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Feb. 1964

7.21 and 7.22

There are various and conflicting claims. Best to see all groups involved and make your own assessment. Compare the views of Dr. Nkomo (Pretoria), Mda, Peter Raberoko and Mandela, Siqulu and Tambo. Of all these, the one who has no axe to grind and who is likely to be most objective is A. P. Mda.

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7.23

Refer to Lambedi's motion to have Reds expelled from the ANC. Motion carried but disallowed at later conference by Dr. Xuma. Details can be supplied by Mda, Leballo, Ngubane or Tambo.

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7.3

Election marked by clashes and fights with Tema bitterly opposed to Communists leading ANC. Moroka invited to preside at second election meeting. Decided in favour of Marks. YL confused. While sympathetic towards Tema and supporting him, believed that Reds should be ousted "constitutionally" by being voted out. Thus, when Tema formed independent National-Minded EACC, forfeited support of Y.L. which wanted to keep ANC intact.

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7.25

Having failed to prevent the adoption of the Programme, the Reds set to subverting it immediately. Setting aside all the preliminary and constructive provisions of the Programme, such as the creation of a National fund to finance the struggle, the establishment in urban areas of Co-operatives and in the rural areas Collective Marketing, the Action Committee provided for in the Programme, chose to implement the One-day stoppage of work provided for in the Programme. It is interesting to note that this clause was not in the original draft programme, but was proposed at the last minute: after the rest of the Programme had been adopted. It was proposed by the Rev. Calata in his summing up as speaker (rather, Chairman really) of Conference.

To give to the outside world (particularly the USSR) and to the Government the impression that they were a force in African politics, the Reds chose May Day as the day on which to stage the protest, using the argument that the Suppression of Communism Act was aimed, not at the Communists as such, but against the ANC.

To forestall criticism from the Y.L., the Reds argued in public meetings that the May Day strike would demonstrate whether the teachers, lawyers and students of the YL who had spoken so bravely at the Conference in support of the programme would have the courage to implement that programme.

- + For details of the management of the Strike, YL reaction and decision to call June 26th Day of Mourning and Protest, see Loballo and Mda - also Prof. Matthews.

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9.0

For PAC's assessment of Congress of Democrats, see "Africanists" of April/May 1959 and Tloome's reply in two issues of "Fighting Talk".

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7.5

Strongest centres of Defiance in Eastern Cape where Red influence at a minimum, if existent at all. Spirit in the Cape was strongly religious and Ministers of religion, particularly late Rev. W. B. Tabane, played prominent roles.

It might be significant to point out here that both in 1949 and in the Defiance Campaign, the Nationalists broke with ANC and CP tradition and addressed meetings in the vernacular. In the 1949 Conference a representative of King Sobhuza addressed the conference in Swazi and Chief Mordko, after his election, spoke to conference in Setswana. Njongwe and Gwentane of P.E. and East London respectively, addressed meetings in Xhosa and when they visited Johannesburg masses went wild. On the other hand, the Reds had been taught Marxism in English and could not put across Marxist ideas in the vernaculars. They were, therefore, constrained to speak pure African Nationalism themselves.

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7.6

After Defiance Campaign, the YL as officially recognised and re-organised by ANC became the "Volunteer" wing of ANC whose task was to silence all opposition to ANC leadership. The Nationalists, held together by the Orlando Y.L. under Leballo, became the official opposition in the ANC. It was they who criticised the Presidential Address and the Executive Reports and insisted on an honest implementation of the 1949 Programme of Action.

And in every conference since then they were either assaulted or thrown out bodily by the Volunteers.

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8.36

I do not know what information you have on this. But it also indicated a remarkable change in ANC outlook and tactics. It reflected the New Congress Alliance, within which "White supremacy" as emphasized by the 1949 Programme and by the Africanists became an embarrassment. It now became necessary to present an "Anti-Apartheid" front. This move was severely criticised by Africanists and a scathing memorandum submitted by the Orlando branch of the ANCYL. Report of this carried in "The Africanist" of either April or May of that year. From the moment the decision was taken at a "Workers Conference", seven or more ad hoc Committees were at one time or another responsible for arrangements, and the ANC appeared on the stage only to call of the strikes.

Since September 1957, an intense struggle raging within the ANC. Dissatisfaction with financial report seized upon by Africanists who persuaded over twenty branches to draw up a petition demanding special conference.

