

THE PAC CONFERENCE – 1959

In *Searchlight South Africa*, No 7, we printed a review of Benjamin Pogrand's book on Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe and the Pan Africanist Congress, together with Jack Halpern's account of the conference of the ANC in March 1958 when the split was imminent. Consequent to those articles appearing Bob Edgar sent us copies of the following three documents found in the Intermediate Archives Depot, Johannesburg under the heading: Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department, File 219/38, Africanist Liberation Congress A.L.C. (sic). Considering their origin they must be treated circumspectly. Nonetheless They throw further light on the thinking of the founders of the PAC and will be of interest to those wishing to understand the nationalist movements in South Africa.

The Manager
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60 Albert Street
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Meeting of 'The Africanist Movement' held at the Orlando Communal Hall — 4th to 6th April 1959, and termed the Africanist Liberation Congress.

I instructed Municipal Policemen, Isaac NA 64150 and David NA 64121, to attend the above congress and submit a report to me on the happenings there.

Isaac was able to gain admittance to the meeting on the 4th, and the morning of the 5th of April 1958, but was then excluded as he was not in possession of a membership card. David, however, blustered his way in on the last two days and as a result was present, when the confidential agent was dealt with.

The average daily attendance at the congress was in the region of four hundred people, of which only about fifteen were women.

I am enclosing copies of both Isaac's and David's reports, together with a copy of the Agenda, the Manifesto, and the Draft Constitution of the Congress. A list of the elected officials of the Congress is also enclosed.

E Aidaltal [?]
Acting Senior Superintendent
ORLANDO

Recvd 7 April 1959

Report by Municipal Policeman David NA 642141

The gathering at the hall called itself the Africanist Liberation Congress (ALC). The membership consists of some former members of the ANC e.g. Mr Madzunya and Sophukhue [Sobukwe].

It was felt that it was not enough for them to be mere helpers in as a movement, but had to be actual drivers of the congress. Several pamphlets were dissipated (sic) among the members, headed thus:—

1/ Manifesto of the Africanist Movement (the Africanist Manifesto) Africanist Inaugural Convention.

2/ Draft Constitution of the Africanist Liberation Congress.

(There were also two others which I missed.)

The Draft Constitution was read through and amended. A new copy would be disseminated (sic) to different branches e.g. Cape Branch, Durban Branch, etc. after printing.

The National Executive members were elected; they occupied their seats and hereafter individual after another had to voice his opinion on what the ALC must do. Their main objective to strive for recognition by different racial groups, and thus treated equally as these. They want to be served and satisfied in shops in exactly the same way a European would have been served. It was also stated that for this reason, any shop that shunned this would be boycotted and only those shops prepared to attend them as they do the Europeans, would be patronised. In schools also, where the Govt prescribes a syllabus, teachers should try and give the learner a little more than what is contained in the curriculum.

They planned to have as many layers of leaders as possible, so that when one group of leaders is removed, another takes its place, and so on. Certain slogans would be introduced like 'Akuthengwa' i.e. we don't buy in the shops that do not satisfy the ALC. They rejected being called names like John, Nanny, Boy or Girl, especially in public places and also aimed at being extremely sensitive to oppression and misuse of any kind.

Report on the Africanist Inaugural Convention Orlando Hall

Date 4.4.69

Time 2.p.m.

Attendance 400

Chairman – Mr Mothuping [Mothopeng]

The convention opened with a national hymn – Nkosi Sikelele Africa, prayer and preaching by Revs N B Tantsi, W Dimbaand, Rev Ngqoloma, while waiting for delegates from other places.

The chairman addressed the meeting saying that they are not African National Congress (ANC), they are Africanists. He said we are here today to discuss about our freedom and our Africa, which the white man gained from us by bribery. It is high time that we should shake ourselves up and freed ourself from the white people. We do not want to be ruled by other nations any longer, three hundred and seven years in which the white man kept us as slaves are enough. We want to govern ourselves here in Africa because Africa is for Africans.

One of the speakers said that we have long been pleading for freedom from the white man as though is our God today. We have come to the end of our task, and we want freedom by force. 1959 is the year of African's freedom, we do not care what might happen, we are going to die all for our Africa. Fancy 250 million to be ruled by 5,000,000 Europeans. God created all black and white people and gave each and every nation a country to live in and rule over it. Now the white people

through their selfishness they left their country of birth to come and interrupt us in our country. We are criminally oppressed men and sons of Africa are being forced to carry passes wherever they go, just like a dog when is fastened a ticket [collar?] on the neck. Still all they are not satisfied, they go on forcing women and daughters of Africa to carry passes as well, which is a shame and a disgrace.

At 7.30 pm the convention adjourned. The chairman said there will be a reception at 8.00 pm. The reception started from 8.00 pm to 2.00 am next morning.

On the 5th members of the Africanists were given chance to ask questions after the opening of the convention at 9.30 am. At 1.30 pm lunch. At 2.00 pm the convention resumed. Only members of the Africanist, who have membership cards were permitted to go in. The same thing occurred again on the 6th, until the closing of convention at 1.30 pm.

Isaac NA 64150.

Books Received

Reviews of some of these titles will appear in later issues.

Robert Fine and Dennis Davis, *Beyond Apartheid*, Pluto, 1991

Hillel Ticktin, *The Politics of Race Discrimination in South Africa*, Pluto, 1991.

Randolph Vigne (Ed), *A Gesture of Belonging: Letters from Bessie Head, 1965–1979*, SA Writers, London, 1991.

Jay Naidoo, *Coolie Location*, SA Writers, London, 1990

Lauretta Ngcobo, *And They Didn't Die*, Virago, London, 1990

Pamphlets

Yunus Carrim, *Liberation Movement and Beyond: Challenges for the ANC*, Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR), 1991.

Robert Davies, *South Africa in the Region: A Post-Apartheid Future*, CIIR, 1991