

FSAW
Tel: 44-5749
23-8321.

Federation of South African Women,
(Transvaal Region),
P.O. Box 10876,
JOHANNESBURG

25th May, 1955.

Dear Friends,

The Federation of South African Women is an organisation that has been formed to bring together all women for organised action, women of all races, colours and nationalities, to fight for the defence of women and children, to help to bring about the emancipation of women from the special disabilities suffered by them under the laws, customs and conventions, and to strive for a genuine South African democracy based on complete equality and friendship between men and women and among all sections of the people of South Africa.

The Federation has therefore given its full support and assistance to the forthcoming Congress of the People, which will be held in Kliptown on 25th and 26th June, 1955, and where delegates of all the people of South Africa will speak of freedom and will adopt a Freedom Charter, drawn up from the demands of all the people.

All groups of people are invited to send delegates to the Congress of the People and we wish to ask the women of your Committee if they will hold a house meeting, to which we should like to send one of our members who will explain the importance of the Congress of the People. From this meeting a delegate may be elected who would represent them at the Congress of the People.

During July, the Federation of South African Women will be organising an important Congress of Mothers, who will meet together to declare their united and unflinching opposition to all forms of war and who will pledge their support to the worldwide campaign of protest against the manufacture of atomic and hydrogen bombs. We are sure that you will give your support to this campaign and will send women to this Congress to strive for peace in the world.

The Federation of South African Women has pleasure in **inviting** your organisation to affiliate to our Federation, for we are confident that we share a common aim in our struggle for peace, democracy and freedom.

Yours fraternally,

Helen Jordan
SECRETARY

Federation of South African Women
(Transvaal Region)

Transvaal Region,
Federation of S.A. Women,
P.O. Box 10876,
JOHANNESBURG

7th June, 1955.

The Secretary,
Congress of the People,
P.O. Box 11045,
JOHANNESBURG

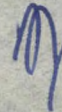
Dear Friend,

I enclose demands adopted by a meeting in Johannesburg of 200 women on 29th May called by the Federation of S.A. Women (Transvaal) Region.

Twelve delegates were elected at the meeting. Credential cards have been issued.

I enclose also two set of demands handed in at the meeting by women from Albertynsville and Benoni.

Yours for peace and freedom,



Regional Secretary
Federation of S.A. Women.

Fstw
9/7/55

Editor, New Age.

Your correspondent, "Teacher", whose letter appeared on June 23rd, raised some questions concerning the Federation of South African Women that call for a reply.

"Teacher" is correct in criticising the wording of some of the demands put forward by the women for the Freedom Charter, though it would have been more useful to all if those criticisms had been raised at the meeting called for that purpose. The demand "We want bigger and better reserves" was not included in the Freedom Charter, which states on this question, "Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it..." This is so clearly correct, ~~that we are certain~~ that had this matter been drawn to the ~~the~~ attention of the women's meeting, we are certain that all present would have accepted the change.

"Teacher" also criticises the demand "We demand better shopping facilities particularly in the non-European townships," and castigates the women for their "slave" mentality in so readily accepting the concepts of "apartheid" - separate non-European townships.

We feel this is not right, for all that has happened here is that there has been some confusion over those demands which are possible of immediate achievement, and those that require a fundamental change in our form of government and state before they can be achieved.

The Freedom Charter sets forth those fundamental changes which are essential to a democratic South Africa. For that reason, many of the hundreds of small, immediate changes demanded by people from all over the country (such as the one quoted) were not included in the final Charter in their original form. However, it is not wrong for people to fight for improvements, even under our present undemocratic form of government, and that is why women demand and fight for better shopping facilities, or clinics for their children, or parks, ~~even though we know that ultimately the whole cruel system of segregation, of locations and ghettos, must be swept away.~~

Finally, may we in turn criticise? How can "Teacher" state that "perhaps this confusion comes because we are never encouraged to criticise what our leaders tell us"? It is simply not true. The women were anxious for criticisms and suggestions, and would have welcomed them. There can be no leadership without the active participation of the people. What prevented "Teacher" from speaking at our meeting, or from getting someone to speak for him or her?

Won't "Teacher", therefore, get in touch with us? There is plenty of work to be done, even by those whose position prevents them from speaking or appearing in public. We are sure that "Teacher" will find a direct association with the Federation of South African Women will be to our mutual benefit.

Yours sincerely,

The Transvaal Regional Committee of the
Federation of South African Women.

PSAW II A

FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN. TRANSVAAL REGION.

P.O. Box 10726,
JOHANNESBURG.
Monday July 18th 1955.

Mr. and Mrs. Desai,
20, Beacon Road,
KLIPTOWN.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Transvaal Regional Committee of the Federation of South African Women, I want to express our sincere appreciation of your most generous hospitality for the Indian delegates to this great Congress of the People.


In every area, our requests for hospitality for 2,000 delegates were met with such warmhearted and ready response, that we were not able to take up all the kind offers of hospitality. Your individual contribution, however, in providing food for 250 Indian delegates was really outstanding, and was a magnificent contribution to the care of the delegates and the whole organisation of the Congress.

As our organisation was in charge of providing accommodation for the delegates from other centres, we were able to appreciate to the full what great assistance you provided.

Again, many thanks.

Forward to Peace and Freedom!

Yours sincerely,


(Mrs) H. Joseph,
Secretary.

FSAW

FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN. TRANSVAAL REGION

P.O. Box 10726

Johannesburg.

The Chairma n,
African National Congress,
NEW LOOK BRANCH.

Dear Friend,

On behalf of the Transvaal Regional Committee of the Federation of South African Women, I want to express our appreciation of the magnificent assistance given by members of your branch in organising accommodation for the delegates to the great Congress of the People.

We hope you will convey to all your members our sincere thanks for all their generous offers of hospitality. As you know, many of the delegates from other parts of South Africa were prevented from arriving at the Congress of the People, and thus it was not necessary to take up all the kind offers of hospitality.

It was the warmhearted and ready response to our request for accommodation for 2,000 delegates which played a great part in the organisation of the Congress of the People, and made it possible to proclaim to the whole of South Africa that we were ready to receive every delegate.

Forward to Peace and Freedom!

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs) H. Joseph,
Secretary.

Collection Number: AD1137

FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

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