

## REPORT ON ECCs NATIONAL STRUCTURES AND EMPLOYEES

NOTE: This is a preliminary report. Regions should discuss it and suggest appropriate ammendments to the National Office before the National Conference, where a final report will be tabled.

### INTRODUCTION

Several regions have pointed out that we seem to be taking an adhoc approach to the appointment of National and Regional employees and that there is an ongoing lack of clarity about the role of our national structures. Several concrete suggestions for new posts have been made, and we need to decide whether we accept these - in principle - by or at the National Conference. The main criticism of our approach to appointments is that we are attempting to adapt our administrative structures, without looking at changes in our political priorities and therefore without a set of principles and guidelines. This report - compiled by the National Employees after a discussion at NC - attempts to establish some of our internal priorities and makes recommendations about various posts.

### ECCs INTERNAL PRIORITIES AND TRENDS

- 1.) Since the start of the State of Emergency it has become clear that for our organisation to survive this level of repression, we need our activists to be dicsciplined and well trained. Hence, we have prioritised training and development.
2. In newer regions - in particular in regions where there has been little history of white organisation - we have struggled to overcome the effects of the State of Emergency, and we are still reliant on external inputs.
3. The new methods of political work we have developed under the State of Emergency have generated additional bureacracy and have made new demands on our activists. (There is much more emphasis on alliance politics, front building, consultation, networking etc.)
4. The State of Emergency has put strain on the national coherency of the campaign and hence we have made increasing use of the National Employees and on the National Office (for information, co-ordination, legal strategies, press strategies, financial problems, international relations etc.)
5. Over the last year the campaign has grown on the campuses. The campus groups have tended to become seperate branches that have come to require a degree of national co-



ordination independent of the 'town' branches. The campus branches are likely to withstand repression most effectively (because of the concentration of young intellectuals with few responsibilities all physically in one place) although we have seen they are as likely to be at the receiving end of state repression. We have concluded from this that there may come a time when campuses are the only place where there is high profile opposition to conscription and hence we should concentrate on building a strong campus section.

### NATIONAL EMPLOYEES (OR PORTFOLIOS) - THE PICTURE SO FAR

#### The National Secretary

As mentioned this portfolio has expanded. National co-ordination is a bigger task, because of the conditions (especially the lack of a National Conference) and the additional campus branches. The job has entailed a lot of counter-smear work, legal work, maintenance and building of international relations etc.

#### The National Organisers

We identified the need for a second National Organiser as early as mid-1986. The need became greater as we started feeling the effects of repression. The role of a National Organiser has assumed a much stronger internal, organisation building emphasis and much less of the high profile spokesperson emphasis it had before. As we have only recently appointed a second National Organiser we are not in a position to assess how fully our requirements will be met.

We appointed a second National Organiser because: (a) the newer and weaker regions were struggling to survive the effects of the State Of Emergency; (b) the State Of Emergency undermined the national feel of the campaign; (c) there were increased possibilities for work on campus but we were still weak internally; (d) the weaker regions made a very strong request for such a portfolio and (e) we identified that it was a priority for us to concentrate on the development of activist who are sufficiently skilled to take forward the campaign despite the conditions.

#### The National Finance Officer

This is an unpaid position. The job has assumed much larger proportions with the financial investigation and the insecurity of our funding.

### PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW PORTFOLIOS

#### Paid National Finance and Fundraising Officer



The administration of our finances has become a much more complicated and expanded task. We are unable to bring in money on the same scale as we were before the State Of Emergency (it is more difficult to sell T shirts, hold concerts etc.). We have become quite reliant on printed media, newspaper advertisements etc., all of which are more expensive. The financial investigation showed us we need to be even more careful with our books and financial records and it also reminded us of the insecurity of our financial situation. We have placed a high priority on raising our own funds inside the country.

