

Indian Opinion

No. 49—Vol. XXIV.

Friday, December 10th, 1926.

Registered at the G. P. O. as a Newspaper
Price Fourpence

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS EMERGENCY CONFERENCE

ON Monday last the 6th instant, the South African Indian Congress held its Emergency Conference in the M. K. Gandhi Library and Parsee Rustomjee Hall, Queen Street, Durban.

The following delegates were present: Cape: Dr. Patel Masters, Messrs. Amod Mahomed, T. V. R. Pillay, K. Mookrey, S. Camroodeen, Kesha Valabb, A. Bardey, I. H. Desai, A. M. Chetty, S. Casoojee, and A. E. Haffjee; Transvaal: Messrs. D. M. Nursoo, S. M. Desai, U. M. Shelat, C. K. T. Naidoo, M. D. Baroochee, N. A. Camay; Natal: Messrs. M. D. Barmania, P. S. Aiyar, M. A. Motala, G. B. Chetty, Sorabjee Rustomjee, M. Beethasee Maharaj, V. Lawrence, A. H. Kazi, Shaik Himed, M. M. Lockhat, P. R. Pather, I. M. Haffjee, B. M. Patel, T. C. Moodley, M. A. H. Moosa, Mahomed Ebrahim, I. A. Essack, B. A. Maghraj, R. K. Naidoo, B. M. Singh, N. P. Naidoo, Maganlal Patel, S. R. Naidoo, M. I. Kajee, A. C. Moola, Ragoonath Singh, E. M. Haffjee, Goolam Ahmed, Cassim Meer, P. V. Henry.

Before the proceedings were opened, prayers were offered by Moulvi Fateh Mahomed, Pundit Girja Shanker, Mr. S. J. Randeria and the Rev. C. F. Andrews for the success of the Conference.

Amongst the many messages wishing success to the Conference, few were read. One cable from Mahatma Gandhi read: "God's grace unity indispensable." Another from the President Mrs. Sarojini Naidu read: "Stand courageously united in your deliberations and decisions at Conference, my love to all."

In opening the Conference the Rev. C. F. Andrews said:

My words in opening this Emergency Conference will be as few as possible. I hope also that a similar brevity will characterise the Conference itself. If it had been at all possible, we should have endeavoured to avoid holding this meeting altogether so as to preserve to its utmost limit the calm atmosphere which Dr. Malan has asked for in order to prepare the way for the Round Table Conference at Capetown. But under our own constitution it was not possible to proceed with regard to the Capetown Conference itself without calling a general meeting of South African Indian Congress in order to decide in common our course of action in the next few weeks which will be of such momentous importance to us.

What will be needed to-day is this: We shall have to decide, whether we should wish to draw up a united statement to place before the Delegation (in some such way as we drew up a statement last year) or whether we shall adopt any other mode of procedure. We shall also decide, how we shall welcome the Delegation and come in touch with it at Capetown. These things are better settled at a general meeting of representatives than by taking executive action. We have adopted the democratic method.

In face of the need to avoid all controversial subjects, we have determined strictly to confine our

meeting to the conduct of necessary business, such as our President's speech from the chair, the welcome of Representatives from the different provinces, and the reading of interim reports, as the preliminary procedure. We shall get at once from these things to the subjects relating to the Round Table Conference itself.

To mark the solemnity of this occasion in the life of the Indian community in South Africa, we have begun this meeting with prayer to Almighty God to direct us in every word that is spoken and in every decision that is made. We know that we have no strength of our own, but we also know that **GOD'S** strength is made perfect in and through our weakness. At the time of the opening of the Round Table Conference at Capetown, we intend also to hold a Day of Prayer on Sunday, December 19th. We hope that members of all hands will join with us in asking for the Divine Blessing upon the Conference itself and imploring the Divine mercy to bring it to a rightful issue of peace and goodwill among nations.

Reception Committee's Welcome

Mr. Amod Bayat, the President of the Natal Indian Congress in his capacity as Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates in the name of the Indian community of Durban. In the course of his speech, he said:—

This Conference at which you have assembled is, by common consent, a most momentous one in the history of the South African Indians inasmuch as a duty of first rate importance, and one which concerns the national welfare, is entrusted to you for the consideration of issues which are to decide ultimately the fate of our countrymen here, and the honour of the 300 million people of India.

Since the Asiatic Bill was launched out as a challenge to the existence of the Indians in South Africa, rapid and important developments have taken place. Our cry of horror and indignation at the subtle provisions of the Bill, which threatened to strike a death blow at us, was re-echoed by the entire Indian nation and to India and to her Government we owe a deep debt of gratitude for the encouragement given us and for the fidelity shown to our cause. You, who have followed the course of events from the time of the interview our deputation had with the Honourable the Minister of the Interior in Pretoria in November 1925, when the Union Government was told that the Bill was unacceptable to the community, are fully aware of the results of labour faithfully and diligently done by our Deputation in India, by the Paddison Deputation in South Africa and by us during a period of extreme trial and anxiety. Our aim right from the commencement was to secure the holding of a Round Table Conference for a honourable and lasting settlement of the Indian question. Although we have not succeeded to the full extent in what we asked for, namely the holding of a conference between the Imperial, Indian, Union Governments and of the representatives of the Indian nation and of our

people in South Africa, yet the principle of holding a Conference was found acceptable to the Union Government, and, may I make bold to say, that God has answered our prayer.

A word of praise is due to our community which approached the subject with extreme caution, and dealt with the delicate situation with foresight and wisdom. The spirit evinced throughout the fateful days of the negotiations and the unanimity of purpose and of action shown by our community, marked a new note of sympathy, of co-ordination and of unity. At no other time was our community as united as it is to-day in facing the situation, and to me it is a hopeful sign of the coming events. Our cause is right, and the angel of justice, being a twin sister of right, must come to our rescue in our battle for freedom, which is our birthright as much as it is with others.

To-day to your vigilance and care are entrusted the fate and future of the community. In your hands rests the destiny of our posterity, and may God bless you all with wisdom and thought to guide you through all the stages of the extremely delicate work that remains to be done by you.

To this Conference, it is my proud privilege to extend a most cordial welcome and the hand of fellowship to our friend and brother, Mr. Andrews. His presence here and his unflinching interest in our cause and his indomitable courage and his complete resignation to the will of God in all that he undertakes in the cause of humanity and of peace, breath a new life of hope into our community. They bring us fresh hopes. They foretell peace, and above all tell us intuitively that Divine power in guiding us through the thorny paths of difficulties that beset every step we are obliged to take at this juncture. The Indian community here, nay the Indian nation is ever thankful to Mr. Andrews for all that he has done and may do for us.

Fellow delegates: Your response to the clarion call of duty has imbued us with courage and hope. Your stay here, owing to the urgency of the situation, and to the fact that the Round Table Conference will meet shortly, will all be but of short duration. Durban Indians have always felt the pride and privilege not only on this but on previous occasions of welcoming you and of extending to you the hand of fellowship. It is hoped that you will make yourselves at home here, and enjoy the pleasure of association with one another, and carry away with you, on your return, pleasant memories and happy recollections, which Durban, I am sure, will afford you.

In reply, Mr. A. M. Chetty, on behalf of the Cape delegates, and Mr. N. A. Camay, on behalf of the Transvaal delegates, thanked the Chairman for his warm welcome and reciprocated the good wishes expressed by him.

After the formal business of the Conference was over, the Deputy-President, Advocate J. W. Godfrey delivered his able and eloquent address which is published elsewhere in this issue. The report of the Honorary General Secretary, Mr. A. I. Kajee which was a full and interesting one was read and Mr. S. R. Naidoo in moving for its adoption spoke of him and his great work in terms of the highest praise and felt that the Congress was fortunate in having so enthusiastic and energetic a Secretary to look after its affairs. The report was thereafter unanimously adopted.

The Congress Deputation that visited India last year presented its Report and the Financial Statement which was also unanimously adopted and a resolution appreciating their services was recorded.

The Financial Statement of the Congress as submitted by the Treasurers was read and the confirmation of same was put off to the Annual Conference next year.

