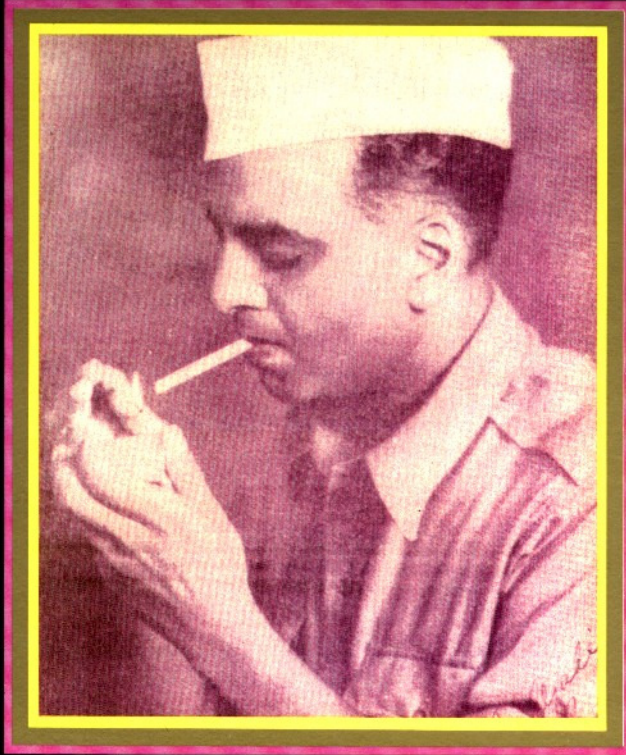


# MONTY SPEAKS



Speeches of Dr. GM (Monty) Naicker  
1945 - 1963

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*Speeches of Dr G. M. (Monty) Naicker*

*1945-1963*

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<sup>1</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, July 23, 1948

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## **FOREWORD**

This compilation of speeches of Dr Monty Naicker is an invaluable chapter in the history of our struggle for liberation.

Monty, as we all referred to him affectionately, was a generous, jovial man with sufficient political foresight to realise that the problems of South Africa's disenfranchised cut across ethnicity and had to be fought on a broad united front.

He gave the formidable Natal Indian Congress, founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1894, a new lease of life when he assumed its presidency in 1945 and galvanised the Indian people into militant passive resistance against General Smuts's racist laws.

He struggled relentlessly for the rights of all South Africans to the end of his life and remains entrenched in our history as an eminent contributor to our freedom struggle.

Nelson Mandela  
September 1961

## "OUR GREATEST INDIAN LEADER SINCE GANDHIJI"<sup>2</sup>

As one who has had the privilege, honour and, indeed, the pleasure of being a close associate and comrade-in-arms of Dr Naicker - MONTY to all of us - in the political arena for the last forty years, it can be said without exaggeration that he was the greatest leader that the Indian community has produced since the time of Gandhiji.

Monty was a man of the people who believed in collective leadership and made an invaluable contribution in transforming the Natal Indian Congress once again into a mass organisation, unifying and mobilising all sections of the community - the working class, small traders, professionals and intellectuals, youth, students and women - for mass political action.

He strongly advocated and assiduously worked for the unity of the people, irrespective of their religious beliefs or political affiliations, in the common struggle against racial discrimination and for full democratic rights and equal opportunities for all.

Monty was an ardent revolutionary nationalist and one of the main architects in laying the foundation of building the "Unity in Action" of all the oppressed Black people in their common struggle for national liberation.

The Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact of 1947, the National Day of Protest of 1950, the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the Freedom Charter adopted by the Congress of the People in 1955 bear ample testimony to his fruitful labour in this direction.

Monty was born in Durban in 1910, the year in which the ruling capitalist class consolidated their economic hegemony over the whole country with political power to maintain and perpetuate it. The new constitution legalised racism, national oppression and class exploitation of the Black majority: African, Coloured and Indian found themselves voiceless and voteless in the land of their birth.

Earlier, Monty's grandparents were brought from India to work the huge sugar cane plantations owned by the growing class of white capitalist landowners. There were promises of a better life from that obtaining in a poverty-stricken India dominated by British imperialism. There were also promises of full citizenship. Reality was different. Whilst the labour-power of the Indian masses, harnessed under near slave conditions, built the economy of Natal and the country and created wealth for the white capitalist landowners, their own economic condition was dogged by want, poverty, unemployment and deprivation. The racism and racial arrogance of the white colonists found ready expression in laws denying them any semblance of civil liberties and democratic rights.

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<sup>2</sup> From: *Sechaba*, second quarter, 1978



White tyranny and the harsh material conditions of life were answered by fierce campaigns of resistance, defiance and confrontation against white supremacy rule. The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was formed in 1894 under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, later to become the architect of India's liberation struggle. Struggle by way of mass petitions of grievances and demands, and deputations, were soon succeeded by the mass-based passive resistance campaigns of 1907 and 1913. Although these campaigns are known as "passive" resistance campaigns, they were in fact active campaigns of protest and defiance.

It was against this background that Monty grew up. At the age of 17 he was sent to Edinburgh in Scotland to complete his secondary education and study medicine. In 1934 he returned to South Africa, having successfully qualified as a doctor, and set up practice in Durban, where he inevitably became involved with the social and economic problems of the many poor who daily filled his practice. Political consciousness grew out of these conditions and the desire to find solutions to them. During the course of the next ten years Monty became involved in a number of organisations created to give organised expression to their struggle and drew nearer to the trade union struggle. Together with a group of radical activists, he formed the Anti-Segregation League to mobilise the Indian masses against the Smuts regime's Pegging Act, designed to restrict Indian landownership rights and introduce residential segregation. The League also saw as its other main task the ousting of the reactionary "leadership" dominating the once-powerful NIC in the interest of the tiny merchant class so ready to compromise in its own narrow interests.

In October 1945 the radicals seized control of the NIC with mass support. Monty was acclaimed by a crowd of 12,000 enthusiastic supporters as the new President, and the new executive, drawn from all walks of life - workers and trade unionists, doctors, nurses, teachers and progressive small traders - proceeded to transform Congress once more into a people's organisation. In December 1945 the militant section of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) gained power in an attempt to unite all anti-racist and democratic forces in our country.

The new pledge by a united leadership of the Indian Congress reflected the force of ideas towards unity in purpose and action of all the oppressed and exploited: "to make common cause with all sections of the Non-European peoples in economic and political issues." The year 1946 saw the ideas of united struggle advance by leaps in the three great mass-based campaigns launched by the black people: the great African Mineworkers' Strike, the Anti-Pass Campaign and the Passive Resistance Campaign against Smuts' Ghetto Act for the Indian people.

Monty Naicker, together with the new leadership, threw himself unsparingly into mobilising the people to defy the Ghetto Act. Thousands defied by occupying plots of land and areas from which the Act excluded them. More than 2,000 courted arrest and imprisonment; among them Monty. But not before he and myself left for India and gained support for the people's cause. The following year, an independent India cut off all diplomatic and trade relations with the racist regime of South Africa and raised and

condemned the policy and practice of white minority rule at the United Nations. The cause of the Black people's struggles was internationalised and has remained a burning issue for freedom-loving people the world over. More important was the way in which these three great campaigns interacted on each other, drew pledges of support and solidarity from each other and drew the forces of national and class liberation closer.

On 9th March 1947 the high degree of unity in action and perspective during the historic campaigns of 1946 found organisational expression in the Joint Declaration of Cooperation issued by Dr A. B. Xuma of the ANC and Doctors Monty Naicker and Yusuf Dadoo of the Indian Congresses. The Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo pact laid the foundation for the formation of the Congress Alliance in 1955. For Monty, who at his inaugural speech as President of the NIC called for a united front of all anti-racist and democratic forces against white supremacy rule, an ideal was being given substance. It was an ideal which he lived for and practised in real life right to the end. During his lifetime he worked closely with all genuine patriots - Africans, Coloureds, Indians and democratic whites. He never built nor encouraged ideological barriers around him, being equally at home with Christian, Hindu, Moslem and non-believer; with communist and revolutionary nationalist. What mattered was the common struggle of the oppressed and exploited against the common oppressor.

Soon after the Declaration of Cooperation, the ANC and the Indian Congress with the full backing of the SACP (South African Communist Party) and the APO (Coloured People's Organisation) jointly launched the great Defiance of Unjust Laws campaign in 1952 as the practical testing ground of unity in action of the toiling masses. The Campaign became the most forceful reminder of the Power of the People when properly organised. Thousands defied selected unjust laws all over the country. More than 8,000 Africans, Indians, Coloureds and white democrats were arrested and imprisoned. The regime of white supremacy, conscious of the danger posed by the massive defiance, confidently and skilfully organised and with such united backing, introduced new draconian laws. But the new strategy of mass-based action in which the freedom of the people became the primary responsibility of the people themselves, could not be denied the entire decade of the 1950's. Nelson Mandela, then National Organiser of the Campaign, was to declare, when it became known that the Presidents of the ANC and NIC, Chief Lutuli and Monty Naicker had volunteered to defy jointly: "We can now say that the unity of the Non-European people in this country has become a reality."

Monty emerged from his period of imprisonment after the Defiance Campaign with a renewed and undaunted vigour setting about organising and mobilising the people in the campaign of seeking out from the people their deepest aspirations and demands for a future South Africa and consolidating the unity thus far forged.

In March 1954 the alliance between the ANC and the Indian Congress was strengthened by the CPC (Coloured People's Congress), the COD (Congress of Democrats, the organisation of white democrats) and the SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions, the only non-racial trade union council in South Africa). From the Congress Alliance, headed by the premier liberation organisation, the ANC,

organisational unity was crowned on 26 June 1955 - South Africa Freedom Day - with political unity with the adoption of the Movement's basic programme of principles - the Freedom Charter.

In December 1956, Monty together with 155 of the people's leaders was arrested for High Treason.

The trial dragged on for five long years and in the end all the accused, once facing the possibility of the death sentence, were released. Monty himself like so many other Treason Trialists was already serving a 5-year banning order when charged.

But the people were not deterred. New forms of struggle to cope with the new situation were being forged and prepared. The massacre of the African people at Sharpeville and the banning of the ANC closed the doors to the possibility of non-violent change in our country. On 16 December 1961, with simultaneous acts of sabotage in the major provinces of our country, *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the armed wing of the national liberation movement, led by the ANC, announced to all South Africans: "There comes a time in the life of a nation when there remains only one choice: Submit or Fight. That time has now come to South Africa."

Indian militants joined their African and Coloured compatriots within the ranks of MK and a new chapter in the history of our national liberation opened.

For Monty Naicker the years from 1960 to 1974 were years of continuous banning orders, restricting his life and effectively cutting him off from any political activity. Failing in health, he nevertheless became from 1977 the head of the anti-South African Indian Council Campaign to mobilise the Indian people once more to reject the dummy Indian Council and the fraudulent three-tier Parliament for whites, Coloureds and Indians.

Almost his last sentiments and act in hospital, according to a close friend,<sup>3</sup> as reported in *The Leader*, were:

"Monty," I called.

"Hello", he replied.

"How are you?"

"Well," he said, "getting on - but things in this country - they are moving too slow - too slow for change."

His hand went up in the clenched fist salute and stayed there.

"*Amandla!*", I said. The clenched fist grew firmer...

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<sup>3</sup> Fatima Meer

I had to return it to bed.

Monty Naicker died as he lived: Defiantly, heroically. The greatest tribute we can pay to this great son of the people is to intensify the Freedom Struggle.

*HAMBA KAHLE* MONTY NAICKER!

Yusuf Dadoo

## TRIBUTE TO MONTY NAICKER<sup>4</sup>

Unswerving dedication to democracy and peace were the two most outstanding characteristics of Monty Naicker's 40 years' life service for the cause of a South Africa freed from the shackles of race discrimination and bigotry.

In the 1930s when Mohambry Naicker, as a young man raised the flag of human dignity, there were few in South Africa who were thinking of a non-racial democratic future, and those few gravitated around him, a group of young South Africans, whose loyalty to him was as great as his to the cause he espoused. From the ranks of the newly qualified professionals, young trade unionists and other community leaders, Monty Naicker formed the Nationalist wing of the Congress movement and it soon became identified with its counterpart in the Transvaal, led by another medico, Yusuf Dadoo. Within a short space of time, he was able to rejuvenate the Indian community politically, and South Africa saw the return of the Gandhian spirit, its horizon expanding to embrace not only the radical Indians, but also Africans and Coloureds who were uniting under the banner of the Non-European United Front.

The NEUF was not an exclusive black organisation, it included some whites who worked with the blacks towards the goal of a just society. The late 30s and the first half decade of the 40s saw Monty immersed almost every night in discussions and debates that went on until the early hours of the morning, formulating a new outlook for all South Africans.

Those were the days when the Liberal Study Group provided a meaningful forum for the youth of the time, when Peter Abrahams was writing his first poems and short stories, and I.E. Dhlomo was in the midst of his great work, "*The Valley of the Thousand Hills*."

A cyclostyled journal, "*The Call*" symbolised the new awakening and discussed international and South African issues in depth and probed the inequalities of colonialism. In Britain Krishna Menon formed the India League and inspired South African Indians to do likewise.

Dr Naicker, as a member of the India League, was among those who welcomed Indira Nehru during the years of blackouts and war, when she arrived in Durban with a group of students and addressed a meeting at the Avalon Cinema.

The post-war era brought Monty into conflict with Smuts who had helped to draft the United Nations Charter but was not prepared to extend the principles of the Charter to Black South Africans.

Indian South Africans found themselves facing the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, a post-war gift from Smuts, and the country saw Monty at his best when he led the passive resistance movement and over 2,000 resisters were imprisoned.

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<sup>4</sup> Article published in the Naicker Commemorative Supplement, *The Leader*, January 27, 1978

For Monty, going in and out of prison became a routine in his confrontation with the authorities.

His contribution was all the more remarkable for it was at its height when the campaign for a non-racial democracy was still in its infancy, the African National Congress, still in a conservative bind, the church yet to be awakened to its social responsibilities, and the universities, voluntarily entrenched in racial practices. Monty's voice rose clearly and fearlessly from those doldrums, demanding justice for all, a demand which was taken up only 20 and 30 years later by the universities, churches, and the Liberal Party.

Dr Naicker also played a crucial role in placing racism on the international agenda. He realised that unless South Africa's racial practices were brought before the attention of the world, they would remain unsanctioned particularly with an international figure of the calibre of General Smuts presiding over them. He thus prevailed on India, once liberated, to place the issue of racial discrimination in South Africa on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly. The issue has remained a matter of prime concern in international politics ever since.

One of the highlights of Monty's political career was his visit to India with Yusuf Dadoo where they spent some time in Gandhi's Ashram and consulted with Gandhiji on the future of the Indian people in South Africa, and the problem of racial tyranny in general.

When the Nationalist came to power in 1948, the Dadoo-Naicker-Xuma Pact had already been sealed, laying the basis for the Congress Alliance. Under the Presidency of Albert Luthuli, that alliance began the bitter struggle against the Nationalist Government leading to the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign, the Congress of the People, the mammoth treason trial, and eventually the banning of the ANC, PAC and the SACP.

Monty Naicker was among the hundreds who were personally banned to crush all resistance to apartheid and his voice of reason and understanding was muted for 14 long years. Yet he remained a symbol of hope for all those dedicated to a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

During the years of his banning, he led a quiet, highly restricted life with his family, drawing strength above all from his wife Marie who was, as always, a tower of strength. The police kept a vicious watch over their movements. On one memorable occasion, unable to tolerate the stifling atmosphere of a banning, they invited a few friends. The police swooped on them and he was charged for contravening his banning order and sentenced to imprisonment.

When Monty's 14 years of bannings expired, he once again became the rallying point of those agitating against apartheid. He died in harness, as the leader of the Anti-South African Indian Council Committee.

Fatima Meer

## PERSONAL NOTES

### A MAN OF FUN AND LAUGHTER<sup>5</sup>

A curly-headed young man with beads of perspiration glistening on his wide forehead shouted “*whoopee*” on winning the table tennis match against his opponent, the champion at the Indian Association in Edinburgh. The student giving vent to his feelings was Monty. He was good at sports. Snooker was his favourite game as was tennis.

He stood out in a crowd because he was one of the smartest and best dressed men among the students, wearing a Hector Powe suit with carefully chosen shirt and tie, spelling a quiet, classy quality.

I went to watch him play tennis near the meadows in Edinburgh. He was immaculately turned out in his white tennis togs. Seated on the bench nearby, watching the players was a bevy of Scottish beauties. There was one for whom Monty had a special eye, but being the gentleman he was, he was attractive to all.

At one party, he was sent out on an errand to fetch a young girl who so wanted to come to the party but could not manage the distance alone. The ever-ready gentleman volunteered and that was the last we saw of Monty that evening. After that incident, we thought better of asking him to go on such an errand again. We pulled him later, but as always, his inimitable smile and accompanying laughter disarmed us completely and it was impossible to be cross with him. He was naughty, but we were helpless against his many antics.

Whenever Monty arrived at a party, the sedateness of the atmosphere would disappear and there would be a sudden livening up of young and old. Looking around the room he would sidle up to the oldest lady, perhaps an aunt or one old enough to be one, and make some unexpected comment like, “Is your husband good to you?” His remark would sound out of place in Tamil as the language does not lend itself to frivolous banter. Then as the music started playing, he would lift her almost bodily and wheel her on to the dance floor, guiding her to keep rhythm with him, and whispering in her ear, “Now your husband *will* be good to you.”

Monty loved singing Tamil songs. His repertoire consisted of no more than a few lines from three or four songs he had learnt at Tamil school. Some Saturday nights would find him squatted on the floor of his lounge, shoes off, his two fingers pushed into an empty match box, beating time to his vocal talent, on the back of a “*dekse*” (pot), as happy as any uninhibited, boisterous schoolboy. The performance would go on even in the presence of VIPs and dignitaries who visited Monty as the president of the Natal Indian Congress. Though bewildered at first, they would soon join in the spirit of the carefree

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



evening and would leave South Africa with an unforgettable memory of the “*jolly Indian leader*,” they had met in Natal.

His personal friends were drawn both from the movement and the larger community. The Naickers were very hospitable and their home was the scene of many happy parties, where the guests, after enjoying Marie’s cooking, would invariably form a ring and dance to improvised Zulu and Tamil songs.

Monty was a great protagonist of the “*club*” which meant for him a continuation of the good life he had lived in Edinburgh. Accordingly, he persuaded a group of 20 of his closest friends, to purchase a rambling cottage on two acres of land in Bellair. There in between going to prison, directing political campaigns and practising medicine, he relaxed, dancing and playing bridge.

The Naickers were very attached to their home in Percy Osborne Road. It was the first home Monty bought and he lived there with Marie, his children Vasugee and Kreesan and his father. The house was unpretentious, colonial in style, with a verandah on all sides where guests sat in wickerwork chairs cooling themselves in the summer heat. The dog Rinty (Rangasamy) would be sprawled in the doorway and it would be hop, skip and jump, if one wanted to go into the garden. No one ever heard him bark and Monty joked that Rinty would take a burglar to the safe, to get it over with quickly, and return to his sleep.

Dr K. Goonam

## **TASTE FOR THE EXOTIC<sup>6</sup>**

Monty had gourmet tastes, both for food and music, so out of the way as to startle some of his immediate associates. So it was when he produced *wudumbu* on the table and *thirukutu* on the stage.

*Wudumbu* is iguana. It is considered a rare delicacy served up as a curry. The reptile often found near rivers, was shot in the bush or the outskirts of Durban by a friend, and delivered to Monty, who was a good shot himself. It was duly presented to his guests with much fanfare. Marie refused to have anything to do with the reptile and in deference to her, it was prepared in the late S.S. Pather’s home. Most of his guests viewed this exotica with scepticism and kept their distance, but Monty and a few connoisseurs would settle down to it with relish. There was not a dignitary or a consul who was unacquainted with Monty’s rapturous declamations on *wudumbu*.

*Thirukutu* - the six foot dance was brought to the City Hall by Monty in the early fifties. This was the first and the last time that this dance graced that august hall. For months Monty raved about this great South Indian heritage. The entire Congress executive was

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

marshalled to honour this shining contribution to *Desi* excellence. *Thirukutu* was to be staged in all its purity. It was, but not in the purity Durban's sedate audience was accustomed to. The dancers from the sugar plantations of Mount Edgecombe ran riot on the City hall stage with their pornographic jokes and spontaneous time schedule. There was no restraining them as they nipped backstage for a cane spirit refresher, and reappeared, bawdier than ever, with the barroom jokes that raised the well groomed hair of the specially canvassed Durban gentry.

The Congress executive blushed, but Monty enjoyed the lusty brawl.

Fatima Meer

## MILESTONES

1910 - Birth of Mohambry (Monty) Naicker to Papiah Gangathura, a fruiterer, and Dhanamal, of Leopold Street, Durban.

1917-1926 - Attended the Carlisle Street Boys School, graduating from it with a junior school certificate.

1927 - Enrolled at Marine College and prepared for his Matric.

1928, March 10 - Left for Edinburgh to study medicine, enrolled at Skerrys Tutorial College where he prepared for the entrance exam to the Edinburgh University. Dr Goonam was a fellow student.

1929 - Admitted to the medical school of the Edinburgh University.

1930-34 - The years of the gay student who pursued social and sporting activities as earnestly as he did his studies. He became an executive member of the Edinburgh Indian Students' Association, edited its handbook and played in its lawn tennis, table tennis and cricket teams. He excelled in ballroom dancing and was very popular with the girls. He met Dr Yusuf Dadoo, a fellow student, during this time.

1934 - Awarded the M.B.Ch.B. degree of the University of Edinburgh and returned to South Africa.

1935 - Established medical practice in Short Street and founded the Hindu Youth Movement which concentrated on social and sporting activities. His medical practice attracted a large number of poor Indians, mainly from Magazine Barracks and he found himself becoming involved in their social and economic problems.

1936 - Married Mariemuthu Appavu of Port Elizabeth, in the Umgeni Road Temple, Durban.

1938 - Birth of daughter, Vasugee.

1940 - He joined the Liberal Study Group, a multi-racial organisation and became exposed to radical ideas. This group laid the foundations of his political orientation and provided him with a nucleus for his future political action.

1941-45 - He drew close to the Indian trade union movement and identified himself with a number of strikes.

1943 - He confronted General Smuts's Pegging Act, the first South African Act passed by the United Party Government imposing spatial segregation on the Indians of Natal. Following stringent reaction in India, this Act was modified into the Pretoria Agreement

in terms of which the then leaders of the Natal Indian Congress, A.I. Kajeer and P.R. Pather, undertook on behalf of the Indian people to accept residential segregation voluntarily in exchange for unhampered and free economic enterprise. Dr Naicker challenged the *bona fides* of this Agreement.

Birth of son Kreesan.

1944 - The Anti-Segregation Council was formed with Dr Naicker at its head, to organise the Indian people against segregation.

1943-45 - Dr Naicker built up mass Indian support for his programme of complete equality and forced the Natal Indian Congress, through a Supreme Court order, to hold the long overdue conference of the NIC.

1945 - The NIC held its general meeting at Curries Fountain, Durban. The existing officials failed to turn up, and an enthusiastic crowd of 12,000 unanimously voted Dr Naicker as head of the NIC

Dr Naicker called for a United Front of all South African democrats for the achievement of a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

1946 - The United Party Government passed the Indian Land Tenure and Representation Act, the forerunner of the Group Areas Act, imposing spatial segregation on Indians throughout the country.

March 31 - 6,000 people led by Monty Naicker marched in protest against the Act following a mass meeting addressed by Indian, African and Coloured speakers.

1946 – Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses launch passive resistance against the Asiatic (“Ghetto”) Act. Dr Naicker led the first batch of resisters occupying a plot of municipal land in Durban reserved for Whites.

The Government at first ignored the violation but when a group of Whites subjected the resisters to nightly assaults, the resisters were arrested. Dr Naicker was sentenced to imprisonment.

Marie Naicker, wife of Dr Naicker, led a resistance batch and was imprisoned for one month. By the end of the campaign 2,000 had defied segregation and suffered imprisonment.

Dr Dadoo gained control of the Transvaal Indian Congress and strengthened Dr Naicker’s leadership.

India, urged by the Natal Indian Congress, took up the issue of racial discrimination at the first session of the UN General Assembly and defeated General Smuts. The issue of

racism in South Africa became an annual UN issue thereafter and laid the foundation for the present international movement against racism in South Africa.

1947 – Drs Naicker and Dadoo, and Dr Xuma, president of the ANC, signed an agreement for joint co-operation between the Indian Congresses and the ANC.

Drs Dadoo and Naicker visited India and obtained official recognition from Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah. They attended the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi and held discussions with delegates of many countries.

1948, January - Passive Resistance entered its second phase. Dr Naicker led a batch of 15 resisters across the border into the Transvaal at Volksrust. He was sentenced to a further six months imprisonment.

September - The Nationalist Government confiscated the passports of Drs Naicker and Dadoo to prevent them from attending the third session of the UN General Assembly in Paris.

Dr Naicker was elected president of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC).

1949 - Violence broke out in Durban when impoverished and highly frustrated Africans were provoked to attack Indians following a rumour that the latter had killed an African lad.

Dr Naicker and his Congress worked in close co-operation with the ANC to restore calm and later when a commission of inquiry was appointed the two organisations jointly briefed council. They later withdrew from the commission when it ruled against their right to cross-examine witnesses.

1950 – The SAIC set up a Joint Consultative Committee with the ANC to plan a new resistance campaign.

1952 - Dr Naicker led the first resistance group in Natal in the Defiance of Unjust Laws campaign. He occupied a White waiting room and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

1953-54 - Dr Naicker threw himself behind the massive move to convene the Congress of the People.

1956 - Banned for three years.

1956, December - Dr Naicker together with 155 others, including the then president of the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli, was arrested for treason. The trial continued for three years.

1960 - Dr Naicker played a key role in planning a mass civil disobedience movement. The initiative was taken by the ANC and the PAC which called on Africans to revolt against the carrying of passes.

The Government retaliated by declaring a state of emergency. Dr Naicker was among the hundreds who were detained.

In Durban, the court found a technical fault in the detention order and the detainees were temporarily released. Dr Naicker and J.N. Singh were advised by the movement to work underground for the duration of the emergency.

Dr Naicker, disguised as a Muslim merchant, spent five months organising from the "underground".

1963 - Banned for five years.

1966 - Sentenced to imprisonment for breaking his banning order by sitting down to dinner with his daughter and his friend, Dr Alan Paton. All, save one week of the sentence was suspended.

He was finally forced to move out of his house in Percy Osborne Road in terms of the Group Areas Act. He had lived in that house for 20 years. Dr Naicker had refused to move out and had to be finally ejected. He had made no alternate plans and lived in hotels for a while before settling down in Asherville.

1968 - Served with another banning order.

1973 - His third banning order expired and his release from captivity was celebrated at the Vedic Hall by over a thousand jubilant supporters.

1974-75 - He supported local groups opposed to apartheid and spoke from their platforms.

1971 - He supported the students at the University of Durban-Westville in their protest against the June police shooting in Soweto.

1977 - He led the Anti-SAIC (South African Indian Council) and began a campaign to conscientise the people against government structured apartheid institutions.

1978, January - Died peacefully after a short illness at the St Aidens Mission Hospital.

Fatima Meer

## **SPEECH ON ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, OCTOBER 21, 1945<sup>7</sup>**

Dr G. M. Naicker, President, said that the Anti-Segregation Council candidates had been elected because the Kajee-Pather leadership had become outdated - it had left the Indian people to drift to disaster.

"We offer you our earnest desire to serve the community. We have no ambition for power. We decided to fight because we felt that your voice was not being heard. We repudiate the charge that we want to pit the poor against the rich. We hold no ill-will against anybody.

"We must mobilise all our strength to seek a better life... We are, after all, sons of South Africa; and all we want is to live as free citizens in a free world."

