

39 P.D.N. 171

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MEMORANDUM ON THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION ADOPTED AT THE
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE A.N.C. DECEMBER, 1946.

The memorandum deals with the following matters:

- (a) The content of the Programme of Action and the conditions which gave rise to it.
- (b) The extent to which it has been implemented and the effect of such implementation on the organization.
- (c) The desirability or other wise of retaining methods of struggle contained therein with specific reference to the Boycott of differential political institutions.
- (d) The Programme of Action and the Charter.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

Internal Conditions.

Before 1949 the A.N.C. did not ~~usually~~ conduct many campaigns based on the activity of the masses of the people. The strength, confidence and courage of the masses of the people in liberating themselves had not yet revealed itself. The belief was prevalent that changes in the conditions of the people could be brought about by relying on constitutional methods and explaining the effects of the laws and policies ^{on} the Africans to the authorities. The primary task of leadership was regarded to be more to speak for the people than to speak to the people. These beliefs were created by the deceptive policy of consultation pursued by the United Party.

The result was that the A.N.C. despite its consistent denunciation of Government Policy, had no programme of activities based on the masses and its organisational machinery and units were weak.

External Conditions.

After World War II the masses of the people under various organisations embarked on a number of mass actions and revealed thereby the strength of the unity of the people - The Mine Workers Strike 1946, the Alexandra Bus Boycott, the Squatters Movement. These actions revealed the concealed militancy of the people and the potentialities of mass action.

The deadlock in the N.R.C. in 1946 and its adjournment since then was a serious blow to Constitutionalism.

Within the ruling circles too changes took place in 1949, the rise of the Nationalist Party to power in 1948 with its uncompromising attitude towards the African and its declared mission of maintaining White supremacy and White domination at all costs, made it clear that the days of consultation were gone and that the people would have to rely on their resources to effect changes in the country.

These changed conditions made it necessary to have positive changes in the character, activities and method of struggle of the A.N.C. They demanded a more militant A.N.C. which would lead the growing militant masses against the uncompromising reaction within the country.

It was therefore no accident that the A.N.C. should at its Conference in 1948 consider the need for a programme of action which was subsequently adopted in 1949.

CONTENT.

The Programme of Action deals with the Political, Economic, Cultural, and Educational aspects of the struggle of the people. Under Political, the Programme states the demand for direct representation and the abolition of all differential institutions.

The Programme proceeds to enumerate various activities directed towards the attainment of the political objective, amongst which are the creation of a National Fund, organisation of Propaganda, immediate and active boycott, strikes, civil disobedience, non-co-operation and national stoppage of work.

The economic aspects of the Programme consist of commercial and industrial enterprises in urban and rural districts and the organisation of Trade Unions.

In the Educational section, the establishment of educational centres is proposed.

Under Culture there is a proposal to establish an Academy of Arts and Science. The Programme concludes that the people will be brought together under the banner of African Nationalism.

it defines one object only and that is National Freedom. "By National Freedom we mean freedom from White domination and the attainment of political independence. This implies the rejection of the conception of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship or White leadership which are all in one way or another motivated by the idea of White domination or the domination of White over Black."

The rest of the Programme enumerates activities whose purpose is to mobilise and unify the people for the achievement of this objective.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

- (a) National Day of Protest, June 26, 1950.
- (b) Civil disobedience - Defiance Campaign June 1952 - Jan 1953.
- (c) Co-operation with Trade Union Movement.
- (d) Boycott of N.R.C. and Advisory Boards in certain areas.
- (e) Regular issue of propaganda material to raise the political consciousness of the masses.

No specific activities have been undertaken to implement the rest of the Programme for various reasons. Firstly, campaigns which in the Programme appear in two words only - Civil disobedience - engaged every ounce of the energies of the Movement for at least six months. Secondly, concrete experience has proved that not every aspect of such a varied Programme could not be implemented ~~at~~ simultaneously. It is essential to concentrate on an activity for which the conditions are suitable.

There can be no doubt that the Programme of Action brought the organisation into closer contact with the masses of the people and inspired the people with confidence in themselves and in the Congress. The upsurge of political consciousness during the Defiance Campaign clearly indicated this. This was so, primarily because the basis of the Programme was contact with masses; reliance on the militancy of the masses, and mass activity. This certainly was an advancement in the movement, but it could by no means be claimed to have reached perfection.

Whilst the Programme defines the activities and "means" as may bring about the accomplishment of our aspirations, "it failed to define these aspirations with any precision, and all we have

is the general demand for National Freedom.

It should be stressed that the Programme of Action clearly regarded Boycott, civil disobedience, and strikes as "weapons" and "means" for the "realisation of our aspirations"

What should our attitude be towards the differential institutions?

