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**Commission on Cadre Policy,  
Political and Ideological Work**

**Internal Commission Report**

**Commission on Strategy and Tactics**



# COMMISSION ON CADRE POLICY, POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL WORK

## 1. CADRE POLICY

The deepening general crisis of the apartheid regime, the mass revolutionary actions of the oppressed masses inside South Africa and developments internationally confront the ANC with great challenges. Under conditions of fascist state terror and violence the Movement is called upon to lead the people in raising the level of struggle to that of a people's war for seizure of power.

We also need to mobilise the international community to intensify its support for our struggle and for the complete isolation of racist South Africa.

To effectively carry out these and other crucial tasks the Movement has to strengthen itself. One of the basic challenges we face in this context is that of formulating and implementing a coherent and systematic cadre policy.

**Delegates' Additional Recommendations in Plenary**  
Cadre policy should include **discipline** of all cadres as a prime quality in the definition of a cadre. In the words of our President, 'discipline is the mother of victory'.

A fundamental prerequisite for the success of a revolution is the existence of a strong revolutionary organisation. The strength of a revolutionary organisation lies not only in numbers but primarily in the quality of its cadres. Hence in the development and consistent strengthening of our organisation, cadre policy occupies a central role. Cadres are all members of the Movement involved in the formulation and practical implementation of policy, and willing to carry out all tasks assigned.

The cadre policy of an organisation is determined by the tasks which are short- and long-term in the revolution. A correct cadre policy produces activists equipped to perform special and general skills and tasks.

In the case of our organisation the long-term task is the overthrow of the apartheid regime and the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa as enshrined in the Freedom Charter. The short-term tasks vary from time to time, in line with the strategy and tactics of the organisation. Therefore, cadre policy becomes an important component of the political life of the organisation.

The main principles of work with the cadres should embrace the following questions:

- Recruitment
- Education and Training
- Deployment
- Promotion and Accountability
- Preservation of Cadres

### Recruitment

Under this topic, the following recommendations were made:

Our recruitment drive should address itself to the question of enlisting more and more members from our main base of recruiting, i.e. the working class, particularly black workers, to make their leading role in our revolution a reality.

Special campaigns should be launched to have rural masses in greater numbers in the organisation so as to make our stated aim of mobilising rural masses a real possibility.

Our recruitment drive should consciously aim to achieve an increase in the presence of women and an appreciable presence of all national groups in the organisation, especially MK.

Recruiting should at all times be based on an acceptance of the basic policy and programme of the ANC. Potential recruits should be made to understand and accept that the struggle means, basically, sacrifice.

Recruitment should not be an occasional business, but should be on a continuous footing at home and abroad. Special attention should be given to recruitment within enemy institutions.

Experience in the past has shown that recruits within enemy ranks can be of valuable service to the Movement in such respects as neutralising the enemy.

Special care should be taken to see to it that recruitment is done in all areas and regions of our country. In principle all members of the organisation, through correct channels, have a duty to increase the strength of the Movement in terms of numbers. In addition, special cadres should be trained in the art of recruiting, especially if they are to use their training in establishing underground units of our organisation inside the country.

Existing structures must work out methods for the harmonious and co-ordinated integration of new recruits into the Movement. Our recruitment drive should emphasise swelling the ranks of MK as the 'vital cutting edge of our struggle'.

### Delegates' Recommendations in Plenary:

**Delegate 1:** As part of our conscious policy, cadres must multiply inside the country, including intellectual youth who are progressive. Each cadre must mobilise the youth.

**Delegate 2:** As a revolutionary Movement, we must work out a consistent manpower policy. Our revolutionary Movement must demand of its people to come and work for the Movement.

**Delegate 3:** With an express purpose to control the minds of our future intellectuals, the US Administration has set aside \$6-9-million for scholarships for black South Africans. To counter this US move, recommended that the Movement should appoint a full time organiser to the USA to work on these, our people, there.

### Education and Training

Education and Training can be divided into the



following:

Political and ideological, military, moral, academic and cultural education. Political and ideological education and training should include patriotism and boundless hatred for the enemy. A good cadre has sterling revolutionary attributes, loyalty, discipline, dedication, devotion and determination. Cadres should be staunch in their belief in our ideological line, namely revolutionary nationalism and committed anti-imperialism. Above all, the main direction should be the training of cadres to exercise political leadership and be organisers. They should be well versed with the political and ideological forces inside the country. They should be able to transmit independently ANC policy to all sections of the people at home and internationally. The Movement should set up its own political school.

### **Recommendations of Individual Delegates in Plenary on Education and Training**

The high level of consciousness must broaden the spirit of patriotism which must not be isolated from internationalism.

Recommended that for proper education of all cadres, our cadre policy should adopt a slogan of *Fight, Learn, Produce*.

Older, experienced and skilled comrades should adopt and practice the Cosas slogan of *Each one — Teach one*. Such a slogan is more fitting for the purposes of eradicating illiteracy in our ranks.

Our cadre policy should also aim at bridging the gap between mental and manual labour.

Urged the incoming NEC to now gear itself for the practical implementation aspect of our sub-divided education programme (of political, ideological, military, moral, academic and cultural training) for the benefit of the cadres and the Movement as a whole. Reason for urgency of the implementation of this recommendation was that it was seen as a solution to such a problem as the existence of a sizeable number of cadres who are not employed in any activity undertaken by our Movement, especially those in Zambia.

On the subject of training the rapporteur also added a verbal recommendation which was unintentionally not raised in the commission discussions and emanating mainly from the Lusaka region, namely that there should be compulsory military training for all able-bodied members of the Movement. Although the recommendation was received with applause by the plenary, the recorders received two strong objections to the recommendation. We include them verbatim.

'MK is a glorious army, ideally composed of comrades whose dedication, unflinching commitment and readiness to sacrifice is very high. Its members are the best sons and daughters of our people. A conscripted soldier is most probably not going to undertake his/her mission consciously, if ever. The likelihood of such a soldier selling the revolution out is very high.

