

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CONFERENCE OF THE ALL AFRICAN
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W. M. TSOTSI

We meet to-day in the dark and ominous shadow of tensions and crises both national and international. On the international plane the Egyptian and Hungarian situations have brought us within the verge of the third world war. In South Africa Non-White oppression has maintained its awful and discordant crescendo. We have been the victims of such a diabolical spate of discriminatory and oppressive legislation that the minds and hearts of all of us should be moved, were it not for the fact that our emotions and susceptibilities have by and large been petrified and "choked with custom of fell deeds." Mass uprootings and expropriations of Non-Europeans, tribalisation with its Bantuisation, and Colouredisation on the educational and administrative levels; the final abrogation of the Cape Coloured male vote, and so on, ad nauseam, entitle the year 1956 to a conspicuous place in the annals of oppression.

The crowning crisis of the year has occurred since this address was drafted. Some 150 leaders of the Non-European and European organisations have been arrested on allegations of High Treason. We are not permitted to comment on this latest development at the present stage, but we should be failing in our duty were we not here and now to express our misgivings, and our solidarity with the victims, no matter what our political differences with them may be, in so far as they are genuine fighters with us for the national liberation of the Non-Europeans oppressed in South Africa. Whatever I have said in this address by way of criticism of the policies and activities of the political groups or organisations to which these unfortunate people may belong, must not be taken as an endorsement of their arrest and incarceration.

The tensions and crises mentioned above emphasise the urgent need on the part of the leadership of the oppressed frankly and objectively to take stock of its position as a leadership in order to find out whether and to what extent it is equipped for the tasks that devolve upon it. The present state of Chronic tensions and crises must of necessity have an acute effect not only on the morale of the leadership but also on the nature and the direction of its activities. For this reason I have decided to devote this address to a brief survey and assessment of the growth and development of our leadership, with a view to stimulating thought and discussion on this all-important subject. There is an additional reason why to-day we may indulge in retrospection, take stock of ourselves and see whence we come and whither we go. This year the A.A.C. has come of age. When we were a child we may have justifiably spoken and understood as a child, but now we are a man, it behoves us to put away childish things.

The failure of the oppressed in S. Africa to halt the sway of the ruling-class tyranny, the failure to build up an effective counter to Herrenvolkism, can legitimately be ascribed to the failure of leadership. The fundamental cause of this failure has always been, since military conquest gave way to the era of political struggle, that the real control of the leadership of the oppressed is vested in the ruling-class.

The military defeat of the Non-Europeans automatically placed the political control of the country in the hands of the Whites and ushered in a period of political defeatism on the part of the Non-Whites. Whatever the political norms may have been in the past, ~~the~~ in the 20th. century the military conquest of a people does not justify their enslavement by their conquerors. Our own country provides a classic illustration of this fact. The military conquest of the Boers by the British at the trun of the century did not result in the political subjugation of

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the former. On the contrary, British Imperialism not only spent millions of pounds on the rehabilitation of the defeated Boers, but also roped them in as partners in the political control of the country, and thus gave them a stake in the exploitation of its resources, both human and natural. Although the Non-Whites assisted both sides in the military conflict, they were excluded from the White partnership because their role was to be that of instruments, the "domkrag", for producing wealth for their masters. To the Non-Whites, therefore, conquest meant political deprivation and economic enslavement. Hence the political defeatism of the Non-Europeans, which has led to their acceptance of inferiority and European leadership.

It was unthinkable, of course, that the role reserved for Non-Whites should be blatantly declared as that of slaves. British Imperialism with its long history of colonisation was too adept in the art of political deception to adopt such an amateurish course. The Non-White leadership was persuaded that the Whites merely held power as trustees for them until such time as they were sufficiently civilised to be admitted to rulership with the White partners. Even before Cecil Rhodes proclaimed with his tongue-in-the-cheek ideal of equal rights for civilised men south of the Zambesi, Non-Whites in the Cape had the franchise and were in theory eligible for election to Parliament. They were fed on hopes and illusions that with the passage of time the ruling class would put the Black man on an equal footing with the White man in all spheres of life and activity. To this day these hopes and illusions still persist among a considerable section of the Non-European leaders, despite numerous disappointments and clear indications of their futility, with the result that the real leadership of the oppressed Non-Whites is still to a large extent in the hands of the oppressors. The burden of this address is to attempt to account for this extraordinary situation because I am convinced that, unless the Non-White leadership fully understands it, it cannot begin to build up a liberatory movement capable of putting an end to ~~xxxx~~ Herrenvolkism. Only by such a full appreciation followed by unconditional severing of the political apron-strings which tie the ~~xxxxxxx~~ leadership of the oppressed to their oppressors, can an independent ~~xxxxxxx~~ people's movement flourish, capable of rejecting the idea of the inferiority of the Black man and fighting for equality, of clearly formulating the tasks facing the oppressed and devising adequate methods of struggle.

In order to understand fully the reasons for the failure of our leadership, we have to trace its history from the beginning of the century. I can do no more in this address than give a bare outline. For the sake of my argument I shall divide the period from 1900 to 1956 artificially into six decades which I shall characterise respectively as the decade of complete dependence, the decade of disillusionment, the decade of awakening, the decade of compromise, the decade of re-awakening or redirection and the decade of struggle. I emphasise that these divisions are artificial and I adopt them merely because they tend to throw into bold relief the general outlook and development of the leadership of the oppressed during the periods indicated.

