

Indian Opinion

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MASS MEETING OF INDIANS

VOICES NO CONFIDENCE IN CONGRESS

THE Durban Town Hall was packed to its utmost capacity with Indians, numbering no less than five thousand, in response to the invitation of the Colonial-born and Settlers Indian Association, a newly formed body, whose objects are to work for the moral, political and economic betterment of Indians born and settled in this country without distinction of caste or creed.

In the life of the Town Hall very few meetings have been held with such orderliness as was witnessed last Saturday. It was quite in contrast with the meeting held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, just two nights before, when the Agent and his consort were present in support of the Congress, and the Kunwarani was shocked to see the unseemly and unruly behaviour of those very men who professed to revere Mahatma Gandhi and had decorated his portrait with flowers and illumination on the platform, making a mockery of him. It was a pity the Agent and the Kunwarani were not, owing to previous engagements, able to be present at Saturday's meeting for, indeed, they would have had adequate recompense for the shock they received on Thursday night. The Congress officials, too, shunned the meeting. Possibly they were moved by pride and prestige. They refused to recognise the first mass meeting held at the Victoria Picture Palace and very likely they did not wish to recognise this meeting either. How long they are going to ignore the voice of thousands of their compatriots remains to be seen.

Any other meeting of the like nature, there is not the slightest doubt, would have been given prominence to in the Press. But the only decent report of this meeting appeared in the *Natal Mercury*. The *Natal Advertiser* and the *Natal Witness* only published the resolutions passed at the meeting. The *Natal Mercury's* reporter was present and the other reporter present was Mr. D. Bramdaw who was seen taking notes profusely, and since he is known to be reporting for the *Advertiser* and other papers, one would have expected the proceedings to be well reported. Since, however, they have not been reported, one can only surmise that either the papers concerned did not think it of much importance to do so or that Mr. Bramdaw was acting as the confidential stenographer of the Congress.

This is what the *Natal Mercury* reports about the meeting with the following headlines: "Indian Protest Meeting," "Big Town Hall Gathering," "S. A. Congress Attacked By All Speakers," "Co-operation Move Spurned:"—"Soon after seven o'clock the main hall was half filled and the people

were filling into the galleries. At 7.30 the only vacant seats were in the galleries and on the platform. Before eight o'clock every seat was occupied and many were standing along the walls." In drawing a comparison with the Congress meeting it could be said that the seats on the platform, which number 500, were not made use of at the Congress meeting while on Saturday those seats were also fully occupied.

After prayers a letter was read from the Agent, Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, regretting his inability to accept the invitation to this meeting owing to the fact that he and the Kunwarani had arranged a trip to Ladysmith. They hoped to return to Durban on Aug. 28.

Chairman's Speech

The chairman, Mr. A. Christopher, addressed the audience as "fellow Colonial-born Indians and settlers who have made their home in this country." He recalled the days of the £3 tax agitation when every man stood up for Mahatma Gandhi and his principles. He had no doubt that that spirit was still in them. They then showed the spirit of obedience and non-violence, of loyalty to their leaders and sacrifice for the cause of humanity. It was in that spirit that he asked them to consider the vital question now before them.

The chairman went over the history of the repatriation scheme in the past when the indenture system was still in vogue and referred to the changes made by introducing the bonus and then changing it into an assisted emigration scheme, all with a view to reducing their population in this country. He referred also to the economic pressure brought on the people in addition to other inducements which forced them to leave the country. He strongly deprecated the attitude of the Government of India and our leaders acquiescing in thus bartering away the rights of their poorer section to safeguard the rights of another section. The chairman quoted Mahatma Gandhi's words advising them not to barter away the rights of the labouring class for any doubtful concessions to the more favoured. South Africa could easily accommodate its whole Indian population.

He strongly criticised the S. A. Indian Congress for participating in a scheme with the above object and deprecated the attitude of some of his own Colonial-born brethren, who ought to know better, in falling in with the Congress.

Enthusiasm greeted Mr. Christopher's declaration that they were South African nationals, prepared to do their duty in the defence of the country, and

determined that, come what might, they would live and die in South Africa.

No Confidence Motion

Mr. S. L. Singh proposed:—"That this mass meeting of Indians held under the auspices of the Colonial-born and Settlers Indian Association hereby reiterates its strong protest against any co-operation by the Congress with the Committee of Inquiry set up to investigate into the possibilities of a colonisation scheme for settling Indians from South Africa in other countries and to ascertain to what extent they would be prepared to leave the country under such a scheme.

"That this meeting further, in condemning the action of the South African Indian Congress in co-operating in the above inquiry, expresses a vote of no-confidence in the Congress."

