Year of fire, year of ash. The Soweto revolt: roots of a revolution?


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# Year of fire, year of ash. The Soweto revolt: roots of a revolution?

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Baruch Hirson
Zed Press, 57 Caledonian Road, London NI 9DN,

This book is dedicated to all political prisoners held in South Africa, and in particular to those held at Pretoria Local Prison

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List of Abbreviations
AAC All African Convention
AAC Anglo-American Corporation
ABCFM American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
ACROM Anti-CRC Committee
ADP African Democratic Party
AEM African Education Movement
AFRO Anti-CRC Front
AICA African Independent Churches Association
Anti-CAD Anti-Coloured Affairs Department ANC African National Congress *
ASSECA Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People
ATASA African Teachers Association of South Africa
BAWU Black Allied Workers Union
BCP Black Community Programmes
BIC Bantu Investment Corporation
BOSS Bureau of State Security
BPA Black Parents Association
BFC Black Peoples Convention
BWC Black Workers Council
BWP Black Workers Project
BYCA Black Youth Cultural Association
BYO Border Youth Organization
CFS Committee for Fairness in Sport
CI Christian Institute
CIS Counter Information Service
CNE Christian National Education
CPRC Coloured Persons Representative Council
CRC See CPRC
CYL Congress Youth League
FRELIMO Front for the Liberation of Mozambique IDAMASA Inter-Denominational African Miniatiera Association

HE Institute for Industrial Education
JASCO Junior African Students Congress
LAY League of African Youth
LEARN Let Every African Learn
MPLA Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NAYO  National Youth Organisation
NEUM  Non-European Unity Movement
NUSAS  National Union of South African Students
NYO  Natal Youth Organisation
OFS  Orange Free State
PAC  Pan-Africanist Congress
PUTCO  Public Utility Transport Corporation
SABRA  South African Bureau of Racial Affairs
SACP  South African Communist Party
SACTU  South African Congress of Trade Unions
SAD  Society for African Development
SAFO  South African Freedom Organisation
SAIC  South African Indian Congress
SAIC  South African Indian Council
SANA  South African News Agency
SAPPI  South African Pulp and Paper Industries
SASM  South African Students Movement
SASO  South African Students Organisation
SOYA  Society of Young Africa
SPROCAS  Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society
SRC  Students Representative Council
SRRSA  Survey of Race Relations in South Africa
SSRC  Soweto Students Representative Council
SWANLA  South West African Native Labour Association
SWAPO  South West African Peoples Organisation
TEACH  Teach Every African Child
TLSA  Teachers League of South Africa
TRYO  Transvaal Youth Organisation
TUCSA  Trade Union Council of South Africa
UBC  Urban Bantu Council
UsJ  Union of Black Journalists
UCT  University of Cape Town
UTp  Urban Training Project
UWC  University of the Western Cape
WCY0  Western Cape Youth Organisation
YARM  Young African Religious Movement
ZETA  Zulu Education and Teaching Assistance

Nineteen Seventy-Six
Go nineteen seventy-six We need you no more Never come again We ache inside,
Good friends we have Lost.
Nineteen seventy-six You stand accused of deaths
Imprisonments Exiles
And detentions. You lost the battle You were not revolutionary Enough We do not boast about you Year of fire, year of ash, Oupa Thando Mthimkulu

Foreword
The story of the Soweto Revolt has in the first instance to tell what happened, and how. And because all revolts have their origin in events, both remote and recent, I am indebted to the many sources from which I was able to borrow books, pamphlets and documents, There would have been little point in even commencing this study if it had not been for the International University Exchange Fund's distribution of documents, reprinted in Geneva after being banned in South Africa. Added to the material collected together in the annual Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, and the four annual Black Reviews, from 1972 through to 1977, the events of the 970 began to unfold.
Documents, manifestos, leaflets and copies of underground newsletters collected together in South Africa, and photocopied so that they came available in Britain, allowed me to cross-check some of the stoties, and fill in some of the more obvious gaps, For these collections, I must thank the International Defence and Aid Fund, Counter Information Service, the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, and the Centre for Southern African Studies at the University of York. To Tom Lodge, IBrinn Willun, and others who willingly lent me copies of documents, I am equally grateful.
To tell the story, is little enough. Events i) not occur fortuitously, nor are they preordained. Real live people have made the history recounted here, and even if events unfolded against their personal wishes, it is their actions which have to be understood. This was in many ways a most remarkable story. Youth at schools throughout the country, many of themm young children, raised the banner of revolt and called on the workers, their parents, to disrupt the entire economy. And their parents listened. School children cannot, by themselves, topple a strong intransigent regime. But few would have dared to believe in June 1976 that the Revolt could last for more than a few weeks. Yet it did; it continued for well over a year and in the process altered the history of the country irrevocably, Understanding these events was the task of the author, and I am more than aware of the shortcomings in the answers I give to many of the questions raised by the events of Soweto. The deficiencies in the book would have been far more serious if it had not been for the criticism of the earlier chapters by May Katzen, John Laredo, and Allen Ilirson. The chapter on the actual events

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in Soweto itself came to life after I had discussed the material with Nick Barker, and my ideas on Black Consciousness took final shape only after Shula Marks and her students at the School of Oriental and African Studiet demanded more answers of me than I could provide at the time.
Eventually the task of editing this book rested on the never.tiring work of Robert Molteno. It is due to his critical appraisal that at least some of the grosser errors and oversimplifications were spotted and removed. It need hardly be added that I alone am responsible for some of the opinions that I obstinately held to despite the critical comments of all those who suggested further changes.

I am grateful to Thando Mthimkulu for permission to reprint his poem, and for the use of the last line as the title of this book. I must also thank Peter Magubane and the International Defence and Aid Fund for allowing nW to use the picture that appears on the cover, Allen Hirson for drawing the maps for the book, and Bella Peters for typing the first draft of this study.

Finally it must be said that this book is by no means impartial. To write a book about South Africa, and in particular, a book about the Revolt of the 1970s, demands that the author take sides. That, indeed, is not difficult. There can be no doubt about the justice of the demands that lay behind the Revolt. But that does not mean that this book is a defence of one particular position. The telling of the story also discloses the forces at work in that society, and I have used the material available to me critically and without favour. The cause of the South African revolution requires no special pleading, no false argument, and no distortion of what was said or done. If in the process I have appeared to be harsh, and hyper-critical of some persons or organisations, it is because I believe that only a real understanding of 1976 will help the forces of socialism and liberation achieve the free Azania that the youth of Soweto so passionately called for in the days that followed 16 June, 1976.

Baruch Hitson
Bradford and London
1977-78.

Introduction
As I have told the South African public time and time again, race relations in this country have deteriorated to the extent that there will no longer be any possible reconciliation between black and white. What is happening is, in fact, a projection of black anger against the racist regime. This anger is directed at anything that is connected with the system and the government. It is not a question of the insistence on the Afrikaans language as the mode of instruction for black schoolchildren. The burning of the offices belonging to the government administration - the beerhalls, administration offices, post offices, administration-run buses and the like - should be enough for the people to realise this point. It has got nothing to do with Pandalism ... it is black anger against white domination. Winnie Mautidla Interviewed by Eric Abroham, after 16th June 1976.

Black anger against white domination has never been far below the surface in South Africa. In the countryside, on the farms, and in the towns, Africans have voiced their protests, organised campaigns, and used every means available to
them in order to secure some concessions from the white ruling class. At every turn they were met by an intransient minority which meant to maintain its control -- by political hegemony, by economic subordination, by social segregation, by rules and regulations, and ultimately by brute force.
The anger has often been muted. The forms of protest have been 'peaceful'. The black population has shown a measure of self-control which belied the deep hatred of endless humiliation felt by every man, woman and child, In all the strikes, the boycotts, the demonstrations, and local and national campaigns, leaders urged restraint and the police answered with baton charges, or with armoured cars, teargas and bullets.
The violence, all too often, turned inwards, and in the black townships that bordered the allowhito towns, groups of t.sormis (as the delinquents were called)' terrorised the population. The seething anger, fostered by poverty and frustration, exacted its toll of injured, mutilated and murdered from the oppressed black population itself,
Soweto, a town that is not to be found on most maps, has been the focus of much violence for several decades now. Its population of 1.3 million serves the half million white, (who constitute the 'official' population of Johannesburg) as labourers in their homes, shops and factories. By all accounts this town that is not a town, this area known to the world by the

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acronym Soweto (South West Township) is one of tile most violent region on earth. One year before Soweto erupted ill revolt tile nwslpap'r Of the students of the University of the Witwatersrand repoited that:
... In the last year there was a 100 per cent increase in crimes ol violerice:
854 murders; 92 culpable homicides; 1,828 rapes; 7jv82 wsisults with intent to do grievous bodily harm,
Four hundred thousand people in Sowe to do not thave hmnts., The streets and the eaves of the churches are their shelter, The ltaces and bodies of many Soweto people are scarved; the gun is quick and the kifut i0 silent.2
The same black fury has been turned against whites. Not only ill acts of crime - the houses of white Johannesburg are renowned for their rosebushes and for their burglar-proofing! - but through acts of violence directed against any individual seen to be harming members of the township population. There is a long history of rioting following motor, train or bus accidents in which Africans have been injured or killed. Tile fury of the crowd that collected was directed against persons who were present, or passing tile scene. Voluble fury changed to stone throwing and tile destruction t' property. The crowd would metamorphose into a seething furious mass that sought revenge.
This violence was endemic in a country where local COmMUnitieR lived under intolerable conditions. There was always a deep sense of frustration and alienation inside the townships or segregated areas of the hig 1than conurbations.
The riots served to bring a section of tile colmiiltunity together, to fuse disparate individuals into a collectivity which rose up against litesanding wrongs.
When the riot was protracted - as it was in 1976 - the crowd was not static. Factions emerged and formulated new objectives. There was not one crowd, but an ever-changing mass of people who formed and reformed themselves as they sought a way to change social conditions.

To describe the participants and their groups as being 'ethnic' or 'racial', as many white South Africans do, does not help to explain the aspirations of such people or the causes of events. It only lides the giar's inequalities in the society and conceals the poverty of the rioter. Such descriptions, furthermore, distract attention from the prolonged campaigns of hatred by the local and national (white) press which often preceded African attacks on minority communities. An openly anti-Indian campaign in the press preveted the Durban riots of 1949. Direct police intervention and police direction accompanied the 'tribal' assaults during the Evaton bus hycott in 1956. Open police incitement led to attacks on Soweto residents by Zulu hostel dwellers in 1976.

When apologists for the system found that descriptions of the rioters in terms of 'race' or 'ethnicity' were not convincing, they tried another ruse.

Introduction
They claimed that the events were (file to 'criminal die ents' mnd to township tsotsis. They ignored what has long been a marked feature of periods of high political activity in the townships of South Africa, namely a corresponding sharp drop in criminal activity. This decline in criminality was also a marked feature of the events of 1976 when the initial riots were transformed into a prolonged revolt against the white administration.

It was necessary for the police and the regime to mask the new antagonisms that emerged in the townships. When the youth turned against members of the township advisory council (the Urban Bantu Council or UBC), or against African businessmen and some of the priests, the authorities blamed the tsotsis; when the youth destroyed the heerhalLs and bottle stores, again it was the tsotsis who were to blame; and when plain clothes police shot at children, tsotsis were blamed again. Yet never once did any of these tsotsis shoot at the police, or indeed at any white. Not one of the slanderers, who glibly accused blacks of shooting their fellows in the townships, find it necessary to comment on this anomaly.

Race Riots or Class War?
The revolt, presented to the world by the media as a colour clash, was, in fact, far more than a 'race war'. The words used in the past had changed their meanings by 1976. The word 'black' was itself diluted and extended. During the 1970's the young men and women who formed the Black Consciousness Movement recruited not only Africans, but also Coloured and Indian students and intellectuals. During the 1976 Revolt the Coloured students of Cape Town, both from the (Coloured) University of the Western Cape and from the secondary schools joined their African peers in demonstrations, and faced police terror together with them. In the African townships there were also indications that the Revolt transcended colour considerations. In Soweto there were black policemen...
who were as trigger-happy as their white counterparts; there were also
government collaborators in the black townships who threatened the lives of
leading members of the Black Parents Association; there were black informers
who worked with the police; there were Chiefs who aimed to divert the struggle
and stop the school boycott; and there was an alliance between members of the
Urban Bantu Council, the police, and tribal leaders which was directed at
suppressing the Revolt; and, ultimately, there was the use of migrant labourers
against the youth. Armed, directed, and instructed by the police, these men were
turned loose on the youth of Soweto, and in Cape Town, shebeen (pub) owners used migrant labourers to protect their premises. The result was
widespread maiming, murder, and destruction of property.

Despite this evidence of cooperation by part of the African petty
bourgeoisie and others with the government, there was one indubitable fact. The
Revolt did express itself in terms of 'black anger' which did in fact express a basic
truth about South African relationships. Capital and finance

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are almost exclusively under white control. Industry and commerce are almost
entirely owned and managed by Whites. Parliament and all government
institutions are reserved for Whites, and all the major bodies of the state are either
exclusively manned by, or controlled by, white personnel. The conjunction of
economic and political control and white domination does divide the population
across the colour-line. Those Blacks who sought alliance with the Whites
naturally moved away from their black compatriots and allied themselves to the
ruling group. Certain others were cajoled or threatened, bribed, driven - or just
duped - into buttressing the state structures and using their brawn-power to break
black opposition.

Because most white workers, irrespective of their role in production, sided so
overwhelmingly with the white ruling class, class divisions were concealed, and
racial separation and division appeared as the predominant social problem. The
economic crisis of 1975, in part a result of the depression in West and the fall
in the price of gold, and in part a manifestation of the crisis in South African
capitalism, only cemented the alliance of white workers and the ruling class. The
black communities found few friends amongst the Whites in the aftermath of the
clash of June 16, 1976, Those Whites who demonstrated sympathy with the youth
of Soweto were confined to a handful of intellectuals who came mainly from the
middle class; or from a group of committed Christians who had established some
ties with the groups that constituted the Black Consciousness Movement.

Capitalist production in South Africa owes its success to the availability of a
regimented cheap labour force. In the vast rural slums, known as Reserves, the
women and children, the aged, the sick and the disabled eke out a bare existence.
All rely on the remittances of their menfolk in the towns. The accommodation in
townships, in hostels, or in compounds (barracks) is like wise organised in order
to depress African wage levels. At the same time, the vast urban slums, of which
Soweto is by far the largest, were planned in order to ensure complete police and
military control, were the administrative system ever to be challenged.
The government also sought to control more effectively the vast conurbations that grew up on the borders of the 'white' towns by dividing the townships, the hostels, the compounds and all the subsidiary institutions (like schools and colleges) into segmented 'tribal' regions. It also divided Africans from Coloureds, and both of these from Indians, by setting up residential 'Group Areas' (each being reserved for one 'race'). The map of South Africa was drawn and redrawn in order to seal off these communities, and ensure their separation from one another.

For much of the time the government has, in fact, been able to use its vast administrative machinery (reinforced by massive police surveillance) to keep opposition under control. Time and again small groups, organised by those movements in exile, were uncovered and smashed. Political organisations in the townships were not allowed to develop, following the shootings in Sharpeville and Langa in 1960, and the banning of the two national liberation movements (the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress),

Introduction

It was only with great difficulty that political groups emerged at it later date, and it is some of these which will be discussed in this book.

The 1960s: from Quiescence to Resistance

Black anger seemed subdued through the sixties, Draconian legislation, constant police surveillance and the many political trials of the 1960's cowed the people. Some found solace in drink, and it was the feeling that so many adults had surrendered the struggle for liberation and turned to the bottle that led to the onslaught on bottle stores and beerhalls in 1970.

Not all sought to escape. Although there were no effective open political organisations for them to join, and no industrial organisations to provide a lead, some workers were still determined to take action in order to secure higher wages. These working men and women participated in the widespread (largely illegal) strikes of the early seventies. This strike wave was the main indication of an end to nearly a decade of political inertia. No account of the Soweto Revolt call ignore the working class struggles of neighboring Namibia or of Natal and the Witwatersrand. These too expressed 'black anger', but very different from that of the black anger which finally erupted in Soweto. It was the anger that a working class determined to secure better living conditions, and the workers needed to the philosophy of 'blackness' to instruct them. They knew the price of discrimination, and they sought redress from those who could pay the owners, the industrialists, and the business.

Out of this scene of industrial stirring came the Black Consciousness Movement. Its leaders spoke of black awareness and of black identity, and this was a language which appealed particularly to students and intellectuals. There it might have rested or if it even been stilled had it not been for two crucial factors. Firstly, the organisations were allowed to exist, and even encouraged, by members of the administration who were blinded by their own rhetoric into believing that this movement fitted into the framework of apartheid policy. The Black Peoples Convention (BPI, all umbrella organisation that embraced unions...
of journalists, students, artists, and a federation of black women, was more usually known as the Black Consciousness Movement, and given initial sanction. Secondly, the main constituent of this was the South African Students Organisation (SASO), which was allowed to organise (or was tolerated initially) on the black campuses.

Students in Revolt

SASO was the latest of a series of organisations that set out to organise black university students, as such it was the inheritor of a long tradition of student struggles that started first in the boarding schools of the Eastern Cape, continued in boarding schools and colleges of education in the Cape Province and Natal, and eventually embraced the University colleges and every school in the country. These struggles in the schools and colleges were not integrated into the activities of the national liberation movement before 1948. Their strikes were neither organised nor encouraged, and received scant attention. Although it is possible to trace the link between earlier struggles and the students' revolt in the 1970s, the continuity was barely recognised by the new leaders in SASO and in the townships. It is not even possible to find traces of any formal black students' organisation in the schools before the late sixties. Nonetheless, conflict situations developed year after year and erupted in periodic boycotts, strikes, and arson.

When, eventually, an independent black university organisation was formed in the late sixties, it immediately provided political direction and stepped into the vacuum left by the banning of the ANC and PAC in 1960. The new student body, SASO, provided the leading cadres for the BPC, and helped create the atmosphere which led to the 1976 confrontation in Soweto.

The Uprising of June 1976

Conflicts on the campuses in the seventies coincided with a contraction of the country's economy and with momentous events on the northern borders of the country. The fighting in Namibia, the collapse of the Portuguese army in Mozambique, the move to independence in Angola and the resumption of guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) all influenced the youth of South Africa (or Azania, as they renamed the country). The BPC generally, and SASO groups in the universities, used more militant language. They now talked of liberation, and of independence; they defied a government ban on meetings, and when arrested were defiant in court.

When the government finally took steps to change the language of instruction of higher primary and secondary school students in 1975, the stage was set for a massive confrontation. The factors sketched above were by no means independent of each other. The strains in the South African economy, the wave of strikes, the new military situation, the resurgence of African political consciousness, and the rapidly altering position in the black schools, were all interconnected.

The only non-tribal political organisation that was able to operate openly inside South Africa was the Black Peoples Convention. Yet from its inception in 1972 the difficulties it faced were insuperable. The South African state was powerful,
its army undefeated and unshakably loyal to the regime. The police force was well trained and supported by a large body of informers in the townships - and it had infiltrated the new organisations, Above all, the regime had the support of the Western powers and even seemed to be essential to America and Great Britain in securing a 'peaceful' solution to the Zimbabwean conflict.

Introduction
The young leaders of SASO and of the BIC were inexperienced. Their social base was confined (at least as of 1975) to the small groups of intellectuals in the universities, some clerics, journalists, artists, and the liberal professions. Furthermore, their philosophy of black consciousness turned them away from an analysis of the nature of the South African state. They seemed to respond with the heart rather than with the mind. They were able to reflect the black anger of the townships - but were unable to offer a viable political strategy.

At times, in the months and even weeks before June 16, the students in SASO seemed to be expecting a confrontation with the forces of the government. They spoke courageously of the coming struggle but made no provision for the conflict. Even when their leaders were banned or arrested there did not seem to be an awareness of the tasks that faced them and when, finally, the police turned their guns on the pupils of Soweto schools and shot to kill, there were no plans, no ideas on what should be done. Black anger was all that was left; and in the absence of organisation, ideology or strategy, it was black anger which answered the machine guns with bricks and stones.

The people of Soweto had to learn with a minimum of guidance, and they responded with a heroism that has made Soweto an international symbol of resistance to tyranny. Young leaders appeared month after month to voice the aspirations of the school students and if they were not able to formulate a full programme for their people, the fault was not theirs. A programme should have been formulated by the older leaders and that they had failed to do. In the event, the youth fought on as best they could and they surpassed all expectations. Despite all the criticisms that can be levelled against the leaders of the school pupils, the revolt they led in 1976-77 has altered the nature of politics in South Africa. Firstly it brought to a precipitate end all attempts by the South African ruling class to establish friendly relations with the leaders of some African states, and it has made some Western powers reconsider the viability of the white National Party leaders as their best allies on the subcontinent,

Secondly it marked the end of undisputed white rule, and demonstrated the ability of the black population to challenge the control of the ruling class.

In every major urban centre and in villages in the Reserves, the youth marched, demonstrated, closed schools, stopped transport and, on several occasions, brought the entire economy to a halt.

The youth showed an ingenuity that their parents had been unable to achieve. They occupied city centres. they closed alcohol outlets, they stopped Christmas festivities. At their command the schools were closed, the exam. inations were boycotted, and the teachers resigned. They forced the resign. nation of the Soweto Urban Bantu Council and the Bantu School Boards both long
castigated as puppets of the regime. They were even able to prevent the immediate implementation of a rent rise in 1977 ani, in the many incidents that filled those crowded days that followed the first shootings of 16 June 1976, they were able to show South Africa and the world that there was the will and the determination to end the apartheid system.

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References
Note: References to the Introduction have by and large not been provided. Evidence for all assertions will be found in the text when the event are described in greater detail.
1. See Glossary for words that are commonly used in South Africa,
2. This extract, taken from the Wit Student, 16 June 1975, was reprinted in an International University Exchange Fund bulletin after appearing in the South African Outlook,
3. The words used represent different phases in the struggle of an oppressed people. Riots are acts of violence against individuals or a community in order to redress some wrong. Revolts are risings against the local or national authority, usually to redress some wrong or secure some changes in the law. Revolutions occur when riots and revolts (or any other mass action) are aimed at changing the structure of a given society. The transition from riot or revolt to revolution can occur in the midst of a struggle, but such a transition usually involves a marked change in consciousness and the acceptance of an ideology.
4. The South African population in the mid-1970's consisted of approximately 4.3 million Whites, 2.4 million Coloureds, 0.75 million Indians, and over 18 million Africans.

PART 1
From School Strikes to Black Consciousness
1. The Black Schools:
1979-1954
Schools: Segregated and Unequal
In 1971, every white school child in the Transvaal was given an illustrated volume to 'commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Republic of South Africa'. On the subject of education the authors of the book declared:
The cultural and spiritual developmental level of a nation can with a fair amount of certainty be ascertained from the measure of importance the nation concerned attaches to the education of its children. Only by developing the mental and spiritual resources of the nation to their maximum potential, can the need of the modern state for fully trained leaders, capable executives, industrialists with vision, dedicated teachers, scientists, engineers and skilled personnel be properly supplied. The subject of education was then explored in terms of facilities provideJ. buildings and equipment used:
Not only has the equipment to be suitable with a view to efficient
teaching, but the physical well being of the pupils must be taken into
consideration.  

This was a state publication designed to instil patriotic fervor in the
breast of every white child. It was the white child’s well being that was being
discussed, and the white child’s future as leader, executive, industrialist or
professional that was being described. It was also a self-congratulatory book+ and
the administration was satisfied with the role it played in providing facilities for
the schools. Accompanied by lavish illustrations there were eulogistic
descriptions of library facilities, school equipment and sports grounds, and also of
teacher training, of psychological and guidance serviceo. and of educational tours.
The claims made in this commemorative volume do not stand serious
scrutiny. The educational system (for Whites) had serious defects which had been
debated openly for many decades. The standards in many of the schoo

The Black Schools, 1799-1954
were low, the social sciences were designed to show the superiority of the Whites,
and the natural science courses were antiquated in content. With all their
blemishes, the white schools were however lavishly equipped, and the cost of
educating each pupil was high,
If the commemorative volume had set out to describe the conditions of all
sections of the population, a very different publication would have been
necessary. In the realm of education alone, it would have had to be shown that the
conditions of the vast majority of the youth were very different from those of the
Whites. The Transvaal Province was responsible for financing and directing the
education of all Whites below University level. And being the area of greatest
population density, the Province catered for 52 per cent of the white youth of the
country: that is, some 400,000.
The responsibility for African education, on the other hand, had been placed in
the hands of the central Department of Bantu Administration and Education since
1954. Unlike the Whites, for whom education was compulsory, African youth had
great difficulty in obtaining education, and what they were given was grossly
inferior. Whereas every white child would complete primary school, and one
quarter would complete the secondary school in 1969 (the date at about which the
commemorative volume was being written),3 70 per cent of all African children
who found a place in the schools would leave after four or less years of
attendance. Less than four per cent would enter secondary school, and few of
these would complete the five year course.
Some comparative statistics indicate the disparities in the schooling of Whites and
Africans. In 1969 there were 810,490 white youth at school, and the total cost of
their education was R241,600,000 (or £120.8 million). In the same year 2,400,0(K)
African children were at school. The cost of their schooling, tgether with the cost
of the infinitely more expensive University education, was R46,000,0(X) (£23
million).4 In the Transvaal that year, when white primary and secondary
education cost R88,000,000, the estimated cost per student for the year at school
was: primary level  R 175; secondary level
- R234; vocational and agricultural high school . R350; and teacher training
- R589.5 The Minister of Bantu Education stated that the expenditure on each
African child in 1969 was: primary level - R1 3.55; secondary level R55.6 African
youth were not presented with the commemorative volume in 1971.
Since the mid-fifties African education has been directed by the Department of
Bantu Affairs and Development (it department which changed its name, but not
its function over the years). This lioa, however, not always been the case,
First Steps in the Cape
African education was not really required before the turn of the nineteenth
century, The African people were still unconquered, and were not yet

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
incorporated into the Cape economy and the schools were open to the children of
freed slaves, or children of colour who had the opportunity of attending.
The first school built specifically for African children was established, in 1799,
ear the present site of Kingwilliamstown, by Dr. JT. van der Kemp of the
London Missionary Society. It was 21 years before other missionary bodies
followed suit, and established schools for Africans in the Eastern Cape. Some
missionaries moved further afield and built schools in the uncolonised interior,
moving into Bechuanaland, Basutoland and the Transvaal.
The need for further educational facilities was apparently first felt after the freeing
of the slaves in 1834. To cope with the children who were turned free with their
parents more schools were required because of 'the need to extend social
discipline over the new members of a free society'. Through the nineteenth
century and during the first quarter of the twentieth century African schooling was
provided almost exclusively by the missionary societies. The missions were given
land, but they provided the buildings, the teachers and most of the funds. Only a
small portion of the expenses incurred, and usually only the salaries of staff, was
provided by government grants (or after 1910, by Provincial Councils).
The first government grants to mission schools, of from £15 to £30 per year, were
only provided after 1841, and were exclusively appropriated for the 'support of
the teacher or teachers'. It was only after that date that the number of schools
increased considerably.
In one respect the colonial governments were bountiful. Land was available for
the taking after the expulsion of the Africans, and mission stations were given
extensive lands by the Governors on which to establish their schools, hospitals,
colleges, as well as farms and orchards. The Glasgow Missionary Society, for
example, received a grant of some 1,400 acres just inland front East London, and
on this they eventually built the Lovedale school complex. The schools also
needed state patronage and assistance which was to comne with the appointment
of Sir George Grey as Governor of the Cape from 1854 to 1861. Grey's task, as he
conceived it, was to integrate the African peoples into the economy of the Cape,
and he sought a solution by means of which'
The Natives are to become useful servants, consumers of our goods,
contributers to our revenue, in short, a source of strength anti wealth to
this Colony, such as Providence designed them to be,9
To assist Providence's design, Grey meant to break the power of the chiefs and educate a new class of Africans. Grey brought with him the ideas on education then prevalent in Great Britain. Although he wanted an educated minority, he maintained that Cape schooling was too bookish, and proposed that the missionaries pay more attention to manual education. What was said by a Justice of the Peace in Britain in 1807 seemed apposite to the administration in the Cape in the 1850's:

The Black Schools, 1799.1954
It is doubtless desirable that the poor should be generally instructed in reading, if it were only for tile best of purposes - that they may read the Scriptures. As to writing and arithmetic, it may be apprehended that such a degree of knowledge would produce in them a disrelish for the laborious occupations of life.10

Grey believed that the missionaries could provide the education he envisaged for tie Blacks He consequently met members of tile Glasgow Missionary Society (later a branch of tile Free Church of Scotland) who had already established an elementary school at Lovedale near Alice in the Eastern Cape. As a result of these discussions the course of Cape educational policy for the nineteenth century was laid down: elementary instruction in literacy plus manual instruction for the majority of pupils, and a higher level of education for a small elite.

Lovedale opened an industrial department and tuition was also designed to: give higher education to a portion of the native youths, to raise up among them what might be called an educated class, from which might be selected teachers of the young, catechists, evangelists and ultimately even fullyqualified preachers of the gospel! Grey also persuaded tile Rev. John Ayliff to start an industrial school at Hlealdtown, near Lovedale, and under took to Support and subsidize missionary institutions that provided such training." Henceforth the missionaries were to provide nearly all African education, but the government exercised overall control by virtue of its grant of funds. The government aimed in its policy at a disciplined population that would become an industrious workforce.

By 1865 there were 2,827 African pupils enrolled in the mission schools and by 1885 the number had increased to 15s.S6. Most of tile schools however: being short of funds, ill-equipped, with inadequately trained and paid teachers and children often undr-fed, wverted and staying too short a time to benctit gave the mere mmatterins of elenirmary letters and touched only a fraction of tile Child population. 14

Reports by successive Superintendnts Gneral rtr Fdtlalior il tile Cape, on the standard tf eduvttion in moslt of the chools, wele ieatiling In 1862 Dr. langham Dale found that only five per cent of putllh in these schools could read, and few of the leachers had pairwd Standard 4 ); Dale's successor, Sir Thuona Muir found that 60 per cent of all African children at school did not reach Standard I In 1882, Donald Ri ilh Inspector General, said that half of the 420 schooli in Kaffrraria (eastern Frontier area), Basutoland and the Calm could be closed without loss to education.15
Year of Fire, Year of Ash
Lovedale, Healdtown, St. Matthews (at Keiskama in the Ciskei) and a few other schools were exceptions in being able to produce trained craftsmen and youth who completed Standards 3, 4, and even 5. Many of the other institutions were little more than disciplinary centres where youth were kept occupied. Dr. Dale explained educational policy as follows:
the schools are hostages for peace, and if for that reason only £12,000 a year is given to schools in the Transkei, Tembuland and Griqualand, the amount is well spent; but that is not the only reason - to lift the Aborigines gradually, as circumstances permit, to the platform of civilised and industrial life is the great object of the educational vote.16

In 1865 the Cape Education Act made provision for three types of school: public schools, mission schools and Native schools. The Native schools were the only segregated institutions and few provided more than elementary classes. At the same time there was pressure on the mission schools to provide more manual instruction. In her book on the role of the missionaries Nosipho Majeka was scathing about government policy. She quotes Dr. Longhran Dale in 1861: 'What the department (of Education) wants, is to make all the principal day-schools places of manual instruction.' Majeka continues, In tile following year his successor, Dr. Muir is complaining that education for Africans is "too bookish and unpractical"." It is hard to conceive schools that do not succeed in training children to read as being 'bookish'. The education was certainly unpractical, but not in the sense that Dr. Muir meant. Manual training was, in most schools, menial labour and a source of much discontent. In 1920 Dr. D.D.T. Jahavu, a teacher in the mission schools, and later a professor at Fort Hare University College, explained the reasons behind the discontent in an article in which he contrasted the situation in South African schools with that at Booker r. Washdington's Tuskagee Institute.
In our schools 'manual labour' consists of sweeping yards, repairing roads, cracking stones and so on, and is done by boys only as so much task force enforced by a time-keeper, and under threat of punishment. It is defended because 'it makes for character training.' The invariable result is that the boys grow to hate all manual work as humiliating..

Agriculture, where at all attempted at our schools, has suffered too, frowm being a motiveless task. It is the most important thing in native life, and therefore deserves a place in the school career of our boys,as it is practised in the Mariannhill native school in Natal .. .
Dr. Jahavu spoke only about boys. In I 871 a girls' 'industrial deprrtnmne was opened in which the girls were trainetd for domestic worki'

Progress in the schools was slow, They were starved of funds, and most of the African teachers were unable to offer advanced instruction. The only post-primary education available in the Cape was at Lovedale College, and at a few teacher training institutions. Under such circumstances, the fact that by 1907,
920 students were enrolled for training as teachers was extraordinary. In the
nineteenth century the education provided by the handful of better endowed
mission schools was on a par with any other school in the country. Between 1884
and 1886 it was reported that Lovedale had more passes in the Standards 3, 4 and
5 classes than any other of the 700 schools in the Cape.
Many of the main missionary schools had no colour bar, and in some years the
number of white pupils enrolled at Lovedale exceeded the blacks. The pupils slept
in segregated dormitories, ate at separate tables (and ate different food!), but they
all attended the same classes. In 1885 when the total Africani enrolment in the
Cape schools was 15,568, there were also 9,000 white pupils at the mission
schools.
There were, however, moves in the Cape towards segregation. The revenue that
had flowed into the Cape, first with the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley in
1867, and then of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, led to a significant change
in the Colony's economy. In order that the Whites might take their 'rightful place'
in a racist society they would need an education that was different from that
provided to Africans. In 1889 the Superintendent-General of Education in the
"Cape said:
The first duty of the government has been assumed to be to recognise the
position of the European colonists as holding the paramount influence,
social and political; and to see that the sons and daughters of the colonists, and
those who come hither to throw in their lot with them, should have at
least such an education as their peers in Europe enjoy, with such local
modifications as will fit them to maintain their unquestioned superiority,
and supremacy in this land.
The Superintendent-General was, it seems, making two broad assumptions, Firstly
that the colonists needed an education that would maintain their paramount
position (relative to Blacks) and, secondly, that in order to achieve this
paramountcy they should be given an education 'such as their peers in Europe'
received. But the Superintendent-General was aware of the nature of secondary
education in Great Britain. This had been exploited by the Taunton Commission
(in Britain) in 1867. Three trades of schools had been envisaged which, said the
Commission report, would 'correspond roughly, but by no means exactly, to the
gradation of society.' The top grade was for the upper or upper-middle class, the
next grade fit the middle class, and the third grade was (or the lower middle
class. The boys (but presumably not girls) would stay at school till the ages of 18,
16 and 141 respectively and be trained for occupations suitable to their class.
All in all, 10 children out of every 1,000 of the population would be in those
schools, and eight of these would be in the third grade where they would be fitted
for a living as 'small tenant farmers, small tradesmen, and superior artisans'.
Wherever possible, it was declared, sons of labourers might be

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
enabled to enter secondary school. In 1861 the average duration of school
attendance in England was two years; by 1861 the majority left school before the
age of 11. Only in 1893 was the school leaving age raised to 1 years. There would
obviously have to be much 'local modification' in Clape schools for the children of colonists who came from the lower middle class, or from the homes of labourers. It also seemed that there would have to be a double process if the colonists were to receive the necessary education. The schooling offered to Whites would have to be upgraded relative to that provided for Blacks, and the schools would have to be more strictly segregated. Legislation to put this into effect was soon forthcoming. In 1893 a new law allowed the subsidising of mission schools that catered only for white children. Only one year previously, white students who had trained as teachers at Lovedale were not allowed to sit the examination."4 By 1905 the Cape School Board Act established segregated state schools.25 Although attempts were made to introduce more manual instruction at Lovedale, in order to answer the accusations of 'bookishness', the staff worked to maintain the standard of education. Despite their efforts, however, Lovedale was bound to lose out. Although graduates of the college emerged with a relatively high standard of education, differentiation was achieved by pouring increasing resources into white schools, while African schools were always short of funds. These changes took place at a time when the Cape no longer needed black school graduates to fill positions in the growing bureaucracy, and the only opportunities open to the young men who emerged from the schools were ill the segregated schools and churches, and occasionally in one of the lower paid positions in a government office. Only a few Blacks were able to study over. seas or, at a later date, gain entry into South African universities and so enter the liberal professions. They were the exceptions, not dissimilar from the sons of labourers in Great Britain who managed to surmount the barriers which kept them out of higher education.

Education in the Interior

White education in the Cape was some 200 years old when Sir George Grey offered assistance to the missionaries for the running of their schools, and conceived of education as an instrument for incorporating Africans into the colony's economy.

The situation in the two interior republics (now the provinces, Orange Free State and Transvaal) was obviously very different. The concerted movement of the Dutch frontiersmen into the interior did not take place on a large scale, and the 'trekkers' who moved across the Orange River in the 1830s had few resources, even for the education of their own children. They certainly had no intention of setting up schools for a people whom they meant to expropriate. Africans were only employed as servants or as farm labourers.

The Black Schools. 1 799-1954

The first mission station was set up in 1842, and the first school built shortly thereafter. No grants were available from the government, and progress was necessarily slow. The most successful school, at Kilnerton, near Pretoria, was established by the Methodists in 1885. This institution trained Africans as teachers - the entrance qualification being Standard Three. After a two-year course they were posted to mission schools in the rural areas. The institution was closed during the war of 1899-1002, but reopened in 1903, when a government
survey in the Transvaal showed that there were 201 mission schools, some of which must have provided the preliminary education for the students who entered Kilnerton. However, very few of these schools offered more than rudimentary instruction in reading and writing. The first Superintendent of Native Education in the Transvaal was appointed in 1904, and a special curriculum for African schools was issued up to the Standard 3 level. The first state grant of £4,342 was made for African education and shared by 121 schools, and in 1907 the first state school (for Blacks) was established. As for the OFS, it did provide token funds of £45 to £80 a year for mission schools in the 19th century. Only after 1902 were slightly bigger grants made and schools could enrol more pupils.

The fourth region of white settlement, Natal, developed a segregation policy to suit its requirements in the mid-19th century. Although the Zulus had been defeated, the settlers were too weak to assert the rights of Africans as labourers in their society. The small government refused to provide the money which would have been required for any system of 'direct role', and there was no possibility of restructuring African society with the resources available to the small settler community. Furthermore, the Natal government administered a territory in which there were as yet few signs of economic development. The land had been parcelled out indiscriminately, and absentee landowners exacted tribute from the Africans resident on their ill-gotten estates. At the same time the whites believed they would be swamped by Zulu refugees, supposedly pouring into their newly settled areas.

The Natal government set up 19 mission reserves, each of which was under the exclusive control of one mission society. In these reserves, in which the Africans, the missionaries had the sole right to use of the labour available, and they also set up schools and churches.

In 1856 a government ordinance laid down guidelines for African education in Natal, which made provision for religious education, instruction in the English language and industrial training. Education was administered directly by the Governor and finances for the schools were provided by reserve funds. One of the earliest colleges in Natal was the Amamzimtoti Institute, later to be known as Adams College. It was set up in 1853 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), and was to become one of Natal's premier African schools until vindictively expropriated only a century later. (This will be described in Chapter Two).

In 1869 Mary Edwards of the ABCFM set up a seminary for African girls at Inanda - the first African girls' school in the country. The object of the Year of Fire, Year of Ash institution was to train the students to be Christian wives and mothers, and a special course was provided for girls who had run away from polygamous marriages.

Two other schools of particular note were set up in Natal. In 1882 Troppist monks set up a school at Marriannhill (between Durban and Pietermaritzburg) to train Catholic students. Graduates of this school (named St. Francis College), who were in later years to become political leaders or trade unionists, tended to be anti-
communist and distinctly conservative in philosophy. In this they followed the main mentor of Mariannhill in the 1930's, Father Bernard Huss. The second college, which is unique in South Africa, was Ohlange Institute, initiated by the first president of the ANC, the Rev. John Dube, who had been sent by the ABCFM to America to further his education. John Dube had been deeply impressed by the work of the Tuskegee Institute founded by Booker T. Washington and, in his return to Natal, was determined to set up an independent industrial college controlled by Africans. The Natal government gave Dube the land he needed, and he was able to raise the funds for the school buildings. By 1912 there were 18,000 African pupils in 232 primary schools, live industrial centres and three teacher-training institutes in Natal. In 1910 the two colonies (Cape and Natal), and the two former Boer republics (Orange Free State and Transvaal) became provinces within the Union of South Africa. At that time, the provision of African schooling in the country was very uneven, aid the major schools established in the Cape and in Natal maintained their pre-eminent position. The pattern of mission control of African education also persisted. Until 1951 84.5 per cent of all Afircan schools and training colleges were mission run and controlled. It was only in the realm of finance that the Provinces (who had charge of all primary and secondary education until 1954) and the central government played all ever larger role.

Early African Criticisms

The problem of finance, and the paucity of state fun in African education had long occupied the minds of African men and women. In 1911 the South African Native Congress addressed a statement to Joseph Linnell lain at the British Colonial Office strongly protesting against the disparity in grants for schools for white and black students. The grant for each white child in 232 public schools was £3.87, for an equivalent school for Blacks the grant was 61 per child.2

Giving testimony before the South African Native Affairs Commission in 1904 Martin Lutuli of the Natal Native Congress asked that education be transferred from the missions to state control. Answering the Chairman's question on the changes lie would prefer, J.Lutuli said:

I would prefer that tile Government should build a Government school to teach everything - to teach the knowledge in head and hands and everything, to know how to work at trades such as blacksmiths, carpentering, mason work, and all those things,'"

African parents, school pupils and the graduates of the mission schools were caught in a double bind situation from which there was no real escape. The only way in which they could hope to get full free and compulsory education was through a state schooling system. Only the government had the resources and the ability to provide the training they desired. They were, however, also aware of the many difficulties they would face if the government did decide to take over tile schools. They had heard or read the many denigrating remarks made by officials
of the education department, and they resented the many statements on the futility of educating the African people.

In 1903 the South African Native Congress issued a statement condemning the salaries paid by the Cape Government to African teachers as 'scandalously illiberal' and was scathing about the comments of Dr. anghaa Dale. The Congress Executive rejected his statement to the effect that: 'I do not consider it my business to enforce education on all the races, it would ruin South Africa. If I could produce 0,00 educated Tembus or Fingo today, what would you do then? Their education must be gradual.'

And, indeed, from the point of view (if the needs) the (ipe economy, there would be no place for o,(0t educated Africs. This was an issue to which Congress members did not address themselves, if only because this was a problem with which they could not cope, and with which they had no desire to cope. The task of providing employment was with the government and with the employers. But there was a more implausible and resonating one: 'I do not consider it my business to educate all the races, it would ruin South Africa. If I could produce 0,00 educated Tembus or Fingo tomorrow, what would you do then? Their education must be gradual.'

In the one crucial stand they took, they were correct. The state had to provide the schools, the teachers, and the finance. Meanwhile, the patent, laroured to secure entrance to mission schools for their children. In so doing, they preferred Lovedale, or latealdow, or Adaits, and it they were 'atholics they sought ciloance at Mtiantoul. Yet here too there was dissatisfaction. There were cheers when Telo Jahavu, editor of Imvo abantsundu, addressed the South African Races Congress in April 1912, and condemned mission schools where 'such is the rivalry of sects that mission schools are laced with an utter disregard to efficiency,' Jahavu spoke of the drop in educational standards, and of the 'great failure of Native students at their religious institutions', and obviously expressed the concern of the audience, many of whom had once attended mission schools.

Criticism of the missionaries became increasingly outspoken. Tengo

Year of Fire, Year of Ash

Jabavu's son, Professor D.D.T. Jabavu, addressed the Natal Missionary Conference in July 1920, and praised the early missionaries who 'faced opprobrium' for befriending Africans, but criticised the more recent arrivals at the mission stations. Jabavu claimed that the present incumbents were socially distant, standoffish, and even 'lordly'. The missionaries were accused of maintaining a military discipline, and of treating Africans as masters would servants. Although these were doubtless a minority, said Jabavu, the many were apt to be judged by their behaviour.31

The pupils at the schools were not heard at conferences, but they too were dissatisfied with conditions in the mission schools. The way in which they voiced their protests will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. Their dilemma...
was even greater than that of their parents. The mission schools provided the only education available to Africans and in the better schools it was but little inferior to that provided in white schools. For some, in fact, the extensive grounds, the wide fields, the country setting, and even the school equipment made them a very privileged group. Yet despite these privileges, which if anything made them more sensitive to any deficiencies, they were confronted by the attitudes that Professor Jabavu alluded to. They resented the heavy handed discipline, together with an inflexibility in the schoolroom which far too often bordered on the racism of the outer world. The process which led to changes in the schools in Britain, where these attitudes were once so prevalent, was not repeated in the South African context. On the contrary, the Act of Union of 1910 led to an increasing uniformity in educational practices in the four provinces, which worked against any liberalisation.

Discrimination After 1910
Initially, the four provinces had very different attitudes to African schooling, and standards differed appreciably. Finances were partly raised from 'Native taxes', and in 1922 this led the Transvaal to impose an additional direct tax on every African male; on the grounds that 'Native schooling' was too costly. The South African government intervened to stop such additional taxes, and furthermore introduced legislation which required local authorities to continue spending no less than the amount voted for education in 1921-2. Each province, therefore, pegged expenditure at the 1921-22 level, and this acted as a brake on further expansion.

After 1925, the finance made available for education was increased by new legislation. The fixed amount (which was calculated as £340,000) was henceforth to be supplemented by one-fifth of the general tax paid annually by Africans. The formula was changed in 1935 when seven-twentieths of the general tax was allocated to the education fund. By 1942 five-sixthls of the tax and, in 1943, all the general tax was paid into the education account.

Finance contributed by the Provinces was considerably less than recurrent expenditure, and did not provide any of the capital needed for buildings and grounds. The additional monies were raised by donations - a considerable proportion being contributed by African parents, and the missionary societies provided part of the annual revenue.

The growth of pupil enrolment, and estimated state grants, in the period 1855-1945, are shown in Table I(a). The overall picture presented by the figures indicates continued growth. But a more detailed breakdown of expenditure over the depression years 1930-39, given in Table I(b), shows that there was a long period of stagnation and indeed decline during that decade.

The number of African children receiving formal education was always small. Although the absolute number enrolled at school rose over the years, the percentage of school-age youth actually in school remained low. Uncertainty about census figures relating to the total African population makes all percentages uncertain, and those quoted in the literature are too high. Nevertheless, by 1936 it
was thought that only 18.1 per cent of all African children were ever enrolled at a school. In 1946 the figure was 27.4 per cent, and only reached 30 per cent in 1951. Only in the 1960's did this figure rise appreciably to 40 per cent. Attendance figures, however, can be deceptive. The overwhelming majority of children who entered school stayed for less than four years. By 1945 the number attending school for more than four years was only 24 per cent of the total school-going population (or seven per cent of children of schoolgoing age). In 1962 only 30 per cent of those who entered school proceeded beyond the second standard.

Few of the youth who left at this early stage of schooling - many aged from 11 to 13 years - could be considered literate.

Many children were unable to obtain admission to schools because there was insufficient finance to allow the schools to expand. Even when enrolment did expand considerably, as it did between 1925 and 1935, state expenditure lagged far behind. In 1935 the position had deteriorated to such an extent that an Inter-Departmental Committee, consisting of the four Chief Inspectors of Native Education and the Director of the Bureau of Educational and Social Research, was appointed to examine and report on Native education.

During the 1920's the state increased its contribution to the schools, so that the amount paid for every student attending school had risen slowly from £1.84 to £2.14. Thereafter the state contribution per student dropped, and did not return to the 1930 level until 1939. Economies during this period were effected by cutting the salaries of black teachers and by stopping nearly all capital investment in buildings and equipment. Conditions, bad as they had been in the pre-Depression days, deteriorated further as the mission societies found that they were also deprived of the donations they had previously depended on from private sources, and from parents. The recession stopped the flow of donations from abroad, and local contributions were hard to secure.

The children came in increasing numbers to schools which had smaller, rather than larger resources, less books and equipment, and grossly overcrowded classrooms, inevitably, the level of education declined considerably.

The situation, as the Inter-Departmental Committee found it, was
The Black Schools, 1799-954

Table 1(b)*
African Schooling: Details of Enrolment and Expenditure During the Depression, 1930.39

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>State Expenditure</th>
<th>Expenditure per pupil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>287,000</td>
<td>611,805</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>296,500</td>
<td>612,293</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>298,600</td>
<td>584,058</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>318,000</td>
<td>586,029</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
isastrous, and little that transpired in many of the classes they visited could pass for education. They suggested some amelioration, but fundamentally their task was to exonerate the system, and this they proceeded to do in the language that was becoming familiar from all government departments -harged with providing facilities for Africans.

The Committee found that there was a divergence between the ultimate aim of education and actual practice in the schools. They claimed that the objective of education was the same for all people. There were, however, reasons for not providing the same schooling: 'Practically considered, the aim in the two cases is not the same because the two social orders for which education is preparing Whites and Blacks are not identical.' Being more explicit, the Committee declared:

The education of the White child prepared him for life in a dominant society, and the education of the Black child for life in a subordinate society... The limits (of Native Education) form part of the social and economic structure of the country.

The Committee recommended that African education should be financed by the government. They suggested a grant of £3.65 per pupil. Grants paid at the time for white and coloured pupils were £23.85 and £5.20, respectively. The recommendation was not put into effect and the grant per pupil declined. Only in 1945 did the government increase its financial contribution to African education. (In addition a sum of £582,374 was voted for African school meals in 1943, in line with a general scheme that each school child... should receive one meal a day.)

The number of primary schools in the Provinces in 1946 as compared with the number of secondary schools, and the slowly altering proportions of students enrolled in the sub-standard and primary classes are shown in Tables 2(a) and 2(b).

Table 2(a)
The Number of Primary and Secondary Schools in the Four Provinces, 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Primary Schools</th>
<th>Secondary Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cape</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transvaal</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O.F.S.</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,414</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2(b)
Percentage of African Pupils Enrolled in Sub-standard and in Primary School Classes, 1924-1945

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
When the war ended in 1945, an era had come to a close in South Africa. During the war there had been a large-scale influx of Africans into the main urban centres without concomitant increases in housing or transport facilities. There had also been no basic change in the nature of schooling offered to African children. In one respect the missionaries had fulfilled everything that Sir George Grey had wanted from them, They had provided the teachers and the religious leaders. They had even provided a small group of doctors, lawyers, and nurses. The philosophy they had espoused was one of 'Christian trusteeship', and they had all too successfully transmitted this philosophy to most of their pupils. The missionaries had, however, been criticised by both the Afrikaner nationalists and sections of the African people. The Afrikaner critics accused the missionaries of 'liberalism', of propagating the idea of equality (of races) and of failing to inculcate the idea of segregation. The education provided in the schools came under attack in Nationalist Party documents, and the mission schools were accused of not having sufficiently inculcated 'the habit of doing manual work'.

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Criticisms levelled by radical African groups started from very different premises. Nosipho Majeka, who presented one such anti-missionary approach, started with the basic presupposition that: 'From the very beginning the missionaries, who were the protagonists of capitalism, sought to implant the ideas of that system..." Majeka claimed that the mission-schools trained the child to accept an inferior position in society, and maintained that the excessive concentration on religious and moral instruction was designed to inculcate 'humility, patience, fear, and passivity'. She continued: 'Missionary-controlled education, therefore, has played an important part in subjugating the minds of the people and in this way ensuring the continuance of White domination.'

It would seem that, at least on occasion, the African pupils agreed with Majeka's standpoint. The Students' Response
From 1920 through to the introduction of Bantu Education in 1954 and beyond, there were periodic outbursts in the schools. Students protested and demonstrated, boycotted chapel or classes and rioted. Despite changes in the country - economically, socially and politically the pattern of student protest in the schools remained remarkably constant, Almost all protest movements took place in schools situated in rural areas, and almost all action was spearheaded by pupils who boarded at the schools. Most occurred in secondary
schools, or in teachers' training colleges, and the age of the pupils involved ranged from IS to 20 years.
Life at the schools was not easy, and students resented the 'paternalism', and the demands that they work in the orchards and on the farms. They were not as enthusiastic as the members of the Native Economic Commission in 1932 when they noted that:
The students rat schoolI were also taught gardening and other manual work; every student at Lovedale had to work two hours in the gardens or on the roads; this excellent practice continues to this day. 42
The situation, as presented above by Professor Jabavu, was far nearer the truth and many protests and demonstrations followed orders from teachers that students carry out some unpleasant cleaning task.
The events that provoked students and led to some counter-actions were generally related to a restricted number of complaints. By far the commonest were about the severity of punishment, about assaults perpetrated by white staff on both pupils and black servants and about the quality and the quantity of food. The obvious disparity between the food served to staff and to students was a constant source of protest. The 'meat and vog' served at high table was contrasted by the students with their own fare. Over and above this unfavourable comparison, the disparities between food served to

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students who paid higher fees and those who paid less, created unending tensions. A student-waiter at Lovedale in the Eastern Cape has described conditions in the dining room in the mid-thirties. At this most prestigious of all black colleges of the time, the white teachers sat apart from the few Africans who were also on the staff. This separation was maintained when casual travellers stopped at the college. The white passerby received a meal in the refectory. The itinerant black received bread and lard in the yard. Amongst the student body there was a division of another order:
The students were divided into four categories and sat at separate tables: there were the £14 students, the £17, the £22 and the £27 per year students. The first category of students received meat once a week with the': samp (crushed maize], the £17 students had meat twice a week, and so on up the scale. 43
In the refectory it was obvious to all students that the pattern of South African discrimination was repeating itself. The distinctions across colour and class - lines were at work in the school. Prefectships went in the main to the £27 students, they sat at separate tables (and got their superior food) and obtained leave of absence more readily than other students. They were considered by their peers to be the 'eyes and ears of the boarding master'. When eventually students at Lovedale rioted the prefects were the only Africans attacked by the student body.44 Nonetheless, over long periods of time students were quiescent and did not make their complaints known. Where discontent became known, impositions, extra duties, chastisement or threats of expulsion were usually enough to abort any move to collective action.
School students were particularly vulnerable and did not readily take action to redress perceived wrongs. People are not easily moved to open conflict and students, who had so much to lose, would tend to be even more restrained than most. The tiny minority in the secondary schools were set for careers which would allow them to avoid the menial jobs that awaited the less educated (or illiterate) African. A secondary education placed them at the top two percent of their people, and prepared them for a number of jobs - of which teaching was one obvious choice. 45 Completion of secondary school could open the gates to the one existing University College for Africans, Fort Hare. A confrontation with the staff at school could lead to a precipitate end to these aspirations.

Despite these restraints, the students were in a unique position. They constituted the small elite of Africans who were literate and had access to books, journals and newspapers. They could (and did) conduct discussion and debating clubs, and life in boarding-schools was conducive to intensive discussions of current problems. It was precisely this heightened awareness which led the staff to take steps against what they saw as an 'unnatural' interest in politics. Ezekiel

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Mphahlele, who was at Adams College, records in his autobiography that at the beginning of the war:

In a great number of their [missionary) schools, certain political journals were banned, topics for school debate were severely censored... As the world war raged on, the tempers of the students raged to the extent that certain school buildings were burnt down,

And the sanctions were severe, because: 'pupils expelled from our schools have not the slightest chance of entering another.' 47 It was one of the features of school strikes that they tended to coincide with disturbances outside the campus, and there were at least six strikes at mission schools at the beginning of the war. 47

Although it is not always possible to find evidence linking student militancy in the schools and colleges with events in South Africa or abroad, there are many indications (for example, factors listed by the Smit Commission below), to show that the students were influenced by outside events. The outbreak of the second world war, the many strikes on the Witwatersrand during its course, the African mine workers' strike of 1946, events in Ghana in the 1950's, or in the Congo (Zaire) in 1960-63 and Mozambique in 1974, all contributed to increased political consciousness and helped to precipitate student clashes with school staffs.

Despite this response to events inside and outside the country there were few (if any) instances of school students joining forces with any of the national liberation movements prior to 1973. During a large part of the inter-war period and through to 1950, the existing political movements were barely viable; they were not capable of reaching pupils at school and would undoubtedly have rejected any suggestion that secondary school students be organised. The aspirations of the political leadership during that period would have made them unsympathetic to militant school action, and there was no likelihood that these elders would have deigned to 'talk politics' with 'children'.
It was only after the formation of the Congress Youth League as the youth section of the ANC in 1943, that attempts were made to win recruits at the University College of Fort Hare. School students, however, were not recruited, despite the fact that many students in the upper school forms were 18 years of age or more. They were mature and aware of events but not yet considered fit for political activity. Although strikes at schools often followed in the wake of political or industrial action in the country, they were not organised, or even prompted, by political movements.

Evidence on the effect of external events comes from the unofficial Commission of Inquiry set up under Douglas Smit at the request of the Lovedale College authorities after the strike there in 1946. The commissioners were told that the students followed the press carefully, had copies of a call to support the African mine workers in their strike, and received circulars through the post. They were also said to have ‘brought back the atmosphere

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of preparation’ for the miners’ strike when returning from their mid-year vacation.

48 This last statement, unfortunately, is not in accord with all the facts, and was undoubtedly added in order to strengthen the case for shifting the blame onto ‘outside influences’. The African miners had been discontented over a long period, but it was only on 5 August that a specially summoned conference decided, for the first time, to strike. On 7 August, long before the students could have heard of the decision, they started their boycott of classes. Nevertheless, the evidence does show that the students were responsive to events outside the school walls.

If the interconnection between events in the country and abroad and those on campus played some part in fuelling student discontent, the direct causes of conflict were to be found inside the schools and, having started at the schools, the students restricted their actions to the campus. They did not move off the campus, and they did not appeal to the neighbouring communities for assistance. Such behaviour would have been inconceivable before the 1970s.

Nevertheless, all actions taken by Africans in South Africa are ‘political’, and all school strikes reflected the discontent in South Africa over discriminatory practices. As one witness said to the Lovedale Commission:

The modern African boy is given access to the newspaper press and finds in an environment of complaint by the African against the colour bar, they identify the European staff in the institution as part of the ‘system’ machinery, and so when they go home we find that they are unhappy with the school authorities whereas in our time we worshipped the school authorities. 49

Strikes in the Schools
Presumably, not all students of the earlier generation ‘worshipped’ the authorities! The first recorded stoppages of lessons, (always called strikes in the South African newspapers), and the first riots in African schools took place in 1920. In February, students at the Kilnerton training centre went on a hunger strike ‘for more food’. A few months later theological students at Lovedale rioted and set fire
to the buildings 'in protest against bad brcild" The damage was estimated at between £3,000 and £5,000. A large rmt'¢; of students must have been involved, because 198 students were liirtght kti trial and received sentences ranging from three months in 14el p An'. fine of £50, to strokes with a light ca fine.50 There is little information about events in schoools ill ti' inter war , .ni Short items in the African press did mention strikes in the late two nltre. 4toi there were reports of many more in the pre-war years. It would have hwei strange if pupils in the schools, starved of resources during the I it)'s ta described on p.23), had not expressed their anger by striking, ri oting, a," burning the premises. There is, however, a dearth of iniformation tmt heuh .

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events, as the government of the day wished to avoid the adverse publicity which would have folowed disclosure of such events in the schools. The two official Commissions of Inquiry, set ip in 1940 and 194i it report on grievances and disturbances at African schools, were never published, 51 The investigations bly the (oinmissions did not lead to better conditions in the schools. In the period 1943-45 there were more than 20 strikes arld serious riots in schools. Each strike led to expulsions (and often court appearances), and to renewed disturbances the IColowing academic year. The most serious confrontation occurred on 7 August I 0,16, and in the monilths that followed at least six more strikes occurred in schools and colleges. 52 Parents were veiy disturbed at the seemingly endless closures of colleges, and organised a delegation to meet the school principals. The I leads of the Association of Native Institutions (is the college principals styled themselves), appointed fnour of their miembets to meet the delegation in October 1945, and they obviously meant to 'teach' them a lesson. The parents got little sympathy and were read a prepared statement which criticised then fror not exercising sufficient control over their children. They were list) infrmed that no flouting of school rules would be tolerated, and that continued disturbances (excclusively confined to Native students in the Union of South Africa' tile parents were told), would lead tt) stricter control of admission, and closer supervision at schools. ,3

It was the Lovelale riot of August 1946 which attracted most attention partly because this was the premier black schl in the country, and partly because the 'independent' ('ommission of Inquiry set up by the Ltovedale Governing Council did issue a report, .,4 From this, it is apparent that the school had been in a state of unrest since 1045, that the students had their own unofficial organisation known as 'The Hoard' (borrowed, it appears, from 'Tile Board tf (uardians' in Oliver Twist), anid that there was a call for a student strike and the removal of tilt headnmaster The admin istrat in 's response was to arrange frit patros of tile school ground(s by memwhers of staff during the iiight and by a constable during tie day, Those assumied tl be ringleaders were pinpointed and threatened with exclusion if tiey failed the forthcoming examinations. None it tile 17 so named were able to proceed to the University ('ollege of ilort I fare in 1940. The school seemned to have bee i quiet during tile fist half it 1946, despite the introductin or new rules of cinduct by tie principal tit tie hgh schl n who had
recently retired from military service. Hi till aftermath of the riots of 7 August, involving damage to school premises and attacks on lecturers and white members of staff, the principal Di, I LW, Shepherd, wrote that the staff had no intimations of dissent action until this hospital events if tile previous year. One hundred and fifty two students were rested and Clingtild with public violence. Most were filled (with the alternative of impisointment); all were excluded from schools in the fitter. There was an obvious unanimity amongst principals all tile need for stern measures. 

