

ANC. Eb5.2 ± 1956

Report on a tour of the Major Centres of the Union submitted to the National Consultative Committee, for discussion.

The following places were visited :

Kimberley	Umtata
Bloemfontein	Matatiele
Cape Town	Umzokulu
Port Elizabeth	Durban
Grahamstown	Pietermaritzburg
East London	Ladysmith

KIMBERLEY JUNE 30th.

Meetings (1) A.N.C. (men and women) (3) A.N.C. Women's league
(2) Youth League (4) A.N.C. Executive

Meetings of over 10 people are not allowed and permission for public meetings must be obtained from the Native Commissioner and the Location Superintendent. Meetings are not allowed over week-ends and in any case may not be held more than once a month.

There is no Consultative Committee as the A.N.C. is the only Congress organisation in Kimberley. Directives of the N.C.C. were received but not implemented. Freedom Charter signatures have been collected but not extensively and reports of numbers collected will be forwarded subsequently. Permission for a meeting to celebrate June 26th was refused at the last moment but celebrations were held in private houses.

The A.N.C. is not strong organisationally but has a very active core consisting of the A.N.C., Women's League and Youth League Executives.

The chief local issues are influx control; site and service and Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act. In addition a boycott of a firm which dismissed 2 A.N.C. leaders, one of whom has already been banished from Kimberley, is being planned.

Attempts are being made to implement the M plan although activity of this nature is not on a sufficiently well-planned basis.

The Women's League is active and 400 women have already protested to the Native Commissioner against passes.

BLOEMFONTEIN - JULY 1st.

Meeting () A joint meeting of members of O.F.S. A.N.C. Executive and O.F.S. Women's League and Youth League officials.

No Consultative Committee exists for the same reason as in Kimberley. It was reported that approximately 5000 signatures had been obtained in the Free State. Attempts are being made to establish more branches in the O.F.S. At the moment there are 6 branches of the A.N.C. and 5 of the Women's League. Lack of transport has been a serious handicap to organisation.

Issuing of Passes:

No further information was received in this connection and to the best of our knowledge no other area had been issued with passes since the N.A.D. unit were reported to have been at Senekal.

Over 400 women in Bloemfontein and 200 in Bethlehem had demonstrated to their local Native Commissioners against passes.

There was a strong request that Coloured people should be approached to participate in the Pretoria Protest and that a member of S.A.C.P.O. be sent down for this purpose as well as to organise a branch of S.A.C.P.O. there.

CAPE TOWN July 3rd. - 6th.

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| <u>Meetings</u> | Public and
General Meetings | (6) Worcester (ANC AND United Action
Committee) |
| | | (7) Paarl (ANC & Food & Canning
Workers) |
| | | (8) Langa (July 4th) |
| | | (9) Langa (July 8th) |
| | | (10) Parade Rally |
| | | (11) Marabastad ANC Women's League |
| <u>Committee &
House Meetings</u> | | (12) Nyanaga ANC Women's League |
| | | (13) COD Region |
| | | (14) COD Executive |
| | | (15) Federation of S.A. Women's Nat. Exec. |
| | | (16) Working Committee A.N.C. |
| | | (17) Consultative Committee |
| | | (18) COD Women's Meeting |
| | | (19) COD Education Meeting |
| | | (20) Educ. Meeting |
| | | (21) ANC Conference (9 branches) |

Owing to a misunderstanding over the duration of the visit to Cape Town, the ANC special Conference and a large public meeting in Langa had been arranged for Sunday July 8th. To meet this difficulty it was arranged that the ANC member should remain in Cape Town and rejoin the tour in Port Elizabeth on Monday July 9th.

Generally speaking Cape Town appears to have been more seriously affected than other areas by the banning of some leaders. There is some confusion over the Freedom Charter and other campaigns, and this has also had an effect on the Consultative Committee and its work. The role of SACPO appears to be limited by the small number of active members despite a relatively large membership. It is significant that no meeting of Coloured women was arranged in Cape Town for the Women's Protest, either through the Federation of S.A. Women and S.A.C.P.O. In the COD an encouraging change has taken place, involving a complete turn-over of membership. Some of the original members have been banned and others have become inactive, but recently the COD has attracted between 30 and 40 new young members, who have become particularly active since SACOD National Conference in April.

Discussions were held with Lee Warden.

