

"I INTEND TO STATE POLICY AUTHORITATIVELY"

Sobukwe Outlines Africanists' Case

(BY R. M. SOBUKWE, PRESIDENT OF PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS.)

THE PAN-AFRICANIST Congress has been launched and since it is destined to play a most decisive role in the struggle for national liberation I think it is in the interest not only of South Africa but of the world, that its policy and ultimate goal should be stated authoritatively and unambiguously. I intend to do so in this article.

For a long time the impression has persisted in the minds of many people in this country and probably abroad, that the Africanists are a wild "crazy" crew, uneducated and confused. The South African Press has created this picture in most cases, out of sheer malice. The Press set about creating an effigy that it christened "African Nationalism" or "Africanism" and then systematically and methodically destroyed that effigy. Needless to say that at no time did the Press criticize either African Nationalism or the Africanists.

What we stand for

Let us begin by saying that we are quite aware of the fact that we are faced with an overwhelming combination of forces internally, in the person of the ruling white minority and externally in the person of the forces of imperialism and international imperialism.

The domestic forces of oppression have entrenched themselves very deep in the social and economic areas. Consequently, they enjoy a monopoly of economic, political, cultural and military power.

Viewed from a single angle, the position of the ruling minority appears impregnable. But there are weaknesses in this structure.

First of all, the entire economic fabric rests on the indispensable pillars of cheap black labor.

Secondly, the white minority can maintain its continued domination only by perfecting the techniques of control in such a way as to inhibit the active co-operation and goodwill of the oppressed.

These techniques include the creation of hoodlums calculated to maintain and develop the system of co-operation and domination, as well as to condition the minds of the dominated for the unqualifying acceptance of their role as subordinates in the perpetuation of their own domination.

That is why we embrace the policy of non-cooperation as enshrined in the national-building Programme of 1949. But because the South African ruling minority is backed

by the forces of international capitalism and imperialism, it becomes necessary for us to develop an international outlook. However, the lessons of history in the last half century show that we can only get the most support and sympathy of friendly peoples; they can never liberate us.

This means, among other things, that we must develop policies not merely appealing to our own country, or merely failures to approximate to or to please certain powers or constabularies of powers or peoples. Our policies must



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flow from the logic of the African situation and from the fundamental long-term interests of the vast African millions. That is why, in international matters, we support Dr. Mbarasa's policy of positive neutrality holding, with Dr. Akinsola that we are "independent in everything and neutral in nothing that concerns the destiny of Africa."

One basic assumption

It is our conviction that the vast illiterate and semi-literate masses of the African are the corner stones; the key and very life of the struggle for democracy. From this we draw the logical conclusion that recruiting and consolidation of these masses is the primary task of liberation. This leads to the conclusion that African nationalism in the liberating context is to achieve this gigantic and historic task and that the philosophy of Africanism builds out the hope of a genuine democracy beyond the shores of struggle.

Co-operation with other

Groups

We have made our stand clear on this point. Our conviction is that the Africanists are the only people who, because of their material position, can be

interested in the complete overthrow of the present structure of society. We have admitted that there are Europeans who are intellectual converts to the African's cause, but because they benefit materially from the present set up, they cannot completely identify themselves with this cause.

This is, as South African history so aptly illustrates, that whenever Europeans "co-operate" with African movements, they keep on demanding checks and counter-checks, guarantees and the like, with the result that they stifle and retard the movement of the African. The reason is, of course, that they are consciously or unconsciously governing their own interests.

The only people who are interested in so-called "freedom" are those who do not possess an permanent (in creation); those who wish to advance a certain line at any given time. We do not wish to use anybody, nor do we intend to be used by anybody who want to make the African people conscious of the fact that they have to win their own liberation, to rely on themselves in creating a self-reliant and determined struggle instead of relying on "out cast" cases and negotiations on their behalf by "sympathetic" whites.

Indian Minority

Of the Indian minority we say that they are an oppressed national group. That among them has emerged a trendset class which has become tainted with the virus of national apathy and cultural separation. The Indian people, unfortunately, is down from this idea, which, like the "sympathetic" whites, is concerned with protecting its own national interests.