Lovedale was closed. All nine weeks, and in reopening in more than 80 students, said to have been guilty of violence, were debarred from the school," and from every other college in the country. The college presumably returned to 'normal'. There were no further reports of student activity at Lovedale in the post-1946 period, and only a more intimate knowledge of conditions on the campus would provide information on the way the student body was now controlled, and how many individual students found continued schooling closed to them due to some transgression of the rules. 

The spate of student demonstrations was not over, and continued in 1946 and subsequently. After the Lovedale strike there were at least five others in the Cape and the Transvaal in 1946, and in December these were followed by a sitdown strike at the Bethesda Bantu Training College near Pietersburg. On through the late forties and the fifties students struck, boycotted and rioted. Each event had its own local causes, and in most cases students acted only after prolonged periods of discussion and representations to the responsible teachers. One columnist of the time summed up the mood when describing the situation: At almost every African mission boarding school conditions for students are deplorable and this has been the root of all the minor revolts which have taken place from time to time at these institutions. Food and the Nazi-like control are usually the main causes for dissatisfaction. Last week the authorities were expecting some sort of explosion at fleadtown (Methodist) Missionary College... Police at five Eastern Cape towns were asked to stand by in case something should happen at the college. Earlier, last week, 100 senior pupils were sent home after a passive resistance strike - escorted off the premises by 20 (armed) police.

The University College of Fort Hare

The one university college for Blacks in the country prior to 1960 was situated in the Eastern Cape. Like so many other features of South Africa, the college reflects the superimposition of an advanced economy on a broken agricultural community. D. Gordon, a student at the college in 1949, described it as follows: "Fort Hare is situated on the East Bank of the Tyumle River, overlookin' Lovedale Institution and the Victoria Hospital, The little town of AliWe. white man's paradise, serves both these institutions and is the centre of an area of African learning and native poverty. Of all the trading stores in the village not one is owned by an African though business would he impossible without their support. The Tyumle Valley is very fertile and..."
is startling to note how the European farmer has squeezed the African onto the barren and soil-eroded hillsides. It is amazing how these people manage to exist and propagate.

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In the midst of all the racial and agricultural disparity we have the only non-European University (College), Fort flare. Founded in 1916, and accepting Indians, Coloured and Africans, Fort Hare had given some 90 degrees in arts and science to its graduates by 1939. It also gave diplomas to students who had not completed secondary school but wanted their higher teacher's certificate. Nearly half the student intake was made up of those who took this diploma course.

Most trained teachers came from one of the 26 colleges in South Africa which provided the necessary certificates or diplomas. At the outbreak of the second world war there were 3,500 pupils enrolled for such courses. Some had only completed primary school, others had some secondary schooling. After one or two years at the colleges they were certified as fit to teach.1

Both the colleges of education and the University College of Fort Hare were segregated institutions (although a few Whites had been enrolled at Fort Hare). For many Africans, the University College presented the only opportunity for receiving a higher education in South Africa, although the universities of the Witwatersrand, Cape Town and Natal allowed a limited number of Blacks to enter their faculties.

The number of degree and diploma students at Fort Hare was always small. In 1959 (the year the university structure of South Africa was altered), the enrolment was 319 Africans, 70 Coloureds, and 100 Indians. In the same year 300 Africans, 541 Coloureds, and 815 Indians were enrolled in the 'white' universities. The black students constituted a tiny minority in the 'white' universities. In Durban they attended segregated extra moral classes at the university, or were enrolled at the medical school which was exclusively for Blacks. In Cape Town and Johannesburg (the 'open' universities) there was no segregation at lectures, but Blacks faced a number of restrictions which they resented, but were powerless to alter. It was the more radical white students who protested against the quota system for Africans at the Medical school, and the exclusion of Blacks from the Dental school. There were even more protests against the complete social segregation and the prohibition placed on Blacks using the swimming bath and many sporting facilities. But the small black groups could play little part in such agitation - and many of them found meaningful political activity only in the national liberation movements off the campus. Only a few played any prominent part in student politics. It was only in the period preceding the introduction of the 1959 Universities Bill that the black students joined their white peers in protesting against the closing of the open universities. Despite the many disabilities they encountered, the education offered at Cape Town and Johannesburg seemed worth fighting for.

The position at Fort Hare was different. The University College was isolated from the main centres of political activity, and although some students joined one or
other of the political movements prevailing during the 1940's, they were isolated from the mainstream of political events. Students recently out of school tended to be even more out of contact with events in
the large cities. They had come to Fort Rare straight from rurally based schools and had lived in small, closed, missionary institutions for the preceding 12 or more years.62
Throughout the second world war there were strikes at Fort Hare almost every year. There was a strike in 1941 because a teacher was alleged to have brutally assaulted an African waitress in hall,63 another in 1942 when the boycotting of divine service led to the suspension of 59 students, and yet another strike in 1943.64 The precipitating factors were always the atrocious food, unbending discipline, or even physical assaults. But the crucial factor was deeply embedded in the system. Writing at the time a student stated:
The whole matter revolves round the principle of whether or not University students are going to allow themselves to be bullied like kindergarten children. It is the old matter of white South Africa regarding the non-European as nothing better than a grown-up baby.65

Politics Comes to the Campus
There was a new political mood amongst Africans during the war years, aid a section of educated youth formed the Congress Youth League (CYL) in I N.* This was the junior section of the African National Congress (ANC) with some reluctance by the older body to stop a drift into other political movements in the Transvaal. The central core was mainly drawn from graduates of St. Peters, the Anglican secondary school in Johannesburg, and of Lovedale, Healdtown, or Adams College. There were also some who had been at Fort Hare and had graduated, or had been expelled after the stwlkti The Youth League did not seek recruits in the schools, but did make contact with students at Fort Hare, It seems, however, that it was only towards the end of 1948 that a small branch of the CYL was formed on the campus. The Cape based Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) also established a branch in the late forties. It seemed to be the predominant political group during the early 1950's, but lost the initiative to the CYL during the Defiance Campaign in 1952. By the mid-fifties the NEUM was reduced to a small group 67

There is an impressionistic account of events at Fort Hare, written by D. Gordon who arrived on the campus in 1949. In that year the (Congresi Youth League-sponsored Programme of Action became official ANCl plnic This programme, more radical than previous ANC Conferences would have accepted, espoused 'Africanism' - a philosophy which called upon Afriwan to reject alliances with any other racial group. Gordon was a supporter of the NEUM and opposed to the CYL and its avowed Africanism, Nevertheless, he expressed admiration for their actions on the campus, while rejecting their nationalistic philosophy.
His comments on the students at the college in 1949 give some picture of events at the time:

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The African student is more politically conscious at Fort Hare than any non-European student at any South African university...
The outstanding political contributors were the students who came from the Native territories of the Union [of South Africa], the large towns and the Transkei...
For the African (as distinct from Coloured and Indian students), Fort Hare is a hive of political activity. He questions freely and openly every suggestion made by the European, whether lecturer or visitor... So tense is the atmosphere that politics is brought into every College activity whether it be a hostel meeting, a church service, a sports gathering, a college lecture or a social gathering.

Gordon is scathing about both the coloured and Indian students at Fort Hare, and it does seem that unlike Coloureds and Indians at the 'open universities', those at Fort Hare mainly kept aloof from politics.

The CYL was undoubtedly the major force at Fort Hare. Gordon continues:
I must express great admiration for the unity which existed among the African ranks and the Youth League. They had a feeling of oneness and suspension and expulsion was not feared, while fighting the cause of the African. That is probably why they were reluctant to admit any other racial group into their organisation. The coloured and Indian students had no political programme...

At a Completer's Social three Youth Leaguers addressed the students in the presence of the principal and the staff and turned a social gathering into a violent attack on the political and social conditions prevailing in the land. The slogan for the evening was 'Africa for the Africans'...

One of the Youth Leaguers who spoke that evening was Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, later leader of the Pan-Africanist Congress. (See Chapter 16.)

The students faced increasing restrictions and a hardening of attitudes in the aftermath of the Nationalist Party success at the polls in 1948. This was, no doubt, the crucial factor which led the students to come out in full support of the 14 days sit-down strike called by nurses at the Victoria Hospital in 1949. Despite the failure of the strike this event did more than any other to strengthen the CYL's hold on the student body.

The post-war years brought an increase in political activity and quickened the students' interest in events in other parts of the colonial world. They read all that could be read on Asia and Africa despite the unofficial censorship, Gordon continues his account. The book on Colonies by George Padtnore [Africa: Britains Third Empire] was extremely popular, but it disappeared from the shelves of the library.

Despite this, only a minority of students were interested in politics and Gordon, near the end of his article, observes:

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... there are those who feel that the African must build himself financially so that Africans can become an economic unit. Several of the students,
especially those that had taught for many years, thought on these lines as they had very little sympathy for the Youth League or any other political organisation.

In adopting this attitude the students were displaying class aspirations which accorded with the status they already held as students of the University College. Many of their colleagues, radical while they were on the campus, would revert to the same attitude after they had graduated. Nevertheless, they created a tradition which would be drawn upon in the coming years when the colleges came into increasing conflict with the government.

References
2. Ibid., p.113.
4. For the changing value of the Rand, see Glossary.
5. These figures are all taken from the section on education in the commemorative volume, pp.106-150.
9. Quoted in Nosipho Majeka (Dora Taylor), (1952), The Role of the Missionary in Conquest, (Society of Young Africa, Cape Town), p.66.
18. D.D.T. Jabavu, (1920), 'Native educational needs', included in The Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems, by Professor Jabavu, (Lovedale, n.d.), p.94. (For Marlannhill, see text below.)

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23. R. Williams, op.clt., p, 159. All information on schools in Great Britain
is taken from this book.
25. F. Troup, op.cit., p.11.
29. Ibid., p.17.
30. Ibid., p.75.
31. D.D.T. Jabavu, op.cit., p.123. 32. M. Horrell, op.cit., pp.33-5, provides some examples, but states that there is no exact account of all the contributions made by missionaries, overseas organisations and by Africans.
33. Table I(a) is compiled from figures taken primarily from P.A.W. Cook, op.cit., pp.351-4, Additional data was added from M. florrell, op.ct., F. Troup, Op.cit., and H. Rogers, op.cit, Some calculations of state expenditure or of expenditure per pupil are my own. Discrepancies in the sources used have led to totals that do not tally. Table I(b) is taken from H. Rogers, op.cit., p.248.
34. Sources from which these figures are taken include the following publications of the South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg: a) Nathan IHurwitz, (1964), The Ionomics of Bantu Education in South Africa; b) Muriel Horrell, (1964), A Decade of Bantu Education; c) E.G, Malherbe, (1964), Bantu Manpower and Education. See also Pierre van den Berghe, (1967), South Africa: a Study in Conflict, (University of California Press), table XV, p.298. 35. For information about the Committee, see M. Horrell, (1963), opcit,, p.32; F. Troup, opcit., p.1 5; and .1B. Tabata, (1960), Education for Barbarism in South Africa, (Pall Mall), p.8. 36. M. Horrell, (1963), op cit., pp.32, 57. 37. P.A.W. Cook, op.cit., p.367. 38. Ibid., p.366,
41. Ibid., p.137,
43. James Phillips, personal intervews, 1 976.77. 44. South African Outlook, 1 January 1947. (See also ref. 28). 45. The majority of teachers at the time had only primary school education plus a further two years training. A secondary school graduata wAs

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obviously well placed for a senior teaching post,
46, Ezekiel Mphahlele, (1962), Down Second Avenue, (Seven Seas), p.146. 47. Inkundiaya Bantu, September 1940. 48, South African Outlook, 1 January 1947. 49, Ibid.
50. South African Outlook, 1 February 1947, There is a short account in this issue of the 1920 Lovedale strike, but no reasons offered for the outbreak. E. Roux, (1949), Time Longer Than Rope, (Gollancz), p. 164, states that both the riots at Kilnerton and Lovedale followed complaints about bad food.

51. Inkundla ya Bantu, September 1940, reports the setting up of the riot commission by the Department of Education to report on a series of school strikes. The report is highly critical of the composition of the commission which consisted exclusively of white school inspectors. On 25 February 1943 the same paper reports a request to the government from the Transkeian Organised Bodies (the regional federal association) that the report be made available. It was never published. An official commission was appointed by Parliament to report on the Lovedale strike in 1946. The Smuts government refused to publish its findings. 52. The Torch carries reports (unfortunately very sparse) in two issues: 14 October 1946 and 9 December 1946. 53. Inkundla ya Bantu, 2 October 1945.

54. The college authorities asked DL. Smit, former Secretary for Native Affairs, to head a Committee of Inquiry into the 1946 events. The report was printed in full in the South African Outlook, 1 January 1947.

55. South African Outlook, 2 September 1946. A statement issued by the Executive Committee of the United Cape African Teachers Association in Inkundla ya Bantu, 1 October 1946, said that Dr. Shepherd 'lacked imagination'. The position of the prefects, as described by the Smit Commission, is quoted above. Compare also a statement by C. Motstet (1949) in an article 'Strikes in African Institutions' (a cutting found in the Fabian Colonial Bureau papers, Rhodes House, Oxford origin unknown) which compared the prefect system to police (informers?) because they carried reports to the white headmasters.


57. Torch, 14 October 1946 and 9 December 1946. 58. Torch, 3 November 1953. See also the report on the same event in the Eastern Province Herald, 30 October 1953. The herald stated that a refusal of meals and a refusal to be seated in the dining hall were the causes of the expulsion.

59. D. Gordon, 'Some impressions of the African intellectual at Fort Ilar' This article, written by a coloured student about conditions on the campus in 1949, appeared in the journal Discussion, Vol. 1, No. 2 (0.1951).


61. Ibid., p.172,

62. D. Gordon, op.cit., makes a similar point In rather patronising terms.

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and also suggests that these pupils were intolerant of the Coloureds and Indians on the campus. He fails to note the equal intolerance (or patronising attitude) shown by Coloureds and Indians to the African students - and his article could be quoted in part as an example of such intolerance!

66. Letters by A.P. Mda to G.M. Pitje, 24 August 1948 and 10 September 1948. These documents are reprinted in T. Karis and G. Carter, op.cit., Vol. II, pp.319-22. A.P. Mda was one of the founding members of the CYL. Trained as a teacher, he later became a lawyer. Godfrey Pitjo was on the Student Representative Council and later became a lawyer in the Transvaal.
67. In 1935 an All-African Convention (AAC) was convened in order to form an African united front against the Native Bills of 1936. The ANC withdrew from the AAC in 1938, and by 1940 it was almost extinct. In 1943 the AAC was revived in the Cape and soon won the support of the federal Transkeian Organised Bodies and the Cape African Teachers Association. In 1943 a group of coloured intellectuals in the Cape formed the anti-Coloured Affairs Department (anti-CAD) and this too was a federal body which included the (Coloured) Teachers League of South Africa. The AAC and Anti-CAD formed a united federal body known as the Non-European Unity Movement in December 1943. For the NEUM at Fort flare, see D. Gordon, op.elit. 68, D. Gordon, op.cit.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid. Gordon only gives a perfunctory description of the strike, 71. Ibid.

2. Bantu Education:
1954-1976

In the 1940s there was much criticism of the schooling provided for Afrvis from many different sources and the missionaries were castigated for providing inferior education. It was stated that the mission schools were poorly funded, that facilities were grossly inadequate, and that teachers were poorly paid and badly trained. The curricula in use were dull and overloaded with moral instruction, the teaching was unimaginative, and much that passed for education consisted of repetitive recitation, or of learning texts by ot,
Dr. O.D. Wollheim, an executive member of the South African Institute of Race Relations, wrote an article on the crisis of Native education in 1q43 after inspecting some of the African rural schools. The conditions he found were deplorable:
Native education has been in an appalling condition . . . Buildings in Tnot* cases consist of tin shanties or wattle and daub huts into which are crammed two or three times the number of pupils which the room should hold. The equipment is correspondingly pitiful ... The salaries paid to teachers are likewise appalling ... The teacher will occasionally be found teaching from eighty to a hundred pupils in two or three different
African communities were equally discontented with the school system and the extent of the dissatisfaction can be gauged from the account given by Muriel Lorrell:

... there was a growing antagonism among Africans to the mission control of schools. Opponents of this system wanted their schools to be administered in the same way as were those of the whites, and felt that Departmental schools were better off in regard to funds and supplies. Of the 2,000 mission schools in the Transvaal, 800 had been transferred to the Department (of Education) by about 1949.2

The demands made in the 1940s, were little different from those made earlier in the century. The African wanted more schools, compulsory education and state responsibility for education. There were few who called for an end to 'Native education' and for integration of the school system, and few who connected the rotten school system with the entire apparatus of segregation in the country. Most criticism ended with calls for improvement, and except for the small groups on the left who demanded radical change, and condemned the message of humility in missionary education, there were few proposals for restructuring the educational system.

The Afrikaner nationalists saw the matter very differently. Not only did they claim that graduates of the schools were liberals and radicals, but they also contended that the doctrine of Christianity, as taught, was suspect. The only Christianity that could be accepted, they proclaimed, was that which followed the credo of the three Afrikaner churches.3

Christian National Education: the Afrikaner Ideal

The Afrikaner nationalist approach to education had been shaped in the course of a long struggle to have their rights recognised by the British in South Africa. In terms of their own struggle, which involved a long and bitter fight against the imperial presence, the demand for 'mother-tongue' (or Afrikaans) instruction, and for separate schools, was understandable. They were a fraction of the dominant white minority and were fighting for control of the economy and of the state, yet any move to apply these principles to the African people was inexcusable. The Africa's, people were in a position of subordination, and their overriding demand in the forties was not for mother tongue instruction or separate schools, but for an education that would allow them to play their full part in commerce and industry. The reality behind Afrikaner aspirations was put succinctly by a school inspector in 1943. His view was that:

The Afrikaner teacher will show Afrikanerdom what a power they possess in their Teachers Associations to build up the country's youth for the future republic. I know of no more potent instrument ... A nation is born by having its youth impregnated at school in the traditions, customs, ways and ultimate destiny of its people.4

This was obviously not what was intended for African youth at school. The only youth that had to be moulded for the 'future republic' were the Afrikaner youth.
In February 1948 a pamphlet was issued by prominent Afrikaner national, isis on Christian National Education (NE). In it set of 15 articles, the authors of this work ('after ten years of silent labour') laid down the ideological basis of education for the youth of South Africa. The first thirteen of these articles were devoted to the problems of white education, and laid down the philosophical framework within which the authors were working.

All white children should be educated according to the views of life of

Year of Fire, Year of "sh
their parents. Consequently all Afrikaans-speaking children should have a Christian-Nationalist education...
The key subject in school should be religion ...
All teaching should also be nationalist...

Owing to the Fall, all children are born sinful, but the children of believers have inherited God's promise, through Christ, of redemption. The necessity for education lies in the fact that the child's soul is undeveloped...

Civics should teach the child to preserve the Christian and nationalist character of home, church, society and state.
Every nation is rooted in a country allotted to it by God.

Geography should aim at giving the pupil a thorough knowledge of his own country ... he will love his own country, also when compared and contrasted with others, and be ready to defend it, preserve it from poverty and improve it for posterity.
History should be seen as the fulfilment of God's plan for humanity

Next to the mother tongue the history of the fatherland is the best channel for cultivating the love of one's own which is nationalism.

In normal circumstances, the church should not erect schools, but may be compelled to do so (a) if the existing schools are unchristian and unnationalistic and (b) in the heathen world.

Science should be expounded in a positively Christian light, and contrasted with non-Christian science.

All authority in school is borrowed from God ...

Unless (the teacher) is a Christian, he is a deadly danger to us.

Articles 14 and 15 were devoted to the issues of 'coloured' and 'native' education. The previous articles, where relevant, were obviously intended to be read together with these final propositions. The article on African education stated:
The white South African's duty to the native is to Christianise him and help him on culturally.

Native education should be based on the principles of trusteeship, non equality and segregation; its aim should be to inculcate the white man's way of life, especially that of the Doer nation, which is the senior trustee.
The mother tongue should be the basis of native education but the two official languages should be learned as keys to the cultures front which the native will have to borrow in order to progress, Owing to the cultural infancy of the native, the state, in co-operation with the protestant
churches should at present provide Native education. But the native should be fitted to undertake his own education as soon as possible, under control and guidance of the state, Native education should lead to the development of an independent, self-supporting Christian Nationalist Native community.

Native education should not be financed at the expense of the white.

The CNE pamphlet appeared only three months before the Nationalist victory at the polls on 26 May 1948, and proponents of the manifesto wanted that the programme be adopted by the government. One such attempt was made at the Transvaal provincial congress of the party in November but was blocked by the Minister of Education, Dr. A.J. Stals, on the grounds that the government only controlled higher education, and that school education was in the hands of Provincial Councils.

African education, however, was controlled by the Department of Native Affairs, and in January 1949 the government appointed a Commission of Enquiry, headed by Dr. W.W.M. liselen, to propose ways in which this education could be altered to meet the needs of the Africans 'as an independent race'. The Commission consisted of educationalists, rather than theologians, and their final report was not couched in the religious terminology of the CNE pamphlet. Nevertheless the substantive points in Article 15 (on African education) were all adopted by the commissioners. The guiding principle of education was conceived of as being Christian and, although it was proposed that the missionaries who had 'diligently acted as guardians of the Bantu' should be replaced, it was suggested that there was a place for them in extracurricular activities.

The Commission also endorsed the (NE suggestions that education lie in the vernacular; that control be exercised by the state; and that the burden of finances be shifted to the African population. None of this was new, and the Commission did not offer anything that had not been repeated ad nauseam by Nationalist Party spokesmen in the past.

There was, however, one set of proposals that seemed at first sight to go beyond the terms of reference of the Commissioners. In paragraphs 789 to 792 the Commission proposed the establishment of 'Bantu Local Authorities' in the Reserves and (white) urban areas. These bodies which, said the commissioners, should be composed of chiefs (if any), plus elected and nominated members, would carry out the functions usually delegated to local authorities, and also 'achieve the active participation of the Bantu in carrying out the educational plans.'9 In the words of the commissioners:

... a happy and prosperous Bantu population must have a social organisation with healthy and vigorous social institutions: a fitting religious, economic and political structure based on orderly family life and attuned to the demands of modern conditions.10

The social organisations that the Commission wished to promote were the proposed Bantu Local Authorities. These new bodies, it was said, would help the child find a bridge between his 'traditional' social setting and the new practices he
acquired at school, The Commission report said, by way of example, that there was a disjunction between 'the virtues and merits of modern hygiene' as apparently taught at school and practices in the 'traditional family'. The Local Bantu Authorities would, in some unexplained fashion, restore the harmony between the 'hygienic child' and his seemingly unhygienic parents!

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Even more important in the eyes of the commissioners was the social environment in which this restoration of harmony could be effected. This they claimed could happen only in the Reserves:
It is particularly in the Reserves that the qualities of independence, self-reliance, initiative and responsibility could be developed; the development of these qualities demands life in social institutions unfettered by outside control.
The Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. E.G. Jansen, addressing Parliament while the Commission was still sitting, made the same point:
We are of the opinion that the solidarity of the tribes should be preserved and that they should develop along the lines of their own national character and tradition. For that purpose we want to rehabilitate the deserving tribal chiefs as far as possible and we would like to see their authority maintained over members of their tribes.2
Dr. Jansen took the matter further. The Eiselen Commission might believe in 'unfettered' institutions, but this was not the government's view. The chiefs had a role to play in controlling the labour force in the Reserves:
The most effective way to arrest the influx of natives into the cities is to see to it that life within the reserves becomes more versatile. The idea is that we should see to it that the tribal chiefs in the reserves have control with and exercise discipline over their fellow tribesmen in the urban areas.13

Bantu Authorities and Bantu Education
In 1951, the Bantu Authorities Act was passed by Parliament. The Act provision for the establishment in the Reserves of tribal, regional and territorial authorities, and for the delegation of administrative and other powers to bodies composed of chiefs, headmen, and tribal councillors. In 1953 the Bantu Education Act was enacted, and the major provisions recommended by the Eiselen Commission became law. The two Acts were conceived as part of one overall plan, and Dr. Verwoerd, who replaced Dr. Jansen as Minister of Native Affairs, made this quite explicit:
My department's policy is that education should stand with both feet in the Reserve and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society. The basis of the provision and organisation of education in a Bantu community should, where possible, be the tribal organisation.4
The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was an administrative rather than a
substantive measure. The control of African education was vested in the
Department of Native Affairs, and the drafting of all regulations governing the
content of education was left to the Minister of Native Affairs. All schools now
came under the Minister’s control, and no educational institution could be
established or conducted without his permission. An amendment to the Act in
1954, aimed against mission institutions, stipulated that all teacher training
schools would have their subsidies terminated in 1955, and that subsidies paid to other
schools would be reduced progressively until they ceased in 1957. Missions were
offered the options of either renting or selling their schools to the government, or
of continuing unaided. Those that chose the latter option found in many instances
that other legislation made it impossible for them to continue in existing premises
because that would contravene one or other of the apartheid laws.
The legislation of 1954 also fixed the state’s contribution to African
education at an amount equivalent to the 1953 expenditure. Henceforth the yearly
contribution would be R1 3,000,000. Any expenditure in excess of this amount
had to be met by African taxpayers.
There were two further administrative measures. Education in the junior classes
was to be conducted in the vernacular, and the schools were to be under the
supervision of boards or committees. In the Reserves these were to be partly or
wholly nominated by tribal authorities. In the urban areas two-thirds of the
members of the school boards were to be government (usually tribal) appointees,
and the remaining third were to be elected by the parents.
It remained for Dr. Verwoerd to outline the philosophy that would guide his
Department in the conduct of the schools. Speaking in the Senate in June 1954,
the Minister made his intentions quite clear;
When I have control of Native Education I will reform it so that the
Natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with
Europeans is not for them... People who believe in equality are not
desirable teachers for Natives .., When my department controls Native
education it will know for what class of higher education a Native is
fitted, and whether he will have a chance in life to use his knowledge...
What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot
use it in practice? That is quite absurd.
Schooling was, quite evidently, blatantly used as an instrument of social control.
The child would be taught that equality was not for him or her either in society or
the work place:
The school must equip him to meet the demands which the economic life
will impose on him . . ., There is no place for him [or her, presumably] above the
level of certain forms of labour ... For that reason it is of no avail for him to
receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the
European community.3

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In practice this meant that even technical training would be inferior. Speaking
about the training of African building workers, the Minister of Labour said in
1950:
The standard of training is not the same as the standard given to the ordinary (sic) artisan who enrolls under the Apprenticeship Act. Native builders will therefore not be artisans in the full sense of the word. They will only receive training which will enable them to erect houses and buildings for their own use.

The schooling was inferior, as a matter of principle. The Africans only had to perform unskilled work for white employers; or, when they served their own community, it was presumed that the work should be inferior. Through to nurses and teachers the training that was recommended by the government would ensure third class status. Nurses, said Dr. Eiselen, should only receive the training necessary to serve their own community. This differential training, he added, would also determine the rate of pay.

The parsimony of the government was to have a debilitating effect on African education. The schools were bleak and dilapidated, overcrowded and ill-equipped. Lower primary schools were built by the state, and the capital costs recovered by raising rentals in the area. The parents who wanted schools at a higher level had to bear half the capital costs.

There were few books in the schools. Primary school pupils received a reader. Other textbooks had to be bought by the parents. The school library often consisted of no more than a dozen dog-eared volumes, and the maximum grant permissible for purchase of books was R20 per year for primary schools, and RSO for post-primary schools. The yearly grant for scientific equipment for a school with approximately 1,000 pupils was R35. In 1966 it was reported that in four Soweto schools (with 3,080 pupils) in which 80 per cent of the pupils were taught science, the total equipment consisted of 13 bunsen burners, six balances, and three microscopes.

In 1954 Dr. Verwoerd also announced that new salaries for teachers would be 'less favourable' than those in existing scales, and that in future it would be departmental policy to employ women in the primary schools in order to save money. As existing posts fell vacant all men would be replaced by women (at salaries approximately 25 per cent less).

New measures followed in quick succession. School meals were restricted to primary schools - but only those which had participated in the scheme in previous years were included. The amount per child per meal was cut from 2.0d (1 p.) to 1,2d. Finally, in 1956 parents were given the 'choice' of either continuing with the meals, in which case there would be no grants for buildings and equipment, or of forfeiting the meals in return for assistance with new accommodation. Within a few years all school feeding had stopped in African schools.

Bantu Education: 1954-76
ANC Responds: the 'Resist Apartheid Campaign'
The publication of the CNE pamphlet had led to considerable agitation amongst white educationalists, and meetings of parents were summoned to protest against the obscurantist views in the 15 articles, Counter-pamphlets were written, the English-speaking press wrote editorials criticising the proposals, and church and
mission leaders voiced their opposition. There was, however, little that these protests could achieve.

There were also angry reactions from African organisations. The Cape African Teachers Association (CATA), affiliated to the All African Convention and the Non-European Unity Movement, announced that they were calling a national conference to discuss the Bantu Education Act. They were warned that the government would not tolerate a discussion of educational policy by teachers, and they cancelled the conference.

The only campaign against the implementation of Bantu Education in the schools was initiated by the African National Congress. On 8 May 1954, the ANC and its associated organisations of the Congress Alliance (the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organisation, and the [white] Congress of Democrats), launched a campaign that was dubbed the 'Resist Apartheid Campaign'. The particular measures that Congress aimed to resist were: the Bantu Education Act; the Native Resettlement Act (which was designed to remove 0,000 Africans from the black townships of Sophiatown and neighbouring regions, and transfer them to Soweto); the pass laws; the Group Areas Act; the Suppression of Communism Act; and anti-trade union measures. Little more was heard of this campaign as a whole, and the first two issues alone occupied the ANC in 1954. In fact it over-extended the movement, and showed that the ANC did not have the resources to defeat the government on any one of the six discriminatory measures against which they had planned to campaign. In the case of both the Bantu Education and the Native Resettlement Act, the campaigns mounted by the ANC were heavily defeated. It is the former which concerns us here.

In view of the seriousness with which the ANC viewed the Bantu Education Act, the handling of the issue at the December 1954 conference was remarkably casual. The report of the National Executive Committee was brief. It said:

The Bantu Education question has been handed over to the women and youth sections of the African National (ingress working together with other organisations whose purpose is to fight against this Devil's piece of legislation. This means that they work under the supervision of the senior body, but specialise on this campaign.

The plans have been drawn up which recommend a withdrawal of children at least for one week. A speaker on the subject will enlighten you more as to precisely what should be done:

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The resolution adopted by the conference called for the 'total rejection of Verwoerd's evil act' and further decided to call on parents 'to make preparations to withdraw their children from schools indefinitely as from 1 April 1955, until further directive from the National Executive Committee.' Nothing further was heard about the role of the women's section, nor of the 'plans' that had been drawn up. According to a report of the Cape ANC, there was no comprehensive programme of campaign, and it was left to the provincial and local
branches to put the issue to the people and prepare for the boycott. It seems, in fact, that there was little thought given to the campaign, and that the conference did not even check to see whether 1 April was a school day. The day had been chosen by the government for the commencement of the new system and fell in the Easter recess.

The provincial and local branches did very little to put the conference resolution to the people, and on 6 March the ANC National Executive stated that there had not been enough time to organise the boycott, and decided to postpone its start to 25 April. At this stage the National Executive also decided that the boycott should not proceed until arrangements had been made for children who were to be withdrawn from the schools. In April a committee of individuals was set up under the chairmanship of Father Huddleston to provide alternative education. This committee was later transformed into the African Education Movement (AEM) and under its aegis a chain of Cultural Clubs was established to provide an outlet for children who were kept out of schools when the boycott commenced.

The setting up of the Huddleston committee, and the decision to postpone the boycott brought strains inside the ANC to the surface. Not everyone in Congress accepted the idea of 'alternative education', and at least one editorial in the Congress journal Liberation rejected it. Writing at a time when it was still hoped by some that the flagging boycott could be revived, it was stated: The idea that a boycott should be made conditional on providing 'alternative education' is, in fact, quite wrong in principle ... It is not the aim of a political boycott of this sort to relieve the State of its obligation to provide proper education, but rather to compel the State to fulfil that obligation honourably.

But the biggest issue was over the boycott itself. Members of the Congress Youth League were afraid that the National Executive decision to postpone the boycott signalled an attempt to revoke the Conference decision of December 1954. Despite the fact that there had not been adequate preparation for a large-scale campaign, members of the CYL called the boycott for 12 April (the first day of the new school term) in the eastern Cape, and on the East Rand (that is, the Witwatersrand to the East of Johannesburg). On that day school entrances were picketed by members of the Youth League, and in some instances schools were entered and class dismissed. Women and children marched through the streets of Denoni, Brakpan and Germiston carrying ANC baners and posters rejecting Bantu Education and large crowds congregated at street corners. They were, inevitably, dispersed by armed police.

In some towns in the Cape the election of parents' representatives to school committees was stopped by Youth Leaguers, and in the Eastern Cape children were withdrawn from schools in six districts the only districts in which the ANC had done any preparatory work.

Early in April, Dr. Verwoerd warned that any children still boycotting
schools on the 25th of the month (the date chosen by the National Executive to start the campaign!) would be permanently excluded from all schools. The National Executive was in disarray, and several prominent ANC leaders called on parents to end the boycott, and sent their own children to school. This all but ended the campaign. Only in Port Elizabeth was any attempt made to extend the school boycott, but this too was aborted when Dr. Verwoerd announced that a single day’s absence (if shown it) be part of a boycott) would lead to immediate expulsion. The boycott was dead, although the ANC only formally recognised that the campaign was over in 1958!

Some 7,000 former school goers did not return to school on the 25th. Most of these young boys and girls, together with some 4,000 who had not been at school in 1955, were catered for by the Cultural Clubs.

The African Education Movement started in mid-1955, and continued through until 1960. Many of its committee members were banned, its club leaders in the townships harassed, and the children subjected to police raids (and in one case at least, had police guns levelled at them). They provided little formal education and served little political purpose (as the Liberation editorial had claimed), although they were an example of dogged perseverance. They also did provide some sheltered occupation for children who otherwise would have roamed the township streets.

The clubs could not legally provide any ‘education’ and had to resort to storytelling, quizzes, play-acting, and similar activities. The club leaders were unfortunately untrained in methods of informal teaching; they were mothers or teachers who had left (or been expelled by) the Ilantu Affairs Department. They were often unpaid, or received a few pounds per month, contributed by the parents. Their accommodation often consisted of a clearing under a tree, and rain closed such clubs for the day.

The parents hoped that their children would receive instruction in reading and writing - even though that would have been illegal, and club leaders had instructions to avoid such activity. The children, consequently, were often sent to the clubs with slates, exercise books, and readers, and these were invariably seized by tie police and used as evidence in court when the leaders were prosecuted.2 AEM activity became, increasingly, the provision of money for bail, for fines, and for lawyers’ fees. The Committee and the clubs finally collapsed in 1960 when many of the active club leaders and some of the committee were placed in detention in the post Sharpeville state of emergency. They were not restarted after the detainees were released.

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The boycott failed in 1955 and there was never any possibility of its succeeding. The state was far too strong, and the government too determined, while the opposition was weak and undecided. To suggest that errors were made is not, therefore, to contend that the school system could have been altered appreciably in 1955.
In March 1955, the ANC Executive had stated that not enough time had been set aside to organise the boycott although the editorial writer in Liberation maintained that:

Three months (from January to April) could be enough to get a campaign going properly, provided that massive, well-organised work was done.

The real fault with the decision about April 1st was that it assumed that all that was necessary was to issue an order and the people would hasten to obey. The problem was, however, not only organisational, but lay in the whole conception of the boycott. The initiative was to be left to parents to withdraw their children, and little consideration was given to the fact that parents of school-going youth relied on the schools, in fact depended on the schools, to occupy their children while they were away from home. Furthermore, the parents hoped that education would allow their children to advance up the economic ladder. To call on these parents to withdraw their children was not realistic, and only a small number could be expected to respond.

Secondly, and far more fundamentally, even a longer period of preparation would not have ensured a greater response to the boycott call in 1955. Campaigns, even on issues over which people are agitated, cannot be called unless there is already a readiness for action. There must be a potential for response, and this in turn depends on a tradition of struggle in the arena chosen for confrontation. There was, however, no open conflict in the schools in the towns, and no history of conflict in the primary schools. When the ANC decided on the campaign, it did not take cognizance of the fact that it was primary school children who would be involved, and that parents had always clamoured to get their seven or eight year olds into the schools. What might just have been feasible at Fort Hare, or even in the secondary schools, was not possible then in the primary schools.

The extension of Bantu Education to the secondary schools, and the legislation to alter the universities, only came four years later in 1959. There was, however, no attempt to call on older students to boycott the schools, the colleges or the universities on that occasion. Nothing had changed in Bantu Education since the time when Professor ZK. Matthews had addressed the Cape ANC in his capacity as President on 15 June 1955. In a long address on education he had maintained that: ‘As the years pass under the new dispensation even our deputation friends will come to realise that education for ignorance and for inferiority in Verwoerd’s schools is worse than no education at all.’ In the circumstances the fact that seven and eight year olds were pulled out of schools while older youth were not called upon to resist the new measures only four years later, needs explanation. The ANC never offered reasons. Nor did any of the other political movements suggest an alternative lead. The NEUM youth sections, the Society of Young Africa (SOYA), only opted out in 1955 when they cursorily dismissed the ANC as cowards who: ‘shifted the burden of the struggle on to the backs of our children.’
The missions and churches faced a government which was intent on expropriating all teacher training colleges and ensuring that all state-aided schools be transferred (after a short interval) to state controlled 'Bantu Community Organisations'. The teacher training colleges were to he taken over immediately but the schools would be given a 'choice'. The existing schools could continue to function under licence. Provided they found the funds, if they removed all white teachers, and adopted the new Bantu Education syllabus. Most mission institutions were closed, or were appropriated by the state. Only a few churches (the Roman Catholics in particular) were prepared to continue, raise the necessary funds, and teach the new syllabus. There were also a few establishments, each comprising secondary school, industrial school and teacher training college, which meant to maintain in their existence in sole form. One such attempt by the staff of Adams College (Natal), aided by the ABCFM, was described by the principal, the Reverend G.C. Grant, in 1951.

Adams College

Rev. Grant had been opposed to the Bantu Education Act from the date of its first publication, and his account describes the harassment to which he was subjected by the police because of his vocal objections. The College was visited by members of the Native Affairs Committee (the top advisory committee responsible only to Parliament), and the principal and his staff were subjected to lengthy questioning on their policy and their political attitudes. Rev. Grant likened the proceedings to an 'inquisition', and it was obvious from the meeting that Adams College would not be allowed to continue for much longer under private control.

In an attempt to save Adams College and the industrial school, the staff decided to close the teacher training college. This latter, however, the government had decided to take over immediately. Furthermore, in July 1956, the principal was informed that only the training college would be allowed to continue operating: the schools would be closed. By government decision the institution was renamed the Amamintotsi Zulu Training College, and most of the staff replaced by government nominees. The students who stayed on had been opposed to the transfer of the college and through 1957 and 1958 the situation there was tense. Students objected to the extensive use of their fellows as 'informers', and the tension was exacerbated when the government threatened to expel any student who maintained an association with the liberal National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).33

In 1958, one of the black school servants inadvertently interchanged tea cups belonging to white and black teachers, and a white teacher, angered by this 'misdemeanour', struck the worker. The students then instituted a passive resistance campaign. Hymn books and chairs belonging to the white staff members disappeared at morning assembly, and these men stood, insulted, while their black colleagues sat! The pettiness of apartheid had turned full circle, but the situation was not allowed to rest there: twenty alleged ring leaders were expelled, and 254 students then threatened a walk-out. The police were called in to 'restore order'
and several students were arrested and charged, although none were convicted."
The discontent did not disappear, and in May 1960 50 students left after
complaining about the standard of tuition.34
Fort Hare
The situation at Fort Hare was significantly different. There, the complainnts
about conditions on the campus were closely integrated with events in the rest of
the country, The Congress Youth League competed with the Society of Young
Africa for control of political life on the campus, and the growing militancy of
these two groups led to a campaign against association with 'liberal' or white
student bodies. In 1952 Fort flare moved 'eltwars' and voted to secede from
NUSAS. The students also boycotted a reception ffor the Nationalist-appointed
Governor-General at the College in the same year, and several students were
expelled, including Gatsha Buthelezi who later mainr to prominence in Bantustan
polities.
During the next two years, members of the CYL were in the forefrot 4d the
agitation against the implementation of Bantu lEducation. and derianded that the
schools be closed. It was due to their organisation, particularly in the Eastern
Cape, that the boycott of schools got under way on 12 April 1955
There were also serious complaints about conditions on the campus. A
Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate conditions at Fort la v f 4r the
Students Representative Council resigned en blrx and the students boycotted the
annual graduation ceremony in early May, 1955. It stated
members were shocked, they said, to realize bow bad the atmospliro
really was at Fort Hare . . . There had, on the part of the authorities. Ivon a carry-
over of the traditional paternal missionary approach. Some of thr rules were
impracticable and unenforceable, Th authoritiom depended too
much on 'informers' for information. The hostels were controlled by
churches and wardens were church, not College, appointments, rosp–oribl
for discipline as well as for certain teaching. Conditions in at least two ol
the hostels were unsatisfactory: living quarters were overcrowded and equipment
inadequate. Requests from students did riot receive proper
attention.

Bantu lNdueatton: 1954-76
The Commission called 'for a bold transition from the methods and
atmosphere of the missionary high school from which Fort Hare sprang to those
of a university'. They also suggested that academic fclilities should be improved; 
that post-graduate classes and scholarships be provided, that religious services be
made voluntary rather than compulsory; and that there be changes in the
administration of discipline. At the same time both political movements (SOYA
and CYL) were criticised in the report because: 'They imagined they were in the
vanguard of "the struggle for liberation"', and confused the issue of the
maintenance (f legitimate college discipline with the idea of baaska p
(donmination).’as
These political forces, said the Commission members, could not he eliminated -
but their effectiveness might be reduced hy (tie 'expulsive power of new
affections' (sic). The principal, finally, was praised for his integrity, deep care for students, and unspiring hard work for the College. The government was already preparing legislation which would transform the College, remove the principal, and reduce the effectiveness of the political groups, so that the Commission report could have been of little worth even if its suggested reforms had been acceptable to the students.

The Extension of University Education Act
In 1959 the Extension of University Education Act was passed through parliament. The 'open universities' would not allow to register any new black students (unless granted special permission by the Minister for Bantu Affairs). Fort Hare would fall under the Minister of Bantu Education and be open only to Xhosa speaking Aluicars. Two tribal based university colleges would be established: the University College of the North at 'urflopp to serve the &rtho, Iedi, Tswana and Venda, and the University College of Zululand at Ngoye, Natal, to serve tire Zulls. Coloureds would all be directed to the new Ulivi Uitlege of the Western Cape in Bellville, and Indians to their University (Coliege eir - )ii Duhati

During the two years preceding the change the Students and Staff at Fort Hare expressed their disapproval, but there was no talk of taking militant action, nor were there early moves to boycott the College. In 195\$ studen on the campus passed a resolution condemning the distrtrul of staff Inertlie r and claimed that the atmosphere of insecurity made the 'normal pursuit of academic activities almost impossible'. They continued:

But let it be noted, once and for all, that our stand as students of Fort Hare and as the future leaders of our country, upholding the principles of education as universally accepted, remains unchanged and uncompromising...
We wish to warn the architects of white domination, the whole country and the world at large that we will not held responsible for the disastrous repercussions of this apartheid policy, which in the foreseeable future will destroy the entire social, political and economic structure of our country.

The words of the resolution, defiant as they were, did not reflect the situation as the national leadership saw it at the time. The Congress movement had taken a number of knocks, and was considerably weakened by a long drawn out Treason Trial which had restricted the leadership and eaten deeply into the resources of the entire Congress movement. The leadership looked to the possibility of widespread opposition which would confront the government and remove fascism (as they were wont to describe the ruling party). The opposition to the University bill encouraged them, rather mistakenly, in the belief that a broad united front could be built. At the time this was expressed in an article by Nelson Mandela:

The Bill has aroused extensive popular indignation, and opposition throughout the country as well as abroad. Students and lecturers, liberals and conservatives, progressives, democrats, public men and women of all races and with varying political affiliations have been stirred into action.
and he argued that Fascism has become a living reality in our country and its defeat has become the principal task of the entire people of South Africa. But the fight against the fascist policies of the Government cannot be conducted on the basis of isolated struggles. It can only be conducted on the basis of the united fight of the entire people of South Africa against all attacks of the Nationalists...

A broad united front of all the genuine opponents of the racial policies of the Government must be developed ...39

The students affiliated to SOYA, and those who were turning to the 'Africanists' inside the ANC (soon to become the Pan-Africanist Congress) rejected this appeal for a united front with 'liberals', 'progressives' or 'democrats', not to mention the 'conservatives'.

The campaign against the new Bill was no more effective than others during the previous decade, although there were more illusions aroused than previously. The names of former judges, academics and politicians opposed to the new legislation aroused hope that it would not be enacted. There were mass meetings, on and off the campuses; one-day boycotts of classes (at Cape Town, Witwatersrand and elsewhere); solemn processions of dons and students in academic garb in the main cities; yet the legislation was placed (in the statute book. Symbolically, plaques proclaiming the idea of the 'open university' were unveiled at Cape Town and Witwatersrand, a yearly lecture

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Fort Hare, however, was not to be allowed to forget the opposition of the past year. The principal and eight white members of staff were informed they would not be reappointed. Professor Z.K. Matthews, the senior African academic and vice-principal, rejected the government's demand that he leave the ANC and resigned. He was joined by four lecturers who left rather than stay in the new Bantu university college.

Students fared little better. When Fort Hare was reopened in 1960, 11 students were not readmitted on disciplinary grounds and the SRC was instructed to resign from NUSAS (which the students had rejoined in 1956). This led to a new wave of indignation amongst the student body:

Next day there was a near-revolt at the college, meetings of protest being held and demonstrations staged in the dining halls. The students decided to dissolve the SRC pending the drawing up of a new constitution.40

The incipient revolt was stifled by the college authorities who demanded that every student sign a declaration reaffirming acceptance of the college regulations, or face dismissal. This was followed by the promulgation of new regulations which required students at Fort Hare to provide yearly testimonials of good conduct, and to sign yearly undertakings to comply with all college rules and regulations.41
At the boarding schools and colleges, and at Fort lare, there were new administrations and new regulations. Inevitably there were new grievances added to the old, and, in the late 1950s and through the 1960s, there were reports of disturbances.

Schools Dismantled and the Struggle Continues

One of the lesser known features of the transference of schools to the Department of Bantu Administration was the displacement of students from schools after their structures had been altered. Part of the story was told by Phyllis Ntantala in an article in the journal Africa South. "A Teacher-training for boys was discontinued at St. Matthews, and the school restricted to girls. Lovedale, which was once co-educational, was transformed into a single-sex school and its industrial department was closed down. All the displaced boys and girls were given five months in which to find alternative accommodation, and most found that there was no place for them in schools which already had long waiting lists of applicants; they were forced to abandon their education.

The reorganisation of the schools showed the government's determination to wipe out the old tradition. At Lovedale, said Ms. Ntantala, the Cuthbert Library, 'one of the biggest and best school libraries in the country' was dismantled, the books sold, and the library building converted into a store.

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The campus sites were also allowed to deteriorate and most of the maintenance staffs were dismissed. All the chilres were allocated to the pupils, and compulsory manual work was introduced both before and after school hours.

Ms. Ntantala lists some of the events which followed the inevitable student discontent and administrative repression. Thirty senior girls were expelled from Shawbury in the Transkei in 1957; 200 men sent home on the eve of the examinations at St. Johns College; over 300 students at Lovedale staged a walkout in February 1959 and went home, The incidents continued, moving from one school to another. In 1960. 420 students were sent home from Tigerkloof School in the Cape. A carpentry block was subsequently burnt down, students were detained and eight were eventually sentenced. A political dimension was added in 1941 when, in addition to demonstrations at schools over food and disciplinary issues, students protested against the official festivities held to celebrate the proclamation of the new Republic of South Africa. Once again there were riots and expulsions across the country. In the Transkei the demonstrators took a more serious turn because the territory was in a 'state of emergency' and all meetings were prohibited. At St. Johns College, the students refused to disperse and destroyed government vehicles before attempting to urin down the school library. Two hundred and seven students were arrested. Ji0 of these, 21 were fined (from £15 to £25) and 86 were sentenced to str4-Ts.'

The disturbances never stopped, and the list of expulsions grew, hut mIN reports became sparse in the aftermath of the hanning of radical jorimal It was only in the late 1960's, when events in the new university colleges became front page news in
the national press, that reporting of schokil deiwrth, strations and riots was 
renewed.
It could not have been otherwise: the educational system had to INc cl 
rebels, and the students had to react. The repressiou, wwhether vert or.,vea. had to 
lead the young men and women to confrontatoin situations: atid tith intransigence 
of the staff had to lead to periodic explosions. lehellio i w! endemic in these 
colleges and schools, and could lie hiddenlii fol public' scrutiny only as long as 
they continued to be isolated from other evcnt' il the country. When the time 
came, as it did in 1970, that the tsvis were to large to be concealed, and when, 
Furthermore, they coincided with deep antagonisms in the country, such student 
disturbances wete to take the country to the edge of revolution, At such a time the 
young mon and womr of the country would step right outside the classroom and 
enter the ilttle, ground.

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Loc.cit.
Quoted in I.B, Tabata, (1960), Education 16r Barbarism, (Pall Mall), 
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lansard, Vol. 5, 1950, quoted in Tallata. op. cit., p.21
1. B. Tahata, op.cit., .26
M. Hurrcll, (i 1964), o ~i ,67-8.
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Loexct.
Ibid., p. 16 8.
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Studies, London.)
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Liberation, December 1955. See also Karis and Carter, op.xi., p.233,
report to the ANC annual conference, December 1955 for the same
point of view.
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manuscript 'The African Education Movement' by the

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secretary, Myrtle Berman, (c. 1959), 21 pp., (available in the library,
School of Oriental and African Studies, London). Trevor Huddleston,
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in Chapter 9, 'Education for servitude'. A less sympathete
account can be found in Edward Felt, (1962), South Africa: the
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31. A shortened version of the original report 'The liquidation of Adams
College' was printed in David M. Paton, (Ed.), (1958), Church and Race
in South Africa, (SCM Press), pp.51-93. See also SRRSA, 1954-55, for
a description of the reactions of the different Churches to the Bantu
Education Act.
32. An account of NUSAS's role in student politics will be found in
Chapter 3,
33. Although this was the largest disturbance at an educational institution
during the period, there are few press reports of the event. The acxunt
here is taken from M. Berman, op.cit., and Ikhwezi Lomso, Februar)
1959 (available on microfilm, Centre for Southern African Studies,
York University).
34. It is not clear whether this was a continuation of the older discon trn
or a response to the tension in the country following the shootinyg ali Sharpeville. In the same month, 240 of the older students at ltl,
Moroka Training Centre (Thaba N'chu, Orange Free State) were rnt
home after boycotting the dining hall and stoning the house of thl
Assistant Boarding Master. There were also reports of denonslratiotto ;
the secondary schools after several years of relative quiet.
35. SRRSA, 1954-55, pp.193-5, contains in summary form some of the recommendations of the Commission under Professor J.1, Duinin.
36. ‘Open Universities’ only admitted black students in limited numbers and in a restricted set of faculties. No more than 5 to 6 per cent of student intake was black. At Durban, which was not ‘open’, 22 per cent of the total student number was black (mainly Indian), but there were separate classes and white students met separately from their black peers. A limited number of Arts faculties were open to Blacks. The segregated black medical school attached to Natal University in Durban and a quota system for black students in the faculties of medicine at UCT and the Witwatersrand (no Africans, however were accepted at UCT!). No dentistry or physiotherapy courses were available for Blacks and there were no African architectural students. Prior to 1959, only four Africans were accepted into the engineering faculty at Witwatersrand. There was complete social, residential and sport apartheid at all universities.
39. Ibid.
40. SRRSA, 1959-60, p.237,
41. Ibid., pp.232-5, for a summary of the regulations.

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3. The University Student Movements: 1960-1969
Bantu Education Implemented
From 1954 to 1958 mother-tongue or vernacular instruction was introduced in the African primary schools, and in 1959 vernacular instruction was extended to the first class of the secondary schools. The implementation of Bantu Education in the schools was nearing completion, and the government anticipated that within a few years the students' progress would be controlled by the Minister of Bantu Education from the first sub-standard of the primary school through to the fifth and final form of the secondary school.
A select few who continued their education in training colleges for teachers, or nurses and midwives, or in the university colleges would also be controlled by government regulations. By far the largest group receiving vocational training in 1975 were the 15,563 students enrolled at the 35 colleges which offered two year courses for teachers' certificates. These candidates had either completed the sixth standard or the third form at school before entering training colleges and were still governed by the regulations and syllabuses issued.
for Bantu Education. A further 476 students were enrolled at the black university
colleges (373 for diplomas and 103 for degrees) in teaching courses.
There were also 5,958 students at the black hospitals and 10 training
colleges for African nurses in 1975. Although these women received the
training as their white peers, there had been pressures brought to bear since 1951 to
alter their status. The original government proposals, in the Nurkin Amendment
Bill, contained clauses which would have excluded all or, the 2,000 registered
black nurses from being appointed or elected to the South African Nursing
Council or to the Board of the South African Nursing Association. Considerable
opposition led to the bill being withdrawn in 1954, but it was again presented to
Parliament in 1954 and then sent to a Select Committee. Dr. Eiselen, one of the
witnesses to give evidence, presented the case that had become commonplace
since he had headed the Commission Wm Native Education. He stated:
Our experience has been that... the professional Bantu is uprooted And4
no longer tribe conscious. The longer it is possible for the Bantu nurse to

The Universio, Student Arfovements, 1960-69
remain a member of the Nursing Association, the more difficult she would
find it to forego such membership.2
It was not only membership of the Nursing Association that Dr. Eiselen objected
to. He also believed, in line with his views on Bantu Education, that the course of
study offered to African nurses should be different. This he explained as follows:
The attitude of the Native towards bodily cleanliness is different from that of the
European ... lie further sleeps with his hand under the blanket, not because he
finds it warmer that way, but because he feels safer. To counter
that, it would not be of much use to try to drum into him that he must have more
oxygen, but it should rather he pointed out to him that the
tokkeloshe [spirit] is not as dangerous as he thinks.1
Despite a determined campaign by African nurses to stop the bill, the government
proceeded with the Nursing Act Amendment Bill in 1957. The terms of the new
Act prevented blacks voting for, or being members of, the Board of the
Association, or of the Nursing Council. In place of this, black nurses were offered
Advisory boards and Advisory Councils through which they could advise their
all-white official counterparts on matters that concerned them. In addition the
Nursing Council was empowered to introduce separate uniforms, and separate
syllabuses and examinations for different racial groups. The black nurses were
finally silenced in 1957 by a notice posted in every hospital which warned them
that they were 'public servants' and that those who 'took part in political activities'
would be dismissed."
The threat of dismissal cut off the possibility of the nurses continuing their
campaign against the new regulations, but did not end the resentment that was felt
by both registered nurses and pupils. In March 1958 a hundred nurses came out
on strike at the Lovedale Hospital after a staff nurse had been dismissed. The
nurses demanded her reinstatement or a month's extension of the dismissal notice.
When their demand was refused, they picketed the hospital. As in 1948, the
students at Fort Hare helped organise the strike, negotiated on behalf of the nurses
with the principal of Fort Hare and the Medical Superintendent of the hospital, arid set aside a portion of all meals to provide the striking nurses with food. The authorities were not prepared to make any concessions and the strike collapsed., On later occasions the nurses and stiidelIt-tiurses were far more circumspect and, even in 1974, whe the entire student body at Turtluop boycotted classes and organised u sit-in, the Students Representative Council excused all student nurses frot participation;" African teachers were also subjected to a severe disciplinary code. They could not claim annual salary increments as a tight, could tie deprived of annual leave, and could be distis d without any reason being proferred. Under the thirteen points of 'misconduct', teachers could be punished if they 'treated with gross discourtesy a member of the public or any official'. Nor

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could any teacher:
.. contribute to the Press by interview, or In any other manner, or publish letters or articles criticising or commenting on the Department of Native Affairs, or any other State Department, or school committee, school board, or any Bantu Authority, or any official connected with ore or more of the above-mentioned bodies.7

In the aftermath of the introduction of Bantu Education, says Mr. Tabata'a ieign of terror has been let loose on the teachers'.8 Leading members AA the Cape African Teachers Association were dismissed; teachers were seized and interrogated in front of their classes; pension rights were forfeited after life. times of service; and hundreds of teachers, who had conformed and never dared criticise the Department, were arbitrarily replaced by young graduates who qualified under the new syllabus after 1956.'

In 1959 when the Extension of University Education Act was passed, the government appeared to have completed their plans for controlling educalton in South Africa. They had separated the races and the tribes, they had either provided differential training or made provision for differentiation, and they had written disciplinary codes into the schools, colleges, universities, and even into the contracts of employment of most graduates of the educatiofa system. Until the 1970's it even seemed that the government plan was succemtl Despite all opposition the legislation had been passed, and the schools and colleges were producing graduates trained by teachers less inclined to 4:11tklo the government. Nonetheless the entire edifice was built around a contra. diction that could not be resolved. Those students who did manage to pass through the educational mesh and reach the secondary schools, or perhaps the universities, received sufficient instruction to inform them that they were neither different nor inferior. They were both the products, and the living refutation of the philosophy of Bantu Education. Under the new system the number of students at schools and univerrmits had risen in absolute terms. There was, however, a constraint on the num br that could be accepted because of the ceiling placed on the state contribulwa to finances. It was consequently cheaper to expand intake at the prinm school level; cheaper if
there were two sessions daily for children in the Wt', standards; and cheaper still if women replaced men as teachers at three quarters of the salary.

The restricted expansion in secondary schools was partly a reflection of parsimony. It was also due to a calculated decision that secondate education be restricted so that no more school graduates he produced than were thought to be required by commerce and industry.

The increased enrolment in the schools from 1955 to 1969 is shown in Table Three. In the first decade of Bantu Education the percentage of pupils in the secondary schools dropped slightly relative to the total enrolment. In 1955 3.5 per cent of the total number of pupils were in the secondary school. By 1960 the figure had dropped to 3.2 per cent, and in 1965 was 3.4 per cent. Only by 1969 had the proportion returned to the 1955 level. In the late 1960's there were signs of a significant change in official policy, and the number permitted to enter secondary schools was increased. By 1975 the proportion of pupils receiving secondary education had risen four-fold. The reasons that lay behind this change of policy, and the effects it had on school pupils, need fuller discussion which will be deferred to Chapter Five.

Despite the slow growth of the secondary schools, there was a more rapid development of higher education. The establishment of two new African university colleges, together with a Coloured and an Indian college, as a result of the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, led to a sudden expansion in student numbers. This is reflected in Table Four.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>970,200</td>
<td>1,452,300</td>
<td>1,885,000</td>
<td>2,435,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior secondary</td>
<td>32,900</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>62,620</td>
<td>82,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms IV and V</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>4,230</td>
<td>6,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,005,200</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>1,951,850</td>
<td>2,524,140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The figures for 1969 exclude pupils at school in the Transkei.)

### Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hare</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turfloop</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>1,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngoye</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (African)</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>2,011</td>
<td>2,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.W.C. (Coloured)</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>1,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durban-Westville</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>1,654</td>
<td>2,004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Indian)

The Black Campus Protest

Within a year of the passing of the University Act of 1959, the two national liberation movements, the ANC and PAC, were banned, and the students who entered the new tribal colleges in the early 1960's brought with them memories of
Sharpeville and the match on Calm Town from Langa-Nyanga. In 1961 there was another stay-at-home called by an ad hoc committee headed by Nelson Mandela and, despite its limited success, the country seethed with rumours of massive police and army concentrations, of underground organisation, and of plans for new black action.

