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News letter

OF THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW SOUTH-AFRICA

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EDITORIAL

BY THEO BRINKEL

EDITOR

A strong democracy needs a strong opposition, able to criticise government effectively and with the potential to change the guard when necessary. The second democratic elections gave a different picture. Most voters approved the past performance and future promises of the ANC and gave the party an enormous majority. The dissatisfied or critical voters turned to a large number of parties that opposed the ANC.

Among these, the DP did very well. Seen from a Dutch perspective, however, the general picture is of a fragmented opposition, with many parties that still have to work towards establishing a stable basis among the electorate.

According to its objectives, NZA fosters the process of democratisation in South Africa. This, by strengthening political parties and improving their functioning in a democratic, non-racial and plural society and a well-functioning, sustainable and pluralistic party system. Pluralistic it certainly is. The party system could, however, be more sustainable and better functioning. Also, many voters still appear to cast their vote along ethnic lines.

The problem does not so much lie with the ANC, which performed marvellously well at the national elections. It are the opposition parties that seem to have a lot of work to do. Recently, among representatives of the different South African political parties, the suggestion was raised to create think-tanks for the political parties. Think-tanks that are autonomous, but at the same time connected to a political

party. Their task would be to prepare and promote research and the ability of parties to formulate coherent policies, policy choices and policy priorities. This may help parties growing into more durable and predictable institutions.

Fortunately, the NZA Board is willing to introduce this suggestion in NZA projects. With the experience of Dutch political parties with think-tanks, the implementation of the mirror function could play an important role in this regard. The results of the South African elections may be a good opportunity to give such ideas a serious thought.

FROM THE NZA BOARD

*Foundation for the Promotion of Democracy
in Developing Countries*

Since the start of its activities, the Board of the *Stichting voor het Nieuwe Zuid-Afrika* investigated possibilities of expanding the idea of supporting capacity building of political parties to other countries. In the previous edition of the Newsletter report was given on these investigations. On 8 June 1998 a debate on this issue was organised for the Dutch political parties, resulting in plans to establish a "Foundation for the Promotion of Democracy in Developing Countries". The Dutch Department of Foreign Affairs was asked to fund the

activities of such a foundation. The NZA Board is currently discussing the articles and policy document of such a foundation.

Some of the lessons learned with the Foundation for a New South Africa (NZA) will be included in the activities of the new foundation. It will focus on support, which will be demand driven, for the democratisation process in “young democracies”. Its activities will be complementary to projects of other institutions in the field of international relations and development co-operation. Support will be given to (a) countries that, after their first-time free national elections, stand before the task of building and consolidating a multiparty democracy; (b) countries that are in a process of transformation from an authoritarian regime to a democratically elected government (c) countries that do not have a democratic system yet, but where the conditions are favourable for the emergence of free institutions which will be able to evolve into a multiparty democracy within a limited period of time.

The NZA model will be modified in order to fit the specific situation in the different countries.

FROM THE NZA BOARD

New South African parties and the NZA

The second democratic national elections in South Africa have resulted in the presence of new political parties in the National Assembly. The *Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging* (1 seat), the Azanian People's Organisation (1), the Federal Alliance (2), the Minority Front (1), the United Christian Reconciliation Party (3) and the United Democratic Movement (14). The board of the NZA is currently discussing about including these parties in its funding. The UDM already did get approval for NZA funding. The members of the Advisory Board are asked for their advise on the matter.

All parties in South Africa that meet certain conditions can apply for support from the NZA. These conditions are: no racial or ethnic exclusivity or incitement to racial or ethnic hatred, no use of violence as a political tool, participation in free and fair elections and a commitment to participation in democratic institutions, democratic tolerance and compliance with the South African Electoral Code of Conduct. Of course, the new parties in the National Assembly will have to meet these conditions as well.

DOCUMENTATION

The SA National Assembly on 18 March 1999 adopted the following resolution:

That the House, whilst it

1. Expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation to the *Nederlandse Stichting voor het Nieuwe Zuid-Afrika* for the financial support they have been granting all political parties since 1994 for the implementation of specific projects that had received prior approval;
2. Wants to assure the foundation that its financial support is contributing to the empowerment of all political parties in Parliament;
3. Wants to point out to the political parties the importance of the correct control and application of these funds; and
4. Would like to express its sincere appreciation to all other donors for their financial contributions, Appeals to the NZA and all other donors to continue with current projects in the interests of multiparty democracy and participation in the political dispensation in South Africa.

