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University College of Fort Hare,
P.O. Fort Hare, Alice,
21st July, 1958.

Mr M.B. Kossew,
African Horizon Insurance Co.,
Strand Street,
Cape Town.

Dear Mr Kossew,

Re: Port Elizabeth Branch.

As I promised to do in our conversation over the phone I went down to Port Elizabeth by car on Saturday, 19th July, 1958. Unfortunately I was unable to stay more than just the one day, but as a result of interviews with various people, including Messrs Venter and Vogel, our Supervisors and Agents and some A.N.C. officials I was able to get a picture of the situation down there as a result of which I should like to make the following observations:-

1. Vogel is highly dissatisfied with the "treatment" which he has received from the Company. He suggests that the letter which he got from Mr Binnedell calling upon him to look for another job does not disclose the real reasons why he has been called upon to resign. He suspects that he is being victimised for his political activities or associations. Anyway he has decided not to pursue the matter any further and informs that he has actually given the Company a month's notice to take effect on August 31. He tells me that he has not discussed the matter of his "dismissal" with any A.N.C. people nor the Staff, i.e. Supervisors and Agents of the Company. But he then produced a Circular issued by the New Brighton branch of the A.N.C. which he had obtained that morning which referred to the African Horizon Insurance Co., in the following terms:- (the following is a translation of the Xhosa)

"Horizon Company Insurance. There are agents who when they want people to join the Insurance Company for which they work use the name of the National Organisation..

People must take note of the fact that the National Organisation owns no business venture of any kind nor does it have any Church which can be said to belong to the National Organisation. People who are members of the National Organisation who are connected with such business concerns are just like any worker who is employed in a Factory. The Factory cannot be described as belonging to any individual because he happens to work there nor can it be said to belong to the National Organisation because certain leaders are employed there and are associated with that business venture".

N.B. 'National Organisation' refers to the A.N.C.

2. I took up with the local A.N.C. leaders the reason for this reference to the African Horizon in their Circular. They explained that they had issued this statement because it had been brought to their notice by some of their members that certain agents of the Company in canvassing for policies were telling the people that the African Horizon Company belonged to the A.N.C. and that therefore all A.N.C. members should support it by investing their money in it and that as some future date the funds of the Company would be distributed among Africans. The A.N.C. leaders feeling that such statements were not in the interests of either the Company or the A.N.C. decided to find the Agent responsible for this false propaganda. They traced it down to one agent whose name is Dhlamini who operates at Zakhele, the site-and-service section of New Brighton. The local A.N.C. executive called this man to a meeting and called upon him to cease and desist from propagating these false statements. They decided, further, to warn their followers against it in the terms indicated in the Circular. I could find no objection to this action on the part of the local A.N.C. leaders.

3. When I interviewed the Supervisors and Agents and confronted them with this Circular, Dhlamini admitted that he had been present at the meeting of the A.N.C. where the Circular was discussed. He did not disclose, however, that it was his own activities that were being called into question. He suggested that what was discussed was the dismissal of Vogel which was regarded as unfair on the ground that Vogel who is

had built up the local branch of the Company was now being called upon to resign. He was unable to explain how the A.N.C. had got hold of this confidential information about Vogel. The rest of the Staff knew nothing about Vogel's impending resignation with the exception of Dhlamini who went on to say that he feared that many policy-holders would lapse their policies as soon as it became generally known that Vogel had been dismissed from the Company. Already, according to him, his own collections and new business had begun to decline within the last fortnight. I was not happy about the attitude of this man who seemed to me to be most likely to be the source of any proganda detrimental to the Company which might arise out of the resignation of Vogel. I could not establish to what extent, if any, he and Vogel might be working in this matter.

4. I warned all the Supervisors and Agents against the use of inaccurate or false statements in order to boost their business as such proganda was bound to harm the interests of the Company in the long run.

5. I could find no direct evidence that Vogel had made the statement attributed to him, but I did feel that he had a sense of grievance against the Company. He made it clear to me that he had had great hopes in the Company when he first joined it, but that he was now satisfied that it was wrong for anyone connected with what he called "the liberatory movement" to be associated with it. It is possible that he may seek to persuade the local A.N.C. to attack the company in the same way as the 'Sunday Express' did some time ago, but as I say I could find no evidence that he had done so as yet.

6. Ngina, the Supervisor, is very nervous about what is likely to happen when Vogel goes, but if a storm does develop as a result, I am inclined to think that he and his team of Agents would be able to survive it.

7. The impression which the A.N.C. people gave me was that it was not their intention to interfere in the relations between the Company and its employees. What they were not prepared to tolerate was the use of the name of the A.N.C. to boost the business of the Company.

8. I think I have dealt with all the essential points which I should like to mention. It will be for you down there to decide whether, in the circumstances, you wish to retain ~~their~~ services of Vogel or to accept his resignation as from August 31. If any further information is required before a decision can be arrived at, it might perhaps be a good thing for Senator Rubin to go to Port Elizabeth to investigate things on the spot.

9. I was highly impressed with the quality of the Supervisors and Agents we have at Port Elizabeth, and it would be a great pity if their good work were to be prejudiced by something extraneous to the business.

Yours sincerely,