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EPISCOPAL CHURCHPEOPLE for a FREE SOUTHERN AFRICA

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339 Lafayette Street
New York, N.Y. 10012

6 January 1988

PEOPLE'S EDUCATION VS PRETORIA

'People's Education is fundamentally different from the "alternative education" programs that shun the reality of the conflict in South Africa, and, in some cases, have a hidden agenda of the depoliticisation of education and the creation of an apolitical black middle class. In reality, of course, these hidden agendas and intentions have a blatant political purpose: the defence of the present situation. People's Education, by contrast, becomes an integral part of the struggle for a non-racial, democratic South Africa.'

- Eric Molobi, November 1986



The National Education Crisis Committee came into being at a conference at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg in December 1985. Teachers, students, parents, academics and activists from across the country were intent on bringing order out of the chaos Pretorian apartheid had wrought upon education for black South Africans. They envisioned a system of learning cleansed from top to bottom of bantu education. The theme of the conference: 'People's Education for People's Power'.

Pretoria's response - as it has been to all opposition: political, church, trade union, student, community organization - has been savage. Its bantu education is the most fundamental kind of control mechanics for the perpetuation of apartheid and minority exploitation. Ideas, translated into action, are more dangerous than bullets. On 8 December 1987, Eric Molobi, NECC national coordinator, was arrested and disappeared into a Pretorian prison as had Vusi Khanyile, the Rev Molefe Tsele and others of the NECC leadership.

Eric Molobi is in his late 30s. He was imprisoned before, in the late 70s. He was a member of the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee, predecessor of the NECC. He is completing a BA degree in politics and runs the Joint Enrichment Project, which provides vocational training and cultural programs for youth in the townships. He and his wife Martha live in Soweto and have two daughters, one teenage, the other a subteen.

HELP DEFEND THE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Secretary George Shultz
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Ambassador Piet Koornhof
South African Embassy
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THE National Education Crises Committee consultative conference, held at Wits University in September, rejected the government's proposed Education Laws Amendment Bill and resolved to reiterate its demand for the right to work towards people's education in and outside schools and to unite all community sectors for this purpose.

In an unprecedented move, the government requested NECC to comment on the proposed Bill which would bring all schools and institutions for the education of black persons under the Minister of Education and Development Aid.

At a hastily convened conference, about 200 delegates from the NECC's 10 regions and representatives from various progressive organisations in the country rejected the contents of the Bill, and called for its withdrawal. The NECC was initially given three days to respond, but rejected this deadline, stating that it needed time to fully consult with all its regions and representatives.

National co-ordinator Eric Molobi said the government's approach came as a surprise in view of the fact that many NECC leaders are in detention. He also made reference to the Government Gazette dated 9 January 1987, which effectively prevents the NECC from holding gatherings where discussion on alternative education takes place.

Speaking at the two-day conference, Molobi said the struggles in the education front must be seen as a dialectical process of the entire society as it strives for complete transformation from its present social formation.

The proposed Bill will, amongst other things, redefine 'school' as "any school, special school, pre-primary school, school of industries, reform school, class, part-time class, night school, college, technical college, centre institute or any other institution for the education of black persons", and bring them all under the Minister of Education and Development Aid, F W de Klerk.

It will also empower the Minister to suspend the activities of any school or class. Technikon will have their admission policies more strictly monitored, while greater power will be held to regulate "the entering of the premises of public schools by pupils of such schools" and "the discharge of teachers".

NECC

Yes to People's Education, No to Education Bill



NECC's Eric Molobi (centre) with representatives from Sansco, Nusas and Neusa.

Addressing delegates at the conference Sansco President Billy Ramogopa said of the Bill, and other proposed Bills, that they "are an extension of the emergency into the labour field, university campuses and any other area that could still avoid some of the stipulated restrictions."

"The Government's strategy at this point is to regain control at all levels, to crush or silence the democratic movement and win over certain sections of the community such as the academics and employers," he said.

While the conference centered on the Bill, discussion around other areas was held. Decisions made at the conference included that NECC would:

- form an interim structure, with a

Flashback: Students at a parents' meeting to push for their demands.

