

MINUTES OF NWEC MEETING - 11 TO 15 APRIL 1989.

PRESENT: GS, MN, LN, ZM, LM, MM, RM, MS, YM, DM and BK.

APOLOGIES: RS, TM and LM.

NWEC was informed that it was not possible for JM to attend the meeting or participate in any other way until further notice from the Movement.

In her opening remarks the Chairperson - Cde MN - pointed out that the second NWEC meeting was taking place at a time of important developments in the region. In its deliberations, it would be essential that NWEC see how far we have gone in carrying the mandate of Conference out.

The NEC member - in officially opening the meeting - made the following points:-

- a) Issues on the agenda of today are more complicated than when we started. We need to equal the challenges.
- b) There is a move to project racist South Africa as part of the liberatory forces in Southern Africa. In this process there are opportunities for South Africa and its allies to sabotage the peace process particularly in Namibia.
- c) The Anti-Apartheid Movement has been weakening Internationally and trade has been increasing between the racist regime and countries abroad.
- d) We need to preach SANCTIONS against South Africa even harder to strengthen the Anti-Apartheid work.
- e) The readiness of the ANC to consider negotiations if the correct setting is created does not mean that we intend to suspend our program for the struggle.
- f) The National Commission on emancipation as suggested by the 1987 Luanda Women's Conference should be followed up. It could involve people from inside South Africa.
- g) There's a need for us to make a critique of both our Constitutional Guidelines and the regimes' Law Commissions' draft report on a Bill of Rights. We need to study where and how the latter is meant to lay traps and snares for us.

The following agenda was then adopted for the week:

AGENDA

1. Minutes
2. State of Organisation of South African Women

Admin/2.....

3. Administrative Report of Secretariat
4. Conference Report
5. Progress Reports
 - a. Malibongwe
 - b. Dakar
6. Issues of particular concern
 - a. Emancipation in context of Constitutional Guidelines.
 - b. Children.

I MINUTES

a. of the 19.09.87.

- Add names of R. Nzo and M. Manzini as present.
- P3 Y. Modise to head Finance, Projects and *Welfare*
- P5 Office for NWS not NWEC

Minutes were adopted with above corrections.

DISCUSSION.

_ Meeting was briefed about Bussie who had since gone to UNHCR.

- It was agreed to ask Cde Zinto to work on Secretariat report according to suggestions of conference.

- Presidential Commission had decided against a Women's Section permanent representative at the UN as sessions to be attended only amount to a few weeks a year.

- A specific person should be given task of preparing guidelines for next NPC and NWEC should come out with policy statements on certain issues.

- Although NEC had a point in not confining conference to women who were "available", we need to point out disadvantages of not consulting people before electing them. Next time no one should be elected if they are going to school.

b. MINUTES of 20/09/87

- Matter of training still to be pursued.

- Contraception still of concern especially in the face of trend of girls getting pregnant deliberately so as to leave West.

- Matter of conditions in UG houses to be left to structures already handling it as it is complex one.

: Our social workers should assist in addressing disintergration in our community. This is partly caused by cadres spending long periods with vacuum in their lives.

- Rest and cure should be seen to by specific structures for whom people work on full time basis. It should be policy that cadres

go on/3.....

go on holidays on regular basis when they work full time.

- Manuscript and progress of History Book to be requested from Frene. Try that the book should be out by Malibongwe conference.

- It was reported that Priscilla Nyanda was out of prison.

II STATE OF ORGANISATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

- Paper was presented by Cde G. Shope

- Discussion

:- Women in the Eastern Transvaal should be commended for unemployed workers' groups

:- Women in Angola equally to be commended for initiative of Imbokodo.

:- Not enough done on plight of our children. We have to avoid leaving discussions hanging. Cde Lindi, Regina, Rebecca and Mittah to see to follow up on the following:-

1. Petition outstanding since 87
2. Use of system of adoption for some children as need arises for specific children especially inside
3. Fund raising campaign for children
4. Information gathering, this is essential for correct solutions/ projects being designed for specific groups (try and get UNICEF booklet on situation of children in the region).

5. Work out specifically and carefully how funds will be channelled for work on children.

:- We have to suggest to Dept of Education that offers for schools in Cuba and GDR not only consider exile children but try to absorb thousands of displaced, disadvantaged children inside.

:- Domestic Workers Union affiliate of COSATU.

