

CONGRESS RESISTER

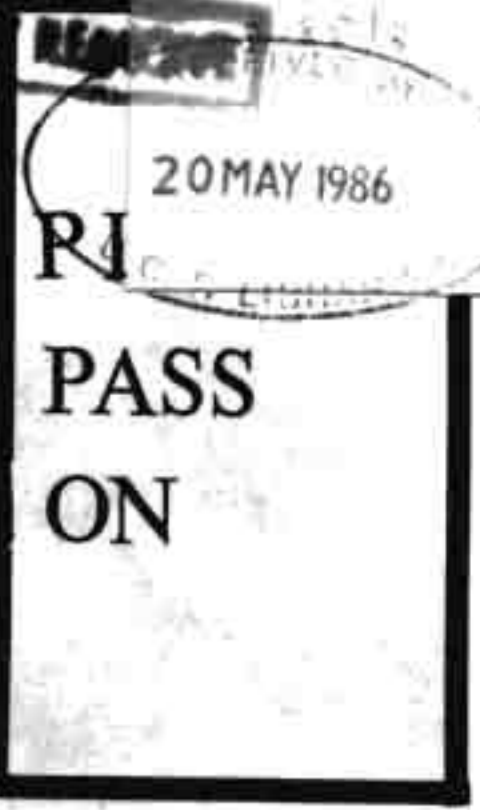


NEWSLETTER OF THE TRANSVAAL INDIAN CONGRESS

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10 000 mourners at the funeral of Ebrahim Carelse in Cape Town, who was shot by police. Imam Hassen Solomons led the procession and said, "so long as I have breath in my lungs and blood in my veins, I will continue to fight for justice. Imam Solomons has since left the country, but has called on us to march forward to freedom.

FORWARD TO FREEDOM

Law and order must be restored at all costs - this was P.W. Botha's message to our country on that fateful Saturday in July when the state of emergency was declared. We knew then that we were facing the worst attack on the democratic movement since the 1960's.

At the same time, 40 000 mourners paid their last respects to the four Eastern Cape UDP leaders who died tragically. They pledged to continue with the fight for a free and democratic South Africa. For them, the death of our leaders will not be in vain.

In these dark weeks as the SADF moved into 'cleaning up' the townships and weeding out all the so-called agitators, thousands of people have been detained, injured and lost their lives. Many men, women and children are

missing. And, the assassination of VICTORIA MXENGE, UDP NATAL LEADER, shook us to the core.

REFORM - RECIPE FOR DISASTER.

The Botha's, the Viljoen's the Malans and their supporters in the tricameral parliaments and the homelands, have lost the last breath of faith of our people. Did we not warn our people that the new constitution was a recipe for violence and conflict? Did we not warn our people that GST would increase as the government needs to finance its apartheid parliaments, the troops in the townships and to wage unjust wars against neighbouring states?

Daily, our organisations are being blamed for the violence and the bloodshed in the townships. Did we not wage a peaceful campaign against the

apartheid elections? Who was responsible for the police brutality at Lenz and Actonville? We will never forget the rubber bullets, the sjambokking of men, women and children. It is these very tactics that are being used in the townships today.

WORLD SUPPORT AGAINST APARTHEID

The voices of protest against apartheid are not being heard in S.A. only. All over the world, from the United States to Europe and Africa, the call from the people is that apartheid must go. Under these pressures, many governments have been forced to introduce economic, military and diplomatic sanctions against apartheid.

Never before has the world spoken out with such unison against the government. And inside the country, powerful businessmen are beginning to loose faith in

the National Party's ability to rule this country.

P.W. Botha has been pushed into a corner. Now, he is once again talking about reform. Have we not heard such promises before? He is talking about scrapping pass laws. About granting African people citizenship and a place in Botha's Presidents Council. A council which the majority of our people have rejected.

WE WILL NOT BE MISLED

We must not be misled. P>W> is playing with words such as, universal franchise and a common citizenship.

Our demands still stand for:

- *one South Africa free of Bantustans and Group Areas.
- *A non-racial and democratic S.A. in which one person shall have one vote.

