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EXECUTIVE-DIRECTOR ' S REPOR'IL

FOR THE MEETING OF BATLAGAE TRUSTEES

ON FRIDAY OCTOBER 18TH 1991

This Report should be read in conjunction with the attached Report presented at the last Batlagae Oversight Committee Meeting on 18th September 1991.

Since my inception, I have consulted frequently with the Trustees, except for William Seriti, due to unavoidable circumstances. The Chairperson made himself available on numerous occasions and so did John Samuel and Barbara Watson, while I was able to see Neil McGurk once but had several telephone consultations with him.

Broadly speaking, emphasis has shifted from placement at a large a reception centre to smaller, regionally-based centres for a core of returnees while making provision for a large bursary programme for the majority of returnees who will be dispersed upon arrival. It is not feasible at present to work on the objective of setting up an adult education centre.

Since September 18th 1991 (the date of the Report to the Batlagae Oversight Committee) , the Trust's main efforts have been directed towards (1) the continued search for sites (reception centres) , (2) the establishment of s. bursary programs for the returnees, (3) securing funds, (4) locating premises, and, (5) finding staff.

(1) RECEPTION CENTRES

Efforts to find two or more reception centres continued and we have been successful in securing a former primary school in Mnyville, Durban as a reception centre/school for up to 200 returnees .

There has been no success in finding sites in the PWV and Cape Regions .

I visited Durban on September 24th and with Professor Fatima Meer's help was shown the empty school in Mayville by a representative of the Natal Provincial Administration. The school has been handed to the Institute for Black Research, which is willing for it to be used for the returnee students. A formal letter of approval is awaited. The school was a day school for 400 primary pupils and will require half of the classroom accommodation to be converted into dormitories and the ablution blocks will require upgrading.

What is critical is financial assistance from the State towards conversion costs, staff salaries, etc. John Samuel will see Minister Sam de Beer regarding the government's earlier commitment in this regard. If government assistance is not forthcoming, is it feasible to establish a completely independent school?

Another fundamental question is what should the Trust's continuing role be towards the school.

Meanwhile, the Trust has to give consideration to:-

- (a) whether the school should be for primary or secondary learners;
- (b) the composition of the governing board

The search for a reception centre in the PWV Region comprised:-

- (i) a visit to Tweefontein Farm near Pretoria; it is over-priced and does not have staff housing facilities;
- (ii) visits to Sagewood School, which is for sale; it too is very costly to purchase.

After consultation with one or two Trustees, I stopped trying to find sites that are for sale because of the difficulty of raising huge sums for this purpose and until a clear policy decision is arrived at on this matter.

Brother Neil McGurk agreed to pursue the availability of Observatory Girls Primary School.

So far I have had no success in finding suitable contacts to find a reception centre either in the Border region or the Western Cape.

(2) BURSARY PROGRAMME

Since the majority of returnees will be dispersed, emphasis must be placed on a bursary programs. Accordingly, consultations have been held with the ANC's Task Force on SOMAFCO, its Repatriation Committee and Department of Education, as well as with the NCCR. I phoned Klaas Hasishi of the PAC but we have not been able to meet to discuss the PAC's requirements with regard to returnee children and youth.

Barbara Watson and Mariane Cummins made a second trip to SOMAFCO to elicit more data on the returnees, especially with regard to their dispersal.

I am preparing a list of institutions and organisations to be contacted regarding the admission of returnees. So far, some have been contacted but no firm offers have been forthcoming.

St. Ansgars School was visited on September 20th and the Principal said that 90 day places could be made available if the Council of the School gave its approval. A meeting was arranged on September 27th with Mr. Moria Tsiki, chairperson of the Council of St. Ansgars School. He said that he would present to his Council the proposal to place 90 returnee students at St Ansgars School if boarding facilities could be found for them near the school; if it is not possible to find residential facilities for them in the neighbourhood, could an emergency construction programme be mounted to build the required boarding units? So far, there has been no response from Mr. 'I'siki. On October 4th I visited the Kangwane Work-Study Project, with a view to the placement of returnee youth there for matriculation studies and skills training. About 60 will be admitted in January 1992 .

The Khuphuka Skills Training and Education Project, based in Durban, will be able to accommodate adult learners if funding for them can be obtained.

There is urgency in setting up the bursary programs with respect to the appointment of a bursary administrator and finding funds (see sections below on staffing and funding).

Systematic procedures will have to be established in consultation with the NCCR and the Liberation Movements to facilitate the processing of returnees for entry into institutions. Furthermore, selection criteria will have to be formulated in the event of there being insufficient funds for all the returnees.

The question arises as to whether the Trust should be responsible for the entire range of learner returnees or only for those from pre-school to technical level, delegating responsibility for tertiary scholarships to another agency.

I met with venita Meyer and wolfgang Lauer of the NCCR and with Ivy Matsepe-Cassaburi of the Education Development Trust, principally to seek advice. It is clear that there will have to be close coordination with the NCCR to avoid duplication of effort.

RAISING

John Samuel has facilitated the transfer of SIDA funds, as follows:-

- A. Start up cost for Batlagae Trust 301 020
 - B. Bursary Programme 750 000
 - C. Reception Centre 415 000
- 1 466 520

Approximately 2 million rands are available from the Nordic Operation Dayswork Fund committed to the ANC. In consultation with the ANC's Department of Education, it is proposed that the money should be utilised for the following purposes:-

- A. Reception Centres
- B. Bursary Programme
- C. Kangwane Work-Study Project
- D. Khuphuka Skills Training Education Project

The ARC is willing to allocate a further 400,000 rands of Norwegian money to the Trust for the returnees programme.

I have as yet not been able to approach local funding sources, such as the IDT, Kagiso Trust or Liberty Life.

PREMISES

I propose that the Trust should lease 3 offices at 51 Plein Street as from November 1st 1991. During September and October I have been given space free of charge by the Hatla Trust.

STAFFING

Barbara Watson and I interviewed three prospective candidates for the post of secretary and recommend the appointment of Irene Haminze, with a monthly salary of R2000.

One of the three candidates, Dot Zothile Mkhwanazi, withdrew her application as she felt she'd like a job with more financial management responsibilities. Barbara Watson and I considered her to have the qualities for a bursaries administrator and I have discussed this possibility with Michael Corke, who supports her appointment as the Trust's bursary administrator. Ratification is required for this proposal from the Trustees' Meeting. The recommended salary for this post is R3000 per month.

Job descriptions have been given to the Chairperson and are available for scrutiny. A Contract of Service is under preparation.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

1.

The proposed meeting with Dr. Frank Chikane could not be arranged due to his tight schedule. However, I met with his personal assistant, Mr. John Lamola, and gave him a progress report on the Trust.

John Samuel proposes that the Trust should coordinate the transfer to South .Africa of educational archives from Tanzania and Zambia and their placement at Wits University. Funding might be forthcoming frqm FINNIDA.

My salary for October will be paid by the ANC. The Chairperson leased a vehicle for my use as frqm September 9th for 6 weeks. The leasing and running costs of the vehicle and office expenditure since September 9th (telephone, fax, photocopying) will be met from the Rhodes Trust allocation to the St. Barnabas Outreach Programme. Two bank accounts (a Trust and an Operational account) have been opened at the First National Bank, Braamfontein, as per the decision of the last Meeting of Trustees. Furniture and office equipment are under order for the let of November 1991.