



MANDELA

SPEAKS

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Last modified: 14 February 2000

Presidential Address at the Annual Conference of the African National Congress Youth League

December 1951

It is always a most difficult task to deliver a presidential address to an organisation such as ours. One is expected to give as comprehensive a picture as possible of the political situation, both nationally and internationally. Then included must be the review of the organisational strength and power of the movement and the progress it has made in its efforts to

carry the people to victory. Lastly, some indication must be given to the reply the organisation must make to the situation having regard to the preceding analyses. Quite clearly it is not possible to do justice to all these, and yet a presidential address in which anyone of them is missing is not worthy of the name. I have [heard] it said that Dr. Nkrumah addresses conferences for five hours. I do not intend to break his record.

Mankind as whole is today standing on the threshold of great events - events that at times seem to threaten its very existence. On the one hand are those groups, parties, or persons that are prepared to go to war in defence of

colonialism, imperialism, and their profits. These groups, at the head of which stands the ruling circles in America, are determined to perpetuate a permanent atmosphere of crisis and fear in the world. Knowing that a frightened world cannot think clearly, these groups attempt to create conditions under which the common men might be inveigled into supporting the building of more and more atomic bombs, bacteriological weapons, and other instruments of mass destruction. These crazy men whose prototype is to be found at the head of the trusts and cartels of America and Western Europe do not realise that they will suffer the destruction that they are contemplating for their innocent fellow

beings. But they are desperate and become more so as they realise the determination of the common men to preserve peace. Yes, the common man who for generations has been the tool of insane politicians and governments, who has suffered privations and sorrow in wars that were of profit to tiny privileged groups, is today rising from being the object of history [to] becoming the subject of history. For the ordinary men and women in the world, the oppressed all over the world are becoming the conscious creators of their own history. They are pledged to carve their destiny and not to leave it in the hands of tiny ruling circles - or classes. Whilst the dark and sinister forces in the

world are organising a desperate and last-minute fight to defend a decadent and bankrupt civilisation, the common people, full of confidence and buoyant hope, struggle for the creation of a new, united, and prosperous human family. That this is so can be gathered from the increasingly militant and heroic struggle that is being waged in all colonial countries against heavy odds. Our mother body has in clean and unmistakable terms indicated in which camp we are in the general world contest. We are with the oppressed all over the world and are irrevocably opposed to imperialism in any form.

In Africa the colonial powers - Great

Britain, Portugal, France, Italy, Spain, and their servitors in South Africa - are attempting with the help of the notorious American ruling class to maintain colonial rule and oppression. Millions of pounds are pouring into the continent in the form of capital for the exploitation of our resources in the sole interests of the imperialist powers. So-called geological and archaeological expeditions are roaming the continent ostensibly engaged in gathering material for the advancement of science and the furtherance of humanity but being in reality the advance guard of American penetration. It is important for us and for the African people as a whole to realise that but for the support of American

finance it would have been difficult if not impossible for the Western colonial powers to maintain rule in Africa, nor indeed anywhere in the world. In thinking of the direct enemies of the African people, namely, Great Britain, Spain, France, Portugal, Italy and S.A. [South Africa], we must never forget the indirect enemy, the infinitely more dangerous enemy who sustains all those with loans, capital, and arms.

In common with people all over the world, humanity in Africa is fighting these forces. In the Gold Coast a situation exists which is capable of being translated into complete victory for the people. [events] in Nigeria are

leading to a similar situation. In French West Africa, the Democratic Rally of African People is leading the people into what is virtually open war against the French imperialists. In Egypt the heroic struggle is being waged which must receive the support of all genuine anti-imperialist forces, albeit with certain reservations. In Uganda the leaders of the Bataka Association who were condemned to fourteen years of imprisonment have had to be released as a result of the attitude of the masses. In Central Africa the people saw through the tricks of the British imperialists who sought to foist a bogus federation scheme on them. What the rulers have reaped instead is a rejection of partnership,

trusteeship, and white leadership and a clear demand for self-determination and independence. These are hopeful signs, but precisely because the African liberation movement is gaining strength the rulers will become more brutal and, in their desperation, will practice all manner of deception in order to stay on at any rate to postpone the day of final victory. But history is on the side of the oppressed.

Here in South Africa the situation is an extremely grave and serious one. The plans of the Broederbond to set up an openly police state have so far almost run to schedule. About that there can be no question. This is in the interest of the

ruling class in South Africa whether it is nominally in the U.P. [United party] or the Nationalist party.

The United party represents the mining interests and also the rapidly rising industrialist power. The Nationalist party represents farming interests and the growing Afrikaner commercial interest. The farming group as a distinct and separate interest is, of course, dying out if it is not dead already! The financial lords are destroying the farmer group, and instead we have huge semi-industrial estates and plantations through which the big money power seeks to extend its monopoly of economic South Africa to the agricultural sphere. At one

time it was thought that the development of a powerful industrialist class would produce a clash involving the primitive feudal-capitalist farming and mining interest on the one hand and the industrialist on the other. It was thought that this clash might result in a realignment of forces that might be advantageous to the oppressed people in the country. But it is becoming clear that there is no possibility of [a] clash between such groups. There is no chance that Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the leading mining magnate, will clash with Harry Oppenheimer, the leading industrialist. There is also noticeable a growing affinity among the English, Jewish, and Afrikaner financial and industrial

interests. It is quite conceivable that all their interests find the fascist policy of Malan suitable, as it will enable them to continue their bankrupt role by crushing the tribal union movement and the national movements of the people. It is true that in the rank-and-file of the white parties are a number who whilst they support the maintenance of colour as an instrument of white political and economic supremacy are scared of a naked Hitlerite regime which might later turn out to be a danger to themselves; hence movements like the now thoroughly discredited Torch Commando. This white South African people who have lost all their moral backbone [sic]. The possibility of a

liberal capitalist democracy in S.A. [South Africa is] extremely nil. The propaganda among the whites and their desire to maintain what they imagine to be a profitable situation make it utterly unthinkable that there can be a political alignment that favours a liberal white group. In any case the political immorality, cowardice, and vacillations of the so-called progressives among whites render them utterly useless as a force against fascism.

The situation is developing [in] the direction of an openly fascist state. The Broederbond is the centre of the fascist ideology in this country, but like other things it is itself merely an instrument of

the ruling circles which are to be found in all white parties. The commandos are the nucleus of a future Gestapo. The acts passed by the government, in particular the Suppression of Communism Amendment Act and the Group Areas Act, provide the readymade framework for the establishment of the fascist state. True to the pattern depicted for the rest of the imperialist world, South African capitalism has developed [into] monopolism and is now reaching the final stage of monopoly capitalism gone mad, namely, fascism.

But the development of fascism in the country is an indication of the fear they have [of] the people. They realise that

their world is a dying world and that the appearance of impregnable strength is a mere facade. The new world is the one in which the oppressed Africans live. They see before their eyes the growth of a mighty people's movement. The struggles of 1950 were an indication that the leaders of the Africans and their allies were fully aware of the weakest link in the chain of white supremacy. The labour power of the African people is a force which when fully tapped is going to sweep the people to power in the land of their birth. True, the struggle will be a bitter one. Leaders will be deported, imprisoned, and even shot. The government will terrorise the people and their leaders in an effort to

halt the forward march; ordinary forms of organisation will be rendered impossible. But the spirit of the people cannot be crushed, and no matter what happens to the present leadership, new leaders will arise like mushrooms till full victory is won.

The people are possessed of tremendous potential powers which can be unleashed at short notice by a determined leadership. But is the African movement as at present organised capable of answering to the challenge of the present conditions?

African Nationalism

On the ideological plain there can be no

question of [the] dynamism of African nationalism as an outlook for our people in the present stage of our struggle. At the present historical stage African nationalism is the only outlook or creed for giving the African people the self-confidence and subjective liberation without which a people can never hope to challenge effectively any national oppression.

As the guardian of African nationalism, the Congress Youth League and, to a lesser extent, the senior Congress are undoubtedly the greatest hope that the African people, and indeed all oppressed people, have that they will ever live in a free, independent, united,

democratic, and a prosperous South Africa. The Congress and the Youth League are the instruments through which these aims will be achieved.

African nationalism was born in the ANC and grew in confidence through years of struggle. In the Congress Youth League, African nationalism found new form and was made concrete and crystallised. I wish to say emphatically as possible that there is only one African nationalism and that is the African nationalism propounded by the Congress and the Youth League. In certain quarters there is a feeling that the language of African nationalism within the movement is not uniform. It is said that

there are various brands of African nationalism. I think it is more a question of concept of struggle. I have no doubt that so far as this stage of struggle is concerned, our language is sufficiently uniform. It is, however, when we seek to apply our creed to concrete situations that there are revealed different approaches. This was made clear during the three struggles of the past two years. I refer to campaigns of May 1st, June 26th, and May 7th this year. Owing to differences that developed regarding them, there is a tendency to think that these campaigns revealed differences in our concept of African nationalism. Fundamentally, African nationalism is one, and what these campaigns revealed

was our inexperience in actual struggle. There is nothing to be afraid of in the setbacks we have suffered. Many of us grew in those campaigns by [the] very reason of our failure. The Youth League has, in my opinion, become stronger.

We learned in those struggles that the face of a liberatory movement must always be turned against the main enemy - fight fascism. We learned that when the masses of the people were on the march, even if we had genuine principled objections to the move, we must never be against the mass movement of the people. We learned that always a true fighter must be on the side of the people against the oppressor. We learned during

these campaigns that the political dilettante, the [person] who regards politics as the attendance of conferences and the making of beautiful analyses, is over. Today politics has become the affairs of a professional revolutionary. Our policy and attitude towards the national groups was in practice severely tested in the campaigns. In short, these were in a way a test of our concept of actual struggle. Our imperfections were made clear to us, and the duty of the conference will be directed towards correcting these mistakes and practising honest objective and serious self-criticism to fully prepare ourselves for the struggle we will have to wage early next year. Sons and daughters of Africa,

I do not think we differ concerning our ideas of the aims of African nationalism in Africa. In any case the very nature of [the] national movement to which we belong makes it impossible to expect [an] absolutely identical approach. The very nature of the national struggle and the manner of its organisations make it impossible to achieve what is perhaps possible to achieve in a party. African nationalism has to my mind been sufficiently concretised, and its aims are, for the present historical stage, clear. Any attempt to go beyond this might well be unconstructive and will merely [delay] the consideration of what our answer should be to the immediate crises facing our people.

Expressed in what is perhaps an oversimplification, the problem of the Youth League and the Congress today is the maintenance of full dynamic contact with the masses and the fight in the daily issues that face them. We have a powerful ideology capable of capturing the imaginations of the masses. Our duty is now how to carry that ideology fully to the masses. In the past two years we have registered certain big successes in this task in spite of setbacks.

We must here in conference confine our attention to a few vital considerations. Firstly, our National Executive of the Senior Congress has called upon the country to rally to [a] nation-wide

struggle that will probably begin at this national conference. In accordance with this policy it has called upon other national organisations to fall in line with this programme. In view of our claim to leadership of South Africa, it was perfectly logical that Congress should take initiative in calling all the people of South Africa to join in its struggle. Needless to say, the whole situation demands an answer of struggle. The possibility of our movement being banned makes it doubly necessary that the message of struggle should be carried to the people in the manner contemplated by the senior Congress! It is clear that if a movement is banned and its readers' activities proscribed, this

should happen in the midst and as a result of an actual struggle. Then also we must make clear our attitude to the participation of other national groups in our struggles, always bearing in mind the international situation and the political theses that the mind of the masses must always be directed towards the fight against Malan and must not be diverted from this for any reason.

Then we have to design on concrete steps to be taken to deal with the situation that has arisen as a result of the Suppression of Communism Amendment Act. How are we going to react to the liquidation of Congress leaders as [a] result of this act? And how are the

operations going to be carried on in the event of our being banned? This is a serious matter and can hardly be discussed in the conference except in very general terms.

We have to discuss measures [for] the creation of strong nuclei of active workers in the struggle on the proper organisation of the League and the Congress [and] the elimination of unredeemable reactionaries, which work has proceeded quite far in certain areas. We have to consider measures to eliminate the looseness and lack of discipline in the movement and also the cultivation of a serious approach to the struggle. In this context we have to

examine various tactics and weapons in our struggle, including boycott, civil disobedience, and strikes.

Sons and daughters of Africa, our tasks are mighty indeed, but I have abundant faith in our ability to reply to the challenge posed by the situation. Under the slogan of FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA NOW, we must march forward into victory.

'We defy'

10,000 volunteers protest against 'unjust laws'

Here Drum publishes a statement of the Campaign's aims

By Nelson Mandela

Drum: August 1952 Our Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign began on 26 June. It is going smoothly and according to plan; though there have been minor setbacks, like the arrest of Y. Cachalia, SAIC General Secretary, and myself, which was not according to plan.

The support we have received from the masses has been most encouraging. At the moment, for security reasons, I cannot disclose how they are helping the Joint Planning Organisation and its sub-committees to care for the dependants of those volunteers already arrested.

I would like to emphasise the aims of our Campaign over again. We are not in opposition to any government or class of people. We are opposing a system which has for years kept a vast section of the non-European people in bondage.

Though it takes Us years, we are prepared to continue the Campaign until the six unjust laws we have chosen for the present phase are done away with.

Even then we shall not stop. The struggle for the freedom and national independence of the non-European peoples shall continue as the National Planning Council sees fit.

As I say, we are not opposing a certain class or classes of the inhabitants of South Africa. We welcome true-hearted volunteers from all walks of life without consideration of colour, race or creed. Europeans can also join our ranks to defy these unjust laws - some of which are as unjust to them as they are to us. At the moment the Campaign is still in its first stage: defiance in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. Soon - perhaps even before you read this - it will move onto

the next stage, which will be defiance of the laws in all the big centres of the Union. ANC then lastly it will assume a mass character with defiance spread all over the country; in towns as well as on the platteland.