THE DECADE OF COMPLETE DEPENDENCE.

By the end of last century the recognised leaders of the majority section of the Non-Europeans, the Africans, were drawn from the tribal chiefs and intellectuals. For the most part these men were leaders because they were recognised as such by the authorities, not because they served the true interests of their people. This state of affairs has largely persisted to this day and was accepted by the African leadership as a whole until comparatively recent times, so that we can hardly say that an

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independent leadership of the people, of the workers and the peasants, has as yet crystallised among the African people. The same can be said of the other sections of the Non-Europeans., but for the sake of brevity I shall confine my remarks almost entirely to the African section.

At the turn of the century British imperialism and Dutch feudalism were locked in bloody conflict, the prize being the ownership and control of the Witwatersrand gold mines. If there had been an independent African leadership it would have taken advantage of this situation and made demands for lands and equality. But the African chiefs had already been emasculated and had become mere hirelings and puppets of the ruling class, while the intellectuals at the Cape, the only province where these creatures were in evidence, had been lulled into a deep RipVan Winklian sleep by the lullabies of their progenitors, the White liberals, and dreamed of the benevolence of Great Britain with their great white Queen, to whom they owed the very air they breathed.

Only a few years before the outbreak of the world war, in 1894 the political and economic destiny of the Black man in S. Africa had been outlined by Cecil Rhodes on the ~~anniversary~~ occasion of the passing of the Glen Grey Act. Cecil Rhodes had declared that the Africans were children who had properly been excluded from the Government, and for whom dummies in the shape of Bungas should be manufactured. Rhodes proposed that the Africans should be taxed so that their administration should not be a burden on the White man, and also so as "by the gentle stimulant of the labour tax to remove them from a life of sloth and laziness; you will thus teach them the dignity of labour...It must be brought home to every Black man that in the future nine tenths of them will have to spend their lives in daily labour, in physical work, in manual labour." Rhodes went out of his way to insult the African intellectuals. "Why," he said, "I have travelled through the Transkei... There are kaffir parsons everywhere. These institutions are turning them out by the dozen. They are turning out a dangerous class. They are excellent so long as the supply is limited, but the country is overstocked with them. These people will not go back and work and that is why I say that the regulations of these industrial schools should be framed by the Government, otherwise these kaffir parsons would develop into agitators against the Government." Dr. Verwoerd might have quoted Rhodes when he introduced the Bantu Education Act.

Rhodes would give himself a pat on the back if he were alive today to see how assiduously the majority section of these same intellectuals still apply themselves to the sucking of the dummies which he invented for their delectation and retardation. In the light of the declared policy of even the Cape Government an independent leadership would have used the occasion of the Boer War to make political demands.

There is another conflict which occurred immediately after the Boer War and of which an independent African leadership if it existed, would have taken advantage. It was the conflict between White capital and the White aristocracy of labour. Finance capital having won the battle for the Witwatersrand Gold Mines, the question of the labour supply for these mines became a burning issue. In 1905 not only did the ruling class devise plans for the wholesale exploitation of the Blacks as cheap labour, but owing to the urgency of the need, it imported some 50,000 indentured Chinese labourers to do the unskilled work. The then newly formed Labour Party with which was associated the "White labour Policy Association", led by Cresswell supported among others by one Patrick Duncan who later became the Governor-General of South Africa, strenuously oppose this move. This conflict continued for upwards of 20 years and finally ended in the

compromise of 1925 with the statutory entrenchment of the colour bar in industry significantly enough by a Labour and Nationalist Pact Government. This fight vitally concerned the Africans and could have been turned to some advantage by a conscious and independent Black leadership, but such a leadership was non-existent. The Black leaders if they were aware of it all, regarded this conflict as the sole concern of their masters, and they would have thought it presumptuous for any of their number, to have attempted to take advantage of it. There were no people's organisations capable of engaging in the fight. It is not surprising therefore that the African leaders made no serious effort to obtain direct representation at the National Convention which established the Union of South Africa. However, contacts resulting from urbanisation, employment and education of Africans led to partial shedding of the tribal outlook and paved the way for the formation of organisations based on an individual membership.

THE DECADE OF DISILLUSIONMENT.

I have characterised the second decade of the century as the decade of disillusionment of the Black leaders. Events took place during this period which gravely shook the confidence of the Black wards in their White guardians. First of all the Act of Union placed the Non-Whites outside the body politic by depriving them of the full right to elect and be elected to Parliament. Instead a special department of state, the Department of Native Affairs, was created to control the lives of the Africans. In order to reassure their wards the Cape liberals, on whom fell the task of lulling the Africans into a false sense of security, made out that the exclusion of the Africans from the Government of the country was merely a temporary setback, just a temporary concession to the Boers. They were able to point to the clauses in the South Africa Act which entrenched the Cape male franchise rights of the Africans, and made loud promises that so far from these rights being whittled away, they would in due course be extended to the Africans in the Northern provinces. These assurances however, did not stop the Africans from forming the first important organisation constituted on modern individualistic lines. The formation of the A.N.C. in 1912 was the first outcome of disillusionment in this period, and its importance was the manifestation of the gradual development of ~~the~~ a nationalistic as against a tribalistic consciousness among African leaders. This did not mean, however, that the tribal outlook had disappeared. On the contrary it has continued to exist in one form or another to this day, as the sequel will show, and still remains a considerable obstacle to the birth and development of a true South African nation.