Military training should remain being the undertaking of ANC members who wish to do so. It should

be on the basis of one's consciousness and conviction as membership in MK is an honour but also implying possibilities of supreme sacrifice. Acceptance of military discipline presupposes a high state of political, mental and moral preparedness. Compulsory military training for people long in exile, without desire or motivation, is full of danger of swarming MK ranks with people who might not measure up to the demands of an army that has serious challenging tasks ahead'.

Noted that the army has a fairly large number of illiterate comrades. Recommended that the new leadership must ascertain that an MK cadre is able to read and write especially since propaganda is part of his tools. Further recommended academic training for MK cadres and also that upgrading should constitute one of the main aspects of our cadre development programme.

Recommended that military education for everybody to go hand in hand with basic education for everybody in the Movement.

Noted a delay with MK oath-taking after training plus naming of detachments. Explanation to this problem was that oath-taking was normal procedure in MK after course completion. Difficulty is that the oath has to be administered by the President. Matter would be looked into as to whether perhaps for the future the President could delegate powers to one of the NEC members.

### **Deployment**

a) Deployment must be according to speciality, aptitude, qualification and capability. Though in principle a revolutionary must be ready to serve in any capacity, in practice the aptitudes and wishes of individuals should be taken into consideration wherever possible. Cadres should be correctly placed and promoted at the right time so that they may fully apply their talents and creativeness.

b) We need to deploy our best cadres in the front ranks of the political and military battles.

c) When deploying cadres the Movement should combine old and young, thereby ensuring continuity. In the forward areas such combination would facilitate contact with the population.

d) The following proposals should receive attention:

- The Department of Manpower Development (DMD) should continue to seek for and explore the possibilities of deploying our highly trained cadres in the independent states.

- Deployment should primarily be the concern of the DMD in consultation with other departments recommending deployment and redeployment through the DMD.

- Special attention should be paid to the deployment and promotion of women at all levels and in all sectors of the Movement.

### **Individual Delegates' Recommendations in Plenary on Deployment**

Proposed deletion of paragraph (a) on the grounds that it would, in his/her opinion, encourage brain-drainage



from the Movement and would also be politically wrong at the present stage of our struggle.

ANC should incorporate into its Cadre Policy the obligation for professionally trained cadres to put their profession at the service of their people as others were putting their lives at the service of our common cause.

On the necessity for more speedy deployment of students after completion of their studies, delegate recommended that DMD should know ahead of time before students complete so as to avoid Dakawa frustrations where students wait there indefinitely.

Urged incoming NEC to take as a matter of priority the problems of cadres deployed in Front Areas. Noted that despite orders not to, some cadres break policy by going to or calling in their families. Furthermore, some military comrades refuse to take orders from somebody who is not trained. Such practices lead to general dangerous anarchistic behaviour in these Front Line Areas.

Recommended that the Luthuli Detachment comrades should go to the West and into the country in order to inspire the younger ones.

### **Demobilisation**

As a matter of simple respect, courtesy and comradeship it should become normal ANC practice to give an explanation of the reasons for demobilisation of a comrade and directly to the comrade concerned, first and foremost.

### **Upgrading in Cadre Education**

ANC centres should carry out programmes to improve skills of cadres in relevant fields. Special attention should be given to the needs of elderly cadres and those of young members who are in transit to military schools.

### **Promotion and Accountability**

- The political performance of cadres should at all times be the guide for placement and promotions. There should be no favouritism, opportunism, regionalism and ethnic (tribal) or sex discrimination.
- Correct deployment makes the job of observing the performance of cadres in his/her tasks easier. At all times deployment must equal the capabilities of a cadre so as for his/her input to be effective.
- Heads of departments must display keen interest in the performance of the cadres on their staff and encourage and follow up their participation in the political life of the region.
- There should be constant check-ups on the performance of cadres.
- Elderly cadres who can no longer perform their duties due to age or illness should not be left out of the life of the organisation. They can be of valuable service to the organisation, especially in the cultural and counselling fields.
- Cadres who perform badly at their tasks should be confronted and criticised with the view to improving their performance while care is taken that cadres do not take advantage of a lenient approach. Ways and means should be found to ensure that false reports do

not become the basis for disciplinary action against cadres.

- A systematic manner of promoting and upgrading cadres should be striven for, based on a thorough knowledge of everyone's work ability and personal life.

- A concerted effort should be made to develop and exploit to the full the creative abilities and talents of our women cadres and to promote capable women cadres to responsible positions.

### **Delegate's Observation in Plenary on Accountability in the Army**

NEC to address itself to issues of accountability, victimisation and favouritism in the army. 'If you speak your mind, you will never leave Angola'. Secondly, when comrades make mistakes, instead of being corrected on the spot, reports are written on them, including false ones. This eventually affects adversely the morale of comrades.

### **Preservation of Cadres**

Preservation of cadres is important. The Movement must take maximum security measures to protect and safeguard our cadres. A cadre who has misbehaved should not be made to feel ostracised, but instead be made to understand that criticism is meant to build them. Cadres should be encouraged to be critical and self-critical.

- Unity and cohesion of the Movement and a spirit of togetherness is essential for the preservation of our cadres.
- Preservation of cadres should include the improvement of their working conditions, health and where possible holidays should be organised.
- Rules of self-preservation and security must be imparted to each cadre by the relevant organs of the movement.
- Cadre preservation policy should strengthen those organisations which look after the welfare of our imprisoned cadres.

### **Delegates' Observations and Recommendations on Preservation of Cadres**

Recommended that besides physical preservation of a soldier cadre, this must go hand in hand with his/her political preservation.

Pointed out that after people have received skills they are mis-deployed thus losing whatever they had acquired. The Movement should also work for the preservation of skills.

## **II. IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL WORK**

Politics is the life of any revolutionary movement. There can be no revolutionary party without revolutionary theory, which is the core of the discipline and cohesion of the Movement. Intensified ideological work is necessary to overcome the enemy's ideological offensive against the national democratic revolution.