In the light of the above it has been recommended that we employ a full time Financial Officer who would be required to draw up budgets and maintain monthly books, ensure regions keep up to date in their books, make regular reports to the funders (SACBC), do the general financial bureaucracy like paying salaries, UIF, submissions to the auditors and finally, devising and running a full-time fundraising strategy.

We felt that, aside from fundraising, all these tasks could be done on a part time basis by an activist in an unpaid national portfolio as is the case now. We felt the test, in principle, in this case was whether someone could do the task adequately and still hold down a job that could support them financially. We felt that if we were to appoint someone to devise and run a co-ordinated fundraising strategy, they would have to apply themselves full-time to this task. We agreed that this work was a priority, but we recommend that we do not create such a position until we are clear on the legal situation governing fundraising, whether we can be issued with a Fundraising Number and reviewed what the possibilities for raising funds from our community are. In the interim we suggest that the work continues to be shared between the National Secretary and an unpaid Finance Officer who is also an ECC activist.

#### A Full-Time National Campus Organiser

(see written motivation that went to regions)

We understand that such a portfolio would be identical to the work of the National Organisers, but with a campus emphasis. We believe that resources, in the form of educational material, experienced political leadership and other organisations are readily available or accessible on most of the campuses. We feel that one of the reasons we have just appointed another National Organiser is to cope with the increased load, partly due to the growth of our campus section. We recommend that we do not create such a portfolio until we have had time to assess the effect of a second National Organiser.



Eastern-Cape Organiser.

The four regions - now three, after the amalgamation in Gtown - have argued that they need a full time organiser in the region (no written motivation has been sent out, but there have been several verbal motivations at NC). In assessing this question, we asked ourselves what the long term potential of our branches in the Eastern Cape is, what their needs are (especially those they are unable to meet themselves) and what the best ways to fulfil these needs are.

We felt that there is considerable potential for the ECC to grow in the Eastern Cape. We based this assumption on the fact that the PFP has a significant support base in the urban areas and on the de facto existence of 3/4 ECC branches with a total of about 65 activists in the area.

The overwhelming need throughout this area is for training and development of activists. Resources are not readily available in the Eastern Cape (either in the form of materials or more experienced people.) In PE and EL in particular there are ECC activist willing to move on realising some of the potential but with no natural starting point to learn the skills to begin this process. It is true that people learn political skills through practice, but this process needs a foundation that is consciously built.

Two options seem to present themselves here. The first is the jacking up of regional co-ordination, so that where there is more experience, this could be shared between the branches, in conjunction with the increased % of time one of the National Organisers would spend in the region. The second would be to appoint a full time Regional Organiser. Our feeling was that the specific need in the Eastern Cape was for someone with political experience to spend ongoing time with individuals, helping them with training and development, building planning and assessment skills, encouraging political debate and discussion etc. We felt that the presence of one of the National Organisers was not sufficient for this task. The National Organisers could never give this kind of detailed attention to the development of individual activists over an extended period of time. While National Organisers are helpful in the building of organisation and the training of activists, the nature of their contribution is more transitory and they are often unable to follow things through. For this reason we recommend the employment of a full-time Regional Organiser. There are obvious dangers in this sort of appointment, in particular the danger of a dependency being built up. Therefore we further recommend that this be an ad-hoc appointment, lasting for only one year, with a specific education and training emphasis i.e. we would not be creating a permanent post, but filling a temporary gap -



these regions must be able to sustain themselves after this period of time. This position would be quite similar to the NOs in terms of accountability (to NC in an ongoing sense, but to the region in which she or he is in, in a day to day sense), although some form of accountability to the Eastern Cape Regional Committee would need to be established. In all other respects the general rights and duties of this portfolio would be the same as any national position.

### APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL EMPLOYEES

Several regions have raised criticism of our method of appointment to national portfolios. The essence of the problem is that regions are feeling that they are not in a good position to make a real assessment of the nominees. In the end they are completely reliant on the region that makes the recommendation and motivation.

