

Minutes of Africa Group meeting held on 13.5.82.

Present: GS, JG, JPM, JKN, AS, and FM.

Absent: Pat & TM, JJ, all of whom were out of town.

Chair: GS.

GS: Introduced the matter for discussion. The CC had decided that a GS commission should look into why JPM had not attended the CC meeting. The GS explained that TM had tendered an apology for not attending the CC meeting and that this was not accepted by the meeting.

JPM: Asked what were the terms of reference of the GS commission.

GS: Explained that the CC had decided that the GS should set up a commission which would look into JPM reasons for not attending.

JKN: Raised the problem posed by the fact that some members who were present at the previous Africa Group meeting were not present today.

GS: Explained that various explanations were given to the CC meeting for JPM's absence. The absence of some members should not pose a problem. What was required was that we should find out what were JPM's reasons for not attending.

JPM: Why did I not attend? I have had a grievance for a long time. This dates from even before the 1975 CC meeting. Since then I have not taken the CC seriously. I would like to give a brief history of the Family. I joined the Family in 1944 since when it has been reorganised three times. Some people who used to be the pillars of the F are no more with the F now. In 1950/51 the CC held a meeting (which I did not attend) arising out of a campaign for a new look at the people coming into the F. There was talk of a new life, new people. The result of such talk was the incorporation of ~~SA~~ Mapepe, Boyeveld coming in and Shope being pushed out (Shope is being pushed out now). There was a wrangle in the F, in which we had people like Ludi. Some of us never worried about who determines who was in the F. Some people were isolated. There was an accusation that we opposed allowing Nelson and Whittor into the F. I, JB and Bopape were opposed. We were not informed because this was arising after the 1950 campaigns. The recruitment of Nelson came after. (Related to the campaign of JB for the Presidency). Then came a major reconciliation. The accusation against us could have been true but not against myself and Bopape. A meeting was called at Coolam's place to accuse me and my brother of this (Bopape refused to attend). We were accused of being responsible for Resha's loss at elections; I was accused - at different meetings - of blocking the way of recruitment to Nelson and Whittor (this was conveyed to me by Mapepe). My point was why was I not invited to the meeting planning the new future of the F if I am so important now? Then there was the Pretoria meeting of the ANC, a meeting which was not approved by the NEDC. It was engineered by the Sophiatown group. Here Bopape, I, my brother and J Mavuso were involved. Here the Transvaal Committee

was dissolved. I said to Nelson (NM) what when this meeting was planned NM knew about it but I did not know and now NM was asking me to dissolve it - I refused. The matter came to the F. Here I am going to be racialistic: this problem was discussed by White comrades and it was planned that Bopape and I should be ostracised. The F accused me, my brother and Bopape of not wanting these new people joining us because we were anti-intellectuals and this was done by White comrades. At that time some comrades fell off but I did not. Our reasons were that we were not consulted about the future of the F. From that day we felt that something was wrong with the leadership of the F. With regard to the CC meeting that I refused to attend - only 2/3 of the people who were in the F then are still left in the F. I am one of those who feel the F must influence African workers and it can only do so if it has African members in the leadership. I don't have a grudge against those leading it. I feel that I should have been invited to the meeting preceding the 1979 meeting to look into the planning of the future of the F. I was a sort of coordinator here. Most of the members in the area (Africa) know me. But I was not consulted. I have a right to be consulted. I pulled out because I felt that some thing was wrong. Who invited those people who attended the 1979 meeting? I began to say: who runs the F? I suggested to JJ that I would like to be at the CC so that I should say what I wanted to say. I was unhappy with the GDR meeting - with regard to the people who were present, the items that were discussed and the lack of frankness. Again I had heard by rumour that there was a juggling of personalities about who out of YD and MM should be GS and who should be ~~Chairman~~ Chairman, only to be confronted with the issue at the GDR meeting. Again I was not consulted. I feel I have a right to participate in such discussions because of my record. If I was present at the last CC meeting I would have said all this in front of JS. Because of this I am prepared to leave the F, that is, my right to be present at discussions about the future of the F because of my record, and that the F be reorganised to face the future. Some people who were present at the GDR meeting were not qualified and we could not discuss frankly in front of them. I asked to be given a chance to discuss this before the ^{54.} ~~GDR~~ meeting and this chance was not given to me. The document was given to me one week before the meeting. I take strong exception at the way in which the document was prepared. Also I object to how a confidential document reached Gatsha. We prepared a confidential document which even all the members of the NEC of the ANC did not know about. But it got to Gatsha and I know how it reached Gatsha. Also I don't like YD's drinking habits and no one seems to be ready to say this to him. Something is wrong with him. I feel that it is better if I keep out of the F because I don't want to cause problems. I am not a manoeuvrer - pity TM is not here because he is one.

I did not attend because I felt that I was not given the opportunity to do what I should have done. Also I have come to doubt if CC members are on the same wavelength. We meet, agree and then each goes out and does what he wants. For example, the PB - I have a very poor view of them. What politics are they discussing? Can they, taken one by one, stand the present challenge facing the F unless they have a frank meeting? Also their behaviour in the ANC - do they work out how to behave? Can the F hide behind the ANC? Is it advantageous or not? How long can it go on like this - especially now that it has said it is going to operate openly? Finally I feel that I would not allow myself to be quoted like when I allowed myself in the 1950s.

