

**C-72**

Rev 677

REPORT ON TIC WORKSHOP HELD ON 1/12/84.

Introduction.

A workshop was held by the TIC on 1/12/84 to discuss various aspects of organisation in the TIC constituencies. Activists from all areas came together to discuss collectively the direction of the TIC and possible solutions to some of our organisational loopholes. The process of discussing these issues; as well as the workshop itself; was in itself a process of consolidation and the discussions and recommendations must be seen in that light. The major focus of the workshop revolved around possibilities of forming TIC branches in different areas their viability and how this will be done

1) ROLE OF A BRANCH.

A) Difference between branch and area

Area committees differ from branches in a number of significant respects. Area committees are generally formed to take up specific issues at certain moments in the struggle. Thus; the issue-orientedness of an area committee leads to relatively informal ad-hoc types of structures. Inherent in this structural informality are a number of drawbacks:

- i) It does not encourage and develop leadership skills; therefore there is a lack of an identifiable leadership.
- ii) Membership remains inconsistent and fluid.
- iii) The lack of organisational safeguards exposes a large number of activists to an unnecessary harassment.

Branches; on the other hand; are structurally recognisable and of a more permanent nature. They evolve through a process of struggle. Once fully emerged and functioning; branches can engage the masses in struggle. The structure of a particular branch depends on the specific needs of a community. Greater organisational coherence and control can help in averting harassment. Branches foster leadership skills and facilitate political decisiveness. Above all; the long-term objective of a branch is to deepen the struggle against Apartheid, to build organisation and to strengthen the movement.

B) General role of a branch.

i) Role of branch at local level and challenges facing local communities under new const

a) To take up local issues; supplement civic and youth struggles; inject political content into mass struggles and provide political leadership at local level.

b) Initiate organisation whenever necessary.

Branch must provide alternative leadership to that imposed by the govt. in local areas. While govt. can make genuine concessions; life is going to become worse at mass level; eg; paying for community councils; local recreation; education; conscription; etc. Full-time MP's will have more time to establish themselves; therefore; we must encourage and develop full-time activists in our community. Reactionaries are also going to have more resources at their disposal.

A branch must be legitimate and authentic representative of the people.

Recommendations:

a) Closer relation between civic; youth and political organisations. We need to have a special discussion and seminar on this subject.

b) Our medium term objective must be to develop full-time activists in all areas.

i) Consolidating organisation.

'Consolidation' means taking political mobilisation and organisation a step further. We need to build on past struggles; recognise weaknesses and incorporate gains. Therefore; we need to tighten up our structures and organisations.

Two aspects of consolidation:

a) Internal

We have developed skills; resources and generated activists during the campaign. We have a larger support base and we have extended our structures. We therefore need to make full use of these gains and tighten up our organisations. We must also take note of our weaknesses.

b) External;

We have taken communities through a process of struggle; raised consciousness and developed a popular organisation. We need to solidify this and extend our influence over other organisations and individuals in our community.

### How do we consolidate?

a) We need to know what our ideal form of organisation is; what direction we are moving in and what our objectives are. We then need to consolidate our gains and rectify our weaknesses in terms of that ideal.

b) We must reflect on gains we have made in aspects such as membership; level of consciousness at mass level; education and training of activists and membership; discipline in our organisation; relationship between older and younger people; etc.

Recommendation: Workshop must be held on 26/27 January to further scrutinise our organisation.

### iii) Decentralisation.

'Decentralisation' means extending our organisation; building our resources and at the same time consolidating. It facilitates greater participation in our organisation and greater democracy. It also develops a secondary leadership which protects our organisation against harassment.

On the other hand; decentralisation addresses itself to different conditions in different areas. This creates the need for better horizontal and vertical communication in our organisation. Therefore; while decentralisation increases autonomy of areas and calls for better co-ordination. Decentralisation poses the danger of creating organisational and regional chauvinism. This then means that with decentralisation we also need centralisation.

Recommendation: Areas must submit reports to central TIC regularly. The office must take these reports seriously.

