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# The Report of the Native Affairs Commission 1936

A Reply to the Criticism appearing in  
"The South African Outlook".

By G. HEATON NICHOLLS, M.P.

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**I**F the article appearing in your December issue dealing with the Report of the Native Affairs Commission reflects the views of the *South African Outlook*—“A Journal dealing with Missionary and Racial Affairs,” then it demands some attention; the more so because most of your readers are presumably concerned with Native welfare. As one who claims to be equally concerned with Native welfare, I hope you will permit me, in my personal capacity—I have not consulted my colleagues—to furnish a reply.

I am not in the slightest degree concerned with the opinions of your Critic. If the article were limited to an expression of opinion there would be nothing to be said: but your Critic goes much

further. He makes the charge that a number of statements contained in the Report of the Commission are factually inaccurate: that they are based "on no evidence at all or on evidence which is demonstrably false;" and in order to demonstrate their falsity he makes a "series of propositions, the validity of each of which" he claims to examine.

A very careful combing of the article yields eleven points of substance. I propose to deal faithfully with these seriatim in the following paragraphs:

1. Well timed and justifiable protests, says your Critic, have come from various parts of the country concerning the use of an official Government report as a cloak for propaganda on behalf of certain political theories.

*Reply:* The Native Affairs Commission is not, and was never intended to be, a departmental committee concerned with administration. It is a political commission, in the sense that it is concerned with Native policy; and to explain that policy it must, of necessity, explain the theory of the policy. In form, the Report follows along the lines already established by previous Commissioners. On this occasion, however, the circumstances were unique. Parliament had recently passed legislation which was designed to give a positive national direction to Native policy in contradiction to the *Laissez faire* attitude of the past. It was the obvious duty of the Commission to examine the implications of that policy and to set it forth in unmistakable terms for all to understand. The only question which can arise, therefore, is whether or not the Commission has correctly interpreted the intentions of Parliament, not whether it should interpret the legislation to please those "who

have doubts of the wisdom of present trends in South African Native policy."

2. Appendix "A" of the Report, says your Critic, gives "a travesty of the old Cape Native policy." In an endeavour to substantiate this statement your Critic cites the Glen Grey Act which, he says, hammered out the Native Council system and "made the Transkei possible."

*Reply:* There were Councils in the Transkei before the Glen Grey Act was passed. But, in any case, the maintenance of Native law and custom in the Transkei does not depend on the Council system. The fundamental difference between the Cape proper and the Transkei, which is emphasized in the Report, is that while the Cape proper could only deal with Native law so long as it was not "repugnant to the law of England" (para. 77 Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education) in the Transkei "Native custom was recognized (after annexation) and the result was that the life of the ordinary Native was hardly affected. His social fabric was left untouched and the change was effected without violent dislocation" (J. T. Kenyon, on the Transkeian Territories). It is surely unnecessary to point out that the Glen Grey Act was simply an Act to issue individual title to land in the Glen Grey district, and that the Council system established by the Act followed along the lines of the European Divisional Council system of the Cape proper. (Rogers.) To contend that the Glen Grey Act established Native policy in the Transkei where the policy was, and is, to leave the social fabric of the Native people untouched, is to play with words. The Transkeian General Council was not established by a Cape Act, but by a Proclamation. The power of edictal legislation

which the Transkei possesses has been maintained in order to preserve the distinctive Native character of the Transkei. The existence of that edictal form of legislation in the Transkei and its absence in the Cape proper is sufficient proof of the statements made in the Report.

3. Your Critic challenges the statements in the Report that the Native Affairs Act, the Native Urban Areas Act, the Immorality Act and the Native Administration Act, were all opposed by the combined hostility of the various assimilationist groups. In an endeavour to prove that this is untrue and thus show "how little reliance can be put on some of the statements of this section of the Report" the Critic quotes long extracts from the *Christian Express* of 1920 and the *South African Outlook* of subsequent dates when it dealt with these Acts.

*Reply:* Your Critic may be surprised to learn that I was unaware of the existence of the *Christian Express*; nor did I ever read the *South African Outlook* in those days. This, also, possibly applies to my colleagues. The Commission's Report was obviously not referring to those Journals, but to hostility in the political field, as disclosed by speeches in Parliament and in articles in the political press, which influence legislation.

In any case, this is a mere quibble. The sole object of mentioning these Acts in the Report was to show the undoubted trend of South African Native policy as disclosed by its legislation, about which there cannot surely be any dispute.

#### NATIVE EDUCATION.

4. The Critic questions the accuracy of the statement that it is the aim of the Native Education

Departments of the Provinces as disclosed by the Interdepartmental Committee's report, to accelerate the speed of detribalization and to bring about the Europeanization of the Native.

*Reply:* On this point it would be better to call upon an educational authority to speak.

“Essentially, the Committee's educational programme for Natives is a programme of Europeanization, perhaps with Native nuances, borrowed to a small extent from tribal tradition, but mainly imposed by the limiting conditions of the Natives' status in White South Africa. Culture contact, for the Committee, means transition from primitive tribal to civilized European ways of thought and action . . . I am not convinced that the Committee has fully thought out the application of its educational programme to the Natives in the light of the various stages of detribalization and Europeanization in which we actually find them.” (Professor Hoernlé addressing the Educational Conference at Pietersburg on the Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education.)

5. On the subject of the Europeanization of the Native, the Critic continues: “In spite of the evidence of our senses we are all apparently suffering from hallucination when we observe tens of thousands of Natives regularly wearing European types of clothing, sitting at table for meals, using separate table utensile for each individual, living in brick, two or five roomed houses . . . following the precepts of Christianity . . . getting into debt, suing for divorce . . . . That the report should deny the very existence of these commonplace phenomena and on that denial base a charge against the Departments of Education of deliberately working to destroy all regard for the very existence

of primitive culture amongst the Native people is a line of argument of really breath-taking boldness."

*Reply:* "Although the Bantu have for several generations been in more or less close contact with European civilization the metamorphosis brought about in the traditions and habits of the great bulk of Bantu society is but superficial." (Report, Inter-departmental Committee on Native Education. Para. 343.)

"In regard to the incidence of divorce cases, experience has shown that few Natives receive a true conception of the obligations flowing from a Christian or civil marriage." (Report of the President of the Native Appeal and Divorce Courts. Report, Department of Native Affairs, 1936, page 64.)

"There is too much talk of The Native as though all Natives were in the same stage of development. The educational problem for the Reserve child is very different from that in the urban location." (Professor Hoernlé.)

Does the style of dwelling, the method of eating, the buying and selling at trading stations, and the other things he mentions, turn a Native into a European? Did Ghazi Kemal Ataturk turn all the Turkish women into Parisiennes when he insisted on their discarding the veil and wearing French clothes? This attempt to regard outward conformation as a symbol of inner grace is responsible for much loose thinking.

6. The Report, says your Critic, states that Native education has been staunchly opposed by the older generation of Natives and "has been scarcely worthy of the name." In support of this view the Report points to the low average

standard reached by Native pupils; asserts that the schools are hopelessly understaffed; and finally adds that most of the teachers are unqualified to teach. After querying all these facts your Critic continues: "This last statement is definitely false."

*Reply*: This denial is so categorical that I must take it first.

Professor Hoernlé told the Pietersburg Educational Conference:

"The present state of Native Education may be judged from the following cardinal facts, culled from the Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education.

"Less than 30 per cent. of the total Native child population of school age receives any schooling at all. Less than 2 per cent. of these scholars advance to the post-primary stage of schooling. The majority do not get further than Standard I, i.e. they go to school only for two or three years, and even then their attendance is often intermittent, with the result that many are 'over age' for their classes." "A good many Native schools that are 'aided' and inspected, are hopelessly overcrowded and understaffed" (300). "*In 'unaided' schools, practically all teachers are without professional qualifications.*" The statement in the Report of the Commission that "*most of the teachers, according to scholastic standards, are unqualified to teach*" applied to both "aided" and "unaided" schools—and is, therefore, an accurate statement of the position.

