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'ANDREW MASONDO - ANC

Lecturer Department of Mathematics and Applied Maths

University College of Fort Hare 1960-1963.

Went to Robben Island for political reasons (ANC) 1963-1976  
(11 years with Mandela in same section).

Left the country 1976.

Member of the National Executive Committee and National  
Political Commissar of ANC 1977ul985.

Head at Department or Manpower Development and Training of  
the ANC 1983 n 1986.

Permanent Member of the Education Council Principal of  
Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College Secondary Division and  
Coordinator of Principals Committee, Member of College  
Directorate.

ADDRESS TO THE 32nd ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD FEDERATION  
OF ORGANISATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION,  
ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA  
AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS.

by ANDREW MASONDO.

Chairperson,

Leaders of the WCOTP.

Leaders of Teachers' Organisations.

Distinguished Guests.

Fellow teachers.

The African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions are grateful for the invitation to attend this Assembly of World Teachers. Personally it is an honour for me to rub shoulders with colleagues in a profession which is the queen and servant of all professions.

The teaching profession is at the base of society.

Politicians, Economists, Scientists. Doctors, Philosophers, you name it. have gone through the hands of teachers. God creates and the teacher moulds.

The fact that the theme of the Assembly is "Values in Public Education" is extremely significant. This theme recognises that in the development of values in society the teacher plays a basic role. This is particularly so in modern times where parents spend less and less time with their children. The teacher cannot transmit and develop values that he or she does not accept or has never acquired. If by Public Education we mean education for the public then the values will be those that the public accepts and has acquired. Whether the will of the public will be expressed by the State or some public organisation is immaterial because those values will be those of the dominant group that has control of the School System. A good teacher brought up in a racist society will produce racists. because his or her conception of good values are racist values. Somebody brought up in a system where property is more important than human life will inculcate such values and even work to produce a bomb that destroys life and preserves property. It would appear to me that a teacher cannot be neutral in society. The teacher must be involved in influencing society to have values that are worthy to transmit. The greatest problem facing the teacher in transmitting and developing values in the students is that of competition with the mass media, political organisations and literature that is produced and distributed. This also affects the teacher's own values.

Even words are given different meanings. Words like Democracy, Freedom, Terrorism etc. have different meanings for different societies. The African National Congress was formed in 1912. For close to 50 of the 76 years of its existence it has advocated a peaceful solution of the problems of South Africa and during this half a century the South African regime has killed our people. In 1960 after killing people in Sharpville and Langa the racist regime went further to ban the ANC. The regime continued this by banning the 17 Black Conscious Organisations after killing more than 800 of our people, the majority of whom were children. in 1976. Once more, after killing thousands of school children, they have banned the United Democratic Front. the Congress of South African Trade Unions and many others. The pattern is that the South African regime does not like peaceful resistance. It starts by shooting people who use non-violence and then bans organisations that use non-violent methods. The crime of the African National Congress is that it believes, as do the other Organisations that have been recently banned, -"that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. black and white. and that no government can justly rule unless by the will of all its people". To defend our children and to fight for the above beliefs is Treason and Terrorism.

The Botha-Malan militarist and racist regime has bombed African National Congress offices and residences in London. Sweden. Zimbabwe. Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana. The regime has also killed ANC people in these countries and has also kidnapped them. The most recent murder was that of Comrade Dulcie September in France. According to the Reagan Administration and the Thatcher Government this is not Treason nor Terrorism. it is the African National Congress which has never bombed South African Missions anywhere in the World and has never kidnapped nor killed the South African regime's personnel anywhere in the World. that is a Terrorist Organisation.

The African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions believe in the Unity of all Anti-Apartheid forces inside the country. They have always urged that there should be one National Organisation for the Students. one National Organisation for Women, one National Trade Union Federation and one United Front. That is why we encouraged the formation of the United Democratic Front, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions and support them. The African National Congress has no quarrel with people or Organisations that believe in fighting the regime by non-violent means as long as they do fight the regime. We do have problems with people or Organisations that advocate non-violence against the regime that kills our people in cold blood but use violence against our people as Chief Berthelezi and his Inkatha do.

The African National Congress takes the question of Education very seriously. The struggle for a better Education has cost us the precious lives of our Youth in their thousands. their detention, arrest, torture and hanging. 63.360 children under 17 years are awaiting trial in prisons. Over 50 of our people are waiting to be hanged for political offenses and most of them are youths.

There can be no Education System without Students. nor without Teachers. Since this is the case. therefore. teachers depend on the students for exercising their profession and students depend on teachers for their education. It seems to us that the cooperation between the Teachers and the Students is imperative. The African National Congress and its allies therefore encourage a close working together between Teacher Organisations and Student Organisations. An education system that is not good for the students can never be good for the teachers.

The African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions are committed to encouraging teacher unity within South Africa and also to the formation of one teacher Federation for the country.

The process that was started in Harare has all our support, encouragement and assistance. We are convinced that the Organisations from South Africa participating here are committed to Unity and will assist a great deal in the process. We have confidence that by the next Assembly Teacher Unity will have been achieved. If our teachers are going to make an impact on the liberation of the education system from racist control and influence they need to be united and coordinate with the rest of the Trade Union Movement. the Mass Democratic movement and the Student Organisations. Teachers can never be neutral in the South African problem.

When young people come to the African National Congress from within the country, they are asked whether they want to work for the ANC full-time or join the Liberation Army, or whether they want to go to school. This is done because the ANC considers both military and academic training as equally important. One is important for the overthrow of Apartheid. the other is important for the development of a prosperous. and democratic South Africa. People do not eat slogans but must produce the food and better life for which so much sacrifice was needed. They need freedom and liberty in concrete terms.

The African National Congress, to meet the demands of those who choose education, has with the help of the land given by the Tanzanian Government. and international solidarity. built Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College and a Vocational Centre to train the victims of Apartheid. There is also a paramedical training centre in Angola.

We therefore appeal for funds and material assistance for the School and also for the struggle of the teachers and students inside the country.

We appeal to your organisations to put pressure on your governments to concretely show that Apartheid is a crime against Humanity and a Heresy.

We also appeal that you educate your young people about the legitimacy of our struggle.

We assure you that sanctions will affect us but will affect those who flourish on Apartheid more and therefore will assist in the downfall of Apartheid. Do not listen to Reagan and Mrs Thatcher when they say that they feel for us. Why do they not feel for the ordinary people of Nicaragua and Poland? What they mean is that their profits will suffer.

We appeal that you put your weight into the Release the Children Campaign and the Release Mandela and other political prisoners campaign.

We want to thank WCOTP and other Organisations that assist in our struggle for better Education and Freedom.

Let us teach peace!

Let us teach that life is more important than property and profit!

Let us teach the right for all to be free!

The African National Congress believes that. "The doors of Learning and Culture shall be open to all, irrespective of colour, race or creed."

This what is Treason.