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The coming into being of the African National Congress in 1912 was an event of historic landmark in South African history. It was an important milestone and marked a great political development among the African people. This organisation was destined to play a significant role in changing the political and economic life of the country, some of these changes have already taken place, although they might not have been easily noticed. They are indeed insignificant when one takes into account the changes that are expected, which must definitely take place. Since the coming into existence of the African National Congress, many organisations have come and gone, but this mighty organisation remains. It has had some of the stormiest days and it has stood the test of time. We can look to the future through it, with confidence.

The African National Congress has become a political force in the life of South Africa, even nations of the world look forward to the day when the government of this country will pass from the hands of the reactionary oppressors into the hands of the people - the African National Congress.

The importance and prestige it enjoys is due to its correct policies, the sincere and consistent lead it has given the broad masses of people, the policy of goodwill and friendship with other sections of the South African population, whilst struggling ceaselessly against the oppressors; it has followed an honest policy of wanting for others what it wants for itself. In other words it has no design to replace white domination by black domination.

The African National Congress has distinguished itself in recent years in the manner in which it carried all its struggle together with its allies, especially during the Defiance Campaign of 1952, when it forced the white rulers to recognise not only its existence, but also the powerful influence over millions of Non-European people.

The purpose of this article, however, is to bring to the notice of Congressites the serious organisational weaknesses, which

hamper the progress necessary for the development and inkeeping its status of the African National Congress. We would be failing in our duties if we did not take the first opportunity to tell the rank and file of the Congress membership, how serious these problems are, and how best to correct them.

The last forty years of the Congress existence have been almost devoted to agitational and propaganda work to the complete negligence of the organisational aspect, although we must concede to the fact that this agitational and propaganda aspect was absolute essential in restoring the confidence people has lost in the face of the powerful forces they were faced with. It served an important function of raising the political consciousness of the masses of the people and has also dispel any illusions about the false hope, for the change of heart of the rulers. As a result they became convinced that freedom does not come as a gift to a people but they shall pay a high price for it. This propaganda made it possible for the African to despise tribalism and any form of racialism, and know that the salvation lies in their unity in their struggle against their enemies.

THE ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEMS.

Times have changed, therefore our methods must also change. The enemy has perfected its machinery, well equipped with modern technique. It behoves us, therefore to keep in advance with these changes in order to succeed in difficult times. "It is quite clear that Congress cannot survive unless it changes its present organisational structure. If it is not yet clear, it should be made abundantly clear to all concerned that the Nationalist are determined and mean to deprive us of/deny us the elementary human rights of freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of organisation and freedom of movement. Their aim is to divide the Africans further and to prevent us even from uniting. Their aim is to scatter the whole African population and keep and treat.

More than ever the Defiance Campaign, Congress of the People, Bantu Education, the Removal of Western Areas have all shown that the organisations' standard of the African National Congress was

far below its great political task. These campaigns have shown that to disregard the organisational problems with the hope that they will solve themselves is like ^{fishing in} sailing like troubled waters, and that can create the most dangerous situation, not only to the African National Congress but to the entire liberatory movement in South Africa. It was for this reason that the National Executive Report to the last Annual Conference of the African National Congress ^{REGARDED} ~~classified~~ the organisational problem as ^{PRIORITY} item No.1.

The following suggestions were made. "That to meet these stringent and hostile conditions, therefore, the Congress must be on an entirely new organisational footing. Congress leaders and activists must recognise and accept this basic fact. The organisation should be highly centralised on the National and Provincial ^{LEVELS} ~~planes~~, but highly decentralised on the branch and membership levels. It must be re-organised along the lines ~~laid~~ laid down in the "M" "Plan". The following scheme was, therefore, envisaged."

- (a) It should be based on small manageable units.
- (b) Several of these units should be united under and controlled by a sub-committee consisting of leaders of each unit.
- (c) Units, sub-committees to be responsible to branch committees.
- (d) All units and unit sub-committees to be equipped with the knowledge necessary to enable them to carry out their duties and functions.
- (e) Branch committees to be responsible for seeing to it that all units and sub-committees are activated and efficient.
- (f) Greater use to be made of the printed word, but where and when this becomes impossible to make use of the word of the mouth.
- (g) Provincial committees to be more alive and to exercise their supervisory and administrative control strictly and conscientiously.
- (h) Each member of a provincial committee to be personally responsible to the provincial committee for the proper and efficient functioning of a given branch and units and units sub-committee under the control of such branch.
- (i) Each member of the National Executive to take an active

and leading part of the provincial committees in his province?

The above extracts are contained in the last Annual National Executive report given in December to the Annual Conference of the African National Congress. This report was a departure to all other ^{PAST} reports which can only be appreciated if studied in full, first because it instructed the lowest organs of the African National Congress to discuss the organisational problems at the branch level before coming to the conference, and further by giving a clear analysis of the situation in the country and then place the organisational question as the main issue before the National Conference. The low political level again reveals itself on this important political task of the day at conference among the delegates and even among the leaders. The conference merely regarded the report as the very interesting document but failed to give it the attention it deserved or to appreciate its significance. There was no paper discussion on it nor were there any suggestions from the branches not even at conference, hence, no specific resolution on organisation was passed accepting the report. That is why up to this ninth month after the conference, not even the least effort seems to be taken in the implementation of the report. It is doubtful whether any study of the report even in some provincial levels has been made.

Now we must put a stop to the question of regarding these reports and even directives as mere formalities displaying good English. We must realise that we have the entire nation upon our shoulders. To ignore these warnings will amount to deliberate sabotage wrecking the ship of Freedom in the mist of sea ~~waters~~ waters.

Otherwise how can anyone give reason for this type of attitude to so fundamental a question except by justifying it on the grounds of complete lack of understanding of what the Freedom struggle entails or could it be due to the leadership which is not honest and sincere and therefore tends to be irresponsible

or a psychological sickness born by the conditions of the country. This is probably due more to low political level and also to the self-seeking adventurous leaders who are more concerned with their positions than the people they are supposed to lead. Whatever ~~the~~ the causes are, we must say ^{thus} this far and no further.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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