The deliberation of the Conference was then directed towards the forthcoming Round Table Conference and a full and free discussion ensued on the subject. The delegates evinced much interest and after two days' discussion the resolutions were passed which appear in another column in this issue.

The business of the Conference having ended, the Chairman closed the proceedings with his concluding remarks: "Our cause is just; let our prayers be sincere and with the Almighty's help, victory will be ours."

We present our readers this week with a Souvenir of the South African Indian Congress assembled in Emergency Conference.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN EMERGENCY CONFERENCE

THE South African Indian Congress which assembled in Emergency Conference at Durban on Monday and Tuesday last, has fully justified its existence. As an organisation, the Congress undoubtedly occupied a pre-eminent position in the Indian political world of South Africa.

The constituent bodies rose to the occasion and although the full quota of delegates was not sent, the delegates sent were men of experience who, throughout the proceedings of the Conference exhibited a sense of responsibility. The spirit of toleration prevailed throughout the Conference, and the presence of the Rev. O. P. Andrews materially assisted the delegates in solving many difficult issues that came up for discussion.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found a report of the proceedings of the Conference and a cursory glance at the few resolutions passed will reveal the tremendous work that lies ahead of the South African Indian Congress before the representatives of the Union and Indian Governments sit in Round Table Conference.

The work, tremendous though it may seem, will, we feel sure, be light to the officials who are at the helm of affairs. The last twelve months have been a very trying period for the Indian community of South Africa and but for the incessant work of the Congress, the status of the Indians in South Africa would have been quite different to what it is to-day.

The bulky volume prepared by Mr. A. I. Kajee, the Honry. General Secretary of the Congress, proved a mine of information. The Report presented by the South African Indian Deputation that visited India was another volume which was very interesting and gave a full survey of the work of the Deputation in India. Both these volumes, we feel sure, will be highly treasured by the delegates who attended the Conference.

A word for the Secretary. In Mr. A. I. Kajee the Congress has an efficient Secretary and the volume prepared by him bears eloquent testimony to the splendid services rendered by him to the community. The major portion of his huge task lies ahead and the community will look to him to continue his noble services.

The Conference was indeed a brilliant success and a contributing factor to the success attained

was the impartial manner in which the Deputy-President, Advocate Jas. W. Godfrey, carried out his functions.

The resolutions passed, though few, are of far-reaching importance. Indeed the carrying into effect of these resolutions will involve a great deal of work but we may feel confident that the terms of the resolutions will be carried to the letter.

*Why does he
constantly write about*

The Emergency Conference

(BY C. F. ANDREWS) (Not must)

I have been present at very many Conferences and Congress Meetings and have often taken part in such assemblies, but the Emergency Conference in Durban will long remain in my mind as one of the most remarkable (1) have ever known in its results.

The urgency was so great, and the crisis was so acute, that everything hung upon its outcome. Yet success was jeopardised time after time owing to causes over which no one seemed to have control.

The strain at times was terrible. It almost seemed as if Satan and all his hosts of darkness were striving to overcome us. But in reality, the end was never doubtful. For God was with us throughout every moment of the day; and we were brought back again and again to rely upon Him, and to cast all earthly props aside. We learnt our own weakness. We understood His strength.

The result was very wonderful. As the Conference proceeded our hearts became warm with love for one another. We drew near to each other as we had never done before. The ties of intimate friendship became stronger. By the time the Conference was over, the same enthusiasm had captured us all, and we were united as brothers in a common sacred cause.

The resolutions passed,—good and wise as they were,—became by no means the most important part of the Conference. That which counted most was this: unity of all hearts; this burning enthusiasm for the cause.

I could not but admire the patience and goodness of the Chairman. He set an example to us all of gentleness mingled with firmness.

No one knew better than I did the difficulties under which the Transvaal delegates were placed. Yet they bravely surmounted them all. They struggled nobly through.

The Cape Delegates immensely impressed me. They kept such a quiet spirit. Their quiet bearing was noticed by us all.

Lastly, a word is due to the splendid self-sacrifice of Natal in looking after all its guests and providing them with every convenience possible. The delegates were made thoroughly at home and they shared everything with us as friends and brothers are always ready to do. Our greatest debt of gratitude is due to those who served us so well and faithfully at every hour of the day and night.

Success is now certain in the highest sense of the word, because we have won a moral victory over ourselves.

Presidential Address

The following is the full text of the Presidential Address delivered at the Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress, by the Deputy-President, Advocate J. W. Godfrey:—

Gentlemen,—This as you know is an Emergency Conference and I am indeed proud to realise that you have so nobly responded to the call which has been made upon you to attend here to-day. I know you have come from great distances and I welcome you most heartily and know that your deliberations will be marked with that honesty of purpose and earnestness of thought and action which the gravity of the situation demands. This is as it should be, for great and momentous issues are now in the balance and according to their decision we stand to live or die as a community in this Union of South Africa. Both our life and honour are at stake and as Shakespeare says,

“Life and honour both grow in one,
Take honour from me and my life is done.”

Before I proceed, I specially welcome our inestimable friend Mr. Andrews. His presence is a great comfort to us and is in itself an assurance that our cause will be greatly assisted by him. His work for us is, one of love and justice and we desire to assure him that we wish him long life. May he be spared for many years to continue the good work he has so well accomplished up till now.

For years now we have been buffeted from pillar to post. We have no voice whatsoever in the Government of this country. We are the scapegoat of every party which comes into power. We are accused of many wrongs; many allegations are freely made and are so served out to the public as to appear to have the colour of truth. Investigation has however, many times, shown the falsity, fallacy and groundlessness of these charges. Our presence has been alleged to be a menace, yet the Commission enquiring into this matter discovered that the menace was merely an “obsession,” “a misconception” and “ill-founded alarm.”

The Economic Commission also found that the skilled white trader had nothing to fear from the Asiatic artisan and so on the story proceeds. Yet notwithstanding this, the Government have from time to time allowed themselves to be deceived into believing that it was popular to consent to any legislation which directly or indirectly could in any way be detrimental to us as a community. Every time any such legislation was being promulgated we did not lose the opportunity of lodging our respectful protest and point out the injustices sought to be perpetrated. The result has almost always been the same. Our appeals have fallen on deaf ears. Might was right. We as an unrepresented people had to accept the inevitable. We have not the slightest hesitation in saying that nowhere in the wide world will you find so many legislative enactments designedly passed to operate against a class of people admittedly law-abiding and uniformly useful and totally unrepresented. Where is the simple justice of man to man? Where is honesty of Government? Where is the great principle of no taxation without representation? Where is the honoured privilege of the stronger protecting the weaker? None of these great principles and considerations weigh when it affects our community. We have often cried out in our great and deeply felt hearts, “Oh God Thou Seest,” and He also has taught us that, “Thy ways are not my ways,” so we have to patiently and hopefully wait for Him to render us His help in a manner and at such a time as He knows best.

Without going into details of the past legislation I wish to rest content in merely pointing out that in its injustice the Government has deprived us of our Parliamentary Franchise, the great bulwark of citizenship, for which men have even laid down their lives. Not content with this in Natal, even our Municipal Franchise has been taken away. Was there any and has it ever been shown that there existed any justification for this grossly improper use of legislative power?

Then followed the Immigration Acts and need I enlarge upon the fact how surely these Acts have operated to limit the entry of our people into the Union? True that in 1914 we agreed in the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement to the closed door principle, yet we know that irksome, and to use entirely unnecessary and inconvenient forms, are required to be completed before any Asiatic can be declared to be free to enter and reside in the Union. For the sake of detecting a few Asiatics who illegally attempt to enter the Union, thousands of other bona fide residents are submitted to wholly unnecessary examination. We shall deal with this matter during the Conference and I hope to make some practical and useful suggestions. We had expected that the question of Immigration had been settled by the aforementioned Agreement but we were rudely awakened by the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill which foreshadowed some very drastic additions. We shall however, refer to this Bill later.

So far as our trading facilities are concerned one is surprised at the subtlety shown in the various legislative regulations appertaining thereto. It is common knowledge that the sole object is to limit Asiatic trading and where possible to oust him altogether. Our Court records abound with numerous cases showing how strenuously our community is compelled to fight to secure to itself the bare right to trade under existing licences, and as for obtaining a new licence it is a rare occurrence. Hundreds of pounds have been spent in individual cases which have gone up to the highest tribunal in this land the Appellate Court at Bloemfontein only for the simple right of obtaining or preserving a licence. No appeal however is allowed on the merits of any licence application.

