

TRANSVAAL NATIONAL CONGRESS: The annual conference of the Transvaal ANC was held in the Orlando Communal Hall on November 1 and 2. I attended the entire conference - for the RHM. I set out all relevant details, in chronological order.

Most speeches were either in English or were translated from the vernacular. It was obviously impossible for me to understand the vernacular, although, wherever possible, I tried to get people around me to tell me what was happening. In several cases of translation, I had difficulty in following what was said.

On Saturday, Nov. 1, I arrived at the meeting-place at about 1.30 pm. The hall - which would be able to seat 800 to 1000 people on benches - is set in the middle of an iron enclosure, with the main gate leading to the main road. The ~~main~~ fence is about 20 to 40 yds from the hall, forming a rectangle around it.

* I had been told that the conference began at 1.0 pm. When I arrived, there were about 50 people - singing and dancing. At about 2.15 pm, Nkobi and Tambo arrived. The official agenda for the conference - which was not circulated to delegates - was as follows: 2.0 Official opening. 2.10 presidential address. 3. adjournment. 3.15 Roll call. 3.25 election of sub-committees. 3.30 Executive report and financial statement. 4.30 Election of exec. committee.
Sunday: 9.30 passes and tax (representatives of the women who were arrested). 11 a day campaign. Trade Unions.

At 3.10 pm, the conference began. Tambo stood up on the platform, and said: "I have been asked by the national exec. to preside at this conference. I am making this announcement so that no-one should at any stage ask who is introducing the man. There is no programme at the moment - we will try to let you have one at a later stage. I would also like to say: it has been made to appear that we are going to have a rowdy, violent conference." (lapsed into vernacular here).

Then followed the singing of the anthem, and a long ~~prayer~~ prayer (in the vern.) ~~xxxx~~ At this stage, the people on the platform were Luthuli, Tambo, Nkobi, James Hadebe and about 2 others I did not know. For the rest of the conference, those on the platform were usually the same, except that Putini and Nzo were also there at times.

Tambo continued: "This is an open session to which all and sundry are welcome, whether they are members or not, friends or foe, whether they are concerned about our affairs or indifferent. At a later stage, it will be a closed session.

"In a sense we are fortunate in coming together today - it falls in the middle of a vicious struggle. Nobody knows what the ultimate results will be. The ANC has never reckoned on results - for us, there is only one result, and that is, the victory in the struggle. It is fortunate we meet today because whatever happens we will remember that we are meeting in the middle of a battle.

"We have attempted to come together in the past and we have not ~~achieved~~ been successful. Sometimes because we have been able to make no progress towards freedom. At other times we could not come together because those who have power over us would not allow us to meet. But let it not be said again that the reason why we have not ~~achieved~~ achieved anything is because we are incapable of doing it.

"We have come together today to achieve something. I want to ask this of you. As chairman or speaker I should like to see an opportunity given to everyone to do what he has come here to do. I want to proceed on the assumption that everybody is going to act honestly and to help the organization."

He then called on Luthuli to give the presidential address.

(NB At this stage, about 600 people in the hall - had been steadily dribbling in. This no. was the high water mark for the day).

Luthuli; "I want to make one or two observations which are quite relevant to the conference. The first point is: normally I should be saying that I accept the honour of being the guest speaker - but I am not in the capacity today. We from national headquarters are here in quite another capacity. Events that have made us here to be on the platform cannot be described as giving us joy.

"Normally, the man who is the president should be here - I need not relate the sad story of why national had to come into the Transvaal. But although I cannot say at the beginning that I have been honoured to be here, I shall be able to say that at the end of the meeting. I anticipate results which will make me say thank you.

"I too shall try to assist the conference in whichever way I can as the leader of the house.

"Another observation I would like to make arises from my reading of the Bantu World. It was suggested in the BW that there were several candidates for election who were standing for election. It is the right of any public organ to tell the community what people are aspiring for. The paper too has a right, if it favours certain candidates, to push them up. The only point I wish to point out which is somewhat somewhat misplaced in the article I read is that when the article suggested that my executive was interested in certain candidates. I would like to disabuse, here and now, any such thoughts. The national executive cannot put up any candidate at provincial level. What we are interested in from the national point of view is that the Transvaal should be able democratically to elect a Transvaal executive. In the national executive, there are of course members of the Transvaal executive. Those men and women have a right to aspire to the leadership of the Transvaal. But the fact that certain executive members aspire to leadership does not mean that the national executive sponsors their aspirations. The national executive comes here as impartial mediators."

Luthuli then proceeded to his address. The theme was "The meaning and challenge of Nationalist rule." This speech ended at 4.45 pm.

Tambo rose again. He said he thanked the Chief for the speech and said: "I have no doubt delegates may wish to comment on what has been said. There will be limited discussion - about 4 speakers. When we have elected a new president and he opens our next conference then will be the time for full discussion.

1) The discussion began with Zak Maphong. He said: "The national president made a very interesting speech and he made a few observations. I want to comment briefly. I want to comment on this issue of multi-racialism. Frankly and honestly, if the president is sincere, he will realize that there can be no cooperation between the oppressor and the oppressed. ~~There can be no cooperation between the oppressor and the oppressed.~~ *re-creating people in this country as divided into 2 groups, affirmed & oppressed. There can be no cooperation between the oppressor and the oppressed.*

Tambo: "I should like to ask the comments on the presidential address should not carry any suggestion of insincerity on the part of the president.

Mathopeng: "I am sorry if you read it into my remarks. I withdraw it. As long as there is a difference of interests, you cannot bring together two peoples. The people who are oppressed are the African people and the gravity of the struggle is on their shoulders. They are fighting for their land Afrika."

