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PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA

TO TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON VIOLENCE FAX NO. 011 397 2211

ATTN.

FROM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

DATE 11.6.1993 TIME

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The following replaces the fax sent earlier this morning.

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Demokratiese Party
Democratic Party

10 June 1993

TO: TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON VIOLENCE
FAX NO: 011/397.2211
FROM: DEMOCRATIC PARTY
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YOUTH SERVICES CORPS

The Democratic Party's submission for the establishment of a Youth Services Corps follows:

It is considered that this is a matter of the utmost urgency, as the Corps should be in operation well before the election next year. Full use should therefore be made of existing facilities.

Paragraph 8 of Report Number Four of the Technical Committee on Violence speaks of "due regard to the experience of other countries." It is urged that we do not waste too much time in researching such information, as we have considerable experience available in this country. To give two examples:

Forty years ago the Johannesburg Municipality decided to build the township of Soweto. Mr A J Archibald was appointed Director of Housing and, starting from scratch with virtually no trained personnel and no plant or materials, he built up in a short space of time a unique organisation, numbering at its peak some 3000 men, capable of building 12 000 houses per year.

Between 1954 and 1969, when the scheme was stopped by the Government, 49 146 houses, 88 schools, 3 hostels accommodating 14 428 people, 7 administrative blocks, 9 communal halls, 1 public library, 1 bank, 9 TB clinics, 8 beer gardens had been built.

Mr Archibald lives in retirement in Port Alfred and is available to make his experience available.

Secondly, the Defence Force in the mid-eighties undertook a project in Kimberley, similar to that now being proposed, but on a much smaller scale. Under the codename Moltano, Coloured youths were trained as "assistant tradesmen" in all disciplines of building construction, e.g. bricklaying, concrete work, welding, motor mechanics, etc. Altogether 2000 young men completed the training before it was stopped as a result of complaints from the trade unions.

The objection raised was that these qualified young men were competing on the open market for jobs previously held by men who had undergone the prescribed training laid down by the trade unions. This is a factor which will have to be cleared with COSATU and other bodies before embarking on the envisaged Youth Services Corps.

Construction work undertaken by the Corps must be done in co-operation with the Government's formal national housing programme. Much of the work will, however, be undertaken in communities where unemployment is rife and where residents are too poor to pay for services rendered.

It is urged, therefore, that the work be done free of charge (including the building of simple core houses) and that every effort be made to obtain overseas finance for these projects. Obviously this will require careful negotiation with all interested parties in deciding on priorities.



LT. GEN. R.H. ROGERS M.P.

YOUTH SERVICES CORPSDESIRABILITY

The economy in South Africa is such that only 7% of school leavers can find employment in the formal sector. Many of the young people have had no education and the opportunity to do so may have been lost forever. As urbanisation continues to grow, more and more people are being forced to live in conditions of the utmost poverty and squalor. Family life has broken down, customs and cultural values have suffered and respect of authority no longer exists. The prevailing atmosphere is one of despair and this environment is a breeding ground for crime and violence.

It will be many years before the economy improves sufficiently to provide jobs for all, and it will take even longer before these people can afford to pay for improvements in their standards of living. Yet the country owes its young not only a better future, but a better present.

Another important factor is that while the reform process, despite hiccups along the way, has progressed to the point where a tentative election date has been agreed upon, nothing has yet happened at grass roots level to reflect this progress.

Finally, it is essential, if the coming election is to be declared free and fair, that the run-up to the election and the election itself be relatively free from violence. Every possible preventative measure must be taken to ensure this.

Special steps are therefore required to accelerate the acquisition of jobs, to re-instill a sense of pride, of dignity and of purpose in the youth, to decrease the level of violence in the townships and to raise the quality of life of our very poor.

To this end, the establishment of a voluntary Youth Services Corps is proposed, as a matter of urgency.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Corps will be -

- a) To provide employment for our unemployed youth by recruiting them to serve voluntarily for one or two years. Preference should be given to those living in violence-torn areas.

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- b) To provide recruits with a basic academic and vocational training so as to enable them to be usefully employed in the Corps and to be in a better position to find employment on completion of their service.
- c) To instill a measure of discipline while serving.
- d) To instill in its members a sense of belonging, a sense of pride and dignity, a sense of contributing to the formation of the new South Africa.
- e) To provide normal community services, such as sports fields, water, sewerage, drainage, streets and perhaps electricity in squatter townships.
- f) The building and manning of clinics.
- g) The building of simple houses, the conversion of hostels and the building of administration buildings and schools.
- h) To provide the opportunity for young entrepreneurs to take the project further and create more employment.

ORGANISATION

It is suggested that the Corps will operate under the auspices of the Peace Committee, who will, after consultation with the National Economic Forum and youth organisations, appoint a Management Committee consisting of

- a) A Chairperson
- b) Members who have wide experience and knowledge of development projects
- c) Members who have an intimate knowledge of the requirements of the disadvantaged communities.

A central administrative headquarters will be established which will be responsible for deciding on the projects to be undertaken, doing the design work and quantity surveying and raising the necessary finance.

Regional sub-units will be established and Regional Directors appointed. Projects will be undertaken on a regional basis.

Organisations such as the S.A. Defence Force, who are capable of providing accommodation and training facilities, instructional personnel and the necessary construction equipment, will be engaged on an agency basis to train the personnel and to

execute all projects.

Whilst it is realised that making use of the Defence Force is a sensitive issue, it must be borne in mind that it is an organisation that possesses the infrastructure, the equipment and the expertise to undertake such a project. Its Engineering Corps has the technical personnel and equipment required and the Medical Corps can provide the training for clinic personnel. Moreover, it has had experience in this type of project. It is emphasised that it will be employed by the Management Board on an agency basis.

The Management Board will be financially accountable to the Minister of Home Affairs and audited accounts are to be submitted annually.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Basic conditions of service will be as follows:-

- a) Volunteers must be between the ages of 17 and 30.
- b) They must commit themselves to serve for a period of 1 or 2 years.
- c) Recruits will be provided with accommodation, food and a uniform of Youth Services Corps design.
- d) They will be paid a modest commencing salary of R350 per month. Depending on the results of training courses and promotions within the Corps, this will be increased with time.

FINANCES

Funds to cover the running costs of the Corps should come from one or all of the government departments which will benefit from the activities of the Corps, viz. Manpower, Housing, Health, Local Government and National Education. In addition, an appeal must be made to suitable and sympathetic organisations overseas.

Funding of each project undertaken must also be provided by the government but, because of the immense backlog of work which has to be undertaken and the nature and the objectives of the Youth Services Corps, a substantial amount of the required finance will, hopefully, be forthcoming from overseas sources.

LT. GEN R.H. ROGERS M.P.

10TH JUNE, 1993

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