Soon after its birth the Congress had to contend with the Native Land Act of 1913. This law was a great shock to the leaders especially those bred in the illusory ~~the~~ tradition of the enduring milk of British justice which oozed directly and freely from the expansive bosom of Queen Victoria, the Good. How could such a flagrantly unjust piece of legislation which would and did result in untold suffering of thousands of innocent subjects, howbeit black, of her Majesty the Queen though long dead, be reconciled with the justice associated with British rule? It was no doubt due to the influence of the Boers from the north and a direct and humble appeal to the British Government would soon bring them to their knees. And so vast sums of money were collected and deputations of protest sent to England. It is well known how these deputations ended in dismal failure which in turn largely contributed to the decline and fall of the A.N.C. It was as if their little world had fallen about the ears of the African leaders. The milk of British justice having apparently prematurely dried up, they had to content themselves with the milk of a human kindness, sympathy and hope which was alternatively offered to them by the White Liberals.

Just at this time the first world war of 1914 broke out and South Africa willy nilly became involved in the hostilities. The Government called upon the African people to join up in defence of democracy which it said was being threatened by German barbarism. This was a grand opportunity for an independent leadership of the oppressed to call upon the people to refuse to participate until they had been placed on a footing of equality with the Whites by means of suitable amendments to the South African Act of 1910 and the Defence Act of 1912, the Repeal of the Colour Bar Act of 1911, the Natives Land Act of 1913, etc. But such revolutionary thoughts were incapable of entering the minds of a servile African leadership even though there was a considerable section among the Whites themselves who were for non-participation. Even the lackeys of British imperialism congregated in the so called Labour Party, with the July strikes of 1913 and of 1914 which had resulted in the shooting of White workers by the police and the surreptitious deportation of their leaders by Botha and Smuts, still fresh in their minds, had the temerity to vote against participation in the war although this decision was rescinded soon enough.

Not that the Labour Party would have been prepared to make common cause with the Africans. On the contrary, as events were to show later, any approaches made by the African leaders for a joint campaign against the war - would have led to an immediate rescission of their resolution and whole-hearted support of the war effort. But the very fact that the African leadership made no move to oppose the war in spite of the example given them in that regard by the Labour and Nationalist Parties, is evidence of its abject servility and helplessness in spite of disillusionment. Instead the African leaders listened to the cooings of the liberals, took up arms or rather kerries, joined the war and lost their lives in the Mendi and other disasters, in order to preserve the chains that shackled them. The liberals of course saw to it that they put blinkers about the eyes of the people by organising public celebrations of the anniversary of the Mendi disaster in which they do not fail to praise the bravery of the Africans in the face of disaster and to extol the virtues of loyalty, obedience and self sacrifice.

THE DECADE OF AWAKENING.

I pass on now to the decade of awakening which followed close on the decade of disillusionment. This period began roughly with the formation of the I.C.U. in 1919. This is the period in which the African leaders awakened to the two fold nature of the oppression of the African people as workers as well as members of a conquered race. Its distinctive characteristic is the birth of the African Trade Union Movement and the development of other African organisations based on individual membership. The I.C.U. was neither a trade union nor a political party in the commonly accepted sense of these terms. It appealed for membership along racialistic lines and had no clearly defined organisational form, principles or programme. However during the decade or so of its virile existence it became a power in the land. By 1926 it had a reputed membership of 100,000. Its meteoric rise and spectacular collapse have important political lessons for us which I shall underline later in this address.

I wish at this juncture to deal with the development of a new class of Liberal, the neo-liberal, whose birth dates back to this period which I have described as the decade of awakening. This new class of liberals is exerting an increasing influence in "Non-European" politics and we are well advised to take stock of its genesis and antecedents with a view to assessing its position in the social set up.

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I have already referred to the Labour Party and its fight with the Chamber of Mines in the course of the first quarter of this century. During this struggle the Labour Party never for one moment thought of appealing for assistance to or of organising the masses of oppressed African workers. This was because, as Edward Roux has put it in his book on S.P. Bunting, the S.A. Labour Party is not a socialist or even a labour movement at all in the true sense of the word. It is essentially a political party of an aristocracy of labour trying to maintain a remarkably high standard of living in face of competition from the less paid masses of Africans. It has, therefore, been, and is, a commonplace for traditional liberals to join the Labour Party and for Labour Party "socialists" to join the Liberal Party because both groups consist of petit-bourgeois intellectuals who accept the Government's policy of White supremacy. It is not uncommon for many White South African so-called socialists to regard the Black man, if not with antagonism, at least with a superior feeling of complete indifference.

During the First Great War the left-wing members in the leadership of the Labour Party formed what was called the International Socialist League of S. Africa, which was a political party to preach the doctrine of international socialism. This party in the early twenties became the Communist Party of S. Africa. After the end of the first Great War this "socialist" party was so pre-occupied with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and its outcome that it completely forgot about the existence of the oppressed African workers in its midst. In fact the Communists made common cause with the Herrenvolk when the Black Peril alarm was sounded. For example, in 1919 there was a wave of African strikes, riots and pass burnings and as a result many numerous African workers were arrested and imprisoned. It so happened that at the same time there was a strike among White municipal workers in Johannesburg, which threatened to spread. But as soon as the capitalists made racialistic appeals about the Black Peril, the White workers, including the "socialists" called off the strike, preferring to make common cause with the bosses rather than with the striking African workers.