In order to discuss this question it is essential to realise that mere membership or participation in the political, social, cultural and other institutions established by the oppressor does not necessarily imply collaboration with the oppressor. Collaboration must depend on the nature and function of the institution and also the activities of the members within the institutions. It is possible under certain conditions to use the institutions of the oppressor as an auxiliary force for the downfall of the ruling class.

It is also important to bear in mind that the Boycott of the institutions may not assist us to achieve our aspirations.

In order to realise them we require the force of the people behind us, in order to mobilise that force we require contact with the masses of the people.

The primary question therefore must always be how can we achieve greater contact with the people in order to expose the oppressor to them, to unite them and so overthrow the oppressor.

If we have adequate means of keeping contact with the people let us confine ourselves to them. But if the institutions of the oppressor can serve our purpose even in some small way, not to advance his interests but advance the interests of the people, then it would be unwise to deprive ourselves of the opportunity of using them.

WAS THE ACCEPTANCE OF BOYCOTT CORRECT IN 1949?

Because of the condition which then prevailed, particularly the deception of the masses of the people by promising them gradual maturity to full constitutional rights, and also the faith which the people had in these limited institutions it was correct to ask them to turn away from them in order to launch the spirit of resistance, and ultimately to struggle for our aspirations.

It was also correct because then the A.N.C. was a legal organisation capable of holding its meetings whenever and wherever it wanted to and was thus in a position to transmit its message to the people.

HAVE CONDITIONS CHANGED?

They have changed. Firstly, the spirit of resistance, the political consciousness and confidence in the A.N.C. of the people has grown as never before.

Secondly, in direct proportion to the confidence which the people have in the movement the Nationalists have introduced laws and practices which have virtually made the A.N.C. an illegal body. We rely on the people - and for that reason we must keep in contact with the people. How can we in the present circumstances?

We must allow ourselves the flexibility of tactics and means. We are not faced with the blind opposition to the Nats. We must ask ourselves in every situation:

- (a) What can we manage?
- (b) What can we convey to the masses of the people?
- (c) How can we convey it?

Finally is what we do in the interests of the people or not?

That is how we solve our problems. If Port Elizabeth has boycotted the Advisory Boards and crushed them, and yet can keep in contact with the people, congratulations.

Let us learn to think not only of our successes but how we can remedy our failures, step by step taking into consideration our own general and peculiar position. Let us not be rigid and let us not be unprincipled. Our task is to achieve our principles by adopting the most flexible means.

AFRICAN NATIONALISM.

The Programme of Action merely refers to African Nationalism but does not suggest its content and implications. Its content has been determined by the exposition and practice of the A.N.C. (See 1953 Presidential Address).

THE PROGRAMME AND THE CHARTER.

The Charter and the Programme of Action are neither redundant nor in conflict with one another. The Programme of Action defines

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT
OF
THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
ON
THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE,
SUBMITTED TO
THE 42ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CONGRESS,
HELD IN DURBAN
ON THE 16TH, 17TH, 18TH & 19TH DECEMBER, 1954.

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

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1. I have great pleasure in submitting to you a supplementary report on the Campaign for the convening of the Congress of the People, which was decided upon by the last conference of our Congress. In order to implement this gigantic task the conference instructed the national executive to call a meeting of the executive committees of the South African Indian Congress, the South African Congress of Democrats, the South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation and other democratic bodies which subscribe to the principle of full citizen rights for all, for the purpose of obtaining their co-operation in creating a "truly representative convention of the people of South Africa." A conference of the national executives of the above-mentioned organisations was consequently called on the 21st of March, 1954, to consider a memorandum placed before it by the African National Congress. The document, which is annexed herewith, marked "A1", explaining the aims of the Congress of the People, stated that:

"The main task of the Congress will be to draw up a Freedom Charter for all the peoples and groups in South Africa. From such a Congress ought to come a declaration which will inspire all the people of South Africa with fresh hope for the future, which will turn the minds of the people away from the sterile and negative struggles of the past and the present to a positive programme of freedom in our life-time. Such a Charter, properly conceived as a mirror of future South African society, can galvanise the people of South Africa into action and make them go over to the offensive against the reactionary forces at work in this country instead of being perpetually on the defensive, fighting rear-guard action all the time."

2. The unanimous decision of the four organisations, representing the African, Indian, Coloured and European people of our country, to co-sponsor the convocation of a national assembly of a mass character at the conference of 21st March, 1954, marked a great step forward in our struggle for democratic rights. This conference also set up a joint planning committee to draw up a Call for the Freedom Charter and a draft plan for the Campaign. The report of the planning committee was submitted to another conference of the joint executives during May, 1954. The plan of work annexed with the main secretarial report marked Annexure "A" and the Freedom Call is attached herewith marked Annexure "A2". The Freedom Call is an inspired document, expressing the conditions of our people, and will retain its impression on the sands of time in the annals of our country; its imprints are indelible for they are stamped on the lives of millions of our people who suffer from poverty, privation and oppression. The acceptance of the plan for the Campaign of the Congress of the People, which laid down the basis of obtaining mass support and which charged the organisations concerned to work on the broadest possible front by reaching the people in all walks of life, on the farms and reserves, in the cities, villages, towns, mines, factories and homes, afforded us a unique opportunity of consolidating our organisations.