(this statement was greeted by a concerted shout of support, foot-stampings and cries of Afrika! It was clear that ~~was~~ about 100 Africanists were present, standing and sitting at the back of the audience. Many of them carried long, heavy sticks. From this stage onwards, whenever an Africanist speaker spoke, the group gave him loud and prolonged vocal support).

He continued: "Let us cease to deceive the people that they can get friendship from the Whites - they are oppressors. (shouts) Africa is for the Africans and the Whites must go back to Europe." (loud shouts. ~~Next~~ Altho he started quietly, by the end of his speech, Mathopeng had worked ~~himself~~ himself into a near frenzy and was shouting at the top of his voice.)

Tambo: "I should like to ~~comment~~ comment to you on an experience I had. Standing here in front of you, I am capable of mistakes. There is the possibility that you also will make mistakes. I should like to thank Mr Mathopeng for the apology he made. He was making respect not to me but to the conference. I feel happy when I see it. I hope we shall endeavour to follow his example."

2) Nsima: "The key-note of his address was unity and the reformation of the Tvl. Personally, I had no quarrel with it. I am all out for unity, but there must be some specific basis for the unity - there cannot be unity only in writing. This Rand conference should be given an opportunity to state their views and to weigh their convictions. I want to declare that there is nothing like a narrow nationalism. (PS I am not too certain whether I recorded this last sentence correctly). We have learnt history with understanding - people all over the world have struggled for independence and it was based on nationalism. I stand for African nationalism (shouts). At the same time I stand for democracy. I believe we must enter into alliances but because of our numbers we must play a dominant role. Democracy in its narrower sense is rule of the majority. Africans in this country are the majority and must rule (PS He said these two sentences, but I don't think he knew just what he was saying). Africans do not want to rule others. But this country is ours and whether we die or not, this country is ours (shouts). This conference will be successful only if ~~we~~ ^{we} everybody a chance to express themselves. We do not know who is ~~xxx~~ wrong - ~~xxx~~ we must listen to them." (shouts - not too loud).

Tambo: "You must not misunderstand Mr Nsima. There are 600 of us here - it does not mean all must speak today.

3) Ramokgadi (spelling?): "We have gathered from all corners of the Tvl. We have come to see the ways and means of seeing the building of a new Africa. And it is through democracy. We shall never discriminate on race - our policy is democracy and christianity. (NB There was an uproar at this stage - it was difficult to decide from where it was coming or ~~xxx~~ what

was causing it. Then someone jumped up and shouted: "We have come to a political meeting not to a church."

Tambo: "We must permit t one who wants to talk to do so." (This statement followed by another series of interruptions - there was simply a general unrest. Then t next speaker rose, and things quietened down again).

Motsele: "We have listened here to a presidential address concerning t problem. This report contains matters of grave importance. There must be cooperation while we are fighting apartheid. I want t African people to be united so tt they can push out of t way x those who oppose them. (shouts) I want to state tt t presidential address which has been given today should not be given to an oppressed people but to t oppressor. T presidential address can be given to us when we ~~xxx~~ have freedom. It has never happened in t history of mankind tt t oppressor has cooperated with t one who is oppressed. (NB By tstage, he was screaming at top of his voice. There was also a constant background of shouts of support from t Africanists) Our business is for t president to call for t unity of t African people ~~xxxx~~ and to leave t white people alone - they can look after themselves. (shouts). They came into Africa to oppress us. Our business is to overthrow them. We ~~xxxx~~ cannot accept t minority who come to us when they see t Black child of Africa is waking up. We cannot accept them. I will appeal to all, t Africans here to stand together - whether they are left or right wing - they are Africans."

4) Tsele: "T chairman has t right to see tt discussions do not become repetitious and tedious. Every speaker has said exactly t same thing. I know t Chief's feeling. Cooperation is a fundamental ~~xxx~~ aspect of human life so let us rule out t repetition."

Tambo: "I do not think t speakers were repeating ~~xxxx~~ themselves."

5) Judith Matee: "During t presidential deliberations, he touched x upon t point tt a leader would arise and point out t way of liberation. But tt leader is found missing in t way he is pointing to people to follow. T slogan: Africa for t Africans - for a long period we have heard t slogan - but those people ~~are~~ not there to lead t people. (shouts of Mayibuye - from t leadership supporters). I stand for unity and ~~xxxx~~ solidarity broadly. I stand for Africa for all (shouts of Mayibuye and Afrika from t opposing camps. Incidentally, t 2 sides, generally stuck to one slogan: t Africanists to Afrika, and t others to Mayibuye). Let us all unite with t Whites and wipe out t word ~~ap~~theid. We must liberate t Whites from apartheid and show them t way to democracy. Women are carrying passes today because you men went and carried passes. Before we reach liberation, it ~~xi~~ will be t duty of all men to destroy their passes."

6) Sobukwe: (he spoke in Sotho and was badly interpreted. I had t utmost difficulty in making out what was said, so t following is more a series of points than anything else). "Let us listen to each others point of view. we shall disagree as we go along. T president tore nationalism left, right and centre. He said we are going back to tribalism. But we are wearing European clothes and we will not go back to tribalism. When we speak of nationalism, there is no point of connection with tribalism. When t ANC was born in 1912, t Zulu nation and other tribes were completely buried. No one today says x I am a Zulu, a Sotho, etc. We all say we are Africans."

Nationalism has made us say this, and this is far from tribalism. It is not nationalism which will carry us forward. We are against nobody. We demand freedom and we will go by stages, if necessary. I here and now declare that the Nationalist Party is not the only oppressor of the African. Even before 1948 we were oppressed. We are against white domination and oppression. There will be no justice if no democracy. We cannot afford to forget our history (he referred to various tribal wars) - we cannot pretend that this did not happen. This is an African land. We were born here. This is our national heritage. After ~~the~~ freedom, whoever will stay will enjoy human rights. There will be no bags here. (shouts of Afrika). Other nationalists will respect us when we are a united group."