In order to achieve the victory of the national democratic revolution, the ANC should conduct systematic and consistent political and ideological work



among the masses of the people. The people should have a thorough understanding of the revolutionary perspective of the Movement as well as its programme, the Freedom Charter.

The Movement should conduct a campaign centred around a policy statement on our principles, and perspectives based on all relevant political statements issued by the ANC, including the documents of this present Conference. This campaign should include a considered reply to counter-revolutionary forces that seek to deny the national liberation character of our struggle.

Bearing in mind our stated positions on the divisive effects of apartheid, the cleavages between cultural and racial groups, the disunity of the working class, the policies of bantustans, and the fragmentation of our country, the Movement should reaffirm our policy of striving for the overthrow of the apartheid fascist regime, the elimination of all remnants of colonialism, and the unification of the country and its people as a necessary precondition to the implementation of the Freedom Charter.

### Enemy's Ideological Counter-offensive

The main task of our enemy is to annihilate the ANC. The ideology of apartheid is bankrupt and in deep crisis. Even the enemy no longer seeks to publicly defend its own ideology. The advances scored by our Movement in the ideological, political and military fields have compelled the racist regime to modify, adapt and modernise its rhetoric and postures. Instead of speaking about defending white supremacy, it speaks about South Africa as a country peopled by different nations. It claims to be in favour of peaceful instead of revolutionary and violent change. Whilst it seeks, by blood and violence, to bludgeon our people and neighbours into submission, it describes the ANC as 'terrorists'. It poses as a defender of 'free' enterprise which is opposed to so-called totalitarian communism. It describes our movement as a tool of Moscow whilst it portrays itself as a staunch defender of Western military and strategic interests.

The main features of this ideological offensive are:

- The massive propaganda campaign labelling MK combatants as 'terrorists', in a bid to isolate us from our people and progressive and peace-loving forces the world over who support our struggle.
- In this counter-offensive, enemy agent provocateurs infiltrated into our ranks have played a big role. They use various methods to undermine our leadership, eg rumour-mongering, anti-communism, sowing mistrust, etc.
- Another direction of the enemy's counter-offensive is the so-called talks between the ANC and the racist government. This is intended to lure weak elements in our ranks into believing that it is possible to change apartheid through talks and renunciation of armed struggle.
- Distortion of the relationship between the class and the national aspects of our revolution are resorted to, aimed at undermining and weakening the historic and

time-tested alliance of the ANC and SACP. In this context the ultra-leftists who deny the validity of the national liberation character of our struggle objectively form part of the enemy's counter-revolutionary offensive.

● It is important to note the role of international imperialism, particularly the USA, in assisting the Pretoria regime in its counter-offensive against our Movement. The policy of Reagan's 'constructive engagement' campaign against so-called terrorism, the 1982 Denton Commission, and the disruptive activities of the ICFTU and the AFL-CIO which has set up a special fund to train African trade unionists outside South Africa, are testimony to this fact.

● The cosmetic reforms that are made in South Africa and the Nkomati-type agreements also form part of the regime's political and ideological counter-offensive. One of the aims of this counter-offensive is to redefine the character of our revolution as a civil rights struggle.

### The National and Class Question

The correct understanding in theory and practice of the inter-connection of the national and class question is the key to our revolution. South Africa was conquered by force and is still ruled by bloody violence and terror. National and racial oppression are organic and integral parts of state monopoly capitalism in South Africa. Since 1912 the ANC has been leading the struggle against colonial conquest. South Africa has the largest working class in Africa and the birth of the ICU and the South African Communist Party affirmed that the aspirations of the black population are closely interwoven with social emancipation.

The complex character of this multi-national and/or multi-ethnic society can be characterised as *colonialism of a special type* in which the colonial oppressors and the colonised live in the same geographical territory. Thus the national liberation of the black people, in particular the African people, is of primary significance. But there are some ultra-left and chauvinist elements who seek to distort the nature and character of our revolution and who are hostile to the policies and programme of the ANC.

For example:

- Inkatha distorts African nationalism and reduces it to ethnic chauvinism.
- The ultra-left workerist tendency ignores the problems caused by conquest and national oppression and focuses on the African worker as an embodiment of class consciousness, which should not be muddled by ideas of nationalism and national consciousness. The National Forum has an eclectic approach which seeks to mix the ideas of black consciousness with the rhetoric of socialism.

It is therefore a task of all our members to jealously defend the strategy and tactics of our Movement. We need to carry on a consistent ideological and political battle against the anti-ANC forces. Conference should expel those individuals who call themselves the Marxist Tendency within the ANC



and are connected with the publication of *Inqaba yaba Sebenzi* and involved in counter-revolutionary activities which are calculated to confuse our workers, discredit our movement and derail our revolution.

In our ideological work, it is necessary to consistently explain the character of our national democratic revolution. Our commitment in implementing the Freedom Charter will determine the tempo and direction of the national democratic revolution.

### **Delegate's Additional Recommendations in Plenary on our Ideological Work**

In our ideological work we should pay attention to combating anti-communism (anti-Sovietism). Content of this work should include popularising the real gains of the socialist community and its contribution in advancing the cause of national liberation, social progress and peace.

### **The Women's Question**

We recommend that the movement set out a theoretical basis for the understanding and solution of the women's question within the liberation struggle. An analysis of the women's question should be made, based on the doctrine of the triple oppression of women in our country.

The speech delivered by the President at the close of the Women's Conference in Luanda in 1981 should serve as a basis for the further development of the theory of women's emancipation within the liberation struggle.

One of the main reasons for the backwardness of women is the traditional patriarchal relations and attitudes towards them, regarding them as household objects attached only to the home. A conscious development programme asserting the equality of women and men has to be embarked upon by the Movement. Urgent measures should be taken to ensure their participation at all levels of our liberation struggle. In deployment and promotion of cadres we recommend positive discrimination in favour of women. The progressiveness and success of our Movement will largely depend on the participation of the womenfolk.