"Any man who tries the Hitler method with us is going to find himself badly mistaken," said Mr. Singh in condemning action of the officials of the Indian Congress.

Mr. Lazarus Gabriel seconded the motion.

Mr. P. R. Pather addressed the meeting in Tamil.

Mr. M. M. Gandhi said he was grieved to have to oppose a body which, for years, they had considered as speaking for the people, but he had found that the Congress no longer represented the Indian public. Since the Congress was opposed to the colonisation scheme and had declared over and over that they did not want to send a single Indian out of the country, why were they participating in an inquiry whose object was to find out the possibilities of sending them out? He hoped the European public would appreciate the stand they had taken. They wished to be true to the Europeans and to themselves. They did not wish to say what they did not mean. "All these people, most of whom are sons of the soil, and who originally did not come to this country of their own free will, but were brought to this country for its development, are peaceful citizens and, surely, Europeans do not want to send them out when their purpose is served. I have no doubt they are chivalrous enough not to do such a thing. We want to live in this country as useful citizens and to prove that we are an asset to the country." Mr. Gandhi also spoke in Gujarati.

The motion was then put to the meeting and was passed by the assembly of five thousand without a single dissident.

Other speakers were Messrs. Bethasee Maharaj, Bernard Gabriel, C. N. M. Khan, D. S. Chetty, C. R. Naidu, Dhanjee Ramjee (Verulam) and S. Muthray (Maritzburg).

Prayer For Mahatma Gandhi

The following motion was then moved from the chair and the huge assembly rose to its feet, standing still in silent prayer for a minute for Mahatma Gandhi's health. Not a word, not a murmur was heard during that minute:—

"That this mass meeting of Indians held under the auspices of the Colonial-born and Settlers Indian Association hereby sends its love to Mahatma Gandhi and prays the Almighty that he may be speedily restored to health so that he may continue his noble work for the uplift of the depressed classes in India."

The meeting which lasted for three hours and was enthusiastic and orderly throughout, terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

Notes and News

LAST Saturday's mass meeting at the Durban Town Hall, where not less than five thousand Indians had assembled, has struck yet another blow to the prestige of the Congress. A unanimous vote of non-confidence in the Congress was passed owing to its obstinate attitude in regard to the Colonisation Inquiry Committee. If matters have gone from bad to worse and if the Congress leaders find themselves in an hopelessly embarrassing position, as indeed we think they do, we are afraid they are themselves to blame. During the last few weeks the Congress leaders have not acted as benefactors of the community but as oppressors. On the one hand, while they talk of the right of consultation they are supposed to have been given by the Government; on the other, they are themselves depriving the community of that right. We, who have always supported the Congress in the past, do not at all feel happy to have to criticise it as we have had to do recently. If the Congress officials will still persist in their autocracy and ignore the voice of the people, they will know, and the world will know, that they are not representing the people. It is never too late to come to reason though sluggish obstinacy makes it more and more embarrassing and therefore all the more difficult.

As a result of the present controversy between Congressmen over the colonisation inquiry committee, a new body, known as the Colonial Born and Settlers Indian Association, has come into existence. Neither time nor space permits us to discuss in the present issue the objects of this new organisation. We will only say that the promoters of the organisation have the very best interests of the community at heart and will serve every section without distinction of caste or creed or standing.

THE following letter, dated August 14, has been addressed by the Agent of the Government of India, Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, to Mrs. V. R. R. Moodley:—

"Dear Mrs. Moodley,—I enclose a crossed cheque for £40 on behalf of my wife and myself. This sum should kindly be distributed at an early date by a committee composed of one Hindu, one Muslim and one Christian lady, viz: yourself, Mrs. Christopher and Mrs. Ephraim Thomas to such Indian institutions or societies in or near Durban as the committee may think fit. The only condition that I make is that the institution or society concerned is engaged in helping Indian women or children of the poorest classes. I hope that my donation will stimulate other Indians to help their poorer brothers and sisters. Will you please acknowledge receipt and also let me know in due course how you distribute the money?—Yours sincerely, (Sgd.) MAHARAJ SINGH."

We heartily congratulate Kunwar Sir and Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh on their generous gesture which, we have no doubt, will be appreciated by the whole Indian community. It is to be hoped that it will act as a stimulant to our well-to-do brethren to do their bit for their poorer compatriots.

WE deeply regret to record the sad news of the untimely death of Mr. M. Samy, a well-known resident of Kimberley, which took place last Sunday at his residence. The late Mr. M. Samy was the uncle of the Misses Samies. Kimberley Indians have lost in the death of Mr. Samy an old and respected compatriot. We tender our heartfelt sympathy to Mr. R. Samy, the son, and other members of the late Mr. Samy in their great and irreparable loss.