We have sufficient volunteers for the present stage Ever since the arrest of Kotane, Dadoo and the others who defied the Suppression of Communism Act, there hw been a sudden upsurge in the rush to volunteer. It reached its peak the week following the beginning of the Campaign on 26 June.

This training has already shown its necessity, and the spirit of the volunteers is very high. This was clearly illustrated

at Boksburg location when the location authorities slammed the gates closed and prevented the volunteer from entering. The volunteers waited outside the gates for a period of almost two hours until the African volunteers were arrested for pass violations. Soon thereafter, when the gates were opened, the Indian volunteers entered the location peacefully and defied the permit regulations. They were also arrested. The unity between the Africans Indians and coloured people has now become a living reality. Volunteers are not committed to actions that will lead them behind bars. Many of them are being trained for behind -the-scenes work that is necessary for the smooth running of

our plans. Theirs is as important a task as that of their comrades now behind bars.

'The Shifting Sands Of Illusion'

Article written by Nelson Mandela for the monthly journal *Liberation*

June 1953

The Liberal Party constitution purports to uphold the 'essential dignity of every human being irrespective of race, colour, or creed, and the maintenance of his fundamental rights'. It expresses itself in favour of the 'right of every human being to develop to the fullest

extent of which he is capable consistent with the rights of others'.

The new party's statement of principles thus far contents itself with the broad generalisations without any attempt to interpret them or define their practical application in the South African context. It then proceeds to announce 'that no person (should) be debarred from participation in the government or other democratic processes of the country by reason only of race, colour, or creed'. But here the neo-Liberals abandon the safe ground of generalisation and stipulate explicitly 'that political rights based on a common franchise roll be extended to all SUITABLY QUALIFIED

persons . This question-begging formulation will not for long enable our Liberals to evade the fundamental issue: which persons are 'suitably qualified'?

The democratic principle is 'one adult, one vote'. The Liberals obviously differ from this well-known conception. They are, therefore, obliged to state an alternative theory of their own. This they have, so far, failed to do. The African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, and the Congress of Democrats stand for votes for all: the demand, a century ago, of the British Chartists for universal equal franchise rights. Does the Liberal Party support this demand? Historical reality demands

a plain and unequivocal answer . . .

In South Africa, where the entire population is almost split into two hostile camps in consequence of the policy of racial discrimination, and where recent political events have made the struggle between oppressor and oppressed more acute, there can be no middle course. The fault of the Liberals - and this spells their doom - is to attempt to strike just such a course. They believe in criticising and condemning the Government for its reactionary policies but they are afraid to identify themselves with the people and to assume the task of mobilising that social force capable of lifting the struggle to

higher levels.

The Liberals' credo states that to achieve their objects the party will employ 'only democratic and constitutional means and will oppose all forms of totalitarianism such as communism and fascism'. Talk of democratic and constitutional means can only have a basis in reality for those people who enjoy democratic and constitutional rights.

We must accept the fact that in our country we cannot win one single victory of political freedom without overcoming a desperate resistance on the part of the Government, and that victory will not come of itself but only as a result of a bitter struggle by the

oppressed people for the overthrow of racial discrimination. This means that we are committed to struggle to mobilise from our ranks the forces capable of waging a determined and militant struggle against all forms of reaction. The theory that we can sit with folded arms and wait for a future parliament to legislate for the 'essential dignity of every human being irrespective of race, colour, or creed' is crass perversion of elementary principles of political struggle. No organisation whose interests are identical with those of the toiling masses will advocate conciliation to win its demands.

To propose in the South African context

that democrats limit themselves to constitutional means of struggle is to ask the people to submit to laws enacted by a minority parliament whose composition is essentially a denial of democracy to the overwhelming majority of the population. It means that we must obey a Constitution which debars the majority from participating in the government and other democratic processes of the country by reason only of race, colour, or creed. It implies in practice that we must carry passes and permit the violation of the essential dignity of a human being. It means that we must accept the Suppression of Communism Act which legalises the gagging and persecution of leaders of the

people because of their creed. It implies the acceptance of the Rehabilitation Scheme, the Bantu Authorities, the Group Areas, the Public Safety, the Criminal Law Amendment Act and all the wicked policies of the Government.

The real question is: in the general struggle for political rights can the oppressed people count on the Liberal Party as an ally? The answer is that the new party merely gives organisational expression to a tendency which has for many years existed among a section of the White ruling class and in the United Party⁽¹⁾. This section hates and fears the idea of a revolutionary democracy in South Africa, just as much as the

Malans⁽²⁾ and the Oppenheimers⁽³⁾ do. Rather than attempt the costly, dubious, and dangerous task of crushing the non-European mass movement by force, they would seek to divert it with fine words and promises and to divide it by giving concessions and bribes to a privileged minority (the 'suitably qualified' voters, perhaps) It becomes clear, therefore, that the high-sounding principles enunciated by the Liberal Party, though apparently democratic and progressive in form, are essentially reactionary in content. They stand not for the freedom of the people but for the adoption of more subtle systems of oppression and exploitation. Though they talk of liberty and human dignity they are subordinate henchmen of

the ruling circles. They stand for the retention of the cheap labour system and of the subordinate colonial status of the non-European masses together with the Nationalist Government whose class interests are identical with theirs. In practice they acquiesce in the slavery of the people, low wages, mass unemployment, the squalid tenements in the locations and shanty-towns

We of the non-European liberation movement are not racialists. We are convinced that there are thousands of honest democrats among the White population who are prepared to take up a firm and courageous stand for unconditional equality, for the complete

renunciation of 'White supremacy'. To them we extend the hand of sincere friendship and brotherly alliance. But no true alliance can be built on the shifting sands of evasions, illusions, and opportunism. We insist on presenting the conditions which make it reasonable to fight for freedom. The only sure road to this goal leads through the uncompromising and determined mass struggle for the overthrow of fascism and the establishment of democratic forms of government.

Two years after this article was written, the Liberal Party, although invited, did not participate in the

Congress of the People, the most representative mass event up till that moment in South Africa's history.

The proposal for such a Congress was originally put forward by the veteran ANC leader Professor Z. K. Matthews. It was adopted by the Congress Movement consisting of the ANC, the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Organisation and the (white) Congress of Democrats. These bodies each elected eight members who joined together to form a National Action Council to organise the event.

One of the Council's first tasks was to produce a leaflet calling the people of

South Africa to the Congress. The leaflet was distributed in several languages to all parts of the country and to all sectors of South African society, even including the governing Nationalist Party and other exclusively white organisations, none of which responded.

The response from ordinary people, however, was 'spectacular and moving to quote Mandela .

1. White political party in opposition to the Nationalist Government
2. Dr D F Malan, Prime Minister of South Africa 1948-54

3. Sir Ernest and his son and successor Harry Oppenheimer, managing director of the Anglo-American Corporation, the most powerful mining and financial group in southern Africa

Articles written by Nelson Mandela for *Liberation*, 1955-59

Liberation - a "Journal of Democratic Discussion" - was published in Johannesburg from 1953 to 1959, with D. Tloome as editor. Nelson Mandela wrote a number of articles for this journal.

'People Are Destroyed'

October 1955

On the effects of apartheid, and in

particular the pass laws, on people's lives.

Rachel Musi is fifty-three years of age. She and her husband had lived in Krugersdorp for thirty-two years. Throughout this period, he had worked for the Krugersdorp municipality for £7 10s. a month. They had seven children ranging from nineteen to two years of age. One was doing the final year of the Junior Certificate at the Krugersdorp Bantu High School and three were in primary schools, also in Krugersdorp. She had several convictions for brewing kaffir beer. [\(1\)](#) Because of these convictions she was arrested as an undesirable person in terms of the

provisions of the Native Urban Areas Act and brought before the Additional Native Commissioner of Krugersdorp. After the arrest but before the trial her husband collapsed suddenly and died. Thereafter the Commissioner judged her an undesirable person and ordered her deportation to Lichtenburg. Bereaved and broken-hearted, and with the responsibility of maintaining seven children weighing heavily on her shoulders, an aged woman was exiled from her home and forcibly separated from her children to fend for herself among strangers in a strange environment . . .

In June 1952 I and about fifty other

friends were arrested in Johannesburg while taking part in a defiance campaign and removed to Marshall Square. As we were being jostled into the drill yard one of our prisoners was pushed from behind by a young European constable so violently that he fell down some steps and broke his ankle. I protested, whereupon the young warrior kicked me on the leg in cowboy style. We were indignant and started a demonstration. Senior police officers entered the yard to investigate. We drew their attention to the injured man and demanded medical attention. We were curtly told that we could repeat our request the next day. And so it was that Samuel Makae spent a frightful night in the cells reeling and

groaning with pain, maliciously denied medical assistance by those who had deliberately crippled him and whose duty it is to preserve and uphold the law.

In 1941 an African lad appeared before the Native Commissioner in Johannesburg charged with failing to give a good and satisfactory account of himself in terms of the above Act. The previous year he had passed the Junior Certificate with a few distinctions. He had planned to study Matric in the Cape but, because of illness, on the advice of the family doctor he decided to spend the year at home in Alexandra Township. Called upon by the police to produce proof that he had sufficient

honest means of earning his livelihood, he explained that he was still a student and was maintained by his parents. He was then arrested and ordered to work at Leeuwkop Farm Colony for six months as an idle and disorderly person. This order was subsequently set aside on review by the Supreme Court but only after the young man had languished in jail for seven weeks, with serious repercussions to his poor health.

The breaking up of African homes and families and the forcible separation of children from mothers, the harsh treatment meted out to African prisoners, and the forcible detention of Africans in farm colonies for spurious statutory

offences are a few examples of the actual workings of the hideous and pernicious doctrines of racial inequality. To these can be added scores of thousands of foul misdeeds committed against the people by the Government; the denial to the non-European people of the elementary rights of free citizenship; the expropriation of the people from their lands and homes to assuage the insatiable appetites of European land barons and industrialists; the flogging and calculated murder of African labourers by European farmers in the countryside for being 'cheeky to the baas';⁽²⁾ the vicious manner in which African workers are beaten up by the police and flung into jails when they

down tools to win their demands; the fostering of contempt and hatred for non-Europeans; the fanning of racial prejudice between whites and non-whites, between the various non-white groups; the splitting of Africans into small hostile tribal units; the instigation of one group or tribe against another; the banning of active workers from the people's organisations, and their confinement into certain areas.

All these misdemeanours are weapons resorted to by the mining and farming cliques of this country to protect their interests and to prevent the rise of an all powerful organised mass struggle. To them, the end justifies the means, and

that end is the creation of a vast market of cheap labour for mine magnates and farmers. That is why homes are broken up and people are removed from cities to the countryside to ensure enough labour for the farms. That is why non European political opponents of the Government are treated with such brutality. In such a set-up, African youth with distinguished scholastic careers are not a credit to the country, but a serious threat to the governing circles, for they may not like to descend to the bowels of the earth and cough their lungs out to enrich the mining magnates, nor will they elect to dig potatoes on farms for wretched rations.

Nevertheless, these methods are failing to achieve their objective. True enough they have scared and deterred certain groups and individuals, and at times even upset and temporarily dislocated our plans and schemes. But they have not halted the growing struggle of the people for liberation. Capable fighters and organisers are arising from amongst the people. The people are increasingly becoming alive to the necessity of the solidarity of all democratic forces regardless of race, party affiliation, religious belief, and ideological conviction.

Taking advantage of this situation, the people's organisations have embarked

on a broad programme of mutual co-operation and closer relations. The Freedom Charter recently adopted by people of all races and from all walks of life now forms the ground-plan for future action.

However, the fascist regime that governs this country is not meeting this situation with arms folded. Cabinet ministers are arming themselves with inquisitorial and arbitrary powers to destroy their opponents and hostile organisations. They are building a mono-party state, the essence of which is the identification of the Nationalist Party with State power. All opposition to the Nationalists has been deemed opposition to the State.

Every facet of the national life is becoming subordinated to the overriding necessity of the party's retention of power. All constitutional safeguards are being thrown overboard and individual liberties are being ruthlessly suppressed. Lynchings and pogroms are the logical weapons to be resorted to, should the onward march of the liberation movement continue to manifest itself.

The spectre of Belsen and Buchenwald is haunting South Africa. It can only be repelled by the united strength of the people of South Africa. Every situation must be used to raise the people's level of understanding. If attacks on the people's organisations, if all

discriminatory measures, be they the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act, Bantu Education, or the classification of the Coloured people, are used as a rallying point around which a united front will be built, the spectre of Belsen and Buckenwald will never descend upon us.

Transkei Revisited

No.16, February 1956

On the coercive methods used to make the 'Native Reserves' (now bantustans) into reserves of labour, and in particular on the situation in the

Transkei.

The Transkeian Territories cover an area of more than four million morgen⁽³⁾ of land, exclusive of trading sites and towns, with an African population of over three million. In comparison with the other so-called Native Reserves, this area is by far the largest single Reserve in the Union and also the greatest single reservoir of cheap labour in the country. According to official estimates, more than one-third of the total number of Africans employed on the Witwatersrand gold mines come from the Transkei

It is thus clear that this area is the

greatest single support of the most vicious system of exploitation-the gold mines. The continued growth and development of gold-mining in South Africa brought about by the discovery of gold in the Orange Free State calls for more and more of this labour at a time when the Union loses about ten thousand workers a year to the Central African Federation. [\(4\)](#)

This labour problem compels South African mining circles to focus their attention more and more on the Reserves in a desperate effort to coerce every adult male African to seek employment on the mines. Recruiting agents are no longer content with discussing matters

with chiefs and headmen only, as they have done in days gone by. Kraals, ⁽⁵⁾ drinking parties, and initiation ceremonies are given particular attention and kraal-heads and tribesmen told that fame and fortune await them if they sign up their mine contracts. Films portraying a rosy picture of conditions on the mines are shown free of charge in the villages and rural locations.