The Report of the Interdepartmental Committee did not deal with "unaided" schools; but it shows that 55 per cent. of the teachers in "aided" schools in the three Northern Provinces were unqualified. (Para. 189.)



In regard to the opposition by the older generation, the Report of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei contains the following:—

“ Unfortunately, education remains in a state of comparative stagnation. The vast majority of the Natives take no stock in learning and are content that their children should adopt the same attitude. In the face of this apathy the missionary bodies are helpless though they struggle on as best they can. State-aided schools are left in charge of Native teachers who very often display no interest in encouraging the people to send their children to school.” (Report of the Department of Native Affairs, 1936.)

“ Evidence before the Committee brought out the fact . . . that the establishment of schools is often hampered by conservatism and lack of enlightenment on the part of the chiefs.” (623. Report, Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education.)

“ The Kaffirs see in the school the agency that weakens and then effaces all tribal bonds and customs . . . the chiefs especially watch the growth of schools with suspicion ” (26—*ibid*—in regard to position in 1881).

“ In the Reserves, where Natives still live under tribal conditions, tradition has assigned the herding of cattle to the young boys and domestic service to the girls. These duties would be interfered with if the children were compelled to attend school, and it is unlikely the Natives will break lightly with their customs.” (Para. 401—*ibid*—regarding present day conditions.)

7. The Commission's Report says that in Native education the utmost licence prevails, state control being limited to an inspection of curricula which have little or no relation to the Native policy of the

country. "All this is moonshine," says the Critic; "for except for the one subject of religious instruction, every aided Native school in the country follows a curriculum and works to a syllabus laid down just as they are in European schools, by the Educational Department." "*It is with embarrassment, almost with regret, that we are driven by the logic of fact thus to ruin the Commission's artistic picture of what it calls the 'chaos of educational ideas and practice'.*"

*Reply:* Where lies the moonshine? The Report does not say there is no curriculum! It says the curriculum has little or no relation to the *Native policy* of the country—that is, the policy underlying all the Native legislation, a fact made plain in the report of the Departmental Committee on Native Education. The extent to which inspection of curricula is effective, even in Government-aided schools, may be judged by the following items of information given by the Interdepartmental Committee:

"In single-teacher schools, of which there are a large number in each Province, this curriculum is generally adapted and limited to essentials." (182) There was no Chief Inspector of Native Education in the Transvaal until 1936. In neither the Orange Free State nor in the Transvaal is there any specialist staff employed for the supervision of various special subjects." (180.)

Witnesses of "considerable standing in the educational world" made the following remarks to the Committee about the existing system:

"It is in a state of chaos." "The position is hopeless." "It is utterly unsatisfactory." (287) Your Critic should direct his misplaced sarcasm at these educational authorities.

Finally, the report of the Educational Committee says: "The fact that Native education has been tolerated rather than actively fostered by the European may be due partly to fear and partly to sheer indifference. There is, however, another reason, and that is *uncertainty of aim*." (455. The italics are the Committee's.)

"What are we driving at in educating the South African Native? . . . There exist widely divergent views on this matter, and it has not been easy for even those sympathetically inclined to Native advancement to lay down one definite direction towards which to strive. The result is that a *laissez faire* policy has been followed in the main." (455.)

This is precisely the point made in the Report of the Native Affairs Commission.

8. The Report refers to the rapid increase in the number of Native religious sects with *attendant schools*. The Critic says this is "a fantasy pure and simple." He adds: "Now the fact is that the newer Native religious sects, at least in the Cape Province which we know best, very rarely attempt to run their own schools."

*Reply*: It is dangerous for your Critic to apply his Cape knowledge to the whole Union. The Interdepartmental Committee did not deal specifically with unaided schools; but the extent to which they exist may be judged by paras. 366 to 370 in their Report.

"From time to time representations have been made to the Native Affairs Department by missionary bodies, individual missionaries and the Transkeian Territories General Council requesting that no private Native school which enters into competition with aided Native schools should be

allowed to be opened unless official approval has been obtained for its establishment, and that any school which disseminates pernicious doctrines be liable to be summarily closed. The Native Affairs Department, while fully alive to the unfortunate effect on schools of sectarian rivalry and the evils resulting from doctrines taught by self-styled prophets and others of that ilk, felt that in the absence of free and compulsory education for Native children, parental authority should be allowed full latitude. It accordingly came to the conclusion that interference with the establishment and conduct of private Native schools was not warranted." Since an important part of the work of the Native Affairs Commission is to consider applications for recognition of Native churches, with their *attendant schools*, to state that they do not exist, is, to use the words of your Critic, "a line of argument of really breath-taking boldness."

9. The Report states that the time has arrived to adopt a policy of the Bantuization of the Native educational service. In contesting this proposal your Critic argues:—

- (a) It has already been done as far as possible;
- (b) the number of Native teachers who qualify year by year is very small and not sufficient to meet the existing demand;
- (c) that while 66 per cent. of secondary teachers are European who absorb two-thirds of the total sum spent on secondary education, this forms only 9 per cent. of the total sum spent on all Native education and is therefore a small amount;
- (d) less than half of one per cent. of the teachers employed on primary education are Europeans.

The Critic then accuses the Government of refusing to carry out in its own sphere the policy which the Commission recommends for Native education.

*Reply:* The relevant paragraph in the Report speaks of the *gradual* accomplishment of Bantuization without hardship to anybody. It is the policy of the "paramountcy of Native interests in Native areas," announced by the Prime Minister at Umtata, in 1925, as follows:

"To him it seemed clear that they would have to follow the line of assisting the Native in such a manner as to make him capable of administering himself in all matters relating to Natives, so that he was given scope not only for his physical strength but his intellectual energy so that he would have the right and opportunity to *govern himself in these Territories.*"

That policy is being gradually carried out, as shown by the lecturers and clerical assistants in the Agricultural Colleges, by the 200 odd Native Agricultural Demonstrators, by the 384 appointed Chiefs and 1,256 Headmen, who administer the affairs of their locations, many of them with judicial powers. The newly created Native Trust is already bringing about a rapid advance in the direction indicated by the Prime Minister.

In regard to the specific points raised by your Critic:

- (a) Native secondary education is also a Native area. Whilst 66 per cent. of secondary teachers are European it cannot be said that it is yet a Native area.
- (b) If sufficient Natives do not qualify either that is the fault of the system or else the Natives cannot or do not wish to qualify. Your Critic cannot have it both ways.

- (c) The fact that the cost of European teachers' salaries in Native secondary education is only 9 per cent. of the whole, merely begs the argument.
- (d) What the cost of the European service in Native primary education is I do not know; but it cannot be limited merely to the salaries of primary school teachers. It must include the cost of supervision and the administration at headquarters, some part of which is met from ordinary Provincial revenue.

10. It is not a fact, says the Critic, that the Missions frown on Bantu culture. The opposite is the case. There is not a Bantu language which has not been reduced to writing under Missionary auspices.

*Reply:* The Report nowhere says that *all* Missions frown on Bantu culture. It argues that there are unacclimatized Missionaries who do: but the purpose of the whole argument was to point out that a *laissez faire* policy had been followed in the main—a fact emphasized by the Educational Committee.

It is surprising to learn that the Bantu languages were originally reduced to writing in order to preserve Bantu culture. Your Critic must refute the following by W. G. A. Mears, in *The Educated Native*.

