

own people. That is what they want to do, the big rascals. You will have to fight the African drivers of the lorries

"I stand here today not to ask you to defend me against these small boys, (he was referring to the police present) I can do that myself; you know that. I stand here to ask you to defend your homes to the bitterest ends, to the last ditch. Yes, friends, some of you are asking what is going to happen on that day. The answer is simple; when we had a conference at the Western Native Townships last Monday the police came with their guns merely to intimidate and frighten us. That shows you what they will do when they come to force you from your homes. When will the white man realise that we are prepared to fight and die for our Motherland. It is on that day that we must make the white man realise that if he comes to the African he must think twice. Friends, we have no guns; friends, we have/.....

have nothing with which to attack the white man, not because we cannot get them if we want to; the white man must realise that if we want guns we will get them from them today, because if we decide to do so every European who has a gun will have to give it up to us because we cannot take it by force. So it is simple. It is because we have decided not to kill the Europeans; that is why we do not take their guns. It is quite simple. If there is bloodshed on the day of removal it will be because of the ignorant police boys. We know that Congress does not believe in violence, but what are we going to do when we defend our homes and other people shoot at us?"

And at page 7497 the record reads:

"I want to tell you what you must do as from tomorrow. Every man, every woman, and every child must be ready to meet the enemy at the gate. When your enemy meets you in your own house, then

/you.....

you are placed in difficulties because you don't have enough space to move about. We are going to meet this Dutchman in the street."

There was no examination or cross-examination of Resha on this speech, and the cross-examination of Coetzee does not affect the quality of what was said.

It will be seen immediately there are contradictory elements in the various speeches delivered, and that Resha himself, while stressing the non-violent nature of their resistance, appears to suggest that their policy of non-violence would reach the limits of its existence if violence were used against them by the police.

On the whole, I am unable to come to the conclusion that this meeting should be classified as one where a clear line of violent resistance had been adopted insofar as the Removal Scheme is concerned, and I am therefore unable to draw any inference that the speeches, taken as a whole, are consistent with a policy of violence of the African National Congress.

There/.....

There is nothing of any special significance, in my opinion, contained in the report of the next meeting covered by Coetzee - a Colonial Youth Day meeting held in Sophiatown on the 20th March, 1955, organised by the Colonial Youth Day Committee consisting of the African National Congress Youth League, the Indian Congress Youth League and the Youth of the Congress of Democrats. The various speakers stressed the alleged evils and inhumanity of the removal scheme of Sophiatown, and of various other oppressive acts in South Africa, and dealt with the struggle for freedom which was being waged against the imperialist and colonial powers. One of the speakers, Press, is recorded as having said at page 7510:

"The youth of the Soviet Union are free. They are free to live the best life possible for any human being. The youth of China are marching forward in a great army. But the youth in America, the youth in Guiana, the youth in all these oppressed places, oppressed countries, they are taught to work in the mines, they are not allowed to go to school/.....

school , they are not taught to work like those in the Soviet Union."

The familiar tune is played again concerning the heroic stand of the people in Kenya and of the "British Imperialists slaughtering women and children under the guise of suppressing the Mau Mau".

There is nothing worthy of any particular further comment about this meeting.

The prosecution stressed the importance of the next meeting reported by Coetzee, which was a Freedom Charter Committee meeting held in Johannesburg on the 18th September, 1955. The evidence discloses that it was a widely advertised meeting.

The accused Lollan was chairman thereof; the main speaker upon whom the prosecution relied was the co-conspirator Sejake, and I shall set out in full his speech, which has been referred to often during the course of these proceedings.

Coetzee's notes disclose that Lollan stated:

"We/....."

- 59 -

"We will now ask Mr. Sejake to speak on the section of the Charter which says "The people shall share in the country's wealth."

In parenthesis, this was confirmed by Lollan when he gave evidence.

SCHEDULE No. B - SPEECH BY SEJAKE, 18th SEPTEMBER,
1955, FREEDOM CHARTER MEETING, JOHANNESBURG,
FOLLOWS.

1.

SCHEDULE No. B

Speech by Sejake, 18th September, 1955.

Freedom Charter Meeting, Johannesburg.

The people shall share in the country's wealth. The land shall be shared amongst those who work it. Land must be used by man for his welfare. This service absorbs the following branches of cultivation : Agriculture ... " I have in parenthesis 'Horticulture'... "Forestry, Industrial, Commercial, Housing, Railway Sites and so on....."

Yes. Then the speaker deals with certain of these matters that he mentioned, referring to the conditions in South Africa? --- Yes.

Is that correct? --- Correct.