Continuing, Dr Naicker said that this was a great day for the members and officials of the Anti-Segregation Council.

"There comes a time in the life of the people when the opinion of the common people jumps ahead of those few who are in control and the man-in-the-street becomes wiser than the politician."

This was such a time in the life of the Indian community, he said.

"We will not dilly-dally with our demands. We will be bold, sensible and decisive. We will never compromise on our principles and we make it clear to the authorities that we will not go down on bended knees for crumbs. We want to live as men."

The policy of the new leadership could not possibly be broader, for it was based on national lines, Dr Naicker said. The new leaders would fight against any measure directed against the Indian people.

The immediate programme of the Congress would be: the demand for the unconditional repeal of the Pegging Act; the vetoing of the Natal Housing Ordinance; no

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<sup>7</sup> From *The Leader*, Durban, October 27, 1945

The candidates of the Anti-Segregation Council, led by Dr G. M. Naicker, were elected at a public meeting of over 7,000 people in Durban, as officials of the Natal Indian Congress. Dr Naicker succeeded A. I. Kajee as President.

The above is a report of his speech after the election.

segregation and no residential zoning; the removal of the provincial barriers, which were a stigma on the Indian people; adult suffrage for the Indian people; and free education for Indian children up to the Junior Certificate.

## **“LET ME LIVE - LETTER TO A EUROPEAN” : JUNE 1946<sup>8</sup>**

Dear friend,

I am addressing this letter to you in the hope that you would read it with sympathy and consideration. Indians have been in South Africa now for 85 years, and in the measure of their possibilities, they have contributed to the prosperity and development of the Union. As you are aware, they were asked to migrate from India, and towards the end of the last century, they were encouraged by the State to settle in South Africa and make this country their home. While they have remained loyal to the spiritual inheritance of their race, they have adjusted themselves to their local environment. They have adopted a Western way of life. They have only one ambition: to pool together with the rest of the community for the welfare of the country at large.

The cry was raised by some European public men that if the so-called Indian penetration was left unchallenged, the whole of Natal would be in the hands of the Indian. What is the factual position? Of the 8,000 acres in the old Borough<sup>9</sup> the Indians own 326 acres. As you know, there is a very acute housing problem for all sections. This shortage is more marked, when we come down to the lower income group. Over 85 % of the Indians in South Africa fall in this group. What has our City Council done to alleviate the position? The Council's expenditure on housing was £ 7-3-4 per head for Europeans and 17/6 per head for the Indian population. You are aware of the neglected condition of the Indian areas as far as elementary civic amenities are concerned.

It is suggested in some quarters that the presence of Indians in South Africa is a menace to the interest of the Europeans. This, I beg to say, is hardly a reasonable assumption. After all, our total population does not exceed quarter of a million. The wealth of this country, its productive capacity, its untapped resources are such that far from being an impediment in the way of the Europeans, the Indians can be of greater help in the further expansion of South Africa's fortunes. We are living in an age of economic expansion and, if things are carefully planned, there is no reason why there should not be enough for everybody. I am sure that if Indians were given civic rights, and the disabilities to which they are subjected were removed, the result would be highly beneficial not only to us, but at the same time to the Union of South Africa. The atmosphere of suspicion in which we are living is by no means conducive to a healthy state of mind.

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<sup>8</sup> From: Leaflet published by the Passive Resistance Council, Durban

<sup>9</sup> Of Durban



I have no doubt that many Europeans realise the justice of our claims. We have reached a turning-point in history. This is an epoch where in the words of Field Marshal Smuts, "humanity has struck its tents and was on the march." Some of our opponents may have spread the alarm that we wish to start a revolution in South Africa. This letter will, I hope, dispel any such apprehensions. I am confident that our Prime Minister who has justly earned an international fame for his genius in statesmanship, will find a solution to the Indian question, which will be acceptable to us all.

We are now appealing to the civilised conscience of the Europeans in South Africa, and we hope it will find an echo in their hearts.

Yours cordially,

Dr G. M. NAICKER,  
Chairman  
Passive Resistance Council

### **STATEMENT MADE IN COURT WHEN CHARGED WITH 46 OTHER PASSIVE RESISTERS UNDER RIOTOUS ASSEMBLIES ACT, JUNE 1946<sup>10</sup>**

I am a South African born Indian, peaceful citizen of this land. Recently Government has passed Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, 1946, which deprives my fellow countrymen and myself of certain basic elementary human rights. In protest to this unjust and inhuman law I have occupied land which Act debars me from. I am not challenging Durban City Council's ownership of land nor am I engendering hostility to any section of community....

### **"THREE DOCTORS' PACT," OR "JOINT DECLARATION OF COOPERATION"( BY DR A. B. XUMA, PRESIDENT OF THE**

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<sup>10</sup> From: Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Volume 84, p. 500.

Dr G. M. Naicker, President of the Natal Indian Congress and Chairman of the Passive Resistance Council, led the first batch of passive resisters in the Indian passive resistance movement of 1946-48. Others arrested with him included: Dr K. Goonam, Vice-President of NIC, M.D. Naidoo, Secretary of NIC, the Reverend Michael Scott and eight women.

**AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, DR G. M. NAICKER,  
PRESIDENT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, AND DR Y. M.  
DADOO, PRESIDENT OF THE TRANSVAAL INDIAN CONGRESS),  
MARCH 9, 1947**

This Joint Meeting between the representatives of the African National Congress and the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses, having fully realised the urgency of cooperation between the non-European peoples and other democratic forces for the attainment of basic human rights and full citizenship for all sections of the South African people, has resolved that a Joint Declaration of Cooperation is imperative for the working out of a practical basis of cooperation between the national organisations of the Non-European peoples.

This Joint Meeting declares its sincerest conviction that for the future progress, goodwill, good race relations, and for the building of a united, greater and free South Africa, full franchise rights must be extended to all sections of the South African people, and to this end this Joint Meeting pledges the fullest cooperation between the African and Indian peoples and appeals to all democratic and freedom-loving citizens of South Africa to support fully and cooperate in this struggle for:

- 1) Full franchise
- 2) Equal economic and industrial rights and opportunities and the recognition of African trade unions under the Industrial Conciliation Act
- 3) The removal of all land restrictions against non-Europeans and the provision of adequate housing facilities for all non-Europeans
- 4) The extension of free and compulsory education to non-Europeans
- 5) Guaranteeing freedom of movement and the abolition of Pass Laws against the African people and the provincial barriers against Indians
- 6) And the removal of all discriminatory and oppressive legislations from the Union's statute book.

This Joint Meeting is therefore of the opinion that for the attainment of these objects it is urgently necessary that a vigorous campaign be immediately launched and that every effort be made to compel the Union Government to implement the United Nations' decisions and to treat the Non-European peoples in South Africa in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

This Joint Meeting further resolves to meet from time to time to implement this Declaration and to take active steps in proceeding with the campaign.

**JOINT STATEMENT BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND DR Y. M.  
DADOO, MARCH 11, 1947<sup>11</sup>**

*(Dr Naicker and Dr Dadoo, Presidents of Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses, visited India in March 1947 to consult Indian leaders on the South African situation and to attend the Asian Relations Conference. They issued the following joint statement to the South African people on the eve of their departure from Johannesburg on March 11, 1947.)*

We carry with us the goodwill and the good wishes of the entire Indian community and the non-European peoples, and the progressive elements among the Europeans to the people of India.

We are leaving the shores of South Africa at a critical and decisive phase in her history. The Smuts Government has shown a bankruptcy in leadership in dealing with the acute post-war problems which confront both the white and non-white populations. The acute housing shortage has created a crying scandal. Thousands of homeless people amongst the Africans are forced to live in squatters' hell in sack shanties.

***Fostering race antagonism***

Instead of giving a strong lead on the decision of the United Nations, the Smuts Government is guilty of not only permitting but fostering race antagonism. This antagonism has begun to express itself in the boycott of Indian traders and the open propaganda of our vulgarly fascist bodies.

General Smuts is attempting to cover up the criminal failure of his Government to deal with the colour and post-war problems by riveting the attention of the people on the pomp and glamour of the Royal tour.

But this will be a temporary affair, and when the curtain goes down on the Royal visit, the chaos and confusion existing in South Africa will be exposed to the public gaze. Under the guise of the Royal visit, reactionaries in the Indian community are being rendered every assistance by the Union Government, with the sole purpose of attempting to divide the Indian people.

The Indian people must beware of this trap. We appeal to them to stand fast. Do not heed the counsel of despair. Render full support to the Passive Resistance Movement. Join up as volunteers. Help financially. History has entrusted you with the important task

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<sup>11</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, March 14, 1947

of being in the vanguard of the battle for democracy in South Africa.

### ***Historic meeting***

The historic joint meeting last Sunday between representatives of the African National Congress, representing the African people of South Africa, the Natal Indian Congress and the Transvaal Indian Congress, and the Joint Declaration ensuing therefrom, have paved the way for greater and closer cooperation between the African and the Indian people.

We hope that ere long the Coloured community too will come in, into this great movement.

### ***On to Freedom***

We appeal to the non-European people to come forward on the road to freedom. We appeal to all true democrats and men of goodwill in the European community to throw in their lot wholeheartedly on the side of progress. They can either through the extension of democratic rights to all South Africans go forward in step with the world democratic forces to a greater and happier South Africa and towards world peace or else allow the fascist forces in the country to lead us into racial antagonism, a totalitarian regime and war.

The battle for democracy is on!  
On to Freedom!  
*Au Revoir.*

## **MESSAGE ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT, JUNE 1947<sup>12</sup>**

A year ago we began our unequal struggle against the arrogant racist Government for democratic rights almost alone. A glorious chapter in the history of the Indian people has been written by the heroic sacrifices, massive enthusiasm and invincible spirit of our men and women from all walks of life. Today we are happy in the thought that in our struggle, which is the spearhead of the battle for fundamental human rights in the Continent of Africa, we have with us the United Nations, Great India, Greater Asia, and the progressive people of the world.

Here, in South Africa, we have as allies the oppressed African and Coloured masses with a band of courageous breed of men and women of the ruling class solidly behind us. Together we march for freedom. If the Indian people show the same indomitable spirit, the cold-blooded courage and the enthusiasm they have shown in the last twelve months

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<sup>12</sup> From: *The Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, June 12, 1947

then liberty is assured and victory is ours.

## **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, JUNE 1, 1947<sup>13</sup>**

*My dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends,*

It gives me a sense of very deep pleasure to be back among you again, back in time for this Conference, the first to be held under our new democratic constitution.

I know that most of you would wish me to give you a full account of my experiences in India but I cannot do that tonight. I must leave such a talk to a later date. However, I wish to give you the main political conclusions that Dr Dadoo and I have drawn from our tour. India approves of our struggle, and is against any form of surrender or talk of surrender. Every political party in India pledges us its full support. We were inspired not only by India's great leaders and national organisations to continue unswervingly along our path, but also by the fighting spirit of the masses of India, who everywhere greeted us with spontaneous enthusiasm and encouraged us to fight with increased vigour. Whatever internal differences may exist in India we found that the people and leaders were unanimous about their compatriots in South Africa.

Gandhiji told us that the *Satyagrahis* of South Africa should know that they have India behind them in their struggle for preserving the self-respect of Indians in South Africa.

Jinnah, after he had been given an outline of the position, said: "I believe and wholeheartedly sympathise in their struggle for a righteous cause. We have done all we could to help the Indians in South Africa and we wish we could do more to help them."

We were also fortunate enough to be able to have discussions with representatives from almost every country in Asia, and one and all assured us of their keen interest and active support.

Both India and the Asian leaders recognised that we in South Africa were not only fighting for our just rights but also to preserve the national honour and dignity of all Indians and Asians; and Dr Dadoo and I know that we spoke in your name when we made it clear to all that we would not flinch whatever the trials that fate may have in store for us.

When South Africa first insulted Asians and accorded them a lower status here, the

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<sup>13</sup> This was the first annual conference of the Natal Indian Congress under a new constitution adopted in December 1946.

Asian countries were weak, divided and oppressed by imperialism.

We were quick to notice a fundamental change in Asia. Despite temporary difficulties the old Asia is dead for all time and a mighty India and resurgent Asia is arising which will allow no country to trifle with her sons and daughters in other countries. Little does puny South Africa realise the rapidly growing strength of the mighty forces whose anger she is provoking. The whole Asian world is aglow with the determination never to submit meekly to race domination or imperialist exploitation.

### ***What Do We Indians Ask in South Africa?***

We are not here to make extravagant demands or to seek any privileges that are not our due. We are citizens of this country. We are taxed in the usual way. All we ask is to be given in return those rights which belong to all citizens in a democratic State. We are not foreigners. We are South Africans of Indian descent, in the same way as others are South Africans of English, European, or African descent. Nearly all of us were born in this country. Our fathers came here in the 1860's and after at the express desire of the then Government of Natal on the promise of rights "not a whit inferior" to those of the white man.

We do not accept the theory that just because our skin is darker than that of Europeans we should get inferior treatment, and should be relegated to the position of "drawers of water and hewers of wood". The world has just emerged from the greatest crisis of humanity in its fight against Nazism and Fascism, the supreme embodiments of the "herrenvolk ideology". Recognising that such ideas are bound to lead to further wars the nations of the world assembled at San Francisco, in framing the Charter of the United Nations, resolved categorically to ban racialism from the world, and all the members of the United Nations subscribed to the Charter prohibiting discrimination based on colour, race or creed.

South Africa in signing the Charter accepted the proviso and thus in effect agreed to the abolition of its colour bar policies. Notwithstanding her solemn world obligations, notwithstanding her repeated agreements with India, not only did she refuse to frame a programme for the gradual elimination of all such legislation but on the contrary introduced the "Ghetto" Act, thereby depriving the Indian community of fundamental human rights and imposing a policy of segregation.

The United Nations, after a careful and full examination of South Africa's conduct, decided by a two-thirds majority that South Africa and India should meet so as to bring the treatment of Indians in this country in accord with the United Nations Charter and in consonance with agreements between the two countries. In other words, the United Nations implicitly ruled that South Africa had violated the Charter, but that she be given an opportunity to remedy the situation.

We, the Indian people, stand by the UN's decision as the judgement of the highest tribunal in the world. We realise that the world is not only concerned about our treatment

but that it recognised that in South Africa's treatment of its non-Europeans generally were hidden the seeds of vast international conflicts. Just as the peoples of the world had refused to tolerate the racist ideas of Hitler, so the United Nations had agreed not to allow South Africa to menace world peace.

Can South Africa defy United Nations? We think not.

It would be wrong, of course, to give the impression that we demand our liberty by the sweep of the pen. That is not so. What we ask is first the unconditional repeal of the Ghetto Act. Secondly, a programme of progressive removal of all the laws that place Indians in an inferior position.

### ***Why Should South Africa Refuse to Grant us our Rights?***

South Africa is a member of the World Parliament where she works with delegates of all nations including Indians, Asians, and other non-Europeans. She has never objected to this arrangement and has not demanded that in the interests of "White Civilisation", non-white countries should be debarred from membership because their overwhelming number will swamp the United Nations and finally force the world to follow an "Eastern policy." Then why should she not apply the same principles in this country and allow non-Europeans free and equal representation? If South African soldiers did not object to fighting side by side with Indians and other Asians to overthrow Nazism, why should South African citizens object to working together with all the inhabitants of this country to defeat the real enemy - poverty, hunger, unemployment, lack of housing, disease, crime and so on.

We reject all arguments based on the inability of Indians to have the same culture, understanding and standard of living as the Europeans. Such arguments are specious, untruthful and unscientific, and are based completely on the refuted Nazi ideology. We can thus come to only one conclusion - that the Government is not anxious to deal fairly in the matter but for its own purposes, namely, those of protecting European vested interests, it is prepared to allow South Africa to degenerate into the undesirable position that Germany finds herself in today.

There is no justifiable reason at all for one community to try to live on the exploitation of other communities. South Africa is a large country with a small population and vast resources. There is plenty of room for all, wealth for all and work for all provided we do away with artificial barriers and give every person the opportunities of full self-development and the right of equal participation in the building up of South Africa's vast potential.

Once the standard of living of all South Africa's populations is raised, and with the removal of the fears of unemployment, together with the supplying of adequate food and housing, racialism will disappear. But if the process is reversed and if our common problems and dangers are forgotten, to be replaced by an orgy of race baiting and race hatred, then this country will be dragged towards an abyss; and not the least to suffer will

be the Europeans themselves as they can never hope to enjoy the fruits of democracy by allowing non-Europeans to live in poverty and disease.

The colour bar is recognised by thinking men and women in South Africa of all colours to be the greatest barrier to industrial and agricultural development, in the same way as slavery was to America in the middle of the last century. Our policy, therefore, far from being impractical, is the only real and lasting solution if South Africa is to avoid a devastating economic and political crisis in the near future.

Nor is our policy in any way anti-European. We know that the fundamental interests of both Europeans and Indians (and other peoples) of this country are the same. We stand for friendship with the European community, but such friendship can only be won on the basis of equal status for all - not on the basis of race inequalities.

### ***Smuts Government and the United Nations Decision***

After the United Nations decision the Passive Resistance Council decided to continue passive resistance in token form in order to give the Government an opportunity of translating it into reality.

We regret to note that the Government has failed to observe a proper sense of responsibility following the last Assembly of the United Nations and has encouraged the belief among the electorate that its decisions may be ignored with impunity. The reactionaries immediately went ahead with attempts to terrorise the Indian community and the Government itself connived at the boycott of Indian traders, hoping thus to force the merchant class into panic. But it has only succeeded in driving the leaders of appeasement out of their hiding places. It must also be admitted that due entirely to the Government's refusal to reveal the true implications of the United Nations resolution to the Europeans there has been a deterioration in relations between the two communities.

There can be no doubt, however, that the Prime Minister is greatly troubled by the thought of the next meeting of the United Nations General Assembly and is not as comforted as he was by his "powerful friends."

It is clear that the South African Government desires a Round Table Conference with India, but only in the hope that some compromise agreement can be arrived at.

Realising that your Congress would not collaborate in destroying the aspirations of the Indian people, the Government has inspired the formation of a "Natal Indian Organisation" in the time-honoured imperialist tradition of divide and rule. The indecent haste with which General Smuts has recognised this organisation reveals the ineptitude of his tactics. Aptly has Sir Syed Reza Ali castigated it as an "unholy alliance" between a small section of "big Indian money in the Union and General Smuts."

The representative voice of the Indian people of Natal, however, is to be found in no other place than in this, the largest Assembly of accredited delegates of the province's



Indian community. It is always available to the Prime Minister and in his need he should seek it, if he sincerely desires an understanding with our people. He must be warned that the substitutes sought elsewhere are valueless.

### *Summary*

To summarise: We stand for a Round Table Conference to be held within the framework of the United Nations resolution. We are not anti-European. We are the friends of all the peoples of this country.

We expect that the Ghetto Act will be unconditionally withdrawn, and that steps will be taken to remove the other disabilities against us.

We stand also for the removal of disabilities imposed on the Africans and all other races amongst us and at all times we shall assist them in their struggle.

We stand for non-European cooperation as the best means of waging a struggle for the full implementation of the rights of all peoples of South Africa. We regard the signing of our agreement with Dr Xuma as a historic development in the cooperation of our two peoples.

All of India is perhaps more pleased with this achievement than with all our other steps to date. Just as we shall never rest till we are freed so shall we work till all the non-Europeans get equal treatment.

To all who think that we are not strong enough to continue the struggle we say: With 8,000,000 out of 10,000,000 organised in a determined struggle, supported by India and Asia, and the rest of the peace-loving peoples of the world, we must win, just as all the countries of Europe and Asia raising aloft the proud banner of freedom and revealing an unconquerable spirit are winning through to independence.

## **SPEECH REPORTING ON VISIT TO INDIA, DURBAN, JUNE 1947<sup>14</sup>**

...Delegates from 32 countries of Asia sat shoulder to shoulder to participate in the historic conference which was a momentous demonstration of the unity of Asia's freedom-loving people...

The wholehearted response to the invitation of India from all the people of resurgent Asia and the unqualified success of the Conference was the manifestation of the indomitable urge for freedom, culture, unity and strength. It was a challenge to dying and

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<sup>14</sup> These extracts were read by the prosecutor in the treason trial of 1956-61, and are taken from the Treason Trial Transcript, pages 3729-32.

tottering imperialism. It was a friendly but firm warning to the warmongering imperialists that the people of mighty Asia are awake and are not only not going to tolerate any form of exploitation in Asia, but they are going to extend their strong arm of help wherever there is a struggle for democracy and justice...

Whether it was the women's movement, the status of women, labour problems, racial problems, agricultural reconstruction, industrial development, or transition from colonial to national economy, when any item on the agenda was discussed the delegates went straight to the root of the problem which, when unearthed in each case, was found to be imperialism. And they decided unanimously that as a prerequisite to progress this decaying root must be pulled out and hurled into the dust bin of history...

We took the opportunity of meeting and discussing our problems and struggle with delegates of Tibet, Nepal and Soviet Socialist Asiatic Republics from the North, delegates from China and Malaya from the East, delegates from Ceylon in the South and delegates from Egypt, Iran and Arab League in the West, with delegates fresh from the trenches, the battle-scarred patriots of Indonesia and Vietnam. This is a reminder to us that Freedom must be won and cannot come as a gift.

The enthusiastic way in which they listened to our problems and those of other oppressed countries and their inspiring message and the promise of renewed support for our cause was at first embarrassing. And in the words of His Excellency Azzam Pasha, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, "The Arab League needs no thanks for the part they have played in supporting the Indians' case at the United Nations. The Arab League will always support any struggle for just and democratic rights as the Arab League stands for human brotherhood, democracy, justice and peace."

During our short stay in our Motherland we travelled extensively from West to East and South to North. We met and discussed our problems with the people of British India, people of the states, with the princes, with leaders of trade unions, members of the Interim Government, Pandit Nehru, Mahatmaji, Jinnah, leaders of the Communist Party and the Chamber of Commerce, with industrialists, students and the All India Women's Conference... In our ears still ring their determined and passionate promise to give us all possible help in our unequal battle for fundamental rights...

Our struggle - not merely a struggle for fundamental rights of the Indian minority in South Africa but a spearhead of the struggle of the oppressed people against the establishment of this Master plan...

A year ago we assembled here and took a solemn pledge to sacrifice and suffer for our freedom. Then we were alone. India was under the heel of imperialism.

Today we are assembled to renew our pledge and we can do so with greater determination and courage - for we have India on the verge of complete freedom and with a promise of the 32 Asiatic countries, the USSR and the rest of the progressive world to support our just struggle. We have since translated the growing desire for unity

among the various sections of the oppressed people here into reality.

Today we have to pledge with cold-blooded courage and determination that we will rather stand on our legs and fight and die if need be than grovel on our knees and live for the crumbs that may fall to us. There can only be one answer that you can give and that is:

"WE SHALL RESIST"

### **SMUTS REFUTED: JOINT STATEMENT BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND DR Y. M. DADOO, AUGUST 1947<sup>15</sup>**

We, the Presidents of the Natal and Transvaal Congresses, representing the overwhelming majority of the Indian community in both provinces, welcome and fully support the stand taken by Pandit Nehru on behalf of South African Indians on the question of negotiations between India and South Africa.

We have implicit faith in both the Governments of India and Pakistan to champion our cause vigorously and adopt firm measures to obtain justice and democratic rights for South African Indians in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

We reluctantly but justifiably deplore the attitude adopted by General Smuts in his letter of June 18 to Pandit Nehru. It is a deliberate misstatement of facts on the part of Smuts, who had full knowledge of the true position, to state: "Groups representing all classes of Indians are dissatisfied with the conduct of the affairs by the Natal Congress, whose leadership was under an ideological influence of which they disapproved and whose approach they consider harmful to Indian interests."

These are the facts:

1. The Natal Indian Congress can boast a membership of 35,000 out of a total of 228,000 Indians in Natal. The officials are elected at properly constituted public meetings and enjoy the fullest confidence of the overwhelming mass of Indians in Natal. These facts have been demonstrated at dozens of mass meetings attended by as many as 10,000 to 12,000 Indians who wholeheartedly endorsed the policy of Congress.

2. The struggle for democratic rights has never been influenced by ideological conceptions. The battle is waging against the racist tendencies of the Government

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<sup>15</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, August 28, 1947

which denies Indians who are South African nationals: (a) the rights of citizenship; (b) freedom of movement; (c) freedom of residence; (d) freedom to purchase land; and (e) equality of opportunity in the economic and educational spheres.

The "group representing all classes" referred to by the Prime Minister is no other than a handful of discredited individuals styling themselves the Natal Indian Organisation. This so-called organisation, which claims to represent the views of the Indian people, came into being at a secret meeting a few months ago, behind closed doors guarded by officers of the C.I.D. supplied by the Government. This handful of disgruntled individuals danced to the tune of the Prime Minister and indulged in flirtations with him while delicate correspondence affecting the future of Indians was going on between the two Governments.

In Parliament, Smuts frankly admitted that he did not know how many Indians this "group representing all classes" represented.

In the Transvaal, where there is a population of 37,000 Indians, the Transvaal Indian Congress is the only organisation representing all sections of the Indians. Its officials, like those of the Natal Congress, are democratically elected at mass meetings attended by 10,000 out of the total of 37,000 persons, and the present policy enjoys the wholehearted support of the mass of the Indians. The leadership amongst Transvaal Indians remains unchallenged.

Yet Smuts has the impertinence to tell the Government of India that his obstinacy in refusing to hold discussions on the basis of the United Nations decision is backed by a considerable volume of responsible Indian opinion in South Africa.

We challenge this statement.

In his long career as a South African statesman, Smuts has stooped on many occasions to methods far from honourable, but his latest action in using the very name of the people concerned in support of his attempt to evade the decision of the World Assembly will remain the grossest misrepresentation ever made by the Prime Minister of a country.

**CALL FOR RENEWED STRUGGLE AGAINST GHETTO ACT:  
JOINT STATEMENT BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND DR Y. M.  
DADOO, DECEMBER 1947<sup>16</sup>**

The Joint Passive Resistance Council of the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses,

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<sup>16</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, December 11, 1947

having given careful consideration to the present political situation affecting the Indian people of South Africa is of the view that a restatement of the position is necessary in the light of recent developments.

Since the advent of the Indians in this country the first positive struggle to stem the tide of unjust and anti-Indian racial laws was the Passive Resistance Campaign of the 1906-1914 period under Mahatma Gandhi.

The intervening period of 32 years has been characterised by a futile policy of hat-in-hand negotiations in defence of the fast-dwindling rights of the Indian people; a policy which has enabled the Union Government to introduce measure after measure of racially discriminatory legislation culminating in the nationally ruinous "Ghetto Act" now strangulating Indian economic life, social progress and political aspirations.

Last year saw the beginning of the second Passive Resistance struggle.

For the last 17 months the Indian people of South Africa have waged with success a historic and heroic campaign. At the Gale Street plot they demonstrated their unalterable opposition to the Ghetto Act. The Union Government gaoled nearly 2,000 men and women. Hooliganism, wholesale arrests, harsh terms of imprisonment and organised boycott of Indian traders failed to crush the spirit and will of the Indian people. The policy of repression has not availed the Government. In its dilemma the Government has now resorted to non-arrest tactics. At Gale Street, Passive Resistance has won a victory.

### ***United Nations decision inviolate***

The intransigent attitude of the South African Government has compelled India to sever diplomatic relations, to apply economic sanctions and to indict South Africa before the United Nations.

Last year the United Nations condemned South Africa's racial policies. She was asked to report to the 1947 session the steps taken to obviate the complaint. South Africa did not implement the decision.

That decision remains inviolate until upset by another two-thirds majority. This year the Assembly's decision, as expressed in the Indian resolution, though carried by a 31 votes to 19 majority, lacks the force of a binding decision, owing to a procedural technicality; it nevertheless constitutes a majority opinion of the United Nations. It called upon South Africa to convene a Round Table Conference between itself and the Governments of India and Pakistan. The Union Government must, therefore, note :

(a) That world opinion has not changed. As in the 1946 session, the 1947 session of the United Nations General Assembly has exposed it to universal condemnation. Not one delegate was found who could defend racial persecution in South Africa.

