

The Leader, 23 January 1981

SHADOWS AND THE SUBSTANCE

DURBAN'S Mayor, Sybil Hotz, has reportedly told visiting American academic, Gwendolin Carter, that all the people of this fair city "have the vote".

While this may technically be so, if regard is to be taken of Local Affairs Committees and the urban areas which come under the control of Kwa Zulu, we feel a totally wrong impression can be created by such a claim.

If Mayor Hotz had given such information to a visitor from outer Mongolia, presumably he would have gone away thinking that all the people of Durban and in cities elsewhere in South Africa where LACs and Management Committees are in operation) enjoy the municipal franchise.

Nothing as we are all aware, Mayor Hotz included, could be further from the truth.

Fortunately, Professor Carter did not buy the story either. She has long been a keen student of South African affairs and probably knows the situation inside out. It must therefore, have been no mean surprise to hear such a comment from the city's First Citizen.

The visiting academic may well have been prompted to remark: "Tell that to the marines" But that would not have been ladylike. She chose instead to try and verify the mayor's claims with other parties.

The plain facts, as we are all aware, Mayor Hotz included, are that only Whites in South Africa enjoy municipal and parliamentary franchise.

The situation in the "homelands" is in a category by itself.

Indians, Coloureds and urban Blacks do have a vote of some kind, but it is not meaningful in any way.

We hope Mrs Hotz emphasised to the visitor that Indians and Coloureds can, as in Durban's case vote for ethnic, Advisory Local Affairs Committees and not in elections for the City Council.

We hope she should have emphasised too, that these institutions of ethnic representations are purely advisory in character and have been largely rejected by the communities they are supposed to represent.

We hope she would have emphasised, too, that a great number of the persons who have served and are serving on such bodies have expressed reservations about their effectiveness and that members themselves are on record as having described these institutions as "toothless" and "meaningless"

We trust that Professor Carter would have been able to see for herself that this form of representation is not designed to give real powers to these particular communities.

The voting powers that Mrs Hotz reportedly spoke of are mere shadows of what is generally understood to be the power of the vote.

The day that the Blacks of Durban can decide whether Mrs Hotz should or should not represent them on the City Council, is the day that Mrs Hotz can tell the world that everybody in the city has the vote.

Until then it sounds like a deceptive boast

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Own Correspondent

Azapo congress to formulate policy guidelines

JOHANNESBURG. — The Azanian People's Organization is to formulate policy guidelines and its standpoint on a wide range of contentious issues when it holds its two-day annual congress beginning at Houtbosdorp, outside Pietersburg, tomorrow.

Among items set for discussion are papers on black consciousness, labour, education, sport, culture, relations with

liberals and Azapo's attitude to a national convention.

The congress takes place after a year of continuing state action against several of its top members, some of whom have been banned, others detained for long periods and still others questioned.

In a significant departure from its inaugural congress near Roodepoort 16 months ago, this weekend's congress will be open to the press and

public. Azapo now has more than 20 branches.

Azapo's publicity secretary, Mr George Wauchope, will deliver a paper on the organization's attitude towards a national convention, which is advocated by a number of black and white bodies.

His paper is in response to talks held by anti-National Party groups exploring the possibility of launching a "convention movement".

The congress is likely to endorse Azapo's stand that it will only attend a convention called to transfer power to the black majority.

A commission will report on education, in the light of the continuing schools crisis in some areas and government moves to introduce compulsory education for blacks. Azapo has rejected compulsory education as being an attempt to foist racially segregated and inferior

schooling on blacks, and preventing them from boycotting classes.

Papers presented by Mrs Khangali Makhato — on black consciousness — and Mr Vusi Nkumane, chairman of Mdali, on "The inroads of liberals into BC and organizations which parade under the BC banner" should serve as important indicators towards Azapo's position on the national scene.

There have been allegations

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guidelines

in black-consciousness circles that some white radicals, mainly academics at universities, have been trying to infiltrate BC groups. At the same time, some black university students are said to be calling for closer links between "progressive" blacks and whites.