It enabled us to work with the different sections of our people in closest co-operation for the achievement of a common objective.

3. When the National Council again met on the 15th August, 1954, under the Chairmanship of the President-General of the African National Congress, Chief A.J. Lutuli, to consider the details of action, it recorded the tremendous enthusiasm of the sponsoring organisations throughout the Union. Conferences already held on provincial and regional levels in the different parts of the country showed that the idea of the Congress of the People had captured mass imagination. The meeting, among other things, accepted a detailed plan of action for obtaining the support of other national bodies, popularisation and publicising of the Campaign, organisation of provincial and regional committees and enrolling and training of volunteers. The first stage of this plan has been completed in all its major aims in the following manner:

- a. Support of other organisations. Other national bodies have been twice requested to participate and co-sponsor the Congress of the People. To date the National Campaign Committee, the Textile Workers Industrial Union, and the African Laundry Workers Union have agreed to become co-sponsors and the matter is still under the consideration of the South African Labour Party, the South African National Union of Students, the Food and Canning Workers Union and other organisations. Co-operation of a large number of other organisations have been obtained on provincial and regional levels. It is regretted that the Liberal Party, after protracted negotiations, decided not to co-sponsor the Congress of the People. It did so as it was not prepared to participate in a Campaign which envisaged the drawing up of the Freedom Charter by the representatives of the masses of the people of our country.
- b. Publicity. The Campaign is publicised by means of mass meetings, conferences and written material throughout the country. Copies of the Freedom Call were printed and distributed in thousands in Zulu, English, Sotho and Xhosa. Bulletins and other written materials have been regularly issued both from the national headquarters and the provincial and regional centres. The Campaign evoked encouraging support from many sources. Among the messages received is one from Dr. Du Bois, the famous American Negro. Other messages include numerous international organisations and national organisations such as the Labour Party of Great Britain.
- c. Organisation. The branches of the Congress have been geared to accomplish the gigantic task successfully. A certain amount of confusion resulted from a mistaken view, prevalent in some quarters, that the Congress of the People was an organisation and not merely a campaign. This view has now been corrected and the position made clear beyond any possible doubt. Functioning provincial and regional committees of the Congress of the People exist in all the provinces of the Union and the state of each provincial organisation is as follows:-

Cape Province: A provincial conference, attended by representatives of the Cape Western, Cape Eastern, Border and the North Eastern regions was held at George during October, 1954. The conference resolved to zone the province into eight regions, in most of which active work has been undertaken.

Natal : A provincial committee was established at a mass conference held in Durban in September and has carried on active work since then. Natal has been zoned into three regions, the provincial committee also being for the coastal region. An active committee was set up at a North Natal conference and a Midlands Committee has already convened a regional conference.

Transvaal: A provincial committee was formed in the Transvaal in July and it has zoned the province into fifteen regions, in each of which it is hoped to set up regional committees. So far six of such committees have been formed and nearly all of the regions have been visited by teams of volunteers, and Congress of the People volunteers in the main centres of these regions; it is hoped to establish regional committees from these nuclei soon.

Free State: The provincial executive committee of the African National Congress has constituted itself into a provincial committee for that province. Several Congress branches have done solid work for the Congress of the People in their own areas. The Headquarters has posted an organiser in the province to assist the committee.

Organisers: Apart from a national organiser there are full-time organisers in the Transvaal, Northern Natal, Natal Coastal Region, Cape Eastern Region, Cape Western Region and Free State.

d. Volunteers: A large number of volunteers have enrolled throughout the country. These volunteers are showing great enthusiasm for their work and it is our task to weld them into a network of groups, under the leadership and direction of their local committees. As a first step towards this a pamphlet "Welcome Volunteer" has been produced and distributed.

4. It has been apparent that the Government has singled out the Congress of the People for its most concentrated attacks, issuing banning orders to almost all active workers, whether listed or not. The whole of the original secretariat of the Campaign was immobilised by the action of the authorities. Among the first to fall was the Secretary-General of the African National Congress, Mr. Walter M. Sisulu. The Government treat the Congress of the People as though it were a criminal conspiracy and will obviously stop at nothing to impede and hamper its work. It is a tribute to the members and the leaders of the sponsoring organisations that they have managed as much support for the campaign as they have in face of the heavy Government attack. In this period the organisations have again proved that they have the loyal support and allegiance of the majority of South Africans, and can count on the readiness of the people to rally to the call whenever and wherever the Call is made