7) & 8) Two speakers followed. Both were pro-leadership as far as I could make out. Difficulties of recording prevented me noting their words. In any event, it was of little import. The second one did, however, say this: "The role of the African people is to educate those poor Whites who do not know how to live in a multi-racial society. The people who oppose a multi-racial SA are in fact carrying out the very apartheid policy of the Nationalist Party government."

James Madisa Hadebe rose to speak. Madzunya, however, said that he wanted to speak first. At this, there were shouts of Afrika.

Tambo: "Mr Madzunya has had his hand up for a long time. I do not want to create a precedent, but at the same time I do not want to create the impression of not wanting him to speak. This conference is open to all. I am going to exercise my discretion and I do not want anybody to say that I am creating a precedent. I shall ask Mr M. to do me this favour because I am departing from the course I have already indicated. - to speak for exactly 3 minutes. It is a special favour."

9) Madzunya: "Fellow-Africans who are slaves in their own country, the country given them by G-d. All of us who are here are all oppressed - but we are being asked to fight against oppression. This oppression which we are fighting against has been brought by a foreign people. I say that every human being has been given a portion of the human globe by G-d. This is recognised by all great philosophers - Marx, Lenin, Engels, Trotsky. They say to ~~destroy~~ foreign ~~colonialism~~ colonialism must have nationalism. But you can't ~~destroy~~ ask me when I am struggling, to cooperate with elements of the oppressor. - that I can't do. The Englishman can't say England is for everybody. Russians also can't. That is why when Germans attacked Russia, Stalin ~~said~~ said: defend fatherland. We recognise Africa for the Africans, Africans for Humanity, Humanity for G-d. Nationalism doesn't mean what colour you are. But you must not recognise the country from which you are. In SA there cannot be an inch given to a man who recognises the country of his origin." (NB All this was screamed at the top of his voice, together with arm-wavings and gesticulations. The language is his own. Throughout, he was backed up by the Africanists, and the end of his speech was greeted by hearty applause.)

Tambo: "I must thank t last speaker for honouring t agreement between us" (NB Madzunya had spoken for about 4 to 5 minutes).

10) James Mabebe: "T president spoke at length about t menace called apartheid - t word which has made SA a stinking name throughout t world. How did apartheid come about? - it is t baby of fear and hatred..... Nobody is isolated from t whole world." (NB Here he was interrupted by shouts from t Africanists. But someone started a song, and all joined in.

After a minute or so, Tambo rose and said tt Luthuli would reply to t debate - this was at 6.35 pm.

#Luthuli: "I was happy to hear different points of view. Obviously, I cannot agree with all tt has been said. So I do not wish to speak on tt aspect. As far as possible, I want to remain neutral and to guide conference. I presented my address which I thought would be current Congress policy, as a democrat. I realise t even within Congress there may be different points of view. But t debate has stressed tt we need more political education among ourselves - discussion such as we have had today, but in a quieter atmosphere."

(NB Unfortunately, I missed t last few minutes of his speech, but Matthew Nkomo told me later tt he had simply restated what he started saying, and tt nothing new emerged).

At 6.45, all those in t hall were sent to t back of t hall. Lists of delegations were handed in, where this had not already been done, and t delegation name was called out, together with t names of delegates. T delegates were then allowed to go t front of t hall, and were seated there. Tambo, assisted by Putini, Nkobi and others did t calling out of names, et I tried to keep track of t names of t branches, t no. allotted to each, and t no. which actually came forward. This, however, proved an almost impossible task. In ~~xx~~ many cases, t number of delegates did not correspond with t allotted number. Also, I had great difficulty in making out t names of t branches - Afrikaans place-names spoken with an African accent sound fantastic! In any event, I set out below, t branches present each one being on a separate line. I indicate t divergences where applicable. Where t actual no. of delegates was present, I add t word "yes". Where not, I state t position.

Yakk

Volkstrust	3	yes	
Western Native Township, No 1.	2	yes	
Mapete	5	yes	
Alexandra no 6	2	yes	
Newclare	7	yes	
Dube	7	yes	
Molapi	9	yes	
Kwatama	1	yes	
?	(i.e. branch name indecipherable)	3	yes
Payneville	8	yes	
Mofolo	2	yes	
Mzimhlope	3	yes	
Jabavu	9	yes	
Mofolo North	4	yes	
Alex no 1	2	yes	

Orlando East 6 names were read out (G. Mache, N. Putini, Maduna, N. Molapo, Mahlangu, Q. Molapo). 5 came forward.

Tambo said: "Itx is understood tt Orlando East has two delegations. I shall make notes of t others." (NB He went to fetch a note-book, came back and duly recorded t position.)

Zizka Phomolong: 4 yes
 Lady Selborne 4 yes (S. Mandela, Mangisa, Dr Tsele, J. Tsele).
 Alex. no 2 2 yes
 ? no,? none.
 Sophiatown 7 yes (included Mahopo, Segale, Ramugale, Kosi, Mali, Mbuli (was present in afternoon, but not now)).
 Central 7 yes

Tambo: "We have two delegations from Western Native Township - in each ~~xxx~~ there are 10 delegates..." (lapsed into vernacular). "Also, an ANC Alex. branch.2 - 10 people."

? 2 yes

Tambo announced tt he would first call out t branches already on t list. (From now on, no names of delegates were calledxout. Only t branch, and t number of delegates.)