No matter what we may say or do, the cry simply is "We don't want you and we intend to kill you out." A cursory enquiry shows that the "We" in this case is the self-interested petty retail dealer who in most cases is a foreigner perhaps recently naturalised.

We have proved our ability and special adaptation to circumstances which render our presence of great value to the Poorer White, Native and Indian communities. We are a boon to them and as the white petty dealer desires to usurp this avenue of trade, he does not scruple to bolster up fanciful allegations so as to induce the Government to believe he needs protection. Therefore it is we find in this Asiatic Bill that we should be restricted to certain areas for trading purposes. If this is ever done, believe me, our days here are numbered.

In matters of Education we are very badly off indeed. Education is the most vital need of any community. Our Government realises this and therefore it is, we are to-day without any education to speak of. Whilst others have compulsory free education, hundreds of our children are compulsorily being kept away because no provision is made for their accommodation or tuition. Even such schools as are permitted to us have a curriculum of less utility than the European.

As to higher education—it is almost nil. We shall need to very carefully study this phase of our life here and we must make up our minds most definitely that the position will have to be materially improved and that very soon. The urgency of the matter impels early action.

Industrially we are being hampered in a manner which clearly indicates that no effort is being spared to completely repress us and preclude any opportunity for progress. This idea has found fruition in the Colour Bar Bill. This Bill has been denounced in no unmistakable language. It is an iniquitous Bill affecting a class of our countrymen least able to bear the imposition of enforced idleness for this will clearly be one of the results of the Bill when our workmen are told they are not entitled to dispose of their services because of their colour.

We protested against the passing of this Bill and stated that it was, "An attempt to violate the liberty of the subject, his freedom of contract, his right to hold, possess, control and sell his own labour which is his own property." Our protests have been in vain, for the Bill has been passed. We are an unfortunate community

having to live and work under a continual fear of insecurity.

From these brief references which I have made to some of the main points upon which I feel we are handicapped you will readily see that our existence here is a precarious one and fraught with the gravest possibilities. One would have thought that with our political rights taken away, our educational facilities reduced to the lowest possible minimum, our commercial activities limited, our industrial outlook legislatively restricted, that there was really nothing more left to take away from us. In this we were sadly mistaken, for in July of 1925 the Minister for Interior launched his famous Asiatic Bill. What had we as a community done to deserve this most iniquitous and totally indefensible attitude of the Government? We put this question at the very outset and up till to-day it has not been answered, except in our favour. The Government felt that we had not been humiliated enough. We had to be got rid of at any cost. All repressive legislation apparently left us untouched and we seemed still to progress. Why should this be and the Government decided upon a course of action at once reprehensible and unjust, for it sought to deal with an unrepresented people in a manner which would unquestionably deprive them of their personal freedom, right to trade and live as decent men and women. It was expected that the operation of this Bill, if it became law, would make things so intolerable and thoroughly disgust us so that we would accept the position and leave this country and in this way the "irreducible minimum" of Dr. Malan would be attained. The Bill was a direct challenge to us as men of honour. Our respectability had been called into question, we were relegated to a position of definite inferiority, even less than that of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Gentlemen, our answer to that was clear, decisive and dignified. We objected to the Bill on its principles but the Minister for Interior was unable to discuss the matter as he maintained that his Government was committed to the principles as laid down in the Bill and he was not prepared to depart therefrom.

The issues at stake were momentous, and we felt that the whole position of Indians in the Union should be faced fairly and squarely. To this end we proposed to the Union Government the acceptance of a Round Table Conference. The Union Government was not at the time in a position to openly and readily admit the idea of the Round Table Conference. It being felt as stated by Dr. Malan that the "Union Government considered the Indian question to be a question which has to be solved by South Africa." "It is a South African question and it has to be solved by the South African Government, Parliament and People." Strangely the Indian Government thought so too until your deputation went to India. The strong public opinion formed in India was largely responsible for the Indian Government persisting in their communications with the Union Government and pressing for a Round Table Conference.

Whilst in India we heard of the Select Committee and the decision to send out the Paddison Deputation to collect evidence for the basis of future communications. At the time we felt that no good purpose would be served but we are glad to find that to that extent our assumptions were miscalculated.

The tremendous work done by this Deputation, assisted as it was by our Congress, is I think one of the main reasons for the Union Government at last consenting to the Round Table Conference. Here I crave your indulgence to make a digression—a digression which I know will receive the unanimous approval of everyone here and it is a reference to our Secretary Mr. A. I. Kajee. To him this Congress owes a debt it will never be able to repay. It was he who collected and collated all the evidence which was handed to Mr. Paddison, the leader of the Indian Deputation and helped to shatter the case of the Anti-Asiatic. He has written not hundreds but thousands of letters, hundreds of cablegrams and telegrams, given interviews to hundreds and devoted his time and energy to our cause, and all this, gentlemen, he

has done for our mutual benefit. He attempted much, has accomplished much and placed us under his obligation. Proper reference will be made at another place, I merely digressed to show that it was one of our members who had played so intimate a part in securing this Round Table Conference.

Now that we have got the Round Table Conference, the question is for us to decide what we shall, as a community do towards securing the maximum of good results from it. It is for this purpose that you have been so hurriedly called together. Great and grave issues are to be discussed and it is possible our suggestions and co-operation may be sought for.

In such an event we should be prepared with the fullest information and with ready and practical suggestions. The Round Table Conference will have gentlemen sitting on it who have world-wide experience and their discussion is likely to be more on principles than on details. We would do well to remember this because we might do ourselves incalculable harm by allowing a cloud of detail to obscure the main issues.

We presume that the Round Table Conference will *inter alia* discuss and most possibly come to some definite decision on such matters as segregation, trade facilities both inter-Provincial and overseas between India and the Union, rights to purchase freehold land, Immigration and perhaps Franchise. On all these matters we have from year to year stated our views and communicated them to the Government. Our attitude has been fair and reasonable throughout. We cannot consent to any legislative measure which seeks to deprive us of the slight vestige of rights left to us.

At this our Conference, you will be called upon to decide more fully your views with regard to these great points and I know you will adopt a calm and tolerant spirit in your discussions knowing that only by this attitude can we be of assistance to our community and perhaps to the Round Table Conference.

We expect a great deal from this Round Table Conference. We have a right to. We desire to be South Africans.

India is our country of origin and South Africa the land of our birth and adoption. We are prepared to accept full citizenship responsibilities and expect full citizenship rights and privileges. This will not create any chaos or animosity. The knowledge of a sense of equality and fairplay will also enforce a sense of respect one for the other. A tolerant attitude and spirit will at once be born and our community will, we know, as always adopt the line of least resistance and display a spirit of graceful reserve and refrain from doing any act likely to irritate those amongst whom our lot is cast. We of course will expect a similar recognition and courtesy from the other side and it is bound to come if both sides are prepared to acknowledge the good points in each other. When this happy state is brought about, then we shall of a necessity trust each other and work for mutual benefit.

When we passed our resolution last year suggesting a Round Table Conference we also suggested that we should be represented on it. The Union Government and the Indian Government have decided that this Conference should only be between the representatives of the two Governments. We therefore will have to merely stand by and see what is done. We may rest assured that the Deputation from India will have our best interests at heart and will endeavour to obtain for us a reasonable settlement consistent with honour. We cannot conceive of them doing or accepting anything detrimental to ourselves. Should however anything transpire which does not accord with our views and we are able to show good reasons for our conclusions then I feel sure that the Indian Government will not consent to the decision arrived at, for after all the decisions of this Conference must be accepted or rejected by the respective Governments. Our attitude towards the Round Table Conference must be one of loyalty in the full hope and belief that those attending it are earnest in their desire to find a solution on all the points of difference which now unhappily exist—differences

which we are able fairly to state are not of our doing but the result of thoughtless and unfortunate legislation born of race hatred, mistrust and ignorance of the ambitions of our community.

