minded, as a large number of jingoes would join due to the government's failure to provide an authoritative interpretation of what he believed to be a deliberately vaguely-worded Act. Malan also refused to discuss Hertzog's programme of principles, informing him instead that his Head Committee was about to draft its own programme, and that their discussion about the principles would therefore have to be delayed. Malan left an anxious Hertzog to fret about the coming storm. 'I could not help but come to the conclusion that he is preparing for a second break in the National Party when the next congresses take place,' Hertzog wrote in his diary.²⁸⁴

For the time being, however, Malan kept a straight face while he and his group devised their plans. His address to an audience at Moorreesburg the day after his interview with Hertzog did not betray the fact that, behind the scenes, the Malanites were determined not to be drawn into a fusion, and were looking for an opportunity to force a break with Hertzog.²⁸⁵ They did not have to wait too long. On the same evening that Malan delivered his rather colourless speech in Moorreesburg, Smuts gave a speech to the Rotary Club which, according to Geyer, amounted to 'an imperialist's confession of faith.'²⁸⁶

Smuts's speech added to the tensions that were already rampant. Discussions about Hertzog's programme of principles were proceeding apace within the Transvaal and Free State

²⁸¹ INCH, M.P.A. Malan collection, PV 34, file 8, "Vergadering Daelikse Bestuur Cape Town 3 Mei 1934."

²⁸² C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 630.

²⁸³ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewende en Stryd*, 594.

²⁸⁴ C.M. van den Heever, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog*, 631: 'Ek kon nie anders as tot die gevolgtrekking kom nie dat hy hom voorberei op 'n tweede breuk in die Nasionale Party wanneer die volgende kongresse plaasvind.'

²⁸⁵ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 36-7.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 37: "n geloofsbelydenis van 'n Imperialis"

caucuses – but these meetings were deliberately kept a secret from the anti-fusionists in their own ranks, who only found out about them by accident.²⁸⁷ When Malan next met Hertzog, he finally confronted Hertzog about the fact that he was drafting a programme, and not the Federal Council as they had agreed in their correspondence in February. Hertzog, however, could not see anything wrong with his actions – the congresses of the Transvaal, Free State and Natal had given him the instruction to negotiate with Smuts in drawing up a basis for agreement, which is what he was doing, and he would soon present the document to the press for publication. To this, Malan retorted that *he* too had to act in accordance with the instructions of his congress, and informed Hertzog that he would not discuss the Cape Head Committee’s recommendations with him but instead submit it to the Federal Council when it met. Malan and his followers, however, decided among themselves that, if Hertzog wanted to present his programme of principles to the public even before the Federal Council had had a chance to discuss it, they would do likewise. Geyer was instructed to inform them as soon as *Die Burger* received Hertzog’s document, whereupon they would also submit theirs for publication. The peace was nearly at an end, and this fact would soon be made public.²⁸⁸

Malan decided to use Smuts’s imperialist speech to bring the state of affairs out into the open. He waited for two weeks before he spoke out, thus allowing the tension to mount. Then, on 24 May, he let loose with a strongly-worded speech in Paarl, in which he declared that he would fight fusion ‘tooth and nail.’²⁸⁹ ‘It was the Doctor of old again,’ Geyer wrote, overjoyed.²⁹⁰ When Hertzog appeared in Parliament the next day, it was clear that he was anything but pleased. Instead, according to Paul Sauer, he resembled ‘a cantankerous wildebeest bull.’²⁹¹ Malan had forced him into a position where he had to choose between him (Malan) and Smuts. It was clear that the peace had finally reached its end – and everyone now waited for the formal break to take place.²⁹²

The cracks grew a few inches deeper when the two competing programmes of principles – one drafted by Hertzog and Smuts, the other by Malan and the Cape Head Committee – appeared in the press on 6 June. There were such glaring discrepancies between the two documents that there could be little doubt about the chasm that now existed between Malan and Hertzog. All that was left was for the final confrontation to take place. As for Malan, he no longer harboured any illusions.²⁹³

²⁸⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 40.

²⁸⁸ INCH, M.P.A. Malan collection, PV 34, file 8, “Notule van vergadering van die Hoofbestuur gehou in Pretoria op Dinsdag-aand, 19 Junie 1934”; KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 43.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 45; O. Pirow, *James Barry Munnik Hertzog*, 185.

²⁹⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 45: ‘dit was weer die ou Doktor’

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*: “‘n nors wildebeesbul”

²⁹² KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 45-6.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 45-50.

The battle was scheduled for 20 June, when the Federal Council would meet in Pretoria. The Cape Head Committee met the evening before and drafted a letter to the Federal Council, in which it bemoaned the fact that Hertzog had not been faithful to the assurance that he had given to the Head Committee that the programme of principles would be drafted by the Federal Council, where the Cape representatives would be able to make a contribution. Instead, they complained, he had drafted a document in consultation with Smuts and the Members of Parliament, and had submitted it to the press before the Federal Council could meet.²⁹⁴

With such an opening letter, the fur flew as Hertzog and Malan tackled each other directly.²⁹⁵ Hertzog refused to be held accountable to the letters exchanged between him and the Cape Head Committee. In answer to Malan's accusations, he replied that he had given his undertakings to the Head Committee in his personal capacity, and they therefore had no bearing on the party's formal procedures. The row then shifted to Hertzog's programme of principles. Malan and his followers systematically attacked the points regarding South Africa's sovereign independent status – which were formulated so vaguely that it could be left open to interpretation.²⁹⁶ Hertzog refused to budge on any of his points.²⁹⁷ The matter was brought to a vote, which Malan lost by twelve votes to eight. At this point, the Cape representatives requested a recess in order to consult with its Head Committee. After discussing the matter, Malan suggested that the Cape representatives present their own basis, which would then be voted on, one point at a time. If they were defeated, he would issue a statement of his intention to recommend to his party congress that the NP ought to continue its existence.²⁹⁸

The Cape representatives returned to meeting, where the points in their programme of principles were rejected one by one – apart from the section on economic policy. They remained in a minority of seven to thirteen,²⁹⁹ which consisted of the five Cape representatives, N.J. van der Merwe from the Free State and Mrs Mabel Jansen from the Transvaal. The meeting finally dissolved after midnight,³⁰⁰ with the break between Malan and Hertzog now official.

On the following day Malan and his supporters issued a statement to the press, in which they declared that the Federal Council had failed to agree on an acceptable basis for a new party which

²⁹⁴ INCH, M.P.A. Malan collection, PV 34, file 8, “Notule van Vergadering van die Hoofbestuur gehou in Pretoria op Dinsdag-aand, 19 Junie 1934”.

²⁹⁵ N.J. le Roux, *W.A. Hofmeyr: Sy Werk en Waarde*, 111.

²⁹⁶ INCH, M.P.A. Malan collection, PV 34, file 8, “Notule van Vergadering van die Hoofbestuur gehou in Pretoria op Dinsdag-aand, 19 Junie 1934 – Hervatting.”

²⁹⁷ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 55.

²⁹⁸ INCH, M.P.A. Malan collection, PV 34, file 8, “Notule van Vergadering van die Hoofbestuur gehou in Pretoria op Dinsdag-aand, 19 Junie 1934 – Hervatting.”

²⁹⁹ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)”, 15.

³⁰⁰ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring”, 55.

would bring all those who belonged together through their inner convictions into the same fold. They revealed that Hertzog had not honoured the procedure which he and the Cape Head Committee had agreed on, and had instead placed an accomplished fact before the Federal Council. Since they were unable defend all that was dear to the NP, Malan and his followers declared that the nation's only salvation lay in the preservation of the NP.³⁰¹

The matter now had to be taken to the various provincial congresses, but this was a mere formality. Hertzog did not attend the Cape's provincial congress in Somerset West, which was the first to be held, little more than a month later, on 25 July. Instead, Attie Fourie was dispatched to wave the Hertzog-banner.³⁰²

Malan's speech to the congress was the speech of a Leader of the Opposition. It consisted of a devastating attack on the Hertzog-government's failure to assist the Afrikaner farmers and the poor during a time of drought and depression – as far as Malan was concerned, the government was once again under Hoggenheimer's control. With regards to South Africa's constitutional position, it was clear that it was Smuts who played the piper, since Hertzog had remained quiet while Smuts and his supporters declared that South Africa did not possess the right to neutrality. Malan was convinced that this revealed the fusionists' weaknesses: 'There are two things against which the new party's basis ought to be measured: the British connection and our participation in a war', he declared.³⁰³

Malan exhorted his followers not be too optimistic, 'The victory on the road that will be taken will not be achieved while sitting in an armchair.'³⁰⁴ He nevertheless declared that he was hopeful because he believed in his nation. His words were greeted by euphoric applause.³⁰⁵

When the matter of the NPs continued existence was finally brought to a vote, it was a triumph for Malan. His congress voted 164 to 18 in his favour.³⁰⁶ The Cape National Party would not be dissolved. The Free State congress, held a few days later on 31 July, was, in contrast, marred by angry accusations and venomous personal attacks. N.J. van der Merwe left the proceedings with a small group of supporters to continue their own congress in a nearby café, while Hertzog and the main congress decided that the Free State NP would be dissolved in order to join a new party. It would take all of its assets with it. The rift between Free State Malanites and Hertzogites was so bitter that personal friendships were broken, and would remain divided according to party-lines for

³⁰¹ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)", 15-16.

³⁰² J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 609.

³⁰³ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)", 31: 'Daar is twee dinge waaraan die basis van die nuwe party getoets moet word: die Britse konneksie en ons deelname aan 'n oorlog.'

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 27: 'Die oorwinning op die pad wat sal ingeslaan word, sal nie sittende in 'n leunstoel bereik kan word nie.'

³⁰⁵ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)", 27.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 19-21.

years to come. The Transvaal congress followed the same pattern, albeit in a less tumultuous fashion. A small group of Malan-supporters also left the meeting in order to continue with their own proceedings elsewhere. Natal too followed suit in pledging its support to Hertzog. The few Malanites present did not, however, stage a formal exit.³⁰⁷

The time had arrived for Malan and Hertzog to each reconstitute their respective parties.

With fusion a thing of the past, Geyer reflected on Malan's last-ditch attempts to broker a peace with Hertzog. There were arguments for and against. Malan had certainly proven to the nation that he had done everything in his power to preserve its unity. It had enabled him and his followers to present their programme of principles alongside those of Hertzog, thus making it clear that the divisions were the result of a clash of values, rather than personalities. On the negative side, the Malanites had lost a parliamentary session in which they could have formed an effective opposition to the government.³⁰⁸ When measured against the years of political capital that Malan would gain from his newly claimed moral high ground, however, the loss of a parliamentary session was of passing value.

Geyer was certain that many of Malan's followers had lost some of their faith in their leader, which would not easily be restored.³⁰⁹ Indeed, when the pressure began to mount, Malan's leadership did not differ too much from that of Hertzog. He too acted without his followers' knowledge and consent when he deemed it to be necessary, and he too became angry when his decisions were criticised. Within his inner circle, Malan was the senior partner, as his former peers had passed on. Langenhoven and Charlie Malan had died, while Beyers had retired from politics. Malan was left with a group of confidantes who were much younger than him, and who could not challenge his authority to the same extent as members of his own generation would have done.³¹⁰

Yet, his followers' defiance forced Malan to consider the prospect of being a shepherd without a flock. In such moments, Malan was faced with his own assertion that a leader could not lead without the consent of his followers. Ultimately, he was more sensitive to his followers' sentiments than Hertzog ever was.

³⁰⁷ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 610-5.

³⁰⁸ KAB, A 1890, A.L. Geyer collection, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Opnuut Verwarring", 56.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 40.

Chapter 9 – Taming the Wilderness, 1934-1940

It was in his sixtieth year that D.F. Malan embarked upon yet another new phase of his life: that of leader of a party which stretched across the wide South African expanse. In more prosaic terms, he now commanded pockets of Nationalists who were holed up and scattered across the country. He would soon discover that leading Nationalists from different provinces was akin to attempting to herd cats.

In the immediate aftermath of the party-split, while Hertzog and Malan hurled accusations at one another,¹ the damage had to be surveyed. The Cape National Party was left intact, which meant that Malan's regional power base was secure, but in the other provinces the party consisted of small pieces of wreckage, salvaged from what was once the NP. It would be years before there was any noticeable Nationalist presence in Natal. From the Transvaal, Malan's parliamentary presence consisted of a sum total of one backbench MP by the name of Hans Strijdom who, a mere five years after his entry into Parliament, found himself sharing the regency of a very small dunghill. Matters were marginally better in the Free State, where four MPs, led by N.J. van der Merwe, cast their lots with Malan. The NP² would retain its federal structure, which meant that the three Northern provinces had to, as before, establish their own parties and elect representatives to serve on the Federal Council. This body held its first meeting in Bloemfontein on 7 November 1934, where it decided to appoint a committee to review the party's programme of principles.³

The simple process of clarifying the party's constitution became a regional power struggle which would last for more than a year: Malan had inherited all of the northern republican dissidents, whose main reason for defying Hertzog was that he had been steadily diluting the republican ideal since 1926. Thus, ironically, while Malan accused Hertzog and Smuts of creating a motley conglomerate of diverse interest groups, the new NP itself consisted of two poles: the southern nationalists – traditionally the least republican of the four provinces – and the most extreme republicans from the traditionally republican north. On a body like the Federal Council, where each

¹ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toesprake op kongres van Nasionale Party van die Oranje-Vrystaat: Antwoord op beskuldiging – Bloemfontein, 1 Aug. 1934', in F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Oberholster, eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake, Deel 6: Oktober 1932 – September 1943* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1977), 92-101; University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/1086, "Malan verklaring i.v.m. ooreenkoms met Genl. Hertzog", 28 August 1934.

² Contrary to popular belief, the party never adopted the name '*Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party (GNP)*' or 'Purified National Party (PNP)', but retained the name 'National Party'. Thus, the name '*Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party*' does not appear on any of the party's official documents. Malan and his followers did become known colloquially as the *Gesuiwerdes*, or Purifieds, which they carried like a badge of honour – while their opponents used it in less complimentary terms. For the purpose of this chapter, the party's official name, the National Party (NP), will be used.

³ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, (Bloemfontein: Instituut vir Eietydse Geskiedenis, 1986), 9-12.

province had equal representation, the Cape Nationalists therefore found themselves in a minority, despite the fact that they represented the party's largest power base.⁴

In the months leading up to the next Federal Council meeting, the three northern provinces held their first provincial congresses. It was clear that the battle with Hertzog had scarred them, as they set out to erect party structures which could not be controlled by a single individual. In the Free State, where Hertzog had always dominated provincial congresses, N.J. van der Merwe was elected as the new provincial leader. The role of the leader was painstakingly defined as that of *primus inter pares* (first among equals). The Free State leader would not be allowed to take any actions contrary to the party's democratic principles.⁵

The Transvaal congress, on the other hand, decided that it would in future be governed by a triumvirate. To this end, Hans Strijdom, C.J.H. de Wet and Mrs Mabel Jansen were elected to the leadership. This arrangement would last for less than two years – in October 1936, Hans Strijdom would be elected as the Transvaal's sole leader.⁶ In due course it became clear that De Wet, in particular, was a republican extremist.

At each of the three conferences, the republican ideal also played a prominent part. In a departure from the party's traditional espousal of the ideal – which had never gone beyond lip-service – the Free State declared that it would consciously strive for its achievement.⁷ The Natal congress followed suit.⁸ The Transvaal, however, not to be frustrated in its endeavours any longer, went one step further. Despite the fact that the Federal Council had appointed a committee to draft a constitution for the new party, it proceeded to draft its own programme of principles, which it presented to its congress. The congress also passed a resolution that the party would work, along constitutional lines, for the achievement of a republic, independent of the British crown and outside the British Commonwealth.⁹ Most significantly, the Transvaal's congress decided that its own programme of principles could only be modified if two-thirds of the congress agreed. This effectively bound the other four provinces to the Transvaal's programme, as the Federal Council's programme could not be adopted unless the congresses from all four provinces approved.¹⁰ Later events would show that Malan was furious about this, but that he contained himself. The Federal Council's meeting was scheduled for 5 July 1935.¹¹ Malan sent the preliminary programme of

⁴ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, (Bloemfontein: Instituut vir Eietydse Geskiedenis, 1986), 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

¹⁰ DFM, 1/1/1146, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 8 September 1935.

¹¹ Free State archives repository (hereafter VAB), N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, "Federale Raad Agenda (5 Julie 1935)".

principles to the other provincial leaders and asked them to meet him before the proceedings, in order to discuss it.¹²

These discussions would have revealed to Malan that the Transvaal Head Committee had – at a meeting where neither Strijdom nor Mabel Jansen were present, which left the field open to De Wet and his troops – instructed its Federal Council representatives to defend its provincial programme of principles at the Federal Council meeting. If the Federal Council could not be persuaded to draft a set of principles that was the same as those of the Transvaal, the Transvaal would not take part in drafting a compromise. Instead, its members were told to prevent a new split in the party (which they were forcing) by declaring that the time was not ripe for a communal set of principles yet – and that in the interim, Transvaal would abide by its own constitution.¹³

The Transvaal representatives' hands were therefore tied, and they could not take part in the Federal Council's decision to adopt the principle that a republic was most ideally suited to the South African nation's conditions, traditions and aspirations, and the party would therefore strive and protect the ideal. It stated that a republic would only be established if it was supported by the majority of the nation – and in such an event, the equal language rights of both sections of the population would be upheld. Membership of the party would not, however, be withheld from those who were not committed republicans. In essence, the principle was identical to that which the NP had adopted during the First World War, when republicanism had first become a factor.¹⁴

The Transvaal republicans were not satisfied with such a watery commitment to republicanism, however. As far as they were concerned, there was a vast difference between 'striving' for an ideal, and achieving it.¹⁵ Representatives of *Die Republikein* (The Republican) – the only publication the Transvaal NP had managed to retain as a political mouthpiece – took it upon themselves to write to Malan and inform him that the republican ideal as formulated by the Federal Council placed them in an 'unbearable position.'¹⁶ They made it clear that the three northern provinces were all in favour of a more unambiguous articulation of the ideal, and the petitioners were certain that Malan and *Die Burger's* influence was sufficient to convince the Cape

¹² Central archives repository (hereafter SAB), J.G. Strijdom collection, A 2, Volume 35, F.C. Erasmus – J.G. Strijdom, 17 June 1935; VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, S. Siebert – N.J. van der Merwe, 18 June 1935.

¹³ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A 2, Volume 35, "Die Nasionale Party van Tvl.: Notule van derde vergadering van Hoofbestuur gehou in die Residensie Hotel Pretoria op Dinsdag 18 Junie 1935."

¹⁴ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 18-19.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/1141, A.H. Koopmans and F.C.K. Jacobsz – D.F. Malan, 6 August 1935: 'onhoudbare posisie'.

province of the merits of their case.¹⁷ Similar letters were sent to the leaders of the other provinces.¹⁸

Soon after this bombardment, Malan received a memorandum from the Transvaal Head Committee. It had taken it upon itself to modify the Federal Council's programme of principles by deleting sections that were not to its liking, and substituting them with sections from its own draft constitution.¹⁹ The Transvalers deemed this to be a great improvement, and even issued a pamphlet containing the new version, which it touted as an 'Acceptable solution for all Nationalists' and a 'Combination of the Standpoints of North and South.'²⁰ Most significantly, the Transvaal removed the assurance that non-republicans would still be allowed membership of the party, and that the republic would only be achieved once the majority of the population approved – it deemed the first point to be 'extremely unhealthy and dangerous',²¹ and the second point so obvious that it could be left without saying.²² Malan, however, felt certain that it was essential to state that a republic would only be achieved by constitutional means. After reading copies of *Die Republikein*, in which the example of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was praised, he felt certain that it was not beyond the Transvalers to use force to achieve their republican goals.²³

Along with the memorandum and the pamphlet, Malan received a letter from Strijdom to inform him that there was not the slightest chance of the Transvaal accepting the Federal Council's draft programme of principles. Instead, it had sent its newly modified draft to all of the other provinces, hoping that it would serve as the basis of the new party's constitution.²⁴

At this point, Malan had finally had enough of the Transvaal's attempts to bend him according to its will. He responded with a sharply worded letter, in which he labelled the Transvaal's actions as 'indefensible.'²⁵ Malan felt that he was being manipulated, and he would not stand for it:

¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/1141, A.H. Koopmans and F.C.K. Jacobsz – D.F. Malan, 6 August 1935.

¹⁸ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, A.H. Koopmans and F.C.K. Jacobsz – N.J. van der Merwe, [n.d.]; SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A 2, Volume 35, A.H. Koopmans and F.C.K. Jacobsz – J.G. Strijdom [n.d.].

¹⁹ DFM, 1/1/1144, "Die Nasionale Party van Tvl.: Memorandum van Wysigings in die Konsep Program van Beginsels van die Federale Raad, soos voorgestel deur die Hoofbestuur van die Nasionale Party van Transvaal op 31 Augustus 1935."

²⁰ DFM, 1/1/1143, "Aanbeveling van Transvaalse Hoofbestuur", 31 August 1935: 'Aanneembare Oplossing vir alle Nasionaliste', 'Verbinding van Standpunte van Noorde en Suide.'

²¹ DFM, 1/1/1144, "Die Nasionale Party van Tvl.: Memorandum van Wysigings in die Konsep Program van Beginsels van die Federale Raad, soos voorgestel deur die Hoofbestuur van die Nasionale Party van Transvaal op 31 Augustus 1935": 'uiters ongesond en gevaarlik.'

²² *Ibid.*

²³ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe Collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 8 September 1935.

²⁴ DFM, 1/1/1145, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 2 September 1935.

²⁵ DFM, 1/1/1146, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 8 September 1935.

You know that I have always been, and still am, willing to go very far for the sake of unity and cooperation. I believe that it is the only way to keep a party together and to build a nation. I am afraid that my sense of unity is so prominent that it sometimes encourages others, who feel very little for the unity of our Afrikaner nation, to exploit it for their own ends. But you also know that, precisely because of that same sense of unity, I have always set myself against provincialism in any form, as I still do, and that I regard separatism as an enemy to nationalism that is as dangerous as imperialism or capitalism. As long as I remain the party-leader, I shall therefore continue to resist the disregard of our party-machinery by unilateral actions or shock-methods. It is undemocratic.²⁶

Malan's resistance would prove futile. Strijdom did not respond to Malan's lashing. Instead, Mabel Jansen wrote to Malan in soothing tones to assure him of the Transvaal's ardent admiration for and appreciation of him as their leader:

I therefore hope, even if it seems that the Transvaal sometimes wants to cause trouble, that you will understand that it is not truly the case...at the moment, the only difference between us is that the Cape regards the Republic as an ideal, while we are of the opinion that it is a practical possibility and that all of our political energies should be directed at that goal...with a little patience and tact we will eventually be able to find a compromise.²⁷

More important was a letter from H.T.W. Tromp, the Natal NPs secretary. He had read the correspondence between Malan and Strijdom – which Malan had sent to the other provincial leaders²⁸ – and arrived at the conclusion that the problem lay with the formulation of the principles themselves, as they were open to interpretation. He explained that this gave party members leeway to give or withhold their support at whim, which reduced the NP to a vote-grabbing organisation. He also pointed out to Malan that all three of the northern provinces were republican, which left the

²⁶ DFM, 1/1/1146, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 8 September 1935: 'Jy weet dat ek altyd bereid was en nog is, om baie ver te gaan terwille van eenheid en samewerking. So alleen voel ek, kan jy 'n party bymekaar hou en 'n volk opbou. Ek vrees dat hierdie eenheidsbesef by my selfs so prominent is dat dit ander wat vir die eenheid van ons Afrikanerdom bitter min omgee, soms aanmoedig om dit vir hul eie doeleindes te probeer eksploiteer. Maar jy weet ook dat ek juis as gevolg van daardie selfde eenheidsbesef my aangesig altyd gesit het en nog sit teen provinsialisme in enige vorm en dat ek separatisme beskou as net so 'n gevaarlike vyand van nasionalisme as imperialisme of kapitalisme. Solank as ek hoofleier bly sal ek my daarom ten ene male versit teen die veronagsaming van ons party-masjienerie of teen eiehandige optrede of teen skokmetodes. Dis ondemokraties.'

²⁷ DFM, 1/1/1148, M. Jansen – D.F. Malan, 12 September 1935: 'Ek hoop dus, al lyk dit of die Transvaal soms wil moeilikheid maak, u sal verstaan dat dit in werklikheid nie die geval [is] nie...Die enigste onderskeid tussen ons nou is dat die Kaap die Republiek meer as 'n ideaal beskou, terwyl ons meen dis 'n praktiese moontlikheid en dat ons al ons politieke strewes definitief op daardie doelwit moet afstuur...met 'n bietjie geduld en takt sal ons wel uiteindelik tot 'n vergelyk kan kom.'

²⁸ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, F.C. Erasmus – N.J. van der Merwe, 10 September 1935.

Cape in the minority: the compromise had to come from the south, not the north.²⁹ Malan remained relatively quiet for the next few months. He attended the Free State's congress in October, but made no mention of the republican ideal.³⁰

When the Federal Council met again in February 1936, Malan and the other Cape representatives made a last-ditch attempt to formulate the party's constitution in such a manner that non-republicans would still be allowed membership, but they ultimately had to abide by the will of the majority. The new constitution did, however, make it clear that a republic would only be established on the basis of the will of the majority, and the language rights of the two white communities would be guaranteed. The NP therefore became a republican party, obligated to devote its labours to the achievement of a republic.³¹

Peace was restored, but the balance of power in the party was exposed. While most of the power rested in the south, the party's structure meant that the northern minority could not be ignored – and at crucial moments, it was able to dictate the terms.

The internal issues resolved, the party could now devote more of its energies to positioning itself in the political arena with regards to matters of the day. To Malan this meant, above all, the unity of the Afrikaner nation through the resurrection of nationalism. 'Just as much as you can stop the Zambezi with your hand, or brush back the ocean's tide with a broom, or block the Eastern wind with a sieve, can you halt nationalism,' he declared to a rapturous audience in Worcester.³²

When it came to more tangible matters, however, Malan took special care to position the NP as the party for the poor whites. It had been one of his priorities since his entry into politics, and he carried it into the new party. When a third poor white conference was held, in October 1934, to discuss the findings of the Carnegie Commission on the Poor White Problem, Malan was in attendance as a speaker. As was the case with the previous conferences, his speech was of a moral, rather than a scholarly, nature. He appealed to his audience to remember that the poor whites were members of the nation: those who wanted to help them had to learn to identify with them, instead of approaching such persons as the objects of study or charity.³³

The Carnegie Commission and the resultant conference had a significant impact on Malan and the NP. It added the Coloured community to the list of threats to the poor whites, and argued

²⁹ DFM, 1/1/1149, H.T.W. Tromp – D.F. Malan, 16 September 1935.

³⁰ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 21-2.

³¹ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 22-3.

³² Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie: Notule van die Een-en-Twintigste Kongres (Worcester 1936)", 24: 'Net so min as jy die water van die Sambezie kan keer met jou hand, of die vloed van die oseaan kan terugvee met 'n besem, of die oostewind kan keer met 'n sif, kan jy nasionalisme keer.'

³³ D.F. Malan, 'Toespraak deur Dr. D.F. Malan, L.V.', in P. du Toit, *Report of the National Conference on the Poor White Problem, held at Kimberley, 2nd to 5th Oct., 1934* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1934), 122-5.

that Coloureds, along with Africans, were crowding the poor whites out of the labour market. To make matters worse, according to the commissioners, the poor whites were being forced to live in racially mixed slums with Africans, Coloureds and Indians, where miscegenation was the inevitable result.³⁴ The implication was that all people of colour were a threat to the poor whites, and it would mark a sea change in Malan's approach to racial policy. He was still persistent in portraying Hertzog and his party as Hoggenheimer's puppets, at the expense of the poor whites and the farmers.³⁵ The poor white issue had always been one of Malan's most consistent concerns, but he and his party now took a new turn when it came to the position of Coloureds, Indians and Africans.

By the time the Nationalists took their seats on the Opposition benches in January 1935,³⁶ Hertzog had spent more than eight years endeavouring to have his segregationist legislation adopted by Parliament. In essence, the legislation in its final shape aimed at placing Africans on a separate voters' roll; having special Natives' representatives in Parliament and the Senate, as well as a Natives' Representative Council; while the government would buy more land to enlarge the Reserves and invest funds for the development of these areas.³⁷

Hertzog envisioned that Coloured people's rights in the Cape would not only be safeguarded but also expanded, in order to place Coloured people on the same level as the whites. A bill to this effect had been drafted before the Coalition and Fusion crisis, but in the face of resistance from the north, Hertzog was persuaded to postpone it until the African matter was 'solved'.³⁸

While still a member of Hertzog's party, Malan had supported his leader in his endeavour to draw Coloureds into the mainstream and to establish segregation between white and black. By 1932, however, Malan had become rather irritated at all the delays caused by endless committees and consultation, and had declared that the National Convention had made a mistake in entrenching Africans' voting rights in the constitution and in so doing had done South Africa's attempts to solve a very complicated problem a disservice. As far as Malan was concerned, the nation was the highest authority in the land, and it ought to decide on the matter, not a two-thirds majority of Parliament.³⁹

When Malan's new party's Federal Council's committee drafted its programme of principles, it departed from Hertzog's policy with regards to Coloured people. Its policy concerning Africans remained unchanged while its policy involving Indians was expanded. The new party retained the principle of white Christian guardianship – which had been a part of the NPs

³⁴ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 59, 89-91, 94.

³⁵ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)", 28-30.

³⁶ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 24.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 43; W. Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 123-4.

³⁸ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewes en Stryd* (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1987), 419-20.

³⁹ INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van Sewentiende (1932) Kongres", 32-4.

constitution since its inception – as well as its opposition to miscegenation, which had also formed part of the NPs constitution since 1914. The belief that Africans had to be allowed to develop on their own, according to their own natural abilities, was also preserved. The new constitution also kept the principle that the local population – which included Europeans, Africans and Coloureds – had to be protected from Asian immigration and the expansion of Asians' rights.⁴⁰ Segregation, however, now became part of the new party's programme of principles. It stated that the party 'declares itself in favour of the territorial, political and industrial segregation of the native and the separate political representation of the coloured.'⁴¹

In stark contrast to the battle about the republican ideal, there was no debate or even correspondence about the party's newly adopted principle of separate representation for Coloureds. The measure was adopted into the final programme of principles, which also broadened its position with regards to Indians by pledging to establish an 'effective scheme for Indian segregation.'⁴²

The fact that Malan shifted his position with regards to Coloureds and Indians with such ease is a testament to his list of priorities, as well as the extent to which Hertzog had dictated the party's racial policy. Malan's concerns about nationalism and the poor whites dominated his agenda, while his policy with regards to the other races was fluid and subject to the interests of the poorest Afrikaners. It also revealed the extent to which he had toed the party-line on this matter. Throughout the 1920s, Malan had echoed Hertzog's belief that the Coloureds were members of the Western civilisation, but his shift in the 1930s revealed that his words were not grounded in the same conviction as his statements on Afrikaner nationalism. The same could be said of his stance on Indian affairs. His concessions to the Indian government were part of a process of mutual give-and-take – it was the politics of the moment – and at the time, the Indians were not portrayed as a threat to the Afrikaner poor, but mostly as a concern to the English in Natal. In essence, Malan believed in the preservation of the Afrikaners as members of Western civilisation. Changing conditions called for a flexible approach to achieve this ideal. With the poor white problem higher on the national agenda than ever before, more extensive measures were therefore required.

⁴⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/1/1, "De Nasionale Partij: Beginsels, Constitutie, Statuten. Uitgeven namens 't Bestuur daartoe benoemd door Speciaal Kongres gehouden te Bloemfontein, 7-9 Jan., 1914", 8; INCH Cape National Party Collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/2/1, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Program van Beginsels en Konstitusie (1930)", 8; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/2/2, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie: Program van Beginsels en Konstitusie (1934)", 9-10; DFM, 1/1/1111, "Konsep Program van Beginsels van die Nasionale Party" [1935]. The programmes of principle cited in this footnote are representative of the collection of such documents in the Cape National Party Collection at INCH. From 1914–34, the principle with regards to Africans, Indians and Coloureds remained unchanged.

⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/1111, "Konsep Program van Beginsels van die Nasionale Party" [1935], 4: 'verklaar hom tengunste van die territoriale, politieke en industriële segregasie van die naturel en van die aparte politieke verteenwoordiging van die kleurling.'

⁴² DFM, 1/1/1153, "Program van Beginsels van die Nasionale Party van die Unie" [26 February 1936]; INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/2/2, "Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie: Program van Beginsels en Konstitusie (1937)", 10-11: 'doelmatige skema vir Indiër-segregasie.'

In contrast to Hertzog and Smuts's new United Party (UP), Malan's NP now had a uniform position on racial policy, which provided Malan with ample ammunition with which to exploit the UPs inner divisions on the matter. Smuts thus lamented to a friend that:

We have had some difficulty in parliament and in the cabinet over some colour bills introduced by private members of our party. First it was some bill against mixed marriages which however has for the moment been sidetracked. Then it was two bills against Asiatics employing white girls etc. Hofmeyr [J.H.] took a strong line against these bills, while I have temporized, as not only public opinion even among our reform social workers is much against such employment and the social evils to which they lead or may lead...I think there is a good deal to be said for control of such employment, and am prepared to consider a fair compromise. But Hofmeyr continues very stiff. These colour questions are more and more trouble, and are partly no doubt exploited by our opponents in order to foment differences of view in the United party.⁴³

Thus, as in the 1920s, the Nationalists capitalised on the public's sympathy for racial segregation. In the aftermath of the Carnegie Commission the issue of miscegenation was an exceptionally prominent one, and Malan began to incorporate it into his speeches.⁴⁴ This appealed, in particular, to the Dutch Reformed Church, especially as its Free State Synod had, since 1935, unsuccessfully lobbied the liberal J.H. Hofmeyr – Malan's successor as Minister of the Interior – to introduce legislation that would ban mixed marriages.⁴⁵

Malan also focused his and his party's energies on lambasting the Afrikaners' old enemy, Hoggenheimer, the greedy Jewish capitalist who had inhabited *Die Burger's* cartoons since 1915. In the context of the 1930s, this translated into opposition to Jewish immigration, which was increasing due to growing anti-Semitism in Europe.⁴⁶ In 1932, the year before Hitler's rise to power, Malan had introduced the Quota Bill to curb the swell of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe. Hitler's ascension in 1933 meant that Jewish immigration from Germany, for which the Quota Act did not provide, began to multiply. Malan and his followers were convinced that their immigration was backed by Jewish capital, and thus – rather simplistically – believed that

⁴³ J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 67.

⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/1189, "Die Wekroep van Ons Leier", 22 September 1936.

⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/1236, P.H. van Huyssteen – D.F. Malan, 2 September 1937.

⁴⁶ For an analysis of Afrikaner anti-Semitism in the 1930's, see E. Bradlow, 'Anti-Semetism in the 1930's: Germany and South Africa', *Historia*, 49, 2 (November 2004), 45-58.

Hoggenheimer's ranks were being swollen to the detriment of the Afrikaner poor.⁴⁷ It fed the appetites of anti-Semites in South Africa, and Malan therefore even received letters of support from SAP members who approved of his stance on the matter,⁴⁸ and assured him that they were willing to transfer their loyalties to his party if he took an even stronger stance against the Jews – and moderated his party's republicanism.⁴⁹

The question of Jewish immigration did indeed have the potential to strengthen Malan's position – but not in the manner envisioned by his closet SAP admirers. Malan's views on the Jews were as fluid as his views on Coloureds and Indians. In 1932, the same year he had introduced the Quota Bill, Malan agreed to be the patron of a history book on South Africa, written in Yiddish, 'because such an important section of the population is of Jewish origin and they have fully identified themselves with the country and its people.'⁵⁰

Once in Opposition, however, Malan wanted to consolidate the Nationalists' support by drawing smaller political parties – which had been established during the Fusion crisis – into his more mainstream nationalist fold.⁵¹ This also entailed neutralising his opposition on the far-right flank, which most notably came from the South African National Party (SANP) – otherwise known as the Greyshirts – an anti-Semitic organisation established in 1933 by Louis Weichardt that took its inspiration from Hitler's Brownshirts.⁵²

In July 1937 the secretary of the Cape National Party, F.C. Erasmus – no doubt acting with Malan's approval – hinted to the Greyshirts' party secretary, W.R. Laubscher that the NP might be amenable to an election agreement – elections were scheduled for the following year. In reaction to this hint, Laubscher wrote a letter to Erasmus in which he suggested that the two parties enter into electoral negotiations based on the principle of 'no compromise'. An election agreement was essential to fighting their common enemies: 'Fusionist-Liberalism and Labourite-Communism.'⁵³

It was the beginning of a period of correspondence between the two organisations. Unknown to Laubscher and the Greyshirts, the NPs letters were all drafted by Malan, then typed and signed by Erasmus.⁵⁴

In responding to Laubscher's letter, Malan welcomed it, and pointed out that their common interests went beyond their shared enemies: both organisations were also concerned about the Jewish question. He argued, however, that the Greyshirts' assertion that the agreement would have

⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/1189, "Die Wekroep van Ons Leier", 22 September 1936.

⁴⁸ DFM, 1/1/1216, S. Helps – D.F. Malan, 13 January 1937.

⁴⁹ DFM, 1/1/1244, S.A. Cloete – D.F. Malan, 19 October 1937.

⁵⁰ INCH, L.T. Weichardt collection, PV 29, P. Schoeman – S.H. Michelson, 12 November 1932.

⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/1189, "Die Wekroep van Ons Leier", 22 September 1936.

⁵² H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 441.

⁵³ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1/1, W.R. Laubscher – F.C. Erasmus, 13 July 1937: 'Smelter-Liberalisme en Arbeider-Kommunisme.'

⁵⁴ See letters in Malan's handwriting in INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1/1.

to be based on the principle of ‘no compromise’ not only alluded to the fact that there were irreconcilable differences between the two organisations, but it also implied that the Greyshirts would not be willing to cease their incessant attacks on the NP. For this reason, Malan therefore requested that the Greyshirts articulate the fundamental differences between the two parties, on which they would not compromise, before any formal negotiations could commence.⁵⁵

Laubscher refused to heed this request,⁵⁶ and when Malan repeated the request,⁵⁷ he received a torrent of angry accusations, amounting to a charge that the NP was obviously not interested in cooperating with the Greyshirts.⁵⁸ Finally, Laubscher sent him a copy of the organisation’s programme of principles – accompanied by a few more angry indictments.⁵⁹

Malan studied the document carefully, and his impression of it was not a favourable one. It was clear to him that the Greyshirts were nothing more than a South African copy of Hitler’s National-Socialist Party – evident from its use of the Swastika and a form of greeting that was the same as that utilised in Germany. In his reply to Laubscher, Malan thus stated that it was very problematic for the NP to enter into an election agreement with an organisation that was intent on abolishing parliamentary representation – as well as all political parties – save for itself. According to their programme of principles, the Greyshirts espoused ‘Responsible Leadership’, by which they intended to vest all power in a single individual which, in a democratic country, belonged to the nation. Malan could not see how a party such as the NP, which he believed possessed a purely South African democratic character, could bind itself to a party that took its inspiration from a foreign country – regardless of whether their relationship with that country was of a friendly nature. The fact that the Greyshirts’ constitution placed them under the obligation to destroy other political organisations made cooperation even more impossible.⁶⁰ As far as Malan was concerned, the discussion between the two organisations was at an end – there was nothing to be gained from an agreement between them, and his letter intended to convey this.⁶¹

It was lost on Laubscher, however, who was still under the impression that he was corresponding with Erasmus. He wrote to his leader, Weichardt, to report on the negotiations – in a letter that exuded mindless bravado, which might have been an attempt to conceal the fact that he had sunk the discussions. He wrote that it was the Greyshirts’ formidable strength which, no doubt, had forced Malan and Erasmus to negotiate with them – and was incensed at ‘Erasmus’s’ last letter,

⁵⁵ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, F.C. Erasmus – W.R. Laubscher, 9 August 1937.

