

68. Passive resistance, 1946-7

The passive resistance campaign was launched on 13 June 1946 and finally suspended on 31 May 1948. The report of the Passive Resistance Council, reproduced here almost in its entirety, relates the events which occurred between 13 June 1946 and 13 May 1947. The report contains three parts, the first two of which have been reproduced here: Political analysis; Progress of the campaign; and Statistical analysis. It is a very useful document. Source: N.I.C. Agenda Book, 1947.

PART 1: POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STRUGGLE

A. SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian people

The present leadership of the Natal Indian took over in October 1945.

The Indian people of Natal had decided to give the new policy advocated by the progressives a trial because they were convinced of the impotence the old leadership, which called itself 'moderate' but in reality was characterised by a policy of weak-kneed appeasement.

When the present Congress leaders assumed office, the first question they tackled was that of the status of the Indian community in South Africa. The appeasers had been prepared to accept a status of permanent inferiority for Indians in this country. They preached that Indians had no other alternative as they were totally at the mercy of the all-powerful Government and had to accept the best possible compromises, whatever that was. Nothing had to be done that might 'antagonise' the Government or European feeling. The best ways that Indians could hope to achieve their objectives were by tactfully worded resolutions and imposing delegations to the Prime Minister. Only the respected heads of the community could partake in the delegations and the farther the masses were kept away the better.

Congress leadership discarded these outworn 'good boy' conceptions that Indians were at the mercy of the good intentions of the Government and could never hope to attain equal rights. It regarded the masses of the Indian people as an integral part in the struggle for liberation and developed their political consciousness to a new perspective of free independent citizens, living a secure, dignified life in a fully democratised country, with equal opportunity for all irrespective of race, colour or creed.

Having shown the Indian people a new aim in life, Congress taught them that it was not good enough merely to rely on resolutions and deputations. For the defence and extension of their rights it was imperative for the whole Indian community to participate in the struggle and that such participation entailed not only work, but suffering as well; that unless the people were prepared to sacrifice for their cause they would not be entitled to liberty.

The appeasers sneered at this formulation, having no faith in their own community, and forgetting that it was among the South African Indians that Mahatma Gandhi first learned how to develop the mass struggle.

Congress teaching bore fruit when the Indian people responded magnificently to the S.A.I.C. resolution to resist the 'Ghetto' Act and rallied solidly behind the Joint Passive Resistance Council. The success so far of the passive resistance campaign is a triumph for its full belief in the willingness of the Indian people to sacrifice for its ideals and a blow to the appeasers' scepticism.

The Indian people are now a community with a record for putting its resolutions into practice. A new chapter in the history of South Africa is being written. The passive resistance campaign, at first scorned and laughed at by Government spokesmen, has now been recognised to their fear as a mighty weapon of destruction of South Africa's

racial system. They are attempting by all possible means to destroy the movement and to get the Indian people to return to the old paths of compromise; but in vain. The Indian people are determined to keep on their new path right till the end of the road.

Congress can point with pride to having achieved among Indians the greatest possible political unity since the days of Gandhi. It has proved itself to be a national, not sectional, leadership. It has supported the interests of the broad masses of the people, has gone equally to the aid of both merchants and workers, and has defended the dignity of the Indian people as a whole.

The African people

The bold Congress policy of resistance has had effects far wider than among the Indians. A profound impression has been made among the other Non-European sections, particularly the Africans. They have seen a community with a population vastly inferior in numbers to theirs and with much less justification for struggle than themselves, refuse to accept the Government terms. They have seen this small community humiliate the seemingly invincible power of the South African rulers. And they have drawn the necessary conclusions. It is noteworthy how much more militant the African people have become during the year, as evidenced by the anti-pass conference at Johannesburg last year, the African miners' strike involving over 100,000 workers, the 'passive resistance' of the Natives' Representative Council which adjourned after the miners' strike and to date has refused to meet, the Bloemfontein emergency conference, the burning of the passes in Cape Town, and the militancy displayed by the shanty-town movement in Johannesburg and Durban. These are but the first effects. The move to further mass movements among the African people is bound to make greater strides in the coming years.