“To the evangelistic missionaries, only through a knowledge of the Bible could there be full spiritual development. Therefore from the outset they began to teach adults and children to read and write, but particularly to read. Again they studied the Bantu languages, so that the Bible and Church books might be translated into the language of the congregation. Thus, in a short time,

missionaries entered upon the task of making the Bantu literate. In any criticism of the kind of school education promoted by the Churches, one has always to remember originally they did not try to introduce a general educational system, but they aimed solely at an education which would facilitate their work. For them it was a means to an end and not the end itself."

The Interdepartmental Committee says much the same thing.

"When the missionaries started to convert the heathen, they had no doubts; they tried to make sure, in the first instance, that the Native would gain salvation as a good Wesleyan, Anglican or Roman Catholic. Incidentally, under the motto of *ora et labora* they also taught him a few things that were useful to his mundane existence, e.g. the three R's and some manual work. Their aim was narrow, but clear cut."

II. "Growing tired of argument," says the Critic, "the Report recommends in a curt line or two, that 'the policy of transferring Native schools from mission control to State control should be consistently pursued.'"

*Reply:* That, also, is the recommendation of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education.

"During its investigations the Committee encountered much evidence, especially from Native witnesses, in favour of transferring the Native schools from the care of the Missions to the sole control of the Government . . . They are becoming restive under the paternal control exercised by the missionary and look for emancipation to some other system." (341.)

"The Committee recommends—that alongside the aided system facilities should be provided by

means of which a system of Government schools, such as is described above, might grow up." (363.)

"The assumption by Government of increasing financial responsibility, the fact that in some areas there is serious overlapping of missionary endeavour, and the difficulty that Missions find in keeping pace with the needs of Native schools in urban areas, specially in the matter of providing buildings, are factors of the situation which make Government control necessary." (359.)

12. It is not an accurate statement, says the Critic, to suggest, as the Report does, that the handing over of Native education to the Union Department of Education would take away from the Native Representative Council the right to consider one of the most important aspects of the Native budget.

*Reply:* This is a matter of opinion. Your Critic claims the same omniscience in the political field that he claims in the Native educational field. The Native Representative Council, as constituted under the Act, is in association solely with the Department of Native Affairs. The Minister referred to in the Act is the Minister for Native Affairs. The European members are the chief administrative officers of the Department of Native Affairs. Its Chairman is the Secretary for Native Affairs. The Act provides that the principal (and the most important) duty of the Council is to consider the estimates and expenditure in connection with the Native Trust Fund, which is administered by the Minister for Native Affairs. It is the Department's business to furnish the fullest details of both revenue and expenditure for the information of Councillors. Much of this money comes from Native taxation and it is right and fitting that the



Native Council should have a say in its disposal. At the recent Council meeting the plan was seen in operation. The Department was able to provide the fullest details of the expenditure on matters directly under control of the Trust—that is, the employment of the various Trust officials and their salaries, and the special work of development which is to be carried on; but no details were available in regard to Native education because this was a Provincial matter. The Councillors were able to discuss only the block allocations to each Province.

Precisely the same thing would happen, unless the Act is altered, if Native education were transferred to the Union Educational Department. Nobody connected with that Department will have a seat on the Council. The Minister of Education, it is true, would have the right to address the Council; but he would merely be in the same position as the Minister of any other Department. The Council would not be linked up with the Union Education Department in the same way that it is linked up with Native Affairs. If a separate Native Education Fund were created it would fall outside the Trust Fund, and, therefore, outside the purview of the Council.

As things stand, if the money had to be voted each year by Parliament under the vote of the Minister of Education, it might lead to a discussion which would not be beneficial to Native education, particularly if Parliament felt that the estimates were submitted to the Native Council beforehand. Of course, an Act could be passed to provide for a special annual subsidy from revenue as in the case of the Provincial subsidy; but unless the Union Education Department were linked with the Native Representative Council and the Native Edu-

cational Fund were made part of the Native budget in the same way as the Native Trust Fund, there could be no adequate discussion of the details of Native education by the Native representatives. The Commission believes, with much political experience behind it, that the finest interests of Native education would be served by bringing its control directly under the Department associated with the Native Council, whose officers are imbued with a regard for the welfare of the Native people. No Native educationalist interests would thereby be sacrificed. In no other way could the Native Council obtain that influence over the development of Native education which would accord with the aspirations of the Native people.

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I think I have now replied to every charge of factual inaccuracy made in your Journal. A few verbal inaccuracies have, unfortunately, crept into the Report as a result of the Commission's pre-occupation with the acquisition and development of Native land, which entailed their continued absence from headquarters and prevented any of its members reading the proofs: but the facts are unassailable. In most cases I have endeavoured to meet your Critic on his own ground by quoting only educational authorities. I have said nothing of the Commission's own experience, some of it extending over an administrative lifetime: nor have I referred to the evidence which the Commission has itself garnered in its almost continuous and extensive travels all over the Union, during which it has visited schools and mission stations and met chiefs and headmen, numbering in the aggregate

many thousands in all the Native Reserves. Such evidence your Critic would reject.

Reading carefully between the lines I judge the real offence is not any factual inaccuracy. It is the Commission's departure from a normal acquiescence in existing conditions (by indulging in criticism of mission control of Native education) which is objected to. Characteristic of this touchiness is the offence taken at the echo of a remark made in the recent Report of the International Institute Examination Enquiry that our educational system had its roots in the Middle Ages, "and that the mediæval tradition persists." (Sir Michael Sadler.) The Commission's Report referred to all missionaries having in common, whether they were French or Norwegian or German or Dutch or Italian or English or Scotch or American, the same educational tradition, though a different political outlook. Surely a statement of fact! Apparently such a remark can be fittingly applied by educational authorities to the teachers of Europe, but must not be made to the teachers of the Natives in South Africa without the risk of affronting a large body of devoted workers whose services to the Native people the Commission very justly appreciates.

The truth of the matter is that the Commission, in addition to all its other work, had before it the Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education, which it was in duty bound to consider, since the Commission is, by law, the body responsible for the allocation of funds for Native education. This Committee raised the whole question of the control and content of Native education, and emphasized the very controversial character of these subjects. On all professional points the Commission made no comment: but on

the subject of final control and content of Native education the Commission felt it necessary to reaffirm the recommendations made by both Dr. Roberts and Dr. Loram in their Native Affairs Commission Report of 1921. The professional qualifications of both these gentlemen are beyond question, and the experience they gained on the work of the Native Affairs Commission added strength to their recommendations.

In any case, we have now reached the crossroads. Very important decisions will soon have to be made by Parliament. The facts of the existing chaos and divided control are indisputable. The Interdepartmental Report states:

“ 336. The multiplicity of denominations, seriously complicated by the establishment of numerous sects, presents a problem of which a satisfactory solution has not yet been found. The Missions themselves have realized that competition means waste of power and that the future lies in association and united effort.”

The Commission emphasizes that position. It was not concerned, in its Report, with religious instruction, although it agrees with the Interdepartmental Committee that religious instruction must have a place in the curriculum of the school. Its concern is to see that education conforms to Native policy: and by removing that “ *uncertainty of aim* ” which the Interdepartmental Committee regarded as a fundamental reason for the existing educational *laissez faire*, to give to Native education those opportunities for expansion and improvement which are not in sight to-day.

The recommendations of the Report, therefore, are confined to two in number: (1) the gradual assumption by the State of its responsibilities to

Native education under the control of the Native Affairs Department, which includes the Native Representative Council; and (2) the development of an acceptable content of that education in conformity with Native policy.

There is nothing in these two recommendations which need cause any conflict between its signatories and your readers. The Commission believes that a greater advance can be made by a full acceptance of the "policy of segregation as determined by the recent Native legislation" than by any mental reservations in favour of any form of consciously designed assimilation.