*and for the immediate lifting of the state of emergency.

We further demand that all political prisoners be released unconditionally and the unbanning of all political organisations.

We in the TIC together with our fellow South Africans in the UDP will only participate in a national convention when apartheid has been dismantled.

We call on all Congress supporters to stand firm behind the organisations of our people. Not to loose faith in our vision of a South Africa based on the Freedom Charter.

Now, more than ever before, we must rally behind our organisations. We must not be fooled by Botha's empty talk of reform. Nor, should we allow our struggle to be side tracked by the Slabberts, the Rajbansis, the Hendrickses and the Buthelezi's.

LONG LIVE CONGRESS

STATE WILL



WE SALUTE ALL OPPONENTS OF APARTHEID



A tiny little woman, always dressed in a white sari; a woman with a broad smile and a lively sense of humour; a woman who may to some seem timid; in reality, a woman who is a vociferous opponent of Apartheid - this is Maniben Sita.

Maniben, the daughter of Nana Sita, follows the tradition of a father who engaged in the fight for human rights with Mahatma Gandhi and who for many years was a source of inspiration to all who hate injustice in this country.

Silencing the truth

Maniben is a fiery proponent of the truth. She speaks with an energy and a passion that makes the truth sting and which hurts all those, whites and "non-whites", who benefit from and support the oppression of other people.

It is because Maniben has the power to shame racists, opportunists and exploiters that she is now in prison. Like all those who dare to see the truth and expose it, she is treated as a criminal.

Now she, with thousands of others, is detained. It is an attempt to silence her and the voices of all those imprisoned. But incarceration of someone like Maniben proclaims the truth of oppression even more loudly than she proclaimed it herself.

Serving God

Maniben is a devout Hindu who has been studying the

Since the state of emergency was declared, 4 300 people have been detained. 3 500 have been released and today, there are 860 people still being held. These figures exclude the detentions in areas which have not been declared emergency areas.

Nine prominent members of the Transvaal Indian Congress are still in detention. In addition, two TIC executive members, Dr Jassat and Cas Saloojee are facing treason charges.

We salute their bravery and will continue to stand by them. Maniben Sita (65) is being held at Diepkloof Prison. She is an executive member of the TIC and of the Federation of Transvaal Women. In this edition of the Congress Resister, we want to pay a special tribute to her for her strength and sacrifice for a free South Africa.

philosophy of Yoga for the past twenty years. There is nothing she would like better than to devote her whole life to meditation and the service of God. But she has sacrificed personal aspirations for the sake of serving God by fighting injustice in the community.

She lives by the principle of non-violence. Nothing is more abhorrent to Maniben than the idea of taking a life, even the life of an insect. She is a vegetarian because she does not believe in the killing of animals. She will not eat white flour or white sugar because she believes that the colour is derived from crushed bones.

Maniben was arrested on the first day of the Emergency. She was ordered off a bus returning from the funeral of Matthews Goniwe.

The bus was surrounded by about twenty policemen carrying R1 rifles. Maniben stood up to question one of

the policemen. His response was: "Sit down, you coolie bitch!" Being a disciple of Gandhi, she did not sit down but in a dignified way asked, "I have never in my life addressed anyone in such terms, why do you speak to me like this?" The policeman did not expect this, but still he was not ashamed and forced her to sit down.

We have been brought up to respect our elders. Where was his respect? How could he call a woman old enough to be his mother, a "bitch"?

This policeman, a brutalised automaton of the government, who cannot treat an elderly, defenceless woman as a human being, is the liaison between this government and the oppressed people of this country.

Now under the Emergency regulations, he has been given the power to monitor the tiniest action and the most innocent utterance of

OF EMERGENCY NOT SMASH US



By declaring the State of Emergency, PW Botha has admitted that his reform strategy is a failure and that Apartheid rule is in a deep crisis. The Emergency is a desperate attempt on the part of the Nationalists to ensure the protection of white minority rule.

