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Since the end of the Defiance Campaign and more especially since the holding of the Congress of the People, there has been a steady decline in many aspects of our organisational work. No purpose would be served in a report on this question if we are not prepared to criticise our work with the object of learning from the mistakes we have apparently made, in so far as our organisational structure is concerned.

In the foregoing sections of the Secretarial Report you may note that the main political perspective for the coming year is:

1. The popularisation of the Freedom Charter;
2. The carrying out of an intensified campaign to mobilise the Indian workers against the ever increasing threat of Unemployment;
3. To work for the establishment of Vigilance Committees in all areas in accordance with the decision of the All-In Group Areas Conference held in May, 1956.

If the resolutions that will be adopted at the end of this Conference on the above subjects and on other subjects are to be worked for then it is necessary for us to see that our organisational structure is capable of carrying out these decisions.

CONGRESS MEMBERSHIP:

The present membership, in terms of our Constitution stands at a little over 35,000. It is generally accepted by all units of Congress that this is not a correct reflection of our organisational strength.

Since the 1945 campaign by the present leadership against "the old guard" of Congress we have made no endeavour to recruit new members or to consolidate the old. Since this campaign was carried out over ten years ago, we have made no serious effort to recruit the many thousands that are eligible for Congress membership each year. Neither have we made any endeavour to recruit these that were not recruited during the 1945 campaign.

Conference will agree that this is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs and urgent and careful consideration must be given to this important aspect of our work.

We recommend:

- (i) that in the coming year every endeavour must be made by Congress to re-new its entire membership and to recruit those that have not yet enrolled as members of Congress;
- (ii) that each branch should under the supervision of the Provincial Treasurer, collect a regular levy of 1/- per month from its membership. Such levies should be properly recorded in levy cards to be issued by the Provincial Executive to all levy-paying members.

BRANCHES:

According to our register we have 17 branches. Of this number 2 branches, namely Newcastle and Dundee, can be considered as defunct.

The remaining 15 branches, apart from a few exceptions, are in a serious state organisationally. Whilst it is true that these branches meet occasionally, they are not organising the people of their areas for the struggle ahead of the Congress movement. One of the chief reasons for the apathy found in the Branches is the lack of sufficient political consciousness. If the recommendations of the political report are carried out, it is obvious that the organisational level of the branches will be considerably raised.

The Branches are the most important units of Congress, and should provide the mass organisational strength whereby the Natal Indian Congress carries out its policy, instead of leaving everything to the Executive. In this respect we have much to learn from other organisations which function efficiently on the local level. The Branches must have effective leadership and we must concentrate on developing reliable, responsible and energetic Branch officials. We should not tolerate windbags on Branch Committees nor should we be indulgent of old members who occupy executive positions merely on the strength of their past services. These are the elements that retard our progress.

The following recommendations are made to strengthen the Branches:-

- (1) Branches should meet regularly if possible on a fixed day each month;
- (2) Branch meetings should be made more interesting by regularly:
 - (a) Holding political discussions, with guest speakers wherever possible,
 - (b) Conducting business in an organised and efficient manner. This the branch Executive can ensure by meeting beforehand to prepare the Agenda and presenting proper reports on activities,
 - (c) Having literature available for sale to Branch members.
- (3) Branch activities should provide local leadership by working in their branches, and should organise their work amongst the people independently of the branches,
- (4) The Branch should organise practical work such as calling local house and public meetings, collecting signatures for petitions, selling literature, collecting donations, levies and subscriptions, assist in the distribution of leaflets, follow up visits to inactive members, and obtain signatures for the Freedom Charter etc.

- (5) The Branch should hold regular weekly classes, making use of speakers' notes provided by the Consultative Committee,
- (6) Socials (including picnics and sporting events) should be held (a) to raise funds, (b) to enable members to get to know each other socially and to interest non-members in the Branch.
- (7) Particular attention should be paid to drawing in women into these activities, both to stimulate their participation in Congress affairs and to establish Women's Groups within each branch.
- (8) Branch Executives should meet regularly between branch meetings in order to direct the work of active members and to send in regular reports of all activities to the Provincial Executive.