5. It is in the light of these facts, that the National Action Council at its meeting of 28th November, 1954 decided to speed up the whole tempo of the Campaign by:-

- (i) reiterating its decision that the Congress of the People be convened as soon as possible, but in any case not later than June, 1955.
- (ii) calling for the setting up of local and regional Congress of the People Committees, representatives of the people of all races, in all areas by not later than 30th January, 1955.
- (iii) calling for the submission of demands from all sections of the people throughout the country for inclusion in the Freedom Charter to be made not later than 15th March, 1955.
- (iv) Setting aside the period from March 15th to April 15th, 1955 for the election of the delegates to the Congress of the People.
- (v) therefore, called on all Congress of the People volunteers, all members of the sponsoring organisations and all supporters of the Congress of the People to work ceaselessly and conscientiously to complete all preparations for the Congress of the People in terms of this timetable.

6. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done in the forthcoming months. Congressmen throughout the country must make the Congress of the People a great success. Let the aspirations of the people of South Africa be reflected in the Freedom Charter. We must mobilise the masses of our people to proclaim their demands through thousands of committees throughout the land. Our people will

demand their inalienable right to freedom and justice in a Charter which can and must incorporate the free wishes of the people for the attainment of freedom in our lifetime.

LET US SPEAK TOGETHER OF FREEDOM!

MAYIBUYE AFRIKA!

42nd NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL
CONGRESS HELD IN DURBAN, FROM THE 16th - 19th
DECEMBER, 1954.

A.A.C.
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PROGRAMME

THURSDAY - DECEMBER, 16th.

1st Session: Open to the Public.

- 1) 11.a.m. Opening of Conference by singing of National Anthems: Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika, Morena boloka Sechaba. Sa heso.
- 2) 11.5.a.m. Devotion: by Rev. W. Gwe, National Chaplain.
- 3) 11.20.am. Welcome of delegates by Rev. J. Calata, Speaker of the House
- 4) 11.35.am. Official Opening of Conference by the Guest speaker - Dr. G.M. Naicker, Acting President of the S.A. Indian Congress.
- 5) 12.10.pm. Election of Committees: a) Credentials Committee; b) Resolutions Committee.
- 6) 12.15.pm. Fraternal greetings and messages.
- 7) 1.30.pm. ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH.
- 8) 2.30.pm. Report of the Credentials Committee.
- 9) 3.15.pm. Presidential Address and Discussion.
- 10) 5.0. pm. ADJOURNMENT

2nd Session:

- 11) 6.0. pm. Cont. Discussion on Presidential Address.

Close Session:

- 12) 8.0. pm. Executive Report and Discussion.
- 13) 9.0. pm. ADJOURNMENT

3rd Session (Closed) - FRIDAY - 17th DECEMBER, 1954.

- 14) 10.0. am. Cont. Discussion on Executive Report.
- 15) 12.0. Noon: Treasurer's Report and Discussion.
- 16) 1.30.pm. ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH.

4th Session: (Closed)

17. 2.30.pm: Cont. Discussion on Treasurer's Report.
18. 5.0. pm: ADJOURNMENT.
19. 7.45.pm: Delegates Welcome function.

5th Session: (Closed) - SATURDAY - 18th DECEMBER, 1954.

20. 9.0. am: Bantu Education.
21. 1.0. pm: ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH

6th Session:

22. 1.45.pm: Women's Session.
23. 5.0. pm: ADJOURNMENT

7th Session: (Open)

24. 6.0. pm: Provincial Reports on the 1949 Resolution.
25. 7.0. pm: Constitution.
26. 9.0. pm: ADJOURNMENT.

8th Session:

27. 9.30.pm: Cont. Constitution.
28. Midnight: ADJOURNMENT.

9th Session: (Open to Public) - SUNDAY - 19th DECEMBER 1954.

29. 9.a.m.: Resolutions.
30. 11.a.m.: National Service.
31. 1.p.m.: CLOSURE OF CONFERENCE.

A.A.C.9.

THE 4TH. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE A.N.C.W.L. (T.V.L.) HELD IN
THE MAVIS ISAACSON HALL, JABAVU ON THE 11th NOVEMBER 1956.

PROGRAMME.

1ST SESSION.

- 9.30. A.M. OPENING OF CONFERENCE.
- (a). National Anthem.
 - (b). Prayer.
 - (c). Chairman's remarks.
- 10.a.m. Official opening by Ad. D. Mokwe.
- 11.a.m. Fraternal Greetings.
- 11.30.a.m. Appointment of Committees.
- (a). Credentials Committee.
 - (b). Resolutions Committee.
 - (c). Press Committee and Recording Secretary.
- 1 . p.m. A D J O U R N M E N T .

2ND SESSION.