REPORTS FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARTIES

Now the first five year period in the South African democracy has ended, it is a good time to consider in what way NZA has been helpful to the South African parties. The Newsletter asked the contact-persons of the South African parties about the role of NZA during this period, and what they expect for the near future.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Five years ago, South Africans voted the ANC into office to begin removing the terrible system of apartheid. In these short five years, the ANC has laid the foundations for a better future by putting together one of the best constitutions in the world, sweeping away racist and oppressive laws and passing new laws that protect equality for all.

At the same time, the ANC has begun to address the enormous apartheid legacy by providing basic needs such as education, housing, water and electricity to millions of people. The second democratic election took place in a different political context than the first one. While South Africans voted for freedom in

BY TOINE
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FOR ANC

1994, this time they voted for the organisation that they believe will be able to accelerate change in the country.

For the ANC, the last five years have been at once about maintaining its character as a mass liberation movement, committed to the mass participation of the people in transformation, while also dealing with the demands of a parliamentary democracy.

NZA funding has assisted greatly in beginning to weave the demands of participation and representation. Funding has been used in the main for capacity building within the organisation. Various NZA projects have allowed ANC cadres to understand the experiences of other parties in their election bid. Not only did we learn much from the trips that we took to the Netherlands, but we made good friends too!

We have drawn substantially from the lessons learnt in more entrenched democracies like the Netherlands in campaigning. In particular, our experience with parties in the Netherlands have confirmed our perspective that direct voter contact is essential in getting the message across. Through NZA funding we have begun to build a capacity in the ANC for research – both qualitative and quantitative. Funding for research has allowed the ANC to challenge companies in South Africa which tend towards an urban bias in their research. This research then assisted the ANC in obtaining its strategic focus for the campaign.

In addition, numerous training programmes funded by NZA have assisted in transferring skills to the basic units of our organisation – our branches. Training has included all aspects of electoral campaigning, like understanding the law, canvassing techniques, party agent work for the election day and counting. We have deliberately chosen a positive campaign message that talks about the participation of the people in the continuing fight for change in South Africa. It is a positive message since the ANC views this campaign as setting the tone for the next five

years of governance. It was not a campaign simply about election day. Many of the strategic sessions were made possible through NZA funds. Our goal for the election was to achieve an overwhelming majority, similar to that of 1994, in the context of a higher voter turnout, which would renew the people's mandate to the ANC for accelerated change, transformation and reconstruction. Our organisation is much better prepared now to meet the challenges of deepening and defending the democratic gains that we have made since 1994. We are impressed with recent research conducted across countries going through transitions to democracy. In these surveys, 75 per cent of South Africans indicated their approval of democracy. And the future of democracy lies in the people's belief that it is a system that is most able to empower them and deliver on basic needs. For this to properly happen, requires a strong and capacitated ANC that is able to meet those demands.

Funding from the NZA has significantly assisted in this regard.

NEW NATIONAL PARTY

South Africa is a young and vulnerable democracy, with a new political dispensation based on multi-party participation. It is imperative that every participating political party must dedicate its utmost efforts to ascertain that the electorate has a clear understanding of the options offered to them.

The majority of South Africans, due to past policies, do not have the skills and knowledge to serve the true values of multi-party democracy. The New National Party took up the challenge to equip its representatives, candidates, organisers, party offi-

BY HENNIE SMIT

NZA CONTACTPERSON

FOR NNP

cials, voluntary workers and supporters with the basic skills and knowledge to play a constructive and informatory role in the 1999 elections.

The New National Party started their preparation for the elections two years ago. The Institute for Political Leadership (IPL) is the responsible for all training related activities in the party. A complete project proposal was submitted to NZA by the IPL in February 1988, for the proposed training of all party beneficiaries. The fact that NZA was prepared to assist the South African parties to build the foundation for this training programme, helped to a great extent that the election campaign ran according to schedule and enabled the New National Party to be well prepared.

The guidelines of the NZA for capacity building also suited the programme planning of the New NP very well. The programmes were arranged accordingly. The project activities were subdivided into four categories under the arrangement of the relevant convenors: Project 1: Elected representatives to national and provincial government and candidates.

Project 2: Local government councillors and candidate empowerment programme. Project 3: Training, related to successful participation in multi-party elections 1999.

Project 4: Special seminars on youth, women, personnel and parliamentary caucuses at provincial and national level.

Most of the training programmes were presented in the form of workshops. Specialists on different topics and independent consultants were utilised to present these courses and workshops. The special seminars focused on specific needs expressed by elected representatives to be better equipped to efficiently fulfil their duties. The following topics were addressed: leadership, fundraising, handling the media, public speaking, computer training and interpretation of budgets.