The only Indians who can facilitate their material position, be interested in the complete overthrow of white domination and the establishment of a genuine Africanist democracy, are the poor "coolies" of the sugar plantations of Natal. But they have not yet reached the leadership of their own. What we wish of them is that they should reject this opportunist leadership and produce their own leadership.

In short, we intend to go it alone. Should a time arise which objectively requires that we take it up, we will, irrespective of who may also be interested in that issue.

Mass Demonstrations

Some quarters have already stated that the Africanists are not interested in mass demonstrations. That is true

Africanists Must Explain This . . .

ON THIS PAGE we bring you an article by Mr. R. M. Sobukwe, President of the Pan-Africanist Congress. Mr. Sobukwe has a duty to the public. What is the attitude of his Congress to the white, Indian, and Coloured peoples of South Africa?

The facts are these: Mr. Robert Sobukwe has proclaimed that the Africanists are non-racial. His words were: "Everybody who owes his only loyalty to Africa, and who is prepared to accept the democratic rule of an African majority . . . (is regarded as an African)." (Contact 13 April).

On the other hand he told Mr. Hertz Schom, of United Press, that "no white man can identify himself with the struggle of the black people in this country . . ." (Dagbladet 13 April).

Now these two statements, from the President of the Pan-Africanist Congress, are absolutely contradictory.

It is necessary for Mr. Sobukwe and his Congress to make these points of view clear. It is necessary for two reasons: firstly it is the most important line ahead of the country; secondly, in the job of building a new following fast, leaders must be absolutely and blindingly clear on the basic issues of their creed. If they are not, the public will not trust or follow them.

It is a matter of legitimate pride to members of the Liberal Party, and an owner of their future success, that theirs is the only movement in the history of South Africa which has defined with absolute clarity the words "nation," "people," and "South Africa."

if the emphasis is placed on democracy. But it does not mean that we are not interested in mass action. We are a mass organization and we believe that every African should be involved in the struggle for national liberation.

Having said that, I should further point out that we believe in a disciplined, organized struggle. Unfortunately we have noticed throughout the entire post-1949 period, the absence, on the part of those who "lead" the African people of any capacity to learn from past struggles. There seems to be a tendency among them to derive impulsive decisions from a feeling that being immediate emotional dividends. At best they were ineffective and at the worst they revealed opportunist leadership.

We have said in the past and we say so now, that we are not prepared to have our people used as cannon-fodder. When we embark on a campaign it will be the leaders who will be in front. They will not remain behind while the masses rest in jail.

Ultimate Objectives

Politically we stand for government of the Africans by the Africans by the Africans with everybody who owes his only loyalty to Africa, except the democratic rule of an African majority, being regarded as an African.

We guarantee no minority rule because we are fighting precisely that group-exclusiveness which those who plead for minority rights would. This is precisely what it is our aim to do. We have guaranteed individual freedom, we have given the highest guarantee necessary and possible. I have said and I still say as now, that I see no reason why, in a free, democratic Africa, a predominantly black electorate should not return to Parliament, for colour will count for nothing in a free Africa.

Economically we stand for a planned economy and the most rapid distribution of wealth. I have said that to me, at least,

the slogan of "equal opportunities" is meaningless if it does not take up equality of income as the springboard from which all will take off.

Our problem, as we see it, is to make a planned economy work within the framework of a political democracy. It has not done so in any of the countries that practice it to-day, but we do not believe that totalitarianism is inherent in a system of planned state economy.

Socially

Socially we stand for the full and complete development of the human personality with the active creation of conditions that will encourage the rapid disintegration of group exclusiveness and the emergence of a united African nation, devoted to the tremendous task of developing the country and creating a distinctive African culture.

Lastly, of course, we who are Pan-Africanist in outlook, do not subscribe to the doctrine of South African exceptionalism and for this reason are committed to the idea of a Southern Federation of independent States, merging first with other federations to form a United States of Africa, which we would like to see as a unitary, centrally controlled organic whole.

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