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THE REPORT OF THE NEW YORK UNIT ON THE  
THE SITUATION IN THE UNIT AND THE REGION.

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The ANC New York Unit met on June 12, 1988 to consider the situation arising from the Chief Representative's decision to suspend the RPC and dismantle all structures of the ANC in the region, that is, the Youth Section, the Women's Section, various units or branches, and the Cultural Committee. The unit felt that this state of affairs merits urgent attention, particularly since it might create an impression of disunity within our ranks and has a practical effect of rendering our work non-existent. Because of the importance the Unit attaches to this development, it adopted a resolution which has already been communicated to headquarters, to the President's office, the Secretary General's office and the International Department. The unit was mindful of the proper channels of the ANC, but in a situation where the RPC itself was, by a stroke of a pen of the Chief Representative, suspended and units not informed but instead simply ignored, we felt it was urgent that we, as a collective in New York and the surrounding areas, send this resolution to headquarters. In that way, we thought, the urgency and importance of the matter could be emphasised. The resolution is as follows:

" We the active members of the New York Chapter of the ANC, recognising the fact that the Chief Representative has decided to suspend the structures of the ANC, namely the RPC and replaced them with a nominated Ad-Hoc Committee constituting of some members who were voted out of office in the last Annual General Meeting and other structures of the ANC, resolve to disassociate ourselves from his decision mainly because we feel that the Chief Representative has no authority to suspend a structure put in office by conference. We should like to suggest that headquarters sets up, urgently, a commission of inquiry to investigate developments and events in this region so that the truth should prevail. We resolve this because at this stage of our struggle we can least afford to stay idle and not execute our duties as members



of the organisation when our people pay in their blood and lives.

We hope for an urgent response from H.Q. "

The Unit instructed the Chairperson of the Unit and the RPC Chairperson to sign the message and make sure it is sent to headquarters.

The New York Unit and the Observer Mission's Office.

The New York Unit has, since the setting up of ANC structures in the region of which it is part, worked very closely with the Office of the Chief Representative to the United Nations. This has been so because of, inter alia;

- (a) The need for the New York Unit to have an operational base which the office provided in mobilising support for our struggle outside of the United Nations;
- (b) The manpower which the Unit has provided by encouraging people to give part of their time to do office work such as mailing ANC publications, mailing or delivering letter to various missions and organising material support, in the form of medicine, clothes and books, which increased as the struggle intensified and support increased.
- (c) Using the office for regular Unit meetings.
- (d) Keeping a Unit account-established for unit activities as part of the ANC office account.
- (e) The Sechaba cultural group rehearsed at the office.

In this working relationship between the office and the Unit, the results were tremendous. People participated in our activities with high morale. Support groups embraced and respected the ANC even more. Huge campaigns always saw a large



presence of ANC members. The Unit was able to push for the speedy cleaning and sorting out of clothes in the storage and their shipping to the needy comrades in Africa. The Sechaba cultural groups, established by Unit members for the purpose of mobilising support for the popularising of the ANC through culture, became more busy as more and more support groups in various towns and cities invited it to help them in their support work. In commemorative events and meetings at the United Nations, the ANC, through the encouragement of the former Chief Representative, Comrade Makatini, was able to have large delegations by getting members to participate. This continued for some years but is now declining.

A problem has arisen at the office which, as members have said, has been an effective locking out of the Unit. We can no longer rely on using the office for ANC work. This was caused by the Chief Representative, Solly Simelane, Susan Mnumzana and Nthabi Simelane's decision to change the office locks and have copies for only the four of them. This was done under the pretext of security. This in no way suggests that we would like to risk the security of the office. It is important to note that Susan Mnumzana and Nthabi Simelane are hardly at the office. Neo Mnumzana is always on the road. Solly Simelane attends meetings at the United Nations. This means that if Themba Ntinga or Victor Mashabela cannot enter the office because they don't have keys, the telephone will ring unanswered at such hours as 10:00 a.m. The other effect of this withholding of the keys is that if for instance, we want to go and fetch Sechaba publications from the airport, a task that has been consistently carried out by Victor Mashabela (who now has no keys) and Simpi Mothobi, and none of the "key holders" is available on Saturdays to open the office, there is no way to get Sechaba and deliver it to the office. The financial implications of that is that the office would then have to pay more for storage. This has already happened.

The Sechaba Cultural Group has been affected by this withholding of office keys. The same can be said of the Youth Section, the Women's Section, or the Unit,



structures which hold regular meetings at the office. The office is simply not available anymore.