Alex, no 3 5 (all absent ?)
 Hamersford 1 none
 Pitans 10 none
 Bank 1 none
 Alberton 1 none
 Robinson 10 none
 Eastern Native Township 2 yes
 Koster 20 none
 Rustenburg 4 (absent ?)
 Evaton 4 yes
 van der Bijl Park 7 none
 ? 10 none
 East Dhlamini 1 yes
 Magiskraal 10 none
 ? 8 none
 West Reef 5 none
 ? 2 none
 ? 5 none
 ? 1 none
 Tikkiedraai (?) 10 (8 yes)
 ? 10 (all present ?)
 Krugersdorp 2 yes
 Jabavu Western Centre (?) 4 (1 yes)
 ? 3 (1 yes)
 Roomanskop (?) no.? none
 Natalspruit no.? none
 P.P. Rust 9 none
 ? no.? none
 ? 2 none
 ? 8 none

Ermelo 5 none
 ? 1 none
 Elandsheep 2 none.
 Heidelberg 4 none
 Meadowlands 10 (8 yes)
 Westonaria 2 none
 Witfontein 2 none
 Winterskop(?) 4 none
 Tladi (?) 4 (2 yes)
 ? 2 yes
 Benoni 5 none
 Roodepoort 1 none
 Zwartkops 7 none
 Phefeni 2 yes
 Driefontein
 Newstands
 Four other branches

} only 1 branch name called. No numbers of delegates
 } There were no delegates from any.

? 1 yes.

Standerton 2 yes.

(NB Above list by no means claimed to be wholly accurate - all the omissions apart.)

Tambo made an announcement in vernacular which I was told^{was}/about the disputed delegations.

Then he said: "There is another delegation from Newclare. Who is the leader? (NB I think this referred to Newclare South). I understand there are 11 delegates. I have made a note of it - it is one of our headaches." "There are also ~~some~~ people from ~~the~~ Moroka (or Moroka West?), but I understand there are only 18 members in the branch."

At 8.45pm, the meeting continued. At this stage, about 130 people - the accepted delegates-were sitting together to the left of the platform. About 200 others sat on the right of the platform. The Africanist disputed delegations were in this group.

Tambo said: "We know more or less where we stand. I know where my problems are and I want to tackle them tonight if I can. On my left there are delegates from various branches. In the case of the delegates from Orlando East, there is a problem that I will sort out tonight - that there is another delegation from Orlando East. Another problem is that in one or two cases we have more delegates from a branch than they are entitled to. For example, ~~the~~ Dhlamini has two instead of one. At the back, we have people, all are members of the ANC, some may be not. But they have not created any problem at all. The only complaint is that they have been disciplined and have behaved in an exemplary manner. It is good to have members of the organisation at the conference being behaved about things and listening to what is said. "Some of the pressmen will have bad dreams. I know many of them came to photograph you in a fight, and they have gone home with their cameras empty. "To my right, we have several headaches. I do not know which is the proper delegation from Orlando East, Western Native Township and Newclare.

"We shall have to decide with everybody's cooperation which is the proper delegation. There can only be one. There may or there may not be members. It may be that some ~~members~~ members do not represent any branches. It may be that they do not even come from branches. I do not know - will have to sort all that out. But what I want to ask everybody here - we must help each other - nothing will come right if we do not.

"Sorting out of the problem can be done tomorrow, but if feasible and practicable, we should like to go as far as possible this evening so as to leave tomorrow free. I will not be bound by your views, but can anyone help me out in this matter?"

1) Monzi suggested a special committee to go into the matter while conference continued to sit, and to report the next day.

2) A woman - from the non-delegates side - supported the idea, but said that the committee should be elected and not appointed by the chair.

3) Tsela: "We have come to discuss the affairs of the committee, but I want to ~~oppose~~ oppose an adjournment, and suggest a committee be appointed to sit with the ~~administrative~~ assistance of the administrative committee."

4) An Africanist (name unknown to me): "Instead of retrogressing the progress of this conference, we should have a committee to go into our grievances."

5) A woman spoke in the vernacular.

6) Luthuli: "personally, I am quite used to all-night sittings and if delegates wished to remain all night, I would not stand in their way at all. ~~Especially~~ If, Mr Chairman, you feel that the delegates on the left constitute the conference, you can take a vote, provided that you are satisfied with these delegates."

7) Africanist: (on a point of order): "Here is the president general - from the Natal - suggesting that the matter be left to the leadership. I think the president-general is out of order." ~~(laughter)~~ (laughter).

8) Leballo: "There are certain delegations here like Alexandre and Newcler." (NB He began to argue the merits of the case - choked off by Tambo pointing this out - ~~he~~ Leballo tried to continue - choked off again - Leballo tried again.) interrupted by Tsela, on a point of order: "We are not dealing with the merits."

9) Molutsi: "We will not have a properly-constituted conference until the question of the delegations has been solved."

(Several speakers came after this - I did not record - either because they spoke in the vernacular, or because they said nothing of interest. Also, by this time, I was damnably tired. I also did not want to attract too much attention to myself, by appearing to take down every single word that everybody spoke.)

At 9.35 pm, ~~xx~~ Tambo spoke again. He said: "Where a vote has to be taken at this stage - to elect a credentials committee, etc - it has to be taken by those delegates who are recognised, if they constitute a quorum. T delegates on t left from t affected branches are also concerned." He told t members of t Newclare, Orlando East and Western Native Township branches ~~to~~ withdraw to t right hand side. Also t ~~xxxx~~ Dhlamini delegation. (NB Earlier t "loyal" delegates from these branches had been seated on t left. It was these people who were told to move to t right. This they did without a murmur. T Dhlamini branch was minor - it did not come into t conflict, being purely administrative.)

10) Madzunya challenged t right of t other Alex. delegates to vote.

Tambo replied: "T point about tt branch ~~ix~~ (NB i.e. t ANC Alex branch - t Madzunya crowd) is tt there is a query about t members of tt branch. You will be given an opportunity to explain t position to t credentials committee."

11) Madzunya: "I cannot agree to ~~any~~ monkey-trick which has been carried out year after year. No further, no further. Year after year, discussing about Alexandra. I say - no further. There is only one Alexandra branch - t others are splinter branches who simply say yes. T conference of last year made a decision about Alexandra and you must stick it. I cannot stand monkey-tricks anymore."