LEADING BODIES OF CONGRESS:

The primary task of the leading bodies of Congress is to provide political leadership. The work of the whole organisation will be ineffective if political leadership is erratic or if it is not consistently on a high level. It is important that members of the leading bodies of Congress should be fully aware of their responsibilities and take an active part in the work of the bodies to which they have been elected so as to fulfil the trust which has been placed in them. Furthermore, it is vital that the leading bodies should at all times work to a clear perspective and not merely transact business in a mechanical way.

As regards the work of the leading bodies during the past year it cannot be said they have at all times been free from the defects mentioned above. Attendance at Working Committee, Executive Committee and Secretariat meetings often leaves much to be desired and the tendency to transact business in a routine, day to day basis is ever present. To correct these tendencies it is necessary that all Congress activists should be clear about the role and functions of these leading bodies.

There are a number of problems to which the members of the incoming bodies should turn their immediate attention. In the first place the work of existing branches must be co-ordinated by such measures as the calling of regular meetings of branch activists, providing regular information to branches on current issues by such means as organising bulletins, news flashes, leaflets etc., calling for regular reports on the work of branches and providing lecturers on important topics for branch meetings. In order that executive members can take an effective part in the work of Congress it is necessary that they should attend branch meetings to assist in local problems and to see that the correct political line of Congress is carried to the people.

At the present critical stage in the political struggle it is necessary that the work of Congress should be extended. New branches must be formed and defunct branches should be revived. Some of this work can be done by members of the Executive, but it is clear that this and other tasks could be carried out with far greater effectiveness if Congress had a full-time paid organiser with a responsible position on the Executive. During

the coming year/.....4

- 4 -

the coming year strong efforts will have to be made to ensure the conditions necessary for the appointment of such an organiser. If we are sufficiently aware of the great need, then the difficulties, financial and otherwise, which stand in the way of such an appointment can surely be overcome.

Another task to which our organisation must apply itself immediately is the creation of a pamphlet fund. If we are to get the message of Congress to the widest sections of the people it is necessary that we pay more attention to the dissemination of material in the form of booklets, pamphlets and leaflets. So far, only the Congress of Democrats has succeeded in forming a pamphlet fund, and the productions which this fund has made possible have been of the greatest assistance to the other Congresses. We should try to emulate this achievement as there are a number of issues of great local interest on which Congress pamphlets are urgently required. In this connection we may mention such issues as Unemployment and Housing.

All these projects make it necessary that in the coming year Congress Executive should take a more active part in guiding branches to improve their financial position. Branches should be encouraged to submit regular financial statements and to see that levies of their membership are fully paid up.

POLITICAL EDUCATION:

If Congress is to plan and carry out its political functions with a bold and correct historical perspective, then it is necessary that the level of political knowledge and theory of Congress members should be continuously rising to keep pace with the demands of a rapidly changing situation. No one ever reaches the stage where his political knowledge is "complete." Congress members at every level should regard the organisation of political education as a continuous task. When this task is neglected the consequent decline in our political perspectives is liable to lead to wrong decisions or an avoidance of decisions altogether, a mere "drifting with the tide." Such attitudes are not worthy of Congress members and it must be the task of our educational programme to see to it that everyone of our active members is given the theoretical equipment to stand on his own politically. When people carry out decisions they must do so, not mechanically, because they have come down from some higher body or have been approved by some well-known individual, but because they fully understand the reasons for these decisions and therefore regard them as correct.

In the past year the problem of political education has not always been treated with the seriousness that it deserves. Only some branches have held political classes for their members. The incoming executive should see to it that education becomes an integral part of the work of all branches and of all levels of Congress. For this purpose it is necessary to organise education systematically, to draw up a syllabus, provide notes on various topics, train lecturers and arrange for their regular visits to branches. In this connection we must rid ourselves of the present tendency to look only to a very restricted circle of individuals for lecturers; new lecturers must be developed within Congress.

ORGANISATION OF CAMPAIGNS:

During the past year Congress organised four mass meetings on the following topics: The Population Registration Act; the Western Areas Removal Scheme, the Congress of the People and a

Farewell to Father Huddleston. In each case the attendance at the meetings could have been greatly increased if our preparatory work had been more extensive.

More recently, a highly successful conference on the Group Areas Act was organised. Wide sections were mobilised around our militant stand against this pernicious piece of Nationalist legislation. The Conference showed clearly that the organisational work of Congress is capable of reaching a high level if correct political and organisational leadership is forthcoming.

THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE AND FREEDOM CHARTER:

The most important event of the past year in South Africa was the holding of the historic Congress of the People at Kliptown on June 26, 1956. Our own organisation played an important role in the great campaign that led up to the Congress; 325 delegates attended the Congress of the People from Natal.

The Campaign for the popularisation of the Freedom Charter is the most important organisational task that faces Congress in the coming year. It will be necessary to organise mass meetings, conferences, local campaigns, classes etc on this issue, bearing in mind that our programme must not be put before the people in an abstract manner, but related to their everyday needs and problems. In particular, there is an immediate need for action on the economic position of the Indian people, a need for action in connection with the burning problem of unemployment and also the cost of living.

DURBAN REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE:

In the past this Committee has not been able to play the vital role that has been assigned to it due to certain misunderstandings about its purposes and functions. It must be stressed that it is not the function of the Consultative Committee to organise the campaign to popularise the Freedom Charter. It is merely its function to co-ordinate the work that is being done by the different national organisations on this issue. The Consultative Committee has not the organisational apparatus at its disposal to wage any campaigns of its own, nor should it attempt to do so. Congress cannot divest itself of the responsibility for organising the Freedom Charter campaign by loading such work into the Consultative Committee and then forgetting all about the matter.

CONCLUSION:

To sum up, therefore, it is necessary for us to stress the following:-

- (1) The entire membership must be drawn into the activities of Congress more vigorously as suggested earlier in this section of the report.
- (2) Working and Executive Committees must constantly pay attention to the ideological aspect of Congress activities and leave detailed day to day work to the Secretariat.
- (3) Political Education must be intensified, especially if we are to meet the threat of replacing the number of leading Congressmen who may be removed from active work as a result of banning orders as if we are to draw in rank and file Congressmen to carry out political decisions adopted by the various organs.
- (4) All branches be called upon to prosecute the Freedom Charter campaign with greater enthusiasm.

Minutes - Conference

6

3 P.M.

Agenda adopted, strictly as above.
Report - Mr. R. A. Kelley - Reported on behalf
of the Cerebral Committee.

Resolution Committee

Matters moved. Smart. Gages presented
D. Sade, W. Scitola, Manmie Kellai, R. A.
Kelley, Geo. H. [unclear]

Secretarial Report:

N.T. read the report.
Manmie Kellai read the paper.

Bewysstuk No.
Gekry by A. Guedes
Deur Kellai
Te Hallingaraed, Pulo
Datum 5/12/54
Verwysings No.

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Minutes of the African National Congress
Annual (Natal Branch) Annual Conference
held at Nene Hall, Two Stick, Durban &
at Stanger on the 8-10th of October, 1956.

Mr. S. S. D. Nyembe, Speaker, presiding the
Conference was opened with devotion
by the Rev. Mkiye, in the absence of
the Provincial Chaplain Rev. Sikaane.

A written message by the Provincial
and General President Chief H. J. Lutshuli
was read.

Fraternal greetings from the
Natal Indian Congress, South African
Congress of Trade Unions, and other
bodies were received.

The Committee Conference elected
Messrs P. S. Simelane,
to the Credentials Committee.

The conference elected Miss G. Huzwayo
Mrs. Mangoni, Mrs. M. A. Gumede
to the Resolutions Committee.

The minutes of the previous conference
not being available were not read.

Reports were received from
delegates representing Durban Central
Branch, Ladysmith, Sontsen Branch
Dawnbancor (no report), Newhook,
Merebank.

Following a lengthy discussion on
Congress Uniform it was finally
agreed that the matter be referred
to the National Conference for
decision.

The conference was adjourned

On the 9th October, 1955, at Stanger
the Conference was resumed. on
closed session. The Provincial & General
President was present.

Dr. W. Z. Conco, Deputy President formally
handed over Conference to the President.
The Deputy President then proceeded
to perform the ceremony of conferring
ISITHWALANDWE upon the President
Chief A. J. Lutshuli which honour ^{he stated}
conferred on him ^{he had been} in absentia at the
Congress of the People held on June 25-26, 1955
at Klipfontein

Mr. Shange, ^{in person} ^{received} ^{an epic or} ^{which was well received}
The President stated he was overwhelmed
at the honours conferred on him and the
words of praise addressed to him and
expressed wonder that in the short period
he had been able to serve the people as
their leader he should have merited the
honours bestowed on him. #

He warned the delegates
not to be disheartened and misled
by the propaganda and tactics employed
by the government in its efforts to
keep the people under the yoke of their
rule.