The intention of the State of Emergency is to crush the democratic movement and set our struggle back. In the past two years, the freedom loving people have made many gains. Never before has there been such widespread opposition to Apartheid policies and more and more people uniting behind the UDF and its affiliates like the TIC who are committed to bringing about a non-racial Democratic South Africa.

Through the Emergency the government wants to stop this, rescue Apartheid, prop up puppet leaders and force unacceptable solutions down our throats.

They intend to achieve this by:

* Firstly, trying to quell the revolt in the townships. Daily the police and SADF beseege the townships and terrorise residents with teargas, shamboks, shootings and assaults. They hope to harass and intimidate the people into submission.

* Secondly, the government has gone all out to smash our democratic organisations. Leaders have been detained, activists harassed and leaflets confiscated. There are threats that the UDF and other organisations may be banned. Presently TIC executive members Ismail Momoniat, Isu Chiba, Prema Naidoo, Ram Saloojee, Hanibhen Sita and Cassim Coovadia are still in detention.

More than half of the UDF leadership is behind bars. These include: Curnick Ndlovu (UDF Executive

president), Terror Lekota (UDF publicity secretary), Billy Nair (NIC), Pravin Gordhan (NIC), Yunus Mohamed (UDF Natal executive member).

Transvaal leaders such as Amos Mazono (Soweto Civic Association publicity secretary) and Amanda Kwadi (Fedtraw executive member) are also detained.

Despite these setbacks our people have fought on. In the midst of the State of Emergency the people on the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Natal and on the mines have not surrendered. All over the country our people have supported the call to boycott white shops. The consumer boycott strategy is proving most successful.

Many people have lost their lives since the state of emergency was declared. Children have been died, families have been left without breadwinners and mothers have been taken from their children. Mass

funerals, in some cases, have attracted up to 40 000 mourners. These funerals are the symbols of the brutality of apartheid. It is here that mourners have strengthened themselves to continue to fight on against apartheid. But we cannot stop here. We must:

* Constantly show to our people, big business and the world that Apartheid is the enemy.

* Intensify our struggle against the collaborators and tricameral system.

* Ensure vigilance and discipline.

* Stand united. We must not allow Botha to divide and rule.

* Swell our ranks. We can only attain freedom if more and more people participate in the struggle. Workers, students, teachers, women, unemployed must all join hands.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE LIVES ON

every one of us. He has been given tremendous authority yet he is not capable of simple human decency.

Maniben has probably forgiven this policeman for calling her a "coolie bitch". She knows he is the real victim of Apartheid. He has sacrificed his humanity to uphold an ungodly system. Her prayers will be more for him than for herself and her comrades in prison.

Since the elections for the Black Local Authorities and the apartheid parliaments, there has not been a day of peace in our country.

The state of emergency is now 10 weeks old. The government thought that it could silence our people and stop the unrest. Instead, the unrest has spread to other parts of the country - first to Natal, then to East London and now the Western Cape is the scene of the worst conflict since 1976.

Police brutality, the

detention of young children, the deaths, have angered our people and spurred them on to protest against the presence of troops in the townships. Such is the anger of the people that many no longer fear death. We have waged a bitter battle and have made great sacrifices.

In the Western Cape, The people fought back with a two-day work stay-away which was supported by 75% of the people. Recently, students, teachers and parents waged a campaign against Carter Ebrahim, the

Minister of "Coloured" education to re-open the schools. This was a great victory for us as Ebrahim was forced to step down. Daily, there are newspaper reports of people injured and killed by the police in the Cape.

In the Vaal Triangle where most of the leaders of the Vaal Civic Association have been charged with high treason, the people have refused to pay rentals for over a year. They have stood firm despite threats of eviction. A successful consumer boycott of white owned shops in the East Rand led to the arrest of township shop-owners.

The consumer boycott in Maritzburg was so

successful that white business was forced to negotiate with the people's leaders to end the boycott.

And, in Port Elizabeth, the consumer boycott continues unabated as more and more white shops are forced to close down. Our people are saying clearly that business must choose its side. Either they support the people's demands for freedom, or they support apartheid. There can be no middle road.

