

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 1978 AT 29-5TH STREET, LOWER HOUGHTON, JOHANNESBURG AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT: Mrs. J. Harris (in the Chair),

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| Mrs. G. Dyzenhaus | Dr. N. Motlana |
| Mr. P. Soal | Mr. G. Budlender |
| Mr. C. Saloojee | Mrs. I. Mennell |
| Miss M. Nell | Mr. M. Dangor |
| Mr. D. Rawliss | Mr. D. Mateman |
| Mrs. S. Duncan | Mr. M. Richards |
| Mr. B. Godsell | Bishop D. Tutu |
| | Mrs. R. Nzanya |

APOLOGIES: Mr. G. Waddell, Mr. P. Davidson

Mrs. Harris welcomed all to the meeting and briefly recapped on previous meetings. She regretted that Mr. du Preez was not present as he had agreed to present a paper on the National Party Constitutional proposals. It was agreed that the Agenda would be reversed and Mr. Godsell would report on the Constitutional proposals of the PFP. Mr. Godsell then gave a brief outline of the PFP plan. He dealt in particular with the franchise and the protection of minority rights. Points raised during discussion were:

1. Worries about the nature of participation at the National Convention were voiced. - People were very distressed at the decision to exclude people who had been convicted under South Africa's terrorism or sabotage laws.
2. It was felt that the PFP proposal was a significant document as a beginning point for negotiation but that it was not acceptable as an end point.
3. Many of the blacks found the minority veto unacceptable. It was felt that the minority veto was an attempt to woo an Afrikaner vote and it was pointed out that this was an unrealistic assessment of the South African situation. Bishop Tutu stressed that the only protection that whites could expect was an assurance by blacks that their rights would be protected. He pointed out that blacks were still prepared to negotiate with whites.
4. The blacks also rejected the concept of cultural councils.
5. It was suggested that the whole concept of consensus government was unrealistic.

General discussion arose. There was a great deal of discussion about the role of the PFP in the parliamentary system. The blacks expressed the view that the Progressive Party had been much more effective when it had been represented by Helen Suzman alone than when they had more people in parliament. They said that the PFP should not concern itself unduly with trying to win major white support as it probably would never be elected as a government but that it should concern itself with stating its position clearly. Bishop Tutu said that the choice was between the Afrikaners and the interests of black South Africans. He said there was no middle road choice.

Dr. Motlana said that he resented the impression created that blacks who had met with the Progressive Party had approved their Constitution.

Mr. Dangor said that the PFP emphasis on creating a non-racial society was unrealistic. What was required was the creation of a liberated society.

Mr. Godsell said that the most important thing was to create a black/white alliance and to create meaningful interaction between blacks and whites, in South Africa. He pointed out that the PFP Congress had been swayed by a number of conservative people simply because there had been no blacks present to counteract them.

It was generally agreed that too much emphasis had been placed on winning Afrikaner support at the PFP Congress.

People discussed the mechanics of a National Convention. It was generally agreed that the government would never be persuaded to call a National Convention and the question arose as to whether some kind of freedom charter or "Tennis Court Oath" would not be a more suitable strategy. It was strongly suggested that the formation of a popular movement be investigated. Bishop Tutu said that whites needed to be quite clear about the consequences of their action and they needed to commit themselves irrespective of sacrifice in the same way as the black community had.

It was agreed that it was important to have something positive to motivate people towards.

It was agreed that an important function of the group was to discuss ways and means of getting all opposition groups to act together - if necessary outside parliament - as an effective opposition.

The blacks strongly recommended that the Progressive Party leave the parliamentary structure and refuse to collaborate.

It was emphasised that no constitutional plan would be acceptable if it were drawn up by one group in isolation from the others.

Mrs. Duncan said that it was important to have some kind of vision of what South Africa would be like after liberation. Dr. Motlana said that the Black Consciousness Movement had a very clear vision of the future but were not prepared to discuss it in the present political climate.

Mr. Godsell said that he thought it was unwise for any group to devise a plan in isolation from other groups.

The point was made by Bishop Tutu that protest politics could be used to teach people to question authority. He also said that any movement needed to be able to count its successes. Therefore it might be advisable to set limited objectives which could be achieved.

It was pointed out that all black initiatives had been banned before they could get moving. Mr. Motlana spoke particularly about the BCP experience. He said that small initiatives had more chance of surviving than large ones.

Mr. Mateman raised the question of whether it was not possible to achieve more through government structures than by non-participation. Mrs. Duncan said that she was worried that participation also enabled the government to contain the opposition.

The meeting broke for lunch.

The meeting reconvened at 2.00 p.m.

Dr. Motlana was asked to explain why the Committee of Ten had refused to participate in the Community Council elections. He said that their decision had been based on the fact that the Community Councils were not seen by government as a City Council but rather as a consultative body joined to the homelands which would be manipulated by the government in the control of urban blacks. The Committee of Ten had prepared a blueprint which had been very moderate and mild and which had been worked out by the people themselves. This blueprint had been rejected. The primary provisions in the blueprint had been:

1. A City Council to control Soweto.

2. Based on freehold tenure. The City Council would have needed to raise money from property taxes.
3. They rejected any linkage with the homelands but were prepared to accept linkage with other City Councils in the metropolitan area.

The meeting then discussed future meetings. The next meeting would be held on Sunday, 14th January, 1979 at Mrs. Harris' house.

The meeting then discussed the Agenda for the following meeting. Suggestions included:

1. The establishment of a Kliptown Freedom Charter movement.
2. The drafting of principles on which there was consensus.
3. A discussion on the values of participating in government structure or non-participation. It was agreed that most people present were in favour of non-participation, but that all pros and cons needed to be examined in order to persuade the various parties.

It was agreed that the PFP representatives would give the reasons for participation (I am not sure whether Mr. Richards agreed to present a case for participation or not). The meeting would also develop a point by point argument on why they disagreed with participation. Strategies of non-participation would then be discussed.

Agreed that Mr. Soal would talk to Mr. ^{Mayer}~~Meatt~~. Mr. Godsell would talk to Mr. Khanyile and to Inkatha and Dr. Motlana would talk to Dr. Asvat.

The meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.

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