

PRESS STATEMENT

ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT-GENERAL, AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

On the 14th May, 1950 representatives of National Organisations came together in a historic conference to discuss the Unlawful Organisations Bill, (now called the Suppression of Communism Bill) a Government measure which, having regard to the present distribution of political rights in this country, is by far the most sinister piece of legislation that has yet been produced by any Union Government; for it seeks to destroy not only freedom of organisation, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and the freedom of the press, but is also intended to deprive the voiceless and oppressed millions in this land of their right to fight against oppression and exploitation.

The National Organisations represented at the Conference decided to mobilise all sections of the South African people for a mass opposition to this unwarranted and highly undemocratic Bill, and appealed to the whole country to rally to the defence of freedom and democracy which are in grave danger of total extinction in South Africa.

The National Executive of the African National Congress met on the 21st May, 1950, and after considering the implications of the Bill against the background of the diminishing rights of the African people in this, their Motherland, it decided that if ever there was a Bill which removed all hope of a better future for a struggling underprivileged people, that Bill was now before Parliament, and therefore if ever there was a time when the African people were required to put their eight million force behind the principles of democracy, in alliance with other freedom-loving members of the South African community, that time had come. The African National Congress and other National and local organisations are required, by the clear implications of the Unlawful Organisations Bill, (now called the Suppression of Communism Bill) to fight against this Bill, against the Pass Laws, against low wages, against the Urban Areas Act, the Group Areas Bill, the Riotous Assemblies Act, lack of housing accomodation, and of franchise rights, of educational facilities, against every

other disability which has been and is the lot of the ruled in this country.

Upon the authority given to me by my Executive, and after consultation with other National leaders, I declare MONDAY, the 26th June, 1950, a NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST, and call upon the African people in their united millions to observe it as such by refraining from going to work on that day, and I appeal all other South Africans of all races, and in particular, to fellow non-europeans, to respond to the call of their leaders for the observance of this unique day in the history of South Africa.

LET US ALL STAND FIRM TOGETHER FOR:

FREEDOM NOT SERFDOM !
FREEDOM NOT MIGHT !

(Signed): J.S. MOROKA
(President-General)

We, on behalf of our Organisations, pledge our whole-hearted active support to this call made by the President-General of the African National Congress to observe Monday, 26th June, 1950 as a National Day of Protest against the tyranny and oppression of the Nationalist Government, and for the immediate defeat of the Fascist Unlawful Organisations (alias Suppression of Communism) and the Group Areas Bills.

We want the white working class and the voters of South Africa to remember that their liberties and privelages are being attacked and will be destroyed by these Bills. We therefore call upon them to join the struggle for the defeat of these tyrannical measures and for the extension of democracy to all.

This struggle will require determination, courage and sacrifice which must and will come from all of us.

Signed: (Dr) G.M. Naicker
President, South African Indian
Congress.

S.M. Rahim
President, African Peoples'
Organisation.

I. Horvitch
Chairman, Communist Party of
South Africa.

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