- 2.p.m. Presidential Address and Discussion.
- 2.45 p.m. Minutes and arising.
- 3.p.m. Credential Committee's report.
- 3.15. Executive Committee's report and discussion.
- 4.p.m. Financial report and discussion.
- 4.30.p.m. Resolutions.
5. p.m. Election of Office Bearers.
- 5.30.p.m. CLOSURE.

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James Nathan
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5/7/56

THE PEOPLE ON THE MARCH TO FREEDOM:

In every part of the world the former subjects of the colonial powers are well on the way to independent nationhood, asserting their right to take part in human society as complete equals. Discrimination against peoples based on race and colour has received its death blow in the greater part of Asia. Many parts of Africa are not far behind. In those colonial areas still ruled by foreign powers the struggle for national liberation is being intensified. There can be no doubt that within our lifetime the millions of oppressed throughout the world will govern themselves freely.

STRUGGLE HAS MADE ADVANCE POSSIBLE:

Colonial peoples have suffered centuries of oppression and brutal treatment, but nowhere have colonial powers voluntarily abdicated their possessions. Nowhere has freedom come about independently of the peoples' struggles. The ten years since the end of the Second World War has seen savage wars waged against the colonial people to keep them in subjection. These years have seen also the maturing in many countries of the peoples' liberation movements, the birth of new, militant methods of struggle and the determination of the people to sacrifice and contribute all for their freedom.

This new era of colonial liberation was symbolised by the Bandung Conference held in April, earlier this year. This conference represented 29 Asian and African countries which not so long ago were represented in the councils of the nations by their foreign oppressors and Colonial Office spokesmen. Here was a conference of free peoples who until recently had been victims of imperialism and colonialism. It was a conference which pledged to fight until the last vestiges of imperialism and colonialism are wiped off the face of the earth. The conference made a pact not for aggression against smaller nations, but for peace and for freedom. It deplored the policies of race segregation and discrimination which form the basis of government and human relations in large regions of the still exploited world. It proposed economic and cultural co-operation between the Asian and African people, and demanded increased representation for the people of these two continents in the United Nations. Oppressed people everywhere will be inspired by this conference to redouble their efforts to win freedom themselves.

The African National Congress cannot disregard or hold itself aloof from these important changes which have come about in the world, and were symbolised in the Bandung conference. We salute our brothers who have achieved their liberation, and all those still engaged in fighting for their freedom!

It is our task to make known to the oppressed people of South Africa the fact that our movement is not an isolated and lone one, but only one arm of the great struggle of people everywhere to live out their lives in peace and freedom.

THE WAY OPENS TO PEACE AND FREEDOM:

Bandung was one great landmark in the world since our last annual conference. The Geneva Peace conference was another. Liberation and peace are brothers; war and colonial oppression born of the same family. We who fight for freedom fight also to maintain world peace, the only atmosphere in which we can advance and our people prosper. It was the united action of the people of the world whose plain desire is to live without the shadow of war who forced the governments of the Big Powers to meet at Geneva and establish a basis for peace. The Nationalist Party has used the danger of war on the African continent and in the world at large as a pretext for the suppression of Communism Act, for the offensive against our organisations and our freedoms. Preparations for war, whether the Cold War or Hot War, are the climate in which our civil liberties are attacked. Victories for the peace forces prepare the way not only for an ending of open warfare but also for great advances by the peoples' movements everywhere.

The people everywhere, on the African continent too, are preparing to make great advances, confident in the justice and certain success of their cause, to win peace, freedom and equality for all.

THE NATIONALISTS TRY TO TURN THE CLOCK BACK:

In the face of these world-shaking events the Nationalist Party dreams of 300 years of apartheid. These political lunatics think that against the tide of the thousands of millions of human beings they can perpetuate a system under which a Herrenvolk minority will for all time reign supreme.

The Nationalists have even sworn in the services of the Bible and their version of Christianity to try to prove that the Non-White people are by nature predestined to inferiority. But they rely not on the Almighty to maintain this so-called natural state of things but on Swart's policemen and their sjamboks, on the Skietcommandos of Erasmus, on Verwoerd's regulations and restrictions.

Despite their boasts and braggings the actions of the Nationalists are those of friendless men who are filled with fear. It is this fear which is driving them from one excess to another.

The past year has seen a succession of acts designed to hold back the peoples' movements. There have been new bannings and exiles, police raids and searches, the threat of treason trials. Each year Parliament tightens the screw of the pass laws and now our women are being made widows while their husbands still live, as the pass laws are being extended to them; the network of labour bureaux are tricking our people into working on the farms; breadwinners are being endorsed out of the cities and their families broken up; our youth are hounded night and day and denied a future, and the police swoops to abolish the so-called Locations in the Sky and to persecute our brothers from the Protectorates and from outside territories like the Rhodesias and Nyasaland are in full swing. Apartheid is bringing misery and uncertainty into the homes of millions of our people in town and country. It was nothing to the Nationalists to start a scheme to uproot 70,000 people in the Western Areas; they will go further to drive 178,000 Africans from the Western Province, regardless of how long they have lived and worked there, to turn them into migratory labourers. The Nationalists are making it plain by their actions as well as their speeches to the country that they will do everything to ensure, in the words of Dr. Verwoerd, that "there is no place for the African in the European community above certain forms of labour."