The Indian people have now learnt the fallacy of sectional and isolationist principles. By their experience in the resistance struggle they have learnt the necessity of allies and that their natural allies are the other oppressed Non-European groups, together with the progressive Europeans. All great Indian leaders such as Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah and Joshi support this stand.

The Africans too have learnt from the passive resistance struggle that the Indian people are their friends and despite their smallness as a community can be very valuable allies. For years the Africans have regarded the Indians with suspicion. Their doubts were bred from the Government's divide and rule policy and by the sectional attitude of the old Indian leadership.

But when the passive resistance campaign began they quickly realised that a success for the campaign would benefit them immensely in their own and from the beginning it had their full sympathy,

They were enheartened by the known views of the new Congress leaders who had at all times demanded full support for African aspirations in this country; who had at all times extended the hand of friendship to the African people; and many of whom had been responsible for the building of trade unions among Africans.

These circumstances, backed by the electrifying speeches of the Indian delegation at UN on behalf of the Africans in South Africa, disposed of any remaining doubts. They have come to realise that India, growing more powerful and important every day with its population of 400,000,000, stands behind their just struggle.

The two communities decided on taking the first steps toward unity of action, and a historic declaration of co-operation and mutual aid was signed between them.

Thus today the Indian people are no longer alone. They are gaining the practical support of over 7,000,000 of the population of South Africa.

The Coloured people

The Coloured people, although not so united on their feeling for unity, nevertheless are eager to establish closer relations with the two communities. The majority of them see in the passive resistance movement a bulwark against the segregation plans [directed] against them.

The importance of these developing political alignments cannot be over-estimated. The Government has maintained its rigid rule over the Non-Europeans so well because of its clever imperialist 'divide and rule' tactics. That these tactics are receiving a decided reverse is an indication of the vast strides to ending oppression that are being taken by the Non-Europeans.

The European people

It is not surprising that the immediate effect of the passive resistance campaign has been an intensification of anti-Indian feeling among Europeans. Falsely brought up on anti-Non-European hatred (with emphasis on anti-Asiatic hatred), the majority of Europeans regarded it as insolence for Indians to demand any rights. Extremists among them have made vain attempts to counter the passive resistance movement by such means as the use of terrorism at the commencement of the campaign and later the attempt to boycott Indian traders.

It was also no surprise to see the appeasers panic at the first futile attempts to intimidate the Indian community. Bleating untruthfully that Congress leaders are responsible for the 'deterioration' in European-Indian feeling, they have made no mention of the part played by responsible European leaders who have stooped to the most despicable depths in order to incite race-hatred. They always fail to mention that it is the present Government with its 'Ghetto' Act that is responsible for the deterioration in relations between the communities.

Congress leaders are not anti-European. We have and will do our utmost to bring about friendly understanding between the two peoples. We, unlike the European leaders, have never gone in for racial hatred. We have consistently explained to our own community that there is no reason why there should be racial friction. We have always maintained that South Africa is large enough and rich enough for all South Africans to live side by side in peace and prosperity, if only the Government and the European leaders will let them.

We are against the Union Government's racial colour-bar policy, which is fascist in essence. We are against that section of European vested interests that, also caring nothing about their own people, have spread false propaganda for their own selfish ends and brought about the present strained relations.

We are confident that if European leaders put the full truth to the European people about the present controversy, their judgement will be no different to that of UN (where, incidentally, 8 of 15 European countries voted for the French-Mexican resolution, showing that the mass of the European nations repudiate race-hatred and colour -bars).

Congress leaders have maintained that neither the friendship nor the respect of the Europeans will be won by a policy of cowardice and appeasement. If the Indian people have not the necessary self-respect and courage to stand up for their rights, how can they expect to win the respect of Europeans, let alone friendship? Today, they are winning the respect of the majority of the Europeans and the admiration of a growing minority, many of whom are now actively supporting the passive resistance campaign. Among them are Europeans such as the Rev. Michael Scott, Mrs. Mary Barr and Rev. Satchell (all of whom went to jail to oppose the Ghetto Act), Senator Basner, who did so much to reveal the truth at UN, Mrs. Lavoipierre, Miss Cousens and Mrs. Mabel Palmer, who formed the Council for Human Rights, and the late Dr. John Robertson, a founder of the Council for Asiatic Rights.