Regular meetings of the branch and regional membership should be held in order to highlight the role of women in our struggle and inculcate a spirit of respect and equality between women and men.

Having noted that there is a general tendency to refer the question of women's emancipation to the women, the commission declared that the Movement as a whole should address itself to the problem. It therefore recommends units and branches of the Movement begin discussing the question.

The Women's Section should be revitalised and activated to ensure the effective implementation of all programmes and decisions relating to the mobilisation and education of women.

A national seminar on the Women's Question must be organised in which all sectors of the movement should actively participate.

Such a seminar must work from the theoretical understanding that the liberation movement is com-

mitted to and must undertake the abolition of women's triple oppression as wage workers, as members of the oppressed nation, and as women. Our policy is to liberate them from legal, economic and social disabilities.

Liberation involves a radical change in attitudes of males as well as females, including the eradication of chauvinism and male domination, equal job opportunities and equal pay for equal work at all levels of employment, rights of inheritance and monogamy for both wives and husbands.

It is also necessary to have a study commission comprising both men and women to such countries as Vietnam, Cuba and Nicaragua to learn how they are solving the women's question.

The commission further noted that whereas the movement acknowledges that the relations between women and men are durable and satisfactory when based on mutual respect and affection, there are cases in which men, because of traditional attitudes, use their superior positions to take advantage of women. The commission calls on the Movement to educate comrades to stop practices that are unethical and are contrary to the high principles of the organisation. At the same time women in the Movement should be educated to free themselves from the images projected by the mass media of women as slaves to fashion and sensuality.

### **Political Education**

Political education is the life-blood of any revolutionary movement. We should have a political education programme aimed at constantly improving the political consciousness, knowledge and skills of our cadres. This could be a differentiated programme depending on the political understanding and maturity of the comrades concerned. Every member should undergo a course of basic political training.

A serious deficiency in our educational programme is that there is no authority responsible for political education. We should set up a Department of Political Education whose functions should include:

- a) Appointment and monitoring in every region of a political officer.
- b) The drafting and implementation of a syllabus of political education and ensuring fulfilment.
- c) The preparation of such material as may be found useful for conducting political classes.

The syllabus of political education should include:

- The history of our country, with focus on the struggle of our people against the colonisers. The Wars of Resistance must form the basis for this.
- The history of the liberation struggle and the policy development of our Movement, e.g. how the different constitutions of the ANC have developed, the Freedom Charter, the question of seizure of power, methods of armed struggle, the dismantling of the racist state and the leading role of the working class.
- The relationship between the ANC, SACP etc.
- The current resistance movement — youth, students, workers, women.



- The history of the trade union movement in South Africa, its importance and role.
- Liberation policies and programmes (SACTU, SACP, etc).
- Theory of revolution. This is to be taught in such a way that comrades do not only regurgitate the theory, but apply it to the concrete South African situation and to the specific tasks assigned them.
- The South African state and its political economy.
- The ideological and theoretical understanding of the relationship between the concept of national liberation, class struggle and the emancipation of women.
- Experience of other revolutions.

To ensure the successful fulfilment of the programme on political education, the commission recommends that:

- Cadres liable for selection as political instructors should be committed to a minimum of two years.
- Every region must have a circulating library which must contain relevant literature and works that would supplement the political education cadres receive. Steps should be taken to develop the reading of progressive literature. This can only be achieved through the creation of reading groups.
- A comprehensive list of reading material must accompany the political programme. Special attention must be paid to material from inside the country and to the experience of other revolutionary struggles.
- Teaching aids such as films, videos, tape recorders and projectors must be procured for such study groups.
- The use of documentary films, especially from socialist countries, must be encouraged.
- Films produced at home must also be used as part of our education programme, and not only viewed as entertainment films.

### **Recommendations of Individual Delegates in Plenary on Political Life in the Movement**

Urgently requested incoming NEC to gear itself to the task of resolving the problem of political life in Somafo by drawing its students into it. 'Unacceptable that students, after being mobilised under the banner of the ANC, should be left to lead a non-political life'.

Speaking on the same subject, another delegate felt that within our political structures there must be some concerted educational programme; structures must enhance the theoretical level, eg RPC in Somafo, which they do not have presently.

Agreed that there should be no incentives for an ANC cadre working for it, but that Somafo is a different case where incentives are justified, otherwise there would be a problem of having pupils without teachers. Teachers from solidarity groups in Somafo are also paid.

### **Recommendations for Political and Ideological Work in the Army**

1. Ideological work constitutes an essential factor in creating the nucleus of a people's army which will be

ready and prepared at all times and under all circumstances to fight for and defend the gains of our revolution. In the words of our President, OR Tambo, 'In building up our political army we aim therefore not only at the overthrow of the fascist regime, we aim at building up a politically conscious and revolutionary army, conscious of its popular origin, unwavering in its democratic functions and guided by our revolutionary organisation'.

We recommend that the Movement implement in full the principle of political guidance and leadership over the army to ensure strict control and accountability through the relevant structures of our army.

2. The Commissariat, in conjunction with the Department of Political Education, must ensure through its organs continuous, uninterrupted political work within the ranks of the army. It must embark on a comprehensive programme of training and education of political activists in our army, viz., commissars, instructors, propagandists, etc. Emphasis in this should be put on producing field workers at grassroot level. In this regard short term political courses should be introduced, based on our own experience as an army and as a Movement. Opportunities offered by the fraternal countries abroad should be fully utilised in this regard.

- Veterans and stalwarts of our Movement should be fully utilised for the purposes of conducting short courses, lectures, seminars, etc for selected groups and the membership of our army in general.

- To ensure that our political programmes meet the demand of producing the required cadre, the problems of political literature and training facilities must be solved decisively. In this regard a proper mechanism should be worked out to supply the army with the required literature, particularly literature from the home front.

- There is a need to establish an effective and dynamic link between the rear and the front.

