

The Branch executive meet at least once every month preferably on an agreed day in order to take care of business.

However, the impression should ^{not} be created that lack of interest or apathy was at the service of the irregular meetings. The executive had its share of problems to cope with and noteworthy amongst these were:

1) The fact that our Chairman, M.B. Yengwa, was taken ill at a time when we were beginning to organise our work in a much more systematic way.

2) The fact that our first Secretary, Comrade Cab Zungu, because of various problems was unable to function in an effective way as possible as convenor of meetings.

3) The fact that upon his subsequent departure, Comrade Theresa Maimane, withdrew from the Branch executive meetings as secretary.

4) But, in the main because of style of work ~~much~~ hampered to regular meetings through postponement for one reason or another (absence of members of the executive) of agreed-on meetings.

In the main the Branch executive, although it succeeded in organising and arranging general members meetings, failed to grapple with some of the more fundamental tasks outlined above ^{which} the Branch must concern itself.

It was primarily the executive's consciousness of its basic failings which prompted a special meeting to consider ways and means of meeting the above fundamental requirements and propose a style of work and an organisational structure which will be more effective and able to cope with. These proposals we now place to the general members as a guideline for our future activities:

I STRUCTURE:

That the Branch Executive Committee be composed of, members from each of the various committees now functioning within the U.K. i.e. Youth, Women, Finance and Publicity, Trade Unions together with 3 elected members other than those involved in the above committees. Members of the Office Committee to serve in an ex-officio capacity in the Branch executive Committee.

The main reason for this proposed structure is that it will be representative of the broadest cross-section of activists in the various fields of solidarity within the U.K.

It will be much more expedient to coordinate the activities.

2 FUNCTIONS:

That the functions of this Committee should be mainly as outlined in the opening section of this part of the report.

3 STYLE OF WORK:

That this committee meet at least once every 2 weeks in order to discuss the implementation of the above tasks as continuing considerations, but equally important to review the current events within S.A. with a view to initiating solidarity campaigns in the U.K. and Europe.

Clearly this last mentioned-task is of vital importance to our people's action at home. Such a regular and continuing assessment and awareness of events at home will also serve the added and important purpose of making preparations in good time before Solidarity campaigns are actually mounted.

In the final analysis, our real task ^{in the U.K.} is to win over support for our people's just Struggle.

II October 1972

2 THE BRANCH AND SOLIDARITY ACTION IN U.K.

Functions of Branch:

- I) To provide political and organisational content to the activities of our members by way of:
 - a) Regular meetings aimed at raising the level of political understanding of the general members through discussion of theoretical aspects of the struggle as well as providing a platform for discussion of current and developing activities within S.A.
 - b) Education of our members on aspects of our struggle and the propagation of our struggle within the U.K. as speakers.
- 2) To initiate complement, and coordinate with solidarity movements in the U.K. and Europe on campaigns designed to support the various aspects of the struggle of our people and isolation in the international arena of the racist regime.
- 3) To mobilise all South African patriots in the U.K. in meaningful and purposive activity at various levels such as solidarity action, raising funds, writing and speaking on S.A. issues and generally to represent the A.N.C. as and when required.
- 4) In general to assist the Office in its tasks as the official representatives of our people in the U.K.

In reviewing the work of the Branch and particularly its elected executive within the above framework a number of weaknesses, in both organisation and style of work emerge. Added to this, are a number of functional short-comings.

I) In so far as organising general members' meetings, the committee can with some justification report a quite substantive and fairly successful year.

Over the period under review-----general members meetings were organised, and discussions arranged for these meetings ranged over a wide range of topics including:

A report on the extended meeting of the A.N.C. Executive at which a number of the most urgent problems facing the movement were discussed at length. Such problems included; The Governments Bantustan policy; the energetic policy of SASO; The issue of Dialogue; the tasks of internal reconstruction and the organisational problems facing the A.N.C. etc.

A series of 3 separate meetings focussing attention on current events within S.A. with particular reference to the Bantustans, SASO. and the growth of the Movement of Black Consciousness, the issue of Dialogue and Sports.

A discussion on Unity between A.N.C. and P.A.C. and its implications.

Special general members meetings were organised to commemorate

The 60th Anniversary of the founding of the A.N.C. Hero's Day.

June 26th on which occasion we were fortunate to have as our speaker our Acting President General O.R. Tambo.