Azapo members certain to reject any alignment with whites.

The Cape Times

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1981

Sitting on the safety valve

THE Minister of Justice, Mr Coetsee, an inexperienced newcomer in a demanding post, has sought to justify the destruction of the Post newspapers. He asserts that the authorities had to act because the newspapers concerned were creating a revolutionary climate in the country. This stunning declaration, a gratuitous and damaging slur upon the editors and the directors of the Argus company, could well have legal repercussions. Mr Coetsee could yet regret his rashness. He has made a notably inauspicious beginning and, if he continues thus, will suffer the same fate in politics as Mr Jimmy Kruger.

Mr Coetsee's original blunder, for which he must share responsibility with Mr Heunis, Minister of Internal Affairs, has been compounded by this ill-considered public statement. There is only one way in which a newspaper could create a revolutionary climate and that is in the full light of day — in its own columns of news and comment. South Africa has a formidable battery of legislation to deal with revolutionary incitement. The authorities could act immediately if this did in fact occur, taking those responsible to court to face a properly-constituted charge. No criminal charges have been laid against the Post newspapers in question. Mr Coetsee offers the public no examples of such infringements of the law: He has not produced a single press clipping to illustrate his assertion. It must be concluded that he is unable to do so and that the government is mounting a total onslaught on the free press of South Africa. We are back to where we were when Mr Kruger banned the World.

Meanwhile, the damage done to South Africa's interests in Western capitals and notably in Mr Reagan's Washington has been immediate and massive. The Republic's international relations have suffered a serious reverse. Did Mr Coetsee think to consult Mr Pik Botha before he allowed this disastrous situation to develop? Is he not resolute enough to stand up and oppose the security

police, the Bureau for State Security or other arms of the state when their recommendations are so obviously contrary to the national interest?

The truth of the matter is that the Post newspapers have mirrored the attitudes and aspirations of the black community fairly and faithfully. And so the intense hurt, resentment and bitterness felt among blacks, particularly the school-going youth, have been accurately reflected. This resentment is a direct consequence of oppressive Nationalist policies which trample upon self-respect and human dignity. If there is a revolutionary climate in the land, actual or potential, the blame lies primarily on the shoulders of the government. It is obtuse of the Bureau for State Security or any other agency to deduce from the reporting and comment in these newspapers that Post and Sunday Post have subversive aims and objectives and therefore should be banned. It is not only obtuse. It is acutely damaging to South Africa's real interests. If these papers are suppressed, as they have been, it does not mean that blacks will cease to feel bitter and resentful, it does not mean that legitimate grievances will disappear. On the contrary, these resentments, without means of expression, will be bottled up and intensified until they burst forth one day without warning in horrifying explosions of violence. A free press performs many indispensable functions, most of which are taken for granted and only appreciated when newspapers have been closed down and none exist to carry out these functions. When newspapers go, there is no corrective, the wildest rumours flourish and the ill-disposed can sweep up the agitated masses with ease. Official irregularity and corruption can have a field day. Ignorance and uncertainty stalk the land.

Newspapers function as a safety valve. To sit firmly on the safety valve is not the highest political wisdom, as Mr Coetsee and his cabinet colleagues so rashly imagine. It is sheer folly and the country will pay for it dearly.

Azapo meets to decide on stand

Sunday Tribune, Daily Mail, Friday, January 23, 1981

By AMEEN AKHALWAYA
Political Reporter

THE Azanian People's Organisation is to formulate policy guidelines and its standpoint on a wide range of contentious issues when it holds its two-day annual congress, beginning in Houtbosdorp, outside Pietersburg, tomorrow.

Among items set for discussion are papers on black consciousness, labour, education, sport, culture, relations with liberals and Azapo's attitude to a national convention.

The congress takes place after a year of continuing State action against several of its top members, some of whom have been banned, others detained for long periods and still others questioned.

During Azapo's 16 months of operation, a number of significant developments have dominated debate on the national political scene, the foremost being the "reformist" plans of Mr P W Botha's government.