At the request of the President, Mr. Bhangen
of Ladysmith offered thanks on behalf
of the President for the signal honours
conferred on him.

Conference thereafter considered
the Lamb's draft constitution clause
by clause and suggested amendments to
be proposed at the National Conference.

Conference considered the Freedom
Charter adopted at the Congress of
the People and passed a resolution
expressing its concurrence ^{generally} in the
broad principles ^{forming the basis of the Charter}
but expressing ^{its} ^{concern} ^{at} ^{the} ^{lack} ^{of} ^{detail}

in a long term policy statement such as the Charter in accordance with which amendments ^{and proposals} were passed for consideration at the National Conference. The Banter Education Act Campaign, the issue of Cases for women.

~~Conference received the President's Address~~
~~The Secret Secretarial Report was read~~
and duly adopted.

Arising from the report given by the London Branch in regard to the Youth Leagues & its financial relationship with Branches. The President pointed out that an unsatisfactory position was being created by the failure of the youth leagues to carry out the request made to them to submit their constitution in order that it may be known what the relationship was between Congress and the youth leagues and secondly that the present constitution gave rights of representation by delegates to those who have no rights enjoyed by Congress members and members of a body like the youth leagues would not be enjoying the membership if they became members of Congress.

In token of loyal greetings to the President a sum of £8.13.4. was collected in confidence and handed to the President.

Conference was adjourned.

On the 10th of October 1956, Conference was resumed at Nine Hall, Two Street, Durham.

In discussion of the Secretarial Report the following ~~amendments~~ were dealt with and ten ~~amendments~~ resolutions were passed by Conference.

- (a) Gathering at the Royal Exchange
- (b) Banter Education Act
- (c) Banter Education Act
- (d) Banter Education Act
- (e) Banter Education Act
- (f) Banter Education Act
- (g) Banter Education Act
- (h) Banter Education Act
- (i) Banter Education Act
- (j) Banter Education Act

The illness and recovery of the Natal Provincial & General President
(c) Congress ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~direction~~ ^{direction} of co-operation with
Trade Unions:

(d) The removal of Africans residing in a near suburb to Saffo
The opportunity of influencing the Resolution to Zululand Residents' Road
Co-operation of other organisations in
the liberation movement

The Provincial Treasurer ^{Mr. P. Simelane} ~~presented~~ gave the annual financial
Report which was duly adopted.
Branch Reports were submitted by Newcastle
Branch, East Java ~~Stick~~ Branch, Lamontville
Branch, & the ~~Stick~~ ^{Stick} Branch.

Arising from the report presented by the
two ~~Stick~~ ^{Stick} Branches a committee of
five namely Rev. Sibiyu, mess. mee,
Phengwe, Mungwana and H. Mzembe
was elected to inspect ~~the~~ ^{the} stream
a heavily polluted stream running close
to two ~~Stick~~ ^{Stick}.

In regard to the ~~Stick~~ ^{Stick} Branch
it was agreed that Congress should
assist in organising in that area.

Mr. Simelane explaining that location
of the youth League complained about
by the Durban Central Branch should
there was no reason for ~~the~~ ^{the}
a defalcation for which the
then officials were responsible.
A committee consisting of Rev. Sibiyu, M. M. Mzimba
and Mr. Simelane was elected to consider and report upon the
The extent of ~~the~~ ^{the} system to ~~the~~ ^{the}
women.

Mr. A. G. G. led discussion on
this matter which was dealt with
at length and a resolution
thereon passed. ~~As~~ ^{As} hereinafter appears
The Deputy President gave his official address
which was heard by an appreciative audience.

In view of
the

The Conference considered two ~~two~~ ^{two} ~~authorities~~ ^{authorities}
The Council's dealing with the constitution
to report to the Provincial Executive Committee
for distribution to the Branches after conference

The following resolutions were ~~presented~~ ^{presented} by the Res. Com. ~~to~~ ^{to}
The President & members of Executive Committee

The Election of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Executive~~ ^{Executive} ~~Committee~~ ^{Committee}
was held and resulted as follows:
President: Rev. H. Mzembe
Executive Committee: Messrs. P. S. G. Mzimba, M. M. Mzimba, M. M. Mzimba, M. M. Mzimba, M. M. Mzimba

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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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