(b) That the most practical method by which measures may be inaugurated that

could lead to a solution of the conflict remains a Round Table Conference between the Governments of India, Pakistan and South Africa.

(c) That the responsibility for convening such a conference now rests upon South Africa. Failure to discharge this responsibility may not only lead to more emphatic action by the next Assembly of the United Nations but possibly invite measures even earlier by the 31 nations who voted for the resolution, and more particularly by the Asian peoples.

*No rest*

On the international plane and within South Africa, the struggle has made tremendous advances.

The non-European peoples of South Africa have seen demonstrated the significance of non-violent resistance against the power and influence of a State based on white supremacy. But the Ghetto Act remains on the statute books of South Africa. Final victory has yet to be won.

There can be no rest for the Indian people. Our faith and confidence in the courage and determination of the people remains as strong as ever. We shall occupy the Gale Street.

We shall occupy other areas. We shall adopt other methods of struggle. We shall continue to resist till our goal is reached.

**STATEMENT IN COURT BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND DR Y. M. DADOO, WHEN CHARGED WITH AIDING AND ABETTING UNDER THE IMMIGRANTS REGULATION ACT OF 1913, FEBRUARY 26, 1948<sup>17</sup>**

*Your Worship,*

We are charged with the offence of contravening Section 20 (r) of the Act No. 22 of 1913 in that we did wrongfully and unlawfully aid or abet certain Asiatic persons in entering the province of the Transvaal from Natal knowing that the said persons were prohibited in terms of Section 4 (a) read with the Minister's Minutes of the 1st August, 1913, from so entering.

We would like to deal first with the Minister's Minute of the 1st August, 1913.

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<sup>17</sup> The statement was read by Dr Naicker.

It is our submission to the Court that the said Minute which deems the entire Indian community on economic grounds to be unsuited to the requirements of any particular province of the Union is not in keeping with the spirit, if not the letter, of the said Section 4 (a) of the Act No. 22 of 1913. It is inconceivable that the legislators in empowering the Minister to deem "any person or class of persons on economic grounds or on account of standard or habits of life to be unsuited" could have in mind deeming a whole community with varying economic groupings or differing habits of life to be unsuited. It is therefore reasonable to presume that the then Minister exceeded his powers in deeming the whole Indian community to be unsuited. In this contention we are fortified by the dissenting judgement of the learned Justice Rose-Innes in the case of *Rex vs. Padsha* (A.D.) 1923.

Or alternatively, we submit Your Worship, that if any such grounds existed in the year 1913, no such grounds exist in this year 1948. During the passage of thirty-five years, since the Deeming Order was issued by the Minister, the Indian community of South Africa, despite the very limited field of opportunity allowed it by scores of restrictive laws, has made an officially recognised contribution to the economic development of this country.

In this regard, the Union Government in the Agreement concluded with the Government of India in the year 1927, known as the Cape Town Agreement, "recognises that Indians domiciled in the Union are prepared to conform to Western standards of life, should be enabled to do so." By virtue of these recognitions, the Minister's Minute of 1913 is rendered obsolete and out-of-date and can have no bearing today on the intention of the legislators in framing sub-section 4 (a) of the said Act.

Now returning to the charge of aiding and abetting, we submit, Your Worship, that our only offence is that of putting into practical effect the assertion of the Union Prime Minister, General Smuts, made so forcefully before the 1946 session of the United Nations Assembly, that South African Indians are Union nationals. This assertion was reiterated by the Minister of Interior, Mr H. G. Lawrence, at the 1947 session. If we are Union nationals, then it is but reasonable and in accordance with natural justice to exercise the most elementary right of citizenship, that of freedom of movement within the boundaries of one's country of birth. Any denial of such basic human rights would only make a mockery of democracy and democratic principles.

The crossing of the provincial borders in wilful defiance of Act 22 of 1913 constitutes the second phase of the Passive Resistance struggle which is being conducted by the Indian community under the aegis of the Joint Passive Resistance Council of the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946, the Ghetto Act.

During the last 20 months over two thousand gallant men and women resisters of all races have courted imprisonment. They preferred to suffer the rigours of gaol life rather than submit to unjust and undemocratic laws.

Your Worship, it is in this great cause and noble struggle that we call upon volunteers

to cross the border and bear the penalty of the law. We consider it an honour to do so.

The Passive Resistance struggle which we are conducting is based on truth and non-violence. It is associated with the name of one of the greatest men of all time, Mahatma Gandhi, on whose death in tragic circumstances just a few weeks ago, the whole world wept. Among the millions of men who paid their last tribute to this great soul was Field Marshal Smuts, the Prime Minister of South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi was the father of our struggle. Gandhiji too defied the unjust laws of South Africa and suffered imprisonment during the 1906-1914 Passive Resistance Campaign.

This is the man whom Field Marshal Smuts referred to as a "Prince among men." This is the man - the pilot of India's march to freedom - who is the source of inspiration of our just struggle for democratic rights in South Africa.

This struggle of the Indian community against the Ghetto Act of 1946, against the provincial barriers and against racial discrimination of all kinds is part and parcel of the struggle of the whole non-European and democracy-loving peoples of South Africa to turn this country into a genuine democratic State in which our multi-racial population will live and work in harmony.

It is in view of these considerations that we are pleading guilty to the charge. We are willing to bear the full penalty of the law. Our bodies may be incarcerated but our spirits cannot be crushed. It is the spirit of freedom which lives in the hearts of the oppressed. It is the spirit which seeks to do away with racial discrimination and *herrenvolkism*. It is the spirit - deep-rooted in the heart of every non-European, generating the urge for a better life. It is the spirit that alone can deliver the people from colour bondage in South Africa and make this land a happier place for the generations to come.

*We Shall Resist.*

**SPEECH AT MASS WELCOME MEETING IN DURBAN ON THE  
RELEASE OF DR G. M. NAICKER, DR GOONAM AND R. A.  
PILLAY FROM PRISON, JULY 1948<sup>18</sup>**

"Our struggle has lit fire in the hearts of other oppressed peoples and unshackled their bonds to unite with all oppressed people of South Africa. We have reached a stage when we can no longer think in terms of the Indian people alone. We must form a United Democratic Front and challenge any force that will lead the land of our birth to the fate of

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<sup>18</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, July 16, 1948



fascist Germany or Japan...”

Dr Naicker said that he was very proud to see after two years of struggle such solid unity of the people still present. "We are living in a most memorable era in the history of this country. There is conflict between justice and injustice, between truth and the naked evil forces."

Referring to the results of the general election he said that the electorate is not to be blamed for Nationalist victory.<sup>19</sup> Smuts and his party are to be blamed for they, like the Nationalists, played on the colour bogey instead of giving a clear lead to the country. They have instilled in the minds of the electorate the feeling that their future depends on the oppression of non-Europeans. Therefore the electorate had voted for the party that can best oppress non-Europeans.

In approving the Joint Passive Resistance Council's decision to temporarily suspend resistance whilst the interview with the Government is pending, he stated that the Joint Council wants to obtain an unequivocal statement before declaring to the people its line of action.

"Our struggle has lifted to the international plane our grievances against injustice. The majority of the nations present at the United Nations Organisation strongly condemned the fascist tendency of the Government. Today all the Eastern countries are behind us.

"On the home front we have to steel and prepare ourselves. It is for us to dedicate ourselves to humanity. I have faith in you and the world has faith in our struggle."

**“INDIA'S STEP MOST TIMELY”: JOINT STATEMENT BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND DR Y. M. DADOO ON THE DECISION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO RAISE THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, JULY 1948<sup>20</sup>**

The Indian people of South Africa welcome this step on the part of the Government of India as being most opportune and timely in view of the present political situation in South Africa.

South Africa can ill afford to incur the hostility of two great countries like India and Pakistan. On the other hand, friendly relations with them can be a great boon to the economic welfare of this country.

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<sup>19</sup> The Nationalist Party, espousing apartheid, won the elections in May 1948.

<sup>20</sup> From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, July 23, 1948

The Indian people of South Africa hope that the Union Government will act in terms of the United Nations Assembly's resolution and bring about an honourable solution of the Indian question, failing which they hope that the United Nations will act with dispatch on the recommendations proposed by the Government of India in the interests of relations between the Union of South Africa and the Governments of India and Pakistan, and in the interests of world peace.

## **TELEGRAM TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA, JULY 1948**

PRIME MINISTER  
INDIAN GOVERNMENT  
CONSTITUENT HOUSE  
NEW DELHI

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS DRAWS YOUR URGENT ATTENTION TO UNDEMOCRATIC AND UNWARRANTED ACTION OF UNION GOVERNMENT IN REFUSING PASSPORT AND PREVENTING DOCTORS Y M DADOO AND G M NAICKER PRESIDENTS OF TRANSVAAL AND NATAL INDIAN CONGRESSES FROM ATTENDING FORTHCOMING SESSION UNITED NATIONS. CONGRESS SATISFIED THIS UNPRECEDENTED ATTACK ON CIVIL LIBERTIES OF INDIAN PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA IS DELIBERATE AND CALCULATED ATTEMPT BY UNION GOVERNMENT TO STIFLE AND BLACK OUT ANY ADVERSE EXPRESSION BY VOTELESS VOICELESS INDIAN COMMUNITY WHO TODAY SUBJECT TO OPPRESSION OF MOST REACTIONARY GOVERNMENT THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS EVER KNOWN. BY THIS ACT ALONE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN HOLLOWNESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRACY REVEALED FASCIST TENDENCIES AND HAS FLAGRANTLY VIOLATED FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF UN CHARTER. THIS UNJUST ACT IN ITSELF WILL NULLIFY THE REPRESENTATIONS OF UNION DELEGATION AND NO AMOUNT SPECIAL PLEADING BY MESSRS TE WATER AND ERIC LOUW CAN CAMOUFLAGE TRUE CONDITIONS OF OPPRESSED NON-EUROPEAN PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA DOCTOR NAICKER PRESIDENT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

## **“WHAT I OWE TO MAHATMA GANDHI”: AN ARTICLE, SEPTEMBER 16, 1948<sup>21</sup>**

I was eight years old when Gandhiji left South Africa. I could not understand then the

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<sup>21</sup> From: Chandrashanker Shukla (ed.) *Reminiscences of Gandhiji*. Bombay: Vora & Co., Publishers, Ltd., 1951.

intricacies of politics or the meaning of the struggle which for two decades he had to wage against the authorities, but I have a very distinct recollection of the image that was stamped upon my young mind of the national hero whose name was a household word among the Indian community. I faintly realised in those early days the powers of the simple man who was to achieve in the fullness of time such miracles as even in their heyday warriors like Napoleon could only dream of. As the years went by I was able to assess the full power of the weapon of *satyagraha* which Gandhiji had perfected during his career as a public man in South Africa. When I reached the age of reason I began to make a deep study of the writings of Gandhiji, and although I became an adherent of his great principles, little did I think that it would fall to my lot to take up the flaming torch he had left behind. I was scarcely prepared for such a task; I did not feel inclined to be in the forefront of the struggle that began half a century ago. Yet when the call came, the response in me was instantaneous. It was the voice of Mahatma Gandhi calling for action. Without any preparation, without any experience, without the slightest hesitation, I threw myself into the battle. With faith undiminished in the righteousness of the cause we had espoused, I became, with thousands of my fellow-countrymen a *satyagrahi*. I made the vow of reaching the goal that we had in view, no matter what sacrifice was demanded of us.

Two years ago when I was locked up in the prison of Newcastle, I spent my time reading *My Experiments With Truth*<sup>22</sup>. I had read this book many times before, but inside the prison walls the words came to have a different meaning for me. It was in Newcastle that he started his epic march with thousands of men, women and children; and somehow I felt that I too was in the crowd that marched past across the Transvaal border in serried ranks. I said to myself that, if only the spirit that animated our people in those days could once again be mobilised, how nearer would we all be to the goal! It was true that Mahatma Gandhi was now in India and not in South Africa, but did it really make any difference? Had we not promised to be pure *satyagrahis*? And whether the master was in our midst or engaged in a bigger struggle elsewhere, we had to show the mettle of our pasture. It is to the credit of the South African Indians that in 1946, when we decided to take up the challenge, Gandhiji sent his blessings from India. I knew an intense moment in the struggle when I was sent to Pietermaritzburg gaol. Thirty-three years before, this prison had the privilege of holding an august prisoner: Mahatma Gandhi. It was here that Gandhiji made a pair of sandals which he presented to General Smuts. The time for personal contact with the great leader had now arrived. I decided to fly to Wardha with Dadoo, in order to receive more precise guidance in regard to future plans.

Never before was my soul so wrapt in joy. I had come into the breach with a very warm heart, but the pleasure I felt then was of a different kind. It was the joy one feels in doing one's duty. But to be with Mahatma Gandhi was like the vision of a dream. I was not going to meet a stranger. His teachings had become part and parcel of my life. His autobiography had been my Bible, and in my leisure time I have been reading it over and over again. Yet to meet one's hero in flesh and blood was to be such a noble experience. During my airborne voyage to Karachi and Patna and then by train to Harla in Bihar,

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<sup>22</sup> The autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi

where Bapuji had proceeded to stop the rising tide of a communal conflict, how many thoughts crossed my mind! I imagined flying to those regions where live only the choicest souls of the earth. When Dadoo and I arrived at Harla station, we were told that Gandhiji was putting up in a village a few miles away. The news of our arrival had preceded us, and we heard that Bapu was waiting for us. We were to have the privilege of being in audience with him for the whole day.

We were ushered in his room by Mridula Sarabhai. Gandhiji was sitting cross-legged with the spinning wheel in front of him. It was a quiet place. It appeared that we were the only visitors of the day. We had come to meet the Father of the Indian Nation, and the welcome we received was naturally that of a dear father to his affectionate children. We were in the presence of a king among men, and in an instant we felt the glamour of royalty in the house. We will never forget the warm smile which lighted upon both of us - the smile of the hero we had loved and admired for thirty years.

"Do you speak Gujarati, Naicker?" he enquired. I had to confess my ignorance of this language. "I understand your difficulties," he replied. "Besides your own Tamil, you have to study English, and therefore there is not much time left for other languages. Right, let us now do some talking."

We gave him an account of the progress of the struggle, and were quite surprised to find that, in the midst of his multifarious activities, he had found time to keep in touch with the latest developments of our *satyagraha* movement. Speaking for myself, he certainly knew more of South Africa and its problems than I could boast of! We discussed every phase of the struggle, and at every point he intervened with observations that had the effect of illuminating the subject. Throughout our talk he kept on emphasising the central lesson of the *satyagraha* movement. He asked us always to remember that non-cooperation was not the weapon of those who found a shelter in a negative attitude of life; it was a most positive action leading straight to success if the principles were not compromised on the way. India recovered her freedom by clinging to the principles of non-violence. South African Indians, he said, would see the milky way, if they followed the example of the mother country. He also advised patience. Success never comes in a flood, he said. He was particularly glad to know that even the children in South Africa had done their part in the latest struggle. He asked us to give his blessings to all of them. The long session was coming to an end. The gentle voice of Mridula Sarabhai announced that it was the scheduled time for rest, and it was not for Bapu to say 'no'. When we took leave of him he asked us to come again after we had completed our tour in India.

When we met for the second time, after six weeks, he was the guest of Dr Syed Mahmud in Patna. From his rooms, across the wide lawns, we could see the beautiful banks of the holy Ganges. We reached the place long after the time which is normally scheduled for visitors and interviews, but Bapuji, in his great kindness, decided to see us. He was eager to know the response we had met from the various leaders in India, and he was glad to learn that everywhere we had received enthusiastic assistance. The plan of our campaign was drawn up by him personally. We were going away with his blessings,

and this made our work all the more easy. He invited us to walk with him on the lawn, and while walking we gave him an account of our meetings all over India. At dusk we parted. He was good enough to enquire about our sleeping arrangements. "Will you sleep out in the open?" he asked. We answered in the affirmative. Before we separated Dadoo asked Babu if we could attend his first prayer meeting. "Yes," he said, "if you can afford to be up at four."

We were feeling the strain of our various journeys throughout India. The climate also contributed to our fatigue. Babu's doubt about our early rising was fully justified. We had a sound sleep, and we were only awakened by the hearty laugh of Gandhiji, when he saw us in our beds after he had finished not only the four o'clock prayer but his half an hour's walk. Leaping over our bed, he asked us in that affectionate voice, which I can scarcely describe, if we had a good sleep.

By his death, Gandhiji came nearer to us. It is not in a spirit of mourning that we must honour the memory of the great departed. It is our pride and our delight that he was born on Indian soil. It will be our privilege to follow his teachings. In the realisation that our outlook will be informed by his ideals lies the hope of the whole Indian race. Let us strive so that his message may find practical application in the heart of all mankind.

Durban  
16-9-1948

### **TELEGRAM TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, PARIS, OCTOBER 1948<sup>23</sup>**

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS BEHALF QUARTER MILLION UNION INDIANS SENDS SINCEREST GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES UNITED NATIONS DELEGATES ASSEMBLED AT THIRD ANNUAL SESSION IN PARIS. THE COMMON PEOPLE OF THE WORLD LOOK TO UNITED NATIONS TO PRESERVE PEACE IN TROUBLED WORLD AND SAFEGUARD THEIR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS. BEHALF SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS PLEASE CONVEY FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO UNITED NATIONS AND HEADS OF DELEGATIONS ASSEMBLED AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY QUOTE INDIAN PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA APPRECIATE THE ACTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN DELIBERATING ON THE DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF INDIAN NATIONALS OF SOUTH AFRICA FOR THE PAST TWO SESSIONS. THEY NOTE WITH REGRET THE FAILURE OF ANY EFFECTIVE MEASURE TO BRING THE TREATMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER AND THUS END A

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<sup>23</sup> The telegram was sent by Dr Naicker as President of South African Indian Congress.  
From: *Passive Resister*, Johannesburg, October 8, 1948

SITUATION WHICH HAS NOT ONLY BROUGHT UNTOLD SUFFERINGS TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY BUT HAS ALSO IMPAIRED FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS NAMELY INDIA AND PAKISTAN ON THE ONE SIDE AND THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA ON THE OTHER.

THEY THEREFORE URGENTLY APPEAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS THAT IN ORDER TO MAKE THE CHARTER A REALITY; TO PREVENT FURTHER IMPAIRMENT OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN MEMBER STATES; TO END RACIAL STRIFE AND BITTERNESS WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA; TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE THE DEMOCRATIC WAY OF LIFE; TO PREVENT RACIAL CONFLAGRATION WHICH MAY THREATEN THE PEACE OF THE WORLD; AND TO INSPIRE FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED NATIONS AS AN EFFECTIVE BODY FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES AND TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE ITS OWN PRESTIGE COMMA IT ASSERTS AT ITS FORTHCOMING SESSION IN PARIS ITS AUTHORITY AS EMBODIED IN THE CHARTER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO EFFECT AN IMMEDIATE LASTING AND SATISFACTORY SOLUTION IN THE INTEREST OF PEACE AND DEMOCRACY.

**TELEGRAM TO MRS MARGARET BALLINGER, M.P., JUNE 6,  
1950<sup>24</sup>**

MRS BALLINGER  
PARLIAMENT  
CAPE TOWN

DOCTOR DONGES<sup>25</sup> STATEMENT THAT INDIA AND PAKISTAN DELEGATES AT TRIPARTITE TALKS FEBRUARY CAPETOWN HAD BEEN INFORMED INTRODUCTION GROUP AREAS BILL REFUTED BY ALL INDIA RADIO AND SAPA<sup>26</sup> MESSAGE FROM NEW DELHI. PLEASE ELICIT EXPLANATION FROM MINISTER AND ASCERTAIN WHETHER GOVERNMENT PREPARED PRECIPITATE BREAK DOWN ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE BY PROCEEDING WITH BILL

DOCTOR NAICKER PRESIDENT SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

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<sup>24</sup> Member of Parliament representing African voters

<sup>25</sup> Dr T. E. Donges, Minister of the Interior

<sup>26</sup> South African Press Association

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE FOURTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
SEPTEMBER 30, 1950**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Indian people of Natal are most grateful to Senator Dr Edgar Brookes for agreeing to open this Annual Provincial Conference of ours.<sup>27</sup> We had expected Senator Brookes to be with us at our Conference last year but he was unable to do so, as he was at the time engaged in championing our cause on the parliamentary front. He, however, sent us a written address in which he gave us important advice.

We are thankful to Senator Brookes for the advice he then gave us, and I am sure that what he has told us today will receive the serious attention of our delegates when considering the problems facing us. Although we may not agree with everything that Senator Brookes has told us, we are fully aware of the fact that he is one of the few individuals among the Europeans of this country who believe in justice and democracy for all. We remember with gratitude the well reasoned and outspoken speech he made in the Union Senate when the Group Areas Bill was under discussion. In that speech we found many things which we would have brought before Parliament ourselves had we the access to the legislature of this country.

In these dark days of growing racial tension in the Union we require more men of the calibre of Senator Brookes who can speak for South Africa as a whole, and not for a particular racial group. We hope that the spirit of liberalism which he symbolises will find a greater place, particularly among the Europeans of this country.

The Indian people of Natal are meeting in Conference only a week after the Nationalist Party Congress held in this very city and addressed by leading Government spokesmen, including Dr D. F. Malan, the Prime Minister of South Africa. It is only natural that I should refer to some of the things which Dr Malan told the Nationalist Congress and the English-speaking people of Natal in particular.

In his main speech Dr Malan stated that on the colour question both the white racial groups in the country stood united and that this common outlook on the non-European question formed a unifying bond between them. His message to the English-speaking people of the province was to stand united with the Afrikaans-speaking people on the

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<sup>27</sup> Edgar H. Brookes, a distinguished educator and a prominent liberal, was member of Parliament from 1937 to 1952, representing Africans.

basis of apartheid. He was convinced that the present Government's policy had the support "inwardly, that is through conviction, if not always outwardly, of the great bulk of the English-speaking South Africans everywhere, and not the least of English-speaking Natal."

This was a call for the consolidation of a white bloc in South Africa. It was an appeal for unity based on a policy which relegates the non-white people of the country to a place of serfdom in a rigid caste society planned by the authors of apartheid. This attitude on the part of those who hold the reins of government of the country arises out of a desire for white dominance. Behind it lies the fear of losing the political power which today has become the monopoly of people with white colour.

What South Africa requires is not the counsel of despair - not the creation of a white bloc against the non-white peoples - but the removal of the antagonisms in our race relationship in the Union. The policy of apartheid can never lead South Africa to a better understanding between the white and the non-white people because this policy is based on keeping the majority of South African citizens in perpetual bondage. It is in the interest of all South Africans, white and non-white, to reject apartheid in toto and to adopt a sane and constructive policy which will enable all South Africans to give their best to South Africa.

This Conference today gives an answer to the challenge of the Nationalists. We have on our platform South Africans of all races demonstrating our faith and belief in South Africans of all colours working in peace and harmony on a basis of complete equality. Because we have this concept of the future, the Indian people can under no circumstances support the policy of apartheid. Our total opposition to apartheid arises from our firm conviction that this policy is leading South Africa to poverty, chaos and racial conflagration.

Today the Indian people find themselves in the invidious position of being the chief target of the policy of apartheid. The Nationalists have declared that the complete segregation of our people is merely the prelude to the enforcement of their fantastic policy of banishing us from our homeland. It is most tragic that the English-speaking people of Natal, nurtured in race prejudices, are becoming a very easy prey of the Nationalists, particularly on the Indian question. Dr Malan realised this fact when he spoke in Durban last week.

He stated that "English-speaking Natal rejoiced in her heart when the present Government repealed the Act granting representation to Indians in Parliament and in its own Provincial Council and that English-speaking South Africans generally - to a very large extent - are, together with Natal, in favour of at least that most important and vital part of the Government's apartheid policy, namely, the Group Areas Act of last session."

From this Conference I want to issue a serious warning to the English-speaking people of Natal and to all white South Africans who cherish freedom for themselves. If they believe that there exists a grave danger in the country of the establishment of an



Afrikaner Republic based on the fascist draft constitution published with the authority of Dr Malan himself, if they fear that the English language will be swept away and that the Constitution will be torn up by the Nationalists, then they must search their hearts and endeavour to discover the basic causes which make these threats possible. They must ask themselves whether by their actions they are not contributing to the dangers which South Africa now faces. If this question is faced honestly then it must be admitted that the clock has been put back in the Union because of the attitude of white South Africa on the colour question. The genesis of apartheid is to be found in the racial policies pursued by parliamentary parties in power in the country since the Union came into existence. In fact the very Constitution of South Africa embodies in it the principle of inequality.

The Nationalist victory has, however, emphasised one cardinal point, namely, that the cancer of racialism knows no colour bar. The extreme racialist policy of Dr Malan and his Government seeks to destroy the liberties of all South Africans who stand in the way of a totalitarian republic. Let us make no mistake about that. Today the attack is primarily directed against the non-white people of the country. Tomorrow the Jewish people, the English-speaking people and the democratic Afrikaners will be the targets of this very same policy. My warning to the English-speaking South Africans is that if they want to save themselves from the horrors of a totalitarian regime then they must discard their racialism. Democracy is indivisible. Every time the Government takes away an existing right of the non-white people, the attack on the Europeans opposed to the Nationalist policy is brought a step nearer. If they refuse to discard their colour prejudices then they will fail to save themselves from the fate which ultimately befell even the democratic Nordic German people under the Hitler regime.

If the English-speaking people of Natal support the Group Areas Act and the policy of expatriating the Indian people then they are unconsciously bringing their own doom nearer.

As far as the Indian people are concerned I have not the slightest doubt that they will most strenuously oppose the policy of apartheid. They will count no sacrifice too great in their opposition to expatriation. They will never be a party to making the Group Areas Act work. They will rather perish than allow themselves to be so humiliated.

Our chief task is to defeat the Group Areas Act. We have no doubt that the primary aim of this measure is to make us impotent economically. As Dr T. E. Donges, the Minister of the Interior, pointed out on Wednesday last at the Nationalist Party Congress in Bloemfontein the Government's declared policy is to expatriate us. The authorities believe that in the Group Areas Act they have the instrument which will make it possible for them to throw us out of South Africa.

Under this Act the Indian people are to be relegated to their own exclusive ghettos in slums and in poverty. The dangers which we face under this Act were brought out sharply by Dr Donges himself in Bloemfontein. He stated that the Land Tenure Advisory Board could consider proposals to establish all Indians in the Transvaal in one Group Area only, if those interested in such a scheme made concrete proposals which indicated just where

this area would be situated and suggested other details which would make the scheme practicable.

What Dr Donges said for the Transvaal must hold good for the Indian people in Natal and the Cape as far as the Nationalists are concerned. Thus we see that the Group Areas Act strikes at the very basis of our existence in the country. No Indian vested interests are secure under it and all possibilities of economic progress for our people have been halted by this measure.

What can we do in the face of this grave threat? The Indian people must accept the challenge of the Nationalists with courage and determination. There must be no traitors in our ranks ready to compromise the birthright of our community and of the generations to come. The Indian people must, and the Indian people will, resist the Group Areas Act with all the resources at their command.

The Indian people realise that they are not alone in the struggle against apartheid. The African and the Coloured people stand united against this policy. We have many European democrats supporting our just cause. The fight against apartheid must become the fight of all South Africans who stand by the democratic ideals. It will thus be an endeavour of the Indian people to work towards a healthy cooperation among all South Africans who believe in justice and fair play for all.

I must mention that the past year has been one of growing cooperation and understanding between the Indian and the African people in particular. For the first time in the history of this province, on 26th June, mass political action was taken jointly by them.<sup>28</sup> And today we can say with great pride that a most cordial relationship exists between the African National Congress and the Indian Congress.