⁵⁶ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, W.R. Laubscher – F.C. Erasmus, 13 August 1937.

⁵⁷ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, F.C. Erasmus – W.R. Laubscher, 1 September 1937.

⁵⁸ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, W.R. Laubscher – F.C. Erasmus, 3 September 1937.

⁵⁹ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, W.R. Laubscher – F.C. Erasmus, 22 September 1937.

⁶⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, F.C. Erasmus – W.R. Laubscher, 28 September 1937.

⁶¹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw [27 September 1937].

which contained ‘the old Jewish lies about German Movements and Dictatorship.’⁶² He undertook to write a non-committal response to Erasmus while awaiting his leader’s further instructions.⁶³

Laubscher’s reply was thus filled with condescension at ‘Erasmus’s’ inability to comprehend his organisation’s programme of principles. It was not their aim to destroy all political organisations, save for their own – they wanted to abolish all political parties, *including* their own. Being National-Socialist and using the Swastika did not make them copy-cats of the German model – by implication it meant that democracy in South Africa was an imitation of the French or American systems. Furthermore, he could not see why the two separate organisations could not fight their common enemies together.⁶⁴

Malan was thus forced to write a second letter, in an even harsher tone, to drive home the point that the doors for negotiations had been closed. He lambasted Laubscher’s protestations that the Greyshirts were not a German-inspired organisation which were, in Malan’s estimation, weak, at the very least:

Without insinuating the existence of an explicit connection, it can yet be rightly said that your party is inwardly and outwardly so similar to the German National-Socialist Party that it is indistinguishable from it. Your comparison of South Africa’s democratic system, which we share with America and France, is inapt, firstly because this system has been a reliable reflection of the South African nation’s democratic character and aspirations throughout its history, and furthermore because democratic institutions are the result of a thousand-year process of development of those elements from which our nation, as well as the American and French nations, were originally drawn. As far as the Swastika is concerned, it has to be assumed that its original meaning, which you emphasise, is less important in this regard than the fact that it is also the symbol of an overseas party and of another state, in particular. In the public mind, its use here does not differ in essence from the similar use of the Union Jack by imperialists or of the Russian hammer and sickle by the communists.⁶⁵

⁶² INCH, L.T. Weichardt collection, PV 29, W.R. Laubscher – L.T. Weichardt, 13 October 1937: ‘die ou Joodse leuens van Duitse Bewegings en Diktatorskap.’

⁶³ INCH, L.T. Weichardt collection, PV 29, W.R. Laubscher – L.T. Weichardt, 13 October 1937.

⁶⁴ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, W.R. Laubscher – F.C. Erasmus, 15 October 1937.

⁶⁵ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, F.C. Erasmus – W.R. Laubscher [25 October 1937]: ‘Sonder daarmee ‘n daadwerklike verbinding te insinueer kan tog met reg gesê word dat u Party innerlik en uiterlik so digby die Duitse Nasionaal-Sosialistiese Party staan dat dit daarvan nie onderskei kan word nie. U vergelyking van S.A. se demokratiese stelsel, wat ons met Amerika en Frankryk deel, is nie toepaslik nie, vireers omdat hierdie stelsel die demokratiese karakter en aspirasies van die Suid-Afrikaanse volk dwarsdeur sy hele geskiedenis getrou weerspieël en verder omdat demokratiese instellings die resultaat is van die duisendjarige ontwikkelingsproses by juis daardie elemente waaruit ons volk sowel as die Amerikaanse en Franse volke oorspronklik saamgestel is. Wat die Swastika betref moet aangeneem word dat die oorspronklike betekenis daarvan wat u beklemtoon van minder belang vir ons in hierdie verband is as die feit dat dit ook die simbool is van ‘n oorsese party en van een ander bepaalde staat. Die gebruik daarvan hier verskil in die volksgedagte essensieel nie van die dergelike gebruik van die Britse Union Jack deur Imperialiste of van die Russiese hamer en sekel deur Kommuniste nie.’

Malan was opposed to the importation of foreign ideologies to South Africa, and for this reason believed that there could be no basis for cooperation between the two organisations, despite the fact that the Greyshirts had done South Africa an important service by alerting the populace to the Jewish threat:

On the other hand, we believe that the equation of this service, as is the case with your party, with a Nazi or Fascist movement, can only hinder this service and damage its envisioned goal. There are thousands in our country who, with regards to both the Jewish and Communist threat, would along with you and with us, consider the victory of Fusionist-liberalism and Labourite-communism a first-rate disaster for South Africa. They are not hostile to Nazism in Germany or Fascism in Italy, as every nation has to choose its own form of government. But they disapprove of the transplantation of those movements onto South African soil, not only because they want to see South African problems solved from a South African point of view or because the dictatorship-principle clashes with our nation's character and traditions, but also and especially because that transplantation would mean to our country nothing less than the transplantation of the same glaring contradictions, which have brought turmoil to other countries and which has already brought Europe to the brink of domestic revolutions and war.⁶⁶

Malan's brief spell of anti-Semitism, which would dissipate after the Second World War, was thus not part of a broader attraction to Nazism or Fascism but was, instead, more of a politically opportunist nature. Malan's rejection of totalitarian ideologies had been a consistent feature of his political confession of faith since these European imports had first begun to turn the heads of Afrikaner intellectuals in the early 1930s. Malan was convinced that democracy formed an inherent part of the Afrikaners' Western European heritage, and was therefore an inalienable aspect of the nation's character.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 2/12/1/1//1, F.C. Erasmus – W.R. Laubscher [25 October 1937]: 'Aan die ander kant meen ons dat die vereenselwiging van hierdie diens, soos by u Party geskied, met 'n Nazi of 'n Fascistiese beweging, hierdie diens alleen kan strem en sy beoogde doel alleen kan skade aandoen. Daar is duisende in ons land wat met die oog op beide die Joodse en die Kommunistiese gevaar saam met u en met ons 'n oorwinning van Smelter-liberalisme en Arbeider-kommunisme as 'n eerste-rangse ramp vir S.A. beskou. Teenoor Nazisme in Duitsland en Fascisme in Italië is hul nie onvriendelik gesind nie, omdat elke volk ten slotte sy eie regeringsvorm vir homself moet kies. Maar hul keur die oorplasing van daardie bewegings op Suid-Afrikaanse bodem af, nie alleen omdat hul Suid-Afrikaanse probleme op Suid-Afrikaanse manier en van Suid-Afrikaanse standpunt benader wil sien of omdat die diktatorskap-beginsel indruis teen die tradisies en karakter van ons volk nie, maar ook en veral omdat daardie oorplasing niks minder vir ons land moet beteken as die oorplasing van daardie selfde skerp teenstellings, wat sommige ander lande beroer en wat Europa alreeds tot die rand van binnelandse rewolusies en van oorlog gelei het.'

⁶⁷ *Die Burger*, 15 July 1933.

While Malan was writing these letters to the Greyshirts, he was also busily writing letters of a more intimate nature. By the end of 1937, D.F. Malan was in love again. The lady in question was called Maria Ann Sophia Louw, whose jet-black hair, bright blue eyes and exceptionally rosy cheeks – which she inherited from her Irish great-grandmother – struck all who met her.⁶⁸ She had caught Malan’s eye years before, but it was only in 1937 that the relationship deepened.⁶⁹

Their paths had first crossed back in 1918 when Maria’s father had offered Malan his seat in Parliament – Maria was then a girl of thirteen. They might have met again in 1929 when Maria, by then a young woman of twenty-four, helped to canvass votes for Malan in his Calvinia constituency. She lived and breathed politics, and it was doubtless because of this enthusiasm that she became Calvinia’s party secretary in 1931, at the age of twenty-six.⁷⁰

After her tireless efforts in the 1933 election Malan had written her a short note of gratitude, which contained a warmth of tone absent from all his other letters to political acquaintances.⁷¹ Maria was elected to the Cape National Party’s Head Committee in 1934,⁷² and would remain in this position until December 1937.⁷³ This meant that Malan saw her periodically when she visited Cape Town in order to attend its meetings. Their correspondence was confined to party-matters, but Malan’s letters exuded a familiarity which Maria did not reciprocate.⁷⁴ Malan was not deterred, and continued to hint at his admiration for her. ‘I hope that you can attend the Congress,’ he wrote in September 1936.⁷⁵ ‘Some people, as you know, eventually become indispensable to the Congress.’⁷⁶

A change in the relationship came in August 1937. Malan was due to visit his constituency in September, and Maria sent him a telegram requesting that they discuss his programme at the party congress to be held in two weeks.⁷⁷ Malan certainly did not have party-matters in mind when

⁶⁸ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag* (Cape Town: Malherbe, 1965), 16-17.

⁶⁹ The letters exchanged between Malan and Maria have only recently been added to the D.F. Malan collection. They have not been classified as yet, and therefore do not have archival reference numbers. They shall therefore be referred to as “Addition to D.F. Malan collection”. Few of these letters are dated, and most of them only refer to the day of the week on which they were written. This scant information has, with the help of the smudged and faint postage stamps, as well as key dates and events that are mentioned in the letters, been used to place the letters in a chronological order and to assign dates to each. Electronic copies of the letters are in the writer’s possession.

⁷⁰ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 27, 35-7.

⁷¹ Addition to Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, 6 June 1933.

⁷² INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Negentiende Kongres (Somerset-Wes, 1934)”, 2.

⁷³ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw [7 December 1937].

⁷⁴ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, 19 June 1935; Addition to D.F. Malan collection, 30 August 1935.

⁷⁵ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, 18 September 1936: ‘Ek hoop dat jy Kongres toe kan kom.’

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘Party mense, soos jy weet, word naderhand vir die Kongres onmisbaar.’

⁷⁷ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, 6 August 1937; INCH, Cape National Party, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/1, “Die Nasionale Party van die Kaapprovinsie. Notule van die Twee-en-Twintigste Kongres (Uitenhage 1937)”.

he scribbled at the bottom of the telegram: ‘That’s fine! On the evening of 8 September I will come to discuss it *personally*, with the most ardent hope and the best expectations.’⁷⁸



**Figure 16: Maria Louw
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

It was most probably on this occasion that Malan asked Maria for her hand in marriage – and asked her to stop calling him ‘Doktor’ and begin calling him Danie.⁷⁹ The event was followed by three months of correspondence, wherein they planned their future – and revealed all that they had kept hidden from others. Malan could now tease Maria about her earlier formality:

But tell me, why were you so *terribly official* in those earlier letters to me, almost as if you went out of your way to avoid any spark of personal feeling in them? Conversely my letters to you were not like that at all, except in the case of those that you also had to read to others...No, come on, admit again that we were madly in love with one another and hope to remain so forever! And believe me it is only going to get worse if we keep acting so sensibly

⁷⁸ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, 6 August 1937: ‘Mooi so! Op die aand van 8 September kom ek dit *persoonlik* met jou bespreek, en met die vurigste hoop en die beste verwagtings.’

⁷⁹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [11 September 1937].

so as not to force things. We must let our hearts take their free course. I really believe this. I have acted thus towards you and you must do the same.⁸⁰

Maria was not ready to reveal their secret to others yet, however. She was organising a large Nationalist festival in Calvinia, and did not want the news of their engagement to dominate or jeopardise the proceedings. Malan therefore agreed to keep it secret until after the event, which was scheduled at the end of October.⁸¹ The two of them took special delight in their conspiracy to keep their friends in the dark – they rendezvoused clandestinely in various places around Cape Town and beyond in the months before, and enjoyed prolonging the ruse.⁸² Maria, however, needed to share the news with her mother, and her many brothers and sisters, as she had taken care of her elderly mother since her father's death in 1931,⁸³ and it had to be decided where her mother would live after the wedding. Predictably, this proved to be the weak link in the chain. In mid-October, while Malan was touring the Transvaal, Maria was mortified to receive a phone call from Emmie du Toit, one of the late President Steyn's daughters, who was one of Malan's neighbours and also served on the NPs Head Committee. As Maria wrote to Malan, she *had* to tell her family, but had forgotten that 'every brother's wife has her own parents or best friend and so it became public! Yes, so public that it has even reached Cape Town!'⁸⁴

Thus, when Malan's stepped off the train in Cape Town on his return from the north, he was greeted by reporters who, to his chagrin, asked him for a picture of his betrothed. Malan did not mind that the news had reached his family and friends, but was furious that a matter that he considered to be 'personal' had made it onto the *Argus's* front page.⁸⁵ The press could not allow such a juicy titbit to go unnoticed, however, and the news soon spread to other newspapers, and even the radio. In jest, Maria wrote to Malan to congratulate him on the announcement of his engagement⁸⁶ – and to tease him about the *Times's* report on 'the romance in the life of beady-eyed Dr. Malan.'⁸⁷ He, in turn, teased her about the attention with which she was suddenly being swamped: 'Do you blush a lot when they congratulate you? Really, I would have given much to

⁸⁰ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [25 September 1937]: 'Maar sê vir my, hoekom het daardie vroeëre briewe van jou aan my altyd so vreeslik offisieel gewees, byna asof jy uit jou pad wou gaan om elke vonkie van persoonlike gevoel daaruit te weer? Omgekeer was dit nie so nie behalwe in die geval van die briewe wat jy ook aan ander moes voorlees...Nee jong, erken nou maar nog 'n keer dat ons altwee smoor verlief op mekaar was en hoop om dit altyd te bly. En glo vir my, dit gaan erger word as ons so verstandig bly om niks te forseer nie maar ons harte toelaat om hul eie vrye gang te gaan. Ek glo daaraan. So het ek ten opsigte van jou met myself gehandel en so doen jy ook maar.'

⁸¹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, 13 October 1937.

⁸² Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [21 September 1937].

⁸³ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 36.

⁸⁴ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, 13 October 1937: 'elke broer se vrou het haar ouers of goeie vriendin en so het dit publiek geraak! Ja so publiek dat dit ook al in Kaapstad is!'

⁸⁵ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 40.

⁸⁶ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, [19 October 1937].

⁸⁷ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, [24 October 1937].

witness it, and if there is one thing that I hold against the *Argus*, it is for robbing me of that pleasure.’⁸⁸ There was also a more serious tone under all the teasing. That Maria was about to be drawn from a small rural community into the political limelight was an inevitability, for which Malan prepared her: ‘it is the price you have to pay for wanting a husband who has many friends and also many enemies, and you still have to learn, as he had to, to approach the world philosophically if it needs be, without losing your gentle heart.’⁸⁹

At the same time, Malan was jubilant about the fact that he was not only about to have a new wife, but also that he was to marry a friend and partner with whom he could talk politics. Most of their letters dwelt on politics – both local and national – and in writing about these things, Malan rejoiced:

...that I am about to get a wife who knows something about politics and who will empathise intelligently with her husband. Really, you will do it wonderfully! Just this though: what I want in the first place and above all is *a wife* – politics is splendid, but it is *number two*. Correct?⁹⁰

Maria, for her part, made Malan’s political mission her own. He was due to visit Calvinia again at the end of October, and she knew that she would have to share him with the local Nationalists: ‘I have now discovered that the National Party is my greatest rival when it comes to you. I shall remain quiet and content, because I too cherish a feeling of true love for my rival!!!’ she wrote.⁹¹ As far as Maria was concerned, matters of the nation carried precedence over matters of the heart, which could wait for a more convenient time to be dealt with. Thus, despite the fact that there were some difficult matters to discuss about their future, she would not do so when Malan was away on political tour:

I am not going to answer your letter in any way while you are on tour, because I know that you are then the property of the National Party, the Nation. And I have taken this part of your

⁸⁸ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [16 October 1937]: ‘Bloos jy baie as hul jou gelukwens? Regtig, ek sou baie wil gee om daarby te gewees het, en as ek vir die *Argus* oor een ding kwaad is dan is dit dat hy my van daardie plesier beroof het.’

⁸⁹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [21 October 1937]: ‘jy wil mos ‘n man hê wat baie vriende en ook baie vyande het, en jy moet nog leer, soos hy, om sonder jou sagte hart te verloor, die wereld [*sic*] filosofies te beskou as dit daarop aankom.’

⁹⁰ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [25 September 1937]: ‘...dat ek ‘n vrou gaan kry wat darem ook wat van politiek af weet en wat intelligent met haar man sal kan meelewe. Regtig, jy sal dit somaar lekker doen! Net dit darem: wat ek in die eerste plaas en bo alles wil hê is ‘n vrou – die politieke belangstelling en aanleg is kapitaal, maar dis *nommer twee*. Of hoe?’

⁹¹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, [24 October 1937]: ‘Ek het nou tot die ontdekking gekom dat die Nasionale Party my sterkste opposisie is by jou. Ek sal maar stil tevrede swyg want ook ek koester so ‘n gevoeltjie van opregte liefde vir my opposisie!!!’

life to heart with such earnestness, that I would happily contribute to keeping your thoughts, etc. undivided.⁹²

This set a precedent that was to characterise their marriage. The issue that Maria refused to discuss at this point was the question of Nettie's fate. Both Malan and Maria felt that Nettie could not be cast aside after seven years of devoted care of Malan's children, and both were eager to find an arrangement that could satisfy all parties.⁹³ Malan had also taken Nettie into his confidence right from the beginning. The news must have come as a shock to her. Unknown to Malan, the entire family was convinced that Nettie had been in love with him for years.⁹⁴ Whether or not it was true would never be known. They had been friends since Malan's student days, and there were never any such feelings from Malan's side. That Nettie, who had teased him about his bachelorhood when they were young and whose life revolved around him and his children, felt differently, is plausible. Once she was told of Malan's plan to remarry, however, there was no question of her revealing emotions that may or may not have existed. Her greatest fear, which she could express, was that she would be separated from the children. At the same time, however, she realised that she could not detract from Maria's position as the children's new mother.⁹⁵



⁹² Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, 1 October 1937: 'Ek is nie van plan om jou brief in enig opsig te antwoord terwyl jy op toer is, want ek weet dat jy dan aan die Nasionale Party, die Volk, behoort. En so ernstig dra ook ek daardie sy van jou lewe op my hart, dat ek met plesier sou wil bydra om jou gedagtes ens. onverdeeld te hou.'

⁹³ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, [15 September 1937].

⁹⁴ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke library, Document centre (hereafter US Library), H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., "Interview notes: N.J. du Preez", 2 December 1979.

⁹⁵ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [21 September 1937].

**Figure 17: D.F. Malan and Nettie with Danie (right) and Hannes (left)
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

Maria was especially anxious that her happiness would not come at Nettie's expense, and assured Malan that she was willing to make any reasonable sacrifices so as to accommodate Nettie.⁹⁶ This came as a great relief to Malan. His solution to the problem was to have his house enlarged. As he and Nettie had always employed white servant girls who lived with them in the house, there was a shortage of bedrooms. He decided, therefore, that Nettie would be given a room in the new part of the house,⁹⁷ while her old room would become Malan and Maria's.⁹⁸ The symbolic significance of Nettie evacuating her room in the front of the house in order to move into a room at the back was clearly lost on Malan.

In the meantime, Malan and Maria could revel in their bliss.⁹⁹ They saw each other at the end of October, as agreed, and it is possible that Malan then brought Maria to Cape Town in order to choose her engagement ring.¹⁰⁰ It was also possibly during this time that Maria was first introduced to Danie and Hannes, who were now ten and eight respectively. The boys were not told the reason for her visit, and since there were always visitors, it is unlikely that they made anything of it. Hannes later recalled, however, that he had thought she was a nice lady, and that he had tried his best to persuade her to climb on top of the chicken run with him. His first attempt failed, but Maria, who had a boisterous farm upbringing,¹⁰¹ joined him on a subsequent occasion.¹⁰² Malan waited until the last week in November, when his and Maria's wedding was less than a month away, to tell his children. By this time, the news of his engagement had been public knowledge for more than a month. What he did not know was that his children were already being teased at school about their father's engagement. He afterwards wrote to Maria that Hannes was silent with wonderment when he heard the news, while Danie had adopted a know-it-all attitude – but soon both were merry again and filled with expectation.¹⁰³ The children remembered the event very differently. Hannes recalled that his father took him on his lap and spoke to him at length, but he refused to accept such an alien idea as his father being married. Danie would have none of it.¹⁰⁴

Malan and Maria were quietly wed in a private ceremony, at her sister's house in Porterville, on 20 December 1937. It was, of course, impossible to escape the press photographers, who had laid

⁹⁶ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, Maria Louw – D.F. Malan, [26 September 1937].

⁹⁷ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [25 September 1937].

⁹⁸ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, J.L. Malan – H.B. Thom, 22 February 1980.

⁹⁹ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [20 November 1937].

¹⁰⁰ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [21 October 1937].

¹⁰¹ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 26-8.

¹⁰² US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

¹⁰³ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [26 November 1938].

¹⁰⁴ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

siege to the town – the couple’s photograph appeared on the front page of the *Argus* that same afternoon. They left for their honeymoon that same day, which they spent in the Southern Cape.¹⁰⁵

Their return to Cape Town in January would not be as easy. While Malan adored his new wife, his circle of friends and his family did not accept her with ease. His three half-sisters sympathised with their aunt, Nettie, and resented the fact that their monopoly over Malan had ended. They therefore regarded Maria as an intruder. In addition, everyone was struck by the vast difference between Maria and Mattie. Mattie had never taken an interest in politics, while to Maria it was an almost consuming passion.¹⁰⁶ This necessarily made her a controversial figure, and if anyone in Malan’s political circle ever fell out of his favour or did not receive what he believed to be his due, it was usually ascribed to Maria’s influence. She made both friends and enemies within the party. Some of the other Afrikaners sniffed at her rural upbringing, as well as her army of siblings.¹⁰⁷ In small-town Calvinia, Maria was a member of a prominent and well-educated family – she herself had matriculated at the Good Hope Seminary and had then studied at the University of Cape Town until her studies were interrupted after she was injured in a car accident.¹⁰⁸ The Cape Town elite, on the other hand, believed that she came from an impoverished background and her marriage had allowed her to rise above her rank. Maria was therefore regarded unfavourably relative to Mattie,¹⁰⁹ by people who conveniently forgot that their backgrounds were nearly identical.

The living arrangement with Nettie was not to last. During the course of 1938, Nettie moved to an apartment nearby, where the two boys would visit her regularly.¹¹⁰ She was regularly invited to family gatherings, but the separation from the children was so painful to Nettie that she still crept to their window from time to time to visit them in secret or to pass them small presents. It disturbed Hannes, who told his stepmother – and soon after, the visits stopped.¹¹¹

In June 1938, Malan took his wife and children on a family holiday, which gave them the opportunity to become better acquainted. After six months of marriage, Maria was finally confident enough to assert her authority when the children misbehaved. To the boys, this came as a shock, as their stepmother’s regime was very different from Nettie’s. Nettie disliked punishing them – which meant that discipline was mostly left in the hands of the exasperated white servant girls.¹¹² The boys still did not bath themselves, and if they did not want to eat their food they were given treats

¹⁰⁵ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 41-3.

¹⁰⁶ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., “Interview notes: N.J. du Preez”, 2 December 1979.

¹⁰⁷ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1., “Interview notes: E. du Toit”, 14 November 1979; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, Danie Malan – H.B. Thom, 20 November 1976.

¹⁰⁸ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 16-26, 30-1, 35.

¹⁰⁹ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1., “Interview notes: E. du Toit”, 14 November 1979; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.K.M.13 (16), Danie Malan – H.B. Thom, 31 July 1979.

¹¹⁰ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1., “Interview notes: Hannes Malan”, 1 December 1979.

¹¹¹ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

instead.¹¹³ Also, their table manners left much to be desired. Maria thus felt that she needed to correct their upbringing – or what she believed to be a lack of it. Hannes, who had a shy and introverted personality, accepted her authority. He would grow attached to her, but he also feared her to a certain extent. Danie, on the other hand, had an assertive character and fought back. It would be the start of many clashes, which would continue throughout their lives. Maria herself had an emotional and impulsive personality, and her stepson's challenge to her authority seldom failed to produce an angry eruption – a problem which became more severe as the years passed. These quarrels would always be kept within the walls of their house, however. Malan, for his part, was never involved in these confrontations.¹¹⁴ As is the case with many such marriages, the bond between the two partners was strong, while the relationship between the stepparent and children was volatile.

True to her promise, Maria ensured that Malan's mind would not be distracted by personal matters. The household's care would be left entirely in her hands, and for years afterward the children would resent the fact that she acted as a barrier between them and their father. She always insisted that Malan was busy with national interests, and could not be disturbed. The implication was that Malan was able to devote all of his energies to his political career while his wife hurried to remove every possible stone from his path.¹¹⁵ His every need became her highest priority. She learned how to drive and soon became Malan's chauffeur, as his weak eyesight and absentmindedness made him a bad driver. She made sure that his clothes were in order, and on at least one occasion prevented him from appearing in public with one brown shoe and one black.¹¹⁶ Whenever Malan delivered a speech in Parliament, Maria would be in the gallery to support him,¹¹⁷ and she also accompanied him on many of his political tours.¹¹⁸

By February 1938, Malan was back on the road campaigning for the elections, which would be held in June. During the previous years, he and his supporters had made a concerted effort to expand the party's machinery in other parts of the country in the same manner in which they had established themselves in the Western Cape over two decades before: through the establishment of more newspapers – *Die Oosterlig* in Port Elizabeth and, more importantly, *Die Transvaler*, a daily

¹¹³ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(4), "Interview notes: Marietjie Cilliers", 2 June 1978.

¹¹⁴ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(2), "Interview notes: Danie Malan", 30 May 1978; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(4), "Interview notes: Marietjie Cilliers", 2 June 1978; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1., "Interview notes: E. du Toit", 14 November 1979; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1., "Interview notes: Hannes Malan", 1 December 1979; H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1. (5), "Interview notes: J.N. Smith", 1 June 1978; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

¹¹⁵ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(2), "Interview notes: Danie Malan", 30 May 1978; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1. (4), "Interview notes: Marietjie Cilliers", 2 June 1978.

¹¹⁶ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

¹¹⁷ E. Robins, *This Man Malan* (Cape Town: South African Scientific Publishing Company, 1953), 52-3.

¹¹⁸ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191. M.1., "Interview notes: Hannes Malan", 1 December 1979.

newspaper which they envisioned would play the same role as *Die Burger* in the Cape. In choosing an editor for *Die Transvaler*, they also followed the same recipe as in 1915: they recruited an intellectual who could also take his place on the political stage. They chose the young Prof. Hendrik Verwoerd, who possessed a formidable intellect and who had already earned his stripes by researching the poor white problem and protesting Jewish immigration. Thus, along with *Die Volksblad*, which also belonged to Nasionale Pers, the NP could count on propaganda mouthpieces in Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg.¹¹⁹

Malan's message, as his party embarked upon its first general election, was clear: the party would remain neutral in the event of war; it would oppose Jewish immigration; it would remove all representation of Africans in Parliament, stop the purchasing of land for Africans, thus leaving it to Africans to purchase their own land according to their own initiative and needs; and it would implement segregation between all whites and 'non-whites', a term that was used to encompass Africans, Coloureds and Indians – in short, all those who were not white. The NP therefore promised to introduce legislation that would provide for separate residential areas, labour unions and, if possible, separate workplaces. It would implement a colour bar, and provide separate representation for enfranchised Coloureds. Finally, it would expand the Immorality Act of 1925 in order to make it applicable to all non-whites (the Immorality Act of 1925 only forbade intercourse between whites and Africans), it would prohibit mixed marriages and it would end the employment of whites by non-whites.¹²⁰

Malan still railed against 'parasitic exploiters' who deprived the poor of their last possessions and the greedy mine owners who robbed South Africa of her wealth, while the farmers – who were the country's true backbone – still waited for a solution to their problems. He dwelled on the plight of the newly urbanised poor whites, who had to share the cities' slums with blacks and Coloureds while fighting a losing battle to keep South Africa a white man's country. In order to preserve the dominance and purity of the white race, for the sake of both white and 'non-white', and that of Christian civilisation and human justice, Malan implored his followers to fight: '*Veg hard! Veg skoon! Veg in die geloof!*' (Fight hard! Fight fair! Fight in accordance with your faith!)¹²¹

Only the first of part of Malan's call would be heeded. The 1938 election was characterised by a particularly dirty campaign, in which personal insults flew back and forth.¹²² Hertzog accused Malan of being a traitor because he never fought in the Anglo-Boer War, while the UP as a whole had a field day in exploiting Malan's about-turn on the republican issue and the political

¹¹⁹ For a more detailed study of the Nationalist press, see C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1990), 432-47, 460-9, 488-95.

¹²⁰ DFM, 1/1/1280, "Eleksie-Manifes van die Nasionale Party", [1938].

¹²¹ DFM, 1/1/1280, D.F. Malan, "Toespraak op Porterville op Maandagaand 4 April, 1938."

¹²² For a detailed discussion on the 1938 election, and the broad range of issues that were debated, see P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 126-78.

representation of Coloured people since his exit from the government. The NP, in turn, could deride Hertzog for abandoning his earlier republicanism – which Hertzog now called ‘youthful foolishness’. The Transvaal NP gave the party’s opponents the most ammunition when they distributed a poster of a poor white woman languishing in an urban slum while her black husband watched her and their mixed children at play. The UP lambasted the poster as an affront to the dignity of the white woman, and it soon became a public relations nightmare.¹²³ The events that took place later that year, however, made it clear that the issues of poverty and miscegenation had struck a chord.

When the results were announced, it was clear that Hertzog and Smuts had won by a landslide. They gained 111 seats as opposed to Malan’s 27 seats. It was deemed to be a grave disappointment to the Nationalists, who had been overly confident about their chances. A closer analysis of the figures, however, revealed the same pattern as in 1915: the Nationalists were breathing down the UPs neck, and the tally of parliamentarians was not an accurate reflection of the national vote. In the 103 constituencies contested between the UP and the NP, the UP gained 309,132 votes, while the NP received 247,947 ballots. In the Free State, where the division between the two parties ran the deepest, the UP won by a narrow margin of 4,817 votes: the Nationalists captured six seats and the UP won nine. Hertzog and Havenga’s marginal victories in their own constituencies were trumpeted by the Nationalists, and widely regarded as a psychological blow to Hertzog.¹²⁴

The Nationalists failed to capture any seats in Natal, while the only Transvaal constituency to vote a Nationalist into power was Waterberg,¹²⁵ where Strijdom clung precariously to his position as his province’s sole Nationalist MP, with a majority of 242.¹²⁶

In the Cape Province, the UP only gained a majority of 1,343 in the forty seats contested between it and the NP.¹²⁷ Malan himself moved from Calvinia to the constituency of Piketberg – always considered a safe seat – where he was elected by a landslide.¹²⁸ The Nationalists’ narrow defeats in the constituencies of Paarl and Stellenbosch were blamed on the Coloured vote, which tipped the scales in the UPs favour. Nevertheless, it was in the Cape that the NP made the most gains. Most tellingly, however, was the fact that it did not gain any urban constituencies.¹²⁹ Its strength was in the countryside, where seventeen of its twenty seats were located in areas where,

¹²³ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 144, 149-50, 151-3, 168, 170-1.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 169-71.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 170, 172.

¹²⁶ R. Weide and S. Weide, *Die Volledige Verkiesingsuitslae van Suid-Afrika 1910-1986* (Pretoria: Private Publication, [1987]).

¹²⁷ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 172.

¹²⁸ R. Weide and S. Weide, *Die Volledige Verkiesingsuitslae van Suid-Afrika 1910-1986*.

¹²⁹ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 172-3.

according to the Carnegie Commission, the numbers of white families classified as ‘very poor’ exceeded the national average.¹³⁰

The NPs growing popularity, and the fortunes of the poor whites, would explode onto the scene during the second half of 1938. It was a hundred years after the Battle of Blood River, and it was decided to commemorate this event by re-enacting the Great Trek. Nine ox wagons left Cape Town in August 1938 to make their way north. One group was headed for Pretoria, while the other went to Blood River. These wagons caught the imagination of the Afrikaners, who clad themselves in Voortrekker costumes and joined in the processions that accompanied the wagons as they rolled through towns and villages. With each turn of the wagons’ wheels, the enthusiasm gained momentum and swelled into a phenomenon that could only be described as mass hysteria.¹³¹

The emotional outpouring did not remain unharnessed. The theme of the commemorations was soon broadened beyond a mere celebration of Afrikaner heroes and the resurrection of their nemeses, the British and the Africans. Prominent Afrikaners – most notably the Dutch Reformed cleric, Dr J.D. (Vader) Kestell – began to call to the nation to rescue its poor. These calls were entangled with concerns about the racial order and miscegenation, which was regarded as a looming threat to the poor white Afrikaner. Audiences were assured by speaker after speaker that the Voortrekkers had kept their blood pure, and that it was the present generation’s duty to honour and practice the morality of their ancestors.¹³²

Malan also regarded these two issues as both pressing and inseparable. In late 1937, he received an invitation to deliver a speech at Blood River on 16 December 1938, which would form part of the culmination of the celebrations.¹³³ When Malan, in answer to the organisers’ request, informed them that he intended to devote his speech either to “‘The Colour problem of today and the danger thereof to the white race and its civilisation” or “‘The new Voortrek[kers]. South Africa’s current day cry for help and the answer to it,’”¹³⁴ the organisers replied that another speaker had already indicated that his address would be entitled “‘The Voortrekkers’ Native politics”.¹³⁵ Thus Malan would speak on his second choice.

¹³⁰ N.M. Stultz, *The Nationalists in Opposition, 1934-1948* (Cape Town and Pretoria: Human & Rousseau, 1974), 57.

¹³¹ See Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging, *Gedenboek van die Ossewaens op die Pad van Suid-Afrika, Eeufees: 1838-1939* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1940).

¹³² *Ibid.*, 64-70, 79-80, 101, 381-9.

¹³³ DFM, 1/1/1257, J.P.W. de Vries – D.F. Malan, 6 December 1937.

¹³⁴ DFM, 1/1/1292, J.P.W. de Vries – D.F. Malan, 7 September 1937: “‘Die Kleurprobleem van vandag en die gevaar vir die blanke ras en sy beskawing” of “‘Die nuwe Voortrek[kers]. Suid-Afrika se noodroep vandag en die antwoord daarop.””

¹³⁵ DFM, 1/1/1292, J.P.W. de Vries – D.F. Malan, 7 September 1937: “‘Die Naturelpolitiek v.d. Voortrekkers.””

Malan did not abandon his address on the threat to white civilisation, however. In spite of the fact that the NP had voted for Hertzog's native bills – which were finally passed by Parliament in 1936 – its support was given grudgingly, and the party took the segregationist mantle upon itself. The bills' final shape was, inevitably, the product of compromises made between members of the Fusion-government. To the Nationalists, these compromises – which softened the bills' sharpest edges – diluted the solution to what they regarded as a pressing problem, especially in the face of the poor white problem. The NP therefore advocated a more rigid and uncompromising segregationist policy than Hertzog, and even lobbied for its expansion to include measures against Coloureds and Indians.¹³⁶ Shortly after the 1938 election, in which the issue of race had dominated the agenda, Malan decided to call a Union-wide congress at which the NP could discuss broad policy issues such as the country's neutrality in the event of war, or the racial problem. He hoped that such an event would enhance the party's unity – and alert the north to the looming danger posed by the current racial status quo. The implication was that it was the Cape Province, where Coloureds were still on the common voters' role and where Africans still possessed some form of parliamentary representation, that felt itself to be under the greatest threat. Malan's aim with such a congress was to orchestrate a large and impressive event which would put these matters on the nation's agenda. It would be the second such congress in the party's history, the previous congress being the Independence Congress of 1919, which had resolved to send the Independence Deputation abroad.¹³⁷

The conference, which would eventually focus on matters of race, was held in Bloemfontein in November 1938, while the Centenary celebrations were almost at their height and headed towards their final climax. 'We have gathered here with one great aim in mind, and it is to safeguard South Africa for the white race and to preserve the white race, pure and conscious of its calling, for South Africa,' Malan declared to his audience.¹³⁸ It was both an old and a new Malan who was speaking. Malan had always regarded Afrikaner nationalism as his and the nation's highest, God-given, calling. He had always been concerned about the poor whites, who he deemed to be members of the nation, and he had always set himself against enemies of the nation, such as Anglicisation, which he regarded as a manifestation of imperialism; British and Jewish capitalism; and, since the early 1920s, African urbanisation and organised labour, which he believed was susceptible to communism. It was, however, a new Malan who spoke in heightened tones of the

¹³⁶ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 42-53, 57-8, 68-72.

¹³⁷ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe Collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – N.J. van der Merwe, 18 June 1938.

¹³⁸ D.F. Malan, 'Die Groot Beslissing', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1964), 110: 'Ons het hier bymekaargekom met een groot doel voor oë en dit is om Suid-Afrika veilig te maak vir die blanke ras en om die blanke ras, suiwer en bewus van sy roeping, veilig te bewaar vir Suid-Afrika.'

imminent threats to the nation's existence, and who broadened these threats to such an extent that the image of the nation having to do battle with a hostile world came to mind. In the context of 1938, when Afrikaners were regaled with endless tales of British animosity and African atrocities to defenceless women and children, fear crept into his words and permeated the air into which they were breathed. It was a matter of survival and self-preservation, more than ever before.

According to Malan, the Afrikaners' preservation could not be solved by legislation. By this time, he knew that legislation remained a dead letter unless the will to implement it existed. He was therefore appealing to the nation to take the matter to heart. He regarded it as imperative, since inaction would leave them to drift downstream – 'if we do not want to be swept away, we must be willing to swim, and to use all of our powers to swim upstream.'¹³⁹

The Afrikaners were, according to Malan, already threatened by the force of African numbers. He was not afraid of the possibility of violence – under 'modern conditions' such an event was unthinkable. Instead, he feared the psychological, social and, inevitably, the political impact which majority-status would endow on the Africans: the Africans would be in control of the atmosphere in which whites had to breathe. In stark contrast to his stance during the previous decades, Malan now regarded the education of the Africans as a threat to the white population. An educated white minority could still hold its own against an 'uncivilised and uneducated' black majority, but an educated black majority which insisted on equal status with the whites was an entirely different matter.¹⁴⁰

During the previous decades, Malan had still believed that both Africans and whites respected the 'natural' racial hierarchy – which is why, in 1912, he could naïvely assert that Africans called white men 'baas' or 'Inkosi' due to their inherent respect for their 'superiors'. But the rise of educated and politicised Africans such as D.D. Jabavu – who headed organisations such as the All African Convention (AAC) which was established with the aim of opposing Hertzog's native bills¹⁴¹ – would have destroyed Malan's faith that each group knew its 'natural place' and that education would not upset the order.

According to Malan, there was a common perception that the racial threat was confined to the Cape Province and did not concern the Transvaal, but he lambasted this as contemptible provincialism, and proved the contrary by pointing to the staggering 614 per cent growth of non-white school children in the Transvaal, which far exceeded the 90 per cent growth of such pupils in the Cape. Malan warned the Transvalers that the majority of those children were in all probability

¹³⁹ D.F. Malan, 'Die Groot Beslissing', in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as redenaar, 1908-1954*: 'as ons nie daardeur meegesleur wil word nie, dan moet ons bereid wees om te swem en om met volle kraginspanning stroom op te swem.'