Mass stay-aways have hit our country over the past year. Since the stay-away in the Vaal Triangle in September last year, this has become a major non-violent weapon in the hands of our people.



RELEASE
OUR
LEADERS



WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT INANDA?



The tragic events at the beginning of August were a sad moment in the history of the oppressed peoples. The government, the Rajbansis and the media, portrayed this as a conflict between Indians and Africans. The blame was laid at the feet of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and its affiliate, the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). But, the UDF and the NIC believe that it is the agents of apartheid themselves who are responsible for this conflict.

What really happened at Inanda?

Inanda is a vast squatter camp on the outskirts of Durban where Indians and Africans have lived together for years. It is a black spot which the government wants to incorporate into KwaZulu.

But, Buthelezi does not want it because he does not have the finances to improve the area. The government has been stalling because they would have to resettle the Indians who are demanding large amounts of compensation for their land.

Most of the Indians are landowners and tension has been developing between them and the African businessmen who are supporters of Inkatha. These businessmen held a meeting a few months prior to the August events, where they identified the Indian landowners as obstacles to incorporation into KwaZulu and demanded that action be taken by the Department of Community Development. They wanted the Indian landowners out because they could then get their land.

It is against this backdrop that the events in Inanda took place. On Monday 5 August, several combis of "strangers" entered Inanda and began attacking Indian shops. Many Indian families fled and took refuge at Greenbury Hall in the adjoining Indian township, Phoenix. By the end of that week, close to 1 000 families were left homeless.

Inanda Relief Committee.

In Phoenix, the Phoenix Child Welfare Society, the Phoenix Working Committee, the local civic association, together with affected residents, set up an Inanda Relief Committee.

It was assisted by the Muslim Youth Movement and the UDF-affiliated, Durban Housing Action Committee (Dhac). Through these organisations, UDF and NIC members were centrally involved.

The Inanda Relief Committee sent two memorandums to the authorities demanding proper housing and compensation for losses suffered by the people. They also called on the authorities to meet the short term needs of the people.

It was not long before the political opportunists arrived on the scene. Rajbansi and the government stepped in and blamed the NIC and UDF for the incident. When the looting was at its highest, the SABC interviewed an Indian resident who claimed on TV that "it's the UDF". Later, the NIC discovered that the man did not know what the UDF was and that he had been told to say so by the TV crewmen.

A member of the Phoenix Working Committee said; "it was not a situation of race rioting. Many of the looters were just hungry people because of the high

unemployment and poverty in the area. Nothing was ever mentioned by the press of how Indian families were protected by their African neighbours". Observers have questioned the role of the SADF and the SAP in the event in Inanda. Reports are that they were present in the township, but they did nothing to prevent the looting. It has also been said that they prevented fire engines from entering Inanda to douse the fires. Why is it that in other trouble spots in the country, the SADF and the SAP are the first on the scene?

Rajbansi flees.

But where were Rajbansi and the House Delegates? Contrary to press reports, members of the House of Delegates were nowhere to be seen. Rumours that they had been sleeping with the families were also totally untrue, informed sources told the Congress Resister.

Rajbansi and other members of the House of Delegates visited the Greenbury Hall for the first time on Friday 9 August, where they made an announcement that the families would get R22 million in compensation and that housing will be provided immediately.

When they reappeared on Sunday, they restated their promise about the R22 million but suddenly had problems carrying out their promise of housing.

Rajbansi had also promised to lead the Indians back into Inanda in convoy with the SADF to get back their possessions. However, when some residents returned to Inanda, there was no presence of Rajbansi or the army and clashes occurred.

Rajbansi had instead attended an Inkatha rally. When Rajbansi came back to Greenbury Hall, he was greeted by angry people and forced to flee.

None of Rajbansi's promises have materialised. Yet the UDF, NIC Diakonia and the Black Sash set up a crisis committee to collect information, monitor developments and collect relief. People from around the country have sent food, clothing and money to the Inanda families.

