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Motto: RIGHT NOT MIGHT FREEDOM NOT SERFDOM

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2 & 3 New Court Chambers,
44 Commissioner Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

5th April 1950.

Mr. A.W.G. Champion,
19, Old Dutch Road,
DURBAN.

Dear Sir,

Herewith please find enclosed Statement issued by your Working Committee in connection with the Newclare Riots, and also the Minutes of your last meeting and that of your Council of Action.

Yours for Africa,

W. M. Sisulu
SECRETARY-GENERAL.

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

Dear Sir,

I feel it my duty to furnish you with additional information and observations on the disturbances that occurred at Newclare and other places from the 29th January, 1950.

As you will have observed from press reports, these disturbances were provoked, at Newclare, by police raids. The first one occurred when an African lady was arrested in terms of the Liquor Act. It would appear that her husband engaged the policeman in argument as a result of which the policeman assaulted him. On the intervention by the members of the public the disturbance immediately ensued.

The second one occurred in the course of a police raid for passes. From the evidence at our disposal, it appears that a policeman demanded a pass from an African. As he produced it the policeman dragged him into the pick-up van. As he resisted the police began assaulting him and a clash immediately developed. During this disturbance some Africans were fatally shot, others severely injured whilst severe damage was caused to property. The police were so harsh in suppressing the rising as completely to forget the fact that a police sergeant had been saved by the very people they were shooting.

A few Indian and Chinese shops were burnt down. In my opinion this fact did not indicate an anti-Asiatic attitude. My impression was that this was directed against certain individuals. I must point that throughout this situation, there was much cooperation between Indian and African leaders.

It will be observed that the relations between Africans and members of the police force have become strained, and unless something is done in the immediate future the position is bound to deteriorate. Your Working Committee was conscious of its responsibility during this conflict. It interested itself early in the disturbance and I must say with great success. Your Working Committee issued a statement (a copy of which is herein attached) in which the importance of discipline was emphasised.

Wherever I have gone, I have emphasised the importance of coordination between the local Branches of the A.N.C. on the one hand and between the Provincial Branch and the National on the other hand. The members of the National Executive are urged to take more active interest in the affairs of the Nation. In this way only shall Africa's cause triumph.

Yours faithfully,

W. M. SISULU.
SECRETARY-GENERAL, AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

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