¹⁴⁰ D.F. Malan, "Die Groot Beslissing", in S.W. Pienaar ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as redenaar, 1908-1954*, 113.

¹⁴¹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 264-6.

Asiatics, who were even more capable than Cape Coloureds of penetrating the ranks of white society. This increase in educated non-whites had to be seen in the light of the growing influence of liberalism and communism, both of which advocated racial equality. Malan insinuated that these ideologies were driven by British imperialist forces who had always looked at the Afrikaners with condescension. It was the British imperialists who gave Africans and Coloureds voting rights in the Cape Province – something that was not done anywhere else in the British Empire, which meant that the British had enfranchised these people with the sole aim of counterbalancing the Afrikaners.¹⁴²

The result in the Cape was, according to Malan, dire. There were thirty-eight Cape constituencies where there were enough registered Coloured voters to swing the outcome of an election. It meant ‘that the Coloured can be the arbitrator between white man and white man.’¹⁴³ Malan pointed to the Cape’s Provincial Council, where the influence of Coloured voters could clearly be seen when Fusionist members – who were dependent on the Coloured vote – refused to pass legislation that would have established separate residential areas. As it was believed that mixed residential areas were the death knell to the poor whites, and therefore for the Afrikaners as a whole, Malan declared that a situation existed where ‘it was the Coloured who could determine the poor whites’ lot and the white race’s future.’¹⁴⁴ To Malan, the fact that, in the battle for survival, the future of the white race depended on the poor white was also a cause for grave concern:

The battleground has been moved, and the task to keep South Africa a white man’s land, which has become ten times heavier than before, rests on the shoulders of those who are the least able to bear it. Our Blood River lies in the city and our Voortrekkers are our poor who, in the most difficult of circumstances, have to take up the cudgels for our nation against the swelling dark tidal wave.¹⁴⁵

If the competition between white and black in the labour market was fair, Malan contended, there would not have been any reason to be concerned. Poor whites, however, were expected to maintain a ‘civilised’ lifestyle, while the same was not demanded of African labourers. Poor whites, who were forced to live in mixed slums, were being crowded out of the labour market by African workers who were being imported from beyond the country’s borders, while the existing policy of

¹⁴² D.F. Malan, ‘Die Groot Beslissing’, in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954*, 113-5.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 115: ‘die Kleurling die arbiter kan wees tussen witman en witman.’

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 116: ‘Dit was die Kleurling wat kon beslis oor die armblanke se lot en oor die blanke ras se toekoms.’

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Die terrein van die stryd is verskuiwe en die tien maal swaarder taak om Suid-Afrika witmansland te hou, rus vandag op die skouers van diegene wat dit die minste kan dra. Ons Bloedrivier lê in die stad en ons Voortrekkers is ons arm mense wat onder die mees knellende omstandighede teenoor die aanrollende donker vloedgolf in die bres moet staan vir ons volk.’

segregation was not being implemented consistently. Thus, Malan repeated, the time had come for the Afrikaners to swim upstream with all their might.¹⁴⁶

Malan was convinced that the only way to turn the tide was for the Afrikaner nation to awaken and unite their energies to procure and safeguard the continued existence of the white race. He believed that the time was ripe for nationalism to arise:

The centenary year in which we live has come as a God-given opportunity. This is the case because we are powerless without idealism, and this is the year in which we have reawakened from the slumber of materialism, to new life and new, inspiring, visions... We now know and – overcome with joy and new enthusiasm – we now experience, on a practical level, the age-old truth that a nation, like an individual, cannot live on bread alone. Idealism, and especially a new, reborn idealism, is an irresistible and progressive force.¹⁴⁷

Malan himself was now headed for the crest of the wave of resurgent nationalism. The congress decided to draw up a petition to lobby Parliament to pass legislation that would forbid all mixed marriages between whites and non-whites; to make all miscegenation between whites and ‘non-whites’ a punishable offence; to put an end to racially-mixed residential areas; and to implement both economic and political segregation between whites and non-whites. When Malan submitted the petition to Parliament on 1 June 1939, it had been signed by 230,619 white adults – just over 17,000 signatures short of the total number of votes the NP had won during the 1938 election. The UPs chief whip refused to allow for any parliamentary time to discuss the petition – and the outbreak of the war soon thereafter meant that the NPs segregationist campaign would be moved onto the backburner for the next six years.¹⁴⁸

In late 1938, however, the victory still belonged to Malan. A public storm broke out concerning the ceremony at which the foundation stone of the Voortrekker monument would be laid on 16 December, to which Hertzog had been invited. The government had contributed to the monument’s funding and, for this reason, Hertzog insisted that the Governor-General, as the representative of the country’s Head of State, also attend. This meant that *God Save the King* had to

¹⁴⁶ D.F. Malan, ‘Die Groot Beslissing’, in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954*, 117-8.

¹⁴⁷ D.F. Malan, ‘Die Groot Beslissing’, in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954*, 118: ‘Die Eeufeesjaar waarin ons lewe, is vir ons ‘n godgegewe geleentheid. Hy is dit omdat enige volk magteloos is sonder idealisme, en dit die jaar is waarin ons weer uit die doodslaap van materialisme ontwaak tot nuwe lewe en nuwe besielende vergesigte... Ons weet nou, en oorstelp met blydschap en nuwe geesdrif beleef ons nou prakties die eeue-oue waarheid dat ‘n volk, net so min as ‘n individuele mens, by brood alleen nie kan lewe nie. Idealisme, en veral ‘n nuwe, wedergebore idealisme is ‘n onweerstaanbare voortstrewende mag.’

¹⁴⁸ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 71-3.

be sung at the event.¹⁴⁹ Hertzog was inundated by telegrams and letters from across the country imploring him not to ‘defile’¹⁵⁰ the Voortrekkers’ memory by playing the British national anthem and hoisting the Union Jack.¹⁵¹ The result was that Hertzog decided to boycott the event and spend the day at his farm outside Pretoria.¹⁵² The organisers frantically tried to replace Hertzog with another high-profile dignitary and sent a telegram to Malan, asking him to attend the main event in Pretoria.¹⁵³ Malan replied that he had already committed himself to Blood River, and would only go to Pretoria if it was logistically possible – and if Hertzog attended Blood River as well.¹⁵⁴ This arrangement did not materialise, and the day therefore belonged to Malan.

A laager-camp was erected at Blood River three days before the proceedings, where festival-goers took up residence in about 2,000 tents. When Malan arrived at the station, he was greeted by approximately 100 men, who carried him from the train while singing *Die Stem*,¹⁵⁵ which by this time had become the Afrikaners’ *de facto* national anthem.¹⁵⁶ On 16 December, when Malan ascended the stage to address the crowd, a giant *Vierkleur* (the Transvaal Republican flag) unfolded behind him, while the audience sang the hymn *Dat’s Heeren Zegen op U Daal* (May God’s blessing descend upon you).¹⁵⁷

Malan’s speech was a triumph and would be regarded as another of his oratorical masterpieces.¹⁵⁸ It was a poeticised repetition of the speech he had delivered five weeks earlier, filled with phrases taken from *Die Stem* and images from the Great Trek. This time, Malan’s overwhelming focus was on the plight of the newly urbanised poor whites, who had to fight their Blood River in the cities. Quoting from the Carnegie Commission’s report, he dwelt on the numbers of poor whites and the spectre of miscegenation, which has begun to rear its head. The generation of 2038 would, as they gathered in the same place to celebrate their ancestors’ history, judge the generation of 1938 on whether or not it succeeded in preserving the Afrikaner nation and keeping South Africa a white man’s country, Malan assured his listeners. He thus called upon the nation to heed the poor whites’ smothered cries for help.¹⁵⁹

¹⁴⁹ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 433.

¹⁵⁰ SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Volume 47, File 160, B.J. de Klerk – J.B.M. Hertzog, 26 July 1938: ‘onteer’.

¹⁵¹ See a collection of these letters and telegrams in SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Volume 47, File 160.

¹⁵² H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 433.

¹⁵³ DFM, 1/1/1331, E.G. Jansen – D.F. Malan, 12 December 1938.

¹⁵⁴ DFM, 1/1/1332, D.F. Malan – E.G. Jansen, 12 December 1938.

¹⁵⁵ Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging, *Gedenkboek van die Ossewaens op die Pad van Suid-Afrika, Eeufees: 1838-1939*, 618-21.

¹⁵⁶ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 432.

¹⁵⁷ Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging, *Gedenkboek van die Ossewaens op die Pad van Suid-Afrika, Eeufees: 1838-1939*, 625.

¹⁵⁸ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 296.

¹⁵⁹ D.F. Malan, ‘Bloedrivier’, in S.W. Pienaar, ed., *Glo in U Volk: Dr. D.F. Malan as Redenaar, 1908-1954*, 121-30.

In the immediate aftermath of the celebrations, Afrikaner organisations which had been established since the early 1930s were indeed infused with new energy. A flurry of organisations would also be founded, the most notable among them the Ossewabrandwag (OB), or Oxwagon Sentinel. This was a cultural organisation, aimed at keeping the ox wagons' spirit alive.¹⁶⁰ The calls to rescue the Afrikaner poor also gave impetus to an economic movement which aimed at increasing the Afrikaners' share of secondary and tertiary industries. The cultural and economic movement would gain momentum in the coming years, and finally work to Malan's advantage.¹⁶¹

Malan could now be regarded as the most prominent representative of Afrikaner nationalist sentiment. Smuts lamented to a friend in July 1938, in the interval after the elections and before the commencement of the celebrations, that, 'I find it often most trying to work with my old Nat friends. They are more influenced by fear of Dr. Malan than of God.'¹⁶²

Indeed, there were rumours that Hertzog and his supporters wanted to put an end to Fusion with Smuts and cooperate with Malan, whose support was growing. This, coupled with Malan's calls for Afrikaner unity, prompted the supporters of the mirage of reunification, which had eluded Afrikanerdom since 1919, to prick up their ears. The first attempt came from Albert Hertzog who, along with a number of unnamed intellectuals, drafted a basis for agreement between his father's party and the NP. It reflected the younger Hertzog's nationalist sympathies. Malan supported the young Hertzog's effort,¹⁶³ but made it clear that he was not amenable to negotiating with the UP in its entirety. It was the same argument he had used during the Fusion crisis. He was only willing to unite the like-minded, which meant that he would not cooperate with the old Unionist-element that now called the UP its political home. Hertzog the Elder rejected his son's initiative, as the document drew a distinction between English and Afrikaners – he was not willing to achieve Afrikaner unity at the expense of the English-speaking population.¹⁶⁴ Albert Hertzog did not retreat, but instead waited in the wings, from which position he spread more rumours to Malan's lieutenants that his father was seeking an opportunity to force a break with Smuts. Malan's followers were not the only people to whom Albert Hertzog spoke about his father's growing disenchantment with Smuts – he was in contact with another group of self-appointed mediators.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, 442.

¹⁶¹ For a detailed discussion of the Afrikaners' cultural and economic movement in the 1930s and 1940s, see T.D. Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); D. O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁶² J. van der Poel, ed., *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 131.

¹⁶³ INCH, D.F. Malherbe collection, PV 453, file 2/1/1/1, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malherbe, 15 March 1939.

¹⁶⁴ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 223-6.

¹⁶⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, Eric Louw – C.R. Swart, 20 July 1939.

By March 1939, lecturers from the Afrikaans universities began to call on Malan and Hertzog to reunite the Afrikaners in the spirit of the Voortrekker Centenary.¹⁶⁶ Malan made it clear that he approved of the principle but was, however, sceptical about the prospects of working with Hertzog, who had never ceased to attack the Nationalists, and who had refused to take a stance on neutrality years before. In the face of a looming European conflict, the prospect of Hertzog taking the country into the war made any cooperation impossible in Malan's eyes.¹⁶⁷ The academics were not easily deterred, however. A few days before 1939's parliamentary session ended, a delegation from Stellenbosch, led by Prof. A.C. Cilliers, met with Malan and some of his followers to persuade them to enter into negotiations with Hertzog. The committee had already met with Hertzog and Pirow, who had told them that the nationalist section in the UP was willing to break away from Smuts if only they could be assured of cooperation. Hertzog was apparently on the lookout for such an opportunity, and believed that a large congress where both parties could meet to draw up a basis for agreement would provide the ideal occasion. Malan and his followers, however, took this information with a pinch of salt since, as far as they were concerned, Hertzog and Pirow could not be trusted¹⁶⁸ and furthermore, for a congress to meet without a draft document to discuss was unheard of. The basis had to be drawn up before there could be such a gathering.¹⁶⁹ Malan's terms in the event of negotiation were clear: the NP would not cease to exist, and its policies concerning the republic, segregation and Jews, would not be diluted. If Hertzog was willing to accept these terms, reunification could be explored. The academics were despatched to Hertzog with this message, while Malan's followers smirked at the disappointment which they were bound to encounter.¹⁷⁰

Malan's Young Turks, in particular Strijdom, Swart and Eric Louw, did not trust Hertzog, and were certain that he was simply exploiting these friendly overtures towards Malan to drive the liberal element – led by J.H. Hofmeyr – out of his party, and to neutralise the NP as a whole. They did not keep their qualms hidden from Malan, and wrote to him to warn him of what they believed to be Hertzog's plot.¹⁷¹ There were other rumours that the nationalist section in the UP was afraid of being dragged into the coming European conflict, and wanted to use Malan in order to neutralise Smuts's attempts to join England in a war against Germany.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/1448, D.F. Malherbe – D.F. Malan, 14 March 1939; DFM, 1/1/1459, L.J. Coertze and G. Cronje – D.F. Malan, 20 April 1939.

¹⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/11461, D.F. Malan – L.J. Coertze, 1 May 1939.

¹⁶⁸ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 4 July 1939.

¹⁶⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/23, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, [n.d.]

¹⁷⁰ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 4 July 1939; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/23, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, [n.d.]

¹⁷¹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 30 July 1939; SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 5 August 1939; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, Eric Louw – C.R. Swart, 20 July 1939.

¹⁷² SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 11 August 1939.

Even without these warnings and rumours, Malan was cautious. The self-appointed mediators might have been learned men, but he regarded them as politically naïve and also believed that they could easily be exploited by rivalling interest groups within Hertzog's party in their quest for control of the organisation and supremacy over the Nationalist opposition. He was especially distrustful of Pirow, whom he suspected of being on a quest to oust Hofmeyr and to divide the Nationalists.¹⁷³ When academics from the four Afrikaans universities signed an appeal for him and Hertzog to meet in order to arrange a basis for a national congress,¹⁷⁴ he rejected the idea. The document itself was, in his opinion, half-baked, and gave credence to the rumour that it was Hertzog himself who had drafted it.¹⁷⁵ Malan replied to the academics that nothing good could come from a congress between the NP and the UP. Instead, the leaders had to meet in order to determine whether there could be any basis for discussions.¹⁷⁶ Malan was willing to meet Hertzog,¹⁷⁷ but he insisted that Hertzog had to make the first move – in writing. He believed that it was dangerous to proceed on the basis of second-hand information of what Hertzog or his lieutenants might or might not have said – especially since the information was often based on very thin grounds.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, Malan was not willing to contemplate cooperation that went beyond a mere coalition. As a precondition for meeting with Hertzog, Malan insisted that the two parties had to agree on South Africa's neutrality in the event of war. In setting all of these conditions, Malan and his followers made it clear that they were extremely wary of Hertzog¹⁷⁹ – the events of 1934 had made them twice shy. The fact that Malan was not overwhelmingly enthusiastic about a fresh alliance with Hertzog was clearly evident in his insistence on a speedy response from Hertzog's side – he was scheduled to address a number of political meetings towards the end of August, and he wanted to know what his position was before he spoke to his followers.¹⁸⁰

When Hertzog's written answer arrived, Malan's Young Turks felt vindicated. Hertzog thanked the professors for their attempts to heal the divisions among Afrikaners – it was a division which saddened him deeply, especially due to the 'vile motives that are a discredit to the nation'¹⁸¹ which had caused it in the first place. He thus welcomed all initiatives to remove both the divisions and the 'vile motives' in order to create a united people in which both English and Afrikaans speakers could share as the two equal parts of the South African nation. Paul Sauer was incensed and insulted at being called a 'vile motive' – and being blamed for the divisions in Afrikanerdom.

¹⁷³ INCH, D.F. Malherbe collection, PV 453, file 2/1/1/1, D.F. Malan – D.F. Malherbe, 15 March 1939.

¹⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/1485, "Beroep op Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog en Dr. D.F. Malan", 17 July 1939.

¹⁷⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 14 August 1939.

¹⁷⁶ VAB, N.J. van der Merwe collection, A 110, Volume 2:5, D.F. Malan – A.C. Cilliers, 1 August 1939.

¹⁷⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, [3] August 1939.

¹⁷⁸ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 14 August 1939.

¹⁷⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, [3] August 1939.

¹⁸⁰ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, D.F. Malan – C.R. Swart, 14 August 1939.

¹⁸¹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, P. Sauer – J.G. Strijdom, 19 August 1939: 'volks onterende motief'.

Malan, for his part, knew that Hertzog was not serious about reunion either.¹⁸² The professors were disappointed. With his characteristic humour, Paul Sauer described their reactions:

“There are two Hertzogs” A.C. [Cilliers] exclaimed. “An honest & a dishonest one. When he speaks he is honest, but when he writes, he dons a political coat of dishonesty.” “Yes” says D.D. [D.F. Malan], “but we are dealing with the coat & not the man & he has a different coat for every wind that blows.”¹⁸³

To Malan and his Young Turks, Hertzog’s condescending and insulting attitude spelled the end of the overture.¹⁸⁴ The professors, however, seemed to recover from their initial astonishment with remarkable ease, and were soon hard at work to arrange a meeting between Malan and Hertzog, which they hoped would take place during the course of September.¹⁸⁵

The events in Europe, however, moved with a pace far exceeding that of the aspirant peacemakers. By late August it was clear the clouds of war were about to unleash their thunder onto the European continent. Strijdom still speculated that war would be averted by Germany and Russia’s non-aggression pact, which was why Hertzog sank negotiations with the NP, as he did not need them any longer.¹⁸⁶ By the time Parliament had gathered in Cape Town for a special session, which was to commence on 2 September, however, the chances of South Africa plunging into war, along with England and the rest of the Commonwealth, had become a real possibility. There were no doubts about the Nationalists’ stance on the matter – they had been agitating for neutrality since their inception. The outcome of the government’s decision was not equally predictable, however. As far back as 1934, Hertzog and Smuts had agreed that the question of neutrality was merely of academic value, and for the sake of their negotiations they had undertaken to agree to disagree, confident that a second world war was unlikely. The matter had finally come home to roost.

When the MPs arrived in Cape Town on Friday 1 September, Hitler had already crossed the Polish border. Hertzog called Malan to his office that morning to discuss the following day’s parliamentary session.¹⁸⁷ Hertzog, who was known to reserve his cordiality for his friends,¹⁸⁸ welcomed Malan as if they were old companions – but Malan was struck by his exceptionally

¹⁸² SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, P. Sauer – J.G. Strijdom, 19 August 1939.

¹⁸³ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 19 August 1939: “Daar is twee Hertzogs” roep A.C. [Cilliers] uit. “’n Eerlike & ’n oneerlike een. As hy praat is hy eerlik maar as hy skrywes trek hy ’n politieke jas van oneerlikheid aan.” “Ja” sê D.D. [D.F. Malan] “maar ons het te doen met die jaste & nie met die man & en hy het ’n ander jas vir elke wind wat waai.”

¹⁸⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 19 August 1939.

¹⁸⁵ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 26 August 1939.

¹⁸⁶ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/21, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 23 August 1939.

¹⁸⁷ Cape archives repository (hereafter KAB), A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike herinnerings uit die koalisiestryd: Dit stort in duie”, 1.

¹⁸⁸ W. du Plessis, “James Barry Munnik Hertzog – Die Mens”, in P.J. Nienaber, ed., *Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog* (Johannesburg: Afrikaanse Pers Boekhandel, 1965), 50.

inarticulate demeanour. Hertzog was clearly under a lot of strain, and muttered and rambled about people who made his situation very difficult. It was obvious to Malan that Hertzog wanted to declare South Africa's neutrality, but that he found it very difficult to do so.¹⁸⁹ The NP caucus met that same afternoon, and continued to discuss the situation well into the evening. The consensus was reached that Hertzog had to be dragged away from Smuts.¹⁹⁰ Malan drafted a letter to Hertzog, in which he promised that the NP would support him if he chose to declare neutrality.¹⁹¹ It was 10:00 P.M. when Paul Sauer was despatched to Groote Schuur to deliver the letter to Hertzog. He was received most warmly – and was even offered tea, but left without a definite response from the letter's recipient.¹⁹²

When Hertzog appeared in Parliament the next day, his dishevelled appearance shocked those in attendance. He looked even older than his years, and his voice was so hoarse that he was almost inaudible. He was clearly a tortured soul. The Nationalists were quick to fix their hatred on Jan Smuts, whom they believed had outsmarted Hertzog and left him to bob like a ship without an anchor.¹⁹³

When Malan's confidantes gathered at his house in Sea Point on Sunday 3 September, they were convinced that they had to make a stronger effort to help Hertzog. A declaration of neutrality would certainly split the UP – and endanger Hertzog's position as Prime Minister. In order to remove this deterrent, and to provide Hertzog with a safety net,¹⁹⁴ Malan wrote a second letter in which he promised that a declaration of neutrality would provide a basis for cooperation between the two parties.¹⁹⁵ The tension was mounting, as it was known that the Cabinet would meet at 4:00 P.M. to decide on its stance,¹⁹⁶ yet Malan, with his characteristic calmness, appeared to be unmoved, and wrote the letter slowly and painfully, while his lieutenants snatched the sheets from him to make a copy – each sheet written in a different handwriting.¹⁹⁷

At 3:48 P.M., Paul Sauer raced from Malan's house to his car and sped to Groote Schuur. The traffic lights blinked in his favour and, when he saw Jan Smuts in his car, he sped up in an effort to beat his opponent to their destination. At precisely 4:00 P.M., Sauer and Smuts ascended the steps to Groote Schuur's entrance, where some of the other Cabinet Ministers had also gathered. Hertzog took Sauer aside into the dining room, where he read the letter. He thanked Sauer, but told him that the decision had already been taken, and the Cabinet was only meeting to discuss its

¹⁸⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 3 September 1939.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

¹⁹¹ SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Volume 50, File 167, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 1 September 1939.

¹⁹² INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

¹⁹³ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 3 September 1939.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

¹⁹⁵ SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Volume 50, File 167, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 3 September 1939.

¹⁹⁶ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

¹⁹⁷ D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 65; See copy of the letter in the D.F. Malan collection, DFM, 1/1/1558, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 3 September 1939.

implementation. Sauer returned to Sea Point disappointed. Malan and his circle were convinced that Hertzog would declare war, with the quid pro quo that South Africa would be passively belligerent – or that her involvement would be limited to protecting England’s interests south of the equator.¹⁹⁸

Only later did they find out that Hertzog had tried to hold the Cabinet to the declaration of neutrality it had drafted a year before, when Hitler had occupied the Sudetenland. Smuts refused to abide by this, and the Cabinet was split.¹⁹⁹ At 8:00 P.M. that evening Hertzog phoned the Governor-General, Sir Patrick Duncan, to inform him that the Cabinet was divided and that the matter would be taken to Parliament the next day. Hertzog expected to receive a majority in the House – and if not, he would ask for the dissolution of government. Duncan informed him that he would only consider such a prospect once the outcome of the parliamentary vote was known.²⁰⁰

Soon after he spoke to Duncan, Hertzog phoned Malan and informed him that he was sending his car to fetch him from Sea Point. Upon his arrival at Groote Schuur, Malan was taken directly to Hertzog’s study, where Hertzog and the ministers who had supported him were assembled. Hertzog read his motion of neutrality to Malan, with the news that ‘the English’ did not want to accept it. After Malan asked some questions about the government’s obligations with regards to the Simon’s Town naval base and whether or not there were any other obligations with regards to East Africa,²⁰¹ the discussion concentrated on the agreement between the two political parties.

It was clear that it was only the nationalist section of the UP that would form an alliance with the NP – which is what Malan had wanted from the start. The outbreak of war had diminished the remaining differences between them, and Hertzog and his ministers now assured Malan that they wanted nothing more than to be Nationalists again, and to forget the past six years. They would use the NP of 1933 as the basis for reunification. When Malan raised the point that there were new issues that had since arisen, he was assured that they would support both political and residential segregation. One even exclaimed that they were in accord with the NPs Jewish policy as well. Hertzog’s followers now declared themselves to be ardent republicans, and Pirow gave the assurance that it could not be any other way otherwise supporters from the Transvaal would revolt. They agreed on the need for the economic rehabilitation of the poor, and undertook to amalgamate their Transvaal newspaper, *Die Vaderland*, with the NPs *Die Transvaler*. When it came to the question of leadership, Hertzog stressed the need for him to remain the leader for the next two years

¹⁹⁸ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939; KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 3; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 3 September 1939.

¹⁹⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

²⁰⁰ DFM, 1/1/1559, Memorandum by Patrick Duncan, “4th September 1939”.

²⁰¹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 4-5.

until all the Afrikaners were united, in order to prevent the impression that he was running away. He did, however, promise that Malan would be the party's parliamentary leader, and undertook to withdraw himself from politics systematically, thus leaving the leadership to Malan.²⁰²

When the NP caucus met the next morning, Malan informed them that Fusion was finally at an end, and that reunion had at last arrived. Parliament duly assembled – in an atmosphere where the tension was palpable. When Hertzog rose, he was noticeably excited, but maintained his composure. He informed the House that the Cabinet was split, and that the rupture was irreparable. He declared that Fusion had been a failure, and proceeded to serve his motion for neutrality before the House. Up to this point his speech was controlled, and showed a regard for the English speakers' feelings by emphasising South Africa's friendship with England. The next moment, however, Hertzog began to speak without his notes – and proceeded to justify Hitler's actions. It sounded the death knell for his prime ministerial career. When the House finally divided that evening, Hertzog was defeated by 80 votes to 67.²⁰³

After the proceedings, Hertzog went to Patrick Duncan and requested that the Parliament be dissolved, as its decision did not reflect the will of the nation. Duncan replied that the present Parliament was hardly a year old – the matter of neutrality was tested in the 1938 election – and that Hertzog and Smuts had always insisted that the Union's participation in the event of war would be decided by the people's elected representatives: these representatives had spoken. In the present condition of heightened anxiety, Duncan was certain that a general election could only lead to bitterness, and even violence. Hertzog tendered his resignation the following day.²⁰⁴

On that same day, 5 September, representatives from Malan's party met with Hertzog's supporters to form a committee which would make the necessary arrangements for the reunification of the two parties. The Hertzog-group asked that the negotiations be postponed for three to six weeks – they wanted to embark on a drive to recapture as many of their supporters from Smuts's camp as possible. Once this was done, the necessary steps for their absorption into the NP could be taken.²⁰⁵

The NP caucus met again on Wednesday morning, 6 September, to discuss the pending reunification with Hertzog. Soon after the meeting commenced, a message arrived from Hertzog's secretary: Hertzog would like to greet the caucus. When Hertzog appeared, accompanied by Havenga, he received a standing ovation. It was an emotional scene that unfolded. Many of the men in the room had not been greeted by Hertzog for years, and were moved by his appeal to forget the past six years and to put their trust in one another. He assured them that he had done so already.

²⁰² INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

²⁰³ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie", 5-6.

²⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/1559, Patrick Duncan, "Continuation of Memorandum of 4th September, 1939", 6 September 1939.

²⁰⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939.

There was nothing left of the old battle axe whom they knew so well when Hertzog assured them that the Afrikaner nation was united again. Hertzog finally expressed the wish to greet each member of the caucus personally. There was hardly a dry eye or a clear throat in the room after he had shaken the hand of each of his former adversaries.²⁰⁶ With his customary melodrama, Paul Sauer wrote to Swart that ‘Conradie was blubbering, and even the hardhearted Hans [Strijdom] began to sniff and to poke his finger in his eyes. (I want to eat salty, very salty, snoek for a week or two in order to recover).’²⁰⁷

Malan himself hardly maintained his composure – his supporters had never seen him so moved before. He recounted the Independence Deputation’s return from Europe in 1919, when they were pelted with rotten eggs in Pietermaritzburg. All that the deputation had to show at the time was the assurance that South Africa possessed the right to self-determination. Now, he lauded Hertzog for standing up in Parliament and claiming that right.²⁰⁸

The love-fest was taken from the caucus-room to the station-platform, where crowds gathered to greet Hertzog as he left Cape Town that evening. Malan was there to bid him farewell, and he, Hertzog and Havenga were lifted onto the crowd’s shoulders and paraded around the platform, while a Union flag was draped around Hertzog’s shoulders.²⁰⁹ A mixture of nationalist anthems and religious hymns were sung. By the time Hertzog’s train pulled out of the station, the last words that he would have heard were *Het eind zal zeker zalig zijn!* (The end is certain to be blissful!).²¹⁰

Hertzog’s journey to the north transformed his humiliation in Parliament into a triumphal procession. Crowds gathered at every station to cheer his arrival, and his reception in Pretoria was equally joyous.²¹¹ To the reunionists, it provided an opportunity to recapture the euphoria of the previous year’s Voortrekker Centenary. The Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) organised an enormous meeting at Monumentkoppie, where the foundation stone of the Voortrekker Monument had been laid the year before. Albert Hertzog, who was a member, was instructed to deliver his father to the event, which was attended by approximately 75,000 Afrikaners who had come to see Malan and Hertzog appear side-by-side on the same stage. Those close to him saw that some of Hertzog’s old

²⁰⁶ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 7-9.

²⁰⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939: ‘Conradie huil snot & trane & selfs die hardvotige Hans [Strijdom] het sy neus begin snuit & sy vinger in sy oë gesteek. (Ek wil nou sout, baie sout, snoek eet vir ‘n week of twee om reg te kom).’

²⁰⁸ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 9.

²⁰⁹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 692-3.

²¹⁰ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 10.

²¹¹ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 693.

fire was gone, however. He was prepared to leave the political stage, but was being propped up by his supporters.²¹²

In the aftermath of the emotional hangover, there were those awoke first to the prosaic realities of repairing the cracked vase that was Afrikaner nationalism. There were vested interests that had to be taken into account, and old personal rivalries were littered across the political landscape.²¹³

The rapture would not last. In the Free State, C.R. Swart was furious about his fellow-Nationalists renewed adoration and worship of Hertzog – he had been under the mistaken impression that they had been ‘weaned’ off Hertzog, he fumed.²¹⁴ He was even more upset by the realisation that he was in a minority. The Free State leader, N.J. van der Merwe, would hear nothing of Swart’s complaints that only Hertzog was being lauded while Malan and the Nationalists did not receive any praises. Swart was thus compelled to confide his misgivings to his kindred spirit, Strijdom. Strijdom and Swart were both disconcerted at the Hertzog-group’s assertion that a new party would be established – they were under the impression that Hertzog and his followers would merely join the NP. The prospect of the NPs relatively young provincial leaders being forced to relinquish their positions to more senior Hertzog-politicians was particularly unpalatable.²¹⁵

Strijdom was equally incensed that Nationalists in the Free State and the Transvaal appeared to be under the spell of Hertzog’s personality-cult again. He was concerned that the Hertzog-group’s refusal to join the NP immediately after Hertzog’s resignation, and instead to embark on a drive to capture supporters, was aimed at increasing their bargaining power in order that they would be able to negotiate with the NP on an equal footing. He wrote to Malan to voice his concern that the drive to collect more support for Hertzog was, in reality, a campaign, and that it was to the NPs disadvantage – if they did not act quickly, ordinary Nationalists might be so overwhelmed by their admiration for Hertzog that they would be willing to sacrifice some of the party’s principles.²¹⁶ Malan did not reply, and left Strijdom and Swart to watch the Hertzog-group’s activities with growing alarm. They were joined by a third dissident, Eric Louw, who counselled that they, as the party’s young ringleaders, ought to keep their heads cool and remain in contact with one another, so as to ensure that none of their principles became diluted during the course of the hero-worship.²¹⁷

²¹² *Ibid.*, 697-8; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 8 September 1939; H.B. Giliomee private collection, U.R. en Bondsraad van A.B. 1939-1942, “Notule van die 18e Gewone Bondsraad Gehou op 2 Oktober 1939 in die Kinderhuissaal, Bloemfontein.”

²¹³ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Dit Stort in Duie”, 10-11: ‘Pirow, wie se een doel in die politiek is die bevordering van die politieke belange van Oswald Pirow.’

²¹⁴ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 8 September 1939.

²¹⁵ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 15 September 1939: ‘Ek is gewillig om ‘n streep deur die afgelope 6 jaar te trek *mits* daar vir my bevredigende waarborge vir die toekoms is.’

²¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/1569, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 18 September 1939.

²¹⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, E. Louw – C.R. Swart, 26 September 1939.

Therefore, even before Malan had begun to negotiate with Hertzog, there was an organised movement within his party intent on protecting its own interests. These Young Turks were not carried away by personal loyalty to Malan in the same manner that typified the relationship between Hertzog and his followers, and were unwilling to sacrifice the positions that they had gained on account of being the only fish in the Nationalist pond for the past six years. Malan, for his part, was optimistic. In a speech to the Transvaal NPs congress, he declared that the Afrikaners were united again. He told his audience that it had always been difficult for him to fight Hertzog, as he knew Hertzog to be a true Afrikaner, although the same could not be said of Smuts. He railed against South Africa's entry into the war – due to the votes of the Natives' Representatives and those MPs who had been elected by Coloureds and capitalist Jewish interests: it was clear to Malan that the British connection only served to drag South Africa into foreign wars. He therefore declared, 'Down with the British connection, we want to be a Republic.'²¹⁸ At the same time, Malan was intent on preventing a repetition of the 1914 Rebellion, and implored his followers not to resort to violence and in so doing, play into Smuts's hands: they had to achieve their Republic by constitutional means.²¹⁹

Malan's pandering to republican sentiments and his call to rally against foreign enemies did not have the usual appeal to the lower-ranking Afrikaners leaders, who were concentrating their energies on the battle against each other. By late September, while Malan and Hertzog met to discuss their future plans, Strijdom and Oswald Pirow were locked in a power struggle. Strijdom did not want to lose his position to Pirow, but he also realised that his party and its mouthpiece, *Die Transvaler*, were in dire straits – politically and financially. Reunification was the Transvaal NPs only hope of survival, but Strijdom was reluctant to pay the price. He was also dissatisfied with the nature of the two leaders' negotiations: Malan's accounts of the discussions gave Strijdom the distinct impression that Hertzog was being deliberately vague and evasive in order to provide himself with enough room to change direction if he deemed it necessary. He consequently became increasingly angry with Malan for not clinching the deal directly after the parliamentary debate – he was certain that Hertzog would deny all of his promises to Malan as soon as his position was strong enough.²²⁰

Malan, however, did not share Strijdom's distrust, and was satisfied with his meeting with Hertzog, who had received him most warmly. Hertzog assured Malan that he did not want the two parties to remain separate, and that he was eager to amalgamate. The two men still held to the agreement they had reached that evening at Groote Schuur before Hertzog's party was split from

²¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/1573, "Dr. D.F. Malan se Toespraak te Pretoria", 26 September 1939: 'Weg met die Britse konneksie ons wil 'n Republiek wees.'

²¹⁹ DFM, 1/1/1573, "Dr. D.F. Malan se Toespraak te Pretoria", 26 September 1939.

²²⁰ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 29 September 1939.

top to bottom – the party would unite on its 1933 basis, with provision to be made for new issues which had since developed. Hertzog still promised to be the party's nominal leader only – Malan would be the leader in the House, which effectively made him the *de facto* leader. Only with regards to the republican issue did Hertzog begin to express some qualms – he could not imagine that a republican party could win an election. Malan pointed out to him that failure to adhere to the republican ideal would create a new split in the party, as the northern republicans would certainly leave to establish their own organisation. The greatest resistance to republicanism was in the Cape where Malan's party, which had already accepted republicanism, was the dominant force. Hertzog accepted these arguments. There was no question of him becoming a convinced republican himself, but he was willing to leave the matter to the party to decide, and would not cause any obstructions. He had a new enemy to hate: the English jingoes. They had caused him to fall into disfavour with the Afrikaners – for their sake he had boycotted the previous year's Centenary – but at the crucial moment, they had betrayed him. It now seemed that the trust between Malan and Hertzog was repaired.²²¹

This did not move the Young Turks, who vented their anger to one another whenever Malan and N.J. van der Merwe praised Hertzog in public.²²² Hertzog's followers began establishing new party branches across the Transvaal, and Strijdom felt the ground rapidly disappearing from beneath his feet. He was even more furious with Malan who, after a second successful meeting with Hertzog, could see no wrong in this latest development.²²³

The Young Turks soon seized on the ammunition that Hertzog gave them, however, when he made his annual speech to his Smithfield constituency on 4 November. It was common knowledge, both in the inner circle and beyond, that Hertzog was not a republican. At Smithfield, he condemned Smuts and the jingoes for dragging South Africa into the war, especially as it strengthened the case of those who wanted to break South Africa's bonds to Britain – he did not want to be counted among their ranks. Hertzog, however, also declared that South Africa had to be governed as a free country: if the jingoes continued to frustrate this freedom, he warned that the British connection would not last long.²²⁴ It was a warning for the jingoes to come to heel, rather than a plea for freedom that could be exerted outside the commonwealth if necessary.

Swart was furious. The party would be a laughing stock if it accepted the republican ideal while its leader wanted to maintain ties with Britain, he lamented to Strijdom – Malan's lukewarm

²²¹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 12 October 1939.

²²² INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/22, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 17 October 1939; SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 21 October 1939.

²²³ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 30 October 1939.

²²⁴ J.B.M. Hertzog, 'Toespraak: Deelname aan die Oorlog – Smithfield, 4 Nov. 1939', in F.J. du T. Spies, D.W. Krüger and J.J. Oberholster, eds, *Die Hertzogtoesprake Deel 6: Oktober 1932-September 1942* (Johannesburg: Perskor Uitgewery, 1977), 280-1.

republicanism of a few years earlier apparently forgotten.²²⁵ Even N.J. van der Merwe, who supported Malan in his crusade to reunite with Hertzog, was shaken. He wrote to Malan to warn him that their supporters in the Free State and Transvaal were growing increasingly dissatisfied with Hertzog's wavering position on the republican issue – and, especially in the Free State, there would be objections to simply handing the provincial leadership to Hertzog.²²⁶ They were all, inevitably, headed for a collision. Strijdom began to polish his armour, as he realised that Malan was clearly set on his course, and arguing with him was futile. 'The result is that I do not do or say anything anymore – except write, and I write a lot, to Nationalists from all parts, who feel anxious about these things and who write to me to complain or to warn me,' he told Swart.²²⁷ Strijdom was not the only one who was brandishing his pen. His wing-man, Hendrik Verwoerd, was using *Die Transvaler* to attack Hertzog, Havenga and Pirow. It spelled the end of the good will, as Hertzog was furious about Verwoerd's articles.²²⁸

By the time that representatives from the two parties finally met on 23 and 24 November, there were few hopes of calming Hertzog's temper – which he lost several times. The meeting revolved around two matters: the republican ideal, and the party's name. Hertzog, supported by Havenga, refused to accept the republican ideal. He would not make propaganda for a republic, and he would stand on his right to fight republicanism in the same manner that he had fought N.J. van der Merwe in the past. Malan, however, held fast. He declared that the republican issue had become a matter of principle, and refused the Hertzogites' suggestions to postpone the issue until after the war, or to establish a party while the matter remained unresolved. He gave Hertzog a choice: either agree to the republican principle, or end the negotiations to amalgamate and rather explore cooperation between the two separate parties.²²⁹

The discussion surrounding a possible republic became deadlocked, and the men decided to turn to the matter of the party's name. Hertzog now insisted that a new party, with a new name, had to be established – he refused to join Malan's NP. Malan, however, would not accept this, objecting that it was his side that was being forced to make all the concessions: the party's leadership, its identity, its name and the republican ideal. As far as Malan was concerned, the discussions were at

²²⁵ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 50, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 7 November 1939.

