

TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF AFRICA.

This letter accompanies the Constitution of the Society of Young Africa (SOYA), an organisation started by a group of young men and young women in the Western Province three months ago, and calculated to be the nucleus of a movement that will eventually cover the whole of Southern Africa including those African territories at present known as Protectorates or Crown Colonies. The aims and objects of the organisation speak for themselves. We pledge ourselves to the cause of African liberation.

At present we call ourselves the SOYA, but our intention in sending you a copy of our constitution is that branches should spring up immediately all over. Then we shall be the Western Province Branch of the Society of Young Africa, and, with the co-operation of your branches, a conference will be held and a central body will be established.

We wish to state most emphatically that:

- (a) we make no compromise whatsoever as far as the aims and objects and composition of this organisation are concerned;
- (b) we stress ideology and principle above all else. The stress on ideology implies an intelligent approach to the social, political and economic problems of this country. Therefore, intellectual development must be the aim of each and every SOYAN. Every SOYAN must understand the full implications of every word or expression that he or she uses in speech or in writing, and of every doctrine or ideology that he or she accepts or rejects. Intelligent and systematic study, clear thinking, intelligent discussion, fearless criticism in study-groups, in public speech or in writing - these must be the outstanding characteristics of the intellectual aspect of SOYA.

~~The organisational aspect is related to, and closely bound up with the ideological.~~ Study-groups must have a systematic programme calculated to achieve these aims. But these studies must not be divorced from the life around you and from the people who live this life. For the aim of SOYA is not just to give you scope for academic discussions and intellectual satisfaction for its own sake, but to open your eyes to a clear understanding of the social, political and economic conditions around you so that you may be in a position to set about the struggle for liberation in an intelligent manner. In other words, the Society of Young Africa is not an end in itself, but a means to the liberation of all people in South Africa. We want intelligence rather than romantic enthusiasm: we want patience and courage rather than exhibitionism and impetuosity. We want sound co-operation and loyalty rather than personal ambition. We want loyalty to principle rather than loyalty to personalities. We want a sound, reliable leadership rather than a leader.

We suggest that you follow a definite scheme in building up your membership. For instance, you might insist that every new member should bring two more within a month of joining. EACH ONE BRING TWO.

Until a conference of the branches has been held and a central organisation established, we claim the right to be the headquarters of this movement, and as we should like to hear from you as early as possible, we shall be glad if you will address all correspondence to Mr. D.P. Kunene, Secretary of the Society of Young Africa, School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, C.P.

Issued by the Executive Committee of the SOYA, Cape Town, 3rd May, 1951.