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A iGAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. SA'
DON EDUCATION tCOIiilViITTEE

V1.8.th Sc, tember -1'. 78

Pro heals fer the Agenda for the t pint meetinv of re
NE' and Education Committees of the AM to take
Septembe: 30th to October 3rd 9V3.

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olace at MorevOrQ

,ISSueeef Education in Our Struggle", is correctly worried about the absence
of a clear and coherent ANC eiucetion policy. It argues that the formulati
cf an education policy requires, in the first-inStanee, the explicit
statement of a set of general principles. That document states:

What follows is not a programme on education. Rehher, we outline
the Erincigles upon which any such pregramme should be based,
and Suggest the immediate tasks necessary if the Movement is to
eaveleh suCh a revolutionary education policy.

The outline of principles ehiCh foilows in the iocument may be briefly
summarized as follows: education is related to the'society as a whole through
the system of productien and the ideOIIOgical and cultural structure; the-
educational system in the new society muSt be used to'aeveIOp the 'neW'man
and wgmenv progressive, internationalist, Committed to buildin3,the new
seeiety and equiped to do so in ecbordance with the society's and the4peeplets
yneeds from time to time;.in the revolutionary struggle, education must eerVe
to prodhce cadres to take their place in that struggle.

The document produced by the Dar Es Salaam Education Committee, "The Burning
TheSe.general principles are more or less repeated both in the Report en'the
Maputo'Seminar end in the iocument issued from LaSaka "Education
PoliCy.of the African National Congxess(SA)". There are differences hetWenn
theSe verieus documents but by end large there.seems to be.e large'measure
of agreement and we believe that a succinct statement of principles should
be quickly arrived at at the-meeting.

It.is necessary to stress, however, that while.general principles age.an
essential element in-the precess of policy formation, en their own they are
not at all sufficient. Strategies and tactics, that is to say, policies and
.COncrete programmes, cannot-be derived from general-prineiples. General
principlethave to be SiVem a Concrete content in concrete situations. Thus,
another eessential element.in arriving at educational policies is the analysis
of the present conjuncture. This points to ah important gap in'ihe Burning
Issue..' document, a gap which is highlighted by the fact that at Various
points it, ih'fact, attempts to derive Specific policies from the general
principles-without making an analysis of the situationthh 8 brings us to
the next points for inclusion on the agenda. .

"The-Burning Issue.." document reeognisas and_stresees that education in the
site of strugglee This is correct hut it is necessary to differentiate the
situations:

a. It is quite clear that in one sense, the ANC has 10mg recognised that the
educational Sphere is a sphere of struggle. It is only necessary to recall
the struggle against Bantu Education in the 1950's and the support given
to Soweto students in 1976'and after.

Nonetheless, it is also clear that the ANC has not paid sufficient attention
to the educational sector in South Africa. Too often there is merely a
blanket Opposition expresseD to black and Bantu Education precisely en
the hasis-ef.'3eneral principles; but me analysis is made of specific
features of the concrete situation and its effects.on the political
mobilisatiien of students and intellectuals. Thus, theretie little analysis
of the education system, how it relates to the ieVeloping economy and
the changing division of labour, what the-effect is of the very massive
widening Od primary education for Africans, what is the significanee Of
the expansion of technical education for AfriCahs, what are the political
meVements and ideologies developing in the black schools and universities,
etc. That is to say, it is not eufficient merely t9 condemn the ehucational
system fer blacks as being a weapon for Apartheid (which it undoubtedly is),
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it must also be recognised that these educational institutions are being utilised by the people and that they are riven with contradictions (hence Soweto 1976); it is necessary to analyse the contradictions and to work out policies of opposition which may involve boycott (as at present?), but which may also be apparently reformist in character, e.g. demands for syllabus reform, the question of language instruction, school facilities, teacher training, democratisation, etc. That is, to mount demands which arise in the concrete situation which can form the basis of a variety of political struggles.

What the ANC has failed to recognise so far, and here is the Burning Issue.. document makes a basic point, is the political nature of its own educational activities. A sharp line has been drawn between political education in political study classes and basic education which has tended to be thought of as the function of professional teachers. Obviously, professional educators in the ANC have an important, even vital role to play in ANC education, but that education must not in the first place be thought of as a technical operation - it is a political process relating to the political struggle and basic education and "technical" skills are part of that political process.

But to make this principle the actual basis of a policy on education, it must not be merely acknowledged and then put aside - so that the discussion of the Morogoro school or classes in the camps become reduced to technical discussions about books and equipment only. What is to be taught is the political question and that question can only be answered on the basis of a close analysis of the present needs of the revolutionary struggle and the projected needs in terms of an assessment of the likely developments in the struggle over the next few years. This calls for close collaboration between the RC, NEC and the various education committees and schools. The burning issue is to turn young militants into political cadres who are literate, politically conscious and skilled to perform the tasks required by the Movement. Thus, education must be structured to meet the specific political and organisational tasks of the Movement. This, therefore, returns us to the need for concrete political analysis which links the political struggle to the 'educational' tasks.

Therefore the agenda for the meeting must, in our view, include a discussion of the developments internally in the educational system in South Africa (including the present struggles) and how these affect external educational work and an analysis of the requirements of the Movement in terms of educational priorities. These, together with a discussion of the general principles and the additional points made on page 11 of "The Burning Issue.." document, should be on the agenda;