

Newspapers in the March to Freedom — 3

"ABANTU-BATHO" — ORGAN OF CONGRESS

AT an historic meeting in Bloemfontein on January 8, 1912, the South African Native National Congress was born. It had been summoned by P. ka Isaka Seme who had brought together all the Vigilance Associations, representatives of nearly every Paramount Chief in the country, church organisations—practically every existent African body—and they had amalgamated in one Congress. This was the direct antecedent of the African National Congress.

The Congress newspaper, *Abantu-Batho*, set out the 21 objects of the organisation in its first issue, which called for the removal of the colour bar in the political, educational and industrial fields.

Its first editor was Robert Grendon, who also distinguished himself as being the first African to address a Socialist meeting in South Africa. He spoke at an International Socialist League gathering on "The link between Black and White."

But "Abantu-Batho" did not prove very militant in its first years and during the early part of the 1914 war it was particularly docile. It dissociated itself entirely from the industrial struggles on the Witwatersrand, but this is readily understood as the African working class was still small and completely unorganised. There was in fact no visible reason for the Africans to support the white workers of the Rand who were fighting tooth and nail to maintain the privileges that a white skin gave them.

Then in November 1916, there appeared an article 'Native Drudgery' in "Abantu-Batho" which revealed an awakening of the African nationalists: The article said:

"The unskilled labour and drudgery of all kinds, both at the mines and in the urban areas, are done by Native people . . . They form the major population of the country and they belong to the working class. They are the mainstay of the country's industries and the backbone of the land's prosperity . . . And they are the most worked and the least paid . . . A European thinks more of his dog than he does of the black man who does all the work for his comfort."

Women Against Passes

"Abantu-Batho" played a vital part in the years of the fight of the Free State African women against passes.

In July, 1913, 600 women in Bloemfontein marched to the municipal offices and asked to see the Mayor. They handed him a big bag. When he opened it he found it crammed full of the women's passes. They told him they would not be using them any more.

The biggest demonstration took place at Winburg where 800 women marched. Many were arrested and dispersed throughout the jails of the Free State. "Abantu-Batho" tells that ANC leader Solomon J. Plaatje visited the women in the Kroonstad jail and the tears rolled down his cheeks when he saw the terrible prison conditions. But all the women vowed that when they came out they would never carry passes.

It was "Abantu-Batho" that carried week-by-week news of the courage and determination of the Free State African women.

During the 1920's the newspaper became less and less of a political mouthpiece of the African people. After a succession of editors, including Mveli Skota, the author of "Black Folks' Who's Who," Saul Msane and Selope Thema, it was finally bought out by the African and Indian Trading Association in 1931.

It is a tragedy that "Abantu-Batho" is one of those papers that seems to have been irretrievably

From the Notebooks
of
LIONEL FORMAN,
with additions by
SADIE FORMAN

lost. No library in South Africa has copies of it prior to 1930, and all attempts to trace a collection of copies have proved futile.

"The International"

While "Abantu-Batho" was attempting to find a firm foothold in an African consciousness, the Socialists during the First World War were having trouble with the Labour Party. The left-wing Labourites had broken away to form the War-on-War League. When that disintegrated, the splinter sections came together in the International Socialist League, the forerunner of the Communist Party.

On September 10, 1915, the first issue of the "International" appeared as their organ, under the editorship of David Ivon Jones. Though the "International" was crystal clear that on the world scene all workers were brothers, German, British, French and Italian alike, and should be bound together in a single world workers' party, the need for a single South African workers' party of Briton, African, Afrikaner, Coloured and Indian, was something which even the most advanced of the white Socialists had to discover and lay bare with an immense effort.

"Not till we free the Native . . ."

An editorial in an early number marked the first bold steps towards a truly Socialist policy:

"An internationalism which does not conceive the fullest rights which the Native working class is capable of claiming will be a sham. One of the justifications for our withdrawal from the Labour Party is that it gives us untrammelled freedom to deal, regardless of political fortunes, with the great problem of the Native.

"NOT TILL WE FREE THE NATIVE CAN WE HOPE TO FREE THE WHITE."

In almost every subsequent issue of the "International" Jones stressed this new-sung theme, strongly supported by S. P. Bunting.

Many years were to pass before South African socialists—including of course, the Non-European socialists, whose numbers grew steadily over the years—began to

understand that the very opposite was true, that it was the Africans who would bring freedom to the Whites. Nevertheless, Ivon Jones' editorial marked an important milestone.

