

Fourteen hundred delegates from all over South Africa went A NEW AND POWERFUL



SINGERS REHEARSE Bags, blankets and voices raised, this group has come from Durban to the All-In Africa talks in Maritzburg. Harmony is strength, they say.



WOMEN PREPARE Fourteen hundred people have flocked to the talks. Living and being a delegate is hungry work, so volunteers step up to do peeling and cooking.



FATHER PLAYS NURSEMAID The call at the conference is all for unity, but baby wanted variety. So papa takes her out for sake of peace.



DELEGATES PLAY BUILDER The hall is packed to capacity. Many can't get in. Shelters are put up hastily to protect them from the rain.

THE odds were all against success, and yet the outcome was a triumph, an indication of a new spirit of resolve which has emerged among the African people.

Few meetings can have been preceded by so many unfavourable omens as the All-In Africa Conference at Maritzburg.

There was the ban on the two main political organisations, the round-ups and imprisonment of leaders, the last-minute withdrawal of some Liberal Party and ex-P.A.C. men, the difficulty of finding accommodation for delegates, the problems of transport. There was the decision to change the hall after tape-recording wires were reported to have been found in the original venue.

Yet despite all this, 1,400 delegates from

all over the Union got to Maritzburg — and many of them slept out in the veld because there was no other place for them to stay.

They came by train, by car, by foot, by bicycle. They came carrying bundles of food, which they shared out as if on a family picnic.

They sang songs about Ex-Chief Luthuli, about Minister De Wet Nel, relishing the words, the notes.

Could the Nationalist Party have achieved this in the face of banning orders, with few cars, and very little money to spend?

Could they have brought 1,400 people from homes far and wide, and got them to make corresponding sacrifices?

The picnic spirit at Maritzburg was all for the open spaces. Inside the hall the labourers,

the clerks, peasants, ministers of religion, intellectuals, the people from all walks of life, got down determinedly to discussing the need for united political action.

They talked, they listened, they argued, and at the end they crystallised their feelings in resolutions.

They called for a "non-racial, democratic constitution" in South Africa.

They demanded the holding of a national convention of elected representatives of all adult men and women on an equal basis, irrespective of race, colour or creed. The convention should be called by the Government not later than May 31.

If the Government ignored this demand, the conference resolved that country-wide demon-

to Maritzburg, where they sounded

CALL FOR UNITY



WOMEN TAKE OVER

But not all women are cooks. Some prefer to sing, even if it means shoving a little to get on to the stage. The conference has not yet begun, and there are still details to be worked out by organisers.



MAKING THE BEST OF IT

You know what it is about getting into the best hotels, so these delegates decided on the next best. It could have been a lot more comfortable, but then they hadn't come to Maritzburg for rest cure.

strations would be held on the eve of the intended proclamation of the republic.

The conference also called on the Indian and Coloured communities, "and all democratic Europeans" to join in opposing a regime "which is bringing disaster to South Africa."

The delegates also condemned Bantu Authorities. A resolution said: "This all-in-Conference views with grave concern the deterioration in the living conditions of the people in the rural areas as well as the forcible imposition of the system of Bantu Authorities, notwithstanding the unanimous opposition of the people to the scheme."

Meetings in any part of the world are often dominated by the opening speech. And so it

was at Maritzburg, where the ex-A.N.C. leader, Nelson Mandela, made a strong plea for unity, which left its mark on all the talk that followed.

"We should emerge from this conference with the fullest preparations for a fully-representative multi-racial national convention. From this conference will come the foundation of a fully democratic government," he told the gathering.

I was sitting next to a man who was busy taking notes while Mandela was speaking. Suddenly the man turned to me and remarked: "This is like a State of the Nation address by an American President." The man was from the Special Branch, but he seemed to have summed things up well.



MANDELA TALKS

Ex-A.N.C. leader Nelson Mandela calls for a non-racial constitution in SA

Mr. Mandela — who was able to attend only because a ban on him had been lifted ten days earlier — paid tribute to the role played last year by the banned African organisations. The A.N.C., which for nearly fifty years had been "the sword and shield of the African people," had been suppressed.

The people, he said, were now faced with two alternatives.

They had either to accept discrimination, humiliation, Pondolands, the betrayal of the true interests of the African people, appeasement. That was one choice. The alternative was to stand firm for their rights.

