

S.G.'s Office. Lum/065/0004/06

Meeting with Members of the International Red Cross held on 6/7/79.

Present; Frederick Steinemann, Mauricette Gollt, Comrade Raymond and Wolfie.

It was that since Miss Gollut could not answer all our questions put to her at the previous meeting, that we should call at their premises to meet Mr. Steinemann and this was done at the request of Miss Gollut.

Steinemann gave us a run down of the work done by the Red Cross and informed us amongst other things that they had got the co-operation of the South African government, to open an office in Pretoria. He said that they would encourage every body to come to their office as they had made it clear that it would be run on non racial lines. Their representatives would periodically travel around the country seeing various people and visiting prisons all over the country as well. The next visit would be on the 1st September. In this connection if there are any matters which we would like them to take up e.g. family visit to Robben Island and so on, these must be submitted to them here in Lusaka by the mid August the latest.

Other matters discussed and agreed upon were:

- 1) We would advise the Comrades concerned that the Red Cross would like a continuous contact kept between the two organisations. Comrade Thomas
- 2) That we inform amongst other things that Comrade Cuduzo Makhitini who is a prisoner in Wahwah gaol would like a letter from him. This letter to the Red X was sent to them in 1978. (The other two Comrades mentioned were Comrade Ruth and what seemed like Tennyson Makiwane) Visits to the Rhodesian gaols take place every 2 to 3 months. If Comrade Thomas gives Steinemann a letter it will be sent on to him.
- 3) They can deliver reading material to our Comrade prisoners in these Rhodesian gaols, so we must contact them about newspaper delivered to them and any other reading matter which we would like to send and which we can check up on with the Red X.
- 4) Ask Mao Maharaj to submit any report which he had made for Lesotho. He should get in touch with Steinemann.
- 5) We should let be known as much as possible to all our released prisoners who need help that they can get in touch with the Red X in South Africa. This applies to those for instance who are house arrested, banned and in any case generally need help.
- 6) The protocols to the Geneva Conventions which can be obtained from their offices should be studied by our legal comrades and taken up on behalf of all political prisoners. Steinemann felt that there was a lot that could be done and he quoted a few passages where certain words and phrases could be interpreted to for the benefit of the interned comrades. These should be taken up at the appropriate levels.
- 7) On his return to Lusaka on the 17th July, we can contact Steinemann to view a film about the exchange of prisoners and other things which would be of interest to the comrades. These could be seen for a limited audience at his house or if there is a bigger audience, at another venue.



Steineamnn at our request gave us a photocopy of the parcels we had sent to the comrades in Rhodesian gaols in 1978. He would like us to look at the lists make any alterations and submit the new list to him for the X-mas hampers to be given this year.

We gleaned an important bit of knowledge from the Red people about their organization namely this that although it is called the International Red this name is a misnomer and only refers to the nature of their activity. It is purely a Swiss set up and nobody other than Swiss can belong to it. This is apparently to ensure their complete neutrality'.

After talking around the subject, we compromised by saying that if themselves could not put pressure to bear on the African Government to alleviate the conditions of our prisoners, then at least they should use their influence amongst their contacts to do so.

We pointed out that 'Life' imprisonment in most countries meant fifteen or so years and this business of applying in our literally in our country was beyond the norms of civilised behaviour and this should be stressed wherever they could.

Another point which they noted was our condemnation of the behaviour of Doctors attending prisoners in South Africa.

We received a few exercise books and pencils to look at with the possibility of asking them for a lot of these and possibly other stationery for the school. But they were vague and this will have to be followed up.

The impression gained is that they are keen to be in contact with the Liberation Movement but are very strictly 'neutral'.

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