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LUTULI STATES A.N.C. ELECTION POLICY

“Help Defeat The Nationalist Government”

THE general election policy which should be followed by the Congress movement has been outlined by the President-General of the African National Congress, Chief A. J. Lutuli, in an interview with New Age.

His main conclusions are:

- The elections do concern Non-Whites and are of vital importance to their future.
- Job Number 1 of the Congress movement in relation to the elections is to help throw out the Nationalist Government.

- Build a united front with all genuine anti-Nationalist forces.

- STEP UP THE MASS STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN OUR LIFETIME.

Here are the questions New Age put to the President-General, together with his replies:

NON-EUROPEANS CAN PLAY A VITAL PART

QUESTION: There is a “tradition” that because only the Whites have the vote, the general election is not of great concern or interest to the Non-European people. Is this a correct approach?

ANSWER: It is a most unrealistic, even suicidal outlook. A general election decides the nature of the Government and must, for better or worse, influence the course of a liberatory movement.

The nine years of Nationalist rule have seen the enactment of the most tyrannical slave laws ever to besmirch the statute books of our country.

Who can say, in the face of this record, that the 1948 elections were of no concern to us?

The 1948 election which put this neo-fascist government in the saddle will always be remembered with great indignation by all freedom-loving people in our land.

FRAUD AND DECEPTION

The Nationalist Government's career has been one of fraud and deception to voters and to non-voters alike. Its promises to the electors, such as that to keep down the cost of living, have proved false. Its pretences to “positive” and “beneficial” aspects of apartheid have proved deceptive. All that is left is a naked policy of oppression and complete enslavement of the Non-White peoples.

There is a limit to what any people will tolerate. A further period of Nationalist rule after the elections will almost certainly strain already dangerously tense conflicts past breaking point, and bring about a national disaster.

In the light of these facts who can say that the general election is of no interest to Non-White people?

Whatever other problems may still face us, the immediate problem of all South African democrats is—to get rid of the Nationalists!

QUESTION: Arising out of this, does Congress support the attitude that it does not matter which party—the Nationalists or United Party—wins the election?

ANSWER: It should be clear from what I have already said that it does matter which government is in power. A ruthless government imposes a great strain on the freedom forces. By continuously provoking violent reactions from the people, it makes it more difficult for Congress

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Chief Lutuli.

Lutuli States ANC Election Policy

(Continued from page 1)

to keep our people along our chosen path of non-violence.

Nationalist repression has not intimidated or weakened our movement; Congress is stronger and more determined today than it has ever been. Even under a further period of trials and tribulations of Nationalist rule the forces of freedom will continue and emerge victorious, but the struggle will be harder and more bitter.

That bitterness will leave scars which will make more difficult the task of building a multi-racial society of equals, based on fraternity and mutual confidence, that will face us on the morrow of liberation.

On the face of it there seems little difference between the Nationalist policy and that of the United Party. Racial domination, whether it is caused by baasskap or White leadership, is fundamentally unacceptable to Congress. It might be said that the Nationalists murder you most ruthlessly, while the United Party tries to poison you slowly.

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES

But the important differences must not escape us. It would make some difference to us to have a government that would show some sensitivity to democratic opinion at home and throughout the world. Freedom lovers will oppose the reactionary aspects of United Party rule with the same determination and courage that they are now showing against the Nationalists. But a United Party Government coming into office in the growing crisis created by Nationalist ruthlessness and rigidity, in a general atmosphere of relief and rejoicing at the end of the Nationalist terror, would not be likely to be able to pursue the unpopular policy of repression and police rule practised by its undemocratic predecessors.

The United Party as it is at present is not a force which will bring freedom to the Non-White peoples. But, willy-nilly, its rule will give the country a respite from the unrelieved terror of a decade of Nationalist rule; it might bring about a relatively peaceful period in the country; it could create favourable conditions for the rapid development and maturing of the struggle for freedom; it could provide the European and the Non-European population groups of our country with opportunities to come together and find honourable and peaceful ways of transforming our country from an oligarchy to a democracy

based upon liberty, equality and fraternity.

BLOODY UPHEAVALS

On the other hand a further stretch under the Nationalists might well make inevitable the further growth of hatred and intolerance, and lead to chaotic and perhaps bloody upheavals desired by no sane South African, least of all by us of the Congress movement.