FOLLOWING the evidence tendered before the Farmers' Commission by the Natal Indian Farmers' Association on the subject of the disabilities under the Tobacco Control Act and preferential rates of tollage on Bananas grown in this country, a deputation consisting of the representatives of the Indian Farmers' Association and dealers in Natal Grown Tobacco, was received by the Prime Minister, General J. B. Hertzog and General J. C. Kemp, Minister of Agriculture. The interview took place at Maritzburg. The disabilities under the Tobacco Control Act were placed before the Ministers, who sympathetically received the deputation and promised to go into the matter. The deputation comprised representatives from Port-Shepstone, Umziato, Umkomaas and other places. Mr. A. B. Naidoo (Secretary of the Farmers' Association) accompanied the deputation. Mr. R. C. Naidoo of Umkomaas acted as spokesman.

MISLEADING THE PUBLIC

WE reproduce elsewhere in this issue that signed document which is used freely by the Congress officials as a stick to beat their opponents with and by which they are misleading the public so much. We would also ask the reader to read the extracts from the Congress Statement submitted to the Government of India Delegation on the Assisted Emigration Scheme and also the Congress plea for co-operation with the Colonization Inquiry Committee which also appears in this issue. The first argument put forth by the Congress officials in favour of co-operation is that the delegates signed the bond. The public should first know how the bond came to be signed. These are things which should never have been disclosed any more than the Round Table talks between the two Governments should have been disclosed. For these were talks with the Government of India Delegation in confidence. But the Congress officials are guilty of indiscretion.

Now what actually happened was this: When the Government of India Delegation failed to get a hearing from the Union Delegation on the Indian question and especially on the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, which was the main subject of anxiety at that moment, unless the former gave a substitute for the assisted emigration scheme, which formed part of the first Agreement and which was now exhausted, the Government of India Delegation suggested a colonisation scheme. The Union Government knew the views of the Congress on the assisted emigration scheme, as they had been stated in no uncertain terms in their statement, and they asked the India Delegation whether the Congress would be prepared to give their co-operation in such a scheme; for if they refused to do so, they maintained, the scheme would be worthless. The India Delegation then had talks with the Congress delegates and told them of India's mission to explore outlets for her increasing population and asked if they would not, out of patriotic reasons, co-operate, together with the Union Government, in India's mission, and whilst touring, our representative could ascertain in the countries explored, if there existed any good opportunities for South African Indians.

Seeing that the work of the Round Table Conference had come to a standstill on the very vital

issue of the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, the Congress delegates agreed to co-operate in India's mission but with many reservations: that such co-operation on the part of the Congress must be taken as inspired only from patriotic motives, namely, to help relieve the congestion in India, and not on the score of Indians in South Africa being deemed undesirable or that their population was to be reduced. Further that the Assisted Emigration Scheme was to be eliminated and further still that should the Agreement or any matter dealt with by the Round Table Conference not meet with the approval of the Congress the latter reserved the right to withdraw such co-operation and to reject the Agreement.

Delegation Not Satisfied

This conditional document, however, did not satisfy the India Delegation. They wanted from the Congress a blank cheque. The discussions were prolonged. A few of the Congress delegates, among whom were Messrs. Sorabjee, Rustonjee, A. K. Kaje and A. Ismail weakened. They were prepared to agree to co-operate in a Colonization Scheme unconditionally. But the majority of the delegates refused to fall in with their view and the conditional document was eventually presented to the Indian Delegation for what it was worth.

The Second Stage

The question was re-opened at the Annual Conference of the Congress held in Johannesburg in August 1932, as a result of a communication received from the Union Government asking the Congress whether it was willing to co-operate in the colonisation scheme in terms of the Agreement. Messrs. S. R. Naidoo, A. Christopher, P. R. Pather and M. M. Gandhi voiced their strong protest against any co-operation, arguing that the document was null and void in view of the fact that the terms of the document were not fulfilled, for the Land Tenure Bill, which was among the main subjects dealt with by the Round Table Conference did not meet with the approval of the Congress the Bill having passed into law. It was, however, pointed out that there was no harm in co-operating in India's mission out of patriotic motives and that there were no prospects of such a mission taking place in the near future in view of the present political struggle. It was therefore once again passed by that conference that:

"The Congress in answer to the letter of the Secretary of the Interior, and in accordance with the statement submitted to the Government of India Delegation at the last Round Table Conference, agrees to co-operate with the Governments of India and the Union of South Africa in the former's mission to explore outlets for colonisation in regard to her increasing population, and to ascertain whether there existed any good opportunities for South African Indians in the countries explored, provided that such co-operation is taken as inspired by patriotic motives and not on the score of Indians being deemed as undesirable or that the Indian population is to be reduced."