Outside we had lots of problems especially when we were going to reorganise the F. I take off my hat for YD, JS, for their persistent pressure for reorganising the F. In that I participated. Mkhomane and I were suffering. We were in the executive committee but all other members were getting £45 per month while Mkhomane and myself were getting £24. Matlou was a member of the commission - I was the Chairman - reviewing salaries and we got a shock at this and if that can be repeated you can't stand it. Incidentally I have been in all the important commission of the ANC. In 1967x Gatsheni who was Chief of Staff and an enemy agent, was a member of the F.

I confronted Malume as to why he was standing in the way of the reorganisation of the F. Malume told me that some F had been formed at Kongwa. There was a meeting in Dar (Ray, JS, YD, Mkhomane, JIM, Mike H etc) where discussion on Malume line that all people must subordinate themselves to ANC. Known members of the F were suffering because of Malume's line. That time I wanted to leave ANC. This is a history which a matured politician must forget with regard to what happened to him. But if it is repeated one cannot forget. Frank discussion can be faced and we would not be on different wavelengths. For example some people are busy of the Church front etc - our work in the liberation movement is haphazard. We say that the main content is the liberation of the African people. I doubt if all the members of the F look at that. How do they expect that to come about in practice? Do they accept African leadership? I did not like Leon Levy and Beyleveld being presidents of SACTU. How many look at this? Hence a lot of manoeuvres. This is because there is no frank discussion. Each one does his own thing. Is belief in socialism the only thing we can quote and not prepare conditions for F work? Who runs the F? What sort of people compose the PB? Is the PB too small or too big? What is going on? People who should be in there should be aces. I am demoralised. There was in 1959 talk that some people are old and must be removed. In 1971 the same words were used by Michael H. He saw Africans getting old, but not Whites. Taking my record and the respect I commanded, it warrants me not going with the F. Others are old and I don't want my last days to be spent destroying all what one has done.

I am demoralised, especially now. I did not know so much was expected of me. Especially since comrades in Africa did not want to meet me before the CC meeting. There was talk that I am being individualistic - I don't like that. I no longer have resistance to be made a scapegoat. I can't see future of the F. Its decisions are good but we are not on the same wavelength. I can't see the F survive. I want to see Africans in F play an important role. The influence which was there for 350 years must be removed. I am not racist. I want to add that we came together from home. I was once suspect and was detained in an hotel for 9 months. There I already had diabetes. I was not provided with the necessary food. Maud was surveilling me. I ran out of clothes. Fortunately I am always able to make friends. I was able to canvas and get clothes through friends. After 9 months JB, Malume and Duma came to see me to tell me that I was suspect and that I had been cleared. This happened after Bram had been to London. How did this suspicion come about. JB once told me - he didn't mention names - I was on the third floor of the hotel. I thought to myself: I thought of suicide but resisted. I knew where the suspicion came from. I thought of leaving the movement. Then I thought of the knife I had with me. Then I asked Duma- I could have killed Duma with the knife. I told him he had no right to suspect me because when we were detained I was shown a document in his handwriting. ~~He was a little spy. The document was a terrible thing and I at that time opposed their expulsion even so.~~ The detention hurt me. When Mkhomane asked for my transfer here - I was the only one to whom the disgruntled men would listen.

Discussion then followed.

GS: The Chair summarised some of the points raised by JPM and invited comments.

JG: What I cannot understand why JPM didn't think that the best place to discuss his problems was at the last CC meeting.

JPM: I made attempts to meet the CC Africa Group. I have attended all CC meetings since 1971. I know how they are run and how the agenda is arranged. I felt it was better not to attend. I was protesting. I felt I could be suspended or expelled and that would help me.

JKN: JPM has raised interesting things which should be looked into more carefully. One thing attracts me - his desire to have a frank discussion. That this is need in the F. The CC meeting was like that. If he had come the meeting would have benefitted. Its wrong for any individual to be annoyed with the F to the extent that he feels damn the F, they can do what they like to me. If the majority disagree you must abide by that. We need time to best discuss this question and help the F and JPM and ourselves. I would regret it if I knew that by our actions he is forced out of the F. If he had come to that meeting he could have done better. There

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are weaknesses in the F which we have to accept. Therefore we need time to discuss the matters JPM has raised.

RS: I fail to understand how problems which he has raised could not have been put to the CC meeting. He says that he was not in the right frame of mind. But sometimes it is necessary to speak out. It is not good for people with his experience to fail in this way to present their case.