In fact, there was no peace or quiet in the country. In 1962 there were the first well publicised acts of sabotage. In 1963 the new organisations that appeared, carried out widespread acts of disruption, and the names of the clandestine movements, Umkhonto we Sizwe and Pogo (connected to the ANC and PAC respectively), and the newly established and much smaller National Committee of Liberation (NCL, later called ARM), appeared in the national newspapers. The arrest of the national High Command of Umkhonto, and the continued police pressure that led to the crippling or destruction of Pogo and the Committee of Liberation, continued to be front page news for over a year. All this was known to the university students, and many of them maintained an allegiance to one or other of the two main liberation organisations, even though the blanket ban on overt political discussions on the campus prevented open organisation.

During the first years numbers were low, except at Fort Hare, and there were no traditions of past activity on which the students could build new organisations. But each year brought increased enrolment, which facilitated the growth of informal groupings. Corporate identities were built up in residence, and students felt increasingly able to voice complaints about conditions on the campuses.

The students had a lot to complain about: they were subjected to a disciplinary code; they were isolated on campuses that had been built in rural areas far from the mainstream of social or political activity. Furthermore, separated on tribal grounds (Fort Hare for Xhosa, No#ve for Zulu, and Turfloop for Tswana-Sotho-Venda), and isolated from Coloureds and Indians, whom they came to welcome as fellow black oppressed. As the years went by they also became increasingly critical of the staff. They had always protested against the all-white control of the Councils and Senates of the universities, and against the preponderance of white professors and lecturers. They became even more indignant when they found that they were being offered a succession of 'introductory' courses, thrust to their final year of study, and were never allowed to proceed beyond all elementary level in most of their optional courses. When lecturer after lecturer demanded uncritical regurgitation of texts, they rejected, but all protests were ignored or rejected.

The avenues available for formal protest were restricted, and only at Hare were the students able to show their discontent openly in the early 1960's. As a first step they refused to vote or a Student Representative Council, claiming, correctly, that the constitution rendered the body invalid and, furthermore, that membership of the Council invited victimisation. The student body at Fort Hare, smarting under the need to produce 'good low duct' certificates, and sign their acceptance of the regulations befoe ower tration every year, organised a number
of demonstrations. They hoycoited visiting dignitaries (including cabinet ministers), and refused to attend

The University Student Movements, 1960-69 graduation ceremonies, unless due to be capped themselves. They also, on rare occasions, sent delegations to meet the Rector and carry their collective complaints. The result was usually disastrous. In 1967, for example, they sent a deputation to protest against the presence of police informers on the campus. Fourteen of the students who went to see the Rector were arbitrarily refused admission the following year.12

It was only in 1967, when many students joined the University Christian Movement anti two years later, when the South African Students Organisation (SASO) was formed, that the students on the different campuses were able to participate in organisations that were tolerated, to a greater or lesser degree. The evolution of these bodies, and some of the strains that followed in their wake will be discussed below. Before they could appear, however, the issue of organisation across the colour line dominated student discussion, and was seen as the major problem by the majority of black students. The government was determined that the racial groups be kept separate, and throughout the 1960s the issue of affiliation to the predominantly English-speaking National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) appeared to be the single most important political issue on the black campuses.

The NUSAS Issue
Throughout the 196's black students campaigned for the right to affiliate to the National Union of South African Students and just as steadfastly, the move was vetoed by the campus nithoirities. N1 ISAS was also keen to wel. come the colleges into their fold. Not only would this make it the largest student organisation in the country, but it would also bring into the liberal fold all student opponents of the government's apartheid policy.

Despite this general clamour by leading members on the black campuses to affiliate, there had always been dissident voices which claimed that NUSAS was part of a 'white imperialist front'. The Non-European Hlity Movement had always adopted this viewpoint, and between 1954 and 1957 had even managed to secure student support at Fort Hare for disaffiliation from NUSAS. In the late fifties, the Non-European Unity Movement body, the Progressive National Student Organisation, called for 'non-collaboration with the collaborators', and secured considerable student support. This attitude was later described by the South African Students Organisation (SASO) leaders, in one of their publications, as 'emotional'.13 Yet, after nearly a decade of agitation in which students in the black colleges demanded the right to affiliate to NUSAS, and after witnessing some of the most militant action ever taken by the white students in 1968, the black student body, SASO, denounced NUSAS, in terms not dissimilar to those used by the Unity Movement, Tds vol leface changed the nature of blnck student politics itnd con. tributed, in part, to the launching of other black organisations in the early 1970's. To trace the events lending to this reversal, after a decade of agitation,
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in favour of affiliation, it is necessary to look briefly at developments inside NUSAS.
NUSAS was formed in 1924 in order to unite all the university students of South Africa. At that stage the universities concerned were few in number, and were exclusively white in composition. The attempt to unite English and Afrikaans-speaking students failed during the thirties. In the decade preceding the second world war, many students on the English-speaking campuses were inclined towards a programme of liberal democracy, although they thought primarily of a democracy that would embrace all whites. In 1933, when Fort Hare was proposed as a full member of NUSAS, a Commission was set up by the students, and as a result of their report the constitution was amended to read: 'NUSAS is a federation of the SRCs of European universities, and University Colleges, and of pro-NUSAS branches at European University Colleges.'
The University Colleges of Potchefstroom and Pretoria, and Grey University College, Bloemfontein had already withdrawn in 1933. The latter College had already decided that NUSAS was: too English, too imperialistic, too negrophilistic in colour ... [and displayed a] liberalistic tendency especially as a result of the strong influence of socialistic international-minded Jews who wish to effect a general world citizenship without founding it on genuine nationalism,..." When Stellenbosch left NUSAS in 1936, the National Union was confined to the English-speaking campuses until 1945 when Fort Hare again applied for admission and was accepted.
The Nationalist Party, the parliamentary opposition from 1933 until 1948, and since then the governing party, condemned NUSAS in terms not dissimilar to those used by the students of Grey University College in 1933. Through the years the stress of individual politicians altered, but NUSAS was always accused of being negrophilist, liberal, imperialist, socialist (and communist), cosmopolitan, English, Jewish and, obviously, subversive.
There were times when NUSAS policy was ahead of white opinion in the country, and also times when students at the black colleges believed that they could work with their white peers. But far too often it was only because of the activity of pressure groups (both black and white) that more radical amendments were made by NUSAS leaders. There was, however, a pervading feeling of self-satisfaction amongst students on the liberal white campuses, and a former national student leader, Neville Curtis, commented on the lack of perception of these young men and women:
After 1959 liberalism had established within itself a myth of moral impeccability that made it unable to see itself as an integral part of white racism, and of the white racist establishment. At the same time the myth of the common society precluded recognition of the real actual divisions which apartheid was creating."

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Read out of context, the point made by Curtis seemed to coincide with the criticisms made by SOYA and the far left in the 1950's. But Curtis started from different premises. He was critical of the new 'ideological liberalism' and wanted a return to 'the open-ended, essentially tolerant [and presumably, pragmatic] liberalism of NUSAS'. He stated furthermore that English-speaking students saw the need to maintain contact with the black students, but that the lecturers 'feigned not to know that they existed'. The conclusion he reached was that '... ideology had warped the real concern which had existed with regard to black education' and it was not a new radicalism that Curtis was espousing but a condemnation of 'the effort to cling to principle, and the elevation of 'idealism to adherence to fixed points'.'

NUSAS could neither move away from liberalism, nor could it become a radical organisation. The continued attack on the organisation and on its leaders by the government precluded any possibility of NUSAS altering its liberal stance. It was an organisation under siege, and short of abandoning the movement, the leadership had to maintain the tradition of opposition to apartheid. On the other hand the hulk of the white student body looked forward to the positions of leadership, and of affluence, that they were being trained for. There was no possibility of a large-scale radical movement growing out of the white student body. It was this realisation that led to the withdrawal of some of the more radical students from NUSAS in the late 1960's. Inspired in part by the worldwide student revolts, they were libertarian, anti-establishment, and also engulfed by the feeling that whites were irrelevant to the struggle they foresaw in South Africa. Some abandoned their studies, most refused to accept posts in NUSAS. NUSAS was weakened by defections against radical Whites, and also by tentative moves by blacks to form their own organisation, but they were given a lease of life in 1968 (and again in 1972) by sit-ins and demonstrations in Cape Town, Rhodes (Grahamstown), and Johannesburg. This only concealed the fragility of NUSAS, and the fact that conservative white opinion was being organised to oust it. After 1972 NUSAS was only a shell of its former self.

Action began at the University of Cape Town (URor) when, early in 1968, Archie Mateje, a former African student at UT, was appointed senior lecturer in the School of African Studies. The Minister of Education demanded that this appointment be rescinded, and the University 'council complied, although it protested against government intervention.

Over 1,000 students and many lecturers protested, and gave their support to some 200 students who staged a sit-in for nine days. On the ninth evening the demonstrators were raided by rightwing students from JCT and from the University of Stellenbosch. The police said they could not guarantee the safety of the sit-in in future and the campaign came to an end.

Students at all other English-speaking universities also protested over the 'Mafeje affair' and at the Uni-ersity of Witwatersrand they planned a march through the city of Johannesburg. This was forbidden at the insistence of the Prime Minister, and the students formed a picket line inside the campus.

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perimeter, bearing placards: 'We have had enough!' They were attacked ad
assaulted by campus conservatives and students from the neighbouring Rand
Afrikaans University and tile (Afrikaans) Goudstad (Goldtown) Teacher Training
College. The police confiscated placards and took the names of students in the
picket-line. When a deputation of Witwatersrand University students went to
Pretoria, hoping to hand the Prime Minister a letter of protest, they were assaulted
by students of Pretoria University.
The demonstrations in Cape Town and Johannesburg started on 14 August 1968.
On Saturday 24 August the Prime Minister issued a warning that, if the student
protests had not ended by Monday, police would move onto the campuses. The
protests had already been called off, however, and the students were back at
lectures by 26 August.
It was only one month later that students at Fort Hare were also involved in a sit-
in. This action was precipitated by the growing resentment of the students against
the ban on affiliation to NUSAS. The students boycotted a leading Cabinet
Minister and painted slogans on campus walls. Police interrogated senior students
which led to a build-up of tension culminating in a sit-in demonstration in
September. This only ended when police moved in with dogs and teargas. The
demonstrators were taken to the railway station and sent home. Twenty-one
students were rusticated for the year, although they were allowed to take
examinations off the campus. The rest of the student body were allowed to return,
but only after they and their parents had signed declarations undertaking not to
take part in any further demonstrations, and to refrain from any act of
insubordination.
The SRCs at both Turfloop and Ngoye also claimed the right to affiliate to
NUSAS, and students on both campuses gave their full support to the sit-in at
Fort Hare. Although there is no evidence of any concerted student action, the
college authorities banned all demonstrations. At Turfloop the 0.nale forbade a
student statement of support for their fellows at Fort Ilare, and the Minister of
Bantu Education banned the application for affiliation to NISAS. Those deemed
to be behind the dissent were expelled.
Black Students Break with NUSAS
Through the period 1960-67 the black students fought the administratiln on the
issue of affiliation to NUSAS. Every move by the Students' Repre'en tative
Councils was vetoed by the universities. Student action was let by stern
disciplinary counteraction, and a large number (if students were expelled. In the
light of Curtis's criticism (of student liberalismn hwiig a% o integral part of white
racism), and the even sharper criticismi frm the ti Its that coupled affiliation with
'collaborationisnt', this concentration ol ,, dmaign for membership of NUSAS
needs explanation.
In seeking affiliation, the black students were demanding the right to associate
with organisations of their own choice, and the more intrantm the government
showed itself, the more determined the students seemed to become. There was,
furthermore, little possibility of engaging in oplwol Ilmmnt and the students,
confronted by Rectors and staff who were determined it)
The University Student Movements, 1960-69

make the tribal colleges work, became engrossed in campus affairs. For a time it might even have seemed that there was an identity of interests between black and white English-speaking students. Nevertheless the disparities between the position of the two racial groups must have been obvious.

The white students were preoccupied with the whittling away of democratic rights: the Blacks' concern was to secure the most elementary of such rights. The white students did not often feel the need to take their political demands outside the campus: the Blacks were always conscious of the fact that they came from an oppressed majority, and they could not divorce the demand for national liberation from their own student demands. No matter how unpleasant the white students found apartheid, they could live outside the oppressive system; the African could never escape it.

Periodically tile divergence of interest came to the surface. When NUSAS set up a Freedom in Society commission in 1969 to examine laws that infringed on human liberties, a black delegate asked pointedly: 'What is the use of an African talking about the erosion of freedom in South Africa? We have no freedom and one or two laws more or less make no difference to our situation.'2' There were also indications that some Blacks resented the paternalistic attitudes that they perceived at conferences. One student leader expressed irritation at the way meetings were white-centred: 'It does not help us to see several black faces in a multi-racial gathering wiich ultimately concentrates on what the white students believe are the needs of black students.'2

The black university students were irritated; the pattern of South African discrimination was only too obviousy being repeated at meetings. Nonethe. less they continued to press for affiliation, because they to shared the liberal ideology of their white peers; and they too aspired to positions of (comparative) affluence after graduation. It was the realisation that they would not in fact get the posts they knew they deserved, that puNshed them to more radical positions. They were demanding equality, and that drew them to NUSAS: the realisation that this equality could not be obtained if any alliance with NUSAS forced them to adopt new political solutoins. The split was inevitable, hut the reasons were 'felt', rather thai undeistooll.'Black Man, You Are On Your Own.'

The most prominent slogan of the students, and of the student organiisat ions in the 1970's was 'Black Man, youl are on your owt'. It acted asa rallying call on all the black campuses, and was incorporated into tite lauguage o1 those men and women, students and intellectuals, who espoused thle philosophy of' black consciousness. The slogan was an assertion of’ the right to independent organisation on the campuses, and was also a political statement of more general application. The young studetits were aware of the hiatus in their political lives following the banning of the ANC and the PAC, and they saw campus politics as only one part of the broader fight that had to be taken up

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by the African people. Apartheid on the campus was inseparable from the general division of the country on colour lines as envisaged by the government, and campus organisation was only the prelude to building a national organisation. Nevertheless the first step towards independent organisation occurred under conditions which indicate that the black leaders were most undecided on the tactics they should adopt. The precipitating factor occurred at the annual conference of NUSAS, held at Rhodes University in July 1967. At this conference, the black delegates were informed that the Minister of Bantu Affairs had decreed that, under the Group Areas Act, they were requited to sleep in the neighbouring township, and could not be accommodated at the university residence. The student body, both black and white, were furious. The situation was exacerbated when the university Vice-Chancellor stopped all racially mixed social gatherings, and even forbade Blacks the right to take meals in the residence. Many white delegates boycotted the official meals, and conference decided, overwhelmingly, to work for the abolition of racial segregation on the campuses. Despite the fact that NUSAS could not be held responsible for the Minister's decision, and despite the solidarity expressed by nearly whites, it was this event which led the black students to query the value of maintaining links with NUSAS.

A second conference was also scheduled for Rhodes University in July 1967. Some 90 delegates, more than half of them black, attended the concluding conference of the ecumenical University Christian Movement. The new movement did mark a reversal from the now defunct Student Christian Association (disbanded in 1965), which had maintained a colour bar. Nevertheless, as at the NUSAS conference, the accommodation was segregated. Many of the accusations levelled against NUSAS in 1967 could equally have been made against UCM. The Christian Movement was also subjected to segregationary requirements - and like NUSAS protested, but was forced to comply. UCM could not change the structure of the country. The whites tended to dominate the proceedings at the conference and were no more able to decide what was good for the Blacks than the leaders of NUSAS. There were, however, differences. The majority of delegates at the conference were black. The movement was Christian, and was furthermore allowed to exist on the black campuses, where it attracted a considerable membership. These factors, in varying degree, attracted the student leaders as they explained in 1972: The formation of the University Christian Movement in 1967 gave Black students a greater chance of canting together. Because of its more radical stance, and also because at that stage it had not developed a 'bad' complexion politically in the eyes of the Black campus authorities, UCM tended to attract more Black students to its conferences, and this opened channels of communications amongst the Black students.

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It is not at all clear what this 'more radical stance' consisted of, nor is there much evidence that students who were attracted to the UCM in 1967 wanted such a
stance. Furthermore, if the students were satisfied with the programme and constitution of the UCM, it is not easy to follow the reasoning of the SASO authors of the 1972 document, when they continue:

Among the Black students, one of the most talked about topics is the position of the Black students in the open organisations like NUSAS and UCM. Concern was expressed that these were White dominated and paid little attention to problems peculiar to the Black student community...

It was felt that a time had come when Blacks had to formulate their own thinking, unpolluted by ideas emanating from a group with lots at stake in the status quo.16

It would seem, in fact, that there was a far more cogent reason for the students to work in the UCM in 1967. NUSAS activity was banned on all black campuses in 1967 and the move into L1CM was an act of adroit political opportunism on the part of the black students! This supposition is borne out by the history of UCM presented in Blak Reiew, 1972. After mentioning the banning of NUSAS, the account continues:

It was not surprising, therefore, to find that the constituency at the 1968 UCM Conference at Stutterheim was very different from the one at Graharstown the previous year. The major ity . . . were those whose ties with their particular denominations were weakening and who were therefore far less conservative theologically.

It was at this conference that a black caucus was formed out of which grew SASO (the South African Students Organisatiwnl, the spearhead of Black Consciousness.)

The UM proved it) he less useul as a political cover than the students had hoped. The police kept tie memiers under surveillance, halts tof residence were raided periodically and leading members were held for interrogation, Attempts were made by the authotitics to discredit the orgaisration, and ill 1969 the UCM was bannied on black campuses after tmly twi years' activity."9

The black students had not broken shalrply with NOSAS, and they sent delegates its the 1968 commfeieC, IveN whe the Studet tpiesetative Councils of the black antipses imnt at Marialinhil in Dckenber 1968, and decided to firm SASO, tlint N1 ISAS PNositdvlnt was ilvited to attend tile inaugural colference the following July Tlie Pcestdr Ws nitable to lie present and tile white tudts, seeingl unwawalo of, tile significalce of the new movement, made little effort to prevelit the spfi.

SASO Is Born, 1969

The black students were by no mealls iriallIlloUt ill their resolve to torni a separate organisation. In a communique issued at the end of the 1969 conference those opposed to separation were quoted as saying:

Any move that tends to divide tile student population into separate laagers [camps] on the basis of colour is in a way a tacit admission to defeat and seems apparently in agreement with apartheid.

In a racially sensitive country like ours, provision for racially exclusive bodies tends to widen the gap that already exists between
races and to heighten resentment, and the student community should resist all temptation to do this.30

The majority however maintained that apartheid had already separated the communities, and that mixed organisations were farcical. They argued that an independent organisation would be more effective, and that black students owed their first allegiance to the black community. Even more crucially it was argued that it was the students' task to raise the level of consciousness of the black community 'by promoting awareness, pride, achievement and capabilities.'31

Over and above the assertion that Blacks had to organise alone, the leaders of SASO held that Coloureds and Indians were also black, and from the inception the Executive of the student body included members drawn from the Coloured and Indian campuses. Being black, as it was explained, was associated with a way of viewing the world, and not with skin colour.

This formulation, as will be shown later, led to a number of strange rationalisations. Many men of black skin were not considered black, particularly if they co-operated with the government. But Whites, irrespective of their political sympathies, were always judged by skin colour, and could never, despite their way of thinking, be 'black'.

The new way of thinking demanded by the students was called black consciousness and was written into the preamble of the SAS() constitution in July 1970:

Whereas, we the Black students of South Africa, having examined and assessed the role of Black Students in the struggle for the ascension of the Black people in South Africa and the bulternment of their so iail, political and economic lot, and having unconditionally disdttid 'tilt t4k of faith in the genuineness and capability of multi-racial ti kwiafatons An4 individual Whites in the country to effect rapid social cliige' .... do commit ourselves to the realisation of the wiorth ff the Ilack ait. t11 assertion of his human dignity and to promoting concicioit-nw ati ndrerliance of the black community.3

Some of the students who had opposed the formation of a new organisation had done so on the grounds that tile university athnistrtton would not tolerate a black student federation, and in part their fears were confirmed.

Statements from the Departments of Indian Affairs and of

Thw Uni'versit, Student Movements. 1 96069

Coloured Relations declared that students under their control (at the Indian University and at the University of the Western Cape), would not be allowed to join SASO. Their statements asserted that the three black communities had nothing in common, either socially or culturally.?3

But for reasons that still remain obscure, the administration at Turfloop gave SASO early recognition, and demanded only that the preamble to the constitution he altered. The Snyman Commission, appointed by the government to inquire into the disturbances a Turfloop in 1973, received evidence that the students had been urged by two former (white) rectors of the University to: . shake off the yoke of NUSAS and to establish their own organisation'.34 The government's intention,
however, was not to replace one 'radical' organisation by another and, in the aftermath of confrontations between the students and the authorities, SASO was banned from all campuses except Ngoye in 1975.

The situation at Fort Hare was always difficult. SASO was discouraged from the beginning and student leaders were expelled because of the active role they played in the organisation. Here too, SASO was banned in 1975. The campus at Ngoye was the only centre at which SASO seemed to exist without friction between students and the Reector. In 1975 there was, however, a rival organisation which divided the students ideologically. For some time it looked as if SASO would be relegated to a subsidiary position, and it was only after the key opposition students graduated that the field was left open for SASO activists to re-establish their ascendancy. (This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.)

The UCM was banned on black campuses from 1961), but members of SASO retained individual membership and attended IICM annual conferences; but the differences widened between white and black delegates. There was a 'shift in focus' in the discussions, and the issues became in reasingly social and political. Many white students left the organisation and the churches which had supported the UCM were estranged. By 1970 SASO members were proposing literacy projects and were espousing the cause of Black Theology. This lay outside the perspective of tie founding members of the IICM and, by 1971, the polarisation inside the organisation was formalised when it was converted into a federation of interest groups. For the Whites there were White Consciousness and Women's Liberation sections. For the Blacks, Black Consciousness and literacy projects. The executive was converted into a consultative body for the four interest groups.

In 1972 the UCM was dissolved and SASO took responsibility for the literacy campaign. Black theology was an integral part of SASO's philosophy, and was accepted by all black consciousness groups as part of their overall outlook. The UCM had helped shape an essential part of the programme of the movement which dominated black politics in the early 1970s, and the Christian world outlook continued to play an important part in SASO and its associated organisations.

Year of Fire: Year of Ash,
References
2. Quoted by I.B. Tabata, op.cit., p.28.
3. Loc.cit.
5. T.V.R. Beard, (1972), 'Background to student activities at the University College of Fort Hare', in Hendrik W. van der Merwe and David Welsh, (Eds.), Student Perspectives on South Africa, (David Philip, Cape Town), p.169.
6. Reprinted in J.G.E. Wolfson, (1976), Turmoil at Turfl op: a Suamsry of the
Snyman and Jackson Commissions of Inquiry into the Unwertik
of the North, (Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg), p.7 2.
8. Loc.cit.
9. Ibid., p.64.
10. The figures are taken from M. Horrell, (1964), op.cit., and relmvant
issues of the SRRSA. (The numbers are rounded.)
11. Extracted from issues of the SRRSA. There were always a large numutbr
of black students registered at the University of South Africa, vwhich
offered tuition through course notes. Students did not visit the campus,
except for optional summer school courses and these were always
segregated. Students were not involved in any of the conflicts describbtu
in this work although some individuals were to become tiemhei of
the South African Students Organisation (SASO) after 1968. Students at the
University Colleges sat for the examinations of the Univctty of South Africa until
1969. The colleges were given full university s otus
Curtis and Clive Keegan, ( 1972), 'The aspiration to a just society', in van der
Merwe and Welsh, op.cit., pp.98-9. Hereafter
referred to as Curtis.
16. Quoted in ibid., p.98. 17. Ibid., p.115.
18. Loccit.
student Il', t va &T
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pp.56-8.
27. BA. Khoapa, (Ed.), Black Review, 1972, (Black Community Ptes
grammes, Lovedale), p. 186,

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Loc.cit
32. J.G.E. Wolfson, op.cit., p.12. 33. SRRSA, 1971, p.293. 34. J.GE. Wolfson,

4. Black Consciousness
Politics: 1970-1974
SASO and the Black Consciousness Movement
When SASO emerged as a separate organisation, it addressed itself to both
student problems and to the broader issues .f black emancipation. In its airm
SASO meant to achieve the unity of all black students in the country, and represent their interests. It also resolved to encourage students to become ‘. . involved in the political, economic and social development of the II4ck people.’

While remaining predominantly a student organisation, SASO also claimed to be an instrument for changing society and sought allies outside the campus. There had always been a large number of African welfare, religious, sporting, and educational bodies in the townships of South Africa.” The student leaders were, however, searching for organisations which had a national outlook, and at that stage either had no contact with, or were not interested in, small township organisations.

In the late sixties the only African organisations that had nationwide memberships were sports federations and religious bodies. It was to the later that SASO leaders turned, and organisations that could claim to have a national outlook were invited to send delegates to a conference to be held on 24 April 1971, to consider launching a national political organisation?

The April 1971 conference was the first of three held that year of which the proposals for a new body were discussed, and it was July 1972 before the Black Peoples Convention (BPC), as it was known, was formally launched. Ultimately, members of SASO were able to prevail and shape the national body in their own image, but in the process the delegates present at the first gathering in April left their imprint on the new political movement. Four organisations met with SASO in April, and some do need further scrutiny.

The organisations were: the Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa (IDAMASA); the African Independent Church’s Association (AICA); the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) and the Association for Educational and Cultural Advancement of Africans (ASSECA).

Three of these organisations were religious, and the only lay body was ASSECA. Many of the projects of the latter were similar to those taken up by SASO and the new BPC, and for that reason it will be examined first.

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The Story of ASSECA
Thec Association får the 1,'dketttotтал ankд (ulrv Advttncientt off1 Afican people of Sunjtli Africa was estab)isb1e(i it) 19<0 hy P.Q. Vundla and Menassahi T. Moer-ane.s l3uth bad been incihers uof (tic ANC. Mr. Vundla was a member of tbic National E.xecutive Coinrittec or the ANC in 1<955 ajid took part in thie decision to defer thle boycutt' the B3antu E'-ihcatiunn sehools. I le was furtherrre strungy uppucsedtu thlle Coungress Youtli leagu decision to start the boycutt on April 12, and ledt a deriutatiun tu) sceure th e reinstatement of the chtildren thtat Dr. Verwoerd bad decided tu excutde tri ebuss ielie also told parents to send tfieir children bauck tu school rotil (lbc National Emxcutive called upon themr tu) wibidraw tbc chtildren. Mr. Vundla was,,asnultzed by Congress nhers and subsquentY expelled fromn (lic ANC. Ile joined (ihe Moral Reariament Association shortly thtercafter und played nu further role ini the <bien existing Africn politieal organisatiuns, Mr. Muerane bald also been in the ANC, and was partietually active during thee scemund world war. lic bad participated in some
uf the discussions which led to the formation of the Congress Youth League, bot in the early 1950's adopted a very eunserative line in African affairs. It was on the stuff of which, during the 1950's and 1960's, was reowned as a riit-wining paper. Mr. Muerane subsequently lieci editor of the paper <reianied thec Wort<>. tie alsu succeeded P. Vund la as chayi männ tf ASS'A in 1969.

ASSE('A was started inic t ake ut, (ibe pubblisllnictln its larim) examniniatiun resul ts fot 19<67 whlidi htdiNchet 6.cd be t rdiat less <han a tja rtcr utc tbc 2,034 cand iket es bad sceor d toniver sit tviini mmce passes, that a furthier 23 per cent bad l ihntaint Nehuul l4'aving jniass, hitt tbit 5 2.5 per cent uf tbc can didlates biad flettt. ititis was, ini lft , ant ii nprrt iveinenit uver thc 1965 resul ts wbien (0l7 [)er ce nt liad tlile d, hut insufic ienit to reasssure ite puresntsty

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ASSiCA was pkeiiPetually Nhurt ul I'llnd (tir iis prtuwcnz andl in 1970 Mr, Moeranc l'itet %tlggc,%ted. inmu ads (tu thte Neutral't xtnerence, that RI ,000,0001 lie naesed hly a volhntary kev on every Atnicaai akfult ini litt Countrmy. the schelire wa% liiiti proevkiled wit i, hitt wa% ; iis agani in 1973 wbsen â 1t0 cent levy onl stukicts wâ% NiLggesled.ý [hi6 tekt tu an otely fruni jiarccits whu clzti med it despit ex npinimo ol l e utiimsatirun * it ha d tiitritging to ccorn iiitt', and tiere was a derntand li ht ASSI' (A publiliisi at ntmete uft is f'anncs,6 1By 19/,1 thrrre Was couitlerale kluhl 41jut ble iiitgrity of thetrgiicicii Snirting ini 1971 , ASEVb(A ba<l received R 10,500 front the 11( iaikiitl Gur ui rt »am iiite UNA (fifoluli ig ticinanids in10(d0 by it s bilack Ammerican ii ukvrä> 'to pmiinitte vitanse, iin south Arica b.y linnctig Projicts witht part t nt% loca(prufits. ASSUV(A alsu, receved 1 dluiuation (of

Year of Fire, Year of Ash unknown magnitude) from the American First National City Bank. Tile Polaroid money had been used to purchase a motor car, establish an office, buy equipment, and pay the salary of an organiser. Although ASSECA awarded some (small) scholarships after 1971 and provided some laboratory equipment, there seemed to be a discrepancy between receipts and expenditure. Its leaders always refused to release the accounts that had been demanded of them.

Reports do indicate that ASSECA made some impact on communities, particularly in the Cape. There are, however, few details available, and no indication of whether SASO-BPC members worked in the actual projects that ASSECA had pioneered. Subsidiary organisations of the BPC did, however, undertake to promote literacy and educational projects in the Cape after 1972, and
the development of community projects was in keeping with the ideas that motivated the founders of ASSECA.

The Religious Focus

The most important influences on the newly founded BPC were those of the religious bodies, and this was not accidental. Most of the SASO leaders had been in the UCM and, political considerations aside, the student leaders were deeply involved in propagating Black Theology inside the black church. Steve Biko, first President of SASO, and Nyameko Pityana, Secretary-General of SASO, both contributed essays to the volume Black Theology, first published in 1972. Biko summed up the students' approach when he said that Black Theology:

seeks to relate God and Christ once more to the black man and his daily problems. It wants to describe Christ as a fighting god, not a passive god who allows a lie to rest unchallenged ... It seeks to bring back God to the black man and to the truth and reality of his situation. Pityana stated the case more fully. He maintained that religion is permeated by the life of Blacks, and that a study of Black Theology was a study of black consciousness. In order to express African needs he maintained that:

... the Church ... must go back to the roots of broken African civilisation, and examine the traditional African form of worship, marriage, sacrifice, etc., and discover why these things were meaningful and wholesome to the traditional African community."

After quoting from the SASO resolution of July 1971, to the effect that Black Theology is an authentic and positive articulation of the black Christians' reflection on God in the light of their experience', and arfiernrs the belief that this theology was 'a theology of liberation', Pityana stated 'In a nutshell, then, Black Theology concerns itself with liberation, and liberation presupposes a search for humanity and for existence as a (twd created being.' It was, therefore, obvious that members of SASO would

Black Consciousness Politics, 1970-74

work closely with African Christian organisations, particularly if members of those bodies adopted Black Theology as a doctrine relevant to the 'liberation' of Blacks.

The South African Council of Churches and the Christian Institute The body with which members of SASO found themselves in sympathy was the South African Council of Churches (better known under the name it used before 1968 - the Christian Council or South Africa). Twenty-seven churches and church organisations were members of the Council in 1968, and this included the Christian Institute of South Africa (C), IDAMASA, YWCA, and the UCM. The Christian Council comprised the major church groups in the country, with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church, and tire three Afrikaner Churches (referred to loosely as the Dutch Reformed Churches - DRC). Besides these 'established' churches there were also the African Independent Churches, which catered fr one-fifth of all African Christians. A section of these churches had, with the assistance of the CI, established the African Independent Churches
Association (AICA) in 1965. By 1968 it represented more than 200 churches, was a member of the Christian Council, and was a religious movement of some importance. Three years later AICA claimed to represent 358 of the churches, and although there were some 3,000 African independent churches in the country, it was the larger congregations which owed allegiance to AICA.

The close ties that the Christian Institute maintained with AICA marked the CI, with many prominent Whites in the leadership, as a movement with considerable influence amongst black Christians. It was also a body that obviously had considerable influence inside the newly formed BPC, and in a further subsidiary body that was to be formed, the Illack Community Programmes (BCP).

The Christian Council was pre-eminently a religious body, and a large part of its activities were devoted to the propagation of the Christian faith. Its significance, for this book, lies firstly in its international association with the World Council of Churches, which took all increasingly radical stance in opposing apartheid in South Africa, and secondly in the many clashes between tile Christian Council and both the ORCand the government on the issues of race. This inevitably led to the issues of [ace U1d o0 Christian orthodoxy being inextricably interconnected. The government retaliated over the years by banning churchman born in tie country, and deporting privsts from abroad. Tile DRC expelled dissidents from amongst their ranks, and it was men such as Dr. CF. Beyera Naud, Dr. B, Fngelbrechl. and Professor AS, Geyser, once adherents of the DRC, who set up and directel the CL.

The clergy inside the Christian Council were hy no mvazns united in their stand, and some felt that their disputes with tie authuttnie were iainly on questions of interpretation of the gospels. Others were more radical in their political approach, and were even prepared to take direct political action when they felt that some issues needed a wider public airing. Three examples,

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chosen from a large sample, are: Father Cosmas Desmond, who exposed the conditions of the men, women and children removed from the land they farmed and dumped unceremoniously on wasteland; the Rev. David Russell who organised a protest against the low grants given to indigent Africans and, together with sympathisers, lived for six months on the average old-age pension of R5 per month; and Beyers Naude who faced endless persecution at the hands of the Security Branch because he championed black consciousness projects. It was men like these that seemed to Africans to be keeping faith with their own aspirations. The extent to which some of these clerics represented a radicalism that could lead to meaningful change in South Africa needs further discussion. At best they remained a tiny minority, and did not have the support of many priests, and still less that of the overwhelming majority of the white laity from member churches of the Christian Council. Nor, for that matter, did they have the support of most African Independent Churches! Writing in ft Veritate, journal of the CI in May 1968, Rev. Dante van Zyl, said that the 'White churches had failed to communicate with the African people'. Writing in support of this, Archdeacon
R.F. Yates of the Anglican Church stated that: "... Africans scorned Western churches that condemned racialism with their mouths but in fact practised it."

In September 1968 the Christian Council, responding to the growing radicalisation of black Christians, issued a Message to the people of South Africa, that brought it into headlong conflict with the government. The Message was issued by the Council, but was not binding on membet churches and organisations - presumably because there was no way in which nctrbr of the churches could be expected to support the document. In a summary of the Council's Message, the central thesis, as reported in the Survey of Race Relations was:

... that the doctrine of racial separation had become, for many South Africans, a false faith, a novel gospel. The measure of conformity to the practice of racial separation in the life of the Church itself was the measure of the Church's deviation from the purpose of Christ. The practice involved a rejection of the central beliefs of the Christian Gospel.

The message demanded that every Christian face up to the question: 'To whom or what are you truly giving your first loyalty - to a subsection of mankind, an ethnic group, a human tradition, a political idea - or to Christ?' The Prime Minister was not moved, lie warned them to stop their agitation: 'I want to say to them, cut it out: cut it out immediately, because the cloth you are wearing will not protect you if you try to do this in South Africa.' He also warned the church leaders not to 'turn your pulpits into political platforms . . . to do the work of the Progressive Party, the United Party, the Liberal Party.'

Mr. Vorster sought a political confrontation with the churches but, no doubt partly for tactical reasons, and partly because the organisations con.

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cerned were not primarily political bodies, the members of the Christian Council claimed that their concern was with the 'social and ethical problems of the country', and an editorial in Pro Veritate objected that the arguments against the Message to the people of South Africa had been political. What they wanted, said the editors, was a 'denial or rejection on genuinely Biblical grounds'.

Standing firm on theological principles had its advantages. It challenged the government on grounds that Mr. Vorster, for all his bluster, could not easily counter: he was not going to get involved in theological polemics. For the Christian Council, however, it was a pyrrhic victory. They won the battle of words, but they could not stop the government's implementation of apartheid measures, nor the sniping which removed one radical priest after another by means of the inevitable banning orders.

The relationship between the Christian Council of South Africa (and its constituent members), and SASO, was equivocal. In many respects SASO was attracted to the Council, and more particularly to the Christian Institute. Nonetheless they sought to be an African (or, more accurately, a black) organisation which would act independently of any white body. The students were searching for a radical solution (although they were far from defining the 'radical change' in 1971), and were attracted by ilic report of the Church Commission which stated:
Our approach to change is gradualist while seeking to be radical, that is to go to the roots. As a Commission we do not propose violence as a means of change in South Africa just as we do not approve violence which is being used to prevent change for the better.20 There also seems to be little doubt that the more radical Christian Institute was the predominant external influence on SASO.21 They gave more attention to Black Theology (although the CI always had reservations on this issue), and were also able to offer a number of facilities to SASO, to the BPC after it was formed, or to members of SASO IPC. Their publishing house (later under the imprint of Raveni Press) produced many of the books that publicised black consciousness. The Black Community Programmes (B3CP), which was jointly sponsored by the South Africa Council of Churches and the CI, published the annual Black Review, and it is any respects indistinguishable from the 11K.

The Christian Institute, as it was led by Whites, was not invited to the meeting in April 1971 when the Black Peoples Convention was first mooted. But the President of the YWCA, Mrs. Oshidi Phakathi, was the Transvaal regional director of the CI, and many delegates were also connected with it.

**IDAMASA**

The largest, and possibly oldest, African church movement present was the Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa. In 1935 the body had been associated with the protest against the three Native Bills Year of Fire, Year of Ash which demarcated the African Reserves and removed the franchise rights which African men in the Cape had up to then enjoyed. Members of IDAMASA had taken leading positions in both the ANC and the All Africa Convention, and had been associated with many of the policy statements published by these organisations. The African ministers had not been renowned for their militancy and were bypassed by events in the 1950's, but they were not immune to the changes taking place amongst Africans in the towns, and during 1971 decided to exclude white ministers from their executive committee.

Their attitude had been shaped by discussions organised by the UCM. In the words of Bishop A.H. Zulu, in a diocesan newsletter:

... young concerned Christians, are shocked by the drift from the Church of young educated blacks, especially in the cities. They find the reason for this withdrawal a challenge to Christian leaders to demonstrate the relevance of Jesus Christ for black persons in apartheid and discriminating South Africa. They want black theologians to reply to the charge that Jesus is Lord and saviour of the white people only.2a

The April conference was inconclusive, and two further conferences took place, in mid-August, in Maritzburg, and then in Soweto in December 1971. Speakers who were called upon to address the conferences included Drake Koka, former member of the Liberal Party, Dr. Willie F. Nkomo, one time member of the Congress Youth League and then adherent of Moral Rearma. ment, Steve Biko of SASO, Mrs. Mabiletsa of ASSECA, and (Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief
Executive Councillor of KwaZulu. Mr. Moerane of ASSICA acted as interim Chairman.

It was not until the third conference, in December 1971, that pressure from SASO delegates, led by Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu, persuaded the delegates to establish a political (rather than a cultural) organisation. This decision ended a division inside the nascent movement, opened the way for new leadership, and replaced the older, more conservative founding members. The new BPC ad hoc committee prepared the way for a conference in June 1972, at which the organisation was formally founded.

Black Peoples Convention (BPC) Launched, July 1972

July was conference time in South Africa, and in July 1972 the black students had a heavy programme. SASO held their own conference at Flammanskraal; sent delegates to Pietermaritzburg to help launch the BPC; were present at the disbandment of the UCM, and sent a message to the NUSAS conference, re-affirming their policy of onco-omration. The black students were angry and determined, after emerging from the largest revolt ever experienced on the campuses. The 1972 revolt (which is discussed below) hardened them in their resolve to break all open contact with Black Consciousness organisations led by Whites.

At the UCM conference, the President, Ms. Winkie Direko, explained the unanimous decision to disband. She stated that:

, the main reason (for disbanding I was the growth of Black Consciousness among the Black members, and their consequent unwillingness to work within a multi-racial organization. They no longer believed 'that multi-racialism is a viable strategy to bring about real change'.

At the SASO conference a unanimous resolution instructed the Executive to boycott 'the so-called leadership of the White racist institutions' and to explain to black people the 'fraudulence and barrenness of the promise' of these institutions, which were extensions of the system of oppression.

The editor of Black Review summarised the position of the students' movement as follows:

SASO has mainly been instrumental in the spreading of the philosophy of black consciousness ... The slogan 'black man you are on your own' expresses the attitude black students and indeed most black people have now adopted in fighting for survival in this country.

SASO delegates, however, made by far their biggest impression at the BPC conference. The equivocations of the previous year were set aside and political objectives agreed upon. The aims decided at Conference were:

to liberate and emancipate blacks from psychological and physical oppression;

to create a humanitarian society where justice is meted out equally to all;

to co-operate with existing agencies with the same ideals;

to re-orientate the theological system with a view to making religion relevant to the aspirations of the black people'

to formulate, apply and implement the principles and philosophies of
Black Consciousness and Black Communalism:

- to formulate and implement an education policy of blacks, by blacks, for blacks.
- Conference also pledged itself:
  - to establish and promote black business on a co-operative basis including establishment of banks, co-operative buying and selling, flotation of relevant companies, all of which would be designed as agencies for economic self-reliance for black people as a corporate unit and not for individuals;
  - and to apply itself fully behind attempts to fully establish trade unions for black people, particularly directed at co-ordinating and unifying all trade unions'

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The conference also set itself organisational objectives. These included:

- a drive to enrol one million members in three years,
- the establishment of branches throughout the country, the formation of vigilante committees of residents, and a resolve to 'operate openly as an overt people's movement'. There was to be no co-operation with any government institution - in the Bantustans, or in the townships, or in the communities.

The aims set out at the Pietermaritzburg conference contained in essence all the main points that were to be found in statements of the 1970's on black consciousness: psychological emancipation, black theology, communalism, black community business enterprise, black studies, and a rejection of apartheid institutions.

Black Consciousness in Action:

During 1972, and extending through to 1977, there was a proliferation of organisations in South Africa that were connected with SASO and BPlt'. In with the Black Community Programmes. Each organisation had its own specific programme, and the audiences they addressed were somewhat different. Nevertheless, there was an overlap in membership of the three bodies, and their campaigns were often indistinguishable. Any attempt, therefore, to separate out the activities of these organisations becomes arrttical.

The five years in which they were allowed to exist were tile most tullttt in the history of post-war South Africa and yet a survey of their activity does not provide many concrete cases of organised campaigning. A relhint o' the BPC in 1972 could, with small variations, have been made in any other year. Thus it was recorded: 'The issues picked up by IPC Imve to date depended a lot on spontaneous reaction by black people to their virtou' situations, e.g. bus strikes in Johannesburg and Durban and the doc'k %olky strike in Durban.' 10 BPC 'action' in these instances consisted of issuin, statements.

There were in fact only two 'campaigns', ascribable to IPC' or SASO. lli,j could be characterised as political. The first was the 'May revolt' on th, xi% puses in 1972, and the second was the calling of the 'Viva Fioino' i,Oltr, r 1973. All the other activities engaged in literacy camnipaigns. healtht pjr, , (in which students assisted at clinics), the building of school% and cfr dr at community centres,
home education schemes (tuitiun for erantio;Li r co-operative bulk buying, the
establishment of a factory and a boutiquro. involvement with black theatre in the
townships - had effects on local %tma, nities which are not easy to appraise.
Black theatre, and with it the proliferation of black poetry, did hetp gd., ate the
aggressive atmosphere that was witnessed later at the trials of htAwk
consciousness groups. This was, however, always confined to small group of
intellectuals. The community projects and the co-operatives, on the whet hand,
might well have been the first steps towards building roots in local co* munities.
But they were only first steps, and the Black Consciousness

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Movement was never allowed (by police interference) to get beyond the opening
move. Consequently, little or none of the activity pursued in those few years
affected the social structure of South Africa.
Nevertheless, in describing their activities, the ICP was presented as an
organisation that was, somehow, to become an instrument for social
transformation. Explaining the formation of the BCP, it was stated at the time
that:
In the seventies Black South Africans are seeking a more effective means
of rallying their common aspirations round a quest for identification as
blacks living within a reality of domination by a white sipra-structure and anti-
black manipulations through economic power and cultural alienation.
Groups and organisations have emerged whose basic aim is to bring hack to the
black community a black identification and an articulation of the
black experience.a'
Or put more clearly and without the heavy philosophical jargon, the goals of the
BCP were said to be:
To help the black community become aware of its identity.
To help the black community create a sense of its own power.
To enable the black community to organise itself, analyse its needs and
problems and also mobilise its resources to meet these lides.
To develop black leadership capable of guiding the development of the
black community 32
The same claim was made for SASO:
To date SASO has come to be accepted at one of the most relevant organisations
in this scordl for the lack man's rel drittiny and of his liberation. Tie involvement
of students with the conflict y. by way of community development projects
lem-iu a testimony of the oneness of the
two both in plight and in efforts, 1A
What SASO, IW anrd 1C11 did not disclose was where the finances were going
to come from to this ambitious progartnnte There was no way in which (to quote
again I - forn the BP goals) the black community could Imobilise its resources to
tieet these need%% When SAS( started an orientation course for pre-university
students, they estimated the cost at more than £40,000 and this they obtained from
the liberation support movement, based in Geneva, the International University
Exchange Fund (IUIFF) " To finance their offices, their publications, their
equipment, and to pay their organisers. They obtained money from the USA and from Europe, front governments, private enterprises and church bodies. To organise their projects they used the facilities of the CI and of white friends. To speak of 'using black resources', or of exclusive 'black identification', did not present an accurate picture of

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the way the organisations functioned. A similar pattern will be observed later, when members of BPC set out to form a black trade union.
The May Revolt, 1972
In 1972 SASO claimed a membership of between 4,000 and 6,000. Most of the members were students in the universities, and although there were contacts and obvious groups of sympathisers in the colleges of education, there is no indication of the extent of SASO influence amongst this large student body.
Although the membership was by no means large, students were concentrated on the campuses for a large part of the year and had joined the organisation as individuals who accepted its aims. As a consequence SASO was a body able to campaign for particular objectives, and to mobilize its supporters. In March 1972, there was a confrontation between SASO members and the authorities at Turfloop when students were ordered to remove copies of the SASO Manifesto and a Declaration of Students Rights. In retaliation the students made bonfires of official diaries.

The next confrontation followed the speech given by Onkgopotse Ramothibi Tiro, a former SRC President, on behalf of the graduands of 1972. on 29 April. Onkgopotse Tiro, studying for the Education Diploma, strongly criticized white control of black universities, discrimination on the campus, and the entire apartheid system. In a call to the assembled students he said:
... the challenge to every black graduate in this country lies in the fact that the guilt of all wrongful actions in South Africa, restrictions without trial, repugnant legislation, expulsion from schools rests on all those who do not actively dissociate themselves from and work for the system breeding such evils...

Of what use will your education be if you cannot help your country in her hour of need? If your education is not linked with the struggle on the whole continent of Africa it is meaningless.

On 2 May the all-white disciplinary committee expelled Tiro. A student petition for his reinstatement was rejected and the students boycotted lectures. All 1,146 students were expelled, but refused to leave the premises they were occupying until all services were cut off. Thereafter the students decided to leave and the police sealed off the university.

Students at other black universities expressed their solidarity with Turfloop by boycotting lectures. First the University of the Western Cape on 9 May, then the Natal Medical School (for three days), followed by an eight day boycott at Fort Hare. By 1 June every black university had boycotted lectures, and they were joined by the M. L. Sultan Technical College and two colleges of education,
The students of the University of the North were persuaded to return by filack Consciousness Politics, 1970-74
the President of SASO, but when they discovered that 22 students -,- mainly members of the SRC or of the SASO local committee - had been refused permission to return, some 500 to 700 students again left Turffloop.
As a result of the wave of boycotts students were suspended, staff members resigned, bursaries were suspended, and hundreds of students just left the universities. The mood was summed up by the students' manifesto drawn up at Fort Hare, It declared:
We, the students of Fort Hare, believe that all Black institutions of higher learning are founded upon an unjust political ideology of a White racist regime bent on annihilating all intellectual maturity of Black people in South Africa. 3a
The Fort Flare manifesto was issued on 7 June 1972, but by this stage events on the black campuses were no longer considered news-worthy. All attention was concentrated on the NUSAS Free Education campaign which had been launched on 22 May. On 2 June, in Cape Town, a student meeting on the steps of St. George's Cathedral was baton charged by police and by persons in plain clothes. Students were pursued into the cathedral and several passers-by were also beaten up. This led to marches by 800 students from the University of the Witwatersrand, pickets at Natal University, Pietermaritzburg, and marches at Rhodes University. Police used teargas and dogs, and a large number of students and onlookers were arrested.
These events did not bring the black and white students closer together. The attitude of the black students was expressed by the report in Black Review ...
... the course of the black student revolts was largely affected by the decision by white student campuses to join the bandwagon. There was a drop in further publicity on the black student activity whilst newspapers concentrated on the protests by white campuses. 39
During 1973 there were new disturbances on the black campuses. At the University of the Western Cape, which had a strong SASO following (despite the prohibition by the Minister for Coloured Affairs), there were student complaints that the rules and regulations were oppr`sitv, that there was a lispportionate number of Whites on the staff, and that the c oloured staff alary rates were too low. The discontent ott the campus was furthermore :xaerbated by constant raids on student residences by membets of the 3ecurity Police, which in turn was a sociated with the harassment or SASO ffiials on all the campuses, Slogans carried by students read. 'thalamgue io; confrontation yes, yes, yes!' And the chant of on student song (to the una of'Glory, glory, hallaltuit') was symbolic of the mood;
'Arson, rpe and ,loody murder [repeated three times] when the Black revolution Omes. 40
The University of the Western Cape was closed on 12 June, and the

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students were told to reapply for admission one month later. The students met and, by an overwhelming majority, decided that they would not reapply as individuals. They dispersed to organise large public meetings in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Oudtshoorn and Johannesburg. The coloured community gave the students wide support. The largest meeting was at Athlone (Cape Town) where some 12,000 attended a rally to hear Adam Small (who resigned from UWC in 1973), Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, Sonny Leon (leader of the coloured Labour Party and of the Coloured People's Representative Council), and other prominent community leaders. Representatives of the BPC joined the platform, despite their previous refusal to appear with individuals like Buthelezi and Leon who worked in government institutions.

The students were all accepted back on 15 July, but boycotted lectures to support their demand for an impartial Commission of Enquiry. The suspension of 18 leaders was followed by a walk-out of several hundred students in sympathy. These were rusticated; SASO was sorely depleted; and the students of UWC maintained an uneasy quiet for the rest of the year.

Disturbances also continued at Fort Hare during 1973. The immediate cause of new outbreaks in August followed student attacks on an unpopular African hostel warden. In an attempt to force his resignation, students raided his residence and caused some damage. The police were called in and 15 students were rusticated. Only the threat of a mass walk-out secured the reinstatement of the 159.

For about a week all students at the Federal Theological Seminarycottled lectures in sympathy with Fort Hare. It is reported that: 'They talked off this action on being satisfied that the S. A. Council of Churches was showing deep concern over the situation at the university.'

At most other universities the students were quiescent. This was partly due to the banning of eight leading officials of SASO, followed by the banning of seven students who had been elected to replace them. SAMt AS Alt organisation was also banned at Fort Hare, Turffloop, the Western Cape, and throughout Bophuthatswana.

The 'Viva Frelimo' Rally

In the period January 1973 to June 1974, there were more than 8,000 African workers. 'This indulged' rioting on the mines and clashes between the workers and the police At 150ji 132 miners were killed and more than 500 injured. It was these cliques on the mines which led to widespread indignation and widespread activity till the white English-speaking campuses.

On the night of 11 September 1973 there was widespread violence on the Carltonville compound, which left a trail of arson, and of killed and wounded. There was widespread indignation throughout the country. 'He fire, pto'lu came from white students in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Approximately 80 students from the Witwatersrand University forced their way into the
Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) headquarters and demanded an open enquiry into the shooting. Cape Town students called on Harry Oppenheimer of the AAC to resign as Chancellor of the University if genuine trade unions were not permitted and wages not appreciably raised. This was followed by demonstrations, days of protest and confrontation with the police. At Durban-Westville 600 Indian students held a prayer meeting for the dead and started a collection for the dependents; SASO condemned the shootings; and at Turfloop the students voted to remove the SRC because it had not arranged a protest gathering.

The deep feeling over the shootings had affected the students, but these sentiments were not translated into any closer contact between black student and worker; not could there be any immediate contact. The campuses were not only by deliberate design situated in the rural areas, but also constituted a world apart from life in the compounds or in the townships. It would have needed a revolution in the lives of any student group to switch their attention from the lecture room to the factory bench. This gulf between political need and social reality; the distance between the workers’ complaints and the students’ theories could not be closed, and at no time in 1973 through to September 1976 was it even narrowed.

Carltonville touched a sensitive nerve of the black student, but the full message never got home, and the students seemed unable to build a bridge to one social force that could hack their own demands for political change in the country. Nevertheless the experiences of 1973 did create a new mood in the country and when, in April 1974, the Caetano government was overthrown in Portugal by the Armed Forces Movement, BP(' and SASO leaders did not conceal their delight. When, later in the year, Mov;ambique was granted independence, BP(C-SAS) called for latitowide 'Viva Frelinlo' rallies to be held on 25 September.

The Minister of Police banned all SASO and M Pt(" meetings for one month. In Durban a crowd gathered despite the ban, and was I icibly dispersed by the police. This was followed by raids on tile hi 'n ies of IIPC leaders and the detention of many o ' thi. Twelve IIP(1, SASSOS leaders were equently charged, and most of theni, toge'ther with Willesse talso held in. ou'tiidy by the police), were in detention thloigh out 19 tt, Tlii siel weaikened the unoveinen t, and contributed to the absence of the organsatioi i t lie coicial period of the 1976 Revolt.

The studeinats at Thulihop ahii resl ilonked toi the call fl a tl ly, They inly heard of tile ball ol tile Inet illigis ill a ladio annoulelelen and argued that, as their gathering had been called by the SRC. and not by SASO, it was not covered by the ban. Some of the black staff supported this contention and the demonstration was not cancelled. Overnight tile capnlls walls were plastered with posters containing slogans which were a nuniture of radicalism, adventurism, and student irresponsibility. A selection taken From the subsequent Commission of ENquiry and reprinted in Turmoil at Turfloop read,

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Frelimo fought and regained our soil, our dignity. It is a story. Change the
name and the story applies to you.
The dignity of the Black Man has been restored in Mozambique and so shall it be here.
Black must rule.
We shall drive them to the sea. Long live Azania.
Revolution!! Machel will help! Away with Vorster Ban! We are Afro Black Power!!
Viva Frelimo. Azania is bored (sic) and from this boredom a Revolution shall erupt. Down with Vorster and his Dogs (Boers)!
Power!!! We shall overcome. 44

Twelve hundred students gathered for the meeting, but were ordered to disperse by a force of 82 policemen, equipped with guns, gas pistols and police dogs. Assaults by the police and stone throwing by students, attacks on two white members of staff and two white technicians, and the arrest of two students ended the day. Two days later the college closed for the short autumn vacation, but on reopening (eight days late to avert a threatened student sit-in) the president of the SRC was arrested. The students organised a march and a petition to the police, and this led to a further arrest. The postponed sit-in was then organised. The action lasted for over a week, but was ended just before the college authorities could issue an ultimatum. Students returned to preparations for the examinations which they were not prepared to forego, and their arrested comrades remained in police custody.

There was no news of further student activity in the universities over the next two years (late 1974 to mid 1976), and in that period there was a change in the composition of the student bodies as older students left or graduated and younger students entered. The resentments, however, were always present. In a press interview, Gessler Nkondo, a senior lecturer at Turfloop, gave an account of the bitterness felt by black staff and students alike. Both had to endure discrimination, and for those students who aspired to academic jobs, there seemed to be no end to the barriers placed in their way of their advancement, Doors were shut at every level, he had the following to say of the students' mood: [they] felt 'savage' because they were isolated, shut out from the main currents of thought and activity in the country. What had happened in Mozambique had excited them: they were beginning to feel that change was possible - and in their lifetimes. 41

Mr. Nkondo had in fact put his finger on the crucial issues. At Turfloop they were isolated, geographically, and from the needs of the towns and villages. They saw change coming from Mozambique and not from the struggles of the local population. Their slogans pointed to foreign events, and not local ills - and in most revealing fashion spoke of a 'boredom' which was peculiar to student isolation, and not to township life.

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When, later in 1976, South African troops who had entered Angola were forced to withdraw, there can be little doubt that students responded jubilantly, and that, like the rest of black Africa, they saw this retreat as a defeat for the South African
government. Turfloop students were among the first to demonstrate in sympathy with the Soweto students and there can he little doubt that many who had been involved in the 25 September proFrelimo rally, joined in the general black jubilation at the victory of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

References
2. See, for example, report of a conference in August 1971 attended by 26 such bodies in SRRSA, 197 1, p. 45.
5. SRRSA, 1968, p.227. ASSFVA did not achieve much in its early years. In 1967 its chairman died and Mr. Mocrane took over.
6. Ibid., p.222.
12. Ibid., p.43
13 Ibid., p.62
14 Ibid., p.63.
15 Ibid., p.22. A 'new summary of the Message is included in Apartheid and the Church,Spro-Cas publication No.8, 1972, pp.77-81. 17. Loc. cit.
Boesak claimed that only Blacks had the right to ask whether violence should be used in South Africa. tic continued. 'Whites have lost that right, except tha few who live like Boyers Naude.’ 22. Quoted In SRRSA, 1971,p.44.

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Secondary Schools and the African School Movement

We should not give the natives an academic education, as some people are too prone to do. If we do this we shall later be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and Non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in the country? (Mr. J.N. Le Roux, later Minister of Agriculture, in Parliament, 1945.)

Mr. Le Roux, Nationalist member of parliament was no expert on education. He never claimed to be. In fact, he saw academically trained men and women as a 'burden'. Out as a farmer, and as a leader of a party which had the support of the white farmers, he claimed to know something about labour. He wanted, and he knew his constituents wanted, a plentiful supply of cheap manual labour: and he knew that he must prevent the type of education which might leave him short of his precious commodity.

When eventually the Bantu Education Act was promulgated in 1954, it did seem as if the provision of Mr. Ue Roux's 'manual labour' would be ensured, and that South Africa would not be burdened by an excess of 'academically trained' men and women. Nor did Mr. Le Roux's constituents on the farms suffer from the extension of farm schools. In 1954 Dr. Verwoerd assured his supporters that schools that were established on the farms would have curricula which included training 'in order to fit [the child] for farm work'. This was made more explicit by the Minister of Bantu Education in 1959. He said:

We have made it compulsory that where the farmer wants these facilities,
part of the school instruction of these children on the farm of the European farmer must be training in the normal activities or the farm, in order to encourage a feeling of industriousness on the part of those children and particularly, to sharpen in their minds the fact that education does not mean that you must not work with your hands, but to point out to them specifically that manual labour and also manual labour on it form Is just as good a formulative (sc) and development level (sic) as any other subject is. In order to do this, we create the opportunity so that if there is

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any farmer who has a farm school on his farm, and who wishes to make use of the schoolchildren under the supervision of the teacher to assist with certain farm activities, this can be arranged in a proper manner to fit in with the curriculum.

In 1975 there were 3,815 farm schools in the country. This amounted to approximately one-third of all African schools, and catered for approximately 10 per cent of all African schoolchildren. They provided only primary education. In fact Mr. Le Roux and his supporters had every cause for satisfaction. New legislation was put into operation to ensure that cheap labour would be forthcoming for the foreseeable future. Not only would the children he taught to accept servitude; but the system of Bantu Authorities would also remove all African hope of political advancement by tying their aspirations to the Reserves; Group Areas, furthermore, would separate out all racial groups and ensure that black unity would never be achieved. That, at least, was the plan.

The plan did seem to work. The new school system was not seriously challenged by the ANC boycott of schools in 1955. The races were sepmalatej out into their little compartments throughout the country. The African opposition to the Homelands policy was crushed, at least temporarily, in the late 1950's, and by 1960 political movements of opposition were contained and severely circumscribed.

New Labour Needs and School Expansion
The real national income grew throughout the 1950's at an average annual rate of five per cent. Through the 1960's this increased to six per cent. A ed this growth depended above all on the supply and control of black manual labour. It was this labour which was used to open up the Orange Free State gold mines after 1946; and this labour which kept the farmlands, the fatoneFi. the transport system and construction works functioning. But as the ecouomy expanded - and in the process allowed those in power to enrich themselvms the type of manpower needed changed perceptibly. More and more skilled personnel were required, anid this was not easily obtainable from abtoad.

