

NEW AGE

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EDITORIAL

NEW YEAR: NEW EFFORT

THE progressive forces in South Africa, of all shades of opinion and colour, stand at the threshold of a new year, in which they are faced by a great decision and a great challenge. The year 1955 may well mark a turning point in the history of our country.

With the advent to power of the Strijdom clique, there can be no doubt that the tempo of reaction is to be speeded up. The mask of moderation will be cast aside, and intensified efforts will be made to drive our people into the kraals of apartheid. The New Year messages of Strijdom and his police chief, Rademeyer, a compound of threats, nonsense, hypocrisy and Christian-National mysticism, express one common theme—their contempt for the legitimate desires and aspirations of the masses of the people, and their desire to drown them in a hysteria of anti-Communism. As far as the Government is concerned, the emphasis will be more than ever on “Die witman moet baas bly” and “Kaffer op sy plek.”

On the Government agenda for the immediate future are the Western Areas removal plan, the Coloured vote removal plan, the African schools removal plan, the trade union apartheid plan, the internal censorship plan—and probably some new amendments to the Suppression of Communism Act. Not that that will be all. Each step that the Nationalist Government has taken towards fascism has led inevitably to the next. We need only look back on the extent to which democratic liberties have been abrogated since 1948, when Malan came to power, to realise how far back we have slipped in this country, how close we stand to the absolute police state.

The challenge to the progressive forces is precisely this—that unless a supreme effort is made in the coming year to roll back the Nationalist tide, we will be living under the most naked fascism this time next year. That is our warning.

At the same time, we believe more firmly than ever that this disaster can be averted and that the course of events can be turned towards a more peaceful and harmonious future for all on the basis of equal rights. We have confidence that the people and their leaders will rise to the occasion and, no matter what the sacrifice and cost, carry through the freedom struggle to its victorious conclusion.

There is one central task to which every democrat must bend all his energies in the coming months—the Congress of the People. This Congress, which will be the rallying point, not merely for the progressive movement but for the whole of oppressed South Africa, will take place in 1955, when the four sponsoring organisations—the SAIC, the ANC, the COD and SACPO—have completed the immense preparations that are necessary.

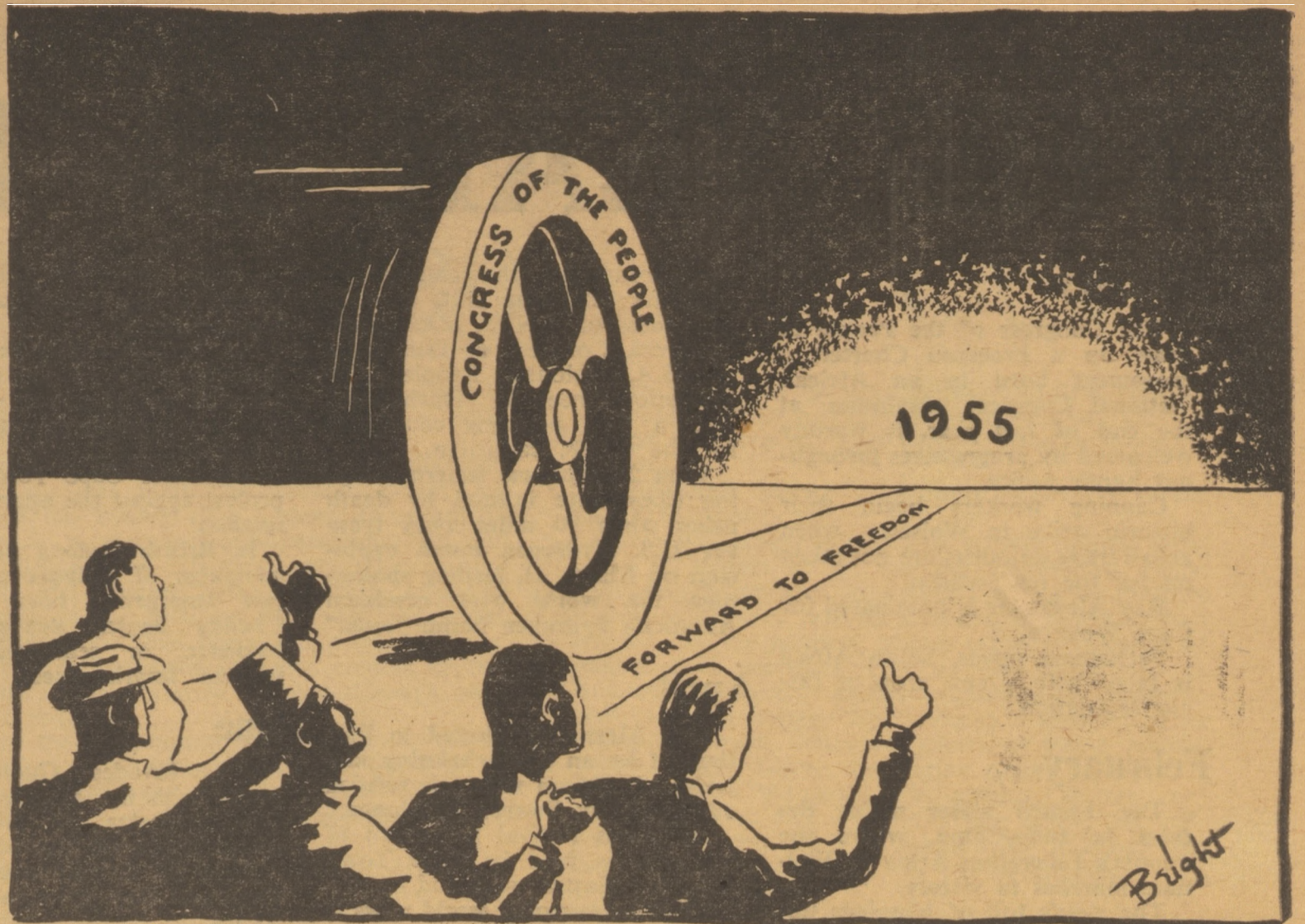
The Congress of the People is not merely to be another conference at which resolutions are passed. It is designed to be a mass campaign, around which the whole people can be organised in active struggle against Nationalist tyranny and in support of the people's demands, which will eventually be incorporated in the Freedom Charter.

