

Eastern Cape ANC: Ad boycott? What boycott?

The ANC in the Eastern Cape has disavowed a proposal to boycott 'propaganda' paper...



The Herald perhaps (and others, perhaps) - to be punished for being critical?

African National Congress (ANC) Eastern Cape and Nelson Mandela Bay bosses have distanced themselves from a leaked strategy proposal to pull advertising from "propagandist" newspapers such as Port Elizabeth-based *The Herald*.

While provincial secretary Oscar Mabuyane and Nelson Mandela Bay regional secretary Zandisile Qupe both confirmed a report on a regional strategy did exist, they said the one leaked to *The Herald*, *Business Day*'s sister paper, was "distorted".

The leaked report recommended that the Nelson Mandela Bay municipality "must consciously cease all its business with the local newspapers that feed the propagandist negative publicity about the ANC".

It also said: "The ANC with the municipality must actively assist pro-ANC local newspapers to develop and use same as alternative newspapers to replace advertising in publications such as *The Herald*."

Dwindling support

A strategy to improve support for the party was developed before President Jacob Zuma's shock disbanding of the regional leadership last month.

It followed an instruction from ANC deputy secretary-general Jessie Duarte to Nelson Mandela Bay regional and branch

leaders to embark on a massive recruitment drive to improve the ANC's dwindling membership and revive the party.

Qupe said the authentic turnaround strategy report for the metro was presented to the provincial executive committee on December 14 and was being perused by the national executive committee (NEC).

The disbanding of the regional leadership is expected to be finalised after the ANC's annual January 8 anniversary statement, to be delivered in Cape Town on Saturday, with a regional task team being named.

There is a plan, but...

Mabuyane said: "The plan you have is a distorted plan, it's not the original plan...

"The views that are mentioned in the plan you have - that the ANC must stop working with *The Herald* - has no basis. We distance ourselves from the leaked documents.

"There is a plan that still has to be presented to, and discussed by, the NEC before it becomes an ANC strategy."

About the leaked report Qupe, who remains regional secretary until the regional task team is announced, said: "Nowhere in our documents can we write the name of *The Herald*. As the person in charge of writing and coordinating the reports, nowhere was *The Herald* mentioned.

"We wrote about improving communication to the public... We could not isolate *The Herald* when so many other newspapers operate in the region and province that report on what takes place in the metro."

Qupe said that before 2012, the party felt that *The Herald* had ignored the ANC's events and campaigns. "Things have since changed since 2012 and we are able to communicate with you all, and you will send reporters to our campaigns. Therefore, we cannot pick on *The Herald*.

"Everybody is now taking advantage of the situation (with the regional leadership)... They wanted to give you a juicy story for the New Year."

Qupe said the regional executive committee would remain intact until a new task team was announced.

Source: *Business Day*, via I-Net Bridge

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