It is not practical politics to imagine that there can be any legislative going back on the path adopted. That being so, it is surely wisdom to extract from the policy of "trusteeship" every atom of goodwill, without bothering ourselves overmuch about what may happen when our wards grow up. They will grow up in any case. The policy adopted is designed to encourage them to grow up as friends, not as enemies. The policy of paramountcy of Native interests in Native areas, if properly envisaged, contains a live philosophy of goodwill and promise which all can assist in making effective.



I. BUD-M'BELLE

“LANGA VELA”

13, LORENTZ SL

PRETORIA.

5/1/45

Politics - General

# Non-European Unity Movement

(UNITE FOR FREEDOM)

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## REPORT

OF THE

# 3rd Unity Conference

HELD IN THE

Banqueting Hall, Cape Town

ON

4th & 5th January, 1945

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CHAIRMAN:

Rev. Z. R. MAHABANE.

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Issued by the Non-European Unity Committee.

Joint Secretaries: S. A. JAYIYA and E. RAMSDALE.

P.O. BOX 3475,  
CAPE TOWN.

# NON-EUROPEAN UNITY MOVEMENT.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THIRD UNITY CONFERENCE

HELD ON

4th—5th January, 1945

IN

The Banqueting Hall, Cape Town.

Chairman: Rev. Z. R. Mahabane.

### THURSDAY, 4th JAN.: MORNING SESSION.

Conference assembled at 10.15 a.m. under the Chairmanship of the Rev. Z. R. Mahabane.

The Joint Secretaries, Mr. S. A. Jayiya and Mr. E. Ramsdale, read the notice convening the Conference.

The Chairman welcomed the delegates to this momentous, epoch-making Conference. He regretted the unavoidable absence of Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, due to illness.

This Conference, he said, had been called at a momentous hour in the history of the world, at a period of crisis in the life of the Non-White races of mankind. This year might witness the end of World War II, which was likely to herald peace. They had been called together to take stock of their existence as a people. A situation had been created by what he considered to be the blind policy of the White ruling class. The population of South Africa was made up of four racial groups, Europeans, Coloured, African and Indian. But the Europeans had seized the political power and denied the Non-Europeans any share in the Government of the country. To carry out their policy the Europeans had entrenched themselves in the position of supreme power by a series of clever incisions into the constitutional machinery of government culminating in the Colour Bar Clause in the Act of Union. This Act divided the population into two main racial groups, European and Non-European. According to this imperial statute, membership to the Union Parliament was limited to "a British subject of European descent."

This Colour Bar Clause is the very foundation on which the whole policy of **Segregation** has been built.

The White man appears to suffer from a psychological malady, a fear-complex, superiority-complex, colour-prejudice. This was evident when the late General Hertzog, in moving the second reading of the notorious Representation of Natives Bill of 1936, said he had to resort to what has been described as the first law of nature, or the principle of self-preservation, self-defence. Such measures are bound to create in the minds of the wronged section of the community an attitude of dissatisfaction, friction and antagonism to the section that is responsible for these immoral methods, and thus prepare a fertile soil for breeding the germs of disloyalty.

### RESULTS OF THE POLICY OF SEGREGATION.

The policy of segregation and the denial of political and civic rights in the land of their birth and adoption has had far-reaching effects on the Non-Europeans, such as: economic bondage, employment in menial occupations, low wages, restriction of land, inferior education for their children, sham representation in the legislation and administrative councils of the land, mock parliamentary institutions, mock advisory councils, mock education boards, your Native Representative



Councils, your Coloured Advisory Councils, your Pegging Acts, your Indian High Commissionships, etc.

This highly intolerable state of affairs, this highly untenable position must not be allowed to continue. The Non-European races must seek out those who suffer under the same disabilities; they must abandon the attitude of indifference and apathy to the sufferings of their brethren. It is high time they discarded the selfish attitude as separate political entities, each unconcerned with the fate of the others.

### ATTEMPTS AT CO-OPERATION.

Attempts at co-operation among the Non-Europeans have been made from time to time. Firstly, when the joint deputation was sent to London to protest against the Colour Bar Clause in the Act of Union. Secondly, when a Non-European Conference was called together under the leadership of the late Dr. Abdurahman and Professor Jabavu in 1927. Thirdly, the Non-European United Front of 1939.

These movements have been failures. But that is no reason why we must adopt the attitude of defeatism and cry: "It is hopeless. We are doomed"; or "Iedereen vir homself en God vir al." Let us make another attempt; let us try again and again and again.

### NOT AN ANTI-WHITE MOVEMENT.

This is not an attempt at an alliance against the White man. This is not an anti-White movement. On the contrary, it aims at bringing about a state of affairs in South Africa in which mutual understanding, co-operation between White and Non-White in the building up of a strong and virile population, in developing all the resources of the land, shall be the order of the day—a state of affairs when there shall be peace on earth and good-will among all men of all races, of all colours, of all conditions of development, of all tongues, of all cultures. Let each section of the Non-Europeans put aside the fact that it enjoys certain privileges which are denied to the other sections; let us come together and put up a fight against all forms of discriminatory legislation directed against us. Let us join hands in the grim struggle against all measures adopted by those who have assumed the role of a Herrenvolk, of keeping the Non-European down, of keeping him in what is supposed to be "his place"; a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for the White man. The struggle may be long and bitter, but let us go on in the firm belief that we shall secure our place in the national structure and the political organisation of this, the land of our birth or adoption.

**Mrs. Z. Gool** (Nat. Anti-C.A.D. Comm.) moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his inspiring address. This was seconded by **Mr. Arendse** (Gen. Bldg. Workers' Union).

Letters and telegrams were then read from the following: Professor Jabavu; Liberal Study Group, Durban; Durban Indian Municipal Employees; Natal Coloured Teachers' Association; I.C.U., Bloemfontein. Many other telegrams were received from various parts of the Union.

**The Joint Secretaries** presented their Report, as follows:—

### REPORT OF THE JOINT SECRETARIES TO THE UNITY CONFERENCE: JANUARY 4th and 5th, 1945.

The Unity Movement in its present form was launched as a result of discussions at a Conference between representatives of the All African Convention and the National Anti-C.A.D. Committee held at Bloemfontein in December, 1943.

As a complete record of all work and meetings is attached (in the form of addenda) to the minutes of the 2nd Unity Conference which are in the hands of the delegates attending this Conference, we will confine ourselves to a general review of the Unity Movement.

In attempting to measure the extent of the development of any political movement—if indeed this is possible at all—it is, we feel, necessary to measure the development not only in relation to the

progress more towards the attainment of the objective, but the progress it has made towards getting away from the situation which existed to give birth to the movement.

When the Provisional Committee elected at the Bloemfontein Conference set out on its task of preparing the ground for this momentous Conference and the ultimate goal of Unity of the oppressed groups in what we all recognised was a common struggle, the Committee had to face up to two fundamental tasks; it was not enough to lead the people TO a specific objective. The people had also to be led AWAY from the past. In other words, the Committee realised that it was futile to pretend that it was possible to establish REAL Unity unless we broke down the artificial barriers which create division between the oppressed groups.

The Committee started off with a heritage few could be proud of—except the rulers. Each of the Non-European oppressed groups were paddling their own little canoe leading to its own segregated ditch. Each had tacitly accepted segregation amongst themselves; each group suffered under—or tolerated—a docile and reactionary leadership which bargained for concessions and petty reforms from the rulers at the expense of the others; each group had for years and years swallowed the poisonous propaganda of the rulers that differences of language, “culture,” “standards of living,” etc. (all artificially created differences) meant a difference in the political, social and economic requirements of the citizens of the country. Thus each group helped to entrench the barriers which kept us in separate camps, whilst the ruling class, having succeeded in keeping us divided even in oppression, ground us down one by one.