Bantu Education is an indispensable part of this diabolical scheme. The Nationalists aim to enslave not only our bodies, but our minds too, and the minds of our children. The new regulations for African teachers turns them into convicts of the State; they aim to smash any teachers' organisation which is not prepared to sing the praises of government policy of the administration.

The last year has seen attacks on the peoples' rights on many different fronts. The Government is dropping all pretence of providing even housing for the people and is introducing its own form of legal squatting as the site and service schemes. The farm gaols and the youth labour camps are the great reservoirs of labour established by the Nationalists to ensure the farmers a continuous supply of cheap labour.

THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK:

These attacks on the people have not remained unanswered. The Nationalists fear the united force of the African people, so it tries not only to pollute the minds of the people by education for slavery, but to divide our ranks, to scatter our forces by playing Zulu against Pondo, Sotho-speaking against Xhosas, Ndebele against Pedi. This is the government's infamous scheme of ethnic grouping and its system of Bantu authorities. At Verwoerd's indabas he tries to convince the chiefs that Bantu authorities and Bantu education are beneficial. But the Nationalists are over a century too late. Their efforts to return us to the days of tribalism will be fruitless.

Even the Nationalists have no doubt that but a handful of collaborators and traitors have accepted apartheid. The good boys have turned traitor.. yet they are few and isolated. Our people have not only refused to accept apartheid but they have begun to forge the weapon that will eventually sweep the Nationalist Party system from power; the unity in struggle of all who fight for freedom - Black and White, all Africans no matter what language they speak and from which reserve they originally hailed, Indians, Coloureds, Malays, all democratic Europeans. The peoples' most important campaigns of the past year have been marked by the spirit of unity and co-operation between all races.

Some of the most important campaigns against Nationalist tyranny in the Transvaal were seen during the past twelve months.

In the Western Areas the Government had to call in the army and the police force to move the people from their homes at gun-point. This was a full-scale military operation, so fervent was the opposition of the people to this scheme and so great the fear of the apartheid government. Not only was the army of 2,000 police which effected the removal greater even than the force which invaded Guatemala, but the Government felt impelled to proclaim a state of wartime emergency along the length of the Reef for 20 days, at the time of the first removals.

To try to punish the African people for their boycott of the Bantu Education schools Verwoerd had to take reprisals against 2,000 of our children. The start of the campaign against Bantu Education in the last year has shown that our people are capable of great fervour, determination and steadfastness in the struggle to build a better future for their children.

The year since our last conference has seen also the birth of a new trade union centre, based on a genuine inter-racial partnership of workers of all colours prepared to fight not only for the rights of the workers as such, but taking its place as the ally of the liberation movement with all our forces in the struggle.

NO COMPROMISES WITH APARTHEID:

Every attack of the Government succeeds in the long run only in strengthening our forces, winning us new recruits, creating more hatred and opposition to Apartheid and the Nationalist Government. No people on earth will gladly endure tyranny and the African people are no exception.

It is, however, not only hatred of the Nationalists and all their works and tyrannical acts which spur the peoples' movement forward, but the positive and unconditional demand to be treated as free and equal beings. The mass of the people in South Africa are beginning to realise that there can be no compromise with the system of baasskap and that nothing less than the complete liberation of all the peoples of our country can lay the basis for an advance towards a better life for all.

FORWARD WITH THE FREEDOM CHARTER:

It is this realisation which created the great Congress of the People movement and which culminated in the drawing up of the Freedom Charter.

The people have said: "We the people of South Africa declare for all our country and the world to know that we pledge ourselves to strive together until the democratic changes set out in the Freedom Charter have been won:-

- The people shall govern
- All national groups shall have equal rights
- The people shall share in the country's wealth
- The land shall be shared among those who work it
- All shall be equal before the law

All shall enjoy equal human rights
There shall be work and security
The doors of learning and culture shall be opened
There shall be houses, security and comfort
There shall be peace and friendship

The Freedom Charter is not a dry document, but the living representation of the peoples' needs; it is not the treasured property of the Congress movement alone, but belongs rightly in every home, in every corner of our land.

The vehicle by which this document can become the inspiration of all our struggles is the signature campaign. We must show to the people of South Africa and the world that for every voter on the colour bar roll who send a racist representative to the Assembly or the Senate, there are ten South Africans who reject baaskap and who are determined to fight for freedom! Mayibuye!