Without the financial assistance of the NZA it would not have been possible to present all these training programmes.

In implementing these programmes, the IPL had a few minor obstacles to deal with. Because of busy schedules it was sometimes difficult to involve all the relevant roleplayers. The vastness of the country and lack of transport facilities in especially rural areas were also limiting factors in the training process of organisers, party officials and personnel. The long period of waiting in anticipation for the finalisation of the Electoral Act had a detrimental effect on the training of election officials and personnel.

In all instances the IPL managed to overcome these obstacles through more intensive planning. The fact that the NZA approved an additional project proposal and allocated additional funding for follow-up courses and other needs identified, mainly contributed to the effectiveness of these training programmes.

It is envisaged that the workshops on fundraising will enable the New NP to, at least partly, fund our activities in future, but will still be very much dependent on co-operation and financial support from other resources.

NZA was in the past three years our main sponsor as far as training is concerned. The support that political parties in South Africa have received from NZA enabled them to empower their representatives and officials to be well equipped to serve their parties and their supporters. It is therefore of paramount importance to continue good relations with Dutch parties and specifically NZA to ensure that your support for the parties in South Africa is continued after 1999. We really hope that NZA will continue their support to South African parties. Parties still need this most appreciated support.

BY BOBBY STEVEN-
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MANAGER
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
DEVELOPMENT AND
TRAINING PRO-
GRAMME FOR DP

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The assistance given by the *stichting* certainly helped to ensure that the Democratic Party (DP) was better prepared for the 1999 elections, as opposed to the 1994 elections. One of the key projects supported by NZA was the Local government development and training project. This assistance has empowered the DP to focus heavily on local government issues and the training of local government councilors, as well as the development of policy at local government level and improved communication between the different councils. As a result, the DP has won a number of stunning by-election victories in areas where previously it had no chance. This has helped to project the DP as a force throughout South Africa.

Furthermore, NZA has given assistance for election training. Training involved drawing up an election plan for the party. Training is taking place in how to market the party. Assistance was also given with regard to voter registration process for the general elections, as is was totally different to those of 1994. People had to be educated in the new process, which meant physically going to register to vote and having one's name on a voters roll, as opposed to simply going to a polling booth with an ID document in 1994. Many voters did not possess the necessary bar-coded ID documentation. They had to be assisted in the process. Co-ordinators also assisted in giving training and direction to the party structures in how to assist members of the public with queries. A toll-free hotline was set up.

It should be emphasized that one of the key obstacles with regard to voter registration was the fact that a national survey showed that only 65 per cent of

people who potentially wanted to vote for the DP had the necessary bar-coded ID documents. This meant a massive education drive to encourage people to firstly obtain these documents. Many voters were reluctant to obtain these documents, as they felt they would have to stand in long queues. The issue was further complicated by the fact that when people applied for their bar-coded ID documents, they were not at first issued with Temporary Registration Certifications. Without these TRC's they could not register to vote. The DP took this issue to the Constitutional Court. Surveys have shown that up to 5 million voters could not be in possession of the necessary ID documents in time.

Some of our members have had contact with Dutch parties, particularly those who share our liberal philosophy. The art of politics is to adopt winning ideas that can improve the quality of life of one's citizens. Information sharing between political parties on an international level can play an important role in this regard. The DP looks forward to ongoing contact with the Dutch political parties.

THE FREEDOM FRONT AND ITS DUTCH PROJECTS

The Freedom Front (FF) was involved with NZA from the beginning, as our first contact was made during the second half of 1994. Since then, the party has learned a lot from the Dutch way of doing things, and has launched quite a few successful projects with their assistance.

From the outset, it was stressed that the aid from NZA was meant to build the capacity of the party to participate in the democratic processes in the RSA. The party was forced to consider every suggestion from party members according to this guide line. Many hours were spent on preparing project proposals carefully, so that it would be made easy for NZA to approve. It became clear to us that aid from NZA must be directed at the really important issues. Our experience was that the NZA was quite willing to approve sound project proposals, but were equally willing to question project proposals which did not seem to adhere to the guideline of capacity building. A valuable lesson the party learned was that each project must have an owner, i.e. a party member driving the project as his or her own. Only then the proper attention is paid to the project, and the proper finalisation of the project takes place.

A study of all the projects that the Freedom Front has attempted up to now, brings to light that our projects could broadly be classified as follows: projects regarding party policy, projects relating to youth affairs, training projects, projects relating to party organisation and establishment of a research foundation for the party.