We considered various options, including a national tour by those nominated, which we rejected on the grounds that this wouldn't improve the situation enough to compensate for the time and money involved (people may come across well in an interview without us really knowing much more about their abilities). We felt that in the absence of a lot of ongoing national contact and cross-pollination, regions would have to rely on the motivating region. However, we made the following recommendations:

- 1.) Regions send around full CVs and motivations that discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate.
- 2.) Regions discuss the motivations and formulate questions they would like asked (both of the nominating region and of the nominee).
- 3.) The nominees attend a National Committee meeting where these questions are put and where they are interviewed by the NC reps.
- 4.) The reps then report back to the regions which make their final decision, which is then collated by the National Office in the normal way.
- 5.) The decision is then ratified at the National Conference or the Next NC.

These recommendations clearly don't enable us to make a well informed decision, but they do allow us to make a better informed one.

### REGIONAL EMPLOYEES

We have a situation where several of the regions are employing part-time workers but there is no uniformity in



their role definition and there are no principles governing when and if these appointments should be made. The following are recommended guidelines:

- 1.) We don't pay anyone for work they could or would be doing for ECC anyway.
- 2.) We don't employ someone to do work that ECC activists could or would be doing collectively.
- 3.) We shouldn't employ people to do general organising work in the regions.
- 4.) The administration work of our organisation should be being done by our activists. It is only when the organisation is generating sufficient bureaucracy that we should consider employing someone on a part-time basis to do this task. When this is the case, the person in this position could also be used to staff an office.
- 5.) These appointments should ideally be ratified by the National Conference (to which reports and motivations concerning these appointments should be submitted). In the interim National Committee can be used for the same purpose.
- 6.) Regions should review these positions annually.
- 7.) These guidelines would be binding on regions, whether the finances for the position are raised locally or nationally.

#### NATIONAL DISCUSSION AND DECISION MAKING

Our inability to hold a National Conference or discuss things freely between the regions (on the phone or through letters) has limited the flow of information and ideas and resulted in a growing incoherence in the national feel of the campaign. National decision making has become increasingly difficult and labourious. At this stage there are no radical solutions to the problems, but there are guidelines that should improve the situation. We feel that the current limitations are here to stay and it is a question of using the limited channels we have to best effect.

#### National Committee

The NC has met approximately once every 6-8 weeks and has generally limited its role to that of co-ordination of decisions and information exchange. The already operational amendment to this limitation is that the NC rep can be mandated to make a decision in an 'emergency'. An emergency in this case would be when regions have been unable to meet



to consider a particular question and it is imperative that we have a national decision as soon as possible - this was probably not imperative in the case of the last national campaign. In this instance the 'decision' would still have the same force and affect as a 'recommendation'. Regions should not feel obligated to accept such decisions if they seem to be damagingly incorrect - as the decision around WINCLCAJP may have been.

Regions need to prepare far more thoroughly for National Committee. Representatives to National Committee participate primarily on the basis of the discussions they would have had in their regions and only secondarily on the basis of their own insights and ideas. At present only a few regions take any responsibility for thinking about the whole of ECC and these regions consequently have significant influence over ECCs national direction.

#### National Conference

The National Conference is our highest decision making forum and many of our problems with national decision making have come from our inability to hold a National Conference under the State of Emergency. See the agenda document from the National Office for guidelines about the functioning of the Conference.

#### Other Forms Of National Communication

The 'Phone System' seems to be working at an optimum, although some regions still don't phone often enough. Constant feedback between the National Contact person and the region is imperative. One of the main inadequacies of our system of national discussion is that there is little direct communication between the regions; circulating of positions, arguments, proposals etc. To aid this process we recommend that regions re-establish a safe phone system between each other.

The area where most of the regions fall down is in the circulation of written proposals, updates, ideas etc. This should be an established duty in the region and should serve to enrich the pool of ideas in any region and enhance our decision making ability.

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