

BASUTOLAND AFRICAN CONGRESSMANIFESTOA. WE OPPOSE INCORPORATION OF BASUTOLAND WITHIN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Whereas the question of incorporation of Basutoland and other countries now classed as the High Commissioned Territories within the Union of South Africa has been one of the principal motivations towards the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 - as clearly indicated by its inclusion in the South Africa Act of 1909; and whereas the British Government, in her Schedule now standing as part of Section 151 of the same South Africa Act of 1909, declared her preparedness and intention to hand over Basutoland and other High Commission Territories to the Union of South Africa if only the four colonies agreed to form the Union; and since such handing over of Basutoland seems to depend more on some consultation rather than on any legal agreement or consent of the inhabitants, whose identity is not clear in the said Schedule to the said South Africa Act; and since the results of this consultation may bear no weight upon the final decision of whether Basutoland shall be incorporated within the Union of South Africa or not; and whereas the South African Governments have from time to time since 1910, and in accordance with the said British Government's promises demanded the transfer of the Government of Basutoland to the Union of South Africa:-

We, the members of the Basutoland African Congress, declare and do strongly hold, even as Moshoeshe and the Basotho of old have correctly maintained - in the words of the Rev. Mr. Daniel, who wrote to Woodehouse in 1867-8, assuring Woodehouse that "incorporation within Natal would be contrary to the wishes of every Mosotho" and even as Woodehouse also declared and satisfied the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time that "annexation of Basutoland to Natal would not only be impossible and impolitic, but also repugnant to the wishes of the Basuto Nation", that the incorporation of Basutoland within the Union of South Africa would both be impolitic and repugnant to the best wishes of every Mosotho. We believe, we hold and we demand that Basutoland must never, at any time in the present, in the future, as it has not been in the past, be incorporated within the Union of South Africa, except by consent of a two-thirds majority of the Basotho. May it be remembered and recognised that:-

1. The Basotho are not a conquered nation subject to Britain.
2. Basotho asked for protection from Britain and not for annexation of their country and subjugation of their citizens.
3. Basotho declared allegiance to Britain on their own free will.
4. Basotho fought wars such as "Ntoa ea Seqiti" and "Ntoa ea Lithunya" to maintain their independence and against the government of Basutoland by the Boers - the members of the Nationalist Party of today who rule the Africans in South Africa with the iron heel, sjambok and thunder.
5. Basotho have always upheld their allegiance to the British Crown in times of peace and in times of stress.
6. Basotho have most loyally and with great national and personal sacrifices participated indirectly in the Boer War and directly in the World War I and the World War II in the defence of (a) Democracy, (b) the British prestige and (c) the freedom and the independence of their country, Basutoland.
7. In those great wars, Basotho participated as a national unit distinct from the Union of South Africa as a further indication of their unwillingness to have anything common with the Union of South Africa.
8. Britain had neither any moral, any political, nor any legal right nor excuse to discuss and to make promises about the land of the Basotho without their knowledge and their consent - as it were, behind their backs - that Britain has done so has been a great breach of moral, political and legal faith on her part. The Basotho have been faithful to their allegiance but Britain has been unfaithful to her word of honour.
9. We, the members of the Basutoland African Congress, oppose the incorporation of our country, Basutoland, within the Union of South Africa.

10. We oppose the Union of South Africa's legalised political non-recognition of the Africans, the Indians and the Coloured communities as human beings and the Union's efforts to prevent the said non-white groups of South Africa from entering into the world community which is the birth-right of every human being today.

11. We oppose the Union of South Africa's fascist rule - the rule of the gun and the sjambok.

12. We oppose the legalised racialistic political philosophies and the laws emanating therefrom which are designed to make the Africans perpetual slaves - hewers of wood and drawers of water in their own land of birth.

13. We oppose Apartheid in all its implications which in a nutshell mean the modern enslavement of the Africans in South Africa - Africans to be slaves whose existence shall only be tolerated as long as it serves and promotes the interests of the white people of South Africa.

14. We oppose the incorporation of our country into the Union of South Africa because in South Africa there are Churches - Christian Churches - but they have knowledge neither of God nor of justice.

15. We oppose the oppressive rule of force and bloodshed to which the Africans in the Union of South Africa are subjected.

16.16. We oppose the refusal by the Union of South Africa to give the Africans a chance to rise in public affairs according to their gifts, and discrediting the Africans internationally as a means of self-justification for the exploitation of the Africans.

17. We oppose the Union of South Africa's desire to usurp our land and to reduce the Basotho to the status of the Africans in the Union with no freedom to determine and to shape their destiny.

19. We oppose the armed Union of South Africa's legalised enticement and her armed provocation of the weaponless and defenceless masses of the Africans into a bloody war and revolution.

20. We oppose Britains' negotiations with South African Governments on the transfer of our country without the knowledge and consent of the Basotho and Britain's employment of the Union nationals political insiders to effect the transfer.