The Consultative Committee consists of representatives from ANC COD SACPO but has no Indian representation. Directives from the NCC have been received, but have not been implemented, due

due to the lack of clarity on the Consultative Committee and in the Organisation. Discussions held should lead to a clearer understanding of the Freedom Charter in relation to other campaigns. The last directive from the NCC was fully discussed. Consultative Committee was requested to send money away for Freedom Charters. The Charter has not been printed in Afrikaans through lack of funds. Approximately 1000 signatures have been collected for the Freedom Charter.

The special Conference of the ANC was centred on the anti-Pass campaign and the Freedom Charter; and the opportunity was taken to clear up the confusion still existing about the campaign against Bantu Education. It was apparent that the people do not want Bantu Education but were not clear as to the correct course of action. No boycott has been started, but in Retreat a few parents have withdrawn their children from school and a small cultural club has been started. Members of the COD and ANC will start a small branch committee of the African Education Movement to assist this club and to stimulate the formation of others.

PORT ELIZABETH - 7th to 10th.

Meetings. (No public meetings on account of ban).

- (22) ANC Youth League (Women's Section) New Brighton
- (23) ANC Women's League, Korsten.
- (24) ANC Women's League, New Brighton.
- (25) ANC Youth League Executive.
- (26) Consultative Committee.
- (27) African Education Movement.
- (28) Federation of South African Women (Coloured and African).
- (29) Coloured Men and Women. Schauder Township. - July 8th
- (30) Coloured Men and Women. Schauder Township - July 9th
- (31) COD.
- (32) ANC Youth League members meeting.
- (33) Transkei Committee meeting.
- (34) Club leaders Conference (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

The Consultative Committee should be considered as the Eastern Cape Regional Committee as it does not function outside the Port Elizabeth area. All directives from the NCC have been received and implemented, although no reports of activity have been forwarded. Over 3000 signatures have been collected and further copies of the Freedom Charter are required to replace many copies seized by the Police in raids. Freedom Charter Day was celebrated by thousands of volunteers moving conspicuously about the town and docks despite the ban on meetings.

COD is weaker than any other area and although individual members assist in the Congress movement and serve on the AEM Committee there is no activity as COD. Useful work has however been done for the Cultural Club leaders and one Leaders' Conference has been held.

SACPO has become weak despite large meetings held earlier in the year. The membership is generally inactive, both as a result of police intimidation and the lack of organisational activity. Reclassification has not yet been imposed except voluntarily through employers' pressure and the real impact has not yet been felt.

The high standard of ANC organisation in Port Elizabeth is deeply impressive and unequalled in any other area. Despite the ban on meetings of more than 10 Africans the ANC has developed organisationally. The extensive practice of small meetings has led to even closer contact between the leadership and the rank and file. The ban has failed utterly to disrupt the ANC and the alternative measures employed have in fact proved superior organisationally.

The AEM is functioning as a committee but needs closer contact with club leaders and clubs. Over 4000 children are still boycotting the Bantu Education schools.

A successful club leaders' conference was organised during the visit to P.E.; a fuller report will be submitted later through the AEM.

GRAHAMSTOWN - JULY 10th

Meeting (35) Members of ANC Women's League and Vice Chairman of ANC: This meeting was arranged without previous notice, but 12 members attended within half an hour. The discussion was held on the Women's Protest to Pretoria.

EAST LONDON - July 11th.

Meetings (36) ANC, Women's League and Youth League.
(37) House meeting of Coloured women.

No Consultative Committee exists as the ANC is the only functioning organisation. Efforts are being made to establish contact with the Coloured people, and to set up a branch of SACPO. Mrs. Kuse from Queenstown came to East London and discussions were held.

THE TRANSKEI. - July 12th and 13th.

No meetings were arranged but contact was made with ANC in Untata and with leaders in Matatiele Umzinkulu. Reports of famine were received from some areas; the position will be much worse from September. Arrangements are being made from P.E. with personnel in Transkei for relief organisation at a later date when appeal fund will be set in motion. In Untata women are being persecuted for residential permits. Two hundred were arrested on one day for permits or marriage certificates which are required to establish authority to reside in Untata location.

DURBAN. July 13th - 15th.

Meetings (38) General meeting of COD, NIC, ANC officials and members.
(39) Public meeting - Federation of South African Women.
(40) ANC Women's League, Lamontville.
(41) Consultative Committee.
(42) Federation of South African Women Committee.
(43) School committee, Cato Manor.

