

No special deal ^{B. Day 6/3/91} for exiles, says govt

CAPE TOWN — Exiles should not expect preferential treatment from government on their return to SA as sanctions and disinvestment had brought the country to its knees, Home Affairs Minister Gene Louw said yesterday.

Louw told a media conference the first group of 108 exiles would arrive at Jan Smuts Airport tomorrow afternoon. He said 658 exiles, including trained Umkhonto we Sizwe members, would return over the next five weeks.

It is believed the ANC is in the process of transferring its Lusaka political structure.

Louw said exiles would have to fit back into SA society on the same basis as other citizens.

Government was not going to provide accommodation, money, jobs or hand-outs.

He said the exiles would also not receive compensation as they had left the country of their own accord.

Medical and welfare facilities would be available at entry ports.

BILLY PADDOCK

Applications had been received from 5 967 people, including about 2 600 dependants, and 2 874 extraordinary travel certificates had been issued. No applications had been rejected so far, he said.

Following tomorrow's flight, five more flights at weekly intervals had been arranged, each carrying about 110 exiles.

Louw said the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was welcome to bring exiles to the entry ports and to have a full-time official inside SA to observe the repatriation process.

Confusion

If an agreement with the UNHCR was reached it could include financial and logistical arrangements.

Cabinet was investigating the implications of the UNHCR's involvement with repatriation and an announcement could be expected within 14 days, he said.

Meanwhile, PATRICK BULGER reports there appears to be confusion over where the hundreds of returning ANC exiles will be accommodated.

An ANC source said yes-

terday the organisation had launched an "adopt-an-exile programme", requiring members to accommodate returnees.

A National Co-ordinating Committee for Repatriation (NCCR) source said he was aware the ANC had set up a committee to investigate this possibility.

But an ANC repatriation official identifying herself as Dr Khosa telephoned Business Day later, accused the newspaper of jeopardising the accommodation efforts, and vowed to find out who had "leaked" the information.

She said there was no such programme and accommodation was being organised by the NCCR.

As the exile repatriation programme gets underway, the ANC yesterday made it clear it did not expect all exiles to be home by April 31.

Rather, obstacles to the exiles' return would have to be removed before April 31 for the negotiations precondition to be met.

Reacting to Louw's announcement, the ANC said government was still dragging its feet on exiles.

The NCCR said Louw's failure to clarify any future involvement of the UNHCR continued to hamper its repatriation efforts.