Such Europeans are quite different from the wishy-washy friends of the appeasers who are nothing but agents of the Government, attempting by honeyed words to get the Indian people to accept any degradation whatever, without putting forward any opposition. The consequences of such advice would be to create contempt for Indians among Europeans.

By following a consistent policy of friendship with Europeans based on mutual respect and understanding, Congress policy will end ultimately in triumph, in the same way as today the Asian nations are forcing European countries to recognise their rights of independence, having achieved this not by abject surrender but by self-sacrificing struggle.

B. INTERNATIONAL

Up till the time of the passive resistance campaign the world generally was under the impression that South Africa was a democratic country and one which had participated nobly in the fight against Hitlerism. It had before it a world-famous statesman, Field Marshal Smuts.

It was then shocked to learn that a passive resistance campaign had started in this country to oppose the very principles of fascism that had plunged the world into a six-years' holocaust. Wide interest about South Africa was aroused and the world learnt of the full horrors of the colour-bar in South Africa. Protests against South Africa's system were made throughout the world and from every country (including Britain and America) came messages of sympathy and support for the Indian people. The self-sacrifices of the number of volunteers made an impression on the world and raised the prestige of South African Indians to that of the people of India, of the Indonesians and the Vietnamese. The campaign raised the struggle of the Non-Europeans to an international level and it was recognised as part of the world-wide struggle to make a reality of the war aims and the [United Nations Charter](#).

United Nations

At UN, delegates of the peoples of the world one after another condemned South Africa's slave system, not one country attempting to justify it. Britain and America tried to save South Africa by evading the issue and attempting to win support for reference of the matter to the International Court of Justice. But notwithstanding the influence and power of these two countries, a vote of censure was passed against South Africa's treatment of its Indian population when by a two-thirds majority UN passed the French-Mexican resolution.

According to Mr. Krishna Menon, a member of the Indian delegation, 'No small measure of success attained at United Nations is due to the passive resistance action in South Africa, and the sacrifice and suffering for our people there.'

PART 2: PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS DECIDES ON PASSIVE RESISTANCE

A provincial conference of the Natal Indian Congress, held at Durban on 30th March 1946, resolved as follows:

This provincial conference of the Natal Indian Congress, in terms of the decision of the executive of the South African Indian Congress, resolves launches a concerted passive resistance struggle against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill.

NATAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE COUNCIL

The March conference of the Natal Indian Congress decided that the conduct of passive resistance should be entrusted to a passive resistance council. It resolved as follows:

'For the successful prosecution and conduct of the passive resistance struggle, this conference resolves to appoint a council of 25 members to be known as the Passive Resistance Council. ...

After careful discussion the provincial conference came to the unanimous decision that only passive resistance volunteers should be eligible for membership on the Passive Resistance Council. This decision was based on the firm conviction that it would be unethical for a non-volunteer, who himself was not prepared to court imprisonment, to serve on a body which directs volunteers to break the law and to offer themselves for arrest and imprisonment

Powers and functions of council

The powers and functions of the Natal Passive Resistance Council were defined by the 'struggle' resolution of the March conference as follows:

.... Conference hereby delegates full and absolute powers to this council to carry out the following:

1. to organise forthwith a volunteer corps of a substantial number to conduct the struggle;
2. to launch forthwith a fighting fund for the struggle;
3. to launch the struggle at the opportune moment and in a manner it deems advisable, and to do all acts for the successful prosecution thereof.'

Subsequently, the status of the council was further clarified by the committee of the Natal Indian Congress, which laid down that the council is subordinate to the committee of Congress in so far as general policy and broad principle concerned.