The role of Inkatha in the Inanda issue is not clear. However at the same time as Inanda was blowing up, Inkatha imps were patrolling the Durban townships of Umlazi, Lamontville and KwaMashu

seeking out UDF supporters. They were bent on destroying the schools boycott which was organised to protest against the murder of UDF leader, Victoria Mxenge.

5 000 people attended the memorial service at Umlazi. The mourners were attacked by a group of 300 Inkatha members who were wielding sticks and spears as they tried to disrupt the service. At least 15 people were killed in this battle. The Inkatha members were chanting anti-UDF slogans.

In looking back on the events of Inanda, it is clear that the government forces are determined to break the unity of the Indian and African people. A unity which has been built through many years of struggle and sacrifice under this government. There can be no doubt that Inanda whipped up feelings of mistrust. But, we in the TIC, the NIC, together with all freedom loving people are determined to continue to fight for the unity of all South Africans.

SUPPORT MINERS

Workers throughout the country are finding it more and more difficult to feed, clothe and house their families. The ranks of the unemployed are swelling, while the price of basic essentials increase. It is against the backdrop of inflation, recession and drops in living standards that the NUM strike must be understood.

When the strike was announced, it became clear that mineworkers would require support. Various trade union, community, political, youth, health and student organisations formed a Num Strike Support Committee. Amongst these organisations were the TIC and other UDF affiliates.

The TIC has done so with the understanding that the workers in South Africa are the most oppressed and exploited. Our destiny is linked with theirs. It is only their final liberation from Apartheid rule and economic exploitation that will liberate all South Africans.

The TIC calls on all the people to support the miners in what ever way possible.

PFP CANNOT BE TRUSTED

In 1983, when the government held a referendum to determine whether the white community would support the tricameral parliament, the Progressive Federal Party (PPP) urged whites to vote NO. Its leader Van Zyl Slabbert argued convincingly that the new constitution would increase conflict in our country. Unfortunately the vast majority of whites rejected Slabbert's argument and supported Botha's "new deal".

We had hoped that Slabbert and the PPP would then turn their backs on Botha's racist 3-chamber parliament and join the democratic movement in our struggle for democracy. Instead they opted to participate in the white parliament "to change the system from within". In so doing they did an about

turn - they decided to participate in the very parliament which they had rejected earlier on; a parliament which they said would increase conflict.

Last year in one of our greatest showings of unity, we boycotted the elections for the Indian and "Coloured" Houses of Parliament. The government's aim to co-opt the Indian and "Coloured", and particularly the middle-class sections of our communities failed dismally. The new constitution was therefore still-born - doomed to failure right from the beginning.

Faced with this rejection, the government tried a new trick. It decided to scrap the Political Interference Act, thereby opening the door for mixed political

parties. In so doing it hoped that the PPP with its more credible liberal image would begin to make inroads into the Indian and "Coloured" communities. Of course the PPP has now attempted to do precisely this - and has set aside R10 million rand to facilitate this.

At its recent congress held in Durban, the PPP decided to field candidates to contest elections for the Indian and "Coloured" houses of parliament - despite strong opposition from its youth and other prominent members - despite its total rejection by our people - despite the fact that this very parliament has contributed to setting our country on a road to disaster.

For us in the Transvaal Indian Congress and the

United Democratic Front this decision of the PPP is the last straw. It shows us that the PPP cannot be trusted. By going against the wishes of our people, they have declared war on us.

The PPP has also revealed its opportunism. By criticising the government on the one hand, while attempting to rescue the apartheid parliament on the other they are only trying to give apartheid a better face. This also confirms our view that the PPP is much closer to the Nationalist government than they would have us believe.

The TIC is committed to a South Africa as envisaged

in the Freedom Charter; a South Africa where all South Africans will participate in the decision-making process; a

South Africa where all South Africans, Black and White have the vote in a single parliament. Only then will peace and prosperity come to our country.

In order to achieve our vision of a non-racial democratic South Africa, we remain committed to mobilising and organising our people in united mass action against Botha and his collaborators, whether they are the Rajbansis, Hendrickses or even Slabberts.