12) One of t delegates on t left said tt t chair had been insulted. At this, confused shouts from all over.

13) Tambo tried to speak. He was interrupted by Madzunya, who was screaming. He was completely incoherent, so tt although I was sitting quite near him, I was unable to make out a single word he said.

14) One of those on t right: "Normally, branches must report to a credentials committee. I do not know why tt was not done."

15) Luthuli said something about "there are certain things a conference must do." (sorry, but his remarks were rather ~~ix~~ insane).

At 10.20 pm, Tambo called for nominations ~~xxx~~ for t credentials committee from delegates. (NB At this, interruptions from all over, especially t right. But he continued, nevertheless.) "T office will be represented by Mr Nkobi and Mr Nzo - they have t records of branches. I call for 3 nominations." (interruptions again - this had now developed into a constant thing, with t noise merely swelling to a higher pitch whenever Tambo made a fresh announcement.) Segale was nominated, but declined immediately. Tambo called to Sobukwe to assist in t counting, and he came forward straight away.

16) An Africanist: "T people on t other side toe t line, and if t whole credentials committee ~~x~~ comes from tt side it will be biased."

17) Madzunya: "What will you do if this house refuses to cooperate with your credentials committee?" (this screamed against a background of general disorder and confused shouting from all over).

Let me attempt to explain the situation at this stage, and what transpired from now on: People all over the hall were shouting and arguing. People kept jumping to their feet to shout something. Sometimes one person was on his feet, sometimes several at a time. Madzunya kept popping up, screaming something ~~inarticulate~~ (unintelligible, sitting down and then doing it same again. Through all this, Tumbo, calmly proceeded with the calling of names and delegates put up their hands. There was a certain amount of disturbance from the delegates' side, but the bulk of it came from the right. Sobukwe was busy counting hands. After a couple of votes had been cast - it was not more than about 2 or 3 - Madzunya stood up to shout again. Bob turned to ~~her~~, apparently in an effort to quieten him. Madzunya, however, shouted something at him, and within a moment, there was complete and utter bedlam. A crowd of people surged towards Bob, and tried to pull him back. Everybody - as it seemed to me - was on their feet, and the hall was in wild disorder. I was certain that a fight was about to begin. A group of 6 blanketed characters - "Russians"? - who had been sitting at the front of the people on the right, jumped up and ran to the ~~the~~ front door of the hall. (A few minutes later, I saw them skulking at the back of the hall, outside - i.e. at the door leading to the stage at the back of the hall.). In any event, feeling distinctly apprehensive, I retreated to the side door at the right of the platform. I went into the adjoining kitchen for a minute or so, and then came back into the hall. It was still in wild disorder. I climbed onto a chair at the door so as to have a better view of the proceedings. Someone - in the thick of the Africanist mob - pointed at me, and with a decidedly unfriendly look on his face, pointed his finger at me and screamed: "Get out! Get out!" I left again, bumped into the caretaker and he ~~escorted me~~ escorted me round the side of the building to the front door. ~~xxxxx~~

There I found Mathopeng, Sobukwe and about 3 to 4 other Africanists. They told me that they had come outside because the atmosphere inside was too "tense". They went inside after about 5 minutes, and I followed them. By now, things had quietened down again, and Luthuli was speaking in the vernacular.

I spoke to the "Post" photographer. He told me he had tried to take pictures of the proceedings, but two of the leadership people had threatened to assault him. He advised me to leave. A few minutes after this, ~~xxxxxx~~ someone - unknown to me, although I think he was an Africanist, rushed up to me and said: "Go peacefully now. We do not want to hurt you." This time I left for keeps - this was at about 11 pm. The first shouting and disturbance had begun at 10.40 pm.

Not having a car, I had perforce to go to the Special Branch fellows across the road, and ask for their protection. They took me into their car, fed me with cigarettes, and at 11.40 pm, when the conference ended, drove me to my flat door.

The next day, I learnt - from a number of sources, each of which added to my information - that after my forced departure the previous night, the election of the credentials committee continued, despite the undiminished opposition of the Africanists. Apparently, however, there were no further disturbances. After the elections were completed, the conference adjourned until Sunday, 9 am.

I learned that X Shope had taken Nzo's place on the committee. I was unable to learn the reasons for this. Nkobi was a member. The elected persons were: Magome and Modisane (from Randfontein). I was unable to learn the name of the third elected person.

Tambo, on the Sunday morning, told me that on the previous night, he had heard that a group of people wished to assault the Whites at the meeting. I was the only one there, and he had tried to get a message to me, to tell me to leave.

On Sunday, I arrived at the hall at about 11.30 am. A crowd of about 400/450 was standing in front of the hall. The Africanists - still about 100 strong - were standing to one side (I have included them in the number last stated). I walked round to the back of the hall. Behind, under the trees, was a group of about 130 men, all of whom, as far as I could see, were bearing weapons of some kind - truncheons, lengths of wood, sticks, and lengths of iron. I saw David Mahopo among them, so I walked up to say hello. The men were standing around in little groups, and my purely subjective impression was that they were being briefed. As I walked up, Mahopo waved me away, muttering something about being busy.

Leballo told me that earlier that morning, he, Madzunya and Molutsi had had discussions with Tambo in an attempt to effect a compromise. The Africanist had not, however, been prepared to accept a credentials committee, had said so flatly, and the discussions had come to naught. (NB This is what Leballo told me - I was unable to check its truth).

I also learned - from sundry sources, including Putini, Legwate and Leballo - that the credentials committee had sat during the morning. Just when they began and ended, no-one seemed to know. In the case of Western Native Township's two delegations, a compromise had been effected, and five delegates from each side had been accepted, instead of the 10 from each side. Newclare (Africanist side) and Newclare South had been disqualified. After this, Orlando East and Alex. did not present themselves to the committee, as they felt they would stand no chance. (quote Leballo and Legwate).