It is difficult to assess whether our general members' meetings aimed at political discussions on matters directly relating to our struggle have been sufficiently regularly organised. Certainly we want to avoid merely having discussion for its own sake. But what needs to be done more regularly at such meetings are:

- I) A regular news review
- 2) More discussion of our tasks within the U.K. and Europe and how best to meet these.

This leads us on to an assessment of the Branch Executive

The Branch executive has, on more than one occasion seen it fit to examine its own style of work since it was continuously during the period under review; being plagued by cancelled meetings which had been previously agreed to. At a special meeting of the executive therefore it was decided that:

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Comrades,

It is proper at an Annual General Meeting to start with a political report. We do not pretend in any way that this report is going to be both comprehensive and in depth. The time in hand to deal with the business of tonight simply does not allow it. Therefore, we propose to concern ourselves mainly with some of the larger events, issues and developments within our country in the recent period in order to assess their significance for the national struggle of the oppressed peoples, and possibly to guide us, here in the U.K., in our complementary tasks.

However, it is important and, indeed, essential, to place the struggle of our people in its proper political context without at the same time minimising its own inherent contribution and importance to the struggle of all oppressed peoples for liberation, peace and progress.

In the first instance, the SA struggle is a part of, and linked to, the world-wide struggle against international imperialism. Our people are a part of the anti-imperialist alliance comprising the socialist countries, the movements for national liberation and genuine independence in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the progressive forces within the capitalist countries.

In the second instance, and more particularly, our struggle is essentially linked with the struggles of the people of Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau against the reactionary alliance of South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal: an alliance which is underpinned by the South African state, itself an instrument of international imperialism and at the same time of expansionist South African capitalism.

In the first context we pay tribute to the revolutionary will and determination of the Vietnamese people, against the most powerful political-military power in the modern era of imperialism. The struggle of the Vietnamese people against the successive designs of French, Japanese and American imperialism has already added a new chapter to the history of revolutionary struggles. It is and will undoubtedly serve as a source of constant inspiration to struggling people the world over, not least of all our own people.

Yet Vietnam also wrote a quieter page in the history of people's struggles - i.e. the importance of international solidarity action. No previous struggle has captured the support of so many millions throughout the world, including the western countries, and who amongst us can doubt that these forces will come to the support and aid of our own just struggle? Certainly one of the contributory factors that led to the release of black American patriot Angela Davis was the acute embarrassment caused to the American administration by the international campaign for her release. The lessons for us are clear. For our people, apart from the concrete demonstrations that we must ensure will accrue to our future struggle, it is and will be a source of great moral strength to maintain and increase international solidarity.

Nearer home two events of historic importance underline the potentially revolutionary possibilities of the Southern African situation.

In Zimbabwe, the designs of British imperialism were for the time being shattered by the popular will of a united people, who, despite police state conditions enforced by the Smith regime, unequivocally rejected the proposed sell-out.

In Namibia the historic strike of workers against the harshness and brutality of the contract labour system, coupled with the clearly political overtones of the demands and the spreading mass action, shook South African imperialism into temporary retreat. Not since the Mine Workers strike of 1946 have we witnessed the strength of united working class action.

In both Zimbabwe and Namibia the degree of organisation, the skill of mobilising the masses of the people, together with the response of the masses, is a sure sign and pointer to the strength of mass-based struggle.

The continuing struggle of our compatriots in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau provide the prospects of a widening and deepening crisis for the regimes of Portugal, Rhodesia and, not least of all, South Africa. With the escalation and extension of struggle by the freedom fighters, the involvement of the Republic becomes proportionately deeper, since Portugal has neither the potential for the ability to prosecute these colonial wars without the aid of NATO and South Africa. The Republic, in turn, cannot view with equanimity the use of her own resources, particularly manpower.

We pledge our support and solidarity with the freedom fighters of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau and urge our movement's continuing co-operation and co-ordination. No doubt the opening of the SA front in the Southern African crisis will prove to be decisive to the victory of the oppressed millions in these regions.

Events within SA itself have given much cause for optimism in the recent past. After the massive repression of the early sixties, the years of silent suffering are steadily giving way to widespread protest and resistance at all levels. The past year and more have indeed witnessed growing signs of political activity and manifestations of protest throughout the SA black communities, and, with the last black-initiated student strike, even the white community. I intend briefly to go over some of these events and developments.

But we need to remind ourselves of our problems too.

