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MEETING OF CONGRESS OF MOTHERS : SUNDAY 7TH AUGUST, 1955,
TRADES HALL, 30= KERK STREET, JOHANNESBURG.

(Convened by the South African Federation of Women.)

RAHIMA MOOSA: (Chairlady.) "Friends, mothers and women, now before I declare this meeting open, I want you all to stand up and sing our national anthem.

(Singing of Nkosi Sikelele Afrika.)

Friends I greet this Congress of Women, and a report will be given of the World Congress of Women held in Switzerland a month ago when two thousand women came from all over the world to seek an end to war and to find a way to live in peace with the rest of the world. The Federation of South African Women supports this conference of the Congress of Mothers. At a meeting of mothers held on the 29th of March we appealed to women to come together, I will read to you the appeal: We, the women of South Africa, appeal to all women of our country in joining the women all over the world. We are the women who know the joy of having children, and the sorrow of losing them. We know the happiness of rearing our children and the sadness caused through illness and ignorance. We stand here before you in our fight for happiness for all our children and people - peace for all people living. We know as mothers the sufferings through the ravages of war and say once again - peace is in danger. The forces of war are threatening the security of the nations in deputising to an armaments race and through the remilitarization of Germany, the ever pressing threat of the atom bomb - we cannot permit such dreadful happenings.

Together with people everywhere we believe in the desire for peace and we will not allow the use of these several weapons of pain and suffering. We women are the basis of the human race, we will not stand by and watch this destruction. We do not respect the idea that war is inevitable, we know that our sufferings for liberation for ourselves, for the freedom of all the people of our country, for opportunities for our children, is closely bound up with the world-wide struggle for peace. What is more, we understand that there are hundreds of millions of us, women and mothers, who want peace.

We are the backbone in every country/.....2.

We are the backbone in every country of the forces of life, of progress and of happiness. We, women will make our voices heard and this is what we say : We do not want war we want friendship between all people, we want disarmament, we want the forces now used for war preparations, diverted to peaceful construction; we demand that atomic energy should be used to enlighten man's toils and serve the progress of mankind.

Since the plea was issued South Africa has seen the holding of the historic Congress of the People, when the people of South Africa came together for the first time to express their demands and draw up a Freedom Charter. This is the foundation stone for the happiness and liberty of all the people in South Africa - in this country. The women of South Africa has played a vital part in the Congress of the People, and our demands as women are enshrined in the same charter, our demands for the sake of our children and for the women of our land and for the freedom of ourselves and our children.

This is the first meeting of the women held since the Congress of the People, and it is important for us also to adopt the Freedom Charter, for the progress of freedom and democracy. We shall therefore devote part of the time today in discussing the Freedom Charter, but because it is such a wide document, we cannot discuss it in total, but we have asked leading women to speak on particular aspects and we hope the women will add in the discussions which will take place - when you will discuss the charter. Our first speaker will be Virginia Mngomo who will speak to you on apartheid measures and the racial policy of this Nationalist Government, as perpetrated in their policy of white supremacy - a policy the Nationalist Party is trying to spread throughout the land.

The Freedom Charter says - all apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside, and when the Freedom Charter and all it stands for, have won, apartheid will be stamped out in this country. Virginia Mngomo will read to you the first part of the Freedom Charter in Zulu. You have all copies in front of you and you understand it. Miss Amina Asvat will address you on the Group Areas Act and the Freedom Charter; all shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose. After that we shall discuss the apartheid measures and the Group Areas Act and all

matters arising out of that. Friends our first speaker is not here, so I have asked Mrs. Resha here to read it out to you in Zulu."

MRS. RESHA: (Reading of first seven paragraphs of Freedom Charter in Zulu.)

CHAIRLADY: "Well friends you have just heard the first half of the Freedom Charter. Now our first speaker has arrived and I will ask her to finish this section."

VIRGINIA MNGOMO: (Speaking in a native language interpreted into English.)

"Lady Chair, ladies and gentlemen, I have been given the honour to speak here before you. I am going to speak to you on the Freedom Charter which was adopted at Kliptown a few weeks ago. As you all know we have been struggling for years to formulate our demands in order to be able to liberate ourselves from the tyranny that has been upon us all these years. I am now asked to speak to you on apartheid. Now I will read to you a few lines here on apartheid: All National groups shall have equal rights! There shall be equal status in the bodies of State, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races; all people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own culture and customs; all national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride; the preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime; all apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

