

Fort Hare,
21.2.55.

Dear Chief,

I was very glad to hear from you. Our country is a great country, but sometimes its size is a little inconvenient because it is so difficult for people who ought to meet to get together. I hope you did get the message I sent you, raising some of the problems confronting us at the present time. I have just returned from visits to Cape Town & Port Elizabeth and I have in touch with our other areas. In spite of all the difficulties we have to face, our movement in the Cape is in a pretty sound condition, but it seems to me absolutely essential for the National Executive to meet to review the position regarding the Western Areas and our plans re the Bantu Education Act. I have suggested to H. Q. that this meeting should take place in Durban on March 5. There have been some suggestions that we should meet in Johannesburg but I am not in favour of that for reasons which I need not go into at the present time. I personally want to contact you and obviously we can do that better in Durban than in Johannesburg. The main subject for the Agenda must be General Review of Various Campaigns at present in progress, e.g. the Western Areas Removal, the Bantu Education Act, the League of the People, the intensification of the improvement of our organisational machinery.

On the subject of the Bantu Education Act I am satisfied that the resolution which was adopted by the National Conference in Durban must be reviewed. The resolution as it stands correctly

interprets the attitude of the African people with regard to the Bantu Education proposals of Dr Verwoerd, but for the implementation of that resolution we are dependent upon a number of factors some of which are not some of which are within our control. Among these factors a very important one is the fact that our call in the resolution is to the parents of the children in the school to withdraw their children from school. Many of these parents are not members of the A.N.C. Indeed many of them are not sympathetic to the A.N.C. point of view. Now I think many of them can be won over to the A.N.C. point of view, but it is doubtful whether this can be done in the brief period we have allowed ourselves for the Campaign. If we rush into this thing without the support of the parents, the net result will be to create ^{DISSENSION} within our ranks without giving any reward, even by way of the strengthening of our movement as a result of the Campaign. Another factor which must be reckoned with is that the teachers have become so scared about how this step is likely to affect their positions that they are doing propaganda against the Campaign against the A.N.C. We require time to deal with that aspect of the problem. The question is how the matter of a postponement can be presented to our followers without appearing as in the nature of a retreat from our resolution. I think this can be done along these lines. In the first place it appears that April 1 is going to fall within the period of the school holidays, so that in any case the date for the launching of the Campaign has to be advanced. It must be after those school holidays

10. The Verwood syllabuses will not be put into operation until January 1956. What is being done by April 1 is to have ready his machinery for the running of the schools i.e. the school committees, school boards etc. already they are running into difficulties there because in the light of our resolution people in some centres are refusing to serve in the committees. That is an aspect of the matter which must be emphasised - people must not serve in these committees. Those who do can be pointed to as serving the purposes of Verwood.

11. Many centres have drawn our attention to the fact that while they are in agreement with our resolution, they do not think we are fair in giving the people so short a time within which to make up their minds on such an important matter. Even in a centre like P.E. where I am sure the campaign would be 100% successful if launched on April 1, it is felt by our supporters that we are pushing them too hard and too fast.

In the light of these factors & those such as the fact that we have not had sufficient consultation with other organisations working in the educational field ~~exists~~ we are entitled to suspend the implementation of the Resolution and the launching of the Campaign until a later date. I believe that a statement on this matter after a National Executive meeting signed by the President. General would command the support of the entire nation.

I must not keep you any longer. We all hope and pray that you will be granted a speedy recovery. Please follow all the directions given you by the medical men. Don't overstrain in any way, whatever may happen outside. Our Cause is right. Nothing which Verwood others can do will stop us. The odds are in our favour to a greater extent than some of our younger folks realise. With best wishes, Marybridge

Yours for Africa
Z.K. Matthews