During the 1960's industrialists and financiers had wazied that S outh Africa would soon reach the stage where skilled labour woull he iW short supply, and during the rapid expansion of the economy, this prediction a more than borne out. By 1965 the shortage of skilled labour had becoe r , severe that there was a rapid rise in (white) wage levels and, cnleiitai, an inflationary spiral which was never
effectively controlled. By 19f69 the position had worsened considerably, and
Ilobart Houghton sated thart:
Serious labour shortage, especially in the skilled categories, led to
irresistible demands for wage and salary increases ant there wax a dechlue

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in productivity per man. Private consumption expenditure accelerated and
private savings declined. Foreign funds still poured into the country ..4
The government tried to bring down the level of inflation by means of import
controls and by reducing public expenditure on capital works, but tis had only
limited success. One other way suggested itself and that involved the introduction
of skilled black labour. That, in turn, required more training, and more secondary
school education.
The number of pupils in black schools had increased by over 250 per cent in the
period 1955.69 (see 'able Three), but the number of school leavers who were
literate was low. A government estimate based on figures taken from the 1970
census, claimed that 49.5 per cent of Africans aged 15 years and over were literate
according to the United Nations definition of the term. Even this figure is higher
than would be expected from schools where the drop-out rate was 55 per cent in
the first four years. Of the children enrolled in African schools in 1969, 25 per
cent were in the first year (sub-standard A), and a further 45 per cent were
enrolled in the next three standards (substandard B, and standards 1 and 2).
In 1969 only 4.33 per cent of pupils were in secondary school, ’ and very few
completed the fifth (and final) form successfully. In 1969 only 869 obtained a
passmark which would entitle them to proceed to a degree course at a university.
Not all would proceed to higher education, but even if they did, 869 would
represent only a tiny fraction of the total South African university enrolment of
over 8.,000 in 1970.4
Indications that there might be changes in the school system came from an
unexpected source: Dr. P.J. Riekert, economic adviser to the Prime Minister, and
chairman of the Econotnic Advisory Council. On 28 January 1970 he addressed
the annual general meeting of the South African Institute of Race Relations on the
economy of South Africa. He asserted, in the course of his speech, that to
maintain the growth rate of the economy there would have to be a ‘shift’ of black
workers into skilled occupations, lie continued: ‘This shift indicates the
contribution that the non-whites will have to make to the solution of the skilled
manpower shortage within the next ile to three decades,’7
Despite this statement of intent, there was no obvious move by the governmeat to
make any alterations in the school system, and the l)epartriient of Bantu Education
resolutely refused to allow any private corporatiorn or individual to donate
money tr equpuient for African edocation
In November 1970 the Aught Astircan Corporation, the largest nining and
finance house in South Africa, offered a secondiity school ir Soweto 13,000 for
the erection ofi extra classrooms. The Departriient of Bantu Education vetoed the
offer, but did make a grudging conceision. Ill a circular letter sent to all principals
of schools, it was stipulated that all donations from private sources up to R50
could be accepted. Any donation larger than this amount had to be forwarded to the Department who would both decide whether the sum could be accepted, and where the money would be allocated.

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The government did not, however, intend increasing the contribution from general revenue to African schooling. The percentage of gross domestic product spent on African education stood at less than one half of one per cent in 1970, a smaller percentage than had been contributed by the state in 1954. Despite Dr. Riekert's assertion that there would have to be a shift in the training of Blacks, the Department of Bantu Administration seemed reluctant to make any further concessions. The first and most obvious place to start was to provide additional classrooms. It was estimated, for example, that there were 1,307 classrooms in Soweto in 1971, but that a further 2,016 rooms were needed immediately to cater for those who had applied for admission to the schools. A survey of school facilities in 1970 showed:

Many of even the primary schools in urban areas are seriously overcrowded, with two classes of children sharing one room, "here are still not enough desks: it is reported from many centres that children have to squat on the floor, using benches on which to write."
The Minister of Bantu Education said in Parliament that in 1969: double sessions were operating in 4,246 schools, involving 8,361 teachers and 750,428 pupils. Besides this, 17 schools used the platoon system in 1968, the classrooms being used by two sets of pupils a day, each with its own teacher. Even this did not reveal the full extent of overcrowding. A survey in the Star of 24 January 1973 stated that a quarter of all registered schools in Soweto had no buildings of their own, but congregated in church halls, tents, or classrooms borrowed from other schools in the afternoons. Furthermore, it was estimated that 35,000 children could not enter school because of a lack of accommodation. But changes had to come, and in 1971 a long-standing offer by the Urban Bantu Council to make an annual levy of 38 cents upon every head of family in Soweto, for payment into the education account was accepted by the Department of Bantu Affairs. The shift in official attitude led to a spate of donations and appeals for money. In summary these included a campaign launched by the Johannesburg City Council for R200,000 to build 18 new classrooms by the end of 1971; offers of R5.000 from the Anglo-American Corporation and of R32,000 by the Bantu Welfare Trust (administered by the South African Institute of Race Relations), and the launching of A.1 (Teach every African child) by the Star newspaper in 1971 to provide funds for classrooms in Soweto. Public subscriptions poured into the postal box at the International African Institute and the R200,000 target was soon oversubscribed. The emphasis was on additional donations or money for the acquisition of desks, office equipment, chairs, and gymnastic and sports equipment. Textbooks were also donated by those titles passed by the school inspectors as suitable.
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the principals.
Major policy changes followed. In November 1972 the Minister of Bantu Education announced that schooling for Africans would be reduced from 13 years to 12 years in 1976. This change was prompted by the 1971 decision of the World Court, at the Hague, on Namibia. The Court found that the 13 year school programme for Blacks (in contrast to 12 years for Whites) was dis. criminatory. The South African government acted on this issue, according to BlackReview, 1974-75, by dropping the extra, sixth standard, in both Namibia and South Africa. The Minister also announced that English and Afrikaans would be used as the mediums of instruction in standard 5 in 1976.11

Through 1973 and 1974 TEACH collected more money for classrooms. The half million Rand this fund had collected by the end of 1973 provided accommodation for a further 15,000 pupils in Soweto alone. Other newspapers organised parallel funds; the Natal Daily News initiated LEARN (Let every African read now) to provide books; the Cape Town Argus, the Pretaria News, the Port Elizabeth Evening Post operated similar projects; and a group of Indians launched ZETA (Zulu education and teaching assistance) for building classrooms in KwaZulu.

Secondary School 'Explosion'
One final alteration of great importance became effective in 1974. Prior to this date, African students who wrote the standard 6 examination obtained a pass at the end of the year if their marks were over 40 per cent; but they could only enter secondary school if they achieved 50 per cent or more. Of the 134,377 Africans in the country who passed in 1973 (out of a total of 181,455 candidates), only 78,677 were eligible for secondary school entrance. In 1974 the 150,324 pupils who obtained over 40 per cent all became eligible for secondary school.16 In 1975 the last students to enter standard 6, together with all students in standard 5, wrote examinations which would decide eligibility for secondary schools.

The changing structure of African schools in the 1970's (as compared to enrolment in 1965) is shown in Table Five. The increase of accommodation which made it possible to accept the larger secondary school intake was funded by TEACH, by private individuals and corporations, and by the parents of Soweto. The government provided no additional money.

In 1976 the Minister of Bantu Education told Parliament that school enrolment in African schools had topped the four million mark.* The most marked increases were in the first form of the secondary schools. This is shown in Table Six.

The increase in 1975 was due to the administrative change which permitted pupils with pass marks over 40 per cent to gain automatic entry into the secondary schools. This had led to a new crisis in accommodation, and a large number had to be accommodated in temporary premises near to

Table 5
Enrolment of African pupils17
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Pupils in Secondary Forming a University Secondary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1,957,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2,741,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2,916,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>3,079,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>3,286,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>3,456,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3,697,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

Enrolment in Form I at African Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>49,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>53,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>63,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>70,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>82,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>149,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem that was anticipated for 1976 was infinitely greater. The numbers in Form I could even exceed 300,000 because graduates of both standard 5 and standard 6 would enter secondary school in the same year. The expected shortage of classrooms in 1976 was 4,000, and plans were made for most Form I pupils to be taught in the primary schools, by primary school teachers (in classrooms no longer needed for standard 6). The Form I classes, furthermore, would have to be taught on a shift basis, with two classes sharing the same classroom. There is some evidence, unfortunately not verifiable, that BOSS (the Bureau of State Security) was aware of the possibility of the situation being explosive, and even giving rise to concerted student action. Looking at the position with hindsight, it must have been obvious to observers (and who in a Secondary School and the African School Movement better position to observe than BOSS?) that there were bound to be severe tensions. Pupils who were to enter the first form of secondary school would face severe overcrowding, and a two-shift system (already a nightmare in the Sub-A and Sub-B standards). They would be taught by primary school teachers (upgraded after special in-service training), and not even be able to enter secondary school buildings,
Furthermore, the pupils would inevitably include a higher percentage of youth who were markedly different from the usual secondary school entrant. The examination results marked those with 40 (it) 50 per cent pass marks as being possibly of lower academic standard and many would have been, in previous years, part of the 'push-out' group in the township. It seems most likely that a large number came from poorer homes where there were fewer facilities for study. If that was indeed the case, the class composition of the secondary schools would have undergone a marked change after 1975 when the first form entry was twice as large as that of 1974.

The Language Bombshell

Over and above the tensions which were bound to follow in the wake of this massive increase in numbers, the Minister of Bantu Education announced that the proposed changes in the language of instruction would commence in 1976. One half of all subjects were to be taught in Afrikaans, the others in English, in standard 5 and Form One. It was also stipulated that arithmetic and mathematics (the subjects with the highest failure rate) together with social studies (history and geography) would in future be taught in Afrikaans.

There was an immediate protest from the teachers. All African teacher training colleges, bar one, were conducted in the English-language medium, and African teachers were not proficient in Afrikaans. They certainly could not teach in the Afrikaans medium. But the government made it clear that they would countenance no changes in the regulations, and that both social studies and mathematics had to be taught in Afrikaans.

No explanation was offered for this intransigence, and no explanation given for the need to teach mathematics (in particular) in Afrikaans. The only previous reference to this subject had been Dr. Verwoerd's 'What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd.' Perhaps it was no longer absurd, and presumably in this period of labour shortage Afrikaans firms needed black workers with a knowledge of arithmetic. One document does show the connection between the new regulation and labour needs.

On 20 January 1976, the Board of the Meadowlands Tswana School was given an 'explanation' for the new language regulations by the school circuit inspector. After stating that all taxes contributed by Africans were used to pay for education in the homelands, the inspector was reported as saying:

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In urban areas the education of a Black child is being paid for by the white population, that is English- and Afrikaans-speaking groups. Therefore, the Secretary for Bantu Education has the responsibility towards satisfying the English- and Afrikaans-speaking people.22 (my stress)

The instructions indicated that schools could apply for exemptions for one year only, but reiterated that there would be no alteration to the list of subjects that had to be taught in Afrikaans. In effect few, if any, exemptions were to be granted: the needs of the white population (Afrikaans-speaking in this case) had to be satisfied.
School Students Organise
A study of the world-wide student revolt in 1968 by Barbara and John Ehrenreich led them to the conclusion that student disaffection with conditions in the colleges was raised to the point of revolt by the growing awareness of the iniquity of the war in Vietnam, and of the poverty and racism that permeated society. They concluded that:
Understanding what's happening to the schools is the key to understanding what's going on with their students,...
The American student movement didn't begin as a student movement. People may have had plenty of gripes as students, but these seemed trivial and personal compared to issues like Vietnam, racism and poverty.2
In South Africa, the interconnection between what was happening in the schools, and in society, was transparently obvious to black students. The poverty and racism that permeated society, stalked them in the schools. Unlike America, the 'gripes' felt by black students inside the schools of Smdki Africa were not trivial and personal; the students understood only too well that what was happening in their schools, was happening in the country. Io 1949, writing about the strikes in the schools at that time, C.A.R Slotsept observed that black students were aware of their parents' agitation for better conditions of life, higher wages, better housing, better judicial treatment etc.4 The parents, deeply concerned about their children, also knew that the discrimination they faced affected their children.5
African children were never allowed to forget that they were from a 'subordinate' people. At home and at school they met discrimination, and learned to hate the institutions that oppressed them. Joyce Sikakane recorded one of the incidents in her life that left her smouldering.
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it was at boarding school in 1960 that I turned 16 a 'doomsday' instead of a happy birthday because I had to carry a pass, a 'reference book' I had to carry every day of my life or else face a gaol sentence.
I was at boarding school when the passbook was issued instantly to me and 300 other girls, We had not been informed, we were taken out in small groups for finger prints and instant photographing by the Bantu Affairs officials, who had set up a mobile station in the college grounds.26 Joyce Sikakane was upset, not only because she had to carry a pass, but also because 'We who were politically active failed to organise a protest. The government had adopted very stringent methods to see to it that African women above 15 years carried the passes..." The government had taken stringent measures not only with respect to women's passes, but in 1960 had also banned the ANC and the PAC, and had declared a state of emergency after the shootings at Sharpeville and Laonga. It would not be possible to organise protests in the
schools for over a decade. It would also be difficult for students to organise any overt political groups in the years to come.

We have few accounts of secondary school students’ extra-mural activities in the 1960’s. In fact there are few accounts of such activities at any time in the history of the schools. There can be no reason to believe, however, that school students in the townships were any different to their peers elsewhere. They either established societies to which they could discuss their problems, or they created the organs through which they could meet. The activities of a Soweto school-based body, known as the society for African hvelopient (SAD), must have been repeated in many other centres. Biatick Re.’r’o’ said of SAD that it:

. . . concerns itself with the development of social awareness among the African youth and the speeding up of black vonius via mofati by means of organising symposiums, group discussions and ‘collscientisation’ picnics.

The first reports of activities in African schools tona at t’l basis appeared in the annual t t N tol’ti itiack R&Ir-iw after I 91. Th’ er-e mre only reports (and brief iCpoa is at tth) it’t a tw rthalilslth. Thhet’ Is 00 indication of how repiesei tative ot how ig they were at te I itnt Ni li it p-ssible It deduce whett e gi totitl IT C0li ‘n ti ctot lliUt il a o tli’litl’ y ilt the lkrmally orgatused stuiiuent h=localhost in0111 tioVrlu!iijt in wVt rbiij’ t ‘us others were devoted to t ti ptopagntion if blit’ th titlitsi t t il niobilisation of’ African youth il N01110 Cw’itiathy matit comlsiinli ’ pirt ‘t.

Provincial or regional h’dicw which Aimed to 1111it Youth till a real or tional scale included: the Natl Youth Otrganisaton (NYO), established by the BCP in August 1Q72 with Drbtha and Pletterimaitiburg Youth lubs; te Transvaal Youth Organisation (TRYO) launched by SAISO and BO1 (founder groups included SAT) rid the Black Youth Cultural Amsociation), the league of Africat Youth (LAY). aklo founded in mtd.97217 in tmata, which aimed

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at becoming a nation-wide body; and the Junior African Students' Congress (JASCO), founded in mid-1971 at Inanda Seminary. (Banned by the principal, together with threats of expulsion, the society was not revived.)9 Further regional organisations were launched in 1973: the Western Cape Youth Organisation (WCYO), many of whose affiliated clubs were religious, belong. ing to different denominations; and the Border Youth Organisation (BYO) in the Eastern Cape.30

In June 1973, the Provincial Youth Organisations were invited by the Black Community Programmes and SASO jointly to a seminar, and a Natio1 Youth Organisation (NAYO) was established. The aims of the organisation did not differ in any way from those already outlined for SASO or for BeI 01 BPC. The two central objectives were:

To project the Black consciousness image culturally, socially, religiously, educationally, politically and otherwise.

To commit itself to the elimination of psychological and physical oppression of Black people.
The programme was, in its main points, similar to that adopted by the BICP literacy campaigns, home education schemes, bursary fund, the establishment of creches, the propagation of black theology, and the organisation of that, drama and art workshops. University and school students also formed local student associations, three of which (at Pretoria, Springs and Sharpeville) are mentioned in Black Review. There were to organise symposia, games, picnics, and so on. Their aims were to 'promote togetherness and brotherhood', and to secure cooperation between students and their parents. There were also religious youth groups, one of which might well have had an influence on events in 1976. This was The Light Bearers which aimed at 'promoting Black Theology and combating excessive drinking in the black community'.

The South African Students Movement

Despite the proliferation of groups, few of them functioned, and they were never able to organise large numbers of students. In part this was because of continued police harassment, bannings, and arrests. School students are also notoriously hard to organise - and leave the organisation when they graduate. One of the groups which was originally formed in Soweto, and subsequently won adherents throughout the country was the South African Students Movement (SASM). It too was persecuted, by police and school principals alike, but it managed to survive: and that was its most important achievement. When finally the school students rose in protest against the imposition of Afrikaans as the language of instruction of three school subsdies it was the SASM which provided much of the leadership, SASM that called the crucial demonstration for 16 June 1976, and SASM which created the...

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Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) from which leaders of the Revolt were drawn.

In 1970, at least two years before SASO/BPC and BCP had organised tiny school pupils, senior students from three secondary schools in Soweto (Orlando West High, Diepkloof' High, and Orlando High) had met to found the African Students Movement. They were able to establish contact with schools in the Eastern Cape and the Eastern Transvaal, and met with them in conference in March 1972. It was this new enlarged body that called itself the South African Students Movement (SASM). The students who participated in the SASM had, in many instances, belonged to youth clubs in the township, and discussions at those clubs had led them to the decision that a students movement was necessary. In an interview, Tebello Motapanyane, Secretary-General of the SASM in 1976, described the situation as the students saw it:

We were, of course, very alive to the fact that we as black people were being oppressed. The students especially were quite sensitive to this and we were all the time trying to find a way of doing something about it. It was just unfortunate that we were not so clear about how to show our anger and resentment in a clear political way. But we certainly expressed...
ourselves indirectly in things like poetry reading and so on.6
But, said Motapanyane, the school students movement was not just an extension
of the youth clubs. They were concerned primarily with the problem of Baotu
ludication which was designed to 'homesticate' and not to educate. They
discussed the subjects they were being taught and concluded that the education
they were receiving was inferior.
Answering a question about the connection between SASM and SASO,
Motapanyane denied that SASM was an offshoot of SASO. He maintained that the
students movement was formed independently and was autonomous, but that
many ideas had been held in common by both bodies. In particular he mentioned
black consciousness as a philosophy that both groups had propagated.
It seems, however, that although the SASM was autonomous, it did have direct
links with the movements that formed part of the SASI.BPC.1B('P organisation.
Black Review, 192, reported:
'The main aim of NASM o, to ko ordlnntv activttties o(high s'hool students.
Their other main areoi of otpsririot are thrit informative pro)grtri(mNI
concerning injustice in %oviety anti i hook and their variniaign to preach
black eonsczosune AS. SAM il affiliate of TRYO?"
It appears, furthermore, that the Secretary,6eneral of SASM, Mathe
Diselto, under whom the organisation expanded in 1972, was also the acknow-
ledged leader of the National Youth Organisation), l"he activities of SASM were
in no way different iroin those of any of the tniany ICX sponsored
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groups and consisted of projects to assist senior school students to: prepare for
fifth form examinations; improve study techniques; bridge the Junior Certificate
(third form)-matriculation gap; bridge the matriculation.university gap; choose the
right career or profession2.9
These were hardly 'revolutionary' projects. Yet early in its existence SASM came
under surveillance, and its members were subjected to police harassment. Some
of its leaders left the country in 1973 to escape the police, and in 1974 and 1975
members of the organisation were arrested and tried under the Suppression of
Communism Act and the Terrorism Act. Partly due to this harassment, and partly
because some members of the organisation were in contact with clandestine
groups of the ANC, several underground cells were formed in order to protect the
members.40 At about the same date SASM worked more independently of SASO-
BtC, and there seems to have been a strong ANC influence inside the movement.
At a trial of SASM students from Healdtown and Tembalabantu schools, (Alice
and King William's Town), one of the accused, Wilberforce Sinxo, told the court
that: '. . . SASM stood for equality and majority rule, and that only white people
like Brain Fischer and those banned or imprisoned because of their struggle for
Black liberation were respected.'4 The reference to Brain Fischer, imprisoned
chairman of the South African Communist Party and close associate of the ANC,
might have been fortuitous. Nevertheless, reference to him generally came from
those who owed allegiance to the ANC.
SASM had at an earlier date resolved not to affiliate to either the ANC or the PAC, but that did not act as a barrier to personal, or even group, affiliation to the underground movements. This statement in court, taken in conjunction with the Sechaba interview given by Motapaiyane, suggests that there were links between SASM and the ANC. This would indicate that SASM was different and distinct from all the other organisations that espoused Black consciousness.

SASM was not able to make much progress. Leading members were forced to leave the country or face detention and arrest. In many schools the organisation was banned by the headmasters, and could not point to any real successes. In an article printed in 'The Organ of the Students for Social Democracy' group at the University of (ape Town, and devoted to the story of the leaders of the 1976 Revolt in Soweto, it was claimed that SASM had been in existence for seven years and it had never really taken off. By early 1976 its prestige stood at a low ebb. It was banned in virtually all schools by the headmasters, and had no really striking achievements to its credit.

The appraisal made by the journal was harsh, but probably correct. No school movement could point to any 'striking achievement', no school group 'really took off'. But it is not so certain that its 'prestige' was at a 'low ebb'. And what was of supreme importance was the fact that it continued to exist, openly or clandestinely, throughout the agitation against the new rulers.

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in the schools in 1976, and had the personnel to take the decision that led to the demonstration of June 16. In the months that followed the first confrontation with the police, it was the members of this movement that provided what leadership there seemed to be in Soweto.

References

1. Senate Debates, 2 June 1959, Col. 3463.

2. SRRSA, 1975, p.216.


4. Ibid., p.222.

5. SRRSA, 1970, p.211.

6. This total includes 2,397 students registered at the University of South Africa (Unisa), out of a total of 4,578 black university students.


classrooms by different teachers and classes, usually at morning and afternoon
sessions. It could also involve two teachers sharing a room
simultaneously.
Statistics from SRRSA, annual issues, 18. Asha Rumbally, (Pd.), (1977), Blark
Review, 1975-16, (Black
Community Programmes, Lovedale), p.141.
Loe t.,
21. It is unfortunately not possible to disclose the iource (f this inforilatiol.
22. Quoted inS RRSA, 1976, p.52, 23, Barbara and John FPhronreich, (I 69),
tong March, Short Spring: the
Student ti rdng at Ilone and Abroad, (Modern Reader, New York),
pp.165 and 175.
Soweto. (International Iflonce
and Aid Fund), p.41.
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26, Ibid., p.42. 27. Loc.cit.
pp.63-4. 31. Ibid., p.64. 32. Ibid., p.65.
33. Black Review, 1972, p.183. 34. Ibid., p.184. 35. Interview with Tebello
Motapanyane, 'flow June 16 demo was planned'
Sechaba, Vol. 11 (2), 1971, p.49. 36. Ibid., p.50.
Motapanyane, op.cit., pp,53-4. 41. Black Review, 1975-76, p.87. 42. The issue is
clouded, unfortunately, by the existence of another body
which also styled itself the Southern African Student Movement
(SASM). In June 1973, members of black universities from South
Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland set up an organisation under
the presidency of OR. Tiro, and this body is referred to in Black
Review, 1973, as SASM. The school students organisation is referred to
in the same issue of the Review by the confusing appellation Junior
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One Million Members? An Impossible Goal
Today when we speak of the Black Consciousness movement, we
immediately think of students in SASO and a few clerics. The rest of the
people are not involved. (Bonganjalo Goba, 1q7 1)'
Most of our people will agree that, thanks to SASO efforts, Black
Consciousness has come to stay in South Africa. Because of the nature of
its membership and composition, SASO only reached the educated and sophisticated segment of the population. Through its projects it is now gradually moving towards the grass roots. Relatively a small number of Blacks will join BPC. (Rev. Smangaliso P. Mkhathshwa, 1975)

At its founding conference in 1972, the Black Peoples Convention set as one of its aims the recruiting of one million members in three years. The objective was unreal. It is doubtful whether the organisation on its own ever achieved a membership of 3,000 or, together with SASO, a total enrolment of 7,000 members. The BPC remained an organisation of students, a few clerics, and some professional men and women. The target of one million members, accepted by the conference, reflected the hopes of the younger members who dreamt of sweeping South Africa and filling the black population with their own undoubted enthusiasm. A more sober view of the role of the organisation was presented by Drake Koka, who had played a leading role in convening the conferences that led to the formation of the BIJC, and who was its first Secretary-General. In a statement to a news reporter in 1973 he said: 'We are aware they can shove us in gaol at any time. That is why we are not a movement of confrontation, but a movement of introspection our aim is to awaken Black Consciousness.'

Although there appears to be some disagreement on what the UPC aimed to achieve, the differences between those who wanted 1 million members, and Mr. Koka who envisaged a 'movement of introspection', were not great. The BPC and SASO aimed to reach the black population of South Africa, They wanted to reach out into every section of their people and spread the message of black awareness and self-reliance. But those who wanted a large member-

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ship in the organisation were not able to induce large numbers to join and it was left to the members to spread its ideas amongst the restricted groups with whom they worked.

SASO had a three year headstart on most other black consciousness group and were consequently well established before other groups were launched. Although they did face the problem of a turnover of membership as students graduated, their potential recruits were gathered together in the universities and training colleges. The total number of black students in universities ill 1972 was estimated as 9,000; and early that year SASO claimed to have secured the affiliation (mainly through the SRCs of colleges) of some 4,000 of them. But every attempt to expand outside the campuses failed. SASO did try to organise school pupils, and assisted in the formation of the National Youth Organisation (NAYO). Unlike SASM, however, NAYO did not survive.

SASO also planned to work on rural projects, but they were not very successful. A report to the third annual conference of SASO at I[alianskraal in 1972 stated: 'It is to our regret that we report that our field work projects leave much to be desired. As yet we cannot claim one completely satisfactorily project.'

The BPC was not very much more successful. In a report in 1973, it was claimed that its first year of operation saw 41 branches spread throughout the country.'
Despite this claim, Rev. Mkhatshwa, a member of the executive of the BPC, stated that:

BPC, the only non-tribal political organisation, needs to treble its eft'ril before it can even begin to give a semblance of being a people's ia si movement ... There are undoubtedly millions of Ilack people who have political frustrations have no organized outlet...

The failure to recruit more members does need explanation, and it would appear that there were three main contributory factors which need conidl. ation. There was, firstly, the police harassment which removed leaders, pre, vented activity, and frightened off potential recruits. Members were detaind or raided, charged, banned, and assassinated. Meetings were prohibited, unpublished manuscripts confiscated, books banned, and every device uWd to circumscribe the activities of the organisations connected with SASOhIB!

Secondly, and by no means less restrictive, were the barriers to orgaimting in the Reserves. These areas, which housed 40 per cent of the African population, were controlled by regional (or tribal) authofities, and polhitcal movements (where they were allowed at all) had to operate inside the polky of 'separate development'. The uncompromising stand taken by IP ag.aiml any officially instituted body or organisation, meant effectively that liare was little chance of their operating legally or openly in the nine 'Ii o, land' areas. The BPC also found that apartheid laws made it extremely difficult ta operate inside the Coloured and the Indian communities. Their nimjor sumc amongst the Coloureds was at the University of the Western Cape where I section of the students were affiliated to SASO. There were few other

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Coloured or Indian converts and when organisations emerged inside these communities which seemed t) move in the same direction as the BPC, leading members were banned by the government.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the BP( did not have the leadership that could either withstand police harassment, or provide the ideas and programme that could have rallied the mass of the population which alone could have ensured survival and even success in the struggle that was hound to eventuate. At its inception, the BPC was composed of students, of clerics, and of men who had, in many cases, been regarded by both the ANC and the PAC as 'sell-outs'; Drake Koka had always been a 'moderate' and had worked in the Liberal Party. Menassah Moerane of the Wortl and of ASSIWA was a conservative. Dr. Nkomo, a member of Moral Rearmament, had, after a short stay in the Congress Youth League, stood aloof front the ANC; lie died in 1972. And LB. Mehlomakhula and Mrs. Mabiletsa were leaders of ASSECA which, in 1972-73, was under a cloud because of the way in which the Polaroid funds were used. After 1972 some of these individuals ceased to be on the central directing committees of the BPC hut occupied other key positions in affiliated organisations. M.T. Moerane and L.B. Mehlomakhula continued to administer ASSECA. These two men, neither of whom had any connection with the working class, were inehbers of the consultative Planning Committee of the Black Allied Workers Union (BAWIJ), which was organised
and controlled by Drake Koka until he was banned in 1973. Mrs. Mabiletsa joined the Federation of Black Women as its Vice-President under Mrs. Fatima Meet.

The Myth of BPC Radicalism

The students were ostensibly more radical, and there was some friction inside the BPC. At the Black Renaissance convention in December 1974 they would not give Mrs. Meer, leader of a sister organisation, a hearing. They also clashed with their university authorities, but there was little that was specifically radical in their ideas or their projects. Their educational, clinic and work projects were identical to those that NUSAS conducted.

Nor was there anything very radical about the ideas (or organisational plans) of the younger leaders. Rev. inaugaliso Mkhatshwa, interviewed by James MacManus, in a series on apartheid for the Guardian, was at pains to make it clear that he was no revolutionary and not communist: 'I recognise that my church is the Number One enemy for 01to lnhinnnts. We are not going to exchange one for the other.' Out while he was not a 'communist', it is hard to discern from the interview what Mkhatshwa did want. He said that the African wanted 'full rights in the country', and then he expanded: 'I know the tuandairy of the Afrikaner, I know his fears for survival. But when will lie realise that his survival depends upon an accommodation with the people of this country and not their wupprmaion?1a

It is difficult to believe that the BPC really wanted an 'accommodation'. Bat there are few documents which set out clearly what the OPC or SASO

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did want. The Secretary-General of SASO, Nyameko Pityana, contributed a paper entitled 'Power and social change in South Africa' to the collection of essays on Student Perspectives on South Africa. He took care to stress that he was no Marxist - a system which he dismissed as 'utopian', and it was clear from the way he envisaged change that he worked outside the Marxist tradition:

The first step, therefore, is to make the Black man see himself, to pump life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth. That is what we mean by an inward-looking process.13

It was hardly likely that the worker in the townships would accept this statement. His life was anything but an empty shell; he was not guilty of any complicity in the working of apartheid; and he had little need for an 'inwardlooking process'.

He might, however, (if we are allowed to speak for the men and women who did not have the benefit of a university education), ask precisely what it was that SASO expected him to do. Pityana did supply his answer:

This means that Black people must build themselves into a position of non-dependence upon Whites. They must work towards a self-sufficient political, social and economic unit. In this manner they will help them, selves towards a deeper realization of their potential and worth as selfrespecting people. The confidence thus generated will give them a sense
of pride and awareness. This is all we need in South Africa for a meaningful change to the status quo.

If this was indeed what was needed for a meaningful change in the status quo, then 'liberation' was going to be a long time coming. Lituya did not expand, and it is left to the reader to interpret this passage, and to give meaning to the claim that Blacks could become 'self-sufficient' politically, socially and economically. The mind boggles at the idea of Africans setting up new economic institutions that would free them from white or black. Mines, factories, industries, farms, cooperatives, shops, or whatever Pityo conceivably conceived of, would always remain phantom projects of his imagination. Self-sufficient political and social institutions were equally unreal, and if these were essential steps towards some deeper realization, then there was little hope for the oppressed people of South Africa.

Other statements from SASO leaders were equally obscurantist. Steve Biko, one-time President of SASO and organiser for the IP, also called for the restoration of the 'great stress we used to lay on the value of human relationships'. This led him however to quite remarkable conclusions in his appraisal of education:

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The attitude of some rural African folk who are against education is often misunderstood, not least by the African intellectual. Yet the reasons put forward by these people carry with them the realization of their inherent dignity and worth. They see education as the quickest way of destroying the substance of the African culture. They complain bitterly of the disruption of the life pattern, non-observation of customs, and constant derision from the non-conformists whenever any of them go through school... How can an African avoid losing respect for his tradition when in school his whole cultural background is summed up in one word: barbarism? Biko concluded that it was necessary "...to reduce the hold of technology over man and to reduce the materialistic element that is slowly creeping into the African character." The description of the educational system contained a mixture of truth (the destruction of African culture, the denigration of the past), with a romanticisation of the past that was unrealistic. Ills observation that 'lack of respect for the elders is... an unforgivable and cardinal sin', while traditionally correct, was absurd in 1972: and his call for a reduction of 'the hold of technology' militated against every demand of blacks for more and better education. Biko also sought some growth of awareness through participation in a 'Buy Black' campaign, which would show the 'power' the Blacks wielded as a group. There were no further suggestions in Biko's paper for methods of countering apartheid, of building an organisation, or even of raising 'awareness'. His concluding paragraph was defiant but of little use to any person in his audience who sought some way to act against the regime. What he stated was:

Thus, in this age and day, one cannot but welcome the evolution of a positive outlook in the Black world. The wounds that have been inflicted on the Black world and the accumulated insults of oppression over the
years were bound to provoke reaction from the Black people. Now we can sit and laugh at the inhumanity of our powerful rasters, knowing only too well that they destroy themselves and not us with their insolent cynicism... We have ill us the will to live through these trying tines: over the years we have attained moral superiority over the White man; we shall watch as Time destroys his paper vessels and know that all these little pranks were but frantic attempts o" frightened little people it) convince each other that they can control the nurds and bodies of indigesimal peoples of Africa indefinitely."

Read today, ill the alteimath of the Soweto Revolt, and of the brutal murder of tie author, these words ol Steve Iliko need appraisal. It obviously was not enough to talk about 'loral superiority', and it was wrong to believe that the Whites lived in 'paper castles'. A serious political leader call be excused for exhorting his audience to, greater deliance, but lie fils badly if he does tot warn of the consequences ol' taking oil a well atriled government. It Year of Fire, Year of Ash

was not going to be realistic to 'sit and laugh' at these 'powerful masters'. The organisations needed at that stage (1971-72) to prepare for a bitter fight. and individuals had to find means of protecting themselves from the police. The stage had been reached when black movements had to appraise the enemy and probe his strength. To dismiss the Whites as 'frightened little people' frantically convincing each other that they could control the African, was not realistic, and there were few if any indications, in the years that followed, that Biko, or indeed any other member of SASO/BPC, reconsidered the logistics of the political struggle in South Africa.

The Appeal to Fanon

Both Pityana and Biko quoted extensively from Fanon in their articles. They used his earlier work, Black Skin, White Masks, and it was obvious that Fanon had appealed to their assertion of the Africans' intrinsic worth. Pityana quoted the passage: 'I am not a potentiality of something, I am wholly what I am ... My negro consciousness does n
OT hold itself out as black, it IS., That is all that we blacks are after, TO BE ..' But Fanon wanted something more than an existential assertion from Blacks; particularly from radical leaders. He reserved his most trenchant criticism for the many nationalist leaders in the Africa of the late 1950's in his The Wretched of the Earth lie was not impressed by these men who sang the praises of 'Negritude', or of the 'African personality', who spoke of negro (or black) consciousness, and %ho quoted his (Fanon's) writings to justify their middle class politics, lie l'ecare deeply suspicious of the products of the universities where 'colonized intellectuals' learned to accept the 'eternal' (social and political) qualities of the western world.20 He disliked the political parties they built, but was ible to see the effect they were ultimately bound to have:

In their speeches the political leaders give a name to the nation. it this way the native's demands are given shape.

There is however no definite subject-matter and no political or riial programme. There is a vague outline or skeleton, which is nevertheless
national in form... The politicians who make speeches and who write in the
nationalist newspapers make the people dream dreams. They avoid the
actual overthrowing of the State, but in fact they introduce into their readers' or
hearers' consciousness the terrible ferment of subversion.2.1
Fanon knew that these weavers of dreams could play a catalytic role in 11W
colonial societies he had observed, but he was perpetually wary of them. He
continued:
The national or tribal language is often used. Here once again, d re arrs Are
encouraged ... these politicians speak of 'we Negroes, we Arabs', and
these terms which are so profoundly ambivalent take on during the
colonial epoch a sacramental significance. 22

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Fanon was impatient of such men. he condemned them as leaders 'anxious to make
a show of force' so that they would not have to use any; who appealed to the
radicals for calm while looking to the right; and whose role generally was to stifle
political action.23
It would seem unfair to quote from Fanon's appraisal of African leaders in 1961
(the date in which his work was first published) in discussing the leaders of BPC
and SASO. Indeed not all that he said then is applicable to these young men who
did not lack bravery. In the final analysis, however, there was no campaigning and
no direction. In place of real political activity, there were just words -- and far too
often the words were incomprehensible. A sample taken from an organisational
document will illustrate the frustration the membership must have felt:
The arduous task of self-emancipation presupposes student activism.
What must we do, students keep on asking. It is not easy to know what to
do. In other words essence precedes existence, Behaviour and action are
always preceded by some thought and theory, otherwise, they become
haphazard and confused.24
Nevertheless the leaders of the Black Consciousness Movement did make people
'dream dreams'. And in dreams, a touch of confusion did not matter overmuch.
There was, however, a deep gulf between dreams and reality, and it is not certain
that this gulf was ever bridged.
Non-collaboration? The BPC Dilemma
At an early stage in the history of SASO, leading members declared that they
would never work with Blacks who belonged to any of the political institutions
established by the South African government. They rejected completely the
concept of 'iHomelands', and declared that any person who entered the tribal or
regional assemblies was a traitor to the cause of African liberation. They
maintained the same stand against any person who entered the Coloured
Representative or Indian Councils, the Urban Bantu Councils (the advisory bodies
in the townships), or any other government boards or councils in townships or
reserves.2
This commitment to non-collaboration was reaffirmed in July 1972 when the
President of SASO was expelled at conference because he had suggested that the
organisation had to be more flexible in its approach and had to learn to speak even
to its opponents. It was reported that Temba Sono, in address, called for: '... open-mindedness towards Bantustan leaders, white liberals and even towards security police.' The reference to the security police, if correct, was inexcusable. But the issue of white liberals and 'Bantustan leaders' became a recurrent problem for members of the black consciousness movement.

The relationship between individual members of the black consciousness movement and white liberals was in fact never resolved. A number of prominent leaders of BPC and SASO maintained contact with, or established very close relations with, liberal Whites. Steve Biko was in constant close contact with Donald Woods, editor of the East London Daily Dispatch, and Woods was accepted as a champion of the Black Consciousness Movement by Ilike's friends. There were also obvious close contacts with leading members of the Christian Institute, and with one-time leaders of the dissolved Liberal Party. Even SASO's break with NUSAS was more organisational than ideological. They declined to work with the white students on grounds of colour, and not because they disagreed with the activities of NUSAS, or found fault with the programme of the National Union of Students. Most of their own activities, on the campuses or in the communities, did not differ appreciably from parallel activities undertaken by the Whites.

Members of BPC and of SASO were able to secure the expulsion of delegates from conferences if they were associated with any of the apartheid councils. The Declaration of the Black Renaissance Convention, which met in December 1974, stated that:

One of the most dramatic highlights of the Convention was the vehement condemnation of the policy of separate development, its exponents and institutions. By an overwhelming vote, the delegates prevented a prominent homeland leader from addressing the Conference. The Convention also expelled Collins Ramnusi of Lebowa, David Curry of the (coloured) Labour Party, and S.S. Mothapo of the Bophuthatswana opposition party. What was left unsaid was that these men had originally been invited to attend by members of BPC! Despite these expulsions BVICISASU continued to be equivocal in their attitude to some of the men and women who participated in apartheid institutions.

Buthelezi's Politics Pose a Problem

In the early stages of the BPC, the convenors of the preparatory conferences did not exclude men who were actively involved in homelands' politics. At the gathering, in August 1971, which was summoned in order to launch the BPC, Chief Mongosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, chief councillor of KwaZulu, was invited to address the meeting from the platform. Thereafter, it would seem, relations between BPC and Buthelezi were broken, and the black consciousness leaders condemned the Chief in terms which did not differ from those employed against Chief Kaizer Matanzima of the Transkei.

There had never been any accord between Matanzina and the students, and the Transkeian chief had always been accused of being the main collaborator with the
South African government. Matanzima had, lurtherrone, never used the radical language that Buthelezi was apt to employ in addrtstUt4 a popular audience. It had been easy, therefore, for BPC to condemn

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Matanzima, and to reject tile direction taken by the ruling Transkeian party as it moved towards so-called independence in October 1976. Buthelezi, on the other hand, did present a more radical stance in his dealings with the government, did have a populist appeal when he addressed mass meetings and was able to win the support or a large number of people who were opposed to the apartheid policy. As recently as February 1971 P.V.T. Mbatha, writing in the ANC organ Sechaba, referred to 'this great leader of the people, chief Mongosuthu (Gatsha) Buthelezi', and praised him for leading the Zulu people against apartheid. Buthelezi's policy was more complex than P.V.T. Mbatha's statement would indicate, le worked inside the apartheid system and he attacked it, he co-operated with the government but criticised government instructions; he spoke in favour of a united South Africa, but also seemed to favour a federation of black states; he seemed to support militant action against apartheid, but claimed that lie feared the growing alienation in the townships. In the many statements that he made publicly, he veered from left to right, aiming to please the authorities at Pretoria, the black leaders of the other Homelands' governments, his followers in KwaZulu, and the meetings he addressed in the townships. lie took as many stances as needed to satisfy his different audiences, and was obviously able to build tip a large black following throughout the country.

In 1972 his reply to his critics in SASO was: 'We are doing not) more than attempting to exploit the limited political expression within the framework of [government] policy, for what it is worth ... [and ] I am working within the system without accepting it ,2

Although lie claimed that he was only 'workitng the system', his main concern seemed to be to secure more land for KwaZulu, 3 and lie made constant appeals (some in government propaganda statements) urging foreign investors to build industries in the Homelands. Buthelezi also accepted ethnic (and racial) division in the country, and in a series of meetings at the end of 1973 secured the co-operation of homelands' leaders for a federation of black states leaving it to an ecstatic Matanzima to declare: 'My dream has come true. This fascinating historic occasion ... is the renaissance of the United Nations ol black South Africa ' 34 Together with the black leaders, Buthelezi then attended a conference on federalism convened by Donald Woods of the Dily Dispatch. Present at the conference were members of the Progressive Party, and some small groups which were conservative in policy. Buthetezi outlined a scheme in which 'non-black states' could join the proposed federation of black states in a 'Federal union of autonomous states of Southern Africa'." Two months later, in January 1974, Buthelezi met Harry Schwartz, leader of the United Party in the Transvaal, and in a joint declaration tie two men called for peaceful change, leading to a federation of ethnic states.3

The acceptance of a federal state went contrary to everything that
members of the Black Consciousness Movement advocated, precisely because such a position accepted the government’s division of the country into ethnic

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units. This was ‘working within the system’ as Buthelezi had said, but it was also accepting its basic premises, and thus negating his claim that he rejected the government’s policy.

Buthelezi’s political pronouncements are often difficult to interpret. He seemed to intersperse phrases which cancelled each other out, He was for a unified South Africa, and he was for a federal structure; he was against foreign investment, but he was in favour of such investment if it was in the Reserves; he was for violence, and he was against violence.

In August 1974 he addressed a meeting of IDAMASA, one of the founding members of the BPC, and spoke about violence. Initially he seemed to say that violence was inevitable. The situation in South Africa, he declared, was the ‘direct result of our system which is structured in violence’, and this ‘institutionalized violence’ gave rise to ‘guerrilla violence’. This seemed unexceptionable, even if the listener did not agree that one form of violence necessarily gave rise to counter-violence. As Buthelezi saw the problem, the two were interconnected, and out of the one situation the obverse situation had to emerge. But the Chief was not a proponent of violence, and going against the logic of his own argument concluded by saying that violence could not be condoned.

Other examples of such Janus arguments will be quoted in Part three of this book, and will show that at least Buthelezi was consistent in his inconsistencies. Far more important than what was said were the actions of Buthelezi and the support group he built to take his message into the country. In practically every instance his actions were instrumental in damping the black struggle, or in turning it away from its original path. An example of the disruptive effect of Buthelezi’s politics, when his supporters acted at a local level, can be traced in the events at the University of Zululand at Ngoye.

The clash between Buthelezi and SASO was particularly severe on the Ngoye campus. In 1974 John Vusumuzi Mchunu, one time minister in the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, was a student at Ngoye. He formed a cultural organization with a strong ‘back to Africa’ revivalist stress, which called amongst other things for church services ‘to suit the African cultural background’. Initially, the new society obtained strong support, particularly from members of SASO. Metlow, however, championed Buthelezi, lobbied against SASO, and claimed that students from the Transvaal were not Zulu and should go home. As enit grew the Mchunu group threatened to use violence, and the SASO group made little headway.

There was a change in 1975 after Mchunu had graduated and when, in mid-year, Buthelezi attacked the morals of the students, and claimed that the students were living a loose life on the campus, and that the Rector was to stop the immorality, the students and the University Council condemned Buthelezi. The Chief had called for the appointment of a black Rector who would uphold the cultural values of his Society! This nation (or in fact
tribal) chauvinism was too much for the students, and SASO ono again became the undisputed leader of the Ngoye student body.

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Inkatha Yenkululeko Yesizwe

In 1974 Gatsha Buthelezi decided to revive the Zulu cultural society started by King Solomon (of the Zulus) in 1928. The organisation was to serve a double purpose: it was to provide Buthelezi with a machinery in KwaZulu through which he could control events in the Legislative Assembly, and at the same time give him a platform from which he could organise a movement throughout the country. Inevitably Buthelezi faced new contradictions by trying to 'work within the system' and also operating outside the apartheid framework. He was not permitted by law to organise people who were not citizens of KwaZulu, and he was forbidden to organise amongst other ethnic groups. Initially therefore, Inkatha was open to all Zulus over the age of 18, and also to organisations (like trade unions, nurses associations, and so on) that were eligible to affiliate. Only Inkatha members could stand as candidates for the Legislative Assembly, and only the President of Inkatha could be the Chief Minister of KwaZulu. That is, he would have to be a hereditary chief.

The national aspect of Inkatha was explained by its Secretary-General, S.M. Bengu, Dean of Students at Ngoye:

Inkatha can be seen as part of the cultural identity movement that is sweeping Africa today. Instead of Africans endeavouring to be carbon copies of others they want to be distinctly themselves... national unity and models for development should be based on values extrapolated from the people's culture and adopted to present-day needs and situation.

Professor Bengu also made the point that Inkatha did not aim to live in the past. He was careful to stress that the movement worked within the system, but was not confined to one tribal group. This was a departure from the initial constitution of the movement which restricted membership to Zulus:

Inkatha is a national movement which is open to all.

One of the main objectives of Inkatha is to fight (or the liberation and unification of Southern Africa. The movement aims at fostering the spirit of unity among the people of KwaZulu throughout Southern Africa, and between them and all their brothers in Southern Africa, and to co-operate locally and internationally with all progressive African and other national movements that strive for the attainment of African unity.

Inkatha grew rapidly - having a 'apctivo' constituency in KwaZulu - and by 1977 claimed a membership of over 100,000 and funds of R136,000. The entrance fee was high by South African standards, and stood at R3 for an individual, and at R20 for doctors, lawyers and social workers. Organisations were levied at R100 on joining, the annual subscription was R2 per
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individual, R20 for professional workers, and RI O0 for organisations. This made Inkatha the largest and best financed black organisation that had ever been built in South Africa. 2 Who was recruited, and the basis on which the recruits were drawn into Inkatha, is not known. It is doubtful, however, whether any but Zulu joined and in 1976 Buthelezi was speaking about forming a set of Inkathas to cater for other communities if they did not wish to join his organisation. (See p.1)70.) When asked in an interview what Inkatha would do when they had organised, the answer from two leading members, Dr. Nyembezi and Mr. Mavuso, was: 'I'd rather not say'. When asked, further, how they recruited people 'without having any clear policy', the answer given was: 'You have a fine leader in Buthelezi. You must support him. You must work for the Zulu first and then attract all the good of the black community.'4

Zulu Consciousness, or Black Consciousness? Frantz Fanon, in the passage quoted above, drew attention to the fact that 'tribal language is often used. Here once again, dreams are encouraged . . . Buthelezi, at least in some of his pronouncements, claimed to transcend tribalism. In one statement he declared: Among the so-called homeland leaders there are some like myself who believe in Black consciousness, and who believe that they have done more in promoting the concept of Black consciousness than those who arrogantly dismiss them as 'irrelevant'. Although there is much talk today about Black consciousness as such, this concept was born long ago when Black people realised that their political salvation depended on their ocvipolitical concept of one African people, whose destiny could only ti reached beyond the limits of ethnic groupings.44

But basically Buthelezi's movement attracted the middle-aged, and rallied tl population in the KwaZulu reserves. In the towns, it was the migrant Zulu worker who followed his lead. The youth, and the more permanent urban population were not attracted. It is not possible to see what was being offered to the recruits, nor was it obvious how Inkatha meant to break the apartheid system. When stripped of rhetoric, neither side could offer any means of breaking the apartheid system. All answers to questions on this matter were turned aside. In the case of Inkatha, the interview of Nyembezi and MItvuSO produced the following non sequitur:

Question: If you feel it is Impossible for you to treat with the Nato [Nationalist Party] and if it Is going to be impossible to got the Nat, ""I of power by any peaceful means, how do you see Inkatha avhlevin# lit aim?

Answer: People go into the separate development leager becauie the government says the Nets are the only people who can protect them. The issues are not even looked at.46

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When pressed further, the two members of Inkatha maintained that talks with white groups, including presumably the government party, would provide a solution. They furthermore declared that Inkatha would 'overcome those people
who will not sit down with other people'. They added: 'We want to avoid a Rhodesian situation. We want Buthelezi to talk now'. Members of SASO used more radical language, but they too (as quoted above) could offer no answers to the urgent questioning of the students who asked 'what must we do?', except to pursue some mythical self-sufficiency.

When eventually the black population erupted in revolt, BPC and SASO had no direct hand in leading the townships; and only a few were able to participate, as individuals, outside the campuses. Personal initiative allowed members of these organisations to play a role - but the organisations as such were not in evidence. To a certain degree this was the consequence of police action. The BPC and SASO were severely damaged by harassment, arrests, bannings, and the precipitate flight of many leaders to avoid possible detention. But it was also the consequence of a failure to organise, the failure to expand out of the elite circles the students frequented, and the failure to work out a strategy by means of which the apartheid system could be undermined and then destroyed.

Inkatha played a more ominous role. Buthelezi condemned the 'violence', and sounded ominously like government ministers when he called on the township population to take a stand against the destruction wrought by the youth. His role during the Revolt will be fully described in Chapter Thirteen.

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PART 2
Workers and Students on the Road to Revolt

7. Black Workers Set the Pace

Black workers in South Africa were obviously discontented in the early 1970's. The long period of industrial peace of 1962.68, when the number of Africans involved in officially reported strikes did not rise above 2,000 a year, came to an end in April 1969 when some two thousand Durban dockers cam out on strike. The strike failed and a large proportion of the work force was expelled from the Durban municipal area and replaced by newly recruited workers. The old rate of pay remained, unaltered.'

Just over two years later, in September 1971, there was a new threat of industrial action by the Durban stevedores. Demands were made anon) nmusi. and no leaders were announced. A wage increase was granted from I 0ctobr, although it was maintained that the management had been considering the rise since May, and had not been influenced by the threat to strike. The stevedores were far from satisfied and, in July 1972, appeared before a W4 Board and asked that the existing minimum weekly wage of R8.50 ( 5.50 be raised to at least the poverty datum line of R18. The spokesmen for the workers stated that, if their demands were not met, they would appeal for assistance to their homeland governments.
In October 1972 the Durban dockworkers brought the harbour to a standstill and refused to negotiate. When asked to appoint spokesmen they only replied 'We will be fired'. They did however let it be known that their working hours were too long, their food unfit to eat, their barracks unhygienic, their beer diluted, and that they often worked a seven day week and received no sick pay.

The workers, being predominantly Zulu, appealed to Chief Gatsha Buthelezi for assistance. The KwaZulu government, however, was not prepared to offer any help, and following an ultimatum the stevedores returned to work on 23 October, pending the outcome of the Wage Board's determination.

The following day on 24 October, without any prior warning, African coloured stevedores at the Cape Town docks stopped work at 5.00 pm, three hours ahead of time. The stop-at-five strike continued for over a month, and built up a big backlog of cargo waiting to be loaded and unloaded. The In6s leaders stated that the action would continue until there were considerations for improvements in wages and hours of work.

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The Wage Board decisions were made known in November, and minimum wages were raised by approximately 40 per cent. This government body, empowered to recommend minimum wages in occupations not covered by existing wage agreements, had granted one of the highest increases since its inception nearly forty years previously.

The Economic Paradox

This concession to workers who had struck work for at least a brief period, marked a reversal of South Africa's labour relations. Strike action in the past had usually been followed by arrests and deportations, or court appearances. In the 1972 strike, fifteen Durban workers were ultimately dismissed; but the outcome of the strike was seen as a victory and the wage increases, although insufficient, were significant. This was a new departure, and it reflected the ever increasing importance of black labour in the South African economy. Paradoxically, at a time when there was an ever increasing need for more semi-skilled black operatives in industry and commerce, there was a massive growth in the number of black unemployed. The number estimated to have been without work in 1962 had been just over half a million. This had grown to one million by 1970, a million and a half in 1974, and would exceed two million by 1976.

The labour shortage in the docks reflected the position in the country. The staff shortages at the end of 1971, according to the Minister of Transport, included: 1,026 Whites in Durban; 456 Whites and 50 Blacks in Cape Town; 208 Whites and 64 Blacks in Port Elizabeth; and 42 Whites and 24 Blacks in East London.

By 'white' vacancies the Minister meant semi-skilled, skilled or supervisory posts; 'black' vacancies, in South African parlance, meant unskilled and some semi-skilled occupations. By 1970 it was becoming obvious that there was very little hope of the 'white' vacancies being filled unless Blacks were allowed to fill them and were trained to do so.

There are few indications that the government knew how to solve the problems of labour shortage at the time. They had, very tentatively, taken steps to alter the
school system in order to provide some of the skilled personnel they needed. But even there, tile changes were badly planned and inefficiently applied. The more basic changes needed in labour policies and needed immediately - if the economy were to continue expanding, were not effected. We still lack information on the various solutions that were discussed by the government at the time, but those records that are available suggest that there was considerable confusion over the problems of economic expansion.

The plans that were discussed in the early seventies were based on the supposition that the economy could continue to grow at a rate equal to that achieved in the 1960's when capital poured into the country. Economists spoke of a growth rate in the gross national income of five to seven per cent, and no calculations ever considered the possibility of a recession, or even of a Year of Fire, Year of Ash severe cut in the growth rate.

Over and above the failure to consider such possibilities, economic thinking was also predicated on the need, posed in the fifties by the Nationalist Party, for the ratio of Africans to Whites in the towns to be reduced after some fixed date (set at one time as 1978), and that thereafter the number of urban Africans would continue to diminish in absolute terms.

Dr. P.1. Riekert, economic advisor to the Prime Minister, seemed to base his entire plan for the future of South Africa on estimates of jobs that had to be created in and around the Reserves in order to stop the flow of blacks to the 'white' towns.' He made elaborate calculations of capital investment needed for job creation to reverse the movement of the black workforce. Integral to his master-plan was the proposition that future development of industries in the towns should be capital-intensive, and that all industries built near or in the Reserves be labour-intensive. This, said Dr. Riekert, would simultaneously solve the shortage of skilled (white) personnel and the surplus of unskilled (black) labour.

The government did introduce legislation aimed at reducing the number of unskilled workers that any industry in the urban areas could employ. But Dr. Riekert's plan for labour-intensive industries in the rural areas was rejected because commodities produced under such conditions would not be competitive in the market. New economic developments were delayed by shortages of skilled labour, and vacancies in existing plant could not be filled. It was under these conditions that the government had to find some strategy to overcome the 'shortage' of labour - and in the ensuing period of indecision it became possible for black workers to press their wage demands.

Inflation

There was one other factor which made it possible for workers to press their demands successfully. In 1971 it seemed to many economists that the South African economy was entering an era in which it would expand at a rate which might even exceed the average yearly growth rate of the 1960's. This new optimism followed the decision of the United States to suspend the convertibility of the dollar into gold. The official price of gold was raised from $35 to $46.5 per fine ounce, and governments would henceforth have allowed to sell gold on the
open market. Private buyers had always paid a considerably higher price than governments and, from 1971 through to 1974, the price soared to an all time high of $200 per fine ounce. Although the price there, after was not anywhere near that peak value in 1971, it was rising continuously, and increased state revenue led to an expansionist prigroumit. This in turn led to increased inflation, and the African standard of living declined as a result.

From 1963 to 1971 there was an estimated decline in the value of the Rand of some 24 per cent. This figure, taken from the officially calculated index of retail prices, was based on the expenditure of the 'average white family', and did not reflect the increased cost of living of black families who spent a far higher proportion of income on food. Professor G, Trotter, head of the School of Economics at the University of Natal, reported that, between 1959 and 1971, the household costs of an average African family in Durban increased at almost twice the rate of those of a white family because of rapid increases in food prices. It was no different in the other major urban centres. Black workers therefore had every reason to complain, but had to find effective means whereby they could express their demands.

Workers' Organisations: Old and New

By 1970, however, there were few trade unions to which black workers could turn. The unions which had once existed had been largely destroyed by the government during the mid-sixties. By banning the organisers and secretaries of any trade union which would not collaborate with the government, or appeared to be too militant in its demands, the Minister of Labour bled the unions dry. In 1963 it was reported that many of the black unions affiliated to the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), one time member of the ANC-dominated Congress Alliance, were being forced out of existence by the banning of their officials, and by the detention of some 35 of their leading members. In 1964 the pressure on the unions was increased. Fifty-two officials and members had been banned by April; offices had been raided and files removed; members had been arrested on a variety of charges, and the journal Forward claimed that the government seemed intent on destroying SACTU without formally declaring it an unlawful organisation.

The few unions which were able to survive had broken from SACTU. The National Union of Clothing Workers, the largest of the existing black unions, had left by 1957, and had a long history of collaboration with the government. Its secretary, Lucy Mvubelo, had allowed the government to use her name in appeals for investments in South Africa, and her avowed anti-communism made it easier for her to continue working in her union. Nonetheless the union had no official status, and was able to secure benefits for its members only because of the 'protection' afforded it in negotiations by its 'mother' union - the Garment Workers Union. In the wake of the strike wave of 1973, garment workers were eventually involved in work-stoppages, but the union could not take a lead in pressing members' demands, and the only role it could play was to bring the strikes to a speedy close.
disputes, union officials were (in several cases) pointedly excluded from the negotiations.

Five small African unions had also been established by the African Affairs Section of the all-white Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA), which operated from 1962-68. By 1968 strong internal dissension and government pressure led to tile closing of the African Section, and all funds were withdrawn from the five unions. One of these, the Engineering and Allied Workers Union, managed to survive. It was short of funds, lost most of its full-time officials, and was barely able to pay the salaries of the two organisers who remained. Workers' subscriptions covered only the office rental and a

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funeral-insurance benefit premium. It was only after the union appealed for and obtained the support of the International Metalworkers Federation, that the continued existence of the organisation was assured.

With most formal organisation broken by government action, the workers had to fall back on their own resources, or look to two small groups, the Urban Training Project (UTP) and the Institute for Industrial Education (IIE), which had been set up in 1970 and 1971, and offered some advice and assistance to working-class groups. The crucial factor was that the workers were able to build 'some degree of informal but effective organization', according to Fozia Fisher. In making this claim, she relied on the...

observation of two graduates who have recently worked on construction sites in Natal, who both independently report that there is a relatively tight organisation which controls work pace, informal 'disciplining' of unpleasant supervisors, and also the recruitment process, largely by leaning heavily on unwanted fellow workers. Similarly the experience of union organisers [after 1973] is that it is a question of convincing key individuals in the factory of the importance of the union.

These workers were influenced, or perhaps assisted, by the Industrial Wage and Economic Commissions set up by NUSAS together with the SRCs on some of the campuses, or by the Urban Training Project that was formed by personnel from the former African Affairs Section of TUCSA after 1968. These groups, often consisting of no more than a dozen students, publicised black workers' rights under existing legislation, offered some training in organisational work, or helped groups of workers prepare evidence for meetings of the Wage Boards.

Fozia Fisher denied that the strikes in 1973 were organised by any group from outside the working class, and although she was correct in stressing that the initiative in the strike wave came from the workers inside the factories, it is possible that she underestimated the effect on the workers of the evidence presented by students at Wage Board enquiries. The Financial Mail of 28 July 1972 was reported as stating that the student wage commissions: "... represent a "new voice, highly articulate and backed by comprehensive research”. The students in the Durban based Wages Commission also broke new ground in September 1972 when they established the General Fatoty Workers Benefit Fund with the assistance of Lauriet Bolton, staCRy, the Garment Workers Union
in Natal. "I Amongst the attractions of the Benefit Fund were death
benefits and medical services for members. A large number of Africans heard
of the Fund when trouble tittle Wxye! Commission visited factories and
distributed their paper fiti 'nT, they joined the Benefit Fund and paid monthly
contributions.

The Benefit Fund soon widened its scope, Workers started to make offices
(provided by the Garment Workers Union) on Saturday mornings. They
tried to register grievances about workmen's compensation, unemployment inurance.