Within SA the problems posed by the oppressor government's Bantustan policy continue to make urgent tactical demands on the Movement. In 1962 when the Verwoerd government announced its Bantustan scheme, the movement, quite correctly, condemned the scheme as a fraud and called for the boycott of the elections in the Transkei. Our understanding of the Bantustan scheme was as follows:

- (a) It was an intensification of apartheid policies leading to greater oppression of the people.
- (b) It was an attempt to divert the energy and attention of our people from the larger issue of a national struggle to that of ethnic politics.
- (c) It created an intermediary between the real oppressors - the SA government and its allies - and the masses by way of Bantustan leaders, ethnic parliaments and racial institutions.
- (d) It was an attempt to destroy the unity of all peoples, especially the African people, and replacing national consciousness with narrow tribal and ethnic consciousness.
- (e) Above all, it was an attempt to maintain the existence and supply of cheap, readily available labour.

Today, more than 10 years later, Bantustans are fast becoming a reality in the sense that a government has been able to obtain the co-operation of the African chiefs to commit the people to a scheme of separate development.

The speed with which the oppressor government is implementing its policy is a sure sign of the Bantustan scheme's strategic importance to it.

The policy of the national movement for liberation remains unchanged, but clearly there has been a significant change in the conditions since we first formulated the boycott slogans. It is no longer sufficient merely to condemn the Bantustans, ethnic institutions and chiefs as fraudulent. Ten years ago it was both sufficient and necessary. After all, the national movement had gone through a decade of mass struggles and militancy - from the Defiance Campaign to the calling of a national Convention which gave utterance to the Freedom Charter. From the treason trial to the massive campaign of boycott. From urban campaigns to the peasant revolts. And culminating in the formation and operation of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

We are no longer in such a situation and conditions have changed sufficiently

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to warrant a re-appraisal of our tactics in regard to the Bantustans and ethnic institutions.

But the problems posed by the government's Bantustan policy must be seen in the larger context of the strategic tasks which face the movement. Briefly these can be stated as follows:

- 1) The need to mobilise and organise the masses of our people - wherever they are - and to provide leadership and guidance.
- 2) The need to set up an internal underground organisation of professional revolutionary cadres, trained and skilled in political-military technicians, capable of surviving in the conditions of a fascist states whilst at the same time being able to have contact with the people at all levels and mobilise them effectively.
- 3) The need to make all the necessary preparations for the armed struggle which must be the inevitable perspective of our struggle.

The absence of our own cadres within the country, leaving the masses weak and without political expertise, will seriously hamper the realisation of the above tasks and in the long run can prove damaging to the entire cause of our people.

It is within this context that we must view the growing signs of political activity and manifestations of protest throughout the SA black community in the recent past.

The Coloured Labour Party, formed, as it was initially, in opposition to the government-sponsored Coloured National Party with its pro-apartheid followers, appears to have gone from strength to strength after its election victory. There is no doubt that the very existence of the Party is a growing embarrassment to the Vorster government. Its leaders have during the recent past campaigned vigorously on local grievances not only suffered by the Coloured community, but by Blacks in the Republic in general. This apart, the Party has seen the importance and need for unity amongst all the oppressed peoples in the Republic. This has been a continuing rallying theme in all the statements and calls from the Party.

With the resuscitation of the NIC and the prospects of an extension to the SAIC, the Indian people have served notice on the government-appointed South African Indian Council. The need for a political organisation to express the grievances and needs of the Indian community has been long-debated inside SA. As with the CLP, the question of national unity seems to be a central issue with the NIC.

Both these developments in the nationally-oppressed minorities are to be welcomed. The need for organisations that can operate legally in the conditions of oppression and fascist repression in the Republic has long been on the agenda. What we are witnessing is the ability of our people to respond to the harsh conditions of existence by seeking political forms of struggle, limited in their objectives though these may be, instead of channelling the energy and anger of the people through dummy institutions.

The intensification of oppression in the Bantustan through the implementation of the so-called land betterment schemes and the removal of larger and larger numbers of Africans into the already crowded, impoverished and economically depressed Reserves, has led to the Bantustan leaders becoming more and more vocal and militant in their demands and public utterances. No doubt the land question is crucial and pressure from the masses of the people is leading to the militant postures and demands that are made. Whilst this remains essential and necessary, it remains a fact of fundamental importance that it requires the active involvement of the masses in these areas to bring about a situation of confrontation between the people and the real oppressors. It is only when the people are moved to demand and resist that the conflict between oppressor and oppressed will become heightened. At the moment the Bantustan leaders are acting, apart from anything else, as the shock

absorbers of the peoples' energy and anger. As long as people remain passive observers of demands made and action undertaken on their behalf, the prospects of confrontation will remain remote.