The Round Table Conference will be well advised to investigate how far all this legislation is necessary and to endeavour to remove them from the statute books. We do not object to general legislation which has general application but we do respectfully and emphatically protest against the steady growing policy of passing legislation clearly detrimental to us as a community.

We desire to make it clear that we ask for a revision of all the legislation both Union and Provincial, which are inimical to the interests of ourselves as a community. We ask further that only such legislation be undertaken which will not specially single out our community nor in its application be applied only to us. We ask that the fullest freedom be given to us to expand commercially, industrially, educationally and politically. It is only by doing this that the Union Government will have a strong and healthy Asiatic community which will be a valuable asset to the Union of South Africa.

Dr. Malan requires the Asiatic community to conform to the Western Standard of Civilization. The quickest, simplest and surest way is to educate the community. Education in all matters and in all directions is necessary if this desired end is to be achieved. We already find a definite move in that direction amongst hundreds born in the Union who live, dress and think as the Europeans do—so much so that many of them are even unable to speak the Indian dialect. We do not admit all Western standards of civilisation are necessarily the best. It is an academic question. But living as we are in a country where such standards are accepted, as the criterion of civilisation, then we ought as far as possible endeavour to conform to such requirements. We therefore look to the Union Government to remove all obstacles in the path of our progress and assist us to attain this Western Standard. We hope that when we express this willingness that we shall be met by the other side with a similar spirit of willingness to do what is right. There can be no doubt that in our general progress the Union will also benefit.

The condition we foreshadow in this paragraph is not an impossible one if the Round Table Conference has the will and desire so to do. With due recognition of existing prejudices, we nevertheless trust that the discussions at the Round Table Conference will not lose sight of these possibilities. We know that notwithstanding all the past repressive legislation the conscience of the Union Government is not moribund for we have the experience earlier in the year that the suspension of the Asiatic Bill was in a very great measure due to the appeal made to General Herby not to insult India by bringing in a Bill which the whole of the Indian nation regarded as essentially unjust. We will in this our Conference, endeavour to find ways and means of making ourselves as useful as possible to the Round Table Conference believing that by so doing we are serving our community honestly, faithfully and well.

In conclusion, gentlemen, let me ask you once again to remember that we are met together, on a very solemn and great occasion. We have serious work in hand, so let us approach it with a full sense of responsibility and let us remember the sound advice of Shakespeare thus,

“Above all things to thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

We shall proceed to do our duty without fear. We shall ask for that which we are entitled to, so that the generation following us will not curse our memories but will press in our foot-steps until they secure what is right, just and fair.

Our cause is just, our fight is right, and relying as we do, upon the assistance and guidance of the Almighty, we must in this Round Table Conference succeed—
“HEAVEN'S LIGHT BE OUR GUIDE.”

Interim Report Submitted At Emergency Conference

By Mr. A. I. Kaje

The Hon. General Secretary, South African
Indian Congress

Mr. Deputy-President and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit an interim report of the various activities in which the Executive and I have been engaged since the termination of the last Conference held at Capetown in November, last year.

At the outset I venture to state that during the last twelve months the amount of work that had to be performed by your Executive and officials was of an abnormal character; and idea could be formed of the voluminous nature of the work done, by a reference to the annexures, and also when I say that no less than sixteen Executive meetings had been held at Capetown, Johannesburg and Durban, and that over 100 cablegrams and over 300 telegrams have been despatched relative to the operation of our communal work. In addition to the above, considerable correspondence has taken place between myself, the Government of India, the Government of the Union, Provincial Administrations, Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, All-India Congress Committee and with other leading citizens and public bodies in India, South Africa and England.

Asiatic Bill

In terms of Resolution No. 4 passed by the fifth Session of your Congress held at Capetown, your delegation waited on the Honourable the Minister of the Interior on the 16th day of November 1925 and submitted Resolutions No. 2 and 3 passed by the fifth Session of your Congress held at Capetown, relative to the Asiatic Bill, then pending before Parliament.

A short statement of our case was also presented which, together with a verbatim report of the interview which lasted nearly ninety minutes form part of the Annexures hereto. The Minister, Dr. Malan in his reply to your delegation made it clearly understood that the Government were not disposed to modify in any shape or form the principles underlying the Asiatic Bill, and so the Executive in terms of Resolution No. 5 decided and instructed the Deputation appointed under that resolution to proceed to India to further our cause in our Motherland.

Deputation To India

Your Deputation consisting of Dr. Abdurahman, representing the Cape, Messrs. Amod Bayat, Advocate J. W. Godfrey (our Deputy-President), Pundit Bhawani Dayal, Sorabjee Rustomjee and V. S. C. Pather, representing Natal, and Mr. A. A. Mirza, representing the Transvaal, sailed from Durban on the 23rd November 1925, and remained in India for about two months, and during their brief sojourn, the Deputation has done excellent work for the cause of our countrymen. The Deputation had the honour of an interview with His Excellency the Viceroy and presented our case with consummate ability and sound judgment, and subsequently attended the Session of the Indian National Congress held at Cawnpore, and placed our case with great eloquence before that great National Assembly.

After presenting our case before the National Assembly, the Deputation addressed mammoth meetings in several important centres of India presided over by the great leaders of our Motherland. A report of the Deputation together with the Statements presented to the Viceroy on the Asiatic Bill and the Colour Bar Bill by your Deputation is submitted to you in a separate volume. It is scarcely necessary for me to state that both the Press and leaders

have expressed themselves in appreciative terms of the most creditable work done by your Deputation; funds for the expenses of the Deputation during their sojourn in India were provided by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association at the request of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who, in a message dated the 6th March 1926, spoke of the work done by our deputation in the following eulogistic terms:

"Cordially join you in offering warmest welcome home to your deputation that has pleaded your cause in the Mothercountry with such earnestness and eloquence and kindled a living flame of love, sorrow and indignation in the hearts of your kindred here. Request our loyal friend Andrews remain longer his presence and advice valuable at this critical juncture. Your continued and unbroken unity in your brave struggle essential ultimate success. India stands behind you with fullest support but you are the true captains of your own destiny as citizens of South Africa."

Government of India Deputation

On the 20th November 1925, the Government of India sent the following cable:

"Reuter has announced intention of your Congress to send deputation to India shortly in connection with Asiatic Bill. With the concurrence of the Government of South Africa, Government of India have arranged to send a deputation from India which will sail for South Africa on 25th November. Main purpose of deputation will be to collect as soon as possible first hand information regarding economic condition and general position of resident Indian community in South Africa and to form an appreciation of wishes and requirements of Indian community in South Africa. It is expected that their report will afford valuable material to Government of India for use in connection with discussions which are now proceeding between the two Governments. In view of this your Congress will perhaps wish to defer or cancel projected visit of your members to India."

To this the following reply was despatched by me on instructions from your Executive, dated the 21st November 1925:

"Cable received Congress in Session Capetown appointed deputation wait Minister Interior with resolutions passed rejecting Bill *in toto* on principles and suggesting Round Table Conference of Union, Indian and Imperial Governments representatives of India and Congress to decide on whole Indian question. Minister emphatic not alter principles Bill he prepared refer Bill Select Committee to afford Congress opportunity criticism on details Bill. Congress Executive thereupon decided in terms of Resolution passed at Conference on deputation to India consisting of Dr. Abdurahman Cape Provincial Councillor, Advocate Godfrey Congress Deputy President, Pather, Congress Treasurer, Bayat, Bhawani Dayal, Sorabjee Rustomjee, officials Natal Indian Congress, Mirza, Secretary Transvaal British Indian Association, are fully acquainted and informed on economic and other conditions and also with wishes and requirements of community. Sailing Monday 23rd. My Executive submits that interest South African Indian community best served if Government of India deputation defer sailing pending arrival Congress Deputation."

Replying to the aforesaid cable, the Government of India further cabled as follows on the 22nd November 1925:

"1. Your telegram of November 21st is essential that the Government of India deputation should sail without delay in order to collect

certain information urgently needed by the Government of India and to study and report on the local conditions of the Indian community in South Africa, if this investigation is deferred or delayed no time will be left for its execution before Union Government proceed with their legislation and the Government of India will be seriously handicapped in making necessary representations in regard to that legislation, delay in sending deputation from India is likely to jeopardise chance of improving situation of Indians in South Africa which Government of India is so anxious to secure, suggestion therefore that deputation from India should be deferred or wait until the arrival of the South African Indian Congress deputation in India is detrimental to the best interest of Indians and is impracticable.