In 1912 over 40,000 African mine workers came out on strike, as a result of which many of them were shot dead by the police. In spite of the general labour unrest among the White toilers themselves, the African mineworkers received no support from the White workers. Two years later 22,000 European mine workers came out on a strike which soon degenerated into a general fight by the White workers for the maintenance of the colour bar in industry. The "English" jingo Labour Party joined with the Boer ware Afrikaner Nationalist Party in a virulent racialistic campaign whose slogan was "For a White South Africa". It is noteworthy that the Communist Party of S. Africa supported the strike and its advocacy of a colour bar in industry. S.P. Bunting, the most progressive of its leaders, attempted to rationalise this reactionary campaign which resulted in a white racial program against Non-Europeans in the following words: "This strike is sometimes called a strike against the abolition of the colour bar....The colour bar literally as a restriction on Non-European workers is of course unfair. To the extent, however, that it helps to keep up high wages and the number of ~~them~~ those drawing them, it serves the interests of all workers. Nor would its abolition benefit more than a mere handful of Coloureds or Natives." Even when the strike of White workers developed into a revolt that was ruthlessly suppressed by the military, which shot and killed many White workers, no attempt was made to enlist the support of the Black workers either by the organised labour movement or by the African leadership itself, and this despite the oft repeated communist slogan: "Workers of the World Unite." Instead rival meetings were called by the intellectual leadership of the Black and White workers which were based on

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the acceptance of racial segregation.

The main interest of the Labour Party at this stage was the defeat of the Smuts government and for this purpose a Nationalist-Labour Pact was formed, to which the C.P. gave its unqualified support. As a result the Smuts government was overthrown in the "general" election, which took place in June, 1924, and the Nationalist-Labour Pact came into power. The new government lost no time in entrenching the White workers as an aristocracy of labour, by passing the Colour Bar Act of 1925 and adopting the "civilised labour" policy which resulted in the sacking of Africans in Government employment and replacing them by Europeans. It is of interest to note that it was this same government that passed the Native Administration Act which provides not only for legislation for Africans by proclamation but also makes possible the deportation of African leaders without trial.

The "Native policy" of the Nationalist-Labour Pact Government was so openly reactionary that the C.P. was willy-nilly driven to seek a new field of endeavour and then for the first time discovered the existence of the Black workers. But this new interest immediately caused a rift in the party and some of the leading members resigned because the Communists "were running after the Natives who could not possibly appreciate the noble ideals of Communism." This attitude of mind persisted in the C.P. right up to the time of its suppression by the Nat. Government, so that the few Africans who were allowed to be members of the C.P. of South Africa before its dissolution were mostly mere stooges and had little or no idea of Communism.

The C.P. tried to infiltrate into the I.C.U. which was at this stage enjoying a mushroom growth, and to capture its leadership, but they found that the traditional liberals of the "Joint Council" type were already in control through Kadali and were leading the organisation along safe and respectable lines, confining its activities to meetings, resolutions and protests. Competition for leadership of the Blacks on the part of the two liberal elements resulted in the expulsion of the C.P. from the I.C.U. in 1926. Having failed to control it, the C.P. then began to attack the I.C.U. and to hasten its downfall. From now on it became the policy of the C.P. either to control African organisations or failing that to kill them. When it did not organise the Non-White people around itself over some burning issue, it set up an ad hoc body or committee in which its own men played a leading part. It used African leaders as its stooges and hindered the growth of People's organisations into a permanent independent force. From now on under the influence of the C.P. the African people are plunged from one opportunist venture to another at a great cost in human suffering, to the glory of the C.P. of South Africa.

Let it be said in favour of the Communists that they built up the Trade Union Movement among the Non-Whites in South Africa, but here again by failing to realise that the question of organising the oppressed workers in South Africa is primarily a national question and only secondarily a trade union question, they kept the trade Unions out of politics and thus weakened the liberatory struggle to such an extent that when the sword of Democles ever hanging over the heads of the African trade union Movement finally struck the blow it was powerless to defend itself and now lies prostrate on the ground before its bloodthirsty assailants. The C.P. itself was outlawed and it disappeared from the scene without being able to strike a single blow in self defence.

I have dealt at length with the genesis of the neo-liberals now clustered in organisations like the Congress of Democrats and exerting an influence in Non-European politics because I am of opinion that our leadership should know this history in order to understand and appreciate their historical background and position in society which determine their present political role.

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We may sum up the position during the decade of awakening as follows:

1. The African leaders began to realise that the African people were oppressed as workers as well as by reason of race, and discovered that the strike weapon was more powerful than the conciliatory method of humble requests and deputations.
2. The leadership was, however, without any guiding principles and re-acted to White racial emotionalism with Black racial emotionalism.
3. White liberals of the traditional missionary type, as well as the "socialist" liberals, sought to and did capture the leadership in order to guide it along lines which ~~did not~~ would not disturb the social set-up of White capital and Black labour.
4. Petty rivalries among the leaders, fomented by the liberals, misappropriation of funds, the infiltration of Government spies and agent provocateurs, the absence of a principled basis of struggle, and a clear programme of action all combined to bring about the downfall of the people's movement which had potentialities.

THE DECADE OF COMPROMISE.

