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***NATIONAL WORKING COMMITTEE***

***DOCUMENT (3)***

***22 JULY 1993***

***MISS***  
***SOUTH AFRICA***  
***1993***





## **ANC WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

**TO : ANC - NWC**

**FROM : ANCWL**

**DATE : 21/07/1993**

**SUBJECT : INVOLVEMENT OF THE ANC IN THE MISS SA  
BEAUTY PAGEANT**

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*The League has learnt with shock about the involvement of the ANC in the Miss SA Beauty Pageant. The League notes that the practice of not consulting structures in particular the Women's League and the Women's Emancipation Commission continues.*

*The League takes strong exception even against the use of the language by ANC members that reflects strongly on the backwardness with regard to the gender debates. Sensitivity with regard to how women are portrayed by the ANC becomes crucial in the light of:*

- a) The present ANC priorities.*
- b) The involvement of the ANC in beauty issues given the limited time before elections take place.*
- c) A contradiction of the ANC policy pronouncements in place, that promote women's emancipation*
- d) The consequences of such actions and statements on the image and credibility of the ANC.*

*The League further reiterates the call for an NEC workshop to be held soon on Gender Equality and Sexual Harassment.*

*In the same light the League acknowledges the right of individuals to involve themselves in such ventures and that the same issue still remains controversial within South African women.*

*We strongly demand that the ANC publicly distances itself from the actions of the said NEC comrades and Organising Department of the ANC.*



African National Congress  
National Working Committee  
22 July 1993

From: Commission on the Emancipation of Women.

Issue :

Miss SA Contest

Decision Required :

While remaining free to comment on the racist nature of any event, including beauty contests, the ANC should distance itself from any initiative which actively promotes beauty contests, and specifically the one requiring the establishment of a R250 000 fund to train black women to compete in the Miss SA Contest (see Annexure 1)

Further that the ANC's training priorities for the development of South African women should not be training women as models and for participation in beauty pageants.

Motivation :

The ANC, as an organisation, committed to the ideals of a non-racial, non-sexist society cannot in principle be associated with such initiatives. The ANC has been under pressure for some time for not "putting its feet where its mouth is " and not putting into practice the non-sexist policies which we profess.

The ANC needs to be sensitive to the views of women, many of whom consider beauty contests to be sexist and an affront to their dignity.

An initiative which prioritises the training of women as models and participants in beauty pageants makes a mockery of the principles of non-sexism and affirmative action to which the ANC is committed. It says to the women of South Africa, that "beauty" as perceived by men, is a woman's greatest attribute, to the extent that the ANC wants to actively promote the training of women in this field in preference to others.

This is an insult to the dignity and status of women and cannot enjoy the support of a national liberation movement.

Background :

The full details of how the ANC became involved in the Miss SA Contest is contained in the attached document. (Annexure 1 and 2).

As the documents state, members of the ANC National Executive



Committee and the Co-ordinating Committee of the Anti-Bophuthatswana Campaign were approached following complaints concerning the allegedly racist selection of finalists in the 1993 Miss South African competition.

Initial discussions with the promoters of the competition took place, attended by Comrades John Nkadimeng, Rocky Malebana-Metsing and Peter Mokaba, at which various proposals were placed on the table for the consideration of all parties.

One of these proposals was the establishment of a R250 000 training fund for beauty pageants and modes in South Africa. It was further proposed that the ANC:

- \* jointly administer such fund;
- \* be consulted in future Miss SA contests;
- \* jointly appoint judges for future contests.

The Commission on the Emancipation of Women and the Women's League were not involved nor consulted at any time. The secretariat of Commission registered its concern with the Secretary-General immediately on hearing of the initiative (Annexure 3)

A meeting of the Commission held on July 21st. authorised the secretariat to draw the attention of the NWC to this initiative, and request that the ANC distances itself from it.

Note: The Commission has not requested the ANC to oppose beauty contests, but to be register its awareness that this is a sensitive issue, which requires education of our people in an understanding of the exploitation and oppression of women.

  
Frene Ginwala  
Deputy Head.



ANNEXURE 1  
**INTERNAL MEMORANDUM**

15th July 1993

RECEIVED 15 JUL 1993

From: Cde Rocky Malebana - Metsing  
Cde John K. Nkadimeng  
Organising Department

To: Cde Cyril Ramaphosa  
Secretary General

**Re: Miss South Africa 1993**

The Co-Ordinating Committee of the Anti - Bophuthatswana Campaign was informed by concerned members of the public and some democratic formations of the injustices and lack of fairness experienced by our people involved in the Miss South Africa Competitions.

This public outcry was communicated to us after the 1993 semi- finals published on Sunday Times of the 4th July 1993. In which nine of the twelve finalists are white. The contention is that:-

- \* These finalists are not reflective nor representative of the South Africa population.

- \* Judges who presided in some of these competitions were mainly white, and that they were racist and or biased against black contestants.

- \* Blacks had little or no say in the running and promotion of the Miss South Africa Competition.

- \* Sun City venue chosen to host the event was unacceptable as it is situated within Bophuthatswana and therefore associated with the Mangope's Administration and lack of free political activity in that territory.