White women employers' disruptive activities need to be exposed as blackmail. This tendency usually exploits differences in existences of workers in employers' backyards and those who live in townships.

:- Need to highlight plights of women political prisoners with help of women's organisations friendly to us. To collect data on specific prisoners to facilitate campaign. DIP, IDAF, WIS to assist with necessary information on individual prisoners.

:- Political Education Desk to attend to publication of biographies of our fallen heroes. Movement should edit, not suppress writing about comrades who were involved in sensitive work. These deserve to be known more than those who are alive.

:- Paper contains a lot of activity but lacks reflection of education of women by and about themselves and the nature of their oppression. There's a need for Seminars to do this.

:- There is a need to update 1983 Political Education programme and literature mentioned in 1987 programme of action. These should be sent inside.

:- In conjunction with DPE come out with papers (including those prepared for 87 Conference) to be sent inside for political discussion by our women.

:- Sister Ncube first President of Womens' Decade. It is important that we work with Church women and Presidency of Sister Ncube is an advantage for us.

:- What is the Womens' Section platform for collaboration with Churches and workers?

:- We have to work closely with SACTU.

:- Meeting heard reports on efforts to organise women in OFS and Northern Cape. Unit of women was wiped out in former and no feedback yet from people sent to the latter.

:- Taking over of creche sub-Committee by RPC in the UK was largely viewed positively. This shows progress as the care of children is not left solely to women.

:- Issues referred to on page 9 - involving traumatised young girls in Mazimbu - were elaborated on. We need to train specialists to address such problems.

:- Social Workers should be properly deployed and should address specificities of social work in our ranks.

III ADMINISTRATION REPORT.

- Cde Baleka presented the report from the Secretariat

:- It was agreed that Cde Yoli would submit a typed report on Scandinavia.

:- Cde Mavi gave a verbal report. The following points came out:-

:- Cde Mavi went without a briefing and has not been formally introduced to our community in Holland to this day.

b) She found the ANC unit and the women's unit in particular, paralysed over the Bunie issue which is still not yet resolved.

c) AABN had not communicated to our people about Malibongwe, instead they were talking about working with our people in London on Malibongwe. Mavi had to correct the situation.

d) Mavi sits in Malibongwe Board and Secretariat. Other ANC women are also involved.

REPORT FROM REBECCA:

A written report would be submitted.

a) Mobilisation of Nigerian women was difficult and some efforts were interrupted by issue of unity between ANC and PAC, which had become a point of disagreement and tension with hosts.

b) It was impossible to organise ANC Women's Section.

c) Political problems among students were contained.

d) There were possibilities of training women in handicrafts.

CANADA TOUR .

a) The conference was good but was almost crippled by diverse tendencies.

b) Cheque for US\$229 was submitted from Sashathcwan women.

c) Canadian women complain that we do not respond and follow up.

d) We need to strengthen anti-apartheid work by sending more students, possibly couples.

e) The Anti-Apartheid Movement there is dominated by women.

f) The area has political problems caused by existence of people with weak relations with the Movement.

g) An invitation will be coming for someone to tour Jamaica and two other countries.

13.04.89.

Apologies from MaMotshabi.

- Discussion of Administrative Report.

INTERNAL ;

:- The proposed programme does not address triple oppression.

:- Our Internal Sub-Committee must work better under PMC/IPC to make sure there are no parallel lines likely to endanger people's lives.

:- PMC to meet NWEAC while most members are around.

:- Examples of some embarrassments of NWEAC members being uninformed

even on/6.....

even on things that need not be secrets.

:- There is need for more openness to NWEC members than in the past if they have to have ability to complement NEC work. Why the extra sensitivity with women?

:- We have to define our role in the struggle and present proposals to lead discussion with leadership.

:- Our role to see to it women of our country participate at all levels in all four pillars of our struggle.

:- We have a right to say who should represent us especially in a key structure like the Internal Sub-Committee.

:- It was agreed to increase NWEC involvement in informal work by adding Comrades RM and ZM to WIS.

:- Problem of slowness in rural mobilisation not confined to women but goes across the Movement.

:- Rural community projects and literacy programmes can be used for political work.

:- Need to train rural women all round and send them back.

X:- WIS should find out about specialised program for under ground rural work which Czechs have.

X:- PAIDESA course to be used for rural women.

:- Need to correct view of rural population as politically raw. There is a history of good political participation in rural areas. They need weapons to fight.