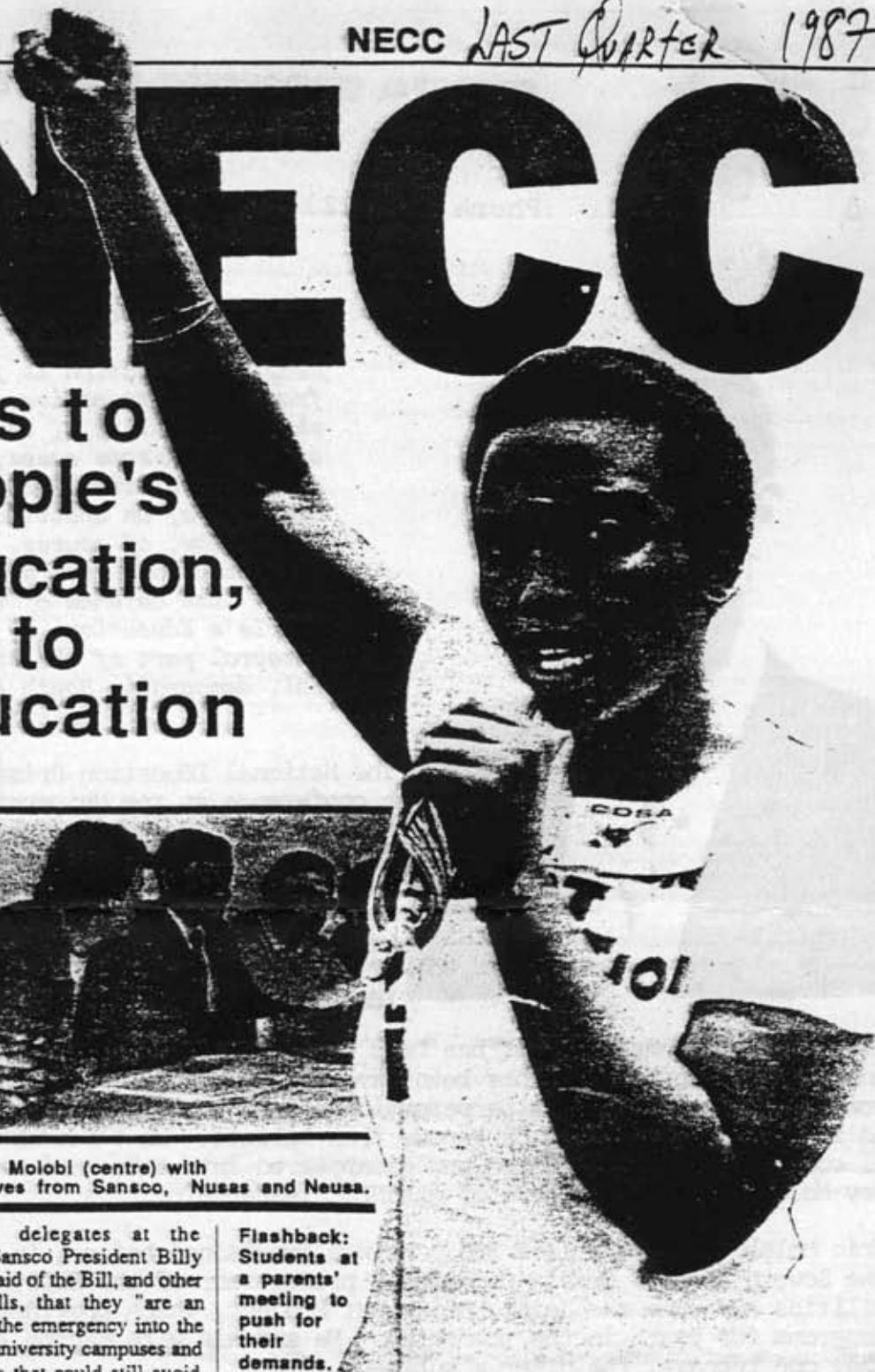
view to launching a National Executive Committee,

- work with other organisations to form a national teachers union,
- call on progressive academics to form a national academics association,
- co-operate on the Education Charter Campaign.

The delegates present also called for an intensification of the academic

boycott.

Eric Molobi announced that despite repression, NECC had established sub-committees to research text books for History, English and Mathematics that would be more appropriate for the conditions of South African pupils. The History text book has already been completed and this was shown to the delegates when the conference opened.