Outside the hall, things were quiet, but very, very tense.

Shortly before 12.30pm, everybody went into the hall. Me too. There were announcements - all in the vernacular - but I was told that these dealt with the procedure to be followed for the rest of the day. At about 12.45, everybody left the hall again. I strolled out through the back way, and found armed guards (with sticks, etc) all over the place. One was stationed in the door next to the stage. Outside the kitchen, another was sitting outside a room leading to the stage. At the two entrances to the bricked-in back enclosure, there were 2 to 3 guards at each entrance. And a couple more were standing around inside the enclosure itself. Incidentally, the guard outside the stage-door called me a "bloody White bastard", and in no uncertain terms told me what he would like to do to me if I didn't get the hell out of the place. (I know him as a pro-leadership man from Alex.). Later, I complained to Putini about this, and he took me back to the fellow, who apologised - I think he was drunk. I did the rounds of the various guards in the enclosure, introducing myself as best I could. They all seemed quite a crew of cut throats.

Shortly before 12.45, Tambo and others stood on the steps of the hall, and the delegates already recognised were called into the hall. As far as I was able to ascertain, (because they spoke in the vernacular) the name of each branch was called out, and the delegates then entered the hall. I was told that there were about 200 ~~representative~~ delegates - this was told me later in the day by Putini.

The last of the delegates were admitted at about 1 pm. Tambo then ^{said} something to the effect that: "I would let you in as well if I trusted you." (NB This is Legwate's translation - he was standing next to me at the time) - his words were addressed to all those outside. Besides the Africanists - still about 100 strong - some 200 to 300 others were left.

The Africanists moved off, and went to hold their own meeting several hundred yards away. They were out of sound and practically out of sight of the hall. During the course of the afternoon, I was kept informed of their doings by Legwate and Nkoana. Both told me that the Africanists had decided to break with the ANC, and that they would not be returning.

~~xxxxxxx~~ Outside the hall, all remained ~~quite~~ quiet. People stood around chatting and just sitting. Now and again, someone emerged from the hall, and I spoke to Putini several times. Always non-committal, however. Now and again, one could hear clapping from inside the hall.

At a few minutes after 5 pm, a group of about ~~20~~ 25 to 30 Africanists approached the hall. They did not enter the grounds, but stood at the fence. People who had been at the front of the hall tended to move round to the side so as to watch the Africanists, who were also on the side. About 80-100 gathered in this way.

Nkoana told me that the Africanists had decided to break and that they had sent two messengers with their letter addressed to the chairman of conference. I am not too sure what happened at this stage. It seems that, however, that the two messengers came into the grounds, but were not permitted to go to the front door of the hall. On the other hand, they might have gone to the door, and been refused entry. (sorry, but it was extremely difficult to make out what was happening.). In any event, after a short while, the 2 messengers came back. They went to the door, were refused admittance, and a scuffle developed. I had stationed myself about 15 yds in front of the door, with the main gate of the grounds about 15 yds immediately behind me. I saw the scuffle, and one of the leadership types seemed to pull something from his pocket. The next thing was that one of the Africanist messengers was running for dear life, with about 80 people close on his heels. He came straight towards me, heading for the gate, and I am afraid I cannot say what happened during the next few minutes as I left in a hurry, and did not stop till I was in the RDM car, and safe on the other side of the road. I then saw the Africanist on the outside of the fence, and walking away from the hall. I do not know what happened to the other messenger.

Nkoana told me later that the messengers had been told by one of the officials outside that they could go into the hall to deliver their letter. At the door, however, they had been told to leave, and the scuffle had then started. The letter had been taken away from them. He said that the messenger who was attacked was R. Nziaba. He and the other fellow were Mofolo delegates.

wish to notify this conference: 1) We are not a party to any decisions ^{made}
 2) We have come to the parting of ways, at this conference.
 3) We dissociate ourselves from the ANC in the Transvaal as it is at present constituted.
 We are launching out on our own as the custodians of ANC policy as formulated in 1912, and pursued up to the time of the Congress alliances."

signed: S. Ngendane, Secretary, Africanist group.

After leaving Sobukwe, I went to Luthuli's place, and saw Tambo for a few minutes. He was very tired, and not willing to say much. He did, however, ~~yield this:~~ yield this:
 He said there had been about 200 delegates from about 80 branches. They had discussed the report of the credentials committee, the financial statement and had had elections. He said it had been a "quiet, orderly conference."

I asked him about Africanist allegations that supporters of the leadership had carried arms. He replied: "I have no such information." He also said: "I think the future is hopeful."

Luthuli did not want to say anything at all. I asked ~~what had happened to the Africanists' letter.~~ what had happened to the Africanists' letter. Tambo said it had been read to the conference, and the contents were "noted". I asked what was ~~the~~ the reaction of delegates to the letter. Tambo said there was no reaction. I gathered - this more subjective than anything else - that both ~~he and~~ he and Luthuli were not altogether displeased about the Africanists' leaving.

While ~~stating~~ doing this report, I have ~~to~~ had to omit one or two points so as not to disturb the continuity. Let me now list these:

- 1) On the Saturday evening, I chatted to Luthuli. Nothing of interest or value in this - it was all general stuff - except that he showed me a copy of the 1957 ANC constitution, and pointed to the disciplinary section. This stated clearly that any national or provincial executive had the power to suspend or expel any member of the ANC where thought necessary.
- 2) Tsele was at the conference on Saturday, and again on Sunday morning. He left just before the delegates went into the hall, telling me that he had to fetch some meat for the conference. I did not see him again, however, and I believe that he did not ~~return~~ return.
- 3) Both Legwate and Nkoana were emphatic in stating that the leadership tough boys were carrying knives and guns. They said that the room leading off the stage which was so well-guarded was the place where a cache of arms was being kept.
- 4) Gerry Mbuli was at the meeting on the Saturday evening, but took no vocal part. I did not see him there that evening, nor on Sunday. (though he might have been present on at least the Sunday.)
- 5) On the Saturday afternoon, at about 2 pm, I spoke to Nkobi. He told me

tt t conference would begin by being an open session, and tt later, only delegates would be admitted. I asked him what would happen if t Africanist refused to go. In tt event, he replied, "t people will decide."