"Conquerors of Race Prejudice"

The efforts of men like Jones, Bunting, Clarke, and in Durban, L. H. Greene, and later W. H. Andrews in Cape Town to reach out to the Africans and draw them into the I.S.L. was by no means plain sailing, but they did show considerable progress.

Meetings were called to which ANC and APO speakers were invited. In March 1917 an historic meeting was held in the Trades Hall, Johannesburg—the first political action taken by the socialists on a matter not directly linked with the white workers. It was a political protest against a law affecting the Africans—the Native Administration Bill which placed Africans at the mercy of the Native Affairs Department without recourse to the courts.

At the meeting the "International" reported Jones was chairman and Saul Msane was the main speaker. He opened his speech with the words: "I hail you as conquerors of race prejudice." S. P. Bunting and Horatio Mbelle of the ANC also spoke.

In its erudite way the "International" established itself as a supporter of the African cause, and as representative of Whites who sought equality for all.

There was a singular lack of "journalism" in the newspaper. The articles were written in good literary style and the standard of theoretical material was high. And

the dedication to the cause of socialism was unquestionable.

The "South African Worker"

In 1926, on January 1, the "International" changed its name to the "South African Worker," the first issue of which stated that the new title would "emphasise the CLASS basis of the Party's objective, for it is only by virtue of common class interests against a common class enemy that unity of the working-class—international or inter-racial the world over—can be attained, and without unity we cannot win."

But the "S.A. Worker" did not really devote its interest to the African, Indian and Coloured workers. It turned for news mainly to issues of international socialism and the Labour Party, although it gave full coverage to the ICU (Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union—a tremendous organisation of African workers).

"Umsebenzi"

It was to meet this need of a workers' paper that would reach out to the lowest paid industrial labourers, the Africans, that "Umsebenzi" was launched, early in 1930, from a tiny upstairs office in Hanover Street, Cape Town.

Perhaps the most exciting and the most tragic news reported by "Umsebenzi," was the great pass-burning of 1931 at Cartwright's Flats in Durban.

There had been a country-wide campaign to burn passes on Dingaan's Day, December 16, and tension was mounting as the day drew nearer. Support for the campaign was particularly strong in Durban, while in other centres re-

sponse was moderate.

"Umsebenzi" described the tragic events of that day in Durban.

"The meeting began at 11 a.m. and continued into the afternoon. It was enthusiastic but quiet and orderly. Passes were handed in and collected in bags. At this moment a large force of the Durban Borough Police marched on to the Flats and attacked the meeting."

Johannes Nkosi, a young African Communist, had been standing on the platform trying to control the crowd. The police were armed with revolvers. While he was appealing to the crowd not to become violent, the police shot Nkosi and struck him down with their pick handles.

They packed him into a lorry and there was a trail of blood dripping all the way to the police station. Nkosi had been most horribly mutilated by the police before he died the next day.

For most of its years until it was replaced by "Inkululeko" in 1960 "Umsebenzi" was edited by E. R. Roux, through all the difficulties of lack of finance and production facilities. It was a small paper—4 pages—but it takes a most important place among the newspapers that built the tradition of South Africa's fighting press.

(Next week: Newspapers and People's History)

Fined For House Arrest Demonstration

JOHANNESBURG

The fifteen women arrested and tried for holding a public gathering without permission in front of Mrs. Helen Joseph's house were fined in the Johannesburg Magistrate's court last week.

Twelve were fined R20, and two, who admitted previous convictions R40 each.

The women told the court the purpose of the gathering was to show sympathy for the secretary of the Federation of South African Women, Mrs. Joseph, when she was placed under house arrest.

KRISHNA SHAH BACK IN S.A.



Krishna Shah, the young Indian producer who gave us "The King of the Dark Chamber," is back in South Africa again, working on another play which is to open in Durban on December 12. The play is based on "Sponono," a story by Alan Paton dealing with juvenile delinquency. Members of the cast include Cockey Tlhotlha as Sponono, Ruth Nkonyeni as Elizabeth, Joe Ngoetjana as Walter and Philemon Hou as "Ha'panny." Our picture shows Krishna Shah demonstrating to the cast how the fight scene should be performed.

**INDIAN
TROOPS
ON THE
MARCH**

Hamlet: " . . . I see | The imminent death of twenty thousand men, | That, for a fantasy and trick of fame, | Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot | Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause, | Which is not tomb enough and continent | To hide the slain."