- We must pay particular attention to the all-round improvement of the material, cultural and spiritual well-being of the soldiers especially in the camps. We should solve the problem of how to combine the improvement of the material, cultural and spiritual life of a soldier with the strengthening of his or her political conviction.

### **Delegate's Comment and Recommendation in Plenary**

A delegate from the West felt that there is a discrepancy between the theory and practice of MK cadre development. These discrepancies and recommendations to improve that situation were detailed by MK in the West to the 1984 Stuart Commission. Urged Conference to ensure that the incoming Executive implements the recommendations of that Commission.

### **The Work of the DIP in the Ideological Struggle**

Our Movement pays insufficient attention to analysing the content of the different ideological trends in our country. We therefore recommend that the research unit of the DIP should be charged with compil-



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ing and distributing papers analysing these trends.

- ANC documents and conference papers presented by our delegations to various international gatherings must be made available for the general membership.
- Films, videos etc must be procured, particularly on events at home.
- New laws and developments that affect the lives of our people must be compiled in information pamphlets circulated to the membership.
- In order to improve our political and ideological work the DIP should have regional structures which

supply their regions with the relevant information. The internal propaganda machinery must be strengthened, and steps must be taken to develop correspondents inside the country.

Material circulated inside the country should include material on ideological issues.

The abundance of material produced at home should be compiled and made available in a form most helpful to members.

Conference urges the DIP to implement the decisions taken at its conference in 1983.

~~commission for approval before presentation to the~~

for the kind of thorough discussion throughout our ranks, which such a document merits.

4. Apart from the above, there was broad agreement

in their tens of thousands to be recruited and organised into contingents of political and armed fighters and who show an unending creativity in finding forms of

#### **Ideological work in the Army**

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## COMMISSION ON STRATEGY AND TACTICS

1. It was our intention to place before you a document which would contain a summary of our strategy and tactics for the coming phase of the struggle. The basic strategic document which formed the foundation of our approach up to now, is the Strategy and Tactics document adopted by the 1969 Morogoro Conference which has been tabled under No F5. Since then, the only other all-round treatment of our strategic perspectives is contained in the 1980 'Green Book', a copy of which was available to the Commission but unfortunately was not made into a Conference document.

2. The draft Strategy and Tactics document which we, as a Commission, were called upon to consider, is before you under No. B2. We also had before us a number of other documents such as Planning for People's War (No. B3), a very thoughtful batch of contributions from the regions (particularly from the camps) contained in Nos D1 and E1, and a number of other relevant documents in the E and F series.

3. In considering the draft Strategy and Tactics document (B2) our Commission arrived at the following conclusions:

a) A document which embodies our strategy and tactics and which is intended to provide guidance for some years to come, requires the most careful and widespread discussion by all levels of our Movement. In the case of the document which was before us, there had been no circulation to the regions and even Conference delegates saw it for the first time a few hours before proceedings began. It should be noted that when our Commission convened, the overwhelming majority of its members had not yet managed to read the draft, and we had to adjourn for some hours to enable them to do so. We concluded that we would be reporting to a Conference which itself had no real possibility of preparing effectively for such a detailed discussion.

b) There was yet another reason why we decided not to attempt to place an amended draft before you. We are of the opinion that a document such as this should not only serve as a basic guide to all levels of our organisation, but also as a means of spreading our analytical message to all sectors of the broad front of our struggle to racist rule. We considered that the style of the document was not suitable for both these purposes. We considered the formulations in the document needed to be examined more carefully for the purpose of presenting its content in a style and language which is more accessible to a wider audience. This is a task which the Commission considered was impossible to do justice to in the time available.

c) We therefore recommend that the task should be entrusted to the incoming NEC which should avail itself of the opportunity of circulating an amended draft for the kind of thorough discussion throughout our ranks, which such a document merits.

4. Apart from the above, there was broad agreement

with the general approach contained in the draft Strategy and Tactics document. It was, however, felt that a number of important questions which bear on our strategic approaches had been omitted and would have to find a place in a revised document. The Commission then devoted most of its discussion to these questions. Some of the major ones have been incorporated into formulations which attempt to summarise our consensus. Yet others will be referred to more briefly and elaborated verbally. But before we deal with these it is necessary to draw your attention to some fundamental propositions which formed a background to all our discussions.

### **Additions Made by the Plenary Session:**

- a) The document should identify the epoch during which our liberation struggle is taking place.
  - b) The document should discuss the revolutionary alliance amongst ANC/SACP/SACTU; our international alliances; and the enemy's alliances.
  - c) The omissions in the document which must be corrected are: the role and place of the working class in our strategy and the significance of the emergence of the democratic trade unions; the character of bantustan leadership and the changing nature of the bantustans.
5. From the very beginning the following was emphasised:

Our discussions on strategy and tactics (more particularly in the area of armed struggle) must be informed by two basic realities about our situation. Since there is unanimity among us that there can be no destruction of the regime leading to the capture of People's Power without some form of revolutionary violence, we have to recognise two fundamental characteristics (one negative, the other positive) which, in combination, are very unique and special to our situation.

### **Firstly, the negative factor:**

We have never had, we have not got, and we are unlikely to ever have a rear base in the classical sense. So when we begin to examine the concept of people's war, guerrilla activity, guerrilla zones, problems of arming the people, creating, sustaining and supplying a people's army in the initial stages, etc we must accept that all these objectives have to take off and grow within the limitation of the absence of an effective rear base with a friendly border.

### **Secondly, the positive factor:**

We have revolutionary resources and potentials which no other Movement in Africa had. We have a people (and especially a proletariat and fighting youth) which constitute a revolutionary contingent which is highly politically conscious, experienced in struggle over a period of more than half-a-century, who stand ready in their tens of thousands to be recruited and organised into contingents of political and armed fighters and who show an unending creativity in finding forms of



resistance and of mass legal and semi-legal organisation in the face of the enemy's continuous terror against the people.

6. The key to the future unfolding of our strategy and tactics is, on the one hand, to compensate for and to find ways of overcoming the weakness of the absence of a rear base. On the other hand, we have to exploit to the maximum our strength, which is **the people in political motion**.