6) T Pressmen at t conference were: Nkoana, Nkosi and a photographer from "Post", "Bantu World" - reporter and photographer, myself - we were present throughout, except on t Sunday onwards, when none of t press were allowed inside. * A "New Age" African was also there - I do not know what happened to him on t Sunday. On Saturday afternoon, until about 5.0, Georg Clay, Henri Jonker (A.P.), Stanley Uys and Jack Halpern were also there. T latter was also present for about 15 mins. on Sunday afternoon. Also, on Saturday until about 6.30, there 2 people and a photographer from t "Sunday Times", and one reporter from t "Sunday Express".

7) In t week following t conference, I met Segale several times. He told me tt he had declined nomination for t credentials committee because he felt t Africanists should be given t chance to state their case before t conference. He said tt Sibande had obtained either 104 or 105 votes for t presidency, as against 97 for Moritsela. Sophiatown people had nominated t latter. T other members of t executive were: D. Mahopo, A. Nzo, T. Nkobi (these apparently pushed by t Sophiatown people), and P. Mathole, Elizabeth Mtingoe, O. Motshabi and B. Hlapane (apparently pushed by t pro-Sibande people). In addition, P. Moritsela was elected treasurer, and J. Habela, secretary.

8) At t conference itself, Legwate told me tt t African Nationalists were not cooperating with Africanists at t meeting itself. He said tt this was due to t fact tt decisions had been made at t anti-Charterist Council, but immediately afterwards, t Africanists had gone their own way without consulting their colleagues. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Legwate said tt this had happened because t Africanists had their own "inner circle" which took decisions independent of everybody and everything else. He also said tt t Africanists went too far in their views and demands. He said tt Madzunya - whom he praised as being a natural leader of t African Nationalists - was now lost. He said tt he would lose all his support and popularity as a result of having worked with t Africanists.

9) A few days after t meeting, Sobukwe told me tt he and t other Africanists had been taken completely by surprise at t suggestion for a special committee. He said tt when Tambo threw open t debate, he had put up his hand immediately, but had not been recognised. He had wanted to ask for a proper enquiry into t Africanist grievances. He said tt when t committee was becoming a fact, he thought it best to cooperate, and to wait until t committee's report was presented to t conference before attacking it. Tt was why he had agreed to assist in t counting. He had not been told beforehand tt he would be asked to do this. He said tt he did not know whether t 5 Africanist delegates from Western Native Township had gone into t closed session. He thought not, but was not sure.

COMMENTS: (at long last!)

1) T outstanding feature of t first day of t conference, was t quite remarkable cooperation and conciliation showed by Oliver Tambo. He was always leaning over backwards to everybody, t Africanists included. He thanked others when they were nice to him, and ~~was~~ made a point of saying tt it was possible tt he would make mistakes, and asking conference to forgive him if he did. Throughout t day, he was cool, calm and collected, and was never ruffled even when things were at fever-pitch, or when Madzunya was on his feet screaming at him. Frankly, at t time, I could not understand it. I also could not understand why it was tt there were most definitely no overt signs of organisation on t part of t leadership in response to t organised aspect of t Africanist camp - because obviously t ~~leadership~~ leadership ~~was~~ prior to t meeting was fully aware of what was likely to happen. Even at this ~~st~~ stage, I am at a loss to explain this lack of preparedness on t first day. There were times when it seemed open warfare was about to happen within t next few minutes, and yet Tambo remained as calm as ever, and I am certain tt, on t first day at least, there was no group of toughs around.

On t second day of t meeting, I began to understand some of t happenings of t previous day. ~~Wk~~ With a group of obviously well-armed men at least 130 strong, Tambo was able to stand on t steps of t hall, allow only t delegates to enter, and in effect, to tell t Africanists either to get t hell out of it, or ~~to~~ be beaten to a pulp. And believe me, on t Sunday morning, t leadership ~~was~~ prepared. T extent of t ring of guards thrown around t back entrances of t hall was clear enough proof of this, and these men remained there throughout t day. T Africanists chose to withdraw. Sobukwe told me afterwards tt they did this because they wished to avoid bloodshed. I would tend to regard this as only half of t truth, as my feeling is tt they realised tt they ~~well~~ were outnumbered - and out-gunned! - and were therefore forced to retreat. In view of their oft-repeated statements prior to t conference tt they accepted t probability of bloodshed - with t proviso always attached tt they also expected to win any such clash, I find it hard to believe tt they retreated purely from ~~their~~ feeling of abhorrence at t thought tt blood might be spilt.

To return to Tambo: at t conclusion of Luthuli's speech on t first day, he said at first tt he would allow only 4 speakers. Yet he accepted far more than this number, and in fact, t debate dragged on for several hours. Later in t evening, after stating so frankly and beautifully tt he had several "headaches" in t shape of t various disputed branches (and how tactfully he stated it all, never once referring to Madzunya and Lebello, for example, as not being members of t ANC, but saying instead tt some people might not be members, and yet they might, he did not know!), he proceeded - to my complete astonishment at t time - to invite t 400 present to assist him in solving t problems. Not only tt, but he sat quietly in t chair, making comments only ~~occasionally~~ comparatively occasionally, while t debate dragged on and on. And yet, looking back, one can see t picture so clearly. I do not know ~~if~~ whether t proposal for a special committee, made so promptly after inviting assistance, had been deliberately arranged.