M: I agree with the view that it would not be good to force a comrade with the experience of JPM out of the F. But I think it is necessary for him to shift from his position of defiance. He says that he has no confidence in the PB and the CC. He was party to electing them and he cannot now take the position he is taking. He says that he was dissatisfied from before the GDR meeting. Yet he has not raised his problems in the proper forums. He says he attempted to raise his matter in the Africa Group. But he never took the matter beyond that. The Moscow meeting of the CC was such a forum but he did not attend. Nor has he taken the matter to the PB. Even now he has waited for the F to come to him. And while avoiding the proper forums of the F he has been talking outside the forums. There may be points in what he has said here which we may agree with or not. Yet even when he criticises our conduct in the ANC he ignores the decision of the last CC. In fact in response to that decision he ignores the content of the decision (which at least meets

some of his points on this aspect) and writes a long memo dealing with his grievances. I feel that even before one can think of going into some of the problems he raises he should shift his position of defiance and apologise for not attending the CC meeting and not having submitted an apology to the meeting. For a comrade of his experience etc his stand is unacceptable. He also makes a point of the suffering and sacrifice he has undergone. I don't think that provides him a basis for his claims. Everyone makes sacrifices and there is no way of comparing sacrifice that one person makes with that of another. He claims a right to be present at all discussions of the F - at least the policy ones. I think that right depends on which organ of the F one is elected to serve.

JG: JPM wants F to act according to his terms. That must not be allowed. JG gives example of the London Chief Rep and the opposition to his appointment and how he defended the appointment. Something is wrong with JPM and not with the F. He must take two steps backwards - its not defeat.

JPM: I want to correct the impression that I was opposed to the appointment of the GS. Members of the CC should have met to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the arrangements re the appointment of the GS. But composition of the Berlin meeting was not correct. If we take what M is saying as correct then this meeting today is irregular. I want clarification on that. Every person has an opinion

and I wanted to express this here. With regard to whether I want to be in everything that is decided - I have a right to be in the discussions. Probably something is wrong with me - perhaps it is that I do not like someone else to take my contribution and make it his. Nobody could agree with that. If you find that you have reached certain limits - I have nothing against the F but I have something against the leadership. The question of who leads the F still goes on.

JG: JPM should apologise for not going to the CC meeting.

JPM: Is this meeting regular? Am I being accused, have I been given an explanation, what procedure should I have followed. Someone must apologise to me for not giving me the chance to meet the Africa Group before I apologise for the Moscow meeting. With regard to my right to be present in the discussion of the F - I am questioning how things should be done. If the person who refused my request for the Africa Group meeting apologises to me for that then I will apologise for not attending the CC meeting.

JKN: We can't take decisions at this meeting. We should study the report of this meeting and then decide unanimously on what should be done.

JG: A person must identify where the wrongs are. I have said that JPM should apologise for not attending. Also JPM says he has asked the Group here to be given a hearing. I can understand the rank and file taking this attitude, but from JPM I don't. He should have gone to Moscow.

RS: The solution is not in a technical issue eg whether this meeting is competent or not. That's sidestepping. If we are frank JPM's problems arose at the latest in the 1979 meeting where he didn't raise them. I am not satisfied that I get the leadership that I expect from JPM - not at the 79 meeting or the 81 meeting.

JPM: Perhaps I should apologise for not attending the Moscow meeting so that the meeting must refuse to discuss what I have had to say. Perhaps apologise for those who did not know of my request for an Africa Group meeting.

GS: You should not put conditions on apology. You need to apologise.

JPM: I apologise but will what I have been saying go beyond this meeting?

GS: We have JPM's document and the minutes of this meeting which will be submitted to the PB.

JPM: Probably that document is not enough.

JG: No. JPM can't go on piling memos. Don't encourage JPM to pile on memos.

GS: There is the minutes and JPM's document. These will go to the PB.

JPM: Then I am satisfied.

GS: JPM suggests that the matter be discussed when more members of the Africa Group are present. I shall not be around. It won't be a good thing for the matter to be reopened in this forum. This record

should be read as minutes at a normal meeting of the Group.

JPM has spoken frankly. I also appreciate M's approach. It was harsh but correct. JPM is not happy with the leadership of the F. He is entitled to that view. But he is a frightened man. When you see shadows of other racial groups you are afraid. The leadership is completely in the hands of Africans. There is no need to fear about that. JPM was party to the discussions about the composition of the '79 meeting. There was the error about the young participating. Another irregularity we nearly fell into was when the view was put that Mali should be brought into the CC while he was still studying. Later his conduct showed itself. It is some of the mistakes we get into - not mistakes of individuals but ours. I don't know if there was a caucus as to who should be at the Berlin meeting. But I ~~am~~ ^{avoid} always ~~avoid~~ caucuses. JPM at times bites deeper than normal. He speaks of their being the only two in the NEC who were receiving £24 per month. I was in the NEC and I never got anything. But the F is a F of disciplined people. When the majority decides we have to accept. Even if you don't agree with the calibre of the PB - JPM was there to elect them. We should be there to see things are done correctly and fight for them. The CC is the body which decides and in its absence the PB. JPM says he has no respect for the CC and the PB. This makes it difficult. It is a bad position. Then what does he respect?

This matter will be raised at the PB We would like your views on this matter for the next PB.

Agreed: A) that the record of this meeting will be shown to the remaining members of the Africa Group who are not present today to enable them to add their comments

B) That this record together with JPM's earlier memo will be submitted to the PB.

ends.