#### Membership.

The Unit has members who can be categorised into two: those who participate in activities of the Unit and those who don't. For a number of years the Unit was able to remain united, to discuss its matters at its meetings, to work very closely with the office, and resolve its differences within its structures and to plan and execute tasks of the ANC as already mentioned. It is true that there are some members of the Unit who, even at that time- before the situation deteriorated to what it is today- withdrew completely from the ANC and in fact even renounced its policies and politics. Some, because of family or work constraints, have not been able to take part in all our activities, but whenever possible, they do. Others have remained a working nucleus of the Unit and to date have been consistent in their participation. The questioning of the membership validity of members is mainly directed at most of the active members of the ANC in New York.

#### Membership Regularisation.

For a very long time now, the issue of membership has been dealt with by the RPC. To resolve this issue, the RPC over the past two years, instructed different units to circulate membership forms to be filled out by applicants or potential members and to be submitted to the RPC. There might have been a few cases of people whose membership had not been regularised, that is, sympathisers who were taken as members of the ANC and participated in ANC activities. It is important to make mention of the fact that during the time when Fred Dube was the Chairperson of the RPC to the time of Cap Zungu, the matter of questionable members did not assume dimensions it seems to have assumed today. In our Unit Fred Dube started to question the membership of certain members of this Unit two years ago supported by Neo Mnumzana. The people



under question were those of the Women's Section who had remained and continued to work for the ANC when others had left. The matter got to the point where Dube said that some of the members of the RPC itself were, in fact, not bona fide members of the ANC and could not, therefore, be in the RPC. When Dube was confronted about facts regarding this issue at a Unit meeting, he walked out of the meeting.

Why is this important? It is important because within the so-called Ad-Hoc Committee are, among others, Fred Dube and Cap Zungu, both former RPC Chairpersons whose leadership was most ineffective. It is also important because in our discussion with Themba Vilakazi, the current Chairperson of the RPC, we learnt that the main reason for the suspension of the RPC by the Chief Representative, was that the RPC failed to regularise membership in the region. Yet the record shows that in fact these two individuals actually stifled the regularisation of the membership in the region. Cap Zungu insisted that the RPC could not process the membership. He and Neo Mnumzana pushed for the appointment of a secret committee to do this task, an idea which was rejected by the rest of the RPC. Some members of the Unit being puzzled by this desire by Cap Zungu and Neo Mnumzana to violate the ANC procedures as contained in the structures document, opted to send their application forms and biographies directly to Headquarters via Solly Simelane. It is therefore astounding that the issue of membership is so urgent and important that it gave the Chief Representative a reason to suspend the RPC and all structures of the ANC. Note should be taken also of the fact that the bulk of membership regularisation took place in 1987 during Themba Vilakazi's tenure. About twenty (20) application forms were submitted to the S.G.'s office by the Secretary of the RPC, Nomazizi Sokudela during her travel to Africa. It must also be stated that it is this current RPC that has processed and recommended five (5) new members for admission into the ANC and is working on more applications from prospective members. It is worth noting that in the last Annual General Meeting, the entire membership of the RPC was kept as is but only the Chairperson, namely Cap Zungu was replaced by Themba Vilakazi, the then



Vice-Chairperson of the RPC.

The 1986 Annual General Meeting(AGM).

During the last annual general meeting held in 1986 and hosted by the New York Unit, it became clear that there was a move not to have it as an Annual General Meeting. It seemed obvious that the reason for that was to avoid having elections and thus keep the RPC with Cap Zungu as Chairperson as it was. The idea of having it as a so-called consultative meeting with no elections for a new RPC was not supported by the majority and it proceeded as the Annual General Meeting. One of the reasons advanced for not having it as an AGM was that " senior members such as Dube " were not present. Notices for the AGM had been circulated to all the membership and when follow up calls were made, Dube denounced the RPC preparation and actually hung up on the person delegated to make the calls.

The Role of the Chief Representative at the AGM.

The role of the Chief Representative at the AGM left a lot to be desired. A press conference had been planned to give maximum publicity to the ANC. He vetoed such a move on the ground that the Reagan Administration was hostile and it would not be proper for us to have a press conference.

The Chief Representative, instead of facilitating political debate and planning for the future during the AGM, consistently engaged in posturing and sermonizing about ill-defined structures thus undermining the whole effort of the AGM. It seemed at the conference that the main aim of the Chief Representative to establish and make it clear to the entire membership in the region that he, and he alone, as a " representative of the NEC " could decide on anything and his decisions would be final, subject to no questioning or criticism.