But just in case these somewhat peaceful methods of persuasion fail to induce enough recruits, the authorities have in reserve more draconian forms of coercion. The implementation of the so-called rehabilitation scheme, the enforcement of taxes, and the foisting of

tribal rule upon the people are resorted to in order to ensure a regular inflow of labour.

The rehabilitation scheme, which is the trump card of both the mining and the farming industries in this sordid game of coercion, was first outlined by Dr D L Smit, then Secretary for Native Affairs, at a special session of the General Council of the Ciskei held at King William's Town in January 1945.

According to the Secretary's statement the scheme had two important features, namely, the limitation of stock to the carrying capacity of the land and the replanning of the Reserves to enable the inhabitants to make the best possible use

of the land.

The main object of replanning, the statement continued, would be to demarcate residential, arable, and grazing areas in order that each portion of land should be used for the purpose to which it is best suited. Rural villages would be established to provide suitable homes for the families of Africans regularly employed in industrial and other services and, therefore, unable to make efficient use of a normal allotment of land.

In point of fact, the real purpose of the scheme is to increase land hunger for the masses of the peasants in the reserves and to impoverish them. The main object

is to create a huge army of migrant labourers, domiciled in rural locations in the reserves far away from the cities. Through the implementation of the scheme it is hoped that in course of time the inhabitants of the reserves will be uprooted and completely severed from their land, cattle, and sheep, to depend for their livelihood entirely on wage earnings.

By enclosing them in compounds at the centres of work and housing them in rural locations when they return home, it is hoped to prevent the emergence of a closely knit, powerful, militant, and articulate African industrial proletariat who might acquire the rudiments of

political agitation and struggle. What is wanted by the ruling circles is a docile, spineless, unorganised and inarticulate army of workers.

Another method used to coerce African labour is the poll tax, also known as the general tax. When Cecil Rhodes introduced it in the old Cape Colony he openly and expressly declared that its main object would be to ensure cheap labour for industry, an object which has not changed since. In 1939, Parliament decided to make all African tax defaulters work for it, and the then Minister of Finance expressed the view that farms would benefit through this arrangement. The extent of this benefit is

clearly revealed by reference to statistics. According to the 1949 official Year Book for the Union, 21,381 Africans were arrested that year for general tax. Earlier, John Burger had stated in *The Black Man's Burden* that something like sixty thousand arrests were made each year for non-payment of this tax. Since the Nationalist Party came to power these arrests have been intensified. In the Reserves, chiefs, headmen, mounted police, and court messengers comb the countryside daily for tax defaulters and, fearing arrest, thousands of Africans are forced to trek to the mines and surrounding farms in search of work. Around the jails in several parts of the country, queues of

farmers are to be observed waiting for convicts.

Much has been written already on the aims and objects of the Bantu Authorities Act and on the implications of its acceptance by the Transkeian Bunga.⁽⁶⁾ Here we need only reiterate that reversion to tribal rule might isolate the democratic leadership from the masses and bring about the destruction of that leadership as well as of the liberation organisations. It will also act as a delaying tactic. In course of time the wrath of the people will be directed, it is hoped, not at the oppressor but at the Bantu Authorities, who will be burdened with the dirty work of manipulating the

detestable rehabilitation scheme, the collection of taxes, and the other measures which are designed to keep down the people.

It is clear, therefore, that the ruling circles attach the greatest importance to the Transkeian Territories. It is equally clear that the acceptance of tribal rule by the Bunga will henceforth be used by the Government to entice other tribal groups to accept the Act. As a matter of fact, this is precisely what the chiefs were told by Government spokesmen at the Zululand and Rustenburg Indabas. [\(7\)](#) Yet by a strange paradox the Transkei is the least politically organised area in the Union. The Transkeian Organised

Bodies Association, once a powerful organisation, is for all practical purposes virtually defunct. The Cape African Teachers' Association is dominated by a group of intellectual snobs who derive their inspiration from the All-African Convention.⁴⁰ They are completely isolated and have no influence whatsoever with the masses of the people.

Recently, when the African National Congress declared for a boycott of Bantu Education and advocated the withdrawal of children from such schools, the AAC fought against the withdrawal and placed itself in the ridiculous position of opposing a boycott it had pretended to

preach all along. This somersault completely exposed their opportunism and bankruptcy and the volume of criticism now being directed against them has temporarily silenced even the verbal theatricals for which they are famous.

Nevertheless, it is perfectly clear that the people of the Transkei are indignant. Isolated and sporadic insurrections have occurred in certain areas directed mainly against the rehabilitation scheme. Chiefs and headmen have been beaten up by their tribesmen and court actions are being fought. But in the absence of an organised peasant movement co-ordinating these isolated and sporadic

outbursts, the impact of this opposition will not be sharply felt by the authorities.

Once more the problem of organisation in the countryside poses itself as one of major importance for the liberatory movement. Through the co-ordination of spontaneous and local demonstrations, and their raising to a political level, the beginnings will be found of opposition to the policy of oppressing and keeping backward the people of the Transkei. Then we can look forward to the day when the Transkei will not be a Reserve of cheap labour, but a source of strength to build a free South Africa.

In Our Lifetime

No.19, June 1956

The adoption of the Freedom Charter by the Congress of the People at Kliptown in June of last year was widely recognised both at home and abroad as an event of major political significance in the life of this country. In his message to the C.O.P. Chief A. J. Luthuli, the banned National President of the African National Congress, declared:

"Why will this assembly be significant and unique? Its size, I hope, will make it unique. But above all its multi-racial nature and

its noble objectives will make it unique, because it will be the first time in the history of our multi-racial nation that its people from all walks of life will meet as equals, irrespective of race, colour and creed, to formulate a Freedom Charter for all people in the country."

The editorial of *New Age* of June 30, 1955, characterised the C.O.P. as the most spectacular and moving demonstration this country had ever seen; and that through it the people had given proof that they had the ability and the power to triumph over every obstacle and win the future of their

dreams. *Fighting Talk* of July, 1955, saw several signs at the C.O.P. that the liberation movement in South Africa had come of age and in the same issue Alfred Hutchinson, reporting on the C.O.P., coined for his article the magnificent title "A New World Unfolds..." which accurately summarised the political significance of that historic gathering.

The same theme was taken up by *Liberation* of September last year when, in its editorial comment, it predicted that the text books of the future would treat the Kliptown meeting as one of the most important landmarks in our history. John Hatch, the Public Relations Officer of the British Labour Party, in an article

published in the *New Statesman* and *Nation* of January 28, 1956, under the title "The Real South African Opposition," conceded that some degree of success was achieved by the Congress Movement when it approved the Charter. Finally, in his May Day Message published in *New Age* of April 26 this year Moses Kotane reviewed the political achievements of 1955 and came to the conclusion that the most outstanding one was the C.O.P. which produced the world-renowned document—the Freedom Charter, which serves as a beacon to the Congress Movement and an inspiration to the people of South Africa

WORLD-WIDE ATTENTION

Few people will deny, therefore, that the adoption of the Charter is an event of major political significance in the life of this country. The intensive and nation-wide political campaigning that preceded it, the 2,844 elected delegates of the people that attended, the attention it attracted far and wide and the favourable comment it continues to receive at home and abroad from people of diverse political opinions and beliefs long after its adoption, are evidence of this fact.

Never before has any document or conference been so widely acclaimed

and discussed by the democratic movement in South Africa. Never before has any document or conference constituted such a serious and formidable challenge to the racial and anti-popular policies of the country. *For the first time in the history of our country the democratic forces irrespective of race, ideological conviction, party affiliation or religious belief have renounced and discarded racialism in all its ramifications, clearly defined their aims and objects and united in a common programme of action.*

The Charter is more than a mere list of demands for democratic reforms. It is a

revolutionary document precisely because the changes it envisages cannot be won without breaking up the economic and political set-up of present South Africa. To win the demands calls for the organisation, launching and development of mass struggles on the widest scale. They will be won and consolidated only in the course and as the result of a nation-wide campaign of agitation; through stubborn and determined mass struggles to defeat the economic and political policies of the Nationalist Government; by repulsing their onslaughts on the living standards and liberties of the people.

The most vital task facing the democratic

movement in this country is to unleash such struggles and to develop them on the basis of the concrete and immediate demands of the people from area to area. Only in this way can we build a powerful mass movement which is the only guarantee of ultimate victory in the struggle for democratic reforms. Only in this way will the democratic movement become a vital instrument for the winning of the democratic changes set out in the Charter.

FOR ALL CLASSES

Whilst the Charter proclaims democratic changes of a far-reaching nature it is by no means a blueprint for a socialist state

but a programme for the unification of various classes and groupings amongst the people on a democratic basis. Under socialism the workers hold state power. They and the peasants own the means of production, the land, the factories and the mills. All production is for use and not for profit. The Charter does not contemplate such profound economic and political changes. Its declaration "The People Shall Govern!" visualises the transfer of power not to any single social class but to all the people of this country be they workers, peasants, professional men or petty-bourgeoisie.

It is true that in demanding the nationalisation of the banks, the gold

mines and the land the Charter strikes a fatal blow at the financial and gold-mining monopolies and farming interests that have for centuries plundered the country and condemned its people to servitude. But such a step is absolutely imperative and necessary because the realisation of the Charter is inconceivable, in fact impossible, unless and until these monopolies are first smashed up and the national wealth of the country turned over to the people. The breaking up and democratisation of these monopolies will open up fresh fields for the development of a prosperous Non-European bourgeois class. For the first time in the history of this country the Non-European

bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to own in their own name and right mills and factories, and trade and private enterprise will boom and flourish as never before. To destroy these monopolies means the termination of the exploitation of vast sections of the populace by mining kings and land barons and there will be a general rise in the living standards of the people. It is precisely because the Charter offers immense opportunities for an over-all improvement in the material conditions of all classes and groups that it attracts such wide support.

CAN IT COME ABOUT?

But a mere appraisal of a document however dynamic its provisions or content might be is academic and valueless unless we consciously and conscientiously create the conditions necessary for its realisation. To be fruitful such appraisal must be closely linked up with the vital question of whether we have in South African society the requisite social forces that are capable of fighting for the realisation of the Charter and whether in fact these forces are being mobilised and conditioned for this principal task.

The democratic struggle in South Africa is conducted by an alliance of various classes and political groupings amongst

the Non-European people supported by white democrats. African, Coloured and Indian workers and peasants, traders and merchants, students and teachers, doctors and lawyers, and various other classes and groupings: all participate in the struggle against racial inequality and for full democratic rights. It was this alliance which launched the National Day of Protest on June 26, 1950. It was this alliance which unleashed and waged the campaign for the defiance of unjust laws on June 26, 1952. It is this same alliance that produced the epoch-making document—the Freedom Charter. In this alliance the democratic movement has the rudiments of a dynamic and militant mass movement and, provided the

movement exploits the initial advantages on its side at the present moment, immense opportunities exist for the winning of the demands in the Charter within our life-time.

THE FORCES WE NEED

The striking feature about the population of our country and its occupational distribution is the numerical preponderance of the Non-Europeans over Europeans and the economic importance of the former group in the key industries. According to the 1951 Population Census the population of the country consists of 2,643,000 Europeans as against 10,005,000 Non-Europeans, a

numerical disparity which is bound to have a decisive bearing on the final outcome of the present struggle to smash the colour bar. According to the *Official Year Book of the Union of South Africa* (No. 27—1952-53) there were 46,700 Europeans employed by the gold mines and collieries at the end of 1952. The number of Africans and Coloureds employed on the mines for the same period was 452,702, a proportion of 1 European employee to nearly 8 Non-European employees. The racial composition of industrial employees in establishments with over 10 employees during the period 1948-49 was as follows: Europeans 33 per cent; African 51.5 per cent; Asiatics 3 per cent and

Coloureds 12.5 per cent. According to the same Year Book, during 1952 there were 297,476 Europeans employed on farms occupied by Europeans and 2,188,712 Africans and 636,065 other Non-Europeans.

These figures reveal the preponderant importance of the Non-European people in the economic life of the country and the key task of the movement is to stimulate and draw these forces into the struggle for democratic reforms. A significant step was taken in Johannesburg on March 3, 1955, when a new trade union centre—The South African Congress of Trade Unions—was formed with delegates from 34 unions

with a total membership of close on 42,000 and when for the first time in the history of trade unionism in South Africa, African, Coloured, European and Indian workers united for a fighting policy on the basis of absolute equality. Peter Beyleveld, who was elected the first president of the Congress, emphasised in his opening address that trade unions would be neglecting their members if they failed to struggle on all matters affecting them. The trade unions, he pointed out, should be active in the political field as in the economic sphere for these two hung together and could not be isolated from one another. With 42,000 organised workers on our side and fighting under the flag of a trade

union centre that has completely renounced racialism and committed itself to a militant and uncompromising policy, it only remains for us to redouble our efforts and carry our message to every factory and mill throughout the country. The message of the new centre is bound to attract the support of the majority of the workers for they have no interest whatsoever in the country's policy of racial discrimination.

OUR ALLIES

The workers are the principal force upon which the democratic movement should rely, but to repel the savage onslaughts of the Nationalist

Government and to develop the fight for democratic rights it is necessary that the other classes and groupings be joined. Support and assistance must be sought and secured from the 452,702 African and Coloured mine workers, from the 2,834,777 Non-European labourers employed on European farms and from the millions of peasants that occupy the so-called Native Reserves of the Union. The cruel and inhuman manner with which they are treated, their dreadful poverty and economic misery, make them potential allies of the democratic movement.