²²⁶ DFM, 1/1/1595, N.J. van der Merwe – D.F. Malan, 9 November 1939.

²²⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/23, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 14 November 1939: 'Die gevolg is dat ek niks meer doen of sê nie – behalwe skryf, en baie skryf ook aan Nasionaliste uit alle dele, wat benoud voel oor al hierdie dinge, en dan aan my skryf, om te kla, en te waarsku.'

²²⁸ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!", 1-2.

²²⁹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Vol. 52, Notes taken by J.G. Strijdom at the meeting between the NP and the Hertzog group.

an end – there could be no amalgamation. Instead, it was decided that a committee would be established to coordinate interaction between the two parties.²³⁰

Yet, despite the negotiations' collapse, Malan did not lose faith in Hertzog. The experience convinced him that Hertzog, who by this time was a man of 73, was aging rapidly – and it was taking its toll on his mind.²³¹

The Young Turks were less sympathetic, however. Verwoerd published a sharply-worded article the following day, in which he blamed Hertzog and Havenga for the failure of the negotiations. He followed this up with another article a few days later, in which he targeted Havenga as an 'anti-republican'.²³² Strijdom utilised a public meeting to make a speech in which he attacked Pirow – the evening before the Nationalists were to meet to discuss the deliberations among themselves.

Thus, when the Nationalists met in Bloemfontein on 1 December, the fur flew. It opened with an attack by C.W.M. du Toit on Strijdom – to which Strijdom responded angrily. A long speech by Verwoerd followed, in which he asked Malan to grant permission for the full proceedings of the meeting between the NP and the Hertzog-group to be published – and that the position of each representative be indicated. Malan came close to losing his temper at the suggestion that the contents of the meeting, which was conducted behind closed doors, be made public. He was already angry about Verwoerd's attacks on Hertzog, and when he took to the stage, he did not mince any words, but took Verwoerd to task in a manner that left Strijdom, who regarded an attack on Verwoerd as an attack on himself, licking his wounds for weeks afterwards.²³³

The gloves were off and the divisions in Malan's ranks were glaringly obvious. 'I'm afraid S [Strijdom], one of the nicest men in our party, is beginning to suffer from the complex that he is the "strong man" in the party, the man who can stay the course – and staying the course means fulfilling the role of a stubborn and kicking mule!' Geyer wrote in his diary.²³⁴ Indeed, Strijdom's resentment of Malan was beginning to reach boiling point, and the situation was hardly improved when Kemp and Pirow, two of Hertzog's followers, established a political party – the *Volksparty* (People's Party) – in the Transvaal on 8 December. This revealed divisions within Hertzog's own ranks – while Hertzog and Havenga continued to condemn the notion of the republic, Kemp and

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!", 3-4.

²³² KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!", 3.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 5-6; SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 51, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 13 December 1939; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/23, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 19 December 1939.

²³⁴ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!", 5: 'Ek vrees S [Strijdom], een van die gaafste manne in ons hele party, aan die kompleks begin ly dat hy die "sterk man" in die party is, die man wat kan koers hou – en koers hou beteken dan die rol van 'n steeks en skoppende muil vervul!'

Pirow emerged as ardent republicans, adopting the republican ideal as one of their party's articles of faith.²³⁵

Malan did not react to this development immediately. This added fuel to Strijdom's fire. He declared to Swart that his patience with Malan was at an end, and that if he was given the slightest provocation, he would tell Malan precisely what he thought of the manner in which he had handled the situation.²³⁶ 'How in Heaven's name did we manage to fight the battle with such political weakness for more than six years, and still achieve such success?' he asked Swart. 'Maybe the answer is that Dr Malan is a good fighter when the enemy is right in front of him, but he is a hopeless general when he is dealing with a hidden enemy.'²³⁷ Two weeks later, when Malan condemned the formation of Pirow's party as an obstacle to reunification,²³⁸ Strijdom snapped that it had come three months too late.²³⁹ This did not bode well for the negotiations which continued during the course of 1940.

When the two parties assembled in Cape Town by mid-January, Malan and Hertzog launched into a fresh round of discussions – this time in their capacity as parliamentary leaders. They needed to find a basis for agreement which would enable them to provide a united front to Smuts.²⁴⁰ Once again, Hertzog's temper and his stubborn refusal to compromise made Malan's task nearly impossible, and his Young Turks' unwillingness to make any concessions to Hertzog and his followers did not improve matters either.²⁴¹

Predictably, the republican ideal caused a heated debate. As a compromise, Malan and Hertzog agreed that the republican ideal would be upheld, along with the assurance that membership would not be refused to non-republicans. Strijdom and Eric Louw fought this membership clause tooth and nail, but finally Malan had had enough, and brought the young hounds to heel. He told them that it was clear to him that they did not want reunification. While he acknowledged that a leader had to be sensitive to his party's wishes, his function was not only that of a servant of the party, but also to give direction – and a leader also had his own convictions and boundaries. He was not willing to sacrifice the principle of Afrikaner unity for the sake of a sub-

²³⁵ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 295-6.

²³⁶ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 51, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 13 December 1939.

²³⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/23, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 19 December 1939: 'Hoe in Vaders naam het ons daarin geslaag om met sulke politieke onmagtigheid die stryd vir meer as ses jaar, en nogal met soveel sukses voort te sit? Die antwoord is miskien dat Dr. Malan 'n goeie vegter is wanneer sy vyand oop en bloot voor hom staan, maar 'n hopelose generaal is wanneer hy met 'n bedekte vyand te doen het.'

²³⁸ DFM, 1/1/1630, "Dr. Malan se Nuwejaarsboodskap", 1 January 1940.

²³⁹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 51, J.G. Strijdom – E. Louw, 3 January 1940.

²⁴⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 249.

²⁴¹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/24, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 19 January 1940; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/25, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 12 February 1940.

clause which was not a principle in itself – and he was willing to take responsibility for this stance. Malan’s speech had the desired effect. Strijdom grumbled, but he accepted his leader’s authority.²⁴²

The party’s name also caused complications – especially for Malan personally. When Malan departed from Hertzog’s Cabinet in 1933, he had automatically lost his income as a Cabinet Minister, and instead had to depend on his annual parliamentary salary. Parliamentarians frequently complained that their yearly stipend was inadequate to support their families, and his decision to go into the wilderness certainly entailed a financial setback for Malan. It was therefore to his surprise and gratitude when he discovered that his old friend, F.W. Beyers – who was a wealthy man – had begun to deposit money into his bank account every month. When Beyers died in 1936, he left his fortune to the Cape National Party. Malan would receive an annual allowance as long as he remained the leader of the Cape National Party, while the party itself would receive the annual interest earned by the estate – as long as the party retained its identity.²⁴³ If the party was dissolved, the money would be given to the University of Stellenbosch.²⁴⁴ Thus, it was essential that the Cape National Party had to remain part of a federal body, and that it had to reunite with elements that had once been a part of it, and not cease to exist in order to establish a new organisation.²⁴⁵

This caused complications when the name of the new party was debated. The Malanites were willing to change their party’s name to the *Herenigde Nasionale Party* (Reunited National Party), while the Hertzogites insisted on the *Volksparty*. Malan did not want to be accused of fighting for a particular name for the sake of his own financial interests, and decided to sacrifice the £600 pounds that he received annually from Beyers’s estate, despite the fact that it had become a substantial part of his annual income.²⁴⁶ He ceded the money to the party’s Federal Council (when the matter served before the Federal Council, it decided not to accept it, and sent the documents back to Malan).²⁴⁷ Malan’s stipend was therefore not a factor when the two parties reached a clumsy compromise on the organisation’s name: the *Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty* (Reunited National Party or People’s Party),²⁴⁸ which was a testament to the divisions within an organisation that was desperately trying to present itself as the political representative of a united Afrikanerdom.

The deadlock came, however, when Hertzog insisted that his supporters had to be guaranteed their seats. Malan and his party refused and Hertzog – who was motivated more by

²⁴² KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Onderhandelings”, 1-3.

²⁴³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 201-4.

²⁴⁴ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!”, 12.

²⁴⁵ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 201-5.

²⁴⁶ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, “Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!”, 12.

²⁴⁷ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 204.

²⁴⁸ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 298.

loyalty to those who had stood by him than by the entreaties of his followers – would not give way. By this time, Hertzog was teetering dangerously close to the edge of a nervous breakdown. After consulting with his caucus, which finally supported him in his decision not to give in to Hertzog's demands, Malan went home to write to Hertzog about his decision, which would effectively have ended their negotiations. It was late in the evening, and he must have been very surprised when Oswald Pirow arrived at his doorstep with a fresh compromise to suggest – one which Malan found acceptable. Pirow left shortly thereafter to consult Havenga and Kemp. Even though Havenga was somewhat hesitant, they agreed to call the rest of Hertzog's caucus together – while Hertzog was soundly asleep in his bed. Hertzog's caucus all accepted the compromise, which meant that Havenga had to give in. With this information in hand, Pirow returned to Malan. This new development therefore changed the contents of Malan's letter.²⁴⁹ He would still not guarantee seats, but he undertook to protect Hertzog's followers from any victimisation, and assured Hertzog that their act of voting against the war would be taken into consideration when the various constituencies nominated their candidates.²⁵⁰ Pirow took it upon himself to deliver the letter to Hertzog, which meant that he could use his powers of persuasion as one of Hertzog's trusted lieutenants.²⁵¹ His tactic worked, because Hertzog accepted Malan's letter.²⁵²

If there was one aspect of this experience that impressed itself on Malan's mind, it was that Hertzog could not be held accountable for his actions any longer. In order for Malan to make any progress in uniting the two parties – which he was set on doing – Hertzog had to be by-passed. He also knew that he had the support of some of Hertzog's followers – Pirow and Kemp most notable among them. It now came to light that Pirow and Kemp had deliberately kept Hertzog away when they had established the *Volksparty* in the Transvaal, as they knew Hertzog would have obstructed their path. Malan now wanted to use the same tactic. Instead of drawing up a programme of principles, which could then be used as a basis for the establishment of a new party, he decided to establish a new party, which would then draw up the programme of principles – and to keep Hertzog away from the founding congress. This would spare him the nightmare of drawing up such a document with Hertzog, who was certain to quibble on every point, and it would lock Hertzog into a party where he would have to abide by the will of the majority. If he then tried to break away, he would only be able to take a small minority with him, as it now became apparent to Malan that Hertzog's followers only clung to their leader for fear of victimisation in the new organisation. If they knew that they were safe, they could transfer their loyalties to Malan. Malan tried to explain

²⁴⁹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Onderhandelings", 5-8.

²⁵⁰ DFM, 1/1/1635, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 26 January 1940.

²⁵¹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Onderhandelings", 8.

²⁵² DFM, 1/1/1636, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 27 January 1940.

this to Strijdom, who seemed unable to grasp Malan's strategy, and tried to insist on the natural order.²⁵³

In a move that belied his earlier bravado and private threats against Malan, Strijdom decided to abide by Malan's leadership. He justified his acquiescence to Swart by asserting that he did not want to jeopardise Afrikaner unity by forcing a split in the party. The other reality was that Strijdom was not ready to lead his followers into the political wilderness, where he was certain he would perish: 'We would have had to fight without a newspaper and without money, for the sake of disputes that the ordinary man will not understand,' he wrote.²⁵⁴

Malan decided to use the parliamentary agreement between Hertzog and himself as a preliminary basis for reunion, which could be presented to the various party-congresses as they met to decide on the matter of reunification.²⁵⁵ These congresses would take place around the Easter holidays, and would elect representatives to serve on an interim Federal Council which, according to the parliamentary agreement, would draft the new party's programme of principles. The process ran smoothly in each of the provinces except for the Free State, where the Hertzog-group did not elect any Federal Council representatives.²⁵⁶

By this time, March had reached its end, and Hertzog's mood swings had worsened to the point where Paul Sauer began calling him 'Pernicketty' [*sic*], and Havenga was dubbed 'The Chamberling'.²⁵⁷ Hertzog could most probably sense that there was a plot brewing against him, and his paranoia knew few limits. Thus when Malan, who could not be equally self-denying when it came to the £3,000 his party received annually from the Beyers-estate,²⁵⁸ informed Hertzog about the procedures that the Cape National Party would follow in order to retain the money, Hertzog erupted.²⁵⁹ From an organisational point of view, it was suicide to sacrifice such an amount of money. Malan had put his cards on the table from the start – when he and Hertzog met in November of the previous year, he had advised Hertzog about Beyers's will – and at the time Hertzog had agreed that it was important to safeguard the party's financial interests. He confirmed this stance in January, when the parliamentary agreement was being discussed, and had accepted Malan's argument that the reunion between the Cape parties needed to be conducted in a manner that did not jeopardise the party's funds. Now, however, Hertzog vehemently denied ever having discussed such

²⁵³ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/25, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 12 February 1940.

²⁵⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/25, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 3 February 1940: 'Ons sou met 'n minderheid moes veg sonder koerant en sonder geld, en as gevolg van geskille wat vir die gewone man nie verstaanbaar sal wees nie.'

²⁵⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/25, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 12 February 1940.

²⁵⁶ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die 'Gesuiwerde' Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 304-5.

²⁵⁷ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/27, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 28 March 1940: "die Kamerling".

²⁵⁸ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, "Persoonlike Herinnerings uit die Koalisiestryd: Hoe Klein is die Mens!", 12.

²⁵⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/27, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 28 March 1940.

a matter with Malan, or having made a promise in this regard.²⁶⁰ He was convinced that Malan's arrangement with the Cape Hertzogites – led by Attie Fourie and Henry Fagan – was a ploy to force him to join the NP, instead of establishing a new party with a new name. Malan did not bat an eyelash upon witnessing Hertzog's outburst, and drily remarked to Sauer that he would not take any notice of such 'tantrums'.²⁶¹

Hertzog could not be left in such a state of anxiety forever, however, and Malan and the Cape Hertzogites decided to visit him in order to explain to him that they were all in agreement about their reunification, and that the agreement between the parties as a whole remained intact. Since the party was organised on a Federal basis, the arrangement in the Cape did not affect the parties in the other provinces.²⁶² The day of the meeting, 15 April, became a fateful day for Malan, but especially for Hertzog. Hertzog placed an interpretation on Malan's assurances that the latter had never intended. In Hertzog's mind, Malan had come to plead for a federal basis in order to protect the Cape's financial position, and in his magnanimity, he granted the request – thus sacrificing the centralised party structure which he now believed they had agreed upon earlier. Hertzog thus believed that they had reached a new agreement, and he took command of it with newfound enthusiasm. Four autonomous provincial parties necessitated four provincial constitutions, Hertzog believed. He therefore busied himself with drafting the Free State's programme of principles, where he would be the provincial leader.²⁶³

Malan's camp first caught wind of this new development when Hertzog informed the NPs Free State leader, N.J. van der Merwe, that he was busy drafting a constitution for their new party. Van der Merwe was aghast, and told Hertzog that the agreement had stipulated from the start that the party would be federal and that the Federal Council, not Hertzog, would be responsible for drafting the programme of principles.²⁶⁴ Even after Van der Merwe showed Hertzog the document that he and Malan had issued earlier that year – which stipulated a federal structure with a constitution drawn up by its Federal Council²⁶⁵ – Hertzog refused to accept the documentary evidence, and insisted that he had sacrificed the party's centralised structure – he would not sacrifice the Free State's autonomy and his right to compose its constitution as well.²⁶⁶ When Van der Merwe tried to speak to Hertzog again, Hertzog refused to see him.²⁶⁷ Malan also tried to reason

²⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/1740, "Kommissie van Ondersoek i.v.m. Vrystaatse Geskille, 30 January 1941", 42-6, 53.

²⁶¹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/27, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 28 March 1940.

²⁶² DFM, 1/1/1664, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 9 May 1940; DFM 1/1/1740, "Kommissie van Ondersoek i.v.m. Vrystaatse Geskille, 30 January 1941", 40-2.

²⁶³ DFM, 1/1/1659, J.B.M. Hertzog – N.J. van der Merwe, 29 April 1940; DFM, 1/1/1663, J.B.M. Hertzog – D.F. Malan, 8 May 1940.

²⁶⁴ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 52, N.J. van der Merwe – J.B.M. Hertzog, 26 April 1940.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*; DFM, 1/1/1660, N.J. van der Merwe – J.B.M. Hertzog, 1 May 1940.

²⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/1659, J.B.M. Hertzog – N.J. van der Merwe, 29 April 1940; DFM, 1/1/1661, J.B.M. Hertzog – N.J. van der Merwe, 6 May 1940.

²⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/1660, N.J. van der Merwe – J.B.M. Hertzog, 1 May 1940.

with Hertzog, and told him that he had misinterpreted their meeting of 15 April, which had merely dealt with a domestic agreement²⁶⁸ – Hertzog did not respond. It was his task as the party's leader to call the Federal Council to a meeting, in order that the body could begin its work in drafting the party's constitution – but Hertzog refused.²⁶⁹

The caucus-room had degenerated into a battle-ground by now. Hertzog became furious when the Nationalists refused to support a budget-vote for the purchase of land for the African Reserves, which was in accordance with his segregationist legislation.²⁷⁰ His own followers had begun to hold meetings without him – and were loath to speak to him as they feared his outbursts.²⁷¹ Malan was more convinced than ever before that it was necessary to gather Hertzog's supporters and proceed without him. In order to reassure Hertzog's frazzled followers, Malan gave in to their demands with regards to African land purchases. He explained his strategy to Strijdom – who refused to accept it. As far as Strijdom was concerned, Malan had given in to Hertzog's threats to resign once again, and it was yet more proof of Malan's weakness. What if Hertzog threatened to resign at the party's founding congress? Strijdom wanted to know. At that event, Malan assured him, they would stand their ground. Strijdom was not satisfied and decided that he would quietly resist Malan's overtures to the Hertzogites.²⁷²

Malan went ahead with his plan to circumvent Hertzog. He arranged that the Cape and Transvaal's Head Committees call a meeting of the interim Federal Council in order that the body could begin its work on 7 August. Strijdom still did not trust Malan to see his plan through,²⁷³ however, and decided to call a clandestine meeting of the Young Turks. He, Verwoerd, Swart and Eric Louw would gather to discuss their plans.²⁷⁴ The time had come, according to Strijdom, for the younger leaders to make their presence felt – the older generation's time was passing, and it was up to the young ones to lead the nation out of its state of hopelessness. He would not give another inch to Hertzog.²⁷⁵

Their chance came when a large OB delegation – who knew that the Young Turks did not agree with Malan's more cautious approach to the situation – visited Swart with the request that a large republican demonstration be held in Bloemfontein. Swart took them to N.J. van der Merwe who, by this time, must have felt very despondent about the situation with Hertzog. Van der Merwe

²⁶⁸ DFM, 1/1/1664, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog, 9 May 1940.

²⁶⁹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 9 May 1940.

²⁷⁰ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 9 May 1940.

²⁷¹ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/28, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 26 April 1940.

²⁷² INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 13 May 1940.

²⁷³ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 20 May 1940.

²⁷⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, H.F. Verwoerd – C.R. Swart, 5 June 1940.

²⁷⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/30, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 19 June 1940.

and Swart gave heed to their call, and a mass meeting was called.²⁷⁶ It drew tens of thousands of Afrikaners – it was estimated that approximately 70,000 people descended on the Women’s monument in Bloemfontein. A more powerful defiance of Hertzog – who only three weeks before the event had told the Free State leaders that he would not support a republic – is difficult to imagine. Hertzog refused to have anything to do with the event.²⁷⁷ Malan himself, who disapproved of such shock tactics, was also furious, and scribbled ‘*Die Breekspul*’ (The Mess) on the letter which C.R. Swart sent to him to inform him of the meeting’s decisions.²⁷⁸ As far as Malan was concerned, the Free State Nationalists had only worsened the mutual distrust which existed between themselves and Hertzog. Years later, he would call the event the ‘pinnacle of stupidity’.²⁷⁹

The meeting called for a Boererepubliek (Boer Republic) – which harked back to the two Boer republics which existed before the Anglo-Boer War. It wanted the republic to be instituted immediately, and made no mention of achieving this in a constitutional manner. The rights of English speakers were not referred to either.²⁸⁰ To Malan, it was a sign that matters were getting out of hand – and that the younger generation was trying to force its will upon him and Hertzog, which opened the way for irresponsible leaders and irresponsible actions.²⁸¹ He repudiated the decisions taken at the meeting in public – and when he met a delegation appointed by the meeting, he made it clear that while he supported the republican ideal, he also believed in *leierskap-in-rade* (council-leadership). Under the circumstances – where Hertzog could not be expected to provide adequate leadership – Malan suggested that the party be led by a council of representatives from each province.²⁸² It rested on Malan’s broader conception of leadership. To him, ‘council-leadership’ meant that a leader had to be sensitive to the wishes of his followers. In times of crisis, however, leaders who followed their supporters were a danger to the greater good.²⁸³ Thus, the mass-meeting did not succeed in moving Malan from his course.

In August 1940, the Nationalist circles were shocked by NJ van der Merwe’s unexpected death – presumably from a heart attack.²⁸⁴ This meant that C.R. Swart took his place. Strijdom’s most loyal ally had become more powerful, and together, they represented a powerful force in the party.

By the end of September, Malan called a committee together that drafted a programme of principles, which would form the basis for the reunification of the two parties. It modelled the

²⁷⁶ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/30, H. Martins – C.R. Swart, 4 July 1940; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/30, G. Yssel – Anon., 13 July 1940.

²⁷⁷ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 310-3.

²⁷⁸ DFM, 1/1/1673, C.R. Swart – D.F. Malan, 22 July 1940.

²⁷⁹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 192: ‘toppunt van onverstandigheid’.

²⁸⁰ DFM, 1/1/1673, C.R. Swart – D.F. Malan, 22 July 1940.

²⁸¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 192-3.

²⁸² P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die ‘Gesuiwerde’ Nasionale Party, 1934-1940*, 313-4.

²⁸³ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 193.

²⁸⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/31, L. Scholtz – C.R. Swart, 20 August 1940.

document on the NPs constitution. The Federal Council met in mid-October, where the document was accepted.²⁸⁵ The stage was set for the party congresses, which would meet during the last two months of that year. The Cape Congress in Cradock was a triumph – the new constitution was adopted unanimously, without any amendments.²⁸⁶ In the Free State, however, the first rumblings of an earthquake were audible. Its congress was scheduled for 5 and 6 November – but in the weeks preceding it, Swart could see mounting signs of the disaster that was to come. Unlike the other congresses where only the Federal Council’s draft constitution was submitted for approval, the Free State was faced with the document that Hertzog had drafted. Swart decided to submit the Federal Council’s constitution to the congress as well, knowing that it would create a duel between the two documents. To his relief, he had Malan’s full support for his decision. Malan counselled him to postpone the matters of Coloured and African political representation by referring them to the Federal Council, in the event of reunification only being hindered by these two issues. But with regards to the rest of the document, Swart received Malan’s blessing to stand his ground. In spite of his and Strijdom’s belligerent letters to one another, Swart was apprehensive about the coming confrontation with Hertzog – especially as he had become the repository of all Hertzog’s hatred. He attempted to approach Hertzog before the congress, but only received an abusive response.²⁸⁷

When the Free State congress gathered, the earth began to tremble. As was the case with Hertzog’s last confrontation with the Nationalists in October 1933, the meeting was stacked with Nationalist supporters who were ready to vote for the Federal Council’s constitution. Hertzog, for his part, used the same tactics he had used seven years before – he insisted that he would regard the rejection of his document as a motion of no confidence in his leadership. Once again, the delegates were forced to choose between him and a document. In the seven years that had passed since Hertzog had last made such a threat, however, the ground had shifted. The evening of 6 November would be the last time that Hertzog would give his tried and tested ultimatum. When the votes were counted, he was defeated. Hertzog remained seated, as if paralysed. When the meeting began to discuss the Federal Council’s constitution, he raised his voice for a final time. The document did not provide for the equal rights of English speakers, he told Swart. Swart pointed out to him that the English speakers were guaranteed equal cultural and language rights. To Hertzog, this did not constitute comprehensive equality. He stood up and left through a side entrance, followed by about eighty-four supporters.²⁸⁸

Once they were outside, Klasie Havenga sobbed like a small boy, while Hertzog remained mute. Havenga eventually composed himself and broke the deathly silence with the words ‘General,

²⁸⁵ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 52, J.G. Strijdom – E. Louw, 18 October 1940.

²⁸⁶ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 52, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 4 November 1940.

²⁸⁷ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 52, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom, 28 October 1940.

²⁸⁸ J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewe en Stryd*, 726-30.

we will establish a new party tonight; we will establish a new party right now!²⁸⁹ Hertzog, however, was tired and beaten. If he could not lead the Afrikaner nation as a whole, he would not lead at all. It was the end of his political career. While Havenga would indeed establish a party to keep Hertzog's torch burning, Hertzog would retire to his farm. He died two years later.²⁹⁰

Despite the battle that forced Hertzog into retirement, the Nationalists did not rejoice about their victory. They regarded the manner in which the final break took place as tragic, but inevitable.²⁹¹ Malan sent Hertzog a telegram to express his heartfelt regrets about the painful circumstances under which he had resigned. He assured Hertzog that, in spite of all that had happened, the Afrikaner nation would continue to honour and remember the sacrifices he had made for its sake.²⁹² This was not merely lip-service – Malan would not stand for it when his followers said insulting things about Hertzog in his presence, and did not hesitate to rebuke those who tried.²⁹³

At the same time Malan, who was not blind to the Young Turks' resistance to him, protected Swart from accusations that Hertzog had resigned due to a personal dispute between them. He appointed a commission of enquiry to investigate the dispute within the Free State's leadership, and gave evidence which pointed to the dispute that had occurred in April when Hertzog had decided to draft a programme of principles in defiance of their original agreement.²⁹⁴ The deterioration of Hertzog's mental state remained a secret, however, and never became public knowledge.

Hertzog's exit left D.F. Malan as the Afrikaner nationalists' most powerful political leader. His power would not remain unchallenged, however. The next contender had already entered the stage.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 730: 'Generaal, ons gaan vanaand 'n nuwe party stig; ons stig net vanaand 'n nuwe party!'

²⁹⁰ See J.H. le Roux, P.W. Coetzer and A.H. Marais, eds, *Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog: Sy Strewte en Stryd*, 730, 731-76.

²⁹¹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 52, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 7 November 1940; INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/33, J.G. van der Merwe – C.R. Swart, 25 November 1940.

²⁹² SAB, J.B.M. Hertzog collection, A 32, Volume 50, file 167, D.F. Malan – J.B.M. Hertzog [n.d.]

²⁹³ INCH, P.W. Botha collection, PV 203, MV 24/1/7, P.W. Botha – H.B. Thom, 23 June 1971.

²⁹⁴ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/33, J.G. Strijdom – C.R. Swart, 25 December 1940; DFM, 1/1/1718, D.F. Malan – J.C. van Rooy, 17 December 1940; DFM, 1/1/1740, "Kommissie van Ondersoek i.v.m. Vrystaatse Geskille, 30 January 1941".

Chapter 10 – The Obstacle-Course to Victory, 1940-1948

When Hertzog left the stage in December 1940, D.F. Malan would have had every reason to believe that he represented the majority of Afrikanerdom. The broad reunion of the Afrikaner nation had failed, and a few of Hertzog's followers – led by Havenga – did strike out on their own by establishing the Afrikaner Party. Nevertheless, heavyweights such as Pirow and Kemp remained with Malan. Attie Fourie also was only too delighted to be welcomed back into the Cape Party.¹

Afrikanerdom itself was transforming, and looked set to become an organised force to be reckoned with. As 1939 drew to a close, Malan delivered a speech in which he implored the Afrikaners to establish organisations to advance their interests.² His call served more as a positive confirmation and approval, than an impetus, as the ox wagon-wheels of organised Afrikanerdom had already begun to turn.

Following the Voortrekker Centenary an economic organisation, the Reddingsdaadbond (RDB), was established to raise and direct funds for the economic transformation of the Afrikaner nation. It was energised by the mandate of an Ekonomiese Volkskongres (Economic National Congress), held in late 1939, and was directed by prominent members of the AB, a secret organisation that was first established in 1918 to advance Afrikaners' interests.³

Its clandestine character served to provide it with an image of power, which far exceeded the reality and, at crucial times, cloaked its impotence. Malan had become a member during the early 1930s, but he for one did not take the organisation or its mysterious shroud very seriously – his membership was certainly no secret. When Hertzog attacked the organisation in 1935 and ranted against Malan's connection to it, Malan replied in jest that he would have to revise his plans of joining a local mountaineering club, as his membership of any association seemed to be a contaminant that elicited Hertzog's wrath.⁴ That said, Malan was never a member of the ABs Executive Council, but by 1940 he would have been kept abreast of its dealings by Eben Dönges, who had become one of his confidantes. Malan did not regard himself as anything more than a token-member of the organisation, and on the rare occasion that he attended one of the Executive Council's meetings, he regarded it as a show of goodwill⁵ – and the *braaivleis* (barbeque meat) they

¹ P.W. Coetzer and J.H. le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party Deel 4: Die Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party, 1934-1940* (Bloemfontein: Instituut vir Eietydse Geskiedenis, 1986), 330-1, 334-5.

² University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/1605, D.F. Malan speech: "By Onthulling Piet Retief Monument, 16 Des. 1939: Afrikaner Volkseenheid".

³ T.D. Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 202-6.

⁴ DFM, 1/1/1605, "Dr. Malan se antwoord: Waarom Generaal Hertzog die Broederbond Aanval", 15 November 1935.

⁵ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Louw, [4 October 1937].

fed him at one such occasion as a cross he had to bear, since he did not have much faith in meat that was cooked by men.⁶

During the course of 1940, Malan began to focus his attention on another group of meat-cooking men – and women. In reaction to the Union Defence Force's recruitment drive,⁷ the OB was recruiting members at a momentum that made other Afrikaner organisations – and Malan's party in particular – sit up and take notice. By April 1940, Malan was convinced that there had to be some coordination between the OB and his party. He was well-disposed towards the OB, but was concerned that such an organisation could quickly endeavour to become the power behind the throne.⁸

These concerns prompted Malan to seek an alliance with the OB leadership, as well as with leaders from other Afrikaner organisations such as the RDB, the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) and the Handhawersbond. His stated aim was to demarcate each organisation's territory in order to ensure that there was no overlapping, and to bring these organisations under the party's control in order that their work could be coordinated.⁹ This implied that Malan was intent on guarding his own turf while harnessing these energetic bodies to his advantage. There was, however, another factor that weighed on his mind: he was concerned that the OB might employ violence to wrestle control from the government,¹⁰ and wanted to prevent this at all costs.

Malan's advances were rebuffed by the OB, which was intent on maintaining its independence. He was, however, assured of their willingness to coordinate their efforts with his party, and he received a promise that the organisation would not resort to violence against the government.¹¹ This promise rang very hollow barely two months later. The government issued an emergency regulation whereby civilians had to surrender their rifles – which would only be reissued to those who enlisted in the non-permanent home defence force. It caused an uproar among the Afrikaners.¹² As General Christaan de Wet famously said, 'a Boer and his gun and his wife are three things always together.'¹³ Malan felt the full brunt of the anger as he was, literally, separated from his wife by gunless Boers. He and his family happened to be on holiday when this measure was passed. While they were making their way back to Cape Town, they decided to spend the night at a hotel in Oudtshoorn. News of his arrival spread quickly, and to Malan's surprise five men

⁶ Addition to D.F. Malan collection, D.F. Malan – Maria Malan, [24 November 1941].

⁷ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 368.

⁸ Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/28, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 16 April 1940.

⁹ DFM, 1/1/1665, Zondagh – J.C.C. Laas, 11 May 1940.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II: The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 368-9.

¹³ Quoted in S. Swart, 'A Boer and His Gun and His Wife are Three Things Always Together': Republican Masculinity and the 1914 Rebellion', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24, 4 (Dec. 1998), 750.

arrived to inform him that the family had to pack their belongings back into their car and accompany them to a farm in the vicinity, where an important meeting was to be held. Malan's protestations fell on deaf ears, which made his eventual acquiescence seem like an abduction. Once on the farm, he felt like a prisoner. The meeting consisted of five hostile OB generals who were incensed at the confiscation of their weapons, and demanded that Malan instigate an armed rebellion against the government by issuing a countrywide call to arms. Malan refused flatly.¹⁴ The experience made it clear that the OB had to be brought under control, since it was a threat, not only to government but also to hapless Afrikaners who could be drawn into its schemes, with ill-fated consequences.

The war itself added to the tensions. The Nationalists soon realised that their letters were being opened, which prompted Paul Sauer – always the jester – to write special messages to the censor at the bottom of his letters.¹⁵ When unsolicited maintenance men arrived to repair Malan's telephone, while there was nothing wrong with the instrument, Malan became convinced that it was an attempt by the government to tap his calls.¹⁶ The authorities denied his allegations, however.¹⁷

Throughout the war, Malan issued statements in which he called on Smuts to withdraw from the conflict. He was gravely upset by the hostile attitude displayed towards anti-war Afrikaners, and blamed Smuts for this state of affairs. He gave the English-speaking section of the population assurances that the Afrikaners' stance on the matter was not synonymous with any racial hatred of the English – and it was certainly not the result of Nazi sympathies either.¹⁸

This made very little difference, and did not deter Malan's opponents from labelling his supporters the 'Malanazi's'. As had been the case during the First World War, an angry mob laid siege to Keerom Street in July 1940.¹⁹ Malan's home in Sea Point also became a target for Allied seamen. On one occasion, while Malan was away on a political tour, Maria awoke to the sound of Australian soldiers poking their bayonets through her bedroom's wooden shutters. Much to the children's delight, the family dog attacked drunken sailors who, on another occasion, had begun to stone the house. A soldier was arrested when he tried to break into Malan's study as he sat there working, and a bullet was retrieved in the vicinity of Malan's study after someone fired a shot at the house. Maria became particularly frantic when she received threatening phone calls in which an anonymous caller assured her that her husband would soon be assassinated. Malan tried to make light of these threats, but he still thought it necessary to acquire a pistol. He did not, however, carry

¹⁴ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959), 193-4.

¹⁵ INCH, C.R. Swart collection, PV 18, file 3/1/29, P. Sauer – C.R. Swart, 12 June 1940.

¹⁶ DFM, 1/1/1693, D.F. Malan – C.F. Clarkson, 12 October 1940.

¹⁷ DFM, 1/1/1700, C.F. Clarkson – D.F. Malan, 28 October 1940.

¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/1668, Verklaring, 1 June 1940.

¹⁹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1990), 605.

it with him, and instead kept it in a safe.²⁰ It is hardly surprising, given the constant threats to his family's safety that, by 1942 Malan sold his house in Sea Point and moved to Stellenbosch.²¹

Malan also sought to neutralise the looming threats within the Afrikaners' ranks. He condemned the formation of interest groups within his party, in particular Oswald Pirow's New Order, which endeavoured to dress the party's programme of principles in National-Socialist robes.²² When Pirow and his supporters decided to boycott the caucus, Malan disowned them as members of his party.²³ Similarly, Malan issued a warning to the Greyshirts – who had decided to dissolve their organisation in order to join his party – not to attempt to form an organised bloc.²⁴

The OB, however, presented the most potent and worrisome force. A number of prominent Nationalists were members of its upper echelons, but the organisation's furtive and erratic leader, J.C.C. Laas, was a loose cannon. Laas was forced to resign at the beginning of October 1940, which meant that the OB was, for a short period, under the control of men like Ds. C.R. Kotzé and C.R. Swart, whose sympathies – in this instance – belonged to Malan. It was during this window period that the two organisations signed the Cradock Agreement. It tied the OB to Malan's demands that, in working towards its aim of a Christian National Republic, the organisation would follow the constitutional route and refrain from violence. It would also confine itself to non-political activities, and pledged that it would neither interfere in any of the party's affairs, nor seek to undermine it.²⁵ In return, Malan promised his party's friendship and cooperation, and even encouraged the members of his party to join the OB.²⁶

Malan made sure, however, that he protected his party by closing all possible loopholes. He introduced an amendment to the Cape party's constitution, which stipulated that its members were not allowed to belong to any other political party – or a politicised organisation – which the party's Head Committee declared to be in conflict with the party's principles.²⁷

Malan had begun to fortify his territory just in time. In January 1941, J.F.J. van Rensburg was inaugurated as the OBs new leader. Van Rensburg was an ardent admirer of National-Socialism – and of Hitler in particular. He had strong links with Afrikaner intellectuals in the AB – in particular its chairman, Nico Diederichs, and secretary, P.J. (Piet) Meyer, both of whom shared his

²⁰ H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.9, Notes prepared for H.B. Thom by J.L. Malan.

²¹ H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1980), 325-6.

²² DFM, 1/1/1751, A.L. Geyer – [O. du Plessis], 1 March 1941.

²³ DFM, 1/1/1947, "Besluit", [15] January 1942.

²⁴ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Vyf-en-Twintigste Kongres (Cradock 1940)", 20-5.

²⁵ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2008), 363-9, 382-5.

²⁶ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Vyf-en-Twintigste Kongres (Cradock 1940)", 20-5.

²⁷ DFM, 1/1/1701, "Voorgestelde Amendement", [28 October 1940].

totalitarian worldview,²⁸ and who were described by Geyer as ‘Nazis through and through’.²⁹ It would soon bring them on a collision-course with Malan, who still believed in the virtues of Western European democracy. Within months, Van Rensburg began to purge prominent Nationalists from the OBs ranks. Shortly after his election to Parliament, C.R. Swart was forced to resign from his position on the OBs Groot Raad (Great Council) on the grounds of a clause in the OBs constitution, which stated that party officials were not allowed to hold positions in the OB. He was followed shortly thereafter by Frans du Toit, the party’s organising secretary in the Free State – who was suspended from the OB on dubious grounds.³⁰

It meant that Malan had to remain vigilant. He must have realised that he could not guarantee the future of Afrikaner nationalism merely by harnessing the efforts of non-political bodies and by holding the OB to a contract which its leader had not signed. He, however, took his calls to Afrikaners to become organised, to heart. By the beginning of 1941, the party had embarked on a drive to reorganise its structures in order to make its organisation more efficient. The bulk of the task was entrusted to the young organising secretary, P.W. Botha – a member of the OB. The result was a structure that, in spite of some crucial differences, bore remarkable similarities to that of the OB. The party retained its basic structure, but renamed its various bodies. Committees would in future be called Councils, and chairpersons became ‘leaders’. The focus was on the organisation of local branches. In order to improve communication at grassroots level, branches would be divided into small groups of eight, each with an elected group leader.³¹

The scheme evoked an outcry from the OBs leadership, which contended that, since members of the party were also members of the OB which itself was organised into groups of seven under the command of a corporal, there would not only be a duplication of organisations, but also widespread confusion due to the existence of two contending figures of authority.³² Geyer smirked at complaints from OB officials that the party’s system would be more popular since the party’s groups would be able to choose their leaders, while the OB corporals were appointed from above. At the same time, Geyer feared that the OBs resistance to the party’s reorganisation was merely a symptom of a larger problem.³³

Malan was indeed being forced to play a game not of his making. Afrikaner enthusiasm for a German victory, which they were certain would endow them with a republic, had moved beyond day-dreams. The constitution of the imminent republic had become a serious point of debate, and

²⁸ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 387-395.