Now the first one shall be, there shall be equal status in the bodies of State. Now we all know that in the State now only white people are allowed into the Government. You will recall for instance that only white people are allowed to be judges, magistrates and all those kinds of things. In our own locations white people are allowed to rule over the Africans. In the Post Offices, in the Superintendent's offices, it is all Europeans there, the African people are not allowed to hold any official position, not because they are not able to but because of their colour. How then, can a person with brains say that a person with a black skin cannot do the job of the white man? The brains is the same in a white man as in a black man, there is no difference there, but the Africa /..

but the African people are not given a chance to prove this, to prove them capable of doing anything and everything, like for instance, on the railways, the engine drivers are Europeans, the guards are Europeans, when you get on a train to Cape Town, Europeans are there. This train carries African people as well as white people, but only the Europeans are allowed to take charge of everything and they say that it is because the African people cannot do these things. But have they tried, have they given these men a chance to see whether they can do it or not? They don't even want to give them a chance to try these things, they simply conclude that because a man is black he cannot do what a white man does.

Let us come to the schools. Well African people are taught and European people supervise over them, over the teachers and everything. As if a European has a better brain than an African - now this chapter says, there shall be equal status between the Africans and the Europeans in the bodies of State - all people shall have equal rights to use their own language. As you all know we are different sections in this country, we have Zulus, Sesuthos, Basutos, we have got Jewish and Afrikaans people, but in this country you must only speak Afrikaans and in other cases you must only speak English. Now, in this country, in this Charter everybody will be able to use his national language as he likes, or at least everybody can use any language he feels like using and choose between their own culture and customs. I remember when Christianity was introduced into this country, well before that day what did we do? We used to work in the fields and do other work. We did not worry about material things. The missionaries told the people that to be real christians you have to do away with all the things that you are wearing and start to wear clothes like this. It was said that if you are not a christian, what we give you would be refused. I am not saying that you should go back and wear the things you used to wear. I mean to say that we have been given a chance to improve by now. Although our mentality has been very good - of course I agree with you there, all people were not bare, but I still maintain that we would have improved those things, that has nothing to do with it at all. Then further, to develop their own home culture, in this we have not been given a chance - to develop our culture which we are very proud of. As you will agree it goes on - our culture will improve if we are allowed to study our own things and so on.

All national groups shall be protected by the law against insults to their race and national pride. You know that that is the most essential thing we want in South Africa. You will find that even the Africans and the Indians are the same, often you say Coolie, but this person is not a Coolie but an Indian. So why do you say Coolie unless you mean it as an insult? There are some Europeans who say Kaffir when he refers to an African. He will not say it by chance. The minute you are around him he starts calling you a Kaffir. He means this as an insult and it is to be regarded as an insult. That must be done away with. We are all proud of our nationalities. If we are Zulus living in our country, we are proud of being Zulus, and you whatever you are, are proud of what you are. Then why should people be insulted by people of other nationalities? I know that some of us would like to say that the white Dutchmen are evil. I know that some of us are dissatisfied with the Dutchmen and the Dutch people. It is still not proper for us to be called according to our nationality, for this Charter says that that would be a punishable crime.

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside. Apartheid is not a new thing, it has existed for years and years, but it has now been improved by the Nationalist Government. I must tell you that apartheid must never be implemented. The Government, when it says apartheid, it means that the Africans must be divided from the European people. But there is one thing that the Government does not realise, and it is that we, the African people, we are the people in fact who are helping them along in this country, we are the people who dig the gold up in the mines, who are the people who toil on the farms to give them food and vegetables, we are the people who wash their dishes, their washing, we do their cooking, and help them do the things in their own houses - we do all their house work. Now how can apartheid be implemented when these people cannot do this work. Then you cannot say an African must not come into your house because he has got to come and clean your house.

It is a most foolish thing this apartheid that the Government is trying to do and one thing they cannot even dare do is to divide the African people from the European people. I think, the Government having divided the African people from the European people, the/.....

the Government will say, there is another apartheid coming amongst the European people. The Government is trying to implement apartheid in the Government schools today. The Government policy is the Jews one side, the Afrikaans people one side and the English people one side. That is also apartheid. Those people today who are moving the African people to the locations, moving the Africans is their policy, according to apartheid, and I must say to you people here today, apartheid is the most deadliest lie I have ever come across, it should never be allowed in any community.

It is for us people here to go out - it is our duty to preach to the people the voice of the Freedom Charter and fight apartheid at all costs. This is God's own world - everybody has been placed upon this earth to do good - so it is for us to go out and do good. People must live peacefully amongst one another. I know that some people will say, and mostly the Government will say, they are scared of communism. I maintain that if communism is as good as this Freedom Charter, then we shall have communism here.

