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COLOURED PEOPLE REJECT GROUP AREAS Organize To Defend Their Homes

CAPE TOWN. THE firm decision of the Coloured, Malay and Indian people to defend their homes and to resist any form of Group Areas zoning was expressed by a crowded, enthusiastic and militant meeting in the Mowbray Town Hall last week.

An Executive member of the South African Coloured People's Organisation, Dr. R. E. van der Ross, presided over the meeting, which was called by the Group Areas Co-ordinating Committee.

The meeting unanimously passed a resolution rejecting apartheid, the Group Areas Act and the zoning proposals for the Cape Peninsula.

Agreeing with the chairman that if the people ignored the Land Tenure Board and refused to give evidence before it, the Board would conclude that the people approved of its racial demarcation of the Cape Peninsula, the meeting resolved to make representations to the Board, but emphasised that it would at no stage propose zones for any race at all.

This means that the representations made would, in every case, object to the Board's proposals and reject them in toto.

For the Group Areas Co-ordinating Committee meeting the Mowbray Town Hall was packed to the doors, many people standing at the back or sitting on the platform. It was the response to the proposals outlined by the chair, that by the end of the meeting the Co-ordinating Committee had been urged to include representatives from every area affected by the Land Tenure Board's proposals.

Scores of people came forward offering their services, homes and the use of halls in the furtherance of the campaign, which aims at making the Coloured, Malay and

Indian people of Cape Town speak with one voice before the Land Tenure Board. Representations to the Board must be in before March 31. The Board's present proposals deal mainly with the Southern Peninsula, from Observatory downwards.

It proposes that areas like Observatory, Claremont, Crawford, Kenilworth, Wotton, Newlands, Plumstead, Day River, Ottery, Constantia Valley, Hout Bay and Maitland be reserved exclusively for Europeans.

In every one of these areas there is a large residential and commercial Non-European population—and in many of these areas Coloured people can tell you that it is they who pioneered the place and who set up homes there first.

HUNDREDS OF YEARS

Nine areas, including parts of Wynberg, Athlone, Heathfield, Cook's Bush, Grassy Park, are set aside by the Board for either Europeans or Coloureds. Like the areas quoted above, they are also at present thoroughly "mixed"—as indeed is practically every part of the Cape Peninsula where people of all races and colours have lived together harmoniously for hundreds of years.

The Board has reserved only two areas exclusively for the Coloured people—the Grassy Park-Beetroot area and part of the Battoswood Estate, Wynberg. The rest of this estate is further cut up into an area for either Coloureds or Malays—the only portion set aside for Malays.

Does the Board then want the Coloured and Malay peoples to fight each other over this lean scrap? And the Coloureds to fight the Europeans and vice versa over every square foot of the Peninsula? It certainly seems so.

But the people have not fallen into the trap.

(Continued on next column)

(Continued from previous column) Act. The position is similar in Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown (see Letter Box).

The Chief Information Officer of the N.A.D., Mr. C. E. Prinsloo, recently had interviews in the Bantu press in which he called for the creation of thousands of school committees in the shortest possible time.

Thirty-nine posts of sub-inspectors of Bantu Education have also just been created. The African inspectors are to be under-studies to the European inspectors. The N.A.D. is urging the national action council to accept inspectors by offering them big pay—£80 a month is the figure mentioned. But, everywhere like people are snubbing these committees.

TRANSVALA A.N.C. DECISION

JOHANNESBURG.

The Transvala A.N.C. met in conference last weekend and passed a resolution recommending that the national action council of the Congress of the People intensify the campaign so that the Congress of the People can hold the last weekend in June.

This conference also passed a resolution that it was in favour of the school boycott starting from April 1, regardless of the A.N.C. executive decision the previous weekend.

When Mr. George Golding, chairman of the Coloured People's National Union, put forward an appeasement policy at a meeting a few evenings after Co-ordinating Committee's meeting, he clearly did not have the backing of the people. Even from his much smaller and largely selected audience there came objections to his view that it did not matter if the Government divided the Non-European people into Christian Coloureds, Malays and Indians so long as an area like District VI, for example, was retained for the Coloured people.

A map showing the areas allocated to the Coloured people will be printed in New Age next week.

For all the news on the campaign to fight the Group Areas be sure to order New Age.

In spite of appeasers and compromisers like the Government, the people are preparing to resist, as last week's Co-ordinating Committee meeting showed.