### iv) Tactical alliances.

Tactical alliances are short-term alliances. But all tactical alliances must be forged with a view to a permanent relationship with such organisations because objectives are long-term political objectives. (Types of organisations: religious; cultural; sporting; community and welfare)

Therefore; an organisation should be accessible to all kinds of people with different backgrounds and interests. Our alliances; then; are geared to extend our network and influence over a broad section of our community (Hegemony).

We are also fighting a constant battle with the govt and reactionaries in our areas for allies.

We must; therefore; be vigilant and establish our leadership in the community and become hegemonic; especially after the campaign.

This question is also especially important for the rural areas.

### v) Education and training.

#### a) Mass level.

We need to be creative and to co-ordinate our messages to the community. We must identify what we want to educate our people about and open channels of communication; eg; grassroots newspapers; 20min. door to door visits; house meetings and mass meetings.

Recommendation: We must make full use of 1985. This year is the 30th. anniversary of the Freedom Charter and we must fully educate our community on our ideological position; because the anti-election campaign has engendered higher levels of consciousness.

#### b) Membership and support base.

Many people have joined us during the campaign. We must incorporate them into our organisation. We need to train these people on our ideological position and on field work and we need to educate them. (Lenz. Friday night meetings) We must be creative when dealing with our support base.

Recommendation: aa) Publish an internal newspaper as our ideological and training arm.

bb) Post all our pamphlets; resolutions and publications like 'Speak' to our supporters.

#### c) Activist/Core level.

Our activists are only picking up technical skills. They must now develop their organisational skills. Activists must be given responsibilities and initiative must be forthcoming from them. This is essential for democratic participation.

Our activists must also develop a more global perspective of struggle instead of a narrow outlook of their own areas only. Our activists must also read newspapers; etc. to get a 'sense' of state strategy. Community newspapers like 'Speak' also give a global picture of the struggle.

### of branches in integrating TIC.

We need to make the Area Reps. Committee more functional. (Friday meetings) Reps. must be mandated and must report back to their areas. Consultation; strategic discussion; etc. must start taking place at this level.

Must start realising the full potential of our executive; council; branches; area rep. committees etc. Efficient branch secretaries must keep contact with central TIC and with other branches.

### BRANCHES AND MEMBERSHIP.

There are three positions:

#### a) For membership.

Membership allows us accessibility to our support base. It creates loyalty to our organisation. will be able to identify our organisation concretely and open channels of communication with our support base (mailing lists; etc.) Branches would be able to operate more efficiently since it would be easier to allocate tasks. Formal membership means ability to collect finance. We cannot stifle expansion because of harassment considerations.

#### b) Against membership.

Formal membership increases harassment. It would set us back organisationally and is not necessary for building and solidifying our support base. participation can be increased in many ways other than formal membership. Furthermore; a limited and formal membership will restrict the representative nature of our organisation. This opens us to criticisms of being unrepresentative. Efficient organisation comes about through hard work and not merely by an organised membership.

We need to organise at a mass level effectively before organising our support base.

#### c) Compromise between membership and non-membership.

Conditions differ from area to area. TIC as an organisation should thus not and cannot take a decision on the matter. The conditions in different areas will dictate whether we have a signed-up membership or not. Their decisions must however be communicated to the central TIC and to other branches.

Recommendations: aa) The 'Deem' clause in the constitution is too broad and must be specific

bb) A recommendation was made to have both a signed-up and an honorary membership.

\*The signed-up membership will have voting power and the leadership must be answerable to them.

\*The honorary members will encompass all the people in our community who agree with the aims and objectives of the TIC.

NB. THIS DEBATE IS COMPLETELY UNRESOLVED; INCLUDING THE RECOMMENDATIONS. AREAS ARE ASKED TO REDISCUSS AND COMMUNICATE THEIR VIEWS TO THE CENTRAL TIC.

### 3) BRANCHES AND STRUCTURE.

Branch execs. must be fully functional. Added to the education; finance and such committees; we also need to have a research and resources committee. The branch structure and its needs will however be determined by the conditions of its own community. The structures must be geared towards realising the potentials and skills of all our activists. There must also be an open working committee forum where all activists participate.

Women and youth are special categories and the general view is that they should have a degree of autonomy.

Recommendation: Special workshop on women and youth must be held soon. (Especially women).

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