First meeting of council

Although the Natal provincial conference of 30th March had resolved to appoint a council of twenty-five members, it was not until 6th May that the first meeting of the council was held. Even then only eleven persons could be found to volunteer as council members and it was decided that work should begin rather than wait for the full complement of twenty-five. So on the night of May 6th 1946 the eleven volunteers met to plan out a campaign of passive resistance, fully aware of the magnitude of their tasks and responsibilities, perhaps not knowing what turn future events would take or precisely how the campaign would develop, but firm in their convictions and confident of the unwavering support of the mass of the Indian people.

The eleven council members were: Dr. G. M. Naicker, Messrs. M. D. Naidoo, A. E. Patel, S. V. Reddy, H. A. Seedat, R. G. Pillay, M. P. Naicker, P. B. A. Reddy, M. Moodliar, R. A. Pillay and Debi Singh. Dr. Naicker was elected chairman of the council, Debi Singh secretary and A. E. Patel treasurer.

Method of resistance

The council carefully considered the appropriate time for the launching of the campaign and the different anti-Indian laws which passive resisters could systematically assail. In regard to the first point, it was decided to launch the struggle immediately the 'Ghetto' Bill became law. In regard to the laws to be broken, the council was of the firm opinion that since our decision to resist was a result of the 'Ghetto' Bill, our campaign must initially be directed against that measure. As the campaign expanded and when conditions made it possible, action could be taken against other anti-Indian legislation.

The council investigated the ways in which the 'Ghetto' Act could be attacked and found that, in the absence of available vacant houses in controlled areas, the only method open to us would be to occupy municipal and Crown lands in controlled areas.

TRANSCVAAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE COUNCIL

The Transvaal was not far behind Natal in organising for resistance. On April 21st a mass meeting of 7,000 Indians, held in Johannesburg under the auspices of the Transvaal Indian Congress, resolved to set up a passive resistance council of fifteen members to be appointed by Dr. Y. M. Dadoo, the president of the Transvaal Indian Congress.

The speed with which the Transvaal acted can well be judged by the fact that within twenty days after the mass meeting which authorised the formation of a council, four representatives of the Transvaal council were on their way to Durban for a joint meeting with the Natal council.

The Transvaal Passive Resistance Council was inaugurated with its full fifteen members, Dr. Y. M. Dadoo being elected chairman and Mr. J. N. Singh secretary.

Bearing in mind that the Indian population of the Transvaal is about one-seventh of that in Natal, it can be clearly seen that the people of that province have made a contribution to passive resistance which is in every way equal to Natal's. Not only has the Transvaal council maintained a steady flow of men and money to the 'front line' in Natal, but has also borne a goodly proportion of the political, publicity and organisational work involved in the planning of the campaign.

As a result of a joint council decision, no resistance camp was established in the Transvaal. The task of the Transvaal council, however, was made no whit lighter by this. For at the height of the campaign, when Natal's hands were more than full, big responsibilities such as the management of overseas publicity and the production of our official organ, the Passive Resister, had to be shouldered by them, quite apart from the ever-present burden of raising funds.

JOINT COUNCIL

No sooner had resistance councils been set up in the two provinces than it was decided that there should be complete co-ordination and perfect harmony between the two councils in order that a planned and effective campaign might be conducted. Hence the joint council came into being as the supreme body, which analysed each new situation, formulated policy and principles, decided on major activities and mapped out each new step to be taken. No room was left for independent decisions or unilateral actions.

It was due to this organised and disciplined basis that there developed the growth and intensification of a passive resistance campaign which drew the admiring interest of the whole world.

The joint council is composed of five representatives from each of the two councils. The secretaries of the two councils are joint secretaries of the joint council and the two chairmen preside alternately.

The first meeting of the joint council was held on May 11th 1946, and ten meetings have been held since.