LINK ALL CAMPAIGNS AND RELATE THEM TO THE FREEDOM CHARTER:

This campaign must not be regarded as one merely for the collection of signatures. This is the great opportunity to build the Congress; to strengthen our organisation; to grow its roots among the people, and to relate all the pressing daily needs of the people to the positive demands of the Freedom Charter - our vision and our plan for the new South Africa.

There is a tendency, often, to think of issues and campaigns as distinct and separate from one another; to concentrate on one pressing issue but at the same time to neglect other equally important issues in the struggles of the people. We must overcome this tendency to think of our campaigns as though each were in a separate "compartment". Of course Bantu Education is important: it has been one of our most prominent campaigns in the last year. But the burden of the pass laws which torment and harass us at every turn and are the pivot upon which the whole policy of cheap labour swings, the pass laws -- and many other issues -- also press heavily upon our people and must be fought. Site and service dooms us to permanent shantytown slums; ethnic grouping aims to return us to tribalism.

Congress must give a lead on all these issues. All these campaigns must be carried forward. Each one is connected to the others. Apartheid breeds all these evils. Congress will grow and become strong, the people will be tempered in the struggle on all these fronts - and all must be linked and drawn into the campaign for the Freedom Charter which is our answer, our alternative, our policy for the country. It is not enough to struggle against Nationalist apartheid -- we must struggle for the Freedom Charter.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES:

This report will now proceed to review some of the important campaigns our Congress has conducted in the last year. We must record our successes but also the fronts on which Congress has not been so successful: the issues on which we have been found wanting. Is it wrong to talk of mistakes? Some people might blame us for doing so. They are wrong. The only people who make no mistakes are those who do nothing. The mark of a serious movement is that it discusses its errors seriously and openly and learns from these mistakes and corrects them. That is education in the field of struggle!

We must learn from events of the past year that, in this long bitter struggle against the Nationalist oppressors, there are no short cuts by putting fine-sounding slogans from the platforms without the backing of strong organisation. That leads only to disappointments and setbacks. To win our ideals, we must understand that it is necessary to do hard, steady, patient work of organising our branches till they are hundreds and thousands strong, of helping to build the trade unions and the movement of the people in the rural areas.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE REMOVAL OF THE WESTERN AREAS:

The Nationalist scheme for the removal of the Western Areas has been a practical demonstration of the vicious meaning of apartheid. Not only does the scheme remove people from homes they have occupied for decades, and place them far out of town and away from the facilities and services they have paid for and helped to build up all these years, but it robs them of their freehold rights. This is one of the last areas in the country where Africans have been enabled to own property and now they are to be deprived of that right too.

Great indignation arose over this removal scheme and we can safely claim that our campaign had the effect of wringing certain concessions from the Government. The Native Affairs Department had to provide proper houses for the people at Meadowlands and the people who were finally uprooted were not placed on the bare veld without any facilities, as was intended at the outset.

But we must acknowledge that certain mistakes were made in this campaign. Our propaganda against removal, for instance, did not take sufficient account of the different interests of the people in the area. Congress issued the same appeal to both the landlords and the tenants as if their interests were identical. While the landlords were affected by the loss of their freehold rights, the tenants in the majority of cases lived under bad housing conditions and longed for decent accommodation. The offer of alternative housing was, therefore, very tempting to a great number, and could only be resisted by those who were more politically conscious. This factor could not be overlooked.

The purpose of the campaign was to oppose the removal, and to show that even if the people did move the removals were being carried out by the government, by force and not by the free will of the people. The impression was created in propaganda that come what may, the people would not move, and this did not take into sufficient account the fact that the Congress was not sufficiently organised and the people sufficiently prepared to physically oppose removal.

We must recognise that the campaign is by no means over. In fact, it has just begun! The majority of the people are still to be moved. The work of expropriating the landlords has not yet started. Our task is clear: while we are not opposed to housing, better housing, for the people and this is one of the aims of Congress, the people must show in a manner that none will doubt that they are against the removal of the western areas as part of the apartheid plan; that they go against their wills.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST BANTU EDUCATION:

No recent action of the Nationalists has caused as much indignation and anger as Verwoerd's Bantu Education Act. The African people know oppression in many forms, but here is a scheme to educate their children into slavery, to poison their minds, to warp the young generation.

Action that has been taken against Bantu Education shows that our people understand fully this great menace to our future, and that they are prepared to make great sacrifices, and show great courage in action, in order to protect the future of their children. Our African women, African mothers, in particular have shown sterling qualities in this campaign against the Bantu Education Act.

The campaign, however, has suffered some severe disadvantages from the outset, and if the struggle is to grow in intensity and consciousness, we would do a service to ourselves to examine any weaknesses frankly.

