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The Reverend D. G. Thompson
Union of South Africa

Mr. President and Friends of South Africa

The elements of what is now a complex human society were beginning to appear in South Africa in the mid-seventeenth century, 200 years ago. By the year 1700 the three main groups were European, African and Coloured. The Asian population was to come much later.

The European population has become, in due course, to consist of two main groups, - Afrikaans and English. Western Europeans entered Africa from the south and the process has continued, which, in the fulness of time, a political Union of South Africa was to be established. The European population numbers 2,600,000, the Africans 8,500,000, the Coloured over 1,000,000 and the Asian 323,000.

South Africa is, indeed, a "house divided against itself" and the history of South Africa is the story of strife between the various groups composing the political union. Until 1910, the date of Union, the story is one of war between tribe and tribe, black and white, and between English and Afrikaner Boer.

Economically, everything that has been achieved in agriculture, in mining, transport and industry, is the result of European skill, capital and organisation combined with non-European labour.

So much and more can be gleaned from Leo Marquard's fine study of the South African scene in his book "The Peoples and Policies of South Africa".

South Africa is, therefore, a country of contrasts and contradictions, where white and black, European and non-European, wealth and poverty, science and superstition, education and illiteracy, Christianity and heathendom live side by side in the same towns and villages and the same farms.

The Europeans have political control and you can well imagine the task that confronts them is formidable, and it is desirable that the world outside South Africa as well as people of all races in South Africa should understand the complexity of our problems as well as the supreme task of integrating the non-European into the political and economic life of the Union, and leaving social relations to the good sense of all concerned. Most

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The Reverend D. C. Thompson (Contd.)

Europeans in South Africa have so far evaded the real issue.

The Organising Committee for the Congress for a South African Peace Movement is calling a South African Peace Congress in July and a Call to Peace has gone out which I would like to read to this meeting of the World Council of Peace, to show where we stand in the Peace front.

"The whole world lives in the shadow of the threat of war. Armaments are being stockpiled, new and more frightful weapons perfected. Science, which should work to make life easier and happier for all mankind, is being harnessed to devise new means of mass slaughter and destruction. National economies are being crippled by the armaments burden, and living costs soar. Racial discrimination becomes a source of national bitterness and conflict, threatening armed clashes.

"But this is only the cold war.

"In Korea, Malaya and Indo-China the war is hot. The last two years of war have killed millions of men, women and children, injured millions more, ravaged countries and destroyed what man has built in those lands since the dawn of history.

"Thus far governments have failed to find a way.

"We believe that the peoples' wish for peace, if powerfully expressed in every land, can succeed where governments may fail. There is an urgent need for people of every social outlook, every religious faith, every political credo, every racial group, to discuss and find the policies which will unite all in their unshakable will for Peace.

"We believe the people of South Africa must find their own way to defend humanity and preserve world peace. All about us military bases are being prepared for war. Neighbouring territories are becoming vital strategic sources of war materials and manpower. Our own country is already paying heavily for the Korean war, is committed to military pacts in the Middle East, and is becoming one of the prime producers of uranium for atomic weapons. Our racial policies are the cause of international tension, diplomatic breaches and UNO debates on the threat to world peace. We are moving

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The Reverend D. C. Thompson

~~into the framework of a future~~

We believe that in a Peoples' Congress we can draw from our different ideas and ideals that which we have in common, so that we can act to preserve Peace."

Since this Call to Peace was first issued a few weeks back, the Korean situation has changed and the peaceful settlement will not only ease international tension but also have immediate results in the growing colonial power of South Africa - and I am sure will facilitate the process of certain aspects of "peaceful co-existence" as between the various races in South Africa.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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