The Third Stage

The third stage had arrived when Mr. Hofmeyr, the Minister of the Interior, made a statement in

the Union House of Assembly in response to questions put by Natal M.P.'s as to what the Union Government proposed to do to relieve Natal of her burden of a large Indian population. Mr. Hofmeyr announced the appointment of a local committee of inquiry whose terms of reference in effect are :

"to investigate into the possibilities of a colonisation scheme for settling South African Indians in other countries; and to ascertain to what extent Indians in the Union would participate therein."

Mr. Hofmeyr, in the course of his statement, said : "the time had arrived for the exploration of the possibilities of such a scheme, and it was hoped that the opportunities thus created would appeal to a large section of the Indian population of the Union."

A Departure

It has been admitted by the Congress officials and also by the Agent of the Government of India that this is a complete departure from the original agreement of which no one knew anything about, not even the Agent was informed. In the circumstances, was it right, we would ask, for the Congress Executive to nominate their representative and to co-operate with the Committee without informing the community of the departure? Where did the Executive get the mandate to do so? Whether the departure was favourable or unfavourable, what right had the Executive to take independent action? We, however, do not view the departure favourably, for the appointment of the present committee establishes the principle of a colonisation scheme for settling South African Indians in other countries and asks the Congress to co-operate in the formation of such a scheme, and the Minister has expressed the hope that the opportunities thus created would appeal to a large section of the Indian population of the Union. Neither the Union Government nor the European Press have made a secret of the fact that the object of this investigation is to find ways and means to reduce the Indian population of the Union. The *Natal Mercury*, recently, stated that it should be reduced by half before the community could expect any concessions. And yet the Congress officials seem to be so hypnotised, Lord knows by what mysterious agencies, that they simply refuse to believe or to convey to the public the truth.

We would ask them if, after the stand they had taken in regard to the assisted emigration scheme and after they had condemned the scheme as being inhuman and against all moral laws, they would have then countenanced any suggestion of the present Committee by the Government of India Delegation? If they would have their action would certainly have not been consistent with their words.

The first two arguments of the Congress in favour of co-operation have been replied to in the above lines.

Other Arguments

The third argument they have put forth is that we have always welcomed commissions and committees of enquiry into any phase of our

question. This can be replied by a simple question: Why have the Congress officials then refused to co-operate with the "Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission?" Why did the community, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, refuse to co-operate with the "Solomon Commission" in 1914? The reasons that justified our non-co-operation with those commissions justify our non-co-operation with the present enquiry.

The fourth argument is that for the first time in the history of Indians in South Africa we have been given representation on a commission of enquiry for which we have been clamouring so long. This argument really betrays the utter insanity of our Congress leaders. They seem to have lost all sense of judgment. Surely they ought to know the difference between the right of consultation in the question as to *why* one should be hanged and as to *how* a person should be hanged. The first confers an honour in that you are consulted in regard to the principle while in the second case it is an insult rather than an honour because the principle has been established and you are consulted only as to the method of applying the principle. And here, too, we would ask why the Congress did not accept the honour conferred upon it by the Union Government some years back, of being represented on a commission to explore the possibilities of settling South African Indians in British Guiana?

Misleading The Public

Arguments 5, 6, 7 and 8 are to mislead the ignorant public. The terms of reference clearly state the purpose of inquiry and leave no scope to prove our right to be in this country, or that we are an asset and not a burden to this country, or that we are not undesirables and our numbers need not be reduced. Nor even do the terms of reference allow you to prove that the Union has vast and unoccupied spaces that could be opened to the Indians nor to ask for the removal of the provincial barriers. There is no question of our case going by default because the only case we are asked to state before the Committee is how many of us are prepared to take advantage of the scheme. The Congress has not yet put that question to the public.

The ninth argument put forth by the Congress is that we can trust Mr. S. R. Naidoo. Those who are opposing the Congress co-operating with the Committee are not doing so because they mistrust Mr. Naidoo or because they fear that Mr. Naidoo may sell the community. Mr. Naidoo's work has been chalked out for him on the committee and he can go no further. To say that he can protect our rights by being on the committee is to mislead the ignorant public. He has no rights to protect. Mr. Naidoo is asked to do two things on the committee: to find out how many Indians are prepared to go out of this country and to explore the possibilities of sending them out. South African Indians do not want Mr. Naidoo to co-operate in their name in digging their grave however good his intentions may be.