THE CAPE PROVINCE

While the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses formed resistance councils to combat the 'Ghetto' Act, the Cape Indian Congress, under the outmoded leadership of Mr. Ahmed Ismail, remained inactive. Notwithstanding the fact that he was president of the South African Indian Congress, which had decided on resistance, Mr. Ismail not only did nothing to mobilise Cape Indians in support of the campaign, but also stubbornly refused to sponsor the formation a council when requested by Cape progressives and constantly attempted to hinder and harm the movement.

The vast majority of Cape Indians and other Non-Europeans, however were opposed to Mr. Ismail's retrogressive policy and soon took step that the Cape desired that the Cape did its share in the struggle. The progressives in the Cape desired to send resisters and funds to Natal without delay, and three passive resistance councils were set up in that province.

When considering the role that the Cape has played in the campaign, one has to bear in mind that that province does not suffer from colour-bar legislation to the same extent as the other three provinces of the Union. Although not affected by the 'Ghetto' Act and other anti-Indian laws, the Non-Europeans of the Cape have not hesitated to contribute their share in our struggle for freedom.

Under the guidance of Mrs. Z. Gool, Mr. Sundra Pillay, Mr. Cassim Amra and other leaders, a passive resistance council was established in Cape Town known as the Cape Passive Resistance Council and independent of the Cape Congress. Mr. Sundra Pillay was elected chairman, Mr. Cassim Amra secretary and Mr. Yusuf Motala treasurer.

The first batch of twelve Cape Town resisters, which included three women and was led by Mrs. Z. Gool, was sentenced in Durban on 13th August 1946.

In July 1946 a passive resistance council was set up in Port Elizabeth under the Port Elizabeth branch of the Cape Indian Congress, with Mr. M. M. Desai as chairman, Mr. V. K. Moodley as secretary and Dr. S. V. Appavoo as treasurer.

This council has sent into action four resisters and has contributed £600 to Natal council funds.

The East London Passive Resistance Council was formed under the East London Indian Congress on June 30th 1946, with Dr. N. V. Appavoo as chairman and Miss D. Jonathan and Mr. R. Harry as joint secretaries.

This council has contributed £250 to the Natal council funds.

RESISTANCE BEGINS

On June 2nd the Ghetto Bill became law.

June 13th was declared 'Resistance Day' to mark the beginning of passive resistance against the Ghetto Act. Indians observed complete *hartal* throughout the country. This was the first clear demonstration of the Indian community's determination to carry its opposition to the inhuman Ghetto Act farther than mere words.

'Resistance Day' culminated in an historic mass meeting of over 15,000 people at the Red Square in Durban. After the meeting a great procession marched to the corner of Gale Street and Umbilo Road, where under the leadership of Dr. Naicker and Mr. M. D. Naidoo the first batch of 17 passive resisters (including 7 women) pitched five tents on a piece of vacant municipal land in defiance of the Ghetto Act.

The sixteen other resisters of the first batch were: Mrs. Luxumi Govender, B. Veerama Pather, Miss Z. Asvat, Mrs. Jamila Bhabha, Miss Zohra Bhayat, Mrs. Amina Pahad, Mrs. Patel, Messrs. J. Premalal, R. A. Pillay, V. Patrick, Shaik Mahomed, M. N. Govender, P. Poonsamy, V. S. Chetty, T. J. Vasie, Abbai Soobramoney.

On June 21st the resisters were arrested for 'trespassing'. They were found guilty but cautioned and discharged. That very evening the resisters went back to the Gale Street camp. They were again charged with 'trespassing' and the magistrate passed a suspended sentence of 7 days' hard labour. Undeterred, the resisters promptly made their way back to Gale Street and occupied their camp once more in calm and dignified protest against the Ghetto Act.

European hooliganism

While the whole democratic world acclaimed the action of the passive resisters as just and brave, a certain section of the local European community found it most disconcerting. This group was made up of those people who are imbued with the Nazi theory of 'superior race', who lack all sense of justice and fairplay, and to whom 'might is right' and true democracy is something foreign.

These Europeans were amazed at the undaunted spirit of the passive resisters and, not accustomed to right thinking, decided to destroy the morale of the resisters by means of naked brute force. Squads of European hooligans were organised to terrorise the passive resisters. Defenceless men and women were assaulted, tents burned, passing cars stoned and some stationary ones set on fire.