It was clear to us, therefore, that real Unity could only be achieved on the basis of a complete repudiation by all three sections of the past and the practical recognition by all three sections of the common disabilities under which they suffered, which, in their turn, called for a completely new approach to the problem facing the Non-Europeans of South Africa—that of forging the political weapon which will remove forever the symbol “For Europeans Only” which adorns the edifice of the South African brand of “democracy.”

At the Bloemfontein Conference, where the Provisional Committee was elected, a 10-Point Programme was adopted as a programmatic basis on which real Unity could be established. This programme, read in conjunction with the Declaration on Unity also issued at the Conference is at once a starting point on a new road for all groups and a common goal. It sets out not only what we have to strive for, but what we have to get away from. The acceptance by the people, and the translation into reality of this programme is the objective of the Unity Movement.

We are happy to report definite progress towards the attainment of this objective as far as the African and Coloured peoples are concerned. The National Conferences of the federal bodies of these groups, the All-African Convention and the Anti-C.A.D. Committee, have ratified the 10-Point Programme and have thus turned from the old road of docile acceptance of segregation and oppression and now face the future with a confidence born of the knowledge that in the 10-Point Programme they have at long last found a weapon with which they can effectively strike at the Rulers' policy of Divide and Rule. These two bodies—the A.A.C. and the Anti-C.A.D.—are sufficiently representative of the respective groups they represent to enable us to gauge the effect of the Unity Movement on these groups, and in the light of the decisions taken at their Conferences we can safely say that the idea of Unity on the basis of the 10-Point Programme is taking root amongst the African and Coloured peoples.

A striking example of the extent of the development of the Coloured people on the road to Unity is seen from the complete failure of the attempt made by the Government last year to incite the Coloured people of the Cape Peninsula against the Africans by raising the “influx of Natives” bogey. Although every weapon at their disposal was used, including the press and the notorious Coloured Advisory

Council, to persuade the Coloured people that the Africans were taking the bread out of their mouths, the campaign fizzled out because the Anti-C.A.D. Committee (who took up the matter in co-operation with the W.P. Committee of the A.A.C.) had no difficulty in convincing the Coloured people of the Government's real motives in raising this cry.

Proof that the Africans, too, are advancing on the road towards Unity can be found in the leaflet, "Along the New Road," issued by the Executive of the A.A.C., together with the resolutions on Unity passed by the Executive at its July 1944 meeting held in Johannesburg, and which were ratified by the Convention when it met in Bloemfontein last month. It should also be remembered that it was the Africans who took the initiative in launching the Unity Movement when in September, 1943, the Convention issued the "Clarion Call" and invited the Anti-C.A.D. Committee and the S.A. Indian Congress to meet them to discuss Unity.

The situation in regard to the Indians is less encouraging. Every effort was made to draw the S.A. Indian Congress into the Unity Movement, but the present leadership of Congress is, to use their own words, so "steeped in compromise" that they could not conceive of Unity being anything more than a useful lever with which to extract a few "concessions" or conclude "agreements" with their oppressors. It seems like a touch of poetic justice that whilst their leaders were rejecting the path of Unity with the Coloured and African people because, to use their own words again, they wanted to "appease European public opinion," the same "European public opinion" were busily engaged preparing an all-out assault on the Indians of Natal.

It is perfectly clear that with the present leadership of the S.A. Indian Congress real Unity is an impossibility, but we are nevertheless confident that with the Indian people Unity is not only a distinct possibility, but is in fact already taking shape. The Indian rank and file are beginning to realise that Unity with the other oppressed groups is for them the only way in which they can check further oppression. Evidence of this was given recently when a member of the Committee undertook a tour of Natal. Many meetings, attended by thousands, were held, and at each resolutions calling for Unity on the basis of the 10-Point Programme were passed. This shows that the present Indian leadership does not represent the masses of Indian public opinion on the question of Unity. But it is as well that the Indian rank and file realise also that the other groups are not prepared to have Unity merely as an instrument for political bargaining. If they really want Unity then they, the Indian masses, should follow the lead of the progressive African and Coloured rank and file, by repudiating the present opportunist and careerist leadership and turn their backs completely on the policy of compromise and appeasement which has brought them to the sorry pass in which they find themselves to-day.

Taken as a whole, the position is very favourable. Many difficulties faced the Unity Committee, but the progress made is nevertheless marked and has been made in spite of these difficulties.

We would mention a few of these difficulties:—

1. The prostitution of Unity in the past has made many people in all three groups sceptical of any movement towards Unity.
2. Only among the Coloured and Africans have any real attempts been made to completely neutralise the reactionary and segregationist leadership.
3. The artificial barriers which for so long kept us divided are so firmly entrenched that many people saw in the Unity Movement an attempt to set up all sorts of stupid social customs, instead of seeing the Unity Movement for what it really was, viz., to set up the political machinery to combat oppression and to join forces in the common struggle for full democratic rights.
4. The available machinery for propagating the idea of Unity is very inadequate. The press on the whole is not sympathetic to the Unity Movement. In fact, the majority of so-called Non-European newspapers are, for well-understood reasons, hostile to the idea of Unity.

The last difficulty—the lack of propaganda facilities—was the main difficulty because it was only through the medium of the propaganda machine that we could enlighten the people on the real implication of the 10-Point Programme and the real purpose of the Unity Movement. The Committee issued a leaflet, "The Way to Unity," and several public meetings in different parts of the country were held, but our work in this direction was seriously hampered by lack of adequate funds.

We would also mention that another major difficulty which seriously held up the work of the Committee was the "hide and seek" attitude of the S.A. Indian Congress. As the feeling at the Bloemfontein Conference was definitely that Unity could only be complete when it embraced all three sections, every effort had to be, and was, made to get the S.A. Indian Congress to nominate its representatives to the Provisional Committee, but it was not until 8 months had elapsed before the Congress leaders told us what in effect they knew from the very outset, viz., that they did not want Unity. Our work was hampered in this connection because we were bound by the spirit and decisions of the Bloemfontein Conference and we could not, therefore, undertake any major move until the Indians had come into the Unity Movement.

As we said at the commencement of this report, no attempt has been made to give a detailed account of all the work done by the Committee, for to have done so would have made this report a long drawn-out document. But it should not be deduced from this that very little was done. On the contrary, the Committee had much to do since it was constituted. We wish to pay tribute to the ready co-operation we received from all the members of the Committee and in particular to our Chairman, Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, we wish to offer our thanks for his help and guidance.

S. A. JAYIYA,  
E. RAMSDALE,  
Joint Secretaries,

Non-European Unity Movement.

Cape Town, 3rd January, 1945.

Discussion followed.

**Mr. Sobrun** (S.R. Old Boys' Club) wanted to know whether the S.A. Indian Congress was invited to the Unity Conference.

**The Joint Secretaries** replied that the Congress broke with the Unity Movement at the Johannesburg Conference in July, 1944. Notwithstanding this, however, a general invitation had been extended through the press to all organisations interested to attend.

**Mr. Sobrun**, continuing, said: Although the Congress leaders had accepted four of the Ten Points of the Programme, no further attempt had been made to get the Congress into the Unity Movement. The absence of an official S.A. Indian Congress delegation showed that this was not a real Unity Conference.

**Dr. G. H. Gool** (Vice-Chairman) referred the Conference to the Report of the Proceedings of the Johannesburg Conference (in the hands of delegates) which showed that the S.A. Indian Congress leaders had definitely broken with Unity by their refusal to accept Point One of the Ten-Point Programme, calling for a common franchise for all. This was the cardinal point of the Ten-Point Programme and therefore the fundamental basis of the Unity Movement. The S.A.I.C. was committed to a policy of compromise.