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In many respects, the Benefit Fund provided the services of a general workers union, and, in the immediate aftermath of the first
strikes in 1973, workers associated with the Fund formed the first African trade
unions in Natal since the mid-sixties."

A number of trade unions were also established in Johannesburg with the assistance of the UTP. The influence of this group was evident in the aftermath of a
highly successful strike of bus drivers who were employed by the Public Utility
Transport Corporation (PUTCO) which operated between the townships and
adjacent towns in the Transvaal. In June 1972, some 300 of the strikers in
Johannesburg were gaolde some after demanding that they be taken into custody
with those who had previously been arrested. The Attorney-General refused to
prosecute the arrested men although they had been charged with participating in
an illegal strike, and the employers offered a pay increase of 33 1/3 per cent which
brought the strike to an end. The defence committee, set up by the drivers during
the strike, was converted on the advice of members of the UTP into the Transport
Workers and Allied Union."0 The workers specifically rejected the use of the
word 'black' in the name of their union.

Black Consciousness and the Workers

The rejection of the word 'black' by the IIUTCO drivers was not altogether
typical. Many unions indicated in their names that they were black (or more
specifically African). But there were few cases in which the workers seem to have
been won to the Black Consciousness Movement. Foszia Fisher, in appraising the
groups that influenced the workers, stated that: 'SASO is much less likely [than
NUSAS] to have been an influence, since it showed no awareness of specifically
worker issues, and had no influence among workers.'59 Ms. Fisher was in a
position to know the attitude of members of the Black Consciousness Movement,
She had been a delegate at the Black Renaissance Convention in December 1N74
and, together with Harold Nexasana of the Institute for industrial Education,
presented a paper entitled The Labour Situation in South Africa'. In it they stated:
We believe that tie gro wth Cit 'tItack (Consciounn q' arnong the black
middle classes indicates a growing awareness of the extent to which they have up
till now been uwd aN functionarivs to keep the sylten running.
They are beginning to ralseh that 11i 'Western ,%ultnrv' to which they have
been given access is nothing hut a set of ttols l'br dtmination. But 'Black
Consciousness' does not a.4 yet wen to have got beyond a Onple rejection.
And It does not seern to have made a clear arnlysis of the relation between
There were very few members of the BPC who had any connection with trade unionism. Drake Koka, who was employed as an organiser by the Urban Training Project, described himself as a trade unionist. Bokwe Mauruna, who had once been employed by the TUCSA African Affairs Section, and had been the secretary of the Engineering and Allied Workers Union until T.JCSA withdrew and stopped all financial assistance, had resigned from the union 'bitterly disillusioned with broken promises', and later became an organiser for the Black Community Programmes. But organised contact with the working class was slight.

When Koka's involvement in establishing the BIX became known to the Urban Training Project, the project's executive containing both black and white members - decided unanimously that politics should be kept out of the organisation. The executive of the UTP had obviously brought from TUCSA a strong bias against politicisation of trade unions together with the belief that funding of the project (both in South Africa and from abroad) would be made difficult if political interests were displayed by its employees.

L. Douwes Dekker, one of the authors of a long review on the new trade unions and the strike wave of the early 1970's, had been employed by TUCSA as its assistant general secretary, and had left after the closing of the African Section. In this review article it was claimed that the new awareness of the value of unions possibly lay 'in the stirrings of a "back consciousness" movement... which emphasises the need for independent black organisations.' Quite inconsistently, however, the authors then said that the eventual failure of Koka's union and the government's action in harming him, reflected both the dangers inherent in black militancy and the fact that militants do not command a great deal of support from our fellow African trade unionists, if partly for tactical reasons.

There may have been faults in the projects undertaken by Drake Koka, but nothing that he proposed or organised could be described as 'militant'. Not was there any indication that the workers (as distinct from trade unionists or members of the Urban Training Project) were averse to militants or to militancy.

In June 1971, Koka and members of the ilw announced the formation of the Sales and Allied Workers Union, which aimed at organising salesmen and hawkers. It is not certain what services they offered their members, but they did not seem to make much progress. Koka, however, was able to use meetings, summoned in the name of his union, to launch a general workers' union in August 1972. This body, known as the Black Allied Workets' Union (IIAW), was henceforth to be the centre of BPC trade union activity until Koka was banned some seven months later. The Sales and Allied Workers Union seems to have continued (at least in name) although there is no indication of any trade union activity on behalf of its members.

In a report in Black Review 1972, it appears that the decision to form B3AWU was a spontaneous outcome of the meeting called that
there are indications that it had been planned beforehand, A decisio iln o mi some general workers body was approved by a SASO ciiereiice the tre. ceding month, and the objects of that organisation, which wis called a Ilack Workers Council (BWC), were alntost identical in wtidilly with fit Isolutsior

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Accepted by the newly launched BAWU. The Black Workers Council's objects Nere:

to act as a co-ordinating body to serve the needs and aspirations of black workers; to unite and bring about solidarity of black workers; to conscientise them about their role and obligation toward black development;
to run clinics for leadership, in-service training and imbue them with pride and self-confidence as people and about their potential as workers.27

The BAWU had as its aims:
to organise and unite all black workers into a powerful labour force that would earn the respect and de facto recognition by both employers and government; to consult existing trade unions to effect the calling of a Black Workers Conference where the Black Workers Council shall be elected; to improve the workers’ knowledge through general and specialised (occupational) educational programinica, thus bettering workers' skills and know-how by conducting; (a I leadership courses; (b) labour seminars;
(c) lectures and specialised commercial courses,.1

The BAWU, furthermore, estimated that it would need the sum of R30,000 er year for Isound administration'. SASO also estimated that it would 'require just over R30,000 ler year fo five years to set up the Black Workers council and an associated Black Workers Project which would work towards it Council, by organising African workers into committees and unions. The Otails of the Project and of the Council, together with the budget and an utline of the aims, were sent to a number of bodies including the IJEF, andi is from the latter source that details are available.29 Besides acting as a trade union, (he BWC was to train black workers in the :ills of their jobs 'in consultation with the management' (sic); to orfer teracy classes; and 'facilities and amenities for relaxation and creative :xupation'. Far from being 'militant' as suggested by Dtuwes Dekker et al., te programme was reformist and even collaborationrist. The programme iggested for migrant workers would have pleased the most hardened nployer

The absence of family life is very depressing, Recreational programmes will then be arranged to employ the workers creatively in their leisure time.

Representations can be made about workers' problems about housing, transportation etc, which all affect the productivity of the black worker.30

mn literacy classes could be interpreted as being of value to the employer:

yea, Of tie m 0

[Workers] are preparing to acquire school certificates which will put them in good stead for promotion. Arrangements can be made with volunteer students to assist with tuition and arrange vacation classes. Improvement in learning will imbue them with self-confidence and ambition.3'
The Black Workers Project and BAWU were unable to persuade existing unions to join them in their attempted Black Workers Conference, and BAW, did not recruit many workers to a broad general workers union. Despite the claim that 'western elements of trade unionism ... had to be modified' in order to handle the problems of housing, transport, pass and curfew laws, and illiteracy, there was no indication of how the general workers union was going to act as both a trade union and as a social and political organisation. The workers did not seem to believe that there was any benefit to be derived from joining BAWU. Foszia Fisher seems to have been correct: SASO 'had it) influence among workers'. But Gatsha Buthelezi did! Although Buthelezi has been received with a certain arvuit of suspicion among the black intelligentsia, he has enjoyed large, but perhaps varying popularity among the mass of Zulu workers. The fact that he has been attacking government policy was widely known, and probably improved the morale of workers.

Nonetheless, Ms. Fisher reiterated her point, made earlier, that these influences only affected the strikes, but cannot explain their occurrence.

The Strike in Namibia, 1971

In December 1971 in Namibia (South West Africa), the Ovatibo workers, followed by other black workers, struck work and brought the economic life of the territory to a standstill. This action undoubtedly influenced South African workers. Events in Namibia were prominently featured in the South African press, and the strike was the talking point of workers in townships, hostels and factories. The situation in Namibia had been widely felt all year. The entire South African government, and plans to divide the country into 'homelands' had been relentlessly pursued. The strike itself was effectively put down by the South African Police. But beneath the apparent calm, there was widespread discontent. The 'homelands' policy, the educational system, low wages, and the comrakot system run by the South West African Native ivo 4Lhm Aisocalioni (SWANLA), all caused resentment. During the last half of 1971 there were widespread protests and

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demonstrations in Namibia sparked off by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. On 21 June 1971, the Court declared that: `... the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia being illegal, South Africa is under obligation to withdraw its administration from Namibia immediately and thus put an end to its occupation of the territory,' The Court decision churchmen wrote letters to Prime Minister Vorster and pastoral letters to their congregations, calling on South Africa to withdraw her administration. There were protest meetings addressed by local leaders, demonstrations in schools and training colleges, and boycotts of some school assemblies. There were antigovernment demonstrations at the Ougwediva Training Institution for Teachers and Trades, leading to a closure of the college and the expulsion of a large
number of the students. At other schools there were demonstrations against the
use of Atriktarns as a medium of instruction, followed by the inevitable
expulsions.35
One of the major sources of complaint in Narnihia was the contract
labour system. Workers were recruited in the Reserves for fixed periods of time
(usually 12 or 18 months), at rates of pay that ranged from R10 per month for
mine labourers, R9.75 for farm labourers, to R3.75 for picannhs (children under
18). It was reported that some employers paid more than the minimum prescribed
rate, but the average wage was some R20 per month. Only males were recruited
and they were housed in 'bachelor' quarters in tire townships, or in compounds
near the mines. They could not take their dependents with them, and air ordinance
of January 1970 prohibited wives residing with their husbands in Katatura out
side the capital, Wind hoek, unless they had been born there or had lived in the
township for at least 10 years and been in continuous employment. The contracts
expressly prohibited strike action, and made the breaking of it a punishable
offence. The worker, however, was not free to choose his employer, and was,
assigned to his place of work by SWANI A after being graded according to
physical fitness and age.'
Discontent was also endemic in the townships. In June 1971, tile men in
Katatura had been angered when IIiot police raided tile towshillp in a search for
illegal residents and arrested men of the mine. In Noether, tile workers rioted
against the proposed erection of guard towers.' Towards the end of the year
church hearing took place, where the Native People of South West Africa
were invited to discuss the matter. The reports of the meeting were
publicised in the press, and the men at Katatura met on Sunday 12 December and
resolved to strike the following day. On the Monday 5,500 workers refused to leave the township

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
We are having problems with the white man J. de Wet. You are having similar
problems. lie said we ourselves want to tie on contract, because
we come to work, But we must talk about ending the system. We in Walvis Bay
discussed it. We wrote a letter to tile government of Ovamoland and
to SWANLA. We will not come back. We will leave Walvis Bay and the
contract, and will stay at home as the Boer J. de Wet said.4B
The men in Walvis Bay formed a committee and their first step was to
demonstrate their rejection of the contracts. They handed in their papers, and
police who had been moved into the town rounded them up and repatriated them
to Ovambo. News of the impending strike had been widely publicised in the
press, and the men at Katatura met on Sunday 12 December and resolved to strike
the following day. On the Monday 5,500 workers refused to leave the township.
which was then sealed off by the police. When tile workers rejected appeals by lieadmen, specially flown in from Owambo to speak to them, they too were repatriated -- at their own request. Within a week all work had stopped at the Klein Aub and Qarnites copper mines, the Berg Aukas lead and vanadium mines, the Uis tin mines and the copper, lead, anti zinc mines at Tsumeb.

By 20 December, 12,000 workers were out on strike in a dozen Centres, and most were repatriated. This did not bring the campaign to an end, and by mid-January 1972 there were over 13,100 men out on strike. Early in January the strikers elected a committee with Johannes Nangutiula as chairman, and it was this committee that formulated a set of demands and issued strike leaflets. The committee rejected the government plan to refurbish the contract system by handing over its operation to the headmen, and in its stead demanded: freedom to choose their jobs; the right to have their anlies with them; the rate for the job, irrespective of colour, an end to the pass, book; removal of the police post at the Owambbo boundary; and mutual respect between bosses and workers.

The strike lasted for over a month, and the workers returned to the under.

standing that the contract system had been scrapped, the SWANIA disbanded and that workers would be free to leave employer and find new portol--Lrs without first being repatriated. The workers even achieved materially better wages in many cases. It was soon tonond, however, that cie trols on in-employees of workers had not been relaxed and that there were (ew po ' 'bitirs of changing employers or of moving Itorl on (kitill ol enofltoryfflenit to ar ther. Despite this reverse for the Owambbo people, it South Africa the strike was seen as a success for the workers and a blow for the authormiow. Oine r(1 611t. tator said of its effect thtt:

What I the strike I has done is to Show South Afrtiea nd thr whitle residents in Namibia that action against then it rot cornfinl to gaurirl a actions inl (Cprivi and Kavor go, or to paper oippoiltllo at tOw tN

The contract labourers too have shown a voiwe and a will Ihey to

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will seek to express the will of Namibia as the next stage on the long road to nationhood is reached.

The Ovambo strike had also shown the South African workers that strike action was possible and that concessions could be forced out of the ruling class. The widespread publicity that the strike achieved in the South African press took this message home to workers in the townships and hostels. Despite themselves the newspapers acted as carriers of a message that was bound to be discussed and thought about in the coming year and, when finally workers did decide on strike action, information about the events in Namibia could only strengthen them in their resolve to take action.

Natal Workers on Strike, 1973

From January 1973 to mid-1976, over 200,000 black workers struck work in South Africa. The overwhelming majority were African, but sizeable numbers of Coloureds and Indians were also involved. This was the most extensive strike wave since the early days of the second world war, and affected most of the main
urban centres. The strikes started in Durban and for most of the period continued to affect industries in this region. In the first three months of the strikes, workers walked out of 146 establishments on 160 occasions in the Durban-Pinetown-Hanniersdale complex. More comprehensive figures released by the Minister of Labour showed that between June 1972 and June 1974 there were 22 work stoppages involving 78,216 workers in Natal, and that in the next nine months there were a further 88 stoppages in the Province involving 12,051 workers. Durban-Pinetown is the second largest industrial area in South Africa, and is surpassed only by (ie Witwatersrand complex. It has an African population of nearly 1,000,000, and some 200,000 are employed in industry. The workers live in segregated townships outside Durban and the nearby Pinetown/New Germany area. Ilainmarsdale is about 25 miles west of Durban and is adjacent to a Reserve. There were some 14 clothing and textile firms in the town, and workers employed there were paid less than their fellows at the main urban centres.43

There was large-scale unemployment in the region as men streamed into the urban areas in the hopes of obtaining work. It the cicillinstaisces, many firms paid wages that were well below those officially calculated Poverty Datum Line. In 1970 the Natal University Sooceæd Research Department had found that 55 per cent of all African families in the industrial complex were living in poverty.44 Since that survey the cost of living had risen sharply without a corresponding rise in wages, and by the close of 1972 many families were in dire straits. Nonetheless most observers noted that in 1973 wages in Durban-Pinetown were no worse than those paid in other areas, and were appreciably better than some. Workers in the area had been restless for some time, and the dockers fwd Year of Fire, Year of Ash struck work in 1969 and in 1972. They were equally restless in other industries. Officials of registered (non-African) trade unions in both the textile and garment industries had warned managers in mills and factories over several months that the workers were discontented and that strikes were in the offing. Officials of the Garment Workers Union were in contact with the General Factory Workers Benefit Fund, and fully aware of the extent of workers’ dissatisfaction. The employers were, however, uncompromising and trade union officials were rebuffed.4 There was obviously good reason for the workers to take action in Durban-Pinetown, but no more so than in the rest of the country and, in the first instance, the question that must be asked, is not why the strikes took place, but why they started in Durban rather than elsewhere. The question ‘Why Durban?’ was posed by Gerhard Mar6 in a paper presented at a symposium on Labour organisation and the Africans, in March 1974. Mare had been one of the main contributors, together with Foszia Fisher, to the Institute for Industrial Education (IIE) publication 77te Durban Strikes, 1973, and his answer to the problem was:

The first factor was the initial strike at Coronation Brick and Tile Company. The second factor was the existence in Durban, strategically placed in each of the industrial areas, of a number of factories belonging
to one organisation [the Frame Textile group] characterised by particularly low wages and bad labour relations. The third factor was the rise in transport costs and then the rumoured train boycott. The first rumour was only heard on the 27th January but it was only after that that the strikes really picked up.46

The three factors detailed by Mard affected the workers in entirely different ways, and each needs to be examined in some detail. The first, relating to the initial strike on 9 January 1973 at the Coronation Brick and Tile Company, involved some features which were unique to Natal and will be considered first.

The Strike at Coronation Brick and Tile In the booklet, *Durban Strikes, 1973*, it was asserted that the strike at Coronation Brick ... seems to have been connected in some way with the visit of Prince Goodwill to the factory.47 Two other claims were made. Firstly, that the strike received widespread publicity because the workforce was so large; because workers marched through the streets to attend a meeting; and because they did gain a wage increase. Secondly, that there would have been no major strike in the textile plants if it had not been for the Coronation Brick and Tile strike.46

The reasons for the strike are fairly clearcut. The workers demanded an increase in the minimum wage rate from R8.97 to R20.00 per week. Some of the workers were also aware of the fact that an enquiry into the industry had been conducted nearly a year earlier by the Wage Board, and that the Durban Black Workers Set the Pace

Students' Wages Commission had presented evidence at the hearing. The IonL delay in announcing an increase made those workers decide on direct action. The one additional factor which set Coronation Brick and Tile apart from other establishments lay in the fact that the Paramount Chief (or King) of the AmaZulu, Goodwill Zwelithini ka Bhekuzulu had visited the factory in the latter part of 1972 and delivered an address to the assembled workers. It was reported that there was some ambivalence in the King's message, and it was not clear whether he had indicated that the management had agreed to raise wages, or whether he had expressed a willingness to negotiate on their behalf. Although there was nothing exceptional in the King addressing meetings of workers, there was no precedent for a direct intervention on matters pertaining to wages or working conditions.

Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief Executive Officer of KwaZulu, had made a number of pronouncements on wages and on the need for African trade unions, but had pointedly refused to come to the dockworkers' assistance in 1972, despite their appeal to him for assistance.41 The appearance of King Goodwill at the Coronation Brick and Tile Company, and his intervention on the wage front, was perhaps not as disinterested as it appeared, and must be seen in the light of the deep conflict between some of the traditional leaders and the Chief Executive Officer.

Gatsha Buthelezi and his supporters had not willingly accepted the government's 'Homelands' policy, and he had been in open conflict with the then recently installed Regent Paramount Chief, Israel Mcwayizeni, who in 1969 had declared that he planned to set up a territorial authority in terms of the Bantu Authorities
Act (i.e. that he was taking the first step towards accepting the apartheid plan for the Zulu). 

Buthelezi was unable to stop the Regent, and in April 1970 a Territorial Authority was established. On 9 June Buthelezi was elected Chief Executive Officer by a meeting of his peers. It was traditional for the head of the Buthelezi tribe to inherit the role of Prime Minister to the Zulu king, and Buthelezi accepted office. He then called for the implementation of government policy with all possible speed. Nevertheless, Buthelezi remained at outspoken critic of the government, and there were continued attempts to replace him by a chief more amenable to official policy. The Regent had been the centre of opposition to Buthelezi and had the support of the South African government. Consequently, when Prince Goodwill was installed its Paramount Chief in December 1971, the chiefs sought to neutralize him politically. In future, the King was told, he should hold himielt aloof from party politics, and he should be represented in the Ugilaltivo Assembly by a personal nominee.

Under the new constitution of KwaZulu, the chiefs retained traditional powers in ceremonial and tribal matters, and the Paramount Chief would 'personify the unity of the Zulu nation'. He also took precedence over the Chief Executive Officer on all matters except those dealt with by the Legislative Assembly. The King also had the services of the traditional Royal Council, This created two centres of power in KwaZulu & one grouped around I

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the Royal House and the Royal Council and given legitimacy by tradition; the other situated in the Legislative Assembly which had yet to establish its authority. Furthermore, the South African government hoped to merge the two power centres and place the King's men in control of the Legislative Assembly. In these circumstances, every move of the King was seen by Buthelezi to be part of the struggle for power.

On 8 January 1973, the management of the Coronation Brick and Tile Company heard that there was an impending strike. They issued a statement accusing 'communists' of fomenting the strike, and threatening 'ringleaders' with 'severe punishment'. The management's attitude swung even the doubters behind the existing informal organisation and, on 9 January, almost the entire workforce of 2,000 assembled at the football stadium. When told by the management to elect a committee, one worker responded: 'Our terms are quite clear. We don't need a committee. We need R30.00 a week'.

There was deadlock, and it was only the intervention of King Goodwill on the 10th that persuaded the workers - albeit reluctantly- to allow him to negotiate with the management on their behalf.9 The workers had only agreed to the King's proposal after his representative, Prince Sithela Zulu, stated '. . . that if they could not trust in the Chiefs word, this would "lower the dignity" '. This was little other than a reprimand and the workers, who had earlier expressed their fear that they might lose the initiative if they agreed to negotiate, were forced to retreat. Buthelezi, on the other hand, seized on the appeal not to 'lower the dignity', and he was said to have 'advised'
the King not to become embroiled in controversial issues which could tarnish the image of the Royal House. The King gave way to this pressure and did not meet the management as arranged. As the workers had feared, they had lost the initiative, and some talks were held between one of the men's leaders and management. Eventually the workers returned to work after grudgingly accepting a R2.07 rise in the weekly wage.

The workers had not gained very much from the intervention of the KwaZulu leaders. It could even be asserted that the King had undermined the solidarity and determination of the workers, and that Buthelezi had turned his back on the strikers. The King and Buthelezi had been locked in a power struggle, and the workers' claims had been used by one of the tribal Councillors for his own purposes. When Buthelezi demanded that the King withdraw, the workers were abandoned.

It is not clear, however, whether the workers in Durban Pinetown were aware of the motives surrounding the King's actions. For many of them the crucial factor consisted of the King's intervention, and the possibility that the KwaZulu leaders would back their claim to wage increases. Irrespective of any other considerations, the workers at Coronation Brick and Tile had won higher wages.

Only further research will reveal the full impact of the KwaZulu dignitaries on subsequent events. This will have to unravel the effects of the recent inauguration of the King and the celebration of King Shaka Day as a national holiday in KwaZulu on 24 September (following an enactment in Parliament),

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In like manner it will be necessary to discover the full effects of Buthelezi's outspoken criticism of the South African government's policies. Nevertheless there is sonic evidence which shows that the workers (or at least a large proportion of them) were responding to an incipient Zulu nationalism. The main slogan chanted by the workers as they marched or gathered at meetings was the traditional Zulu warcry Usuthu. Once a warcry associated with the Zulu King, it had become a chant that was associated with Zulu loyalty. 62

The warcry, Usuthu, used throughout the strikes in Durban was also accompanied by other slogans which seem to indicate that the Durban workers associated themselves with the leaders of KwaZulu. It was reported in Black Review that, in the very next large strike, at four textile works in Natal, the workers were also chanting: 'We are now a united nation'.62 The implication in Black Review was that this referred to a united African nation; but, coupled with the use of Usuthu, it seems more likely that the reference was to a united Zulu nation. The king, however, took no further part in the strikes and KwaZulu Councillors stayed in the background. When one of them, Barney Dladla, intervened in mid-March 1973, he introduced a new and significant element into the strikes. By then the strike wave had spread and involved thousands of workers.

The Textile Workers Strike

It was events in the textile industry which transformed the entire industrial scene, and it was in one firm in particular that the struggle turned out to be particularly bitter. Starting at the Frame Group of textile factories on 25 January, and initially
involving 7,000 workers, the strikes spread throughout Natal, and were extended into the other provinces bringing out thousands of Africans, and with them Coloureds and Indians, in the Transvaal and the Eastern Cape. Always starting at a factory or group of plants inside an industry, the workers poured into the streets and there influenced their fellows in what can be described as a 'multiplier effect'. This was graphically described as follows by L Douwes Dekker, et al:

The first factories to be affected were those with the worst conditions, but once the step had been taken by one group of African workers, the strikes spread by force of example. Whole streets would be affected.

starling in the lowest paying factory on the street, engulfing in the process a firm. . . where wages were considerably higher ... Picketing and incitement is illegal in South Africa but much the same effect was gained by the presence of thousands of workers pouring out of factories and moving en masse down past neighbouring concerns chanting the old war cry of the Zulu armies, Uruthu.4

In hostels, compounds, buses and trains, in beer halls and in the townships, lie workers discussed the strikes. Lacking formal trade union structures, they developed an inter-firm, inter-industry solidarity. They were conscious of their strength in the precincts of the factories, and even during the most bitter strikes they never stayed at home. They also turned their weakness into a source of strength. They refused to appoint spokesmen and would not elect committees, and thus avoided the possibility of victimisation, Faced by an acephalous body of strikers the police made random arrests, but the informal organisation remained intact.

On 25 January 1973, just two weeks after the Coronation Brick and Tile strike, textile workers employed in the giant Frame Group walked out at the Frametex factory in New Germany, near Pinetown. They claimed that they were being paid an average of R5.00 to R9.00 per week, and they demanded R20,00. They were joined by workers of all the Frame Group factories in the area, and some 6,000 Africans were affected, as well as Indian workers.s

At this stage the workers were unintentionally assisted by the media and the employers. On 27 January there were widespread rumours of a boycott of all transport, and this received extensive press coverage. Firms made provisions for workers to sleep on the premises, and Durban Corporation waived curfew regulations and allowed all Africans to be in the 'white' areas between 11.30 p.m. and 4.0 a.m. The police moved heavy reserves into the townships in a show of strength. But there was no boycott and the workers had no intention of staying away from the factories.

The strikes had, in the process, been well publicised, On 29 January some 2,000 workers stopped work and demanded higher wages in four industrial areas in the Durban.Pinetown region, Another 3,000 workers came out the following day in three factories. And in the next three days over 35 more factories experienced stoppages, mostly in Durban, but also in Newcastle, East London (where some
Coloured workers joined the Afriicons in their strike and Boksburg in the Transvaal.
The strikes now covered a large number of industries, including sugar mills, canvas works, concrete pipes, transport, rubber works, engineering, construction, clothes, food and plastics. But the largest and the most extended strikes were in the textile factories. There were 41 textile units in Natal, and each one experienced one or more work stoppage. For example the Consolidated Textile Mills in Durban, the entire staff of 2,600 were dismissed. Workers of adjoining textile plants immediately joined the strikers. The textile workers in East London had demanded wage increases for their Durban colleagues and some 50 workers had stopped work at the Consolidated Fine Spinners and Weavers on 19 January. This rose to 1,000 four days later and to 2,000 by the end of the month.

One further factor marked the textile workers' action as different from that of most other strikers. The registered union that represented the interests of Indian and Coloured workers, the Textile Workers Industrial Union, intervened and played a part in negotiations with the employers. They persuaded the workers to accept wage increases which were as low as R1.75 to R2.50 per week. Thereafter, however, the management bypassed and ignored the union officials.

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There were few other cases of workers having support from trade unions or their officials — neither from the few African unions, nor from the registered unions which organised white, Coloured, or Indian workers. Most of them were on their own, and the strength they drew on was the solidarity in the factory and the action of surrounding factories. Some workers, however, were isolated and dispersed by the nature of their employment. For example, on 5 February it was reported that a go-slow organised by 145 bus drivers employed by the Johannesburg City Council since 24 January would be converted into an all out strike, and this led to a compromise agreement. On 6 February a strike of some 3,000 black workers employed by the Durban Corporation brought public work to a halt. Very soon, some 16,000 municipal workers were out. The abattoirs were closed; food was handled by volunteers and drafted policemen; grave diggers decamped; rubbish piled up on the sidewalks. It seemed as if a general strike in Durban was in the offing when the workers accepted a 15 per cent pay rise on 9 February.
By 5 February 30,000 workers were on strike in Durban-Pinetown, 7,000 were out in Hammarsdale, and smaller numbers in other centres. But the workers could not stay out. There were no personal savings and no organisation to provide strike pay. Many stoppages only lasted a few hours; some lasted a day or two; and few were sustained for longer periods. Only in the textile industry were they more protracted. One lasted seven days; five lasted six days; three lasted four days; others were of shorter duration. Indian workers joined in the strike, and although they were generally permitted by legislation to partake in Strikes, in this instance they broke the ban on industrial action in municipal corporations. In general
Indian workers joined or encouraged African workers in their action and needed little persuasion to stop work whenever strikes were called. There were over 60 strikes in February. By the end of this short period over 40,000 workers had been involved in stoppages or strikes, most of which had taken place in the Durban complex. There was, however, no discernible pattern, other than the obvious fact that in some districts groups of factories came out together. In Johannesburg the strikes were apparently disconnected and affected only small firms. The randthenines% of tile action was a clear indication of the total lack of organisation and direction, and a clear sign that subterranean dissatisfaction had risen to the surface and overtopped, Nevertheless, the press publicity and the growing knowledge that workers were on the move throughout the country led to increasingly ntilitlal Incition 110 strike near Mandini in Zululand teleccted thin growing detertttattit tile mens (and in this case their families) to gain rspr1ovellents, If the proves meithen of the KwaZulu government were brog ht into the strikeN and this r~ivtd afresh the relationship between the leaders of the 'ilomeinlds% and tile workers. It also brought internal slltugglex in tile KwaZtuli cabinet to tile fiore, and this affected, and was in turn affected ty, the workers' struggle%.

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The Intervention of Barney Dladla
On 12 March 1973 a thousand workers stopped work at the giant Tugela Mills of the South African Pulp and Paper Industries Ltd (SAPPI). The state had a substantial financial interest in SAPPI and this made any potential confrontation different from preceding strikes. The striking workers, encouraged by chanting women, set up roadblocks in Mandini and smashed the windows of buses in the township. Then thousands of men and women gathered on the outskirts of the township and started bushfires at the approaches to the mill. By the end of the first day, all 2,000 workers were on strike and police in armoured cars stood by. On 14 March the strike came to a precipitate end after Barney Dladla, Executive Councillor for Community Affairs in KwaZulu, addressed the workers, and said that after meeting the mill management there had been an offer of an extra R2.44 per week. There was tumultuous applause and the workers returned to work."

For a period of just over a year Barney Dladla figured prominently in nearly reports on the strikes. He intervened at a strike in Richards Bay and warned the employers that he would cut off their labour supply. He was reported ohaving said on 30 March:
This is now a challenge to prove whether KwaZulu is a government or not.
If these people are employed by this firm without my approval, it would be clear that we are not a government at all."
The 500 workers at the Alusaf aluminium smelting plant, who had refused to accept a R2.00 per week wage increase, rejected an ultimatum to return to work and claimed that they wanted Dladla to represent them. But the management, which had used army trainees as scab labour, was immovable. They refused at first to meet Dladla on the grounds that the issue concerned labour matters in
South Africa and not KwaZulu, and when they did prA
jat him an interview,
dismissed his appeal. On 2 Aliril, after being out fiorjust over a week, the workers
accepted the R2.00.
For a while Diadla was quiescent, but his reappearance was only a mattr of
time. It was stated in Black Review, 1973, that Dladla was a nembern il thte
Institute for Industrial Education, and it was also quite certain that lie had the
support of Buthelezi in his stand at Richards Bay.4 His opportunity fol
intervening again seemed most propitious at the end of January 1974. A strike at
Pinetex Mill (a member of the Frame Group at New Germany) involving 1,200
workers spread to 10 textile factories In the area. On the second day of the strike,
Dladla marched at the head of between 5,)00 and 10,000 striking workers to the
main Frame Group textile mill in Now Germany, and then conducted negotiations
on their behalf. Together with Halton Cheadle, a trade unionist who was to be
banned the following week. he addressed the workers and announced a wage
increase."

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During this period, events had been moving fast in KwaZulu. Chief C. H-
llengwa,.formerly chairman of the Legislative Assembly, had resigned that post in
order to launch a new movement known as Umkhonto ka Shaka (Shaka's Spear)
at the end of October 1973. The movement, which had the backing of the South
African government, was formed in order to restore political executive powers to
the Zulu king." Buthelezi was able to secure the dismissal or Hllengwa from the
Legislative Assembly, and the King disowned the new movement.
There were also warnings from government officials and ministers against
meddling in labour matters outside KwaZulu. Senator Owen Horwood (a member
of the Cabinet) had issued a warning to Buthelezi in 1973,7 and this was repeated
in the months that followed. In September 1974 a pointed communique from the
Secretary for Hantu Administration again Warned the KwaZulu government
against interceding on behalf 'of Zulu workers in labour disputes in 'white' South
Africa. The reply from tile KwaZulu government was defiant:
We cannot see ourselves turning a deaf ear to any pleas fromn our people for
intercession as our people have io proper machinery for negotiation and we cannot
lie insensitive to any alleged exploitaion of our people. U
Dladla meanwhile had been silenced, lie was accused of not having consulted the
sabinet before interveine in the strikes. The I egisl~ative Assembly said that lie
had exceeded his prerogalives and that it was the tak of tle Kwazulu urban
representative to represent the workes. )ladia w4s first moved to tthe Justice
portfolio and then removed froin the l0islative ANsembhl ill August 1974."m
The debate between 13uthelei arnd ladla had been bit ter. When lie was still a
member of the executive nladla was reptted to have aild that Buthelezi was a
dictator; that lie did not cornnRio1tate with his prople, ant that, furthermore, lie
was trying to itract overas iestors bs claiming, falsely, that the country's labour
I'ce wassstable 11
Buthelezi's attitude to trade unions wAs made Vplica: In an artle In
September 1974. lie iitained there tlnn his rw veutnenrnt was erharrased front time to time by its involveeritnt in labour disputesv tih Kwaluht government, however, could not abandon it% people Two staenscns in the report suniuled up tile Ohlel attutde ito the unolrn and o triket

Even though we do not share adequately the Itua of the ee.oomey,, we are the last people to want to destroy th es onorni or luth Africa.

I do not believe (or a Illoment tha tl trade unions see urstruumns for organising strikes, I regard theut as nrachirery, ttr riq otitwn

In the light of thus it wen that ihe earh:r reply to the limmnt expressed the frustration fell by Ruthe la's C tover.__ n .he, had no de re Io support strikes, hut they aluo had t o h4tv vn .nisirmw tio the wrkers shto

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appealed to them, They asserted their right to intervene, if and when they desired. By dismissing Barney Diadla they assured the government that they did not so desire.

The Organisation of Trade Unions
In the aftermath of the first strikes in January and February 1973. African trade unions were re-established in Natal. Branches of the Metal and Allied Workers Union were organised in May in Pietermaritzburg, and in June in Durban. In August the National Union of Textile Workers was launched, and shortly thereafter the Union of Clothing and Allied Workers was established. In the initial periods all the unions received financial and material support from the Garment Workers Union, the Benefit Fund and N11SAS. The unions in turn strengthened the Fund by their affiliation and their members were covered by the benefits of the Fund. Rent-free offices for the unions were provided in the Garment Workers Union building as well as office equipment and the free use of telephones.2

Organising the trade unions was far from easy. The government was determined to render all attempts at organisation ineffective, and leading young organisers were removed by banning. On 2 February 1974 Halto Cheadle, organiser for the South African Textile Workers Industrial Union. David Davis, administrative officer for the General Factory Workers Benefit Fund; David Hemson, the Textile Workers Industrial Union research officer; and Jeannette Cunningham Brown, assistant secretary of the Union in Durban, were banned. In 1976 a further 18 persons connected with the Urban Training Project, the Institute for Industrial Education, the universigy students' Wages Commissions, and officials of African trade unions were banned."

It was claimed that 22 unions had been started by mid-1474 and that over 30,000 workers had been enrolled. Most of the workers in the uniont also belonged to the Benefit Fund.a4

One consequence of union formation was the appearance of disputes with management over recognition. In March 1974 the workers were in dispute at the Mobeni plant over the demand that the Metal and Allied Workers Unin be recognised. A two day strike was followed by the dismissal of the wofk force of 220 Africans. The management then re-ertployed 155 of the old staff, and agreed
to consult union representatives, provided they were employed at the plant. Inevitably, there was further victimisation live nsitlhu later when the management again dismissed men deemed to be too mhlitat "

Nonetheless, very few workers joined trade unions, and in 1974 no mote than eight per cent of the Durban African work force had been enrolled, i" other areas it was appreciably less. This reflected in part the fact that workeis had found a means for condruting struggles and felt no need to join a forml

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organisation in order to take collective action. Tils represented a high degree of awareness on their part .. as was shown by their consistent refusal to elect representatives, their statements that no negotiations were necessary and all that was required was that the wages be increased, and their complete solid. aTity in all action that was undertaken. At a later stage, however, the lack of formal organisation was to be a weakness, and the need to alter course and transform their economic struggle into a political struggle could not be met. In fact, political strikes were later called by the youth of Soweto, in August and September 1976, but for reasons not directly connected with the demands of workers. The disjunction of purpose by youth and workers when those political stoppages were proposed meant that the struggle could not advance to a higher level. It is just feasible that a well organised working class would have joined the calls to stay at home in 1976, but there was little organisation and the workers of Natal remained outside the orbit of the Revolt.

References
1. See Institute for Industrial Education (1976), The Durban Strikes, 1973, (Raven Press, Johannesburg), p.5. Accounts of the strikes and action that followed are taken from SR RSA, 1971, p.247; and SRRSA, 1972, pp.325-8,
7. SRRSA, 1963, p.215,
8. Reported inSRRSA, 1964, p.265,
16. David Davis, 'How black workerm ore orgpruing'. Aintt4Aprtiofd News,

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October 1974.
17. Lex.cit.
27. Ibld., p.27.
31. Lox.cit.
32. Black Review, 1972, p.45. This point of view is, surprisingly, quoted with apparent approval by L. Douwes Dekker, et al., op.cit., p.234, 33. F. Fisher, op.cit., p.331. 34. Quoted in Namibia News, Vol. 4, Nos. 11-12, November-Decembey 1911. 35. These details are taken from Namibia News, Vol. 4, Nos, 1 1-1 2. The journal carried both a news survey of the strike, and an address by Situ Nujoma, president of SWAPO, to the UN Security Council on S Octoler 1971, on conditions in the territory.
It is not alwayi possible to determine what was meant in official statements. T i erm 'work stoppage' was used ambiguously. If workers stopped work but did not formulate demands, they had not legally truck work - but
were engaged in a work stoppage. On other occasions the legal uetw;es were dropped, and stoppages and strikes were grouped together, both were illegal.


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49. Ibid., pp.9-10. 50. Loc.cit.


55. SRRSA, 1971, p.182. 56. Ibid.


59. Ibid., p.12. 60. Loc.cit.


72. Quoted in Barbara Rogers (1976). Divide and Rule; South Africa's Bantustans, International Defence and Aid Fund, p.44.


8. The Strike Wave Spreads

In the first months of the strike wave in 1973, the press, and in particular the English-medium press, were fulsome in their praise of the low profile maintained by the police. Despite the illegality of the strikes there were no arrests. The usual strike-breaking tactics employed by the police were low, evidence. This did indicate some indecision on the part of the government, dispme the inevitable statement by the Minister of Labour on 2 February 1973 tat. the strike
was the work of agitators with hidden motives. The language used by some police chiefs was unusual. On 6 February, in the midst of the WTk stoppage by municipal workers, the officer in charge, Brigadier T.M. IllII, i.e. said: "The police have nothing whatsoever against people demanding their wages - provided they do not break the law." He also stressed that the police would use force only if absolutely necessary, and then only the minimum required by the circumstances.

Other statements, made in the same vein, were widely quoted at the time and, in the South African context, came as a surprise. On the other hand, massive police presence showed that the 'minimum force necessary' would be employed if and when it was thought to be required. There was a nameless shower of force when the rumoured transport boycott was expected on 1 February, and there was a baton charge followed by 106 arrests on the day that Brigadier Bisschoff made his statement.

Compared to the large number of Blacks arrested every day, police response during the strikes appeared mild, but by any other standards the police were not benign onlookers during the strikes. In 1973 the number of strikes in the country was 353, and 207 of those arrested were charged with participating in strikes or stoppages. In the first six months of 1974, 542 were arrested and 439 charged. An unknown number of others were dismissed and not re-engaged following strike action, and many of these were then forced to leave the towns. It does, however, seem that other than injuries following baton charges, or discomfort following the release of tear gas, there were no serious casualties in Durban-Pine town. The press, COO, therefore, congratulate the police!

The Strike Wave Spreads
Black Miners Shake the Country

On 21 September 1973 workers at the Western Deep Levels mine at Carltonville came out on strike. In the events that followed, a detachment of 21 policemen, led by a major, arrived at the compound and were confronted by an infuriated group of miners brandishing sticks. The police were unable to disperse the miners and after using tear gas resorted to arms. In the shooting that ensued, at least 11 miners were killed. A twelfth miner was said to have died at the hands of the rioters. The beerhall and the kitchen of the compound were wrecked.

Strikes and riots affected mines on 54 occasions between 25 February 1973 and 15 April 1975. At least 140 miners were killed and 1,881 injured. Thousands of miners were repatriated. The number arrested and the number charged do not seem to be readily available, although each event was usually followed by arrests and by court sentences.

There were some factors in the mines which were not dissimilar to those in industry generally. The miners wanted higher pay, and in one case it seems that the police operators and other semi-skilled workers demanded that pay differentials given them in the past be maintained after lower paid workers had received increases. The difference between this and other industries (on this issue) lay in the huge wage differentials between Blacks and Whites, and the control which white workers maintained over black advancement. In 1972 the average wage paid to Africans on all mines was R24 per month exclusive of the cost of housing and
feeding the workers. White miners, who constituted some 10 per cent of the total labour (or - to be more accurate supervisory) force, earned an average of R391 per month. When adjustments are made for estimated benefits, the ratio of white to black wages was in the region of 15:1.

In 1973, when the free market price of gold topped $100 per fine ounce (and reached $126 by June), the federation of goldmining houses (the Chamber of Mines) entered into negotiations with the white miners. In exchange for handsome wage increases of R80 per month and increased holiday leave allowances, the Mine Workers Union at last conceded the right of the mines to train Africans for vacancies which could not be filled by Whites. Just prior to this agreement the Chamber had raised the wages of Africans in the gold mines to an average of R32 per month. When the new categories of work were opened to Africans, a small number of workers could expect substantially higher remuneration but the implementation of the scheme would take several months

The obvious injustice in the new agreements caused considerable discontent, but the white workers demanded even more and, in August, engine drivers and reduction workers demanded a further 20 per cent increase and backed this with the threat of a work to rule. They were offered, and accepted, a 15 per cent increase.4 On 4 August, the African machine operators complained about their wages and demanded more. Between 70 to 100 of these men formed the hard core of the disaffected work force at

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Carltonville on 11 September.

There were few strikes or riots on the mines that did not include dissatisfaction over pay, and even where the riots seemed to involve inter. tribal fighting, workers interviewed by the labour editor of the Financiert Mail complained about exaggerations in the press. A group drawn from several ethnic groups said: "Why do they always blame everything on this so-called faction-fighting? Why don't they look instead at the conditions under which we work and the pay we get?"" The complaints of the black miners related mainly to pay. Wages were too low; even the new pay scales were insufficient to allow them to make any financial progress; and there was an almost total lack of communication between management and workers over wage levels.5

The absence of any trade union on the mines left the workers without overt formal organisation, but there was ample evidence of informal organisation. Tribal and district contacts were maintained by the workers on the mines, and these were reinforced by the management's organisation of labour on tribal lines inside the compounds. Leadership was moulded inside real and tribal groups which responded to the problems faced by the workers inside the mines, and also to issues in the Reserves or countries of origin. Those workers from outside the Republic that faced unacceptable demands made by their national governments, were able to use their organisations inside the compounds to negotiate with cabinet ministers at home and to promote militant activity on the mines to back their own demands.
In January 1974 the Lesotho government demanded that 60 per cent of all their citizens' wages be compulsorily deterred and paid into the Lesotho National Bank. Many Basotho miners maintained that they preferred South African banks to those of Chief Jonathan (the Prime Minister). At one time they were able to organise a petition signed by 700 miners against the deferred pay scheme. At Western Deep Levels, a 26 man delegation was elected by Basotho workers and flown to Lesotho by the mine raetuerm for talks with the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Mines. This led to the retraction of the scheme - at least temporarily.9 This concerted action against the pay scheme got support in many other mines and reflected, at least in part, opposition to the government of Chief Jonathan, and support for the opposition party. It was this ill-lustiance which brought the mineworkers out on strike at Vaal Reel's on 5 January 1975. They also tried to close the mine by Wringing the workers out. This led to clashes with other bodies of miners who stood aloof from the dispute that involved Basotho workers and their government. Numetlmin, it seems that the Basotho were able to win some sections of the mine workers to their side, and that press reports about 'tribal' or faction' fights obscured the real issue -- the attempt by one section of the work force to secure intra-tribal solidarity.10

The existence of such sectional organisation within the mines did not always lead to working-class solidarity. In some cases it led to partial allegiances involving workers of only one tribe (or at least mainly of that tribe). But in many of the strikes in 1974 working class solidarity was achieved. Thei...'

The Strike Wave Spreads obvious solidarity in the wages strikes at Lorraine-Larmorny, Merriespruit mines in May and June and again in Carltonville and Flartebeesfontein in October 1974. At the latter mine, ...the so-called ring leaders who were arrested were identified as representatives of the three main tribal groups on the mine. It was clear that cross-tribal solidarity was deliberately fostered by the strike leaders. On this, as on many occasions when informal leaders of Black miners have been arrested, the press carried no reports of subsequent court hearings."

There were incidents however where the informal tribal organisations were used to further sectional interests. From February through to April 1974 inter-tribal clashes appear to have been largely concerned with issues such as access to women in the neighbouring townships. Debarred from heterosexual relations by the recruiting system and all-male compounds, frustration was diverted into internecine tribal conflict. But it also seems as if there were a number of complicating factors, including the fact that Basotho workers apparently taunted their Xhosa-speaking colleagues with the claim that the latter's Bantustan territory (the 'raiske i) did not have real independence 12. The struggle on the mines in 1974 was marked by continued violence. The apparent mildness of the police in the Durban strikes was not repeated in the mines. The authorities had no intention of allowing the miners to take any concerted action, and from the inception the police suited their usual role. They
shot, and they shot to kill. The miners, and iti particulo the Basotho, retaliated in kind. lie iore a sr ike A Vtal Reef nie pres. report st ated: I Basuto miners threale ned to go otl strike aoad stair t ll lii g at tile S ututth Via , gold mine .. .

Commenting on this, Kurkwood said:
It may well be that other sportanicllui oitbreaks of violence have been more deliberate than press report's make them eim, but one inight dt aw a distinction bietween del berate expresssm.on and deliberate hrgaining through violence. It was this latter that waN new in January

The threats, tile strikes, and te violence, had a Ptotou nd ef(ct on tife country. The shiotings at CarlitiivUlle Initiated a set of dcrmonsl ation ki the university campuses; the goverflnoents of le iotho alnd ot)tSwana a's wll ai the cabinets of the Transkeiai and KwaZulu Batitustatis exptes sd ci iticilll of events on the mines; thousands of Balotho anid (at a later tate) Mozambicans and Malawians were repatriaed and itt the case of Malawi all recruitment was eventually halted by President Bandir for reasons that are still not clear. The Chamber of Mines increand African wages by a further 10 per cent on I December 1973, and arter further riots the Anglo.Anericart Corporation seemed on the point of granting Africans the right to form trade unions, They retracted alter the Minister of Labour issued a statement denouncing any such action.t5

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In 1974 it seemed that the mines faced an unprecedented shortage of African labour. Thousands of Basotho and Mozambican workers had been repatriated. Malawi had suspended all further recruitment, and there was a large deficit in the overall supply of mine labourers. The Chamber of Mines also required a sizeable number of trainees for the newly created semi.skilled jobs. At the end of November the president of the Chamber of Mines spoke of the need to think in terms of a black labour force that would adopt mining as a career.t6 Recruiting stations for the first time were opened in urban areas like Soweto, Germiston and Benoni to obtain labour, and there was a relaxation of the regulation that required all recruits to return to the Reserves on completion of their contract."t

An indicator of the urgency with which the labour situation was viewed was the donation in August 1974 of R186,000 by Consolidated Gold Fields Ltd. to TEACH, for the erection of four junior secondary schools in Soweto. ! The mines' interest in building schoolrooms was discussed in Chapter Five; the amount they contributed to TEACH underlined their perception of the need to extend secondary education.

Strikes Become Endemic
News of the strikes and riots on the mines received wide publicity and it seemed that industrial disturbances had come to stay. The immediate impact on the African workers is hard to determine because workers do not usually start their own newspapers to publicise their ideas. The workers of the Orange Free State were strangely quiescent during 1973, but strikes spread to the Transvaal, Between February and mid-September there were at least 14 strikes in Johannesburg and five on the Witwatersrand. Most of the stoppages had been of limited duration and involved small numbers of workers. But two strikes (on 2
April and 5 May 1973) were of work forces of more than 1,000, and in March 500 dairy workers struck work and won a RI ier week i
One factor which had been so important in most Durban strikes was absent in the mine strikes, The mine compounds were closed to the outside and were far from the main industrial aieam. The multiplier effect which atos from the mingling of workers in the streets around factories could not be replicated in the case of the mine strikes, The effects on the workers were consequently more indirect. When industrial strikes occurred in the Oranr Free State in 1974, the fact that most were centred in Wlkom, the matn mining area in the Province might not have been accidental, ven though five months had passed since the big disturbances on the mines
The distribution of strikes in 1974, according to the Minister of labour in the Assembly on 7 February 1975, is shown in Table 7. There was no more discernible pattern in the 1974 strikes than in those of the previous year In January there was a major stoppage in the dairy industry on the Witwatersrand; in February there was a riot in the Boksburg mine; in Apid

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Table 7
Strikes by Africans in 197420

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Stoppages/Strikes Involved</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transvaal</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>22,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFS</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>18,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>57,656</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

there were disturbances again at Western Deep Levels in Carltonville. In July there was a strike at Rand Refinery, Germiston. In July the multiplier effect was noticeable when workers at engineering firms in Durban, Welkom and the East Rand stopped work. Some 3,000 workers were involved in II firms. Within a week workers at 15 other establishments were on strike.2 Strikes and stoppages had become such common occurrences that few received publicity, and others were accorded only brief press reports. Some 1,400 workers were arrested and a large proportion were charged."

East London: Bantustan Leaders as Strike-Breakers
The 1974 strike wave in East London did not initially seem to be different from any other in the country. In fact, there was a remarkable similarity to events in Durban in 1973. The impetus for the strikes came from an initial work stoppage at Car Distributor Assemblies on 22 July 1974. Soon workers in 21 firms in East London (involving some S,000 workers) and one firm with 3,500 workers in neighbouring Kingwilliamstown came out on strike.23 The strikes lasted longer than in Durban. Most workers stayed out for three or four days, and some did not return for a week. In many of the strikes there were fairly lengthy negotiations with management - the workers' representatives having been delegated or elected by the work force. Most of the
strikes were peaceful although there were three instances of violent action or threats of violence against scabs. The police intervened to disperse the workers with tear gas or batons, but there were no arrests and no serious injuries. Also, as in Durban, some strikes ended without any gains for the workers. In some instances they were all dismissed and invited to re-apply; other workers managed to get small wage increases amounting to 10 to 15 per cent.

In one other respect East London was similar to Durban. The town was on the edge of a 'Homeland' and the Chief Minister intervened in one of the crucial strikes. But the Ciskei, which borders East London and in which the township Mdantsane is situated, is very unlike KwaZulu. The average wage paid in East London was only 66 per cent of that paid to Africans in Durban.

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and a larger proportion of African workers in East London were in lower job categories than elsewhere in the country. Comparative figures are shown in Table Eight.

Table 8
African Wage Levels in the Principal Industrial Areas, 19745

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Average Weekly Wage (in Rands)</th>
<th>Percentage of Africans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port Elizabeth</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durban</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East London</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Ciskei itself was impoverished, but probably not more than other Reserves. Its political structure was, however, simpler than that of KwaZulu. Its Chief Minister, Lennox Sebe, was a commoner and there was an open political fight about the acceptance of the government's apartheid policy for the 'Homelands'; unlike that in KwaZulu, the opposition came from intellectuals. This group was socially weak and the tensions were different from those witnessed in KwaZulu, where Buthelezi faced the Orut, n of some of the chiefs. From the outset Sebe worked with the Chamber of Commerce, i.e. o'talists, and Brigadier Prinsloo (the head of the local police force) to end the strikes. On 30 July the bus drivers struck work, and this threatened i raw lyse East London.

Almost the entire work force lived in Mdantsane, whh was 12 miles from the city and, without transport, industry and cornfueft would have closed down. Brigadier Prinsloo rounded up the drivers I twoA them to the police station. There they found Sebe waiting to meet them and he 'persuaded' them to go back to work pending negotiatftos Ther polut were fulsome in their praise: 'Brigadier Prinsloo said that the Mayor of East London and leading dignitfam in commerce and industry, together with Prinaloo and senior police o fo se This led to a tour of factories, at which there were strikes, by Sebe. leader n f the Ciskei Legislative Assembly and members of the MdRntsane town councd, and the
workers were advised to return to work. Despite some oppositions the intervention was effective and the strikes ended. Sebe was caustic and read the industrialists a lesson he thought they should have known (!):
The calling of the police when things are very ugly does not solve the problem at all. In fact the industrialists make the police indirectly the enemy of the law-abiding workers, These situations could be saved if

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industrialists contact homeland governments immediately."
The propensity for 'settling' strikes was taken a step further in December when residents of Mdantsane imposed a boycott on the buses as a protest against increased fares and the operation of the season ticket system. They complained that they could get no rebate on the weekly ticket for the occasions on which they had not used the buses, and demanded an alteration in the conditions of sale. Although the bus fares were reduced to the original price after the boycott had been in progress for a number of weeks, the buses remained empty because there had been no change in the season ticket system. The bus company offered to sell its buses and the Ciskeian government indicated its interest in securing the stock, They were, however, unable to raise the capital!
New proposals made provision for the Xhosa Development Corporation to take the service over when the bus company's contract expired in June 1976. A black company would also be formed to run an auxiliary service inside the township and shares would be made available for purchase by the Ciskei government. At this stage the Ciskeian ruling party appealed to its supporters to use the buses. They did, and then proceeded to assault all commuters who persisted in using the taxi service or accepted lifts to work in cars. Prominent businessmen made provision for buying blocks of shares when the new company was formed and one was reported as stating in an interview: 'Perhaps we can say this has been the most important development brought about by the strike.'29 In the light of such cynicism, any further comment would be superfluous.

Strikes Without End
In 1973, after the first wave of strikes had rocked industry and commerce, the government amended the labour laws and gave the African worker the legal right to strike, for the first time in the history of the country. However, as in so much of the legislation introduced to regulate the activities of Africans, the government framed the legislation to remove as many of the new 'rights' as it seemed to grant. A large number of workers were excluded from the legislation, and were under no condition allowed to stop work. This included agricultural workers, domestic servants, workers employed by local authorities and all workers employed in 'essential' services, The position of mine workers and other 'contract' workers was not clearly defined, but it seems as if they too were to be excluded from the right to strike.
Conditions under which workers could legally strike were also circumscribed by the elaborate process that was required before they could stop work. The dispute had to be referred to a works committee or to a Bantu Labour Officer, and 30 days
had to elapse after notice of a dispute had been given. Over and above these requirements, no dispute could be declared if there was a wage agreement that was less than one year old, or if the wage

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rate was being attended to by a Wage Board. In short, the legislation was meant to bring the strike wave under control, and not to allow the workers the right to take precipitate action. The effect of the legislation on the stoppages was, consequently, minimal. The strikes continued through 1974 and on through 1975. In the latter year it was reported that there had been 119 strikes, but this apparently excluded work stoppages and work disputes, because the Minister of Labour also referred to 175 'disputes' dealt with by labour officers during the yearA Over 500 workers appeared on charges following the stoppages. In 1976 there were at least 105 strikes, over and above work stoppages and excluding the stay-at-homes called by the youth to support the struggles in Soweto, (‘ape Town and elsewhere. Over 16,000 workers were involved in these industrial disputes in chrome, coal and gold mines; in the Pretoria municipal department; at meat suppliers in Johannesburg; and at a large variety of works in all four Provinces.3’ In 1976 there were two strikes, in particular, which received large-scale publicity, and which attracted the sympathy of the township population. The first occurred at Elandsfontein near Germiston on the Witwatersrand in March 1976. The struggle in the plant revolved around the workers' demand that their membership of the Metal and Allied Workers Union be recognised by the management. Some 480 workers (80 per cent of the African work (or €1 sent a petition to the firm, rejecting the company's liaison and works committees, and demanding recognition of their own trade union. After a month of continued agitation 20 workers were retrenched, ostensibly because of a recession in the building industry. This immediately led to a demand that the workers be reinstated and to a refusal to resume work, on 26 March the entire work force was dismissed and told that they could reap all for Work, provided that they accepted the liaison and works committees. The worker claimed that this was a lock-out and also claimed that the company's statement about retrenchment was shown to be false by the pattern of return after the dismissals. When the workers assembled outside the factory in outd to hear the secretary of their union, they were ordered by the police to dms perse within 30 minutes. The union officials urged them to go home, and to the strains of the anthem Nkosi Sikelel-Afrika (God save Africa) they moved away. Although the half-hour had not elapsed, police turned on the workers with batons and with dogs. Some were seen to wield pick handles. Men and women were savaged (including a woman who was seven months pregnant). Two trade union officials and a number of workers were arrested and later charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act, but were found guilty on lesser charge. The second strike, at the Armourplate Safety Glass entry Sprott% the Witwatersrand), was unique in several respects, It was tile hrit leg Al' African strike; and it was the longest strike in the history of labour dispute involving
Africans. Furthermore, it took place during the Sowetti Revolt, a time when political strikes were taking place, without any noticeable interconnection between this industrial action and the political struggles of 14161.

The Strike Wave Spreads
Armourplate Safety Glass was a member off the British owned Pilkington Glass Group and accorded no recognition to the workers' union. In July the firm announced that in view of the depression the plant would only work a four-day week. Ten days later three workers were dismissed as part of the general policy of retrenchment. The African works committee demanded the workers' reinstatement and, when this was refused, gave warning of a dispute. After the statutory 30 days' cooling off period the workers struck work.

Although the strike was not illegal, the workers who formed a picket line were arrested for participating in an illegal gathering, and charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act. Although the sentences they received were quashed on appeal, the right to form picket lines was not established, and the case throws doubt on the future right of workers to stop scabs entering a factory even if their strike is deemed 'legal'. The strike lasted for weeks, and all attempts at negotiation with the firm failed. Eventually, a large number of the workers decided to seek alternative employment because they feared that when the strike ended they would face victimisation. This brought the industrial action to an end.

The Strikes and the Political Struggle
The strikes undertaken by workers without formal organisations showed at one and the same time the strength of workers in such a situation and their inevitable weakness. By having no formal structures, they were relatively immune from police action. There were no offices to be raided and closed by the police, no officials to be arrested and sent removed from the scene, no weakening of the struggle because the 'head' had been removed. Using informal structures that had been built up amongst their fellows, the workers relied on their own resources, and the random arrests left the body of workers intact.

The realisation, in the very first week, that staying in the vicinity of the factory constituted their greatest maleguard was important. Dispersal would have weakened the workers and isolated them from their colleagues. On the other hand, pouring into the streets and walking (or marching) together produced a multiplier effect and brought out the workers in the vicinity. Finally, the refusal to appoint negotiators saved them at least at the last minute (over offers that might have been made) and poked them into planning a national and international movement.

On the other hand, the lack of regularity eventually proved their weakness. They had no strike funds said could not afford to stay out. In the case of Pilkington, tile workers were fortunate as that workers from neighbouring plants collected money on their behalf, but it would have been impossible for large numbers of workers or for extended periods of time. There was also no planning of the strike, no attempt to bring out workers in associated industries, and no plan to co-ordinate the stoppages, either locally or nationally.

The greatest weakness, however, lay in the fact that there was no political
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A group that could offer a lead and make the strikes part of the political struggle against the government. The strikes of 1973 to 1976 helped create the atmosphere of revolt and showed that the Blacks were not powerless. It was by the multitude of strikes, small and large, that the example of resistance was taken into the townships. The ability to resist the terror of government action was demonstrated repeatedly. Although they have received little attention since the Soweto Revolt, these strikes must be seen as constituting the beginning of the Revolt, and as having affected a far wider section of the population than was ever reached by members of SASO-BPC.

As already indicated above, the BPC had little influence on the working class, and the one trade union they controlled had little effect on events in the strikes of 1973-76. The Black Allied Workers Union did not operate at shopfloor or industry level. During all the strikes there was only one instance in which their offices were used. When the sweet workers of Johannesburg struck work in 1974, they insisted that officials of BAWU represent them in negotiations. Only when they were called upon did this body intervene, and they only seem to have been required on this one occasion. Their policy was one of non-confrontation, and in many ways they held to a statement reported in the Rand Daily Mail on 9 December 1972, and widely quoted:

[The black unions are] not limited to the achieving of physical and material benefits such as good working conditions, increased wages, social fringe benefits, etc. Our concern and priority is the formation of a people and the development of a sense of responsibility in them.