"2. South African Indian Congress must please themselves about sending deputation to India but Government of India thought it right to warn Congress of impending arrival of their deputation to South Africa so as to afford Congress opportunity of considering whether any of the members of the projected Congress deputation might not be usefully employed at the moment in bringing facts regarding local situation to the notice of the Government of India deputation in South Africa.

"3. The Government of India hope that their deputation will receive assistance from every class of Indians in South Africa in collecting information and understanding the local conditions and trust that it will be generally realised that sole object of Government of India in sending deputation is sincere to improve the situation of Indians in South Africa.

"4. The Government of India will naturally be ready to hear any person who comes from South Africa with information to impart regarding the Indian situation. They are anxious to be in possession of the fullest information on every point affecting the position of the Indians in South Africa."

On the 23rd November, the following reply was despatched by me on the instructions of your Executive :

"Your cable dated 22nd received. Owing to urgency of situation in view of Minister's statement at interview as cabled previously and to the strong terms of resolution passed at Congress authorising Deputation to proceed to India without delay it was imperative that in the interests of community sailing of deputation could not be deferred. Deputation has accordingly sailed per *Khandalla* to-day. Repeat that members of delegation are in full possession of facts concerning Asiatic Bill and of general position Indians here which will materially assist Government India but if Government India thinks it proper to allow deputation sail South Africa to collect information Congress will be pleased to place its services at disposal of deputation and will make arrangements to assist it in its mission."

On the 11th December, the following cable from Mr. Bajpai, Secretary of Government of India Deputation dated 11th December from Beira was received :

"Government of India Deputation arrives Durban sixteenth morning and will be glad meet your representatives soon as possible."

I despatched the following dated the 11th December and also a radio message on the 15th December :

"Your telegram addressed constituent body Natal Indian Congress handed to me. Welcome to South Africa. Will be glad to meet you on arrival Executive representing all Pro-

vinces here will endeavour to detain them until arrival."

"Welcome, will meet you on arrival with Andrews."

The Government of India Deputation consisting of Mr. (now Sir) C. F. Paddison, Hon. Raza Ali, and Mr. G. S. Bajpai, landed at Durban on the 16th December 1925, were welcomed by representatives of the Congress and garlanded at the quayside on behalf of the Congress, by Mr. V. Lawrence. The same afternoon, at Mr. Miankhan's premises Mr. Andrews, the Executive and members of the Natal Indian Congress met the deputation and discussed matters, and this resulted in framing a provisional programme, details as to the visit of the deputation important places and interviews with representative bodies and men were arranged. The deputation spent eighteen days in Natal, twelve of which were spent in Durban, obtaining very valuable information, through their interviews with various parties on the Indian question and also their visits to various places. The deputation visited Tongaat, Verulam, Stanger, on the North Coast, and important places on the South Coast. On the 24th December 1925, the deputation left for P. M. Burg, where, on instructions from headquarters, Mr. S. R. Naidoo and members of the Maritzburg Branch of the Natal Indian Congress met the deputation and rendered all the assistance to them.

After completing Maritzburg, the Deputation left for the North accompanied by Mr. S. R. Naidoo, in their tour of inspection. Ladysmith, Dundee, Newcastle, and the Coal Mines were visited and much information gathered about the true state of affairs of the Indian community. Subsequently the deputation, accompanied by representatives of the Transvaal British Indian Association visited various places in the Transvaal, and a true insight of the conditions of Indians was obtained. On the 30th December, Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari, a member of the Government of India Deputation landed at Durban and was welcomed on board the ship by your Secretary and Mr. P. R. Pather and garlanded by Mr. V. Lawrence on behalf of the Congress. The same afternoon, accompanied by myself, Sir Sarvadhikari left for Pretoria to join the Deputation.

Then the deputation left the Transvaal on the 6th January 1926 for a tour in the Cape, where members of the Branches of the Cape British Indian Council met the deputation and rendered all necessary assistance. The Deputation visited Kimberley, East London, Port Elizabeth, and other important places. On the whole, the time and attention of your officials were fully taxed in making arrangements for interviews (both Indian and European), and an idea could be formed from the following one day's programme in Durban alone, how systematically, plans were made to assist the Government of India deputation in their endeavour to entail the views of various parties on the Indian question :

Interviews With Europeans

TUESDAY, 22ND DECEMBER 1925

Messrs.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. H. & A. Payne Ltd. Large wholesale merchants with a very large Indian connection. | 9-30 a.m.
at their offices
Queen Street. |
| 2. Mr. Karl Gundelinger. Director of S. A. Reserve Bank and a very important commercial man. Has a large Indian connection. | 10 a.m.
at his office.
Smith Street. |
| 3. Mr. C. F. Clarkson. Member of the Provincial Council (Anti-Asiatic) S.A. Party. Has introduced many anti-Indian Ordinances. | 10-30 a.m.
at his office
Party Room. |
| 4. Mr. W. Doull. Solicitor, President-Law Society (Natal). Has a very large Indian practice, and was one of the Advocates who led the case of the Indians before Lange's Asiatic Commission. | 2-15 p.m.
at his office
Murray's Court
Smith Street. |

5. Mr. S. S. Brister. Member of the Provincial Council (Anti-Asiatic). Out-fitter by trade at one time; was very friendly with Indians commercially.
6. Mr. A. Jamieson. General Secretary of the South African Labour Party.
7. Mr. W. G. Brown (Head of that established firm of Messrs. W. G. Brown & Co.) has been connected with Indians since the inception of the firm.
8. Mr. H. J. Stuart Solicitor with a large Indian practice; one of the Advocates who led the Indian case before the Lange's Commission.
9. Mr. H. H. Kemp. Anti-Asiatic Town Councillor. Failed for Parliamentary honours.
10. Mr. J. Trembath. Chairman of the District Committee of the South African Labour Party.

2-45 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

3-15 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

3-45 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

4-15 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

5-15 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

6 p.m.
at Mr.
Lawrence's
office.

Asiatic Bill Select Committee

When the Asiatic Bill was referred to the Select Committee the Executive decided not to tender evidence in person, consequently Rev. C. F. Andrews, was then in Capetown, was deputed to present a statement, a copy of same forms part of the Annexures hereto.

Mr. C. F. Andrews' Visit

It will be impossible for me to chronicle the great services rendered by Rev. C. F. Andrews for the Indian community of South Africa, ever since he espoused our cause. His work is a labour of love and absolute devotion, to a community who cannot repay him in any shape or form for all the sacrifices he has made, but our heartfelt, sincere and undying gratitude will ever be his. Whenever the community found themselves on dark days, Mr. Andrews was found to be a beacon-light, and even those who differ from him, unreservedly admit the wonderful and love-inspiring personality of Mr. Andrews. When the existence of our community was shaken to its foundations by the Asiatic Bill, Mr. Andrews like a true and faithful shephard landed at Delagoa Bay on the 1st day of December 1925. Immediately after his arrival, he started on a propoganda in the Press, from the Pulpit and on the platform, and as a result, a perceptible change for the better became visible. In fact Mr. Andrews proved himself a veritable store of information and living help to the Government of India deputation, and His Excellency the Viceroy has gracefully acknowledged in his opening address at the Indian House of Assembly, the meritorious work done by Mr. Andrews for the Indian community in South Africa. In addition to propoganda work through Press and platform, Mr. Andrews found time to publish, for the enlightenment of Europeans, two important pamphlets dealing with the Indian question in all its salient points, and the future historian of Indian affairs would find in it ample materials for reference. A number of copies were distributed both in England, India and the Union.

Mr. Andrews left for India on a brief visit in order to confer with Mahatma Gandhi and others on matters relating to the forthcoming Round Table Conference and a fitting reception attended by a large audience was given prior to his departure by the Natal Indian Congress on the 11th day of April 1926 at Durban.