Policy projects: Through these projects, time was

spent on clarifying uncertainties we had on specific issues. Valuable inputs were received from the Dutch representatives who joined us during these sessions.

Youth projects: The FF soon realised that our policies must give new vision for the Afrikaner youth. Through the assistance of the Dutch Foundation, we managed to reach the youth at the various university campuses. This proved to be so successful, that the party managed to make significant inroads in the student councils of the major Afrikaans universities.

Training projects: Training projects were mainly aimed at the preparation of candidates for local government as well as candidates for the national parliament and provincial legislatures. These not only proved to be quite useful, but also resulted in many problems being addressed through mutual discussions and briefings.

Organisational projects: These projects, through which the organisational structures of the party in the various provinces were maintained, proved to be of utmost importance. In some provinces, administrative functions can only continue by means of Dutch aid. Many party organisers do their work by using, amongst other, Dutch funds. It serves to mention that the party's monthly magazine, Frontnuus, was launched with the assistance of Dutch funding. This proved to be a valuable communication aid.

Research foundation: The Foundation for Self-determination and Development of the Freedom Front was established after motivation and guidance from NZA. It took the party a relatively long time to get the foundation off the ground, but after a competent director was identified, the Foundation was launched. It is proving to be one of the party's good decisions.

We are most grateful to NZA for its interest in our policies and problems and for the contributions they have made to empower the party. The Freedom Front has taken the initiative to pass a resolution through the national parliament, recognising the role of NZA in the new South Africa, and expressing the gratitude of all parties in parliament. This resolution also

BY PIET UYS

SECRETARY GENERAL

FREEDOM FRONT

BY NICKI HOUSEN
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THE INFLUENCE OF NZA IN PREPAR- ING THE IFP FOR ELECTION '99

The assistance of NZA in preparing the Inkhata Freedom Party (IFP) for the country's second democratic elections is spanned across the years of assistance provided. Some areas of valued training and assistance that can be highlighted are: leadership training, the continuous media training and direct election preparedness training, such as voter education and party electoral agent training.

The IFP realised it had a tremendous task ahead in preparing for the crucial 1999 elections. Cognisant of the crucially important role that the party must play in this regard, the party has in 1998 embarked on a voter education and election preparation programme. Voter education programmes were embarked on nation-wide, focussing on imparting basic knowledge of the political and constitutional system, the actual voting process, training on the registration process, the major policy issues and differences between the major parties.

Realising that it is essential to ensure that the elections were free and fair and that all parties contesting are content with the results, the party has also

embarked on extensive party electoral agent training. Training focused on familiarising party electoral agents with electoral procedures and establishing co-operative structures to ensure that the party has an effective and professional presence during the actual voting and counting process.

Apart from assisting in preparation for the general election, the party embarked on a series of workshops aimed at training elected provincial and district leadership in 1997. These workshops concentrate on the nature of their functions and on how they can maximise the realisation of the party's objectives, both short and long term.

These workshops were aimed at ensuring that the IFP leadership are trained to perform their duties to the optimum level and that we can be an effective election machine. The benefit of this training was that with the finalisation of both the nomination lists of the national and provincial legislatures, dynamic and efficient persons were nominated in all nine provinces. They are to represent the party as possible future members of parliament or the provincial legislatures.

For the past three years NZA has assisted the IFP in various ways in improving its media capacity. The result of which is effectively trained publicity secretaries nation-wide, the establishment of a monthly newsletter and focus on effective media relations and a proactive function for the party. This has assisted in the establishment of a focused media function – essential for the party's election campaign.

The assistance of NZA in providing training and education for the IFP has been essential in ensuring that the party's overall capacity has been enhanced and effectively co-ordinated. The IFP is today stronger, more geared and targeted towards its goals thanks to the training and assistance provided by NZA and the many mirror function delegates who have assisted us during these past years.

Apart from the training embarked upon during projects implemented, the mirror functions have provid-

ed valuable information and lessons to IFP participants. All Dutch participants were informative and inspirational – giving the IFP a bird's eye view of how political parties operate with each other in the Netherlands and how they can agree to disagree on matters.

NZA SUPPORT ASSIST ACDP TO ACHIEVE ELECTION READINESS

The African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) is a relative newcomer to the South African political scene. The ACDP was formed in 1993, which was just prior to the country's first democratic elections of 1994. Having secured two seats in the National Assembly, the ACDP was ready to consolidate and grow from this position.

The ACDP welcomed the assistance and support offered by NZA to strengthen the democratic process in South Africa by way of building the capacity of each participant political party to become increasingly structured and self-sustaining. The ACDP recognised that the process of equipping itself to fight elections at national, provincial and local level would have to include empowering its personnel as well as replicating, strengthening and maintaining its structures throughout the country.

