

CONTACT - 8/3/1958

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African National Congress faces Challenge from Extremists.  
Anti-Whiteism threat.

"A major crisis which could have far-reaching effects on the course of <sup>events</sup> in South Africa, faces the ANC: the extremist 'Africanist' group is making a bold bid to capture the leadership of the movement in the Tvl, and plans next to go for national leadership.

"Once in control of the national movement, the Africanists might succeed in turning it from responsible political action to violently anti-White activity, or they might <sup>force a</sup> <sup>split</sup> in the ANC which would release from their present discipline the dangerous tensions and frustrations building up among non-Whites.

"It is too soon to be able to estimate the chances of the Africanists succeeding, but much depends on the outcome of a provincial conference which they have called for Sunday (March 9).

"The conference is to be held at Lady Selbourne, Pretoria.

"Although the Africanists have had little influence in the ANC until now, they have opportunistically seized on the dissatisfaction with the Transvaal leadership expressed by another much larger group, and by allying themselves with this group, they have managed to carry out a significant coup.

"After a chaotic provincial conference on Sunday February 23, at which the Tvl executive failed to meet the complaints against it, a section of the dissident group, led by Africanists, seized the organisation's official car, assaulting its driver. The next day raided the provincial offices and seized furniture and records.

"Two days after the conference, the provincial President, treason suspect Elias Moretsele, resigned stating that, 'There can be little doubt that (after last Sunday's conference) the present provincial executive does not enjoy the confidence of the majority of the active membership of the ANC in this province.'

"The national leadership of the ANC decided at an emergency session last week that it must intervene in the Tvl dispute - but it has not decided how and when.

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"The crisis is made the more urgent for the ANC by the fact that in just a weeks time it is due to bear the major organisational burden of the proposed National Workers Conference.

"The national leadership of Congress is firmly wedded to multi-racial endeavour and the overwhelming defeat of the Africanists at the last national conference indicates that the rank and file back the leadership. But if the national leadership appears to endorse an unwanted and discredited executive of the Tvl, then the Africanists will be given their chance."

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