

It is quite a natural development that at certain periods in the history of mankind, the people's faith whether collectively or individually undergoes a severe test - test of deeds and not of cheap words. In such times, their honesty is likewise tested. In South Africa, whenever such times of test come, we are always collectively or individually weighed and found wanting. That is because those who evade learning by the experiences of others must learn by their own bitter experience. This truth fittingly applies here to perfection. We must go on learning by our own experiences until we become conscious of it. However, the current political situation in this country stands in need of some clarification of certain issues affecting the Africans in particular.

That is with regard to organisations. It does not matter how many manions some politicians may build in their minds about the struggle for liberation, or how many shanty organisations they may have taken shelter under, but the fact is that the real national movement of the Africans is the African National Congress. Those Africans who for one reason or another, have deserted the A.N.C. and formed their own political hovels elsewhere, and some of those who have remained within its ranks, but continue to talk of something greater than congress in the name of the people, evade the real problems of organisations. They all fall in the same error whether they realise it or not, or whether they agree amongst themselves or they disagree.

The bulk of the people are unorganised. There is no amount of talk in the name of the people that will ever solve the questions of organisation and the correct policy to follow. While we have no quarrel with as many political shanty organisations on the other side of the colour line, but we are definitely opposed to them as far as the Africans are concerned: they retard our progress. Analysing the current internal situation

within the A.N.C. we find the following position :-

That the present leadership which formally constituted the left wing of the A.N.C., while retaining the left phraseology, but has definitely shifted right; and the former right wing group has fallen out completely and have formed a new body known as the African National Congress ("National minded"). This group while nationalistic in form, but is highly reactionary in content. The position of the former left-wing in the A.N.C. proper, has been taken by the radical young known as the "extreme nationalists". A close observation of the aims of this group, compels us to dwell a little bit longer on them. They are composed of various elements amongst the intelligensia. This is the first awakening - ening of the intellectuals in South Africa, and a number of them have already sacrificed their profession for the cause.

This, no doubt marks a turning point in the history of this country. They make no bones of their nationalism, and do not disguise it at all. This kind of nationalism can in the end be highly dangerous if left to run unbridled. That is, if it rejects assistance from whatever quarter it may come. But when they say that they stand for independence of Congress to determine its own policy and to direct its organisational problems without outside influences and interference, they are perfectly justified and can keep their own identity, and the right to have that autonomy. To those who are worried about extreme nationalism, " we say that this form of nationalism is a reaction against oppression. You may ask oppression by whom? The answer is the white man. These people know only a white man as a oppressor. Yes, the white man ruler and administrator, the overseer and the mine magnate; the legislator and the voter. The land owner who controls the land in terms of colour. The white man steadfastly upholds the rule of the idel rich white man, as long as he is assured of a bigger slice of farm and the plantation. To be ~~xxxx~~ more precise, the white man worker and boss; the same white as supervisor in the railways, the white man who elects to parliament a white man with his majority vote for the purpose of oppressing the black man. The man who approves of apartheid but sticks to his location office as clerk or superintendent. Th compound manager native commissioner, conductor of trains and trans and the bully ticket issuer. The white man who feels insulted when addressed mister and likes to be called boss even in the firm where he is employed. In short the white man monopolist in skilled jobs.

What is the talk of " extreme nationalism " about, in a country of an extreme-national suppression of the Africans by an extreme gang of nationalists, and where does it originate? What are its basic aims? It is the means by which an attempt is made to divert the efforts into moderation and platform phrasemongers. It originates from the groups of half internationals and liberals, and not from the Africans.

From those who speak about "extreme nationalism" we know, without organisation or group of people ever followed a progressive line that have not been characterised as extremists? Of course, we draw we draw a clear line of demarcation between the extremists of the ruling nation and those of the oppressed nation. While the former are driven to such limits by their desire to maintain cheap native labour for their vested interests, the latter are forcibly thrown into the position by national oppression and hunger for liberation; Such is the position of the African youth.

