

CONFIDENTIALMEMORANDUMON THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL CONCILIATION
FROM THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE NEC1. Background

The Foundation for International Conciliation was established in 1984 by a British national, Michael Davis. Its avowed function according to its brochure is to develop and use "new technique" of conflict resolution.

It acts through delegates and specialists appointed, it seems by its Director (Davis) since apart from the two Swiss Trustees, there does not seem to be any supervisory or executive organ.

2. The delegates do not play a passive role because they may introduce reformulations of various aspects of the conflict and as they may help to clarify certain points; their input being "focussed on analysis and methods".
3. But it must not be thought that they play a passive role.

By exploring "common interests and super-ordinate (?) goals".

They can influence policy and public opinion, which it appears is the primary purpose for initiating in February 1986, a "specialised facilitation and agreement building process in South Africa where a "contact point" has been established at the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg.

4. It appears to me that the first exercise by this Foundation has been the South African scene.

Their literature is elusive about what they have done in the past eighteen months and the information about their funding and financial accountability is even more tenuous.

5. But the South African exercise also appears to go beyond what was promised in their original document.

The Foundation has undertaken to ask 28 leading constitutional and political science experts (whose names have not been divulged) to respond to a questionnaire identifying practical options for South Africa's future including possible forms of constitution.

6. This was followed by Davis writing to 150 South Africans (names not divulged) enquiring whether the Foundations "facilitation" and "agreement building" might be of assistance to South Africa.

The Present

- (1) Davis and his assistant have met a number of people in South Africa. He has also met the ANC earlier this year but after he had been to South Africa. Although the meetings are without prejudice in the sense that there is no commitment of support for the Foundation or with the process now being engaged in South Africa, it appears that a meeting with the Foundation has been construed as willingness to approve of this whole exercise concerning the future of apartheid.
- (2) From the replies I have received from at least two of the 28 "experts" who are to help formulate policy towards South Africa, it is not clear to them whether the group of researchers assembled by Davis in London will either "write up" the report or simply synthesise the replies from the experts. Davis is once again coy about the procedure to be followed.
- (3) The greatest danger, however, is in relation to what will happen in South Africa. According to the Foundation's document, Fresh Prospects for South Africa, The Delegates, it appears, will seek to obtain criticism from those who appear before the Delegates (and whole body and technical advisers) are expected to provide reactions to policy formulations (including 'potential elements of a new constitution') prepared by the Foundation itself.
- (4) This is extremely dangerous, participation in this process, apart from the security aspects, would result in being drawn into a web of policy recommendations over which the democratic forces in our country have absolutely no control.

Participation or willingness to talk to the Foundation provides an imprimature of legitimacy to this project which we are not justified in giving.

CONCLUSION

It is wholly appropriate to ask certain questions concerning the whole enterprise. These questions turn on the funding of what appears to be a very major enterprise.

The names of the 28 experts asked to provide initial views in the future of South Africa, and the relationship between these experts' responses and the report to be drawn up by the Delegates in South Africa.

In the absence of clear and satisfactory answers to these questions, it would appear to be extremely dangerous to have any truck with the Foundation either inside or outside South Africa. The success of this enterprise obviously depends in the representative nature of the responses.

This is anticipated by the Foundation. It would be folly to provide it.

KADER ASMAL discussed and approved by the Constitution Committee.

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