I don't want to waste a lot of your time. As we are together here it is no good talking about apartheid when there is not a lot of people here, but I feel we must all go out and preach the voice of the peoples Freedom Charter. We must see that what has been adopted in this Charter must be carried out to all corners of the world. We want a peaceful country we want a democratic country. We want to live happily with everybody in this world but those things cannot be done unless we go out and do it. Some people will say that freedom will not come today or for many a year, but I feel if more people are pulled into the struggle, we shall definitely win freedom in our own lifetime."

CHAIRLADY: "You ladies just heard the first half of the Freedom Charter, now I will call upon Amina Asvat to speak to you on: All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose".

AMINA ASVAT : "Lady chair, mothers of South Africa, I thank the Federation of South African women for giving me this opportunity to address the Congress.

It is most:...../7

It is most interesting to deliver a lecture of this nature for mothers whose value in life can never be underestimated. We as mothers of sons and heroes know full well the pains we undergo to bring life to this world. We also visualise the happiness of living.

We see our children reaping the fruits of life, but we also unfortunately know the agonies and the hardships in this country of ours, this unhappy country of ours. We black mothers have suffered because of the colour of our skins. We are forced to live in enclosed spaces, we are forced to live in municipal locations, and in hovels and ghettos. We are forced to live a life of poverty and want, a life in which thousands of our children does not even live to see the light of day and of those who live thousands die in their infancy, and some of those who grow up - even women - are slaves. We see the never-ending greed of the Herrenvolk, we are the slaves of the white block of our country.

South Africa is a vast land with wide open spaces. In it is room for everyone but ninety-six percent of the land is preserved, like everything else, for Europeans only. Restrictions on the ownership of land is designed for the peasants, to keep the non-white people poor in a land of plenty for everyone. With thousands and thousands of miles of land lying waste, millions of our people have no place to move to, they have no room to live in, they have only overcrowded locations, they live in shacks of hessian, in shanties, on open stands and in little enclosures.

Now we hear of the site-and-servéda scheme. Us mothers of South Africa who give birth to life, must have a great respect for life, it means the living, it means happiness, it means peace and freedom, but we miss this life, we also know the agony of the man in the street caused by want and hunger, yes, brought about by hunger - and you must fight those conditions of slavery. Yes, it is devised for us everyday by the architects of apartheid and the apostles of racial discrimination.

This definitely cannot endure, it is devised by the Government and this Government means to keep us in a perpetual state of slavery, in a state of serfdom, we cannot accept this. The people of this country will reject it. Time and again hardships were encountered. Under/.8.

Under the wise guidance of the African National Congress, South African Indian Congress, South African Congress of Democrats and the South African Coloured Peoples Organisation we have come this far. During the defiance Campaign we were prepared to go to gaol but today we have moved forward. We, the people of South Africa, including the mothers of South Africa, have drawn up requests in the Freedom Charter, this great Freedom Charter which visualises a new world in South Africa.

Women can claim many things - we can effect these claims and demand what it says amongst the workers. We have set that forth for many years, we have said that we will fight for it with our lives - I shall speak for it until I die. To achieve the Freedom Charter is no easy matter - it means fight and continuous struggle. You mothers must constantly bear the pains of birth, somewhat reluctantly we must live brave lives to give birth to sons and heroes, so let us leave our coward^(ice)ness and with our fathers and husbands and sons and grand sons march on until freedom comes, thank you."

CHAIRLADY: "Any discussions?"

WOMAN SPEAKER: "Comrade chair and comrades, I would like to say a few words on the section of the charter which says that the land shall be shared amongst those who work it. I want particularly to speak to you about something that was in the paper about three days ago. I want to speak about a man Mlonga Tembeni from East London. Mlonga Tembeni got nine months for stealing sheep. In the court his boss admitted that he paid him one pound per month and gave him a four gallon tin of mealies per week to feed his wife and six children. He said he made requests three times and asked his boss for more rations. He said my children and my wife complained that they were hungry. I only received ten shillings because my boss took my wife to hospital. He had to sell some of the mealies because the babies cannot eat mealies. He said I confessed all the time that I stole the sheep because my wife and children were starving and I wanted to feed them and well I will do anything. We say these things happen because the people who work the lands do not own the lands.

We know that these things happen all over South Africa every single day, but because this was printed on the front page of the Star, we find that there is a/...9

we find that there is a number of Europeans whose consciences have been aroused and by the next morning they have already sent a hundred pounds to the Star to help the family. We recognise that as a fine gesture but that will not solve the land question in South Africa. We here have all got relatives in the countryside and we must send them the message of the Freedom Charter - to the people who work and till the land on the farms. To get all the people to be united and to put forward our demands of the Freedom Charter that the land shall be shared amongst those who work it. Thank you."