Nationalism of the oppressed people's must be what it is, before before it is transformed into something else by the process of development. Whether or not this is considered illogical by those who use the immediate danger of "extreme nationalism", but the unchanging fact is that it is not the fault of those who have been pushed into such nationalism, but of those who have driven them into it. However, what is more important at this stage is the question organisation and determination on which depends the future of South Africa. This done, the mists obscuring our line of march will soon clear, and the A.N. C. which we all have the right to claim will inevitably become a force to be reckoned with, and a genuine support of those who offer it will not be doubted.

The above being the position, the question of the African Trade Unions could not be otherwise, but more or less identical that is, in as far as organisation is concerned. When some of the well meaning Europeans say that they want progress and non-colour bar unions, well and good. But that must also find its meaning in practice, otherwise it is merely a theoretical question and wishful thinking. Too long have we been bluffing ourselves and the progressive world. These leaders on the otherside of the colour line who speak so much about non-colour bar unions, must not speak individuals, but exert their efforts in their European unions so as to have the support of the policy before they can speak about it. These half way measures take us no where. And who have found it easy to organise amongst the oppressed must be thanked and told that they work among people who do not entirely trust them, and that charity begins at home.

A brief review of the history of the African political situation and the trade union movement in South Africa, reveals that while there has always been a misunderstanding existing amongst the Africans, but there is usually sharpened and intensified by outside influences and interference from those Europeans who impose and regard themselves as the natural trustees of the Africans politically, economically, educationally, socially and even religiously. This, of course, is quite apart from their well-known trusteeship in the body politics of this country. As for the misunderstandings in the ranks of the Africans it is quite natural if it is genuine for there can be no development without contradictions.

Not very long ago, there have been three hostile groups within the ranks of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions in Johannesburg. Two of them were supposed to have constituted the left wing of the trade union movement. But in actual fact, one of them was considered ultra left. In matters of policy the ultra-left and the right wings always cited together. But that was merely the question of tactics on the part of the latter. However, in the course of time, the latter deunct as a group leading only a few individual trade unions and the field was quite open between the right and the left wing groups. Like the national liberatory struggle, the trade unions have no effective organisation worth talking about. In most cases, these unions are run in the interests of the individual secretaries and organisers. At times, when they talk about outside interference is when they consider their own individual interests first and most of the time is spent discussing policy and not organisation.

These are stubborn facts bitter though they may be. The situation in South Africa needs serious consideration. The question of reorganisation of both the African National Congress and the African Trade Unions is of great National significance. It is one that at present overshadows all. For without proper organisation of a real force which will be able to pull with it the whole nation, and less shouting about what we intend to do, we cannot make a move. In reorganising we must not only concentrate on the Urban Areas, but equally on the rural areas and in the reserves where over five(5) million of our people live without proper organisation. Any talk of action is just an academic and scholastic question devoid of any meaning.

If ever South Africa stood in need of serious thinking and the closing of our ranks it is now. Our people in some of the reserves have been exciled from time to time, and not a word about their deprtation in the newspapers. They wage an isolated and determined struggle. When a number of the people deported from one native reserve in so short a period is given, the public will be shocked. Not only have men been deportees but also women are ~~xx~~ beginning to appear on the list. The signs of awakening is showing everywhere in South Africa. All we lack is organisation.

We must once more emphasise that the present mushroom political organisations both for and against the government, are not a sign of strength but of weakness. They are not an indication of progressive development, but of reaction; nor can they be considered a shield against an attack by the present police state. They are definitely no solution to our lamentably weak propaganda and agitation. Yes, lialityat all cost as an indispensable birth right. of all. ; but where it has been completely destroyed, it cannot be restored by continuous political speculations and formation of new political organisations. For they too, will undoubtedly be attacked as soon as they become worthy of the struggle for the cause of the oppressed. No, we cannot afford to be jumping from pillar to post in this period of a merciless onslaught by an incorri- ble reactionary gang of nationalists. We must make a stand somewhere and meet them by an organised reply, this is the time.

The current political situation in South Africa requires serious attention by every right -minded South African, and by all the Africans in particular. Too long have we been marking time and starggering on the political road without knowing where it is leading ti.

At this period more than at any other time in the history of our country, are we called upon by a set of present circumstances to reorientate curselves and reconsider the most immediate and burn- ing issues of reorganisation of h the National Liberatory movement.

Signed by,

P.Mnguni

G.Mabokoule

S.Mhlambi.

530 Albertensville, Section 1.

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