:- In Harare to: discuss problems and solutions around national initiative. There is need to have full time organisers for this to work.

Postponement of Natal AGM worrying. Must discuss Natal before going to Harare. Then get progress report from Natal women in Harare.

POLITICAL EDUCATION.

:- Mail and statement should be sent also to members of NWEC not only to RWCs.

:- Preparation of papers (see discussion of State of Organisation paper). For papers to be distributed for facilitating political discussion we need not insist on them being perfect in all aspects. We must recognise papers as a process of thinking things out and means at getting more clarity on particular issues being tackled.

Thereis/7.....

:- There is a need for the sub-committee to be re-inforced with a woman for DPE.

:- Should reports from regions go to this desk? We need to look at this question more. Should regional reports not be the business of the Administrative Secretary? The role of the Administrative Secretary is a political one. Conference does not elect people for purely technical office administration. This should be discussed more.

PUBLICITY INFORMATION AND RESEARCH.

:- The two pages of VOW in Mayibuye should be complemented with leaflets and radio broadcasts. The Women's Section draft leaflets and pass them on to Internal DIP for production and infiltration.

:- We should pursue the possibility of London producing VOW. Learn from the DAC experience with Rixaka. Work towards changing the title and merging VOW with Newsletter.

INTERNATIONAL .

:- In view of Cde Mittah's imminent departure it was agreed that Cde Suzie be appointed head of the International desk. A letter should be written to her and SGO in this respect.

:- Cde Rebbs would assist Cde Doris with the work for as long as she is around.

:- Report not only to reflect a list of conferences, but to focus more on the content of discussions with them.

:- The issue of Representatives/Coordinators was discussed.

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

a) When regions ask for someone to work full-time for the Women's Section the Secretariat should send someone if this is within their means. The question of what capacity/position or level of responsibilities she holds in that region will be a matter for that particular region to decide upon.

b) The title of Coordinator no longer exists.

c) The Women's Section shall have women representatives to International Organisations e.g. WIDF, not to regions or ANC Womens' units.

d) NWEK members shall be introduced to regions they are based in, in their capacity as senior cadres in a position to give guidance. They would then work within that community in accordance with ANC regional structures and policy.

e) As soon as the Womens' Section has been organised in Canada, Cde Nompoti will cease to operate as coordinator and work according

to the laid down Structure of the Women's Section.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

- :- There is a crying need for someone full-time in the office .
- :- People like ZM should be approached for writing out proposals.
- :- Data on women is essential for designing correct training programs.
- :- We should exploit possibilities of seconding our women to factories. Do the same with Dakawa Textile, Printing Workshop in order to discover talents and potentials.

CHILDREN .

- :- The question of parents taking their children with to study abroad be discussed with the NEC. The problem affects entire Movement not only the Women's Section.

FINANCE, PROJECTS AND WELFARE.

- :- Women's Section monies from donors must be sent directly to the National Women's Secretariat.
- :- The issue of a separate account should be pursued. A letter should be written to the Presidential Committee and given directly to the President.
- :- The child care centre in Dakawa should be named after Martin Duma.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES.

(The last paragraph on page 26 should read as follows:-

Comrades our sights need to be more sharply focussed in keeping with the developments of our Peoples' struggle inside South Africa. The major reason we are here is the liberation of our people. International mobilisation is an important pillar of our struggle. But we must make a conscious effort to work more on the other pillars than we have done in the past.

- :- It was pointed out that our Structure reflects an inclination towards more International work and national liberation than other aspects.

- :- More to Dakawa. The letter from the CEO asking us for a list of people to be in the advance party was not a welcome approach to the matter. The fact that the implications to the work of the Womens' Section were never discussed with us is disturbing. The decision also reflects how the Womens' Section is seen. We should raise our concerns with the leadership.

- :- It is important for Womens' Section interests to be catered for by ensuring intergration in all ANC structures. We should

see to it/9.....

see to it Womens' Desks are introduced in Departments/sections and structures. These need not be maned by women. But they would ensure that the Movement addresses 'womens' issues'.

14.04.89

Minutes of 15.02.88.

:- The meeting questioned the right of the meeting of 15.2.88. to take decisions, some of which reversed conference decisions. It was justified to call a Consultative meeting, taking advantage of the presence of NWECC members. There were non NWECC members attending.