The Consultative Committee has not been functioning effectively. This failure is probably due to the following reasons.

- (1) The ANC had not endorsed the Freedom Charter until Easter 1956. This apparently held up activity in this area.
- (2) The Consultative Committee was not clear as to its functions.

The position should improve greatly now that the Charter has been endorsed and the role of the Consultative Committee clarified. Approximately 1000 signatures have been collected. ANC has 3 full time organisers of whom one is a woman. Already considerable organisational improvements have been effected.

The COD is weak organisationally. A few members are very active in general Congress work but as in P.E. COD has failed to function as the Congress of Democrats.

SACPO is non-existent.

The NIC is active and far better organised than the other Congresses. There is evidence of intensified activity in the NIC, and the ANC, between whom excellent co-operation exists.

Bantu Education.

One private school has been established in Cato Manor / which ..

which has an enrolment of 103 children. Despite difficulties of finance and organisation this school has continued for 9 months. Registration has been requested but no official reply has been received, but Inspectors indicate that registration would be granted only if the school caters for children under 7 years, i.e. pre-Bantu education. The committee intends to carry on until the school is closed and then to convert to a cultural club. An AEM branch committee is to be set up to assist this school and any others which may be started or cultural clubs which may be started. Although the school is run by the ANC there is no official boycott. Considerable confusion over the campaign against Bantu Education still exists, both in the ANC and the COD.

The President General of the ANC was visited and discussions held.

PIETERMARITZBURG - July 15th.

Meetings. (44) ANC members, members of Women's League and NIC.
(45) Members ANC and NIC leaders.

No official consultative committee has been established, but the actual co-operation between the ANC and the NIC and the coordination of their activities appears to have reached a higher level than in any other area. The consultative committee will be set up officially. NCC directives have been received but have not been implemented. This has been due to lack of clarity on the Freedom Charter campaign and the tendency to regard it as an abstract concept, and the campaign as separate from all other campaigns. The position has now been clarified. The ANC and the NIC in fact welcome the approach that the Charter should be integrated with specific campaigns on day-to-day issues.

LADYSMITH. -

Discussions were held with an NIC leader but time did not permit the arrangement of meetings nor was it possible to contact members of the ANC. The consultative committee has been set up and good cooperation exists between the ANC and the NIC. The ANC is very active locally. The Freedom Charter campaign has flagged, again owing to the failure to integrate it with local campaigns. The Northern Natal region is the only region to have paid for the copies of the Freedom Charter.

CONCLUSION.

It is quite clear that very little work has been done by the regions by way of implementing the directives of the National Consultative Committee, particularly with regard to the One Million Signature Campaign for the Freedom Charter, even though directives on this campaign have been received by the regions.

It is, however, apparent from observations that the following are the reasons for this state of affairs:-

Firstly, there are no well established or smooth working Consultative Committees throughout the country. This is due to the weakness of either one or two or all the Congresses in a given area.

Secondly, it was obvious from discussions that there has been misunderstanding on the Freedom Charter Campaign. In areas where attempts have been made to carry out the campaign, the tendency is to isolate the Charter from the day to day issues that affect the people.

The third and most important reason of all, is that there is great confusion as to what the functions of the Consultative Committees are. Is it a planning body of the Congresses whose duty is to give directives to the organisations from time to time, or is it, a co-ordinating committee whose task is to co-ordinate the activities of the congresses wherever possible? Until and unless this is cleared to have Consultative Committees will only be a farce.

Besides this, a practical approach to the formation of Consultative Committees has to be adopted. It is unrealistic to ask for the formation of a Consultative Committee where there is only one organisation in that area. This only serves to confuse the people. For instance, it is unrealistic to speak of the Eastern Cape Consultative Committee. For there is no such Committee. The Consultative Committee exists only in Port Elizabeth where there are branches of the A.N.C., C.O.D., and S.A.C.P.O. In other parts of the Eastern Cape there are only A.N.C. branches. Therefore

Therefore/

the formation of Consultative Committees must depend on the local situation but wherever possible the Congresses should be asked to form Consultative Committees as they have an important part to play in our struggle.

[Handwritten scribbles]

- ① Express Telegram
to C.F.S.
- ② Mr. Rehanomani
- ③ L. Mavi
- ④

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FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963

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