

NMO/018/0031/65

African National Congress

51 Plein Street
Johannesburg 2001
PO Box 61864
Marshalltown 2107



Tel: (011) 330 7277
Fax: (011) 333 8870
Telex: 421252

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

ANC PRESS STATEMENT ON THE WEEKLY MAIL ARTICLE ON LIST OF NAMES

The ANC considers follow up to the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Complaints by former ANC prisoners to be urgent and important. Pursuant of the Report, the ANC has begun the process of establishing an independent commission of enquiry as undertaken by President Nelson Mandela at the press conference on Monday, 19 October, 1992.

However, with regard to publishing the list of names submitted by the Commission, the ANC reiterates that it is a basic principle of justice that those who stand accused have the opportunity to be heard. It would be incorrect to simply release a list of names so inaccurate that it even includes names of people who could in no way be connected to any of the allegations made.

The story uses the Report of the Commission of Inquiry as a basis for repeating unsubstantiated allegations and accusations. This is a disservice to Weekly Mail readers, those whose names they list and the interests of justice.

It is regrettable that a newspaper such as the Weekly Mail, with its outstanding record of exposing abuse and corruption, should not have seen fit to pay attention to accuracy in the detail of the report headlined "The names the ANC tried to hide". The names listed, some of which are completely unknown to us, are clearly drawn from a magazine article published in 1990, (Searchlight SA, vol.2, No.1, July 1990) and therefore available for all to read.

While some of the names are also listed by the Commission, many others are included, among them the names of people not able to answer the allegations against them, such as Jackie Mabuza who died in Lusaka after being poisoned by South African agents.

Among other things, the report states that Morris Seabelo died "mysteriously" in Lesotho. The Weekly Mail lifted even this terminology from the magazine article, whereas even a superficial investigation or an inquiry to the ANC would have readily revealed what is a matter of public record, that Morris Seabelo was among those killed in the SADF raid on Maseru in December 1985. Other bald statements such as that the ANC had a detention centre at Chongela Farm, when this was a crop-producing farm open at all times to the public and international donors; or that the NEC of the ANC has decided to withhold the report into the death of Thami Zulu, cited as an appendix to the main report, are but a couple of examples of such inaccuracies. The only appendix to the report is the list of names, and the question of publication is among the recommendations made by the commission, all of which are being considered by the ANC, and upon which there has as yet been no decision.

Issued by:

Department of Information and Publicity

PO Box 61884

Marshalltown 2107

23 October, 1992