

MULTI - R A C I A L C O N F E R E N C E O F S O U T H A F R I C A

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMISSIONS.

1. This Conference accepts as its fundamental aim the creation in South Africa of a common society.
2. Conference is convinced that only universal adult suffrage on a common roll can meet the needs and aspirations of the people of this country. It appreciates, however, that there is disagreement as to the ways and means of achieving the transition from white supremacy to a non-racial democracy in which these franchise rights may be exercised.

Conference believes that it should start working immediately towards the achievement of the goal of universal adult suffrage.

3. Conference is of the opinion that the basic human rights of individuals should be safeguarded by means of a Bill of Rights which should be an integral part of the Constitution.
4. Conference suggests that a committee be appointed to consider certain topics relating to political arrangements, raised by various delegates. A list of these topics will be handed in to the Planning Committee.

MULTI-RACIAL CONFERENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND DUTIES IN A
MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY.

1. We believe that any good society must guarantee civil rights to its citizens, and that these civil rights are fundamental to human freedom.
2. Such rights, as upheld in democratic societies, and affirmed in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, include: freedom of speech and association; the right to publish opinions; the right to own and occupy property; freedom of worship and conscience; freedom from arbitrary arrest and banishment; freedom of movement--including travel and passport rights; freedom to choose a marriage partner and to found a family; the privacy of the home and of correspondence; the right to equal protection of the laws.* We recognise that these rights must be exercised with regard to the rights of others, and in the interests of the whole community.
3. To deny these rights to any group in the nation is to prevent men from living a free and dignified life, in harmony with society. The result is resentment and frustration; and a sense of oppression which if not remedied, can lead to rebellion.
4. To withhold civil rights, for reasons of race or colour or creed, is a violation of moral principles and civilised standards. To try to limit such rights to one racial group, in a multi-racial society must lead ultimately to the limitation of the rights of all.
5. The effect on the dominant group is the destruction of the values of their society, with a tacit reliance on force to maintain their dominance. The effect on the subordinate groups may be to encourage resistance or the will to counter-domination, or slavish submission to the state.
6. These general statements have detailed and practical application to our South African society. Since the Act of Union, a variety of restrictive laws have been passed, which limit or withhold civil rights, and which have reached a crescendo in the apartheid laws. Some of these laws have curtailed the personal freedom of the governing group. Their essential purpose has been, however, to apply restraints, prohibitions and racial discriminations to the non-white groups. If these laws are maintained and extended, the moral, material and intellectual decay of our total society will inevitably result. In the subordinate group, arrests for technical offences - which under full civil rights would not be offences at all - are so numerous that imprisonment has tended to lose its stigma. The effect of this is to diminish respect for the law, which is often seen as the instrument of racial domination; and a resultant instability and insecurity in our society as a whole.
7. The remedy is the repeal of all laws denying or restricting civil rights. In addition, the basic freedoms, to which every individual in a democratic society is entitled, should be entrenched in a written constitution, through a bill of rights. Such a constitution would require the assent of a new National Convention, representative of all races in South Africa.
8. The ultimate entrenchment of civil rights is not, however, dependent only upon law. It requires the vigilance of all citizens, and their knowledge and determination that if they allow any breach in civil rights, at the expense of one group, they endanger the rights of all.

The Commission, as a practical recommendation, advises:

That a standing committee be elected by the conference:

- (a) to publicise the pernicious effects of the denial of civil rights involved in the pass and other discriminatory laws, and the effect of these laws upon all sections of the people;
- (b) to encourage united opposition to laws withholding civil rights, in order to bring about the repeal of these laws.

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and freedom to participate in the government of the country.

MULTI-RACIAL CONFERENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

REPORT OF FINDINGS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY.

As a result of a decision made at the all-African Bloemfontein Conference called by the IDAMF, a Multi-Racial Conference assembled in the Great Hall of the University of the Witwatersrand, from December 3 - 5, to consider the problem of living in a multi-racial society.

The Conference, after being opened by the Rev. Z.R. Mahabane, President of IDAMF, listened to an exposition by Prof. MacCrone of his paper "Human Relations in a Multi-Racial Society". One of his propositions set the tone for the first plenary discussion, namely that when a society consisted of a dominating group and a subordinate group, the reaction of the latter was invariably one of two, either submission to domination, or resistance to it, and this resistance sometimes expressed itself in a will to counter-domination.

The danger facing South Africa was that of a headlong collision between the forces of white domination and those of counter-domination. The Conference believed that such a collision would be disastrous for the country, but it was equally convinced that a turning-point had been reached, where South Africa must choose between the concept of a common society, or a bitter conflict between these two wills to dominate, which could only result in collision.

The supporters of Apartheid do not hesitate to voice their fear that the desire of the black man was to drive the white man into the sea. This fear is as old as their first encounter. But the presence of 400 people in the Great Hall of the University was a proof that this was not the inevitable end. These 400 people were the representatives of millions of South Africans who did not desire such an end. But many of them testified that their respective groups stood at the crossroads, where the choice was between co-operation and irreconcilability.

Apartheid offers no solution to this threatening impasse. It offers security to nobody. It condemns white South Africa to live out its historical span behind the walls of a fortress, and it condemns non-white South Africa to an unrelenting struggle to breach these walls. For both, ordinary life was becoming more and more impossible, and each was condemned to an unnatural life of increasing vigilance, anxiety and fear.

Conference believed that the days of white supremacy were past, and that it was completely outlawed by an overwhelming world opinion. South Africa must accept a political^{and} economic structure that would eliminate these bitter conflicts. Conference believed that white South Africa had no adequate conception of the repugnance felt by non-white citizens towards the doctrines of apartheid, and that it had no conception of the sufferings and deprivations inflicted on its non-white fellows by apartheid legislation, of the ways in which they were harried by laws and officials during every moment of their lives. Those white people who tried to understand it were often rejected and made to suffer by their own community and many white people who were convinced of the injustices of apartheid laws, failed to oppose them because of their fear of ostracism and victimisation.