²⁹ Cape archives repository (hereafter KAB), A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 29 August 1941: ‘deur en deur Nazis.’

³⁰ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 400.

³¹ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948* (Bloemfontein: Instituut vir Eietydse Geskiedenis, 1994), 42-5.

³² *Ibid.*, 45.

³³ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 26 May 1941.

Malan and his party were reproached for not participating in the deliberations.³⁴ Geyer lamented that the Afrikaners had become so pro-Hitler that they were under the impression that Hitler was pro-Afrikaner. Even more worrisome was that they began to envision a republic that was governed by a group of 'Super-Afrikaners'.³⁵

L.J. du Plessis, a Potchefstroom academic and AB Executive Council member who was also attracted to the idea of an authoritarian state, drafted a republican constitution,³⁶ which the AB distributed to a number of its branches. Piet Meyer wrote to Malan to inform him of the general mistrust of the party that was growing by the day – and that leading Afrikaners activists merely 'tolerated' it. There was, however, still some enthusiasm for Malan's idea of 'council leadership', which they believed had to be instituted without delay. The letter revealed an underlying concern about the threatened status of the OB, and in an accompanying memorandum – which was also drafted by Du Plessis – it was proposed that a Policy Council be established that would consist of the various Afrikaner organisations, and which would allocate an individual task to each organisation. Malan's Herenigde Nasionale Party (HNP)³⁷ – as his party had since become known – would provide leadership in the political arena, while the OB would be responsible for activism and disciplining the nation. Tellingly, the memorandum stipulated that the various bodies would not be allowed to have the same structures.³⁸

Malan would not be deterred, and moved to entrench his party's position. A Union-wide congress was called, to be held in Bloemfontein on 3 June, where Malan planned to present the party's proposed reorganisation to the four provincial congresses. In Malan's mind, the situation was becoming critical. Word reached his inner circle that those members of his party who were also members of the OB had received orders to vote against his reorganisation plan. This was compounded by the news that Van Rensburg was holding secret meetings with a German agent. When Geyer, on Malan's instructions, confronted one of Van Rensburg's lieutenants with this fact, the man took fright – not because of the accusation, which he did not deny, but because of the possibility that the German agent, who he too had met, might have been an English spy.³⁹

Malan agreed to meet with an AB committee the day before the party congress. The committee – under the chairmanship of L.J. du Plessis – included representatives from the RDB, FAK and OB – the latter of which demanded that Malan drop his reorganisation scheme. It decided

³⁴ DFM, 1/1/1760, A.L. Geyer – O. du Plessis, 29 March 1941.

³⁵ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 19 September 1941.

³⁶ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 407-9.

³⁷ While the Party was still officially called the *Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty*, few correspondents took the trouble of writing the arduously long name or acronym. Thus, in unofficial documents, the party was referred to as the *Herenigde Nasionale Party* (HNP).

³⁸ DFM, 1/1/1755, P.J. Meyer – D.F. Malan, 15 March 1941; C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 409-10.

³⁹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 6 June 1941.

in advance that it would offer Malan the chairmanship of a coordinating committee that would direct the efforts of the various Afrikaner organisations – but it requested that the party cease its reorganisation. Victory, however, belonged to Malan that day. When he and his representatives were called into the meeting, the discussion became heated. Malan did not drop his reorganisation scheme, and only agreed to the establishment of a coordinating body – which would confine itself to that task.⁴⁰

The congress, which took place the following day, was a personal triumph for Malan, as he had planned the proceedings with minute precision. He drafted each of the motions himself, and hand-picked the proposers and their seconders. Former Hertzogites were also included in this group. His speech was one of his career bests, and left little doubts about the congress's outcome.⁴¹

Malan's speech was powerful, yet tactful. In defiance of those who were manoeuvring behind the scenes to diminish his party's position by placing it on an equal footing with the other Afrikaner organisations, Malan declared that:

We are no party-political organisation in the ordinary sense of the word. We are much more than that. As the Reunited National Party or People's Party, we embody the two underlying ideas without which no Afrikaner nation could ever have possibly existed. The one is the Nationalist idea and the other is our restored Afrikaner national unity. It is we who have taken the idea of an own South African nationhood as a holy inheritance from the hands of our brave ancestors, from Piet Retief and Andries Pretorius, from Paul Kruger and Marthinus Steyn and Christiaan de Wet, and who have protected and promoted it in a battle that has lasted for many years, and sought to bring it to fruition...we are no ordinary party-political organisation. We occupy a central position in our Afrikaner nationalist life. If we are torn apart, the entire nation is torn in all directions, as experience has taught us so dearly, time and again. On the other hand, when we stand together our entire nation closes ranks in all areas. We, more than any other, have the responsibility to build a united front in this hour of crisis. We can make our nation, or we can break it.⁴²

⁴⁰ INCH, J.D. Jerling collection, PV 158, file 21, "Kommissie Insake Algemene Beleid. Notule van 'n Vergadering van die Kommissie Insake Algemene Beleid, Gehou in Bloemfontein op 2 Junie 1941"; KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 6 June 1941; C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 409-10.

⁴¹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 6 June 1941.

⁴² INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Ses-en-Twintigste Kongres, Bloemfontein (1941)", 12: 'Ons is geen party-politieke organisasie nie in die gewone sin van die woord nie. Ons is baie meer as dit. As die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty beliggaam ons die twee grondgedagtes, waarsonder geen Afrikanervolk ooit moontlik sou gewees het nie. Die een is die Nasionale idee en die ander is die idee van ons herstelde Afrikaner-volkseenheid. Dis ons wat die idee van 'n eie Suid-Afrikaanse nasieskap as 'n heilige erfenis oorgeneem het uit die hande van ons heldhaftige voorouers, van Piet Retief en Andries Pretorius, van Paul Kruger en Marthinus Steyn en Christiaan de Wet, en wat in 'n jarelange stryd dit beskerm en bevorder het en dit vrugbaar probeer maak het...ons is geen gewone party-

Malan warned his followers that their party was under threat, one that was deadlier than the threats once presented by Chamberlain, Rhodes and Milner. This new danger moved within the Afrikaners' own midst: the formation of disparate groups, each preparing the ground for new fragmentation, and even worse, those who believed that the party had become redundant and could be tossed aside, and who had turned this new conviction into a campaign:

They know that we owe our Party our nationalist consciousness, our language rights, our Afrikaner nationalist newspapers, the expansion of our freedom, our republican ideal and endeavour, our united national will to preserve our white civilisation, our white labour policy and more than a hundred other vitally important things. They also acknowledge that none of the other large national organisations which has served the Afrikanerdom on the cultural, economic, philanthropic or protective fronts during the past few years, could have come into existence were it not for the fertile soil which the Party had prepared for them. The Party is the mother, but as a result of all kinds of fallacious notions, they are willing to commit matricide...⁴³

As he had done throughout the 1930s, Malan made it clear that he would not judge Nazism as a system of government in Germany, but reiterated that it was foreign to the Afrikaners' character and traditions. Democracy had failed in Eastern Europe after the First World War because it was imposed on countries that were not accustomed to it. In a similar fashion, the worldwide imposition of National-Socialism would also fail, as it was not suited to the various nations – and certainly not to the democratic Afrikaner nation, which was descended from Dutch and French Protestants. Authoritarianism might seem to be an attractive solution for solving problems, but the Afrikaner nation would not function under a dictatorship, he argued. The Voortrekkers would have hung a white Dingane from a tree-branch, Malan assured his listeners, while the Zulu's would have

politieke organisasie nie. Ons beklee 'n sentrale posisie in ons Afrikaner-volkslewe. Skeur ons dan skeur ons hele volk in alle rigtings, soos die dure ondervinding ons keer op keer geleer het. Staan ons aan die ander kant weer bymekaar dan sluit ook ons hele volk sy geledere op elke ander gebied. Op ons, meer dan op enig ander, rus daarom in hierdie krisis-uur die verantwoordelikheid om 'n eenheidsfront op te bou. Ons kan ons volk maak of ons kan hom breek.'

⁴³ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Ses-en-Twintigste Kongres, Bloemfontein (1941)", 13: 'Hulle weet dat ons aan ons Party te danke het ons nasie-bewustheid, ons taalregte, ons Afrikaanse nasionale koerante, die uitbreiding van ons vryheid, ons republikeinse doelstelling en strewe, ons verenigde volkswil vir die behoud van ons blanke beskawing, ons blanke arbeidsbeleid en honderd ander lewensbelangrike dinge meer. Hulle erken ook dat geeneen van die groot volksorganisasies wat in die laaste jare die Afrikanerdom op kulturele, of ekonomiese of filantropiese of volksbeskermingsgebied dien, kon ontstaan het as dit nie was op die vrugbare grond wat die Party vir hulle voorberei het nie. Die Party is die moeder, maar as gevolg van allerlei dwaalbegrippe is hulle nou bereid om moedermoord te pleeg...'

employed their assegaïs to rid themselves of a weakling such as a black Paul Kruger, whose attractive ideas of a national government could not guarantee the maintenance of law and order.⁴⁴

Thus, in a move that demonstrated his belief in democracy, Malan asked the congress to affirm his leadership. According to the party's constitution the party's leader was elected by the parliamentary caucus, but Malan told the congress that he was relinquishing his position, and asking the delegates to re-elect him. He needed to know that he had his party's full support on the road ahead. The various motions that he had drafted would serve as a testament to his personal convictions and his statement of policy.⁴⁵

The audience's enthusiasm for Malan knew no bounds. Not only was he re-elected and proclaimed *Volksleier* (National Leader), but his request for increased powers was granted. The congress was the highest authority within the party, but Malan was now given the same powers as the congress itself – for the duration of the crisis. His powers were, however, still subject to the congress, which could decide to put an end to them.⁴⁶ Upon being named the National Leader, Malan received a standing ovation from the 1,200 delegates. 'D.F. Malan's position after the congress has never been as strong', Geyer wrote ecstatically.⁴⁷ Geyer's joy would be short-lived.

The party's reorganisation scheme was accepted by the various provincial congresses despite resistance from the OB members.⁴⁸ When they tried to dissent, Malan drove them into a corner by brandishing the Cradock Agreement, which prohibited the OB from interfering in the party's affairs.⁴⁹ Malan also tied his followers closer to the party by instituting a solemn pledge of loyalty to the organisation – and by expanding the regulation that membership of another political organisation was not permitted to the three northern provinces.⁵⁰

With his party safeguarded, and his leadership undisputed, Malan was now ready to face the AB and its allies. From Bloemfontein he left for Johannesburg, where the various Afrikaner organisations would meet on 9 June. On this occasion, it was decided to establish an Afrikaner Eenheidskomitee (AEK), with Malan as its chairperson and Piet Meyer as its secretary. It would be

⁴⁴ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Ses-en-Twintigste Kongres, Bloemfontein (1941)", 15-16.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁷ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 6 June 1941: 'D.F. Malan staan na daardie kongres so sterk soos hy nog nooit gestaan het nie.'

⁴⁸ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 48-51.

⁴⁹ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 6 June 1941.

⁵⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty van Kaapland: Notule van die Ses-en-Twintigste Kongres, Bloemfontein (1941)", 24-5.

an advisory body with the task of coordinating the various organisations' work – and mediating between them in the event of a dispute.⁵¹

It was another victory for Malan, which left the leading lights in the AB and OB grumbling. At an AB meeting – where Malan was not present – Nico Diederichs declared his opposition to Malan having been appointed National Leader by his party congress. Within less than a week of the AEKs establishment, Malan received a note from Piet Meyer requesting that he to resign as its chairman. Meyer also summoned Malan's newly appointed private secretary to his office, and tried to persuade him to influence Malan to resign as chairman of the AEK – and to accept the AEK as a body that would formulate policies for Afrikanerdom, which Malan would then have to implement. Malan's chairmanship of the AEK was, as far as Meyer was concerned, unfair, as it placed the other Afrikaner organisations in a position that was subordinate to the HNP. Instead of having Malan as the sole leader, Meyer wanted a triumvirate to govern Afrikanerdom. As far as he was concerned, the National Leader had to 'emerge' from the AEK – and his assurances that, if he was forced to choose between the HNP and the OB he would choose the latter, left little doubts as to whom he wanted the leader to be.⁵² The idea of a triumvirate seemed to be a popular one among the ABs totalitarian intelligentsia, since L.J. du Plessis also wrote to Malan to persuade him to relinquish his position in favour of such an arrangement.⁵³

When the AEK met again in August 1941, the RDB (of which Diederichs was a representative) and the FAK (of which Meyer was a representative) requested that Malan resign in favour of a neutral chairman. L.J. du Plessis was elected in his stead.⁵⁴ The cracks were already showing. The OB – under the auspices of Van Rensburg – was defying the Cradock Agreement at every turn. When face to face with Malan, he promised to rectify the situation in public, but once on a platform, he would attack the HNP instead.⁵⁵ The situation devolved into a war between the OB and the HNP.⁵⁶ Members of the public remained largely ignorant of the details, since much of the fighting was conducted behind the scenes. To Geyer's chagrin, Van Rensburg and Du Plessis told the public that the tensions between the organisations were the result of erroneous newspaper reports,⁵⁷ but it soon became clear to Malan and his insiders that Van Rensburg was deliberately providing the press with typed versions of his speeches in advance, which he then pretended to read

⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/1803, "Kommissie Insake Algemene Beleid: Notule van 'n Samespreking van die leiers van Afrikaanse Volksorganisasies, Gereël deur die Dagbestuur van die U.R.-Beleidskommissie op 9 Junie 1941 in Johannesburg."

⁵² INCH, D.J. Potgieter collection, PV 107, file 30, Diary: 18 June 1941; 2 August 1941.

⁵³ DFM, 1/1/1808, L.J. du Plessis – D.F. Malan, 18 June 1941.

⁵⁴ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 415.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 414-7.

⁵⁶ For a thoroughly researched and comprehensive account of the rivalry between the HNP and the OB, see C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 363-449.

⁵⁷ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 27 August 1941.

to his audiences – but which differed from the advance copies to the press. It served to strengthen a growing mistrust of the Nationalist newspapers.⁵⁸

Du Plessis's attempts to mediate between the two bodies – in his capacity as AEK chairman – made it clear that his sympathies lay with a totalitarian society. He wrote to Malan that it was presumptuous of the HNP to reserve the political arena for itself while its leaders were generally uninspiring – except, of course, for Malan in the Cape Province, he hastened to add as a back-handed reassurance. He regarded Strijdom and Verwoerd – who had an intense dislike for Van Rensburg – as troublemakers who were fanning the flames of the dispute. Du Plessis made it clear that the OB was far more popular in the north than the party was. The HNP could only hope to rehabilitate itself through friendship with the OB, and the only means of strengthening itself was by sharing its political authority with the other organisations. By cooperating with the other organisations, Du Plessis contended, Malan would prove his party's competence and suitability to lead the nation⁵⁹ – obviously forgetting that Malan's party derived its authority from general elections and the annual re-election of its officials, while the other organisations had never been tested by a national ballot box. Du Plessis also made the dispute a personal affair by reprimanding Malan for the manner in which he treated Van Rensburg: a friendship between the two organisations would only be possible once a relationship of trust between Malan and Van Rensburg had been established. This would only be possible 'if you act more fatherly and understanding towards him, instead of contractually stipulating.'⁶⁰ Du Plessis also specified that Malan's paternal attitude to Van Rensburg had to be 'fatherly' and not 'schoolmasterly'.⁶¹

This did not remedy the situation – instead, matters deteriorated. By September 1941 Du Plessis had become openly hostile to the HNP, and declared that it did not have the right to lead the nation, since it was subject to 'democratic opportunism'. It became clear that the AEK was a failure, but Du Plessis refused to accept this and tried to keep a flame burning by reviving his idea of a triumvirate that would rule Afrikanerdom – consisting of himself, Van Rensburg and Malan.⁶² He now began to accuse Malan of National-Socialism, due to his insistence on establishing his party as the Afrikaner nation's sole political authority. Leadership, according to Du Plessis, had to be derived from a committee in which all the nation's forces were united.⁶³ He clearly did not regard the democratic process as a suitable or legitimate means of establishing leadership.

⁵⁸ INCH, D.J. Potgieter collection, PV 107, file 30, Diary: 23 April 1941; KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 27 August 1941.

⁵⁹ DFM, 1/1/1835, L.J. du Plessis – D.F. Malan, 20 August 1941.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: 'as u teenoor hom meer vaderlik begrypend as kontraktueel stipulerend sou wil optree.'

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 'vaderlik', 'skoolmeesteragtig'

⁶² INCH, J.D. Jerling collection, PV 158, file 21, "Notule van 'n buitengewone vergadering van die Afrikanereenheidskomitee gehou in Bloemfontein op 1 Sept. 1941".

⁶³ DFM, 1/1/1870, L.J. du Plessis – D.F. Malan, 15 September 1941.

Malan, on the other hand, realised that the OB under Van Rensburg was even more dangerous than it was under Laas. During a tour of the Northern Cape constituencies, he discovered that the locals were being told by OB officials that weapons had been stockpiled for a rebellion against the government, and that they had to ready themselves to seize control of the country in order to establish the long-awaited republic. The preparations had reached the point where the women had begun to prepare *biltong* and rusks for their men to take with them on commando. Malan was furious at the OBs underhanded campaign for a rebellion, putting ordinary Afrikaners in harm's way. He warned the inhabitants of the Northern Cape that Smuts knew all that went on in the OBs ranks – a rebellion would simply play into his hands. This meant, effectively, that they would land in internment camps.⁶⁴

Therefore, when L.J. du Plessis approached him with his scheme of a triumvirate, Malan rejected it. It was clear to him that he and Van Rensburg would neutralise each other – which would leave all power concentrated in Du Plessis's hands.⁶⁵ The AEK was now, officially, dead.⁶⁶ Malan called on the members of his party to resign from the OB⁶⁷ – which they had already begun to do in increasing numbers.⁶⁸

The bitter experience of the rupture between himself and Hertzog would, however, have taught Malan the value of capturing the moral high ground. It was essential to prove to the nation that he had not left a single stone unturned before finally turning his back on yet another Afrikaner leader. Thus, Malan decided to make a final offer to Van Rensburg. He must have known that Van Rensburg would not accept his terms.⁶⁹ Malan proposed that a National Committee be established which would have authority regarding the matter of a republic, but which would respect the Afrikaner organisations' independence in all other matters. The committee would take the shape of a shadow government, complete with Prime Minister (Malan) and Cabinet – in which Van Rensburg would be invited to serve as a member.⁷⁰

Van Rensburg, who obviously did not want to be seen to be the wrecker of national unity either, tried to stall for time by drawing Malan into a lengthy correspondence on particular aspects of the scheme. This gave Malan, the seasoned politician, the opportunity to drive Van Rensburg into a corner from where he was forced to admit his refusal of Malan's proposal. His attempts to save

⁶⁴ INCH, D.J. Potgieter collection, PV 107, file 30, Diary: 18 September 1941.

⁶⁵ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 30 September 1941.

⁶⁶ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 424.

⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/1899, "Verklaring", 3 October 1941.

⁶⁸ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 3, Diary: 26 September 1941.

⁶⁹ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 429.

⁷⁰ DFM, 1/1/1907, "Nasionale Komitee Voorstel", [n.d.] November 1941.

face by passing the blame to Malan had the opposite effect. Malan handed the correspondence to the press, whereby he washed his hands of Van Rensburg.⁷¹

Malan would reject all further attempts by aspirant mediators to mend relations between himself and Van Rensburg. When yet another prominent AB intellectual, J.C. van Rooy, tried to reconcile the two parties, Malan declared that:

Since the days when Generals Botha and Smuts tore Afrikanerdom from top to bottom through their imperialist policy, the Path of South Africa has been littered with the graves of reconciliation efforts. None, as far as I know, ever achieved any success, but instead, many of them postponed the day of reconciliation even further. When reconciliation was achieved, it was accomplished by the two opposite sides themselves, and not through the establishment of mediating movements. The reason for this is that such movements have never been able to progress beyond a declaration that everyone is right and everyone is wrong.⁷²

In June 1942, Malan called for another Union-wide congress to be held in Pretoria that September.⁷³ By September, it was three years since war broke out, three years consumed by internecine battles with Hertzog, the Young Turks and the OB. The time had come to drag the party from the mire before it became submerged in its dirty waters. When Malan ascended the stage on 16 September 1942, it was to bring his party back to the course from which it had wandered during the preceding three years: the achievement of a republic by constitutional means.

Malan declared that South Africa's entry into war had made it clear that the country could only remain neutral in future if it broke the British connection – which meant that it had to become a republic. Yet, Malan insisted, this would only be achieved through the ballot box. An Afrikaner who abandoned his adherence to the democratic process and who pinned his hopes on a German victory – only to be disappointed by the tide that was turning against Germany – was, in Malan's words, 'an unfaithful coward and a traitor'.⁷⁴ The Afrikaners had to follow a single course, and not

⁷¹ DFM, 1/1/1913, D.F. Malan – J.F.J. van Rensburg, 24 November 1941; DFM, 1/1/1915, J.F.J. van Rensburg – D.F. Malan, 29 November 1941; DFM, 1/1/1919, D.F. Malan – J.F.J. van Rensburg, 8 December 1941; DFM, 1/1/1920, D.F. Malan – D.J. Potgieter, 17 December 1941; DFM, 1/1/1921, J.F.J. van Rensburg – D.F. Malan, 22 December 1941; DFM, 1/1/1924, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 27 December 1941; DFM, 1/1/1925, D.F. Malan – J.F.J. van Rensburg, 27 December 1941; DFM, 1/1/1936, J.F.J. van Rensburg – D.F. Malan, 5 January 1942; DFM, 1/1/1938, D.F. Malan – J.F.J. van Rensburg, 7 January 1942.

⁷² DFM, 1/1/1979, "Verklaring van Dr. Malan, 29 April 1942": 'Sedert die dae toe Generaals Botha en Smuts deur hul imperialistiese beleid die Afrikanerdom van bo tot onder geskeur het, lê die Pad van Suid-Afrika bestrooi met die grafte van versoeningspogings. Geeneen het, sover as ek weet, ooit enige sukses gehad nie, maar intendeel het baie van hulle eerder die dag van versoening verder afgestel. Waar versoening gekom het, het dit geskied deur die teenoor-mekaar-staande kante self en nie deur die stigting van bemiddelende bewegings nie. Die oorsaak daarvan is dat sulke bewegings dit nooit verder kon bring as om te verklaar dat almal reg en almal verkeerd is nie.'

⁷³ DFM, 1/1/1929, "Verklaring oor Uniale Kongres, [30] June 1942".

⁷⁴ DFM, 1/1/2029, "Dr. D.F. Malan se toespraak op die Uniale Kongres van die Herenigde Nasionale Party in Pretoria op 16 Sept. 1942": 'n ontroue lafaard en 'n verraaiër'.

diverge from it. According to Malan, it was time for the nation to focus on its goal: freedom from Britain – which could only be achieved by a consolidated white population and the assurance that South Africa would remain a white man’s country.⁷⁵

Malan’s call for Afrikaners to end their domestic disputes and to take cognisance of their fate came as the party had to begin its preparations for the 1943 elections. Thus, as the New Year arrived, he appealed to his party’s supporters to organise themselves and to remember that it was the party which had taken up the cudgels against capitalist exploitation and for the preservation of white South Africa. Malan declared that the Afrikaners had to stop pinning their hopes on the outcome of the war – they determined their own destiny under God, and their salvation lay in remaining Afrikaners and waiting for their time to arrive with courage and with faith.⁷⁶

Malan also shifted his own focus to the issues of economics and race. It was wartime, and economic hardships weighed heavily on the electorate’s mind. As Parliament opened for the 1943 session, he introduced a motion in which he asserted that the nation had to be regarded as a moral and economic unit. Thus, the state had to consider human values and needs before mere financial interests. Malan pleaded for an economic system that bore striking similarities to the Pact-government’s policy in the 1920s. He stated that the government had to develop the country’s resources and industries in order to increase its income – while assuring a more even spread of wealth and eliminating parasitic exploitation. Malan called for greater government control over the economy, with regards to banking and credit provision in particular. Land that lay fallow because it was being held for speculation purposes should be distributed to landless farmers, and the state must accept its responsibility to create employment, he argued. Malan insisted that urban slums be eradicated through state housing projects, while a national health service had to be established. He also appealed for an improvement in welfare services and pensions.⁷⁷

These socio-economic measures needed to be accompanied by segregationist regulations. Malan emphasised that it was in the interests of all classes of the population that the white race and white civilisation be maintained and preserved. Thus, in accordance with the principle of trusteeship, it was the state’s duty to strive for this goal in the social and economic spheres as well. Therefore, it was imperative that a system of fair segregation and quotas be practiced by the State and by Industry. Malan also appealed for the institution of minimum wages for whites, Coloureds and Africans respectively.⁷⁸

It was Smuts, however, who dictated the terms of the 1943 election. The war had turned in his favour, and outweighed the Nationalists’ attempts to sweep up dissatisfaction with wartime

⁷⁵ DFM, 1/1/2029, “Dr. D.F. Malan se toespraak op die Uniale Kongres van die Herenigde Nasionale Party in Pretoria op 16 Sept. 1942”: ‘n ontrooue lafaard en ‘n verraaier’.

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/2059, “Nuwejaarsboodskap”, 1 January 1943.

⁷⁷ DFM, 1/1/2061, Mosie, 19 January 1943.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

measures and the threat of Communist Russia. When the results were announced, it was a stunning victory for Smuts. The United Party (UP) gained seventeen seats for a total of eighty-nine. Malan's HNP captured two more seats to send forty-three candidates to Parliament. Yet, despite this apparent defeat, Malan's position had been strengthened. His party had not entered into an alliance with any other organisation, but had fought the election by itself. Its lack of association with the right-wing meant that, despite its pro-republican and anti-war stance, it could not legitimately be accused of dabbling in foreign ideologies or of praying for Hitler's victory. Havenga's Afrikaner Party failed to capture a single seat, while Pirow's New Order and the OB – neither of which stood for election – were reduced to political non-entities. Malan had succeeded in consolidating the Afrikaner opposition.⁷⁹

The HNP itself was growing stronger. The reorganisation scheme had paid off, as the party's membership grew throughout the 1940s – except for a temporary drop in 1943, which was ascribed to the arduous election year, and another decline in numbers in 1946, which was quickly recovered in the two years that followed. The party would continue to improve its machinery in the years before the next election. It employed fulltime organisers to direct its efforts in the various provinces, and it became more efficient in its fundraising efforts. By 1946, a dedicated propaganda committee would ensure that the party's message was spread beyond the reach of its four newspapers. The foundations for a future victory were being laid.⁸⁰ If anything, the election took its greatest toll on Malan's vocal chords, which became inflamed as a result of the burden that he placed on these instruments. Under doctor's instructions, Malan was not allowed to strain his voice for six weeks.⁸¹ It might have been the imposed muteness that gave Malan time to reflect on the future of white South Africa.

Before the end of the war, D.F. Malan had realised that the world he inhabited would change irrevocably – a war fought on such a scale made it inevitable. To Malan, this new world bode both old and new dangers, and called for comprehensive solutions to the Afrikaners' problems. Russia's entry into the war on the Allies' side disturbed him deeply. His anti-capitalism had always been matched by his anti-communism, but Bolshevism carried a sinister connotation that far outweighed the other two evils. Whatever one thought of Nazi Germany, Malan contended, it had served as a barrier between Russia and the West. When Hitler invaded Russia, however, Malan knew that Germany's fall was inevitable and was convinced that the floodgates had been opened:

⁷⁹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II, 1919 – 1950*, 380-4.

⁸⁰ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 50, 53-67.

⁸¹ DFM, 1/1/2085, Maria Malan – D.J. Potgieter, 5 August 1943.

Bolshevism will not only flood Germany, but the entire Europe, and not least the exhausted, heavily burdened and impoverished England. And then – the Deluge!...We do not dispute Russia's right to rule itself in the manner that it wishes. But every country has thus far detested Bolshevism like the plague...Bolshevism is a destroyer of the foundations of civilisation and of everything the Christian nations deem to be holy. If this is the case in other countries, we in South Africa have a hundred more reasons to detest and to fear Bolshevism...Bolshevism has long had its eye on South Africa. It wants to initiate a Bolshevik revolution here and therefore seeks its support mostly with the non-white elements. Under the leadership of Communist Jews it has nestled itself into a number of our trade unions. It does not acknowledge the colour bar in any sphere, and where it is legally possible, it agitates tirelessly – with the vehement incitement of the non-whites – to remove it. It does not know any patriotism. It is the sworn enemy of all religion, not least of Christianity. In short, Bolshevism is the negation of everything Afrikanerdom has stood for and fought for, suffered for and died for, for generations.⁸²

As the war drew to a close, Malan foresaw a new confrontation between Russia on the one side, and the USA and England on the other. He was convinced that the ground was prepared for a new and more devastating war between these two sides.⁸³ This fear of Bolshevik Russia was tied to the old fears about the preservation of white civilisation in South Africa – Malan never gave serious thought to Africans' petitions for political or any other rights. In his mind, Africans were still the primitive masses of the Dark Continent who could not think for themselves.⁸⁴ Any dissatisfaction in their ranks therefore had to be the result of foreign agitation. Paternalism and trusteeship were the lenses through which Malan viewed black-white relations – in his mind, these terms had the positive connotation of a familial relationship.⁸⁵ Thus, during the course of the 1943 general election and in its immediate aftermath, it was in these terms that Malan turned his mind to the

⁸² DFM, 1/1/1814, "Verklaring oor nuwe Oorlogsituasie", 26 June 1941: Bolsjewisme sal nie alleen Duitsland nie, maar nou ook heel Europa oorstrom, en nie die minste van al ook die uitgeputte, swaar belaste en verarmde Engeland nie. En dan – die Sondvloed!...Ons betwis nie Rusland se reg om homself te regeer soos hy self verkies nie. Ons eis daardie reg ook vir onself. Maar elke land het tot hiertoe nog die Bolsjewisme verafsku soos die pes...Bolsjewisme is 'n verwoester van die fundamente van die beskawing en van alles wat Christelike volke as heilig beskou. As dit die posisie is in ander lande dan het ons in Suid-Afrika nog hondermaal meer rede om die Bolsjewiste te verafsku en te vrees...Bolsjewisme het al lank sy oog op Suid-Afrika gehad. Hy wil hier 'n Bolsjewistiese rewolusie te weeg bring en soek daardeur sy steun veral by die nie-blanke elemente. Hy het onder leiding van Kommunistiese Jode hom alreeds vir 'n groot deel vasgenestel in 'n aantal van ons vakbonde. Hy erken geen kleur-grens op enige gebied nie, en waar dit wettelik bestaan agiteer hy onophoudelik met heftige opsweping van die nie-blankes, om dit te verwyder. Hy ken geen vaderlandsliefde nie. Hy is die verklaarde vyand van alle godsdiens en nie die minste ook van die Christendom nie. In kort, Bolsjewisme is die negasie van alles waarvoor die Afrikanerdom in alle geslagte gestaan en gestry, gely en gesterf het.

⁸³ DFM, 1/1/2147, "Nuwejaarsboodskap", [27] December 1944.

⁸⁴ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, "Waarheen gaan Suid Afrika?" (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 3-6.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 19, 23-4.

racial order in South Africa. The word ‘apartheid’ first appeared in one of his election speeches, in which he lobbied for residential segregation – but instead of using the word ‘segregation’, Malan called for an ‘apartheid of residential areas’.⁸⁶ The general elections in July were followed by a Provincial election in October. It was finally in September 1943, in issuing a statement in preparation of the provincial elections, that Malan gave an indication as to the meaning of the word:

The colour question is a prominent matter in this election, just like any other general election. It remains SAs greatest and most serious problem until its only possible solution has been realised. That solution is the just and fair treatment of whites and non-whites, but each on his own terrain and on the basis of apartheid.⁸⁷

It is not known when precisely Malan first heard of the word. A Dutch Reformed cleric declared that he was the first to use the word in 1929,⁸⁸ while M.D.C. de Wet Nel, the chairman of the Suid-Afrikaanse Bond vir Rassestudie (South African Bond for Racial Studies) – a short-lived organisation established and led by northern intellectuals – claimed to have used it in 1935, in order to indicate that the Hertzog’s policy of segregation had failed.⁸⁹ Malan, however, did not have any bonds with the northern intellectuals. He did not correspond with any academics or clerics, and even his correspondence with family and friends was extremely limited – Malan himself admitted to being a poor correspondent.⁹⁰ It implied that his intellectual interaction was largely limited to his tight-knit inner circle, which consisted of men like Albert Geyer, Paul Sauer and Eben Dönges, all of whom resided in Cape Town and Stellenbosch, and with whom he interacted on a daily basis. His thoughts were informed by a thorough reading of the newspapers – which he still read with the same absorption as when he was a student – giving others the impression that he studied the advertisements as well. When new ideas were presented to him, he mulled them over and, if he found them agreeable, he assimilated them into his worldview. It became generally known amongst the inner circle that a seed had to be planted in Malan’s brain, and then had to be left to germinate,⁹¹

⁸⁶ Quoted in P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 455: ‘apartheid van woonbuurte’.

⁸⁷ DFM, 1/1/2093, Die Provinsiale Raads-verkiesings: Dr. Malan se wekroep, 3 September 1943: Die kleur-vraagstuk is ook by hierdie verkiesing soos by enig ander algemene eleksie, diep betrokke. Dit bly S.A. se grootste en ernstigste probleem totdat die enigste moontlike oplossing daarvan verwerklik word. Daardie oplossing is regverdige en billike behandeling van blankes en nie-blankes, maar ieder op sy eie terrain en op die grondslag van apartheid.

⁸⁸ L. Louw, ed., *Dawie 1946-1964* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1965), 49.

⁸⁹ J.P. Brits, *Op die Vooraand van Apartheid: Die Rassevraagstuk en die Blanke Politiek in Suid-Afrika, 1939-1948* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1994), 76-8.

⁹⁰ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A 1890, Vol. 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 30 March 1951.

⁹¹ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke library, Document Centre, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.GE(112), P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 26 November 1952.

as he did not react instantly. Geyer empathised with a friend who went through the experience for the first time and found it nerve-racking:

I know precisely how it would have been – and then the old man sits there, staring at you, without you knowing whether he heard what you said or whether he is thinking about other things. But my experience has been that he does indeed go away, thinking about what you said – but you are not a person, you are merely a piece of his own brain which produces thoughts. That is why he can start talking to you a few days later, and then tell you precisely what you told him a few days earlier, as if the thought was entirely his own.⁹²

The word ‘apartheid’ reached Malan’s inner circle by 1943 – it snuck into conversations unannounced. *Die Burger* first used it in an editorial on 26 March 1943,⁹³ but Geyer was unable to recall the occasion eight years later, and could not take credit for coining a word that would reverberate around the world for decades to come.⁹⁴ *Die Burger* used it for the second time on 9 September 1943,⁹⁵ a few days after Malan employed it in his press release pertaining to the provincial elections. To Malan the word was a positive term, which he used to replace segregation. It represented a concept – or a principle, as he liked to call it. Malan contended that the British had first introduced it into the Cape Colony through their measures to protect the Reserves; he spoke in glowing terms of the Voortrekkers’ adherence to the principle of apartheid, which prevented their assimilation into the African population, and contended that apartheid was the basis of the two Boer republics’ racial policies, as well as the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape’s decision to establish the Mission Church.⁹⁶

The word marked a shift in Malan’s approach to race relations. His speeches in the 1920s and 1930s – and especially those that were delivered in 1938 – were interspersed with fear of Africans’ overwhelming numbers and defensive measures to keep the ‘black tidal wave’ at bay. Apartheid, on the other hand, was, in his judgement, neither reactionary nor defensive; it was a principle – not a set of measures: ‘Whereas in the past, we might have acted too negatively in order to fend off the danger to the white race, we have to become more positive,’ Malan declared to his

⁹² P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.GE(113), A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 4 December 1952: Ek weet presies hoe dit was – en dan sit die ou man jou mos en aanstaar sonder dat jy weet of hy hoor wat jy sê dan of hy aan glad ander dinge sit en dink. Maar my ondervinding is dat hy tog gaan nadink oor wat jy gesê het – maar jy is nie ‘n persoon nie, jy is sommer ‘n stuk van sy eie brein wat gedagtes produseer. Daarom kan hy ‘n paar dae later met jou begin praat en dan aan jou sê presies wat jy hom ‘n paar dae tevore gesê het asof dit ‘n gedagte is wat heeltemal sy eie is.

⁹³ L. Louw, ed., *Dawie 1946-1964*, 48.

⁹⁴ P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.GE(52), A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 7 April 1951.

⁹⁵ L. Louw, ed., *Dawie 1946-1964*, 48.

⁹⁶ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, “Die Kleurvraagstuk” (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 9-10, 12-13.

party's congress in November 1943.⁹⁷ To Malan, the principle of apartheid entailed 'living space and justice to both sides.'⁹⁸

Malan introduced the word to Parliament in January 1944, when he declared that South Africa's salvation lay in it being a republic that was anti-capitalist and anti-communist, and which would be safeguarded for the white race and the Christian civilisation through the faithful adherence to the principles of apartheid and trusteeship, as well as through the 'development of the non-white population according to their nature and their abilities.'⁹⁹ This idea was not new. The NPs first constitution, drafted in 1914, stated that

In our actions towards the natives we adhere to the fundamental principle of the dominance of the European race in a spirit of Christian trusteeship, with the strict censure of any attempt at racial mixing. We also set ourselves the goal of providing the native with the opportunity to develop himself according to his natural aptitude and ability.¹⁰⁰

This principle was preserved in the Cape party's constitution, and was only expanded in 1935 to incorporate the principle of segregation.¹⁰¹ It was not amended again while Malan led the HNP – by 1952 it still remained unaltered.¹⁰²

Malan and his followers were intent on expanding the principle into a policy, however – especially in the Cape Province, where the Coloured franchise was still regarded as a threat. They were convinced that they had lost six Western Cape constituencies in the 1943 election due to the Coloured vote.¹⁰³ Following the elections, the HNPs Cape congress requested that the party formulate a policy with regards to the Coloured community. Malan subsequently appointed a commission to investigate the matter. Its terms of reference were formulated in accordance with his newly established principle of apartheid: it had to consider the position of the Coloured community in the country's political, economic and social structures and, 'with a view to their happiness and

⁹⁷ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 1/2/2/2/2, "Die Herenigde Nasionale Party van Kaapland: Notule van die Agt-en-Twintigste Kongres (Stellenbosch 1943)", 23: 'Waar in die verlede miskien om die gevaar van die blanke ras af te wend, te negatief opgetree is, moet ons meer positief word'.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23: 'lewensruimte en reg aan albei kante'.

⁹⁹ DFM, 1/1/2114, Mosie, 25 January 1944: 'ontwikkeling van die nie-blanke bevolking volgens hul eie aard en vermoë'.

¹⁰⁰ INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/1/1, *De Nasionale Partij: Beginsels, Constitutie, Statuten. Uitgeven namens 't Bestuur daartoe benoemd door Speciaal Kongres gehoude te Bloemfontein, 7-9 Jan., 1914*, 8: 'Door bij ons optreden teenoorens die naturellen als grondregel te stellen die overheersing der Europese bevolking in een geest van christelike voorgedijnschap, met strenge wraking van elke poging tot menging der rassen. Zij stelt zich voorts ten doel aan die naturel die geleghenheid te verschaffen sich te ontwikkel en overeenkomstig zijn natuurlike aanleg en vatbaarheid'.

