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REGIONAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

27 May 1981
Year of the Youth

Update on the Report on the Sactu Solidarity Committee

Comrade John Gaetsewe, Secretary-General of SACTU, visited Toronto to attend, on behalf of SACTU, the conference "Dictators and Racists in a New Alliance", on 1st and 2nd of May 1981.

While he was here, we took the opportunity of requesting a meeting with him to discuss the SSC. At first, he refused to see ~~us~~ us unless Ken Luckhart and Brenda Wall were present. This was because he felt that they were the ones to do the work in Canada, and should be present. We wanted to meet him alone first, as there were matters (see details in our previous report November 1980) we felt needed to be discussed by members of the Movement only. Eventually, he agreed to meet us.

Present at this meeting were: Cmde Bunting (RPC Chairman), Cmde Saloojee (Chief Rep), Cmde Mooljee (Deputy Rep), Cmde Domingo (SACTU rep on RPC), Cmde Ponnen (SACTU and former chairman of Sactu Solidarity Committee) and Cmde Gaetsewe.

We discussed at some length the matters detailed in our report, stressing in particular:

- a) That SSC was projecting itself as SACTU (whether deliberately or not) and was often viewed as such by Canadian organisations; we in ANC, however, viewed them as a support group, as their name implies.
- b) That SSC was aligning itself with forces like TCLSAC in Canada, with ultra-left tendencies, rather than with the genuine progressive forces which ANC has close relations with. For instance, our information shows that many S SC members adhere to the politics of the Guardian newspaper in New York. This makes it difficult for us to support SSC in the same wholehearted way that we support SACTU.
- c) The membership of SSC is somewhat suspect, partly because of (b), but also because several members (including Luckhart and Wall) have opposed CCSA in the past. (CCSA is the national organisation established with strong ANC support after the Dadoo-Gaetsewe tour in 1975).
- d) The mode of operation of SSC is recruitment of almost anyone, with no obvious criteria. Decisions are made often by majority vote, so that the input of a single member of SACTU (Ponnen or Domingo) is often diluted or outvoted.

Unfortunately, Comrade Gaetsewe did not see that there was a problem with SSC, and insisted that it remain as it is. He did affirm that SSC is a support group, taking instructions from SACTU in London, and doing SACTU's work in Canada. He appealed to us to assist them in whatever way we could. We explained that we could not jeopardise our

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SSC Update

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friendly relations with the progressive forces in Canada by fully endorsing SSC. In summary, little was resolved with this meeting with Cmde Gaetsewe.

At a full RPC meeting held on May 20, this matter was discussed again with a view to arriving at our own position. Present at this meeting were: Cmde Bunting, Bhabha, Domingo, Mooljee and Saloojee, as well as Cmde Lai from Vancouver Unit, and Cmde Freeman from Winnipeg Unit.

Our position now is that we can not maintain "frozen relations" with SSC any longer. Neither can we grant them the "special status" that they have always asked for (i.e. we cannot treat them as SACTU). Rather, we will treat them as any support group and help them at that level in whatever way we can. We would inform any Canadian organisation that asked that this is our position, but no formal public statement would be issued (we have never issued such a statement on other groups, even TOLSA).

It was also felt necessary to cease having a SACTU representative on our RPC, since SSC is the official SACTU rep in Canada, and Enver Domingo is no longer the rep. Cmde Domingo is also being withdrawn from the SSC, as we do not wish any member of ANC to be associated with the SSC: it gives them credibility we feel they do not deserve.

Finally, attempts will be made to get progressive-thinking people on to SSC in an attempt to change its direction. All attempts by SSC to establish local SSC committees across Canada would be vigorously opposed (see previous report); rather, sub-committees of existing support groups (especially those affiliated to CCSA) would be persuaded to do work in support of SACTU (and also NUNW), to avoid the unnecessary duplication (and dilution) of organisations and manpower.

Peter Bunting
RPC Chairman/Secretary

Yusuf Saloojee
Chief Representative