

The NRC In Perspective

ONE of the most remarkable features of African life today is the shortness of memory displayed particularly in political matters. This most clearly seen in the contemporary howls over the apparent reluctance of the NRC members to resign. I am myself not going into the question as to whether or not it would be expedient for these people to resign from the NRC. I leave that to the politically wise; but I simply must react against the attempts of paid-agents to discredit the Congress and its leaders. Not to say that casting aspersions on Congress leaders has any effect on the almost frightening growth of the Movement under the banner of African Nationalism, but the crude efforts of renegade African "intellectuals" to tell Congress how to deal with its internal affairs is sickening impudence to say the least. If there is anything wrong with the National Movement the Congress have intelligence enough to know what it is and they will deal with the situation. Those outside it who, incidentally, are outside the African Nationalist fold, must stop consorting with elements that are doing their best to destroy the spirit of African nationhood, and substitute for it a negative racist non-European unity.

In 1937 when the vocal sections of the African people as represented in the then living AAC, decided to "experiment with the NRC they went so far as to draw up lists of candidates they would sponsor, and to regard these so elected as ex-officio members of the Convention. At this time the Congress refused to sponsor or help any candidate.

Again in 1941 the then virtually dead Convention drew up lists of candidates whom it would sponsor for the elections. The Congress again would not be party to the elections as an organization. Fortunately, or unfortunately some members of Congress stood independently and got in. These people were in a sense not responsible to Congress at all but directly to those who elected them. Incidentally the utter failure of the Convention in these, as in 1937 elections, was a proximate cause of the so-called boycott road which they decided to follow in 1943. By this time the AAC had degenerated into a "disgruntled clique" of Trotskyite

CONGRESS then, as now, officially accepted the idea that if the NRC did not resign but continued in its attitude of not functioning the NRC would certainly be abolished. Resolutions were passed urging that preparations be made for a boycott of elections in 1948, but the NRC was to remain where it was. So throughout 1947 in spite of attractive Smuts proposals etc. The MRC's stood their ground. For as long as they stuck to their 1916 resolution the Congress was behind them. Then in 1948 the Nationalists came to power. There was panic in the African political camp. People suddenly discovered that the African people had never done anything to get out of their difficulties. History had to begin now. The Africans had to start the Fight for political freedom in 1948. All that had been done previously was collaboration. Article upon article followed in which NRC's were urged to resign. Congress was called names and leaders were called names. Others even suggested that the NRC would never be abolished and that the MRC's would never achieve their object. Well in spite of this the MRC's who had the mandate of the people and not the theorists for their actions sat tight. After almost a year's silence the Government of the day announced its intention of abolishing the NRC. Some misguided Africans thought that the MRC's would shed tears over the abolition of this body and plead for its retention.

Secretly the anarchists would have shouted with glee had they done so far that type of action would be a naked betrayal of their resolution and the principles for which they stood. The Nationalists also hoped they would. Instead they moved into the attack and exposed the bankruptcy of this and previous governments and demanded the recognition of the fact that without full democratic rights for the Africans there could be no peace or co-operation between government and people. There was a short lull, and then the people who are working day and night for the Africans by writing articles to the press under pseudonyms came out with a new story. Now, it was said, the Nationalists did not want this set of collaborators but wanted another so they were sacking this group. It was not

really because the strategy of the Congress and the MRC's had succeeded but that the Nats wanted fresh collaborators. So we come to the present day. The campaign against the Congress and those of its members in the NRC continue. Now that the NRC is defunct through the actions of the collaborators. The strategy by which these people wish to destroy the National Movement of the people is altering slightly. Now the object is to pit the present leaders of the Congress against the Youth League. A part of this campaign letters are being sent to individual Youth Leaguers in which the names of past and present leaders are sought to be smeared black. It is not surprising that this crude strategy is failing. It is actually an insult to our intelligence that such foolish letters are sent to us. They are virtually ordering the African Nationalists to kick out certain people from Congress in order that they should stop calling us names.

So these Trotskyites, Conventioneers, and their hangers-on I say they will not succeed. If the CYL speak of non-collaboration they know what it means. If they urge the NRC's to resign they know why. They know who collaborators are in the African camp. If Congress has to be cleaned up they know more about that than people who instead of being among their own people are paying doubtful allegiance to negative racialistic unions based on anti whiteness only. As the spirit of African Nationalism permeates the whole National movement those who feel uncomfortable in the African Nationalist camp will find a new home outside the Congress. But these things shall be accomplished by the Congress itself. We will not be guided by renegade African "intellectuals" who sitting in little rooms by themselves and doing nothing to solve our problems decide who the collaborators are, among the people.

African Nationalism knows what it stands for. It knows what it wants and is going to get it. The fact that it is called names ("tribalist, fascist etc.) will not alter the role of African Nationalism which is to lead the children of a despoiled and tattered continent to freedom and the building of a new world.

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