When one speaker from the floor at the Co-ordinating Committee meeting proposed that the people be given a little longer to decide their action on the matter, he was immediately answered by another who said, amidst applause: "It is later than we think. The Government is stampeding its apartheid legislation, and it is up to us to put our foot down and see that the Group Areas Act does not go any further."

During the course of the evening, Dr. van der Ross warned the meeting that he was attempting to split and split the Christian Coloureds and the Moslems. "We must be careful that this does not happen," he said. "When we reach the stage that we are to fight for the rights of the Coloureds, that Moslems talk for the rights of the Coloureds, and that whites demand that the Coloureds have their rights and vice versa, then we will defeat the Act."

Speaking from the platform, the Reverend Thomas of Parow urged the people to make a "strong start" and give a lead to the people of the Northern Suburbs. "We must everywhere speak with one voice to protect our homes," he said.

CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS

Pledging support from the Congress of Democrats, Mr. B. Turok said that only by mass action would the Group Areas Act be defeated. His suggestion that the Group Areas Co-ordinating Committee hold meetings in every area where the people are affected and that representatives from the African National Congress and from the C.O.D. be invited to speak at these meetings, was greeted with applause.

Amongst the scores of people who got up from the floor to offer their services in the campaign was a representative of the Wynberg Dutch Reformed Church, and Dr. van der Ross later told the meeting that the Rev. Dr. C. de Waard had assured him that they would work in co-operation with his Committee against the zoning.

The meeting then after a very successful on-the-spot fund collection, and after the chairman had promised that the Committee would send a large number of demonstrators and meeting to the next meeting of Cape Town a chance to show their opposition to this "terrible thing" that the Government was planning to do.

Becky Lan Sentenced To Imprisonment



Miss Becky Lan.

CAPE TOWN. Miss R. (Becky) Lan, 21-year-old acting general secretary of the Food and Canning Workers' Union, was last week sentenced in the Vredenburg Magistrate's Court to three months' compulsory labour for attending a meeting in contravention of the Suppression of Communism Act.

Two months of the sentence were suspended for three years on condition she is not convicted in that period of any other offence under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Notice of appeal has been given. In his argument in the final stages of the case the prosecutor said that whether Miss Lan could hear or not did not affect the question that she was attending the gathering, because the car in which she was sitting was in the immediate vicinity.

Mr. Sam Kahn, for the accused, said Miss Lan had had prior discussions with others about the gathering and had arranged for others to address it, she was motivated by not attending it. She had planned not to attend the gathering, said Mr. Kahn.

Giving judgment, the magistrate said that Miss Lan's act in sitting at the table with a number of people around her, prior to the commencement of the meeting, constituted attendance at a gathering. The fact of her sitting in the motor car subsequently was not vital but contributory.

EMERGENCY CONFERENCE ON BANTU EDUCATION CALLED

Schools Boycotted Postponed

JOHANNESBURG.—This April an Easter Emergency Conference against Bantu Education will be called on the initiative of the African National Congress to build the widest possible unity of action in the struggle against Bantu Education.

This was one of the decisions of the African National Congress national executive which met in Durban earlier this month. This meeting decided to defer the plan to withdraw African children from primary schools, a stay-away action which previously had been timed to start on April 1.

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Mathews will open the conference, and items on the agenda will include discussion of the Bantu education syllabus and the control of Bantu education schools.

The resolution of the A.N.C. executive meeting in Durban also provides for the setting up of a National Education Committee, to draw up plans for alternative educational and cultural activities for African children "to be set in motion as and when the withdrawal from the schools is effected."

In the meantime the A.N.C. calls upon the African people not to participate in the election of parents of children at the school committees, and school boards now being established by the Bantu Education Division of the Native Affairs Department.

"DON'T COLLABORATE"

Mr. Tambo said the Congress issued a call to the African people not to collaborate in the administration of the Bantu Education Act.

A large number of communities in different parts of the country have already, on their own initiative, refused to set up school committees. At a meeting called of parents of children at a kindergarten school where parents were called on to elect a committee they refused pointblank. One woman said that if she voted for this committee she was the same as strangling her own child. Instead of electing a committee, the meeting adopted a resolution opposing the Bantu Education Act.

The venue of the conference has not yet been fixed. Professor Z. K. (Continued on next column)