Hamlet. Act IV, Scene IV.



END BORDER TRAGEDY
—Call by World Peace Council

**FURTHER VIEWS
ON THE
INDIA-CHINA
BORDER DISPUTE**

The following statement has been released by Prof. J. D. Bernal, chairman, on behalf of the World Council of Peace:

TITO TO NEHRU

"It is well known to us and the whole world that you and your country are devoted to peace and to the principle of solving problems among people and nations in a peaceful way which would lead to an honourable solution of this problem to your country . . . I firmly believe that well-intentioned initiative of some of our mutual friends from non-aligned countries could contribute in finding out a solution of this problem."

SUPPORTERS of peace everywhere are deeply concerned with the tragic conflict involving the two great Asian countries, India and China. Both peoples are by tradition devoted to the cause of peace and national liberation from colonialism. The hostilities arising from the imprecise frontier demarcation are now verging on open war. Their continuance can give aid and comfort only to the enemies of peace. If prolonged, they may tend to spread to the extent of endangering world peace.

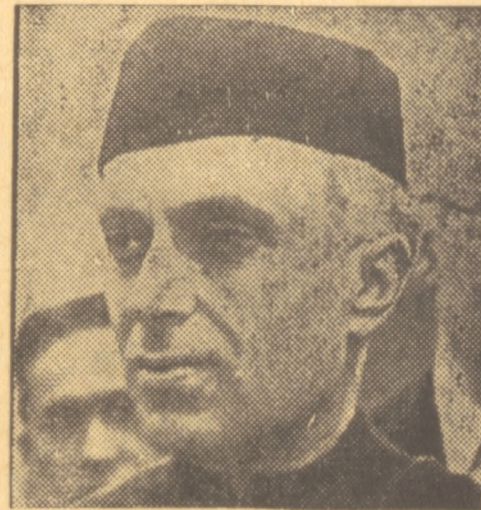
SPIRIT OF BANDUNG

Officers of negotiation have been made. The first necessity is an immediate ceasefire, after which negotiations should be taken up on a mutually satisfactory basis, as urged by the heads of certain non-aligned States in Asia and Africa.

These should lead to a settlement in the spirit of Bandung, which would be in the interests of the peoples of both countries . . .

We urge all peacelovers throughout the world to further such an outcome.

**NEHRU REPLIES TO
KHRUSHCHOV'S
CEASEFIRE PLEA**



INDIA'S Premier Nehru recently replied to the latest letter from Soviet Premier Khrushchov about the Indian-Chinese border dispute.

According to Delhi sources Mr. Khrushchov had urged him to accept an immediate cease-fire for negotiations with China on the border.

Mr. Nehru's reply, according to these sources, again demanded Chinese troop withdrawals before India would agree to talks.

Indian Government sources at the same time said the Nehru Government saw no prospect of a negotiated settlement with China at present.

**PALME DUTT: U.S. and Britain are Fanning
the Flames**

THE United States and Britain are trying to fan the conflict between India and China, Mr. R. Palme Dutt,



R. Palme Dutt

veteran left-wing campaigner for Indian independence and today editor of Labour Monthly, warned his audience at a recent meeting in Britain. Mr. Dutt said the earnest wish of

all friends of both countries was that the proposals of the Afro-Asian powers and of the Soviet Union for a ceasefire and negotiations should bring peace to the border. "In this situation, the massive pouring of arms into India by the U.S. and Britain is not helpful to peace," he said. "These are not arms for the defence of India." **CHINESE OFFER** Mr. Dutt pointed out that China had continuously offered a ceasefire and negotiations without prior conditions, suggesting that both armies should retire to 12 miles behind the 1959 frontiers. "Nkrumah has protested against the imperialist supply of arms and

offered mediation. Nasser and a whole group of Afro-Asian Powers have offered mediation. The Khrushchov letter to Nehru has urged a ceasefire and negotiations," he continued. "What stands in the way of peace?"

Mr. Dutt said the border question could be settled by friendly negotiations as border questions had been settled between China and her other neighbours.

● Pro-imperialist reactionaries in India, with lavish U.S. finance, were seeking to work up war hysteria, but we could be confident that the masses of the Indian people, with their deep anti-imperialist traditions, would quickly recognise the present alignment.



WIFE: "And you keep telling me there's no life on Mars!!!"