The Non-European traders and businessmen are also potential allies, for

in hardly any other country in the world has the ruling class made conditions so extremely difficult for the rise of a Non-European middle class as in South Africa. The law of the country prohibits Non-Europeans from owning or possessing minerals. Their right to own and occupy land is very much restricted and circumscribed and it is virtually impossible for them to own factories and mills. Therefore, they are vitally interested in the liberation of the Non-European people for it is only by destroying white supremacy and through the emancipation of the Non-Europeans that they can prosper and develop as a class. To each of these classes and groups the struggle for democratic rights

offers definite advantages. To every one of them the realisation of the demands embodied in the Charter would open a new career and vast opportunities for development and prosperity. These are the social forces whose alliance and unity will enable the democratic movement to vanquish the forces of reaction and win the democratic changes envisaged in the Charter.

UNITY BRINGS STRENGTH

In the present political situation in South Africa when the Nationalist Government has gone all out to smash the people's political organisations and the trade union movement through the Suppression

of Communism Act and its anti-trade union legislation, it becomes important to call upon and to stimulate every class to wage its own battles. It becomes even more important that all democratic forces be united and the opportunities for such united front are growing every day. On March 3, 1955 a non-colour-bar trade union centre is formed. On June 26 the same year "in the most spectacular and moving demonstration this country has ever seen" 2,844 delegates of the people adopt the Charter and 4 months thereafter more than 1,000 women of all races stage a protest march to Pretoria to put their demands to the Government—all this in the course of one year. *In fact, the rise of the Congress Movement and*

the powerful impact it exerts on the political scene in the country is due precisely to the fact that it has consistently followed and acted on the vital policy of democratic unity. It is precisely because of the same reason that the Congress Movement is rapidly becoming the real voice of South Africa. If this united front is strengthened and developed the Freedom Charter will be transformed into a dynamic and living instrument and we shall vanquish all opposition and win the South Africa of our dreams during our lifetime.

Bantu Education Goes to

University

No.25, June 1957

The Nationalist government has frequently denied that it is a fascist government inspired by the theories of the National Socialist [Nazi] party of Hitlerite Germany. Yet the declarations it makes, the laws it passes, and the entire policy it pursues clearly confirm this point. It is interesting to compare the colonial policy of the Hitlerite government as outlined by the leading German theoreticians on the subject. Dr. Gunther Hecht, who was regarded as an expert on colonial racial problems in the office of the German National Socialist

party, published a pamphlet in 1938 entitled *The Colonial Question and Racial Thought* in which he outlined the racial principles which were to govern the future treatment of Africans in German colonies. He declared that the German government would not preach equality between Africans and Europeans. Africans would under no circumstances be allowed to leave German colonies for Europe. No African would be allowed to become a German citizen. African schools would not be permitted to preach any "European matter" as that would foster a belief among them that Europe was the peak of cultural development and they would thus lose faith in their own culture and

background. Local culture would be fostered. Higher schools and universities would be closed to them. Special theatres, cinemas, and other places of amusement and recreation would be erected for them. Hecht concluded the pamphlet by pointing out that the programme of the German government would stand in sharp contrast to the levelling and anti-racial teachings of equality of the Western colonial powers.

In this country the government preaches the policy of *baasskap*, which is based on the supremacy in all matters of the whites over the nonwhites. They are subjected to extremely stringent regulations both in regard to their

movement within the country as well as in regard to overseas travel lest they should come into contact with ideas that are in conflict with the *herrenvolk* policies of the government. Through the Bantu Authorities Act and similar measures, the African people are being broken up into small tribal units, isolated one from the other, in order to prevent the rise and development of national consciousness amongst them and to foster a narrow and insulated tribal outlook

During the parliamentary debate on the second reading of the Bantu Education Bill in September 1953, the minister of native affairs, Dr. H. F. Verwoerd, who

studied in German universities, outlined the educational policy of his government. He declared that racial relations could not improve if the wrong type of education was given to Africans. They could not improve if the result of African education was the creation of a frustrated people who, as a result of the education they received, had expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa did not allow to be fulfilled; when it created people who were trained for professions not open to them; when there were people amongst them who had received a form of cultural training which strengthened their desire for white-collar occupations. Above all, good racial relations could

not exist when the education was given under the control of people who believed in racial equality. It was, therefore, necessary that African education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the state.

The Bantu Education Bill has now become law and it embodies all the obnoxious doctrines enunciated by the minister in the parliamentary debate referred to above. An inferior type of education, known as Bantu education, and designed to relegate the Africans to a position of perpetual servitude in a *baasskap* society, is now in force in almost all African primary schools

throughout the country and will be introduced in all secondary and high schools as from next year. The Separate Universities Education Bill, now before Parliament, is a step to extend Bantu education to the field of higher education

In terms of this bill the minister is empowered to establish, maintain, and conduct university colleges for nonwhites. The students to be admitted to the university colleges must be approved by the minister. As from January 1958, no non-white students who were not previously registered shall be admitted to a European university without the consent of the minister. The bill also provides for the

transfer and the control and management of the University College of Fort Hare and of the medical school for Africans at Wentworth to the government; all employees in these institutions will become government employees.

The minister can vest the control of Fort Hare in the Native Affairs Department. The government is empowered to change the name of the college. For example, he can call it the Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd University College for Bantu persons. The minister is entitled to dismiss any member of the staff for misconduct, which includes public adverse comment upon the administration and propagating ideas, or

taking part in, or identifying himself with, any propaganda or activities calculated to impede, obstruct, or undermine the activities of any government department.

No mixed university in the country will be permitted to enrol new non-European students any more. The mixed English universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand, and Rhodes will thus be compelled to fall in line with the Afrikaans universities of Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Stellenbosch, and the Orange Free State whose doors are closed to non-Europeans.

The main purpose of the bill is to extend the principle of Bantu education to the

field of higher education. Non-Europeans who are trained at mixed universities are considered a menace to the racial policies of the government. The friendship and interracial harmony that is forged through the admixture and association of various racial groups at the mixed universities constitute a direct threat to the policy of apartheid and *baasskap*, and the bill has been enacted to remove this threat. The type of universities the bill envisages will be nothing more than tribal colleges, controlled by party politicians and based upon the doctrine of the perpetual supremacy of the whites over the blacks. Such colleges would be used by the government to enforce its political

ideology at a university level.

They will bear no resemblance whatsoever to modern universities. Not free inquiry but indoctrination is their purpose, and the education they will give will not be directed towards the unleashing of the creative potentialities of the people but towards preparing them for perpetual mental and spiritual servitude to the whites. They will be permitted to teach only that which strictly conforms to the racial policies of the Nationalist government. Degrees and diplomas obtained at these colleges will be held in contempt and ridicule throughout the country and abroad and will probably not be recognised outside

South Africa. The decision of the government to introduce university segregation is prompted not merely by the desire to separate non-European from European students. Its implications go much further than this, for the bill is a move to destroy the "open" university tradition which is universally recognised throughout the civilised world and which has up to now been consistently practised by leading universities in the country for years. For centuries, universities have served as centres for the dissemination of learning and knowledge to all students irrespective of their colour or creed. In multiracial societies they serve as centres for the development of the cultural and spiritual

aspects of the life of the people. Once the bill is passed, our universities can no longer serve as centres for the development of the cultural and spiritual aspects of the entire nation.

The bill has aroused extensive and popular indignation and opposition throughout the country as well as abroad. Students and lecturers, liberals and conservatives, progressives, democrats, public men and women of all races and with varying political affiliations have been stirred into action. A former chief justice of the union, Mr. Van der Sandt Centlivres, in a speech delivered at a lunch meeting of the University Club in Cape Town on 11 February this year and

reported in the Rand Daily Mail of the 12th of the same month, said: "I am not aware of any university of real standing in the outside world which closes its doors to students on the ground of the colour of their skins. The great universities of the world welcome students from other countries whatever the colour of their skins. They realise that the different outlook which these students bring with them advances the field of knowledge in human relations in the international sphere and contributes to their own culture."

The attack on university freedom is a matter of vital importance and constitutes a grave challenge to all South

Africans. It is perhaps because they fully appreciate this essential fact that more people are participating in the campaign against the introduction of academic segregation in the universities. Students in different parts of the country are staging mammoth demonstrations and protest meetings. Heads of universities, lecturers, men, and women of all shades of opinion, have in speeches and articles violently denounced the action of the government. All this reveals that there are many men and women in this country who are prepared to rally to the defence of traditional rights whenever they are threatened.

But we cannot for one moment forget that

we are up against a fascist government which has built up a massive coercive State apparatus to crush democracy in this country and to silence the voice of all those who cry out against the policy of apartheid and *baasskap*. All opposition to the Nationalist government is being ruthlessly suppressed through the Suppression of Communism Act and similar measures. The government, in defiance of the people's wishes, is deporting people's leaders from town and country in the most merciless and shameful manner. All rights are being systematically attacked. The right to organise, to assemble, and to agitate has been severely fettered. Trade unions and other organisations are being smashed

up. Even the sacred right of freedom of religious worship, which has been observed and respected by governments down the centuries, is now being tampered with. And now the freedom of our universities is being seriously threatened. Racial persecution of the nonwhites is being intensified every day. The rule of force and violence, of terror and coercion, has become the order of the day.

Fascism has become a living reality in our country, and its defeat has become the principal task of the entire people of South Africa. But the fight against the fascist policies of the government cannot be conducted on the basis of isolated

struggles. It can only be conducted on the basis of the united fight of the entire people of South Africa against all attacks of the Nationalists on traditional rights whether these attacks are launched through Parliament and other state organs or whether through extra-parliamentary forms. The more powerful the resistance of the people, the less becomes the advance of the Nationalists. Hence the importance of a united front. The people must fight stubbornly and tenaciously and defend every democratic right that is being attacked or tampered with by the Nationalists.

A broad united front of all the genuine opponents of the racial policies of the

government must be developed. This is the path the people should follow to check and repel the advance of fascism in this country and to pave the way for a peaceful and democratic South Africa.

'Our Struggle Needs Many Tactics'

No.29, February 1958

On political tactics, in particular the boycott weapon. By 1958 there was a close working relationship between all the bodies forming the Congress Movement, headed by the ANC and

consisting also of the Congresses of the Indian and Coloured peoples, and democratic whites, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). This came to be called the Congress Alliance. The organisation SACPO referred to by Mandela in this article is the Coloured People's Congress under its earlier name.

Political organisations in this country have frequently employed the boycott weapon in their struggle against racial discrimination and oppression. In 1947 the African National Congress decided to boycott all elections under the Native Representatives Act of 1936, as well as all elections to the United Transkeian

Territories General Council, generally referred to as the Bunga, to the Advisory Boards, and all other discriminatory statutory institutions specially set up for Africans. A year earlier the South African Indian Congress had decided to boycott and had launched a resistance campaign against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act which, inter alia, made special provision for the representation in Parliament of Indians in the Provinces of Natal and the Transvaal and for the representation in the Provincial Council of Natal of Indians in that Province. In 1957 the South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO) considered its attitude on the question of

the election of four Europeans to represent the Coloured people in Parliament, and decided to boycott these elections as well as the election of 27 Coloured persons to the Union Council of Coloured Affairs. The same year SACPO reversed this decision and decided to participate in the parliamentary elections.

Apart from such boycotts of unrepresentative institutions, boycotts of a different kind have often been called by various organisations on matters directly affecting the people. For example, in 1949 the Western Areas Tram Fares Committee successfully boycotted the increased fares on the

Johannesburg Western Areas tram route. Similarly last year, and by means of the boycott weapon, the Alexandra People's Transport Committee achieved a brilliant victory when it rebuffed and defeated the decision of the Public Utility Transport Corporation, backed by the Government, to increase fares along the Johannesburg-Alexandra bus route. The Federation of South African Nurses and Midwives is presently campaigning for the boycott of all discriminatory provisions of the Nursing Amendment Act passed last year. By and large, boycott is recognised and accepted by the people as an effective and powerful weapon of political struggle.

Perhaps it is precisely because of its effectiveness and the wide extent to which various organisations employ it in their struggles to win their demands that some people regard the boycott as a matter of principle which must be applied invariably at all times and in all circumstances irrespective of the prevailing conditions. This is a serious mistake, for the boycott is in no way a matter of principle but a tactical weapon whose application should, like all other political weapons of the struggle, be related to the concrete conditions prevailing at the given time.

For example, the boycott by the Indian community of the representation

machinery contained in the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946 was correct at the time not because the boycott is a correct principle but because the Indian people correctly gauged the objective situation. Firstly, the political concessions made in the Act were intended to bribe the Indian people to accept the land provisions of this Act, which deprived the Indians of their land rights - a bribe which even the Indian reactionaries were not prepared to accept. Secondly, a remarkable degree of unity and solidarity had been achieved by the Indian people in their struggle against the Act. The conservative Kajee Pather bloc worked in collaboration with the progressive

and militant Dadoo Naicker wing of the SAIC and no less than 35,000 members had been recruited into the SAIC before the commencement of the campaign.

Under these conditions the boycott proved correct and not a single Indian person registered as a voter in terms of the Act.

Similarly, the 1947 boycott resolution of the ANC was correct, in spite of the fact that no effective country-wide campaign was carried out to implement this resolution. It will be recalled that at the time, in an endeavour to destroy the people's political organisations and to divert them from these organisations, the United Party Government was fostering

the illusion that the powers of the Natives Representative Council, the Bunga, the Advisory Boards, and similar institutions would be increased to such an extent that the African people would have an effective voice in the Government of the country. The agitation that followed the adoption of the boycott resolution by the ANC, inadequate as it was, helped to damage the influence of these sham institutions and to discredit those who supported them. In certain areas these institutions were completely destroyed and they have now no impact whatsoever on the outlook of the people. To put the matter crisply, the 1947 resolution completely frustrated the scheme of the United Party Government

to confuse the people and to destroy their political organisation.