For practically the whole of the first half of this period political leadership of the Africans took French leave. Only the dummy institutions of the Government, the Bungas and the Advisory Boards, flourished. To Smuts and Hertzog there seemed no point in perpetuating the division of the Herrenvolk parties in the current state of Non-European political impotence. Moreover, S. Africa was so effectively tied up with Britain that there was no longer any danger of a secessionist move on the part of the Boers. They therefore formed the Fusion Government for the purpose of ensuring the permanent enslavement of the Blacks and introduced the notorious Hertzog Native Bills.

They overlooked the fact, however, that the disorganisation of the African people was due to the failure of leadership and not to the acceptance of Herrenvolkism by the vast majority of the people. In the absence of any organisation capable of calling the people together, a few leaders summoned the first meeting of the All-African Convention for June, 1935. 500 delegates attended, representing every stratum of the country and the Protectorates. This meeting still remains the most representative political gathering of Africans ever held this century, whatever the distorters of history among us would like us to believe to the contrary. The theme of the Conference was unity of purpose and unity of struggle. A unanimous resolution was passed rejecting the Bills and the leaders were asked to inform the Government accordingly.

But the liberals also attended the A.A.C. Conference, for the specific purpose of assuming the leadership and directing the movement along innocuous lines. They offered the A.A.C. Executive every assistance and the upshot was the acceptance of the "compromise" of 1936 whereby the leaders agreed, without reference to the people who had sent them, to operate the Act on the Liberal inspired principle that "half a loaf is better than no bread". We need not go fully into the political reasons for this Compromise. They are well set out in I.B. Tabata's book "The Awakening of a People." Mr. Tabata correctly states that the leaders flouted the 1935 decisions and got away with it because the real control of the leadership was in the hands of Hertzog - Smuts. This is the burden of my argument in this address. I quote, "The chain of connection from the Herrenvolk party leaders through the Liberals to the African leaders and thence to the people is complete...The masses as we have said, looked to the intellectuals to be their leaders and spokesmen. They had long been accustomed to

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giving their allegiance to this or that particular leader because of his personality and prestige. Even when they joined an organisation they usually did so because their particular heroes were in it. They were never taught to discriminate between organisations according to the principles for which they stood and the policy which they advocated. Consequently the organisations themselves did not find it necessary to define precisely their principles and their policies. This was an inherent weakness the dangers of which only a crisis would fully reveal.

"In the absence of clearly-defined principles, the dangers were many and varied. Firstly, it placed no check on the leaders and gave free scope for opportunism, that enemy of principle without which a sustained struggle is impossible, that canker which has infected the political activity of the Africans and taken such heavy toll of our organisations in the past. Secondly, the people themselves, lacking a guiding principle, had no clear directives for action and no touchstone with which to measure and correctly assess the political actions of their leaders.

"It is not surprising that it was difficult for the people to have a political measuring-rod, when the leaders themselves were untaught and untrained to these necessities. Before the leaders could communicate these qualities to the masses they themselves had to break with the liberals and free themselves from their intellectual stranglehold. For proper leadership presupposes independence of thought and clarity of vision as well as intellectual integrity and moral courage. Under such conditions the people were exposed to pressures from an enemy class, to influence now from one section of the Herrenvolk and now from another."

I make no apology for quoting this passage from Mr. Tabata's book fully, because it provides a clear statement of the political difference between the A.A.C. and its sister organisations in the Unity Movement on the one hand and the Congresses on the other hand. More about this later.

The most important political event during this decade was undoubtedly the establishment of the A.A.C. as the permanent national organisation of the African people with which all other organisations should affiliate. However much it may embarrass the sectarians and disrupters in the ranks of the non-Europeans liberatory movement the A.A.C. is the legitimate offspring of the unanimous will of the people, the symbol and the vehicle of the unity which they earnestly desire and must achieve as a precondition to their national liberation. The federal form of organisation was deliberately designed to facilitate the unity of the people as a whole without sacrificing the identity of political parties and groups among them. Again I quote from Mr. I.B. Tabata's book:-

"The problem was to create a mouthpiece for the whole of the African people, a forum from which their voice could be heard. It was obvious that no single party could fulfil this task. A single political party cannot represent a whole community or race for the mere fact of belonging to the same race has nothing to do with a man's political affiliations. In any community people share different political ideas ranging from the extreme left to the extreme right, with all shades of leftists, centrists and conservatives in between. These must naturally fall into their various political groupings or parties. Any attempt, therefore, to form a unitary political organisation or a party was doomed to fail.. Further, no one party could claim to represent tribalists, nationalists, internationalists and liberals and at the same time integrate and attend to the specific tasks of industrial workers, farm labourers, peasants, professional classes, etc. Yet the very crux of the problem was to find a

form of organisation which would meet the demands arising out of the two-fold oppression - national oppression and class exploitation. The problem was to find a means of integrating and co-ordinating the national struggle with the struggles of the people striving to defend themselves against exploitation in their respective fields of labour. It was this objective fact, along with the particular stage of development reached by the people at the time, which dictated the form of organisation required."

Again I say I make no apology for this long quotation. I venture to say it would help the struggle tremendously if we would steep ourselves in the fundamental literature of our movement and bear in mind that the political theory and experience derived from the circumstances of other countries have to be modified to suit the particular conditions obtaining in our country, and the stage of political development which we have reached.