At this stage the Chairman asked Dr. Gool to take the Chair for a short time, as he had an engagement.

**Mr. Rahim** (A.P.O. Central Executive) said that since the S.A. Indian Congress had always worked as a separate entity, they did not represent the mass of Indian opinion. He maintained that there was little hope of getting the Congress to come into the Unity Movement and felt that the Indian masses should break with the leadership.

**Mrs. Z. Gool** said that the Continuation Committee had done everything in its power to draw the S.A. Indian Congress into the Unity Movement, but without success. The leaders would not accept the

Ten-Point Programme. Though everything possible should still be done to draw the Congress into the Unity Movement, it may be necessary to by-pass the leadership to achieve this end and go to the people. The Congress leaders have not learned that there is nothing to be gained by compromise with the Government. Mass pressure must be brought to bear on the leaders.

**Mr. Amra** (India League) criticised the Secretaries' Report on various grounds. No progress towards Unity had been made. It was an astounding statement (in the Report) to say that Unity could only be achieved by repudiating the past. No attempt had been made to draw in the S.A. Indian Congress, the African National Congress and the African People's Organisation (A.P.O.).

Here the Joint Secretaries intervened to point out Mr. Amra's error. The A.P.O. was represented at Conference by delegates from its Central Executive and several branches. The President, a Vice-President, General Secretary and Treasurer of the A.P.O. were in the Conference hall as delegates.

**Mr. Amra** withdrew his allegation. Continuing his criticism, he considered the Report too optimistic. We have not marshalled the people behind the 10-Point Programme. The Unity Committee had not taken the Ten-Point Programme down to the people. The Ten-Point Programme kept away various bodies and Unity was being wrecked because of the insistence on the acceptance of the Ten-Point Programme in full by the leaders of organisations.

(As Mr. Amra was at this point subject to many interjections, the Acting Chairman appealed to Conference not to interrupt speakers.) Mr. Amra said the Committee had made ineffective use of the Press to publicise the Movement, the Ten-Point Programme, and the Conference.

**The Joint Secretaries** again corrected Mr. Amra. Every Non-European newspaper in South Africa had been asked to insert advertisements and editorial matter dealing with Conference and the Unity Movement in general. Every paper had been asked to publish the Ten-Point Programme with explanatory notes. In regard to the "Guardian" and the "Cape Standard," specifically mentioned by Mr. Amra as having received no matter for publication, they said that numerous articles were sent to the "Cape Standard," but few were published, while the "Guardian" gave about five lines of publicity, in spite of receiving a great deal of matter. This paper had also declined to publish an advert. (in the Southern and Northern editions) until the Unity Committee had paid in advance. The adverts. were therefore held over through lack of funds.

**Mr. Amra** contended that the Report closed the door to the entry of the S.A. Indian Congress into the Unity Movement.

**Mr. Stewart** (Students' Socialist Party) said that Unity as a word was of no value whatsoever. Unity for action meant Unity on a Programme. We must accept a minimum programme, the Ten-Point Programme. It was neither radical nor socialist. Anyone who was not prepared to accept this minimum Ten-Point Programme was of no use to the Unity Movement. To abandon the Programme would mean breaking the dynamic which was moving the people. It was more important to stick to the Programme than to win over the S.A. Indian Congress.

**Mr. Sobrun** supported Mr. Amra's view that propaganda had been inadequate, as far as Natal was concerned. Nothing had been done to clarify the Ten-Point Programme to the masses of the Indian people. Even after the 2nd Unity Conference nothing was mentioned about the Unity Movement in Natal.

**Dr. G. H. Gool**, correcting Mr. Sobrun, reported that a member of the Continuation Committee of the Unity Movement and the Secretary of the Anti-C.A.D., had toured Natal after the 2nd Unity Conference. With the help of the Anti-Segregation Council, who had whole-heartedly accepted the Ten-Point Programme, they had addressed gatherings in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle, Dundee, Dannhauser, Glencoe, and the response from the Indian people had been very warm. At

these meetings the Ten-Point Programme as the basis of Unity was explained, and resolutions endorsing the Programme were enthusiastically passed.

**Mr. Fataar** (Cape Anti-C.A.D.) pointed out that the S.A. Indian Congress was responsible for holding up the real work of the Unity Continuation Committee for 8 months. The present Conference had been called in spite of the defection of the S.A.I.C. Negotiations should go on with the S.A.I.C. or any new leadership that would arise, or with any representative Indian body that accepts the Ten-Point Programme as the basis of Unity. He deplored the pessimism of Mr. Amra and Mr. Sobrun.

**Mr. Hammond** (Gleemoor Civic Assoc.) refuted Mr. Sobrun's statements. He had been in Natal during Dr. Gool's tour and had participated in some of the Unity meetings.

**Mrs. Z. Gool** said the criticism of Mr. Sobrun and Mr. Amra was unfounded. The Unity Committee had done everything in its power to contact all bodies interested in Unity. About 140 organisations in Natal alone had been circulated. It was unfortunate that Mr. Amra should always be objecting and theorising at every Conference. Nothing was to be gained by that. She reminded him that he himself had bypassed the S.A. Indian Congress leadership in 1939 by going on to her platform and preaching the need for a Non-European United Front.

**Mr. Basson** (A.P.O. & Anti-C.A.D., Kimberley) denied that the A.P.O. was not kept informed of the Unity Movement. As a proof of this, Dr Dietrich, President of the A.P.O., and himself had taken the greetings of the A.P.O. to the 2nd Unity Conference, in Johannesburg.

In Kimberley, the local Anti-C.A.D. Committee was invited by the African National Congress to its Conference, December, 1944. There they asked the President, Dr. Xuma, for a clear declaration on Unity. The reply was that they could not make the statement because they were not invited to the Unity Conference. Mr. Basson had asked the Secretary to put this categorically in writing, but he refused to do so. Mr. Basson considered that this reply was an excuse. They were sabotaging Unity since not a single delegate at the A.N.C. Conference had raised the question of Unity.

**The Joint Secretaries** stated that invitations had definitely been sent to Dr. Xuma, President of the African National Congress, and the General Secretary, and to all branches of the A.N.C.

**Dr. G. H. Gool** pointed out that in the Minutes of the 2nd Unity Conference (p. 2) Prof. Jabavu had invited Dr. Xuma and the Secretary of the A.N.C. to be present at the Conference. He assured Conference that all literature issued by the Continuation Committee had been forwarded to them.

**Mr. Malunga** (Cape Voters' Assoc., Kimberley) said the idea had been spread abroad that the African National Congress did not represent the African people. This was a wrong idea. The situation among the Africans was in chaos. The All-African Convention was thrust upon the Africans, but did not receive the approval of the masses. The African National Congress must be regarded as a national body and be treated with respect as such. The question was how to get real unity. He too wished to know officially whether invitations had been sent to the A.N.C.

**The Joint Secretaries** referred him to the reply already given to Mr. Basson.

**Mr. Sondlo** (All-African Convention) felt that we should not drag our internecine strife into the Conference. We had gathered there to discuss Unity and not who was, or who was not, the official mouth-piece of the African people. We had come there to fight oppression.

**Mr. Arendse** said that room should be made for the A.N.C. He also maintained that the Ten-Point Programme had not been explained to the workers.

**Mr. Ngubeni** (Georøe District) asserted that the A.N.C. did not receive invitations to this Conference.

**The Joint Secretaries** on a point of order again corrected this statement.

**Dr. G. H. Gool** deprecated the attempts made by some delegates to settle at this Conference the internal fights of their organisations.

**Mr. Lebaken** (Bantu Ratepayers' Assoc.) moved the adoption of the Secretaries' Report. He said that we should appreciate the hard work done to convene this Conference. We have only started. We have no intention of stopping now.