CHAIRLADY: "I want to make an announcement about tea, tea will be ready in a few minutes. There will be a charge of twopence a cup for tea. I hope you all brought lunch with you.

Jb. (Tea break).

BERTHA MASHABA: "Madame Chair, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. I am sure that this Bantu Education Act is the worry of every father and mother in this country and I am sure that you here all want a free and universal education for your children, free and compulsory education for your children and we all know the badness of Bantu Education.

We know that the Bantu Education is going to teach our children to look upon any white man as their superior. We all know that with the Bantu Education the Government will be able to take our children to the concentration camps. We all know that with the Bantu Education our children will not learn hygiene, will not learn geography, will not learn arithmetic. The only thing our children is going to learn is to hate each other and the main subject is of course, will he be able to work on the mines and then domestic science. Our children are going to be taught domestic science so that they will be able to wash the dishes and iron the shirts for the Dutchmen. Our children are going to learn mining work so that they can work on the mines and on the farms.

So you more or less know from what I have said what Bantu Education is, and we all know what to do, how to fight Bantu Education, to fight it, the only thing to fight it is to boycott the Government because it comes to the stage where, should your children go to the Government./10.

Government school or not. They are going to learn their mother language and I am sure that every mother can teach her child in her own house, every woman can teach her child domestic science in her own house, you can teach your son farm work in your own garden, so mothers let us not let our children go to the Government schools, to the concentration camps, because the device of the child going to the concentration camp, if your child is taken to the concentration camp, the Government servant will not ask any permission from you, and the next thing, when you go to that camp to look for your son, you will find that your child is two days buried and that mean we shall never mourn for our children, so I will appeal to you mothers this afternoon, the Bantu Education should be fought to the bitter end.

I know there is this difficulty in our efforts when we are teaching, teaching the badness of the Bantu Education, that some parents of children will tell us that they want alternative education before they withdraw their children from the Bantu Education schools, and I think that that is a very foolish idea, because the first thing when your child is suffering from constipation, is to get a bottle of Milk of Magnesia, and ensure their time, there is no woman who can dig a hole for her child before he is dead, so these parents who say they want alternative education before they withdraw children from Government schools, they believe that we must dig a hole for our children before they are dead.

So I think this is our main worry because we want to see our children becoming doctors, we want to see our children becoming nurses, we want to see our children becoming lawyers, and with the Bantu Education they will never become lawyers or doctors. And still our children will also not be employed in ordinary services because they will not know English. You all know there is not an employer who can employ an employee who does not know English. So the only place for our children will be the concentration camps.

So this afternoon, we have met here this afternoon to find a way for free and compulsory education for our children. We have seen cultural clubs established for those children expelled from the Government schools during the boycott, we have got areas who started cultural clubs. Now we see some of our friends saying, I am not taking part in the cultural clubs. They say they want to see their children rising, they say the Bantu Education is better than the cultural/...ll.

cultural clubs. I personally say that the cultural clubs are hundred percent better than the Government Bantu Education schools because in the cultural clubs they will see that our children will not go to the concentration camps. Even there in the cultural clubs the children will get a better education than what they would get in the Government schools. With the Bantu Education they are going to train standard six children as teachers. With the Bantu Education our children -standard two children will be trained as nurses. They will not be nurses of course, they will only be maids.

So as mothers we only see the badness of the Bantu Education, how dangerous it is. In many areas women having been aroused have withdrawn their children from the Government schools. We have got places like Natalspruit where mothers having been aroused withdrew their children from the Government schools. And I am sure that every mother here is going to preach the badness of the Bantu Education too. Even if in your area there is no cultural club, you must withdraw your children from Bantu Education schools. We are withdrawing our children from the Bantu Education schools even if there is no other alternative. As mothers, I want to appeal to you, ask you, that even if this generation is not educated, it is nothing, because by taking our children to the Bantu Education schools we mean that this generation must all go to the concentration camps and then after that, with the next generation they will also be taken to the concentration camps.

So mothers, mothers, let us fight for our children, let us not expect anybody from outside to come and help us. Even if the Government can send the police to come and take your child from the house to go to the Bantu Education school, you must fight to the bitter end, because you know, after the boycott the Government sent the police to go from house to house to take all the children to the schools. Even if the Government can send twenty police to go and guard one school, if your child is inside, you must go through the police and take your child. The result of your coward^{ice}ness will lead to your child being sent to the concentration camp.

So I think - I think every woman here would like to live with her child. Madame Chair and friends, I am not going to waste time because we still have more speakers to speak and matters to discuss. will speak to you/...12.