For those who think that our defence of the federal structure of our organisation is an afterthought and the rationalisation of a false theoretical position in which we find ourselves, let me quote from a letter which Dr. Yergan wrote from America to the Conference of the A.A.C. in 1936 :-

"I am more than convinced that our chief need now, as was true a year ago, is to build up a people's movement. By this I mean to make possible the largest amount of united action on the part of our people in South Africa. This means clearly that our task is to continue in our effort to federate existing organisations...We must let nothing stand in the way of making it possible for the leaders of the various organisations to see the importance and desirability of united action as will be made possible by a federation of the existing organisations."

The relationship between the form of organisation and its political outlook is well brought out by a comparison of the above quoted statements with a statement made by one of the A.N.C.'s chief spokesmen and theoreticians on the occasion of the joint A.A.C.-A.N.C. Executive meeting held in April 1949. I quote -

"The most effective way of appealing to the Africans as people suffering oppression was to appeal to them on the basis of colour. We could only meet oppression by organising on the basis of African Nationalism. This presupposes a unitary organisation. The advantages of such an organisation were that we would be able to mobilise the majority of the people in a language that they could understand. Secondly there could be no contradictions within the body caused by groups which may place certain interpretations on certain principles because of differences in political outlook. There was a grave danger in admitting different groups in the same organisation, particularly when major decisions have to be made...We must appeal to Africans as such to unite as Africans."

Here we see a sinister, but for us a revealing combination of a racist and a bureaucrat, of a Tshaka and a Stalin, who will brook no deviation from the standardised outlook and views of a monolithic party created or maintained for the control and regimentation of a whole people. Such ideas are anathema to our movement.

Not the least important result of the "compromise" of 1936 and the operation of the 1936 Slave Acts, was the entrenchment of the liberals in the leadership of the oppressed Africans. From now on the political destinies of the African people are by their own deliberate actions entrusted to the White liberals, the so-called "Native Representatives" and the highest political honour of the African leaders is to be labelled "N.R.C."

The spirit and resistance on the part of the African people which had manifested itself in the first A.A.C. Conference now gave way to compromise and collaboration, and in consequence the A.A.C. entered into a period of decline. To make matters worse, the A.N.C. leadership gradually broke away from the other organisations united in the A.A.C. and in defiance of the people's will proclaimed itself as the national mouthpiece of the African people. In this it was, and still is, supported by the Herrenvolk and its liberal press. Just as they had done in the case of the I.C.U. the liberals encouraged the disintegration of the A.A.C. so that it was all that it could do to exist. The result was that another golden opportunity to make demands for political rights was missed.

In 1939 the Second World War broke out, and owing to the lack of a powerful organisation with an independent leadership, the African people were drawn into the hostilities, as had been done in the 1914-18 war, with never a thought of what they would derive from participation on the war. The fact that the Fusion Government split on the war issue, with the Nationalists under Hertzog opposing participation in the war, did not give ideas to our leaders, as it certainly would have done if they had not been under the political tutelage of the ruling class.

THE DECADE OF RE-AWAKENING OR REDIRECTION.

The war had the effect of raising the hopes of the oppressed all over the world that their emancipation was at hand. Liberatory ideas began to spread from the East into Africa and the Non-Europeans in S. Africa also felt the impact of those ideas. The ruling class was alarmed and ministers of state began to vie with one another in making promises of social reform. But when the danger of a Japanese invasion receded, the Herrenvolk forgot its promises and not only reverted to, but also intensified, its old repressive policies. The Non-Europeans, however, were not prepared to accept the old relationship and the leadership began to reassess its position and redirect its steps. It was at this time that the Coloured people formed the Anti-C.A.D. Movement, which, together with the re-orientated All-African Convention, played a leading role in this new awakening and set the fashion in political ideas. There was a sharp break with the past characterised ~~with~~ by the rejection of the inferiority of the Black man, by the demand for full equality, the clear formulation of the tasks facing the oppressed and the realisation of the indivisibility of oppression, and the working out of new methods of struggle. The most important political achievements of this time were the formation of the Non-European Unity Movement (N.E.U.M.) ~~AND THE PLACING OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE ON A PRINCIPLED BASIS~~ and the placing of the political struggle on a principled basis so as, inter alia, to avoid one section of the oppressed using the other section to achieve its own sectional ends. The leadership of the N.E.U.M. resolved that loose unity or ad hoc combinations decided upon from time to time were not acceptable since they would open the door wide for opportunism. A programme of minimum demands, the 10-point programme, was evolved and this still remains the basis of unity. Principle replaced opportunism and leadership replaced individual leaders. The leadership realised that there were two irreconcilable sets of ideas, those of the rulers and those of the oppressed, and whoever propagated the ideas of the ruling class, no matter what the colour of his skin was a traitor to the cause of the oppressed. Colour ceased to be the test of belonging. It was replaced by political methods of assessment, namely the acceptance or rejection of equality, of trusteeship and inferiority.

In this way the All-African Convention and its associated organisations laid a firm foundation for the building up of an independent non-European leadership and cleansed its ranks of liberals, quislings and opportunists. Henceforth these gentry gravitated towards the A.N.C. where they were and still are warmly welcomed.

