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As a department within the ANC, we are bound by the policy, the Strategy and Tactics and all other documents of the National liberation movement. The ANC, as a movement that has its formation within the womb of Christianity; in the sense that, during its formation in 1912, men of the cloth played a leading role; has seen it fitting that this Department should be established so as to cater for the religious needs of the exiled community, mobilise and activate as many religious centres inside South Africa into centres of resistance, devise an interfaith programme which will accommodate people of all religious persuasions and lastly, take care of the social welfare of our people in exile.

As we all know, the ANC has in its foundations, contributions from religious people like: .

Rev. J.L. Dube 1912 - 1917 - The first President of the ARC and a minister of the Congregational Church.

S.M. Makgatho 1917 - 1924 - Second President of the ANC, Methodist leader and a lay preacher.

Rev. Z.R. Mahabane

1924 - 1927 Third President of the ANC, Minister of the MK

1933 - 1940 Methodist Church and President of the Interdenominational African Ministers' Association

(IDMMSA)

Rev. W.B. Rubusana One of the original vice - Presidents of the ARC

co - translator of the Xhosa Bible and the Vice -

President/Chairman of the Congregational Union of South Africa.

Chief A.J. Lutuli 1952- 1967- President of the ANC from 1952 to 1967. A

devoted Christian of the Congregational Church

a noble prize winner, a prominent leader who

chose to serve his people as President of their

vanguard movement rather than as a Chief according

to the will of the racist Pretoria regime.

However, we need to make it very clear that, it is not only Christians who have played a prominent role in our struggle, but also people from other religious formations. The Department of Religious Affairs does not represent The Christian Church only, but all religious bodies in our country.

The President of the ANC, Comrade Oliver Tambo, addressing the World Council

of Churches' Consultation held in June 1980 in Holland, said " The present epoch calls

for a Church that is closely allied with the poor and the oppressed. It demands

Christians of the calibre of Camille Torres, the heroic Colombian priest who joined

the guerilla forces of that country in the struggle against the tyrannical Colombian

oligarchy of the 1960s. This is the Church which must exhort the slave to rise from

his knees and to assert what the Bible bestows as a right to " fill the earth and subdue

it." In that light, cadres like Rev. Tendla "Flockman" Lsibi, in that very same year

laid down their precious lives in the battlefields of Ziezieland in furtherance of the

armed struggle of the people of South Africa.

Here in the region, V'Jee have established a regional structure which is now

sub - branching into 20 local structures both in hazimbu and Dakawa. This is for

solving and attending to issues from the grassroots.

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_AFRlUA . Rev uasha Kani & Zolile Mvela . i