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Ab-Z.6

Motivation for Gary Cullen as ECC National Organiser, 1988.

This motivation arises out of a thorough discussion at a General Body meeting which included campus people.

We used the "strengths/weaknesses, advantages/disadvantages, gains/losses" model as a guide for our discussion. In this model, one first looks at the strengths of a particular option, then the weaknesses, then assesses whether the strengths outweigh the weaknesses or not.

Using this model, we looked at Gary's nomination on two levels - the national level, and the local (Durban) level.

I THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Strengths:

- long experience of ECC - knows the history, understands the subtleties (unsubtleties?!) of ECC policy through its various phases;
- has been involved in all the sub-committees at one level or another, so understands the work from all those perspectives;
- is clearly very committed to ECC the organisation and to the issues it takes up, as is evidenced by his track record;
- is on the National Committee at the moment, and has served one period before, so is in touch with national thinking;
- has attended all the ECC national events, so has a national feel;
- has broad political experience, dating from NUSAS involvement;
- has good extra-parliamentary and extra-ECC contacts;
- good conceptual thinker, balanced by a commitment to finding ways of bringing about the reality of such concepts;
- writes well, and is good at writing position papers and proposals;
- can type and has computer skills;
- good at envisaging appropriate structures for carrying out ideas and visions (knows a hundred and one ways of setting up a committee!);
- prepares well for meetings etc;
- quite good meeting chairing skills;
- although he has a clear political position, he is able to see an issue or a problem from various angles, and is not intimidated if he finds himself in a minority position;
- is good at asking the right questions to get people to think through issues more thoroughly;
- has a non-alienating style, personally and politically - is not very "heavy";
- is pleasant to work with;
- is not competitive in a one-uppership manner;
- is male;
- is free to take the job i.e. is available;
- a Durbanite in a national position will be a refreshing change from the Johannesburg-Cape Town axis;

When asked, Gary identified the following advantages for himself:

- this job would be a challenge;
- having done this job, his experience will enable him to contribute more on a local and national level than he has been able to up until now.

Weaknesses:

- tendency to be short tempered when tired;
- can be sarcastic;
- sometimes gets too personally involved in the position he is advocating;
- not very confident as a public speaker (we feel this can be overcome through practice and experience);
- mixes well with new people on a work level, but is slightly reserved in mixing with new people on a social level (this is not necessarily a disadvantage);
- Gary has not done military service, so cannot identify with that aspect of conscripts' experience;
- he will receive call-ups during the year, which he will have to deal with one way or the other. He will not be registered as a student anywhere, so cannot get deferments for academic reasons;
- he has not had a lot of experience running skills training workshops, but feels that he will be able to learn.

Assessing the strengths and weaknesses, the GB felt that on the balance the strengths outweigh the weakness, and that Gary was a suitable candidate for the job. Whether we would actually support his candidacy would depend on the outcome of the discussion of the next level.

II THE LOCAL (DURBAN) LEVEL

Gains:

- having a Durban person in the a national travelling job would help pull Durban more directly into the national grid;
- not having Gary to rely on would cause us to work harder at distributing the responsibility and workload;
- the contacts, experience and skills Gary would gain would benefit Durban in the long-run;

Losses:

- Gary is the most experienced member on the current coordinating committee, and his loss would be sorely felt there;
- we'd miss his enthusiasm and optimism;
- we'd miss all the work he does!;
- no-one else in Durban ECC has as good links with the UDF etc, so we'd miss that natural contact, but it would cause us to work harder in general to make those contacts;
- the Durban Democratic Association, of which Gary is the secretary at the moment, are not that keen on him leaving their committee.

ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE AN OBVIOUS "LOSS" FOR DURBAN IF GARY DOES LEAVE THE REGION, WE FEEL THAT HE IS A GOOD CANDIDATE, AND THAT WE WILL MANAGE WITHOUT HIM BEING AROUND ALL THE TIME. THUS, DURBAN ECC SUPPORTS HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE POST.

When asked, Gary said that he would like the job, but he is actually rather cautious and even ambivalent about taking it. He is aware of his own weaknesses, and is aware that he can contribute significantly on the local level. For these reasons, he feels he should not necessarily be viewed as a "front running" candidate.

We also raised the possibility with Gary of him being nominated for the National Secretary post. We felt that he would be suitable for that post too. He said he would be, but only secondarily. National Organiser is his first preference.

CURRICULUM VITAE OF GARY CULLEN

1961; born in Vereeniging, Transvaal.
1968-74; primary school in Germiston and Port Shepstone.
1975-79; boarder at Durban High School. Played various team sports, including cricket, soccer and hockey.
1980-85; student at University of Natal (Durban); B.A. Hons (Comparative African Government).

1. NUSAS

March 1981-August 1984; member of S.R.C. Major portfolios: 81-82 Projects Officer; 82-83 Education Officer; 83-84 External Vice-President.
Aug 1981-Aug 1984; rep on NUSAS National Council.
July 1980-November 1985; attended all NUSAS July Festivals and Congresses.

2. Regional extra-parliamentary politics:

1981-1984; extensive involvement with regional political initiatives.
1982; involved in early stages of the Detainees Support Committee.
Anti-South African Indian Council conference delegate.
1983; rep at regional discussions leading to formation of UDF. Voting delegate at the UDF launch conference, Cape Town.
1983-84; NUSAS rep to Natal UDF General Committee.
1984; Involved in UDF Million Signatures campaign and anti-tricameral parliament election campaign.

3. Involved in efforts to establish a progressive organisation in the white community aligned with the Democratic Movement:

1983; Durban Democratic ~~Association~~ *Action Committee*
1984; Association of Durban Democrats.
1985; Action Group Against Apartheid.
1987; Durban Democratic Association (currently holding the secretary portfolio).

4. ECC, Anti-militarisation work:

March-July 1983; NUSAS rep on C.O. Support Group Conference planning committee.
August 1983; involved in establishment of Durban ECC branch (then called Movement Against Conscription).
1984; COSG conference delegate.
Involved in establishment of ECC media committee (the first regional sub-committee in Durban).
1985; Attended the first ECC National Conference, Botha's Hill, Natal.
Establishment of ECC campus branch (then called Conscript's Action Group).
Establishment of AT EASE, Durban ECC's newsheet.
Attended the ECC National Peace Festival and the subsequent ECC conference (Johannesburg).
July 1985-March 1986; Durban rep on the ECC National Committee.
January 1986-helped organise the ECC National Conference at Oakford Priory, Natal.
July 1986; employed as the Durban regional worker.
1987; ECC Contact Committee member.
September 1987; National Committee rep.
October 1987; Durban ECC Vice-Chairperson.

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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