Now I want you to omit the next paragraphs in his speech until you get to the paragraph starting "The State which is the instrument of oppression"? --- "The State which is the instrument of oppression, that is the Government, which is the instrument of oppression, and which is financed by the money is set into operation. Machinery that restricts the movement of people by enforcing particularly the Pass Laws, and that is the great weapon used by the Government in South Africa today. It rests with us to say whether we are going to continue to carry passes, carry the reference books or not. Under this situation the people's purchasing power is

seriously reduced. The articles which they would otherwise have bought must be destroyed. That is the law of capitalism in South Africa as in other countries. Even food is destroyed in South Africa whilst there are millions of people who suffer from malnutrition, and actually die from hunger. This ownership of land becomes meaningless under the present system in South Africa, and you and I must correct it. If you don't God will not, for he has nothing to do with your conditions and omissions. He is not responsible to you. You must sit down and form the machinery for freedom. There is a burning need for a change: a progressive step is necessary to bring the shape of things to come. One million signatures alone are not sufficient. Action is the correct the Proletariat must shout not only from the political platform, because this merely explains the situation, but they must also create a theatre and they must fight tactfully in actual manouvre and employ a definite amount of energy for the freedom to come. This will give us some guarantee that the road to the re-division of land amongst those who work it has been found. We advocate the abolishment of prisons. They stand on land which could have been used for the construction of agricultural colleges. Now we don't find more teachers of land, we find more policemen; instead of finding more schools we find more prisons. Instead of finding a rising degree of happiness we find a mounting degree of misery in South Africa.

The State must provide tractors on the land and not handcuffs. There must be more sheep and no barren land. There must be more water reservoirs and less draught. More domestic animals and no culling of stock. Well paid agriculturists and not men ..." and I have in parenthesis 'who deport us with their fingernails to..... our prisons.' "There must be freedom of movement and no reference books. The day may come when the African women will be compelled to carry reference books, but I visualise that that will be the day when the Devil will be let loose. but we are fighting this evil today because it inconveniences the menfolk. They say our wives must carry the same devil; that will be the day". I have in parenthesis 'applause'. "There must be work and security. The period seems to be fast arriving when ..." I have in brackets 'all the people' -"will join the liberatory movement in this country and finally all workers who are in the grinding mill of misery and poverty should join hands for the determined achievement of the peoples' freedom. This start of the struggle cannot be won early enough, whilst there are other sections of the people who for one reason or another enjoy certain rights and concessions and feel they must stand aloof to protect and maintain their privileges whilst the rest are perpetually injured. It will be good therefore for the workers of all races to join a trade union and affiliate with one co-ordinating body of Trade Unions - an example is

the South African Congress of Trade Unions. It is all very well to say the State shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw up food" I have in brackets unemployment benefits" but we have got to make the State do these things. It requires hard practical work and sacrifice. One must be prepared to clash with the servants of the State, and if the struggle assumes very large and country-wide dimensions, one shall have to clash even with the armed forces of the country. That is the test we must pass before we can have work and security. Apparently the major opinion, that we are oppressed and must be emancipated is crystallising in the minds of the people. The working class understand, the working class is ready. The necessary conditions have arisen. The time is becoming more and more opportune. Someone must step forward in the presence of the police and armed forces. One million signatures must be to..... and bring South Africa and its enslaved people a million years of prosperity and freedom. Wage agreements will then follow; they will not drop from heaven; there shall then be equal work, irrespective of race or sect. There will be a forty hour week, a national minimum wage paid, annual leave and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working people. These things do not come to you when you sit down with folded arms. I will give you a practical example to you of what I saw a few weeks ago. I went to one very big

foundry in this City one day and workers there made demands. The employers refused to give them a hearing. They particularly wanted increased wages. When I was in the office the Manager told me my boys are happy. Not even had he the decency to say 'my workers are happy'. He continued to say he paid them very well. I went to the workers to report. The workers took a decision and said 'After lunch we will go in and just look at the machines'. He had told me that the factory belonged to him. I agreed with him and said even the machines belong to you, but the hands of the workers don't belong to you". I have in parenthesis 'applause'. "They are determined to sell their labour on the best market; they stopped work. The police were called. Three flying squads were called. They said to me 'You are just the person we are looking for'. I said to them 'I am the employee of the workers, I must do what my masters order me to do'. 'If they say I must leave then I will do it'. I was released on the spot. No one was arrested. Friends, don't fear the police; don't fear even the armed forces. Your powers of resistance are greater than even the atom bomb. Freedom in our lifetime". I have in parenthesis 'applause'.

After that the Chairman, Stanley Lollan, spoke?

--- Correct.

And emphasised the necessity of becoming familiar with the Freedom Charter and called upon the audience to repeat the section of the Freedom Charter on which Mr. Sejake spoke? Is that correct?

--- Yes.

SCHD. No. . . .

Which the audience then did? --- Yes.

Collection: 1956 Treason Trial
Collection number: AD1812

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand

Location:- Johannesburg

©2011

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.