

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Western Cape Region



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The News Editor
The Cape Times

Dear Sir

We are extremely concerned about the irresponsible way in which your newspaper has conducted itself over the COSAS affair.

Your journalist, Ms Underhill spent much of Tuesday trying to find divisions in our leadership's position on the COSAS issue - specifically between myself and Mr Tony Yengeni. Having failed to do this, she proceeded to take a statement made by myself and to misquote it, apparently with the sole intention of getting a reaction out of COSAS at their press conference yesterday.

The ANC Western Cape does everything it can to provide prompt and accurate information to the press and has never, in any way, attempted to interfere with the right to report freely and fairly at all times. We believe, however, that press freedom goes in hand with press responsibility and that journalists should report accurately and avoid trying to create problems and conflict where none exist. This responsibility is the greater in a volatile situation, particularly when the lives and safety of ordinary people may be in threat.

We must repeat what we have said to many journalists, including Ms Underhill, over the past few days. The meetings taking place between the ANC and COSAS is an important one and their success depends on the good faith of both parties. We can only condemn members of the press who deliberately set out to destroy that good faith - thereby attempting to disrupt the course of these negotiations.

Yours faithfully

Dr Allan Boesak
Chairperson

The People Shall Govern !