It is against this background that Azapo, the country's major black consciousness political body, has chosen the theme of the congress to be: "Courage and persistence and the demands of our times".

In a significant departure from its inaugural congress

near Roodepoort 16 months ago, this weekend's congress will be open to the Press and public. Azapo now has more than 20 branches.

Azapo's publicity secretary, Mr George Wauchope, will deliver a paper on the organisation's attitude towards a national convention, which is advocated by a number of black and white bodies, including members of the SA Black Alliance and the Progressive Federal Party.

Mr Wauchope's paper is in response to exploratory talks which have been held by anti-National Party groups exploring the possibility of launching a "convention movement".

The congress is likely to endorse Azapo's stand that it will only attend a convention called to transfer power to the black majority.

Azapo's national organiser, Mr Letsatsi Mosala, will present a paper on labour against a backdrop of changes in the country's labour system brought about by the Wiehahn and Riekert reports. Azapo's view has been that the changes were designed merely to regulate black movement and impose stricter control on union activities.

A commission will report on

education, in the light of the continuing schools crisis in some areas and Government moves to introduce compulsory education for blacks. Azapo has rejected compulsory education as being an attempt to foist racially segregated and inferior schooling on blacks, and preventing them from boycotting classes.

Papers presented by Mrs Khangali Makhato — on black consciousness — and Mr Vusi Nkumane — on "the inroads of liberals into black consciousness and organisations which parade under the BC banner" — should serve as important indicators towards Azapo's position on the national scene.

For some months now, there have been allegations in black consciousness circles that some white radicals, mainly academics at universities, have been trying to infiltrate BC groups.

At the same time, some black university students are said to be calling for closer links between "progressive" blacks and whites.

The calls have angered Azapo members, who are certain to reject any alignment with whites and to reiterate their exclusivity.

The congress is scheduled to spell out a new policy on sport

and culture, particularly with regard to international links. On sport, Azapo has previously supported the "double standards" resolution of the SA Council on Sport (Sacos) under Mr Hassan Howa.

Some Azapo members feel that the question of international sporting contacts for black South Africans should be reassessed, in that links should be encouraged with those countries which are sympathetic to black consciousness.

Another major departure being suggested from Sacos policy is that black organisations should remain exclusive of whites at this stage, in line with BC thinking. Sacos has maintained its nonracial stance, and has a number of whites in its ranks.

The tours undertaken to South Africa by overseas entertainers will also be examined, as will the position of black South African artists performing abroad.

One of the important items on the agenda is the election of a new president. Last year, the Azapo executive suspended its first president, Mr Curtis Nkondo, for allegedly violating principles and policy in a move which aroused strong feelings among black consciousness groups.

The Leader, 28 January 1981

NO! MRS HOTZ

'Leader' Reporter

INDIAN leaders are up in arms over a report they have received from an overseas visitor on a conversation she had had with the Mayor of Durban, Mrs Sybil Hotz, during which the visitor was allegedly given the impression that the municipal franchise was extended to all the people of Durban.

Natal Indian Congress president Mr George Sewpersad, told 'The Leader' this week, that a visiting United States academic, Professor Gwendolyn Carter, had told Indian leaders that the Mayor of Durban had informed her that everyone in Durban had the vote.

Congress vicepresident, Mr M.J. Naidoo, confirmed that Prof Carter, who was in Durban last week, had said this.

The NIC leaders said that several of their colleagues had been present when Prof Carter had revealed to them the nature of her conversation with Mrs Hotz.

Mr Sewpersad said that some of the Indian leaders present at the time had described the statement as a "misrepresentation of the truth" to Prof Carter.

He said that Congress was perturbed that visitors from abroad could be given an incorrect impression of the situation in this country through such statements.

Mr M.J. Naidoo, who also heads the anti-SAIC committee, lashed out against the statement.

He told 'The Leader' that when a mayor spoke of voting rights, it was obvious that this referred to a municipal franchise, and it would be a "blatant lie" to say that Blacks enjoyed this in South Africa.

