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AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

CENTRALISATION OR SUBSIDISATION.

Last October Dr. Xuma mentioned to me the prospect of obtaining a reasonable sum of money for organisational purposes and added that in his view he favoured centralisation, upon which he desired consultation. Unfortunately, we could not meet and I was therefore unable to obtain the details of the scheme.

I am somewhat doubtful ^{of the} efficacy of centralisation which will require in order to succeed a strong team in the National Executive Committee composed of a personnel well experienced and familiar with the science of administration. In the absence of such a personnel, there is a danger of dictatorship or of the lack of collective responsibility which ^{may} render the cogs of the machine not to work harmoniously. At the moment I am not certain that we can have such a personnel or team to make centralisation a success.

The alternative proposal which appeals to me is the adoption of the system of subsidies. This will no doubt produce good results. Each Province would under the scheme ~~would~~ need to regionalise its activities and get up for itself a well prepared programme covering one month, during which the organising officer would work up the region intensively, having before him a given target of membership sufficient to raise double the amount covered by the imprest. That is to say: The Provincial Working Committee would determine the size of the region, draw up a programme for the organising officer covering one month, calculate travelling and other incidental expenses, and the salaries, which would be contained in the application for a subsidy in the form of an imprest. The organising officer would be given a quota of membership which he should raise within the region sufficient to cover double the amount of the imprest which would be refunded at the end of the month, supported ~~by~~ a report of work done in the month ended within the region earmarked for intensive organisation. The subsidy or imprest would be a charge against the region marked out for intensive organisation for the month on the basis of ^{the} region paying one half out of the one-third of the fees allocated as heretofore.

Whatever scheme is finally adopted the principle of encouraging branches to have local funds should be observed, as experience has shown that nothing keeps a branch active and alive other than a local fund wherewith to meet local demands. Under imprest or subsidy-cum-imprest scheme, the amount available for organisational work would be continuous and inexhaustible.

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