When Dr J. S. Moroka, President-General of the African National Congress,<sup>29</sup> opened the Conference of the South African Indian Congress in Johannesburg two weeks ago he declared that the African people were satisfied with the presence of Indians in South Africa. Dr Moroka told the Indian people that "they must be very careful, very careful, not to be worked into a frenzy, and not to be tricked into believing that it is the wish of the Africans that they should be hurled out of South Africa. Any insinuations of that nature are the desperate efforts of desperate minds deliriously clutching at every straw to further their own ends and not in the interests of the Africans."

This declaration on expatriation by Dr Moroka, a man who represents more South Africans than Dr Malan himself, is there for the whole world to see. It is the true voice of South Africa proclaiming the rights of all South African citizens - Africans, Coloureds, Indians and Europeans - to stay in this country for the common good of all. As Dr Moroka said, "South Africa is the only home we know and own for ourselves and our

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<sup>28</sup> A national stay-at-home was organised on June 26, 1950, by the African National Congress and the Indian Congresses in protest against apartheid laws and repression. (TO ELABORATE).

<sup>29</sup> Dr Moroka was President-General of the African National Congress from 1949 to 1952.

posterity."

My special appeal to the delegates to this Conference is that they must work even harder than before to build a lasting Indo-African cooperation in this province. The delegates must return to their centres to see to it that there is no ground for any friction between the Indian people and their African brothers. Our actions must be such that we conclusively prove to the African people that we are not standing in the way of their economic progress. Our relationship with the African people must be on the basis of complete equality.

We have been receiving support for our cause from all parts of the world. We welcome this support. We realise that in this one world all the forces of progress have to stand together for a more harmonious international relationship. We cannot remain in isolation. Just as the freedom-loving people of the world are taking a vital interest in our problems and are declaring against injustices in the Union, we too must show our solidarity with all the oppressed peoples of the world engaged in the common struggle to make this world a better place for all of us.

Although we realise that essentially our struggle for human rights must be decided by South Africans on our own soil we are with great interest looking to the General Assembly of the United Nations now meeting at Lake Success. Our question is once again on its agenda and we are hopeful that the world will once again condemn racialism as being a danger to world peace.

This Conference comes very shortly after the Conference of our parent body, the South African Indian Congress. The SAIC Conference has taken some important decisions which we will have to implement in our province. I hope that the delegates to this Conference will discuss the problems that face us in a calm and dispassionate atmosphere. We want some concrete decisions to emerge from Conference which will lead to our striving for a better life for the Indian people of this province, over seventy percent of whom are living below the bread line.

Let us face the future with courage. Let this Annual Conference mark another milestone in our determination to fight oppression and injustice. Let it lay the basis for a more harmonious relationship between all the races that go to make our multi-racial society. Our decisions must be such that posterity can say that the Indian people in the hour of their gravest crisis were not wanting in giving a correct lead for the establishment of a true democratic South Africa for all.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE FIFTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS,  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1951**

We are most grateful to Chief A. J. Luthuli, President of the Natal branch of the African National Congress for opening our Annual Conference this year.<sup>30</sup> The presence of Chief Luthuli on our platform is an indication of the fact that the Indian people in Natal want to work in closest cooperation with the African people who form a majority of the oppressed people of South Africa, and that the African people support this policy of cooperation.

The Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress, besides serving the vital and necessary purpose of enabling the Indian people of the Province to review their past year's activities and of making considered decisions on the problems facing them, serves to emphasise a very cardinal point. In terms of the segregation policies pursued by past governments, and under the more ruthless manifestations of that policy, now parading under the name of apartheid the country is told that separation is the only solution of the problems facing our multi-racial society. This policy has led to racial disharmony and dissensions, for the authors of segregation and apartheid have always preached colour hatred in order to obtain emotional support for themselves and to disguise their real motive - the economic exploitation of the non-European people in the interest of those whom the White rulers of South Africa really represent.

At the opening of our conferences the presence of representatives of the different racial groups in South Africa and their utterances on such occasions have given the lie to the policy of segregation. From our platform has always come not the message of separation but of unity; not the message of fascism but of democracy. The message we give from our platform is a message which our country, South Africa, needs more than anything else at present, for particularly under the Nationalist regime, the Union has seen the further growth of colour prejudices, hatred and despair. The cancer of racialism is busy destroying all that is healthy in the life of the people of South Africa.

The preaching of racialism in high places in South Africa by those who govern the country and who are elected by the vote of a very small minority of citizens, is the real reason why South Africa is suspect in the councils of the nations of the world. The world cannot remain blind to the real motivating force behind the policies of segregation and apartheid. Every new apartheid legislation, every administrative measure of the government giving effect to the policy of segregation, every speech by government spokesmen in support of these outmoded and archaic policies, brings South Africa into further disrepute in the international field.

It will not help the rulers of South Africa to tell the world that they are following a policy in the interest of "Christian civilisation," for their policy is neither Christian nor civilised. Christianity is based on the brotherhood of man and apartheid is the very negation of the noble principles which humanity has inherited from Christ.

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<sup>30</sup> Chief Albert John Luthuli was elected President of the Natal branch of the African National Congress in 1951. He was President-General of the African National Congress from 1952 until his death in 1967. He received the Nobel Peace Prize for 1960.

The last session of the General Assembly of the United Nations again gave a concrete answer as to how the member States of this body view the question of racial discrimination in the Union. In the debate on India's complaint against the Union Government, South Africa's racialists found themselves isolated. It is no use blaming the "agitators" in South Africa for what the world has to say on the policies pursued by the Union Government, for it is not the demand for democracy, justice and equality which is responsible for world criticism; the real blame for the blot on South Africa's name rests entirely with the rulers of South Africa.

The Union Government has deemed it fit and proper to defy the United Nations in face of almost a unanimous world condemnation. Instead of meeting India and Pakistan in conference to discuss the question of the treatment meted out to South African citizens of Indian origin, the Union Government, on the eve of the expiry of time fixed by the United Nations for the convening of a round table conference, brought the Group Areas Act into operation. India has once again lodged with the United Nations her complaint against the Union Government and when the General Assembly of this body meets again in November further consideration will be given to this question.

The Group Areas Act, which received careful consideration by the United Nations, and whose suspension by the Union Government was urged, aims at total apartheid and as far as the Indian people of the Union are concerned, separation is merely a prelude to the enforcement of the Nationalist policy of mass expatriation.

The Act, like any other measure flowing from the policy of segregation and apartheid, is totally unacceptable to the Indian people. It is a measure against which there must be a most concerted resistance and it will be the task of delegates attending this Conference to give a most serious and careful attention to it.

In the forefront of the agitation for the ruthless implementation of this measure are to be found the English-speaking people of Natal and of Durban in particular. The Durban City Council is proving to be even more anti-Indian than the Nationalist Government and is seeking, from the Nationalists, further amendments to this Act in order to facilitate the speedy ruination of the Indian community.

Denied as they are of any representation in the municipal, provincial and central governments of the Union, the Indians have always been made the scapegoat by the racialist white politicians. Anti-Indianism in Natal has become the passport for all European politicians seeking to aspire higher in the political world on the votes of the race-prejudiced electorate.

Every year we have serious anti-Indian outbursts by politicians. With municipal elections scheduled to take place in Durban on October 3rd and with the Mayor of the City, Councillor Percy Osborn, facing a three-cornered contest, we have had another typical example of such emotional outbursts. The Mayor of Durban has discovered that there are twenty thousand Indians in Durban who could not be accounted for by the figures of registration of births or immigration into the country. He has also discovered

that there are twice as many Indians under the age of twenty-one as Europeans.

The cry of "Indian menace" raised by the Mayor will perhaps pay him handsome dividends on October 3rd but let the English-speaking South Africans realise that by rallying behind the Nationalist banner of apartheid they are bringing their own doom nearer. Under the Republican Constitution, published with the authority of Dr Malan, the English-speaking people will lose the privileged position which they hold today in the caste structure of the Union. We issue a warning from this platform to all white South Africans, who are against the creation of a Nationalist Police State, that their freedom remains in danger as long as freedom is denied to non-Europeans who form the majority in South Africa. Democracy is indivisible. You cannot have liberty for one section and oppression for the other under it. Had the non-Europeans the vote there would have been no Nationalist Government in power today. We would have had a government pledged to the democratic ideal, governing the Union in the best interest of all its people and of the country. It is the denial of the vote to the non-European which has brought the danger of the establishment of a police State under which whites and non-whites will be without any civil liberties.

In reply to the Mayor let us state that there is nothing startling about his disclosures. As far as the twenty thousand "surplus" Indians are concerned, their presence is completely in conformity with the natural population trend from rural to urban areas in South Africa, a trend which is to be found in all sections of the country's population. Instead of offering this factual explanation the Mayor's statement has tended to create the impression that perhaps these Indians entered Durban and South Africa as illegal immigrants.

That the Indian population is more youthful than the European is a fact well-known to all who have taken the trouble to make a serious study of South African Indians. In the booklet *Indian life and labour in Natal*, edited by Professor H. R. Burrows and published in 1943, it is disclosed that 47 percent of Indians in Natal in 1936 were under the age of 15 years and only 13 percent were above the age of 45 years. For the same year the European figures were 27 percent under 15 years of age and 26 percent over 45 years. The authors of this booklet after giving these figures state :

"On the lines of present tendencies it looks as though Natal should plan to build more houses and schools for the youthful Indian population and more hospitals and homes for the aging European section. Certainly any economic and social planning in Natal, particularly in its Municipalities, must cater for a rapidly increasing Indian population during the next twenty-five or thirty years."

It did not suit the Durban municipality in 1943 to take note of the youthful character of the Indian population and to follow the advice given in *Indian Life and Labour*. In fact the Durban municipality's record on Indian housing, on civic amenities and in making available sites for the building of schools, is indeed a black one. At present it suits the Mayor to take note of the youthful character of the Indian population, not for the purpose of improving their lot but for the sinister purpose of uprooting Indians from Durban to country areas so that Europeans can live nearer to the heart of the city and raise larger

families.

Our Conference tomorrow and the day after will have to give most serious attention to the dangers facing the Indian people. The present Congress has at all times stressed that the Indian question is not one to be viewed in isolation. It is part of the larger non-European question, for all non-Europeans in South Africa are subjected to a common policy of oppression.

Because we realise this basic truth we have been staunch advocates of non-European cooperation to meet the dangers facing the non-European people and to defeat the policy of oppression. Of course, we welcome European democrats in this great struggle for democracy in South Africa.

All our political actions must be based on the realisation of the fact that without non-European cooperation liberation will not come to the oppressed in South Africa. Our policy and principles are hence clear. We can at no time become participants in the machinery of our own oppression. It was this policy which was responsible for the rejection by Congress of the communal representation granted under the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946, and for the refusal of the Indian people to serve on the Asiatic Land Tenure Board. I wish to reiterate that in all our future actions we will be, and must be, guided by this clear policy based on sound principles.

One of the important tasks of delegates to this Conference is furthering of non-European cooperation in all parts of Natal. Let it be the duty of each and every Indian, no matter where he may be, to make the policy of non-European cooperation a living reality.

This Conference meets at a time when our very future existence in South Africa is threatened. This is no time for despair or defeatism. We have to stand unflinchingly by our policies and principles.

Let us get down to the difficult tasks facing us and as servants of our people let us count no sacrifice too great for a better life for our people enabling us to make our fullest contribution to the prosperity of our country.

## **NEW YEAR MESSAGE, JANUARY 1952<sup>31</sup>**

The year 1952 will be a most significant year in the history of the South African people and Indians must make it their duty to play their rightful role in the great struggle for democracy in the Union...

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<sup>31</sup> *The Guardian*, Cape Town, January 3, 1952

We must make it known to the country and the world during 1952 that we are determined to defeat the policy of apartheid. The new year must find the Non-Europeans determined to fight their common battle unitedly.

My New Year message to the Indian people in particular is that they must have faith in themselves and in the justness of the cause of democracy. Unitedly we can defeat the evil plans of the Nationalist Government.

## **STATEMENT BEFORE A DURBAN MAGISTRATE'S COURT DURING DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN, SEPTEMBER 1952<sup>32</sup>**

Your Worship,

I deem it my duty to place before you the reasons for the action I have taken. I stand before you not as a criminal who has to be punished for a crime he has committed against society. I am here with the full realisation of my responsibilities to our South African society, and it is this realisation which has dictated the decision I and thousands of others in South Africa have taken.

Your duty as a judicial officer is to enforce laws passed by the Legislature. But it is the basic concept of democracy that Parliament should represent all the peoples of the country so that when it passes laws it interprets the wishes of the majority in the country. My colleagues and I before you today represent the majority of the South African people, yet we have no say in the making or the administering of the laws of the country. Because we are denied a say in the government of the country it is our contention that more often than not we are legislated against in the Union with the result that our Statute Book abounds with laws which we consider to be unjust and against the dignity of man.

### ***The Court's Duty***

While you have a duty to perform in enforcing the laws of the country my people and I too have a duty to our conscience. The African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress representing the African and the Indian people of the Union have correctly decided that if we are true to our conscience we cannot tolerate unjust laws passed by a minority group in Parliament and therefore we have with all seriousness decided to defy unjust laws. This defiance on our part is the only concrete way we have of showing our opposition to these laws, for we are not allowed to voice our protests in the law-making bodies of the country.

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<sup>32</sup> *The Leader*, Durban, September 5, 1952



We have adopted a civilised weapon in our protest for we preach hatred towards none and we are bound by the noble ethics of non-violence. Our struggle is not against the White people of South Africa as such but against oppression and injustice.

Today our beloved country cries out for justice. There is a growing attack on the liberties and rights of all sections of South African people, White and Non-White. Even the high tradition of our Supreme Court in upholding basic rights of the people, in so far as that is possible for the Supreme Court to do, is also being challenged. It is at a time like this that the Non-White people of the country have given a clear lead and pointed out that South Africa cannot have freedom for only a small section of its people and oppression for the rest. Freedom is indivisible.

### ***History Will Decide***

Sir, my people have come to believe that when unjust laws prevail in the country the place for all just men and women is in the prisons of the country in defiance of these unjust laws. History will decide whether it was correct for us to have decided to defy unjust laws as we are doing today. In our minds we are satisfied that history is with us, for in the struggle of every nation men and women have had to make sacrifices including courting imprisonment in order to usher in democracy.

That is all I have to say in explaining why we are before you. It is now for you to pronounce your sentence. In due course history will pronounce its sentence on South Africa.

## **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN, FEBRUARY 21, 1953**

For the second time in succession Chief A. J. Luthuli has declared open our Annual Conference. When he opened the Conference in September 1951, I, in my Presidential address, declared that his presence was an indication of the desire of the African and Indian peoples to work in close cooperation. I fully realise that cooperation among leaders of different national organisations is in itself not sufficient for the historic task that lies ahead of us, the task of ending colour oppression in the Union. It is the task of progressive non-European leaders in South Africa to do everything in their power to unite the country's oppressed peoples for their liberation.

Unity of the oppressed people is not something reserved for academic discussion and debate; it is something living, vital and dynamic and is created in the process of united action in struggles against all the injustices that are perpetrated under the policy of segregation and apartheid.

Since our last Conference the country has witnessed the mighty united effort against unjust laws on the part of South Africa's non-white peoples. The Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws is the first major united attack on the citadel of oppression by the growing movement for liberation in South Africa. We are proud of the part played in this Campaign by the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress.

In particular we are proud of the role played by Chief A. J. Luthuli. Chief Luthuli opened our last Conference as the newly elected President of the Natal Branch of the African National Congress. He was at the time the Chief of the Amakolwa tribe in the Groutville Mission Reserve. Because of his courageous stand in the political life of this country, where courage is so often absent, Chief Luthuli has been dismissed by the Government from his Chieftainship. In reply, as it were, the African National Congress elected him to the highest post in their body. Today we welcome him as the President-General of the African National Congress.

Since our last Conference, much has happened in South Africa and abroad which must engage the attention of the delegates assembled here. I ask them to pay serious attention to the problems that face us and to discuss them objectively and dispassionately. We form an integral part of the liberation front in this country and we have to formulate our policy and act in unity with others so as to advance the cause of freedom in South Africa.

On the international plane, we form part of the great movement for peace. We are totally against all aggressive war preparations which are against the interests of the colonially oppressed and freedom-loving peoples of the world.

We welcome the world-wide support we have received from people who believe in freedom and we shall at all times extend our support, in whichever way possible, to all peoples fighting oppression. The struggle against racial oppression is gaining momentum the world over and we too must play our full part in it.

In South Africa we are on the eve of a general election, an election in which the white people will go to the polls to decide which white political party shall rule South Africa for the succeeding five years. It is usual that at election time there is an increased political activity on the part of the parliamentary parties. The Nationalists and the so-called United Democratic Front are already in the field to woo the white voters seeped in colour prejudices. All the parliamentary parties, even within the United Democratic Front, are upholders of white domination; all of them accept segregation.

The non-white people, therefore, can have no faith in their policies or programmes.

The Nationalist Government has since its advent to power gone forward with its ruthless apartheid policy and today the Union is on the verge of the establishment of a full-fledged fascist police State. The non-European peoples have not been unduly surprised at the feeble and ineffective stand in parliament by the official Opposition, as there is no fundamental difference between them and the Government on the question of segregation. The United Party, in particular, has repeatedly done everything possible to

impress upon the European electorate that it, too, believes in keeping the non-European people "in their place". Thus the Nationalists have found no difficulty in putting through Parliament, measure after measure attacking existing rights of the people. Since democracy is indivisible, South Africa today finds itself being threatened with the extinction of all civil liberties of the non-white, as well as the white, people.

There is hardly any concrete opposition from white South Africa against the so-called Public Safety Bill and the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, despite the fact that these Bills seek to destroy all vestiges of democracy in the country and to place in the hands of a fascist clique dictatorial and arbitrary powers never before placed in the hands of any government of white South Africa.<sup>33</sup>

While the non-European people have been unanimous in their condemnation of these Bills, in Parliament only the Labour Party and the "Native Representatives" have expressed their opposition to the principle embodied in these measures. The United Party has demonstrated to the entire country how close it is to the Nationalists by accepting the fascist principles of these bills.

It is in these critical times, more than ever before, that the oppressed people of South Africa should realise the historic role they are destined to play in making South Africa a democratic country capable of taking its rightful place in the progressive world, and in freeing South Africa from the grip of fascism.

While we welcome the support and encouragement we have received from outside the borders of the Union, we must at all times clearly understand that our emancipation and freedom will come from our own efforts in South Africa. Every oppressed South African must be educated by his political leaders to have faith in himself and in the united efforts of the oppressed peoples to free himself, his people and his country. Our freedom cannot and will not come from the United Nations, India, Pakistan or any other outside source, however welcome and important their support.

Once we realise this cardinal fact, that we have to strive for our freedom in South Africa itself, then it is necessary for us to have a clear policy and programme for the achievement of our objective. The present leadership of the Natal Indian Congress, for almost fifteen years now, has consistently impressed on the Indian people that colour and racial oppression in this country will be ended only with the united struggle on the part of the non-European people supported by those Europeans who genuinely belong to the democratic camp.

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<sup>33</sup> The two bills were passed in 1953.

The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1953, laid down severe penalties for defying a law by way of protest or a campaign, including imprisonment, fine and whipping.

The Public Safety Act, 1953, authorised the government, if it considered that public order was threatened, to declare a State of Emergency, during which persons can be summarily arrested and detained.

In the past year, we have been able to see our policy in action in the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws. While there is a growing awakening among the non-European people for united action to end all oppression in South Africa, it would be wrong for us not to take due cognisance of the efforts of the white ruling class to sow the seeds of dissension within the ranks of the oppressed peoples.

The harder we work for unity in the ranks of the non-white people, the quicker will we defeat those who are trying to antagonise us against each other. I want to appeal to all members of Congress to dedicate themselves anew to the great and noble cause of united action which has made such great headway during the period under review.

Members of Congress must at all times in all their actions demonstrate in no uncertain terms that they completely reject the idea of superior and inferior races. All their day-to-day activities must be such that no one can accuse them of being guilty, no matter in how small a measure, of accepting the *herrenvolk* ideology of the ruling class.

The Natal Indian Congress has embodied in its Constitution the demand for "the extension to Indians of the franchise on the common roll free from any special qualifications". This object is fundamental to all national organisations of the people. There can be no compromise on it and it becomes absolutely necessary for all Congress members in all their activities to stress the fact that only when our people have the vote without any restrictions on grounds of colour will we be able to solve the many burning problems which face us.

We can only call ourselves democrats and progressives when we believe in and fight for equal franchise rights, not only for ourselves, but for all South Africans irrespective of colour or creed.

With the development of the national liberation movement, a day must come when there will be no need for separate political organisations for the different sections of the oppressed peoples of the Union. Instead of having an Indian Congress and an African Congress, we will then have a South African Democratic Congress in which all democrats, no matter to which community they belong, will be able to play their part for a prosperous, free and democratic South Africa.

I have taken some pains to stress the question of the franchise because I feel this to be a very important test in determining the character of political groups. For instance we have heard a great deal about the so-called United Democratic Front and so-called friends of the non-European people among the whites of South Africa. Let me say most categorically that only those Europeans belong to the democratic camp who, without reservation, accept the inherent and fundamental right of all the oppressed peoples in South Africa to exercise equal franchise with those who enjoy it at present. Any person who denies the right of the non-Europeans to have equal franchise and speaks of a qualified franchise for them, by his very stand, places himself outside the democratic camp, whether such person happens to be white or non-white.

Once we are clear on the question of franchise then it follows that we totally reject an inferior status for ourselves or for any other section of the South African people. Because we stand for full democratic rights for all we cannot under any circumstance take part in any machinery set up for the oppression of our people. For this reason the Natal Indian Congress rejected the communal representation and the Board created under the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act. It is because we stand for equal municipal franchise rights that we reject the Advisory Board suggested by the Durban City Council.

As equal partners in the common struggle against oppression, we have a right to tell all our allies that they too should pursue this policy, fully and consistently, in the cause of unity and national liberation. We as an oppressed group must not only oppose new attacks made on us, but we must by political action strive to put an end to our present status and march forward to liberation.

Delegates to this Conference must seriously get down to the task of rallying our people in opposition to all the oppressive and unjust laws that operate in South Africa. For that task we require powerful and active Congress branches in all parts of the province. The strength of the branches will depend on the extent and nature of activities in which they engage themselves.

South Africa is at the crossroads. The only effective force against fascist tyranny is the combined strength of all those who believe in true democracy. When we leave this Conference, we must be satisfied that in this hour of our country's crisis, we were not found wanting to play our part fully and courageously in the cause of democracy and freedom.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE SEVENTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
FEBRUARY 5, 1954<sup>34</sup>**

We are most thankful to Mr Walter Sisulu, Secretary-General of the African National Congress, for declaring open this Seventh Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress. Mr Sisulu is a person whose name has come to be respected throughout the length and breadth of this country because of the positive role he has played in the cause of freedom and democracy. Only recently Mr Sisulu returned from an interesting visit overseas where he was a true ambassador of the people, for he voiced the hopes and aspirations of the oppressed people of South Africa.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Dr Naicker could not attend the Conference and deliver the address personally because of banning orders served on him. The address was read by Mr I. C. Meer.

<sup>35</sup> Mr Sisulu was abroad for five months in 1953 visiting several European countries and China.

Unlike the official representatives of the Union Government who encounter serious difficulties in gaining support overseas, Mr Sisulu was warmly received by the people of the different countries he visited, because he was not faced with the task of justifying a policy of oppression. He advocated a policy of equality and preached the gospel of the brotherhood of man.

We, the Indian people of Natal, welcome back in our midst Mr Sisulu as a true son of South Africa, as a man who stands for freedom and justice for all, irrespective of race, colour or creed.

My comrade Chief Luthuli and I are indeed unhappy that we cannot be present to hear the opening address of Mr Sisulu, but although we have been banned and cannot be with you on this occasion, let me say that despite the banning orders of Minister Swart,<sup>36</sup> and no matter how many persons he may ban, the noble work of liberation undertaken by the African and Indian Congresses will go on unflinchingly until this country becomes free and takes her rightful place in the family of democratic nations.

Mr Sisulu's presence today has yet another very significant aspect. It symbolises the spirit of united action for democracy on the part of the African and Indian peoples who are working in conjunction with the Coloured community and European democrats. Despite all the attempts to sow seeds of division in the ranks of the people of South Africa, and despite the preaching of apartheid and segregation, steady progress is being made in the field of interracial cooperation.

While the government of the day has pursued a policy which has resulted in increased racial tension and friction, the African and Indian Congresses have been the most active force in the promotion of race harmony and in striving for a genuine people's democracy in South Africa.

When we met in Conference last year we were on the eve of a general election. In my Presidential address I stressed the fact that the major parliamentary parties in the country were unanimous in their resolve to maintain white supremacy and the perpetual subjection of the masses of the non-white people; to preserve the social and economic pattern of domination and subordination, hatred and fear.

The general election resulted in the Nationalist Party obtaining an increased majority. The campaigning during the elections indicated that the participating parliamentary political parties were determined to entrench the iniquitous caste society of South Africa in which the non-European people are relegated to a status of inferiority. Whether they preached apartheid or segregation for the non-European people, these connotations meant one thing - the deprivation of fundamental human rights and the denial of equality of opportunities. The consequences of such a policy can be only disaster for South Africa.

As we meet in Conference to review our past year's work and to plan for the year that

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<sup>36</sup> C. R. Swart, Minister of Justice

lies ahead, a new session of Parliament is meeting in Cape Town. The last session of Parliament was one during which the Government of Dr Malan passed measure after measure curtailing the meagre rights of the people of this country. Through administrative action the Government continues to carry out its full-fledged attack on civil liberties. The Riotous Assemblies and the Suppression of Communism Acts are being ruthlessly used against the leaders of the national liberation and trade union movements, not only to stifle and gag them, but to remove elected leaders from their organisations in an attempt to destroy all opposition to the maintaining of Nationalist apartheid tyranny. To stem the democratic upsurge of the freedom-loving people in South Africa, demonstrated in the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign of the Congresses, the Nationalist Government enacted the martial laws - Public Safety and Criminal Law Amendment Acts.

The Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act deprives the African workers of the right to organise themselves into legitimate trade unions, and prevents them from raising their standard of living and improving their working conditions and wages; while the Bantu Education Act is part of the Nationalists' nefarious scheme to ensure that the African people remain hewers of wood and drawers of water - slaves in the land of their birth.

Yet another attack was made on our people by the enactment of the Immigrants Regulation Amendment Act, a measure which violates the basic human right of marriage and the sanctity of the family.

The Coloured people face the threat of being removed from the Common Roll. The Separate Representation of Voters Validation Bill was introduced at a Joint Sitting but has been temporarily shelved. The danger of the Coloured people losing the franchise still remains.

Added to this battery of vicious measures was the Separate Amenities Act which gives legal sanction to the diabolical fascist doctrine of racial inequality.

The session of Parliament which is now meeting in Cape Town is, like its predecessors, pledged to carry out a legislative programme further implementing the policy of apartheid aimed at entrenching white minority rule for all time.

The policy pursued by the Government has not failed to have tremendous international repercussions. The name of our country has been brought into disrepute at international assemblies. The blame for this lies squarely with the Malan Government.

Throughout the world great forces are at work for the liberation of mankind. Imperialism is on the retreat. Except for vestiges of imperialist rule, which are being gallantly eradicated, the continent of Asia has rid itself of this evil force. With the great awakening in Africa, the last stronghold of imperialism must inevitably be shattered.

The common people of the world are against exploitation of man by man. They stand

for peace and equality, ideals which have arisen in response to the fundamental needs of the human race. It is because of this that we find such tremendous world-wide opposition to colonialism and racial discrimination.

Peoples who were once subjugated and who suffered the humiliation of race discrimination are today smashing the shackles which bind them and are engaged in the task of building a new society. It is only natural that the Arab-Asian bloc should at the United Nations and elsewhere speak out against colonialism and racial discrimination.