There was confusion, firstly, about how and when the boycott

should be initiated. Our branches campaigned for some time to prepare the people to withdraw their children from the schools but at the last minute the decision was taken by the National Executive to postpone the boycott. In some areas the people were already prepared and ready to boycott: to have stopped them would have meant holding back their struggle. It is to the credit of the A.N.C. branches on the East Rand and in certain Johannesburg areas that they did not lag behind the militancy of the people.

This must not be understood to mean that the decision to boycott should not have been postponed. It is one thing to wish to see a complete national withdrawal of all children from Bantu Education schools. It is another thing to achieve this, Organizational preparedness does not happen overnight. It is the result of steady, even slow, patient, persistent work and we must face the fact that Congress branches everywhere had not, and still have not, put in this necessary spadework. The national decision to postpone the date for the national withdrawal was a recognition that enough ground work had not been done, that all areas could not be expected simultaneously to achieve the same degree of preparedness, and that it was mechanical to expect the whole country to move like one just because a date had been proclaimed. On the other hand, the decision did not provide for those areas that were ready and could take certain action, and, taken at the last minute, this decision did rather leave these branches in the lurch.

In the weeks of confusion at the start of the boycott, it was left to the branches who led the way to decide how exactly the boycott should be run. These branches took the decision that the withdrawal would not be a temporary, protest type of action, but a permanent withdrawal of the children from the schools.

What is the position today?

We must face the fact that our campaign on a national scale has lagged in the past few months. New areas have not joined in. New parents have not joined the boycott. Our propaganda and daily agitation on the issue of Bantu education is slipping.

Campaigns are not run by sensational withdrawals alone, or by the setting of "dates to start". Campaigns have to be started, but they have also to be sustained and brought to new peaks.

The most politically-conscious parents in some areas have followed us. All credit to them. But if the campaign is not sustained, if our slogans are unrealistic, if our tactics have the effect of isolating us from the great mass of our people, then our action might be brave but it is not leading the people, it is leaving them behind.

Where do we go from here?

There is no doubt about the correctness of the long-term aim which is to prevent the functioning of Bantu Education by a boycott. But talk of permanent boycott in the isolated areas where the people are carrying out this slogan will eventually result in disillusionment and a dropping of morale if the campaign remains isolated and localised. We must beware of creating the false impression that by isolated local boycotts the Bantu Education Act can be defeated. The struggle is a long one and the people must see this campaign, as all others, as a stage on the road to victory. Impatience will not bring victory nearer of its own. If the people do not all follow us, we must educate them to the point when they will. The total boycott will not be "proclaimed" by a certain date chosen on the calendar, but it will develop from local actions that spread, that join up and grow nationally.

In those areas where the boycott is operating it is asking for difficulty to proclaim "total, permanent" boycott at the outset

of a local action. This can lead only too quickly to doubt and confusion, even setbacks, when it is seen that one cannot attain the ultimate aim of a campaign in its initial, early stages. Total boycott is to be achieved, not thrust upon the people before they are prepared.

In some areas branches have done magnificent work in building cultural clubs for the children against whom Verwoerd took savage reprisals for their boycott of the schools. These efforts are praiseworthy for two reasons. They fill the gap for those children who would otherwise be in the streets, and they make easier the struggle of the people against the Bantu Education Act.

At the same time we must not deceive ourselves or the people into believing that in the immediate future we can, with our own resources, substitute a national education system. We have no state budget behind us! The average parent who follows our call in the belief that his child will be given adequate alternative education will become disillusioned with Congress if such education is not provided. He must act therefore out of political conviction, and he must be made aware of the sacrifice this campaign, as all others for freedom, will entail.

The fight against Bantu education must go on. But in the different areas we must not talk as though the only possible action is immediate, permanent withdrawal. For example, a series of protest actions of one day in a number of areas could serve to prepare the people for a much bigger step after that. We must build steadily, not rush headlong into rash adventures.

The fight against Bantu Education must go on.

It is treachery for Africans to help carry out Bantu Education, to serve on school boards or accept posts as inspectors of Bantu education. The new syllabus has just been brought out and it shows what we have always said: that Bantu education is to educate our children into slavery.

Let us tell the people how this is being carried out, let us see that our propaganda increases in volume until none are in doubt, and all are prepared to follow us in this campaign for the defeat of Bantu Education.

ORGANISATION:

The report of our National Conference, held in Durban last year, examined the organisational problems of Congress and came to the conclusion that, with the growing oppression since the coming into power of the Nationalists in 1948, Congress could not survive unless it changed its present organisational structure. Having dealt with the achievements and failures of the organisation and the difficulties facing it between Conferences, the report observed that the chief weaknesses still remained lack of an efficient machinery and proper co-ordination between the branches and the provincial committees.

As a remedy for these weaknesses, the National Conference adopted the following reorganisation scheme:-

- (a) That all branches be re-organised along the lines laid down in the "M" Plan.
- (b) That some unwieldy branches be re-organised into numerous small branches which are united under some regional controlling committee.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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