One of the initial challenges faced by the ACDP was to support and maintain the structures it had already established. An important part of this process involved team building and the training of party personnel

in the various administrative and political skills necessary to function effectively.

With NZA support the ACDP has endeavoured to facilitate a process in which the capacity of party personnel is developed and party structures are established and maintained. An important part of the process has been to ensure that new structures and officials assume ever-increasing responsibility and accountability for party functions.

This process started in 1994-1995 with training of local government candidates. In 1996 capacity-building workshops for party officials at national and provincial levels were held. In 1997 the emphasis moved to the empowerment and consolidation of party structures. The first part of 1998 saw the introduction of computer-assisted communications networks. In the second half of that year the process was taken further in the form of the allocation of budgets and responsibilities to departments established for the development of specialised activities.

As a party, which started out with little experience in politics, the ACDP has been particularly appreciative of NZA's policy of assisting it to gain from the perspective and expertise to be found in Dutch political parties. The ACDP received valuable inputs at multi-party conferences in which there was opportunity for exchanges between representatives of Dutch and South African parties.

Apart from the value of inter-party exchanges, the inputs of Dutch experts in information technology and the setting up of computer-linked communication networks have been invaluable in assisting a young party to access world wide information and to facilitate the flow of information between its various structures. In this way the ACDP has been better able to position itself to compete with older and more established parties.

With the support of experienced trainers from Dutch parties, the development of two of the party's key structures, namely the Youth League and the Women's League, were greatly facilitated. After inten-

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sive NZA supported training of members of the respective national executives, structures have been created in all nine provinces. NZA-supported training enabled the ACDP to equip office-bearers at all levels with insight into their portfolios. Training of chairman, secretaries, treasurers, party organisers, policy co-ordinators, etc. all helped the party to concentrate its efforts on the empowerment of resource personnel. The formation of teams of experts in various fields of political expertise as well as support functions are being actively promoted. As a result of the training mentioned above, party officials became more adept at the critical task of money management.

A project, which facilitated the exposure of all structures to workshops on election strategy and methods, as well as in-depth training in party policy and constitutional knowledge, has been of great value in preparing candidates for the elections.

NZA is now considering a proposal involving support for the final phase of the process, which will assist the party to become financially self-sustaining. There is little doubt that although there is still much to be done, the support offered by NZA has played a significant role in assisting a young party to rapidly achieve the levels of political maturity and professionalism necessary to function in the new South African democracy.

MIRROR FUNCTION

D66 joins DP election campaign

One month before the second democratic elections in South Africa, D66 joined the campaign trail of the Democratic Party (DP). As part of a mirror function project, started in 1998 when three DP officials visited D66 during the election campaign for the Dutch parliament, international secretary Wilfried Derksen, treasurer Robert van Lente and D66 international officer Ralph de Vries experienced the South African election battle fought over issues like crime, employment, affirmative action, economic development, health care and education.

DP posters with the provocative slogan "The guts to fight back" could be seen in cities and villages all over South Africa. And the DP did fight back, since they are now the leading opposition party in South Africa. The strategy of the party, challenging the (N)NP as leading opposition party by attacking the ANC as party in government, proved to be very effective.

Regarding the mirror function project Greg Krumbock, national executive director of the DP, prepared an extensive programme. It took the D66 representatives to the Eastern Cape Province and Kwa Zulu Natal. By plane, car and campaign bus, DP events and activists were visited in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, East London, Brakpan, Gauteng East, Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle, and Durban. The influence of American and British tactics and techniques on the campaign was quite visible: canvassing, fundraising breakfasts, lunches and dinners, and campaign rallies. Talks with Tony Leon, leader of the DP, the cam-

paing management, candidates, local activists, and hired consultants gave an good insight in the workings and dynamics of the DP campaign. The discussions included strategy planning, pamphlets and posters, target markets and image, swing voters, media coverage, fundraising, opinion polls, but also topics out of the DP election manifesto.

Based upon a paper he wrote as treasurer of D66, Robert van Lente gave a number of workshops on party financing. The workshops were aimed at local activists and explained the way in which D66 manages it internal and external financial affairs. The importance of maintaining a well financed party infrastructure was acknowledged by both sides. Already ideas and plans are being developed to elaborate this subject in a new mirror function project. Both D66 and DP feel that the mirror function project fulfilled the aims of the NZA and gave a strong incentive to continue and intensify the co-operation.

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