The secretariat of the Anti - Bophuthatswana Co-Ordinating Committee decided to engage sponsors of the competition in order to redress the situation.

A meeting was arranged between Promoters of the competition - Sunday Times, Rapport, Sun - International, M NET and on our side Cde J.K Nkadimeng, Rocky Malebana- Metsing, Peter Mokaba, Mandla Dlamini and Yusuf Asmal on the 13th July 1993 at the Carlton Hotel.

During our discussion it became clear that the unfair selection as characterized by results cannot be reversed without adverse implications to both contestants, promoters or sponsors and ourselves.

After intensive negotiations it became abundantly clear to all parties involved that the postponement or the cancellation of the 1993 event as an alternative was not in our best interest, but could only be an expensive last resort.

In order to break the deadlock since we started negotiations at the last minute, when all things were in place and the contest scheduled for the 7th August 1993 in about three weeks time, our delegation proposed the following.

- The established of a training fund to the tune of R250 000 for Beauty Peagents and models in South Africa.
- The fund be jointly administered by sponsors of Miss South Africa Competition and ANC appointed representative.
- That future contest be a subject of proper consultations between the ANC and sponsors of the contest ( Sunday Times, Rapport, MNET and Sun - International ).
- That Judges be jointly appointed for the 1993/8/7 contest.
- That a feasibility study be conducted as a matter of urgency by a competent firm of consultants on the training project at the cost of R10 000 and a co - ordinator be employed to co - ordinate the project.



- That the Miss World Competition be discussed outside this particular forum since it does not involve other parties except MNET and Sun International.

The other side accepted all the above mentioned conditions of settlement, with the modification of the administration of the training fund. We are satisfied that this proposed agreement is a major breakthrough for the oppressed masses of our people taking into consideration the short time involved.

We therefore recommend that officials:-

- Rectify the agreement or make such other necessary amendments.
- A standing team of our representatives be considered for appointment to interest and consult with Miss Sotuh Africa Sponsors and Promoters in future competitions.

**FOR S.G. s information**

NB = a. Girls have started arriving in Johannesburg for the competition.

b. Sun International is of the opinion that the contest can proceed without us, and that this agreement is therefore unnecessary.

c. The Miss World Competition is not covered by this proposed agreement, and that it is still subject to negotiations. On this issue we do not have any major misunderstanding except the Sun City venue, of which is subject to progress made as the Multiparty Negotiations forum and our bilateral discussions.







## ANNEXURE 2.

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### POSITION PAPER ON MISS SOUTH AFRICA 1993 FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following complaints concerning the selection process for Miss South Africa 1993, meetings were convened at the Carlton Centre on 13 July 1993, which were attended by all interested parties. Arising out of these meetings, an informal consultative committee was established in order to discuss and explore ways and means of resolving the issues.
- 1.2 During further consultations and discussions, consensus appears to have been reached on the following issues:
  - 1.2.1 the organisers of Miss South Africa (Sunday Times and Rapport), whilst having based the selection process on historical selection procedures (which in 1992 produced a coloured Miss South Africa and a black princess) concede that the selection criteria could be improved in order to achieve a more representative group of finalists;
  - 1.2.2 the restructuring of the competition scheduled for 7 August 1993 will not be feasible as it will debase the credibility of the entire competition to the detriment of both the existing girls who have been selected as finalists and any new girls who are added on to the finalists. It is also not possible to re-judge the competition before the 7 August 1993;
  - 1.2.3 the postponement of the competition in order to allow for a re-judging process acceptable to all parties will not be feasible owing to difficulties regarding television scheduling, cost considerations and logistical and organisational complications;
  - 1.2.4 the event cannot continue without there being broad consensus on the basis which future events will be held and organised; and
  - 1.2.5 the parties do not desire to proceed with the event contrary to the feelings of all parties involved in the consultative process.



2. Cancellation

The organisers have indicated that, subject to the approval of their respective boards of directors, and given the foregoing, that it may be preferable for the current event to be cancelled in its entirety. This may create an opportunity for the staging of a new pageant later in the year, before Miss World, which pageant can be established following a fully consultative process. The parties reiterate that this is always a possibility and the failure to reach consensus on the balance of the issues raised in this document would mean that it would be necessary to revert to the cancellation option as a fall back position. The organisers cannot, however, guarantee that their respective boards of directors would maintain the same involvement in the new event, if this option were followed. Such a stance would be for purely commercial considerations.

3. Possible compromise position

Following extensive discussions, it was proposed to the meeting that if the organisers agreed to certain conditions, it may be possible to sanction the staging of the existing event, given fulfilment of those conditions. Following a caucus of the parties, it appeared that the major stumbling block to the compromise proposal was the establishment of a trust fund for the purpose of promoting training at the relevant levels, of participants in beauty pageants. It was felt by the organisers that the allocation of moneys to what may be perceived as a frivolous cause could have an adverse public relations consequence for all parties, given the urgent needs of the community in areas such as health care, education and food.

