

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

1) The Guidelines are a text adopted after considerable analysis and debate by the NEC. This is a Seminar not a conference, accordingly we feel it is more appropriate to present a report rather than a resolution. The NEC is sounding out the membership about the Guidelines and our report is as follows:

2) The discussion was generally of a high level and the interest of the participants was extremely strong. In this sense the Seminar succeeded completely in opening up important themes for debate and satisfying in a small way the immense thirst of the membership for organised discussion on fundamental questions facing the movement.

3) Certain organisational problems reduced the effectiveness of the debate, notably the difficulty in reproducing papers in time for advance distribution. The achievements of the London Printing Unit need to be studied and an appropriate capacity created in Lusaka to back up these Seminars.

4) On the substantive questions raised we would like to make the following observation:

i) There was general acceptance of the preamble and the sections on the State, Franchise and National Identity. The only question raised was about how the organs of local people's power would fit into the scheme. The 'soft' line on the chief was generally accepted.

ii) After explanation was given of the progressive character of the Bill of Rights coupled with affirmative action, there was general acceptance of this section of the Guidelines. Some comrades felt there should be express reference to the following themes: Health, Education, the Right of Information, and the role of culture in promoting a common loyalty. Some questions were asked about whether in a liberated South Africa there should be a multi-party Parliamentary system with freedom for parties that do not violate clauses (i) to (k) but which are reactionary and anti-people. On the whole, however, the participants accepted the perspective contained in this section.

5) The greatest reservation and criticisms were expressed in connection with the section on the Economy. Many participants felt that the failure to spell out a clear commitment to nationalisation represented a retreat from the provisions of the Freedom Charter. This was made worse by a complete absence of reference to the theme of land and land-distribution. In this context, reference to a mixed economy appeared to be accepting the existence of capitalism in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Although many of the participants were prepared to accept a mixed economy on the basis that a strongly organised workers' movement and strong government control could direct the economy in progressive directions, nevertheless there was almost universal feeling that the land question needs to be directly addressed, so as not to give the impression that the ANC is running away from it and from its historic commitment to restore the land to those who work it.

6) There was general satisfaction with the section on Workers, save that some felt that other rights spelt out in the Freedom Charter should be expressly included, for example, the right to work.

7) The Section on Women's rights was accepted, save that the speakers dealing directly with this theme urged strongly that the struggle against sexism be expressed - referred to in the preamble and in the section on a Bill of Rights and affirmative Action.

8) The parts on the Family and International were relatively non-controversial.

9) In general, we consider that the seminar has been highly successful and should be seen as the starting point for a wide-ranging discussion on the central themes discussed. Ways must be found of placing the Guidelines before the whole membership, together with copies of the papers (all or some, in the whole or in part) together with an explanatory document that sets out the background to the drafting of the Guidelines, explains the basic themes of the text, and indicates the nature of the consultation with the membership. Our feeling is that the participants on the whole found the document to be a skillful one, rather than an exciting text that will inspire or mobilise the people. Nevertheless, it will provide the basis for profound debates which will promote unity and enable the membership and the people as a whole to feel that they 'know what is going on' and are contributing to the evolution of the solution. The whole question of the inter-relationship between realism and tactical considerations, on the one hand, and clear revolutionary goals to fight for and die for, if necessary, on the other is a difficult one, that requires more rather than less debate.