Today mankind is yearning for lasting peace and progress. Since we last met the fighting in Korea has come to an end. A great feeling of relief passed through the world when hostilities ended there. The attention of the people of the world is now focussed on Berlin where momentous four-Power discussions are taking place in an attempt to ease world tension. But we are more than satisfied that if racial discrimination is not eliminated from the face of the earth the constant danger of a global conflict will remain.

It is the desire of the peoples of different countries for peace that has been responsible for the continuous attacks on the Union Government's policy of apartheid and segregation.

It will not help the Union Government to find scapegoats in order to explain why the name of South Africa has fallen into disrepute. It may be good strategy on the part of the Nationalists for the Platteland consumption to blame the non-European "agitators" and Pandit Nehru for the attacks on the South African Government, but the Government must realise that these attacks will persist if it continues to proceed along the insane path it has chosen.

A note of warning is necessary on the question of the role of India and Pakistan in the United Nations where they have championed the cause of South African citizens of Indian origin and been instrumental in focussing international attention on the policy of apartheid. There are strong rumours to the effect that the South African Indian Organisation, or members of its Executive Committee, are at present engaged in attempts to appease the Malan Government and advocating the removal from the United Nations agenda the complaints against the Union Government. Without hesitation let me reiterate that any such move will be most severely condemned by all sections of the Indian people who have unanimously resolved that the treatment meted out to them should become a subject of discussion in the world forum.

The Indian people will not tolerate any individual who, in his own interests, seeks to pursue a course of action which can result in incalculable harm to the entire community. Anyone who tries to injure our just cause must be mercilessly exposed. It is criminal on the part of anyone through backdoor manoeuvres to attempt to denounce a stand which is demanded by all Indians of South Africa.

We have on all occasions welcomed the support we have received for our democratic struggle from peoples abroad, but we have on all occasions emphasised that our liberation



can only and must come from forces within the country. We have unequivocally chosen the path of direct opposition to all that is unjust and inhuman in the body politic of this country. It was in keeping with this approach that Mahatma Gandhi launched out the historic passive resistance campaign on this soil of South Africa, a campaign which was a forerunner to even greater campaigns in giving a new status to 400 million subjugated people of India.

After the departure of Mahatma Gandhi there followed a long period of inactivity, but in 1946 South African citizens of Indian origin again employed passive resistance against injustice and oppression and during this campaign over two thousand people went to gaol as a mark of concrete protest.

The struggle for liberation was launched on a higher plane in 1952 when, in the Defiance Campaign, for the first time in the history of this country, under the leadership of the African National Congress, peoples of all races took part in united joint action against unjust laws. During this campaign over eight thousand volunteers suffered imprisonment.

The sacrifices our people have made in the cause of freedom are great, but we shall be called upon to make even greater sacrifices before we can make our country a true democracy. The road to freedom will be hard and difficult but we draw strength from the fact that our cause is just and that a just cause must triumph. We solemnly believe that equality of opportunities is the birthright of all sections of the South African people. We believe that universal adult franchise is a prerequisite to the enjoyment of that equality. It is for that reason that we reject all other forms of franchise. The African and Indian Congresses, I am positive, will not deviate from this just demand. We welcome the emergence of the South African Congress of Democrats in which European democrats are also pledged to this common ideal.

In December the African National Congress, when it met at Queenstown, took vital decisions which must affect our future course of action. I am sure that in the very near future the South African Indian Congress will meet to give serious consideration to the Queenstown resolutions.

The African National Congress Conference has instructed its National Executive Committee "to make immediate preparations for the organisation of a Congress of the People of South Africa, whose task shall be to work out a Freedom Charter for all the peoples and groups in the country." To this end, the Conference urged a meeting of the Executive Committees of the African and Indian Congresses, the Congress of Democrats, the Coloured People's Organisation and any other democratic organisations for the purpose of placing before them the plan of the Congress and to obtain their co-operative support in creating a truly representative convention of the peoples of South Africa. This resolution in particular must receive the urgent attention of all South Africans who wish to further the cause of democracy.

The year that lies ahead of us will require all our resources and strength to meet the

challenge that faces our country. I am more than satisfied that the Indian people of this province will not be found wanting when the call comes. My appeal to the delegates to this Seventh Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress is that they must advance the cause of freedom; that their activities against reaction and for liberation must not cease until democracy for all has been won. Let this be the only guiding factor in our discussions and deliberations.

Let us move forward unitedly with ever increasing speed and strength, towards a South Africa in which justice and equality will triumph over the forces of oppression and tyranny.

*AFRIKA!*

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE TWENTY-FIRST  
CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS,  
DURBAN, JULY 9, 1954**

Chief A. J. Luthuli,  
Fellow Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Acting President of the South African Indian Congress, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Chief A. J. Luthuli, President-General of the African National Congress, for declaring open this Twenty-first Conference of the South African Indian Congress.

At our last Conference, my colleague, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, was elected President for the second time of this highest political body of our people but like so many other democratically-elected leaders, Dr Dadoo has been banned by the Minister of Justice from attending this or any other gatherings. And the same applies to two other office-bearers of the SAIC, namely Mr Nana Sita, Vice-President, and Mr Yusuf Cachalia, a Joint Honorary Secretary.

Under the Nationalist regime, banning orders bearing the signature of Mr C. R. Swart<sup>37</sup> have become certificates of recognition for services rendered in the cause of democracy. Thus our great national leader, Chief Luthuli, himself was banned from voicing the aspirations of his people. Chief Luthuli's ban has just expired and I am proud of the fact that he is making his first public appearance in Durban after the expiry of his ban from our platform, thereby emphasising the strong bond of comradeship that has been forged between the Indian and African people in particular in their common struggle for freedom, justice and human decency.

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<sup>37</sup> Minister of Justice

The movement for liberation of the oppressed people in South Africa will not be stemmed by the banning orders. The voice of freedom will be heard from all corners of our country for it is the voice of our people and it will not be stifled.

Our demand for "Freedom within our Lifetime" is part of the world demand for freedom on the part of oppressed humanity. We realise that there can be no lasting peace in the world until the basic causes of world tension are ended and among them is racial discrimination.

When we oppose racial discrimination in South Africa, we are advancing the cause of race harmony and world peace, while those who preach segregation and apartheid are sowing the seeds of dissension not only in our country but on an international plane.

We are much heartened by the fact that the forces of peace are making tremendous headway on all continents. The common people of the world want the atom and hydrogen bombs banned, they want imperialist exploitation ended and they want lasting peace established.

It is because of the world realisation of the dangers of racial discrimination that the United Nations has annually condemned the action of the Union Government when South Africa's racial policy has come up for discussion on the initiatives of India and Pakistan.

In the United Nations, countries which have recently acquired freedom have been in the forefront in condemning racial discrimination and in advancing the cause of world peace. In particular we are proud of the role played by India in easing world tension.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has consistently pursued a foreign policy, the keynote of which is world peace. It is because of this that he has on all occasions spoken out against imperialist domination, particularly on the Asian and African continents. The part played by India in achieving a truce in Korea is one worthy of world acclamation, and Pandit Nehru's proposals for a cease-fire in Indo-China have again shown the constructive approach of India in the international field.

In the Asia of today a great bond of friendship has been established between the peoples of India and China. The recent visit of Mr Chou En-lai, the Prime Minister of China, to New Delhi has demonstrated to the world the desire of 960 million people for friendship and world peace. We are proud of the fact that amongst messages of support received by this Conference are messages from these two great countries.

The many messages of support which we have received from different parts of the continent of Africa underline the great and common cause we have espoused to make Africa free. The continent of Africa is assuming an increasingly important role in world affairs. Its people from Cape to Cairo are astir with their demand for freedom and independence.

While the forces of progress and democracy are making a tremendous headway in all parts of the world, the Government of Dr Malan with its policy of apartheid is trying to put the clock back. The Union Government has paid no heed to the decisions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and has thereby flouted world opinion with impunity. Not only has the deadlock between the Union Government on the one hand and the Governments of India and Pakistan on the other continued, but the situation has further seriously deteriorated with the closing down of the office of the High Commissioner for India in South Africa.<sup>38</sup>

The complete break in diplomatic relations between India and South Africa is a matter of grave concern for all countries. It further raises serious questions of past agreements and treaty relations between these two countries. The Government of Dr Malan has by its declaration and action branded the Indian people as a foreign and outlandish element and has failed to implement the "Uplift Clause" of the Cape Town Agreement.<sup>39</sup> It is the declared policy of the present Government to enforce expatriation on the Indian community. In the face of this policy and in the face of the recent actions of the Union Government, the time has arrived for the Government of India to give serious and urgent consideration to the underlying concept of the so-called "assisted emigration scheme" and decide whether it should not cease being a party to it.<sup>40</sup> Expatriation is dead. The Government of India should make it known to the Union Government that it will not be a party to any further attempts to implement the "assisted emigration scheme," for we are South African citizens.

I am sure that during Conference sessions, delegates will give serious consideration to this vital question arising out of the further deterioration of relationship between India and South Africa.

Since we last met in Conference, the forces for democracy in South Africa have taken vital steps and decisions in their fight against apartheid oppression. The Secretarial Report deals at length with the mighty Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign in which some 8,000 South Africans of all races participated. The Defiance Campaign has laid a solid foundation for united democratic action. It is our task to make that united front a broad front of all peoples of South Africa who stand for human dignity and democracy. The African National Congress, the premier liberation body in South Africa, has given the country a call to rally to the cause of democracy for all in South Africa, and has taken the initiative in the convening of a Congress of the People. We have endorsed that call and it is for this Conference to take positive decisions to rally the Indian people behind it.

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<sup>38</sup> The office of the High Commissioner of India in South Africa was closed in 1954 on the demand of the South African Government.

<sup>39</sup> Under the Cape Town Agreement of February 1927 between the Governments of the Union of South Africa and India, the Union Government undertook to take steps for the "uplifting" of the Indian community in educational, economic and other fields.

<sup>40</sup> The Cape Town Agreement provided that the Union Government would organise a scheme of "assisted emigration" to India or other countries for Indians in the Union who may desire to avail themselves of it, and that the Government of India "recognise their obligation to look after such emigrants on their arrival in India".

The Congress of the People gives opportunity to all South Africans who stand for freedom to come together in a mighty convention to advance the cause of democracy in South Africa.

The South African Indian Congress is pledged to work with all other organisations on specific issues on which there is agreement. Thus our constituent bodies will work in closest cooperation with all organisations who are opposed to the Western Areas Removal Scheme<sup>41</sup> and to the Group Areas Act. Both these issues are of major national importance to those who are genuinely opposed to the policy of apartheid.

The Verwoerd scheme of removal of 58,000 people in the Western Areas of Johannesburg is a major apartheid attack on the rights of our people. There has been a spontaneous opposition and resentment to this monstrous plan by all South Africans opposed to oppression and injustice.

The Western Areas have become the battleground between the forces of apartheid and the forces of democracy and today on this question has emerged a united front of white and non-white peoples who stand for human decency.

The African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organisation and the South African Congress of Democrats, realising the grave nature of the situation in the Western Areas, and realising its national importance, have jointly issued a call for 50,000 volunteers to oppose and frustrate apartheid in its worst form. It is our task to rally our people behind this call.

Since the present leadership in the Indian Congress came into power, first in Natal, later in the Transvaal and later nationally, it has pursued a policy of resisting segregation and apartheid. In 1946, Passive Resistance was launched against the Asiatic Land Tenure Act, and in 1952, jointly with the African National Congress, the Defiance Campaign was launched. Both the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress have adopted non-violence as the basis of their struggles. While we have preached non-violence at all our meetings and in all our activities, the authorities have adopted a most hostile and provocative attitude. In particular, the recent utterances on the part of the Minister of Justice call for severe condemnation by all South Africans opposed to violence.

Delegates attending this Conference have a serious responsibility to themselves and to South Africa. Chief Luthuli in his opening address has dealt with "Our Common Task." I call upon the delegates to give serious consideration to the questions raised by Chief Luthuli. We are living at a time when far-reaching changes are taking place in the economic life of our country and with these changes new problems are arising, crying out for solutions on our part.

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<sup>41</sup> In 1954, the Government announced plans to move Africans from the "Western Areas" of Johannesburg - Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare - to Meadowlands, some 13 miles from the city. The scheme aroused strong opposition.

It is our common task to find a solution to the problems created by the tremendous industrial progress made by South Africa, progress which in its wake has brought thousands of Africans and Indians into urban areas. The policy of apartheid will not be able to stem the tide of industrialisation which has made a large portion of our mixed population a permanent urban population. The demand of these industrial workers for trade union recognition is a demand which must engage our most serious attention and we must condemn the Nationalist attacks on the trade union movement.

It is also our common task to understand the problems of our people in the rural areas and to assist them in overcoming their difficulties. The culling of the cattle is an issue which is of national importance for all South Africans interested in the progress of our country.

The activities leading to the convening of the Congress of the People will give all South African democrats an opportunity of finding for themselves as never before the common tasks which face us in this country. Let us go forward to make this Congress of the People a mighty Assembly at which the hopes and aspirations of the real people of our land can be made known to the entire world and let us jointly - Indians, Africans, Coloureds and Europeans - enshrine our legitimate demands in the FREEDOM CHARTER.

## **OPENING ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, DURBAN, DECEMBER 16, 1954<sup>42</sup>**

Mr Speaker,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The National Executive Committee of your Congress has done me a great honour by inviting me to declare open your Annual Conference here. I was very pleased to accept your invitation and wish to take this opportunity at the outset of thanking you for the great honour you have done me, particularly at a time when the ban imposed on me by the Minister of Justice under the Suppression of Communism Act is in force.

The invitation you have extended to me symbolises the great, unbreakable links which have been forged between our Congresses and between the African and Indian people we represent. Today we find a great bond of friendship and understanding that has grown between our peoples through the joint, heroic struggle for freedom launched under the banners of our Congresses, and it is my fervent hope and prayer that jointly we shall

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<sup>42</sup> Dr Naicker could not personally deliver the address since he was banned by the regime, as was Chief Albert J. Luthuli, President-General of the ANC.

advance together with all true democrats in South Africa to the goal which we have set to achieve - freedom in our life-time.

Your Conference meets at a time when grave issues face not only people of our country but the peoples of the world. Today in every country, in all the continents of the world, the forces of peace and freedom are making great headway. The days of colonialism and imperialism are rapidly coming to an end, and we see the emergence of free and independent nations on the continent of Asia, a continent which has been subjected to centuries of colonial exploitation.

Because the forces of imperialism have received the shattering blow in Asia, it is only natural that Africa should assume a place of tremendous importance to those who had exploited Asia hitherto, but Africa, long described as the dark continent, is today astir. From the shores of the Mediterranean to the Cape Point, powerful forces of liberation are making themselves felt, to enable the 150 million people of this continent to take their rightful place within the family of nations through their own democratic governments.

We in South Africa have no hesitation in making our stand clear on the international question. As oppressed people, believing firmly in the ideals of democracy, we totally reject all forms of imperialism and colonialism. We reject the exploitation of man by man. We make common cause with the world-wide movement for peace, and are pledged to make positive contribution towards this peace for which mankind yearns. We make this contribution in particular by opposing all forms of racial discrimination. In our hearts we are convinced that in racial discrimination lies the seat of a massive global conflict and this conflict we are pledged to avert. As protagonists of peace, we are the enemies of war, and are opposed to the armament race which is now in progress. We stand for total banning of the atom and hydrogen bombs.

Because we stand for world peace, and against the exploitation of man by man, we find ourselves in strong opposition to the policies which have been consistently pursued by the white ruling classes in South Africa before and after the coming into existence of the Union. The policy of segregation and apartheid based on the maintenance of white domination has today brought our country to the brink of disaster. More and more people in the country are beginning to realise that like peace, freedom is indivisible. Laws, which in the past affected only one section of the people, invariably the African people, are today being extended to the rest of the people of the land. Freedom and liberty of the people, Black and White, are in danger.

It is only a matter of weeks since Dr Malan resigned, and today more strongly than ever before the country finds itself under the rule of a group firmly pledged to the policy of apartheid and all that apartheid stands for. The Strijdom-Verwoerd era<sup>43</sup> has commenced, and the anti-Nationalist forces in the country realise that even greater attacks on democracy and freedom are on the way. Our beloved country is heading

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<sup>43</sup> Strijdom succeeded Dr Daniel F. Malan in 1954 as Prime Minister. Dr Hendrik Verwoerd was Minister of Native Affairs.

towards chaos and disaster, under a policy which has resulted in increased racial tension, in a climate in which there is little respect for human dignity. A small minority group are seeking to impose on the majority an Afrikaner tribal rule, a rule which seeks to perpetuate a caste structure in South Africa, under which the non-white people are to remain in perpetual subjugation.

South Africa has reached the parting of the ways. Those who rule us have chosen the narrow and bigoted path of Afrikaner tribalism, embodied in the theory of apartheid. With deep regret we are forced to admit that the vast numbers of the white electorate of the country have given their support to this basic policy of apartheid. It is in such an atmosphere that African nationalism is asserting itself in the Union.

Let us remember that never in world history has any single movement for national liberation failed in achieving its object, and I am confident that in South Africa too the movement for national liberation is destined to triumph, notwithstanding all the obstacles which may exist today.

A movement for national liberation can become reactionary in character. Nationalism under anti-democratic leadership can become a great threat to the basic values for which we stand. Afrikaner nationalism is an example of how a movement essentially progressive in its initial stages has today become a great threat to democracy, and has become the spearhead of fascism in South Africa.

African nationalism too, under wrong leadership, can become an anti-democratic force giving rise to the emergence of Black fascism in the Union. It is to the credit of the leadership of the African National Congress that African nationalism has chosen the path of democracy, notwithstanding the environment in which it has emerged. The slogan of the African National Congress is not South Africa for the Africans but South Africa for all her peoples of all creeds and nationalities.

Today the African National Congress is the most important factor for democracy in the country, for the A.N.C. enshrines the hopes and aspirations of the nine million oppressed Africans to be free in the land of their birth. The A.N.C. seeks to achieve this freedom, not at the expense of any other group; it seeks to exercise the freedom of its people among the rest of free South Africans.

The political maturity and the ideals of the African National Congress are clearly demonstrated in its call for the convening of the Congress of the People for the formulation of the Freedom Charter, the call which your Congress made last year in Queenstown and which has resulted in the launching of a movement of freedom for the first time jointly sponsored by African, European, Coloured and Indian peoples. The convening of the Congress of the People is the most important task which faces all true democrats of all colours in the country today. Let me express the earnest desire that before you meet in your Annual Conference next year, this mighty assembly of South African people will have taken place, and that the Charter for Freedom will have been drafted, enshrining the hopes of the millions of our land, particularly those who are



voiceless today.

Let me assure you, on behalf of the Indian people, that the Indian Congress will do everything in its power to make the Congress of the People a success and that we shall answer unflinchingly to the call of your President-General to enrol within the ranks of the 50,000 volunteers for freedom. I visualise the Freedom Charter as one of the most historic documents to emerge from South Africa. It will not only in the clearest possible terms state what freedom is, but will be a document by which all South Africans will be judged, whether they stand for freedom and democracy, or for oppression and segregation.

While we are engaged in this great organisational task of convening the Congress of the People, the Government of the day is not hesitating in its attempts to stifle the true voice of democracy in the country. I am, however, convinced that banning orders and deportations will not halt our onward march to freedom and democracy. Action on the part of the Government against our leaders will only make our people even more determined to resist injustice and oppression.

While we talk of freedom and organise our people to make all South Africa truly free, the rulers of South Africa are continuing to bring measure after measure for the perpetual subjugation of the non-European people. The most hated apartheid measure of the Nationalists is undoubtedly the Bantu Education Act, a law which seeks to make the African people a subject people for all times. There can be no compromise with the principle which seeks to enslave a people and, therefore, this Act has to be fought with all the resources available to the democratic forces of South Africa.

All South Africans should realise that the people of the Western Areas in the Transvaal are presently engaged in a bitter struggle in defence of their homes. What is happening in the Western Areas is of national concern, for a great deal depends on the outcome of their struggle. What is happening in the Western Areas today will happen in many parts of South Africa tomorrow, if the Group Areas Act is allowed to be implemented. The race zoning plans submitted by local authorities under the Areas Act demonstrate how tens of thousands of people are to be removed from their homes to satisfy the ideology of apartheid. We will have to unitedly oppose this obnoxious law with all our might.

The African National Congress has come of age and, with its present leadership, no democrat in South Africa should have any hesitation in making common cause with the African National Congress for the achievement of democracy. The Indian people have already made the decision. Not only have we been equal parties in the great Defiance Campaign, a campaign which will fill a glorious chapter in the liberatory struggle of our country, but we are presently working as great allies together with European and Coloured democrats. It is our task to strengthen that alliance so that it becomes unbreakable.

I would like to have been present at this assembly. I would have liked to have heard Chief Luthuli deliver his Presidential Address, and inspire us to make even greater

contributions to the cause of liberation. I would have liked to have sung with you the songs of freedom, led by Chief Luthuli, and to hear his voice which has moved so many in so short a time. But Chief Luthuli and I cannot be with you today, because of the ban imposed on us. But a day will dawn when Swart<sup>44</sup> and his Cabinet will be forgotten and when South Africa will be free, when men and women will meet to talk of freedom and build a free society without fear and hatred. I urge you, in the name of South Africa, to work unceasingly towards that great freedom we all desire, and we assure you that we will work unceasingly for our common objective.

In the name of freedom, I have now the pleasure in declaring your Annual Conference open. History has placed the torch of freedom in your hands; may you hold high its flames!

*Afrika!*

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE EIGHTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
MARCH 25, 1955<sup>45</sup>**

Mr Chairman  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of our Congress, I express our sincerest thanks to the Rev. Father Trevor Huddleston for agreeing to open this Eighth Annual Provincial Conference.<sup>46</sup>

One of the striking features of our Conference this year is the forced absence of so many of the Congressmen who in the past have played an important part in setting our organisation on its present course in the nation-wide struggle for democracy and freedom. Today the oppressed people of the country, in particular, are in the midst of their struggle, and it is only fitting that the opening address should come directly from the battlefield and from one of South Africa's greatest soldiers for freedom.

Father Huddleston today stands as a symbol of all that is good on the South African soil. His courageous and unswerving stand against the Western Areas Removal Scheme has given hope to millions in this land. When the Police State went into action in

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<sup>44</sup> C. R. Swart, Minister of Justice

<sup>45</sup> The address was read by Dr M. N. Padayachee, Vice-President, since Dr G. M. Naicker was then banned from attending gatherings.

<sup>46</sup> The Reverend Trevor Huddleston, a priest in South Africa from 1943 to 1956, strongly supported the struggle of the Africans for their rights. The African National Congress bestowed its highest award on him in June 1955.

Sophiatown, South Africa and the world paid tribute to the work done by Father Huddleston and his associates in maintaining calm and peace, notwithstanding the explosive situation created by the authorities. Although the Government and the daily press have tried to present a distorted picture of the position in Western Areas and the forced removals carried out at the point of the bayonet, we know for a fact that what happened there was against the will and true interests of the people in the Western Areas.

It was correctly stated by a foreign correspondent that such forced removal could have only taken place in Germany under Nazism. Today Western Areas remains the active battlefield for our non-violent army fighting the battle against apartheid and when we meet in Conference, we salute Father Huddleston, the brave leader of this army, and the thousands of ordinary men and women of Western Areas who form the rank and file members of the great freedom movement.

Since we met last year the Government of the Union has taken our country further on the disastrous path of fascism, seeking to solidify the police State. There is no other part of the world in which the lights of liberty and freedom are being extinguished at such a rapid rate.

While we ourselves as an oppressed group are engaged in a higher task of making our country free in cooperation with fellow oppressed and democratic citizens of the country, we cannot be unmindful of the great events which are taking place on the international plane. We must know where we stand in world affairs and help to contribute our share in matters which affect the entire mankind.

From our platforms we have repeatedly emphasised that internationally we have a clear and unambiguous course to follow. As oppressed people we stand for the liberation of the whole of mankind and hence we reject totally imperialism and colonialism. Our stand is not a passive one. We support the struggle against imperialism and we show our solidarity with the liberation struggles in colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The history of mankind gives clear proof that war is the instrument of the oppressor and that in all ages and all times the oppressed people have stood for peace and against war. The common people of the world are not interested in the exploitation of the weak; they are not interested in obtaining world markets; they are not interested in subjugating others in order to increase the profits of a decadent group. Today mankind yearns for peace while warmongers, because of their lust for profits from colonial domination, are brandishing before the world nuclear weapons. We totally condemn the atom and hydrogen bombs and stand for their total abolition.

It is one of the most pleasing features on the international scene that the country of our origin is having a mighty impact in world affairs. Under the wise and tried leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, India is a beacon of hope in a world torn by ideological differences. India's foreign policy today has millions of adherents, not only within the sub-continent but outside the shores of India.

One of the focal points on the international front is Formosa. And here the stand taken by Pandit Nehru is one which is welcomed by all those who are against another global conflict in the present century. In terms of the decision of the great Powers themselves, decisions arrived at in the midst of World War II, Formosa belongs to China and China belongs to the Chinese people with their legitimate Government at Peking. It is a folly on the part of the United States of America not to recognise the great People's Republic of China.

The Government of Mao Zedong has forged bonds of friendship and peace with the Republic of India and today Asia free from imperialism is in no mood to tolerate outside interference in her domestic affairs. The irresistible claim of the People's Republic of China to a seat in the Security Council of the United Nations cannot be indefinitely postponed. If the nations of the world are truly seeking peace and peaceful co-existence then it is only natural that China should take her rightful place at the United Nations.

During the past year the African continent has continued to show its determination in making Africa free from imperialism. The freedom movement in Africa is growing from year to year and in the not too distant future Africa too will take her rightful place in international affairs as Asia is doing. Asia and Africa, the two continents which had to bear the brunt of colonial oppression and exploitation, are historically bound to work in unison in their common resolve to end exploitation of man by man. It is therefore a welcome sign that the great Afro-Asian Conference is to be held in Bandung, Indonesia, on the 18th of next month. An important item on the agenda of this conference is the question of the fight against imperialism and the winning of freedom by the people of these continents.

We deeply regret, but we are not surprised, to find that our country did not qualify to participate at this conference. With a fascist government in power pursuing its insane policy of racial and colour discrimination, South Africa remains a pariah in international gatherings. Although the Union Government has been disqualified, and rightly so, and it has not received an official invitation, it is important that the liberation movement in this country should have their own observers at this conference, and thereby demonstrate the solidarity of the millions of unrepresented people in this country with the rest of the freedom-loving people of Africa and Asia.<sup>47</sup>

The reaction of the free world to the policy of racial segregation has been made crystal clear in the discussions which have taken place in the United Nations since this new world forum was founded and when we meet in Conference it is natural that we should record our sincerest appreciation to those who supported our cause in the General Assembly. The united lead given by the Governments of India and Pakistan on this issue has been acclaimed by South African Indians who hope that all outstanding differences between these two countries will be resolved in the very near future.

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<sup>47</sup> The Asian-African Conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia, from April 18 to 24, 1955. Moses Kotane and Moulvi I. A. Cachalia attended the Conference as observers from South Africa.

We note with gratitude the decision of the United Nations to continue to give its attention to the policy of racial discrimination in the Union.

At the commencement of my address I said that fascism has been established in our country. That is the bitter truth. Steadily since the Nationalists came to power in 1948 measures have been enacted, building on the anti-democratic foundation of the past, with the result that today we have little liberty left. Mr Swart has a number of measures before Parliament seeking to give wider powers to the police and with their enactment the Union will have become a police State with all the tyranny which goes with it.

How ineffective has been the parliamentary opposition to the advancing fascist tide is sharply emphasised as Parliament meets in Cape Town each year. Segregation is embedded in the Union constitution itself. Thus, the House of Assembly and the Senate are reserved for Europeans only while the aspirations and hopes of four-fifths of the country's population are hardly brought to the notice of those who legislate for or rather legislate against the majority of the country.