4. Counter proposal

- 4.1 It was agreed that the organisers would formulate a counter proposal for submission to the informal consultative committee with a view to reaching a resolution on this matter by Friday, 16 July 1993. It is understood by all parties that the proposal set out below is subject to the approval of the respective boards of directors of the parties and is for discussion purposes only. This proposal is submitted as an alternative to the cancellation option referred to above.



4.2 The proposal, on which it appears a measure of consensus may already have been reached, is as follows:

4.2.1 the informal consultative committee on Miss South Africa will continue to meet and to consult on the organisation of the Miss South Africa beauty pageant both in relation to:

4.2.1.1 the judging process of the 1993 Miss South Africa event;

4.2.1.2 the development of the 1994 Miss South Africa event; and

4.2.1.3 a smaller sub-section of the committee will consult in relation to the Miss World beauty pageant scheduled for 27 November 1993 at Sun City;

4.2.2 all parties commit themselves to the following:

4.2.2.1 the implementation of a selection process at all levels in South African society and in particular at grass roots level;

4.2.2.2 the training and grooming of prospective candidates as part of the process towards creating a representative Miss South Africa in 1994;

4.2.2.3 the implementation of community workshops and a comprehensive promotions campaign addressed at all levels of our society, aimed at eliciting entries to Miss South Africa 1994 of the broadest cross-section of the community;

4.2.2.4 the employment of a programme co-ordinator to be appointed by the informal consultative committee who will undertake and compile a formal feasibility study and programme for the implementation of the aforegoing, with a budget, for the compilation of such report of R10 000;

4.2.2.5 all four parties involved in the staging of the Miss South Africa event will allocate goods, services and the necessary cash, to the



value of an additional combined R250 000 in order to achieve the points set out above. The manner of utilisation of such resources will be based on the feasibility plan and proposal referred to in 4.2.2.4 above and will be subject to the joint supervision of all parties involved in the informal consultative committee, with a suitable project co-ordinator, appointed by such consultative committee, being responsible for the execution of such programme;

- 4.2.2.6 the commitment of the parties to provide goods, services and cash to the value of R250 000 will be subject to independent audit to ensure that the contributions are in fact made and met.

5. Judging

As regards the judging of the Miss South Africa 1993 finals, the parties commit themselves, as in the past, to a fair and even-handed implementation of accepted judging criteria without bias to colour, race, creed, religion or ethnic origin. The panel of judges will be at least 12 in number and the judging process of the event will be audited by at least one representative of an independent firm of auditors. To this end, the parties will consult regarding the appointment of the judges for 1993, specifically in regard to the criteria which such judges should fulfil and with specific reference to the fact that there will be at least equal numbers of black and white judges on the panel. This will be subject to the reservation that the secrecy of the identity of the judges should be maintained as far as possible and limited to only a select number of persons, to limit any interference with the judging process. In this regard, consultations may be necessary with the editors of Sunday Times and Rapport, in order to achieve a consensus.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposals referred to above are, as already stated, subject to the approval of the relevant higher authorities of all parties represented at the informal consultative committee and are made subject to the fact that the acceptance will result in:



- 6.1.1 the Miss South Africa 1993 finals pageant being held at Sun City on 7 August 1993, without disruption or boycott;
  - 6.1.2 the overseas stars scheduled to appear at the event being permitted to attend by the relevant authorities; and
  - 6.1.3 the winner of the Miss South Africa 1993 pageant entering the Miss World 1993 beauty pageant to be staged at Sun City on 27 November 1993.
- 6.2 The parties all recognise that this is a matter of extreme urgency and that a decision will have to be taken as soon as possible as to how all the parties should proceed. In the interim, all the parties commit themselves to the confidentiality of these discussions and this proposal.



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## COMMISSION ON THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

TO: COMRADE SECRETARY GENERAL

CC: COMRADE PRESIDENT

FROM: FRENE GINWALA

DATE: 19 JULY 1993

RE: MISS SOUTH AFRICA 1993

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Dear Comrade Cyril

We are concerned at the report that the ANC has taken initiatives to involve the organisation in the Miss South Africa beauty contest. Among other items, plans are under way to set up a "training fund of R250 000 for Beauty Peagents and models", to jointly appoint judges, and to set up a standing team of ANC representatives for future competitions.

We find both the content and language of the internal memorandum outlining these initiatives, prepared by members of the NEC who have been meeting with the promoters extremely sexist and offensive.

The question of beauty contests is a matter of controversy. For some black men, allegedly politically advanced NEC members, it appears to be simply concerned with the racial composition of the participants and organisers. For women, it is a matter of their dignity and status.

We request from the Secretary General an explanation of how the ANC, which claims to be a non-sexist organisation has permitted such initiatives to be taken and has not even considered it necessary to discuss the matter with women or consult the Commission. We also request information on what steps are being taken to ensure that non-sexist policies that the ANC professes are put into practice.

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**The People Shall Govern!**



If the ANC is setting up special training funds for women should the priority be to train women as models and participants in beauty pageants? Who should set such priorities?

Yours in the struggle for a non-sexist and non-racial democracy

*Frene*

Frene Ginwala  
Deputy Head

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