Our desire for a United Party victory is, therefore, based not on any confidence in that party's policy, or on any illusions about its intentions, but upon our understanding that nothing could be more disastrous for all sections of the population than further years of Nationalist purgatory.

QUESTION: Do you think that the United Party is missing an opportunity of forging a united Opposition by refusing to conclude an election pact with the Labour Party?

ANSWER: The main service the U.P. can do for South Africa at present is to get rid of the Nationalists. And to do so they should ally themselves with all available forces. By all forces I mean the Labour Party, the Liberal Party, the Congress of Democrats and all other groups with the vote. I include the Non-Whites also among these forces because, properly harnessed, the Non-White people can and will be a decisive force in the final defeat of Nationalist rule in South Africa. I do hope that in the process of this co-operation the United Party and other groups which are not pro-Congress, will become less segregationist in their outlook and work for the establishment of a truly democratic South Africa.

QUESTION: What are your views on the policy platform on which the United Party is preparing to face the election?

ANSWER: The United Party's "new look" policy regarding political and other rights for the Non-White people is most disappointing. We are not to be bluffed or fobbed off by any version of the archaic 1936 Smuts-Hertzog "Native" legislation, or attempts to present dud forms of "representation" in Parliament as a substitute for democracy. We shall not be side-tracked by schemes for creating a privileged African middle class whose intention is to leave the masses leaderless. The promise of freehold rights for urban Africans must remain hollow and unsubstantial without

the repeal of the 1936 Native Land Act, the Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts and all the amendments and consequent additions to these laws.

There is nothing new about the United Party's election policy. It is designed to appease both the most backward sections of the White electorate and the national aspirations of the Non-White people. It fails miserably to do either.

QUESTION: What are the REAL issues in this election?

ANSWER: The immediate defeat of the Nazi-Nationalists, and the assertion of the rights of all South Africans to freedom and democracy.

This central real issue of the elections, with its implied total rejection of the ruinous policy of apartheid, will not be placed before the electorate by either of the chief parties to the election.

PEOPLE'S CLAIMS

It can nevertheless be brought home to the full by the freedom-loving forces of the country if they do not accept a merely passive "spectator" role in the elections, but immediately form an active and vigorous United Front, and campaign militantly for their claims:

- for increased wages for all workers and the reduction of the cost of living;
- for the right to freedom of speech and organisation, and the ending of political censorship and the persecution of Congressmen and other democrats;
- for the abolition of the pass system and forced removals of settled communities;
- for the right of all South Africans to a voice in the government of the state, the local councils, and the determination of wages and working conditions.

In a word, our claims to democracy and freedom and a South Africa founded upon justice and racial harmony.

QUESTION: What forms must congress campaigns and activity take during the next vital pre-election months?

ANSWER: We should, therefore, reject the idea that the Congresses should "lie low" during the election period. We should rather regard the

period as one of intensive activity, of campaigning by the written and the spoken word, of united mass action, to educate the people, both Black and White.

We should intensify our extra-Parliamentary forms of struggle such as the campaign against the extension of the pass laws to women, and the passes generally; the campaign for a national minimum wage of £1 a day and an all-round increase in wages for all workers; the campaign against the Group Areas Act and forced removals, and so on.

Election day could very well be a day of mass prayer and dedication to the freedom cause. This could be arranged to suit local conditions. I am a great believer in this type of activity. To me, this is the biggest significance of June 26.

OUR CONTRIBUTION

Our best contribution to the enlightenment of the people, both enfranchised and disfranchised sections, is to make it clear beyond doubt that the overwhelming majority of the South African people reject and despise the Nationalists and their hateful policies and actions, and that to place them again in office would be an irresponsible and reckless action whose harmful consequences cannot be measured.

Our slogans during this period would be

AWAY WITH THE NATS!

FREEDOM IN OUR LIFE-TIME!

New University In Indonesia

DJAKARTA.

President Sukarno and Prime Minister Djuanda recently attended the inaugural ceremony for the Padjadaran University in Bandung, Indonesia.

President Sukarno said that the founding of the University was an important event as Indonesia needed specialists for national construction.

This is Indonesia's sixth University, with an enrolment of 2,515 students.

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FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963

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