IN MOSCOW

PRAVDA, the Soviet Communist Party newspaper, in an editorial yesterday, said: "The thing to do is to cease fire and without advancing any terms sit down at the round table of negotiations."

Relations between India and the Soviet Union are "a good example of the successful application of the principle of peaceful co-existence," Soviet President Brezhnev said in Moscow.

He was speaking after Mr. Trikoli Nath Kaul, former Indian High Commissioner in London, had presented his credentials as new Indian Ambassador to Moscow.

CANDIDATES IN ORLANDO ELECTIONS



The Residents' Committee candidates working to oust Mpanza in the Orlando Advisory Board elections. From left to right: Mr. J. B. Hashe, Mr. P. J. Matthews, Mr. D. J. Hlongwane, Mr. T. H. Mathiso.

Special Branch Tries To Buy Informers

PORT ELIZABETH.

COMBINING strong-arm methods, threats and intimidation with lavish offers of financial reward, the police are intensifying their efforts to build a network of political informers in Port Elizabeth.

Miss Kholeka Fuyani, a 19-year-old New Brighton resident, was offered money to pay for food and the rent of the house, if she would give the police useful

information about a number of alleged "Congress people."

Miss Fuyani's guardians, Mr. and Mrs. Dickson Fuyani, were arrested recently. The police told Miss Fuyani that "they would be in gaol for a long time."

Afraid of being beaten-up by the police, Miss Fuyani accepted the offer and arranged to meet a detective-sergeant at a spot just outside New Brighton that evening.

She did not keep the appointment. The detective-sergeant was seen slowly cruising in the vicinity at the stipulated time.

Unemployed workers have also been approached by the Special Branch and promised work in factories if they would turn informers, and the Special Branch have been active in trying to engineer the dismissal of workers who are former members of the ANC or active trade unionists.

Mr. Thomas Manga was last week summarily dismissed from his job at an Uitenhage factory on the grounds that his services were unsatisfactory. The charge was not backed by any specific complaint.

The Special Branch visit this factory at regular intervals and hold conferences with important officials of the firm.

ARRESTED FOR SECOND TIME

PORT ELIZABETH.

Mr. Sebenzile Peter was arrested for the second time at the Magistrate's Court, Port Elizabeth, soon after he had appeared on a charge under the Suppression of Communism Act.

His attorney, who was with him at the time of the arrest, was told that he would be notified in due course if any further charges were preferred against Mr. Peter.

The case under the Suppression of Communism Act had been remanded to February 6, 1963 and bail of R15 allowed to stand.

Special Branch Man Is Matanzima's Ambassador

QUEENSTOWN.

AN African Special Branch detective Mr. Mabunu, told an audience at Queenstown that he had been appointed Kaiser Matanzima's ambassador to this town. The meeting had been convened, and was presided over, by Mr. Mabunu himself.

The hall was surrounded by armed police while the meeting was in progress. Mabunu took notes and wrote down the names of opposition speakers while sitting as chairman.

One of his supporters, Mr. B. Myatata, claimed that the meeting had received blessings from Mandela, Sisulu and Lutuli. "They allow us to carry on in this way," he said, "as they are still busy attending to other matters."

This was too much for the audience. They walked out.

SOMANA FINED FOR PASS OFFENCE

JOHANNESBURG

Trying to note an appeal against pass law conviction in the Native Commissioner's Court, Brain Somana, New Age reporter was told: "No appeals are made from this court. If you insist I will increase the sentence."

Mr. Somana was arrested while photographing Mr. Kathrada reporting to Marshall Square under his house arrest order, and was handed over to the Special Branch and subsequently charged under the pass laws.

In court he was fined R30 or 74 days imprisonment on two counts: failing to produce a reference book, and failure to register at the Non-European Affairs Department.

Somana argued that the registration and payment of service levies was the responsibility not of himself but of his former employer. The magistrate said that he should have known that the trade union for which he worked had not paid service levies.