In this connection we should remember that when we think of revolutionary violence, we must not restrict ourselves only to the organised presence of MK combat units. We must also pay attention to the way in which the people's revolutionary violence (organised or spontaneous or semi-spontaneous) relates to the unfolding of the revolutionary struggle as a whole. In short, we must find ways of harnessing the combat potential of the people, whether in the kind of small combat units referred to in the NEC's recent *Call to the Nation*, the creation of larger paramilitary formations in the shape of workers and people's self defence units, etc. We must also be ready, at the right moment, to provide guidance and lead the people in mass actions involving revolutionary force, such as land occupation, factory occupation, people's control of the townships in the face of constituted authority, etc. Our capacity to play an effective role at this level will depend largely on our combat presence and the availability of minimum armouries of weapons.

7. Against the background of the general contents of the draft strategy and tactics document and the considerations referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6, our Commission concentrated its discussions on a number of important categories which were either missing from the draft or not sufficiently stressed. We proceed to enumerate these discussion items.

- A. People's War and Insurrection
- B. The Bantustans
- C. The Working Class
- D. Military Combat Work (MCW)
- E. Embryos of People's Power
- F. Relationship Between Urban and Rural Warfare
- G. Action Against the Enemy's Support Base

#### **A. People's War and Insurrection**

The Commission addressed itself to the relationship between protracted People's War and Insurrection, taking as the starting point the question raised in the Green Book which states: 'Do we see the seizure of power as a result of general insurrection or protracted People's War in which partial or general uprisings will take place?'

There was unanimity that the primary perspective continues to be People's War which, in our situation, will have a protracted character and that broadly speaking we see insurrection as a culmination of this.

By People's War we mean a war in which a liberation army becomes rooted amongst the people who progressively participate actively in the armed struggle both politically and militarily, including the possibility of engaging in partial or general insurrec-

tions. The present disparity in strength between the enemy's forces and our own determines the protracted nature of the struggle in which we need to reduce the enemy's resources, reserves and endurance, whilst gathering our own strength to the point where we are capable of seizing power. Such a struggle will lead inevitably to a revolutionary situation in which our plan and aim must be the seizure of power through a general insurrection (or whatever other ways might present themselves). What will count is such a situation will be our capacity to take advantage of that revolutionary situation. Unless we have the necessary forces and means under our command, and at our disposal, there is no way we can succeed and the opportunity will pass us by. Therefore, it is imperative that we continuously build the necessary forces and organisational structures which are the subjective conditions for success.

As for the question of how long we have to wait for such a situation to mature, this is impossible to state. The crisis in our country is such that we must be ready to respond to the most dramatic turn of events which might bring the whole situation to a decisive turning point.

Already the present explosive situation in the townships is pregnant with such possibilities and demands our decisive action, irrespective of our current strength. Hence the call to action issued by the NEC. Whilst we emphasise the need to purposefully and patiently build up the forces and means for the revolutionary seizure of power, waging People's War as we do so, it is necessary to stress that an insurrection cannot be mechanically planned on a drawing board to take place at some prescribed date in the future. It could occur as a result of a chain of events which trigger off widespread initiative from the people themselves or as a result of a call from the revolutionary movement at a special moment in the development of our revolutionary situation, or as a result of a combination of both. We must see to it that we are, in every respect, ready for any of these eventualities in the future.

This makes it imperative for certain steps to be taken now in order to be prepared for such an eventuality.

i) We must build up stores of simple, basic equipment in the vicinity of all major urban complexes which, at the right moment, could be used to equip contingents which have been prepared or which can be quickly organised during emergency insurrectionary conditions.

ii) A study must be completed of the main nerve-centres of every city. Such a study must provide us with the knowledge of which forces should be concentrated at which key points during an urban insurrection and should enable us to select priority targets.

iii) There must be special concentration on the creation and strengthening of mass organisations in the rural areas (especially the bantustans) so that urban and rural action can be drawn together at the crucial moment. This, however, must not divert us from persevering with the all-round task of building the forces and means of waging a protracted People's War.



## **B. The Bantustans**

The Commission addressed itself to the bantustans and the question was raised as to our exact strategy towards these enemy-created institutions. The successful spread of People's War is inconceivable without the escalation of political and military struggles in the bantustans, in which over half the African population is forced to live.

Attention was drawn to the reality of the bantustans, which, though puppet creations of the enemy, have spawned a vast bureaucratic apparatus and civil service and endowed a whole range of black professionals with the benefits of public office.

Bantustanisation has developed a momentum of its own and a significant number of government ministers, officials, civil servants and other hangers-on have acquired an economic and social stake in their survival. We must isolate the incorrigible collaborators and win over those whose job opportunities are not irreversibly dependent on the bantustan system.

Within the context of the above, our Movement must consider and be sensitive to the various shades of difference amongst the bantustan governments and leaders. Some bantustans are strategically located along or near the borders lending themselves as routes for penetrating the rest of the country. Yet others are run by brutal puppets, like Sebe and Mphephu, who do not hesitate to employ the most savage repressive measures against the people.

A lively debate also ensued on our strategy for the bantustans. The Commission felt that the creation of bantustan armies opens up new opportunities for the winning over of black soldiers to our side and to capture or obtain weapons from them. It was also accepted that the Movement should learn from the historical experience of regions where peasant uprisings and revolts have thrown up organisational forms and organs of struggle — such as the Mountain Committee in Pondoland — which could become core groups of a revolutionary underground.

Greater attention needs to be paid to the revolutionary slogans and programmes of struggle we place before the bantustan people. We cannot expect to motivate them effectively without placing before them perspectives of struggle against the bantustan administrations themselves. Land hunger remains one of the major national grievances which must be harnessed to activate the masses into struggle. The changing social stratification of the bantustans also received our attention. The emergence of a working class within these areas was noted as was the dumping of the unemployed from the urban areas and the role that migrant labour must play in linking the bantustans with the urban areas and industry. The Commission submits that it has become feasible to build up working class organisational forms in some bantustans, including organisations for the unemployed to demand work. Urban areas that have been incorporated into bantustans, such as Mdantsane, must become revolutionary springboards for mobilising the people in the bantustans.