:- It was decided that NWECC members based in Lusaka, but doing other work, participate through attendance of regular quarterly meetings of the NWECC Working Committee. These meetings can also be called any other time when the need arises.

:- The manpower crisis that led to calling the meeting of 15.2.88 posed the question of whether it was correct/helpful to have Secretariat coming only from NWECC members.

:- It was agreed that the National Women's Secretariat meetings should deal only with matters of an Administrative nature. Matters of policy should go to the meetings of the NWECC Working Committee.

:- Letters should be written to all regions asking women to come and man desks that need manpower.

:- ANC Manpower Development should cater for the needs of the Womens' Section. But women themselves do not appreciate the role of the Section. We should try to make it attractive so women get interested to work.

:- If there are responses /applicants, names should be submitted for approval.

:- K and J in Canada are said not to be hostile but distant towards the Movement. As people who sent her there, it is our responsibility to try and persuade her to return to HQ.

:- PASA. The structure i.e. board, is not open for representation.

:- We have to study the Emancipation document and circulate it to units for discussion before the August meeting.

EMANCIPATION DESK.

In the process of trying to understand the role of this desk there is need to look more at the Structure. The Structure of the Womens' Section goes along the lines of the ANC, and does not actually address the triple oppression of South African women.

We should/10....

We should look more at our structure and whether we need to have all the desks we have, especially in cases where the ANC also has Departments/structures. There's a need for us to get women's desks as suggested under 'Administrative Difficulties' above. Our role would then be to monitor their progress. The Women's Section structure would then eventually be a much more compressed one than at present.

The economic exploitation of women as workers in industry and in the unpaid domestic sphere is one that needs a lot of attention from us. We should find ways/mechanisms to facilitate this. Do we need a Labour desk? or do we do it under the Emancipation desk? More discussion on this.

:- It was agreed that the formation of women's desks is a priority but that we should not do away with the desks we have in the Women's Section right away.

We should provide manpower for the departmental women's desks if necessary.

:- The working document for the '87 conference should be circulated to regions.

:- Paper on emancipation must come from Women's own experiences.

:- Emancipation Desk should send out drafts on issues to be addressed to elucidate emancipation.

:- Let Emancipation Desk take off and see how its work unfolds before focussing on formation of National Commission for Emancipation.

:- Recommendations, including those on the commission, should be submitted to the NEC.

:- Is the commission a presidential one? How often does it report? To whom? Its terms of reference? All these have to be discussed and clear recommendations made.

:- It is good that the Women's Section sits on Commissions for External Organisation and Foreign Affairs. We should write and commend NEC and FAC about appointment of more women in the international area of work. But we should ask that we should not be complacent (as ANC) more still has to be done.

:- The meeting expressed regret that "reserves" were made an issue by being announced at the conference. It unnecessarily created confusion around their 'status'.

:- The meeting decided to take the matter of manning of desks back to the Secretariat.

IV. 2ND NATIONAL WOMENS' CONFERENCE REPORT.

Cde Zanele led the discussion starting from the decision of the

first/11.....

first NWEK meeting that it (NWEK) had to decide on the final version. She then went on to the background of what led to delays.

- It was decided that Cdes Lindi and Rebecca work on an abridged version of the report to be distributed as soon as possible. This will be distributed to both ANC and the public - where necessary.

- We don't have to include all messages, some can be mentioned only, not reproduced.

- The question of sending report inside had to be carefully considered before implementation.

V. PROGRESS REPORTS.

a. - Meeting agreed to shift report and discussion of preparations for Womens' Dakar to the end.

b. - Malibongwe: Cde Mittah gave a briefing on preparations by way of leading discussion.

:- It was agreed that we have to be involved in decisions on content of film on Malibongwe to avoid unsatisfactory final product.

:- Cde Mavi reported on preparations in Holland. She sits on both Board that holds monthly meetings and Secretariat chaired by Corry Zoll. Although Board is supposed to sanction Secretariat decisions, the latter sometimes acts before the Board's okay.

- The meeting agreed to invite IDAF and Women's Section of the Socialist International.

:- Our community in Holland must be involved to be our eyes and ears.

:- Comments were made on the program e.g. it would be better to spread out the films; we should not have blocks of free time etc.

:- We should keep the initiative firmly in our hands and avoid possibilities of any deviations from our interests.

:- Cde Mavivi should be sent copies of correspondence to equip her with capacity to push our line at meetings.