When questioned as to whether representation on local affairs committees could not be regarded as "voting rights", Mr Naidoo was adamant that it could not.

He said that these committees were merely advisory, and had no power whatsoever. They could not be equated with having full municipal franchise.

"It could be said that a slave has the right to vote — so long as that is not clarified.

"A slave can, within the context of his family, vote on what time to sleep.

"I can vote for officials in the Natal Indian Congress, or on its policy.

"You can vote on whether or not your group of friends should go on a picnic. Does that mean that the slave, you and I have

Uproar over 'Blacks have vote' remark

the right to vote as a citizen?

"I am not prepared to accept such arguments as voting for Lacs as justification for claims that we have the vote.

"When a mayor says everyone has the vote, it can only mean that everyone enjoyed equal rights. It can only refer to the municipal franchise, and we do not have that."

He added that while Prof Carter, who has given talks at the Institute of Race Relations in Durban and Johannesburg on politics, undoubtedly knew the truth, most overseas visitors would not be in a position to evaluate such statements, and could be given the wrong impression.

Attempts by 'The Leader' to confirm the remarks were unsuccessful this week.

An official of the S.A. Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg said that Prof Carter did not wish to speak to the press on the matter.

"Prof Carter said that it was a hurried and private conversation between herself and Mrs Hotz and she had nothing further to say on the matter" the official said.

contact 'The Leader' immediately after the meeting was made, but up until the time of going to press she could not be contacted.

Mrs Hotz was at a meeting yesterday (Wednesday) and could not be reached, according to her secretary. A request to

Coetsee declines to back charge

Political Staff

THE MINISTER of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee, has declined to back up his charge that Post Transvaal and Sunday Post were "promoting revolution or a revolutionary climate".

His allegation yesterday in the Nationalist press has brought demands from senior Opposition members who have rejected it as too vague and said he should back it up with facts.

A general reaction was that the charge, which was tantamount to treason, was too serious for the matter not to be taken to court.

Mr Dave Dalling, chief Opposition media spokesman, said: "On this basis one wonders who is next."

Mr Vause Raw, leader of the New Republic Party, said Mr Coetsee owed it to the country to substantiate his claims.

Mr Coetsee confirmed yesterday that the government would have banned the two newspapers if the Argus Company had re-registered them after their registration had lapsed because strike action prevented them being published for more than a month.

Approached for details, Mr Coetsee said: "The government is confident that the actions of these newspapers were aimed at promoting revolution or a revolutionary climate."

Asked for details about his charge, Mr Coetsee said he did not have to give any reasons but added: "I'll consider this in due course if necessary."

Asked if his action had been based on anything which had already been printed in the newspapers, he again declined to reply.

● A Johannesburg correspondent reports that black community leaders challenged Mr Coetsee to make public any evidence that the newspapers

promoted revolution or propagated the views of illegal organizations.

The chairman of the Soweto Committee of 10, Dr Nthato Motlana, said security legislation governed the press to the extent that all South African newspapers had on call, at all times, the services of lawyers on what they may publish. It was therefore scandalous to suggest it was possible to propagate revolutionary ideas or the aims of banned organizations.

The general secretary of the SA Council of Churches, Bishop Desmond Tutu, said that if the government had evidence, it should have tried the newspapers in court.

The Chief Minister of Kwazulu, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, said: "Although both newspapers had become so bluntly manipulated by the black-consciousness groupings — even on the admission of some Mwaas members — and in spite of their constant abrogation of the well-known maxim of jurisprudence *audi alteram partem* in not publishing letters from authors they disliked, I must nevertheless condemn in the strongest possible terms the banning of these papers insofar as they catered for blacks."

The scribe of the Ned Geref Kerk in Africa, the Rev Sam Buti, said the government "does not recognize black peoples' feelings", Sapa reports.

Closing the newspapers showed that the government was not prepared to change its discriminatory policies, he added.

The South African Institute of Race Relations warned in a statement in Johannesburg that the suppression of the newspapers "will prove counter-productive, stimulating instead of dampening the revolutionary forces against which the government professes to be acting".

● See leading article.