The people could allow themselves to remain disunited in the face of the Govern-

PLEASE TURN OVER

Wrangling is futile, says woman leader

ment's arrogance, or they could stand united to ensure that the Government's discriminatory legislation did not work.

He said that Africans would be doing a disservice to the peoples of the world who were censuring the Union if they allowed themselves to remain disunited.

The way had already been shown by the United Front, whose efforts had resulted in South Africa resigning from the Commonwealth. This type of unity was possible here too.

The tone of the speech was followed by Lillian Ngoyi, who also made a masterful plea for unity.

She told delegates that, whenever the police decided on a swoop, political opponents would find themselves sleeping in the same cells and facing the same charges. This, she said, showed the futility of wrangling when faced with a common opponent.

She admitted there had been strong differences to threaten the unity of the African people. It was a bold thing for her to do. So was it, as an ex-member of the A.N.C., to demand the release of Pan-Africanist Sobukwe and his followers, who are in jail for fighting the pass issue.

Throughout all the discussion Security Branch men sat steadfastly in their seats, while outside two vanloads of policemen stood by.

"Own Man..."

In spite of what the conference achieved, another hurdle remains to be surmounted — that of personalities. Perhaps it is the followers, more than the leaders themselves, who are to blame for this. Some of these followers will have only their "own man" at the head, insisting that his sacrifices justify this.

To eliminate this sort of difficulty people must learn to appreciate the other man's problems, to think beyond the individual to the idea.

It is only on a basis of principles, not personalities, that an adequate structure for the future can be erected. Leaders die; causes live on.

The United Front outside the country, for instance, is composed of people of different political views. When the emergency was declared, some had already left the country. Others left later. Now all have joined — in spite of their differences — in their common purpose.

They have shown that collaboration can be achieved without sacrificing principle. Dogs stop quarrelling when they see a rabbit. They chase it, and when it is caught, they quarrel over the booty.

If the spirit of Maritzburg is not to be squandered, the people must sink their differences and get on with the tremendous task ahead.

They must learn from the mistakes of the past, mistakes of division, sometimes of folly.

It is a task which demands no less than unity — and now!



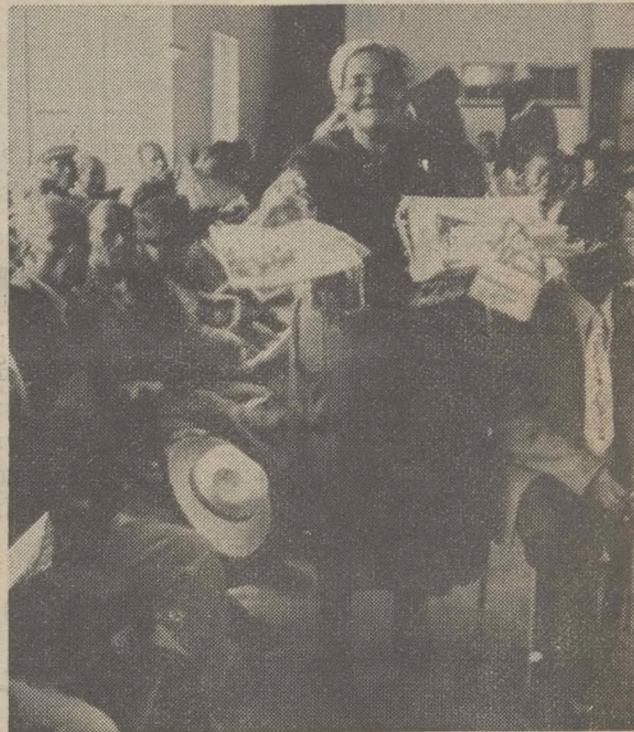
THE BIG WALK

Tape-recording wires have been found hidden in the hall where the talks were to have been held. A new hall is quickly found, and the delegates march there singing. No obstacle seems able to dampen their spirits.



THE BIG WAIT

This mother gets in early, makes sure of seat. Then begins the patient wait.



SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Pamphlets for sale, and no dirty looks if you don't buy.



CROWDED OUT

No room inside at this session. Friends keep them informed of talks.



AND OF COURSE!

Maybe the plain-clothes men have a day off and that's why they are also there!

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