:- It was reported that AABN have a follow up Sub-Committee.

:- Rebbs to take over Malibongwe/Convenor position

:- Malibongwe, book, to be taken to conference.

:- Put together what our women have done.

:- Ask DIP for more pictures to add on our collection.

15.4.89

Apologies: Cdes Regina, MaMotshabi unable to attend.

Cdes Makho and Ruth to first go to meet Australian Ambassador to Pretoria. It was agreed that they discuss sponsorship of some tickets for Malibongwe for women coming from inside.

VI. MATTERS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN.

a. Womens' Emancipation In The Context of Constitutional Guidelines:

Meeting went/12.....

- Meeting went through the guidelines, clause by clause. It was pointed out that it would not be enough for us to add 'sex' all over, but what is necessary is an elaboration on the clauses themselves in as far as they guide the constitution and their implication for the future of South African women.

PREAMBLE: Paragraph 4 line 3 to read "abolish all laws imposing racial and gender oppression and discrimination".

Paragraph 5 line 1 = "In addition, the effects of centuries of racial domination, women's Subordination and inequality". The State: South Africa shall be an independent, unitary, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist state".

The institution of hereditary rulers and, chief and chieftainess shall be transformed to....."

Bill of Rights and Affirmative Action: j. "The state..... inequalities produced by discrimination based on race, sex and creed"
1. Subject to.....Furthermore the state shall have the duty to protect the right to work for men and women, and guarantee.....".

LAND: u)i, Abolition of all restrictions on ownership and use of land based on race and gender
ii) Implementation of, taking into account the Land Act of 1913 and 1936 and the status of victims..."

WORKERS: The meeting suggested that aspects such as equal wages, living wage and the rights of women workers must be incorporated in the Constitution and must spell out clearly what the future is meant to hold for them.

WOMEN: In the same way as Workers have been promised a Charter to protect their rights there is a need for a document, Charter or Bill of Rights to protect women's rights as women have been disadvantaged historically. This document should elaborate on where and how women feature in the economy.

FAMILY: The Movement should draw up a Family Code as the family is an arena where women feature a lot. Under Economy there is a need for a clear definition of family as reference is made to family sector". In this context parenthood also needs to be defined in clear terms.

CHILDREN: warrant a section/clause on their own as a special and very sensitive group of the population. The Constitution must not deal with them in passing.

INTERNATIONAL: South Africa shall be... to the achievements of National Liberation, development, world peace and disarmament".

ADDITIONAL POINTS: 1. The ANC must sign the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination.
2. Our lawyers and economists must help us deal with the concept of "unemployed workers" and the question of the enormous amount of unregulated labour of our women - especially - in the domestic sphere.

3. Legislation should define some of the concepts that cannot be elaborated by a Constitution.

b. CHILDREN: The meeting acknowledged that the many problems related to children as raised in the paper indicate an urgent need for us to address the issue meaningfully.

:- Paper to be distributed to units and next Working Committee meeting of NWEcto take it up.

:- Distribute documents of childrens' conference; the UN Charter on children, Ms Patricia's address in Harare etc.

PASA should take up Children as separate section not as connected to women.

:- Meeting endorsed idea that ANC structures - in particular the Department of Education start taking action to change the situation of our children inside South Africa for the better. Eventhough sending our children to the GDR and Cuba would distance them from our culture, it is better to have an educated adult who can contribute something to the world than a bitter, deculturated and uneducated social misfit bred by Apartheid. Let us take the "street children" out and give them a better alternative to the pipes. (Link discussi with the one under State of Organisation, and Childrens' Desk)

WOMEN's DAKAR:- Meeting was given a briefing of preparations to that point:-

- There was going to be a meeting with the NEC Working Committee on Monday 17.04.89 on the Harare meeting itself.

- Issue of PAC to be discussed Monday.

- The meeting took some decisions pertaining to the programme of the meeting in Harare and allocation of tasks.

:- Cde Lindi would join Miranda in the Advance Party.

:- Rebbs should assist Mme Gerty with her paper.

:- Meeting agreed that NWEc issue a call to our women to come out in support of the people of Namibia in their struggle to make independent a reality in their country. It was agreed to raise this in Harare.

Cde Gertrude thanked the members of NWEc for the work done in the week, urged that the recommendations be implemented. The meeting was closed in the afternoon.