I will speak to you again perhaps some other time, but my last words are, let us all go out and preach the badness of the Bantu Education Act. We all want free and compulsory education for our children from five years upwards. Mayibuye!"

^{12.}
MARY RANTA: (Speaking in native language interpreted into English.)

"I am thankful for the few minutes I am allowed to speak. Lady Chair and South African mothers, even though I have not prepared myself to speak....."

(The speech subsequently made, parts of which were inaudible, pointed out that thirty years ago the non-Europeans were forced to move thirteen miles out of town to the present Moroka Location. Now they are expected to move even further. The speaker appealed to the women of South Africa to fight the Government tooth and nail, saying "I remember a few years ago it was not proper for unmarried women to go and work in the factories, we have fought against this rule and achieved victory". In this present situation she appealed to the women to stand together and oppose the Government at every stage.)

^{13.}
SECRETARY: (Helen Joseph.) "Madame Chair and fellow delegates, I want to say as the Secretary of the Transvaal region of the Women's Federation, I welcome on behalf of the Federation all women here today.

I beg to say to you some things which I have witnessed in the form of a resolution. It is an enormous task for the Women's Federation to organise all the women in Pretoria, but if the Women's Federation undertakes, as I know they will, to do this, it will not fail. I think the time is long past that women of all races should go to Pretoria. I went to Pretoria with the European women and we slept in the Union Grounds, but I was ashamed that it was only European women. I was ashamed that it was the European women who did not invite the non-European women. Now, it is our chance, for the non-European women to invite the European women to go there. But because this task takes a great deal of organisation I want to suggest that we do it in consultation with the four congresses, so that they get the women of the American National Congress, the women of the Indian Congress, the women of the South African Coloured Peoples Organisation and any other organisation that would join us, so that we can all go forward together.

I would like this resolution to be formerly adopted by this house. We had plans that the resolutions would be moved at the end of the meeting, but I feel that it is important that we should move this resolution now.

Resolution.

This meeting of women urges the Federation of South African Women to consult with the congresses and other organisations with a view to organise a mass deputation of women of all races to Pretoria to protest against the Bantu Education Act and all other oppressive legislation. To protest against the site-and-service scheme and to demand proper housing for all people. That is the resolution I would like to move to this house.

(Resolution adopted - tea break).

13.

CHAIRLADY: (Helen Joseph). "Fellow women up to now we have been talking about the struggles in South Africa, the struggle for the freedom of South Africa, the struggle for the liberation of the people. We have said much of the evil things that take place in South Africa, we have spoken of the evils of apartheid, we have spoken of Bantu Education and what the children are taught in those schools. The children are taught to accept an education which is pointless. We have spoken of the poor conditions of the African people, we have spoken of the site-and-service scheme, we have got to build houses for the people. We have pledged ourselves as women here that we shall demand together with all other women who wish to join us and we shall send a national deputation to go to Pretoria.

That is our plan and that is what we have to do. But now, this afternoon I want to turn our eyes and our thoughts outside South Africa. Let us think of the problems of other mothers in other countries all over the world, since we are sisters their problems are our problems. I want to say to you as women and mothers that we must think of world affairs, for what good would it be to free the people of South Africa, if it is to be destroyed by war - and so it is all tied up with our problems here, with our problems here for peace and freedom in South Africa, that is part of the struggle for peace and freedom the world over.

We have here with us a friend who have just returned recently from the World Peace Council. This /.....14.

This World Peace Council was held in Helsinki in Finland and to that World Peace Council came women from all over the world, to plan for the end of war, and for the safety of our children all over the world. This World Peace Council was followed by the World Congress of Mothers, and just as we were able to send a delegate to the World Peace Council, so I am proud to say that we have sent two non-European to the World Congress of Mothers.

I must say that they are not yet back from that World Congress of Mothers but we are fortunate that we have here Tamara Baker who was one of our delegates to the World Peace Council at Helsinki, and she is going to tell us first of all - as somebody from South Africa, meeting all the people of the outside world. First of all she is going to tell us how she as a woman went to that congress. Friends I want to introduce you to Tamara Baker."

TAMARA BAKER: "Madame Chair and friends, before me I have a statement of what happened at the world peace assembly held at Helsinki and which opened on the 26th of June. There were sixty-eight countries present represented by one thousand two hundred and forty-seven and three hundred observers and guests. The largest delegations numbering a hundred each came from India, France and Italy. The Chinese, the British, the Russians, the Japanese and the Canadians were about fifty strong and between ten to twenty members came from the Sudan, Libya, Korea, Indo-China, Switzerland and Australia. The delegates from the French Colonies, that is the Sudan, Teheran, Madagascar and the French Cameroons were all African people. These people spoke French and it was rather strange that they spoke no English at all. Delegates came from all walks of life, there were workers, teachers and writers, and then they came from different churches. There were four hundred and thirty-seven women. Several messages of goodwill were received, from Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Mrs. R.H.Eire? of the Congress of Canadian Women, and Edward Herriot, the ex-president of the French National Assembly.