The magnitude of the political progress initiated by the A.A.C. and the Anti-C.A.D. at this time can be seen by contrast with the activities of the Congress during the same period. Instead of embarking on an independent path, the A.N.C. became the haven of all sorts of opportunists and time-servers who led it headlong from one political stunt to another with breath-taking rapidity. We need only mention a few of these stunts: The M.R.C. inspired "Boycott from within" campaign and the African National Congress; the "National Anti-pass Campaign", and "Votes for all Assembly", the S.A.I.C. inspired "Doctors' Unity Pact" and so on ad infinitum up to the latest Liberal inspired "National Convention on the Tomlinson Report". It has been well said that in politics whoever ceases to represent the true interests of his oppressed people wittingly or unwittingly becomes a tool of those sections of society who consciously serve the interests of the oppressor. No greater proof of the truth of this theory can be found than the Congress stunts referred to above. It is no excuse that these may have been undertaken in an honest and sincere effort to end oppression because according to another political truism: "He who acts as an agent of a class other than his own may or may not be sincere. But this does not affect his objective function. What does matter - and this is the only measuring rod - is the result, the effects of a leader's actions on society. The only pertinent question is: Who benefits from his words and actions?"

Owing to the compromise and desertions of its leaders, the A.A.C. was weak at the beginning of this decade, but the rejection of the old road of trusteeship gave new life to the organisation and it grew from weakness to strength and became a force to reckon with. Realising its potentialities the Herrenvolk and its agents made vain attempts to destroy it. It opened its door wide not only to African organisations but to all organisations provided they accepted the 10-point programme, the Policy of Non-Collaboration, non-European unity on a principled basis and the federal structure of the organisation.

These 4 points to this day distinguish the N.E.U.M. from the Congress movement and it is imperative that we should know precisely what they mean. This is all the more necessary since the Congresses which originally opposed our policy now pay lip service to it, only to debase it. Twelve years ago the S.A.I.C. refused to be associated with the N.E.U.M. because the ~~N.E.U.M.~~ N.E.U.M. gave pride of place in its programme to the demand for the full franchise whereas the S.A.I.C. was committed to a policy of compromise whereby the Indian leaders accepted the communal vote for the Indian people. Today the same S.A.I.C. makes it appear that it is fighting for equality. Six years ago the A.N.C. was openly tribalistic and collaborationist and advocated a monolithic party. I have already referred to the statement made by one of its theoreticians at the joint Executive meeting in 1949. At that same meeting Congress leaders opposed non-collaboration and advocated participation in the Bungal and Advisory Boards. Today this same Congress purports to accept non-European unity and to oppose collaboration.

The S.A.C.P.O. is the bastard child of the C.A.D. which is the very negation of equality, yet the S.A.C.P.O. is associated with the Congress in the apparent demand for the full franchise.

Our ideas have become fashionable and the reactionaries are compelled to use our language in order to catch the ear of the masses, but when the time comes for words to be translated into action no change of outlook is evident. Instead we perceive a debasement of the ideas and principles which, thanks to our movement have now become common currency among the politically conscious. This development imposes on us a duty to be on our guard against the contamination of our ideas and the misleadership of the masses of our people. This leads me to a consideration of the present decade.

THE DECADE OF STRUGGLE.

Towards the end of the last decade the Afrikaner Nationalists got into power. They made it quite clear from the outset that all Non-Whites could never be placed on a basis of equality with the Whites, and that they had to be disciplined to accept this position whether they like it or not. To suit the action to the word, the Nationalist Government has, within the short space of 8 years of its rule, passed numerous laws whose effect is not only to relegate the Black man to an inferior position in society, but also to shut his mind from the stream of progressive world ideas and literally to lash him with the sjambok should he dare to give expression to liberatory ideas. No layer of society has been left outside the laager of regimentation. The peasants, the workers and the intellectuals have all come within the ambit of a ferocious whipclap. The only Non-Whites who are acceptable to the Afrikaner Herrenvolk are the "skepsels" who know their place and who harbour no silly notions of equality.

The indiscriminate lashing out of the Nationalists has had the effect of antagonising elements which, though they accept European leadership, are appalled by the blatant and brutal methods of its Afrikaner champions. These elements are even now by way of clubbing together against the common embarrassment, and it is useful to know their identity. First of all there is the official opposition consisting of the United Party and the Labour Party. Their Herrenvolk attitude towards the Black man is too well known to require repetition here. Then there are the White liberals, intellectuals of the traditional or missionary type. Their role as mediators between Black and White on the basis of baaskap is becoming increasingly difficult, so much so that they have now broken away from the United Party and have formed a party of their own called the Liberal Party and they hope thereby to regain their leadership of the Blacks.

Then there are the Coloured snobs of S.A.C.P.O. who daily thank God and Strydom that they are not as the "Nativis" are, and whose eternal nightmare is lest they be classified as Blacks.

Next in the row you will find the rich merchants to whom the embodiment of all evil is the Group Areas Act which endangers their wealth. They can never forget that this obnoxious Act was passed by the Nationalist Government. Their tool is the S.A.I.C.

Finally you have the Black intellectuals who pride themselves in being the products of missionary endeavour. Led by the ex-M.R.C.'s they have found a resting place in the A.N.C.