These wanton acts of violence, however, achieved results directly opposite to those which the miscreants desired. The men and women on the Gale Street plot, sitting unafraid around their camp fires, showed greater courage and firmer determination.

'Hooligans or no hooligans, carry on we must, and carry on we shall...' These stirring words of Miss Zainab Asvat, that brave young girl who gave up her medical studies to join the ranks of the resisters, were the words in the hearts of all the resisters.

Hooliganism began on 16th June and continued with growing savagery till June 24th, when the district commandant of police read a proclamation under the Riotous Assemblies Act, prohibiting any gathering within 500 yards of the intersection of Gale Street and Umbilo Road.

Volumes could be written about those stormy days at Gale Street. The exemplary behaviour of the thousands of Indians who nightly gathered at Gale Street and in spite of extreme provocation refrained from violence, and the sacrifices, bravery and endurance of the passive resisters, are now part of history.

First to go in

It is interesting that although he was not a member of the first batch and led a group of 50 resisters into action on

June 25th, Dr. Dadoo was the very first resister to be sent to prison, when on the morning of June 27th he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment without the option of fine. Dr. Naicker was sentenced to six months without fine on the afternoon of the same day and within the next few days Mr. M. D. Naidoo, Dr. Goonam, Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee and Mr. R. A. Pillay followed them into jail as leaders of batches.

Authorities adopt a new tactic

On July 1st the authorities adopted a clever tactic to defeat the passive resisters. The courts this day imposed a fine without the option of imprisonment on over 100 resisters.

They were warned that if they did not pay the fines, their properties would be attached and sold under auction.

This was a severe test for the passive resisters. But they stood it as bravely as they held their ground against hooliganism. Not a single resister paid his fine.

The properties of a few of them were sold under auction and the amounts of the fines with other costs taken.

The courts abandoned the practice of sentencing without option of imprisonment and began sentencing resisters to one-month hard labour or £3 fine for the first offence.

Second phase

The campaign entered its second phase on 19th August, when Mr. George Singh and 4 other resisters occupied a vacant plot at Wentworth owned by Mr. Singh.

No action was taken by the police against these resisters, although a prominent K.C. gave the opinion that Mr. Singh and his group were guilty of a breach of the Ghetto Act.

After two months this camp was abandoned.

Expansion of second phase

On September 1st the action begun by Mr. George Singh's group was further expanded when Mr. Rugnath Singh occupied his own house with his family in the controlled area of Wentworth.

No action has been taken against this resister. He is still in occupation.

Resistance continues

After the UN decision in December last year [1946] there has been a general and quite natural decline of interest in the campaign. It was never expected that that campaign could be maintained at fever pitch throughout.

A joint council meeting, held immediately after the victory at UN, decided that it was imperative that resistance should continue until such time as the Union Government takes steps to implement the UN resolution.

Important leaders in India agree with this decision.

Regularly one batch every week (sometimes two) goes into action. Resistance continues.

SUPPORT FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Immediately after June 13th the Communist Party of South Africa declared its full support for the movement and its press has at all times given most favourable publicity to our campaign.

The African National Congress and the African People's Organisation of Natal (the Coloured people's organisation) both resolved to give passive resistance their sympathy and support. A fair number of African and Coloured resisters have served imprisonment.

The entire Non-European trade-union movement has rendered its useful cooperation and urged the workers, with splendid results, to join the campaign.

Council for Human Rights

On June 20th a group of Europeans met at the home of Rev. Satchell in Durban and as a result the Council for Human Rights came into being. In the words of Mrs. Lavoipierre, the chairman of the council, they 'deplored the attacks on defenceless resisters and felt in general sympathy with the passive resistance movement'.

The council's first step was to condemn the 'Ghetto' Act in a press statement, and since then it has rendered remarkable service to the campaign, at all times taking a bold and fearless stand.