In some cases, therefore, it might be correct to boycott, and in others it might be unwise and dangerous. In still other cases another weapon of political struggle might be preferred. A demonstration, a protest march, a strike, or civil disobedience might be resorted to, all depending on the actual conditions at the given time.

In the opinion of some people, participation in the system of separate racial representation in any shape or form, and irrespective of any reasons advanced for doing so, is impermissible on principle and harmful in practice.

According to them such participation can only serve to confuse the people and to foster the illusion that they can win their demands through a parliamentary form of struggle. In their view the people have now become so politically conscious and developed that they cannot accept any form of representation which in any way fetters their progress. They maintain that people are demanding direct representation in Parliament, in the provincial and city councils, and that nothing short of this will satisfy them. They say that leaders who talk of the practical advantages to be gained by participation in separate racial representation do not have the true interests of the people at heart. Finally,

they argue that the so called representatives have themselves expressed the view that they have achieved nothing in Parliament. Over and above this, the argument goes, the suggestion that anything could be achieved by electing such representatives to Parliament is made ridiculous by their paucity of numbers in Parliament. This view has been expressed more specifically in regard to the question of boycott of the forthcoming Coloured Parliamentary seats.

The basic error in this argument lies in the fact that it regards the boycott not as a tactical weapon to be employed if and

when objective conditions permit, but as an inflexible principle which must under no circumstances be varied. Having committed this initial mistake, people who advocate this point of view are invariably compelled to interpret every effort to relate the boycott to specific conditions as impermissible deviations on questions of principle. In point of fact, total and uncompromising opposition to racial discrimination in all its ramifications, and refusal to cooperate with the Government in the implementation of its reactionary policies, are matters of principle in regard to which there can be no compromise.

In its struggle for the attainment of its demands the liberation movement avails itself of various political weapons, one of which might (but not necessarily) be the boycott. It is, therefore, a serious error to regard the boycott as a weapon that must be employed at all times and in all conditions. In this stand there is also the failure to draw the vital distinction between participation in such elections by the people who accept racial discrimination and who wish to co-operate with the Government in the oppression and exploitation of their own people on the one hand, and participation in such elections, not because of any desire to co-operate with the Government but in order to exploit

them in the interest of the liberatory struggle on the other hand. The former is the course generally followed by collaborators and Government stooges and has for many years been consistently condemned and rejected by the liberation movement. The latter course, provided objective conditions permit, serves to strengthen the people's struggle against the reactionary policies of the Government.

The decision of SACPO in favour of participation in the forthcoming parliamentary elections is correct for various reasons. The principal and most urgent task facing the Congress Movement today is the defeat of the

Nationalist Government and its replacement by a less reactionary one. Any step or decision which helps the movement to attain this task is politically correct. The election of four additional members to Parliament, provided they agree with the general aims of the movement and provided that they are anti-Nationalist, would contribute to the defeat of the present Government. In advocating this course it is not in any way being suggested that the salvation of the oppressed people of this country depends on the parliamentary struggle, nor is it being suggested that a United Party regime would bring about any radical changes in the political set-up in this country. It is accepted and

recognised that the people of South Africa will win their freedom as a result of the pressure they put up against the reactionary policies of the Government. Under a United Party Government it will still be necessary to wage a full-scale war on racial discrimination. But the defeat of the Nationalists would at least lighten the heavy burden of harsh and restrictive legislation that is borne by the people at the present moment. There would be a breathing space during which the movement might recuperate and prepare for fresh assaults against the oppressive policies of the Government.

SACPO's struggle and influence amongst the Coloured people has grown

tremendously, but it is not without opposition and there are still large numbers of Coloured people who are outside its fold. In order to succeed, a boycott would require a greater degree of unity and solidarity than has so far been achieved amongst the Coloured people. Prior to the December resolution certain Coloured organisations had indicated their willingness to participate in these elections. To boycott elections under such conditions might result in hostile and undesirable elements being returned to Parliament.

In several conferences of the ANC, both national and provincial, the view has been expressed that the 1947 boycott

resolution requires to be reviewed in the light of the new conditions created as a result of the serious and dangerous attacks launched by the Nationalists on the liberation movement. The political situation has radically changed since. The political organisations of the people are functioning under conditions of semi-illegality. Legal authorities are refusing to permit meetings within their areas and it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold conferences. Some of the most experienced and active members have been deported from their homes, others have been confined to certain areas, and many have been compelled to resign from their organisations.

The present Government regards institutions such as the Advisory Boards as too advanced and dangerous, and these are being replaced by tribal institutions under the Bantu Authorities Act. Platforms for the dissemination of propaganda are gradually disappearing. Having regard to the principal task of ousting the Nationalist Government, it becomes necessary for the Congress to review its attitude towards the special provision for the representation of Africans set out in the 1936 Act. The parliamentary forum must be exploited to put forth the case for a democratic and progressive South Africa. Let the democratic movement have a voice both outside and within Parliament. Through

the Advisory Boards and, if the right type of candidates are found, through Parliament, we can reach the masses of the people and rally them behind us.

A New Menace in Africa

No.30, March 1958

A New Danger

Whilst the influence of the old European powers has sharply declined and whilst the anti-imperialist forces are winning striking victories all over the world, a new danger has arisen and threatens to destroy the newly won independence of

the people of Asia and Africa. It is American imperialism, which must be fought and decisively beaten down if the people of Asia and Africa are to preserve the vital gains they have won in their struggle against subjugation. The First and Second World Wars brought untold economic havoc especially in Europe, where both wars were mainly fought. Millions of people perished whilst their countries were ravaged and ruined by the war. The two conflicts resulted, on the one hand, in the decline of the old imperial powers.

On the other hand, the U.S.A. emerged from them as the richest and most powerful state in the West, firstly,

because both wars were fought thousands of miles away from her mainland and she had fewer casualties. Whereas the British Empire lost 1,089,900 men, only 115,660 American soldiers died during the First World War. No damage whatsoever was suffered by her cities and industries. Secondly, she made fabulous profits from her allies out of war contracts. Due to these factors the U.S.A. grew to become the most powerful country in the West.

Paradoxically, the two world wars, which weakened the old powers and which contributed to the growth of the political and economic influence of the

U.S.A., also resulted in the growth of the anti-imperialist forces all over the world and in the intensification of the struggle for national independence. The old powers, finding themselves unable to resist the demand by their former colonies for independence and still clinging desperately to their waning empires, were compelled to lean very heavily on American aid. The U.S.A., taking advantage of the plight of its former allies, adopted the policy of deliberately ousting them from their spheres of influence and grabbing these spheres for herself. An instance that is still fresh in our minds is that of the Middle East, where the U.S.A. assisted in the eviction of Britain from that area

in order that she might gain control of the oil industry, which prior to that time was in the control of Britain.

Through the Marshall Plan the U.S.A. succeeded in gaining control of the economies of European countries and reducing them to a position analogous to that of dependencies. By establishing aggressive military blocs in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, the U.S.A. has been able to post her armies in important strategic points and is preparing for armed intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign nations. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in Europe, the Baghdad Pact in the Middle East, and the South East Asian Treaty

Organisation are military blocs which constitute a direct threat not only to world peace but also to the independence of the member states.

The policy of placing reliance on American economic and military aid is extremely dangerous to the "assisted" states themselves and has aggravated their positions. Since the Second World War, Britain, France and Holland have closely associated themselves with American plans for world conquest, and yet within that period they have lost empires in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, and they are fighting rear-guard actions in their remaining colonial possessions. Their salvation and future

prosperity lie not in pinning their faith on American aid and aggressive military blocs but in breaking away from her, in repudiating her foreign policy which threatens to drag them into another war, and in proclaiming a policy of peace and friendship with other nations.

U.S. Offensive in Africa

American interest in Africa has in recent years grown rapidly. This continent is rich in raw minerals. It produces almost all the world's diamonds, 78 percent of its palm oil, 68 percent of its cocoa, half of its gold, and 22 percent of its copper. It is rich in manganese, chrome, in uranium, radium, in citrus fruits, coffee,

sugar, cotton, and rubber. It is regarded by the U.S.A. as one of the most important fields of investment.

According to the "Report of the Special Study Mission to Africa, South and East of the Sahara," by the Honourable Frances P. Bolton which was published in 1956 for the use of the United States Congress Committee on Foreign Affairs, by the end of World War II United States private investments in Africa amounted to scarcely £150 million. At the end of 1954 the total book value of U.S. investments in Africa stood at £664 million.

Since then the American government has mounted a terrific diplomatic and

economic offensive in almost every part of Africa. A new organisation for the conduct of African Affairs has come into existence. The Department of State has established a new position of deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs. The Bureau of African Affairs has been split into two new offices, the office of Northern African Affairs and that of Southern African Affairs. This reorganisation illustrates the increasing economic importance of Africa to the U.S.A. and the recognition by the governing circles of that state of the vital necessity for the creation and strengthening of diplomatic relations with the independent states of Africa. The U.S.A. has sent into this continent

numerous "study" and "goodwill" missions, and scores of its leading industrialists and statesmen to survey the natural wealth of the new independent states and to establish diplomatic relations with the present regimes. Vice-President Nixon, Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic party candidate for the American presidency in the last elections, and scores of other leading Americans, have visited various parts of the continent to study political trends and market conditions. Today, American imperialism is a serious danger to the independent states in Africa, and its people must unite before it is too late and fight it out to the bitter end.

Imperialism in Disguise

American imperialism is all the more dangerous because, having witnessed the resurgence of the people of Asia and Africa against imperialism and having seen the decline and fall of once powerful empires, it comes to Africa elaborately disguised. It has discarded most of the conventional weapons of the old type of imperialism. It does not openly advocate armed invasion and conquest. It purports to repudiate force and violence. It masquerades as the leader of the so-called free world in the campaign against communism. It claims that the cornerstone of its foreign policy is to assist other countries in resisting

domination by others. It maintains that the huge sums of dollars invested in Africa are not for the exploitation of the people of Africa but for the purpose of developing their countries and in order to raise their living standards.

Now it is true that the new self-governing territories in Africa require capital to develop their countries. They require capital for economic development and technical training programmes, they require it to develop agriculture, fisheries, veterinary services, health, medical services, education, and communications. To this extent, overseas capital invested in Africa could play a useful role in the

development of the self-governing territories in the continent. But the idea of making quick and high profits, which underlies all the developmental plans launched in Africa by the U.S.A., completely effaces the value of such plans in so far as the masses of the people are concerned. The big and powerful American trade monopolies that are springing up in various parts of the continent and which are destroying the small trader, the low wages paid the ordinary man, the resulting poverty and misery, his illiteracy and the squalid tenements in which he dwells are the simplest and most eloquent exposition of the falsity of the argument that American investments in Africa will raise the

living standards of the people of this continent.

The American brand of imperialism is imperialism all the same in spite of the modern clothing in which it is dressed and in spite of the sweet language spoken by its advocates and agents. The U.S.A. is mounting an unprecedented diplomatic offensive to win the support of the governments of the self-governing territories in the continent. It has established a network of military bases all over the continent for armed intervention in the domestic affairs of independent states should the people in these states elect to replace American satellite regimes with those who are

against American imperialism.

American capital has been sunk into Africa not for the purpose of raising the material standards of its people but in order to exploit them as well as the natural wealth of their continent. This is imperialism in the true sense of the word.

The Americans are forever warning the people of this continent against communism which, as they allege, seeks to enslave them and to interfere with their peaceful development. But what facts justify this warning? Unlike the U.S.A., neither the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic nor any other Socialist state has aggressive military

blocs in any part of the world. None of the Socialist countries has military bases anywhere in Africa, whereas the U.S. has built landing fields, ports, and other types of strategic bases all over North Africa. In particular it has jet fields in Morocco, Libya and Liberia. Unlike the U.S.A., none of the Socialist states has invested capital in any part of Africa for the exploitation of its people. At the United Nations Organisation, the Soviet Union, India, and several other nations have consistently identified themselves unconditionally with the struggle of the oppressed people for freedom, whereas the U.S.A. has very often allied itself with those who stand for the enslavement of others. It was not Soviet

but American planes which the French used to bomb the peaceful village of Sakiet in Tunisia. The presence of a delegation from the Chinese People's Republic at the 1955 Afro-Asian conference as well as the presence of a delegation from that country and the Soviet Union at the 1957 Cairo Afro-Asian conference show that the people of Asia and Africa have seen through the slanderous campaign conducted by the U.S.A. against the Socialist countries. They know that their independence is threatened not by any of the countries in the Socialist camp, but by the U.S.A., who has surrounded their continent with military bases. She communist bogey is an American stunt to distract the

attention of the people of Africa from the real issue facing them, namely, American imperialism.

The peoples of resurgent Africa are perfectly capable of deciding upon their own future form of government and discovering and themselves dealing with any dangers which may arise. They do not require any schooling from the U.S.A., which - to judge from such events as the Little Rock outrage and the activities of the un-American Witch-hunting Committee - should learn to put its own house in order before trying to teach everyone else.

The people of Africa are astir. In conjunction with the people of Asia, and

with freedom-loving people all over the world, they have declared a full-scale war against all forms of imperialism. The future of this continent lies not in the hands of the discredited regimes that have allied themselves with American imperialism. It is in the hands of the common people of Africa functioning in their mass movements.

Footnotes:

1. Home-brewed alcoholic beverage, illicit brewing of which was one of the few ways African women could earn money. The word 'kaffir' is used as an insulting term for Africans but the term 'kaffir beer' was widely used in English as a name for this drink

2. Afrikaans for 'master'

3. One morgen = 0.856 ha

4. Political federation between Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (Malawi), which lasted from 1953 to 1964. These years were a boom period for the mines of the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt.

5. Kraal: 'homestead'

6. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 established local 'tribal authorities' in the African reserves, which were designed to replace existing institution such as the United Territories General Council or Bunga in the Transkei, an elected body established in 1932.