I will never forget that wonderful assembly representing the overwhelming majority of mankind. Practically every language in the world was spoken, hands were clasped in friendship and brotherhood. We here from South Africa, were greeted everywhere by people who were delighted to see that we managed to come. We heard many people speaking of the problems they had in their countries. There/.15.

There were four speeches which received outstanding acclamation - Madame Pasdin Ah-s? of Korea, Eli Ehrenberg of the Soviet Union, Mr. Cuja-Joe?, Vice President of the Chinese Peoples Republic, and the speech made by the leader of our delegation.

This is what he said :- That the message which he brought came from the African Indian and Coloured people of South Africa who believe in the brotherhood of man. He went on to say that our efforts for world peace will remain in jeopardy as long as we have in the world racial discrimination. Women played a vital role throughout the assembly and on the commissions. A Mrs. Cockrun?, President of the Women's International Democratic Federation spoke of the very important role which women can play in the struggle for freedom. She said that women in every country had to find a way to answer the appeal to collect signatures for the Vienna Appeal; and from the number of signatures to the Vienna Appeal more and more women are beginning to understand that there are other ways than war to solve difficulties between States. She said that women must act to protect their children from death and suffering.

The assembly was divided into seven commissions. The Education Commission which I attended was most interesting. The agenda was - Education in School and in Life. I was amazed to see to what extent the American comics with its accent on violence and death have infiltrated to every part of the world except to those countries behind the so-called Iron Curtain. Discussions took place on the necessity of providing history and geography books. It was suggested that the Peace Council should set up a small permanent body whose task it would be to advise as to the most suitable literature and good text books. It was also felt that it was extremely important to develop the exchange of teachers and students and the gatherings of youths speaking different languages, having different religions, with different colours, and that that should be one of the main tasks of the Peace Council in our country.

One of the delegates from the Soviet Union who is the director of the Russian Puppet Theatre said, the theatre is not abstract, the theatre is there for children - it is something which one should hold in one's hand. He ended by saying, I believe in a happy future, I believe that the children of the world will be saved from war and that they will not fear to look up in the sky, because/.16.

because death will not fall from it.

A history professor from Italy said that one of the reasons for the inadequacy in our history books is because they have been written by specialists and not by the ordinary people. He said that the present habit of dwelling on the past, is like giving a man a coat but no shoes to wear in Winter.

Mr. Nado Seleni?, an African from Dakar said that African children are talking French in their schools and not in their mother tongue. A child cannot spend two years in one class and that is why such a small percentage attend school. There are certain schools to prepare children for military service, there they are taught the benefits of American civilization, they are taught that their forefathers were bandits, that those who came out on top were heroes.

Delegates from Canada told us that some school authorities included atomic drill for the children in the United States of America and Canada. Children wore identification discs - tags with numbers on it. Agitation for the banning of the atomic drill system has been successful in a number of schools in Canada. This shows what can be done by the united efforts of all the people.

Delegates from Japan said that there were seven hundred United States Air bases in Japan and that teaching the children in those areas were very difficult. The noise made overhead made it impossible for the children to hear the teachers. There are two hundred thousand illegitimate children of the United States servicemen in Japan. I was about to mention here that the Japanese delegation brought a welcome material to the assembly, pointed out the very shocking thing of atomic and hydrogen warfare.

The assembly ended by issuing the Helsinki Appeal which stated that the work for peace can be achieved if the workers for peace unite their efforts and support negotiation. The closing speech was made by Cuja-Joe, the Vice President of the Chinese Peoples Republic. He said that conditions are not the same in all countries and that one should not be discouraged if the task of finding peace was more difficult in some countries than in others. In his own words he said :- Dear friends, the seeds of the Dandelion are ripe and will be scattered far and wide.
When/..17.

When they fly, they will come to earth with gold. Thank you".

13.

CHAIRLADY: (Helen Joseph). "Friends on your behalf I want to thank Tamara Baker for her report of the congress. I want to say that it is the first time in her life that she has made a speech. I now want to make a report to you of the World Congress of Mothers, a report I had hoped would have been made to you by our own delegates, but our delegates are not yet back from the World Congress of Mothers, and so I have to deputise today for them.