This was a misunderstanding of the mechanisms by which a ‘people’ was formed and a misunderstanding of the needs of the working class for ‘material benefits’. Even in terms of the requirements of the Black Consciousness Movement, it was only by helping the workers to achieve higher wages through strike action that political consciousness could be raised in the first instance. Particularly when the strikes came near to generating a general strike, the opportunity to raise consciousness was present and the existence of an organisation could have assisted in bringing general political demands to the fore. While BPC-SASO were concerned with establishing personal identities, the black workers were forging ahead in building a group identity that took them far beyond the black consciousness that was being propagated by the students and clerics of the BKC.

The economic struggle had to become political and the political struggle had to bolster the economic struggle. Rosa Luxemburg, drawing on the experiences of the mass strikes in Russia in 1905, tried to spell out the lessons for the workers. Her observations still have a freshness and a validity for workers today.

Political and economic strikes, mass strikes and partial strikes, demonstrative strikes and fighting strikes, general strikes of individual branches

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of industry and general strikes in individual towns, peaceful wage struggles and street massacres, barricade fighting -- all these run together, run side by side, cross one another, flow in and over one another.
Every new onset and every fresh victory of the political struggle is transformed into a powerful impetus for the economic struggle, extending at the same time its external possibilities and intensifying the inner urge of the workers to better their position, and their desire to struggle. And conversely, the workers' condition of ceaseless economic struggle with the capitalists keeps their fighting energy alive in every political interval...

In a word: the economic struggle is the transmitter from one political centre to another; the political struggle is the periodic fertilization of the soil for the economic struggle.34

When, in August and September 1976, the students called for stay-at-homes, they were in fact politicising the strikes. But in part, they were too late, and in part they were unable to produce the slogans which could extend the economic struggle. The struggle in the factories produced the climate which led to Soweto, but there was no reciprocal action. The workers' struggle did not gain appreciably from the calls for two or three day political strikes. Also, as mentioned above, the Pilkington strike did not indicate that there was any connection between this important working-class action and the stay-at-home called at the same time by the school students. This failure to link the two struggles inevitably weakened both sectors of the fights that overlapped in time, but were light-years apart in orientation.

References
2. SRRSA, 1974, pp.326, 329.
8. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p.32.
11. Ibid., p.34,
15. SRRSA, 1974, p.291.

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19. A View of the 1973 Strikes, op.cit. 20. SRRSA, 1975, p.210. These figures were supplied in the Houses of
Parliament. Other sources indicate that actual numbers were far higher. 21.
SRRSA, 1974, pp.328-9. 22. In the first six months 552 were arrested and 439
charged (SRRSA,
1974, p.326). In the last six months 841 were reported arrested
(SRRSA, 1975, p.211).
25. Ibid., p.27.
26. The political infighting in the Ciskei is described in Black Review,
1974-75, pp.41-8,
27. Reported in East London Dispatch and quoted in G. Mar6, op. cit. 28. G.
Mar6, op.cit.
29. An account of the events, including details of the interference with the
judiciary when government supporters were charged with violence against bus
boycotters, is given in Black Review, 1974-5, pp.43.50. 30. SRRSA, 1976,
Steve Friedman, writing in Race Relations News, December 1976, 34. Rosa
Luxemburg, 'The mass strike, the political party and the trade
unions, printed in the collection of her works edited by Mary-Allice Watson, Rosa
Luxemburg speaks, (Pathfinder, 1970), pp. 18 1-2, 1 85,
9. State Repression and
Political Revival:
1974-1976
The Schlebusch Commission Reports
The government in the mid-seventies took steps to circumscribe the activities of
two other very different kinds of opposition movement - NUSAS and the
Christian Institute. The activities of these two organisations, as well as those of
the South African Institute of Race Relations, had been investigated by the
Commission of Inquiry into Certain Organisations, set up by Parliament in 1973
under the chairmanship of Al.. Schlebusch, M.P.
The Commission's report on NUSAS was published in August 1974. It claimed
that the organisation had been run by a small clique which propagated 'anti-South
African views' and promoted 'anti.South African' actions. NUSAS, furthermore,
was accused of promoting black consciousness and of favouring a course which
would lead to a confrontation between Blacks and Whites, The Commission
described the NUSAS wages campaign as:
.. really a means to another end, and that is political change to overthrow the
existing order in South Africa and to replace it with an anticapitalistic system
which has sometimes been described as 'Black
socialism'. This has to be brought about by stirring up industrial and labour unrest
and by inciting Black and White against each other, by
polarising them against each other, and eventually by inciting them to
conflict, even violent conflict.2
There was little correlation between the aims of NUSAS as described by the
Commission and the actual aims and actions of the organisation. Individual
members may have had views similar to those imputed to them by the Commission, but there was no evidence that the activities of the Wages Commissions, or any other NUSAS committee, corresponded with the verdict of Schlebusch.

Tito tabling of the report in Parliament led to NUSAS and its subsidiary bodies being declared 'affected organisations' in September 1974. The effect of this measure was to stop the organisation receiving any financial aid from foreign sources. In 1973 the NUSAS budget had been approximately R100,000, and some 70 per cent of the money had been donated by overseas bodies. The immediate effect of the new regulation was, therefore, to curtail NUSAS activities, particularly in literacy training, prison education (for political prisoners), and community development projects.

On 28 May 1975 a subcommittee of the Schlebusch Commission tabled its report on the Christian Institute. The CI and its associated projects - which included SPROCAS (Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society), Programme for Social Change, and the BCP - were accused of conditioning public opinion to accept violent change leading to a black dominated socialist state. The CI rebutted the charges and claimed that they had consistently advocated Christian change by non-violent means and justice through reconciliation. It followed the gospel of Christ and never supported the violent overthrow of the government. On 30 May the CI was nevertheless declared an 'affected organisation', and consequently debarred from receiving foreign aid. For a movement that had previously worked on an annual budget of approximately R500,000, this was bound to have serious effects. A large portion of the money had been collected abroad and the declaration was bound to lead to a serious curtailment of activities.

Detentions and Arrests

While the government awaited the report of the Schlebusch commission, the police continued their harassment of all organisations that seemed able to provide opposition to the apartheid system. The calling of the Viva Frelimo rallies by SASO and BIIC for September 1974, to celebrate the liberation of Mozambique, provided the pretext for widespread raids, arrests and detentions crippling both BPC and SASO well before the Revolt of 1976.

The list of detainees grew in the months that followed, and by March 1975 there were 50 persons known to be in detention, all but 15 having been taken into custody in 1974. Another 50 leading members of these organisations were also reputed to have fled the country, and throughout 1975 the activities of SASOfBPC, on and off the campuses, were restrained. The National Youth Organisation (NAYO), which organised in the schools, was also severely hit by police raids in August and September 1975 and many of their most prominent activists were detained.

Throughout 1975 the harassment of the political movements continued, In June, Raymond Suttner, senior lecturer in law at the University of Natal, was arrested.
together with two associates. lie was later charged with activities on behalf of the ANC and the Communist Party. During August and September there were widespread raids on the homes of students, academics, and members of the Christian Institute. Many of the students were in NUSAS, and some were on the executive, and there was a wave of protests from members of the academic staff at the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand. Shortly after the first detentions it transpired that the raids were associated with the arrest of Breyten Breytenbach, the renowned Afrikaans poet. lie was eventually sentenced to nine years imprisonment for trying to establish a movement amongst Whites, known as Okhela (the Spark), which was said to be associated with the ANC. The other Okhela-related detainees were released, but the arrests put an end to most of their political involvement.

Impact of the Trials: 1976-76

The Okhela Trial
It was the government's intention that all radical opposition be silenced and that all political activists who advocated social or economic changes be banned, detained or imprisoned. The trials that took place in the mid-seventies were not very different from those that had been staged since the mid-fifties. Ultimately the intention was that the prisoners be found guilty and given severe sentences. In the process, those before the courts were to be discredited and the (white) electorate assured that everything was under control.

At the close of the Ilreytenbach trial an observer for the International Commission of Jurists, Professor Charles Albert Morand, observed that:

... the cross-examination of the defendant amounted in reality to an attack by the Attorney General upon those institutions in South Africa which oppose apartheid and which have not yet been declared illegal, in particular NUSAS, the Christian Institute and the trade union. In his report on the trial he stated:

The results of the trial are difficult to evaluate. Nevertheless it may he ventured that they are very unfavourable to the struggle against apartheid, The attitude of the defendant and the passivity of the defence mean that numerous people and organisations find themselves compromised, at least in the eyes of public opinion.

The Dreytenbach trial constitute a remarkable success for the government, It has helped to impress upon the white community the image of a vast subversive conspiracy. The trial, like many of those which preceded it, in to he ween a% a lever which enables the white government to legitimate and reinforce its dictatorial powers and to purmur its policy of apartheid. It is the whole institutional system of exploitation of the Black majority which I s reinforced.

The Breytenbach trial was a fiasco for the overall tierAtton movement, Breytenbach apologised for his intentions and differed no defence of hiA activities on behalf of Okhela. Tie tot, his friend% and the orbrniun he had helped launch were
completely compromised. The trial, as Professor Morand had stated, was a 'remarkable success for the Government.'

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The SASO/BPC Nine

There were other trials in 1975 that were different, and each one of them played a part in rekindling the spirit of resistance. The biggest, longest and most important trial took place in Pretoria, where thirteen (subsequently reduced to nine) leading members of SASO/BPC were arraigned on charges under the Terrorism Act. The State argued that these organisations, together with the Peoples Experimental Theatre, the Theatre Council of Natal, and the Turfloop SRC, inculcated anti-white feeling and encouraged racial polarisation and hostility in order to prepare for violent revolution. The defence's case was that racial animosity was prevalent in the country, that there was no need to encourage a reaction to white racism; and that the Black Consciousness Movement had the right to seek redress of their grievances by peaceful means.

Neither the accused, nor those called as witnesses for the defence, made any concessions on principled political issues. They used the courtroom to present their programme and their philosophy of black awareness. The accused also used the courtroom for public demonstrations. Ack Review, 1974-75, gave the following graphic accounts of a few of the many incidents:

.. February 7 .. the accused started singing from the cells below the courtroom, up the stairs until they got into the courtroom. At the end of the song they bellowed 'POWER AMANDLA'.

.. April 21 .. a fracas developed between the 13 trialists and the police, in which some blows were exchanged. The accused were leaning over the dock, to kiss, hug, shake hands or even touch relatives and friends from the public gallery. The police were in turn trying to force the trialists down the stairs. In the course of the mêlée, there was general shouting and yelling by both the trialists and the swarming black crowd.

.. April 25 .. the trialists, clad in black T-shirts with letters BPC on the chest and black skull-caps came into the court with their customary singing until they ended with the clenched fist Black Solidarity salute, accompanied by a roar of 'Power'. Black spectators from the public gallery responded to the salute.

On 23 June, two of the accused were discharged and the case of two men separated from the remaining nine. The nine pushed aside the police, stood with the audience singing Nkosi Sikeleli-Afrika (God Save Africa), and embraced their former co-accused. The two freed men, surrounded by a cheering crowd, then left the court at the head of elatives and uppotts. all giving the clenched fist salute."

The trial extended through 1975 and 1976, and sentences of six years (for six of the defendants) and five years (for three) were handed down by the judge. In the judgment it was conceded that neither SASO nor BPC had the characteristics of a revolutionary group and that there was no move to bring
about a revolutionary change, politically or economically, by unconstitutional or violent means. The accused were round guilty of committing acts capable of endangering the maintenance of law and order, and seven were held guilty of organising the Viva Frelimo rallies)

The accused were imprisoned after more than two years on trial. During this long period their organisations were in a state of disarray and many leading members were in custody or had fled. By this time the main thrust of the 1976 Revolt was over and the state had ensured that these young leaders were out of commission.

An ANC/CP Trial
The trial of Raymond Suttner was shorter and the state's case was much simpler. The prosecution claimed that the accused had produced and distributed copies of Inkululeko (Freedom) and Vitkani (Awake), the journals of the Communist Party and the ANC respectively. He had also recruited members and formed an underground cell of the ANC. The issue was never in doubt and Suttner received a seven-and-half year sentence. He made a statement from the dock affirming his convictions and beliefs, and concluded with the words: For this I will go to prison. But I cannot ever accept that it is wrong to act, as I have done, for freedom and equality, for an end to racial discrimination and poverty. I have acted in the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. I am confident I have their support.

Suttner then saluted the gallery with the clenched fist and the crowd responded by returning the salute and singing Nkosi Siklidi-Afrika.

The NAYO Seven
The trial of the NAYO Seven, which only began in March 1976 in Johannesburg, was the centre of continued demonstrations. When the accused appeared on 1 March they were 'wearing colourful Afro-slurts'. They joined the public gallery in singing Nkosi Siklidi-Afrika and Umzina Lointh lo (The burden is heavy).

After a two-week adjournment the court sat again on 15 March. For the next two days crowds of 400 spectators, swelling at times to just under a thousand, gathered outside the back of the court, singing freedom songs and giving the Black Power salute.

On 18 March the demonstrations continued, with the crowd again chanting freedom songs. The police moved in with dogs to disperse the gathering and questioned a man distributing pamphlets advertising a 'lero's Day' meeting in Soweto to commemorate Soweto Subsequent events were described in Detention and Derente as follows:
The police, allegedly on a complaint from a white man, arrested a black youth allegedly for pickpocketing. In the confusion the youth ran towards the station for some quartermile distant and the crowd surged after the

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police who followed him. As the youth was arrested at the station, the crowd, whose ranks had been increased to about 2,000 by hlnreward bound commuters ... startedstoning the police. As police reinforcements moved in the rioters spilled out of the station into surrounding streets
where a further clash occurred when some whites overlooking the station from a nearby railway building began to throw objects down, evoking extreme anger in the crowd.

The crowd was eventually dispersed at about 7.0 p.m. when the police arrived with dogs. Subsequent reports showed that this was not an anti-white riot, and that the crowd turned against an African accused of being a police informer. A young white woman reporter was shielded and led to safety by a number of people in the crowd.

The trial was moved to Pretoria because of the demonstrations, and proceedings continued well into May. It was apparent long before the end that few of the charges would be upheld and that the trial was designed to smash NAYO. In late May two of the accused were found guilty of 'inciting' two persons to undergo military training, and given the mandatory minimum sentence of five years.

Some of the detainees required to give state evidence were arrested and charged with perjury, and one of the released prisoners was immediately re-detained. The net upshot of the trial was to weaken NAYO and, because there had been dual membership, to weaken the South African Student Movement (SASM) in the crucial months before 16 June.

The arrests never stopped, and the trials were a constant feature of South African life. The accounts presented in this chapter were selected because they reflect the change of political mood in the townships. Other trials that were staged throughout the country were proof of continued police activity in unearthing small groups, dedicated to fighting apartheid, which sprang to life in communities up and down the country. Each trial told some story of local initiative, of plans for getting abroad or for organizing local groups. Their story needs to be told, but would add little to the account already presented. Also excluded here, have been the harrowing accounts of torture in the prisons and of the deaths of detainees at the hands of the police. What was remarkable was the ability of prisoners to appear in the dock, able to join with their supporters in songs and defiant salutes, in the sure knowledge that their captors would retaliate in the darkness of the prison cells.

The spectators at the trials were also aware of the risks they ran in participating in the demonstrations of solidarity in full public gaze. Of at least one occasion, at the trial of the SASO/BPC nine, the doors of the court were locked and police took the names and addresses of some forty of the spectators. They had allegedly participated in court-room singing and saluting.

The Bus Boycotts in 1975-76

Throughout 1975 strikes in factories and shops continued, as mentioned in Chapter Eight. But the strike wave had decreased in intensity. There were a large number of incidents, but the work force involved in strikes was said to...

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have been only 12,451.2 When provision is made for the artificial distinction between 'strikes' and 'work stoppages', the total number of African workers who 'stopped work' in 1975 was 23,295.24 This was small compared to the number of
workers on strike in 1973, and the average duration of stoppages was only a fraction of that in 1973.

Police action had become tougher, and the concessions that were won were negligible. In the circumstances, the propensity to strike dropped and the workers sought other means to protect themselves from declining standards of living. Incensed by the steep rise in transport costs, workers at a number of centres organised boycotts of the buses, the largest and most protracted being at Newcastle (Northern Natal) in October 1975.

Newcastle was the centre of the second government steel works (Iscor) and the site of a growing industrial centre. There were large clothing companies, steel works, construction works and other industries. The black workers who staffed these firms were housed in KwaZulu in the townships of Madadeni and Osizweni, some eight and fourteen miles from Newcastle. The single fare to town from Madadeni had risen in a series of jumps from 8c (roughly 4p) at the beginning or 1973, to 25c in early 1975, and was scheduled to rise to 30c in October 1975. It was estimated that workers from Madadeni spent 13.6 per cent of their wages on transport. Osizweni fares were higher and equalled 20 per cent of the workers' wages.2

Residents of Madadeni organised a boycott of the buses, which were owned by the Bantu Investment Corporation (IfC), and demanded that the bus owners take over by either the rival bus company, PUTM(, or the KwaZulu government. Available sources give no information on the boycott committee, and it is not certain how far this demand was supported by the residents of the township, or how the committee had the full support of the resident for boycott action. Every day some 20 to 40 thousand residents walked, cycled or rode to work in private transport, and the town virtually emptied. Several thousand also walked the longer distances from Osizweni to the buses there were also almost empty. The police tried to break the boycott by tipping cars carrying white residents and ordering them off the road, but the workers retaliated by stalling their vehicles and wrecking two beerhalls. Vom a time, two white officials were held "howtaw gr iii a coinpolund and, in cashe, with tile police, two Attwn i Al were %l tivoli and many injured.

Ultimately, the KwaZulu government and some other companies operating in the Witwatersrand followed a similar pattern to that described in the Ciskei bus boycott, and in the week after the commencement of the dispute, the boycotters were told that the townships had gained little, but the BIC had protected its investments and the KwaZulu government had been provided with a new source of income. Bus fares were increased everywhere in 1976, In Match they went up 50 per cent in KwaThema, near Springs In fao, the total Increase sinot ptr(70

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took over the service in 1975 was 250 per cent (from 6c to 1 Sc for a single fare). Thousands of residents chose to walk the six miles to work and back and
withstood the usual police intimidation. Nevertheless, after seven weeks, the
boycott started crumbling and only a small number continued to walk during
May. The increased fares remained unaltered. In mid-June bus fares throughout
the Witwatersrand, the Vaal area and Pretoria were raised by 10 per cent.a6
The increased bus fares coincided with rises - sometimes very steep -- in the prices
of staple foods. In May the price of maize, the staple diet of many families, went
up by 1 per cent and milk prices rose by eight per cent, Other price increases
during the preceding few months included those for: tea, instant coffee, tinned
foods, rice, cooking oil, margarine, clothing, toiletries, soaps, detergents, coal (the
only fuel available for heating in most black homes), cigarettes and liquor." The
only price rise that could have been fought was that in bus fares - and that
increase was announced in the press on the morning of 16 June. By the end of that
same afternoon the Revolt had begun, and at that stage resentment against
increased fares was overtaken by events. Burnt-out buses were seen in every
township, but that was part of a deeper resentment against any object that could
be identified with the oppressor, and was not necessarily associated with higher
fares. Those who felt aggrieved at the increased bus fares undoubtedly welcomed
the sight of the burning buses.
'The Revolt Is Already Under Way'
In early 1976 Leslie Sehume, General Secretary of the Committee for Fairness in
Sport (CFS), told an audience of white women in Pretoria that:
... the black revolt in South Africa is already under way as was evident in
a spate of strikes, boycotts, crime, unrest among students, agitation over urban
home ownership and freehold rights, and protest over the medium
of Instruction in schools...
It is destructive to one's own interests to fasten the bastions on the
borders when right within the country 18 million people wallow in the
mud of job reservation, inadequate educational facilities, the ohnoxious pass laws,
influx control, migrant labour, curfew regulations and abject
discrimination all round.28
This statement, emanating from an official of a pro-government organiza
tion which aimed to promote international participation in sport in South Africa,
reflected the difficulties Mr. Sehume faced in selling South African apartheid
sport to the outside world. The maladies he listed were real enough and they were
all symptoms of the deep discontents in the townships, but the listing of crime and
demands for home ownership, together with strikes, boycotts and student unrest,
indicated a general breakdown of local controls

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rather than a revolt, Nevertheless Leslie Sehume had perceived something that
many of tile politicians failed to see and all the conflicts that he observed,
affecting different classes inside the townships, were to merge into and become
part of the conflagration after 16 June. The way in which some demands were
bypassed or brought to the fore in the months to come provides an indication of
the relative strengths of class groupings in Soweto and other regions. At this
juncture. Sehume saw only black revolt against white authority and against 'abject
discrimination all round’. As an official of the CFS he was not likely to expand on
the one talking point that dominated South Africa at the time: tile debacle that had
followed South Africa’s movement of troops into Angola. lie bypassed this by
referring only to the fastening of bastions on the borders’, although tie army’s
venture into Angola was the dominant factor that changed the Imood of the black
townships.
South Africa Invades Angola
Units of the South African army crossed the Narnibian borders into Angola in
August 1975, ostensibly to protect the Koneote hydro- electric scheme
installations. By September it was reported that the troops were 10 miles inside
Angola, and in O0t’” 4r there were govet silent statements that mentioned only
raids on SWAP) miltary bases. Tile government persistently denied reports 01at
0he at1Y would t liist into the interior of tile country. On 23 October the army
advanced, with the covert aid o l the United
States, and mloved rapidly to within I iriles of Ioanda (and over 400 miles from
Namibia). The St utlh Ali nlias were hl.detd by troops of the Luanda government,
newly equipped withi S’Sirt weapipil arid stiffened by Cuban advisers and troops.
Open US involvement ill the Conflict w4ts stopped in December when the Senate
voted against alit exproptitplia hill tot fituriwe counter-revolutin in Angola.
Black African givemelits tndentired the South African presence in
Angola, and Nigeria ad Tanzanla, in patiaccur. called on the OAU to recog.
nise the MPLA governorsit, he South Atrisan army had become an
embarrassment to tile OS and, after particuilary livrce fighling on 21 January
1976, tile troopi (who were cplotted to hAv e %ute0d a deleat) were withdrawn,
but stayed inside ’So ul h r Aogula Itir a finro
South Afiican lack% tfetred at thr ntw% oit the at tny”” reticat and wel.
comed tile pictuvio ot white prionret% in the haods ot al Africa army.
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Cape ’own As fotlhwivi ””, huge blaCK audrr'iice s sutd wath the television news
in cotiued hotelas and clhetrl Oet tt’ti ti tmlllth Atrican caiulaties in
"the opelatilonal tonre”’ A roptt ftout lve Wt4d a o htaed that a poll
taken during the invasrit thtd ti !H i ott tl .44 ti its readers were not
prepared to join thl Whie i dilding Muth Ariciaf
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circumspection was, in part, a reflection of the fear of the Security Police. SASO
and BPC had suffered severe losses after organising rallies to support Frelimo,
and open support for the MPLA governmenttn in Angola could pro. duce the same
reaction. The BPC had passed a resolution at their conference in December 1975
recognising the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola,”” but do not
appear to have given this much subsequent publicity. Black Review, 1975-76,
contains no reference to Angola, nor to the resolutions of the BPC.
Conservative Blacks, aware of the feelings in their communities, did matke
statements. Most of them were oblique, and were couched in negative terms
because these dignitaries could not support a movement (or government) that was condemned as Marxist. But they could not avoid the topic. Colin t'Egum quotes extracts from comments made at the time:

'Many blacks do not see themselves threatened as they are victims of other ideologies in South Africa.' Bishop Desmond Tutu (to a mainly white congregation at St Mary's Anglican Cathedral)

'People are saying "The devil we don't know cannot be worse than the devil we now know".' Professor Ntsanwisi (Chief Minister of Gazankulu)

'If the blacks don't have a stake in the country they cannot give it their full loyalty.' Dr. Phatudi (Chief Minister of Lebowa)

Buthelezi's Road to Liberation

It was left to Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi to make the most forthright public statement at a mass rally of between 1b and 18 thousand people in 14 March 1976. Buthelezi avoided mentioning the NMPIA, but he proclaimed the collapse of the South African attempt to win allies in Africa (the so-called policy of detente) and maintained that the 'wind of change' was no longer distant, but was blowing on the borders of South Africa itself.

Buthelezi did not shy off the invasion of Angola, and he linked the strategic defeat of the South African army with events which were bound to follow in Namibia:

Prime Minister Vorster's detente policy has not succeeded. Not only has it not succeeded but White South Africa has burit he tieme in Angosla. Lk pace of events and the struggle for liberation in South*rm Africa ksaininti monimentum, to the extent that the country's allWhilt Parliament cAnarl dictate events in Namibia for very much longer ,, livery hour of the day, the time is drawing ntarcr. when we will e, White South Africa's enemies encamped on South Africa's brder.)

In his speech, which was enthusiastically received, Buthelezi spoke of the

Stat' Repression and Political Revival; 197419 76 revolution that was coming and challenged the Whites to decide whether the revolution which was unfolding would be peaceful or bloody. He went further:

It is still not too late for a white change of heart. I believe this not because I think that Whites are going to have a sudden spasm of benevolence towards Blacks. I believe that now the Whites can see the writing on the wall and can realise that the country must move towards majority rule.

The 'revolution' Buthelezi was calling for, he claimed, could be peaceful and compassionate. In the process of liberation, the church had a role to play which they had previously failed to fulfil:

The Church must take active steps towards reconciliation in this country before it is too late. There will be no true reconciliation until the Blacks are liberated. The Churches must act with conviction and what is more they must act in public.

It is not clear how the church was supposed to assist the black liberation struggle nor, in fact, how Buthelezi saw this liberation being effected. He said that he wanted 'to go beyond negative criticism' and 'provide alternative policies'. To this
end lie proposed the holding of 'a series of representative National Conventions representing all shades of black opinion'. One was to be on economic matters, one on the 'Homeland Independence issue', and one on South Africa's foreign policy. Ile proposed that the first convention be summoned for August; that international speakers be invited; and that thereafter a black caucus deliberate on the problem themselves.

The role that Buthelezi saw for the black population at large was not stated, but they could hardly be other than observers at conventions. Their role in the liberation of the country was to do as they were told. In the first instance Buthelezi said: 'I am offering a Black hand of friendship (his own, presumably) to the Whites of South Africa, probably for the last time. Yes, it is a Black hand, but it is still a hand of friendship.' Ile returned to this theme later in his speech: I have in the past called upon the Whites to come to their senses, The Whites are politically underdeveloped and they need assistance. The federal formula I offered them was a compromise proposal and I must say with considerable emphasis that such reconciliatory offers will be increasingly difficult to offer in the South Africa that is now emerging.

Having stressed his own role in offering to make the 'Homelands' system work - albeit concealed in the phrase about a 'federal formula', the speaker turned to his audience:

My brothers and sisters, when I lie awake, thinking about you and your suffering, I know that thousands of you get on crowded buses and trains to go to a menial job for a pittance. Most of you work without security and social benefits, and are denied real trade unions. I know you are exploited. I know you feel anger because there seems to be no hope of improving your circumstances. My message to you is that history has overtaken apartheid. There is hope for the future. Justice will prevail, and you will be given the opportunity of participating in the building of a better South Africa. Buthelezi seemed to have begged the question. lie had moved from exploitation to a better society without explaining how justice would be made to prevail, le therefore moved to fill this lacuna: My message to you, however, is that there is not magic formula to change the present Racist Regime into a garden of Eden overnight. It was the Blackman built the economic wealth of South Africa which is denied to the Sons and Daughters of South Africa. It will be by the sweat of the Blackman's brow that a new future will be built.

I appeal to your sense of realism to act constructively. We do not build a better South Africa by doing something in the future. We build a better South Africa in what we do now. (Buthelezi's stress throughout)

It is hard to believe that Buthelezi's audience grasped the full implications of what had been said. Even at this distance it is difficult to see how he could have spoken to an audience in Soweto and told them that liberation would come by means of hard work, or how they could respond to an appeal to 'act constructively'.
Buthelezi's appeal was to quietism. and it was not insignificant that he did not raise a single real issue. The agitation at the time over the rising picture of food, the cost of transport, the language issue in schools, the MUNasing arrests under the pass laws, the ever rising number of unemployed, went unmentioned. Even his call to Join Inkatha tot a wet ofInkathas which would join in a national movement for liberation) was shrouded in musticill in lie promised his audience that 'A% this ruovetent gills notmentuml we will proc. ducea. ground swell which wilt bing abut change in South Africa,. Bill obviously his audience had to take it in trust that It sliltrakel wondId COe that there would be a ground ,well and that change would follow, Although the 'hiers words wenld t Otis to "Irgr a ilew ICad, ter : em peculliar gap% in his proc100ouncel0rartt. le did rit call tor radiial chhaogvl its the Country arid he did not invigh against to/icg invstmtlnt Yet, onh oiro l days before, in a statemit sinet jointly by Ilutholti id Di CF, bI Natdd, both these issues feature d pritnil. l"ogide at cal ll It a ,u Convetloi on foreign invcrtseni in South Attica In many respects the joint slitiment, which would not have been wi!h distributed in Sowto, if at all, w4,as fat Illoe nitant in tlnlie t111 u text 4 tile Sowes ll It 11 co!itu cted with lh demand for 'A radical tdis,

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tribution of wealth, land and political power . . . [and] ... the establishment of a stable and moral society in South Africa.' The document then claimed that: In South Africa for over a century capitalistic paternalism has produced the conclusive evidence which makes us reject government by minority elite, Men have been consistently chhumanised, the many blatantly crushed to reproduce wealth for the few, and the whole of society designed to protect and intensify the naked exploitation of man by man.34 The formulation is open to objection. The crushing of many to produce wealth for the few can hardly be described as 'capitalistic paternalism', but there is no need to quibble here on a relatively minor point. What does need explanation from Buthelezi is the compatibility of this statement with a call to workers to continue as before and provide their sweat to extend this wealth. The statement of 10 March was not very instructive on the question of political and economic change. The authors said that tie Blacks would 'require for themselves the liberation they witness amongst their brothers in neighbouring states'. But apparently this would be achieved without great effort by the workers: 'We are convinced that this capitalistic endeavour is doomed. It will fail because the selfishness of South Africa's white elite is already unrealistic and cannot survive in today's world .'

Having made these assertions the two authors came to the nub of their document. They condemned government statements which relegated the 'homelands' economies to a subsidiary position in the greater South African economy. Under these conditions they maintained: 'Foreign investment in the central economy is devoid of' all morality,' It is not possible to discuss here all the implications of this statement that must be done elsewhere. It must be noted, however, that it scrupulously avoided any mention of investments in the Reserves. Buthelezi had been art
active advocate of the need to attract foreign capital to KwaZulu, and he had travelled abroad to win such investment. This apparently was not to be described as 'devoid of morality', and raises many questions also about the role of Dr. Beyers Naudé, erstwhile ally of SASOCB, and tie latter's condemnation of Buthelezi for encouraging such investment These issues, pre, sumably, could be discussed at another National Convention.

The March supplement to Pro Veritate, besides carrying the text of Buthelezi's speech, also carried a statement signed by Timothy Hivin (Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg), Denis Hurley (Roman Catholic Archbishop of Natal) and Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé. The three churchmen welcomed the speech as a 'courageous and reconciliatory call to a revolution in attitudes ...' and praised it in glowing terms:

The Chief's astute call is the true recognition by a Christian Iyratn that God summons Christians to a new involvement and corrint-

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days of portent. God is calling his people to Christian liberation, that is,
to an acceptance of the law of love, not only between individuals in limited communities, but also between communities themselves, between races, nations and classes. Black liberation, and the consequent liberation of whites, which blacks fervently desire, are fundamentally activities of this law of love.

Concluding that the leaders of Southern Africa needed the 'true insights of the Christian gospel', they urged that black Christians take the initiative and call a National Convention on Christian concern.
The multiplicity of National Conventions that were proposed must have seemed irrelevant to the bulk of the population, and certainly had no effect on the students. There were clear indications that the latter would have nothing to do with any project mooted by Buthelezi when some 200 students demonstrated against him and stoned his car at the graduation ceremony at Ngoye il May when he was awarded an honorary doctorate. The SRC, furthermore, refused to apologise to the KwaZulu government for the incident. With the students opposed to him, and undoubtedly most of the clerics attached to the BPC likewise, the only persons that would have attended the proposed Conventions would have been men and women who were prepared to collaborate with the government. These were indeed precisely the people that Buthelezi brought into his Black United Front later that year. By that time the townships were in revolt and in Soweto National Conventions were irrelevant.

References
1. The Commission was the successor to a Parliamentary Select Committee established in 1972. The Commission was also required to investigate the activities of the already disbanded UCM.
2. Quoted in SRRSA, 1974, p.33.
3. An extract from the NUSAS press statement is quoted in SRRSA, 1974, p.36.
4. SRRSA, 1975, p.34.
5. Extracts from the rebuttal, quoted in ibid., pp.345.
6. Black Review, 1974-75, provides a list of known detainees, p.91.
7. SRRSA, 1975, p.63.
8. Ibid., pp.62-3.
9. Ibid., pp.64-5.
10. Christian Institute, (1976), Detention and Detente In Votithern Aria.
11. Ibid.
12. See Donald Woods, op.clt., p. 114; and IUEF, (1976), The new terorrist:
documents from the SASO/RIPC trial, Geneva, indictment, pp. 1-i 13. Black

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10. The Soweto Revolt:
June 1976
Chaos in the African Schools
The reorganisation of the African schools in the wake of the changes governing
secondary school entrance led to conditions bordering on chaos. The first step was
scheduled for December 1974 when all pupils in the sixth standard who obtained
over 40 per cent would qualify for entrance to secondary school. This, it was estimated, would double the number of candidates for the first form. In one instance that has been reported, the full impact of the change proved to be disastrous.

KwaMashu, the township just north of Durban, had an official population of 22,000 families. The entire area contained only one secondary school and it was already overcrowded. After the examination results were announced in December 1974, parents were informed that: ‘... hundreds of standard six pupils who passed their final examination in 1974 were required to repeat the standard in 1975 because of the shortage of schools.” Parents were told that ‘there would be confusion' if only a small number of the successful candidates entered Form One. At the end of 1975 the number of candidates requiring positions in the secondary schools would again be doubled when the sixth standard in primary school was phased out.

The situation did not, however, lead to any student action. At a time when everyone was clamouring to get into a school, there was little opportunity for any group to suggest a boycott, a demonstration, or a strike. Any such proposal would have run counter to the incessant demand for a place in the schools.

The apparent quiescence in the urban (township) schools contrasted markedly with the position in the rural areas. Since 1972 there had been reports in the press and Parliament of widespread dissatisfaction and student action. In 1972 there were reports of violence and damage to property in at least five schools. It was also reported that 296 pupils had been arrested and 37 convicted in the courts. In 1973 there were signs of widespread strikes and demonstrations, not much below the level of action in the immediate post-war years. At least six schools or training colleges in Lebowa in the northern Transvaal, two schools in the Transkei, and one each in the Ciskei and in KwaZulu experienced strikes, arson, or other student action. Over W

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976

pupils were arrested, and at least 472 convicted by the courts. In one case, at Cofimvaba High School in tile Transkei, pupils stoned the principal's house, overturned a police car, and looted tile school shop. One hundred and thirty were arrested and 116 found guilty and either fined or sentenced to cuts with the light cane.

There was little relaxation in 1975. Nine schools in the Transkei, including five primary schools, Mariannhill near Durban, Itammanskraal near Pretoria, the Mordka High School at Thaba'Nch in the OFS, and a school in the Ciskei were all reported to have been the scenes of violence. Over 2,000 pupils were sent home, (sonic being told that they could re-apply for admission), hundreds were expelled, and the police made large-scale arrests. The discontents were not dissimilar to those registered in the forties and fifties. There were complaints about the food, about unnecessary restrictions on freedom in the dormitories, and general hostel conditions. The one difference in 1972-75 was that the principals and teachers were now all black and were operating a state controlled system.

The Campaign to Stop Afrikaans Medium Lessons
The instructions issued from the office of the Minister of flantu Education that half the subjects taught in standard five and in the first form be in Afrikaans, was immediately opposed by parents, teachers and pupils. This opposition grew during the closing months of 1975, and by early 1976 there were demonstrations in some schools against the introduction of lessons in Afrikaans. As the protests increased, school after school, at least in the Soweto region joined forces and eventually marched together in the demonstration of 16 June that sparked off the Revolt. The widespread opposition to the new regulation, which brought together conservatives and radicals, teachers and taught, indicated that the many strands of opposition - iased on very different premises were uniting against something more than an instruction over language. In 1976 the united stand against Afrikaans, was only the external manifestation of the deep resentment inside the township against the entire administration. Moreover the language predominantly used by police, prison warders, passofmrrce officials, township administrators and, indeed, the entire bureaucracy, was Afrikaans. There were reasons for opposing Afrikaans, and there were reasons for preferring English. From the point of view of the educationist, a switch to instruction in Afrikaans would he disastrous, Time and again both teachers and pupils stressed the fact that their education was inferior to that of the Whites. The view of a young African, reported in the Natal Mer'ury in February 1975, was not atypical: 'The education given to Africans is so low that a Junior Certificate [that is, third form pass] with us is equivalent to a standard 6 in the other racial groups.' There were no easy solutions to the problem and little chance of improvement in a system which was doegsetle to

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fit youth for a subservient position, economically, socially and politically. Yet it was perceived that education conducted in Afrikaans would lead to a definite deterioration in standards. African teachers had received instruction almost exclusively in English, and many were barely able to converse in Afrikaans, They could riot possibly have conducted a course or instruction in that language, and it was inconceivable that they could ever master the technical language required for
the classroom in a language they did not speak more especially for arithmetic or mathematics.

The secretary of the African Teachers Association of South Africa (ATASA) stated the teachers’ case in measured terms:

To say that the Blacks are opposed to the study of Afrikaans is a gross understatement... In strict terms what we oppose now is the manner in which this is being done without regard to the interests of the children concerned, And if this trend continues without being checked then the education of the Black child will be seriously threatened.. I

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976

Parents and their children and, undoubtedly, many teachers objected to the new regulations for a number of reasons which included the widely held contentions that: English was the main language of industry and commerce, and was essential for any youth who wanted to find a place inside the economy of South Africa; it was an international language and the medium through which contact could be maintained with the rest of Africa; and it was the one lingua franca which bound Blacks, at least in the urban areas, together.

For the school pupils, or at least for that section which sought to organise opposition to the system of Ilantu Education, the language issue assumed impotence because it bound together pupils in the primary and the secondary schools on a single issue and offered a theme around which a campaign could be built.

The first vocal protests seem to have come from the School Boards in Soweto. These were bodies set up under the Bantu Education Act to administer Community Schools, and were considered by all anti-government groups to be instruments of the Department of Bantu Education. Nonetheless, the first recorded opposition came from the Meadowlands Tswana School Board early in 1976. The Board issued a circular, under the names of Abner Letlape and Joseph Peele, countermanding the instruction that Afrikaans be used as a medium of instruction in the schools. The two men were dismissed and the dispute, between School Boards and parents and the Department, was openly acknowledged.

Active student opposition seems to have commenced with an altercation between third-form pupils of the Thomas Mofolo Secondary School and their principal over the introduction of Afrikaans on 24 February 1976. Motapanyane, recalling the confrontation in 1977 stated:

As early as March 1976, Thomas Mofolo was the first school to have Afrikaans imposed on it, and immediately there was a student protest.

In March 1976, the principal called in the police to cool the students until force them to accept Afrikaans. Some students from my school, Naledi High School, went there to investigate their problems. We also visited schools in Meadowlands. We found that these students also felt bitter about what the government was doing. They immediately stopped attending classes because they felt as we did that what was needed was as positive reaction, to
The parents' committee then intervened and approached the school inspectors. But they were rebuffed. Motupanyane continued his account. The Naledi lsh SASM branch also went to Orlando West Junior Secondary. The students there agreed with us and started destroying their books and refused to attend classes. And this was the first effective protest started in Soweto... because the students there were quite clear about what they wanted. Despite the threat by the Hantu Education inspector that the schools would be closed, the students remained very firm. We went on to other schools. By May 1976, the protest actions were quite general in many schools."

By now a large number of schools in Soweto were in an uproar. Normal lessons were replaced by debates on current affairs or on the shape of things to come. Essays were attempted on the shape of South Africa twenty-five years hence. Teachers joined pupils in these discussions and there were few signs of the supposed age gap between the generations. The students discussed the US, the role of the Black Power movement, and Martin Luther King (a much admired figure). They spoke of orderly change in the country leading eventually to majority rule and there was, it appears, little talk of revolutionary activity. Some schools were more aware politically than others, and the extent to which such discussions took place varied from school to school. Naledi and Orlando West (amongst others) were developing a very conscious student leadership and were to provide many of the leaders in the months to come. Young men and women were drawn into the vortex of politics and learnt, within the space of weeks, what might otherwise have remained outside their experience. Daniel Sechaba Montsitsi, fourth president of SASM, told the World in an interview on 27 February 1977 that, until he joined SASM, he knew nothing of the ANC or the PAC. Thousands of other could undoubtedly have made similar remarks. By May 17, 1,600 pupils had withdrawn from Orlando West Junior Secondary School and over 500 pupils at the Phetheni Junior Secondary School refused to attend classes and stoned the principal's office. The following day two further schools closed and the children congregated in the school grounds, playing and skipping, while teachers stood by unwilling to interfere. At this stage there was no clear direction from any organisation; children left the classrooms and in many cases drifted back. None of them, however, took any heed of threats either of expulsion or that schools would be closed down and teachers transferred.

The first overt violence was reported on 27 May, when a teacher of Afrikaans at Pimville Higher Primary School was stabbed with a screwdriver. The police who arrived to arrest the offending pupil were stoned. The stonings were henceforth a regular feature of the violence that was evident everywhere. On 5 June, pupils at the Belle Higher Primary School stoned children who had
returned to classes during an appare)( lull in the hlycottm Motopanyane adds from his own recollections:

Early in June the police sent their ren to collect one of our colleague
They arrested one student but lie was later released. Thdn on the Sth
they came again. Hey, it was unfortunate for them to be seen by the
students. They were beaten and their car was burnt. Ott that day they Were
coming to arrest our local secretary of SASM at our school .. in tonnae.
tion with the student protests. .4

Ilie Sowveto Revolt, Jrune 1976

Year of Fire, Year of Ash

Thereafter, said Motopanyane, the students informed the staff that they would not
write the half yearly examination. On 13 June, the Naledi branch of SASM called
a meeting to discuss the entire issue, Between 300 and 400 students were present
and they decided on a mass demonstration. An Actmme Committee of SASM,
composed of two delegates from each school in Sowetr, was placed i n charge of
the demonstration, and it was this body, renamed the Soweto Students
Representative Council (SSRC) after 16 June, that henceforth assumed the
leadership of many of the events of 1976, Tebellu Motopanyane was the first
chairman of the Action Committee and was secretary-general of SASM.19
Motopanyane also stated that the demonstration, planned for 16 June, wit to be
peaceful - but that if the police used violence they were resolved to defend
themselves and, if possible, to retaliate.

The Demonstration of June 16, 1976

In calling the demonstration for June 16, SASM took the struggle on (o the
streets, and publicly challenged the government to revoke its language
regulations. It is evident from other sources that the students were aware of the
need for solidarity and discipline. Pupils at schools which were not thought to be
wholeheartedly against the regulations were excluded.20 Ih 6 not clear, however,
from Motopanyane's account how the students meant tl defend themselves from
police violence or how they thought they would tb able to 'hit back'. The
realisation that their demonstration could lead to violence was rea listic. It is
doubtful, however, whether they anticipated what was to follow.

The nature of such demonstrations generally was discussed in a seminal essay
written by John Berger in 1968. People, he said, congregated in an announced
public place, 'They are more or less unarmed . .. They present themselves as a
target to the forces of repression serving the state authority against whose policies
they are protesting.'2' Demonstrations, said Ileger, art a trial of strength. They
indicate the extent of popular support for lite pro. testers and they reveal the
intentions of the authorities. Yet presumably both these factors are known
beforehand. As Berger stated:
If the state authority is open to democratic influence, the demonstration
will hardly be necessary; if it is not, it is unlikely to be influenced by an
empty show of force containing no real threat.

Demonstrations took place before the principle of democracy was ovr
nominally admitted. [The Chartist demonstrations, and the presenting of the petition to the Czar in 1905, were appeals to authority for an extension of democracy] ... In the event - as on so many hundreds of other occasions all over Europe - they were shot down."2
If, then, the state, and particularly the state which is not amenable to

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976
democratic practices, will not make any significant concessions, the demonstration are rehearsals for revolution' or, more explicitly, 'rehearsals of revolutionary awareness'. ... Ally demonstration which lacks this element of rehearsal is better described as an officially encouraged public spectacle.""
Few, if any, of the pupils gathered together on 13 June could have envisaged their proposed demonstration as a 'rehearsal for revolution'. It was nevertheless a rehearsal of revolutionary awareness that had grown out of the increasing tempo of clashes in the preceding months, The number of youth that gathered for the demonstration at 7.00 a.m. on the morning of the 16th was an indication of the intensity of feeling in the schools, centred emotionally on the issue of Afrikaans.
Fifteen thousand youth, ranging in age from 15 to 20 years, were ready to march off, bearing slogans written on cardboard to i fromin packing cases or on the stiff covers of old exercise books. The banners were all makeshift and bores signs of rapid construction. Tile slogans were simple and to the point:

Down with Afrikaans
Afrikaans is tjlprossor lngaee
Abolish Afrikaans
Blacks are not dustbins Afriean 'tinks
Tie plais was for the colltrllns It, c live ige at the Orlando West Jun ior Secondary School, and fron there matadi to the tOrlando stadu iun one of the few large open spaces ill Sowet i, Th Colulrun that wound it, way through the streets of Orlando was, fly all reportr, caretree sand jovial. The youthi greeted car drivers with raised chervied lists anid shots of Amantl)la (Power).
Then, apparently, a message got to the leader ofl' the colunln that the police were coming. Sophie Temla, veteran tepol en, ill recalling tile event as she saw it, said that one of lite leade i% Moptped tile colunl and addressed the students:
Please brothers and sMter I plhnr9 wit xi.u, reaaiul cool and calm. A report has just been terrivert to say tie policer -rrc rro'nning, WV dio not know what they are after. after all we are not lighting. All we want is, that the departmeint and ffliial% riltl w lrton to the rirvanee4 of our brothers
Ms. Tema recorded her apprehension as site watched the police arriving: 'I had seen at Turfloop on 25th September 1974, how the students were attacked with batons and teargas by tie pohlice even befre they showed signs of hostility."
What happened next is not altogether certai Ms. Tema saw a policeman throw what she thought was a lear gas canister rhto the crowd; Willie Bokala, another journalist, said he aw a white police officer pick up a stone and hurl
Year of Fire, Year of Ash
it into the crowd. The children in the front rank turned and scattered. Some
reporters stated that tile children retaliated by hurling stones at the police, others
say that the police opened fire first. A reporter of the RandDaily Mail wrote:
I did not hear the police give any order to disperse before they threw tear
gas canisters into the crowd of singing school children. The children
scattered in all directions ... The pupils then regrouped and when the
police charged again, they threw stones at the police. The police then fired
a few shots, some in the air, the others into the crowd, I saw four school
children fall to the ground.7
On June 16, the school students stayed firm and threw stones. It was an unequal
battle - stones against bullets. Some fled, others fell, but those behind stepped in
and closed the ranks. Observers commented on the fact that the youth seemed
oblivious of the danger. They kept advancing on the police and pelting them with
any object at hand.
The Youth Take Revenge
By 10.00 am. youth were surging through Soweto, taking what revenge they
could for the massacre of their fellows. They stoned passing cars, set up bart
cades and stopped delivery vans and buses, burnt down the major adminis. trative
buildings, and attacked beerhalls, botti stores and some shops. The beerhalls were
gutted, the bottistores destroyed, and slogans attacking drink appeared on the
walls. Two white officials, one caught in the administrativt centre, were killed.
There could be little doubt that the object of the attacks was to destroy 411
symbols of state control. The demonstrators had moved beyond the stage of
congregation and had taken the next logical step they had shown that they could
occupy the area, even if they were still far from having the power to maintain that
occupancy. They could destroy the symbols of pwer despite their obvious
inability to install their own power.
In his essay, Berger explored this aspect of mass action. Drinonstratoni, he said,
were essentially urban phenomena, and were usually planned to tako place near
the symbolic centre. The action involved the 'symhobic capturing of the city',
where the 'regular life of the streets' was disr ptd. Verger con, tinued: 'They "cut
off" these areas and, not yet having the power to occupy them permanently, they
transform them into a temporary st
age on which they dramatise the power they
still lack.a'
The demonstration in Soweto was somewhat different. The life of Soweti was
disrupted or, at least, the region of Orlando was. But the denointrosm was not in
an urban centre such as Berger was describing. In fact, in the months to come, the
youth showed their realisation of the weaknes" of their position and tried to enter
the centre of the 'white' city. But on June 16 Ovy

The Soweto Revolt, June 1974
operated inside the township. They certainly lacked the power to take over the
area permanently, but they dramatised their situation by destroying the existing
symbols of power.
There was some similarity between the separated housing areas of
Johannesburg and Soweto, and the divisions between Catholic and Protestant housing in Northern Ireland; and the experience of militants in that country proved to be apposite to Soweto that day. One participant in the fighting in Ireland in the seventies stated:

We were to learn in time that when organising a march toward confrontation it is essential to begin in 'home' territory and march out, so that there is somewhere for people to stream back to it if necessary.29

To move out of Soweto there would have had to be a different type of organisation and a different kind of demonstration. The fact was that the demonstration was in the heart of Soweto and, when police reinforcements were brought in, there was nowhere to 'stream back to', furthermore, when the residents returned that night, unaware of the events of the day, they were met by rows of police who confronted them with canisters of tear gas, all drawn batons. Because the demonstration had not, indeed could not, move out of home territory, the returning workers found themselves in the midst of a battleground. The police attack on tired commuters was an indication of the state's determination to intimidate and destroy the student movement amid the question of whether the earlier shooting that day was accidental or a deliberate act by the police, ill the belief that one.also would end the illegal protest. The police failed that morning because they had not understood the depth of frustration and anger in the township. They now saw it as a battle with the workers, instead of turning tail. treacherous as the tal in the morning. They hurled bricks and stones at the police and fought back in the streets. When buses returned from the city with full loads of mirrors, the Soweto hospital, houses, and official buildings burnt through the night leaving only chattered walls and scribbled slogans.

Police Terror

The police action in Soweto on 16 June (midday at 0 ty aa~4a ~ h weakness of fighting in that particular kind of, 'home' territory; three provisions which particularly struck one of the architects, Alan Lipton, at the time, were:

The width of the roadways would have to be sufficient to allow a Saracen [tank] to execute a U-turn.

... the distance between houses had to be kept above a given minimum, and the houses had to be aligned so that firing between houses would not be impeded, and so that there would tie no shelter for a fugitive.

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In an interview with the city Engineer of Durban in 1957, a group of young (white) architects were told that a number of conditions had to be observed in the layout of an African township. Three provisions which particularly struck one of the architects, Alan Lipton, at the time, were:

The width of the roadways would have to be sufficient to allow a Saracen [tank] to execute a U-turn.
The distance between the boundaries of a township and the main highways had to be beyond the range of a .303 rifle.

When the para-military police poured into Soweto on June 1, their effectiveness was ensured by the ease with which they could move through the mail roads in their Hippo armoured cars and the ability to direct their firepower between the houses. They shot at random and they shot to kill. Any person suspected of being a 'leader' was pursued and shots often found a target. Other youth were considered fair game and it was sighted on the streets were instant targets.

The number that died on 16 June, or in the days to come, is not known. Some sources said that the death toll on the first day was 25; others placed it at nearer 100. Nobody knew, and the police took every step to prevent a list being compiled. Journalists were warned to keep away from piles of bodies, on the grounds that it was none of their business! Baramgwanath hospital was closed to the public; lorries arrived and took away corpses; litre, many were never accounted for then, or later.

Deaths at the hands of the police had become commonplace in the country. Figures of casualties due to police action in the 'normal course of duties', as supplied by the Minister of Police in Parliament, are given in Table Nine.

The ever rising toll of persons killed due to police action (as supplied officially) excluded fatalities in the prisons. Tie numbers were alarming and increasing complaints were voiced about the triggerhappy police, but not as yet exclusive of casualties sustained as a result of the Revolt in the country, the police killed 195 persons and injured 410. Most of the fatalities were adults, and very few juveniles had ever been injured. When, on that first day, the number of children shot dead was well over 20, and possibly even 100, there was universal black fury, and in townships throughout the country there were calls to revolt.

The Response of a People

This widespread reaction had obviously not been anticipated by the government. It had also not been anticipated by SASM and, after the first shot in Soweto, the Soweto Revolt, June 1976

Table 9

Persons Killed and Injured by Police in the 'normal course of duty' 1971-1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>2) 79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976*</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The total includes a few Whites and/or Indians who are not listed separately.

* Excluding any persons killed or injured as a direct result of the Revolt.
they worked on an ad hoc basis, sending some of their followers to nearby townships to inform people of events and urge them to spread the revolt. In some regions there were SASM branches or other groups that took the initiative and organised some action. In general, however, there was so little co-ordinating body. This was, in some respects, an advantage. There was no head that could be lopped off, and each region acquired its own amorphous local groupings (some of which will be discussed below) were content to use existing groupings and then call their own supportingilated events elsewhere and then call their own supporting ignited events elsewhere. In many areas, the local leadership was found by the police and silenced. Without a central body to assist areas that had been silenced the townships in pile tiol took little part in subsequent events.

It was in the nature of the - segregatory pattern of the country that no group would always be isolated, and that was the fate of the small band of radical students at the University of the Witwatersrand. The very next day, Tuesday 17 June, 400 white students voted their students' strike, with the pupils of Soweto in a march near the campus. They were found by Mack spectators who marched with them. Police and a group of Whites (said later to be plain-clothes police) wielding chains and staves broke up the demonstration. When the students regrouped later they were again attacked by police. This was the only overt action attempted by white students in the north, and, after this initial action (for which they were eventually sanctioned by the university authorities), they played no further part in the revolt.

In Soweto, the Action Committee, which was soon to style itself the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSR), still had the support of the school pupils and was able to offer them a leadership in the overall control of events in the township itself. These were often decided by individual initiative, or by small groups.

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Assuming local leadership. The SSR only regained the initiative in late July. On June 17, PUTCO suspended its bus service and a large number of residents were forced to stay in the township. They joined the youth who were back in the streets and erected roadblocks. In the 'no-go' areas controlled by the residents, police patrols faced the possibility of ambushes from stone-throwing youngsters, and visibility was reduced by smoke from burning buildings, and from cars, vans and trucks which had been overturned and set alight. Police vans and armoured cars patrolled the streets, and the crack of FN rifles was heard all day. Shooting was directed at groups of youth in the streets. A car driver who was careless enough to be seen giving the Black Power salute was killed by police. Often in plain clothes, the police were all seen cruising down the streets in cars, shooting down any child in sight. Other patrol cars lobbed gas canisters into houses in random fashion. The police aimed to terrorise and to kill - there were no initial attempts at arrest or detention.

Groups of youth infiltrated Dube, the more prosperous region of Soweto, and burnt down Barclays Bank. There were also reports that the homes of
'collaborators' and some of the more prosperous were set alight. Some of the richer inhabitants and some of the clergy left Soweto and sought refuge in Johannesburg; they did not return for many months, and a few were accommodated at the international hotel adjoining Jan Smuts Airport. On the 17th there was news that the Revolt had spread beyond the border of Soweto. At Kagiso (adjoining Krugersdorp) some schools were deserted and at least one was burnt, and at Thembisa (adjoining Kempton Park and near the airport) the schools were also emptied. There was intense fighting at Alexandra Township, a small black enclave of some 40,000 residents in northern Johannesburg. The youth poured out of the schools with banners pledging support to their fellows in Soweto. They set fire to the entire administration block and business centre, burnt vehicles and buses and, armed with stones, faced the police in their mine-proof Hippo vehicles.

The Alexandra region was sealed off by police blocks, and for the first time the Whites felt the direct impact of the Revolt. The roads to Pretoria and the North, and much of the traffic to Jan Smuts Airport, was halted by this police action. Residents in the neighbourhood organised the first white vigilante groups, and these were to patrol the surrounding white suburbs in the weeks to come. On Friday 18 June, the third day of the Revolt, the pattern of events was repeated. Beerhalls and bottlestores were looted and burnt (if they had managed to escape the initial outbursts), passing cars faced stone-throwing youth, and burnt-out vehicles blocked the roads inside the township. Youth were now being detained by the police, and Mateu Nonyane, a reporter on the Rand Daily Mail, said that he heard people screaming and saw students being tortured in the courtyard of the Orlando police station. Outside the police station, bodies were piled up, and the heaps grew through the night of the 17th and on into the 18th. The situation was unchanged at Alexandra.

On Thursday the Minister closed the schools and on Friday the working week was over. At the weekend, the pattern of life in the township invariably changed, but the weekend after the Soweto shootings was unlike all others. Most shops were closed and the delivery of food stopped. The bottlestores stood gutted and the beerhalls closed (if not destroyed) Many homes were in mourning and the police admitted that 06 had died and over 1,000 had been injured in the three days. Many parents were unable to secure access to the mortuaries and no visitors were allowed at Lharagwanath hospital. Those who were brought in were first checked by police before being given treatment, and relatives were refused entry. For Soweto, as for Alexandra, Thembisa, Kagiso, and all of the Witwatersrand there was a temporary lull, and reports of only sporadic action in SOW areas. There were reports of student activities further afield when the news of 16 June became known. There had been a large demonstration at Turflloop and a Soweto solidarity boycott of lectures, and the University was closed on the 18th.
Liter, 176 students were detained. On 18 June the students at Ngoye burnt down the library, tied the university and the DRC chapel. Several university vehicles were destroyed and two (white) staff members badly injured. Many students were arrested and the university was closed for the year. 33

It Durban, the library of the University (if Natal (black) Medical School was burnt down and 200 students engaged in a march down (1mih) Road (in the way to the centre of the town, They were stopped by police and 87 were taken into custody; the others resigned to slip away. The medical students were subsequently charged under the Riotous Assembly Act and were fined R50 each.34

The African university students in Natal played no further part in the events of 1976 as a corporate body and the students at Tunfloop also seem to have been silenced. Students who later reappeared in the townships might have played some role as advisers, but most were known to the police and few could operate openly without fear of being detained.

There were also reports of disturbances in the Southern Free State, and in Cape Town the police were on the alert and were patrolling the townships.

Revolt in the Northern Transvaal

In the early days of the Revolt, a large number of events in outlying districts were ferreted out by journalists. Many of them went over the telex and some were printed in the papers. Others never became known outside the small local (black) communities. But even those initial outbursts, once reported,

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received no further mention as the news of ever new incidents indicated that a national revolt was about to break out in South Africa. The Southern African News Agency (SANA), a 'loose association of free-lance journalists' (as they described themselves), sent out news of some of the early incidents On 21 June they telexed: '.. unrest has broken out in Basutho.Qwa-Qwa Homeland where student teachers attempted to burn down a training college. In the Bophuthatswana Homeland all hostels and schools have been closed to avoid possible unrest.' On 23 June they telexed:

... Jouberton Township, near Klerksdorp 90 miles from Johannesburg... Police fired warning shots over the heads of high school students there who had attempted to hold a meeting. The meeting allegedly dissolved in uproar and soon afterwards cars and bottlestores were stoned, heerhalls raided and petrol pumps at the local Administration Board's Works flet. ment were set on fire .... Police used a helicopter to disperse the crowds. Trouble broke out for the first time in the Lowveld [northern Transvaal] when the Teachers Training College (Ngwenya) at Lekazi Township near Nelspruit was set on fire. Damage estimated at R50,000. There were other incidents of arson in East Rand when a bottlestore and cinema were set on fire.35

These reports gave an insight into the depth of hatred throughout the country and the extent to which local groups responded to the events in Soweto. The two components that made up each incident, local resentment and response to
national events - cannot be found in the terse telex communications. Nor is there any indication of what group, or groups of people, were involved in the local outbreaks. The gap between news items and social analysis in any locality will only be unravelled by close investigation in some of these regions. Writing from afar, there is no way of undertaking detailed investigation and, at most, it will be possible to present some picture of unfolding events in a few of the major regions of revolt.

There are more reports from Pretoria than most other areas in the Transvaal outside Soweto. Although it is still not possible to provide one thin impressionistic picture, it is clear that events there were significantly different from those elsewhere in the country.