Sobukwe tells me that as far as he knows, Mlonzi is not one of the very pro-leadership people. Yet it was so quickly proposed, and was so much in line with what must obviously have been the general plan, that one cannot help wondering.

At the same time, it is interesting to note that, at first, it was merely a "special committee" to go into the matter and to report back to conference. It was only after a fairly lengthy debate that the phrase "credentials committee" was used - and the first to use it was Tambo himself. Also, until Tambo rose to state flatly that only those already accepted as delegates would be able to vote for the committee, it was merely a committee whose functions and membership no one really understood.

Another feature of Saturday evening was the fact that although there was strenuous opposition from the Africanists to the committee, both in its initial nebulous form and later also, the idea of the committee was accepted, and elections were held for it. This was solely and purely Tambo's work. And he did it in a very simple way: he let the Africanists say practically as much as they wished to, but after each speaker, he would simply rise again and get on with the job. In other words, while allowing them to express themselves, he ignored them completely. ~~They~~ Quite possibly they had the feeling that they were getting ~~some~~ somewhere - in reality, though, they did not achieve even the slightest success, because they failed utterly even to expose what Tambo was doing. I do not think they were aware of it themselves.

In retrospect, therefore, I would say that on the first day, for reasons unknown, Tambo ~~allowed the Africanists to~~ ~~express their own views~~ ~~as much~~ ~~as~~ ~~they~~ ~~wanted~~ was not organised. He therefore allowed the Africanists as much time as they wanted. This gave them a feeling of boundless confidence in themselves. They thought they had "wiped up" the leadership. Meanwhile, Tambo was merely stalling the meeting so as to get to the end of the day. At the same time, he ensured that the organisational ^{work} he wanted was set up legally and properly. Overnight, he organised - if this had not already been done in advance of the meeting. On the second day, he stepped in, stopped the Africanists from going any further than he wanted, and forced them to retreat with their tails between their legs.

This might, of course, be an over-simplification. Without detailed knowledge of what happened inside the leadership caucus, however, I do not think I can take it any further. It might be that I have given Tambo too much credit for shrewdness and adaptability. I must say though, that the conference has left me with a tremendous feeling of admiration for what - in my view - he accomplished.

2) I think it important to note that when delegates were "screened" on the Saturday evening, this was hardly the way it is normally done. It was all as far as I could see - very easy and informal. As so much hinged later on who was a proper delegate, this initial piece of skulduggery was smoothly and cleverly worked. The Africanists, of course, did not take up the point at all, although it was potentially a very strong one for them. Here again, perhaps I give the leadership ~~too~~ too much credit for being clever. Perhaps the slipshod screening was that and nothing more. In view of the surrounding circumstances, however, I tend to reject this view.

3) As I have mentioned, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ on Saturday evening, the Africanists were jubilant. They were certain they had scored a major victory in the debate on Luthuli's speech, and also felt that they were making their views felt in the debate on the committee. Several of them - Sobukwe, Rabaroko and Mathopeng included - have since told me that they were certain that a fair number of people were ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ persuaded to their view during the debate on Luthuli's speech. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ Sobukwe has even told me that a number of people came up to him after the debate and told him this - people he says, who were pro-leadership.

But I am not so sure about this. My own impression was ^hvery few indeed - if any at all for that matter, were talked across by the Africanists. My reason for saying this is that my overwhelming impression on the first day was that people had come to the meeting because they wanted a stable ANC. They did not want trouble. True enough, there were more Africanist ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ speakers than on the other side - but these speakers - with the notable exception of Sobukwe who made a strong but balanced speech - ranted and shouted. And I don't think this went down too well with the vast majority of the people, who in ^hevent I think, have been conditioned to the idea that the Africanists always try to make trouble. Thus I think that people's backs were put up when a succession of Africanists rose to declaim furiously and loudly. Added to this was the fact that from the first moment - when Mathopeng spoke - it was obvious to all that the Africanists were present in strength and that they were organised. Their shouts of support for their men was too obviously in concert. I do not think this went down well with the mass of those present. Then too, when this same group heckled and booed the speakers opposed to them, I think they antagonised even more people. My purely subjective impression was that Africanists lost more in the debate than they gained.

I wonder whether it is stretching conjecture too far to say that perhaps the leadership deliberately kept their strong arm boys out of the conference on the first day? Perhaps they realised that Africanists ~~xxxx~~ would make a lot of noise, and perhaps they were shrewd enough to bank on this upsetting the ordinary mass of delegates? Perhaps they thought: let the Africanists come right into the open. From what we know of them, they are sure to over-play their hand. If we then bring in our toughies on the second day, we will have ample right and justification on our side, and everybody will breathe a sigh of relief, and say thank goodness those noisy, nasty men are not disturbing the orderly progress of this important conference anymore. Is this too much of a phantasy? Is it crediting ~~xxxx~~ and Co. with more shrewdness than they have? Perhaps not - perhaps it depends on who is involved in "and Co." ?

4) I was struck by the utter disrespect shown to Luthuli by the Africanists. They couldn't have cared less about him. I might add that I myself was not over-impressed by him. My view was that he had a certain amount of shrewdness, but that basically, he is simply a goat. On the other hand, who knows what part he played in the behind-the-scenes organisation. He sat next to Tambo throughout, and must obviously have been involved to some extent at least.

5) The Africanists I would say mobilised their total resources for this conference. A fair proportion of their 100 people were toughs. The remaining portion does not represent a very significant section of the total ANC membership in the Transvaal, does it? I think they are pretty much a spent force.

PUBLISHER:

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

Location:- Johannesburg

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DOCUMENT DETAILS:

Document ID:- A2618-Ce13

Document Title:- Typed notes: African National Congress (ANC)

Author:- Benjamin Pogrund

Document Date:- 3 November 1958