Friday 11 December
1987

Greetings to you, the board of Kagiso Trust, and the entire staff. At last the South African security police have detained me. A Major Van Wyk found me after having discussions with Mr Goven Mbeki whom I regard as the national leader of our people. Van Wyk told me that he detains me under Regulation 3 of the Internal Security Act. I asked him what unlawful act have I committed. He said by being a member of the Executive of the NECC, he is empowered by law to detain me indefinitely. From that fateful night of Monday 7 I am kept in detention obviously under the whims of a security police officer.

Around me, there are many youngsters, some have been here for over a year. I would like the members of the Kagiso Trust board to raise my detention with the European Economic Community. I would like the EEC parliament the standing committee, the SANAM group to know that I am detained not for any unlawful act I have committed, but simply because I belong to an organisation which has stated on numerous occasions its opposition to Bantu Education as a system of education. In my last speech at our consultative conference, I stated clearly that the NECC is a non-violent organisation, which however, is vehemently opposed to Apartheid in education. I have thought endlessly ^{about} the motive behind this arbitrary and malicious encroachment on individual freedom. I can only come up with one, listening to other detainees speaking to each at night, the

Sought of action breeds bitterness. This sought of actions hardens the feelings of many young people, it makes their hearts full of hatred and vengeance. They watch their lives being wasted, we sit with no books to read. Our conditions are terrible and we ask ourselves, what have we done? My Organization is one that actually pressed for discussions with the D.G.T. Today, the South African Govt says it is reforming its officials, for media and overseas consumption, they say they want to talk. How can they talk to prisoners and detained persons are they not burning bridges by tormenting young black South Africans through detention without trial, through letting them rot under inhuman conditions.

I don't feel pity for myself nor do I think that my fellow detainees ask for mercy. What we want is for the civilised world to take heed and note. Even from the dungeons of apartheid shame and human degradation, we raise our voices for the world to know that we still believe in Democratic rule, we still believe in human rights and human freedom, even for those who keep us in conditions such as we experience daily. For all governments which in one way or other deal with the South African government, may you not forget that, there is no short-cut to Democracy. If it has to last, it must include democratically elected leaders of our people.

Thank you all. Eric Murobi

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A GUIDE TO APPLICANTS ABOUT THE KAGISO TRUST'S CRITERIA, ITS PROJECT SCREENING METHODS

1. CRITERIA

1.1 NON-RACIALISM. Projects should support, subscribe to and promote non-racialism. Projects should also be non-racial in their own practice.

1.2 UNITY. Projects should support and promote the unity of people from different racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This implies that projects that, directly or indirectly, attempt to thwart these aims should not be supported.

1.3 DEMOCRACY. Projects should promote democratic practice, and should be democratic in their own practices. This implies that projects must either be directly community based, or that communities and or their representative organisations enjoy participation within projects at a policy-making level.

1.4 NON-COLLABORATION. Projects initiated and /or controlled by the South African government, any of its structures cannot be supported. This includes structures under the control of the "homelands," "self-governing states," or organisations participating within any of these structures.

1.5 SUBSTITUTION. No contributions will be made for the programs that the S.A. government should legitimately be expected to cover. (e.g. Social Welfare, Non-developmental health care, criminal rehabilitation, etc.)

1.6 DEVELOPEMENT PROGRAMS - will only be supported if they contribute towards a process of education for peacefull, but fundamental change towards a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa.

TRUSTEES : DR. A. BOESAK, DR. M. COLEMAN, PROF. J. GERWEL, MR. Y. MAHOMED.,
FR. S. MKHATSHWA, MR. E. MOLOBI, DR. B. NAUDE, DR. A. NKOMO, ARCHBISHOP D. M. TUTU.

Rev. F. Chikane

The Kagiso Trust - as its criteria printed above makes evident - is anathema to the regime in Pretoria. And to Pretoria's friends overseas. In 1985, the Council of Ministers of the European Community set up a Special Programme of Assistance to the Victims of Apartheid - sidestepping the issue of economic sanctions - and voted financial assistance of about \$30 million for two years. EC reached agreement with the South African Council of Churches and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference on distribution of the funds. The church leaders insisted that Kagiso's criteria be followed.