Although discriminatory and largely powerless, the Bunga embodied the principle that the Transkei and its citizens were to be regarded as part of South Africa. The acceptance of the Bantu Authorities Act represented the abandonment of this principle.

7. Tribal consultations

**The writer examines the new "Bantu
Self-Government Bill, and discloses
behind it**

VERWOERD'S GRIM PLOT

By NELSON MANDELA

No.36, May 1959

"South Africa belongs to all who
live in it, black and white."
- The Freedom Charter

"All the Bantu have their permanent
homes in the reserves and their
entry into other areas and into the

urban areas is merely of a temporary nature and for economic reasons. In other words they are admitted as work-seekers, not as settlers.

- Dr. W. W. M. Eiselen, Secretary of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development (Article in "Optima", March 1959).

The two statements quoted above contain diametrically opposite conceptions of this country, its future and its destiny. Obviously they cannot be reconciled. They have nothing in common, except that both of them look forward to a future state of affairs rather

than that which prevails at present. At present South Africa does not "belong" - except in a moral sense - to all. 97 per cent. of the country is legally owned by members (a handful of them at that) of the dominant white minority. And at present by no means "all" Africans have their "permanent homes" in the Reserves. Millions of Africans were born and have their permanent homes in the towns and cities and elsewhere outside the reserves, have never seen the reserves and have no desire to go there. [\(1\)](#)

It is necessary for the people of this country to choose between these two alternative paths. It is assumed that

readers of "Liberation" are familiar with the detailed proposals contained in the Charter. Let us therefore, as calmly and objectively as we can, study the alternatives submitted by the Nationalist Party.

PARTITION

The newspapers have christened the Nationalists' plan as one for "Bantustans". The hybrid word is, in many ways, extremely misleading. It relates to the partitioning of India, after the reluctant' departure of the British, and as a condition thereof, into two separate States, Hindustan and Pakistan. There is no real parallel with the

Nationalists' proposals, for

1. India and Pakistan constitute two completely separate and politically independent States,
2. Muslims enjoy equal rights in India; Hindus enjoy equal rights in Pakistan,
3. Partition was submitted to and approved by both parties, or at any rate fairly widespread and Influential sections of each.

The Government's plans do not envisage the partitioning of this country into separate, self-governing States. They do

not envisage equal rights, or any rights at all, for Africans outside the reserves. Partition has never been approved of by Africans and never will be. For that matter it has never been really submitted to or approved of by the Whites. The term "Bantustan" is therefore a complete misnomer, and merely tends to help the Nationalists perpetrate a fraud

Let us examine each of these aspects in detail.

"BANTU SELF-GOVERNMENT"

It is typical of the Nationalists' propaganda techniques that they describe their measures in misleading titles, which convey the opposite of what the

measures contain. Verwoerd called his law greatly extending and intensifying the pass laws the "Abolition of Passes" Act. Similarly, he has introduced into the current Parliamentary session a measure called the "Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Bill." It starts off by decreeing the abolition of the tiny token representation of Africans (by Whites) in Parliament and the Cape Provincial Council.

It goes on to provide for the division of the African population into eight "ethnic units- (the so-called Bantustans.)⁽²⁾ These units, It is declared, are to undergo a "gradual development to self-government."

This measure was described by the Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd, as a "supremely positive step" towards placing Africans "on the road to self-government" (in his policy statement of January 27). Mr. De Wet Nel, B.A.D. Minister, said the people in the reserves "would gradually be given more powers to rule themselves."

THE WHITE PAPER

The scheme is elaborated in a White Paper, tabled in the House of Assembly, to "explain" the Bill. According to this document, immediate objects of the Bill are:-

1. The recognition of the so-called

Bantu National Units and the appointment of Commissioners-General whose task will be to give guidance and advice to the units in order to promote their general development, with special reference to the administrative field;

2. The linking of Africans working in urban areas with territorial authorities established under the Bantu Authorities Act, by conferring powers on the Bantu Authorities to nominate persons as their representatives in urban areas;
3. The transfer to the Bantu Territorial Authorities, at the appropriate time, of land in their areas at present held

by the Native Trust.

4. The vesting in territorial Bantu Authorities of legislative authority and the right to impose taxes, and to undertake works and give guidance to subordinate authorities;
5. The establishment of territorial boards for the purpose of temporary liaison through commissioners-general if during the transition period the administrative structure in any area has not yet reached the stage where a territorial authority has been established.
6. The abolition of representation In the highest - European governing bodies.

"FURTHER OBJECTS"

According to the same White Paper the Bill has the following further objects:-

1. The creation of homogeneous administrative areas for Africans by uniting the members of each so-called national group In the national unit, concentrated in one coherent homeland where possible;
2. The education of Africans to a sound understanding of the problems of soil conservation and agriculture so that all rights over and responsibilities In respect of soil In African areas may be assigned to them. This includes the

gradual replacement of European agricultural officers of all grades by qualified and competent Africans;

3. The systematic promotion of diverse economy in the African areas, acceptable to Africans and to be developed by them;
4. The education of the African to a sound understanding of the problems and aims of Bantu Education so that by decentralisation of powers, responsibility for the different grades of education may be vested in them;
5. The training of Africans with a view to effectively extending their

own judicial system and their education to a sound understanding of the common law with a view to transferring to them responsibility for the administration of justice in their areas;

6. The gradual replacement of European administrative officers by qualified and competent Africans;
7. The exercise of legislative powers by Africans in respect of their areas, at first on a limited scale, but with every intention of gradually extending this power.

A HEAVY PRICE

It will be seen that the African people

are asked to pay a very heavy price for this so-called "self-government" in the Reserves. Urban Africans - the workers, business men and professional men and women, who are the pride of our people in their stubborn and victorious march towards modernisation and progress - are to be treated as outcasts: not even "settlers" like Dr. Verwoerd. Every vestige of rights and opportunities will be ruthlessly destroyed. Everywhere outside the reserves an African will be tolerated only on condition that it is for the convenience of the Whites.

There will be forcible uprooting and mass removals of millions of people ("homogeneous administrative areas" -

see (a) under "Further Objects" above.) The reserves, already intolerably overcrowded, will be crammed with hundreds of thousands more people evicted by the Government.

In return for all these hardships, in return for Africans abandoning their birthright as citizens, pioneers and inhabitants of South Africa, the Government promises them "self-government" in the tiny 13 per cent. that their greed and miserliness "allocates" to us. But what sort of self-government is this that is promised?

WHAT SORT OF SELF- GOVERNMENT?

There are two essential elements to self-

government, as the term is used and understood all over the modern world .
They are:

1. **Democracy.** The organs of Government must be **representative**. That is to say they must be the freely-chosen leaders and representatives Of the people, whose mandate must be renewed at periodic democratic elections.

2. **Sovereignty.** The Government thus chosen must be free to legislate and act as it deems fit on behalf of the people, not subject to any limitations upon its powers by any alien or internal authority.

Now neither of these two essentials are present in the Nationalist plan. The "Bantu National Units" will be ruled in effect by the Commissioners-General appointed by the Union Government, and administered by the B.A.D. officials under his control. When the Government says it plans gradually increasing self-government, it merely means that more powers in future will be exercised by appointed councils of Chiefs and headmen. No provision is made for elections. The Nationalists say that Chiefs, not elected legislatures, are "the Bantu tradition."

There was a time when, like all peoples on earth, Africans conducted their

simple communities through Chiefs, advised by tribal councils and mass meetings of the people. In those times the Chiefs were indeed representative governors. Nowhere, however, have such institutions survived the complexities of modern industrial civilisation. Moreover, in South Africa, we all know full well that no Chief can retain his post unless he submits to Verwoerd, and many Chiefs who sought the interest of their people be fore position and self -advancement have, like President Lutuli, been deposed.

Thus, the proposed Bantu Authorities will not be, in any sense of the term, representative or democratic.

The point is made with pride by the B.A.D. itself in an official publication:

"The councillors will perform their task without fear or prejudice, because they are not elected by the majority of votes, and they will be able to lead their people onwards ... even though ... it may demand hardships and sacrifice" [\(3\)](#)

A strange paean to autocracy, from a department of a Government which claims to be democratic!

NO SOVEREIGNTY

In spite of all their precautions to see that their "Territorial Authorities" - appointed by themselves, subject to dismissal by themselves, under constant control by their Commissioners-General and their B.A.D. - never become authentic voices of the people, the Nationalists are determined to see that even these puppet bodies never enjoy any real power of sovereignty.

In his notorious (and thoroughly dishonest) article in "Optima" Dr. Eiselen draws a far-fetched comparison between the relations between the future "Bantustans" and the Union Government, on the one hand; and those between Britain and the self-governing

Dominions on the other. He foresees:

"a co-operative South African system based on the Commonwealth conception, with the Union Government gradually changing its position from guardian and trustee to become instead the senior member of a group of separate communities."

To appreciate the full hypocrisy of this statement, it must be remembered that Dr. Eiselen is an official of a Nationalist Party Government, a member of a Party which has built its fortune for the past half-century on its cry that it stands for full and untrammelled sovereignty within the Commonwealth, that claims credit

for Hertzog's achievements in winning the Statute of Westminster, which proclaims such sovereignty, and which even now wants complete independence and a Republic outside the Commonwealth.

It cannot be claimed therefore that Eiselen and Verwoerd do not understand the nature of a Commonwealth. or sovereignty or federation.

What are we to think, then, in the same article, when Dr. Eiselen, comes right out into the open, and declares:

"The utmost degree of autonomy in administrative matters which the Union Parliament is likely to be

prepared to concede to these areas will stop short of actual surrender of sovereignty by the European trustee, and there is therefore no prospect of a federal system with eventual equality among members taking the place of the South African Commonwealth . . ."

There is no sovereignty, then. No autonomy. No democracy. No self-government. Nothing but a crude, empty fraud, to bluff the people at home and abroad, and to serve as a pretext for heaping yet more hardships and injustices upon the African people.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT

Politically, the talk about self-government for the reserves is a swindle. Economically, it is an absurdity.

The few scattered African reserves in various parts of the Union, comprising about 13 per cent. of the least desirable land area, represent the last shreds of land ownership left to the African people of their original ancestral home. After the encroachments and depredations of generations of European land-sharks, achieved by force and by cunning, and culminating the outrageous Land Acts from 1913 onwards, had turned the once free and independent Tswana, Sotho, Xhosa, Zulu and other

peasant farmers of this country into a nation of landless outcasts and roving beggars, humble "work-seekers" on the mines and the farms where yesterday they had been masters of the land, the new White masters of the country generously "presented" the few miserable areas that were left to remain as reservoirs and breeding-grounds for black labour. These are the reserves.

It was never claimed or remotely considered by the previous Governments of the Union that these reserves could become economically self-sufficient 'national homes' for 9,600,000 African people of this country. That final lunacy was left to Dr. Verwoerd, Dr. Eiselen

and the Nationalist Party.

The facts are - as every reader who remembers M. Mbeki's brilliant series of articles on the Transkei in "Liberation" will be aware - that the reserves are congested distressed areas, completely unable to sustain their present populations. The majority of the adult mates are always away from home working in the towns, mines or European-owned farms. The people are on the verge of starvation.

The White Paper speaks of teaching Africans soil conservation and agriculture and replacing European Agricultural Officers by Africans. This

is merely trifling with the problem. The root problem of the reserves is the intolerable congestion which already exists. No amount of agricultural instruction will ever enable 13 per cent. of the land to sustain 66 per cent of the population.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

The Government is, of course, fully aware of this fact. They have no intention of creating African areas which are genuinely self-supporting (and which could therefore create a genuine possibility for self-government). If such areas were indeed self-supporting, where would the Chamber of Mines and

the Nationalist farmers get their supplies of cheap labour?

In the article to which I have already referred, Dr. Eiselen bluntly admits:

"in fact not much more than a quarter of the community (on the reserves) can be farmers, the others seeking their livelihood in industrial, commercial, professional or administrative employment."

Where are they to find such employment? In the Reserves? To anyone who knows these poverty-stricken areas, sadly lacking in modern communications, power-resources and

other needed facilities, the idea of industrial development seems far-fetched indeed. The beggarly £500,000 voted to the so-called "Bantu Investment Corporation" by Parliament is mere eyewash, and window-dressing: it would not suffice to build a single decent road, railway line or power station.

"RURAL LOCATIONS"

The Government has already established a number of "rural locations" townships in the reserves. The Eiselen article says a number more are planned: he mentions a total of no less than 96. Since the residents will not farm, how will they manage to keep alive, still less pay rent

and taxes, and support the traders, professional classes and civil servants whom the optimistic Eiselen envisages as making a living there?

Fifty-seven towns on the borders of the reserves have been designated as centres where White capitalists can set up industries. Perhaps some will migrate, and thus "export" their capital to sources of cheap labour and land. Certainly, unlike the reserves (which are a monument to the callous indifference of the Union Parliament to the needs of the non-voting African tax-payers) these towns have power, water, transport, railways, etc. The Nationalist Government, while it remains in office

will probably subsidise capitalists who migrate in this way. It is already doing so in various ways, thus creating unemployment in the cities. But it is unlikely that any large-scale voluntary movement will take place away from the big, established industrial centres, with their well-developed facilities, available materials and markets.

Even if many industries moved, or were forced to move, to the border areas around the reserves it would not make one iota of difference to the economic viability of the reserves themselves. The fundamental picture of the Union's economy would remain fundamentally the same as at present: a single

integrated system based upon the exploitation of African labour by White capitalists.

Economically, the "Bantustan" concept is just as big a swindle as it is politically.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Thus we find, if we really look into it that this grandiose "partition" scheme, this "Supremely positive step" of Dr. Verwoerd, is - like all apartheid schemes - merely a lot of high-sounding double-talk to conceal a policy of ruthless oppression of the non-Whites and of buttressing the unwarranted privileges of the White minority,

especially the farming, mining and financial circles.