In the laws which the Nationalists have enacted there has been the continuous attempt to vest the Executive and individual ministers with arbitrary powers and to nullify the rule of law. The Nationalists have succeeded in their objective with such measures as the Group Areas Act, the Bantu Education Act, the Native Laws Amendment Act, the Population Registration Act, the Native Resettlement Act and the Suppression of Communism Act already on our Statute Book.

The Criminal Laws Amendment Act and the Public Safety Act passed as retaliatory measures against the great Campaign for Defiance against Unjust Laws have placed in the hands of the Executive powers to declare a State of Emergency, suspend all laws and establish a dictatorship, and now another parliamentary session has before it another instalment of the Nationalist programme for the enslavement of the people of South Africa. The United Party, and for that matter all parliamentary parties, have proved impotent and futile against the onslaught of the Nationalists. What else could be expected of a parliamentary opposition when the opposition itself believes in racial discrimination?

The historic task of making South Africa free lies in extra-parliamentary forces. It is to the credit of the national liberation organisations that they have not succumbed to the Nationalist onslaught. The protest of 26th June, 1950, and the great Defiance Campaign of 1952 will be recorded in the annals of our freedom struggle for liberation in South Africa. The Defiance Campaign in particular has made the oppressed people realise their existing and potential strength. From the campaign the African National Congress has emerged as the leader of the struggle for national liberation waged unitedly by the African, Coloured and Indian people, supported by European democrats.

We meet in Conference at a time when our people are in the midst of extensive preparations for the holding of the Congress of the People to be convened in the near future for the formulation of the Freedom Charter. I make an urgent call to all Congressmen to work increasingly with enthusiasm and fervour for this historic Congress

destined to be one of the great milestones on the road to freedom. Let this Conference take vital decisions on the maximum contribution each branch can make in rallying the people of Natal for the full participation of this province in making our own destiny in a free South Africa, for that is essentially what the Congress of the People seeks to achieve.

One of the most urgent tasks before this Conference is the question of organisation. This question assumes great importance because of the attacks made by the Nationalists on all progressive bodies in South Africa. We must survive these attacks and continue to give a courageous and fearless lead to our people. I have confidence in the membership of Congress to do so. The Congress membership has rallied magnificently, particularly after the wholesale banning orders served on so many members of the Executive elected by the last Conference. In a year of trial and tribulations the present Executive with new men at the helm of affairs has creditably advanced the cause for which we stand.

In the ensuing year Congress branches must remain fully alive to the problems facing their respective areas and take up issues which affect the people in their daily lives. It is only when we can rally the people effectively on local issues can we rally the country as a whole on national issues and on the major struggle for full democratic rights.

The Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Bantu Education Act, the move to remove Coloured voters from the common roll are some of the measures around which the entire country can be rallied in defence of democracy and I ask Conference to discuss these problems in detail and formulate a policy of action consistent with our organised strength and with the demands of our people.

I speak to you not in person at this Conference. There are many other Congressmen who are in an even worse situation and are debarred from engaging in Congress activities, leave alone attending gatherings. But remember Congress is greater than any individual or a group of individuals. It is an organisation founded by Mahatma Gandhi and it has a proud heritage of struggle and sacrifice. I call upon you to remain steadfast to your great heritage. If you remain true to the cause for which Congress stands then in my mind I am fully convinced that no tyranny or oppression can ever eliminate the Congress from achieving the ideals for which it stands.

**MESSAGE TO THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS SECRETARIAT:  
CALL FOR AN ALL-IN CONFERENCE TO FIGHT THE GROUP  
AREAS ACT, NOVEMBER 1955<sup>48</sup>**

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<sup>48</sup> From: *New Age*, Cape Town, November 24, 1955

The Group Areas Act has often been described as the cornerstone of the apartheid structure which the Nationalist Government seeks to erect on the blood and sweat of the non-white people of this country.

The Congress condemned the law on the grounds that it would ruin the Indian people economically. The truth of our contention has been clearly borne out.

During the last session of Parliament the Government, with the connivance of the Durban City Council, enacted the Group Areas Development Act. By one stroke of the pen Indians in Durban alone are to lose millions of pounds under this law if allowed to be enforced.

Every property-owner, big and small, is seriously affected by the provisions of the Development Act.

Already in Durban's central commercial area where Indian business establishments are concentrated, all Indian property development has been frozen for a period of two years.

The new proclamation dealing with the enforcement of Section 23 of the Group Areas Act places every Indian licence in jeopardy. For the time being the authorities do not want to enforce this section as far as renewals are concerned, but this is only to provide administrative relief.

The Land Tenure Board has not the machinery to deal yet with so large a number of applications for renewals in Natal. But sooner than some people realise, if this Act is not challenged, the Land Tenure Board can become effective machinery in the hands of the Nationalist Government to refuse renewal of licences and so restrict our traders to a small number in keeping with the Nationalists' policy of introducing a racial quota system in trade.

We must not live in a fool's paradise and believe that with this danger facing the entire community a few will be able to save themselves. We must expose those in our community who are thinking in terms of saving their own commercial interests at the expense of the rest of the traders.

The latest treacherous move of the Nationalists is the desire to utilise the Group Areas Act for the purpose of prohibiting workers of one race being employed by members of another racial group.

Grave danger faces the whole Indian community. The Natal Indian Congress must convene a conference of all bodies and organisations to meet this challenge.

## **NEW YEAR MESSAGE, DECEMBER 1955<sup>1</sup>**

The Non-European people and European democrats must work unceasingly for peace and achieve unity to oppose apartheid and segregation, evils which are preventing good will among the peoples of the Union...

The Freedom Charter enshrines the hopes and aspirations of the millions of the underprivileged peoples of the Union and in 1956 our main task will be to advance the cause of the Charter.

Never in the history of man was there a greater need for emphasising the importance of peace on earth and goodwill among the peoples and the nations of the world.

The year 1956 will be what we make of it.

## **PAPER ON THE GROUP AREAS ACT AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE INDIAN PEOPLE OF NATAL, MAY 1956<sup>49</sup>**

### **A: HISTORY AND AIMS OF THE ACT**

1. The Group Areas Act enacted by the Union Parliament over six years ago in 1950 may be described as the high water mark of the Union's legislation against non-European land rights in South Africa. Like its predecessors, the chief aim of this law is to give effect to the racial policy of the white ruling group in South Africa.

2. Segregation and apartheid are fundamentally based on the maintenance of white domination by creating a reservoir of cheap labour among the non-white population of the country. As far as the African people are concerned, territorial segregation has been deeply rooted in the Union's history and Conference has the benefit of having before it the views of Chief Albert J. Luthuli, President-General of the African National Congress, on this vital question.

3. While this paper of the Natal Indian Congress deals specifically with the effects of the Act on the Indian community, nevertheless it is right and proper to emphasise that this law is aimed at the entire non-white people of the Union. The Land Act of 1913, the Urban Areas Act of 1923 and the subsequent amendments to it and the Native Trust and

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<sup>1</sup> *New Age*, Cape Town, December 29, 1955.

<sup>49</sup> This paper was presented by Dr G. M. Naicker, on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress, to the Conference on the Group Areas Act, convened by the NIC in Durban on May 5-6, 1956. Only the first and last sections of the paper are reproduced here. The rest of the paper contains an analysis of the Group Areas Act and the Group Areas Development Act and information on its effect in Durban.



Land Act, 1936, are some of the primary laws directed against the African population.

4. To the Coloured people of the Union the Group Areas Act comes as a first attack on their land rights.

As far as the Indian community is concerned, laws dealing with its land restrictions also go back into history. In the Transvaal, Law 3 was enacted in 1885. We have the history of the "Class Areas Bill" and the "Areas Reservation Bill" introduced before the so-called Cape Town Agreement of 1927. There was the Natal Pegging Act of 1943 and in 1946 the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act was passed. The Group Areas Act is indeed a climax to the many laws that came before it seeking to attack the property rights of the Indian community.

5. The Group Areas Act is a product of the Nationalist Party and hence it embodies that Party's policy of apartheid.

6. When this measure was before Parliament Dr the Hon. D. F. Malan, the then Prime Minister of South Africa, made it known that Parliament was dealing with undoubtedly the most important of all apartheid measures. "What we have in this Bill before us is apartheid. It is the essence of the apartheid policy which is embodied in this Bill", declared Dr Malan.

7. What precisely apartheid means is difficult to determine even from the pronouncements of Nationalists themselves. A study of official and semi-official statements on this question leaves one with a very confused picture. But removed of its frills and trimmings, apartheid is an accentuated form of the policy of segregation, though differing in some respects from the traditional segregation policies of the previous Union Governments. A study of the Manifesto issued by the Nationalist Party, prior to their coming to power in 1948, throws some light on apartheid and the non-European policies of the Nationalist Government.

8. Dealing with the Indian people the Manifesto, after declaring that the Nationalists believed in the definite policy of separation between the white and non-white racial groups, says: "The Party holds the view that Indians are a foreign and outlandish element (*Vreemde En Uitheemse*) which is unassimilable. They can never become part of the country and they must therefore be treated as an immigrant community." The Nationalists accept as a basis of their policy the repatriation of as many Indians as possible. The Manifesto adds: "So long as there are Indians in the country, a definite policy of separation will be applied as far as possible between Europeans and Indians in every sphere, as well as between Indians and other indigenous non-European groups."

9. When the Group Areas Bill was introduced in Parliament the Government sought to justify its action by primarily relying on the report of the Inter-departmental Sub-Committee appointed by Dr Donges<sup>50</sup> in 1948. The Joint Report of the Asiatic Land

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<sup>50</sup> Dr T. E. Donges, Minister of the Interior

Tenure Laws Amendment Committee, published in 1950 on the eve of the enactment of the Group Areas Act, makes interesting reading and underlines that one of the chief aims of this law is to attack the Indian people. The so-called Indian question seemed to have been uppermost in the mind of these sub-committees.

10. It was not surprising that these Committees to some extent re-echoed the policies and precepts of Dr Donges, the Nationalist Minister of the Interior, who had appointed them. Their findings are blatantly of a political nature and bear little resemblance to what may be expected of a judicial commission.

"Before stating our recommendations we feel that reference should be made to one matter which, strictly speaking, falls outside our terms of reference but which is so closely associated in the public mind with the Asiatic question that it has a determining influence on the evidence tendered to us and accordingly also on recommendations based on such evidence and that is the possibility of repatriating the Asiatics from South Africa.

"There appears to be an ever-growing belief in the public mind that the only satisfactory solution of the Asiatic question is repatriation, and that whatever is done by way of legislation should be such as not to endanger the possibility of repatriation and deprive the public of one of its most deeply cherished hopes.

"The fundamental theme of the evidence throughout the years has been and still is: repatriation or, failing which, compulsory segregation. In the most recent evidence there is noticeable a distinct tendency for this theme to assume the form of: repatriation, and, pending which, compulsory segregation... In its most advanced form this then reads: repatriation and, failing which, compulsory segregation *with boycott to induce repatriation.*"

11. One may observe that in the typical South African racialist pattern these Committees use the word "public" to mean only the white racial group of the Union. The report further adds that failing or pending repatriation, "the present situation has to be dealt with incisively if civil commotions arising from racial tension and strife are to be avoided. We can see no way of attaining this end except to legislate for total territorial segregation of the different racial groups, so that in the course of time homogeneous racial groups are brought about". (para. 333 of the Report).

12. Hence the Group Areas Act was born.

13. It is significant that because of the Nationalist policy of regarding the Indian people as a foreign, alien and outlandish element to be expatriated, the Act makes primary provision only for the "White", "Native" and "Coloured" groups. In this primary division there is no room for the Indian people. By Proclamation 73 issued on the 30th of March, 1951, the Indian group was created as a sub-division of the Coloured group, perhaps to emphasise the immigrant status given by the Nationalist Government to the Indian people.

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## E. OPPOSITION TO THE ACT

1. The Group Areas Act is perhaps the only law of a member State of the United Nations which was circulated to delegates of the General Assembly as an official document for consideration when the world forum discussed the racial policies of the Union Government.

2. It is natural that this law should have received the condemnation of democratic world opinion, for does not Article 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights read:

"1. Every one has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others;

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property"?

3. The Act, its background and the present policy of the Nationalist Government all go to indicate that this law seriously infringes the principles contained in this international Declaration.

4. Within the borders of the Union this Act is totally opposed by the vast majority of the people. In 1946 the Indian people of the Union, under the banner of the Congress, launched Passive Resistance Campaign against this Act's predecessor, the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act. In opposition to that law over two thousand men and women, young and old, served terms of imprisonment in order to show their abhorrence of the principles underlying it.

5. In 1952, under the leadership of the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress, the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign was launched against a number of measures, amongst whom was the Group Areas Act. In that heroic struggle over 8,500 individuals of all races went to jail rejecting the policy of apartheid and upholding the principles of democracy. That opposition to the Act is enshrined in the hearts of the masses of South Africa.

6. We reject apartheid and the contention that separation of races leads to racial harmony in a multi-racial society. We oppose the uprooting of any peoples from their homes and we are firmly convinced that the policy of apartheid leads further to the oppression of the non-European people. The application of this policy has accentuated racial tension, conflict and bitterness on an unprecedented scale. No policy which attempts to keep the majority of the population of South Africa under permanent subjection or "*baaskap*" can ever succeed. The non-European people rightly claim full democratic rights in the land of their birth.

7. In relation to the Indian community, it is clear that the real motives behind the Group Areas Act are:

(a) To deprive the Indian people of their long established ownership of land and homes;

(b) To facilitate the uprooting and expatriation of South African citizens of Indian origin;

(c) To ruin the Indian people economically; and

(d) To confine them to ghettos as a source of cheap labour.

8. Any act conceived under the policy of "*baaskap*" and apartheid and passed by Parliament from which all non-Europeans are strictly excluded can only be in the interest of the white dominating section of South Africa.

9. A law which is manifestly unjust cannot be applied justly.

10. Arising from the above contentions the Congress policy on the Act is unambiguous and clear. We declare our total opposition to the law and at no stage will we be a party to its implementation.

11. This paper is being presented to a Conference which is historic in that it presents a broad united front against the Act which is the cornerstone of the policy of apartheid.

12. Not only have we to be united but we must be for ever vigilant.

### **“NO ROOM FOR RACIALISM AT NATAL UNIVERSITY”: STATEMENT, JUNE 1956<sup>51</sup>**

[The most unscientific and blatantly racialistic statement made by Dr Malherbe, Principal of the University of Natal, alleging that the African was “totalitarian at heart and used to an ideology of tyranny” and that his history under such kings as Shaka AND Dingaan showed this, was severely criticised and condemned by Dr G. M. Naicker, President of the Natal Indian Congress, in a statement to *New Age*.]

While in the *herrenvolk* climate of South Africa Dr Malherbe’s pronouncements can be understood, and he is entitled to hold such views with the ‘intellectual elite’ of Stellenbosch, it is most disturbing when one considers the position Dr Malherbe holds..

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<sup>51</sup> *New Age*, Cape Town, June 28, 1956.

The general reaction to his views among the Non-White people of Natal is that there is enough racialism in the Union already and there is no room for it at a multi-racial university if that university is to develop the true traditions of tolerance and university.

Dr Melherbe's observations are inaccurate and without any historical basis whatsoever. On the contrary African National Congress in particular, is democratic in concept. Dr Malherbe will do well to study the Freedom Charter, drafted and adopted at the initiative of the ANC, to see the trend which African nationalism is taking today.

Notwithstanding the bigoted racial theories openly advocated by Afrikaner nationalism as represented by the South African Government, I have still to hear a single African spokesman making sweeping generalisations and condemning the whole Afrikaner people as totalitarian etc., on a racial basis, as Dr Malherbe has done in respect of the African people.

If Dr Malherbe in fact does hold the view attributed to him in the press then he will serve himself, the University of Natal, the Non-White people and all true democrats in this Province well by tendering his resignation from the post he now holds.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE NINTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
JUNE 22, 1956<sup>52</sup>**

Mr Chairman  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the banned President of your Congress I have the greatest pleasure in expressing our sincerest thanks to Dr Letele for agreeing to declare open this Ninth Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress.<sup>53</sup>

The presence of Dr Letele in our midst symbolises the working unity which exists between the African and Indian Congresses. From our platform each year on the occasion of our Annual Conferences come messages of unity and democracy from all sections of the South African people who go to make our multi-racial society.

We do not talk of apartheid, of division, of race oppression and of race hatred. We

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<sup>52</sup> The address was read by Dr M. N. Padayachee, Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress, since Dr G. M. Naicker was banned from attending gatherings.

<sup>53</sup> The Conference was opened by Dr Arthur E. Letele, Treasurer-General of the African National Congress.

speak of racial harmony, of brotherhood of man, and of equality of opportunities for all peoples regardless of race, colour, ideology or creed. It is this inspiring message, which has come down to mankind from time immemorial, which is an inspiration to us all in these dark days when almost all the lights of liberty have been extinguished in South Africa, the land we so dearly hold to our heart.

We know that the gospel we preach is based on truth and that eventually South Africa will emerge as a mighty democratic nation in which all her children - white and black - will be able to hold up their heads in dignity and pride working for the common good when racial discrimination, the pick-up vans and the pass laws will recede into the dimness of past memory.

For those of us who belong to the Congress movement, and indeed, for all those who believe in democracy for all in South Africa we have a historic mission to fulfil in our lifetime. Freedom in our lifetime is no idle slogan in an age when humanity is fast throwing aside the shackles which had bound it for so long. Asia has emerged from her dark days of colonial oppression and imperial subjugation. And our Africa is astir from north to south making colonial oppressors shudder.

In evaluating our national problems and in attempting to find solutions, it is vitally necessary for us to remember constantly that we are part of one world. We have to study and understand international events and learn from the collective experience of mankind in search of freedom.

The most significant feature in the international field since we last met is the continuous relaxation of tension. The forces which have stood for world peace, supported by the common peoples throughout the world, have been triumphant with the result that the nightmare threat of an atomic holocaust which would have destroyed our common civilisation has receded.

The Natal Indian Congress has a clear and unambiguous policy on international affairs. We belong to the great world-wide camp for peace. We stand for the banning of the hydrogen and the atom bombs and the banning of nuclear weapons, for we believe that all nuclear energy should be harnessed for peaceful purposes and not for the destruction of mankind.

On the international front, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Republic of India have given mankind a clear lead. The *Panchshila* enunciated by the Premier of India has become an important yardstick in measuring the peaceful content of the nations of the world.<sup>54</sup> The growing friendship between India and China on the basis of the *Panchshila*

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<sup>54</sup> *Panchshila* (Five principles) were first enunciated in the agreement of 1954 between India and China in regard to Tibet which declared that the relations between the two countries would be governed by the following principles: (a) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (b) mutual non-aggression; (c) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (d) equality and mutual benefit; and (e) peaceful co-existence.

has produced a mighty alliance for peace and progress.

One of the most outstanding events in the international field during the year under review has been the successful holding of the Bandung Conference held in April last year. At this Conference two South African leaders, Mr Kotane and Moulvi Cachalia, were present to give first-hand account of conditions in the Union.

The Bandung Conference must be regarded as a historic milestone in Afro-Asian cooperation on the road to emancipation from colonialism and for world peace. One day the government of truly democratic South Africa will also participate at such historic conferences.

The Bandung Conference showed the determination of the colonial peoples to end foreign domination. It also demonstrated in clearest possible terms the desire on the part of nations like India, recently freed, to see the eradication of colonialism from the face of the earth.

The Bandung Conference was no mere talking shop. It reflected what was happening actively on the anti-imperialist front, particularly on the continents of Africa and Asia and it was right and proper that Kotane and Cachalia should have been there.

While colonialism is rapidly coming to an end in Asia, the retreating imperialists are trying to dig in into the sacred earth of Africa. It is vitally necessary for us to realise how important a prize Africa has become in the eyes of the imperialists of the world. But let us remember that it is not only in Africa that the imperialist is making his last stand against the rising tide of the freedom movement of the world. The people of Cyprus, the people of Malaya, the people of British Guiana and the people of Algeria are all bound together in their noble and inspiring struggle for freedom.

This Conference knows too well my fervent belief in non-violence and knows my great abhorrence for violence. I am satisfied that violence cannot achieve the objectives of freedom that we hold so dear and I realise that on the colonial front a great deal of violence that exists today is violence which was imposed on the oppressed people by the very nature of subjugation.

We declare unequivocally against colonialism and give our whole-hearted support to the fight for freedom throughout the world. In the fight against colonialism the people of Africa are daily playing an increasing role and we in South Africa must make a common cause with the rest of our brethren in this emergent Africa.

While in the international field we declare our total opposition to war and colonialism, we at the same time emphasise that racial discrimination is a curse of mankind, having within it the seeds of a global war. As long as racial discrimination is tolerated in any part of the world, for so long will mankind remain without lasting peace.

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These principles were subsequently endorsed by many other governments.

The hotbed of racialism is South Africa. Here in the twentieth century is a country in which a small white ruling group dominates over the vast masses of the non-white people. It is the country of segregation and apartheid, a country in which human dignity counts for nought as far as we of colour are concerned.

Last year we had the proud privilege of having Father Huddleston declare open our Conference. He was then one of our bravest non-violent soldiers for freedom on the battlefield of apartheid in the Union. Today this great South African is no more with us in our midst. He is abroad physically but in spirit Father Huddleston will for all time remain a part of the freedom movement of the Union.<sup>55</sup>

We could not have sent a better ambassador overseas to interpret the heart and the mind of the millions who must remain voiceless under the cruel and naked policy of racial intolerance.

During the year under review the Nationalist Government has in its well-calculated plan proceeded step by step in implementing its policy of apartheid oppression. The last session of Parliament which has just ended was yet another apartheid session during which individual Ministers arrogated to themselves more and more power, becoming "little Czars" who could issue at will their ukase affecting the lives of millions of people.

Under measures such as the Urban Areas Amendment Act and the Natives (Prohibition of Interdict) Act, the rule of law has suffered yet another devastating blow. The law courts are not to be accessible to South African citizens under such measures, if these citizens happen to be black.

That apartheid is a fraud has been fully exposed, if such exposure was necessary, by the publication of the Tomlinson Report and the subsequent white paper issued on it by the Nationalist Government. After many years of labour an unscientific report is produced extolling apartheid and yet the Government is not prepared even to finance the Tomlinson project. How hollow is apartheid!

Our answer to Tomlinson and apartheid is clear. We do not want any puppet kingdoms conjured up in the dreams of Dr Verwoerd.<sup>56</sup> We want a common society in South Africa based on sound democratic principles enabling every South African to make his maximum contribution for the common good.

How fearful is the Nationalist Government of true democracy is borne out by the banning orders and banishments under which the leaders of the democratic movement in South Africa have suffered further during the period under review.

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<sup>55</sup> Father Huddleston was recalled by his Order to Britain in 1956 and the South African Government then declared him a prohibited immigrant. He continued to promote international action against apartheid. Since his retirement as Archbishop in 1982, he has been President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement and Chairman of the Council of Trustees of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.

<sup>56</sup> Dr H. F. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, later Prime Minister



Conference must give serious consideration to the spate of new laws which have been enacted during the last session of Parliament by the Nationalist Party in its drive towards a police State. We have a duty to our people and to the world to expose the ruthless and oppressive nature of apartheid and to rally our people in their united opposition to the Nationalists' onslaught on human dignity.

What is our answer to apartheid and segregation? Firstly, we must be clear on our objectives. Since the time when Jan van Riebeeck landed at the Cape over 300 years ago, there have been many big and small struggles for freedom in this land of ours. Some of these struggles have been recorded, some are fresh in our memory and there are yet others which democratic historians will record in due course. We will then have the names of our heroes, many of whom remain unknown and unnamed today, heroes who have advanced the cause of freedom.

Yes, our freedom struggle has a glorious history and one of the most important milestones in this history was the formulation and adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People held at Kliptown, Johannesburg, on June 25th and 26th, 1955.

The great assembly which ratified this Charter was more representative of the people of the Union than any Parliament which has met in Cape Town. This Assembly has given us in clear and concise terms our ultimate objective. The Freedom Charter enshrines the hopes and aspirations of all South Africans who believe in democracy and freedom.

It is the duty of each and every Congressman throughout the length and breadth of the Union to become a missionary spreading the gospel of the Charter. Posterity will judge each one of us on the part he or she played in making the Charter a living reality.

Our support for the Charter will come from the people, for the support is already there, if we link the demands in the Charter with the day-to-day demands of our people. You will only be good Congressmen and good Congresswomen if you understand the problems of your people and selflessly go to their help in order to assist them in their sufferings. Your own support of the Charter will only have a meaning if you will by your own action show that by being Congressmen or Congresswomen you are truly servants of your people.

The Congress of the People which was convened at the initiative of the African National Congress showed that African nationalism under the banner of Congress movement was not following a narrow and bigoted path. The African National Congress had invited all South Africans of all colours to come together in drawing up the Charter, the common heritage of all South Africans.

When separation and hatred is preached in high places in South Africa it is our duty to preach with all the emphasis at our command the message of unity and racial harmony. We must work unceasingly for active democratic united front against apartheid and this front must become broader and broader so that the preachers of apartheid and segregation

stand isolated.

A great lesson in united action has been learnt by us by the convening in this province of the Conference on the Group Areas Act and the Group Areas Development Act. Delegates will deal with the achievements of that conference at the business sessions of Conference. But I want to emphasise that in our opposition to apartheid we will have to follow the pattern adopted at the Group Areas Conference. It is the urgent task for all true democrats in South Africa to unite on issues on which they agree. Our emphasis must be that on which we agree and not that on which we disagree.

There are many burning issues before Conference. Delegates taking part in discussions and decisions must weigh each question calmly and arrive at conclusions which will be in the interests of our people as a whole and in the interest of South Africa. The Group Areas Act, the Group Areas Development Act, the question of increasing unemployment among the Indian workers are some of the issues on which the community expects a lead from the Natal Indian Congress which has, since it was founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1894, become the voice of our people.

I wish your deliberations all success. Let us, with the Congress movement and with all true democrats, march forward on the road of liberty.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE TWENTY-SECOND  
CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS,  
JOHANNESBURG, OCTOBER 19, 1956<sup>57</sup>**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our twenty-first Conference was held in July 1954 in Durban when Chief Albert Luthuli in his opening address outlined the "common task" facing the liberation movement in the Union. Since that inspiring message of Chief Luthuli, much has happened, both in the international and national fronts, and it will be the task of the delegates assembled here to deal with the new problems that arise in our common task in the struggle for freedom.

We remember graphically the departure of Chief Luthuli from our twenty-first Conference in Durban to Johannesburg to address a momentous gathering at the Western

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<sup>57</sup> The Presidential Address was delivered on behalf of Dr Naicker, Acting President of SAIC, as he had been banned from attending gatherings. Chief Albert J. Luthuli, President-General of the African National Congress, opened the Conference.

Areas and we remember the news that was brought to Conference of the banning order served on him on his arrival in Johannesburg. Thereafter the bannings came swiftly and many leading members of the South African Indian Congress who were delegates to the last Conference have had their freedom curtailed by them.

I am addressing this Conference *in absentia* owing to the ban which has been imposed on me but I share with you, one and all, the great joy that Chief Luthuli is once again actively with us. We are proud to have him once again to declare this twenty-second Conference open. Chief Albert J. Luthuli has become the foremost spokesman of the underprivileged South Africans of all races. We rightly claim him to be our leader just as the African National Congress does. His inspiring address will live long in the memory of freedom-loving South Africans.

On behalf of the South African Indian Congress, I greet Chief Luthuli and say "*Afrika! Mayibuye!*" We express our sincerest thanks to you, Chief Luthuli, for opening once again our biennial Conference.