The British journal AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL reported that a campaign against support for the Kagiso Trust has emanated - despite the customary denials - from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's no. 10 Downing Street. AC obtained a copy of a document which proposed changing the Special Programme's guidelines to permit funding of projects in the bantustans and those of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha movement, and deleting references to working 'in close cooperation with the democratic structures of the people', language defining the United Democratic Front. AC also said efforts were made to prevent grants going to South African youth organizations 'whose attachment to non-violence could be open to question.' 'The British government has also been accused of trying to acquire potentially damaging information about the Kagiso Trust via the embassy in Pretoria. This is confirmed by South African sources....A representative of the South African government claimed to an EC official in June 1987 that South Africa had "dirt on the Kagiso Trust"'.

THE Director of the Dependents' Conference of the SACC, Mrs Sophie Mazibuko, was held briefly for questioning by the police in De Aar on Wednesday.

She was in the company of Mr Sithile Zondani of the East Cape Council of Churches, who was also questioned and released.

In a statement Rev Frank Chikane, general secretary of the SACC condemned the detentions.

Mrs Mazibuko was on a field trip to the Karoo and was detained in the course of her duties as a

NECC 'SHOCKED' BY DETENTIONS 11/12/87

director of the SACC, the statement said.

Another SACC worker, Mr Nyaniso Mzama (22) was reported to have been detained in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

Mr Francis "Shagwa" Lebalo (21), was also reported to have been detained at a private

house in Parktown.

Also reported to have been detained this week is M. Faucett Mothibedi Mathebe (29) of Danilton.

At the time of writing, the SAP Directorate of Public Relations had not replied to a telex requesting confirmation of the detentions.

By NAT DISEKO

On Wednesday, Mr Zakes Molekane of Ikageng Township, Potchefstroom, was released after being detained in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

The National Education Crisis Committee

reacted with "shock and dismay" at the detention of Mr Eric Molobi.

Mr Molobi is national co-ordinator of the NECC and also an executive member of the United Democratic Front.

His attorney, Mrs Priscilla Jana said police

had confirmed that Mr Molobi is being held under Section 3 of the Emergency Regulations.

In a statement, the NECC said: "Now more than ever we require people of the calibre of Eric Molobi, Vusi Khanyile, Joyce Mfundisi and others to assist in solving the education crisis.

"Contrary to the State's view, these people are not responsible for the crisis. The Government, its policy of apartheid and its intransigence towards the people's legitimate demands remain the

main cause of the crisis."

The International Federation of Journalists has sent a message of support to South African journalists who are in detention.

London journalists joined a rally on November 20 outside the South African Embassy to protest against the detention of journalists in South Africa.

In a statement, Aidas White, general secretary of the IFJ said: "South Africa, as a first step towards rehabilitation in the world press, should immediately release imprisoned journalists.

"It is reprehensible that journalists should be detained for accurately reporting events in their communities."

The city of London's Anti-Apartheid Group will hold rallies in future dedicated to detained journalists Zwelakhe Sisulu, Vincent Mfundisi, Brian Sokutu and Maropodi Mapalakyane.

Molobi held

ANTI-APARTHEID activist, Eric Molobi, was detained in Johannesburg under emergency regulations yesterday, as he was leaving a meeting to discuss a Mbeki Trust, attorney Mrs Priscilla Jana said yesterday.

National co-ordinator of the National Education Co-ordinating Committee and executive member of the UDF, Mr Molobi, was meeting Mrs Jana and others to discuss the formation of the trust and a reception for the ANC leader, Mr Govan Mbeki, recently released after serving 23 years in prison.

Mrs Jana said police confirmed that Mr Molobi, a father of two children, was being held under Section 3 of the Emergency Regulations.

Members of the Security Police waited outside Mrs Jana's central Johannesburg office while the meeting was in progress, she said, and arrested Mr Molobi as he left. 9/12/87

In response the UDF National Executive Committee released a statement condemning the detention of Mr. Molobi.

The statement reads: "We are shocked and angered at the detention of NECC national co-ordinator and UDF member Eric Molobi.

"This detention comes at a time when government security officials have announced that they will be taking action even against people who are acting within the law"

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