**Mr. Tsenyego** (All-African Convention, East London), in seconding the motion, associated himself with Mr. Lebaken's remarks.

The Report was accepted unanimously. Conference adjourned for lunch.

#### **THURSDAY, JAN. 4th: AFTERNOON SESSION.**

**Rev. Z. R. Mahabane** took the Chair.

Arising out of the discussion on the Report, **Mr. O. Caldecott** (Students' Socialist Party) asked leave to introduce the following resolution:

**"This Conference directs the incoming Committee to open negotiations personally as well as by letter with the African National Congress with a view to drawing them into the Unity Movement on the basis of the Ten-Point Programme."**

The Chairman ruled that this resolution should come up later under the discussion on "The Building of Unity." This was agreed to by the movers.

The Joint Secretaries presented a preliminary report from the Credentials Committee. This showed just under 100 organisations represented up to that time. On the motion by Mr. Amra it was resolved to defer adoption of Report till next day with an analysis of the nature of the organisations represented.

A discussion on **The Basis of Unity** was introduced by **Mr. B. M. Kies**, who delivered the following speech:—

#### **THE BASIS OF UNITY.**

Mr. Chairman and Members of Conference,

It is my task to introduce the discussion on the "Basis of Unity" and not to deliver an address in the usual sense of the term. On behalf of the Continuation Committee I shall move the relevant resolution on the agenda paper, namely, "That this Conference re-affirms the 10-Point Programme as the basis upon which Unity is to be built and the fight for full democratic rights prosecuted; it thus urges upon all organisations and members of organisations not only to make known to the people throughout the country the principles and implications of the programme, but to wage the fight for Unity and full citizenship upon this basis."

And so I shall very largely confine myself to the clarification of certain misunderstandings of the programme which have become apparent during the past year; to replying to certain criticisms levelled at the programme; to focussing attention more keenly upon the main points of the programme, and to an explanation of its real significance and implications.

Before we set out upon this task, let us briefly review the history of the 10-Point Programme during the year in which it has first seen the light of day. It was in December, 1943, at the Preliminary Unity Conference in Bloemfontein, attended by delegations from the All-African Convention and the National Anti-C.A.D., that the Programme was provisionally adopted as the basis of Unity. Immediately after this, in January, 1944, the 2nd National Anti-C.A.D. Conference not only ratified the action of the Anti-C.A.D. delegation to the Preliminary Conference, but also adopted the 10-Point Programme as the basis of the Anti-C.A.D. movement in its struggle against the C.A.C. and C.A.D. and for full democratic rights. In July, 1944, the Executive of the All-African Convention, meeting in Johannesburg, endorsed the action of the Convention delegation to the Preliminary Unity Conference. Immediately after this, the 2nd Unity Conference was held at Kholvad House, Johannesburg, and it was precisely on the basis of, and because

of, the 10-Point Programme that there came a parting of the ways between the Unity Movement and the leadership of the S. African Indian Congress. Then in December, 1944, the Annual Conference of the All-African Convention ratified the decisions of the delegation and the Executive and endorsed the 10-Point Programme as the basis upon which Unity can be built. This is the point we have reached, and it is one of the tasks of this, the first all-in Unity Conference, to accept, reject or modify the 10-Point Programme as the basis of Unity.

Let us turn now to a consideration of certain misunderstandings and criticisms of the Programme. These, roughly speaking, fall into four groups. First, there are those who read through the Programme, agree with it, feel that it embodies their aspirations, and therefore say, "I accept the 10-Point Programme," now feeling that they have done as much as could reasonably be expected of them. They are like the man who, tired of repeating the Lord's Prayer every night, wrote it out and added a postscript reading, "These, O Lord, are my sentiments." After that he never found it necessary to pray again. Second, there are the politically immature, who have read many revolutionary leaflets and stirring accounts of other people's militant struggles for liberation. They have such strong r-r-revolutionary stomachs that they swallow a mere 10-Point Programme with the greatest of ease, no effort and no thought. They now feel that they can call for action of a revolutionary character. They have no sooner baptised the baby than they want to marry him off. Third, we have the criticism that the 10-Point Programme is only a "long range policy," an ultimate goal upon which everyone is agreed. But, it is argued, a short-range policy is needed, a policy which applies to the day-to-day struggle of the people; we must come down to the every-day needs of the masses, we need a bread-and-butter policy for the short-range. This argument usually comes from a section of the left, but it is actively seized upon by the right and distorted for their own unprincipled purpose—collaboration, compromise and betrayal. The right pretends to accept the idea of full democratic rights, but only as an ultimate ideal, a star shining over a promised land; in the meantime, until the promised land is sighted, they feel that they have "to make the best of a bad job." In practice this means negotiations and "gentleman's agreements" and not doing anything to ruffle the white Herrenvolk, e.g., the leadership of the S.A.I. Congress; it also means treachery and careerism, e.g., the members of the N.R.C. and C.A.C. They all claim to be striving for the same goal as the genuine fighters, but allege that they are using different methods of reaching it.

Fourth, there is the plain, blunt person, who aggressively announces that he wants action. He foams at the mouth and asserts that theory doesn't matter, that only practice will put things right. To him it doesn't matter if the programme has 5, 10 or 20 points. "We all want the same things," he says, "so let's get down to some action. Let's stop talking and **do** something."

We shall now attempt to reply briefly and categorically to these. The fuller reply to each of these misunderstandings and criticisms will be more evident from our remarks on the main features and implications of the Programme.

To reply to the first group—those who accept the Programme and think their responsibility ends there. This is a grave misunderstanding, but one that is well within our reach to correct. It is not enough merely to accept the Programme, no matter how sincere and loyal you may be. We are looking for independent and determined fighters, conscious of their goal and of the road they must take. We have no use for sheep, for dumb followers, blindly trailing along behind the bell-ram. We have no use for people who think that the real struggle is going on elsewhere and who feel that their local difficulties are so insurmountable that they will have to leave most of the fighting to someone else in some other place, where it is easier to struggle. So the country thinks that the real struggle must go on in the towns; the Northern Provinces think that the real struggle must be fought in the good old Cape, "the home and well-spring of all political movements";



the Cape Province thinks that Cape Town is the real storm-centre; the Africans have a great admiration for the militant and plain-speaking Coloured people; the Coloureds thrill when they read of the strikes, demonstrations, marches and bus-boycotts of the Africans. **Everyone is shifting the struggle on to someone else's shoulders.** This attitude we must root out. We must break the outlook of those who are content to back their team from the grand-stand. Every oppressed person must be brought to the realisation that the 10-Point Programme is an arsenal providing every oppressed Non-European in every dorp and district with the weapons with which to carry on the struggle in whatever place he finds himself. It must not be buried so as to be brought out one day when the sun rises blood-red; it must be used every day in every phase of the struggle against oppression.

To reply to the second group—the fire-eaters. They will have to learn, as we all must learn, that while the adoption of the 10-Point Programme is a great and momentous step forward, **it is only the first step.** The vanguard of any movement should never fall into the fatal error of confusing the most advanced section of the leadership with the masses themselves; it is one thing to pass a resolution, but it is quite another thing to live up to it. The adoption of the 10-Point Programme signifies the direction in which we are travelling, but it does not mean that we have arrived. **The building of real Unity on the basis of such a programme is the work of years and years.** It is both irresponsible and idiotic to try to rush your fences in S. Africa, because great things are happening in Europe and because the social revolution is maturing there. Events in Europe will have repercussions here, profound repercussions, but there is no need for people to think that the struggle in S. Africa will not take years and years. And it would be well to remember that in Europe it will take many, many years before the common man comes into his own. Events in Europe may shorten the struggle in S. Africa, but they will never make it unnecessary to struggle here and now.