Even if it were not so, however; even if the schemes envisaged a genuine sharing-out of the country on the basis of population figures, and a genuine transfer of power to elected representatives of the people, it would remain fundamentally unjust and dangerously unstable unless it were submitted to, accepted and endorsed by all parties to the agreement. To think otherwise is to fly in the face of the principle of self-determination, which is upheld by all countries and confirmed in the United Nations Charter, to which this country is pledged.

Now even Dr. Eiselen recognises, to some extent, this difficulty. He pays lip-service to the Atlantic Charter and appeals to "Western democracy." He mentions the argument that apartheid would only be acceptable "provided that the parties concerned agreed to this of their own free will." And then he most dishonestly evades the whole issue.

"There is no reason for ruling out apartheid on the grounds that the vast majority of the population opposes it," he writes. "The Bantu as a whole do not demand "integration, a single society. This is the ideal merely of a small minority."

Even Dr. Eiselen, however, has not got

the audacity to claim that the African people actually favour apartheid or partition.

Let us state clearly the facts of the matter, with the greatest possible clarity and emphasis.

NO SERIOUS OR RESPONSIBLE LEADER, GATHERING OR ORGANISATION OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE HAS EVER ACCEPTED SEGREGATION, SEPARATION OR THE PARTITION OF THIS COUNTRY IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM.

At Bloemfontein in 1956, under the

auspices of the United African clergy, perhaps the most widely-attended and representative gathering of African representatives, of every shade of political opinion ever held, unanimously and uncompromisingly rejected the Tomlinson Report, on which the Verwoerd plan is based, and voted In favour of a single society.

Even in the rural area&, where dwell the "good" (i.e., simple and ignorant) "Bantu" of the Imagination of Dr. Verwoerd and Dr. Eiselen, attempts to impose apartheid have met, time after time, with furious, often violent resistance. Chief after Chief has been deposed or deported for resisting "Bantu

Authorities" plans. Those who, out of shortsightedness, cowardice or corruption, have accepted these plans have earned nothing but the contempt of their own people.

SERIOUS MISSTATEMENTS

It is a pity that, On such a serious subject, and at such a crucial period, serious misstatements should have been made by some people who purport to speak on behalf of the Africans. For example, Mrs. Margaret Ballinger, the Liberal Party M.P. is reported as saying in the Assembly "no confidence" debate on March 2

"The Africans have given their

answer to this apartheid proposition, but of course, no one ever listens to them. They have said: 'If you want separation then let us have it. Give us half of South Africa. Give us the Eastern half of South Africa. Give us some of the developed resources because we have helped to develop them.' (*S.A. Outlook*, March 1959).

It is most regrettable that Mrs. Ballinger should have made such a silly and irresponsible statement, right towards, one fears, the end of a distinguished Parliamentary career. For, in this instance she has put herself in the company of those who do not listen to

the Africans. No Africans of any standing have ever made the proposals put forward by her.

The leading organisation of the African people is the African National Congress. Congress has repeatedly denounced apartheid. It has repeatedly endorsed the Freedom Charter, which claims South Africa "for all its people." It is true that, occasionally individual Africans become so depressed and desperate at Nationalist misrule that they tend to clutch at any straw, that they tend to say: give us any little corner where we may be free to run our own affairs; but Congress has always firmly rejected such momentary tendencies and refused

to barter our birthright, which is South Africa, for such illusory "Bantustans."

CORRECTING "THE WORLD"

In The World of April 4, 1959, Mr. Duma Nokwe, Secretary-General of the African National Congress, was made to appear to support the division of the country into African and European areas provided there is consultation. Under the heading "What leading Africans think of the Bantustan Proposal" he is reported to have said: "The Congress view is that if the Government desires a division of the country, it should be done in consultation with the African People."

Mr. Nokwe has denied making this

statement. According to him he was asked by a reporter of this paper for his comments on suggestions made by Professor du Plessis that a federation of Bantustans be established. Mr. Nokwe totally rejected the plan put forward by Professor du Plessis as unacceptable.

He informed the reporter that the correct approach would be the extension of franchise rights to Africans. Thereafter a National Convention of all the people of South Africa could be summoned and numerous suggestions of the democratic changes, that should be brought about, including the suggestions of Professor du Plessis,

could form the subject matter of the Convention. The reporter was then referred to a statement released by the Congress setting out its attitude In full on these proposals.

LET THE PEOPLE SPEAK!

Here, indeed, Mr. Nokwe has put his finger on the spot. There is no need for Dr. Eiselen, Mrs. Ballinger or The World to argue about "what the Africans think" about the future of this country. Let the people speak for themselves! Let us have a free vote and a free election of delegates to a national convention, Irrespective of colour or nationality. Let the

Nationalists submit their plan, and the Congress its Charter. If Verwoerd and Elselen think the Africans support their scheme they need not fear such a procedure. if they are not prepared to submit to public opinion then let them stop parading and pretending to the outside world that they are democrats, and talking revolting nonsense about "Bantu self-government."

Dr. Verwoerd may deceive the simple-minded Nationalist voters with his talk of Bantustans, but he will not deceive anyone else, neither the African people, nor the great world beyond the borders of this country. We have heard such talk before, and we know what it really

means.

Like everything else that has come from the Nationalist Government It spells nothing but fresh hardships and sufferings to the masses of the people.

SINISTER DESIGN

Behind the fine talk of „self-government“ is a sinister design.

The abolition of African representation in Parliament and the Cape Provincial Council shows that the real purpose of the scheme is not to concede autonomy to Africans but to deprive them of all say in the government of the country in exchange for a system of local

Government controlled by a Minister who is not responsible to them but to a Parliament in which they have no voice. This is not autonomy but autocracy.

Contact between the Minister and the Bantu Authorities will be maintained by five Commissioners-General. These officials will act as the watchdogs of the Minister to ensure that the "Authorities" strictly toe the line. Their duty will be to ensure that these authorities should not become 'the voice of the African people but that of the Nationalist Government.

In terms of the White Paper steps will be taken to "link" Africans working in urban areas with the territorial authorities established under the Bantu Authorities

Act conferring powers on these Authorities to nominate persons as their representatives in urban areas. This means in effect that efforts will be made to place Africans In the cities under the control of their tribal chiefs - a retrograde step.

Nowhere in the Bill or In the various Proclamations dealing with the creation of Bantu Authorities is there provision for democratic elections by Africans falling within the jurisdiction of the Authorities.

In the light of these facts it Is sheer nonsense to talk of South Africa as being about to take a "supremely positive step

towards placing Africans on the road to self-government- or of having given them more powers to rule themselves. As Dr. Eiselen clearly pointed out In his article In "Optima", the establishment of the Bantustans will not in any way affect white supremacy since even in such areas whites will stay supreme. The Bantustans are not Intended to voice aspirations of the African people; they are instruments for their subjection. Under the pretext of giving them self-government the African people are being split up into tribal units in order to retard their growth and development into full nationhood.

THE CHIEF TARGET

The new Bantu Bill and the new policy behind it will bear heavily on the peasants in the reserves. But it is not they who are the chief target of Verwoerd's new policy.

His new measures are aimed, in the first place, at the millions of Africans in the great cities of this country. the factory workers and intellectuals who have raised the banner of freedom and democracy and human dignity, who have spoken forth boldly the message that is shaking Imperialism to its foundations throughout this great Continent of Africa.

The Nationalists hate and fear that banner and that message. They will try to destroy them, by striking with all their

might at the standard bearers and vanguard of the people, the working class.

Behind the "self-government" talk lies a grim programme of mass evictions, political persecution and police terror. It is the last desperate gamble of a hated and doomed fascist autocracy - which, fortunately, is soon due to make its exit from the stage of history.

Footnotes:

1. According to the 1951 census, trust land locations and reserves accounted for only two and a half million out of a total African population of, at that time, eight and a half million. A further two

and a half million, nearly, were on European-owned farms. The rest were mainly in urban areas, with the Witwatersrand alone accounting for over a million Africans. (*Official Year Book* 1956-57, p.718).

2. They are: North and South Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xosa and Zulu.

3. "Bantu Authorities and Tribal Administration." Issued by the N.A.D. Information Service, Pretoria, 1958

"No Easy Walk to Freedom"

Presidential Address⁽¹⁾ by Nelson R. Mandela to the ANC (Transvaal) Congress

21 September 1953

Since 1912 and year after year thereafter, in their homes and local areas, in provincial and national gatherings, on trains and buses, in the factories and on the farms, in cities, villages, shanty towns, schools and

prisons, the African people have discussed the shameful misdeeds of those who rule the country. Year after year, they have raised their voices in condemnation of the grinding poverty of the people, the low wages, the acute shortage of land, the inhuman exploitation and the whole policy of white domination. But instead of more freedom repression began to grow in volume and intensity and it seemed that all their sacrifices would end up in smoke and dust. Today the entire country knows that their labours were not in vain for a new spirit and new ideas have gripped our people. Today the people speak the language of action: there is a mighty awakening among the men and

women of our country and the year 1952 stands out as the year of this upsurge of national consciousness.

In June, 1952, the AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS and the SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS, bearing in mind their responsibility as the representatives of the downtrodden and oppressed people of South Africa, took the plunge and launched the Campaign for the Defiance of the Unjust Laws. Starting off in Port Elizabeth in the early hours of June 26 and with only thirty-three defiers in action and then in Johannesburg in the afternoon of the same day with one hundred and six defiers, it spread

throughout the country like wild fire. Factory and office workers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, students and the clergy; Africans, Coloureds, Indians and Europeans, old and young, all rallied to the national call and defied the pass laws and the curfew and the railway apartheid regulations. At the end of the year, more than 8,000 people of all races had defied. The Campaign called for immediate and heavy sacrifices. Workers lost their jobs, chiefs and teachers were expelled from the service, doctors, lawyers and businessmen gave up their practices and businesses and elected to go to jail. Defiance was a step of great political significance. It released strong social forces which

affected thousands of our countrymen. It was an effective way of getting the masses to function politically; a powerful method of voicing our indignation against the reactionary policies of the Government. It was one of the best ways of exerting pressure on the Government and extremely dangerous to the stability and security of the State. It inspired and aroused our people from a conquered and servile community of yesmen to a militant and uncompromising band of comrades-in-arms. The entire country was transformed into battle zones where the forces of liberation were locked up in immortal conflict against those of reaction and evil. Our flag flew in every

battlefield and thousands of our countrymen rallied around it. We held the initiative and the forces of freedom were advancing on all fronts. It was against this background and at the height of this Campaign that we held our last annual provincial Conference in Pretoria from the 10th to the 12th of October last year. In a way, that Conference was a welcome reception for those who had returned from the battlefields and a farewell to those who were still going to action. The spirit of defiance and action dominated the entire conference .

Today we meet under totally different conditions. By the end of July last year, the Campaign had reached a stage where

it had to be suppressed by the Government or it would impose its own policies on the country.

The government launched its reactionary offensive and struck at us. Between July last year and August this year forty-seven leading members from both Congresses in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Kimberley were arrested, tried and convicted for launching the Defiance Campaign and given suspended sentences ranging from three months to two years on condition that they did not again participate in the defiance of the unjust laws. In November last year, a proclamation was passed which prohibited meetings of more than ten

Africans and made it an offence for any person to call upon an African to defy. Contravention of this proclamation carried a penalty of three years or of a fine of three hundred pounds. In March this year the Government passed the so-called Public Safety Act which empowered it to declare a state of emergency and to create conditions which would permit of the most ruthless and pitiless methods of suppressing our movement. Almost simultaneously, the Criminal Laws Amendment Act was passed which provided heavy penalties for those convicted of Defiance offences. This Act also made provision for the whipping of defiers including women. It was under this Act that Mr.

Arthur Matlala who was the local [leader] of the Central Branch during the Defiance Campaign, was convicted and sentenced to twelve months with hard labour plus eight strokes by the Magistrate of Villa Nora. The Government also made extensive use of the Suppression of Communism Act. You will remember that in May last year the Government ordered Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo, J. B. Marks, David Bopape and Johnson Ngwevela to resign from the Congresses and many other organisations and were also prohibited from attending political gatherings. In consequence of these bans, Moses Kotane, J. B. Marks, and David Bopape did not attend our last provincial

Conference. In December last year, the Secretary General, Mr. W. M. Sisulu, and I were banned from attending gatherings and confined to Johannesburg for six months. Early this year, the President-General, Chief Luthuli, whilst in the midst of a national tour which he was prosecuting with remarkable energy and devotion, was prohibited for a period of twelve months from attending public gatherings and from visiting Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and many other centres. A few days before the President-General was banned, the President of the SAIC, Dr. G. M. Naicker, had been served with a similar notice. Many other active workers both from the African and

Indian Congresses and from trade union organisations were also banned.

The Congresses realised that these measures created a new situation which did not prevail when the Campaign was launched in June 1952. The tide of defiance was bound to recede and we were forced to pause and to take stock of the new situation. We had to analyse the dangers that faced us, formulate plans to overcome them and evolve new plans of political struggle. A political movement must keep in touch with reality and the prevailing conditions. Long speeches, the shaking of fists, the banging of tables and strongly worded resolutions out of touch with the objective conditions do

not bring about mass action and can do a great deal of harm to the organisation and the struggle we serve. The masses had to be prepared and made ready for new forms of political struggle. We had to recuperate our strength and muster our forces for another and more powerful offensive against the enemy. To have gone ahead blindly as if nothing had happened would have been suicidal and stupid. The conditions under which we meet today are, therefore, vastly different. The Defiance Campaign together with its thrills and adventures has receded. The old methods of bringing about mass action through public mass meetings, press statements and leaflets calling upon the people to

go to action have become extremely dangerous and difficult to use effectively. The authorities will not easily permit a meeting called under the auspices of the ANC, few newspapers will publish statements openly criticising the policies of the Government and there is hardly a single printing press which will agree to print leaflets calling upon workers to embark on industrial action for fear of prosecution under the Suppression of Communism Act and similar measures. These developments require the evolution of new forms of political struggle which will make it reasonable for us to strive for action on a higher level than the Defiance Campaign. The

Government, alarmed at the indomitable upsurge of national consciousness, is doing everything in its power to crush our movement by removing the genuine representatives of the people from the organisations. According to a statement made by Swart in Parliament on the 18th September, 1953, there are thirty-three trade union officials and eighty-nine other people who have been served with notices in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act. This does not include that formidable array of freedom fighters who have been named and blacklisted under the Suppression of Communism Act and those who have been banned under the Riotous Assemblies Act.