After putting all these arguments in trying to justify their co-operation with the colonisation

inquiry committee, the Congress, in the end, asks the public to note well, that it does not advocate anyone leaving the country under any scheme. Might it not be pertinent, in the circumstances, to ask the Government why this inquiry should be proceeded with any further since the Congress wants no colonisation scheme, and to ask the Congress whether it is co-operating just for the fun of it? A more ridiculous position is unimaginable. People are being misled also by attributing personal motives to those who are opposing the Congress. Congress officials must have got a very weak case indeed if they are lacking in sufficient material to establish their case that they should have to suggest personal motives.

In conclusion we would say that if we at all wish to exist in this country as a self-respecting community we must adhere to truth and shun all hypocrisy. An organisation like the Congress which professes to revere Mahatma Gandhi ought never to forsake the path of truth and adhere to methods of hypocrisy and misguide the community to do so.

An Unholy Alliance

(By L. W. RITCH)

The world, at long last, is having brought home to it, with painful insistence, that there is

"The Law which moves to righteousness

Which none at last can move aside or stay"

that this Law, the will of "a Power-divine that makes for good will not to be contemned of anyone;" that "who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains." To its dismay, mankind is discovering that this greater Will that makes for the good of the whole, brushes aside, like so much rubbish, puny man's selfish willings, his conceits and schemings, his plots and counterplots, for the furtherance of his personal ends and exposes his "cleverness" as being no better than folly of which he himself is his own victim.

If there is any one class especially to which has been brought home the danger of paltering with these verities, with Truth, that class is the Indian community of the Union, of which the Congress purports to be the representative head. The Right that righteousness men have defended with their lives—the right to liberty, to equality of treatment, to a recognition of their dignity as fellow-humans—has been trafficked away for sordid considerations, bartered for opportunities to make money, to obtain licences, to retain property interests. Nor has one section hesitated to abandon another to the common enemy if by so doing it might save its own skin.

I am convinced in the very soul of me that the present desperate plight of the community as a whole is to be traced to its weakness for compromise, its reliance upon finding a way out through some back-door, its indifference to the call of Principles as long as its purse

and pocket were left inviolate. "Self-respect" has been much on the tongue, but in the main it has been a mere euphemism for money-bags.

The Congress knows, as everybody in South Africa knows, that the avowed policy of the Union Government is to maintain and, if possible, perpetuate the helotage of its non-European or coloured peoples, and at all costs to retain European overlordship and exclusiveness. The ship of state still flies at its masthead the motto of the former Republic "No equality in Church or State between whites and non-whites."

The Congress cannot fail to perceive that, at least, one of the reasons of that Government's distaste for the Indian within its gates is that the latter may create difficulties in the carrying into effect of colour policy, and at some future date involve it in unpleasant complications. The Congress has surely not forgotten that by statute and ministerial decree all Indians, as such, are in the eyes of the law "undesirables," or the legislation of recent years directed to making the position of the Indian as unbearable as possible and so "persuade" him to quit the Union. In the light of such knowledge it must be patent to the Congress that co-operation between the Union Government and the Government of India for exploring outlets for Indian colonisation in other lands, is from the point of view of South African Indians, an unholy alliance. The Union Government's concern for the welfare of India's millions can best be described by a cypher. The only Indian emigration that does interest the Union Government is emigration that will result in an appreciable reduction and, if possible, complete exhaustion, of its Indian population. Which, being the case, why should the Congress play with fire? Why, if its professed convictions are sound and sincere, should it concern itself with the scheme at all?

Can the Congress not see that its action is exposing it to, let us hope unwarranted, but nevertheless grave suspicion; to doubts and questionings as to whether it may not be ready to barter the liberties of its poorer and more ignorant brothers for material concessions in favour of its richer and more influential?

Nor can the Congress be blind to the euphemism of so-called "voluntary" emigration. What may correctly be styled voluntary when done of one's own initiative and with an equal choice of alternatives, becomes compulsory if the pressure of circumstances becomes overwhelming. The position of the Indian has only to be made sufficiently untenable to compel him to become a "voluntary" emigrant! In passing may I, without impertinence, be permitted to enquire whether any of the members of the Congress executive have themselves contemplated emigrating to "other countries where western standards are not required?" If, as I apprehend, the answer is most likely to be an indignant negative supplemented by the explanation that the potential emigrants from the Union the Executive has in mind are the poor who cannot find employment, I would

respectfully point out, that such poverty and unemployment is due not to an excessive Indian population, but to a deliberate and calculated policy of exclusion from avenues of employment, which eventually, if not in the very near future, may extend to those very gentlemen themselves!