Besides numerous letters and statements to the press, the council published the following pamphlets:

1. The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, by Rev. Warmington.
2. Non-violence: Law makers, Law breakers, by Rev. Michael Scott.
3. The Asiatic Act, by George Singh.

In its task of opposing racial oppression and educating European opinion, the council has had to work under very difficult conditions, but there is no doubt that it has achieved a good measure of success, due to the sincerity of purpose of its members.

Council for Asiatic Rights

The Council for Asiatic Rights was formed in Johannesburg with the same aims as the Council for Human Rights. It is continuing to carry out valuable work in support of passive resistance.

During the boycott of Indian traders in the Transvaal, the council sent its leading members to tour the affected areas

to counter the boycott movement.

P. R. C. DELEGATES TO UNITED STATES

On 10th July 1946 Mr. Ashwin Choudree left for the United States of America as delegate of the Joint Passive Resistance Council. Mr. Choudree's mission was to publicise the passive resistance struggle, to acquaint American public opinion with the injustice of colour-bar laws in South Africa, particularly the 'Ghetto' Act, and to advise the Indian delegation at UN.

Working under difficult conditions, Mr. Choudree did a fine piece of work accomplishing much during a short space of time. Owing to its postponement to 23rd October, he had to return before the United Nations General Assembly met.

After Mr. Choudree's return, Messrs. Sorabjee Rustomjee and H.A. Naidoo were appointed delegates of the joint council to proceed to the United Nations meeting in New York, in order to advise the Indian delegation. When the UN Assembly discussed the complaint of India against the Union Government on the treatment of Indians in South Africa, both these delegates were and kept in close touch with Mrs. Pandit and her delegation.

The S.A.I.O. delegates, Messrs. Kajee, Pather and Christopher, were present in New York but thanks to Messrs. Rustomjee and Naidoo their usual line of 'co-operation with General Smuts' was totally rejected by Mrs. Pandit. The India delegation had complete confidence in our two delegates, who proved of great assistance.

P. R. C. DELEGATES TO INDIA

On 10th March 1947, Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker left for India as delegates of the joint council. They were received as 'distinguished guests' at the All-Asian Conference in Delhi and followed conference deliberations to the end. They established important contacts with delegates of many Asian countries, such as China, Indonesia, Egypt, Persia and others.

They had fruitful discussions with Pandit Nehru and other members of the interim Indian Government regarding our struggle and the next session of United Nations. The doctors met Panditji more than once, and in long conversations on several points complete agreement prevailed, our delegates being greatly impressed by Panditji's firmness.

Other outstanding personalities met by Doctors Dadoo and Naicker were Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah and Mr. P. C. Joshi, leaders of the three greatest political organisations in India.

Our delegates travelled throughout India, addressed huge public meetings wherever they went, under the auspices of various organisations, ranging from trade unions to merchants' chambers. They were warmly received by Maharajas and Communists alike.

In short, their mission has been a tremendous success and the results will stand our movement in good stead.

They returned to South Africa on 27th May 1947.

P. R. C. PUBLICATIONS

Having the consistent support of only a very limited number of newspapers, the passive resistance councils have had to undertake their own publications. The most important is its official weekly organ, the Passive Resister, which will soon be increased in size.

The Flash, the unique bulletin of the council, five or six numbers of which were issued in a day at the height of the campaign, has rendered remarkable service. Its great success was due to the artistic talent and tireless efforts of its originator and editor, Mr. Bobby Naidoo.

The other chief publications directly published by the council were the album of pictures, How We Live, and the following pamphlets: 5 Months of Struggle: Resist the Indian Ghetto Act; and We Shall Resist.

WOMEN'S ACTION COMMITTEE

On 20th June 1946 a group of Indian women, desirous of assisting the struggle, met in Durban to form the Women's Action Committee.

This committee has done magnificent work in the raising of funds. Working tirelessly, under not very easy conditions, its public-spirited members have raised nearly a third of the total amount contributed to the Natal council funds.

An outstanding and highly successful undertaking of this committee was 'Freedom Fair' held at Curries Fountain.

