

REPORT ON CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE

1. It is universsally acknowledged by all who have had anything to do the Congress of the People that it was a great success. Even the delegates who were stopped at Beaufort West have been infused with the enthusiasm of those who were more fortunate in reaching Johannesburg. What is it that makes us speak of success? Firstly the numbers of the people present. The official figure of 3000 delegates does not by itself give a true reflection of the crowds at Kliptown. We feel that the multitude of people approached 10,000, this being in itself a great victory for the Movement. The convocation of so many people is no easy task in South Africa. What with the immense barriers built by the police, the long distances, and the bad transport facilities, it is indeed a wonder that 42 delegates from the Cape Western, for example, found their way to Kliptown.

You have probably heard of the obstacle race of our delegates. Besides the two lorries stopped at Beaufort West, every car travelling from Cape town was stopped at least five times by police road blocks on the National Road and Africans were asked for their passes and poll tax receipts. Also the trains from Cape Town were searched by police for people who might be delegates, and those who eventually did reach Johannesburg were met by special Branch Police.

2. The enthusiasm of the delegates present was a great inspiration to all of us. It has been an object lesson to us to see that the delegates are so enthusiastic for struggle. In particular it struck us that the speeches that were most applauded were those that put forward a militant line, or those that proposed a policy which was of a radical nature. This showed us that the people are ready and determined to achieve a radical change in the South African set up. Platitude

It is also clear that it ^{is} becomin g more important to not only put a militant policy before the people but to put it in some detail. Many of the speakers both from the platform and from the floor, did this, but others should be encouraged to do so. I was greatly impressed with the interest and enthusiasm of the people in the ~~amixix~~ explanations of the ~~axat~~ details of the Charter.

3. It is our opinion that the arrival of the police was a great mistake from their point of view, and a source of inspiration from ours. The calmness of the people, their courage, and quiet fury was an object lesson to all on the degree of maturity of ~~SPK~~ our people. As far as possible future actions of the police are concerned they have learned nothing by their taking of names. Our delegates are all well known to them and have in the past withstood their intimidation with great courage. In general the delegates have nothing but profound contempt for the police and ~~we~~ do not fear them.

4. The organisation of the Congress was indeed a big achievement. Particularly the accomodation and the kitchen worked very well. If criticism is to be made then we should say that the site itself could have been made more attractive with flags and bunting, and there should have been a control office where all requests could have been taken up.

Transport worked very well, and in general we found everyone very helpfull.

5. In conclusion we wish to state that the C.O.P. has assisted us to break the barriers that are created by the Government BETWEEN our peoples. Not only have we worked together in a spirit of brotherliness throughout the campaign but the fact that both Europeans and Non Europeans were searched and pushed around by the police serves as a reminder that oppression is indivisible and that all are affected by Fascism.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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