The point was made that the whole Nationalist philosophy was based on racial difference. But Conference regarded such differences as only incidental to a basic common humanity, on which foundation, and on that alone, just and peaceful policies could be based. This indeed was the teaching of the Christian religion, and non-white people were disillusioned when white people denied the values of the religion that they had taught to their fellows. Most white South Africans had a double standard; they responded to the teachings of Christ so long as they thought these did not contradict apartheid, white supremacy, white leadership or the many forms of racial discrimination. Non-white South Africa rejected this

double standard; nor did it wish to return to the status quo ante 1948 to which many white South Africans hoped to return when the extreme policies of apartheid had been rejected.

The Conference recognised the depth of white fear of granting rights to non-white people, but noted that policies based on fear offered no real security to white people. On the contrary they heightened such fear, and drove white South Africa into more and more dangerous policies. Politicians played on these fears to seize political power. Conference wished to reassure white South Africa that it recognised the interdependence of white and non-white, and wished only to guarantee basic human rights of all people. Conference affirmed its allegiance to the aspirations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and suggested December 10, the anniversary of the Declaration, be observed as a new Day of Covenant offering security and hope to every inhabitant of multi-racial South Africa.

The plenary discussion, though firm and outspoken, was conspicuously lacking in bitterness, and was inspired by hope that a happier future was within the reach of all, provided that it was based, not on apartheid, but on a recognition of the rights of every South African, provided that the rights of none depended on the denial of those of others.

MULTI-RACIAL CONFERENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY.

This Commission assumes that economic advance is important, that poverty is an evil and tends to breed evil, and that therefore it is the duty of the state to take the necessary measures to put an end to poverty. This cannot be done by way of doles and subsidies, but only by securing to every member of the community equal justice and an equal right to live and work. Everyone should have the right to earn his living in any legitimate way, according to his skill and ability. He should also have the right to acquire and hold full and secure possession of land. This would require a more equitable distribution of land. In time this would make possible the eventual disappearance of the reserve system, with its implication of territorial separation of the races.

A just economic policy must be based on the right of each member of the community, without discrimination or limitation, to develop to the full, and use in any legitimate way, his capacity and abilities. This implies that all colour bars in industry should be abolished and all workmen should be entitled to a living wage according to civilized standards. The belief that there is only a limited pool of jobs makes white workers think that the colour bar is necessary for their protection. It is felt that the entry of new competitors into that labour pool would mean a loss of their jobs and a reduction in their standard of living. This is an unfounded fear. If our land, with its natural resources, were made available for full use by all our peoples, our economy would expand with full opportunity for everyone in town and country, in agriculture and industry, to employ himself or to be employed to his full capacity. The colour bar denies to those excluded by it their inherent natural right to be able to use their talents fully. Such a denial is unjust and cannot be defended on any moral or economic ground.

It is essential in a growing community that the economy of the country should be an expanding one. At present in the Union, such expansion is gravely hampered by the colour bar and by restrictive legislation, such as the Group Areas Act, the Pass Laws and influx control, and generally the interference with the mobility of workers.

Any legal obstacles in the way of the worker's freedom to choose his own calling should be abolished, particularly those which interfere with:-

- (a) his right to be trained for any occupation or calling;
- (b) his right to combine with others in trade unions for the protection of his interests, including the right to strike.

The system of using migrant labour is unsocial and uneconomic, and dangerous to the welfare of the country. Every effort should be made to provide for a stable family life for the worker near his place of work.

Provision for social welfare should be available for all without racial discrimination.

To sum up. Apartheid imposes a crippling cost on the economy of the country. The aim should be to remove all discriminatory restrictions based on the colour of the worker and all other obstacles in the way of production as soon as possible, and that the state should encourage the expansion of the economy by all means in its power.

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

The Commission expresses its belief that education must seek to provide for the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical growth of every human being, without distinction of race. It must create such conditions that the native abilities of all people can thrive and come to fulfillment.

The Commission therefore endorses Articles 26 and 27(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 26:

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior rights to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27 (1)

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

With specific reference to South Africa's present and future the Commission rejects current educational policies which seek to perpetuate white domination, accentuate ethnic differences and resuscitate tribal nationalism. The Commission further rejects unracial formulation of educational policy. The Commission deplores the use of mother tongue education for political ends. It rejects the Bantu Education Act, the Separate Universities Bill, the Nursing Amendment Act, the proposals of the Cape Commission for separate Coloured Education and finally, the narrow sectionalism of certain parts of the Christian National Education programme.

Further, the Commission affirms its faith in the common destiny of the various racial elements which comprise the South African nation and believes that the fundamental social aim of our education should be to promote a common patriotism, common citizenship and the welding of the various elements into a single nation-state. Because we visualize the creation in South Africa of a peaceful multi-racial society, we believe that it will be necessary to encourage the multi-racial classroom and to end compulsory segregation in schools. As a start in this direction, we feel that private schools should be permitted to admit children of all races, if they so desire.

We earnestly recommend to the Conference that a Continuing Committee on Education be set up which shall investigate inter alia:

- a) how rapidly education can be made compulsory for all children;
- b) how most effectively and speedily adult illiteracy can be ended and the general education of adults extended;
- c) how the present inequalities of educational opportunities can most speedily be reduced.

(Other more detailed recommendations made by the various educational commissions will be made available to the Continuing Committee in the event of such a body being set up.)

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FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963

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