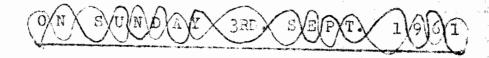
SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

TWENTY THIRD CONFERENCE







SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

23RD CONFERENCE

3rd September, 1961. 9.30 am

DURBAN.

A G E N D A

- 1. WELCOME ADDRESS
- 2. Opening Address CHIEF A. J. LUTULI
- 3. Presidential Address.
- 4. Roll Call
- 5. Adoption of Agenda.
- Confirmation of Credentials Committee and Election of Resolutions Committee.
- 7. Joint Hon. Secretaries' Report.
- 8. Discussion on Joint Hon. Secretaries' Report.

2 P.M.

- 1. Roll Call
- 2. Discussion on Joint Hon. Secretaries' Report (cont.)
- 3. Resolutions
- 4. Financial Statement
- 5. Headquarters..
- 6. Election of Officials (a) President DR NAICKER.
 - (b) Joint Hon. Secretaries (b)
 - (c) Joint Hon. Treasurers Sull Sams

7. GENERAL.

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MESSAGE TO THE

23rd CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
INDIAN CONGRESS - FROM
CHIEF A.J.LUTHULI (former PresidentGeneral of the now banned African Mational
Congress)

I thank you for the opportunity afforded by your Executive, to send

a message to your Conference meeting in Durban. I deeply appreciate the

honour of being invited to give this message. Doing so is enabling me to

join you at this Conference most effectively. Our Association over many

years as comrades - in - arms in the fight for the liberation of the

copressed people in our land, has an honourable history. I cherish,

respect and value this association. It is a source of undying inspiration

to me. It is more so these days when one is isolated by bans and prevented

from being with you on such an auspicious occasion.

It is pertinent to observe that our alliance has proved a most effective instrument in awakening the oppressed masses, and in mobilising progressive forces that fight against forces of reaction represented by those who stand for a South Africa that can never be - a White South Africa. Historical events in South Africa clearly show that South Africa can never be a land of Whites only nor can non-Europeans remain serfs for ever. Herein lies the folly and danger of apartheid. We are a multi-racial country which must eventually become a non-racial democracy if South Africa is to become a peaceful and prosperous country. A conference like this will have failed in one of its objectives if it does not atrengthen your resolve and pledge for the birth of such a South Africa. The South African Indian Congress and its constituent bodies, together with its allieshave made a most significant and lasting contribution to this end.

When others, especially in the White group, increase racial antagonism and strife for cheap political gains, the South African Indian Congress with its allies have declared for democratic principles which will outlast any seperative policies which would divide the people of South Africa into-racial categories. Exclusiveness - an essential of arartheid is a relitical malady of our country that is making South Africa so diseased

a country that it is now most repulsive to most countries that strive for true democracy for all nations and peoples.

I would like here to applaud those who have unreservedly dedicated themselves to the struggle for freedom; but there are still far too many who do not take the struggle seriously. Victory will only come when we outmatch the determination of the oppressor. Under the leadership of the Nationalist Party White South Africa has shown a terrifying determination to keep the non-Whites in a subservient status. The indications are that the freedom struggle in our land is likely to be the longest if not also the fiercest in Africa. The Government has shown in the recent Stay - At -Home and through Ministerial pronouncements, that it is arming itself to the teeth against an unarmed people who have indicated by word and action their desire for a peaceful accommodation of their aspirations by those presently in power. We must face this challenge with a determination which says: "Give me Freedon or Death ". In a sense we should be encouraged by this show of strength, for it is a product of fear and not courage - that possesses White South Africa. It is a measure of South Africa's vulnerability For ourselveswe regret this wasteful and needless fear, for we stand foursquarefor peace and friendship on a basis of equality. How can anyone who acknowledges the dignity and brotherwood of man not join us in our stand?

Strained race relations have long plagued our country but never so intensely and disastrously as under the Nationalist Party rule. So much so is this that the Republic of South Africa a much cherished goal of Afrikaanerdom - was born in an atmosphere of tension. Under the Monarchial system as witness our struggle for freedom we were shamefully and bitterly oppressed. The Republic ushers us into no better era. On the contrary there are omens which point to harder times in store for us. Let us not be deceived by caricatures of democratic institutions which are foisted upon us and by euphemistic description of apartheid institutions and plans. All this should deceive no one but the naive and the few among us with vested interests in slavery or who see in apartheid prospects of acquiring affluence as privileged slaves - a terrible selling of ones soul deserving of strong condermation.

It is encouraging to know that you of the South African Indian Congress and others/3

and others of like mind would never consent to be disinherited of South Africa, our fatherland. I implore you to remain true and loyal champions of democracy for all, when White leadership in the Union champions exclus white interests - a soul corroding policy. You should zealously continue your task of saving White South Africa from itself. You should refuse to be deterred or intimidated in meeting the taxing demands of our common tax

There are unfortunately those among us who directly or indirectly of: the people a counsel of despair which would resign them to serfdon forever this is a shameful acquiescence from which you must redeen them. We should make the people refuse unequivocally and resolutely to be made a nears to an end - White supremacy.

The Government has made desperate efforts to cripple the liberation movement. It has banned your staunch allies the African National Congress; it has muzzled or banned many freedom fighters and at each session of parliament has armed itself with more oppressive laws. This lays greater responsibility on you of the South African Indian Congress and others of the Congress Alliance, who are still relatively free to carry on the task of bringing the message of freedom to our people and protesting against government acts that keep our people hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Progressiveness and bold responsible venture have characterised to its honour - the Congress Alliance. Help the Alliance to continue to
venture further into the deep in faith. The freedom struggle will remain
an unfinished task until freedom is won. Deliberations at this Conference
to te worthwhile, must lead to tasks and plans that will hasten the
glorious day. The inspirations of Conference such as this should help
many not to fall by the wayside, especially at this time when the rest
of Africa is either free or becoming free. To allign ourselves with this
spirit of Africa is the challenge of the hour. May the South African
Indian Congress and other progressive groups strain themselves to meet the
challenge honourably and effectively to save us from being guilty of
betraying mother Africa. To this challenge, your Conference I am sure
will address itself.

I join with many of your best wishers in wishing your Conference A. J. LUTULI.

all success.

P.O.GROUTVILLE, Natal. 1.3.61.