¹⁰¹ DFM, 1/1/1111, "Konsep Program van Beginsels van die Nasionale Party" [1935], 4.

¹⁰² INCH, Cape National Party collection, PV 27, file 8/2/1/2/2, "Nasionale Party Kaapland: Program van Beginsels (1952)", 7.

¹⁰³ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 241.

development on their own terrain, make recommendations for the formulation of a positive and constructive Coloured policy for the HNP.¹⁰⁴

The commission was headed by Paul Sauer, and included the moderator of the Mission Church. It conducted its work from May 1944 to March 1945, and reported on its findings during that year. It contended that, in the instances where whites and Coloureds lived, worked and voted together, tension arose that could only be relieved through the implementation of political, social and industrial apartheid. Whites were increasingly alarmed at the growing numbers of Coloured voters, and these fears were aggravated by a new trend: the ‘communist exploitation’ of enfranchised Coloureds. At the same time, the commission asserted that the Coloureds occupied a ‘middle position’ between whites and blacks, and that their privileged station had to be preserved – it was better for Coloureds to lean in the direction of whites, than towards blacks, it contended.¹⁰⁵

The commission recommended a number of measures to implement apartheid with regards to the Coloured community. In the first instance, it agitated for the establishment of a population register, which would determine a person’s race. It admitted that there were many ‘borderline cases’ in the Coloured community, but was confident that a working, although not foolproof, definition of racial classification could be formulated. This classification would be the foundation of the apartheid policy as a whole.¹⁰⁶

According to the commission, Coloureds had to be removed from the common voters’ roll in order to elect three Coloured representatives – in the same fashion that Africans elected three Native Representatives to Parliament. At a municipal level, friction in town and city councils would be eliminated by the demarcation of residential areas as either ‘white’ or ‘coloured’ – and to provide the Coloured areas with a large degree of administrative autonomy.¹⁰⁷

The commission was, ultimately, adamant that residential mixing between white and Coloured, as well as between Coloured and African, had to come to an end – although it admitted that it did not know how to implement this measure as yet. It cautioned that such a policy had to be applied carefully and incrementally. If people were moved, they had to be provided with alternative housing, and property owners had to be compensated for their losses. In allocating Coloured areas, the needs and wishes of ‘the better class of Coloured’ had to be considered.¹⁰⁸

On the social front, the commission established that mixed marriages were not a peril to the white race – these unions usually took place between whites and ‘borderline cases’. Their numbers

¹⁰⁴ DFM, 1/1/2211, “Verslag van die Kommissie Aangestel deur die HNP van Kaapland insake beleid van die Nasionale Party teenoor die Kleurlinge”, [1945], 1: ‘met die oog op hulle geluk en ontwikkeling op hulle eie aparte terrein aanbevelings te maak vir die opstelling van ‘n positiewe en opbouende kleurling-beleid vir die HNP’.

¹⁰⁵ DFM, 1/1/2211, “Verslag van die Kommissie Aangestel deur die HNP van Kaapland insake beleid van die Nasionale Party teenoor die Kleurlinge”, [1945], 2-3.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 2-4.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

and their offspring were limited. Legislation against mixed marriages would therefore do little to remedy the problem of ‘bastardisation’. Miscegenation mainly took place through extra-marital unions, and this, according to the commission, did indeed present a considerable threat. It therefore proposed that white men who engaged in such liaisons be punished severely – preferably through imprisonment. Children from such unions had to be classified as Coloured, unless the population register’s definition dictated otherwise.¹⁰⁹

The commission also advocated the improvement of the Coloured community’s social conditions. It took cognisance of the firmly entrenched class-differentiations within the community, which it believed had to be accommodated. Furthermore, it proposed the expansion of medical and welfare services, recreational facilities for the youth, holiday resorts, hotels and housing schemes. In the area of education, it recommended the establishment of a tertiary institution for Coloured students, as well as vocational training for secondary school pupils.¹¹⁰

The commission stressed the fact that its recommendations were not final and merely served as guidelines – and emphasised that the proposed measures had to be implemented gradually. Yet, it did believe that it had succeeded in providing the basis for an efficient policy: ‘Once we have found a direction and know where we are going, then the solution to the problem will be implemented systematically, and not unplanned, as it is at present,’ it concluded.¹¹¹

The report, released shortly after the war finally drew to an end, was well-received by the Nationalists, Malan included. The war’s conclusion did not fill him with optimism, however. Instead, he bemoaned the hostility which the Afrikaners had endured from their compatriots, while the Second World War had caused deep and painful divisions within Afrikanerdom – as the First World War had also done. As far as he was concerned, South Africa’s fate as a white man’s country was hanging in the balance, and the only salvation was for Afrikaners to close their ranks.¹¹²

It was in the aftermath of the war, and informed by Sauer’s report, that Malan sat down to write a manuscript which, for reasons unknown, would never be published.¹¹³ It was part-memoir, part-political tract, and it gave him the opportunity to record his worldview. It revealed that Malan still regarded the world as a battle between the forces of nationalism and imperialism. The battleground

¹⁰⁹ DFM, 1/1/2211, “Verslag van die Kommissie Aangestel deur die HNP van Kaapland insake beleid van die Nasionale Party teenoor die Kleurlinge”, [1945], 7.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7-11.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11: ‘As ons eenmaal rigting kry en weet waarheen ons gaan, dan sal die oplossing van die probleem stelselmatig en nie op die teenswoordige onbeplande manier voortgaan’.

¹¹² DFM, 1/1/2150, “Boodskap aan alle Nasionaalgesinde Afrikaners”, [n.d.] 1945.

¹¹³ The manuscript is kept in the D.F. Malan collection under the confusing title “Op die Wagtoring” – the title of Malan’s newspaper column during the Coalition and Fusion crisis – thereby creating the impression that it is a collection of Malan’s newspaper articles. This might explain why no other source has referred to the manuscript previously. The manuscript is not dated, but it is clear from its content that it was written in 1946, and possibly also in 1947. It appears to have been informed by the recommendations of the first Sauer report on the Coloured community, but not by the second report, which was published in 1947.

itself shifted along with the times – with the present battleground situated in the arena of race-relations. The imperialist forces, which usually stood in alliance with capitalism, had always used political rights for Coloureds and Africans as a weapon against the nationalist Afrikanerdom and, in so doing, had opened the door for communist agitators to instigate the removal of all colour distinctions.¹¹⁴

To Malan, this was a sacrilege, as colour distinctions were the natural, God-given order – ‘colour feelings’ were inherent, not the result of a ‘*herren-volk*’ complex which could be eradicated through education, as liberals liked to claim.¹¹⁵ ‘Differences of colour indicate a simple, but simultaneously also an extremely important fact, namely that whites and non-whites are not of the same kind. They are of a different kind,’ Malan contended.¹¹⁶

These differences, Malan argued, were instinctive – the test question, according to Malan, always remained whether a white father would be willing to give his daughter’s hand in marriage to a ‘non-white’ man. No self-respecting white man would ever answer in the affirmative, Malan asserted – and in so doing, called upon the clichéd clinching argument of many a segregationist. As far as Malan was concerned, there was nothing good to be said of miscegenation – it only created an unhappy race with no history to be proud of and who, as a rule, tended to inherit the vices of their respective ancestors, rather than the virtues. Success stories were, as far as Malan was concerned, the exception rather than the rule.¹¹⁷

Malan called on the science of his youth to substantiate his argument. He drew on Herbert Spencer, the man who coined the phrase ‘Survival of the fittest’ and whose work, along with that of Charles Darwin, informed the Social Darwinism of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁸ It was a testament to the survival of Malan’s Victorian mindset. He believed that it was a biological fact that both people and animals tended to improve their genes through mixing – as long as the differences between them were limited. If the set boundaries were crossed, however, degeneration was the result. Differentiation was a law of nature – and transgressions were censured by nature herself, Malan declared.¹¹⁹ He was not alone in employing such arguments. In the early 1940s the Dutch Reformed Church, in its tireless efforts to move the government to ban mixed marriages, presented Smuts with

¹¹⁴ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, “Waarheen gaan Suid Afrika?” (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 1-28.

¹¹⁵ This was probably a stab at J.H. Hofmeyr who, in 1946, attacked South African whites’ *Herrenvolk* mentality. See H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 449.

¹¹⁶ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, “Die Kleurvraagstuk” (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 6-7: ‘Kleur-verskil dui aan ‘n eenvoudige, maar tegelyk ‘n uiters belangrike feit, naamlik dat blankes en nie-blankes nie gelyksoortig is nie. Hulle is andersoortig’.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

¹¹⁸ See S. Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995), 120-1; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spencer/>> (Accessed: 2 October 2009).

¹¹⁹ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, “Die Kleurvraagstuk” (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 8.

a 'scientific report' which argued that the children from mixed unions displayed negative social and mental tendencies.¹²⁰

According to Malan, it was the Voortrekkers' Christianity that had prevented such mixing from taking place in South Africa. Their Christian values had also prevented them from trying to exterminate or oppress the local population – in contrast to the Australians. Instead, they practiced trusteeship which, according to Malan, not only entailed white rule, but also white protection of the Africans, which gave Africans the opportunity to develop themselves within their own Reserves.¹²¹

It was this notion of Coloured and African development, removed from white society, which formed the basis of Malan's apartheid policy. He believed that contact between the races had to be eliminated as far as possible. It was usually the poor whites who had the most interracial contact since they shared the same living and working spaces with the other races – a fact which inevitably eroded their racial pride and thereby removed the barrier between the races.¹²²

Not only was the white race threatened by the erosion of its boundaries and the agitation of communist rabble-rousers who were infiltrating the trade unions and all of the other 'non-white' organisations, but Malan was also deeply disturbed by the fact that the Smuts-government had issued Coloureds and a limited number of Africans with weapons during the war – this had fuelled demands for absolute equality and the removal of all colour bars. Apartheid was being portrayed as oppressive, even apartheid in the social sphere, Malan noted, aghast.¹²³

As far as he was concerned, South Africa had to take a definite stand on the matter. The HNP, for its part, stood by apartheid. He believed that its implementation would eradicate whites' fears of Africans – and that Africans would soon realise that they too had nothing to fear. Whites and 'non-whites' shared a fatherland, Malan declared. Each had to feel at home and had to possess both individual self-respect and nationalist pride. For the first time since the early 1920s, Malan referred to the African Reserves and the need to improve their soil capacity in order to prevent the migration of Africans to the white areas. In these areas, Africans would be able to develop their own institutions, including political structures. This would make their representatives in Parliament redundant, and they could be replaced by Coloured representatives. All 'non-white' groups however, would be represented in the Senate, Malan promised.¹²⁴

By the end of 1946, the formulation of the apartheid policy gained momentum. Following the release of Sauer's report on the Coloured community, which Malan absorbed into his manuscript, it

¹²⁰ H. Giliomee, 'The Making of the Apartheid Plan, 1929-1948', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2 (June 2003), 383.

¹²¹ DFM, 1/7/2, D.F. Malan, "Die Kleurvraagstuk" (Unpublished manuscript: Op die Wagtoring, [1946-1947]), 9-10.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 24-6.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 26-8.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 29-34.

was decided to appoint a second commission of enquiry to draft a general racial policy with regards to the African, Coloured and Indian communities respectively, and in relation to the white community. It had to take the report on the party's Coloured policy into consideration when drafting a policy based on the principle of apartheid. It was instructed to cover apartheid in the political, industrial and residential spheres, and had to be practical, 'positive and constructive as well as negative and divisionist.'¹²⁵

The idea of such an investigation was popular among Nationalists from all quarters. Strijdom wrote to Malan to express his approval of such a commission and to volunteer to testify before it. He agitated for more rigid influx control as he felt threatened by the African residential areas which could develop into African 'colonies' in the cities. These people would inevitably become 'civilised', which would threaten racial boundaries. As far as Strijdom was concerned, only male Africans ought to be allowed in the white areas, as temporary workers – the entire African population had to be moved back to the Reserves and to the farms. He agreed that Africans had to be assisted to increase the carrying capacity of the Reserves' soil, but in all other respects, Strijdom was adamant that Africans had to pay for their own development in the same manner that the white man had paid for his development. Strijdom proposed a comprehensive homeland system – based on the Transkei Bunga – and argued that Africans had to be divided according to their ethnicity, and not be united as a single race, as was the case with the Natives Representative Council.¹²⁶

These arguments – as well as the crudeness and rigidity of both Strijdom's prose and his proposals – were absent from Malan's words. Strijdom represented a northern school of thought, which was doubtlessly informed by his ties to men like Hendrik Verwoerd and M.D.C. de Wet Nel.¹²⁷ The latter would be appointed to the Sauer commission, along with a southern cleric, G.B.A. Gerdener who, as a Dutch Reformed expert on mission work, had the same intellectual background as Malan.¹²⁸ In this manner, both the southern and northern schools of thought would meet in the Sauer commission.¹²⁹

Malan, for his part, began to propagate apartheid – as he saw it – at every turn. At the University of Stellenbosch's graduation day in December 1946, he used his Chancellor's address (he had become the Chancellor of the institution in 1941) to lobby for apartheid in tertiary education, and proposed the establishment of separate universities for Africans. Apartheid under the

¹²⁵ DFM, 1/1/2212, "Opdrag van Kommissie", [1946]: 'positief en opbouend, sowel al negatief en skeidend'.

¹²⁶ DFM, 1/1/2244, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 20 November 1946.

¹²⁷ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 544.

¹²⁸ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 461, 477; H. Giliomee, 'The Making of the Apartheid Plan, 1929-1948', 382-3.

¹²⁹ For analyses and debates on the Sauer-commission, and the intellectual currents that informed the policy of apartheid, see D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); D. Posel, 'The Meaning of Apartheid Before 1948: Conflicting Interests and Forces within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (October 1987), 123-39; H. Giliomee, 'The Making of the Apartheid Plan, 1929-1948', 373-92; H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 447-86; J.P. Brits, *Op die Vooraand van Apartheid: Die Rassevraagstuk en die Blanke Politiek in Suid-Afrika, 1939-1948*.

same roof was nothing more than fencing off, he declared, but apartheid at a distance fostered friendship, since it eliminated daily friction. ‘Fencing off’ on the same university campus, however, created the notion among ‘non-whites’ that they belonged to an inferior race. In the post-war environment, where Malan was being confronted with the new principle of human rights, he declared that:

self-preservation is the first law of nature, that it applies to racial and national communities as much as it does to individuals, that it creates a *right* for each of them which they may exercise freely, in as far as it does not infringe on the equal right of the other; that the white community in South Africa instinctually and traditionally, as well as for valid reasons, places great store on their self-preservation as such; and that their safety can, apparently, only be ensured by their unhindered development on their own terrain, coupled to the appropriate consideration of the non-whites’ identical right, also to be practiced on their separate terrain.¹³⁰

Malan repeated this argument in Parliament the following year, when the legislature debated the newly established UNOs stance on South West Africa and the Indian community in South Africa – which he condemned in the most vehement of terms. He called for a joint parliamentary committee to formulate a comprehensive racial policy on the basis of apartheid – which was nothing more than politicking, as his party was already in the process of appointing such a commission. Failing to receive this support, Malan declared that he would take the policy of apartheid to the electorate.¹³¹

His appeals for apartheid were falling on fertile soil. In February 1947, a deputation from the Transvaal Dutch Reformed Church met with Malan and Smuts to lobby for the formulation of a comprehensive racial policy that would preserve the white civilisation. The church made it clear that it would not support any policy that led to the downfall or the ‘bastardisation’ of the white race.¹³²

¹³⁰ DFM, 1/1/2247, US Gradedag, 12 December 1946: ‘selfbehoud die eerste wet van die natuur is dat dit vir rasse- en volke-gemeenskappe geld net soos vir individuë, dat dit vir elkeen van hulle ‘n *reg* skep wat hul vryelik mag uitoefen mits alleen dit op die gelyke reg van andere geen inbreuk maak nie; dat die blanke gemeenskap in Suid-Afrika instinkmatig en tradisioneel sowel as om gegronde redes prys stel op hul selfbehoud as sodanig; en dat hul veiligheid klaarblyklik verseker kan word alleen langs die weg van vrye ontwikkeling op hul eie aparte terrein gepaar met die behoorlike inagneming van dieselfde reg aan die nie-blankes, uitgeoefen ook op hul eie aparte terrein’.

¹³¹ DFM, 1/1/2266, Voorstel en debat i.v.m. besluite van die V.V.O., 21 January 1947.

¹³² DFM, 1/1/2273, “Memorandum oor die Kleurvraagstuk in Suid-Afrika, met die oog op die onderhoud van die Inligtingsdienskommissie van die Sinodale Sendingkommissie van die N.H. of G. Kerk met Politieke Volksleiers te Kaapstad, 4 tot 6 Februarie 1947”.

Malan was able to tell them what they wanted to hear. He stated that diversity was part of Creation, and that it was the church that had taken the lead in practicing apartheid. His party was in the process of formulating a policy that would be fair to all the races in South Africa – and since the State refused to support them, they would present the policy at the next election.¹³³

Indeed, Malan now began to focus all of his energies on the coming polls, which would be held in 1948. Formulating a racial policy, however, was easy compared to the arduous task of holding the diverse elements in his party together. His opponents liked to play on the tensions between Malan and his Young Turks, and the Royal visit of 1947 gave them such an opportunity. Of the four newspapers under Nationalist control, only *Die Transvaler* refused to cover the event. It gave rise to speculation that there were divisions within the party – especially with regards to the questions of Malan’s successor.¹³⁴ Malan was, by this time, a man of seventy-three, and whispers about the next nationalist leader were inevitable – especially since Malan had not anointed an heir. ‘Paul,’ Malan is reported once to have said to Sauer, the agnostic lover of the vine, ‘I want to raise you for the future. But you have to drink less and you have to go to church.’¹³⁵ Sauer replied that he did not have enough ambition to warrant such a sacrifice.¹³⁶ Malan’s other apparent favourite was Eben Dönges, but Strijdom had established himself as a potent force in the party. He was a rival rather than a protégé, however, who dwarfed all other contenders. Malan clearly did not trust Strijdom, and as a result the communication between the two men left much to be desired. The election agreement of 1947 would destroy the last vestiges of trust.

In the years that followed the 1943 election, the HNP remained the only political party representing nationalist Afrikanerdom in Parliament. Yet, in the language of symbolism, Afrikanerdom remained divided as long as Havenga and the Afrikaner Party kept Hertzog’s flame alive. Malan grasped the force that reconciliation with Havenga would have. It would be seen as reuniting the nation, and it would give his party undisputable legitimacy in the Afrikaners’ eyes. To this end, Malan first approached Havenga in April 1945, stating that he was acting in his personal capacity, and asking that the two of them meet for an informal conversation. Malan could see no differences of principle between the two parties, and with the war nearing its end, was convinced that the Afrikaners had to close ranks.¹³⁷ Havenga, however, was clearly bitter after his humiliating defeat in the 1943 elections, and did not express any enthusiasm for Malan’s proposal,¹³⁸ which forced Malan to drop

¹³³ DFM, 1/1/2274, “Kort samevatting van die antwoord van Dr. D.F. Malan aan die Transvaalse Deputasie, insake rasseverhoudings, op 5 Februarie 1947”.

¹³⁴ DFM, 1/1/2280, P.W. Botha – D.F. Malan, 3 March 1947.

¹³⁵ Quoted in D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 106: ‘Paul...ek wil jou grootmaak vir die toekoms. Maar jy moet minder drink en jy moet kerk toe gaan’.

¹³⁶ D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer*, 106.

¹³⁷ DFM, 1/1/2168, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 2 April 1945.

¹³⁸ DFM, 1/1/2170, N.C. Havenga – D.F. Malan, 14 April 1945.

the idea.¹³⁹ He did not give up hope, however. The next chance came early in 1947. Malan and Havenga finally met in Eben Dönges's house in Sea Point, where they agreed that they would work together.¹⁴⁰ They announced their decision to the press in March 1947. It was based on the consensus that there was no difference between the two parties' respective policies. They would retain their separate identities and they did not demand anything from one another.¹⁴¹

There were, however, complications. Some of the Young Turks – Eric Louw and Hans Strijdom in particular – were unhappy about making any concessions to Havenga's party, especially since the Afrikaner Party was nearly non-existent and on the verge of collapse. The idea of the Afrikaner Party retaining its own identity was particularly unpalatable. They were worried that it might gain in strength, which would enable it to set its own terms within the agreement.¹⁴² To these men, any form of power-sharing necessarily implied loss of power. Most worrisome, however, was the fact that members of the OB, who were purged from Malan's HNP, had since taken refuge in Havenga's Afrikaner Party. The OB was hardly a shadow of its former self and, from a leaked report, Malan and the rest of the HNP leadership knew that the OB was not longer a credible force.¹⁴³ The Young Turks howled, however, when reports reached them that the last remaining OB members had begun to establish branches of the Afrikaner Party across the country. They regarded it as a vicious tactic to infiltrate the alliance and, in so doing, murder the HNP.¹⁴⁴ Strijdom threatened Malan with resignation – unless Havenga repudiated the OB in public.¹⁴⁵ Malan replied in biting tones that Strijdom's threat was 'premature' and merely played into the OB's hands. Malan trusted Havenga – and he would not dictate to him who would or would not be permitted as members of his party.¹⁴⁶

Although Malan rebuffed Strijdom's tactics, he did not ignore his concerns, and requested Havenga to take a stand against the OB – especially since the organisation had not ceased to attack the HNP in public.¹⁴⁷ Havenga assured Malan that he would control the OB members within his party – and that it was best not to alienate such people in an election which he and Malan hoped to win by a narrow margin.¹⁴⁸ Malan accepted his word in good faith.¹⁴⁹ He trusted Havenga – whom he had by then known for more than three decades – without any reservations, and his letters to his

¹³⁹ DFM, 1/1/2172, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 20 April 1945.

¹⁴⁰ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid*, 233.

¹⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/2283, "Verklaring", 22 March 1947.

¹⁴² Central archives repository (hereafter SAB), J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 59, E. Louw – P. Sauer, 3 November 1947.

¹⁴³ C. Marx, *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the Ossewabrandwag*, 531-2.

¹⁴⁴ DFM, 1/1/2324, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 9 September 1947.

¹⁴⁵ DFM, 1/1/2298, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 4 June 1947.

¹⁴⁶ DFM, 1/1/2299, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 5 June 1947.

¹⁴⁷ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, Volume 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 25 June 1947; SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, Volume 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 27 August 1947.

¹⁴⁸ DFM, 1/1/2302, N.C. Havenga – D.F. Malan, 10 July 1947; DFM, 1/1/2319, N.C. Havenga – D.F. Malan, 24 August 1947.

¹⁴⁹ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, Volume 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 21 July 1947.

erstwhile colleague exuded the warmth of a long-lost friend.¹⁵⁰ It was a faith that the Young Turks did not share – and which they scorned as ‘childlike’.¹⁵¹ They were angry and frustrated, as they realised that Malan was set on his course and was utterly unmovable.¹⁵²

Strijdom wrote to Malan for a second time to threaten him with resignation – although he undertook not to execute his threat until after the elections. Malan did not deign to respond.¹⁵³ Instead, he decided to appoint two of his confidantes, Paul Sauer and Albert Geyer, to the party’s Information Committee.¹⁵⁴ The committee, tasked with drafting and distributing the party’s propaganda, was Eric Louw’s creation.¹⁵⁵ It was firmly under the control of the Young Turks, since its members were Eric Louw, as the chairman, Hans Strijdom, C.R. Swart and Frans Erasmus – as Malan’s lone confidante. Malan was convinced that the committee would not promote his agreement with Havenga, and sought to balance its scales.¹⁵⁶ It was too much for the Young Turks. They could not disregard their leader’s wishes, and duly appointed Geyer and Sauer – and directly after, tendered their resignations,¹⁵⁷ which Malan accepted.¹⁵⁸

It was an anti-climax for the Young Turks. ‘It seems to me that we are powerless,’ Swart wrote to Strijdom and Louw.¹⁵⁹ They could not dare to cause any new quarrels, as the blame would automatically be theirs, and therefore: ‘In these circumstances, we are obligated to stay put and to allow matters to develop. Let the other side act first, if they want to,’ he counselled his comrades.¹⁶⁰ The provocation from the other side never came. Strijdom still ranted against Malan in private, and assured his friends that he was ‘finished’ with Malan: if Malan still continued on his ‘opportunistic’ course after the elections, he would resign – not only from the party, but from politics as well.¹⁶¹ In the meantime, however, the Nationalists continued to hide the battles behind the scenes and prepared to present a united front to the electorate.

¹⁵⁰ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A32, Vol. 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 2 April 1947.

¹⁵¹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 59, E. Louw – P. Sauer, 3 November 1947.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*; SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 47, J.G. Strijdom – E. Louw, 24 November 1947.

¹⁵³ See Strijdom’s scribbled note on his copy of the letter, SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 59, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 1947.

¹⁵⁴ DFM, 1/1/2388, E. Louw – C.R. Swart, J.G. Strijdom, F.C. Erasmus and D.F. Malan, 27 October 1947.

¹⁵⁵ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 61-3.

¹⁵⁶ DFM, 1/1/2388, E. Louw – C.R. Swart, J.G. Strijdom, F.C. Erasmus and D.F. Malan, 27 October 1947.

¹⁵⁷ DFM, 1/1/2341, E. Louw – D.F. Malan, 12 November 1947.

¹⁵⁸ DFM, 1/1/2343, D.F. Malan – E. Louw, 15 November 1947.

¹⁵⁹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 59, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom and E. Louw, 29 November 1947: ‘Dit lyk vir my ons is magteloos’.

¹⁶⁰ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 59, C.R. Swart – J.G. Strijdom and E. Louw, 29 November 1947: ‘Ons is in omstandighede verplig om maar stil te sit en sake te laat ontwikkel. Laat die ander kant eers optree, as hulle wil’.

¹⁶¹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 47, J.G. Strijdom – E. Louw, 24 November 1947.

It was thus, with his Young Turks sulking in their tent and his new ally at his side, that Malan led his party into 1948. In this poisoned atmosphere, Paul Sauer presented his report to Malan,¹⁶² which Malan accepted and incorporated into his election manifesto.¹⁶³ The report combined the various strands of apartheid thinking within the HNP. It adopted Sauer's earlier report on the Coloured community, while the policy concerning Africans reflected the North's emphasis on ethnicity, influx control and autonomous Reserves. Its Indian policy harked back to Malan's stance in the 1920s: the Indians were regarded as a foreign element, which had to be repatriated – with the financial assistance of the South African government.¹⁶⁴

Malan, for his part, was determined to make race the most prominent election point in the 1948 election.¹⁶⁵ Thus, in the opening paragraph of his election manifesto, he stated:

The question of which party ought to govern the country...is of the greatest importance. There is, however, another question which overshadows all others which therefore has to be kept in mind, above all else, by the nation which is about to determine its lot, maybe forever. It is: Where is South Africa headed? Can the white race in future maintain its dominance, its purity and its civilisation, and more importantly, does it want to, or will it continue to float, aimlessly, without direction, and for a great part even deliberately, until it finally vanishes without honour in the black sea of SA's non-white population? If it can and wants to save itself, will it do so without oppression and with consideration to the non-whites' inalienable right to a proper livelihood and their right to development in accordance to their own needs and abilities?¹⁶⁶

It was a masterly combination of fear and hope, giving South African whites the opportunity to preserve their position in a manner they believed to be honourable and magnanimous. Behind it lurked the communist threat, which Malan emphasised in the same breath as the apartheid policy. Malan was experienced enough to know that an election could not be fought on a single issue, even though it was best to let a single matter dominate. Therefore, he also attacked the Smuts-

¹⁶² For a discussions of the contradictions contained within the Sauer report, see D. Posel, "The Meaning of Apartheid Before 1948: Conflicting Interests and Forces within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance", 123-39.

¹⁶³ DFM, 1/1/2390, D.F. Malan, "Verkiesingsmanifes 1948", 20 April 1948.

¹⁶⁴ DFM, 1/1/2256, "Verslag van die Kleurvraagstuk-Kommissie van die Herenigde Nasionale Party", [1947].

¹⁶⁵ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, Volume 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 25 June 1947.

¹⁶⁶ DFM, 1/1/2390, D.F. Malan, "Verkiesingsmanifes 1948", 20 April 1948: 'Die vraag watter party die land moet regeer is...van die grootste belang. Daar is egter 'n groter vraag wat alle ander oorskadu, en wat daarom ook bokant alle ander sake, in die oog gehou moet word deur die volk wat nou sy eie lot, miskien vir altyd, gaan bepaal. Dit is: Waarheen gaan Suid-Afrika? Sal die blanke ras in die toekoms nog sy heerskappy, sy suiwerheid en sy beskawing kan, maar veral ook wil handhaaf, of sal hy willoos en koersloos, of vir 'n deel selfs doelbewus, voortdrywe totdat hy vir goed en eerloos in die swarte see van S.A. se nie-blanke bevolking sal verdwyn? As hy himself kan en wil red, sal hy dit dan kan en wil doen sonder onderdrukking en met inagneming van die nie-blankes se natuurlike reg op 'n behoorlike lewensbestaan en op hul eie ontwikkeling ooreenkomstig hul eie behoeftes en vatbaarheid?'

government's economic policies, and in their stead offered a policy that was nearly identical to the erstwhile Pact-government's recipe for success. He gave the assurance that his government would not declare a republic once in power – it would remain faithful to the constitutional route. In what could be regarded as a departure from his earlier position, Malan declared that South Africa would not remain neutral in the next war, as it was certain to be fought between communists and anti-communists. In such a battle, South Africa would cast her lot with the anti-communist forces. He also promised that his government would fulfil its obligations to ex-servicemen.¹⁶⁷

Unlike the previous election, the 1948 election was fought on the Nationalists' terms. They could play on divisions within the UP by attacking J.H. Hofmeyr's liberal racial policies, which were not shared by all of his colleagues. The population was war-weary and irritated about food shortages, and drumming on these dissatisfactions was relatively easy.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, the party machine, which had been brought into preparation and meticulously oiled throughout the decade, accelerated its pace and finally performed according to expectations. In the years since the war, the HNP had won a number of by-elections, and this momentum was carried into the general election.¹⁶⁹

It was also a sign that the tide was turning against Smuts. Malan entered into the race with the intention of winning. He believed that victory could be achieved – albeit by a narrow margin – and he would not leave anything to chance.¹⁷⁰ To the general public and to the international community, however, Smuts's position seemed to be unassailable. Smuts himself, reassured by over-confident informants, was certain of his victory. Indeed, Smuts won the popular vote. Yet, as was the case in so many previous elections, it was South Africa's constituency system that determined the final result. Only 39.85 per cent of the electorate voted for Malan, compared to the 53.49 per cent of voters who cast their ballots for Smuts and his allies. However, Malan swept the countryside, while Smuts's support was concentrated in the cities.¹⁷¹ The greatest upset was in Transvaal, where in 1943 the Nationalists had gained eleven seats. This time, their ranks were swelled to thirty-two.¹⁷²

The news of the watershed trickled in over the course of forty-eight hours, while voters huddled around their radio sets to listen to the announcement of the various constituencies' results. The urban constituencies were the first to report and, on the morning after the election, the UP appeared to be in the lead. The rural votes still had to be counted, however. In *Die Burger's* offices, where the entire staff had gathered, pandemonium erupted when, at 09:45 P.M. that evening, it was

¹⁶⁷ DFM, 1/1/2390, D.F. Malan, "Verkiesingsmanifes 1948", 20 April 1948.

¹⁶⁸ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 479-82.

¹⁶⁹ P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 520-45.

¹⁷⁰ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, Volume 27, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 27 August 1947.

¹⁷¹ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II, The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 498-505.

¹⁷² P.W. Coetzer, *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 5: Van Oorlog tot Oorwinning, 1940-1948*, 657.

announced that Smuts had lost his seat in Standerton. In Stellenbosch, where Malan and Maria sat in front of their radio, students marched to their house, singing *Laat Heer U Seën op Hom Daal* (May God's blessing descend upon him). Geyer phoned Malan to inform him that he might possibly be Prime Minister by the next day, to which Malan replied with his customary dryness: 'Oh, do you think so? If that is the case, come over to Stellenbosch tomorrow, so that we can discuss it.'¹⁷³

When the final tally became known, Malan had won 70 seats. Havenga's party gained nine seats, giving the alliance a total of 79. Smuts received 65 seats – and through his alliance with the Labour Party, another six – thus, 71. Taking the three Native Representatives into account, Malan scraped into power with a majority of five.¹⁷⁴

The narrow victory did not diminish his supporters' exuberance. As Malan and Maria boarded a train in Cape Town in order to visit the Governor-General in Pretoria, they were swamped by an emotional crowd jostling to shake Malan's hand. Malan, visibly moved, headed for the north with *Die Stem* ringing in his ears.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Quoted in D.C. de Villiers, 'Die Wonderwerk van Agt-en-veertig', in J.P. Scannel, ed., *Keeromstraat 30: Gedenkbundel vir die Vyftigste Verjaarsdag van Die Burger* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1965), 211: 'O, dink jy so? As dit dan so moet wees, ry more 'n bietjie oor Stellenbosch toe dat ons dit kan bespreek'.

¹⁷⁴ W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II, The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 505.

¹⁷⁵ E. Robins, *This Man Malan* (Cape Town: S.A. Scientific Publishing Co., 1953), 39.

Chapter 11 – The Prime Minister, 1948-1954

When D.F. Malan became Prime Minister of South Africa at the age of seventy-four, he picked up the reins in a post-war world, where the rules of international and domestic politics had begun to change. At the United Nations Organisation (UNO) his predecessor, Jan Smuts, discovered that he had been transformed from hero to villain, since the newly established state of India – backed by a growing number of emancipated colonies – attacked the treatment of Indians in South Africa, while the organisation itself demanded stricter oversight of South Africa's management of South West Africa.¹

To Malan, the talk of equality between different peoples of different colours was nothing more than a *Zeitgeist* – a man-made passing fancy. It was the spirit of such an idea that had once moved people to build the Tower of Babel in order to preserve humanity as a single nation with a single language – in defiance of the eternal God-given order of diversity. God had expressed his wish for difference and diversity by creating a planet with a diverse landscape, and for this reason he scattered the nations at the Tower of Babel.² All people were equal in God's eyes, Malan agreed, but equality before God did not imply equality before the voting booth. Apartheid acknowledged God's creation of the various nations – wiping out distinctions between them could only spell disaster.³

It was thus, as his government acknowledged its dependence upon a Higher Hand under whose sovereignty the nations shaped their destinies,⁴ that D.F. Malan issued a warning to the wider world not to interfere in South Africa's domestic affairs.⁵

Malan's first task as Prime Minister was to appoint a Cabinet. It was traditional that the Cabinet reflect the contributions made by the various provinces, and it was with this in mind that Strijdom and his allies hastened to compile a list of recommendations. The Transvaal had made the biggest contribution to the election victory, and Strijdom reasoned that it therefore ought to receive the most Cabinet seats – five at least – Verwoerd and M.D.C. de Wet Nel among them. He was severely disappointed. Malan insisted that he would be appointing the Cabinet on the basis of merit, and not on provincial representation. The principle of merit unearthed a disproportionately large number of Malan's Cape confidantes, however, Paul Sauer, Eben Dönges and Frans Erasmus among them –

¹ See W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II, The Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1942), 443-91.

² University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre, D.F. Malan collection (hereafter DFM), 1/1/2967, D.F. Malan, "Gradedag Stellenbosch", 11 December 1953.

³ DFM, 1/1/2885, D.F. Malan, "Toespraak, Stellenbosch", 5 March 1953.

⁴ DFM, 1/1/2737, D.F. Malan, "Nuwejaarsboodskap, 1952", 31 December 1951.

⁵ DFM, 1/1/2409, D.F. Malan, "Radio Toespraak", 4 June 1948.

only Strijdom and Ben Schoeman represented the Transvaal. Strijdom's fellow Young Turks, C.R. Swart and Eric Louw, were also given Cabinet seats, as well as their close ally Stephen le Roux, who had been a friend of Strijdom's since their days as university students in Stellenbosch. The provincial leader of Natal, E.G. Jansen was granted the portfolio of Native Affairs, while Klasie Havenga took his place at the Prime Minister's side as the Minister of Finance. Havenga would serve Malan with the same loyalty that he had once devoted to Hertzog. A personal friendship developed between the two men and their partnership in Cabinet evoked scenes that reminded one of Hertzog's Cabinet. Whenever a Cabinet Minister made a plea for funds, Malan would turn to Havenga to ask his opinion. Havenga held the purse strings as tightly as he did in the 1920s, and when he refused to release funds, his word was law.⁶

Strijdom's portfolio set the tongues wagging. He insisted on being given the minor position of Lands and Irrigation, arguing that, since the party's majority was so slim, he needed time for his political work – and that it was the portfolio that interested him most. In the press, however, it was regarded as a slight to give the Transvaal provincial leader such a minor position – and Strijdom did nothing to correct the impression of his ministerial martyrdom.⁷ It was Paul Sauer, however, who made the most notable sacrifice: following his appointment to the Cabinet, he finally took catechism classes in order to become a member of the Dutch Reformed Church. He did not bemoan his plight, however, as his study of the Bible gave him a new-found opportunity to draw parallels between the ways of the Pharisees and those of the United Party.⁸

Malan, Havenga and Jansen were the only members of the Cabinet who possessed any previous ministerial experience, and they had to initiate the younger members into its protocols. Malan explained that Cabinet meetings were secret and that it never voted on a matter, as the final decision always rested with the Prime Minister. Furthermore, the entire Cabinet was deemed responsible for a ministerial decision, which made it vital that ministers kept each other informed of their doings – and that they did not say anything in public that could embarrass each other or the government as a whole.⁹ During Malan's tenure, however, these protocols existed in name only. The battles that had once taken place within the party were now transferred to the Cabinet. The Young Turks – with Strijdom as their ring-leader – would not flinch from repudiating the Cabinet's decisions in Parliament and in the caucus. As a result, ministers often told caucus members what

⁶ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek* (Johannesburg: Perskor-Uitgewery, 1978), 147-8, 168-9; H.B. Thom, *D.F. Malan* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1980), 222; P. Meiring, *Ons Eerste ses Premiers: 'n Persoonlike Terugblik* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1972), 97.

⁷ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 156.

⁸ D. de Villiers and J. de Villiers, *Paul Sauer* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 106.

⁹ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 156.

their stance had been in Cabinet, while the caucus members soon took the liberty of criticising government decisions.¹⁰

Malan, for his part, appeared to remain aloof from the chaos raging beneath him. He maintained his expressionless façade when Cabinet members told him of their work, and never became involved in his ministers' duties: he seldom knew of the doings of the various departments.¹¹ It was a management style that he had maintained throughout his political career, and his tenure as prime minister would be no different. Malan would propagate the ideal of apartheid, while those below him were left to implement it.