For the C.O.P. to succeed, every man and woman who believes in freedom must play his part, work unceasingly, bring his friends and comrades into the fight, rouse his people to their inspiring mission—which is to free South Africa.

This is no time for doubt or hesitation, for destructive criticism or dilly-dallying at the cross-roads of theory, where intelligence is turned into indecision. In all our work let us keep the following simple truths in mind:

- The main enemy is the Nationalist Government.
- Final defeat of the Nationalist tyranny—or any other “White supremacy” tyranny which might take its place—can only be brought about through the mobilisation of the overwhelming masses of the people, led by the four Congresses and supported by democrats of all ranks, races and classes.
- The call for the Congress of the People has been issued, and must be accepted and carried through to success. The alternative is the naked police state and permanent impotence for all anti-Nationalists.

Let progressive South Africa accept the challenge, unite its forces and march forward firm in the conviction that history never yet showed that the marriage of a determined people to a just cause ended in failure.



NEW YEAR, NEW EFFORT

“WESTERN AREAS” REMOVAL SCHEME FOR CAPE

Peninsula to be Converted to Migratory Labour

CAPE TOWN.

THE Nationalist Government's moves to eject Africans from the Western Cape are growing ever more vicious, and it is becoming clear that they are planning a “Western Areas Removal Scheme” for the Cape Peninsula.

The Government's latest victims are the African women of Blouville and Windermere, who are being hounded under Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act.

The Nationalist plan seems to be the following—Eject as many African women from the Western Cape as possible, and then clear Windermere, Blouville and the squatters' camps by herding all the Africans to one huge camp at Nyanga and screening them to make sure that only those who conform to all the many conditions imposed on them remain in the Western Cape.

All this was made clear to a deputation of African women from Blouville, who, with Mr. B. Turok, of the Congress of Democrats, interviewed Mr. S. A. Rogers, superintendent of Langa, last week. The leader of the deputation was Mrs. Dora Tamana

The deputation was elected at a meeting of Blouville women called by the African National Congress following the receipt by the women of notices ordering them to leave the Cape Peninsula within periods varying from one month to a year.

MIGRATORY LABOUR

“The interview was an eye-opener in that it revealed just how vicious the Government policy is,” one of the deputation told New Age.

This, briefly, is what Mr. Rogers told the deputation:

“The policy of the Government is to reduce the number of African families in the Western Cape as much as possible. The labour needs of the Cape Peninsula are to be met by migratory African labour. . . .

“The Government says there are 60,000 African working men here. Most have not got their wives here, and most of them who have their wives here are not living in Nyanga and Langa but are living in pondokkies.

“If each man brings his wife here the Government would have to build 60,000 houses. The Government has no intention of doing so. . . .

“The Government intend to have

one central location for families at Nyanga. A camp will be established there after services have been put up. The people of Windermere, Blouville and the squatters' camps will be moved there en masse. Those who have the right to stay will be allowed to remain; the rest will have to go ‘home.’”

Mr. Rogers added: “It is only after the Africans have been concentrated in one camp that the Council will decide what its housing requirements are. For urbanised Africans, permanent housing on a letting basis will be set up. No family provision will be made for the others.”

TELL 'EM YOURSELF

At this stage the deputation asked Mr. Rogers to convey to the Government their vigorous protest at this savage policy and their strong opposition to the setting up of this concentration camp.

The people must send in their protest themselves, said Mr. Rogers.

When the members of the deputation wanted to know why some women were given one month, others 3, 6 or 12 months in which to leave the Peninsula, Mr. Rogers said the periods were fixed by the officer in charge, who based his decision on his knowledge of the people.

The deputation pointed out that this particular official had only been in Retreat for 5 years and could not know which of the women had lived there for 15 years, as the Urban Areas Act demanded. They also pointed out that women who were born in the Cape Peninsula and had no other home elsewhere, had been given notices to leave.

Mr. Rogers told the deputation that the women could appeal and that each case would then be investigated on its merits.

The deputation very strongly objected to this method of convicting

and sentencing people before giving them a hearing, and pointed out that great inconvenience and hardship had been caused to many women.

“We are going to fight these ejection notices by all the means available to us and are taking legal advice on the question,” a spokesman for the deputation told New Age.

A mass conference of women, called by the African National Congress, will be held in Cape Town on Sunday, January 9, to discuss ways and means of opposing the application of the Urban Areas Act to African women. Delegates are expected from as far afield as Worcester and Hermanus.

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