All the above groups accept white domination or leadership as it is now euphemistically described, whether they want to know it or not. Save for the first two, namely the U.P. and the Labour Party, they are for the most part petit-bourgeois intellectuals who have no roots among the masses of the people, whom they fear and despise. Their common aim is to overthrow the nationalist Government so that a less fascistic and more "democratic" Herrenvolk Government can take its place and all their efforts are directed towards this end. They all look to the white electorate and the Nat.Government for their salvation, and if now and again they embroil the Non-European masses in their struggles, it is as a lever, threat or demonstration to impress upon the White electorate the need for a change of Government to ensure White domination and economic security against the eventuality of its violent overthrow by hordes of Black savages. Once the masses overplay the part allotted to them, their incitors

disavow them and quickly rally to the forces of order and good Government. Hence you have your opportunistic adventures which were either organised by the above elements and groups or else received their support within certain limits. Such stunts, however, apparently militant, do not represent a change of outlook on the part of the Non-White leadership. Where they are not a fraudulent demonstration of strength for the benefit of the ruling class, they are merely recruiting rallies.

The decade of struggle is now six years old, and during that time the Congresses and the liberals have organised and participated in joint stunts which, as we have already indicated, were not really aimed at achieving democratic rights. Their latest stunt, the national conference convened by ~~Idanf~~ Idanf, +++ has strengthened the bonds of friendship amongst them. To the liberals - as indeed to the whole Herrenvolk - the success of the Conference lay in the moderate tone of its resolutions. The liberals are highly gratified, not only because they were allowed to attend this conference as of right, but also because they were able to guide it along safe channels. The very nature and purpose of the Conference limited its scope to adopt any urgent or drastic measures and therefore ensured in advance that the ~~liberals~~ liberals would not be committed to any immediate or drastic action. It is significant that such a conference was not called on the Bantu Education Act whose immediate harmful effect ^{operation} is felt much more keenly by the masses of the people than the utopia of the Tomlinson Report. So reassured have been the liberals by the "success" of the Idanf Conference that they are now urging their Black disciples to convene a multi-racial conference at which they guarantee the attendance not only of their parties but also that of the openly reactionary Herrenvolk parties, namely the Labour Party and the United Party via the Black Sash Movement. As a matter of interest there are already in existence in Johannesburg and in Durban civic vigilance Committees composed of representatives ~~of~~ from the Congresses and the above Herrenvolk parties, whose methods of struggle consist of making representations to the respective city councils.

The proposed multi-racial conference will only ~~maximize~~ be the first step towards the creation of a permanent liason between the Congresses and the Herrenvolk parties; for to be "an effective fighting front against oppressive laws and measures of the Government, more is required than just thinking on specific campaigns," says Patrick Duncan, national organiser of the Liberal Party. He continues: "The Liberal Party, within a few days of the Ministers' Conference at Bloemfontein, sent a letter to the executive of Idanf pledging full support for their idea of a multi-racial conference to follow that one. Mr. Duncan proposes as a basis of unity of these groups "the largest possible participation by all racial groups on the programme of opposition to White domination, on the basis of the establishment of full democracy."

It should be clear to all of us by now that what the liberals are aiming at, and are by way of achieving, thanks to the collaboration of the Congresses and their appendage, Idanf, is the creation of a rival unity movement which will ostensibly fight for full democratic rights, whereas the objective effect will be the perpetuation of segregation and Non-White inferiority. This "unity movement" of theirs will be a glorified Institute of Race Relations.

Needless to say, these Herrenvolk moves are fraught with danger for our Movement. Unless we can point to the record of the liberals, both traditional and "socialist", and are able to place them where they belong in the political set-up of the country, it is going to be difficult to nail them when they apparently adopt our programme and express our ideas. We have to be careful that they do not take the initiative from us and put us on the defensive. Already we are being accused of being racialists, not only by the liberals, but also by the ultra progressive ~~and~~ idealists

+++ (Idanf = Interdenominational African Ministers' Federation.) and..

to all genuine fighters. However, the purpose of this address is not to sing the praises of our movement and our fighters, but to underline the comparative failure, or at least the ineffectiveness, of Non-White leadership and to take our fair share of the blame. The leadership of our movement is still very largely in the hands of the intellectuals, many of whom are quite young. It is only when we have leaders of the workers and the peasants among us on a large and representative scale, when our ideas have permeated every stratum of ~~our~~ our society and are the common property of the oppressed, that we can boast that we have built up a popular movement. I am sure that it is the wish of all of us that this great and glorious day may come soon. It is up to us to expedite the advent of the time when the people's movement can face up to the tremendous task of liquidating Herrenvolk oppression. To this end, then, we must bend all our resources in the full realisation of the fact that only those who are prepared to lay down their lives for freedom deserve to win it. By the look of things our opportunity is at hand, but we shall not be equal to the occasion unless we throw ourselves wholeheartedly into the struggle.

And so, in the gathering gloom, I ~~am~~ call upon you individually and collectively as a section of the leadership of the oppressed, to examine yourselves closely and to equip yourselves from the Conference of the All-African Convention, this arsenal of liberatory ideas, for the tremendous struggle that is ahead of us. Let us never be daunted, ~~what~~ what though the odds are great and the enemy is ruthless. There is joy in living and in dying for a righteous cause. Let us adopt as our motto: "For us to live is to be free."

"If we must die - let it not be like ~~the~~ hogs,
 Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
 While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs
 Making their mock at our accursed lot.
 If we must die - oh, let us nobly die,
 So that our precious blood may not be shed
 In vain. Then even the monsters we defy
 Will be constrained to honour us though dead!
 Oh, kinsmen! we must meet the common foe;
 Though far outnumbered, let us show us brave,
 And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
 What though before us lies the grave?
 Like men we face the murderous, cowardly pack,
 Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!"

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