Chief Luthuli is coming to us from a historic conference held earlier this month at Bloemfontein where African leaders gathered together, at one of the most representative conferences ever to be held in the Union, to discuss the Tomlinson Report and its underlying policy of apartheid.<sup>58</sup> That conference marked yet another milestone on the hard and bitter road to freedom in South Africa.

Delegates assembled here must pay special attention to the well-reasoned, objective analysis of apartheid which has come from the Bloemfontein conference.

The Bloemfontein conference was convinced that the present policy of apartheid constituted a threat to race relations in the country and, therefore, in the interests of all people and the future of the country, it called upon all national organisations "to mobilise all people, irrespective of race, colour or creed to form a united front against apartheid".

The conference further issued a call to all South Africans "who realise the danger and effects of apartheid to take a positive step to break down the colour bar in group relations". It is for us at this Conference to declare our unequivocal support for the declarations made by African leaders at the Bloemfontein conference, for in so doing we are not only advancing the cause of our own freedom but also the cause of world freedom.

At times we do not seem to realise the significance of the role we are playing in this southern tip of Africa in a struggle which is a world-wide struggle for human dignity and freedom. Racial discrimination - a by-product of colonialism and imperialist domination - today constitutes a major threat to the peace of the world. We are convinced that mankind will not be able to bring peace on earth and goodwill among men until the cancer of

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<sup>58</sup> The All-in African Conference was convened by the Interdenominational African Ministers' Federation in Bloemfontein from October 4 to 6, 1956, to consider the Tomlinson report.

racialism is eliminated from the face of the earth.

Today the world over, imperialism is receiving shattering blows from the struggles of the common peoples of the world united against colonialism and human exploitation. The frontiers of freedom are rapidly extending with almost the whole of Asia emerging free and with the whole of the continent of Africa astir with new awakening.

In this one world, our struggle against segregation and apartheid is only just one facet of the great international struggle for freedom. We welcome the world-wide support we have received for our struggle and we unhesitatingly declare as our own the world-wide struggle on the part of colonial peoples everywhere for their liberation.

Because we hold these views, we declare our fullest support for the Egyptian people in the so-called Suez crisis, a crisis which has shown how imperialism in its death throes is making its final stand on the continent of Africa.

We must take note of the fact that Africa today occupies the battlefield of the struggle between imperialism and the colonially oppressed people and in this struggle we have a positive role to play with the rest of the freedom-loving people of the world.

On the international front, the Bandung Conference has given a new hope, particularly to the peoples of Africa and Asia who are today united as never before in their common resolve to end imperialism and eliminate racial discrimination. We note with pride the positive role played by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in international affairs and in particular in the cause of world peace.

Once again, on the international scene, the racial policies of the Union Government will come up for discussion in the General Assembly of the United Nations. While we reiterate that our freedom in this country will come from our own efforts, we nevertheless realise how important it has been for us to receive the support of the member States of the United Nations.

On the national front the most significant event since we last met in Conference has been the holding of the Congress of the People at Kliptown, Johannesburg, on June 25th and 26th last year. The Freedom Charter which this conference formulated has become the guiding star of all South Africans of all races advancing on the road to freedom. In all our deliberations, decisions and actions, our main concern should be to make this great Charter a living reality.

Just as the Bloemfontein conference has issued a call for a united front against apartheid, so too must this Conference go forward with a call to South Africans to unite against apartheid and to work constructively for the creation of a truly democratic society in South Africa, free from colour bars and race discrimination.

The Nationalist Party is marching ahead with its avowed aim of establishing a

Broederbond<sup>59</sup> Republic in which there will be freedom for none. The parliamentary opposition has proved itself impotent and hence we who constitute the extra-parliamentary front have a very important and decisive role to perform in these days when darkness threatens to engulf the country we love so dearly.

I am personally a great believer in non-violence. The non-violent army of freedom in South Africa will and must triumph and daily our ranks are swelling. We have the urgent task of marshalling a powerful united front against apartheid. We have to rally our people on issues which vitally affect them.

As far as the Indian people are concerned the Group Areas Act constitutes the greatest single threat to their existence in this country. The aim of the Act is to bring about the economic ruination of our people with the object of facilitating their repatriation.

This Conference meets on the eve of contemplated forced expulsion of our people from the western suburbs of Johannesburg. The proclamation of Group Areas in certain parts of Johannesburg has forcefully brought to the notice of South Africa and the world the truth of our contention that the Act spells our economic doom.

Let the people of the western suburbs know that the entire democratic South Africa and the freedom-loving world is with them in their firm resolve to defend their homes. The western suburbs of Johannesburg constitute a test case for the rest of the country. We cannot and must not under any circumstances suffer a defeat there.

I am sure that Conference will give detailed consideration to the grave threat which faces our people from the Group Areas Act and the Group Areas Development Act. It is for the South African Indian Congress and its constituent bodies to give our people a clear lead on this question in every city, town and village in the Union. We have seen how effective our policy of a united front can be by the way in which democratic forces rallied to the call issued by our Congress against the Group Areas Act, both in Natal and the Transvaal. We must strengthen that united front and go forward until we defeat this obnoxious law.

Since we last met in Conference the Nationalist Government has placed a large number of apartheid laws on the Statute Book. These laws have seriously curtailed the meagre freedom which the non-white people have enjoyed in the Union. The country under Nationalist rule has become a fully fledged police State. It is our task to prevent South Africa drifting further on the road to disaster and chaos.

I am confident that Conference will give serious consideration to the numerous laws enacted by the Nationalists and take appropriate decisions. To carry out our decisions we require a well-organised and disciplined liberation movement in South Africa. I call upon each and every delegate assembled here to discuss the problems facing us calmly and objectively with the aim of strengthening our organisation and of advancing the cause of

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<sup>59</sup> A secret society of Afrikaners to which many of the leaders of the Nationalist Party belong

liberation.

We are passing through dark and difficult days but we are not despondent. We know that history is on our side. Never in the history of mankind has the national liberation struggle of a people failed. In the sure knowledge of the truth of this statement, we march forward to a free South Africa in a free Africa.

*Afrika! Afrika! Mayibuye!*

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE TENTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
NOVEMBER 22, 1957<sup>60</sup>**

Mr Chairman  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again I speak to you through a proxy, thereby emphasising the fact that the restrictions which have been imposed on me are still in force, preventing me talking to you in person. But this restriction is no bar to our thinking together and planning for a free South Africa, a country in which the basic freedoms would be guaranteed to all her citizens, Africans and non-Africans.

We are most fortunate in having with us Mr Govan Mbeki. Mr Mbeki is a well known figure in the African National Congress and is one of the great leaders in the national liberation struggle in South Africa. His presence here tonight is most welcome to us because it demonstrates in no uncertain manner the unbreakable bonds of friendship and brotherhood that have been forged between the African and the Indian people in our united endeavours to make South Africa a happy home for all her people. We assure Mr Mbeki that the Indian people of Natal will stand united with the African people in all their just struggles conducted under the freedom banner of the African National Congress.

Since we last met in Conference, one of the most significant things that has happened is the tremendous strength shown by the Congress organisations notwithstanding the nation-wide arrests of prominent leaders on a charge "high treason".<sup>61</sup> The treason case

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<sup>60</sup> The address was read by the Vice-President of NIC since Dr G. M. Naicker was banned from attending gatherings.

<sup>61</sup> In December 1956, 156 leaders of the people, including Dr G. M. Naicker, were arrested all over the country and charged with high treason. The trial dragged on until 1961 when all the accused were acquitted.

is before the courts of the country and therefore any comments in relation thereto cannot be made. As the lawyers say the matter is *sub judice*. I will therefore not make any comments save that the Treason Trial Defence Fund has received world-wide support and we must express our sincerest thanks to men like Canon Collins in England and Mr George Houser in America for the wonderful work they are doing. In South Africa too, the Fund has rallied round it men and women of great prominence who have shown that there is a tremendous amount of goodwill in our country in all sections of the South African people.

This Conference has received messages of support and encouragement from people throughout the world. While we express our sincerest thanks to them for their messages, we must always bear in mind that our struggle is a South African struggle and that in keeping with our basic principles of non-violence and non-racialism we will bring freedom in South Africa through our own efforts in this country.

In the international field, since we last met the cause of freedom has made great advancement. It is necessary for us to take note of the advances made in the cause of freedom in all parts of the world, for we are not living in isolation. The struggle for freedom and emancipation is a global struggle and so is the struggle against the bigotry of racialism.

We welcome the emergence of the new Malaya and Ghana, a free country on our own continent. We pray that Ghana, with all her painful teething troubles, may become an outstanding example of democracy and freedom to the whole world.

At the United Nations once again, the policies of the South African Government have received searching examination on the part of democratic nations who have with one voice rejected apartheid and segregation. We are thankful to India and Pakistan for their united stand on the question of treatment of Indians in South Africa when this matter was again debated at the United Nations and we express the hope that these countries may soon solve their differences and work together on all issues as they have done on the colour question in South Africa.

The United Nations resolution calling for a solution of the so-called Indian question in South Africa by tripartite talks, bearing in mind the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is to be welcomed and let us hope that sanity will prevail and that the Union Government will not stand in the way of Round Table talks between the three Governments.

We reiterate our total opposition to colonial oppression and welcome the great strides made by the forces of world peace. Let the scientists of the world be rallied to the cause of peaceful reconstruction instead of making nuclear weapons of destruction. Man is on his onward march to conquer space and in this age of "Sputniks" let mankind advance to the great heights which it is capable of achieving.

While the world is making tremendous progress and while the old outmoded concepts

are being discarded all over, South Africa continues to find herself groaning under the oppression of apartheid tyranny. Whereas in India the Government is making untouchability a criminal offence, in South Africa the Strijdom Government is not only perpetuating a caste system but is sanctifying it with the halo of religion. Whereas in the United States of America the Federal Government is carrying out a vigorous programme of integration, in South Africa the Government of Mr Strijdom is doing everything possible to work against the natural process of integration and is busy cutting up our multi-racial population into ethnic segments.

White domination and white supremacy are paraded before the all-white electorate as the only basis for the survival of the white man in South Africa. It is a policy which will lead South Africa to disaster. It is a policy which has resulted in such measures as job reservations, resulting in the whole country facing upheaval and chaos.

Delegates attending this Conference will have to study in detail the apartheid laws passed by the last session of Parliament. They will have to study the administrative measures taken by the Nationalist Government in their indecent haste to impose apartheid on the unwilling masses of the people in the country. Delegates will have to take decisions on these questions and will have to carry out these decisions through their branches in keeping with the policy of Congress.

While the Government has continued on its onward march with its policy of apartheid leading the country to the brink of disaster, the South African people have not sat quiet with folded arms. The growing democratic front of the South African people is the real answer to the challenge of apartheid.

We welcome the important Inter-race Conference taking place in Johannesburg early next month.<sup>62</sup> We note with satisfaction the fact that this conference is being sponsored by people of such varied views and we regard it as an important milestone on the road to racial harmony in our country.

The Nationalist measure which is likely to receive the greatest attention of the Indian community is the Group Areas Act, a measure which has been rightly denounced as one aimed at facilitating the expatriation of our people from South Africa.

It is the duty of each and every delegate to rally his or her branch and the entire membership of the Congress in defence of our homes. The Group Areas Act must and will be fought by our people until South Africa takes a saner stand.

Linked with the Group Areas question are other vital issues which affect South Africa's people as a whole. We must show our solidarity with all the oppressed people of South Africa in their struggle against apartheid and segregation. We express our

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<sup>62</sup> A multiracial conference on the theme "Human Relations in a Multi-racial Society" was convened by the Interdenominational African Ministers' Conference as a follow-up of the All-in African Conference of October 1956. It was held at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and was attended by about 400 participants.



admiration of the African women's struggle against the passes and pledge our support to them. We pledge our support to the Coloured people in their struggle against communal franchise. We pledge our support to all South Africans engaged in fighting apartheid tyranny.

The general elections scheduled to take place next year will give the white electorate an opportunity of expressing their views on the Nationalist Government, a Government which represents only a minority of even the white voters. Although the non-white people are voteless the outcome of the elections is of vital importance to us. We are unanimous in our resolve to end the Nationalist tyranny and therefore we must do everything possible for the defeat of the Nationalist Party at the polls.

But by taking this stand we are in no way accepting the segregation policies of the opposition parties. We reject *baaskap* and white supremacy no matter from which source it comes but at the same time we are pledged to work for the broadest possible united front against the injustices and oppression of the present regime. It is necessary for this Conference to give the Indian people of this province guidance and lead on the question of the forthcoming elections for we cannot and we shall not be passive spectators when the country, or rather when the white electorate, goes to the polls.

Conference will have to deal with questions such as education, housing and unemployment among the many items that appear on the agenda paper. I am confident that our delegates will take each issue affecting our people, discuss it and give a correct lead so as to advance the cause of freedom, to advance the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

Let us remember most categorically that we have declared a war against segregation and apartheid, for we believe segregation and apartheid to be evils which destroy human dignity. We have chosen the superior moral weapon of non-violence in our peaceful struggle to uphold human dignity. Let the white rulers of South Africa know that we are equally interested in upholding their dignity. They must realise that by keeping the non-white people prostrate in the gutter they themselves have to be in the gutter. Our concept of South Africa is a South Africa for all her people.

We believe in the brotherhood of man. We want to see the white and the non-white people give their best to this young and rich country and we want to see the white and the non-white people share equally in the country's wealth and happiness. We have never preached hatred for anyone and once again let me emphasise that at no stage will we tolerate anyone within the Congress fold advocating the use of violence to achieve our noble objective of freedom.

Delegates to this Conference, I want to say to you that posterity will be proud of you for the able manner in which you have held high the Congress flag during the year under review, notwithstanding the treason arrests and the great organisational tasks with which you were confronted. I appeal to you to go forward in that spirit during the coming year and build on the foundation which has so ably been laid by our founder, Mahatma

Gandhi.

Forward to a free South Africa under the banner of "Democracy and Justice for All"!

**MESSAGE TO THOSE STAYING AT HOME: JOINT STATEMENT  
BY DR G. M. NAICKER AND CHIEF ALBERT J. LUTHULI, APRIL  
1958<sup>63</sup>**

Those who will be staying at home in accordance with the decision of the National Workers` Conference are called upon to observe the following instructions and directions strictly and in a disciplined manner.

1. Whatever provocations you meet from the police or any other source, observe rigidly the policy of non-violence which the Congress has always advocated. The exemplary discipline observed by the bus boycotters of the Reef should be our guiding star.
2. Those living in compounds are earnestly requested that if they are escorted to work, they should offer no resistance, in the true spirit of non-violence.
3. *People must stay at their homes for their safety, in order to avoid provocation by the police and others organised by those who are against us.*
4. Expect intensive police raids for passes and beer in locations but let not these intimidate us.
- If arrests take place in large numbers don't plead guilty and DON'T pay admissions of guilt, but contact your lawyers immediately.*
5. Nurses, doctors and those employed in hospitals must stay on duty.
6. *Re: Victimisation. We call upon all workers of all races to be prepared to rally to the support of any worker who may be victimised, and we ask them to hold themselves in readiness to take part in any effective protest against such victimisation, even if it means the boycotting of the products of any firm which is guilty of victimisation.*

This non-racial political demonstration is not directed against any employer. It is the expression by the voteless and democratic peoples of South Africa in a concrete manner

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<sup>63</sup> Text of a joint statement issued by Chief Luthuli, President-General of the African National Congress, and Dr G. M. Naicker, President of the South African Indian Congress, concerning the peaceful and non-violent protest during the week of the general election, including the stay-at-home, April 14-16, 1958.

of their abhorrence and condemnation of the tyrannical policies of the Nationalist Party.

7. WE REMIND YOU OF THE CALL ALREADY ISSUED NOT TO DO ANY SHOPPING ON MONDAY, TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, AND TO STAY AWAY COMPLETELY FROM THE BEER-HALLS, BARS AND BIOSCOPES.

8. We understand that the authorities are endeavouring to hold a meeting of *indunas* from different firms where certain so-called "African leaders" would be present.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT WHAT WILL BE SAID THERE WILL NOT BE IN YOUR INTEREST BUT WILL BE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE AUTHORITIES.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
NOVEMBER 21, 1958<sup>64</sup>**

Mr Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 11th Annual Conference of the Natal Indian Congress assembles at a time when our people are facing the most critical period in their history. The steps taken to implement the Group Areas Act have caused grave concern in every Indian home in the Union for one of the avowed aims of this diabolical legislation is to enforce expatriation and pending which to relegate them into ghettos as a reservoir of cheap labour.

The naked aim of the Group Areas legislation is to make our people impotent in the economic field so that apartheid oppression can be completed and all the non-white people of South Africa are reduced to the lowest rung of the economic ladder.

The Group Areas Act is described as the cornerstone of the policy of apartheid, a policy which seeks to entrench white domination under Afrikaner *baaskap*. It is a policy which naturally flows from the narrow and bigoted tribalism of the Nationalist Party.

While the white ruling group in South Africa is preaching apartheid and doing everything possible to prevent healthy race contact, we who belong to the democratic camp have a duty to ourselves, to our civilisation and to posterity. We have to uphold at all costs the banner of a common society based on equality and respect for all in our multi-racial country.

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<sup>64</sup> The address was read by the Vice-President of NIC since Dr G. M. Naicker was banned from attending gatherings.

We reject Afrikaner *baaskap* tribalism most categorically and today this very platform at the opening of our Conference is a clear illustration of our unbroken faith in creating a South Africa in which all our people can live in harmony and in peace.

We have worked for some years now in closest cooperation in the Congresses in the Union. Today we are most thankful that Mr Alan Paton has opened our Conference. We regard this as an important step in broadening the democratic front, for we believe that we have now reached a stage in the Union where all true democrats opposed to the policy of apartheid and white domination should come together emphasising the points on which they agree in a working alliance to lead our country on the path of democracy.

Indian South Africans form the smallest group of our country's multi-racial population. However it is recognised that the Natal Indian Congress has a history of which all true South Africans could be proud. It is the oldest national organisation in the country and the philosophy of its founder has had a profound impact on mankind.

We in South Africa are part of a world-wide movement for democracy, peace and justice and we are vitally interested as to what is happening outside our border. Our Congress policy is based on that great philosophy of non-violence and it is natural that in the international field we stand for peace and for the solution of all international problems by non-violent means.

We are totally against all domination of one country by another, for we stand for the right of each and every nation, big and small, to be completely sovereign and, therefore, we are against the presence and use of foreign troops on the soil of any country.

We have fully supported the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and once again we record our thanks to member States of the United Nations for the magnificent stand taken on racial discrimination in the Union.

We record with great satisfaction the growing influence exerted for peace and democracy in international affairs by Afro-Asian Powers, most of whom have entered the world family of nations with their newly-won freedoms.

Bandung, Cairo and Accra have become important milestones in cementing friendship and understanding between the peoples of Africa and Asia.<sup>65</sup> Next month when the proposed conference is held at Accra representing the people on the continent of Africa, it will be the voice of the democracy-loving people of South Africa that will also be heard there.

Over 64 years ago, on the 22nd May 1894, in the humble home of Mr Dada Abdulla in Durban, the Congress movement saw its birth. A young lawyer from India, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, on that day founded the Natal Indian Congress and today Congress

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<sup>65</sup> Asian-African Conference, Bandung, April 1955; Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 1957; African People's Conference, Accra, December 1958.

has become the vanguard of the freedom movement in South Africa.

The founder of our organisation worked out the philosophy of non-violence and satyagraha on the South African soil. That philosophy has been consistently upheld by our Congress. We believe that in South Africa there is room for all her people. There can be no place for hatred against anyone in our multi-racial society.

We believe that it is vitally necessary that we as an organisation should each year celebrate Founder's Day - the third Sunday of each May - by reiterating the significance of the contribution made by Mahatma Gandhi to the entire world. On this day there should be an annual Founder's Day address by a prominent personality assessing the value of non-violence in the struggle for freedom and emancipation.

Delegates at the Conference should resolve to commemorate Founder's Day as from next year.

When we met in Conference last year the general elections had not yet taken place and I had made pointed remarks on the issues involved before the electorate. The general elections have once again proved that the denial of the vote to the vast masses of the South African population results in the curtailment of democracy for all the people of South Africa, including the white population. The emergence of Verwoerdian regime<sup>66</sup> is the natural and logical outcome of restricting the vote. Had the frontiers of democracy been extended to embrace all South Africans of all colours then our country today would not have been on the verge of totalitarianism. The election results should be a warning to all white South Africans opposed to the Nationalists that if they want to see true democracy in South Africa, the vote should be extended to all irrespective of race or colour.

As a community we fully know what it is to be completely voteless. In 1896 Indians in Natal were deprived of the parliamentary vote and in 1924 they lost the municipal franchise. Had the Indian people parliamentary franchise, would Dr Dinges have dared to place in the Statute Book a measure such as the Group Areas Act? Had the Indian people the municipal vote, would the Durban City Council have advocated race zoning of the type proclaimed on June 6th this year or race zoning of any type?

It is vitally necessary for our people to understand fully the importance of political rights. It is because we are denied the vote that we suffer so many economic, social and educational disabilities in the Union.

It is not my intention to recount to you the measures taken by the Nationalist Government during the last session of Parliament to restrict further basic freedoms in the country. You know these too well. But I do wish to say this in respect of the Group Areas Act. By June 1959 we have a very important task to fulfil in making the country and world know how unjust and disastrous the Group Areas measures are.

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<sup>66</sup> Dr H. F. Verwoerd became Prime Minister in August 1958.

We are indeed thankful to Mr Alan Paton for the way in which he has spoken out against the Group Areas Act and against all injustices in South Africa.

From this Conference let each and every delegate return to his area dedicated to the task of defeating this law. Our petition to Parliament must become the biggest petition ever presented and we must rally the entire community behind our just slogan "*Defend Your Homes*". I want to assure the Indian community that the Natal Indian Congress will be in the forefront of the struggle against the Group Areas legislation.

The Congress Alliance is continuing to grow in strength and we are proud of the fact that the African National Congress today stands as the real bulwark of freedom. It has completely rejected narrow tribalism and is today under the leadership of one of South Africa's greatest democrats, Chief Albert J. Luthuli, leading the African people on the path of a common society based on democracy and peace among all sections of the South African population.

In two years' time the Indian people will be observing the centenary of their arrival in South Africa. It is our task to mark that event with some striking and lasting example of multi-racial cooperation and achievement. Delegates must give serious thought to this question at this Conference.

In 1960 when we celebrate this centenary let it be said by all true historians that in South Africa we have remained the upholders of democracy and freedom and that in a world full of violence and hatred the philosophy of non-violence and love has remained the only effective signpost for the progress of mankind.

I would have liked to have been with you all in person but as you know the treason trials are not yet over. These trials perhaps more than any other factor have brought South African democrats closer to each other and we are indeed thankful to people outside the borders of the Union, and in particular to Canon Collins, for the magnificent support the Treason Trial Defence Fund has received.

The ensuing year will be one of great trials and tribulations for the Indian community. It is the first year of Dr Verwoerd's rule and the first year of the Group Areas proclamations. We enter this year with the firm resolve to oppose all acts of tyranny in the firm belief that our cause is just. Democracy will and must triumph in this South Africa - our beloved country.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE 12TH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN,  
OCTOBER 9, 1959**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are indeed grateful to Mr Brian Bunting<sup>67</sup> for accepting our invitation to declare open this 12th Annual Conference of the oldest organisation in South Africa regardless of race, colour or creed. On the 22nd of May, 1894, over sixty-five years ago, Mahatma Gandhi founded the Natal Indian Congress in this city and we are proud of the fact that we have over all these years held high the banner of freedom, pursuing a policy of race harmony, peace and non-violence in a country where the rulers have steadily proceeded in just the opposite direction.

In the past our conferences have been opened by Chief Luthuli and various other leaders of the African National Congress. We have also had Dr Brookes, Mr Lovell of the Labour Party and Mr Alan Paton to perform this same task. This year in Mr Brian Bunting we have one who has all his life stood with the cause of freedom and justice and we are indeed thankful for his stimulating address which has raised the basic questions which affect our country.

Our Annual Conference presents a non-racial platform from which all sections of our multi-racial society can declare their unswerving faith in the cause of freedom which is indivisible. Delegates present at this Conference will in the business sessions work out an effective programme for the ensuing year aimed at building the Natal Indian Congress into a powerful member in the Congress Alliance whose major task will undoubtedly remain to strengthen the development of a broad united democratic front of all South Africans opposed to apartheid and segregation so that we can in the shortest possible time reach our goal of a truly non-racial democracy in South Africa.

Our platform this evening clearly demonstrates our firm belief that race contacts at all levels lead to harmony and understanding which is indispensable to the removal of fears often based on ignorance. Absence of this understanding and harmony causes a great deal of pain and suffering to the fourteen million people who go to make up our country. Our platform also firmly rejects the false contention of the rulers of South Africa who are pursuing policies based on a belief that race contact breeds friction.

As the President of the Natal Indian Congress and as President of the South African Indian Congress I have firmly believed in the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi who has left us such a rich political heritage. Guided by this philosophy we hold hatred for none in South Africa and we believe that through non-violent political action we can reawaken the whole of South Africa, white and non-white, to a realisation of the brotherhood of man.

In South Africa the Indian community constitutes the smallest minority and yet it is to

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<sup>67</sup> Brian Bunting, a journalist and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was a member of Parliament in 1952-53, representing Africans. He was editor of weeklies, successively banned, which strongly supported the Congress Movement.

the credit of the Indian people that they have never sacrificed basic human values or the ideals of democracy in any attempt to protect their rights as a minority. White South Africa will do well to draw an important lesson from this fact instead of abandoning the basic democratic ideals under a false belief that in doing so they are protecting the rights of white South Africans. They must learn that freedom is indivisible and democracy non-racial.

Our philosophy presents us with no problems in the international field for we believe that the nations of the world must resolve their differences through negotiations by peaceful and non-violent means. We therefore stand for international peace and hope and pray that in the ensuing year positive steps will be taken by the great Powers to end the cold war and to banish war as an instrument for settling international disputes.

We reiterate our wholehearted support for the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and we are filled with pride at the increasingly important role played by the new free countries of Asia and Africa in world affairs.

While declaring our firm belief in the ability of the South African people to find a solution themselves to the problems that face them in our country we take this opportunity of thanking all the peoples and governments who have declared their support to our just struggle for democracy. We are indeed grieved and pained at the differences which have occurred between our two friends, India and China, and we are confident that in the very near future these two great Powers will resolve their differences amicably.

To India and Pakistan in particular we are grateful for their initiative and efforts in placing before the United Nations the question of our treatment in South Africa.

We hope that this year the United Nations, at the instance of the Afro-Asian bloc and other democratic countries, will take positive steps against racial discrimination which has within it the seeds of a global conflict.

On the South West African issue there is indeed an urgent need for the United Nations to bring South Africa to book, particularly in view of its intransigent attitude adopted to the United Nations Good Offices Commission.

The policies pursued by the rulers of South Africa have made the Union an outcast among the family of democratic nations. In the economic field moves are afoot to utilise the boycott weapon internationally against the Union and in the sporting and cultural fields there is a growing demand to isolate South Africa.<sup>68</sup> The West Indian cricket tour has now been cancelled as a result of the Union-wide opposition against apartheid conditions in sport. We hope that the same result will be achieved in respect of the proposed All Blacks rugby tour against which there has been similar outcry both in the Union and in New Zealand.

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<sup>68</sup> The international movement for the boycott of South Africa began in 1959 following a call by the African People's Conference in Accra in December 1958 and the launching of the Boycott Campaign in London in June 1959.



At this Conference I want to announce that I have received a personal communication from that world-renowned philosopher and Vice-President of India, Dr Radhakrishnan, that he has declined invitations to visit South Africa. The University of Natal had invited Dr Radhakrishnan to attend the University's Golden Jubilee and it was also reported in the press and later denied that he had been invited by a certain individual to visit the Union next year during the observance of the centenary of the arrival of Indians to South Africa. This decision is fully in keeping with his dignity and the dignity of India and we welcome this.