When it came to voting for the RPC, the Chief Representative insisted that



he wanted Susan Mnumzana to be elected into the RPC. The Chief Representative approached some members and urged them to run for office and to help vote out the Commissar, Aggrey Mbere, because he had " no politics ". (This report shall not deal with the merits or demerits of that.) The results of the votint were what the majority of the membership had wanted in the first place, namely, to get the Chaperperson out of office. The event of March 1988 , viz. the suspension of the RPC seems to suggest that the Chief Representative has not forgiven the AGM decision. That perhaps explains why among the people appointed by the Chief Representative to be in the so-called Ad Hoc Committee are Susan Mnumzana, Fred Dube and Cap Zungu who otherwise would have found it difficult to be elected into the RPC. When comrade Jeanette Mothobi declined to be nominated for Secretary of the RPC, the Chief Representative praised her and said that because she worked at the office, it would be too much work for her to also be in the RPC. However he actively campaigned for Susan Mnumzana to be in the RPC even though she also works at the office.

The New York Unit Briefing by Comrade Makatini.

Following the assassination of the late Comrade Dulcie September in Paris in March this year and the attempt on the life of Comrade Godfrey Motsepe, a meeting was called to discuss and analyse the situation. We took advantage of the presence in New York that day, of Comrade Johnny Makatini the head of the International Departmen. The attendance was a usual one, with a number of members who consistently make themselves absent , not showing up for that meeting. Comrade Makatini , in his briefing emphasised the need for unity, particularly as the enemy was out to kill us and claim that we killed one another, that there were fights within our ranks. The importance of this meeting is that although almost all the people who have been appointed to the so-called Ad-Hoc Committee "were unable" to come to that political discussion, the Chairperson learnt that they were able to go to a dinner party at Cap Zungu's house.



Problems within the New York Unit.

Some members of the New York Unit, particularly those who don't come to Unit meetings have adopted a theme, started by Susam Mnumzana, of " problems " within our ranks. The unfortunate part of this is that the same Susan Mnumzana has encouraged certain individuals in the support groups to interfere in ANC affairs to the extent where they openly make accusations against ANC members. A case in point was Vickie Ernestein who stormed out of the ANC office after accusing certain members of not assisting Susan with babysitting her children .

Whilst this Unit recognizes the importance of discussing and resolving problems, Susan Mnumzana has consistently sought to reduce the Unit meetings to discussing nebulously defined "problems" especially relating to nonactive members. In justifying this she has quoted the President as having said that after the problems in the West, it was a scandal that we left those problems to result in "killings". The impression given by that statement was of course that the people who were shot were not enemy agents infiltrated into our ranks but genuine comrades who had grievances but ended up being shot. The political implication of such a statement to new members who have just joined the ANC in New York cannot be overlooked.

A Commission to Re-Activate Participation of Members.

When the Unit felt that there was need to reactivate the participation of members who had become inactive, a commission consisting of Fred Dube, Cap Zungu and Pule Leinaeng was set up in April 1986. The meeting decided that the commission find ways to re-activate the participation of the members who were no longer active. The Commission's report, however, attacked the Women Section and accused the Youth Section of being influenced by the Women Section. It was rejected by the Chapter. Dube presented the report and Comrade Mwelil Mzizi said that the Unit could be investing its energies in making the observance of the 75th anniversary of the ANC more successful



and effective, and that the report was nothing else but lies. Comrade Dube threatened him with violence. He, Dube, actually stood up during the meeting and walked towards Comrade Mveli Mzizi pointing a finger threateningly. The Chairperson asked him to sit down. Comrade Dube when asked by the Chairperson to give him a copy of that report refused. He later submitted a revised version of that report. This commission unfortunately ignored its mandate as stated above but instead attacked the Women's Section and actually recommended its suspension. It also accused the Women's Section of conspiring with the Youth Section to retaining positions in the Unit.

### Conclusion.

As stated above, the blame for non-participation was put on active members. In spite of the efforts of the Unit to get back into the fold those members who have become inactive, these members have remained inactive. The source of the problem might not be one, but it is a fact that the Chief Representative has been more destructive than helpful. He has failed to give leadership and direction. Our experience in New York has been contrary to the expectations of what he, as the Chief Representative ought to have done.

The Chief Representative is skilful in manipulating people and making them take positions that he only knows what they are for. Common sense would have made him adopt a different attitude instead of the one he has adopted for the sake of the work of the ANC in this Unit and the region as a whole. It is very unfortunate that at the driver's seat is a driver who seems intent on crushing the vehicle. The New York Unit cannot interfere in the diplomatic work of the ANC office but it surely can and must help to make it more effective. It therefore would wish the situation be corrected sooner than later so that the work of the ANC can continue unimpeded and members be reactivated into meaningful and active participants in mobilising support for our movement.

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