The openly counter-revolutionary role that Chief Gatsha Buthelezi has assumed was noted. Buthelezi, unlike Mphephu, cannot be dismissed as a mere puppet of the racists. He projects the illusion of autonomy from the enemy and pretends to pursue national aims. His counter-revolutionary role must be exposed and we must work to win over his supporters and deprive him of his social base. The more notorious puppets, like Sebe in the Ciskei, have placed themselves, through their actions, squarely within the enemy camp and must be dealt with accordingly.

Clearly the bantustans should also be the targets of our Movement's efforts to render South Africa ungovernable. However, the scope and the pace of our efforts will be determined by our Movement's organised strength in these areas.

One of the questions most extensively debated was whether we should seek to advocate the overthrow of the bantustan administrations or whether we should focus exclusively on the struggle against Pretoria. If the former applies, it would involve the establishment of (if only for a short period) a radical administration with sympathies for the liberation movement. Would such an approach weaken our correct policy of unconditionally rejecting the legitimacy of the bantustans? It was generally felt that we should be flexible in our approach.

There is no doubt that Pretoria would intervene immediately to save its puppets. Such intervention would reduce the whole bantustan policy to shambles. By removing the puppets we would bring the people into direct confrontation with the racists, opening up the possibilities of transforming these areas into bases for the advancement of People's War.

### **Additions made by the Plenary Session**

We require an in-depth study of the bantustans to provide a more adequate knowledge of social stratification, crystallisation of classes (if any) within these regime-created structures; patterns of land ownership and control, the distribution of power, the system of patronage, etc.

## **C. The Working Class**

The Commission found the document on the labour front submitted by Sactu extremely useful. The most significant feature of the situation in our country has been the dramatic growth in trade union organisation (which, for the first time in South African history, has more black than white workers), the escalating strike movement and the increasing involvement of the working class in the popular upsurge.

The special role of the working class was emphasised at the Morogoro Conference and enunciated in our 1969 Strategy and Tactics document. Stressed at that time was the observation that the 'military and political consciousness as a revolutionary class' of the workers 'will play no small part in our victory and the construction of a real people's South Africa'.

The present draft Strategy and Tactics document is not as emphatic on the working class role as the Morogoro Document and must be accordingly improved. It



must keep pace with the times and say far more about the trade unions and deal with the tendency in certain quarters at home to keep them out of politics.

At a time when certain trade union leaders are raising the question of how the ANC will deal with the trade unions and workers demands in a liberated South Africa, we can do no better than the 1969 Morogoro formulation that the 'perspectives of a speedy progression from formal liberation to genuine and lasting emancipation is made more real by the existence in our country of a large and growing working class whose class consciousness complements national consciousness'. Furthermore, it is historically understandable that the doubly-oppressed and doubly-exploited working class constitutes a distinct and reinforcing layer of our drive towards liberation. Its socialist aspirations do not stand in conflict with the national interest.

We recognise that the working class is the key force in our revolution and this must find expression in the three fundamental detachments of our struggle — i.e. the broad mass democratic movement, our underground and our army. The Commission also emphasised the need to pay special attention to the organisation of workers in strategic industrial centres.

#### **D. Military Combat Work (MCW)**

The Commission argues that it is high time that our Movement applied the principles of MCW to the question of armed struggle. These principles have been ignored too long even though they are a key element in the training of our cadres. MCW involves the preparation of combat forces of the revolution according to specific principles, methods and structures. MCW derives from the experience of the Bolsheviks in three revolutions and the experience of revolutionary movements throughout the world. It is the heritage of the international revolutionary movement and a guide to the solving of the problems of armed struggle according to the specific particulars of a given country.

According to MCW guidelines the combat forces of the Revolution are composed of three components:

- a) The advanced combat formations (in our case Umkhonto we Sizwe) which are the nucleus of the People's Revolutionary Army and include the guerrilla formations of the countryside, urban combat groups, sabotage units and workers' and people's self-defence units based in the factories, townships and rural areas.
- b) The People in Arms — i.e. the advanced, active elements of the masses, prepared and trained by the vanguard formations — ready, arms in hand, to swell the ranks of the People's Army.
- c) Those elements of the enemy forces, ready at the decisive moment, to side with the revolutionary forces.

These elements constitute the forces and means of People's War. They have to be built up and prepared according to a planned approach under the centralised command of the political party or movement that has decided on the need for armed struggle. MCW, therefore, calls for a centralised organisational command, with one line of communication from top to

bottom, i.e. from national leadership to regional to district area (in our case from PMC to Regional PMC to Area PMC). Within this structure are the specialisations such as combat work, work within the enemy forces, security and intelligence, and the training centres and camps.

MCW builds up the Revolutionary Army of the People, wages all-out war against the enemy, works to disintegrate the enemy armed forces by undermining them from within and whilst engaging in combat, utilises all forms and methods of struggle, involving all the progressive forces of the people, to a stage where power can be seized by a nationwide insurrection. Unless the above is attended to as a matter of strategic necessity, we are afraid we will continue to remain distanced from the internal situation and therefore unable to properly enter the fray.

#### **E. Embryos of People's Power**

The Commission noted that in large areas of the country the people had acted on the ANC's call to render the country ungovernable. For all practical purposes the government's administrative organs in the black urban ghettos have, in the course of the present unrest, been completely destroyed. In place of these puppet bodies various initiatives have been taken to create local organs such as civic associations and other bodies which claim to have popular legitimacy as representatives of the people.

In the light of these events the Commission noted that the NEC of the ANC had issued a call to the nation which included a call for the creation of people's committees in every black area which could become the embryos of people's power.