There were two townships on the borders of Pretoria, Atetidgeville which had an (official) population of 65,900 and Mameloh with a population of 103,758. It was declared government policy that the population of these townships should be, as far as possible, confined to "single" places. That is, there was an embargo on erecting family houses, and it was planned to build only single-sex hostels in future. In the early seventies hundreds of more than one thousand who were classified as Tswana had been removed to two towns in hopthla. Tswana, GaRankuwa and Mabopane. The removal of the Tswana families was supposed to relieve the pressure on housing, separate out the 'ethnic' group and also provide a work force for industries on the borders of the Reserves the so-called Border Industries. In effect, the housing shortage became even more severe because no new houses were built and there was no accommodation for the growing population in the two townships, the 'ethnic' community. The two townships in BophutaTswana, furthermore, attracted large numbers of Ndebele, Shangaan and Pedi and were hopelessly overcrowded. GaRankuwa had an official population of 81,241 in mid-1977 and over 20,000 squatters living in its outskirts; Mabopane's population was (officially) 86,900, and there were an estimated 350,000 squatters in the nearby Winterveld area.

Both the Reserve townships were approximately 20 miles from Pretoria, and residents worked at Babelegi (inside BophutaTswana), Rosslyn (officially a Border area, but actually on the outskirts of Pretoria), and in Pretoria itself. In periods of tension these residents were affected by events in either BophutaTswana or Pretoria, or both!

On Monday 21 June, residents of both Pretoria and Mabopane entered the Revolt. At Mabopane two events coincided that day. One hundred and seventy workers at the Klipgat Waterworks struck work for higher wages and, according to the police, that precipitated the trouble." At the local high school, students at assembly refused to leave for classrooms and the police were called in. There was shooting and at least one boy of 13 was killed. Students left the school and burnt buses which normally transported workers to Pretoria or Babelegi. They also closed the road to Pretoria, blocking any attempts to get to the city. Those that managed to
slip through were turned back by police, uncertain of what the workers might do if they got to the factories!

In Attridgeville there was a mass march of pupils, confrontation with police and, after shootings, buses and beerhalls were burnt and bottlestores gutted. Students at Manielodi were also out and the pattern of events was repeated. By mid-day both Pretoria townships were engulfed in the smoke of burning buildings, and at least 10 youth had been killed.

On 22 June, the Pretoria work force took further action. Over 1,000 stopped work at Chrysler Park car factory, claiming that they were concerned for the safety of their homes and families in Mamelodi, Although they appeared to make no demands, the matter was treated as a strike and the police were sununoned. There were also reports that students were demon. strating in GaRankuwa and that they were stoning buses and burning buildings.

There are no indications of any co-ordination of events in Pretoria and Soweto, nor of events in the Pretoria townships of Galtnkuwa or Mabopante. Hach region, and each township, seemed to have responded to events in nneighbouring towns arid their acted largely independently of the other. There were occasional signs that activity initiated in one region wa% followed by "other .... but whether this was a reaction to press reports, or Acttal liaison between areas, has yet to be disclosed.

The BophutaTswana Reserve (or Reserves - there being 19 diotricew regions) had a total population estimated at just under 900,000 Ofthi nearly one-third (284,000) were non.Tswanao Affair In the Reerve parodier

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relations in South Africa and the minorities were treated as second-class citizens of BophutaTswana. Lucas Mangope, the Chief Minister, assisted the South African government in its policies and supported the removal of nen. Tswana from the areas under his jurisdiction on the grounds that there were insufficient land and jobs for Tswanas.39 The local administration also discriminated against non-Tswana who sought trading rights, and connived at the removal of Ndebele from Temba Township in flammanskraal.4

One of the most contentious issues was the instruction from the Bopltuti. Tswana Department of Education that Tswana he used as the medium of instruction in all schools,4' This instruction was immediately challenged hy Chiefs of the Ndebele, who had four tribal authorities under their control, but who were split geographically and existed under the suzerainty of Bophuta.Tswana and Lebowa. These chiefs demanded their own 'lomelan' and the right to have their children taught in Pedi, their home language. At one stage the dispute over language-medium led to the closing of schoolS$ accommodating 4,000 youth. Although the South African government claimed that alternative schooling would be provided, the dispute extended through 1976, when Chieftainess Esther Kekane withdrew the Southern Ndebele representatives from the Legislative Assembly.42 The Lebowa authorities exacerbated an already tense situation when tfwy demanded that GaRankuwa, Mabopane and Winterveld be removed from Tswana jurisdiction and declared international territory!4,1
The struggle for land, jobs and privileges inside the Reserves was intiniatlconnected with the struggle over the nature of education and the language of instruction. In the process the school pupils were left unsettled and the progress impeded. It is not known how this protracted, if mainly verbal, light influenced the youth of GaRankuwa, Mabopane or BtophutaTswana. Their actions after 21 June indicated that they were thoroughly disenchanted with schook ain with all tribal authorities. From 6 to 8 August schools were butit down in GaRankuwa and Hammanskraal (home of Chieftainess E ther Kekine), an on 8 August students marched through Montshiwa township, near Mafeking, and burnt down the Legislative Assembly of BophutaTswana. The hor es of Mangope and other cabinet ministers were placed under heavy police gul. and hundreds of men, women and youth detained. There was no concerted move by pupils in Pretoria to coincide with memn a in the Reserves and, from both Atteridgeville and Matnelodi, there were sporadic reports throughout the rest of the year of buses being stoned, lrof schools and other buildings being burnt. There were occasions when th events in Mamelodi (where the activity was most intense) scenmed to coiwtge with campaigns in Soweto. But generally, those groups that offered leadmr ship acted in response to local needs, in the school,, and in the coolmuotl.y and did not seem to act in concert with Soweto.

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976
Leaders of the Revolt
Speaking in the immediate aftermath of the demonstration and shootings of 16 June, Hlaku Rachidi, president of the Black People's Convention, main. tained that the old order would not easily be restored. lie wus reported in the press as saying: ... The authorities, the parents and the teachers are going to he faced with a new child. The kids have learned a whole political lesson during the last week . . . They are rejecting the imposition of the whole White establishment and system plus the norms and values of Whites . . The BPC interprets this as Black Consciousness in the kids. It is gut reaction, not lofty philosophy, and it reflects and articulates the feelings of the people.44 Rachidi's comments were themselves part of a 'gut reaction' to the revolt in Soweto. His assertion that a 'new child' was emerging and that the 'norms and values of Whites' were being rejected was part of BPC rhetoric and will be discussed in Part Three of this book. What is central tu the issue of leadership, is that Rachidi did not then, or indeed later, claim that the B3 had either initiated the events of 16 June, or provided leadership for the events that followed. There was a strong thread of libertarianism in SASO/BPC: 'gut reaction' for them was more important than 'lofty philosophy' and more important than organisation and leadership.

The Action Committee/Soweto Students Representative (council The Action Committee of SASM could not be satisfied with 'gut reactions' and did take some
steps to widen the base of their revolt, Motapanyane, in his account of events, said:

Immediately after the shootings and stoning, we told our students to do what they could to spread the actions to other locations. The struggle went on for some days immediately after June at the same pace because at that time the Action Committee was meeting everywhere in an attempt to intensify the struggle so that it should really be felt by the Government.

Question: The struggle spread throughout the country within a short while. Was the spread of the struggle all organized by any centralized body, or did it have a spontaneous element to it?

Answer: SASM is a national organization and has regional and local branches. If a certain number of a team is doing something that it right, the rest of the team will join him to do it; it was not always a matter of having to instigate the others to do it.

Where branches of SASM existed and were able to function, they might have followed the Soweto example and called on the student body to demonstrate. There were, however, few functioning branches because of continued police harassment.

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In the absence of such branch initiative, or of other groups to call on the youth, there were cases in which school pupils did hear accounts from boys or girls who left Soweto soon after the initial shooting and returned to their home towns. One such recorded instance came from a student at UCT who interviewed pupils in the Cape Town townships. A girl at Guguletu High School stated that she and her classmates had heard a full account of events in Soweto from youth who had returned to Cape Town. In her opinion, it was this personal account which precipitated the local revolt.

Cape Town, in turn, provided a focus for events in the rest of the Western Cape. Local dissatisfaction fused with national revolt, each centre reinforcing the others and in turn receiving fresh impetus. Local organisation, growing out of groups that had existed before 16 June, issued leaflets, called for specific action, and secured some influence amongst sections of the community. Some regions had committees that were acknowledged by at least part of the local community, and consequently initiated campaigns. There were other areas where individuals, sometimes involved in local political groups, acted on their own initiative and organised some local action. That was the pattern of events in Kagiso (to be discussed below), where individuals who were members of a, PAC cover-organisation, took it upon themselves to set buildings alight on 18 June.

It was only in Soweto that there existed a formal, non-clandestine organisation able to initiate a number of events over an extended period of time. That organisation was SASM, acting through an Action Committee and known to the public as the SSRC.

Since its inception in 1971 SASM had always functioned inside the wtk4i and, prior to May 1970, had not engaged in public political affairs. After the introduction of Afrikaans language instruction it was thrust forward, 6osW M the
schools, and after the 'June 16 demo', in public, as an initiator of political activity. Also, before May, it had as an organisation faced a certain amount of harassment: after June 16 of course, its members were actively hunted, and by the police. Before June its activities were partly shielded behind school walls; after the demonstration the schools were closed down and the membership scattered (literally) in the streets of Soweto. This body of school students, and in particular its leadership, unseasoned in political activity, had nonetheless to take the initiative in extending their struggle into the wider community and summoning the entire population of Soweto to demonstrations against the apartheid system.

The transition from classroom discussion to strike and then revolt was far from simple. The members of the SSRC faced decisions that would have taxed a mature political organisation. More than that, the students had to define, and redefine, their position in society, and establish a relationship with the non-schoolgoing youth, with their own parents, and with the working class community. There were severe shortcomings that had to be overcome in their understanding of (black) social forces. They had to appreciate the need to keep contact with the migrant workers who lived in the hostels and whose problems were so very different from those of the homestead holders, and they had to face confrontations with the 'push-outs' whose social aspirations were so different from their own.

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976

In the course of time these youth would also have to face advances from members of both open and clandestine movements, and take decisions on proposals that they work with (or even under) the aegis of the BPC or the ANC. They had to decide on public statements and press interviews; make pronouncements on violence and non-violence; on strikes and boycotts; and more prosaically, on whether to return to schools, and whether pupils should write examinations.

The Perils of Leadership

The matter might have been simpler if the SSRC had been able to retain its leading cadres and had had a period of stability in which to consolidate its gains. This was a luxury it never found and, even though its leaders learned fast, the large losses to police action led to a continuous turnover in the leadership. Tsietsi Mashinini, the second president of the SSRC, was in office for only five weeks. On 23 August he left South Africa with the police hunting him and a price of R$00 on his head. Khotso Seathlolo, president at the age of eighteen, lasted longer, but was shot and wounded in a car chase, in mid-January 1977, and escaped to Botswana. A number of his executive had been arrested earlier and one commentator said that at this stage the SSRC appeared to be dead.'47 The SSRC was not dead, but it had to restart and gather together a new leadership. This repeated itself, although never under such difficult circumstances as in June 1977 when it was said of the new president that: 'Troformo Sno, the new leader, was not picked because he had special leadership qualities. Only because he was one of only two executive members left to pick from.'48

The discontinuities in leadership, and the loss of membership due to
deaths and detentions or flight, led to changes in tactics, altered orientations, and above all to indecision and uncertainty. This makes any generalisation about the SSRC, and any statement about the attitude of the students very difficult. Nevertheless some tentative analysis must be attempted if the events of 1976.77 are to appear as something more than a series of 'gut reactions' to events in the country.

In the days following the demonstration of 16 June, the students had the support of large sections of the township. Eric Abraham who interviewed Mrs. Nomzamo Winnie Mandela on 18 June for SANA telexed the following:
Abraham: ... from the workers and adults I spoke to in Soweto yesterday it would seem that [the students] have the support of the black population at large and that the base of the confrontation has broadened beyond that of the Afrikaans language issue. Would you agree?
Mandela: Precisely. We warned the government that this would happen if they continue compelling the children to learn [Afrikaans] . . . and if they demonstrated their hatred against the language they have our full support. But as such, the Afrikaans issue was merely a unifying factor it could have been anything.49

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The extent of SSRC control of events in those first days is open to question. Very few people in the township had ever heard of SASM or the Action Committee. In fact it did not seem to be until I August that Mahini was able to address a meeting that had been called by the Urban Bantu Council - after a six-week interval in which all gatherings had been prohibited - and announce the existence of the SSR(.A Prior to that date the SSRC was known only by a small circle of persons who were not students.
It would have required a remarkable organisation to maintain control or the situation once the fighting began. The youth that fought were all students, and there was no reason to believe that the 'pushouts' would, if at that stage, have accepted instructions from students.
Soweto's population must have consisted of over half a million youth under 20 years (if it was similar in structure to other townships). Of this number, those registered at school in 1976 were approximately 170,000, of all these were known to support the SSRC, although eventually they could be expected to respond to SSRC instructions. However, there was no geac to suppose that those rejected by the school system had any particular reason for those receiving education. Although there was no assurance that B11a.: who succeeded at school in South Africa would find lucrative careers for them, the overwhelming drive by parents (and their children) to acquire education, was based on the supposition that at the end of a successful '10 career there would be enhanced economic opportunities. Those that fell by the wayside could only envy and, even possibly, hate the small group that achieved the necessary grades.
A number of push-outs - unemployed and with little hope of getting jobs gathered daily in the streets of Soweto and of most urban townships. They were not in the demonstration on 16 June, but there is little doubt that they collected after the
shooting and many must have been involved in the riots that followed. Some joined the students as fellow victims of apartheid. The cause for anger might have differed, but the anger itself was present in all. Perhaps the unemployed were more daring, but that is mere supposition. They struck together. There were others, however, who used the oppo turnly to loot; and in one report, dated 20 June, from SANA, it was said that:

The inhabitants of the townships have formed themselves into vigilante groups to protect themselves from looters and vandals ... and yesterday two looters were killed by such a vigilante group in the township of Alexandra.

After the first bout of rioting and looting, and more particularly when some authoritative voices were raised and there was some measure of leadership, the level of criminal activity dropped in the townships. All talk about the Revolt being the work of rotsas, so prevalent in the white press in Jutte,dlm appeared as the year progressed.

A drop in the crime rate is not, however, equivalent to acceptance by the students as leaders. The SSRC did not always secure the support of the students body in its instructions regarding returns to school or to writing examinations. There is even less reason to believe that youth not at school would accept SSRC instructions unless they were seen to satisfy their own special needs.

The slogans used by the students were also not often designed to attract this element of the population, and it is difficult to see how demands relating to education could be designed to appeal to those who had already abandoned hope of further education. The origin of the Revolt had established a barrier that was not easy to transcend and there is little evidence that any group was even aware of the difficulty.

One further Comment on the students' organisation must suffice at this stage. The change of name after 16 June was primarily tactical in order to protect the membership from the police. But the choice of the new name, the Soweto Students Representative Council, was indicative of a change in direction. The students no longer claimed to represent all schools in South Africa, and this was a concession to reality. The new committee encompassed the schools of Soweto, and other localities owed no formal loyalty to it. Despite this, leaders of the SSRC still issued statements at times that were addressed to a national audience and claimed to come from a national leadership. The committee, furthermore, was marked as a students council, and this too was realistic. Because they had a confined constituency and a definite set of common aims, the students had a basis for organisation, for membership, and for the recruitment of leadership. The question of whether they were 'representative' was raised, but under the conditions at that time, when the police were making every effort to destroy the body, the issue of democratic procedure in constituting the committee or in electing the officials was less important than the problem of survival.

A student council, fighting for student rights, is inevitably something different from a council that is directing the population in revolt, and this factor escaped
the young men there were few women in the leadership who claimed on occasion to be the 'national leaders'. Appearing openly, as they did, when there were too other factions in clandestine hives prepared to take the initiative, the SSRC filled the gap and summoned the people of Soweto to participate in several important events. This seemed to have blinded the committee to the fact that they were not representative of the wider community and did not have the resources to extend and deepen the Revolt. As an SSR, the committee was more than sufficient to fight the school issues and also to organise Adult Up programmes for their cause. To extend the Revolt and secure broad "citizen change", a series of activities and statements implied at a later stage, was beyond the committee's capabilities.

The Parents Play Their Part

Myths grow easily in periods of turbulence, and the belief that the SSRC alone was responsible for organising the township and securing victories Year of Fire, Year of Ash (limited as they were) has been widely accepted. In one respect this also led to acceptance of a second myth: that the Black Consciousness Movement (or more explicitly SASO/BPC) had organised, or led, the Revolt. The connection, or supposed connection, between the Soweto Revolt and black consciousness was proclaimed from the beginning. And from the beginning it was denied. In the interview with Winnie Mandela, Eric Abraham recorded this exchange:

Abraham: Would you agree then that black consciousness should be viewed as a strategy for change in this country?
Mandela: Precisely. There is no other solution. Black has to speak for black, black has to develop self-reliance, self-pride and there is no other solution.
Abraham: Winnie Mandela, would you agree that the confrontations which began in Soweto and have since escalated and spread to other parts of the Witwatersrand, and indeed other parts of South Africa, is a culmination or outcome of the Black Consciousness Movement?
Mandela: Black consciousness is not a thing of today, it is not new. In fact it is not necessarily a culmination. What is happening is just ordinary black anger at the white racist regime. But it cannot necessarily be attributed to black consciousness as such. The issue is more that of a Black nation versus a white minority."

Some opinions expressed by Mrs. Mandela are open to question and will be discussed in Part Three, but her major contention, that the Revolt was not the outcome of the Black Consciousness Movement, accords with the evidence that has been presented above.

It is also obvious that the students' committee could not have proceeded unaided and the leaders were aware of this from the inception. Some resources were available in the community, and these the students obtained directly, or through the assistance of the Black Parents Association (BPA, formed a few days after the shootings began, private transport was needed, and at a later stage, all public...
transport had to be stopped. the bus servore was halted by direct action and the
train service by sabotage, but private transport (both when required and at the title
of the sltayoathomes) could only be regulated with the co-operation of the taxi
drivers. This the studelits obtained, and taximen stood behind the SSRC. The
doctors on the plie of one taxi association also supplied their services and this
protected many victims of police firing from falling into the hands of the Suate
families, rather than the youth, required assistance (or fundels as.4 through the
IIPA the services of undertakers, together with grant% of nonry for the funeral
services, were obtained, The co t ation of undertakersas led to the provision of
free coffins, and the help that foarnhs rwcervrd t W & it easier for them to accept
the supreme burden they carried. Assisnme received by parents, whether spiritual
or financial, also made it easier (of t1w students to maintain cordial relations with
the adults, aid this contribut to the development of the Revolt.

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and the so-called Minister of Bantu Education, M.C. Botha. We felt that they knew what we wanted and it was pointless for us to meet theari.
The BPA never did get to see tile Minister because tile government refused to meet their deputation, but in many respects the BPA did operate as the external mouthpiece of the student committee, The adult body was prepared to submit grievances supplied by the students to the authorities and was care. ful not to go beyond that mandate.59
The BPA's achievements were in the field of legal, medical and financial assistance, and in the arrangement of Funerals, of which more will he said below. But their political role was very restricted. There was never any possibility of the BPA assuming a leading role in the Revolt, or providing the means for setting up a council which could play such a role.
The BPA committee was headed by Dr. Manus Buthelezi and included Nomzamo Winnie Mandela of the Black Women's Federation (and obvious links with the banned ANC), Mrs. Phakathi of the CI and the YWCA, Dr. Aaron Mathlare and Dr. Nthato Motlana - two medical officers, Thonus Manthatha and Aubrey Makoen of the BPC, and others. Yet despite the political affiliations of members of the committee, there was strong criticism of the BPA from the Black Peoples Convention because it was felt that the Association should have taken a stronger political lead." They also faced criticisms from parents in the township on the grounds that they were not representative, because few of them were parents of school-going children. This matter was not however resolved, in part because the entire ciort sitoe, with the exception of the Bishop, was detained in mid. August.
Dr. Huthe frei had also been arrested, but was released after world-wide protests, and worked with a reconstituted committee which confined itself to providoin aid for victims of the Revolt, and to detainees' families.
The BPA also faced bitter attacks from members of the puppet Orb i Bantu Councils, who did not hesitate to show their hostility to the SSRVC or to persons who supported the students. An aspect of the bitterness with which this fight was being conducted surfaced when Winnie Mandela and Dr. Motlana made an urgent application to the courts on 15 August III restrain members of the UBC from interfering with their property and the lives of themselves and their children. The court was inforimed that at a meeting at the house of T. Makhaya, chairman of the
UB1C, Councillor t %W4 Shabangu urged that the houses of Mandela and Mathlare he attacked. anlu that the children who tried to prevent workers going to work should he killed."1 Shabangu and Makhaya went into hiding after the court hearing ad t' UBC stood even more discredited than before, The two who made the cmnt application disappeared into the gaols where they stayed in detention until their release in December 1976, Thereafter Winnie Mandela was hmnned ;mj placed under house arrest, and five months later removed and placed ws4!r restriction in Brandfort, a remote town in the OS.

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976
The Underground Organisations
The ANC
A number of the organisations banned since 1951 and 1960 have claimed that they continued operating inside South Africa clandestinely, and indeed periodic reports of raids, detentions and arrests have indicated that cells of the ANC, the PAC, and the South African Communist Party (SACP) still functioned in the country. The raids had obviously disrupted work in the ANC and the SACP during 1975, and a further set of arrests in mid. March 1976 dealt the ANC a particularly hard blow.

The ANC was known to some students and the fact that there were underground groups became known front the newspaper reports of arrests and trials, and also from pamphlets and journals that circulate d in the tow nships., Some of the students were also persuaded to form cells of the ANC. Motapanyane claimed that these were first foried in 1974 and that:

They were formed by the AN'. We in SASM did not actually think of forming such things. We were operating legally and tried to keep SASM as a broad legal organisation. But some sif us listened to our elders from the ANC when they said we needed more than just riass legal organi.s ation. Hence we founded these underoon cells."4 Nonetheless, because of pot r orgalisation or bad crnLi cations, tile ANC did not sent to he sware oft the extent ot' sgitatiton and Cmillict twe tile language issue, or the explosiveness of the situation ill Soweto until the conflict was far advanced.

The internal newsletter of the ANC, Ananc1ladbatta, issued itl South A'iica in 1976, but before June, listed it numbet o('issues on which it urged people to campaign. The complaints that were nentioned Covered evetytling f ln rising prices to transport costs, rents, and wt'ersi' ighths. They urged campaigns against the Bantustans, support fOr Angola and Moamnbique. and opposition to the 'horder warts' against the people of Natnibia, Zimnbabwe and the new government in Angola. For the youth, they suggested Organise tie youth and students arainst Bantu VfdtuwAttio, setwrate colleges, and their right to demand in what medium they must lie taught. by whom, how, where and what to he taught. and Io dermand (fe, vonri pulsory anti proper education,41
The list of demands was comprehensive, but was too wtdo and n1101rispeef to indicate where attention Should he rcu'ed. lie ANt', having inttiers lin tile executive of SASM, should, moreover, boo bn 4w re th t the dnts were being organised. They should a0 have bn more 4pocific in tiwr demnda if they were to asitt the Atudent slrg!o .

The same isre ul'the newsletter did address a scwtnt to the youth, and criticised the Black Conscruusnm Movemnt ons two irons, Firstly, the ANC

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maintained that the black conscioisisess leaders had ened ill not lyil' dom , a firro basis of principle on which it will vo-optrate with all other rtm racist groups, irrespective of colour'. Secondly, the AN( totok a st i, ie il opposing the conliounity projects that the ItP and SASOIP( sponsore,17 We ., oppose such efforts as the building of clinics, work cartps ,id home industries no matter how well meant. That energy and eithii’liassm of the youth must be directed in efforts to destroy the one ant only source of our misery and oppression, namely white donination.
The ANC counterposed the need to reach all youth, in all classes of Itk. organise them, and take them
... out into the streets in demand of their day-to-day needs like higher wages, an end to victimisation, subsidies in bus fares, free, compulsory and proper education, integrated sports at lowest levels etc. "

There is unfortunately no information on whether students in SASM read this issue of Amandla-Matla, whether they agreed with the point of view expressed, or whether they were prepared to direct attention to the problem of working class (and of unemployed) youth. There was no indication in the slogans of 16 June, or subsequently, that the students paid much attention to these ideas. And yet, it is precisely at times of approaching conflict that readers of pamphlets (or even of ephemeral leaflets) might ie expected to pay greater attention to proposals such as those in ANC literature.

There were expressions of anger and abhorrence in leaflets that appeared under the name of the ANC in the days that followed the first shootings " In their leaflets, the ANC called for mass protests, demonstratios and action 'against Bantu Education, Bantustans, the pass laws and all the hated pol h s of Apartheid'.
The first appraisal of June 16 appeared in another underground mew.em Vukani-Awake, issued by the ANC in July 1976. After referring to the hlotings of Sharpeville and the events of 1960-61, whicl, it was said, ended a decade of 'peaceful protest', the publication continued:
The reaction of the racist state then proved to our people that pto)ti &as not enough and opened a new stage of struggle in which the liberation movement prepared to seize power by force. Our youth understood that their protest would be met by massive police violence but were not intk raidedate. They have won a great political victory the Vorster govrmwet has been compelled to drop the use of Afrikaans in schools, More innpntant, they have demonstrated the power of the people and shown tha( nux protest remains an important part of the liberation struggle,
The article then turned to the 'valuable lessons' that had been learnt in 'solidarity actions' in townships and campuses across the country. There were shortcomings and the authors urged that:

because the protests were largely confined to the locations (townships) damage to the economy, the heart of white power, was limited - the struggle must be taken into the cities, the factories, the mines - the youth mobilised on the burning issue of forced Afrikaans - to maintain the militancy and keep the initiative, demands that unite and draw in the broadest mass of the people, (Abolish passes! Down with Bantustans and Group Areas!) must be advanced.

The ANC had responded rapidly to the events of June and their call to take the struggle into the cities either coincided with, or helped shape, part of the strategy of the SSRC in the coming period. The struggle was, however, not taken into the factories or the mines because this was beyond the capabilities of school pupils, and there was no other organisation capable of undertaking such tasks.

The Soweto Revolt, June 1976

The issue of Amandla-Matla (Vol. 5, No. 2), that appeared in late June, proclaimed: '...this is not the time to weep over our fallen heroes. It is time to hit back at the enemy with everything we have got...'. The publication set the events of Soweto against the unfolding events in the country - the strikes at Heinemann electric company and the gold mines in the OFS, the bus boycott at KwaThema, the demand for free trade unions, and the protests against the Bantustans.

There was also an article on the school pupils which seems to have been written before 16 June, The authors refer to the boycotting of classes, but not yet to the shootings, and consequently some of the suggested demands were dated by the time the issue appeared: as was the call for pickets 'in front of all places administering Bantu Education'. On the other hand, the suggestion that student-parent committees he elected to co-ordinate the campaign was apposite both before and after the shooting."

ANC leaflets were distributed by means of pamphlet bombs, exploded in the centre of cities, and by other forms of delivery. Cell members also received copies and there must have been a large number circulating in towns. Nevertheless the ANC as an organisation was not able to act directly in Soweto and, in recognition of the peculiar position of the SSSC, it made several attempts to persuade its leaders to work with its clandestine organisation. These were rejected by the student leaders at least by the president at the time, and the ANC operated separately. At an informal level members of the SSRC executive, some of whom were, as remarked above, members of the ANC, sought advice from or worked with cell members. There were also occasions when the President of the SSRC apparently journeyed to a neighbouring territory to meet two of the exiled leaders. It is yet too early to ascertain the extent of the contact or the effect this contact had on the direction of events in Soweto or the test of the country. 01

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The PAC
There is little information about PAC involvement in the revolt, and few of no examples of PAC literature distributed inside the townships. But this organisation was active in Kagiso, the township outside Krugersdorp, according to evidence which has become available following the trial of youth accused of having been in the PAC.

Despite reluctance to use material produced at a trial, because of the general unreliability of evidence given by state witnesses against former friends, the short account below does tell of events that could have occurred in any of South Africa's townships. If the story as told in the witness box was false -- as some stories undoubtedly were -- there was still an essential truth in it that can be accepted. Some time in 1975 (it was stated in court), a religious movement launched in Kagiso '... to teach youngsters the correct interpretation of the Bible to enable them to "liberate themselves from the oppression" in South Africa.' 70

The group was first known as the Young African Christian Movement, but in December 1975 changed its name to the Young African Religious Movement (YARM) because one of the leading members was of the Islamic faith. The group had been formed by persons who belonged to the PAC and one of its leading personalities, Michael Matsobane, was said to have served a sentence on Robben Island for PAC activities. The aims of YARM were to unite black youth, provide a fresh interpretation of what was said in the Bible, and ultimately recruit students for military training in camps outside South Africa.

The activities of YARM did not differ appreciably from those of other youth groups in Soweto schools. They went on picnics (for which purpose they recruited women in order to avoid suspicion), organised discussions and sports, and were to offer bursaries for youth interested in military training.

After 16 June, members of YARM formed or helped start a Kagiso Students Representative Council and a Kagiso African Parents Association. Both these organisations, although restricted to members of YARM, were obviously based on the Soweto example. It was claimed that Matsobane had said that the function of the SRC was to obtain information, how arrested and those who were being sought by the police. The function of the Parents Association was to assist students to cross the border and escape arrest.

Evidence from a state witness, who had been on the SRC, alleged that a fellow member on the SRC had burnt the school and a bolltstove on 16 June. In September members of YARM were said to have been responsible for burning the Kagiso administration buildings.

The abbreviated account that became available from the court-roll contained many of the elements that have appeared earlier in this volume: the use of church or religious group in the early stages of discussion or organisation, the search for new religious meaning, recruitment in the schools, an ultimately the formation of an SRC and of a parents association. In this instance a small political group tried to keep all activity in its own hands, and dominated both the students' and parents' organisations. These bodies were not used to mobilise large sections of the community and individuals on the
committees seem to have arrogated to themselves even the task of burning down
some buildings. If this is true, then the PAC made a mockery of political
mobilisation and sought only to build their own organisation while neglecting the
need to involve larger sections of the population in the events of 1976.
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31. This information was compiled from figures quoted in issues of
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35. The Southern African News Agency (SANA) Bulletin was declared af
'undesirable publication' in South Africa. That is, it was banned. Copies of the
Bulletin were reproduced and distributed externally by the IIJEF. 36. SRRSA,


41. Loc. cit.


49. SANA, April/May/June Bulletin. 50. 'The story of the SSRC', op. cit., p.1. The account in this article contains some serious errors. I have tried to avoid the more obvious misstatements.

51. The Financial Mail, 16 April 1971, stated that 55 per cent of Sow io's population was under 20 years, 16 percent were under 4 years. 52. See 'The story of the SSRC", p.5, on the lack of democracy. 53. This was implicit in many of the SSRC leaflets. It was made more explicitly (although ambiguously) in their leaflet dated 7 September 1976. This will be discussed below. 54. SANA, 18 June. 55. Horst Kleinschmidt, (1976), Black Parent.t Asociation,(misneo), lit was a confidential document at the time. Similar material has now printed elsewhere.

56. Ibid.

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11. The Revolt Takes Shape

In the first eight weeks of the Revolt in Soweto, there were two periods of intense confrontation with the police. The first extended over the initial three days, from June 16 to 19, and the second for three or four days, starting on 4 August. These constituted peaks, in which the youth inflicted maximum damage on buildings and vehicles. Police violence was also at its height. The intervening period was less violent, but the township remained tense and there were innumerable small incidents which were no longer newsworthy and were not always reported in the press: stone-throwing, random police shooting (particularly of youth wearing school uniforms), occasional road blocks, or overturned vehicles. There were also events which did make the headlines: the anger at the government's announcement on 1 July banning the planned mass burial of victims of the shooting, and the indignation when it was learnt that many children, some as young as eight, were being kept in police cells.

Nevertheless Soweto was quiet over the period which coincided with the closure of the schools from 17 June till 22 July, and Ione Hoffman caught the atmosphere that others had noted when she went back to Jabulani 11th School on 23 July:

I drove to the school, past buildings black and gutted, beerhalls with shattered windows, clinics that looked as though people had jumped on the roofs. The weird, creepy silence deepened as I went further into Soweto ... a few people looked at me strangely, wondering. On the way out I saw a small boy bending or pretending to pick up a stone, but a woman shouted and he stopped. At school there were only a few students ... I

During those long winter weeks when the children kept indoors, partly for warmth's sake, but also to avoid the cruising police cars, there had been changes in social customs which were not described in the newspapers, but which were more dramatic than many of the violent episodes that were remarked upon. The most important of these changes occurred at the funerals of the young victims of police violence.

The Re volt Takej Shape

The Funeral Ceremonies
One of the first acts of the Black Parents Association was to arrange for the funeral of the young people killed in June, and plans were afoot for a mass burial. When the Minister of Police banned the funeral arrangements there was deep resentment in Soweto. The 'private' funerals which would have to take place were inappropriate to the common tragedy that affected the entire population. The feeling that the bereavements concerned a wider public than those traditionally involved in funerals was ultimately to affect the way people reacted to death and to conduct at the graveside. Youth, who had been
traditionally excluded from funerals, now attended and even took a leading part, in the process displacing the married women who would otherwise have been the main mourners. This revolution in behaviour was profound and occurred at one of the most important ceremonies in the cycle of life and death. All traditional practices concerning women's place in the cycle of life, beliefs about entry into the 'other world', and concepts of pollution (associated with handling of the corpse) were challenged and new practices established. This reversal of roles at funerals between married women and youth was more than an adjustment, radical as that was, in traditional practice. It was also a reversal in social status and corresponded to the reversal that had taken place in political practice. Only 27 years before, in 1949, when the Congress Youth League had had their programme accepted in the teeth of opposition from the established ANC leadership, they had to find esteemed elders who would accept office in the organization pledged to uphold the new Programme of the ANC. In 1976 political leadership fell to the youth almost by default, and they did not feel obliged to defer to adults. The funerals became events at which the reversal of social custom coincided with the fact that the victims (at least initially) were all young. The adults mourned children, the youth mourned lost comrades. The adults wept and the youth grieved too, but they swept away the tears and vowed vengeance. There were adults present, many of them neither related nor close kin, and this too was a departure in practice and they too were expressing political, and not only social, solidarity. They too thought or spoke of vengeance. The new atmosphere percolated through to close kin and parents. They not only accepted the changes in traditional practice, but as the political stance of the audience. Funerals were no longer seen only as a rite of passage in which the departed were entering the other world, but also as gatherings at which there could be an affirmation of the demand for a new South Africa. Dr. Harriet Nguhane records that when she revisited Soweto in July 1977:

I myself saw ... a woman, whose child had been shot and killed by the police, standing erect at the graveside shouting slogans meaning 'We shall overcome', 'Power is ours', etc. Only a few years ago she would have been sitting there in the traditional manner, covered and hardly visible. In July 1976, the youth gave the clenched fist salute, and participated in funeral rites. A year later they were leading the entire group in salutes and chants at the grave: priest, relations and friends. This took place not only at funerals of those who had died at the hands of the police. All deaths in the townships were seen in political terms. Malnutrition, disease, quarrels and gang fights were all attributed to apartheid, and every death was blamed on the government and its pernicious policy. Dr. Nguhane records that, when she offered her condolences to a man who had lost his 20-year-old son shot by the police, he had replied: 'It could have been anyone's child'. That it too constituted a radical change in approach; a change that will not lie easily reversed in the years to come.
The police were aware of the use to which funerals were being put by the youth, and knew that the grief at the graveside was mingled with fervent hopes for radical change. They were not prepared to stand aside and were always to be found in the vicinity of any burial. As a consequence of these confrontations at burials, stories were thrown and shots fired, and all too often there were new martyrs at the end of the day. It was a macabre fame, in which the police seemed determined to show that they were the true servants of death.

Back to School?
The government made a number of tactical retreats during July. The reimplementation on the medium of instruction was rescinded on 1 July by the Minister of Bantu Education, M.C. Botha. On 18 July Joseph Peele and Abner letimpe, the members of the Meadowlands Tswana School Board, dismissed in February, were reinstated, and it was announced that the regional dite:o "A education and one of the circuit inspectors would be transferred from the Soweto area. 6

The students had won a victory and they were aware that it was only because of their resolute actions that the government had been forced to withdraw. But the victory was limited because nothing had changed in the schools and nothing had been altered in the country. The question to Afrikaans tuition was relatively unimportant, it had been a convenient point around which the school pupils had rallied and, having united and paid a fearful price in lives and injuries, they were not going to be satisfied with this restricted concession. It was the whole of Bantu Education that had to go, and that, henceforth, was the students' slogan.

When it was announced that the schools would be reopened on 26 July the school pupils saw little reason for returning. The heavy police intr&1h and the presence of flippos indicated that nothing had altered, Afte

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uneasy weekend, some of the youth gathered at the schools on Monday the 26th, but drifted away during the morning, congregating at street corners and jeering at the police who stood by.

The SSRC was caught in a dilemma. Their president had called for a return to school. Not because he necessarily wanted a 'return to normal', but because, The schools were the focal point of SSRC activities, and while students were scattered through the townships in their homes and in the streets it was impossible to get any sort of programme (if action going. In the schools, it was another matter. The SSRC had no or less free entry. The SSRC could not, however, tell the students their reason for wanting the schools opened again and the statements that were made only added to the existing confusion without securing the return that Mashinini had called for. When the BPA backed the SSRC alongside the school principals and the hated Urban Bantu Council, the students felt deserted!

This must call into question the wisdom of calling for a return to school and does indicate that the SSRC was out of touch with the mood of the youth. The first tentative move to secure the reopening of schools on 26 July received little
support and even the teachers were undecided. Classes often failed to start even when children had assembled in the classrooms.

There were larger numbers at school on 27 July, but reports were received that a school at Mamelodi (Pretoria) had been burnt and that the same had happened at a farm school in Irene ( Pretoria district). That evening six schools and a youth club in Soweto were damaged by fire and, over the next 10 days, some 50 schools were damaged or destroyed in the Transvaal, Natal and the OFS; 'the Cape schools were only to join the revolt the following month.

The SSRC, seemingly persuaded that they were correct, were unable to sense the Illind in the shorIs and streets and continued to call For the classirnor and alst) cli idenluned tl t burn ing hi the to i li ivilt ships, particularly at Alexandra and Thenhisa, there wte I resh outth hr , N It II month drew to a close, Wuses were heig sl ned at Alexandra awl Imil le wele mnatching to tile police station in Theinbisa in I oc t aal it a poliv assault ton a pupil during interrogation. If the SSR(6) had not altered course at this stage, they would have h.h.Nr the credibility already attained. An opportunity came on I Augumt when the Minister allowed (he first public gathering since 1I June, The UlIIC called the meeting and UJBC members, together with school principal, appealed for an end to the burnings and a return to school. The students barricaded and, according to some accounts, broke tip the meeting. That afternoon the BPA held a meeting at the Regina Mundi church and Mashinini, in his first public appearance, called on each school to send two delegates to a meeting of the SSRC. lie still endorsed the 'return to school' appeal. 11

The authorities were alarmed at this move to extend the SSRC and it Year of Fire, Year of Ash seems likely that it was this which led to police raids on the schools in $4ih of the leadership. Despite a promise made by the Minister that the police would be kept away from school premises during school hours (reported at the meeting on 1 August), there were large-scale raids on 3 August, students were interrogated and some arrests made. This provocation led to clashes with the police and shots were fired. Thereafter the schools emptied and pupils poured out into the streets. 11

That ended the calls for a resumption of lessons and the boycott returned -- first to Soweto and Thembisa, %ni then to the rest of the country, bringing in the Cape in the process.

The March on Johannesburg

On Wednesday, 4 August, the students were out in the streets in their sch At uniforms and, in the first instance, tried to persuade the adults not to go to work. A stretch of the railway line to Johannesburg had been damaged overnight and trains to the city were cancelled. Buses that raced through the township were stoned by the youth.

Organised by the SSRC, the students then joined with many of the adults who had stayed at home that day and marched in a column towards Johannesburg. Pictures from the air showed them marching round obstacles. pressing forward in their desire to get to the police headquarters at John Vorster Square to present their demand that the detained students be re. leased. The entire township seemed to
have concentrated on the one objective - to press on and present themselves in the city centre,
Joan Hoffman, coming into Soweto in the early morning, saw the immensity of the operation that day:
When I turned on to the Soweto highway . . . I began to realize that something was wrong, because there wasn't a single car coming out. It was though the road had been rubbed clean. Then I saw two Putco buses, a few taxis, but still no cars, when normally they would be bumper to bumper into town. The road stretched wide In the early light, the whole world empty and silent.
Watching at another exit, one of her friends said: 'They were like ants, wd like ants they (the children] just kept going.'
The marchers, carrying a huge banner that read, 'We are not fighting, don't shoot', were halted by a cordon of police. The students aimed to get to the city centre, but there was no move to break through the line of police blocking them, Moreover, the leadership, in the front ranks of the marlhes, had a firm control over the students. It was stalemate - the police unyielding and the students stationary and unwilling, in fact unable, to go back.
Once again there was shooting and twelve fell, three of the students dead, Three other students were seriously injured when teargas canisters were shot at them.

The Revolt Takes Shape
There were over 20,000 people in the column which now swung back, the orderliness shattered in the haste to get under cover. That afternoon buildings were burning again in Soweto, including the houses of two black police men, The events of 4 August inaugurated a new phase in the Revolt of 1976. In the wake of the shooting at the road block, violence returned to Soweto and to the rest of the country. The fact that on the same day there had also been shooting in Thembisa when students marched to the local police station to demand the release of a student who had been detained, only reinforced the indignation felt everywhere at police terror.
However, a second and more important factor had entered the struggle. The students had appealed to the workers to stay-at-home and, with the assistance of some of their fellows who had organised the disruption of transport, they had ensured that at least 61 per cent of the African work force stayed away from the city. The employers called it 'student intimidation' or explained the withdrawal of labour by reference to the trains. Few sought to explain the obvious support that the workers gave the students that day.
The extent of their success in stopping workers going to town seemed to have persuaded the youth that they could paralyse the economy and that they only had to issue the call for the! tactories to grind it to a halt. Student Power, they thought, could be extended to Workers' Power, aid (presumably) their demands would e met! The enormity of the mistake was only to become apparent later with the failure of the Novienbei stay-at-home.
They did not stop to reflect that Wednesday aid probably they could not stop in their tracks then, On Thursday 5 August they again called on the workers to stay-
at-home and they set up road blocks to reinforce their cull. But the workers saw no putpoic in losnig another day's pay and ignored the call. In Alexander, where the students appeared to be more determined, there were some clashes with workers. Inevitably the government felt this to be a heaven-sent opportunity for dividing the township artid they gave their blessings to workers who wanted to carry knohkerries (knoh-headed batons) as protection against 'agitators' and 'intimmdtatot0

The students never really learned hrw aird when they could call on the working class to join them against the authoritieR tit the workers did do so on 4 August and would again on several ocolifonls Sollettite% they oined the students - but there were times when the workers ignnred their call. Tile factors which helped determine those rolpoltse will he dmo'ulsd in (hapter Thirteen. Tile events in Soweto had taken on a now morintolt ad were not easily stopped. On Friday attempts were agoin made to %top workers loaving Soweto, ind again the students failed. It in not cortain whether the SSRC was in control at the time. If they were, they had rot undefrftood the feelin gs of the workers or, alternatively, they had lost the bilify to commnd and their opinions were not heeded, Marches w were orru ed tn the township, bothon Thursday and on Friday, and on both occasions there were

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casualties. It seems that the police were prepared to shoot at any student or group of students on the streets.
The SSRC was faced with another problem -, small but vital. Until now, students had been summoned to appear at demonstrations in uniform, This helped advertise the action as being student operated, and student led. It also helped keep the push-outs in the background, because they were so markedly different in dress, although the extent to which this exclusion was deliber. ately planned is unknown. Wearing school uniforms had also helped bind the demonstrators together, but in so doing a new factor had been introduced. The police treated students as public enemies and any person Found in the streets in a uniform was a target for cruising police cars. Henceforth students had to be advised not to appear in school clothes.

Nation-wide Response
On 5 August there was violence in Cape Town. Students at the University of the Western Cape, who had started a boycott of lectures on 2 August were angered when the whites-only staff association dissociated themselves from the student action. On 4 August 800 students clashed with police when they demonstrated outside their campus and on 5 August the administration buildings on the campus were burnt down. The initial boycott had been only partially connected with the events in the Transvaal, but everyone connected the latest events with the clashes in the north, and local demands were %ten to merge with the nation-wide conflict. It was in the Transvaal that the response to the new Soweto events wai most marked. On 6 August a beerhall was fired at Brakpan; there wam Stoning for the first time at Dobsonville (near Roodepoort); students clashed with police at Kagiso during a march protesting against the detention of a student. Two schools went up in flames in GaRankuwa; three schools were destroyed in Mhluzi
(Middleburg). And in Johannesburg the third White was killed when Africans in a truck ran down a traffic warden."
The marching, burning and stoning did not stop through August and into September. New communities were drawn into the protest movement in every corner of the country. The schools were prime targets, but so were buildings belonging to the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards, beerhalls, liquor stores and buses. In mid-August the students also protested at the visit of Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State at the time, to South Africa, and their slogans scrawled on banners received worldwide publicity, 'Kissinger, your visit to Azania is bullshit, Even animals are angry.'

By this time the Revolt had also taken off in the Cape -- with two separate foci, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth-East London, from which it raged across both Western and Eastern Cape. It extended to outlying towns in the Northern Cape, to Kimberley and to Upington, and it took in towns across the Cape where the largest group was Coloured and not African. Now social forces entered the revolt when Coloured-African unity was seen

The Revolt Takes Shape
to be effective in the streets of the main urban centres of the South.

References
5. Ibid.,p.7.
14. X-Ray, July-August 1977,

12. The Cape Province
Explodes
The Witwatersrand is built over the gold mines which provided the base for the massive investments that poured into South Africa and consequently led to the industrialisation of the region which is by far the most technologically developed area in the country. The Southern Transvaal, which includes the Witwatersrand and the industrial complex that stretches down to the Vail River, contains a quarter of the country's population and the largest concentration of African workers. Inevitably it has been the centre of some of the most bitterly fought struggles in both factory and township, and many of the national campaigns called by the ANC in the fifties received their strongest support in and around this industrial complex.

Other urban centres, particularly in the Eastern Cape, have on occasions
been the scenes of campaigns which have surpassed the Transvaal in initiative, imagination and daring. The peculiar conditions which led the inhabitants of each locality to participate have to be sought in the social composition of each town and its environs, and the meaning of each campaign for the persons involved must be determined. Only then will there be any understanding, for example, of the widespread success of the Defiance Campaign of 1952 in the Eastern Cape, of the concentration of strikes in Durban or 1973, or of the massive response to the Soweto Revolt in Cape Town in August 1976. By the same token such a study will reveal the reasons for the relative quiescence of the Natal population through the Revolt of 1976-71.

In this study it has not been possible to investigate the conditions of many urban centres during the Revolt and, at most, it has been possible to indite some of the factors which help explain outbursts of activity in some regions. Any detailed examination would only lengthen the book without revealing further light on the factors which led to the explosion in South Africa. Nevertheless the situation in the Cape is so significantly different from that of the Southern Transvaal that it is necessary to look briefly at some of the factors which influenced the two black populations in the period preceding, and during, the second half of 1976.

The Cape Province Explodes

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
The Shaping of Cape Society

Until 1910, when South Africa was unified, the country consisted of four political units, each with its own distinctive history, its own unique population composition, and economic structures which were already profoundly different. The Union effected by the Whites placed the country under a common set of political institutions, established one army and one police force, and unified fiscal control.

The Union of South Africa was designed to provide white political hegemony. The economic control of the country did not need to be written into the new constitution because that had already been decided by the nature of investment from both foreign and local financiers and entrepreneurs. But the land question and the provision of labour were kept in mind when the political institutions were established. Parliament, the government, and the provincial councils were reserved exclusively for Whites.

The pre-Union history of the colonies prevented the drafters of the final constitution from disenfranchising the Coloureds in the Cape and the few thousand Africans who had qualified for the vote under the old Cape constitution. The black vote was devalued in 1936 when white (but not black) women were placed on the voters roll. The Alnicar voters were removed from the poll in 1936 and, in 1956, the Alnicar vote after a five year constitutional wrangle.

The Cape Coloured community, it was once said, is statutory
category' and not a race or a nation, I nt red as tile ple Who d notr look like or are not accepted as eing white tor African, they are rlorc tv are generally lighter skinned than Africans, but darker than Whites. This ethnic ambiguity has created profound stcial pro hleoi tt them. Their total nMUmbei in South Africa is app oxiately 24 mrlion, bill a l known nuniber has ill the past loved into tile white cornUollllly here NV colour made that possible. The advairrges if 'passing fr whlte' na-li ma s sections of this conillinnity deeply conmcrous t' olur, Ilnd kei tots to. political movements to overconle these plejudicc% were tot vet ru The overwhelming Illjorlty ot the c oloured people have alway resrdt'd the Cape and, with approxiniamtcly 1 .9 milhon it that PtoVilnt. t'eyool. number the Whites by some haf-nllion ad with over I tUt1 Ill CAPq Town (and districts), they are the largest populatior group inu South Atl .a legislative capital. Although a large proportion of the coloured people are in evele ttna it z s straits, they are legally less discriminated against than Aftrracmlie a-a they live in are not einced m, as are the towinh ipt, although the 1.-1 position is often no better than that of tic African areas anda la nr have been forced, due to the lack of accommodation, to live in tlatL camps. They have some right to own property and to trade wintta d-o grsar suburbs known as Group Areas, Certain skilled trades are open to thtrr- they have the legal right to trade union organisation and to strike, Tltt wages, consequently, tend to he at least marginally better than tiat of Uue

The Cape Province Explodes
African and the facilities in schools are also comparatively of a higher standard. The advantages brought by a lighter pigmentation were, however, limited and over the years the privileges were whittled away. The vote went in 1956; the Group Areas Act of 1950 was enforced, and Coloureds were moved out of districts that they had occupied for centuries; segregation was enforced in university education; and a multitude of laws were introduced to control this 'in-between' category of persons. To make them fit the apartheid laws, they were declared a nation, but a nation without a 'Homeland', without a language (most speak Afrikaans), and without a separate economy. The one 'gift' presented to them in 1955, they would gladly dispense with. It was announced in that year that the African peoples would be removed from the Western Cape and that all work done by Blacks (that is, unskilled work) would ultimately be performed by Coloureds!

The 'Eiselen' Line
One of the Nationalist Party's plans for the country was that all Africans should be removed from the area west of the Eiselen Line (which extended almost due north from a point on the coast, just west of Port Elizabeth to the OFS border near Colesburg). According to their calculations all the necessary unskilled labour could be performed by Coloureds, and the African population could be transferred to the Transkei and Ciskei and directed from there to other labour centres.
The policy was outlined by Dr. W.W.M. Eiselen, Secretary for Native Affairs, in a paper presented to the pro-government South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) in 1955. In that year there were said to be 178,000 Africans in the Western Cape, 65,000 of whom were in Cape Town. It was this group of people of whom Dr. Eiselen said:

Briefly and concisely put, our Native policy regarding the Western Province aims at ultimate elimination of the Natives from this region. It should take place gradually, so as not to lead to harmful dislocation of industry. It is a long-term policy which makes provision for the following stages:

(a.) Removal of foreign Natives and freezing of the present situation so far as Native families are concerned, coupled with limited importation of single migrant workers to meet the most urgent needs.
(b.) Removal of Protectorate (Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland) Natives and reduction of the number of Native families, with gradual replacement of migrant labourers who return to the reserves, not by new migrants, but by Coloured workers,
(c.) The screening of the Native population and classifying them in two groups; 1, Natives who have remained Bantu and who in time can be moved back to the reserves, where they can play an important role in the Year of Fire, Year of AMh building up of an urban economy; (and] 2. Natives who have established relationships with Coloured women and who in all but colour belong to the Coloured community... should obtain citizenship within the Coloured community...

With consummate care, Dr. Eiselen laid down the conditions that would govern Africans who would be allowed in temporarily, if 'absolutely necessary', as single male migrants. Of those that would be allowed to remain he said: The legally admitted remainder are to be housed in good rented quarters for families and single workers. Because Natives in this Coloured area should not enjoy the same residential privileges as Coloureds, they are not allowed -- in contrast with the practice elsewhere - to buy or build houses. It is hoped and expected that the Native population will not grow, but steadily decrease. 3

As a first step, the government announced that ten more funds would be available for erecting family houses in Langa, Cape Town's only African township at the time. Instead, only hostels for single male migrants would be erected. All families then living in Langa would be moved elsewhere. A second township, designed to hold 9,000, was set up at Nyanga. All squatters in the Cape Peninsula were to be rounded up and taken to this sandy wasteland. There they would be screened and those who satisfied the authorities that they were in the Western Cape legally, would be allowed to erect shacks on plots measuring 27 feet by 14 feet. The rental for these would be £1 per month. All other squatters would be 'repatriated'. 4

Families were to be settled in the region later named Guguletu. Residents living
in shanties in and around Cape Town were moved to shacks and pre-fabricated dwellings, prior to more permanent buildings being built.

At the end of 1973, just 22 years after the ultimate removal of AfriOMii had been decreed, their number in Cape Town had all but doubled. The actual number of Africans in the city was not known and had never been known, and the number of squatters alone was over 50,000. The official figures for the townships is given in Table Ten.

Table 10


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Unga Nyanga</th>
<th>;uguleti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men: 16 years and over</td>
<td>24,969</td>
<td>10,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women: 16 years and over</td>
<td>2,371</td>
<td>2,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 16 years</td>
<td>3,738</td>
<td>3,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31,078</td>
<td>17,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of adult men in single quarters</td>
<td>23,627</td>
<td>8,123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the government's plan to stop the flow of Africans into Cape Town and the Western Cape, their numbers grew steadily and in 1967 new plans were produced to reduce the African population by five percent per year. Consequently, further housing for Africans was frozen. Thereafter, the pressure on housing facilities in the townships became unbearable and the squatter camps grew even larger.

The Eiselen Line did not achieve what the government said it aimed to do, but it did lead to the increased immiseration of both black communities. There were insufficient jobs for the Coloureds in Cape Town and the Western Cape. Large numbers were unemployed and thousands accepted any work that was available. The housing situation was intolerable and some 200,000 Blacks lived in squatter camps. In one account of the plight of these people, a reporter said:

The picture for Coloureds is .. appalling ... There are approximately 22,400 structures scattered across the Cape Peninsula housing 120,000 people.

They are the poorest members of society ... they have very little schooling - Standard 2 is quite common, Standard 4 quite an achievement; the men work as labourers or do unskilled work, so are paid low wages - R20 per week is average. Some are shack dwellers because they have been evicted from local authority housing, others have moved out of townships because of .. violence, lack of social cohesion, cold damp dwellings. Some have been forced out .. because of the Group Areas Act or road-development demolitions ... 9

In these camps they were often joined by Africans - by families that refused to sleep in single-sex barracks; by people who could not find any accommodation in the overcrowded townships; by men (and their families) who had no permits to be in town; and by many who found that a shanty was preferable to a house under the control of township administrators,
The Schools in Cape Town

Until 1963 the bulk of coloured education was in the hands of state aided mission institutions. The advantages, and the disadvantages, noted in the discussion of mission education for Africans were also apparent in the coloured schools - but by 1963 nobody relished government control in the schools. The disadvantages outweighed any advantages that might come, There were some 347,730 coloured children at school by 1963, the vast majority being in the Cape. Nevertheless 95 per cent were in the primary schools and most left school after three or four years. It was estimated that 60 to 100 thousand children of schoolgoing age were on the streets and little hope was held out that there would be places for them in the classrooms.

Year of Fire, Year of Ash

There were two basic changes after 1963, The missionaries (who controlled 72 per cent of the schools) were required to have their institutions approved by the Department of Coloured Affairs which assumed overall control of the schools; and teachers would have to adhere to an approved syllabus. The teachers, who had always played a prominent part in radical political movements in the Cape, were to be tightly controlled under the Act, They could not belong to, or further the aims of, any political organisation, nor encourage resistance to the laws of the state. *they could not criticise any department or office of the state, except at the meeting of an approved teachers’ organisation. "

The Act did not lead to an improvement in education. The quality of the teaching provided was reflected in the sum of money spent per year (sixteen pupils. Against an average of 1605 spent on each white child, R125 was spent on each coloured youth at school. That, in turn, was luxurious when compared with the R40 per year for each African child at school.

Compulsory education was only introduced for children as from 11 and would not be fully implemented until 1979 for children aged 10 to 13 years. There was also little change in the structure of the schools, of 655,347 at school, 68 per cent were in the lower primary classes and 85 per cent in the primary schools as a whole. Those in the upper classes were a tiny minority only 4.5 per cent of all school-going youth, and the top three forms i and only a tiny fraction would ever obtain a university entrance pass.

Comparisons call lie invidious, but it must be noted that the African schools in Cape Town were not only inferior to their coloured counterpart, but were also inferior to African schools elsewhere in the country. In lieu of the declared intention of removing the African population, little new building (except for that provided by TFAI II), and atit estillV4 75 per cent of the children who managed to graduate from primary schools could not be accommodated in secondary schools. Places filled the Reserves, and 65 per cent were left to the streets, very few of which could afford the fees. At some R30 per pupil Neal Thcv were not suitable to the IIT", , t. t as left-ou ts!

In a lecture delivered in September of 1963 at O C(T, I h tmp lloet I + descrieel the looit ions in I one lhot al stili t

Most classroooms are bare shells Willi very little tr !ilt Vilttlpmrrot, o tr"
tricity, and often no desk. The schools were equipped with electricity.

It is significant that many of the schools were equipped with electricity, but

TEAHIF.

Liinga High School, founded 30 years ago, had a block of first-class rooms, still in use, which was condemned as unsafe two years ago. The rest of her account is familiar. It is about material resources, no audio-visual equipment, no teachers (or equipment) for instruction in physics, a shortage of textbooks, or textbooks in the wrong language, and so on.

The Care Problem Explodes

Later that year, a more comprehensive document was issued after school pupils had been consulted. The usual run of complaints, important as they were, need not detain us here. But one point was central to the dissatisfaction and indicates that the situation experienced in the Transvaal was also being felt in Cape Town, and undoubtedly throughout the country. Under the heading school facilities, the pupils indicated:

Immediate provision is urgently required to accommodate present and future scholars in 1077. "The present situation is that I will have to fit into classroom which are already overcrowded with 182 pupils, (2 litres of milk simply will not fit into a one litre bottle.)"

'Coloureds are Black, too'

Adam Small, head of the department of philosophy at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), when invited to read a paper at the conference on Black Theology, said:

When I was invited to speak here, I was invited as a black, and immediately made a point of this. I was not invited as a non-black in the way that I used to be. I am still invited, as a non-white...

We have come, and we are coming, to recognise ourselves as black, and at least a part of our task is, and will be, to unfetter every man who is not white from whiteness... I

It is doubtful whether Adam Small got very far in the 'unfettering' of the coloured community. His message was far too intellectual and never viable to grips with the problems faced by the coloured people. Artur declaring that Blacks would 'live without apology, or as if apologi'ing'. and that we are not 'beggars for life', he continued:

Protest will therefore play a role in our future actions, but we will realize that protesting is a form of hegging, and we cannot beg. Protest will he a secondary form of expression for us. Our primary form of expression will be the repeated manifestation of our blackness. time and again.

It must be clear to anyone who knows the prevailing culture that blackness is for us a supremely cultural fact. It is in the context, the conscious original, that we have trembled into "I am a man."

at our disposal out of which to grow strong in every sense. Looked at in the context of the problems facing the coloured people at the time, there was an air of unreality in the words of Mr. and Mrs. at the time, if they heard these sentiments and if they knew what Attain Snmlite was, would have found the
passage completely irrelevant to their lives. He was apolitical, if not antipolitical, and the equation If p-to-tr will be meaningless.