Today we have met as women in support of the World Congress of Mothers, where hundreds of women from sixty-five different countries met together. They met together for what I think is the most important occasion in the history of the world. I think that almost all of you were present at our historic conference - you were there at the great Congress of the People and you know how proud we were to see three thousand delegates come from all over the Union of South Africa, and they represented half a million people of this country.

On that occasion women came from sixty-five different countries - mothers from all over the world, representing not half a million but hundred and fifty million people - came together to add their voices to the cry for peace, for an end towards this terrible march towards destruction - for the banning of bombs that will destroy whole cities and whole nations, and the cry for a peaceful and happy world.

For the past six months, ever since the beginning of this year, women have been organising all over the world. It began in February when delegates were called to Switzerland to plan for the World Conference of Mothers. At this part of the meeting of the Women's International Democratic Federation, I had the honour to represent South Africa - this is my badge, I wear it with pride. To that meeting the women came to speak of the problems of their countries and to speak of the terrible horrors of war. Here in South Africa we do not know what war is, but we know what racial oppression is. We suffer from it and we struggle for our country to be freed. We struggle against apartheid, against racial discrimination, we struggle against the evil and shameful conditions we live in. We are all women here today and we speak of these things.

The Freedom Charter, the Congress of the People, are landmarks in the struggle for freedom, but yet we do not know the horrors of war and we hope and we pray that we never shall. At that meeting in Geneva I heard a woman speak of what they knew and what they had suffered. I heard a young woman speak from Holland and she bore on her arm the marks of burning of the concentration camp, but she spoke not of her own suffering, but of the crimes of the children that went to the gas chambers to their deaths. She said, if you have ever heard that sound from the children's mouths you will never forget it for the rest of your lives.

Let us never hear that sound again, and from Japan a mother spoke, she told us of the atom bomb that destroyed Hiroshima completely. She told us how it killed the children, crippled them, maimed them. She spoke of women bearing children years after the explosion, how the poor children who were born were maimed. She spoke of women who were in the explosion and who refused to bear children because they were afraid. She spoke of women who lived during the explosion being unable to bear children.

This is only half of what the atom bomb and the H. bomb can do. She spoke too of food poisoned by radio activity, and that was not from war, that was the effect of an experimental explosion hundreds of miles away. She spoke of hundreds of people crying out for food, for what they had, it was better to throw it back into the sea, because it is better to die of hunger than of poison.

This mass destruction, this evil where the world is heading to, must not be allowed she said, for the women of the world, for the mothers who gave life, say this must not happen, and they shall defend it. Together we have to act to defend life against death - to defend friendship against hatred, to defend peace against war - and nothing shall stop us in our fight for the safety of our children. And the meeting in Switzerland where I represented the Union of South Africa, I found that the women of other countries wanted to hear of the hardships, and courage of the non-white women of South Africa, those women who came from all over the world, they rose to their feet and I wish you could see it how they paid tribute to you, the women of South Africa, and as I stepped down from the platform, I sat down amongst them, and their eyes were filled with tears of joy and they said
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that they were our sisters from outside South Africa and that they were with us with their whole hearts, with their hearts they are with us in our struggles, just as we are with them in their struggles, and ever since that meeting in Switzerland, the women of the world have been preparing for this great World Congress of Mothers. They have been holding meetings of women all over their own countries - all over the world, they have been obtaining millions of signatures for the world peace appeal. That same world peace appeal that we have asked you to sign today, and which we have asked you to sign before - please sign it today before you leave this hall. The petitions are at the back of this hall and that is the cry of the world for peace, and we ask you to sign it.

We know that all over the world women have been organising for the end of this destruction of mankind. The women have proclaimed that they as mothers with their children shall live, and that when freedom has been won, their children shall live and enjoy it. Different countries shall live in peace - they shall all struggle for peace - we shall continue to struggle, and it shall not be in vain, that we shall not allow freedom anywhere to be destroyed by war.

The first of July, one month ago, the world's historic womens' conference was held and representatives of hundreds of millions of people came together, and as you know, we are proud, and happy that at that world conference of women we had our few representatives. A few women who represented not the few women here, but the women of South Africa. Two women who spoke for us at that great assembly - the president of the Transvaal Women's African National Congress League and also was there (GLadys Smith?) from Cape Town, an active and courageous leader of the Coloured women in the Cape..... At that great conference millions spoke to the women themselves, and she added first of all her voice, the voice of our country to that of other countries when she spoke of the problems in South Africa and when she had finished speaking, once again the women rose to their feet? and they came in their millions and embraced her and welcomed her as a sister.