Meanwhile the living conditions of the people, already extremely difficult, are steadily worsening and becoming unbearable. The purchasing power of the masses is progressively declining and the cost of living is rocketing. Bread is now dearer than it was two months ago. The cost of milk, meat and vegetables is beyond the pockets of the average family and many of our people cannot afford them. The people are too poor to have enough food to feed their families and children. They cannot afford sufficient clothing, housing and medical care. They are denied the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age and where these exist, they are of an extremely inferior and

useless nature. Because of lack of proper medical amenities our people are ravaged by such dreaded diseases as tuberculosis, venereal disease, leprosy, pellagra, and infantile mortality is very high. The recent state budget made provision for the increase of the cost-of-living allowances for Europeans and not a word was said about the poorest and most hard-hit section of the population - the African people. The insane policies of the Government which have brought about an explosive situation in the country have definitely scared away foreign capital from South Africa and the financial crisis through which the country is now passing is forcing many industrial and business concerns to close

down, to retrench their staffs and unemployment is growing every day. The farm labourers are in a particularly dire plight. You will perhaps recall the investigations and exposures of the semi-slave conditions on the Bethal farms made in 1948 by the Reverend Michael Scott and a *Guardian* Correspondent; by the *Drum* last year and the *Advance* in April this year. You will recall how human beings, wearing only sacks with holes for their heads and arms, never given enough food to eat, slept on cement floors on cold nights with only their sacks to cover their shivering bodies. You will remember how they are woken up as early as 4 a. m. and taken to work on the fields with

the indunas sjambokking those who tried to straighten their backs, who felt weak and dropped down because of hunger and sheer exhaustion. You will also recall the story of human beings toiling pathetically from the early hours of the morning till sunset, fed only on mealie meal served on filthy sacks spread on the ground and eating with their dirty hands. People falling ill and never once being given medical attention. You will also recall the revolting story of a farmer who was convicted for tying a labourer by his feet from a tree and had him flogged to death, pouring boiling water into his mouth whenever he cried for water. These things which have long vanished from many parts of the world

still flourish in SA today. None will deny that they constitute a serious challenge to Congress and we are in duty bound to find an effective remedy for these obnoxious practices.

The Government has introduced in Parliament the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Bill and the Bantu Education Bill. Speaking on the Labour Bill, the Minister of Labour, Ben Schoeman, openly stated that the aim of this wicked measure is to bleed African trade unions to death. By forbidding strikes and lockouts it deprives Africans of the one weapon the workers have to improve their position. The aim of the measure is to destroy the present African

trade unions which are controlled by the workers themselves and which fight for the improvement of their working conditions in return for a Central Native Labour Board controlled by the Government and which will be used to frustrate the legitimate aspirations of the African worker. The Minister of Native Affairs, Verwoerd, has also been brutally clear in explaining the objects of the Bantu Education Bill. According to him the aim of this law is to teach our children that Africans are inferior to Europeans. African education would be taken out of the hands of people who taught equality between black and white. When this Bill becomes law, it will not be the parents but the Department of

Native Affairs which will decide whether an African child should receive higher or other education. It might well be that the children of those who criticise the Government and who fight its policies will almost certainly be taught how to drill rocks in the mines and how to plough potatoes on the farms of Bethal. High education might well be the privilege of those children whose families have a tradition of collaboration with the ruling circles.

The attitude of the Congress on these bills is very clear and unequivocal. Congress totally rejects both bills without reservation. The last provincial Conference strongly condemned the then

proposed Labour Bill as a measure designed to rob the African workers of the universal right of free trade unionism and to undermine and destroy the existing African trade unions.

Conference further called upon the African workers to boycott and defy the application of this sinister scheme which was calculated to further the exploitation of the African worker. To accept a measure of this nature even in a qualified manner would be a betrayal of the toiling masses. At a time when every genuine Congressite should fight unreservedly for the recognition of African trade unions and the realisation of the principle that everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for

the protection of his interests, we declare our firm belief in the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that everyone has the right to education; that education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among the nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. That parents have the right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

The cumulative effect of all these

measures is to prop up and perpetuate the artificial and decaying policy of the supremacy of the white men. The attitude of the government to us is that: "Let's beat them down with guns and batons and trample them under our feet. We must be ready to drown the whole country in blood if only there is the slightest chance of preserving white supremacy."

But there is nothing inherently superior about the herrenvolk idea of the supremacy of the whites. In China, India, Indonesia and Korea, American, British, Dutch and French Imperialism, based on the concept of the supremacy of Europeans over Asians, has been

completely and perfectly exploded. In Malaya and Indo-China British and French imperialisms are being shaken to their foundations by powerful and revolutionary national liberation movements. In Africa, there are approximately 190,000,000 Africans as against 4,000,000 Europeans. The entire continent is seething with discontent and already there are powerful revolutionary eruptions in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Tunisia, Kenya, the Rhodesias and South Africa. The oppressed people and the oppressors are at loggerheads. The *day of reckoning* between the forces of freedom and those of reaction is not very far off. I have not the slightest doubt that when that day comes truth and justice

will prevail.

The intensification of repressions and the extensive use of the bans is designed to immobilise every active worker and to check the national liberation movement. But gone forever are the days when harsh and wicked laws provided the oppressors with years of peace and quiet. The racial policies of the Government have pricked the conscience of all men of good will and have aroused their deepest indignation. The feelings of the oppressed people have never been more bitter. If the ruling circles seek to maintain their position by such inhuman methods then a clash between the forces of freedom and those

of reaction is certain. The grave plight of the people compels them to resist to the death the stinking policies of the gangsters that rule our country.

But in spite of all the difficulties outlined above, we have won important victories. The general political level of the people has been considerably raised and they are now more conscious of their strength. Action has become the language of the day. The ties between the working people and the Congress have been greatly strengthened. This is a development of the highest importance because in a country such as ours a political organisation that does not receive the support of the workers is in

fact paralysed on the very ground on which it has chosen to wage battle. Leaders of trade union organisations are at the same time important officials of the provincial and local branches of the ANC. In the past we talked of the African, Indian and Coloured struggles. Though certain individuals raised the question of a united front of all the oppressed groups, the various non-European organisations stood miles apart from one another and the efforts of those for co-ordination and unity were like a voice crying in the wilderness and it seemed that the day would never dawn when the oppressed people would stand and fight together shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy. Today we talk

of the struggle of the oppressed people which, though it is waged through their respective autonomous organisations, is gravitating towards one central command.

Our immediate task is to consolidate these victories, to preserve our organisations and to muster our forces for the resumption of the offensive. To achieve this important task the National Executive of the ANC in consultation with the National Action Committee of the ANC and the SAIC formulated a plan of action popularly known as the "M" Plan and the highest importance is [given] to it by the National Executives. Instructions were given to all provinces

to implement the "M" Plan without delay.

The underlying principle of this plan is the understanding that it is no longer possible to wage our struggle mainly on the old methods of public meetings and printed circulars. The aim is:

1. to consolidate the Congress machinery;
2. to enable the transmission of important decisions taken on a national level to every member of the organisation without calling public meetings, issuing press statements and printing circulars;
3. to build up in the local branches themselves local Congresses which

- will effectively represent the strength and will of the people;
4. to extend and strengthen the ties between Congress and the people and to consolidate Congress leadership.

This plan is being implemented in many branches not only in the Transvaal but also in the other provinces and is producing excellent results. The Regional Conferences held in Sophiatown, Germiston, Kliptown and Benoni on the 28th June, 23rd and 30th August and on the 6th September, 1953, which were attended by large crowds, are a striking demonstration of the effectiveness of this plan, and the

National Executives must be complimented for it. I appeal to all members of the Congress to redouble their efforts and play their part truly and well in its implementation. The hard, dirty and strenuous task of recruiting members and strengthening our organisation through a house to house campaign in every locality must be done by you all. From now on the activity of Congressites must not be confined to speeches and resolutions. Their activities must find expression in wide scale work among the masses, work which will enable them to make the greatest possible contact with the working people. You must protect and defend your trade unions. If you are not

allowed to have your meetings publicly, then you must hold them over your machines in the factories, on the trains and buses as you travel home. You must have them in your villages and shantytowns. You must make every home, every shack and every mud structure where our people live, a branch of the trade union movement and never surrender.

You must defend the right of African parents to decide the kind of education that shall be given to their children. Teach the children that Africans are not one iota inferior to Europeans. Establish your own community schools where the right kind of education will be given to

our children. If it becomes dangerous or impossible to have these alternative schools, then again you must make every home, every shack or rickety structure a centre of learning for our children. Never surrender to the inhuman and barbaric theories of Verwoerd.

The decision to defy the unjust laws enabled Congress to develop considerably wider contacts between itself and the masses and the urge to join Congress grew day by day. But due to the fact that the local branches did not exercise proper control and supervision, the admission of new members was not carried out satisfactorily. No careful examination was made of their past

history and political characteristics. As a result of this, there were many shady characters ranging from political clowns, place-seekers, splitters, saboteurs, agents-provocateurs to informers and even policemen, who infiltrated into the ranks of Congress. One need only refer to the Johannesburg trial of Dr. Moroka and nineteen others, where a member of Congress who actually worked at the National Headquarters, turned out to be a detective-sergeant on special duty. Remember the case of Leballo of Brakpan who wormed himself into that Branch by producing faked naming letters from the Liquidator, De Villiers Louw, who had instructions to spy on us.

There are many other similar instances that emerged during the Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Kimberley trials. Whilst some of these men were discovered there are many who have not been found out. In Congress there are still many shady characters, political clowns, place-seekers, saboteurs, provocateurs, informers and policemen who masquerade as progressives but who are in fact the bitterest enemies of our organisation. Outside appearances are highly deceptive and we cannot classify these men by looking at their faces or by listening to their sweet tongues or their vehement speeches demanding immediate action. The friends of the people are distinguishable

by the ready and disciplined manner in which they rally behind their organisation and their readiness to sacrifice when the preservation of the organisation has become a matter of life and death. Similarly, enemies and shady characters are detected by the extent to which they consistently attempt to wreck the organisation by creating fratricidal strife, disseminating confusion and undermining and even opposing important plans of action to vitalise the organisation. In this respect it is interesting to note that almost all the people who oppose the "M" Plan are people who have consistently refused to respond when sacrifices were called for, and whose political background

leaves much to be desired. These shady characters by means of flattery, bribes and corruption, win the support of the weak-willed and politically backward individuals, detach them from Congress and use them in their own interests. The presence of such elements in Congress constitutes a serious threat to the struggle, for the capacity for political action of an organisation which is ravaged by such disruptive and splitting elements is considerably undermined. Here in South Africa, as in many parts of the world, a revolution is maturing: it is the profound desire, the determination and the urge of the overwhelming majority of the country to destroy for ever the shackles of oppression that

condemn them to servitude and slavery. To overthrow oppression has been sanctioned by humanity and is the highest aspiration of every free man. If elements in our organisation seek to impede the realisation of this lofty purpose then these people have placed themselves outside the organisation and must be put out of action before they do more harm. To do otherwise would be a crime and a serious neglect of duty. We must rid ourselves of such elements and give our organisation the striking power of a real militant mass organisation.

Kotane, Marks, Bopape, Tloome and I have been banned from attending gatherings and we cannot join and

counsel with you on the serious problems that are facing our country. We have been banned because we champion the freedom of the oppressed people of our country and because we have consistently fought against the policy of racial discrimination in favour of a policy which accords fundamental human rights to all, irrespective of race, colour, sex or language. We are exiled from our own people for we have uncompromisingly resisted the efforts of imperialist America and her satellites to drag the world into the rule of violence and brutal force, into the rule of the napalm, hydrogen and the cobalt bombs where millions of people will be wiped out to satisfy the criminal and greedy

appetites of the imperial powers. We have been gagged because we have emphatically and openly condemned the criminal attacks by the imperialists against the people of Malaya, Vietnam, Indonesia, Tunisia and Tanganyika and called upon our people to identify themselves unreservedly with the cause of world peace and to fight against the war policies of America and her satellites. We are being shadowed, hounded and trailed because we fearlessly voiced our horror and indignation at the slaughter of the people of Korea and Kenya. The massacre of the Kenya people by Britain has aroused world-wide indignation and protest. Children are being burnt alive, women

are raped, tortured, whipped and boiling water poured on their breasts to force confessions from them that Jomo Kenyatta had administered the Mau Mau oath to them. Men are being castrated and shot dead. In the Kikuyu country there are some villages in which the population has been completely wiped out. We are prisoners in our own country because we dared to raise our voices against these horrible atrocities and because we expressed our solidarity with the cause of the Kenya people.

You can see that "there is no easy walk to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow (of death) again and again

before we reach the mountain tops of our desires.

"Dangers and difficulties have not deterred us in the past, they will not frighten us now. But we must be prepared for them like men in business who do not waste energy in vain talk and idle action. The way of preparation (for action) lies in our rooting out all impurity and indiscipline from our organisation and making it the bright and shining instrument that will cleave its way to (Africa's) freedom."



¹ This was the Presidential address by Nelson Mandela to the ANC Transvaal Conference. He was elected as ANC Transvaal President earlier in the year

but had been served with a banning order and the address was therefore read on his behalf.