#### B. WE WANT SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR THE BASOTHO IN BASUTOLAND NOW

Whereas Basutoland is sometimes referred to as a democracy, we of the Basutoland African Congress hold that there is no democracy in Basutoland - the High Commissioner in Pretoria and the Resident Commissioner in Maseru, through the instrumentality of the Paramount Chief at Matsieng, rule this territory with such powers as amount to open dictatorship, in practice though not by law. The Basotho, who in fact own the land have, through the National Council, been reduced to mere advisors on vital matters that fundamentally affect their own political, social, economic and educational welfare. The Basotho pay taxes but they can only be advisors as to how and in what manner their taxes have to be spent. Quite often on such matters, the desires and aspirations of the Basotho are overlooked, yea, their wishes are brushed aside with scorn whenever such desires and aspirations do not suit the objectives of the Imperial Government in Basutoland. It is in this territory that the British system of indirect rule has, in the finer analysis, shaped out to be an indirect dictatorship by the Imperial Government through white officials whose first function, as stated by Lord Harlech in 1943, is that of "political officers". In this system of indirect dictatorship, the Paramount Chief's role, together with the whole hierarchy of chiefs below, is to implement the usually threatening instructions of the Government officials. Can we blame the Paramount Chief? Here it is that we see the officials of the British Government capitalizing on the academic ignorance, the political ignorance, the faith and the misplaced loyalties of the Basotho nation.

This rule we reject because we in the same manner as Moshoeshe and the Basotho of old, only need England to protect and guide us while we handle and shape our own national destiny. We reject this rule because it does not agree with the declared policy of Her Majesty's Government of developing her dependent peoples into self-governing and autonomous units of a whole - the Commonwealth - and we oppose it as undemocratic.

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We of the Basutoland African Congress, therefore, without a desire to create any impression whatsoever that the Basotho desire or have intentions of any sort to break away from the British Government, do demand self-government in Basutoland by the Basotho NOW. And to the end that the Basotho should rule themselves in Basutoland, we demand:

1. That administrative and legislative powers now mostly in the hands of the High Commissioner, The Resident Commissioner and the Paramount Chief and all the diplomatic relations between Basutoland, England and foreign powers be transferred into the Basutoland National Council, the constitution of which should now be amended to give it legislative and executive powers for and over all who permanently or temporarily dwell in this territory.

2. The Resident Commissioner should be what he had always been from 1862-1938 - namely the liaison officer between the Basotho and the outside world. This is what Moshoeshbe and the Basotho had requested.

3. The Council should legislate fully on all matters concerning central administration, Education, Commerce, Industry, State Finances, and the land tenure.

4. The time is now overdue for the replacement, as far as possible, of the Europeans by the Africans in the civil service. We hold that most of the white officials (the experts as they are usually referred to) in the administration are redundant and can be easily replaced by the Basotho as it was clearly shown during the period of World War II, when Europeans were not available for the local offices. Most of the white officials in Basutoland arrive here without experience and academically underqualified for the offices they come to hold - and worse still they get overpaid - both of these are a detriment to a territory with such meagre resources.

#### C. DISCRIMINATION MUST QUIT BASUTOLAND

Whereas there is discrimination as to the treatment of the Basotho and the Europeans in Government service - in such matters as conditions of service, salary scales, promotion rates, allowances, residential quarters; and whereas this discrimination is based on colour along identical lines as in the Union of South Africa where white man's interests supersede those of the black people and where comfort and luxury for white people, no matter how lazy or how inefficient, are guaranteed, and whereas in Basutoland we see colour bar being erected by the British Government that professes not to believe in it; and since we have seen how deterrent to progress and pernicious to good race-relations colour bar practices have been in all the British dependencies throughout Africa, we of the Basutoland African Congress reject this discrimination as being opposed to the best interests of the progress of the Basotho in this country and also as being opposed to the honoured, declared British colonial policy of treating equals as equals regardless of the colour of their skin or mathematical slopes in their skulls - and further we are satisfied that discrimination based on colour is only an indulgence of the British officials abroad - it is radically different from what the British people whom they represent stand for.

We therefore demand that the British Government:

1. Remove all discriminatory laws in Basutoland such as those connected with pass laws, liquor laws, gaol laws and regulations etc.
2. Remove all discriminations and discriminatory practices based on colour and on race as indulged in by the white government officials of the British Government in Basutoland.
3. Declares it as Her Majesty's Government condition for employment of the civil servants that they shall not practice racial discrimination and they shall not become members of clubs which practise racial discrimination.
4. Proclaim that any white man here who is a civil servant, a trader or a religious missionary, or any employee who discriminates or strives for discrimination on grounds of colour should be caused to leave the territory.

5. Proclaim that it shall be illegal for hotels, restaurants or places of public entertainment to discriminate on grounds of colour - and that any such public place of entertainment or any trading or business place which practises discrimination should not be given the right to carry on business - no licence should be given to discriminating business concerns and such trading licences should be withdrawn from such business people as may from time to time be found to discriminate.

SGD. N.M. NTS'EKHE  
NATIONAL SECRETARY  
BASUTOLAND AFRICAN CONGRESS

SGD. N.C. MOKHEHLE  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT  
BASUTOLAND AFRICAN CONGRESS

MASERU,  
BASUTOLAND.  
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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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