She spoke for us and she spoke of us, let us add our voices to her voice, and I want to give you the words of a great Russian writer, who called upon women many years ago. He said, mothers, why, you have the say, you have the right/.....20.

right to lay down your own laws. From you life comes and it is you who must strive, one and all, you must defend life against death, you the women are the eternal enemies of death. You are the powers which ceaselessly fight and conquer death. We are the power, we mothers here, the mothers all over the world, let us listen to the cries of little children dying from war, to the cries of little children who live today, to the cries of little children who have yet to be born.

Mothers of South Africa you whose children are exposed to the evils of the Bantu Education Act, you who have opposed being taken away from your homes and sent to special areas, you mothers who have known the agony of bringing up your children in shanties and slums, you mothers who had to suffer to bring up your children on low wages, you mothers whose babies die of illnesses that can be prevented, you mothers whose sons and daughters are denied the opportunity to enter skilled trades and you mothers who had to give up the happiness of your homes, who have taken part in the struggle for the liberation of South Africa, fight together for the future of your children and freedom all over the world. Add your voices to the voices of the women all over the world. We are the mothers of South Africa, demand peace and freedom in our lifetime."

^{H.J.}
CHAIRLADY: "Now I want to come to the last part of our congress this afternoon - that is to ask for people to move some resolutions, but before I do that I want to call upon one of the women here to make an appeal for funds. I am sure you will agree with me when I call upon the choir from Springs.

(Choir sang whilst money was collected).

Friends I think we have got to go on now to the resolutions because it is getting late and as we are all women here it is difficult for us to get home without transport, we must end. I am very happy to see that the women stayed here such a long time to discuss all these matters, but I want to make sure that the women get home safely tonight. Some still have to get to Pretoria, so I would like to call upon people to move resolutions.

Resolution.

This Congress of Mothers of Transvaal, called together by the Federation of South African Women, proclaim our support of the World Congress of Mothers, for the advancement of world peace.

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We welcome the voices of the women which today are heard from all over the world crying for an end to war and for the outlawing of the atom and the H.bomb and all weapons of mass destruction, and we add our voices, the voices of the women of South Africa of all races, to endeavour to strengthen the demand for peace in the world.

Resolution.

Madame Chair and friends, I would like to move this resolution in support of the Freedom Charter. We must all know that the Freedom Charter is our life - all this time we have worked, struggled and most of our women did not know what we were driving at, we spoke of freedom but we did not know if freedom does come, what we were going to do. Now the Freedom Charter shows us actually what we will do if we get our freedom. Therefore Madame Chair I would like to move, that this Congress of Mothers called by the Federation of South African Women, resolve to adopt the Freedom Charter which is the much sought goal of the people of South Africa. We pledge ourselves to work with all our strength for the implementation of the Freedom Charter. (Proposed by Virginia Mngomo).

(The resolution previously moved by the Secretary was read again and adopted - vide page 12).

CHAIRLADY: "Friends we know that you will take back the message to the places where you come from. We know that you will tell those women who are not present because they attended the funeral of our comrade who died. We know that you will tell them what has taken place at this meeting, and we know because they are our comrades, that they will join us in our work we strive for. I wish to thank all those comrades here who worked so hard today to make this meeting a success. I want to announce the result of our collection. We collected three pounds eleven shillings, and now before I close this meeting I have just remembered that one of our guests wants to move a resolution. I will allow this comrade to move a resolution.

Resolution.

SPEAKER: "Comrade Chair and friends, I want to thank you very much for allowing me to move this resolution here. I may not have the right to move a resolution at a conference of mothers. The resolution I want to move - the first part of it is very important to all of us here, but/.22.

but I would just like to give a little explanation of the second part. The second part deals with Western Germany. In that Germany you know today, that there are two young people in gaol who have been sentenced by the Western German Courts to forty-five years imprisonment. Their only crime was that they fought for peace.

This Conference of South African Women demands that the Minister of the Interior who had the audacity to assume on his shoulders the care for an African child and refused him a passport, should immediately give him a passport, to Stephen Ramosedi, so that he can proceed to America to study there. This Congress of Women demand that the Chancellor of West Germany should immediately free the two Germans who have been imprisoned and who fought for the rights of children, youths and world peace."

CHAIRLADY: "Now friends we must close this meeting and so once again I want to say this on behalf of the Women's Federation. To all those people who have come here and all those people who have helped here, I hope that next time we meet again it will be in Pretoria. We will end the meeting with our national anthem."

(Singing of national anthem).

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RECORDS RELATING TO THE 'TREASON TRIAL' (REGINA vs F. ADAMS AND OTHERS ON CHARGE OF HIGH TREASON, ETC.), 1956 1961

TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand

Location:- Johannesburg

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