Perhaps I may be allowed to add a word concerning this fiction of "over" or "excessive" population. Not even India's three hundred and twenty millions are more than India could accommodate in comfort and plenty the present chaotic jungle disorder replaced by a sane political and economic system based upon a recognition of man's true relationship to his fellow-man and the duty of the state to all and of each to the other. Selfish mismanagement is the reality behind this bogey of over-population. By the same false reasoning that has lent credence to this fallacy, a house of 20 rooms inhabited by a family of ten would be "overpopulated" if the wealthy head of the family were, as selfish as to monopolise for his own comfort 19 of the rooms, nearly all of the household comforts and foodstuffs and crowd the remaining 9 in the smallest and meanest apartment on a starvation diet. Legalised exploitation, legalised monopoly by the privileged few of the necessaries that all need for the living of a full life, legalised selfishness, in short, is the real root of the trouble.

The proper business of the Congress is to labour unceasingly towards the readjustment of the disturbed equilibrium, to never rest until the scales are no longer weighted against its people by prejudice, racialism and jealousy. Any coquetting with the idea of sacrificing the poorer and more helpless for possible advantages to the more powerful and wealthy will inevitably prove a boomerang and result in its own undoing.

Congress And Colonisation

Plea For Co-operation

The following circular was distributed at the Congress meeting held at the Durban Town Hall on Thursday, August 24th.

1. Because our leaders (as delegates of the South African Indian Congress amongst whom were Messrs. Manilal Gandhi, A. Christopher, P. R. Pather, S. B. Medhi and the Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney) gave a solemn and honourable undertaking to the Government of India Delegation in 1932 on which the basis of the second Capetown Agreement was arrived at between the Union and Indian Governments.
2. Because we reaffirmed the undertaking at our conference in Johannesburg in August 1932, and reiterated it again at the South African Indian Congress at an Emergency Conference on Saturday and Sunday last the 19th and 20th August, 1932.
3. Because we have always cried for and welcomed commissions and committees of enquiry into any phase of our question, for instance, "The Asiatic Enquiry Commission" re segregation, "The Education Enquiry Committee of 1929" re education.
4. Because we asked for representation on these Commissions and Committees and this is the first occasion we are being granted representation.

5. Because this enquiry is only an enquiry—we are not committed to any colonisation or colonisation scheme.

6. Because this enquiry is an occasion to prove our right to be in this country, that we are assets in this land, that we are not a burden nor are we undesirable, nor do our numbers need reduction.

7. Because we can, through this enquiry, prove that the Union has ample and vast unoccupied spaces that can or should be opened up to the Indian, and make the removal of the provincial barriers for the Indian, a question of practical politics.

8. Because to refrain to participate will mean allowing our case to go by default.

9. Because above all, we can trust Mr. S. R. Naidoo, the South African Congress nominee, on the Enquiry Committee.

NOTE WELL:—The Congress does not advocate any one leaving the country under any scheme.

Congress On Assisted Emigration Scheme

[Extracts from the statement submitted to the Government of India Delegation to the Round Table Conference of 1932.]

"We ask for the complete abandonment of the Assisted Emigration Scheme as enunciated in the Capetown Agreement of 1926 and ratified by Act 37 of 1927. The scheme as it appears in the Agreement, no doubt seems to be voluntary in character, but in its application, an element of compulsion has been introduced with the result that a considerable number of our people, who would otherwise have stayed in this country, have left these shores."

"The rights and privileges of a section of the Indian community were sacrificed in order that the remainder of the Indian community may not suffer the indignities that the Bill (Areas Reservation and Immigration Further Restriction Bill) offered."

"Various ways and methods have been adopted to induce people to leave South Africa, and these, coupled with the depression and the unemployment which seem to be so noticeable amongst Indians, have contributed very largely to a considerable number of our countrymen leaving South Africa, the land of their birth and adoption for good and never to return."

"We desire to emphasise that the Congress in Conference has decided not to countenance any scheme which has for its object the sending away of the members of our community."

"The Congress firmly believes in the principle that the granting of rights and privileges to the Indian community of South Africa must be made with no spirit of bargaining."

"It would appear that on every occasion when the rights and privileges of the resident Indian community of South Africa were in jeopardy something had to be given away to maintain them."

"The scheme has been characterised as inhuman for not only has it succeeded in repatriating those who were born in India but also thousands of children who were born in South Africa."

"Statistics show that the major portion of the Indian population of this country are South African born. It is believed that only fifteen per cent. of persons born outside South Africa remain in the

country and will in a short period die out. Is it reasonable then to apply the assisted emigration scheme to a people whose home is in South Africa?"