Mr. Andrews' Return

After a short stay in India, Mr. Andrews returned on the 20th October 1926. The Natal Indian Congress tendered a welcome. Without loss of time, he commenced his humanitarian work, the major portion of his time being occupied with the outbreak of smallpox in Durban, with Press propoganda in the compilation of a book on the question. On the whole I venture to submit that Mr. Andrews' presence at the Round Table Conference would be of incalculable benefit to the community in the discussion of this admittedly acute problem.

Prayer Day

In response to the resolution of your Executive to hold prayer meetings all over South Africa, on the 23rd of February 1926; the Indian community in all important centres held prayer meetings and that day was devoted for devotional purposes.

In view of the forthcoming Round Table Conference, and for its successful termination, on the advice of Mr. Andrews, it has been decided by the Executive to hold another Prayer Day on the 19th December 1926, and it is anticipated that the Catholic, the Dutch-Reformed and other Churches would join the community in offering prayers, and it has been similarly arranged that prayer meetings be held in India and Europe.

While the deputation was in Johannesburg, an important Executive meeting was held, and on instructions from the Executive an elaborate statement dealing with the Indian question exhaustively was prepared and submitted to the Government of India deputation, a copy whereof forms part of the Annexures hereto. I have now learnt that this Statement which contains very valuable facts and statistics was of great use to the deputation in their effective handling of the negotiations with the Ministers in Capetown. In the preparation of this Statement, which involved considerable labour and study, I have the honour to acknowledge the services rendered by Mr. S. Aiyar, Editor of *African Chronicle*, and Mr. S. R. Naidoo of P. M. Burg.

Having read in the *Rand Daily Mail* a report that the Government of India Deputation were going to suggest certain modifications to the Asiatic Bill, I addressed the following letter dated the 13th February 1926 to the Secretary of the Deputation:

"At the last Executive meeting of my Congress I was directed to write to you and re-iterate the opinion of Congress that under no circumstances will the Congress accept the Bill and that your deputation, in any discussion it may have with the Union Government, will please give due consideration to the resolutions of Congress.

"I am informed that the *Rand Daily Mail's* political correspondent has reported that the Government of India deputation are suggesting certain modifications in the Bill. As I am not in possession of the report I am unable to express any opinion but felt that I should merely state what has come to my notice."

In his reply dated 22nd February, Mr. Bajpai communicated the views of the Deputation as follows:

"In reply to your letter dated 13th February 1926, I am desired to say that there is no foundation for the report said to have been made by the political correspondent of the *Rand Daily Mail* that the Government of India deputation were suggesting modifications to the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill.

"I am to add that the deputation are aware of the attitude of your Congress towards the Bill."

The submission of an elaborate statement together with a statement submitted subsequently on the Colour Bar Bill of comprehensive dealing with the political, economic and general welfare of the conditions of the Indian community in the Union, tended to considerable correspondence between the Paddison deputation and your humble servant and they are laid on the table for the information of Conference.

Colour Bar Bill

The Mines and Works Amendment Act, better known as Colour Bar legislation was introduced in the Union House of Assembly in 1926, evidently the object of the legislation being to deprive the Indian and the Native of their rights to pursue any calling in skilled and semi-skilled trades and industries, and despite the protest from your Executive to the Speaker at the joint sitting of the Assembly and the Senate, it became law. The following wire was sent to the Speaker followed by a statement covering the ground of objection to the legislation, a copy of the statement is annexed hereto :

"I am directed by the Executive of the South African Indian Congress which represents the Indian citizens of the Union to place on record an emphatic protest against the passing of the Mines and Works Amendment Bill that has for its object the negation of the elementary rights of human beings to utilise their latent energies in the direction which is best suited for their talents. Quite apart from the unethical and retrogressive tendency of the Bill should it become law it would be productive of incalculable harm to the country and would affect the fortunes of both Europeans and non-Europeans. I am directed by the Executive to lodge this formal protest and a petition has been forwarded by to-day's post which would be presented to the Honourable Assembly by a Member of the House."

Subsequently a communication was addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General with a request that an opportunity be given us to appeal to His Excellency in person for vetoing the measure but the Secretary for Mines and Industries, replying thereto observed as follows :—

"With reference to your telegram dated the 14th instant addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General regarding the Mines and Works Act Amendment Bill, I am directed to inform you that it is the intention of the Government in due course to consider the issue of regulations to restore at all events the *status quo* as it existed before the Courts declared certain regulations *ultra vires*. This is necessary in the interests of health and safety.

"There is no present intention of extending the regulations beyond the position as it existed prior to the Court's judgment. Should any such extension be contemplated in the future every reasonable opportunity will be given to all parties in the Union interested in the matter to make representations.

"In the circumstances no good purpose would appear to be served by granting the interview proposed."

Local Government (Provincial Powers) Bill

By virtue of powers conferred on the Provincial Authorities in Natal in terms of the Public Health Ordinance, Indians were deprived of their civic rights where Public Health Committees were formed, and the community as taxpayers, challenged the right of the Provincial Administration to impose taxes under the guise of public health and sanitation since they have no voice in the administration of the funds collected from them, and the legality of the Ordinance was tested in the courts. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in the matter of *Jadwat vs. Isipingo Health Committee* upheld the grounds of objection raised by the Indian community and declared the Public Health Ordinance *ultra vires*. After considerable expenditure while community raised a strong case for the intention of the State, the Provincial Administration and the

Union Government made quite an unexpected move to legalise what was declared by the highest legal tribunal in the land an illegal act, and within the course of a few hours an Amending Bill entitled "Provincial Powers Bill" was introduced in the House of Assembly giving further powers to the Provincial Councils and became Law. Replying to a spirited protest from your Executive, the Minister of Public Health stated as follows :—

"In reply to your telegram of 4th February I am directed by the Governor-General to inform you that on the advice of his Ministers he has signified his assent to the Local Government (Provincial Powers) Bill and no good purpose therefore would be served by his receiving the proposed deputation from your Congress."

Liquor Bill

As certain provisions of the Liquor Bill seriously affected the welfare of the Indian community, in many directions, a statement comprehensively dealing with our objections was submitted to the Select Committee on the Liquor Bill, copy of same forms part of the Annexures hereto.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Mahatma Gandhi

It would be impossible for your Executive to state in adequate language the advice and help rendered by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Mahatma Gandhi, during the crisis through which the community has been passing since the introduction of the Asiatic Bill, and I have the honour to submit that, though separated as they are from us by a distance of some 5000 Ocean miles, their safe counsel and mature experience has enlightened the task of your Executive to a considerable degree and contributed to the success of our cause to the limited extent to which it has gone. I venture to suggest, that in some form or other, the Conference should express appreciation of their labour of love for us. And also for the Indian National Congress and the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, for whose unceasing vigilance and sacrifice of time and money for vindicating the rights of the Indians abroad.

Round Table Conference

After the announcement of the Round Table Conference between the Union and Indian Governments, at the request of your Executive, the following cable correspondence took place between myself and the Government of India :

"Am directed by my Executive to make representation in the matter Round Table Conference to be held between India and Union whether Indian community in Union will be entitled representation at the Conference. Am instructed to urge that seeing that Conference is going to deal with vital issues concerning our present and future destinies claims for participation in the Conference by representatives of Congress engage Indian Government's attention and request steps be taken in the direction desired."

The Indian Government in their cable dated the 3rd July 1926 replied as follows :—

"Your telegram dated 26th May. Personnel of Conference is still under consideration and will take some time to settle. Government of India are fully alive to the importance to Indian community in South Africa of proposed discussions but as Congress are aware formulae agreed upon between the Government of India and the Union Government as basis for proposed Conference provides for participation therein only of representatives of two Governments. Government of India therefore regret that it will not be possible to press for inclusion in the Conference of representatives of the Congress as representing the Indian community in the Union they will however be glad to receive any views which Congress might wish to put forward on questions of interest to the community and if necessary to communicate those views to their own representatives on the Conference."

Correspondence

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR :

Correspondence relating to the various resolutions passed by the Fifth Session of the Congress and affecting the Department of the Interior passed between the Minister and myself. The correspondence is placed on the table for your perusal and information. The Minister in effect has advised that he is unable to take any action in view of the impending Round Table Conference.

MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES :

The correspondence affecting this Department are also placed on the Table. The Minister has advised, as you will observe that the Government will not legislate in terms of our Resolution No. 10 passed by the Fifth Session of the Congress held at Capetown.

MINISTER OF FINANCE :

This Minister referred me to the Minister of the Interior for a reply concerning any resolutions affecting his Department.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE :

The Chief of the General Staff advised me on the 6th March 1926 that it has been the policy in the past to grant permits to Indians when in the opinion of the Police Authorities the possession of a Firearm was essential, on the grounds of self-protection, and that the policy is being continued.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE :

This Department on the 4th February 1926 advised me that the Resolution No. 21 relative to the holding of our Indian Agricultural and Industrial Show in Durban had been noted and that as regarding Resolution No. 22 relative to the establishment of an Agricultural and Experimental School for Indians, the Department regretted funds did not permit of an establishment of such a school by the Government.

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS :

Resolution No. 18 affected this Department. The Minister's reply as contained in his letter of the 15th February 1926, is as evasive as it is pregnant with issues that differentially affect the Indian community though the Minister may term it general Railway Regulation, it would be apparent that the Regulations have been especially drafted to hit the Indian community. It rests with the Conference to take such further steps as would be deemed necessary.

MINISTER OF JUSTICE :

Resolutions Nos. 15, 16 and 17 affected this Department. The Minister is definite in his reply of the 10th February in that he was not prepared to take any action. It would be of particular interest to us that since his reply, he has gazetted a regulation by which all Attorneys are given authority to act as Commissioners for Oaths, thereby allowing Indian Advocates who are practising in South Africa to act as Commissioners for Oaths.

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE PROVINCE OF TRANSVAAL :

The Administrator's reply of the 28th January 1926 is in reference to Resolutions No. 9 and 18. The letter though polite and courteous is unsatisfactory. It would appear there is no hope of the extension of Compulsory Education to the Indian community in the Transvaal Province and neither is there any hope for the repeal of the Transvaal Dealers' Ordinance.

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE PROVINCE OF NATAL :

In his reply of the 17th February 1926, the Administrator of Natal states that he is unable to consider our request as contained in our Resolution No. 18.

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE PROVINCE OF THE CAPE :

The Administrator has passed Resolution No. 18 to the Superintendent of Education for a report. Despite several letters no report has yet been received.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA :

Certain resolutions passed at the last Session of the Congress specifically referring to the Government of India

were brought to their notice. Although correspondence has passed between the Government and your Congress on the matters, no definite replies have been received anent the Resolutions, copies of the correspondence are placed on the Table.

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE :

As evidence of the interest taken by the Indian National Congress on South African affairs, appended below are two Resolutions. The first is the very strong Resolution passed at the Cawnpore Session of the Congress on the Asiatic Bill and the second deals with the colour Bar Bill:

1. "The Congress extends its cordial welcome to the South African Indian Congress Deputation and assures Indian settlers of South Africa of its full support in their unequal struggle against the consolidated forces which threaten their very existence in that sub-continent.

"The Congress is emphatically of opinion that the proposed legislation known as the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, is in breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement of 1914 in that it is racial in character and is calculated not only to make the position of the settlers much worse than it was in 1914, but is designed to make the residence in that country of any self-respecting Indian impossible.

"In the opinion of the Congress, if the interpretation of the said agreement as put upon it on behalf of the settlers is not accepted by the Union Government, it should be decided by reference to arbitration as was done in 1898 in connection with the treatment of Indian settlers of the Transvaal in matters arising from the administration of Law 3 of 1885.

"The Congress heartily endorses the suggestion that a Round Table Conference, containing among others proper Indian representatives, should be called to settle the question and trusts that the Union Government will accept that reasonable suggestion. In the event of the proposal for a Round Table Conference and the proposal regarding arbitration failing, the Congress is of opinion that it is the clear duty of the Imperial Government to withhold the Royal assent to the Bill should it pass through the Union Parliament."

2. "The Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee records once again its strong protest against the action of the South African Union Government in proceeding with the Colour Bar Bill in spite of the unanimous protest of this country and the representatives of the Government of India and assures the Indian community in South Africa that the whole country is behind them in their struggle to resist the insidious and dangerous implications of the Bill."

Your Executive highly appreciated the interest taken by the All-India Congress Committee.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE :

Voluntinous correspondence passed between your Congress, the Constituent bodies, and their branches and other individuals on various matters of importance to the community. These are placed on the Table.

Finance

The period under review has been a very strenuous and expensive one, and Finance played a very great part in carrying the work to a successful end. Levies had to be made on the Provinces apart from their yearly contributions in connection with Mr. Andrews' work. Owing to the Treasurer Mr. V. S. C. Pather being away in India on the deputation, Mr. E. M. Ally was appointed as Acting Treasurer, and it was decided by the Executive on Mr. Pather's return that there should be two Joint Treasurers to cope with the work and Mr. Ally was appointed as a Joint Treasurer with Mr. Pather.

From the Financial Statement to be submitted by the Treasurers it will be noticed that a sum of £109 12s. 2d. has been advanced by the Secretary. This amount will

be refunded as soon as the Transvaal and the Cape Provinces pay up their liabilities.

On the eve of the departure of Mr. Andrews in April last for India, your Executive decided that as an humble token of gratitude for the great services rendered by Mr. Andrews to our cause, a purse of £150 be sent to the Santiniketan Ashrafi Funds per Mr. Andrews; to this purse Natal contributed £79, Transvaal £50 and £21 was added from general funds. This item is reflected under expenditure head re Mr. Andrews.

As money is urgently and daily needed to meet expenses in connection with Mr. Andrews' propaganda work and the effectual working of the Congress specially in view of the impending Round Table Conference, it is essential that no delay be made by the Provinces in paying up their liabilities.

Special collections were sanctioned by the Executive, to each of the Provinces to meet the expenses of its delegates on the deputation to India. A statement of receipts and expenditure as affecting the Natal Province is annexed hereto. It is hoped that the Transvaal and Cape Provincial bodies will furnish the accounts of their special collections before the Annual Conference is held in January next.

Condolences

On the death of the Queen Mother, your Executive sent a cable to the Secretary for Dominion Affairs conveying our condolences in the sad bereavement to the Royal Family.

In the death of the late John X. Merriman, the Indian community lost one of its staunchest supporter. Your Executive sent telegrams to Mr. Merriman's Family and the Mayor of Stellenbosch extending the sympathy of the community. A wreath was sent and Miss Fatima Gool represented the Congress at the funeral.

Thanks

Your Executive have the honour to place on record its sincere thanks and gratitude to Mr. Morris Alexander M.L.A., and Dr. A.H. Gool (our ex-Deputy President), for their ever ready assistance at the Legislative Capital, and to Mr. P.S. Aiyar, Editor of the "African Chronicle", for the invaluable services rendered by him from time to time in the preparation of statements, petitions and other documents, and the thanks of your Executive are also due to Mr. Shapurji Jivanji Randeria for the services rendered by him as Auditor.

Before I conclude, I beg to tender my personal gratitude and thanks to the affiliated bodies and their officials and to Messrs. P. R. Pather, V. S. O. Pather, E. M. Ally, D. M. Nursoo, Dawood Patel, Mangalbai Patel, Suleman Desai, Rajagopal Pillay, A. Sookdeo, S. W. Abrahams and others for their unflinching courtesy and ever ready help at all times during the momentous period in which I have had the honour of being Secretary of this organisation. I should confess, in conclusion, that, imperfect as I am, the discharge of my arduous duties would have been rendered more imperfect, had it not been for the sympathetic and patriotic co-operation of these gentlemen, and the sage-like advice of the Rev. C. F. Andrews.

Resolutions Passed At Conference

The following resolutions were passed by the South African Indian Congress at the Emergency Conference held in Durban on the 6th and 7th December 1926 under the Deputy-presidentship of Advocate J. W. Godfrey:—

1. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress wishes to express to their

friends Mr. and Mrs. Polak, and Leon Polak, their sincerest and deepest sympathy at this time of their bereavement on the loss of Waldo, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Polak and only brother of Leon. This Conference prays to Almighty God that He may grant to them peace and consolation in their unspeakable sorrow.