INDIAN MERCHANTS' COMMITTEE

Immediately after Dr. Naicker went to prison, about ten leading Indian merchants volunteered to form a committee to assist in the raising of funds.

The council readily accepted the offer and the committee has done splendid work, raising a substantial amount from the Indian merchants of Durban.

The two members to whose unselfish and tireless efforts the success of the committee is undoubtedly due are Mr. R. M. Naidoo and Mr. Jalbhoy Rustomjee.

INDIAN STUDENTS' COMMITTEE

Young Indian students from both boys' and girls' schools, especially in Durban, have played a worthy part in the campaign.

Little girls from some junior schools in the suburbs formed a 'gifts and comforts' squad and regularly every Friday brought quantities of cigarettes, which they collected for the resisters.

Many small groups of little boys and girls carried out fund drives in their own areas and raised quite a few pounds.

The most outstanding contribution of the students was made by the Indian Students' Committee, which consisted of boys and girls from the senior schools. Risking the wrath of their teachers and the Education Department, they

organised a highly successful, stage show which realised £1,000.

CANTEEN

Made possible by the generosity of Mr. Nagin Hargovan, who provided premises in Agnes Road free of rent, the P.R. C. canteen was opened on 27th August 1946.

Many Indian merchants, whose names are too numerous to mention here, donated furniture and crockery. The running of the canteen has cost comparatively little, thanks to liberal gifts of vegetables and meat from the Indian market and groceries from stores.

Its usefulness can be judged by the fact that the canteen has to date served 26,500 meals to resisters.

ORGANISATION OF P. R. C. WORK

At the height of the campaign the work of the Natal council was indeed big and complex. The efficient carrying out of the numerous vital tasks was ensured by careful planning, which brought into being a number of departments with a different person in charge of each.

The success of passive resistance has been due in no small measure to these men, who left their own private work and volunteered to carry out almost full-time honorary work for the council.

The chief departments, most of which are still functioning, were:

Secretarial:	M. P. Naicker
Finance:	A. E. Patel
Recruiting:	S. V. Reddy
Legal and drafting:	George Singh
Information:	A. I. Meer
Resisters' welfare:	P. B. Singh
Canteen:	J. Pillay and S. M. Singh.

The departmental chiefs were ably assisted in their work by a Congress office staff which consisted of men who were not only highly efficient but (which is perhaps more important) had the welfare of the campaign fully at heart. For them work did not begin at nine and end at five. They came to the office when there was work to start — whether at seven or six o'clock did not matter; they left when all the work for the day was finished. It was not uncommon for them to remain at their duties till eleven or twelve at night. For them there was no such thing as regular meal hours.

NEW P. R. C. OFFICIALS

When Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker went to prison, Mr. Nana Sita was elected acting chairman of the Transvaal council, Mr. Debi Singh acting chairman of the Natal council, and Mr. M. P. Naicker took the place of Mr. Debi Singh as secretary of the Natal council.

When Doctors Dadoo and Naicker left for India, Mr. Nana Sita was acting chairman for the Transvaal and Dr. Goonam acting chairman for Natal.

PRESENT MEMBERS OF NATAL COUNCIL

The following are the present members of the Natal council. Of the foundation members, Mr. M. Mudaliar resigned and Mr. Seedat left for England to commence medical studies, for which he had enrolled before he became council member: Dr. G. M. Naicker, S. M. Singh, M. D. Naidoo, Dr. K. Goonam, J. N. Singh, Ashwin Choudree, A. I. Meer, P. B. Singh, M. P. Naicker, A. E. Patel, R. A. Pillay, P. B. A. Reddy, George Singh, R. G. Pillay, S. V. Reddy, Debi Singh, and Manilal Gandhi.

YOUTH, WOMEN AND WORKERS IN THE VANGUARD

Studying the statistics of the campaign one finds:

- (a) that of the 1,710 passive resisters who served imprisonment, 1,476 are between 18 and 30 years of age;
- (b) that the overwhelming majority of those who went to prison are workers;
- (c) that 279 women suffered imprisonment....

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