"The Congress resolutely asks for the abandonment of the scheme which is against all moral laws.

[extract from the President's speech at the Emergency Conference of 1931 prior to the sitting of the Round Table Conference.]

"It (the scheme) touches a section who, through no fault of their own, were encouraged to come to this country and contributed to its wealth and prosperity. I have no hesitation in condemning the scheme and to state that the Congress will not be a party to the bartering away of the rights of the poor for the benefit of the rich."

That Signed Document

The following is the text of the document signed at Capetown by the Congress delegates which is used and freely by the Congress officials as a stick to beat their opponents with:

1. The Congress agrees to co-operate with the Governments of India and the Union of South Africa in the former's mission to explore outlets for colonization in regard to her increasing population, and to ascertain whether there exist any good opportunities for South African Indians in the countries explored, provided that such co-operation on the part of the Congress is taken as inspired by patriotic motives and not on the score of Indians being deemed undesirable in the Union or that the Indian population is to be reduced; provided also that the Assisted Emigration Scheme, which formed part of the last Agreement, is eliminated and that the Congress will be free to oppose it as its policy.

2. The Congress also reserves the right to reject the Agreement and to withdraw its co-operation in the above scheme should any points in the Agreement or other subjects dealt with by the Round Table Conference not meet with the approval of the Congress.

Signed by the delegates at Capetown on the 23rd day of January, 1932.—Jussab Ebrahim Gardce, Bernard L. E. Sigamoney, Pragji K. Desai, Sorabjee Rustomjee, P. R. Pather, A. I. Kajee, S. B. Madh, S. R. Naidoo, M. M. Gandhi, Shaik Ahmed, G. F. Andrews, Hajee Cassim Adam, A. Christopher, V. S. C. Pather, A. Ismail, A. D. Motala.

The Problem Of Blind Care In South Africa

BY THE ORGANISING SECRETARY
(S. A. National Council For The Blind)

Blind Beggars

POLICE PROSECUTION CRITICISED.

"How can a man who is totally blind obey a constable's instruction to 'move on'?"

"If the Court finds him guilty what can it do with him?"

"I find him not guilty and discharged and I hope the police will lead him back to his home."

"It does seem wrong that such a case should be brought before the Court."

These quotations are from remarks made by Mr. A. B. Tod in the Caledon Square Court, Capetown, recently. On behalf of the blind generally and

particularly on behalf of those engaged in welfare work for the blind in South Africa I should like to express through the medium of your columns our sincere appreciation of the very special degree of sympathy for the blind shown by Mr. Tod. I should like to be allowed to state further that begging by blind persons is really only part of the whole problem of mendicancy which in its turn revolves in and around the general problem of poverty. One knows, of course, that from time immemorial the tradition of the blind man and his dog has existed and they have always made a strong appeal to the charitably-minded. So long, however, as special provision is not made for the blind, it would be unfair to single out blind beggars as undesirable. Where such provision has been made it is only natural that the sight of blind persons displaying their infirmity in public places inevitably result in a growing resentment against this form of begging.

The problem exists in practically every country in the world and is a very perplexing one.

Blind beggars may be divided into 3 groups:—

1. Those who resort to begging because they have not had an opportunity of being trained for some remunerative employment.
2. Those who become blind after they have passed the age at which training was still possible and who have become helpless and destitute.
3. Those lacking character and self-respect—fortunately a relatively small number—who prefer begging to undertaking more strenuous and less profitable work.

In olden days the blind were generally regarded as being incapable of participating in the ordinary activities of life and were left to depend on begging for their existence.

The development of a thoroughly comprehensive system of education and welfare work on the one hand and of vocational training and employment on the other is of comparatively recent date.

The time has now definitely passed when blindness need be regarded as synonymous with incapacity. The eagerness with which the blind themselves have taken advantage of such facilities as Civilian Blind Welfare Societies in the Union—as in other parts of the world—have been able to offer them in the way of training with a view to enabling them to contribute towards their own support is one of the most encouraging features of this sphere of social work.

The fact remains, however, that these facilities, provided as they are in South Africa to-day, entirely by voluntary charitable effort, and inadequate as they still are, were non-existent in the past. Moreover, the fact that a very large proportion of the adult blind of to-day lost their sight when it was probably too late for them to undergo training, offers some excuse for many who are at present totally unable to do any form of work as contribution towards their own maintenance. As time goes on, however, and as training facilities become more general no such excuse need be accepted, except of course that there will always be some who will be untrainable or who, though capable, will for various reasons be unsuitable for admission to a training depot or workshop, just as there will probably always be a number of young blind persons without sufficient capacity to undergo training.