While the world has been moving with increasing speed to greater freedom and democracy and while Africa itself has made tremendous strides with the emergence of nine new independent States, the rulers of South Africa have continued to assail the civil liberties of South Africans of all colours.

Since freedom is indivisible there can be no freedom for white South Africa whilst abject oppression is the lot of the non-white South Africans.

This fact is being realised more and more by white South Africa with the result that there is now the manifestation of a more democratic outlook in quarters where none existed before. The conscience of white South Africa is astir and we welcome this development. The birth of the Progressive Party is a significant event further illustrating this trend.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Verwoerd Government is doing its utmost with its fantastic plans of bantustans and ethnic universities to impose tribalism on the whole country, there are powerful forces working against sectionalism and tribalism and for the creation of a South Africa in which there will be no room for racial oppression and where all will be free, and will be judged only on merit. The most powerful factor on the democratic front is the Congress Alliance led by the African National Congress under the Presidentship of Chief Albert J. Luthuli, one of the country's greatest democrats who has been banned and banished.

With the rest of democratic South Africa we condemn the restrictions imposed by the Government on so many of the leaders of the freedom movement. Had it not been for this restriction the Chief would have been with us this evening in person to guide and inspire us in our common struggle for freedom for all.

We Congressmen and women are proud of the fact that we have made the country as a whole realise that a lot of re-thinking is necessary and that the *status quo* has no moral or ethical justification. As a believer in non-violence I must condemn with all the power at my command all acts of violence which have taken place in the country, on the side of the Government and even on the side of the people who have at times under great provocation met violence with violence.

The Natal-wide spontaneous women's demonstrations nonetheless brought sharply to

the notice of South Africa and of the world the poverty and frustration resulting from racial oppression. The separate and unequal treatment meted out to the non-white citizens has been the prime factor for the disturbances which have made many thinking South Africans realise how just the slogan for a "pound a day" is to the non-white worker to enable him to live a life reasonably free from want and hunger.

While we meet at this Conference the treason trial is still in progress and our thoughts go out to those thirty accused who are now appearing in Pretoria. It is the duty of all right-thinking people, specially in South Africa, to give unstintingly to the Treason Trial Defence Fund.

Next year the Indian people will be observing the centenary of their arrival into this country and it is right and proper that they should be thinking in terms of the franchise not only for themselves but for all South Africans who are at present disenfranchised and as a result suffer all the indignities of apartheid oppression. Let us enter the centenary year re-dedicating ourselves to the cause of freedom.

Delegates assembled at the Conference will have to give serious consideration to the problems facing South Africa. Their main task will be to take decisions and help to implement them so that the Natal Indian Congress can play its rightful role in the Congress Alliance, the vanguard of democracy in the Union. We must remember that we have a historical role to play and we can only do so if we realise fully the importance of a well-organised freedom movement in South Africa. The primary task of the delegates is therefore to examine the Congress organisation, to study all its weaknesses, to offer constructive criticism in order to build our Congress into a greater political force.

I would like this Conference to adopt as its central theme the task of building the Congress into a powerful organisation dedicated to the achievement of a non-racial democracy. Delegates must spend the major part of their time in discussing the organisational problems of Congress and I am sure that if we do that in a calm and objective manner then we will be giving not only our people but the entire country the lead it requires.

Let us therefore get down to the business sessions of the Conference with the firm resolve that unitedly we can lead our country to freedom. We know that justice is on our side and we know that nowhere in the world have an oppressed people failed to achieve their freedom.

*Forward to a free South Africa, forward to a non-racial democracy!*

**AFRICA MAYIBUYE!**

**STATEMENT (JOINTLY WITH CHIEF A. J. LUTHULI AND  
PETER BROWN) APPEALING TO THE BRITISH PEOPLE TO  
BOYCOTT SOUTH AFRICA, DECEMBER 1959<sup>69</sup>**

In May, 1960, the Union of South Africa will be 50 years old. The Government is preparing to celebrate this jubilee with great enthusiasm, but most South Africans see no cause for celebration. During this 50 years Non-White South Africans have almost completely lost their right to be represented in Parliament, their right to take any job for which they are fitted, their right to hold land in freehold; their school education is now to be of a specific kind, the open universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand are to be closed to them, they cannot move about freely within the country of their birth. At the same time these White South Africans who believed in these rights and freedoms have seen them destroyed one by one.

What has been the response of Non-White South Africans to these attacks on them? They have sent deputations and submitted petitions to the authorities and they have tried to influence the course of events through their meagre Parliamentary representation. When these approaches were unsuccessful they turned to passive resistance and then boycott. They have consistently forsworn violence and pledged themselves to non-violence. But with trade unions frowned upon, strikes illegal and their buying power limited, Non-White South Africans face real problems in mounting sufficiently effective internal pressures to be able to influence the South African Government. They look for assistance abroad and particularly to the people of Britain, by whose Parliament the original Act of Union was approved.

Next year it is proposed to conduct a limited boycott of South African produce in Britain for a period of one month.<sup>70</sup> The boycott is a protest against apartheid, the removal of political rights, the colour bar in industry, the extension of passes to African women and the low wages paid to Non-White workers. In the towns and cities of South Africa over half the African families live below the breadline.

It has been argued that Non-White people will be the first to be hit by external boycotts. This may be so, but every organisation which commands any important Non-White support in South Africa is in favour of them. The alternative to the use of these weapons is the continuation of the *status quo* and a bleak prospect of unending discrimination. Economic boycott is one way in which the world at large can bring home to the South African authorities that they must either mend their ways or suffer for them.

This appeal is therefore directed to the people of Great Britain to strike a blow for freedom and justice in South Africa and for those whom the State would keep in continuing subjection in the Union. If this boycott makes the South African authorities

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<sup>69</sup> From: Press release of the Boycott Movement, London, January 7, 1960

<sup>70</sup> The Boycott Movement, founded in London on June 26, 1959, planned a month-long boycott in March 1960.

realise that the world outside will actively oppose apartheid it will have struck that blow for freedom and justice in our country.

(sd.) Albert J. Luthuli  
President-General, African National Congress

(sd) G. M. Naicker  
President, South African Indian Congress

(sd) Peter Brown  
National Chairman, Liberal Party of South Africa

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS,  
PIETERMARITZBURG, MARCH 3, 1961**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Indian people in Natal I want to express our sincerest thanks to Professor Matthews for declaring open this Conference.<sup>71</sup> Professor Matthews is an international figure for whom our people have the highest esteem. Many of our intellectuals have regarded him as their *guru* when they had the privilege to study at Fort Hare.

Professor Matthews' address to this Conference is of great significance and importance to us for he comes to us as a leader of the African people who have shown courage and determination in the face of the mounting onslaught of the Nationalist Government. As an accused in the treason trial and as a detainee during the State of Emergency, Professor Matthews, together with his colleagues, became world news and we recall with admiration the stand he took when Fort Hare ceased to be a university and on its ashes arose another ethnic institution of indoctrination. Our community will do well to follow in the footsteps of Professor Matthews.

We are indeed proud to have Professor Matthews at this Conference which is being held by the Indian people at the turn of the century of their stay in South Africa. His presence here actively demonstrates the solidarity which has been built particularly in

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<sup>71</sup> Professor Z. K. Matthews, a distinguished educator, taught for many years at the Fort Hare University College. He resigned his post as Acting Principal in protest when the government took over the College in order to turn into a segregated institution. He was a leader of the ANC for many years.

Afro-Indian relationships in South Africa within the framework of the democratic Congress movement.

Right at the outset of my address to this Conference I would like to say that it is a disgrace and a blot on the name of South Africa that Professor Matthews and his colleagues are not allowed to express their demands, which are the demands of the majority of the people of South Africa, through their major political organisation, the African National Congress, which had been built up and evolved over the last fifty years.<sup>72</sup> I want delegates at this Conference to make a determined call for the lifting of the ban on the African National Congress and the other organisations which the Nationalist Government has banned in its efforts to stifle opposition, particularly on the extra-parliamentary front. Not only must Conference pass a resolution on this question but it must be the sacred duty of every Congressman and woman to work unceasingly for the removal of these shameful bannings so as to enable men like Chief A. J. Luthuli and Professor Matthews to play their rightful role in the affairs of South Africa.

This is a centenary conference and in this year when we have completed a hundred years on this southern part of the African continent it is vitally necessary for the smallest minority group in South Africa to take stock of what is happening on the African continent and in the world.

The year 1960 has been described as a year of Africa. It is a year in which we and the world have seen Africa's new awakening. Country after country has thrown off the shackles of foreign rule with the result that this so-called dark continent has found a new dignity.

We are a part of that great upsurge which is taking place on our continent in these historic times and as a part of Africa we declare from this conference that we make common cause with all the peoples of Africa who are striving for freedom and independence.

We want Africa to play its rightful role among the continents of the world and in the councils of nations. We believe in the closest possible cooperation between the peoples of Africa and Asia - the two continents who suffered so long together the indignity, humility and oppression resulting from foreign domination and where there are still peoples upon whom the yoke of colonialism weighs heavily.

We are proud of the increasing role played by the Afro-Asian Powers at the United Nations and are confident that with their continued efforts, supported by the democratic nations of the world, the struggle to put an end to colonialism and race discrimination will be greatly accelerated.

From this Conference we send our fraternal greetings to the peoples of the Congo who have suffered so much as a result of the tragic happenings in that country. We sincerely

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<sup>72</sup> The African National Congress was banned in April 1960, soon after the Sharpeville massacre.

hope that the rightful and elected leaders of the Congo will soon, without any further delay, be allowed to lead their people and country in their newly-won independence and thereby bring to an end the present episode which has brought no credit to the United Nations itself.

On behalf of the Indian people of South Africa, I wish to express our deepest sympathy to the families of the murdered Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and his colleagues, and to the Congolese people. They will not have died in vain. Africa will always cherish and honour the memory of those martyred sons.

We believe in peaceful and non-violent solutions both to international problems and to problems within the border of one's own country. We therefore declare in favour of world peace and express the hope that a summit conference would be held in the near future leading to a lessening in world tension.

We believe that it is the duty of all nations claiming to be democratic to speak out against the injustices perpetrated on the African continent and, particularly in the United Nations, to take positive action against those countries which practise race discrimination. From this Conference we salute all those new independent States recently born on our continent and we are confident that they will champion the cause of all those who are not yet free.

While there is this great upsurge on the continent of Africa and while millions of her people have gained independence and human dignity, we on the southern tip of the continent are still groaning under the burdens of the Nationalist apartheid rule imposed on the people of the Union against the wishes of the vast majority.

Instead of governing with the consent of the people - which is essential in any country calling itself a democracy - we have in this country government by a white minority dedicated to retaining power exclusively for all time. Instead of consultations and discussions we are met by Saracens, emergencies, proclamations, bannings, banishments and other measures which are the stock-in-trade of an autocratic government.

I want to take this opportunity to restate the policy of the Natal Indian Congress. We believe in a democratic South Africa for all South Africans - white and non-white - and we believe it is possible to achieve that objective by peaceful and non-violent means.

We believe that the Nationalist Government is working diametrically against a democratic South Africa. It is foisting on the people of this country an Afrikaner caste rule under a tribal Republic which has not the support of the vast majority of the people of South Africa.

The Nationalist Afrikaner caste rule has stirred the conscience of many white South Africans who had hitherto accepted the policy of white domination under the United Party regime. And for the first time many leading white South Africans, who have in the past not associated themselves with the democratic movement in South Africa, are now,

under the Nationalist rule, giving thought seriously to such fundamental issues as the vote.

It is significant to note that the Congress of Democrats, the Liberal Party and the Progressive Party have all emerged on the political scene after the Nationalists came into power.

We welcome these white South Africans who today preach non-racial doctrines and are thereby regarded as outcasts among big sections of white South Africans who still uphold the doctrine of white supremacy. In particular we warmly acclaim the Congress of Democrats which is a member of the Congress Alliance and which has accepted the Freedom Charter as its programme.

While consideration is given to the question of the vote in different political quarters in the country it is essential for us to reiterate our stand on this vital and fundamental issue. We believe in universal adult franchise because we believe in democracy and because democracy as yet has not found a better form of suffrage.

We are the smallest racial minority in this country but because we believe in the democratic ideal the question of other racial groups swamping us never worries us when we discuss the question of the vote. White South Africans will do well to accept this democratic ideal for themselves; they will, like the Indian people, be able to accept universal franchise without resorting to stratagems of loaded or qualified franchise designed to perpetuate white control.

Twelve years of Nationalist rule have resulted in the serious diminution of civil liberties for all in South Africa. We now face a Republic while in our memories is still only too fresh the draft Broederbond Republican Constitution. In the face of this threat and in the face of the increased arbitrary powers the government is arrogating to itself, we, who are also at the vanguard of the political struggle in the country must in the name of our people, call upon the Government to convene a truly national convention which can put South Africa back on the road to sanity.

I strongly endorse the sentiments expressed by Professor Matthews on this question for I feel that the time has arrived for an urgent meeting of South Africans of all colours to give our country a lead for which it is crying out.

Looking at the Indian scene today we find that after a century in South Africa we live under the fears of the Group Areas Act with increasing unemployment and with insecurity threatening our very existence. We find foisted on our people an ethnic university which has received the unanimous condemnation of the Indian people and to crown it all the Government is to establish what it calls the Asiatic Affairs Department.

It is indeed ironical that when the African people are breaking away rapidly from the narrow paths of tribalism and while Indians are abandoning their past caste affiliations the Afrikaner is today the greatest exponent of tribalism and caste in South Africa.

While the African and the Indian and the Coloured want to be regarded as South Africans - for that is what they are - the Nationalist Afrikaner is imposing on them a spurious tribalism and he wants them to be ruled through separate departments. The logical development would be the creation of a Department for Jewish affairs and a Department for English affairs - all coming under the jurisdiction of a Nationalist Afrikaner Cabinet. This segmentation of the South African population and the group thinking which it inculcates is designed to arouse and accentuate group antagonism and is founded on the well-worn concept of "divide and rule". We reject completely the Department of Asiatic Affairs. We are South Africans and we refuse to be divided on an ethnic basis as part of the implementation of the policy of apartheid.

The first one hundred years of our stay in South Africa have ended. We enter the second one hundred years with the proud knowledge that we have already made a vital contribution to the prosperity of our country. In the political field, we have, while holding high the torch of non-violence, made a fitting contribution to the cause of freedom for all in this country of ours.

Let this first Conference after the observance of the centenary of our arrival in South Africa be a landmark in our political organisation and action in South Africa. Let us rededicate ourselves to the cause of freedom, justice and human dignity. Let us march forward with all true democratic South Africans to a non-racial Free South Africa.

## **DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST PROCLAMATION OF REPUBLIC** **Answers to questions by *Drum*, May 1961<sup>73</sup>**

[*Drum* asked several non-European leaders for answers to three questions concerning the planned demonstrations. The following are answers of Dr. Naicker.]

Question: Do you advocate peaceful demonstrations for May 31?

Answer: The South African Indian Congress is in full support of all-in national talks, and if talks are not held, we feel that demonstrations should take place on the eve of republic day, May 31.

Question: What form should the demonstrations around Republic Day take?

Answer: There are only a limited number of actions non-whites in this country can take. Apart from mass meetings and processions, one means of making the government and the white people see the way we feel would be a general strike.

Question: What should be the aim of the demonstrations?

Answer: Our aim is to rally all our people in support of our big political objectives - the establishment of non-racial democracy based on the United Nations freedom charter.

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<sup>73</sup> *Drum*, Johannesburg, June 1961



**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE TWENTY-THIRD  
CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS,  
DURBAN, SEPTEMBER 3, 1961**

This Twenty-third Conference of the South African Indian Congress meets at a time when the Indian people of South Africa have completed a hundred years of their stay in this country. It is meeting at a time when we as the smallest minority group in our country are facing great challenges and history has destined that we must play our rightful role in solving the gigantic problems which face South Africa.

We are a small country at the southern tip of the great continent of Africa and we can either retreat further and further into isolation from the rest of the world or advance boldly to face the future as a democratic nation, holding its rightful position in international affairs.

As the oldest national organisation in South Africa, the South African Indian Congress has made its position clear both in international and national affairs. There is no doubt as to where we stand in relation to world affairs or in relation to our own country. It is however essential to emphasise our stand and restate in the clearest terms possible our policies so that delegates attending this Conference can go back to their constituent bodies and to their respective areas knowing fully well what lies ahead of us and how to meet the challenges which confront us.

Both in the international and national fields we stand for peace and for peaceful solution of the problems which beset humanity. It is because of this fundamental stand of ours that we have at all our Conferences declared in the clearest possible terms that we believe in the ending of the cold war which is today creating fears in the mind of humanity. If we cannot have peace the only alternative is war and war in this nuclear age means incalculable destruction to civilisation - the possible end of all that mankind has contributed to progress and the ushering in of such dark ages that man has never experienced in his past and primitive history.

The devastation which can result from nuclear war can be so great that no ideologies may survive after the holocaust to guide man to further progress. It may mean the destruction of man. Believing as we do in peace we strongly support the world-wide movement which seeks through the United Nations to solve all international problems through negotiations and by peaceful means; we regard foreign domination of any people as having in it the seeds of war and we regard in similar light racial discrimination within the boundary of any single State.

We therefore welcome the emergence of free and independent States, particularly within our continent, and we make common cause with all peoples everywhere who are in the midst of liberation struggles. We welcome the role played by the new independent

Afro-Asian States at the United Nations and we express our gratitude to them and all others who have championed our cause at the United Nations and who have spoken out against the inhumanity of discriminating against people on grounds of race.

While we believe in the extension of political rights to every man and woman within our own country and throughout the world, the Government of the Republic of South Africa is pursuing a directly opposite policy. It is the only country in the world which enshrines race discrimination in the statute books of the highest law-making body of the country and attempts to justify its practices under the false slogan of separate self-development.

The present government has inherited the policy of race discrimination from its predecessors and has sought to give it a philosophical facade under this theory of self-development - a new name for the much discredited policy of apartheid.

Internationally the effect of this policy has been to isolate the Government of the Republic of South Africa from the rest of the world. Our country is no more a member of the Commonwealth<sup>74</sup> and in every international gathering South Africa is subjected to severe criticism based directly on the policy of segregation and apartheid.

The total State machinery is geared for the advancement of apartheid and it is integral to this scheme that those who are opposed to it are going to be confronted with more and more restrictions and hardships. These restrictions and hardships are in the first instance imposed on the non-white majority in our country but since democracy is indivisible their effects will be and must be, as in fact they are already being, felt by all South Africans, white and non-white. How true this is is borne out clearly when one analyses the laws enacted by the Nationalist Government during the past 13 years. One by one the lights of liberty are being extinguished and if the democratic forces do not rally to face this challenge total darkness may prevail in South Africa.

Our historic task is to play our rightful role within the democratic camp in the country for the meeting of this challenge not only in a negative way but also in a positive direction by creating the conditions which will result in a lasting non-racial democracy for South Africa. Numerically we are a small group and yet we belong to the Congress Movement which to my mind is the most powerful factor not only in opposing the tyranny of apartheid but in leading South Africa to freedom for all in a non-racial democracy.

Since we last met one of our allies - in fact the leader of our alliance - the African National Congress - has been declared unlawful. We call upon the Government of South Africa to remove this ban, both on the African National Congress and on its leaders, so that Chief Albert Luthuli, one of South Africa's greatest democrats, can lead his people under the banner of the organisation enjoying the confidence of the African people.

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<sup>74</sup> Because of the opposition of the members of the Commonwealth to apartheid, South Africa was obliged to leave the Commonwealth when it proclaimed a Republic at the end of May 1961.

Bannings of organisations and individuals are not the weapons of democrats and we therefore call upon the Government to repeal the laws which make such bannings possible in South Africa.

We welcome the growing non-racial front among white South Africans for we believe in the closest possible alliance of all South Africans of all races and colours.

We meet on the eve of yet another so-called General election confined to the white electorate in South Africa. We are, however, not mere spectators. Although denied the vote we are keenly interested in the outcome of the elections. After 13 years of Nationalist rule white South Africans have the opportunity of either accepting or rejecting the policy of apartheid and segregation. The elections will give us some indication of how far white South Africans have been indoctrinated by apartheid.

On the parliamentary front it is however correct to say that at present we find very little hope for drastic changes which are so essential to end existing tensions and to lead our country on the path of sanity. The official United Party opposition is weak and policyless precisely because it agrees on fundamentals with the apartheid philosophy of the Nationalists. It is offering no hope to the majority of the people of the country. To the extent to which the Progressive Party rejects racialism we welcome it although fully aware of the fact that it is by no means voicing the aspirations of the voteless majority in the country.

The real strength of the democratic forces in the country is in the extra-parliamentary front. The voteless democratically-minded majority in South Africa has the vital role of convincing the dominating minority group that South Africa belongs to all her people who must on a basis of equality share the good things that the country offers and assume equal responsibilities in advancing her prosperity and greatness.

The Indian people have suffered much under the policy of segregation and apartheid. The past hundred years have been years of trials and tribulations but we have emerged from them with clear foresight; as adherents of the democratic ideals we claim no special protection as a minority group, we claim no superiority, we claim a democratic future for all South Africans and we hold the unshakeable belief that in a true democracy individual merit will alone count and not the race or colour of persons.

We are totally opposed to the regimentation of the South African population either on racial or on ethnic bases. We are totally opposed to the creation of the apartheid wall separating the privileged white minority from the under-privileged non-white majority. With equal vehemence we condemn all compartmentalisation of the non-whites on ethnic basis. We must reject the concept of labelling South Africans as Zulus, Indians, Jews, Afrikaners or English. Instead we want the democratic concept of a single and indivisible South Africa to prevail, with all her people regarded as South Africans enjoying equal rights and discharging equal duties within our common motherland.

Having that concept as we do we totally reject the creation of the Indian Affairs Department. The South African Indian Congress will have nothing to do with it for we claim to be South Africans although it took the white ruling group in South Africa a hundred years to admit that we are a permanent part of the country's population.

As recently announced by Dr Verwoerd it is clear that the Nationalist Government does not intend to regard us as a part of the integrated South African community. The Government policy appears to be one which envisages separate areas for Indians as it does for all non-white people of the country. This separation or apartheid is to be implemented through laws such as the Group Areas Act and the Indian Affairs Department will be the instrument through which co-ordination will be given to the different apartheid laws for the achievement of the Government's objectives. That is the only light in which we can see the Department of Dr Maree.<sup>75</sup>

Can the Indian people be blamed for holding this view? To them the creation of this Department is to negate all for which they have stood and for which they have striven since they first came to the shores of this country and since Mahatma Gandhi gave them political cohesion and a democratic objective.

To cooperate with the Indian Affairs Department is to show our willingness to isolate ourselves into Indian Group Areas and to accept the Nationalist policy of apartheid which offers nothing but complete economic ruination of the Indian community. An ethnic university has already been imposed on us and if we are not careful, under the guidance of the Indian Affairs Department the control of Indian primary and secondary education will follow.

Our future is not in apartheid, not in ethnic division, not in the spurious policy of self-development under the Indian Affairs Department. Our future lies in a common society in South Africa with deep roots in a non-racial democracy.

All those who believe in a common society and in a non-racial democracy must now come together and voice their opposition to apartheid unitedly. That is the only salvation for South Africa. The historic Conference of African leaders held in Pietermaritzburg and the new awakening among the Coloured people, as reflected in the Malmesbury Convention,<sup>76</sup> are strong pointers of how the non-white people of the country are thinking. They have with them a resolute band of white democrats. Together, this democratic force is the real challenge to apartheid and racism in the country. The future belongs to those who believe in the democratic ideal. That is the lesson of history.

Delegates attending this Conference will in their deliberations deal with the policy of

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<sup>75</sup> Dr Maree was the Minister of "Indian Affairs".

<sup>76</sup> The Coloured National Convention was convened by a number of Coloured leaders with broad public support. The Government banned the holding of the Convention in Cape Town and several other urban areas. It was held in July 1961 on a farm in Malmesbury, 35 miles from Cape Town. The participants pledged to work for a non-racial democratic South Africa.

apartheid as it affects the different facets of our lives. I do not intend dealing with any of these matters in detail. It is the task of all and every delegate present at this Conference to have our basic objectives clear and to realise that we are a small but very important regiment of democracy. We must leave this Conference with a new spirit and a rededication. We must be prepared to face the future boldly and with courage. We can only do so if we know and understand the problems of our people and take part in their day-to-day living so that we can truly voice the aspirations of Indian South Africans. We must as we have done in the past make common cause with all South Africans so that we can lead our country to its goal of non-racial democracy within the shortest possible time.

*Forward to a Democratic South Africa!*

**“DON’T SUPPORT APARTHEID SPORT”:  
APPEAL BY CHIEF A. J. LUTHULI AND DR G. M. NAICKER,  
JUNE 1962<sup>77</sup>**

FIFA - the world soccer body has suspended the all-White South African Football Association from international football for the second year in succession Reason: SOUTH AFRICA’S COLOUR POLICY.

The International Olympics Association will give serious consideration to the continued participation of White South African athletes in future Olympics. Reason: SOUTH AFRICA’S COLOUR POLICY!

In every field of sport South Africa’s colour policy is under fire... Sportsmen throughout the world are taking action against South African participation because of the colour bar practised by the all-White sporting representatives of this country. Sportsmen of the world condemn apartheid in sport!

In South Africa, however, whilst there has been some measure of opposition to the colour bar in sport, many thousands of people continue to patronise all-White sporting events. Recently in Durban, nearly 20,000 non-Whites - mainly Indians, paying almost R4,000 attended an all-White soccer match at Kingsmead. They sat in segregated enclosures.

Similarly in other centres and in all fields of sport we find thousands of non-Whites making huge contributions to witness all-White events sponsored by organisations which refuse to end apartheid in their ranks.

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<sup>77</sup> *New Age*, Cape Town, June 14, 1962

What does this mean in effect? It means those amongst us who attend such racially exclusive events are in fact - morally and financially - supporting the perpetuation of apartheid.

Whilst we appreciate that the vast majority of those who attend such apartheid sporting events are in no way supporters of apartheid and all its attendant evils, we would like them to take into account the abhorrence with which apartheid is held internationally and by the Non-White peoples of South Africa.

Is it not time for South African sportsmen - players, athletes, administrators and spectators, both Black and White, to sacrifice this one pleasure and in so doing support their own non-racial organisations in the fight against apartheid?

In the apartheid atmosphere in which we live in this country this seems to us an urgent and important matter. The question is: do you support racialism in sport? Each person must ask himself this question, honestly and sincerely -without any rationalisation - and then decide what steps he is going to take in the future.

## **NEW YEAR MESSAGE, 1963<sup>78</sup>**

"During these difficult days our minds and hearts go out to Nelson Mandela, Nana Sita and other acknowledged leaders of our people who have shown such a tremendous spirit of sacrifice and courage," said Dr G. M. Naicker, President of the South African Indian Congress, in a New Year message to the people of South Africa.

Continuing, he said: "History will perhaps record 1962 as a year of mighty intimidation in South Africa. It will also record that freedom fighters refused to be intimidated.

"We enter 1963 with more and more peoples of Africa taking their rightful place among the free peoples of the world. The year 1962 saw tremendous changes on our Continent and the world has survived a great crisis which brought humanity to the brink of nuclear war.

"We also witnessed the tragic dispute between India and China - a dispute which left many disillusioned," he said.

Stating that on our Continent South Africa has remained a festering sore, with the entire world again condemning the new drastic measures introduced by the Nationalists in 1962, Dr Naicker added: "The inhuman house arrests, the banning of *New Age* and the

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<sup>78</sup> From *Spark*, January 3, 1963

tragedies wrought by Group Areas have indeed given our country a bad name in all parts of the world."

Concluding his message Dr Naicker said: "I extend my heartiest greetings to all South Africans of all races and fervently hope that in 1963 we will make further advancement towards the consolidation of the democratic forces so that we can unitedly usher in a democratic South Africa for all her people."