The Commission discussed the need to define, with greater precision, what the popular power represents. More particularly, we directed our attention to the question whether the people's committees should attempt to assume the functions of an administrative organ which caters for the daily needs of the residents or whether they should concentrate on their political role as representatives of the people.

We concluded as follows:

- a) In the absence of an early seizure of power those committees would not be able to sustain or finance any of the basic requirements of municipal government for any length of time.
- b) In these circumstances any attempt to hold out the promise of a permanent alternative administration would be frustrated and would therefore lead to a discrediting of the people's committees.
- c) In general we agreed that the main function of such committees should be to represent the people politically and to lead them in struggles to enforce municipal and broader demands.
- d) We further recognised that there may be short periods of time during which such organs are called upon to organise services which have completely broken down. Wherever possible, they should be instrumental in the setting up of people's militia to exercise the functions of popular order and control in a



'Free Zone' etc. But these possibilities can only be determined on the ground by the specific circumstances and context in which each people's committee emerges.

## **F. Relationship Between Urban and Rural Warfare**

Certain key factors necessitate a reappraisal of our strategic approach towards our armed struggle in relation to the emphasis we put on either urban or rural warfare.

The classical approach, which is propounded in the Strategy and Tactics drawn up in Morogoro in 1969, lays stress on the development of guerrilla warfare in the rural areas and designates a supportive role for urban warfare.

But the objective conditions of our situation reveal that:

1. We do not have and are unlikely to have a reliable rear base from which we can advance into the rural areas.
2. The rural areas are not as politically organised as the urban.
3. Our organisational strength lies in the urban and surrounding areas.
4. The bulk of our army comes from the urban areas.
5. In the urban areas there already exist many organised units which have sprung up spontaneously from the mass action and resistance of our people to engage the enemy by violent means using rudimentary weapons.
6. It is in the urban areas that our call to make South African ungovernable has found practical translation. Our people have destroyed the enemy institutions and are seeking ways of creating organs of People's Power.
7. The most advanced elements of our people, such as workers and the township youth, are in the urban areas.

In practical terms, this means that the potential exists more in the urban areas for the creation and rooting among the people of the organs of our Movement to lead our people and organise the armed struggle.

Given the advantages and favourable factors we enjoy in the urban areas, including migrant workers and the impact of the city on the countryside, we see the strategic potential of using our urban stronghold as a base from which to prepare the ground for the countryside for the launching of armed struggle there.

In the rural areas it is necessary to create underground and mass political bases as a foundation for the armed struggle. In areas where suitable conditions exist units must be sent to be based in the terrain to make contact with and train the local population for action against the enemy. We must undertake a sustained drive to clear the white farms and harass the enemy with mine warfare. Sustained armed activity in the rural areas is important both as a politicising factor locally and nationally, and as a tactic to disperse the enemy. Given the geographic conditions of the countryside and the lack of a rear base, we do

not envisage the early creation of liberated areas in the classical sense. But it is realistic to work for the creation of a combat presence which will begin contesting for control of the area with the enemy.

## **Additions Made by the Plenary Session**

The movement should initiate a comprehensive study of all the rural areas outside the bantustans focusing on:

- a) Land ownership and distribution — identify the actual landowners, who is presently using the land (eg leases to big companies).
- b) The changing demographic patterns — who lives in the rural areas, (racial distribution), in what numbers, what are they doing?
- c) The agricultural workforce — who are the agricultural workers, what proportion of them reside permanently in these areas, and how many are migrants; what sort of skills do they have?
- d) Organisations in the rural areas.
- e) Problems encountered in the unionisation of agricultural workers.
- f) The border lands and the regime's regional defence infra-structure in these.

## **G. Action Against the Enemy's Support Base**

We have always gone out of our way to avoid a confrontation along racial lines and we will continue to do so.

But those among the white community who constitute the core of its social base for race domination are increasingly being mobilised in support of brutal repression. In particular the enemy has begun to transform almost every farm into a military outpost. Certainly in the countryside they are more and more blurring the distinction between what is civilian and what is military.

In many other ways, both in the urban complexes and in industry, it is also militarising its civilian support base.

Up to now our dedication to the avoidance of racial confrontation has often prevented us from dealing telling blows against the enemy and his installations for fear that white civilians would be caught in the cross-fire or be killed or injured in the vicinity of an enemy installation.

We have even inhibited ourselves from inflicting direct blows against whites who are ostensibly civilians but are in fact part of the military, paramilitary and security machine.

The escalating brutality perpetrated daily against our people is now creating a new situation. We can no longer allow our armed activities to be determined solely by the risk of such civilian casualties. We believe that the time has come when those who stand in solid support of the race tyranny and who are its direct or indirect instruments, must themselves begin to feel the agony of our counter-blows.

Our Movement will continue to do all in its power to win over sections of the white community; indeed this has become more necessary than ever. But at the same time it is also becoming more necessary than ever for whites to make it clear on which side of the battle

lines they stand.

### Additions Made by the Plenary Session

1. On logistics and ordnance: we must reduce our reliance on supply lines from outside and orientate ourselves to seize weapons from the enemy.
2. On the religious front: we must pay closer attention to the politicisation of religious communities and provide political education consonant with their beliefs. The NEC should send a delegation to Nicaragua to study their experience to discover what we can apply to our situation.
3. NEC: the majority of NEC members should concentrate on the home front, cut down on travel abroad in order to supervise work inside the country.
4. The Luthuli Detachment should be activated and its members reintegrated into the military work of the movement.

The Commission also touched upon a number of other topics (which will be elaborated upon verbally)

which fall into the following categories:

- a) Internal growth and training
- b) The special role of ordnance in the developing situation
- c) The General Political Strike as an insurrectionary weapon
- d) Work in the enemy armed forces
- e) Armed propaganda in the present phase
- f) The liberation alliance between ANC/SACTU/SACP
- g) Our international alliances
- h) The content of our revolutionary nationalism in relation to the epoch in which our struggle is taking place
- i) The concept of internal colonialism and the special character of the South African state.







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