The more dramatic developments within the Black student body throughout the Republic needs our urgent attention in many ways. Again we witness the active rejection of a very important and influential section of our people of the workings of apartheid.

SASO has, since its inception, emerged as the single most important organisation airing the grievances and demands of the Black student body. More important, SASO has now been involved, through its policy statements and intentions in the National Question. It has refused to see itself merely as a student organisation content merely to act on behalf of Black students, but has clearly served notice of intention to consider its role in the national condition of the black masses, sees itself as an integral part of its aspirations and hopes and has started in the direction of bringing about a real change.

The organisation was formed in 1969 and held its inaugural congress in 1970 attended by 100 delegates representing some 3000 students from the African, Indian and Coloured Colleges of education. Thus far it has demonstrated that it has won the allegiance of all black students around its programme, as witnessed by the recent national student strikes. In line with its programme it has also been active in initiating national seminars on its programme based on Black consciousness and Black exclusiveness in its political and organisational formulations.

In so far as this organisation attempts to assert the dignity and national aspirations of the oppressed majority its foundation is a welcome and necessary happening. Since the vicious repression of ASA the need for a black student body has always been widely felt.

It seems true that SASO is attempting to function as an umbrella organisation for national change within the conditions of a fascist state. Whilst black students have never separated the issue of the national struggle from student activities SASO has emerged in the absence of a visible political organisation concerned with national liberation - the ANC. Nevertheless, the search for solutions to our peoples' problems remains a matter of profound concern at all times. SASO seems to have accepted a profound challenge. The real task and problem for the movement is that it must provide movements like SASO, the CLP, the NIC and the host of other organisations legally functioning, giving guidance, experience, leadership.

More important, the challenge for the movement, posed by SASO and the other organisations of the oppressed peoples, is that we should be able and seen to be capable of giving their genuine and just strivings an organisational and above all, political content, which holds forth real prospects of a fundamental change in the SA situation.

For as long as the movement is non-functional in organising and mobilising the peoples at all levels and in all the concrete problems with which they have to cope, the people will create their own organisations, will turn to all forms of struggle in their search for justice and freedom. It is precisely within this context that the various organisations have emerged and so too the Black awareness program, adopted by SASO as a starting point for change, and currently being debated at all levels throughout the black communities.

As a revolutionary movement we have always been, correctly, concerned with the revolutionary potential of our peoples, and hence have as our perspective - revolutionary consciousness as a starting point for change. But we must have a clear distinction between the vocal slogans made by a legally functioning organisation and that of the underground movement. The distinction is of crucial importance in our assessment and understanding of the Black consciousness slogan.

This concept of Black awareness is very much an on-going debate within the country. Hence the formulation of this concept of Black consciousness has been a fairly recent development. It is difficult to assess its importance in

purely political terms. However a number of important points have to be borne in mind:-

1) The importance of the Black people, in particular the African people, to assert their national dignity and culture is of fundamental subjective importance to a National struggle, in particular, in the face of dehumanising policies of the oppressor government.

2) In so far as it also implies the unity of the African masses together with the nationally oppressed racial minorities, the Indians and Coloureds, the emergence of the slogan can be a powerful tool against the divisive tendencies foisted upon the people by the government.

3) To the extent that Black consciousness has not been formulated within the context of a general programme of principles which can provide the basis and framework for active struggle to attain the ideals of Black majority rule, to that extent must we be critical of the movements which espouse the slogan. In the final analysis, liberation of the black majority, must be ultimately based on a revolutionary programme and strategy capable of defeating the oppressor government, and not mere sloganising, no matter how subjectively necessary and essential the forms of these slogans.

4) Nevertheless, it is yet another indication of the search for solutions and the formulation of the problems which face the people. To this extent it indicates some of the serious problems facing our people today - the leadership and guidance of a revolutionary organisation.

In general comrades, the organisations formed by the black communities, their strivings, active and vocal, on local and national grievances, was bound to happen. We must welcome this as a sign not only of the continuity of our struggle, but as so many examples of the revolutionary potential and character of the oppressed peoples. The challenge for us is that we must be involved in a very real way with all the problems our people are confronted with and are attempting to solve. We must give these organisations a wider political perspective. We must build on the potential unfolding in the South African situation in conditions of extreme difficulties and demanding consequences. This surely is the basis of the national struggle. With guidance, a revolutionary leadership, a revolutionary programme and organisation, the masses will march to victory and a free South Africa.

We, here in UK, whilst urging our national movements to continue the task of prosecuting the national struggle for freedom, pledge our support and allegiance to our peoples' struggle.