

St. Teresa Secondary School,  
P.O. Starbapruit,  
Bereshel, Cape Province.

24th August, 1946.

Mr. G.M. Pitjús,  
Department of African Studies,  
FORT HARE.

Sir,

I must first apologise for replying so late. My reasons are as follows:

1. I have not been well of late.
2. I had to have detailed consultations with the National Executive of the Youth League, stationed in Johannesburg.

Now, my old comrade, I can give you a detailed reply.

Fort Hare is just the place to start a Youth League. The young people there are the intellectual leaders to-be, and a growing consciousness of their role in the national liberation struggle will add new vigour and force to the struggle for national freedom. Therefore your suggestion to form a Youth League there is most welcome. Now here are a few facts about the Congress Youth League:-

1. It was founded in 1944 by youths such as the late Lembede, in order to strengthen the National Movement, and give youth scope for training as the future leaders of their people. The Congress Youth League was formed as the result of a Resolution passed by the National Conference of the A.N.C. in 1943 at Bloemfontein, "That Congress Youth Leagues and Women's Leagues be formed." The Transvaal is the first Province to take up the work of organising the Youth League. Now, Natal has followed suit. We hope the Cape and the O.F.S. will do the same soon, so that some time next year we might have a South African Youth Congress, which can in clear terms set a new pace to the politics of South Africa.
2. The political philosophy which we profess is that of African Nationalism. This *inter alia* implies:
  - (a) That the black people of Africa have a divine destiny, that is to say, that they are destined to rise and play their part in the advance of humanity to a better life.
  - (b) That they suffer an alien and foreign oppression. Africa is the black-man's continent, the African peoples are growing under a foreign oppression, because their country has been colonized by foreign powers, and its resources and their labour are being exploited, not for their benefit, but for the benefit of the conquerors and the exploiters.
3. The Africans are a conquered race, their oppression is a racial oppression, in other words, they do not suffer class oppression. They are oppressed by virtue of their colour as a race - as a group - as a nation. In other words they are suffering national oppression.
4. As a colonial people suffering national oppression we can overthrow foreign domination, and win national freedom by organising a powerful national liberation movement. The Congress provides a good frame-work for the task of building a national liberation movement. Hence the Youth League aims at training and mobilising youth, so that Youth should be seasoned for the tasks of leadership, and orientate the entire politics of the African people in South Africa as they do not seek to undermine the forces of African

Nationalism. We are ready to co-operate and join hands with them in fighting oppression and in attacking the common enemy. Again we realize that pending the creation of a really militant national liberation front, many youths have identified themselves with various movements in order to find expression for their desire to free their people. We cannot deter such youths from joining the Congress Youth League, precisely because the League aims at creating an all-in national liberation front. But then once they join the Youth League they should do so with the full determination to serve its cause with vigour and unquestionable devotion. On that basis we welcome all African youth in the League. Once having joined the League, the League comes first and foremost. Youths who join the League and still attach themselves devotedly to other groups had little right to remain as true Leaguers.

Second Question:- What happens in the event of a clash between the Senior Congress and the Youth League as for instance over the question of the Boycott?

The clash is inevitable, because the Congress Senior Leadership reflects the dying order of pseudo-liberalism and conservatism, of appeasement and compromise. The Youth League reflects the new spirit of a self-conscious Africa, striving to break age-old oppression and liberate the national forces of progress.

To Mr. G.H. Pitje - Statement of Policy C.Y.L.

Postscript - African Nationalism

Please note that our Nationalism has nothing to do with Fascism and Nationalism Socialism (Hitleric version) nor with the imperialistic and neo-Fascist Nationalism of the Afrikaners (the Malanite type). Ours is the pure Nationalism of an oppressed people, seeking freedom from foreign oppression. We as African Nationalists do not hate the European - we have no racial hatreds - we only hate white oppression and white domination, and not the white people themselves!

We do not hate other human beings as such - whether they are Indians, Europeans or Coloureds. When we have won our "National Freedom" we shall establish a "People's Democracy" where all men shall have rights and freedoms merely because they are men.

(Signed) A.P. MDA.

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