His government did not waste any time in formulating the laws that the party had agitated for since the 1930s. Building on existing measures, both interracial marriage and intercourse was banned through the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 and the Immorality Act of 1950. Malan did not participate in the debates on either of these bills, but they carried his blessing. When the Group Areas Bill served before parliament, Malan regarded it as the fulfilment of the mission that he had once undertaken as a minister in Graaff-Reinet: it would be the end of residential mixing – and thereby, the dangers which the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts sought to address, would be eliminated.¹² All of these measures were listed in the petition which Malan's party had submitted to parliament in 1939. All that was left to complete the list was to institute political segregation by removing the Coloured vote from the common voters' roll. This would prove to be one of the greatest challenges to Malan's government. Apart from these measures, however, the implementation of apartheid was hardly systematic. The Population Registration Act, which would classify all South Africans according to race, was passed in 1950, in accordance with the first Sauer report's recommendation. It would provide the basis for the implementation of all apartheid legislation to follow – but the age of methodical social engineering would only arrive by the next decade.¹³

Malan, for his part, directed his attention to foreign matters. He held the portfolio of External Affairs – which had been held by his predecessors, Hertzog and Smuts. The administrative

¹⁰ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 180-1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 181-2; Schoeman's assertion – that Malan was mostly unaware of the workings of the various government departments – is borne out by a survey of the D.F. Malan collection. Cabinet ministers had to circulate memoranda among one another, and while Malan kept many of these, one is struck more by what is absent than by what is present. A survey of *Hansard* during the six years of Malan's premiership reveals that he participated in only two parliamentary debates that were related to apartheid legislation: the Group Areas Bill and the Separate Representation of Voters Bill. He confined himself to debates that were related to his twin portfolios as prime minister and Minister of External Affairs.

¹² *Hansard*, 31 May 1950, Cols. 7938-7946.

¹³ See D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 1-22; This study concurs with Posel's argument that the implementation of apartheid by Malan's regime was haphazard – and not, as many believe, based on a blueprint in the form of the Sauer report. It is clear that the nature and contents of the apartheid policy was related to the balance of power within the National Party. When, after Malan's retirement, the power shifted from the south to the north, the northern nationalists possessed more power than before to shape the policy according to their ideals.

head of this department, D.D. Forsyth, generally had a free hand with regards to its administration and appointments, however – Malan seemed to show no interest in these matters.¹⁴ His most significant appointment was to name his friend, Albert Geyer, as High Commissioner in London.¹⁵ Geyer would be succeeded as editor of *Die Burger* by P.A. (Phil) Weber, who kept him informed of political developments in South Africa.

Malan also despatched his ministers, Havenga, Dönges, Sauer and Louw – the latter of who had acquired extensive diplomatic experience before his entry into politics – to represent him at international conferences and at the UNO.¹⁶ Since Louis Botha's first visits to London, and Hertzog's return from the Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1931, the Nationalists harboured a fear that their Prime Ministers would be hypnotised by the English charm and would return to their country as agents of the Empire. Smuts was regarded as the most notable example of such bewitchment. During the 1930s, a congress decision was even taken to prohibit Nationalist Prime Ministers from travelling abroad, and extensive travelling would therefore have made Malan very unpopular.¹⁷ In the light of this general aversion, it is understandable why he only travelled abroad twice during his tenure.

In 1949, the British Prime Minister, Clements Attlee, arranged a Prime Ministers' conference to discuss India's request to retain her membership of the Commonwealth despite her new status as a republic.¹⁸ Malan attended this occasion where, according to the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, he made 'a really substantial contribution to its success...he came there a practically unknown quantity, but his practical and broad approach to problems which confronted us immediately established his pre-eminence.' Maria Malan also succeeded in charming those who met her – 'they were absolutely the success of the gathering.'¹⁹

¹⁴ University of Stellenbosch, J.S. Gericke Library, Document centre (hereafter US Library), P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.172, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 24 October 1953.

¹⁵ Cape archives repository (hereafter KAB), A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 12 January 1950.

¹⁶ K.J. de Beer, "Dr. D.F. Malan as Minister van Buitelandse Sake" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of the Free State, 1977), 160-7.

¹⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.125, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 March 1953.

¹⁸ DFM, 1/1/2462, C. Attlee – D.F. Malan, 2 March 1949.

¹⁹ DFM, 1/1/2480, F.H. Theron – D.D. Forsyth, 23 May 1949.



Figure 18: A bizarre moment with Mr Ernest Bevin, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs (D.F. Malan Collection)

The conference had an even greater impact on Malan, however, as India was given permission to remain within the Commonwealth. This presented new possibilities to Malan, whose republicanism had always been fluid. In a Cold War context he believed safety was not to be found in isolation, but in close association with anti-communist countries. With an increasingly hostile UNO, the protection of Britain – who had a veto-right on the Security Council – was a trump card that was not to be shunned. Thus, as the conference drew to its conclusion, Malan released a press statement that South Africa would remain within the Commonwealth as long as her sovereign rights – including her right to become a republic – were respected.²⁰ This was a departure from his wartime assertions that South Africa had to break the British connection in order to avoid foreign wars. In an even greater departure from this stance, South Africa committed an air squadron to assist the Western forces in the Korean War.²¹

Malan was motivated by the considerations of *realpolitik*. He justified his decision to Parliament by pointing to the U.S.'s position in relation to the Soviet Union. Malan regarded South Africa as a member of the Western European community, and asserted that Western Europe would be helpless without the U.S. Thus, if the U.S. declared that China was an aggressor, then South Africa had to support her. To observers, it was a surreal moment. Suppose it was ten years ago, and suppose it was England instead of the U.S., and Smuts instead of Malan – Phil Weber wrote to

²⁰ DFM, 1/1/2476, "Statement by the South African Prime Minister", 29 April 1949.

²¹ K.J. de Beer, "Dr. D.F. Malan as Minister van Buitelandse Sake" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of the Free State, 1977), 542-7.

Geyer – the Nationalists certainly would have howled that England was holding South Africa on a leash.²²

Malan, on the other hand, believed that participation in the Korean War increased South Africa's moral power in the UNO. The UNO's attacks on South Africa, concerning its Indian population and the administration of South West Africa, continued unabated during his premiership. Malan was angered by what he considered to be ill-informed criticism, and illegal meddling in South Africa's domestic affairs, by an organisation that he was convinced only cared about people of colour and was therefore intent on ramming racial equality down the throats of Africa's whites.²³ He dismissed the UNO as an impotent body on numerous occasions,²⁴ and snubbed its efforts to bring South Africa to book. As far as Malan was concerned, it could hardly impose sanctions on South Africa after her contribution to the Korean War. Only the Security Council could make such a decision, which would force England to choose between the UNO and the Commonwealth.²⁵ Thus, to Malan, association with England not only spelled a valuable economic partnership, but also protection from economic sanctions.

There were causes for concern, however. Malan feared that the process of decolonisation could grant Commonwealth membership to more Asian countries – and even to African countries such as the Gold Coast, where full democratic elections were held early in 1951. Not only would this threaten his international sanctuary where member states assiduously refrained from commenting on one another's domestic affairs, but African independence would also spell the end of Western civilisation in Africa. Malan did not doubt for a moment that democracy in West Africa would fail – as far as he was concerned, the democratic principle was virtuous in itself, but was being erroneously applied to populations of which the vast majority were still illiterate. The process was also irreversible, Malan declared. It was easier to grant rights than it was to retract them.²⁶

When Britain declared that it would welcome its former colonies as members of the Commonwealth, Malan lashed out by pointing to the fact that the Commonwealth was a free association of equal members: Britain could not simply admit new states without consulting the other members. Malan argued that the association was based on its members' common interests, but that these would be diminished by the admittance of diverse members with divergent interests, especially at a time when the organisation was already under strain due to India's exploitation of the

²² US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.38, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 28 January 1951.

²³ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 22 September 1950.

²⁴ DFM, 1/1/2529, D.F. Malan, "Nuwejaarsboodskap", 31 December 1949; DFM, 1/1/2863, D.F. Malan, "Nuwejaarsboodskap", 31 December 1952.

²⁵ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 22 September 1950.

²⁶ DFM, 1/1/2614, "Onderhoud met Die Burger", [n.d.] February 1951; DFM, 1/1/2617, D.F. Malan, "Dinner to Gordon-Walker, Min. of Commonwealth Relations, Kelvin Grove, Feb. 9th 1951."

UNO to attack its fellow-Commonwealth state, South Africa. As far as Malan was concerned, the Commonwealth's salvation – and that of South Africa – lay in the consolidation of its white ranks.²⁷

Malan's words caused a stir in Britain – to which he paid little heed.²⁸ His concerns about the preservation of South Africa's Commonwealth membership brought about a backlash from within his own ranks, however. When Malan reported to Parliament that the 1949 Prime Ministers' conference had, with his support, made it possible for a republic to remain a member of the organisation, he declared that both sides of the House, whether or not they felt loyalty to the Crown, could agree that they wanted to remain members of the Commonwealth as long as there was no infringement of South Africa's sovereignty. In a move that shattered Cabinet's protocol, Strijdom rose to deliver a speech in which he repudiated Malan by citing the party's programme of principles, which stated that it would endeavour to establish a republic outside the British Empire. The Empire, according to Strijdom, necessarily implied the Commonwealth. Once the debate had ended, Strijdom began telling his friends that he would resign if the party accepted Malan's new position – but by this time his threats of resignation were not taken seriously. The situation was defused in the caucus, but the antipathy between Malan and Strijdom was growing.²⁹

By January 1950, communication between the two men had deteriorated to the point where Strijdom wrote to Malan complaining that he had to learn of Cabinet decisions in the newspapers. All of his complaints were related to Malan, Erasmus and Sauer's departments. Moreover, he was upset that Malan, in spite of their altercation in Parliament, continued to propagate membership of the Commonwealth. In a veiled threat, Strijdom asked Malan to stop his propaganda – or it might lead to more clashes and 'serious consequences'.³⁰ Malan was extremely upset that Strijdom chose to write to him while their ministerial residences were only situated a few hundred paces from each other,³¹ and his reply conveyed this disappointment. Instead of trying to defend himself, or inviting Strijdom to an interview, Malan informed Strijdom that he could present his grievances to the Cabinet or the caucus. It only ignited Strijdom's easily inflamed temper. On the back of the letter, he scribbled:

²⁷ DFM, 1/1/2614, "Onderhoud met Die Burger", [n.d.] February 1951; DFM, 1/1/2617, D.F. Malan, "Dinner to Gordon-Walker, Min. of Commonwealth Relations, Kelvin Grove, Feb. 9th 1951."

²⁸ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 26 March 1951.

²⁹ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 163-6; Schoeman's account of the events conflates two separate clashes between Malan and Strijdom about the matter of the Commonwealth – the first clash took place in 1949, the second in 1951.

³⁰ DFM, 1/1/2543, J.G. Strijdom – D.F. Malan, 10 January 1950.

³¹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.53, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 April 1951.

He is definitely looking for trouble from his side...From my side, while I am not willing to abandon our Party's Republican ideal, but with a view to Dr Malan's advanced age – I would not like to have a row or a clash with him, unless he forces the position, I will let the matter rest, unless he makes a similar statement which obligates me to repudiate him.³²

Malan, for his part, was also growing agitated. It is a common affliction among Prime Ministers that they suspect their Cabinet colleagues of plotting against them, and Malan was no exception. By 1951, there were rumours that a secret republican organisation had been established within the party's ranks with the express aim of undermining him. It was called the Republikeinse Stewersbond (RSB) and was driven from the Transvaal. Its alleged leader was Hendrik Verwoerd, who Malan had finally appointed to Cabinet at the end of 1950. Malan called Verwoerd into his office to interrogate him about the organisation, but Verwoerd denied all knowledge of such a body. Malan's suspicions were not quelled, however, and his thoughts began to focus on defeating his unseen enemies.³³

At a festival in Stellenbosch, Malan delivered a speech in which he – pointing to the experience of 1941 when the HNP was assailed by the New Order and the OB – warned against the formation of groups within the party's ranks. Strijdom responded with a speech in which he labelled the abandonment of the republican ideal as 'soulless'.³⁴ This prompted Malan to insist that the caucus hammer out the republican issue in order that it could be laid to rest.³⁵ This paved the way for open clashes in the caucus, in which Malan argued for adaptation in the light of changing circumstances while Strijdom held fast to a fundamentalist interpretation of the party's constitution.³⁶

To observers, it was clear that the clash between the two men was, in reality, a clash about the future leadership in the party.³⁷ By this time, Strijdom's stature in the caucus had reached the point where even some of the prominent Cape Nationalists had resigned themselves to the fact that he would succeed Malan. Malan, however, did not feel that he could entrust the party's future to

³² Central archives repository (hereafter SAB), J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 53, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 11 January 1951: 'Hy soek van sy kant duidelik moeilikheid...Ek van my kant, terwyl ek nie bereid is om van ons Party se Republikeinse doelstelling af te sien nie, sou met die oog op Dr. Malan se hoë ouderdom – geen rusie of botsing met hom wil hê nie, en tensy hy dus die posisie forseer, sou ek dit wel laat berus met die hoop dat hy my nie deur verder dergelik verklaring sal verplig om sy optrede te repudieer nie.'

³³ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.53, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 April 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.56, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 May 1951.

³⁴ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.43, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 March 1951.

³⁵ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.49/1, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 20 March 1951.

³⁶ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 53, Notes by J.G. Strijdom, "Koukusvergadering", 13 March 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.48/2, Notes by P.A. Weber, 13 March 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.49/2, Notes by P.A. Weber, 20 March 1951.

³⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.51, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 2 April 1951.

Strijdom³⁸ – Strijdom lacked vision, he complained to confidantes.³⁹ Malan’s lack of trust in the party’s crown prince was coupled with the realisation that his time to retire was growing nearer. His mind was still clear, and he became upset when his followers tried to scrutinise his health, but the reality was that he was nearing his eightieth year. His body was becoming frail, his immune system was fortified by regular injections, and a countless number of pills treated a range of ailments.⁴⁰

Smuts had once been preoccupied with Hertzog’s humiliating demise, and the necessity of making a graceful exit now became Malan’s concern as well. He mulled over an exchange between himself and Smuts in one of Parliament’s lobbies shortly after Hertzog’s death. It is a pity that Hertzog did not retire five years earlier, Smuts had remarked to Malan – it would have spared him the humiliation. Malan responded with the tale of old Mr Joubert, who was once the minister of Paarl’s Dutch Reformed Church. He was adored by his congregants and when he announced his retirement, they begged him to stay. He refused, as he might reach an age where he could not and would not retire, and his congregation would then be saddled with him. ‘And this, *oom* Jannie,’ Malan said to Smuts, ‘is a lesson to you and to me.’⁴¹ Smuts himself did not retire when he wanted to, because his followers begged him to stay longer,⁴² and Malan was convinced that it was a mistake on Smuts’s part. Now he found himself surrounded by a group of younger men who insisted that he stay with them.⁴³ His inner circle knew that their fortunes were tied to his and that, under Strijdom, they would not occupy the position in the party they once did.⁴⁴

Yet, it was not only his fears of leaving his party to a man who he resented that caused Malan distress. He was also angry at the way that he was being prodded and forced to adopt a particular stance by the same men who had caused Hertzog’s humiliation ten years before. Malan was convinced that, given more time, Hertzog would have adopted their stance on the republican issue, but some thought it best to light a fire under him by organising a large republican gathering. This time round, they had decided to do the same to Malan by organising an underground movement against him – but he would not allow them to force him down the same path as Hertzog.⁴⁵ Malan persisted in forcing the republican issue through the caucus, and refused to be

³⁸ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.49/1, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 23 March 1951.

³⁹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.43, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 March 1951.

⁴⁰ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.35, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 14 January 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.58/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 27 May 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.125, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 March 1953.

⁴¹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.56, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 May 1951: “‘En dit, oom Jannie,’... ‘is ‘n les vir jou en vir my.’” Despite the fact that they had known each other since boyhood, and that there was merely a four year age difference between them, Malan addressed Smuts as ‘Oom Jannie’, a familiar yet respectful form of address which means ‘Uncle’. Smuts, in turn, called Malan ‘Danie’. See G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag* (Cape Town: Malherbe, 1965), 33.

⁴² W.K. Hancock, *Smuts II, The Fields of Force, 1919-1950*, 507.

⁴³ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.56, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 May 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.57/2, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 21 May 1951.

⁴⁴ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954.

⁴⁵ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.56, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 May 1951.

deterred: it was Strijdom who had to give way.⁴⁶ The caucus issued a statement that the party would continue to adhere to the republican ideal, but that the watershed of 1949 made the republic and Commonwealth membership two separate issues which could be dealt with at the appointed time, and that the decision would be determined by future circumstances.⁴⁷ Peace was restored, but the party was polarised.

While the battles in the party and the international arena raged, Malan's home became his sanctuary. Maria knew all that went on in the Cabinet and caucus, and he could discuss his concerns with her. She was usually present when he gave private interviews, and was at his side whenever he appeared in public.⁴⁸ Yet, after years of marriage and raising her stepchildren, Maria's inability to have a child of her own was a source of immense anguish. She had suffered more than one miscarriage, which placed an even greater strain on her relationship with Danie and Hannes, who were by now university students.⁴⁹

Thus, when Malan was approached in the aftermath of the Second World War to act as a patron to an organisation aimed at facilitating the adoption of German war orphans by Afrikaner families,⁵⁰ it presented an opportunity to fill this void. In September 1947 Malan wrote to the organisation to express his interest in adopting a child.⁵¹ It went without saying that the application of a person of his stature would be successful, since such a high-profile adoption would advance the organisation's cause.⁵² To Maria, however, symbolic gestures were far removed from her mind. She was so anxious to be a mother that, as soon as the orphans arrived in Cape Town in September 1948, she was at the centre where the orphans were housed in order to be the first to choose a child. It was a small four-year-old girl who caught her attention. To Maria, it felt as if she gave 'spiritual birth' to the child. To the little girl, however, the experience was traumatic – especially as she was separated from her younger brother.⁵³

Marietjie, as she would be called, would soon wrap her new father around her little finger. Members of the press, accustomed to running into a brick wall when they attempted to interview him, witnessed Malan's stern features softening when Marietjie appeared. She was the only person who was able to circumvent Maria's strict rule that Malan was not to be disturbed when he was

⁴⁶ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.57/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 15 May 1951.

⁴⁷ DFM, 1/1/2651, "Koukus-besluit", 8 May 1951.

⁴⁸ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 33; B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 181, 183; *Die Brandwag*, 24 July 1953.

⁴⁹ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.K.M.13 (17), Danie Malan – H.B. Thom, 6 August, 1979.

⁵⁰ R. Slater, "Die Maatskappy vir Europese Immigrasie: A Study of the Cultural Assimilation and Naturalisation of European Immigrants to South Africa, 1949-1994" (Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, 2005), 33.

⁵¹ DFM, 1/1/2332a, J. Combrink – D.F. Malan, 9 October 1947.

⁵² W. van der Merwe, *Vir 'n 'Blanke Volk': Die Verhaal van die Duitse Weeskinders van 1948* (Johannesburg: Perskor-Uitgewery, 1988), 84.

⁵³ US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.K.M.13 (17), Danie Malan – H.B. Thom, 6 August, 1979.

working in his study. When she arrived, his work was pushed aside and even visitors had to wait while he listened attentively to the tales she told him.⁵⁴ A visitor was astonished at the scene of Malan chasing Marietjie around Groote Schuur's large dining room table.⁵⁵ Malan was highly amused by her witticisms. When he asked her who the head of the house was, her prompt answer was that it was *Mamma* (Mommy). When he asked her how she knew, she replied 'Mommy makes arrangement without Daddy knowing about it.'⁵⁶

Yet, while Malan strolled with his daughter through the gardens of their official residences and told her of fairies and elves hiding beneath the plants,⁵⁷ there were other forces in the country that began to stir.



**Figure 19: Marietjie and Malan at play
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

The Defiance Campaign was launched in April 1952 and continued throughout the months that followed. Non-white political organisations orchestrated a campaign of civil disobedience, whereby

⁵⁴ G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 50-1.

⁵⁵ R. van Reenen, 'As Doktor by die huis kom!', *Deus Arx Mea*, 14, 25 (October 2003), 10-11.

⁵⁶ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 22 September 1950: 'Mamma tref reëlings sonder dat Pappa daarvan weet.'

⁵⁷ R. van Reenen, 'As Doktor by die huis kom!', *Deus Arx Mea*, 10-11.

they invited arrest.⁵⁸ At times it became violent, and the murder and torching of a nun in East London – which the Nationalists deemed to be an act of barbarism – sent chills down the spines of some of Malan’s confidantes. They refused to believe that the disturbances were caused by the apartheid policy – it had to be the result of a new anti-white *Zeitgeist* that was being fed from the outside by the UNO, the Gold Coast, Kenya, the Communists and India. Inside the country, the Torch Commando had to carry the blame for stirring such hatred.⁵⁹ Malan – who held firmly to his conviction that Africans were still primitive beings⁶⁰ – announced that order had to be restored and the guilty be punished before the need for an investigation could be assessed.⁶¹ He was convinced that any form of unrest was due to orchestrated communist subversion, which was directed from Moscow. In a Cold War world, where the West was terrified of Soviet power and infiltration, such a notion did not seem far fetched and gave credence to the Suppression of Communism Act, which C.R. Swart had introduced in 1950, at a time when Senator Joseph McCarthy was sowing the seeds of suspicion in the United States and when British politicians were being scrutinised for possible communist sympathies.⁶² Malan’s resolve had a calming effect on his followers but in private, Phil Weber was also disturbed by the violent methods used by the police to suppress the uprising, and was concerned that the problem was far greater than any of them realised.⁶³

As editor of *Die Burger*, Weber enjoyed the same privileges as his predecessor, Albert Geyer. He was also allowed to attend caucus meetings, and became a member of Malan’s inner circle. Like Geyer before him, Weber was in a position to speak his mind more freely than a member of the party organisation. He witnessed an accelerated process of industrialisation under the Nationalist government, which created a glaring contradiction to its apartheid policy: African urbanisation was on the increase, not the reverse.⁶⁴ There seemed to be little clarity about the policy – he and outside observers knew it. After an informal meeting with two diplomats – who cross-examined him about the apartheid policy, and forced him to admit that the government was torpedoing its apartheid policy through its industrial expansion – Weber was rather glum. ‘We are,

⁵⁸ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 386-7.

⁵⁹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.111/2a, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 16 November 1952; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.112/2a, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 26 November 1952.

⁶⁰ DFM, 1/1/2824, “Radio Talk by the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, Dr. The Honourable D.F. Malan”, [n.d.] September 1952.

⁶¹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.111/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 16 November 1952.

⁶² *Hansard*, 26 May 1952, Cols. 6974-6983.

⁶³ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.111/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 16 November 1952. Documents relating to the Defiance Campaign are glaringly absent from the D.F. Malan collection, which casts doubt about the impact of the campaign at Prime Ministerial level. The Minister responsible for dealing with the uprising was the Minister of Justice, C.R. Swart.

⁶⁴ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.111/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 16 November 1952.

after all, busy with an experiment, and we do not know ourselves what the end is going to be,' he lamented to Geyer.⁶⁵

In the aftermath of the Defiance Campaign, Weber was convinced that he had to speak to Malan about his doubts:

I want to tell him things that he might not hear from others, the first being that a natives' policy can only succeed if a large portion of the natives accept and support it. You cannot govern nine million people against the will of the greater part. We have not reached such a point yet, but if we do not seek and obtain the natives' cooperation and good will, we are headed for trouble. Furthermore, we need to obtain some clarity about what is possible with apartheid. We say that economic integration is fatal, but under this administration, economic integration is assuming even larger proportions. If it continues like this, we will have to face the fact that you cannot make a distinction on the basis of a man's colour forever. You cannot give the natives education, good employment and a high standard of living, and then say that they cannot become citizens of this country due to the colour of their skin. If apartheid is our policy, we will have to do more than just trying to halt the stream to the cities.⁶⁶

Geyer agreed. He would not dare to say it in public, but he was concerned that 'our people regard Apartheid far too much as a question of protecting their interests, without being willing to pay anything for that protection.'⁶⁷ Geyer was convinced that apartheid had to lead to separate development; otherwise it would be a sham. He doubted whether the Nationalists truly accepted this aspect of the policy.⁶⁸ Weber visited Pretoria at the end of November 1952, hoping to share his concerns with Malan. His interview with Malan lasted for half an hour – as Malan had other appointments waiting. True to his nature, Malan did not react to Weber's words, and instead gazed at him with an expressionless face while he listened. Weber felt disconcerted by Malan's stare, and

⁶⁵ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.40, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 3 February 1951: 'Ons is trouens besig met 'n proefneming, en ons weet self nie wat die einde daarvan gaan wees nie.'

⁶⁶ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.111/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 16 November 1952: 'Ek wil hom dinge sê wat hy miskien nie van ander hoor nie, en die eerste is dat 'n naturellebeleid alleen kan slaag as 'n groot deel van die naturelle self dit steun en aanvaar. Jy kan nie nege miljoen mense regeer teen die sin en wil van die grootste deel van hulle nie. Ons het nie daardie toestand bereik nie, maar as ons nie die samewerking en welwillendheid van die naturelle soek en kry nie, dan stuur ons op moeilikheid af. Verder moet ons helderheid kry oor wat moontlik is met apartheid. Ons sê ekonomiese integrasie is noodlottig, maar onder hierdie bewind neem ekonomiese integrasie al hoe groter afmetings aan. As dit so voortgaan moet ons die feit onder die oë sien dat jy nie skeiding vir al tyd kan maak slegs op grond van 'n man se kleur nie. Jy kan nie naturelle geleerdheid, goeie werk en 'n hoë lewenstandaard gee en dan sê dat die kleur van hul vel maak dat hulle nie burgers van die land kan word nie. As apartheid ons beleid is, moet ons meer doen as om die stroom na die stede te probeer stuit.'

⁶⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.112/1, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 21 November 1952: 'ons mense beskou Apartheid veels te veel as net 'n kwessie van hul belange te beskerm sonder om enigiets vir daardie beskerming te wil betaal.'

⁶⁸ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.177, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 15 November 1953.

found himself jumping from one argument to the next. He left the interview without knowing what Malan thought of the matter.⁶⁹ His conversations with other Cabinet Ministers did not improve his concern that the government had no coherent stance:

The man who, in my opinion, thinks the most soberly about racial matters is Ben Schoeman. He is lucid and he does not bluff himself...I spoke to Verwoerd for an hour and a half, or rather, he spoke to me. His paper-policy is excellent, and the man is earnest, and I told him that I would use all of the support at my command in the service of his policy. But it is a policy on paper and it has not yet been accepted in the sense that the entire Cabinet is helping to implement it...Strijdom is different to Doctor [Malan] or Verwoerd. He is unflinchingly logical. He also wants to go backwards. We cannot afford £7 million for native education and the amount has to be cut. He also wants to decrease other services.⁷⁰

Malan, for his part, never shed his vagueness. None of his speeches contained any references to the practical application of the apartheid policy. Citing his government's expenditure on Africans satisfied him that it was applied well, and with benevolence. In a 1952 radio broadcast, Malan informed the American public that the South African government had spent £23 million on services to Africans during the previous year – of which £21 million had been supplied by white tax payers.⁷¹ Eighteen months later, in reply to a letter from an American cleric, Malan wrote that:

Since 1947/48 the Government has increased its expenditure on non-White education from £3,665,600 to an estimated £8,190,000 for the financial year 1953/4. Today nearly 800,000 Bantu children are given their schooling free of charge...It is computed that every European taxpayer "carries" more than four non-Whites in order to provide the latter with the essential services involving education, hospitalization, housing, etc.⁷²

⁶⁹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.112/2a, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 26 November 1952; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.113, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 4 December 1952.

⁷⁰ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.112/2a, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 26 November 1952: 'Die man wat volgens my mening die nugterste oor kleursake dink, is Ben Schoeman. Hy is helder en bluf homself nie...Ek het ander half uur met Verwoerd gesels, of liever hy met my. Sy papierbeleid is uitstekend, en die man bedoel dit eerlik, en ek het hom gesê dat ek alle steun waaroor ek beskik, in diens van daardie beleid sal stel. Maar dit is 'n papierbeleid van hom wat nog nie aanvaar is in die sin dat die hele Kabinet help met die uitvoering daarvan nie...Strijdom is anders as Doktor of Verwoerd. Hy is onverbiddelik logies. Hy wil ook agteruit. Ons kan nie £7 miljoen vir natuurlike-onderwys bekostig nie, en die bedrag moet verminder word. Hy wil ook ander dienste verminder.'

⁷¹ DFM, 1/1/2824, "Radio Talk by the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, Dr. The Honourable D.F. Malan", [n.d.] September 1952.

⁷² DFM, 1/1/3000, D.F. Malan – J. Piersma, 12 February 1954.

Malan continued to cite figures: £3.5 million had been set aside during the previous year to improve farming conditions in the Reserves; another £2 million went into old-age pensions. Extensive loans were granted for housing, while medical treatment was also provided to Africans – mostly free of charge.⁷³ If Africans were children, then Malan believed that he as a father was providing for them. He did not investigate the infrastructure that provided these services.

Even though Malan did not show a visible reaction when Weber raised his concerns, he agreed that the inevitable process of economic integration made the idea of Total Apartheid impractical. When G.B.A. Gerdener – who had served on the Sauer commission – organised a clerical conference in 1950 which called on the government to set up fully independent African homelands and to remove Africans from ‘white industrial life’, Malan rejected the notion as unworkable.⁷⁴ As far as Malan was concerned, the idea of independent homelands was an unrealistic theory hatched by two Stellenbosch academics, A.C. Cilliers and Piet Schoeman, in the comfort of their studies.⁷⁵ He did, however, consider the Reserves to be the Africans’ natural home, and when the Reserves in South West Africa were taken into consideration, it meant that Africans occupied an area larger than Central Europe. Without considering the fact that large Reserves in the sparsely populated South West Africa could not be used to justify the conditions of overcrowded areas such as the Transkei, Malan assured the white electorate that the Africans had ample land, and that there were no grounds for considering the distribution of land in South Africa to be unjust. He also insisted that the Voortrekkers had occupied an empty land, and that the rest of their land had been obtained through negotiated treaties. Since Malan believed that whites had arrived in South Africa at the same time as Africans, he was convinced that they had as much claim to South Africa’s land as did the African population.⁷⁶

While Malan thought of Africans as the residents of the Reserves, he also regarded them as permanent inhabitants of the country – and even contemplated the idea that they could be regarded as members of a broad South African nation. In his first election speech of the 1953 campaign, Malan expressed the hope that national unity would be achieved, and cited the principle that was once common currency during the Fusion crisis – those who belonged together by virtue of their inner convictions had to stand together:

Despite some discouraging phenomena, I believe that national unity, as it should be understood – which includes the great majority of the two white language groups and a sizeable part of the non-white population – is coming soon, and that one of the greatest

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 484.

⁷⁵ Institute for Contemporary History archives (hereafter INCH), Sound Archive, PV 193, tape 122, “Interview: Danie Malan, Cape Town”, 8 June 1977.

⁷⁶ DFM, 1/1/2885, D.F. Malan, “Toespraak, Stellenbosch”, 5 March 1953.

contributions would be made by the implementation of a courageous and fair policy of apartheid.⁷⁷

Weber pointed out to him that it would earn him Strijdom's chagrin, as Strijdom believed that the South African nation consisted only of whites. It could give the Opposition a golden opportunity to exploit the differences between them, 'but Doctor brushed the objection aside – or should I say that Mrs Malan did?'⁷⁸

In all the talk of apartheid, the position of Coloured people remained an unresolved issue. 'You know, Coloured-apartheid perplexes me,' Geyer wrote to Weber. 'In theory, at least, Apartheid between white and black is logical, but the Coloureds will always be among the whites. How should it ultimately be?' he wondered.⁷⁹ Malan and his government did not seem able to provide an answer. Instead, they were set on carrying out an undertaking they had made in the 1930s: to remove Coloured voters from the Cape's voting roll. The matter would not be tackled before 1951. Havenga objected to the removal of the Coloured franchise and Malan, who regarded the political unity of Afrikanerdom as a more important priority, did not force the matter until they were able to reach an agreement in late 1950.⁸⁰ This agreement ultimately facilitated the amalgamation of their two parties, which took place during the second half of 1951. At last, Malan's party could drop the cumbersome name of Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty (HNP), and become the Nasionale Party (NP) again⁸¹ – and to Malan's elation and relief, the Young Turks did nothing to disrupt the process. Havenga was elected as Natal's provincial leader, granting him a senior position within the party.⁸²

The mission of implementing Malan and Havenga's agreement – which stipulated that Coloureds would be placed on a separate voters' roll and be given four white representatives in Parliament, one in the Senate and two in the Cape Provincial Council⁸³ – was given to the Minister of the Interior, Eben Dönges. Dönges was one of Malan's confidantes, but he was not well-liked by the other members of the inner circle, who believed that he was egotistical and 'too clever' – a man

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Ek glo dat ten spyte van sommige ontmoedigende verskynsels volkseenheid, soos dit verstaan moet word, insluitende die groot meerderheid van die twee blanke taalgroepe en ook 'n nie onaansienlike deel van die nie-blanke bevolking, vinnig aan die kom is, en dat een van die vernaamste bydraes daartoe juis die deurvoering van 'n moedige en regverdigde apartheidsbeleid sal wees.'

⁷⁸ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.125, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 March 1953: 'maar Doktor het die beswaar opsy geveeg – of moet ek sê mev. Malan het dit gedoen?'

⁷⁹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.113, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 4 December 1952: 'Jy weet, die kleurling-apartheid gee my hoofbrekens. In teorie, altans, is Apartheid tussen swart en wit logies, maar die kleurlinge sal altyd tussen die blankes wees. Hoe moet dit uiteindelik wees?'

⁸⁰ DFM, 1/1/2526, D.F. Malan and N.C. Havenga, "Verklaring", 12 December 1949; DFM, 1/1/2581, D.F. Malan and N.C. Havenga, "Verklaring", 13 October 1950.

⁸¹ DFM, 1/1/2674, D.F. Malan and N.C. Havenga, "Verklaring", 1 August 1951.

⁸² KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 1, D.F. Malan – A.L. Geyer, 8 November 1951.

⁸³ DFM, 1/1/2581, D.F. Malan and N.C. Havenga, "Verklaring", 13 October 1950.

who was happiest when he had an argument to present, regardless of whether or not it was flawed, and who could not be counted on to be straightforward: Dönges always gave the impression that he was keeping some of his thoughts to himself, which led the others to distrust him.⁸⁴ By assigning Dönges to the task of circumventing the entrenched clause in the South Africa Act that guaranteed Coloureds' voting rights, Malan unwittingly signed both the endeavour and Dönges's political death warrant. Dönges's position in the party was severely damaged by the constitutional disaster that followed.⁸⁵

According to a decision by the Appeal Court in 1937, the Statute of Westminster had made the Union Parliament a sovereign body. The government therefore accepted its legal advisers' arguments that the entrenched clauses in the constitution no longer required a two-thirds majority in order to be amended. The Separate Representation of Voters Bill was passed by Parliament during its 1951 session, but its validity was contested by a group of Coloured voters.⁸⁶ Upon discussing the sympathies of the various Appeal Court judges, some of the Nationalists came to the conclusion that the law would be declared invalid.⁸⁷ When, indeed, this verdict was handed down against the government, chaos ensued within the Nationalists' ranks. It was no longer only the matter of the Coloured franchise that concerned them: they were convinced that the sovereignty of Parliament, which had been an article of faith for two decades, had been destroyed. Malan issued a statement that the matter could not be left there – Parliament's sovereignty has to be restored beyond any doubts.⁸⁸

When Dönges, who had practiced law for many years and who was regarded as a legal expert, presented his scheme of creating a High Court of Parliament – which would function like the British Privy Council – to Cabinet, some of the ministers expressed their doubts. Some of them had been warned by a prominent judge that the Appeal Court would invalidate the High Court of Parliament as well – the only way to pass the bill was by enlarging the Senate. Such a step was considered too drastic and audacious, however, and the Cabinet gave in to Dönges's arguments. The High Court of Parliament was duly constituted, and overturned the Appeal Court's decision. As expected, the Appeal Court declared the High Court of Parliament invalid.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.48/1, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 20 March 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.51, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 2 April 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.54, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 15 April 1951.

⁸⁵ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.152, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 19 July 1953.

⁸⁶ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 379-80.

⁸⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.61, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 26 October 1951.

⁸⁸ DFM, 1/1/2764, D.F. Malan, "Verklaring", 20 March 1952.

⁸⁹ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 188-90.

From London, Geyer wrote to Malan that the constitutional wrangling in South Africa had destroyed all of the work he had accomplished during the past two years. He implored Malan to accept the Court's decision and to present the matter to the electorate instead.⁹⁰

Malan heeded his advice. When the 1953 election arrived, Malan fought it on three planks: apartheid, the communist menace and the Appeal Court decision. He assured the electorate that Coloured people were not being deprived of their voting rights – the manner in which they were exercised was merely being amended. He argued that the Appeal Court's decision had not only endangered Parliament's sovereignty, but that it had also cast a shadow on other laws affecting the Coloured franchise: Parliament's earlier decisions – which were passed by a simple majority and which granted voting rights to white women and eliminated franchise qualifications for white men – could also be declared invalid, as they had diluted the Coloured vote. Even the Group Areas Act, which confined Coloured voters to certain constituencies, could be declared unconstitutional. In the light of the threat to Parliament, as well as the Communist and Liberal perils that had led to bloodshed in Kenya and South Africa, Malan implored the electorate to provide his government with a two-thirds majority in order to execute the mandate that had been entrusted to it. He reassured them that apartheid was morally justifiable, and that there was no difference between apartheid and segregation. According to Malan, apartheid was nothing new; it was merely a word which attempted to eliminate the negative connotations that had become associated with 'segregation'. Finally, Malan asked the nation to trust him and his government, and to affirm the mandate they had been given in 1948.⁹¹

The electorate's response was overwhelming. This time, there could be no ambiguity about the Nationalists' position. Malan achieved a majority, and held thirty seats over his opposition, which fought the election as the United Front.⁹² His journey from Cape Town to Pretoria was, once again, a triumphal march, with crowds gathered at stations along the route to sing to him as his train passed by, and culminated in an enormous gathering at Pretoria's Church Square.⁹³ Malan was thirteen seats short of a two-thirds majority, but he was confident that he could appeal to individual members of the deeply divided opposition to support the government in restoring Parliament's sovereignty and removing the Coloureds from the voters' roll.⁹⁴

When Parliament reconvened in July 1953, the Separate Representation of Voters Bill was served again, but the government failed to receive a two-thirds majority. In response, C.R. Swart

⁹⁰ DFM, 1/1/2779, A.L. Geyer – D.F. Malan, 6 April 1952; DFM, 1/1/2823, A.L. Geyer – D.F. Malan, 29 August 1952.

⁹¹ DFM, 1/1/2885, D.F. Malan, "Toespraak, Stellenbosch", 5 March 1953.

⁹² B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 194.

⁹³ J.J. van Rooyen, 'Segereis van Dr. Malan', in J.P. Scannel, *Keeromstraat 30: Gedenkbundel vir die Vyftigste Verjaardag van Die Burger* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1965), 221-30.