In reply to those who, in good faith, assert that the 10-Point Programme is only a long-range policy, an ultimate goal, we may say immediately that they are completely and dangerously wrong. It is not merely an ultimate goal. **It is a point of departure.** It must become the spring-board for all our political activities. It must become the basis of our day-to-day struggles. In these day-to-day struggles we must insist upon the relevant point of the Programme as a **minimum.** We cannot and must not ask for less. "But," the critic will ask, "is **this practical?** In our day-to-day struggle we are fighting for little reforms here and there, trying to get some relief from the intolerable burden of exploitation and oppression. **Must we ask for full equality? Must we refuse to accept less?**" Without any doubt or hesitation, my answer is "**Yes, definitely, yes!**" Reforms and concessions are a **by-product** of militant struggle in which you demand exactly what you want and not what you think you may be able to squeeze out at that particular time. In any case, the Government will carry through whatever plans it feels it has strength enough to carry through. **They,** the oppressors, always seek to put on fresh chains. **They** will tighten the old screws if they can. Why should **we** help them? **They** will deceive by "compromises" and "agreements." Why should **we** be a party to the deception?

The 10-Point Programme covers both the so-called long-range aims and the so-called short-range demands. **The two are really one.** Why do we say this? Because it is only by insisting on the 10-Point Programme in the so-called short-term, that we will ever get nearer to the so-called long-term goal. **The end is the means:** to reach the **end** or **goal** of the 10-Point Programme, we must use the **means** of the 10-Point Programme. We will never reach the fulfilment of the 10-Point Programme in the "long run" by demanding anything less in the "short run." Moreover, **we must insist upon this.** Otherwise we will be opening our ranks to opportunists who use the prestige and power of the Movement for carrying on their old reactionary games, entrenching themselves by paying lip-service to the "long term" and making merry

in the "short term."

Fourth, we come to the "activists" who despise "talk" and who feel that "programme" and "theory" do not matter. These ideas we shall have to change or we may find ourselves provoked into all manner of adventurist sallies. The Programme **does** matter. Theory is important. Your political theory means the way you sum up things, where you consider the interests of the oppressed to lie. This determines your direction; it determines the type of demand you make and the type of organisation you admire or follow or join; it determines your political activity. Indeed, we have become so used to the harsh **practices** of the S. African Government that we usually forget that these harsh practices are based upon a **theory**—the theory that the Europeans are the Herrenvolk and the trustees of the Non-Europeans; the theory that the natural resources of S. Africa should be harnessed for the benefit of the minority of shareholders and not for the majority of the workers.

What we feel is the result of putting this theory into practice. When we say that the Programme is of **prime importance**, we mean that without the right **programme**, the right **theory**, we will never get the right **practical** activity and the desired **practical** result. **Without a correct evaluation of the forces of oppression and the goal and resources of the oppressed, our faces will not be turned in the right direction and we will not spend our time in activities bringing us nearer to our goal.** The only thing any political movement without a programme can do, is a great deal of harm.

We turn aside now from the misunderstandings and criticism of the Programme, to focus attention upon the main points and implications of the Programme itself.

Because we have called it a 10-Point Programme, far too many people have missed the main point altogether—and the main point is contained in the preamble or introduction to the actual formulation of the ten points or principles or demands. At the risk of being told that everyone here can read and understand as well as I can, I am going to read from the preamble because I am convinced that it is absolutely necessary to drive home certain fundamental aspects of the Programme.

Let us look at Points I—IV of the preamble.

After frank and friendly deliberations on questions affecting all Non-Europeans in South Africa, the Conference has come to the following conclusions:—

I. That the rulers of South Africa, who wield the economic and political power in this country, are deliberately keeping the Non-European people in political and economic oppression for the sake of their own selfish interests.

II. That the entire constitutional and economic structure, the legislative, educational, fiscal, judicial and administrative policy, is designed to serve the interests of the European ruling class (the minority) and not the interests of the people of the country as a whole.

III. That despite protestations to the contrary, it is the firm determination of this ruling class to prevent the economic advance and upliftment of the Non-Europeans.

IV. That during the 33 years since the formation of the Union, the promises of the rulers (who have assumed the self-appointed role of "trustees") that they would use the economic resources of the Union for the benefit of the underprivileged (those in "trust") have been flagrantly broken. Instead of a process of civilisation, of reforms leading to a greater share in self-government and government, to a greater share in the national income, to a greater share in the material and cultural wealth of South Africa, to a more equitable distribution of the land—these 33 years have been marked by a process of cumulative oppression, of more brutal dispossession of the Non-European, of more crippling restrictions in every sphere."

The central idea contained in parts I—IV above, is that the oppression of the Non-European is a deliberate plan or design on the part of the rulers, who have no intention of ever allowing the Non-European to develop economically, politically, educationally or socially. It is of

the utmost importance that we should all understand this, because it means that we will be throwing overboard once and for all the idea which has retarded our progress for so many tragic years, namely, that the oppression of the Non-European is the result of misunderstanding, that it's all a dreadful mistake, that the rulers are really Christians who will change their hearts once we have shown them the error of their uncharitable ways. Once we realise that our oppression is calculated and deliberate, we will also realise that we have to adopt new methods of struggle.

Points V—VII make an equally vital departure from the old paths, for they state in unmistakable and uncompromising terms that the only solution, the only way of effecting the advancement of the Non-Europeans and of S. Africa as a whole, is by the granting of full citizenship on a basis of full equality.

"V. That not only the future welfare of the Non-Europeans in South Africa, but their very existence as a people demands the immediate abolition of "trusteeship," of all constitutional privileges based on skin-colour, privileges which are incompatible with the principles of democracy and justice.

VI. That the continuation of the present system in South Africa, so similar to the Nazi system of Herrenvolk, although it may lead to temporary prosperity for the ruling class and race, must inevitably be at the expense of the Non-Europeans and lead to their ruin.

VII. That the economic prosperity and all-round advancement of South Africa, as of other countries, can only be achieved by the collaboration of free peoples: such collaboration can only be possible and fruitful as between people who enjoy the status of citizenship, which is based on equality of civil and political rights."

The stress laid upon the absolute necessity of obtaining equality of rights should be carefully noted, because it sets our movement on a certain level, the level of men and women demanding full recognition of their manhood and womanhood, refusing to consider themselves wards or minors or inferiors.

Points VIII and X are equal in importance to any other point in the preamble. Indeed, at the present stage, they may perhaps be said to take priority over most of the others, because they represent one of the most dangerous rocks upon which Unity may suffer shipwreck. They refer to the enemy within our gates, the segregationists in our own ranks.

"VIII. The recognition that Segregation is an artificial device of the rulers, and an instrument for the domination of the Non-European, is at the same time a recognition that the division, strife and suspicion amongst the Non-European groups themselves is also artificially fostered by the ruling class. From this it follows:—

- (a) That no effective fight against Segregation is possible by people who tacitly accept Segregation amongst themselves.
- (b) That the acceptance of Segregation, in whatever form, serves only the interests of the oppressors.
- (c) That our fight against Segregation must be directed against the segregationists within as well as without.

X. In view of the heavy legacy of the past still in the ranks of the Non-Europeans, the task of this movement will be the breaking down of the artificial walls erected by the rulers, walls of distrust and suspicion between the Non-Europeans. This breaking down must start from the top and come down right to the bottom. This is the organisational task of Unity. Provincial Committees must follow, then Regional Committees, and finally local Committees, where this Unity will become a living reality."

For a very long time, especially during the initial years, we shall have to wage a very determined battle on two fronts: against the segregationists without and against the segregationists within. We cannot slacken on either front, because defeat on either one front inevitably means defeat on the other.

Closely connected with points 8 and 10, is point 9, that we are building an anti-Segregation and not an anti-European front.

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