(Moved by the Chairman and passed by the members standing.)

2. That this Emergency Conference wishes to express its deepest sympathy for the bereaved relatives of those who recently suffered death in the Dannhauser Colliery disaster.

(Moved by the Chairman and passed by the members standing.)

3. That although the South African Indian Congress has been given no representation on the Round Table Conference in accordance with Resolution No. 3 of the South African Indian Congress unanimously passed at its fifth session held at Capetown in November 1925, nevertheless this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress expresses its willingness to assist the Indian delegation as desired by the Government of India in its communication to the Secretary of the South African Indian Congress dated 3rd July 1926.

(Proposed by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, seconded by Mr. N. A. Camay and supported by Mr. T. V. R. Pillay.)

4. That this Emergency Conference re-affirms its objection *in toto* to the principles underlying the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill.

(Proposed by Mr. S. R. Naidoo, seconded by Mr. A. M. Chetty and supported by Mr. U. M. Shelat.)

6. That Committees consisting of not more than five members from each Province, elected by the Provincial bodies, prepare a statement of facts for each Province based on the following instructions and submit same to the Executive within seven days from date.

(1). The observance in spirit, as well as in letter, of the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement of 1914, the removal of disabilities and the remedy of breaches thereunder.

(2). The extension of the principle of free and compulsory Education and the provision of further educational facilities, both primary and secondary.

(3). Removal of immigration disabilities now suffered by Indians.

(4). Removal of all discriminations and disabilities under the Licensing Laws.

(5). Removal of all disabilities in regard to the Land Question.

(6). Removal of laws which deprive Indians of the Municipal and Township Franchise hitherto possessed by them.

(7). Removal of all racial discrimination contained in several legislations harshly operating against the Indians.

(8). The faithful observance on the part of the Indian community of any reasonable proposals made in regard to the adoption of western standard of living, provided disabilities which impede progress in that direction are removed.

(9). And any other matter that may be deemed expedient.

(Proposed by Mr. P. R. Pather, seconded by Mr. A. M. Chetty and supported by Mr. S. M. Desai.)

6. That the Secretary convene a meeting of the Executive of the South African Indian Congress at Johannesburg as soon as possible to prepare and submit a statement embodying the views of the South African Indian Congress as representing the Indian community, to the Government of India. Deputation from facts and information furnished by the Provincial Committees in terms of Resolution No. 5, hereof.

(Proposed by Mr. T. V. R. Pillay, seconded by Mr. P. V. Henry and supported by Mr. B. A. Magbraj.)

7. That not more than three members from each Province elected by the Provincial bodies proceed to Capetown and present through Rev. C. F. Andrews the statement prepared by the Executive to the Government of India Deputation and assist it in terms of Resolution No. 3 hereof.

(Proposed by Mr. N. A. Camay, seconded by Mr. V. Lawrence and supported by Mr. A. E. Haffjee.)

8. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress assembled at Durban prays to Almighty God that He may bestow His choicest blessings on Mahatma Gandhi, and hereby tenders its sincere thanks for his kindness in sending Rev. C. F. Andrews to help the South African Indian community in this critical period of their existence.

(Proposed by Mr. V. Lawrence, seconded by Mr. T. V. R. Pillay and supported by Mr. C. K. T. Naidoo.)

9. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress assembled at Durban is grateful to its President Mrs. Sarojini Naidu for the invaluable and inestimable services rendered by her to the Congress and prays that she may be bestowed with long life and happiness to continue her noble work for the cause of the Indian community of South Africa.

(Proposed by Mr. T. C. Moodley, seconded by Mr. R. K. Naidoo and supported by Mr. S. Cassoojee.)

10. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress hereby records its everlasting gratitude to the Rev. C. F. Andrews for his great services so nobly and unselfishly rendered and being rendered to the Indian community in the hour of its supreme need and trial.

(Proposed by Mr. N. A. Camay, seconded by Mr. A. M. Chetty and supported by Mr. V. Lawrence.)

11. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress offers its grateful and sincere thanks to the members of its Deputation who visited India under the leadership of Dr. Abdurahman, M.P.C, on behalf of the Indian community of South Africa, and by their ceaseless labours in the cause of truth, honour and justice brought home to the Government of India and the Indian Nation, the gravity of the crisis in South Africa and thereby helped materially towards the postponement of the Asiatic Bill and the acceptance of the proposal for a Round Table Conference.

(Proposed by Mr. D. M. Nursoo, seconded by Mr. T. V. R. Pillay and supported by Mr. G. B. Chetty.)

12. That this Emergency Conference hereby records its appreciation and thanks to the All-India National Congress, the Imperial Citizenship Association, the All-India Khilafat Committee, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, National Indian Federation, All-India Muslim League and other public bodies and leaders of India for all the assistance rendered to the South African Indian Congress Deputation during its stay in India, thereby making its mission a complete success.

(Proposed by Mr. M. D. Bharoochi, seconded by Mr. S. Cassoojee and supported by Mr. I. A. Essack.)

13. That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress further records its deep sense of obligation and thanks to the All-India National Congress, the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, the All-India Khilafat Committee, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha and other public bodies and leaders of India for their timely service in sending out the Rev. C. F. Andrews to the assistance of the Indian community of South Africa and that the devoted gratitude of this Conference be also conveyed by the Secretary of the South African Indian Congress to the Joint Hindustani and South African Indian Deputation for attention and every

possible help and assistance Mr. Andrews' speedy return to South Africa.

(Proposed by Mr. T. C. Moodley, seconded by Mr. U. M. Shelat and supported by Mr. S. Camroodeen.)

14. That this Emergency Conference hereby places on record its sincere sense of high appreciation for the self-sacrificing services so unflinchingly and unsparingly rendered by the Honorary General Secretary Mr. A. I. Kajee.

(Proposed by Mr. P. R. Pather, seconded by Mr. V. S. C. Pather and supported by Mr. C. K. T. Naidoo.)

15. That this Conference hereby places on record its profound sense of gratitude to the Deputy-President Advocate J. W. Godfrey for the very able manner in which he has conducted the proceedings of the Conference, thereby making possible the prevailing spirit of goodwill that is so necessary in the work of the community.

(Proposed by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, seconded by Mr. U. M. Shelat and supported by Mr. T. V. R. Pillay.)

16. That this Congress empowers the Executive to take all necessary measures to give effect to the principles in the foregoing resolutions in so far as such resolutions fall within its scope, and generally to act in regard to the resolutions as provided in the Constitution of the South African Indian Congress.

(Proposed by Mr. M. Beethase Maharaj and seconded by Mr. Ragoonath Singh.)

FOR SALE

Large Building in Richmond, Natal; comprising:—Butchery, General Store, Blacksmith and wagon building shop, fully equipped with machinery.

Good opportunity for a man to start business as Blacksmith and wagon builder, Garage, Miller and Produce dealer, Storekeeper etc. No objection to Asiatics. General dealers' licence could be transferred to purchaser.

Apply: H. C. Hackland,
Richmond, Natal.

વેચવાનું છે.

નાટાલ, રીચમંડમાં એક મોટી બીલ્ડીંગ છે જેમાં બુચરી, જનરલ સ્ટોર, લુહારી કામ અને ગાડી બાંધનારા એ મોટું પુરતી મશીનરી સાથે તૈયાર હોઈ સ્થૂબીજ સારી સગવડ છે.

લુહારી કામ, વેગન બીલ્ડર, ગેરેજ, મીલર અને પ્રોડ્યુસ ડીલર, અને હુકાન શરૂ કરનારને ઉત્તમ તક છે. એશીયાટીક સાથે કોઈ પણ બાતને પ્રતિબંધ નથી. ખરીદનારને જનરલ ડીલરનું લાયસેન્સ ટ્રાંસફર કરી આપવામાં આવશે.

લખો: એચ. સી. હેકલેન્ડ,
રીચમંડ, નાટાલ.

"INDIAN OPINION"

Subscription Rates.

WITHIN THE UNION :		s.	d.
Yearly	20	0	
Half-Yearly	10	0	
OUTSIDE THE UNION and OVERSEAS		s.	d.
Yearly	20	0	
Half-Yearly	10	0	