⁹⁴ DFM, 1/1/2903, D.F. Malan, "Na-eleksie verklaring", 17 April 1953.

introduced an Appellate Division Quorum Bill, which would divide the Appeal Court into constitutional, civil and criminal compartments.⁹⁵ The intention was to pack the constitutional section with judges who were sympathetic to the government and who would therefore give a favourable ruling.⁹⁶ Geyer, who saw yet another blow to South Africa's image approaching, wrote to Weber that there was absolutely nothing that could be said for such a law.⁹⁷ It was intensely unpopular in the caucus, and when C.R. Swart was told by his doctor to rest for a month on account of his 'nerves', none of the other ministers were willing to present the bill in his stead. Malan must have felt the same, for when a group of dissidents from the Opposition approached him with an offer of support, in return for the withdrawal of the Appellate bill, there was little difficulty in persuading him to drop the scheme and to pursue a conventional two-thirds majority instead.⁹⁸

Malan informed his Cabinet of the new developments. He had decided to drop the Appellate bill and to send the Separate Representation bill to committee, while he negotiated a two-thirds majority in the House. It created an eruption in Cabinet. Strijdom had locked his jaws onto a new principle in the manner of a bullterrier, and refused to abandon the Appellate bill – which would have restored Parliament's sovereignty. The final decision rested with Malan as the Prime Minister, however, but the Young Turks would not abide by this. Once in the caucus, Strijdom, Eric Louw and Verwoerd attacked his decision to cooperate with the Opposition – there were even accusations that Malan would be willing to fuse with their enemies. Malan was furious at such accusations. As far as he was concerned, it was hardly a matter of principle: those who had criticised the Appellate bill during the previous meeting were now clinging to it with all their might. He reminded the caucus of the efforts of a 'certain group' to undermine him when he tried to achieve political unity – and that, if they had had their way, the party would not be occupying the government benches. If the caucus did not approve of his decision, his position as Prime Minister would become untenable. The caucus sided with Malan and left the matter in his hands, but the damage was done. Malan felt that he could not retire when his party was in such a state, however. He summoned the Young Turks to his office to castigate them about their behaviour, but it did little to improve the situation.⁹⁹ By June 1954, when Parliament finally voted on the Separate Representation bill, the leader of the Opposition, J.G.N. Strauss, succeeded in holding his party together and deprived Malan of the two-thirds majority by nine votes. Malan would not remain in office long enough to explore the final avenue that remained open to the government: the enlargement of the Senate.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 382.

⁹⁶ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 25 September 1953.

⁹⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.168, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 26 September 1953.

⁹⁸ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.169/2, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 11 October 1953.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.177, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 25 October 1953.

¹⁰⁰ T.R.H. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: A Modern History*, 383.

By 1953, Malan was aging rapidly. His decision to attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II was not very popular among the Nationalists – who resented the rumours that Maria Malan *was looking forward* to the occasion. The British, for their part, appreciated Malan’s respect for protocol despite his republicanism. It was arranged that a Prime Ministers’ conference would be held at the same time, which created fears that Malan might return from the event with more shocking statements, as had been the case in 1949.¹⁰¹

Yet, when Geyer arrived at Southampton to welcome Malan to Great Britain, he was taken aback when he saw how frail Malan had become. To his diary he confided:

I am shocked to observe how old Doctor has become. Now, for the first time, I see him as an old man. He is also living in his own little world again. The P[rime] M[inisters’] conference begins on Wednesday, he is not prepared for it at all, and no matter how much I tried to focus the conversation on world conditions, his attention is concentrated only on SA.¹⁰²

Geyer observed Malan closely during the days that followed. Malan livened up considerably when in the company of other septuagenarian politicians such as Winston Churchill and Lord Swinton, with whom he could chat about conditions in Africa. When he spoke about his chief interests and concerns, Malan’s mind was clear and his words concise. Churchill was showing the same signs of aging as Malan, and Geyer now found himself in the company of British politicians who also thought that the time had arrived for their Prime Minister to retire.¹⁰³

Malan, for his part, enjoyed his meeting with Churchill. When Churchill offered him some whisky before the ceremony, he could not refuse – and discovered that it made the long proceedings ever more bearable.¹⁰⁴ Maria, for her part, could not resist the temptation to tease Churchill about his claim that he had swum across the ‘mighty Apies River’ – whereupon Churchill, rather red-faced, asked someone else ‘Where did Malan get that wife?’¹⁰⁵ When the proceedings were at an end, and the Malans dispatched for a short tour of the European continent and Israel, Geyer recorded his impressions:

¹⁰¹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.125, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 March 1953; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.126, A.L. Geyer – P.A. Weber, 16 March 1953; DFM, 1/1/2923, A.L. Geyer – D.F. Malan, 28 June 1953.

¹⁰² KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 31 May 1953: ‘Ek is geskok om te gewaar hoe oud Doktor geword het. Nou vir die eerste keer sien ek hom as ‘n ou man. Hy lewe ook weer in sy eie wêreldjie. Woensdag begin the E.M.-konferensie; hy is daar hoegenaamd nie op voorberei nie en hoe ek ook al probeer het om die gesprek op die wêreldtoestand te bring, sy aandag is alleen op S.A. toegespits.’

¹⁰³ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 1 June 1953, 8 June 1953, 14 June 1953.

¹⁰⁴ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 181.

¹⁰⁵ INCH, Sound Archive, PV 193, tape 122, “Interview: Danie Malan, Cape Town”, 8 June 1977.

I don't believe that he made the same impression as in 1949 – except in the conference hall and in a few private conversations. The old man is old and maybe, because he is more deaf than he wishes to appear, he creates the impression of a man so old that he does not realise what goes on around him, even when he is being addressed...I am becoming worried. Old Dr should not remain P[rieme] M[inister] for much longer. Our nation cannot do without him, and his wife will keep him there as long as he still has some breath left, but it could end in a tragedy, the kind of tragedy that he so dearly wished to avoid.¹⁰⁶

Malan was not ignorant of the fact that his time to leave the stage was drawing nearer,¹⁰⁷ and he began to prepare the way for his exit. If he had to leave, he wanted to determine both the manner in which he departed as well as the man to whom he would hand the reins. His altercations with Strijdom had made his premiership a burden, and it convinced him of the need to keep the party from Strijdom's hands. He believed that he finally had proof of the RSBs existence, and that it was indeed aimed at pushing Strijdom for the leadership. Others doubted whether such an organisation existed. There was little need for a secret organisation to secure Strijdom's leadership, as representatives from the Transvaal formed the largest bloc in the party caucus, ensuring Strijdom of a victory. Malan did not view the question of his succession in such strategic terms – he was convinced that leadership had to be determined by merit,¹⁰⁸ and he considered a man like Havenga far more meritorious than Strijdom.

When the Cape National Party met for its annual congress in November 1953, Malan resigned as its provincial leader and determined that his successor had to be elected by secret ballot. The two candidates represented the Malan and Strijdom camps – and the former won. Dönges defeated Eric Louw by 195 to 45 votes.¹⁰⁹ It was a sign that the Cape Province remained loyal to Malan's direction.

In the year that followed, Malan's reasons to leave the stage increased. In February 1954, Maria suffered a heart attack. Her recovery was slow and she remained ill throughout that year.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 14 June 1953: 'Ek glo nie dat hy, behalwe in die konferensiesaal en in enkele private gesprekke, so 'n indruk gemaak het soos in 1949 nie. Die ou man is oud en miskien omdat hy dower is as hy wil laat agterkom, maak hy die indruk van 'n man, so oud, dat hy nie begryp wat om hom aangaan nie, ook wanneer hy aangespreek word...ek raak bekommerd. Ou Dr. behoort nie meer lank EM te bly nie. Ons volk kan hom nie mis nie, en sy vrou sal hom daar probeer hou solank hy nog asem het, maar dit kan op 'n tragedie uitloop, die soort tragedie wat hy so graag wou vermy.'

¹⁰⁷ KAB, A.L. Geyer collection, A1890, Volume 5, Diary: 14 June 1953.

¹⁰⁸ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.180, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 22 November 1953.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ There are no medical records or a comprehensive description of Maria's illness, but from the various fragments that can be found in the D.F. Malan and the H.B. Thom collections, it emerges that Maria suffered from heart attacks in 1954 and 1955, which were possibly triggered by severe stress. It is clear that this was accompanied by bouts of depression. Maria was highly strung and easily excitable. Although she never received any formal treatment or a diagnosis, a psychologist who was acquainted with the Malan family stated that she displayed 'heightened emotionalism'; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1(5), "Interview notes: J.N. Smit, 1 June 1978"; US

By July, the new editor of *Die Burger*, P.J. (Piet) Cillié, received an anguished letter, written by the concerned husband of one of Maria's nurses. Maria seemed to have recovered from the heart attack, but the nervous condition from which she now suffered was keeping Malan awake at night – a state of affairs which the man believed could have national repercussions.¹¹¹ It certainly meant that Malan's most pressing concerns were about his wife's health, rather than the country at large. It was during the course of this year that Malan decided to resign as Prime Minister, but he only confided this to Maria. Although he denied it, the timing of his exit was not considered to be a mere coincidence.¹¹²

Malan was due to unveil a statue of Paul Kruger on 11 October 1954. His speech would be remembered as another of his famous nationalist addresses, ranking along with his oration at the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument in 1949.¹¹³ The Cabinet was invited for coffee at Libertas later that afternoon. They were all assembled, apart from Eric Louw, who was overseas at the time. Strijdom, whose health had been giving him some trouble, was due to leave for a tour of Europe the following day. After they had been served with beverages, Malan announced, matter-of-factly, that he would resign as Prime Minister on 30 November. He explained that he was old, his wife's health was fragile, and he wanted to spend the remaining years of his life at his home in Stellenbosch. As far as he was concerned, his work was complete. He had entered politics nearly forty years ago, with the aim of uniting the Afrikaner nation and he had succeeded in doing so. He was convinced that this achievement would not have been possible without Klasie Havenga, and therefore he decided that he would recommend to the Governor-General that Havenga be asked to form a government.¹¹⁴

Malan scrutinised the reactions of his ministers closely. Havenga and Dönges sat in their seats as if defeated. Erasmus began to cry. Strijdom jumped up to protest the procedure which Malan wanted to follow – it was the caucus that had to determine the party's leader, not the Governor-General. Strijdom was correct; as it was indeed stipulated as such by the party's constitution, but his reaction did nothing to endear him to Malan. It was C.R. Swart who rose to thank Malan for the work that he had done, and to express his regrets that the country had to lose his services.¹¹⁵

Malan could see nothing wrong with asking the Governor-General to appoint the next Prime Minister – the same had been done in England. Some of the ministers supported Strijdom – the

Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(9/5a), Danie Malan – J.S. Gericke, 8 March 1974; US Library, H.B. Thom collection, 191.M.1.(9/10a), Danie Malan – H.B. Thom, 1 January 1980.

¹¹¹ US Library, P.J. Cillié collection, 220.K54(65), L.A. Fouche – P.J. Cillié, 18 July 1954.

¹¹² G. Pretorius, *Die Malans van Môrewag*, 102.

¹¹³ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 174-5, 202.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 202-3.

¹¹⁵ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954.

others remained quiet. It was clear to Malan that he could not hope to win this argument and he conceded that the caucus had to choose the new leader.¹¹⁶

When the Cabinet dispersed, Strijdom and his confidantes met at his house where they planned their strategy.¹¹⁷ Verwoerd would act as the army's commander in his absence and keep him informed of developments in South Africa. The country was soon awash with rumours about Malan's possible successor. The English press was overwhelmingly in favour of Havenga, who they believed to be a moderate, in contrast to Strijdom's extremism.¹¹⁸

Malan, for his part, assumed that the caucus would take the prudent decision to elect Havenga as its leader. Weber went to visit him at Libertas, and wrote to Geyer to tell him of their exchange:

I asked him why he is resigning now. He named the reasons that have already appeared in the newspapers. But I think that there is another reason. No, it is not Mrs Malan. Doctor is tired – maybe not physically, but tired of certain things within his own party. Strange, how the RSB...disturbed him. He got hold of its constitution and wanted to read it to me, but I stopped him. The style and the contents, so I have been told by someone, reminds one of Verwoerd. I think Doctor allowed himself to be upset by the RSB unnecessarily. Obviously, I have no information that it was actively undermining. There are no doubts about who Doctor wants in his place. His thoughts range in the direction that the Cabinet unanimously recommend to the caucus that Havenga succeeds him. I told him that he would never achieve unanimity. Eric [Louw] and Black [C.R. Swart] will never support it. The matter is going to the caucus, and Strijdom has a large majority in the caucus. "But don't the people have any common sense?" he wanted to know.¹¹⁹

Malan must have felt a growing sense of disaster as he realised that Weber was right. Strijdom and Verwoerd remained in close contact – and together they decided that Strijdom would

¹¹⁶ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 203.

¹¹⁷ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954.

¹¹⁸ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 8 November 1954.

¹¹⁹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954: 'Ek het hom gevra waarom hy nou uittree. Hy het die redes genoem wat reeds in die koerant verskyn het. Maar ek dink daar is ook 'n ander rede. Nee, dis nie Mev Malan nie. Doktor is moeg – miskien nie so seer liggaamlik nie, maar moeg vir sekere dinge in sy eie party. Snaaks hoe hy hom die RSB...aangetrek het. Hy het 'n konstitusie van die ding gekry en wou dit vir my voorlees, maar ek het gekeer. Die styl en die inhoud, so is my deur iemand anders gesê, herinner aan Verwoerd. Ek dink Doktor het hom die RSB onnodig aangetrek. Ek het natuurlik geen inligting wat sê dat die ding aktief ondermynend was nie. Daar is geen twyfel wie Doktor in sy plek wil hê nie. Sy gedagtes loop in die rigting dat die lede van die Kabinet eenparig by die kookus moet aanbeveel dat Havenga vir hom moet opvolg. Ek het hom gesê dat hy geen eenparigheid sal kry nie. Eric [Louw] en Black [C.R. Swart] sal nooit daarvoor te vinde wees nie. Die hele saak gaan kookus toe en in die kookus het Strydom 'n groot meerderheid. "Maar het die mense dan nie verstand nie?" wou hy weet.'

not withdraw his candidature in favour of Havenga.¹²⁰ Havenga, for his part, wanted to become Prime Minister, if only for a short period of time, as he too was reaching an advanced age.¹²¹ He did not, however, want to contemplate the prospect of an open confrontation in the caucus, as he knew that he would lose to Strijdom. He let it be known that he would only accept the position of party leader if his candidature was uncontested. Thus, if Strijdom announced his candidature, he would resign from the Cabinet and from politics.¹²² Verwoerd conveyed the message to Havenga that Strijdom would stand for election if the caucus nominated him – which was a foregone conclusion.¹²³ Strijdom and Verwoerd began to discuss the composition of the future Cabinet while they waited for Havenga to announce his resignation – and when it did not come, they grew restless.¹²⁴

Consternation descended upon their ranks when it became known that Malan had decided to take a hand in the matter.¹²⁵ Malan had heard that Havenga did not want to enter into a contest with Strijdom and he wrote to him, suggesting a strategy. If Havenga announced publicly that he would not take part in a contest and that the caucus could only consider one candidate, it would appear undemocratic, as the caucus would be faced with a *fait accompli*, which would add more fuel to the Strijdom camp's fire. Instead, Havenga had to wait until the caucus-meeting, and if, true to their habit, Strijdom's supporters proved to be resistant, Havenga would have to announce that he would only accept the leadership if it was uncontested. Malan decided that he would speak to the Cabinet to convince them that Havenga had to be the next leader – and he would issue a press release to the caucus that would have the effect of ensuring Havenga's succession.¹²⁶

Paul Sauer and Eben Dönges also spoke to Havenga to convince him that he had to remain in the running. Havenga had hoped that Malan would be spared the need to intervene directly in the succession battle, but he accepted Malan's offer to speak to the Cabinet on his behalf.¹²⁷ Malan, who had already returned to the Western Cape, made his way back to Pretoria in order to head a final Cabinet meeting where he would press Havenga's claim. C.R. Swart was absent, while Eric Louw and Strijdom were still abroad. As had been agreed prior to the gathering, Havenga also stayed away.¹²⁸

¹²⁰ INCH, H.F. Verwoerd collection, PV 93, file 1/11/1, J.G. Strijdom – H.F. Verwoerd, 17 October 1954; INCH, H.F. Verwoerd collection, PV 93, file 1/11/1, J.G. Strijdom – H.F. Verwoerd, 6 November 1954.

¹²¹ B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 170.

¹²² SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 13 October 1954; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954.

¹²³ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 27 October 1954.

¹²⁴ INCH, H.F. Verwoerd collection, PV 93, file 1/11/1, J.G. Strijdom – H.F. Verwoerd, 29 October 1954; INCH, H.F. Verwoerd collection, PV 93, file 1/11/1, J.G. Strijdom – H.F. Verwoerd, 9 November 1954.

¹²⁵ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 11 November 1954.

¹²⁶ SAB, N.C. Havenga collection, A38, File 26, D.F. Malan – N.C. Havenga, 4 November 1954.

¹²⁷ DFM, 1/1/3095, N.C. Havenga – D.F. Malan, 6 November 1954.

¹²⁸ DFM, 1/1/3095, N.C. Havenga – D.F. Malan, 6 November 1954; B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 203-4.

When Malan addressed his Cabinet, he revealed a side of his character that they had never seen before: D.F. Malan had the ability to hate, even if he did so quietly. On this day his anger at Strijdom – which he had bottled up for years – came pouring out, and resulted in a furious exchange between himself and Verwoerd, which Verwoerd later labelled a ‘catfight’. Malan made it clear that Strijdom, who had fought his attempts to achieve Afrikaner unity at every turn, could not be his heir. In contrast, Havenga had helped him to achieve the ideal. A man of Havenga’s stature could not be expected to serve under Strijdom, who was his junior in the Cabinet. For every argument that Malan presented against Strijdom, Verwoerd had an equally powerful counter-argument.¹²⁹

When Malan accused Strijdom of being at the centre of a secret group with the express aim of undermining him – and produced the organisation’s constitution as a trump-card – Verwoerd and Ben Schoeman tore his allegations to shreds. The document was not signed by anyone, and named Malan as the President of a future republic and Strijdom its Prime Minister. Malan had taken the latter point as proof of his suspicions, but as Verwoerd pointed out, Malan’s name also appeared on the document. As far as Schoeman was concerned, there was much that could be said against Strijdom, but a penchant for secret organisations was not one of his traits – Strijdom was generally known to be hostile to the AB. Verwoerd – who Malan had suspected of heading the clandestine movement – for his part, had never seen the document before, and was convinced that it was planted in Malan’s hands as a form of sabotage.¹³⁰

Malan found himself waging the battle alone. Dönges made a weak attempt to support him, but the other Cape ministers remained quiet. What Malan did not realise was that they had all accepted the inevitability of Strijdom’s leadership long before.¹³¹ They now had their futures under Strijdom’s regime to consider. The meeting ended in disarray, and a number of the ministers left without taking leave of Malan.¹³²

Malan decided to make a final attempt at securing his party’s future. Even though he had undertaken to refrain from politics once he had left the stage, he announced that he would address a final political meeting in Paarl on 26 November. It was four days before his formal resignation and

¹²⁹ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 18 November 1954; B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 203-4.

¹³⁰ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 18 November 1954; B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 203-5. It appears that accounts of the RSBs activities were indeed nothing more than rumours that found fertile soil in Malan’s intense dislike of Strijdom. No evidence of the organisation’s existence was uncovered during the course of this research. Phil Weber, who was no supporter of Maria Malan’s, blamed her for being obsessed with political intrigues, which served to exacerbate the situation. Such a scenario is not implausible. It is a reality that the organisation – whether it existed or not – preyed on Malan’s mind during his final years, although it cannot be regarded as a determining factor in the course of events. See US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.53, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 8 April 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.56, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 1 May 1951; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.180, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 22 November 1953; US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.202, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 17 October 1954.

¹³¹ US Library, P.A. Weber collection, 296.K.Ge.180, P.A. Weber – A.L. Geyer, 22 November 1953.

¹³² B. Schoeman, *My Lewe in die Politiek*, 205.

the election of a new leader – and the same day that Strijdom returned to South Africa.¹³³ Malan intended to use his speech to anoint Havenga as his successor in public, but Eben Dönges heard of it in time. He implored Malan not to force the situation any further, as it would create a crisis within the party. He succeeded in persuading Malan to dilute the section of his speech that would have sung Havenga's praises.¹³⁴ Eventually it was whittled down to a single paragraph.¹³⁵

As Malan spoke to his audience, the tension was nearly palpable. There was a general feeling that he was trying to foist a leader onto his followers that was not of their choosing. To his eldest son, Danie, Malan looked frail – and for the first time, he also realised that his father was old.¹³⁶ Malan recounted his political journey to achieve Afrikaner unity since his departure from the Church more than thirty-nine years before. He had fought many battles and weathered many crises. There was only one episode that he did not wish to dwell on – Hertzog's departure from politics, which still haunted him. Yet, Malan had finally reached the point where he knew that he had to entrust the party's mantle to the next generation and all he could do was to warn against the pitfalls of power.¹³⁷ He could say of himself that 'I tried to bring together what belongs together through inner conviction, and I gave my trust.'¹³⁸

When the NP caucus met in Pretoria on 30 November to elect its new leader, J.G. Strijdom was the only candidate. Malan's Cape followers, Eben Dönges, Frans Erasmus, Paul Sauer, Jan Viljoen, Otto du Plessis and P.W. Botha decided that Havenga had to be persuaded to withdraw his candidature. The task was entrusted to Jan Viljoen. Havenga was disappointed, but he paid heed to their advice. He retired from politics as well. The tension was diffused, but the polarisation in the party would continue to exist.¹³⁹

The Governor-General, E.G. Jansen wrote to Malan the following day to thank him for his services and remarked that:

It seems to me that a phase in our history has ended. You and Mr Havenga were the last of the old guard and you have now both retired. A new generation is now taking over and we can only hope that they will continue with the good work of the past.¹⁴⁰

¹³³ SAB, J.G. Strijdom collection, A2, Volume 60, H.F. Verwoerd – J.G. Strijdom, 20 November 1954.

¹³⁴ INCH, P.W. Botha collection, PV 203, file MV 24/1/7, P.W. Botha – H.B. Thom, 23 June 1971.

¹³⁵ DFM, 1/1/3105, D.F. Malan, "My Laaste Politieke Vergadering", 26 November 1954.

¹³⁶ INCH, Sound Archive, PV 193, tape 122, "Interview: Danie Malan, Cape Town, 8 June 1977".

¹³⁷ DFM, 1/1/3105, D.F. Malan, "My Laaste Politieke Vergadering", 26 November 1954.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*: 'Ek het probeer om bymekaar te bring wat deur innerlike oortuiging bymekaar tuis hoort, en ek het vertrou.'

¹³⁹ INCH, P.W. Botha collection, PV 203, file MV 24/1/7, P.W. Botha – H.B. Thom, 23 June 1971.

¹⁴⁰ DFM, 1/1/3110, E.G. Jansen – D.F. Malan, 1 December 1954: 'Dit kom vir my voor asof 'n tydvak in ons geskiedenis afgesluit is. U en mnr. Havenga was die laaste van die ou garde en u het nou albei uitgetree. 'n Jonger geslag neem nou oor en ons kan alleen hoop dat hulle die goeie werk van die verlede sal voortsit.'

Malan sent the customary telegram of congratulations to his successor. It read: ‘The nation expects much from its prime ministers. May joy and prosperity be your share.’¹⁴¹

D.F. Malan returned to his home in Stellenbosch where he spent his final days gardening, receiving visitors, reading the newspapers and compiling his memoirs, while Maria continued to care for him.¹⁴² He did not make any political statements again and even kept his dismay at the Strijdom-government’s interference in the church, through its decision to control the church attendance of Africans in white areas, to himself.¹⁴³ In October 1958, Malan suffered a stroke. He had recovered from it by the start of the New Year, but after suffering a second stroke on 6 February 1959, he died peacefully on the morning of 7 February.¹⁴⁴



**Figure 20: D.F. Malan and Maria Malan
(D.F. Malan Collection)**

¹⁴¹ DFM, 1/1/3109, D.F. Malan – J.G. Strijdom, 30 November 1954: ‘Die volk verwag baie van sy eerste ministers. Mag geluk en voorspoed u deel wees.’

¹⁴² See J.N. Smit, *Aandskemering op Môrewag* (Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1961).

¹⁴³ DFM, 1/1/32689, Danie Malan, *Herinneringe aan my Vader*, 83.

¹⁴⁴ J.N. Smit, *Aandskemering op Môrewag*, 1-6.

Conclusion

D.F. Malan was the last in a line of Afrikaner leaders who had received a nineteenth century upbringing and who dominated South African politics during the first half of the twentieth century. He felt the outrage of the Jameson Raid and, while he had not fought in the Anglo-Boer War, he experienced its anguish and worshipped its heroes. He did not take up arms in the 1914 Rebellion, but his fortunes were tied to this event. He entered politics later than his contemporaries, Hertzog and Smuts, and when they had passed on he found himself at the head of a movement driven by a generation of younger men.

Malan encompassed a number of contradictions. He was a nationalist of the nineteenth century mould and remained so throughout his life. In this respect he remained consistent, while his fluidity in other matters – such as race and republicanism – remained hidden behind his steadfast demeanour.

His seemingly dour persona drew a curtain across his dry sense of humour and his tenderness towards his loved ones, who delighted in recounting an endless stream of anecdotes about his absentmindedness. His grave appearance endowed him with an image of authority which served to establish his image as an Afrikaner patriarch – and which was in keeping with the Biblical prophets who served as his role models. It was a powerful image, but it did not reflect the reality that his position seldom went unchallenged.

The Afrikaner nationalists' success in appearing as a united front, intent on implementing their mission with an iron will and determination, could be hailed as one of the greatest public relations successes in the history of South Africa. In reality, the first half of the twentieth century was marred by internecine fighting which remained tucked away behind the scenes. Afrikaner nationalism was driven by a group of consummate career politicians who jostled for positions and who possessed divergent views on the manner in which their objectives had to be achieved. No history of any political party is complete without an account of its raging power struggles, and the Afrikaner nationalists were certainly no exception. Interest groups were formed in support of individual leaders, who appealed to regional loyalties. From the 1930s, these interest groups were headed by representatives of different generations.

The Nationalists differed on South Africa's constitutional position and her relationship with Britain, they argued about the future republic long before it existed, and were at variance about the Afrikaners' relationship with their English-speaking compatriots. As professional politicians, they were at odds about political strategy: the question of whether or not an alliance or a coalition with another party ought to be formed led to bitter clashes on numerous occasions. They even

approached race relations differently. Yet, like any other political party, they denied that such differences existed within their ranks – and many believed them.

D.F. Malan, for his part, was a consummate politician. He had the ability to devise political strategies and, in doing so, to take the sentiments of his followers into account without playing to their tune – which is the downfall of many populist leaders. Malan was not a populist, and he was willing to take risks. His battle with the OB was one of the greatest gambles of his political career, as the movement appeared to be more popular than his party. Nevertheless, he had an uncanny ability to recognise a passing fancy, and knew that the Afrikaners' experimentation with totalitarianism was opportunistic. He did, however, misjudge the post-war rise of human rights and racial equality, but he did not live long enough to realise this. While Malan certainly strove to achieve power, he also had the ability to refuse it if it contained the seeds of future strife. Unlike Hertzog, Malan could foresee that an alliance with Smuts was due to founder on the rock that was the British Empire – and was vindicated by the outbreak of the Second World War.

Malan did not carry the baggage of personal grudges and was able to cooperate with people who had once opposed him – hence his willingness to work with Hertzog and Havenga, in spite of the painful experiences of Coalition and Fusion. Malan only remained angry at two members of the extensive cast of characters who played a part in his life, Tielman Roos and Hans Strijdom – the former more so than the latter.

Malan's career as a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church created the impression that he was a theocratic leader. This is true, but it is also a point that should not be overstretched, and which should be considered in conjunction with his political abilities. It should not be forgotten that during his years as a student of theology, Malan was more interested in politics than theology – his was the case of a man who only commenced his career at the age of forty. His commitment to his course, once he had embarked on it, made his decision to leave the church extremely painful, and to this could be added the fact that his personal devotion to God played an important role in his life.

Malan felt aware of a special calling from God from an early age and this awareness would remain with him throughout his life. He believed that all nations and individuals were called in a similar fashion. When Malan left the church and entered politics, he believed that his calling was to serve the downtrodden Afrikaner nation. The Afrikaners' wellbeing would always remain his primary concern, and all other interests were subjected to this consideration.

To D.F. Malan, Afrikaner nationalism was a system of belief. The Afrikaners existed because God had willed it so – and the same held for all other nations. His belief in nationalism was shaped by his reading of the German Idealist philosophers, and was confirmed by his study of Berkeley. Malan believed that the world was shaped by ideals, and he therefore pursued the ends of

Afrikaner nationalism in accordance to a set of principles – Western European democracy being one of them.

He recognised that the twentieth century was an age of ideologies and believed that he was fighting a battle for the forces of nationalism. The clash of ideologies therefore played a prominent part in his political career. Nationalism is usually directed at an enemy, and throughout his career, Malan regarded British imperialism as his greatest foe. His interpretation of the Afrikaners' history – which never went beyond a reading of Theal – served to confirm this. With the determination of a sabre-rattling nineteenth century nationalist, Malan therefore devoted himself to the battle of symbolism. This was his driving force in endowing South Africa with a new flag, and during the latter half of his career, his speeches were hardly complete without some reference to the lyrics of *Die Stem*.

Afrikaner nationalism, like European nationalism, had its genesis as language nationalism, and Malan recognised the symbolic value of replacing Dutch with Afrikaans and of insisting on bilingualism – although the latter assertion was tied to economic concerns as well. It was not only a case of stimulating Afrikaner nationalism, but also of defying British imperialism. Yet, while Malan was an ardent Afrikaner nationalist in reaction to British imperialism, he spent his entire life under the British crown and did not share the rigid republicanism of the north. He was committed to democracy as a 'system' of government, but he never truly committed himself to a particular 'form' of government. During the early years of his political career, Malan only paid lip-service to the republican ideal which occupied the minds of so many of his fellow nationalists. His adoption of republicanism in the 1930s was as a result of necessity rather than conviction, and his willingness to remain in the Commonwealth after 1949 was proof that he regarded South Africa's security and economic interests as a higher priority.

Malan was never an economic expert, but he recognised the reality that economic forces shaped a nation's fate. He regarded unbridled capitalism – as practiced in South Africa – as the preserve of the British and Jewish Randlords. Hoggheimer was a bedfellow of British imperialism, and therefore an enemy of Afrikaner nationalism. It made him an ardent anti-capitalist, and in some of his political speeches, Malan went so far as to call for the nationalisation of the mines. It was an argument that he used on numerous occasions: the wealth of the mines ought to be used for the benefit of South Africa. Once in power, however, Malan quietly dropped this argument.

Malan was also vehemently opposed to class distinctions, which were growing ever wider within Afrikaner society – and blamed the capitalist system for creating an impoverished Afrikaner proletariat. This enabled Malan to reconcile himself to cooperation with the socialist Labour Party in the 1920s. It should be considered that the Labour Party's socialism was of the most diluted kind, which increased the common ground between its ideology and Malan's anti-capitalism. D.F. Malan

was well-acquainted with Karl Marx's theory, as was evident in his 1913 lecture on socialism. He was also able to distinguish between the various manifestations of socialism: he condemned anarchism, feared Russian Bolshevism and dismissed the British Labour Party as a group of Fabians.

The rise of totalitarianism in Europe had an impact on Afrikaner nationalism in the 1930s and 1940s, as a number of Afrikaner intellectuals were attracted to its ideas. Malan was consistent in his dismissal of these movements as foreign ideologies. It is clear that he disapproved of Fascism, but his stance was cautious. This was most probably because he did not wish to alienate nationalists who had temporarily 'wandered from the path', by being drawn into an endless debate on the merits of totalitarianism. Thus, while Malan was never sympathetic to Nazism, other Afrikaner nationalists were, and in a polarised country where Malan was seen as the representative of nationalist Afrikaners, he was given a Nazi label that stuck in the popular mind of the time.

Malan's most powerful argument against totalitarianism, however, was the Afrikaners' European ancestry. Throughout his career he emphasised that the Afrikaners were the descendants of Dutch and French Protestants, and in the years before and during the Second World War, Malan pointed to France and the Netherlands as countries where democracy had a long tradition and where democratic structures remained in place. The English speakers, as members of the broader South African nation, also possessed the same heritage and Malan therefore concluded that South Africa was, in essence, as Western European country with a strong tradition of democracy. In formulating his argument, Malan did not take Africans into consideration. Due to his paternalistic view of Africans, he did not regard them as a nation – in the nationalist sense of the word. Until the late-1930s, Africans only featured in Malan's speeches when they were considered in relation to the poor white problem.

Malan believed that a nation was an organic whole. If one part suffered, all of the other parts were affected. It was for this reason that he lashed out against capitalism and the proletarianisation of the Afrikaner poor which created class distinctions among Afrikaners who, he believed, were meant to regard each other as members of the same nation. To Malan, the poor white problem was not merely an abstraction. On the contrary, his work as a minister of the church had brought him into the dilapidated homes of such people, and his horse-cart crossed the paths of the donkey-carts of the wandering poor whom he described in gripping terms. Furthermore, his stepmother and half-sisters were involved in the ACVVs charity work and were able to tell tales of deprivation, both in the town and in the city, while Malan's pastoral visits to isolated farms would have shown him the face of rural poverty. As a politician, his mandatory political tours took Malan to all the different corners of the country, where he could witness the conditions in which Afrikaners lived.

Malan's initial response to poor whiteism was that of a cleric: he sought the root of the problem in the spiritual condition of the individual, as is evident in his travel description of poor white Afrikaners in the erstwhile Rhodesias and the Congo. When Malan wrote this description in 1912 his views were, to some degree, at variance with other observers of the poor white problem, as Malan did not feel threatened by Africans' numbers – or by African education. He had been raised in a Victorian environment where a hierarchy of civilisations was part of the natural order, and he did not foresee the disturbance of that order by African advancement – instead, its greatest threat came from poor whites who he thought were degrading the dignity of their race. If the poor white problem could be addressed, the natural order would remain intact, Malan believed. He continued to hold this view directly after his entry into politics.

Only in the early 1920s can one observe a shift in Malan's thinking concerning white poverty and its relation to African people. By this time, Malan had been a follower of Hertzog for a number of years, and as a member of Hertzog's party he had to promote his leader's policy of segregation. Following the poor white conference of 1923, during which the other speakers pleaded for industrial segregation – as well as his scrutiny of census statistics, which told the tale of white urbanisation – Malan concluded for the first time that poor whites were victims of structural poverty and that they were threatened by cheap African labour in both the countryside and the city. He now believed that African 'barbarism' threatened white civilisation, as it paved the way for wage differentiation. Segregation was seen to be the solution to this problem: it would protect whites from African competition while, at the same time, it would provide developmental opportunities to Africans. The promise of African development enabled Malan and others like him to believe in the fairness of racial separation, and to adopt it as an article of Christian and nationalist faith.

It is difficult to discern the extent to which Malan's opinions of race in the 1920s were the product of his own observations or whether it was the result of his loyalty to Hertzog. It is clear, however, that his views on race relations were fluid. This is demonstrated most potently by his views on Indians and especially the Coloured community. His willingness to cooperate with the Indian government in the 1920s demonstrated Malan's ability to change his stance, if necessary, and to approach a matter from a new angle. In echoing Hertzog's assertion that Coloured people were members of the Western civilisation by virtue of their Western lifestyle and faith, Malan displayed his willingness to respect his leader and his party by towing the party-line – as long he could reconcile himself to the matter at hand.

After the release of the Carnegie Commission's report on the poor white problem and the poor white conference of 1934 – which pointed to cheap Coloured labour and miscegenation between poor whites and Coloureds as a threat to the Afrikaner poor – however, Malan changed his stance. The discussions of the Carnegie Commission's findings coincided with his break from

Hertzog, which meant that Malan could play a more authoritative role in determining his and his party's stance on racial affairs. The Afrikaners were, at all times, his foremost priority, which meant that Coloureds could easily be transferred from the category of allies to the category of threats. It was during this time that Malan's party began to agitate for the removal of the Coloured franchise, and once in power there were few limits to the strategies that his government would follow to achieve this objective.

Malan and his party's approach to race relations in the 1930s, especially towards the end of the decade, focussed nearly exclusively on the poor whites. Their message was conveyed through the imagery of the Great Trek, and was characterised by an obsessive fear of Africans, miscegenation and mixed residential areas. For the first time, Malan even regarded African education and development as a threat to white civilisation – as it would blur the distinctions between whites and blacks. Although Malan seldom referred to African and Coloured political organisations, his careful reading of the daily newspapers would have kept him informed of resistance to white authority. It threatened his Victorian worldview in which every civilisation had its natural place. He must have realised, however, that while fear was a powerful driving force, it could not be sustained forever – and it could not live in harmony with a Christian conscience.

This realisation marked yet another turn in the 1940s. The Nationalists' campaign against racial integration, which gained momentum during the second half of 1938, was interrupted by the Second World War and their ensuing battle with the OB. When Malan dragged his party from the fray in 1943, he returned its focus to the issues of race and economics. While he knew how to employ fear as an election tactic, Malan was also concerned that his party's racial policy had to move beyond a set of 'anti-measures'. The promise of development was the key, and a new word – which did not carry the baggage that 'segregation' had since acquired – gave the impression that the slate had been wiped clean. To Malan, however, there was no difference between 'apartheid' and the segregation Hertzog had preached during the 1920s. Whether or not his followers agreed is a different matter which has been explored in other studies.

The supreme irony is that the anti-measures of the 1930s were encompassed in some of the first laws which the apartheid government legislated: a ban on mixed marriages; the expansion of the Immorality Act to prevent miscegenation; the Group Areas Act, which would put an end to racially mixed residential areas – and the unsuccessful Separate Representation of Voters Bill which was to remove the Coloured franchise. In this respect, at least, the Nationalists knew precisely what they wanted to achieve.

The developmental aspect of apartheid, which provided the policy with its moral justification, was the area where Malan's government dithered, however. Malan's lack of oversight with regards to his Cabinet's activities meant that, while he as the Prime Minister was responsible

for his government's actions, his involvement in the creation of apartheid's structures, as well as its implementation, was limited. During Malan's tenure, apartheid seemed to consist of anti-measures, and little came of the promises to 'uplift' Africans. Malan, who judged the efficiency of the policy by a survey of government expenditure, did not seem to realise this, despite at least one warning delivered by Phil Weber. Albert Geyer, who expressed the same doubts as Weber, never wrote to Malan to tell him of his concerns – all he did was to inform Malan of the unpopularity of the policy abroad.

This only served to strengthen Malan's animosity to the international world. By the time he came to power in 1948, Malan was seventy-four – he was eighty when he retired. To some of his younger followers, he was fast becoming an anachronism. The new post-war world was dismantling the racial order that he had known since his youth and, to Malan, the world became a hostile and threatening place. With his eyes fixed on the challenges presented by the UNO, the independence of India and the beginnings of African decolonisation – while the threat of the Bolsheviks' new superpower status cast a shadow over Western Europe – Malan did not contemplate the possibility that African resistance to apartheid was motivated by local conditions, or even the policy itself. He still held firmly to his belief that Africans were primitive beings, and was therefore convinced that these hostile external forces were responsible for the Defiance Campaign, which was the most notable challenge to his government's power. Since his entry into politics in 1915, the list of enemies to Afrikaner nationalism had grown. British imperialism remained Malan's most formidable foe, but it acquired new allies: capitalism, liberalism, communism and any country, organisation or individual who preached racial equality.

There is a dichotomy between D.F. Malan's own perception of the meaning of his career and the perception which exists today. When Malan compiled his memoirs, he chose the title *Afrikaner-Volkseenheid en my ervarings op die pad daarheen* (Afrikaner national unity and my experiences on the road towards it).¹ The Afrikaners remained his greatest priority, and his belief that he had managed to achieve unity among them was his greatest achievement. To South Africans today, D.F. Malan is the man who instituted apartheid. It was this final phase of his career that had the most lasting impact, although he did not realise this at the time of his death.

This study strove to create a more rounded and nuanced image of D.F. Malan by painting a warts-and-all picture of his perceptions, his battles, his contradictions and his humanity. By improving our understanding of such a mythologised man, it sought to emphasise the complexity of the South African past.

¹ D.F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en my Ervarings op die Pad Daarheen* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1959).

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