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"PEOPLE ARE ASKING WHY CONGRESS ALLOWED ITSELF TO BE TAKEN UNAWARES BY THE GOVERNMENT WHEN IT COULD HAVE GOT ITS PLANS READY TO ALLOW FOR CONTINGENCIES."

I assume that by "people" is meant those who consider themselves as mere disinterested spectators, in no way involved in or affected by the political storms which are to-day raging with unprecedented fury over the face of South Africa. To such people the Western Areas has been an arena wherein they hoped to witness a clash between the Government and Congress. According to them Congress failed to turn up at the appointed hour, and the day, much to their disappointment, passed uneventful. And now the Congress is required to account for its failure to entertain the spectators.

The Congress is not in the position of a gladiator. On the contrary, it is championing the cause of the oppressed and the unprivileged; it is fighting, perhaps desperately, in defence of what appear to be the last vestiges of democracy in South Africa; it is resisting the sustained and calculated onslaught on the rights of the people; it is opposing wanton destruction of property and legalised robbery, of which the Western Areas Removal Scheme is but a single instance; it is striving to free South Africa and its people from the bonds of racialism, fear and fascism, and also from the growing incidence of political lunacy in high places. It is therefore not disposed, nor can it be expected, to regard the South African situation as consisting of a series of dramatic performances staged for the delectation of on-lookers, who are entitled to demand an explanation if any performance falls short of their expectations.

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If people are genuinely interested in the South African situation of which they and the Congress are integral parts, then they will see the issue of the Western Areas in its true perspective if they ask, not why the Congress allowed itself to be taken unawares - which is in any event incorrect, but rather, why the Government suddenly found it essential to avoid Saturday the 12th February, which was the fixed date of removal; and furthermore, why the Government thought it necessary to mobilise 2,000 armed men to secure the removal of a handful <sup>of</sup> families. It was in fact the Congress which induced this behaviour, and it must surely be admitted that by its conduct the Government furnished the strongest proof of the power of the Congress and the effectiveness of its opposition to the Western Areas Removal Scheme. The Government, in effect, admitted the failure of apartheid and Verwoerdism and conceded the strength and unity of the men and women of all races who stand resolved to resist all forms of aggression on fundamental human rights. The fact was also demonstrated to the country that if the present Government cannot fill the heads of the people of South Africa with its own ideas it will not hesitate to fill them with bullets. [The Congress, with its friends and allies, is engaged in a bitter struggle for the reversal of this Hitler-inspired policy and the establishment of true and full democracy in South Africa.]

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O.R.T. 129.

1. It is incorrect to say that Congress allowed itself to be taken unawares. In the first place, the Government had announced that the removal would commence on the 12 February and this was the most suitable date for mass action. It was, however, contemplated that the Government might endeavour to frustrate these plans by anticipating the removal date. In such event it was released that there would not be sufficient time to acquaint the people with the change of plans and to prepare them for action. In the afternoon of the 8th February we learnt for the first time that removal would begin the following morning and volunteers immediately went into action. In spite of Police interference and intimidation poor facilities and torrential rain they succeeded in transferring from the Buffer strip 40 families during the night of the 8th February in the light of this achievement the suggestion that we allowed ourselves to be taken unaware is both ridiculous and absurd.

2. As is well known that <sup>the</sup> Annual Conference of the African National Congress held in Durban during last year resolved to boycott Bantu Education as from the first of April 1955 on which date the Native Affairs Department would take over the control of the so called Native Education. It was, therefore, reasonable for Congress to time the commencement of the boycott in relation to the aforesaid date. During the intervening period of 3 months a great deal of work was done and good results achieved. Boycott Committees have been systematically established in many parts of the Country and this work continues. In some areas arrangements have already been made for alternative educational facilities. Finally it is

incorrect /.....

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incorrect to say that machinery for mass action can be set up in a vacuum. Experience teaches that the best way to organise the people is a true action and this is the line which the Congress is following with increasing success.

3. To begin with it is wrong to imagine that the African National Congress could have defeated the Government on this single local issue of the removal of the people of the Western Areas. The Government will be defeated by the entire people of South Africa on the general policy of apartheid. The objective of the campaign against removal was to foster a mental attitude of non-corroboration with the Government and to compel it to secure the removal of the people by intimidation and the employment of force. This objective was achieved by the Congress the mobilisation of 2,000 policemen by the Government was the most emphasised recognition by them of the united opposition of the people to the Removal Scheme. Congress is the only militant organisation that is ceaselessly challenging the reactionary policy of the Government and is superiorly confident and it will achieve ultimate victory.

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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**

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