First meeting of dissident branches held in Pretoria. Madsunya and Lebello ~~strongly~~ ~~loos~~ large in ANC blacklist. Africanists stink in ANC circles. Luthuli' declares there's no room in ANC for Africanists. Attempt made on Madsunya's life in Newclare.

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Ever since the Defiance Campaign, a systematic and successful boycott of all shops and business concerns accused of intswela-bulungisa (injustice) had been conducted in P.E., so that those concerns that were overwhelmingly patronised by Africans were "persuaded" to provide employment opportunities for Africans in better jobs at acceptable wages. Natal demanded that the Economic Boycott (Incidentally, also provided for in the 1949 Programme of Action), be implemented in Natal. It became obvious that the first people to be hit by such a boycott would be the Indian shopkeepers and the SAIC were "allies" of the ANC.

Unable to resist the pressure for an economic boycott, but unwilling to expose their allies to economic privation, the ANC leadership on instruction from the Consultative Committee, launched the boycott of "Nationalist" firms.

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The Potato Boycott was almost inevitable after the revelations made by a Johannesburg lawyer of conditions on the Bethal farms. Played up by New Age. But prior to the conference where the decision was taken, branches were demanding action against Passes, in view of the impending legislation to extend passes to women. At a meeting held at the basement offices of the ANC in Market Street, Tumbo warned that the pass laws were "the pillars" of White domination and massive organisation and action would be required to topple them. The branches were unimpressed.

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8.37

Continuation of what Ngubane terms publicity "stunts". Women had been used since 1954 to build up enthusiasm for ANC leadership. Began to dominate ANC conferences - rubber stamping decisions of executive and showing extreme impatience with Africanist "oppositional subversion". Singing and catering characterised conferences now and discussion was held to be waste of time.

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15.4

At Hlocomfontein National Conference, 1955, Africanists determined to oppose Charter. But showdown averted by Rev. Galata, speaker of Conference, who ruled that as the Charter affected ANC constitution, it would have to be considered by the National Executive.

Heds had overplayed their hand. Heds reported in "New Age" that Conference was expected to adopt the Charter and gave preview of Executive Report. Africanists objected strongly to this and had support from the House, Rev. Galata announcing that if he had seen New Age before coming to Conference, he would not have attended.

Conference decided to hold a special conference in April, 1956 to consider the question of Passes for Women.

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At the Annual Congress held in Queenstown, ANC (Transvaal) intended to effect amendments to Programme of Action. Y.L. struck a bargain with Cape A.N.C. Promised to vote for Prof. Matthews's idea if Cape ANC would in turn defend the Programme of 1949, referred to by Africanists as ~~Wankasucht~~ "Nation-Building Programme". Both sides kept bargain.

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15.41

In April, however, Executive informed conference that meeting called to consider Freedom Charter. Immediate uproar from Africanists. Leballo refused permission to speak by Masim who was in the Chair. Stood up and spoke in defiance of chair amid heckling and threats. Raberone shouted "Stalin is dead!". Lilian Ngoyi jumped up and asked Chairman to let the women deal with the Africanists. Mrs. Walam got up and got hold of ~~the~~ ~~chair~~ ~~man~~ pushed off by Africanists. "Volunteers" turned on

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Throughout Conference, Kotane, Marks, Mandel, Tloome, closeted in a house behind Communal Hall, issuing instructions on tactics.

Charter adopted.

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18.1

It is only relevant to point out that the ANC refused to co-operate with PAC in the campaign. Held public meetings in Joh'burg on Sunday 20th March, urging people to ignore PAC call. Statement issued by Duma Nokwe in Sunday Times March 20th denouncing PAC action. About 5:30 on Monday afternoon, Nokwe calls on all "democrats" and right-thinking people" to support campaign. Lutuli calls for Day of Mourning and Protest; Dawie, of the Burger made a brilliant analysis of situation showing how ANC, not to be outdone, was ashing in on the situation. ANC created confusion, with Lutuli and others publicly "burning" their passes. Rightly or wrongly, PAC felt that ANC had deliberately sabotaged the campaign.

The unexpected success of the Campaign alarmed not only the Congress Alliance but also the Liberals, who regarded PAC as arch-racialists. Immediate attempts were made to discredit PAC. Sharpeville became an event that just happened. The Reds took up the slogan "Unity at all Costs". ANC felt it had to do something spectacular to redeem its fast-fading image. Hence the events leading up to the Maritzburg Conference.

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