Attempts by local authorities in other countries to provide allowances for non-institutional unemployed and unemployable blind persons have not

always had the effect of reducing the number of blind beggars who have been known to migrate to other areas when action has been taken against them, and who would probably cease begging only when adequate allowances are given to them. Yet the continuance of begging by blind persons is to a certain extent in the hands of the general public. While it is perhaps natural to give concrete expression to one's sympathy, the giving of alms to blind beggars is not helpful to the cause of the blind and makes it extremely difficult to remove blind beggars from the community.

(To Be Continued.)

Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission

Mr. Mahomed Jajbhay's Evidence

(Continued from last week)

Never mind for the moment what the reason is. I am only putting to you the fact. At the present time, as we know, his customers are confined to the poorer type of European rather than the better class of European?—I cannot make that a definite statement.

I thought I could get this answer quite easily from you, Mr. Jajbhay. It is quite an obvious one?—It is not so easy to answer.

And after the poorer class of European then he does a very considerable trade with the native population?—Yes.

And if his very big trade is with the native population, then reverting to my previous proposition, you find that the class of trade he gets is with the poorer European rather than the better class near the native areas—isn't that so?—Yes.

You say that the closing of mines does not affect the Indian trade at all. You told your friend that?—Yes.

You hardly meant that, did you?—No, I meant that. I have my reasons for it.

If that is so, there is no reason whatsoever why Indians, trading as they do, should not be provided with proclaimed land where the mines now have ceased to exist in the neighbourhood—isn't that so?—No, that is not so. My reply to that was, I said there is no reason why an Indian should not be affected.

CHAIRMAN: There is no reason? You said the Indian trader was not affected by the closing of mines?—That is so.

A very remarkable statement. If all the mines closed, I suppose you would agree he would be affected?—I will give my reason. When the mines have closed the people from that locality, the Europeans, have trekked near another mine. That locality is now occupied by coloured people. Therefore they are not affected. The Indians are continuing to trade with the people who are in that neighbourhood. That is my reason. Take the case south of Anderson Street, or any other area. Those areas have been vacated by Europeans and are occupied by coloured people. They are not affected.

Mr. MACWILLIAM: Mr. Jajbhay, it follows from that answer that they are not affected because the main customers of the Asiatic traders are the coloured people?—And the Europeans, to a certain extent, because there are Europeans. The whole areas are not entirely cleared.

You picture the Europeans moving from this area, and you then tell me that the Indian trader

is not affected because the coloured people remain there or come there?—75 per cent.

75 per cent. of the trade is with the coloured people?—Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Is not the native trade affected by the closing of mines?—The native trade, so far as the mines are concerned, is dealt with by the concession stores. Very small.

Is not the native on the mines buy in the Indian areas?—Very small. It is the domestic servants of the locality, and the people who are living around about the locality, we deal with; not the mine worker.

The presence or absence of the native population is of importance to many Indian traders, is it not?—Small traders.

A considerable proportion of the Indian traders rely to a large extent on their trade with the natives—is not that so?—It is difficult to say, Sir.

I am asking you: don't be so terribly afraid of answering a question, Mr. Jajbhay. I asked you whether it was not the case that to a considerable extent a number of Indian traders rely on native custom?—I could not say "considerable," Sir.

Well, give some answer. You say you are thoroughly familiar with conditions here. There are some questions that you seem extraordinarily reluctant to answer. I don't want to put words into your mouth. Do you wish to deny that the Indian storekeeper relies on native custom?—He does not altogether rely on it.

Of course he does not altogether rely on it. Can you not deal with the question a little more frankly than you have succeeded in doing hitherto? It is a perfectly simple question and one with which you must be acquainted. Can you give me no answer?—As far as that is concerned I cannot give you an answer.

(To be continued)

Five-A-Side Tournament At Estcourt

Soccer fans are reminded of the annual five-a-side soccer tournament to be held under the auspices of the Weenen County Indian Football League at Estcourt on Sunday, September 10, commencing at 8 a.m. The competition is for the Naraidoo trophy which is reputed to be the largest presented to any Association conducting a five-a-side tournament. As the tourney is the chief event of Weenen County, many teams would be participating in the competition. The Victorians of Maritzburg who were successful last year are confident of capturing the much-coveted trophy again, but teams from Durban, Ladysmith and other centres, who are entering, are determined to defeat last year's champions. The entry is 7s. 6d. and is open to any team in Natal. Entries close on Thursday, September 7, with the hon. secretary, P. O. Box 13, Estcourt. Accommodation would be provided for visiting teams.

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