HANI AND MPEMBA FLEE TO BASUTOLAND

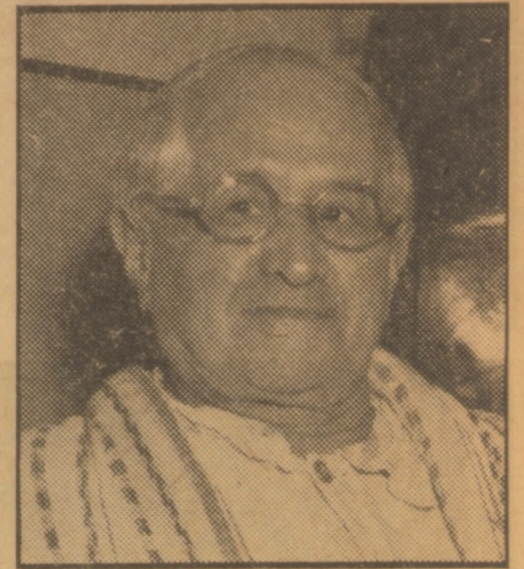
CAPE TOWN.

MESSRS Gilbert Hani and Jacob Mpeмба, who were ordered by the State President to leave Cape Town and exile themselves in the area controlled by their enemy Kaiser Matanzima in the Transkei (see New Age last week) have fled the country and sought asylum in Basutoland.

The two men were due to leave by train from Cape Town last Thursday night and to report in Cofimvaba by Monday of this week. On Thursday night a large number of their friends gathered at Cape Town station to bid them farewell, and sang freedom songs while they waited for the train to depart. A number of Special Branch men were also present.

Neither of the two men turned up, and the train eventually pulled out without them. One of their colleagues then announced to the crowd that they had decided not to comply with the State President's order that they return to the Transkei.

At 3 a.m. the following morning the homes of the two men in Langa were raided by the Special Branch, but by this time it was too late. Messrs Hani and Mpeмба had arrived safely in Mafeteng, where friends were providing them with temporary accommodation.



DEATH OF LOUIS JOFFE

JOHANNESBURG

MR. Louis C. Joffe, a veteran of the democratic movement of South Africa, died last week, four days before his name appeared on the list of named Communists.

Louis Joffe is perhaps best remembered for his sterling service for the African Mine Workers' Union and for the African Mine workers' Union Organising Fund Committee which bore the brunt of providing defence to the miners, workers, trade unionists and democrats who were prosecuted after the historic mine strike of August 1946.

He rallied to every financial crisis of New Age, and, before that of the Guardian and Advance and was a valued and highly efficient fund raiser.

ARNOLD'S HAMPERS DELIVERY SCHEDULE—1962

Thursday November 22nd
Dube
Central West Jab
Moroka North
Zondi
Moroka Township

Friday November 23rd
Meadowlands Zone 2

Saturday November 24th
Benoni Wattville
Benoni Location
Benoni Edenvale

Monday November 26th
Denver
East N.T.
Thokoza
Natalspuit
Meyerton

Tuesday November 27th
Zola No. 2
Zola No. 1
Zola North and No. 3
White City Jabavu

Wednesday November 28th
Diepkloof

Thursday November 29th
Mapetla
Tladi
Emdeni

Friday November 30th
Boksburg
Stirtonville

Saturday December 1st
Dlamini
Jabulani
Naledi

Monday December 3rd
Benoni—Asiatic Bazaar
Actonville

Brakpan—Location
Tsakane
Putfontein

Tuesday December 4th
Balance of Meadowlands

Wednesday December 5th
Nigel—Charterston
Mackenzieville
Dunnottar
Heidelberg
Balfour

Thursday December 6th
Randfontein—Old Location
New Location
Westonaria
Carltonville

Friday December 7th
Roodepoort—Davidsonville
Krugersdorp—Cape Settlement
Munsieville Loc.
Robinson

Saturday December 8th
Benoni—Daveyton

Monday December 10th
Springs—Kwa-Thema

Tuesday December 11th
Luipaardsvlei
Kagiso Location
Roodepoort—Dobsonville
Protea

Wednesday December 12th
Benoni—Balance of Daveyton

Thursday December 13th
Pretoria—Lady Selbourne
Claremont
Vlakfontein

Friday December 14th
Pretoria—Part Atteridgeville

Saturday December 15th
Veereeniging—Sharpeville
v.d. Bijlpark—Bophelong
Boipatong
Swartkoppies
(near Evaton)
Evaton

Tuesday December 18th
Pretoria—Balance Atteridgeville
Saulsville

Springs—Payneville
Kaalfontein

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(Eng.), Qualified Sight-testing and
Dispensing Opticians, 4 King
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Plein Streets), Johannesburg
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U.T.C. KNOCK-OUT CUP FINAL

ACES UNITED versus MARITZBURG CITY

CURRIES · SUNDAY

25th NOVEMBER

3.00 P.M.

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