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
could have no meaning for men and women who existed in dire need. Nor in fact could the students, who were so enamoured of black consciousness, have known how to interpret these words of their lecturer - and one of their champions!
The students however, did seem to absorb this strange talk of 'culture' and 'soul', taking in all the ambiguities and contradictions of Small and other proponents of black consciousness. They sought out the one overwhelming point that Small did make as he concluded:

Our blackness - black consciousness - is not so much a matter of severing contacts so much as it is a matter of a certain historical necessity ... (the fact that blacks) have a will to survive the fury of our time,
If therefore we reject apartheid it is for a much profounder reason than that we want integration; for we do not want integration, we reject it. We want to survive as men, and if we do not insist on our blackness we are not going to make it... 8

More than anything else, the appeal to blackness was taken up by students at UWC. They flocked to join SASO and their leader on the campus in I Henry Isaacs, was also the national president of the South African Student Organisation.
The coloured students were militant and they were always amongst the first to support their peers on other campuses, as already described in Chapter Four. They were also the first group in Cape Town 41 take action in support of the pupils of Soweto.
The conflict between students and the administration at UWC built up over some period. The students resented the high ratio of white to coloured staff - 18 Coloureds in an establishment of 119 lecturers and professors; and they resented the fact that Ismail Mohamed had not used his appointment as Professor of Mathematics confirmed by the council, although his competence was not in doubt and he would have been the first coloured professor.
The students were angry on many accounts, not least of which was their complaint that the education they were receiving was inferior to that provided at the white institutions.
Their complaints were not restricted to campus affairs and they were deeply aware of conditions in the ghettos. They had been reared and educated in these slum areas and their parents still lived there. They knew only too well the poverty that surrounded the coloured people and they knew that their own economic horizons were bounded by apartheid. They were, furthermore, caught up in the wrangling that surrounded the (oloured Persons Representative Council (CPRC, or sometimes CRC), established so 1968 to replace all previous forms of coloured representation in the now Ahlf white assemblies.

The Cape Province Explode Coloureds and Apartheid Politics
The first election to the CPRC took place in 1969. Forty members of the Council were to be elected and 20 would be nominated by the government after the elections were completed. There were three main political tendencies in 1969 and they showed a continuity with political groups that had existed in the early post-war period. There were, firstly, the boycotters led by intellectuals in the late sixties, as they had been in the fifties. The hard core of the movement that called for a boycott of 'dummy' institutions in the 1940's and 1950's had been members of the Teachers League of South Africa. They had resolutely opposed the Coloured Affairs Commission set up by the Smuts government in 1943 and had committed themselves to fight against the establishment of a Coloured Affairs Department. The name they chose for their political movement was the anti-Coloured Affairs Department (anti-CAD).

Dr. M.G. Whisson, in a study prepared for Spro-0as in 1970, claimed that the boycotters were the heirs to the Non-European Unity Movement and its main Cape components, the Anti-CAD and TLSA. Of the boycotters in 1969, Dr. Whisson claimed:

While the actual membership of organisations of boycotters is probably very small outside the TLSA, being numbered in hundreds rather than thousands, the influence of the movement has been much wider. It has been led by men revered as intellectual leaders among the coloured people; many of them have been banned at one time or another and many more have left the country for more congenial places. Through the schools the tradition of boycott, the ideology and the language have all been maintained. 19

The second group consisted of a number of parties that declared in favour of the government and its apartheid politics. Many of them were openly racist and they hoped to gain votes on an anti-African platform. They failed to win the elections, but in 1969 gained a majority in the CPRC by being handed all the nominated places. In the 1975 elections they lost heavily at the polls and could not have formed at executive even if they had been given all the nominated seats.

The third group consisted of parties who claimed to be anti-government and anti-apartheid, but nonetheless maintained that they could use the elections (and hopefully seats in the CPRC) to secure a public platform for their views. Although there were a number of small groups which nominated candidates for the Coloured Council, none secured seats at the elections. The only group with sufficient support to oppose the pro-apartheid members on the Council were candidates who stood in the election as members of the Labour Party. The Labour Party had been kept out of control of the CPRC after the 1969 election and their leaders declared that they would make the council...
of the giov lllllnt viveti d 'illstii iitti ;Il il l 111,e W e some demands that tie labo
r Ply idenlify t il' hleh ly with ti,t, it t. Consciousness Movement,
The polarisation inside tile Libonl Pal 'I'M alrm, nil ot uvios ;il tile conference
held in 1973. Sonny Leon, the pa ty ;adevi , was odh illvlvd attracted to the stance
adopted by (atSha 1uthele, ndi i ited hi ifi speak at the opening sessioni. The
youth sup o ted the SASO position1 mit forced through a resolution allowing
thei t ope on the liabour Yoith Organisation to youth of all races. That proved tbe
only a1 stepping s t., the split that had to come, and the most talidal spi okesnan,
Don Matter.%, resigned shortly after the conference and joined th e IWC(. 2'
Shooly there. after he was banned by the government,
During electioneering in 1975, anti-CPR( groups were fomlied AFRO (or anti-
CPRC front) in the north and ACROM ( anti-(I'R(' conlititec I-, the Cape. Their
members declared that they would not frm a political &wt'y and would not
nominate candidates. Both groups called fo. a total ho t :ot of the elections and
their leaflets carried the slhguan: l)on't vote I'r apartheid - Don't vote for the
CRC.' 22
A spokesman for ACROM said that its niembers ' , se tetinsehe-.w- the vanguard
Black Renaissance. They have taken upon theniselves the Jst io politicizing
the people and making them aware of the value of Black Consciousness.' 23 The
group's greatest strength in the Cape se. ered t the z UWC and in some of the
schools, although it had tio short a lil e to galhoth together many members.
During the election period of 1975 it was repltel that students of the Alexander
Sinton high School in Athlne (Cape 'fivai demonstrated against their school-hall
being used as a polling .tation fill electio
ns to the CPRC. They distributed leaflets
issued by ACRONI and Well dispersed, with some show of violence, by police
who had been stillitalan e t1t the hall. 2' Not unexpectedly, students a t the
Alexander Sinton welt In 1th fore-ont of the Cape Town revolt in August 1976.
The Theron Commission
The Labour Party won an overall victory in the 1975 eieetion and, dplite past
declarations, the leadership decided to use the Council to prts, thif demands for
full citizenship for the coloured people. When the new "ounrol convened in
September 1975, students picketed the entrance to ihe A\\My hall and were
subsequently dispersed by police, 11
The Labour Party was able to block all normal busine,4s onl the grout it that the
Prime Minister had not given satisfactory replies to their dlnarwhi for integrating
the Coloureds into the political institutions of th' coittair For several months the
Labour Party seemed to have won a signal vtiory'.

The Cape Province Explodes
but they got no support from the students who denounced 'integration', and their
own weakness was exposed when the government revoked the appointinetit of
Leon as Chairman of the CPRC Executive and appointed a nomi hated member to
that post,
While this wrangling continued in the Council Chamber, a government appointed
Commission of Inquiry Relating to the Coloured Population Group, under the
chairmanship of Professor Erika Theron (a sociologist at Stellenbosch University)
was touring the country hearing evidence. The Commission had been instructed to inquire into factors obstructing the development of the coloured peoples and to make recommendations on how such development could be further promoted. It was quite clear from government statements that the Commission was not to formulate any new guidelines in policy towards the Coloureds and that proposed reforms should be made inside existing apartheid structures. The Labour Party, consequently, had de facto increased the Commission because they could not accept that the coloured people were a separate population group from whom all citizenship rights were excluded.

The Commission report was tabled in 18 June 1976, two days after the Soweto Revolt had begun. Contrary to Labour Party expectations, the report recommended that Coloureds be given direct representation in Parliament, the Provincial Councils and in local authorities. This was rejected in a government white paper. The Ollie Latti added that the Immunity Act and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act should be repealed. This too was rejected by the government.

The Commission also made a large number of other proposals. They urged that all universities be opened to Coloureds; that compulsory education up to the age of 15 years be instituted; that job reservation be removed, opening all work opportunities to Coloureds; and that many other barriers to coloured advancement be removed. These recommendations were not specifically rejected in the government white paper, but neither were they endorsed.

In July Mr. Leon claimed that Coloured disillusionment with the government had boiled over when the political recommendations were rejected, but the extent to which his view reflected opinion is subject to some doubt. There must have been resentment at the government's reaffirmation of their apartheid policy for the Coloureds, and a few students and intellectuals who had spoken out against integration might have felt that personal ambitions would not now be fulfilled.

Nonetheless, they had spoken and continued to speak against forging any ties with the Whites, and they still espoused a black alliance. It is hard to see how this squared with 'disillusionment boiling over'.

The final word on the Theres Commission report came on 1 September 1976 when the President of the Senate, Mrail Villoen, opened the session of the CPRC. Labour Party members boycotted the session and staged a demonstration in support of their demand that their national chairman, Rev. Al Hendrikse (at that time detained) be released. Senator Viljoen announced a number of concessions which were directed at pleasing, and so winning the support of, the wealthier section of the coloured people. The new concessions consisted of:

- the right to open industries in any area;
- the right to trade outside the Group Areas;
- the right to proper consulting room facilities in district surgeon offices;
- better seating at arts and science conferences (!) and in courts of law;
- representation on housing planning committees;
more extensive legislative and executive powers for the C'PRC; removal of some points of friction in eating and rest facilities (e.g. on the motorways); a better ranking structure in the prison services; and representation on the committees of mixed trade unions - subject to this being justified by the membership.5 These new ‘rights’ were offered a month after the Revolt had swept through the Cape Province. More concessions, or more appropriate c01cessions, might have helped cool the situation in the Cape which had reached boiling point at the time. But the government clearly had no intention of ‘cooling’ the Coloured people. All evidence pointed to an avowed intention u the government ranks of subduing and repressing the opposition. Concesuwnsn might even have been counterproductive to government plans!

Cape Schools Join the Revolt

The school students in Cape Town reacted to the news they heard of even t in Soweto. A teacher at one of the Coloured schools was later to write - 'We haven't done much by way of teaching since the Soweto riots first began. Kids were restless, tense and confused.'29 There is no similar record of wht the African children thought, but it is known that they were aware of the extra police patrols that were set up in the townships following June 16. After the first shootings in Cape Town, a teacher at one of the schools recounted:

... pupils from Fezeka and I.D. Mkize (Secondary Schools in Couguletu Township) used their schools at night for studying because these achoolf had electricity. During the Suweto unrest the police surrounded these schools so that the pupils could not use them properly. They were stopped from studying at night,30

There were some incidents within a week of the first Soweto massacre 24 June the principal's office at Hlargisi Primary School in Nyanga was bwtotf out and on the following day the riot squad was on standby at Langa whena crowd threatened officials of the Bantu Administration. On 27 June there were further arson attacks at the LUna post,offie and at Zinioa school. Te police officer in command issued a statement saying that the events had no

w c'ape Province l",xtild',s connection with events in Soweto. 3 July was vacation time in South Aftfica, and schools reaseil)led just before August. On 2 August students at IJWC boycotted classes (as described in Chapter Eleven); on 0 Angust the 1 lewat Teacher Twining College in Athlone was set alight in solidarity with the UWC hytcotters; ont the Hth, fire destroyed classronis and the principal's office at St ruis Bay (east of Cape Town),and on 10 August there was increased activity another unsucessf t attempt to burn dtown buildings at llewat, a prefilhricated building that was part of the Peninsula college t6 vM valed T'cinical Vdnmalion wa% gutted, and there were three explosions at Die toeiehotop (Guodhop) P iinary School in Cape Town. Sometinte in early August African pupils had also decided that sone
demonstration in sympathy with Soweto was necessary. The pupils of Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu were in communication and it was decided to march together on Wednesday 11 August.

Reports from several sources seen to indicate that the decision had not been widely circulated and that plans were vague. Thernba Nolutshungu, a youth organiser with the South African Institute of Race Relations reported that pupils at Langa High School met on the sports fields in the early morning. Speaker after speaker could be seen gesticulating, obviously striving to hammer a point home. A distinct feature of the meeting was the fact that participation in the actual discussion was neither confined to nor monopolised by a recognised clique.32

They refused to enter the school and after congregating marched out on to the streets bearing placards that declared solidarity with the students of Soweto. At another school, this time in Guguletu, a teacher described the scene as follows:

The students marched towards our school singing softly, Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika. It was really touching when they sang. They were marching quietly around the school to the parade ground where the school conducts its prayers. Two girls came forward and spoke to a teacher, saying: 'Good morning, sir. We have come to ask permission to get together and pray for Soweto.' They were directed to the principal ..... 33

They did not get the required permission, but the pupils at the school left the building and the teachers let them go. The atmosphere, according to the teacher was 'extraordinary. Nobody could speak.' The students planned to converge, but the students of Guguletu and Nyanga were dispersed by police with tear gas at least twice, and then finally confronted and told to disperse within eight minutes. They stood firm and were then showered with gas, and 25 to 30 were arrested. Each attack by the police had left them even more resolute, and, in one instance, pupils of a school that had been undecided joined the demonstrators after they witnessed the police in action.4

After the arrests, the youth re-formed and followed the police to the Guguletu police station and demanded the release of their fellow demonstrators. Bottles of water were passed around and faces doused as a protection against gas. Eventually volunteers met the police and secured the release of the detainees.35

The pupils of Langa had in the meanwhile marched through the streets of their township, followed by their teachers who 'were determined to see to it that the demonstration remained orderly'. They were, in turn, followed by riot police, and the entire procession was surrounded by the crowd that had gathered at the school and grew as the group passed through the township. It appears that it was persons in the surrounding crowd who hurled abuse at the police and also started throwing stones at the first bottleshop that was passed. At that stage the students turned round and returned to their school. The stoning then stopped.36

The students had gone out of their way to maintain the peace, but the crowds that had gathered were not as restrained. At some stage after the school pupils had
stopped marching, thestoning started and the police were quick to respond with
gas and with bullets. That unleashed the terror that Soweto had experienced in
June. Administrative blocks in the townships were burnt first, then shops and
bottlestores. When workers arrived homle they joined the demonstrators and more
buildings went up in smoke. Snie residents blamed the tsotsis and even tried to
organise vigilante groups but fity were dissuaded by other residents.
The shooting carried on well into the night and that day 33 persons were killed
and an unknown number injured, according to the Cape Town Commissioner of
Police.3 What was not explained was the fact that the majority of those killed
were children, but whether these were part of the group of push-outs or not, is not clear.
Rioting reached a new peak on 12 August. At ILanga and Gugulet
attempts were made to stop workers leaving for work and riot squad cars that
arrived to stop this action were attacked and damagedl. Police fired at the crowd
through the mesh windows of the wrecked cars.3
In tie streets young children (some described as tsotsis) stopped all tear and cried
out 'donate, donate', in their demand for petrol to make 'Nloltov cocktails'. Cars
were only allowed to proceed if the driver gave the l–ha4 Power salute and hooted
in support.
Later that morning students of the I–anga I high School marched to the local police
station to demand the release of telly students detained Isi ce the demonstration,
Shots were fired and one of the students, Xolile Mini, W” killed. The students
retreated to their school grounds and stood congre"led the buildings. Two
police helicopters hovered above them and dropped tear gas canisters. The entire
student body of langa High, tolethmr with pupils from other schools, again
marched to the police station, carryins banners: 'We are not fighting. We have just
come to release our people.' Whl

In Nyamiga, studen ts andl tets ga t hied at. a ruatl bbock .tnd we e lletl by a lille
of police. Dogs we10tlekt tild ine erknyd t, te tt gas was (li niwit an d, after thete
crowd re.spendedl with stonies. the pilicc ttredd. lltree bntdies were removed after
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.36 itours of figlititig.
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sttklents wvete ariestedl. Six 1111ii(1ed1 coloured Studetits also marched front
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Modderdam i Schootl Btlttuleuwel was set aliglit.
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events in une centre evoketi sympathetic actiun in the# othler. In tttaet, thie
process was rnade mnore complex by thie fact thitt Ckipe Town was not an11
ishind divorced fromn evertl elsewhiere it Ilhe country. They responded to evenis
itn the Liastern Cape, where a new focus of revolt bad hcen establised
17p, k W/se Prorint-c lý"Xljlljiid.,
Year of Fire, Year of Ash
in Port Elizabeth and East London (as described later in this chapter), and to
events in the North, in Soweto and elsewhere.
On Monday 16 August, 500 students at UWC matched to tile Bellvile
Magistrate's Court where 15 students were appearing on ai number of chirge
arising from recent events. The crowd swelled to 1,000 and were forcibly moved
by riot police. The rest of the week was relatively quiet. There was% a fire at
Arcadia High School in Bontelieuwel on 17 August and a boycott of c lasses at
events in the N
orth, in Soweto and elsewhere. The
magistrate of Wynberg had ordered that the funeral be
restricted to parents and close relatives. Mcsi's fellow students wanted a mass
funeral procession and defied the ban. There wal, inevitably, a clash at the
graveside and the crowd was dispersed with teat gl The youth retreated to the
school grounds. Yet again they were net by tA4dic~ and once more were
saturated with gas. The next day there was a delikonstration at Guguletu, called to
commemoratre the death of another your pupil, Mvuseleli Tleko, aged thirteen. A
large crowd gathered and stInes were thrown at a bus. Tear gas and a baton charge
were used to disperse them
The second event occurred in nearby Bonteheuwel. Students at the b rhyme high schools organised a demonstration 'in sympathy with Soweto' on Monday 23 August to coincide with the first day of a general strike called 'the SSRC in Johannesburg. The demonstration at one of the schools, the Modderdam High School, was broken up by the riot squad and the next day none of the Bonteheuwel High School students would attend classes. He called for peaceful demonstrations in the school grounds. There had been a transformation over the past few days. On 20 August FA. Osili, a reporter, wrote in the Muslim News that after interviewing coloured youth he had found: Students are emphasising that they are boycotting classes because they want to make people aware of the situation, and that they also want to bring to the notice of everybody what is happening at the University of the Western Cape and at Black schools, and also of the oppression and suffering in South Africa.

We want people to know we are not trying to hamper our own education or disrupt anything. We merely want to voice our dissatisfaction of the educational system.

On 23 August, a statement by the pupils of Athlone High School condemned police brutality, inferior education, segregation laws and the plight of detainees. And they added: 'We wish the people to know that we are prepared to sacrifice everything, our carefully planned careers and aspirations, for the assurance of a better and more just future.' The students who signed that statement might have been a bit ahead of their fellow students elie,

The Cape Province RXphdes but others would come to the same position within the coming days.

The police had also changed their tactics. They see med determined now to move into the schools, seek a confrontation and break the spirit of the youth. A letter by two school teachers, written to the London Guardian describes the position at coloured schools front 24 August. Other reports give similar accounts of events in the coloured townships. Their account reads:

On August 24, pupils of Bonteheuwel High School held a peaceful demonstration in the school grounds. They carried placards expressing sympathy with fellow scholars in African areas. The atmosphere of the demonstration was jovial rather than aggressive.

The Riot Squad arrived in meshprotected vehicles; they were wearing camouflage battle dress and were armed with shotguns, rifles, and tear gas guns. Immediately the principal asked them to leave. They ordered him to stand aside. The commanding Officer ordered his men to line up and, without warning, tear gas was fired at the children. They were then baton charged.

The children fled but only the b; vs managed to climb the school fence. The girls, trapped in the grounds, were beaten up by the police. A crowd of pro testing parents who gathered in the alea weke forced to flee from the returning Riot Squad. 'Fleeing was the only defence the people had against the guns of
the Riot Squad; stone throwing their only means of expressing their anger and
pain.43
For three days the unequal fight continued. The police set up ambushes to draw
the crowds into the streets and then peppered them with buckshot. Many were left
severely wounded or dead, in Wednesday 30 August about 600 students followed
five secolIRIdary sclices decided to march to Bonteheuwel. On the way they were
confronted by Y font riot squad vans. A reporter on '43: Muslim News described
what happened:
Sonic students appealed for calm as they did not want to provoke police action.
Meanwhile a member of the riot squad tend out something to the
students which was incomprehensible.
According to some students on the scene the riot squad aimed tear
gas canisters at the students- hfore the order to disperse was given. One
student said, 'They did riot release the tear gas to disperse us but were
aiming the canisters to hurt us'. *
When the tear gas took effect at ong the students the riot squad batoncharged
theni. There was gneral panoni as studenti fled in all dictions,
The reporter then added that local residenti offed the students sanctuary, but the
police fired into the backyard in order t 'flush' the studentS out.

Year o4' Pirc., Yeur ofA sis
Blacks Invade the White City
nroligh August the pattern lit' (lic North had liec.ii iet)cýttk!(I in ('1110 towri,
AN Ute nPä, bd talmn plam in tu HW4 amix mâ de Mâ0 Owimuë in flicir
eelleaves, undisnute1 ad s«whgly 11 ow ewnte Hut
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putiköp that was unc of the fâriv tueruts open n) thola.
On Wedn~ 1 a: wirmer pupils of the slännik of l mngäy
Guguleini arrived at CapeTown rztiIw;ty station willflout any Inikkr no fice o2
pu|lleiity and then niarelîck throughi the cent aal husilless klktlict of (ir 4:ay
Unhindered and iiittioioe,teci, they carried their placards: 'Away wicic quru
hcld';'Equal education, -.""w want okli, Rollhell istalld 0ýWII
marched, 2,000 strong, back to thestation and returnekl littille.,1
Cololired students liad also reached the end ofa road altkl, after lite nwý, recent
confronttation with Ow puke who welv ärteu on kun~ Se Revolt, souglii a new
peaceful way of pleselltilig tlivir tit,ýii:tjitiý, I'K, -Vl demonstration on l
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1,110 youli, however, were far flutit cowed. Despite illv received that (lay, they caine hack into ilte ventie, oftbc citN agani ill 3 September. Once again tliv police waiell off fife city cculleaud .tcti vans were allinved in, hulling gas cy'lilikllly ätil ctovkvly ok ilokl (ile sgrv.ý 4ý, iranlanl. As inen ald wollen cante ~änät, im! J gas hihi hiMdopp är av 1)(dice in hattle dre-s-, 111ýtyellýil alllrN, gioo, al 0w leakil, älld tiling illto tite cilytlicitily Illixed CrLswkl, Ah, propiv fickl, thry wcy! llcätc;t Iýý ý w~ hmmw mâ mi muntутent kä owes mid pteW jpug. M atav
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The children fled but later tied posters tO the sclo00 fence saying: 'We want rights not riots'; 'Give us Justice'. Almost immediately two riot cars arrived, and fired tear gas, birdshot and bullets at the fleeing children. 'A bleeding boy fell to tie ground. The principal ran forward to help him, but was ordered back.' The letter continued with an account of chihhen throwing stones, Tile police burst into the school, guns at the ready, and beat up a teacher and children in the classrooms. The pattern was repeated in other schools. At the Alexander Sinton High School, not only students but bystanders were shot. A youth who had poliomyelitis was hospitalised after being beaten up and was said to be perma. nenitly crippled. Other children had broken limbs after jumping through windows to escape the police who poured tear gas into crowded classrooms'.41 Instead of crushing the Coloured youth, ... all hell broke loose in the [Cape] Peninsula. The kids at the high school refused to attend classes.'49
Tî e Cape Town revolt had passed tihe point where intimidat ion could force the youth off the streets. Despite all the reports of shootings, of savaging by dogs, or of gassing -tie children were still out in the streets. Their mood was one of determination and yet, as they marched, they chanted: 'No violence, no violence'. To no avail: the riot squad charged again and again, The chant in the streets changed: 'We are not afraid to die. We shall sacrifice.'49 And again the response was tear gas, riot sticks and huckshot.
That weekend (4-5 September), the youth were out in the coloured townships. They had stood all that they could bear. Schools, libraries and a magistrates court were set alight. On Monday there were few pupils at school and the pupils were dismissed for a week. On Tuesday the revolt was in full swing from the suburbs of Cape Town through to Stellenbosch and Somerset West, some 30 miles away. They flought i the city centres and they fought in the suburbs - destroying vehicles and ducking the police charges. By far the biggest battle occurred iii the Coloured slum of Ravensmead where the inhabitants set up a road block of flaming tyres
and threw petrol bombs at police vans. For two days they held off the police and brought the industries of the area, only 12 miles from (ape Town, to a halt.:0
The demonstrators in the Cape then moved for tire first time into the exclusive all-
white suburbs, stoned vehicles and shop fronts, removed goods and set buildings
alight, and II Fish Hock threw petrol bombbs into houses.
Urged oii by the government, white vigilante groups had already come into
existence to protect white schools and property, and to organise counter attacks on
bands of black youth in the nerglbotLrhiood. ,arge cinennas converted intn rifle
ranges were packed and gunsmiths were besieged by a clientele that cleared the
shelves. One indication oh the mood of the day came from a report which the
press were not prepared to print, Students at Stellenbosch, the premier Afrikaans
medium university, were apparently enrolled into local Commando groups and
joined nightly patrols, armed with FN guns. They were said to have participated
in shooting-raids on black youth 'suspected of storne throwing'.5'
The Cape Province Explodes

Year of Fire, Year of Aaz,
Was There a Cape Town Leadership?
In his repo
In his report of events in tile Cape Town townships oin 11-13 August, TheInba
Nolutshungu quoted Kittman Fresi of the Black Mamba People's Movement as
saying:
The people were waiting for us to direct the course of events and oranm st all the
forces that were related to this commotion.... Our policy wai to
stay put, watch, analyse, come up with a historical document, and !JLer tn submit
a questionnaire to the public. Wt would not stick our neck out for
an unscrupulous bunch. But the audacity of the students is soiething
worth taking note of. The adults have to listen to the youth. The best tht,
can do is to take orders.'
This statement by Mr. Fresi had a familar ring about it. It came out of fhthe
tradition of small left groups that flourished for brie' periods in Cape' Uto, They
analysed endlessly, wrote their historical documents, but always 'gyed put'.
Submitting questionnaires was a new departure and what the Ilaek Mambas
hoped to achieve by so doing was not recorded. It weems, howntef, that this time
the Black Mambas, and presumably other groups too, decided to 'listen to the
youth' and to 'take orders'.
There is unfortunately a dearth of information on the groups that exilted in the
townships. Some were responsible for leaflets which appeared tn th(e streets, and
called for action or supported the stay-athomes and so on. But they maintained
anonymity and there is nothing on the many leaflet% issued In August and
September to indicate which group or groups were involed,
Many of the adults remembered the events of 1960 and the stories of that time
must have been handed down to the children. Some undoubtedly belonged to
clandestine groups and it was known, at least from the trial of David and Sue
Rabkin and Jeremy Cronin, that there were ANt' and Communist Party groups
active in the Western (ape.
Direct evidence is understandably difficult to obtain, but it is id to believe that
there were no groups in the townships. The memories sverne t vivid to allow for
their disappearance. A teacher, talking to i ady Wikwo os mid-August would only
say 'You must salute to Black power and tivot people are excited by this Black
power, even though they know peope at. dying. It's after 16 years of being bottled
up and airaid, Adultl have r i forgotten 1 %0,'

Some of the youth were also involved in political groups. A eew Nd jowot the
Western Cape Youth Organisation, the local section of the Nsional youth
Organisation (NAYO). Some had contacts with SASM. The slopais Ious n., a
classroom blackboard at the Roman Catholic chool in Nyanrga os 12 August
indicated political awareness:

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Cape Town Comrades. Mdantne (Past London{ (omradvrs Soweto
Comrades. Maputo C(omrades.

The Cape Province Explodes
All these Comrades must unite,
No racism
No colonialism
Equality 65

But the politically orientated students were probably in a tiny minority and most
of the demands expressed in August and issued as statements (or chalked on
placards) were related to better schooling and teaching, more equipment and
playing fiehis, and improved job opportunities for school leavers."5 Students at
Langa I ligh made a statement on 23 August, which included some of the earliest
political demands:
We want our fellow students who have been detained to be released, and
other detainees, regardless of colour.
Equal job, equal pay. Free education.
We will never attend classes unless these demands are fulfilled, and the
South African government will experience daily rioting if the above
mentioned demands are not fulfilled.37
A large number of leaflets appeared in the streets. Some were produced by pupils
of particular schools and bore their names. Others were produced anonymously.
They carried complaints about conditions in the schools and also about police
brutality. On 30 August a leaflet drawn up by students at three Bonteheuwel
schools listed their grievances:
the system of apartheid and Coloured education;
lack of compulsory education; lack of sports ground facilities;
general behaviour of the police during the unrest in Black areas;
police interference with demonstrations in school grounds;
the taking into custody of fellow students; the attitude of White teachers on the
staff;
the inconvenience allowance paid to White teachers - seen as an insult.58

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An anonymous leaflet commenced: 'We the students of the Cape Peninsula
declare ihat: We identify with the struggle for a basic human society.' The Bantu,
Coloured and Indian Affairs Departments were condemned, and three demands
were made: free and equal education for all; equal wages and work according to merit; and an end to influx control. There was no call to stage any particular action and the leaflet concluded. 'Students you have an important role to play in the change. All oppressed people must stand up now and be counted. So unite now.'

Although there were signs of co-ordination in the African areas and also signs of some centralising body in the Coloured suburbs, there were no names attached to most of the calls for action. Even a call for a strike in mid-September (which will be discussed in Chapter Thirteen) appeared anonymously and, equally anonymously, was supported by a variety of groups.

One leaflet expressing solidary called for 'Workers Power and Peoples Power' and must have been the product of one of the many Artal groups tucked away in one of the communities.

At the end of October a body calling itself the United Students Front declared its existence. It was stated that a group of African, Indian and Coloured pupils from schools in the (ape Peninsula had formed this group three months previously. Their aim was to 'politically educate and realise the Black oppressed masses', and one of their proposals was that no exalbl-ntns be written until the government took active steps to remedy (teir griwanse-s11 If this committee was responsible for any of the events of the past three months, it had not only kept a low public profile, but had also only lo.1 a limited effect on the student body. There were few signs that the more students and African students had planned jointly, and only limited rr.,,htuce that events even inside each of the two main populatioi grops had trol co-ordinated.

There can be little doubt that committees had to protect thwemselves, that a certa in degree of anonymity was desirable but committees, W. never declared thentselves and never published under their nante ,, danger of remaining unrecognised amongst tie people.

The roots of the conflict were partly local arad coul he tfu[IJ t Z, in mi ditions in the suburbs and townships ot (ape Town, and pa ti tb stemmed from attempts by the central itoverllnet it) inpleiint , system that tile population found obnoxious. Ixplanaimons oft ,.Po shattering as those of 1976, however, require more tbia a te ol', conditions that are oppressive, There had to be the will tot stciuliug xte 6worganisation to maintain that action once it had started.

There were, as has been shown above, some organisations h3t tt4o 10 provide leadership, even if evidence of their existence has elel ha?, ',i i V, At times this was overcome by students filling a lead sumwstekl, I, activities in the Transvaal. Hlaving once moved into denonstratirm . t lo z of events suggested new tactics and new methods. This in turn helSan ,.r.,n through press accounts to the SSRC in Soweto (and elhewhetiL and ite tactic was applied locally. Students in Cape Town helped initiate the mrtrchoes into the city centres - or at least showed the way. Lt like fashion S:owt students often suggested to other communities what the next step twn-it b. After a while, therefore, a description of
events in only one region and, therefore, one-dimensional, and the dynamics of the struggle are left unexplored.

The events of Cape Town were merged in the national picture and, although local conditions laid a stamp on time actual mechanics with which plans were executed, it was the national pattern which became important.

Although there are only a few newspaper accounts and sparse reports in the annual surveys already cited, it is seen that detailed accounts will show that few urban centres were affected by the Revolt. It also seems clear that the Revolt in each town started at the local school or school, and then spread out. It is a fact that no school in Natal was burned, although there were some reports of damage in other towns.

The first incident in the Eastern Cape indicates that the Revolt there was partly peaceful and bitter. The first incident in the town of New Town was at the police station on 22 July. Within a few days a secondary school at Tugela Ferry was burnt down and at school library damaged in Vryheid, both in Natal.

On 9 August the Bantu Administration Board complex at Pietermaritzburg was destroyed by fire and at least five other schools set alight that month, and students at Olaligolu high School (KwaMasitu, Dl) staged a protest rally at the sports stadium. As a result 285 students were arrested and the township was sealed off by police.

Mysterious fires were reported after this event, probably the first since the early 1960s when these had been part of the sabotage campaigns of the time.
Brightori (Port Eilizabeth) and on 9 August in Mdlartirt (near huis London).

That is, it was days before the students arrived in Cape Towii.

There were very few days in August in which the press did not carry stories of incidents of the Revolt in the innin townships of the Easter tt Cape: fires at sebools, libraries, administration buildings, liotttstores and lle<,rl;thlls.

Year of Fire, Year of Ash

marches, boycotts, freedom songs, road blocks and confrontations with riot police. The dead, the injured, and the closing of all schools all these items appeared. There were also accounts of attempts by African townships to join together in demonstrations and of coloured and African students planning to march together, but being frustrated by police intervention.

There were demonstrations of sympathy with Soweto; marches in protest against the detention of Rev. Hendrickse (national chairman of the LahoUt Party) in Uitenhage, his hometown, and at Graaf Reinet; marches and freedom songs at Zwelitsha (near Kingwilliamstown) after the death in detention of Mapetha Mohapi of the BPC; and there was a march of 500 students through the streets of Lady Frere (Transkei) in protest against the proposed 'independence' in October.

Cars were overturned and set alight, telephone wires were pulled down, and eventually about 3(X) were arrested by the police.

Marches of 300 to 500 were common. On 18 August the crowd rapidly grew to 4,000 when residents of Port Elizabeth's townships joined the students of KwaZakele High School who tried to march to the local Wolfkon Stadium. The march was followed later in the day by attempts by approximately 1,000 residents of the three townships, New Brighton, KwaZakele and Zwide, to march to the main administration buildings. The police scattered the crowd by means of tear gas, but they regrouped, set up road blocks and stoned vehicles. All transport into the townships was stopped and the police tent in reinforcements. Bottlestores, a bank, post office and an administration office block were destroyed. At least eight Blacks were killed and 20 uojur d.

On the same Wednesday, 18 August, students at Mdantsane announced a boycott of classes until a detained student was released. The youth gathered in the streets and cars were stoned until the police arrived with tear gas. All post-primary schools were henceforth closed by the Ciskei Education department.

Towns with previous histories of struggle or strife, and towns which had never before experienced such conflicts, were the scenes of these clashes. Port Elizabeth and Mdantsane, Lady Frere, Uitenhage, Genadendal, Griel Reinet, Idutywa, Stutterheim, in the Eastern Cape, Transkei and Ciskei, West the scenes of major incidents. Other smaller towns did not warrant a n=nlw in the press, already filled with news from the Transvaal and the Western Cape and, when they could be squeezed in, Kimberley, Opington (both in the Northern Cape), and Bloemfontein and Kroonstad in the OFS.

The accumulated anger over oppression, the urgent desire for freedom, the frustration caused by slum housing, had transport, and hunger, the hatted c4 officialdom and the police, were all fed into the Revolt. What needs to be explained
is not why the communities entered the Revolt, but why some regions witnessed such little action in those opening months and indeed throughout the long Revolt. Although Natal seemed to be relatively quiet, there was actually far rMwe action than appeared from the scattered news items in the provincial prte Tote were demonstrations, strikes and acts of arson in many of the towns.

|1’11 (4 Cupe Pro vitt tt! lý. ’ývplodes led in Ilie Inail llky selttk)l students. llut (ile numlivav ýýlseetýittt:ttýy seltools and tile Inititut (if African youtli lit lite wimtik in lite oxhan celltres Outside Ilie Soutliern Trattrmial alut lisc, FaNlern Capv was inititl.%,%Q(IIC, Altlougli tile were local etililktrimis whi ci utake tllifficult, there was u dectect correlation hetweell Ilie C(lfletltrýýîtyýytýñf 4)fsek:.týlitry sellools in a region alld Ilie Cxt-Ont (1111e,11 participation in Ilie Revolt. lit parts offite Cape, whete African seet)títy,bitiy seluinling was ne)t exterväve, tile etýmililleýi coloured and African selistskil ri-iýty,-iill;ttîll411 liltile titall Ilakke Lip for (tie low liunibers of Afficall Stlldertsşý In keeping witti the lâkt klon hy Dr. Vemw,w,1 wiken tie first introduced Barktu 1,»i,iti,e,tti,itt in 195-1, (lic titilk k)lIf African education had heen inovekt iii the Rescives. i11 Marel 1975, wilen Ilie illutke into Afrienn seet)jxd:iyy selitiok hakt alreakty been kloubled, ttt, limptilimt7 of Pulkils kvilo received (licir eltint i-, in Ilie was, 70 per cenv 221,827 youtli received tiken seet)titity(tyv vduvation in Ilie Reserves while only 96,741 were iccoiiiiiyi(yl;itekln in Ilie Vhite urkin ceince,””2 The vast rrt:tkýtity kifthese Nvere in schouls in Ilie Soutliern mritt Ilie Fastekri Cape. Few towships in Ilie Nk)itici ii Calie. Ilie Orange Vrec State ut Natal etnild houst innre titan olle sceoliktýiyi selitiol alltt, Olcy liml heell lite allnual intake was ustially small, This tl)Vi(llý:y:1)1 ’MCJ as a klatillkel om tite extent of activity stiel stildellts coukt killdel tâke allkl thele Sva-s, witiont ally Killtm-Ljp to att initial detiikiiisti;titkýit or strike, The lieavy ekýii-citti;i,ýtî m If Nýýlkkkýís ist (lic Resierves kiklt, lwwcvvr’ stillllulat tite Revolt titere, Witesiko,:tkl itetivity, took illacc iii l)k)IINIIITÍtt’llswil,l,1, in Basotlli Quíl-Qua nid to a Imei tievrec in ýývklils in Ilie Ciskei ndr Ilie adjoining areas of tite Eastern Calie. wrie, deeply involvciill after August. Only KwaZulu ankt Ilie Tianskei terwicnl nius ofetinsiparative quiet. Any attempt ltele to deserityr c<ýýtýlititiiti% in titese latter t~ trea% in detail would go olltside lite SeL)Pc kil’ tilå blitik. It Innst Noffic Itt state litat tile Transkei had been gkývertiet-1 under cillergency laws billec 19610 nikt Illa( ull opposition to Ilie regimc had hecti suanniately dealt willt, A 4tffíkc in Augusi 1960 by 1,300 workets for highet wages; f(illt)wett un allegeill assatilt Ity .1 white fikreman kîlt a black wniun . All (lic, ivýýktýyí% were tikmückl afici the police had licen SUMMOne(1,61 In Ilie firld tl, pohtlçy tilere were eqt.lally(lryICK)ilati illeasums lti atty tilipýuill,4t1, lirtwern .15 und .17 july, nine leallens (if lite. Varty Wlekt-plttl in kletell.
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attracted many of the youth. This did not prevent some of the students demonstrating, particularly as the target was not Buthelezi but the South African government's Bantu Education Department. Of equal importance was the widespread support Buthelezi had built up among the workers in Durban and its environs. Throughout the revolt Buthelezi, who had been seen as a possible embarrassment to the regime, proved to be a valuable asset to the government forces.

The pattern of events in July and August did not yet show the trends to manifest themselves. The students seemed to carry everything before them and they were confident that they could give the lead in the months to come. There were already signs that they were going to introduce new tactics, at least in the main centres, and once again the initiative would come from Soweto. The other towns would follow.

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13. New Tactics in the Revolt
Reaction Takes the Offensive

After the first attempted march on Johannesburg on 4 August, and the partial stay-at-home which kept at least 60 per cent of the labour force away from work, the SSRC was forced on to the defensive. There were large-scale arrests, and the committee members never spent two days at the same place.' On 11 August the Minister of Police, J. Kruger, introduced 'indefinite preventative detention' to break the Revolt.

There were signs of an unholy alliance emerging against the youth. The government was determined to smash all organisations that opposed their apartheid plans. Kruger told a Nationalist audience on 21 August: 'Ile knows his place and, if" not, I'll tell him. The Blacks always say "We shall overcome", but I say we shall overcome.'

In Soweto the Urban Bantu Council was busy organising vigilante groups. In the court action brought by Winnie Mandela on 15 August, and mentioned in Chapter Ten, it was claimed that the government had given this body permission to set up a 'Home Guard' which would attack the homes of members of the Black Parents Association when trouble occurred. A police officer who was at the meeting, apparently assured those present that no one would be prosecuted for carrying weapons and that the vigilante groups would have police co-operation.

From further information, it appears that the police also sought the co-operation of the makeshift tribal courts known as 'akgotla which had the support of the UBC. These 'courts' dealt with minor criminal cases, family disputes and a range of misdemeanours. Those found guilty by the makgotla officials were publicly flogged. The courts had no legal standing, but were not prohibited by the government. The youth were known to despise these tribal institutions, and there was little love lost between them and the 'court' officials. Nevertheless, the makgotla remained neutral throughout the Revolt.

The police also sought support amongst migrant workers, some of whom had turned on the youth on 4 August when called upon to strike. These labourers, largely isolated from the more permanent inhabitants of Soweto, had few local roots. They had no contact with the students and no knowledge of their problems. The slogans of the Revolt were meaningless to them, and

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they were more likely to find the closing of the schools incomprehensible.

Education, for many of them, was still the prized object they had failed to attain.4 The unemployed youth, on the other hand, were (or appeared to be) the tsotsis they hated and feared as pay-day predators. The migrant worker, furthermore, would tend to be amongst the first to resent action that led to an absence from work. Their pay was low and their presence in town was designed to secure the
maximum possible return before their contracts expired. A strike which would not lead to direct pay increases - and which could even lead to dismissal - was not readily acceptable.

The Zulu migrants also had a background of strife which they brought with them into the urban areas. The police seemed to have had information which allowed them to manipulate the residents at one of the hostels, Mzimhlope, in Soweto. It was only the Zulus at this one hostel who seemed to be vulnerable, and other hostels, where comparable numbers of Zulu lived, were not similarly penetrated by police agents. The Zulus at Mzimhlope, furthermore, numbered only 1,630 (out of a total of 10,300 men who had their abode there) and were only one of five approximately equal ethnic groups. The group was, however, quite large enough for the nefarious plot the police were preparing, and during August they waited their opportunity to employ these men against the students.

Chief Gatsha Buthelezi stepped into the murky waters on 10 August, when he issued a statement calling 'for the establishment of vigilante groups to protect Black property against political action'. The newspaper report on his statement continued: 'Appalled by the destruction of African schools and educational equipment, the chief warned Black radicals that they might unsurprisingly be confronted by a backlash from the responsible elements of the Black community.' He was also said to have expressed dismay at 'the powerlessness and inaction' of the government.

When eventually a stay-at-home was called on the weekend 21-22 August, other upholders of 'law and order' made statements in similar terms. Majot. General Geldenhuys warned: 'Agitators who attempt to enforce a work stay away in Soweto will experience a backlash from law abiding citizens in the townships. People in Soweto are getting sick of these people, and because of this the police are not worried.' And on the second day of the strike, ot Visser warned: 'Go to work and disregard the groups of young intimidators telling people not to go to work, People must go to work and junk through the children stopping them. ' The message was clear - and groups at Nmathullop Hostel were indeed being prepared to 'thrash the children'; it aimed) Nevwel clear that the Major-General had been misinformed: workers in Soweto were not 'sick of these people', and had in fact responded to the call for a thorn day strike!

Azikhwelwa Madoda! (Stay at Home)
Azikhwelwa Madodal The call to stay-at-home was slipped under the 4m
Soweto, were available for the small pockets ot' men who ignored the taunts of the young.
Many of those who chose to work were migrants, but only from sole hostels. Reports from other hostels indicated that they fully supported the strike. There was no sign t" the mauch licralded backlash, despite stiirle skirmishes when the imie returned that evening. The SSR, amid ANC had scored a major victory, even though SSRC President, Isietsi Mashinini had to flee the country the day the strike began. Its statement from exile that the ANC was 'extinct internally' and that 'as 11i as the struggle is concerned they are riot doing anything' was icinpehensible and only devalued tire work, done jointly, in preparing for tie strike,
On the afternoon of the second day of the strike, the long icalled event occurred, 're Minister, tile it'c, t., Mat ir4 enemal and (hief lufhelezi could not all be wrog. Aried hostel dwellers, (caryimig sticks. assegais aild long bladed knives) charged tniugh the streets of ti weto, flankled by police Hippos. Wheni the youth tiled to halt the hostel dwellers, they were fired at by police, antid tire 'backlash' continued in a pathl d dst ructioi.
The myth spread, and is poliably still believed by nanly, that the Zulus were on the rampage. The fact that it was a tiny immority of one hostel that acted this way has been obscured by the el damage intitied by a 'iotllp of men, protected by the police and, accoidig to available evidence, fed by them with marijuana and urged to kill the 'tioublenmakers'.
A second myth appeared in the wake of tile first story, tile ef ecl lat it was Buthelezi who icisuaded tile hostel dwellers that their actiol had bee li misguided. Buthelezi had been inforlod by the Minister that lie woiii it lr be allowed into the hostel. But the Chief ignored the ban and addiessed 111 iner of Mzlmhlope and, strangely, tie athioritic did nothing, lie later moaie "I statement accusing the police of haviqi; staged tile whole affor, K iul warned tie press not to publish tile account, but the Suntd 7'rihlTlm pm inted it in fill[. Again nothing was done. Gilbsin Thula, lhthelezi totial epl ileti11 tative, was also warned to stay away. lie defied the ban and spoke to tile hostel workers, lie later inade tie claim that not ontly zils were involved it the fighting and killing." No one accepted Mr. Thula's account, hilt that was of little consequence. lie, too, was not apprehended for defying the balt
Even ifWall the bans were bluffs, and the Ilktluti leaders, by igmtintg the government's statements, showed them to be hollow, the story as told

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conceals the fact that students, hostel dwellers and other parties met, and a reconciliation was arrived at without Buthelezi's intervention,. The question that needs to be asked is why this elaborate charade was staged, and what was being concealed in the process?
Friday, 27 August, was the third (lay of the strike. Despite the attempt by the police to produce a backlash the previous day, the strike held firm. Although there were reports from some factories that workers had reported for duty, other establishments stated that there were even fewer workers than before. The
government, however, continued its provocative line and claimed that law abiding Blacks would put a stop to the students' actions. The Minister of Police, for example, stated: 'People are allowed to protect their selves against physical intimidation, The situation will calm itself once people realise there is a strong backlash.'

The stay-at-home proved to be a valuable step; it provided fresh impetus to the struggle throughout the country, and the Cape students, as previously described, declared their solidarity by staying away from classes. In towns big and small across the Cape, there were demonstrations, stonings and burning buildings. Riot police were airlifted from the Rand to Cape Town and the concerted move to smash the coloured students was begun with unprecedented ferocity. The success of the strike was not, however, complete. There was an attempt to get the workers of Mainelodi (Pretoria) also to stay at home, but the call seems to have been ignored despite the fact that the school boycott movement in Pretoria had commenced with industrial action. There was also a call for a stay-at-home in Port Elizabeth at the end of August, but this too seems to have gone unheeded.

In the flush of the victory in Soweto, these failures were overlooked, and the students did not heed the fact that the workers would not necessarily respond to every summons, and that there had to be good grounds for staying away from work. This was to be underlined for many families, on Friday 27 August, when many firms paid for only two days labour. There was little food on Soweto tables that weekend.

In the light of the obvious hardship following the solidarity displayed that week, the leaflet that was put out, claiming that the real losers were the bosses, was not very convincing: 'Well, that we will lose these wages is a fact but we should not cry over them. We have to rejoice over the fact that while we lost these wages, we dealt the Racist Regime and Factory Owners a heavy blow - They Lost Their Profits.'

To Return or Not to Return to School

In the first week of September the students in Soweto and Cape Town were under pressure to return to school from parents, from teachers, and from official and unofficial bodies. The SSRC used the issue to produce a general statement addressed to 'all residents of Sowato, hostels, Reef and Preturi's', In an eight point message they called for Black (African) unity and urged that

New 7Tct-Icx in the Revolt

all in-fighting should cease. Two of the points were directed against 'false leaders' and 'political opponents'. A third point admonished: 'We say to all black students, residents and hostel inmates: You know your true leaders, Listen to your leaders. Support your leaders. Follow your leaders.'

Point seven was a restatement, said the SSRF, of their demands to the government that all students and black leaders he released; that Bantu Education be 'scrapped off'; that apartheid he abolished; and that the government consult with the parents and black leaders to end the crisis.
The final point was addressed to all school students. They were told that they had
to return to school and the teachers were to start teaching 'and stop wasting time
discussing about us and not with us',
The Cape Town students had no need at that stage to appeal for unity, nor had
they been confronted in August by weapon wielding migrant workers. That time
would come, but there was not yet such a problem. There was no clearly declared
leadership, and no counter-leaders, and the students did not have to address
themselves to the kinds of problems the SSRC faced in Soweto. But they did have
to provide a lead on the issue of school attendance.
A leaflet was issued 'From the African scholars of Cape Town' and
commenced with the slogan that had been popularised: 'Once we return to our
desks - the cause is lost.' This set the whole tone of their declaration and
determined their approach to the boycott. They claimed:
Even if the natural scholar-leaders were to return to school now their friends
would not agree. The leaders would be regarded as traitors to
the whole school community and would be victimied.
It is the whole system of Blantu lEducation which is at issue -no less.
The schools represent a rejected system which offets an education so
poor as to be practically valueless.
Violence is likely to break out again and continue if nothing is done,
In the H1omelands many schools have already been burned down because
authority would not listen. Schools in the Cape may not be spared in the
future,
The following conditions were set down for retutning to schotl
Release of detained scholars 'partole prior to Standing trial 4s aceptable';
police to stay out of schools unle4 r11Mucsted by a pinit0pAl.
re-establisment of cominunicationx between the studenlts and goyernment
authorities, with security guarantees for representative toi the
students;
real chanSe s in the educationl system,. And
adjustment to the end of year examinAtion with extra tition to
allow candidateN thie possibility of paing.'
The leaflet was addreased I n part to the government and in part to the
African students. The central demand was that Bantu Education he scrapped

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and that was indeed central io the demand ofevery African stodent il tile country.
But in the Cape Town context more had to he said, and tlie African students
obviously had not found a means of aising slogans ihat would apply equally to
themselves and to their allies in the coloured schools. The inability to bridge the
gulf, created by the system of apartheid, undetlied tile difficulty of building a real
criteria ing coumittee that could represent all black students.
The final demand also introduced a note of equivocation that was nt t in keeping
with the militant stance of the docurient. fly raising tile issue of extra tuition for
the end of the year examininations, the stideals intiated ihat they were thinking of
returning to school at that file entire issue :ould he over before December. This
could indicate supreme confidence in their power to win their demands or, alternatively, give notice that they would stay out indefinitely and did not wish to spoil their chance; at the examinations.

The Soweto appeal to return to school was in realistic even if it was only a tactical move to restore an organisational base for the SSRC. There was no response from the majority of students, and the schools stayed closed. In view of police tactics at the time, it was hardly likely that the volume would go back. The riot squads were out in force until the ;0% of ships, aid neither homes nor schools were safe. It's in the aids, try to tack e to classes in the circumstances would have been ;tn adiksi o iiot left jin this was precisely what government spokescivii were dcitena iid ilg iiti heie public statements.

On 8 September Vorster addressed a Nationalist Party incetint ill Illoent fontein. He maintained that lie would never hold halkN o t1h t ue st i 1 tff We mail, one vote. The only way that he knew I let gover in ig Sith Afica wai 'by the policy and principles of the Natot Paltisi rty'. Ilie &rutoed his aidkicc that law and order would be instred imidilat ely ;Vid 0ha, it IS could ti be done by existing methods, othei steps Wtold tw taken. k r, Kige *i o m spoke to the meeting. His nessuge was diiect, Evcry White huat to ,tet inl own property and, if lie had to kill in t ie li ,c's, thali wi intilicy

The Nationalist Party menbeis got tie n essage adt o tt did the la students.

Legality and Illegality in Soweto

From August through to lectertiber tile schitok of Sowto hltly fuuctitin.[ There were occasions when a clutch o yuttth altelded f[otl lesols, an"d large numbers would often conlie to the school plei cis it otlet it avoid thietnt picked up by the police when off the school ltteicticts, labulwiw school lut a technical secondary school, futioned more 'nutmally'. Yet even tte. the timetable was only sometimes adhered to, the lrnal syllabus mostly or gotten. Attendance fluctuated. Joan !loffiran's account captures the attin. phere of all Soweto, refracted through the eyes of it (white) teacher at Jabuiani,

New Tactics in th Revolt

From August to November we continued to teach on days when we felt able to get in and open the school. On some days classes were fairly well attended, although many other schools were almost deserted. On other days only a few pupils might arrive. Sometimes all of them would disappear at about ten-thirty, because of some message of danger or news of a meeting, which they seldom imparted to us,

Sometimes we read stories ... It was soothing to read about pretty, soft things, magic, troubles which ended happily in any case. For the students it might be a way of avoiding the recurring inner debate about which course to take: to boycott school and lose hard work done so far, for the sake of solidarity and a dream to gain; or to attend, and be a sell-out in one's own eyes or the eyes of others. "

The SSRC, through this entire period, was called upon to provide leadership in the schools on a large number of issues. If Joan Hoffman's pupils did not arrive, or suddenly disappeared, it was invariably in answer to a call from the student
leaders. They helped organise stay-at-homes, they were on the picket lines, they marched to Johannesburg, they demonstrated against Henry Kissinger's visit to South Africa on his arrival - and at Jabulani that Friday, 17 September, two pupils lay dead after police fired at them. Eventually they had to provide a lead on the most contentious of all issues, that of the end of the year examinations. The SSRC called for a complete boycott and were faced with the problem of persuading thousands of students who were concerned about their futures and did not want to waste a year. Khotso Seatlholo, SSRC president from September till mid-January, toured the schools and urged, successfully, that the examinations be ignored. The SSRC campaigned tirelessly from the end of August, when the students called for a stay-at-home and received massive support, right through to Christmas, New campaigns were launched at frequent intervals. Taken together, the list of events displayed an ability to organise on a level not previously surpassed.

13-15 Sept: Third stay-at-home.
17 Sept: Anti-Kissinger demonstrations.
23 Sept: Second march into centre of Johannesburg.
Early Oct: Intensive anti-drink campaign.
27 Oct: Shebeens ordered to close down.
Campaign starts to stop celebration of Christmas festivities.
End Oct: 'Operation Clean-Up' to remove refuse from Soweto.
1 Nov: Final year examination boycotted.
Stay-at-home called., but flops.
To this list must be added the extensive activity before 26 October to expose the farce of 'independence' for the Transkei; and the many small incidents that took place, involving only small groups of students or residents.
Many of these campaigns teetered on the edge of illegality. Others were

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organised in open defiance of one or other of the many regulations governing black behaviour, and this was to be demonstrated two years later when students held in detention for protracted periods were charged with sedition - the sentence for which can be death."1
Each one of these demonstrations extended the authority of the SSRC, and each success made them more confident. In a statement on behalf of the SSRC on 29 October, Khotso Seatlholo said that:
We have the full right to stand up erect and reject the whole system of apartheid. We cannot accept it as our fathers did. We are not carbon copies of our fathers, Where they failed, we will succeed. The mistakes they made will never be repeated. They carried the struggle up to where they could. We are very grateful to them. But now the struggle is ours, The ball of liberation is in our hands. The Black student will stand up fearlessly and take arms against a political system .... We shall rise up and destroy a political ideology that is designed to keep us in a perpetual state of
oppression and subserviency. The statement was defiant, but unfair. Their fathers had not accepted the system, and had fought against the government and against the bosses in campaign after campaign. Throughout the fifties and well into the sixties there had been stay-at-homes, a defiance campaign, bus boycotts, strikes, anti-pass campaigns (particularly by the women), and militant struggles in the Reserves. Mobile police squads had been rushed to Zeerust and Sekliukune, land (in the Northern Transvaal) and the areas had been sealed off in order to stamp out rebellions. The women of Natal had battled with police. And in the Transkei there had been a serious revolt which was only quelled after troops were moved in, men slaughtered, and a state of emergency declared which still operates today. Mistakes were made, but it was a tradition of struggle that the youth were heir to, and they did their fathers and mothers less than justice in their sweeping condemnation. Nor were the youth exempt from mistakes. They made many, and it was only by making mistakes that they could possibly learn. A more modest stand might have stood them in better stead. Nevertheless, their defiant statement did carry a message of hope, and not that it should be welcomed. Their campaigns had been inpletsive and they had succeeded where few would have imagined they could. Their braveness, lover, had become the hallmark of the Revolt. They had sacrificed lives for a cause, that inspired more and more to join them, and this was expressed in Seaitholo's words in his statement of 29 October: 'The struggle for my freedom will go on until each and every one or us drops dead. This is a vow that the Black youth have taken over the dead bodies, and written with the UmdJ of their wounded brothers.' These were words charged with emotion, and did express the sentiments of the time, and they expressed a pledge to secure the changes that so many youth had died for. But there was danger that emotion would take over.

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from real considerations. The Revolt was 'ot flowing to victory at the end of October, and it was necessary to be realistic about the balance of forces in the country. In fact the youth had miscalculated, and were in error in calling for a five day stay-at-home - as the SSRC did in this statement, They also had to be realistic about their achievements to date. What they had managed did not yet amount to a taking up of 'arms against a political system' as Seaitholo claimed. The students had demonstrated, and in so doing claimed results that had not been achieved, John Berger's analysis of the relation between ambitions and demonstrations is more than apposite to the Soweto Revolt: Demonstrations express political ambitions before the political means necessary to realize them have been created. Demonstrations predict the realization of their own ambitions and thus may contribute to that realization, but they cannot themselves achieve them.13 If the SSRC leaders, on the other hand, were serious in their contention that they would rise up and destroy apartheid, they had another task on hand: The crucial question which revolutionaries must decide in any given historical situation is
whether or not further symbolic rehearsals are necessary. The next stage is training in tactics and strategy for the performance itself.34

The problem in Soweto, and even more pointedly in the rest of the country, was to ask who and where the 'revolutionaries' were. There was no doubt that by October the SSRC were already seeking alternative methods of struggle, despite an avowal that they were in favour of non-violence. Neverthe less they were still only the Soweto Students Representative Council and received their mandate from school pupils, and not from the township. They had transcended this narrow base by showing that they had the ability to call out the entire population, but they still rested on a narrow social base and could lose their mass following at any time. If they were to act as a 'revolutionary' leadership, they would have to transform themselves and cease acting as an exclusively school body.

There was an obvious change in both tone and activity from October to December and, although the details are not available, this was partly the result of contacts with the underground ANC. Some information on this contact has now become available because of disclosures made by state witnesses at trials in South Africa.

At an early stage of the Revolt some leading members of the SSRC were taken to Swaziland in order to incet Mos Mohlida, a leading member of the ANC in exile. The ANC offered assistance and wanted close contact with SASM. It is not clear how this contact was to be maintained, nor what the role of ANC members in the SSRC was to be. Tobello Mulapanyane was at the time secretary general of SASM and also a member of the ANC. And Elias Masinga, one of the Pretoria Twelve on trial in 1977 for allegedly furthering the aims of the ANC, but found not guilty, was a leading member.

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Naledi Tsiki, also one of the Pretoria Twelve, received a 14 year sentence after being found guilty, and he was closely associated with the SSRC, at least close enough to the President, Khotso Seatholo, to meet him just before Christmas 1976, together with two other members of the executive, and demonstrate a machine gun and grenades. He urged the President to affiliate to the ANC, said state witness T.N.A. Mthenjatie, but that apparently was rejected."

The SSRC had been in receipt of explosives and training in their use well before December. Some time at the end of September or beginning of October, Seatholo and Micky Tsagae (also a member of the SSRC) established an urban guerrilla group which became known as the Suicide Squad. This group was led by Paul Mafglo Elliot Utinga, and probably worked with the ANC. It seems to have collapsed when Langa was arrested.

The Suicide Squad was not the only group known to have been interested in such action. The trial of two young men in November 1977 affords some (limited)
information about an organisation known as the South African Freedom Organisation (SAFO) which planned or was actually engaged in sabotage between June and December 1976. It was claimed in court that SAFO aimed to throttle the country's economy by preventing Blacks getting to work and by destroying power supplies to the trains.16

At the trial of Mafgliso Langa in July-August 1977, it was claimed that the Suicide Squad was responsible for several explosions in Soweto. On 24 October 1976 the Jabulani police station was badly damaged by the Squad. The next day part of the railway line between Mzinhlohe and New Canada stations was damaged by a blast. The Squad also used explosives at the Pelican Night Club, where liquor was being sold despite the SSRC (and ANC) call for an end to such transactions. In a further, unexplained, set tit actions, Langa and others were said to have abducted three leading members of SAFO and exploded dynamite in the vicinity of some of its members in order to intimidate them.27

SAFO trained people in the manufacture and use of hohibs. and wvahofti said to have recruited youth for military training out tide South Africa. That would seem to indicate that they were linked with airt txxxeml, exih organisation. It is not clear whether the Suicide Squad als hadt ditect htk. If this ease with the ANC, and also recruited youth fIol such training. But it dte seem most probable, despite Seathohi*th to coun tetrI ice alfila to*o to the ANC, that the formation of an urban guerrilla fiwe led to dilet liikN with the external movement.

The demise of the Suicide Squad led to the ahaadonment, at that same, an urban guerrilla force, The SSRC returned, whether by necessity or othc, wise, to methods of non-violent political activity. Whether they believed all along that the youth had to be involved simultaneously in 'legal' (that is non-violent) politics and in clandestine violence, is not known. But one fact was clear: the leadership had decided that demonstrations had to continue.

Ne ' tricsx in the Revlt
Tle September Stay-at-ffornes
In September it still seened to the SSR(‘. and particularly to tite newly elected President, that tall options were still opell. There could he legal demonstrations and there could be violeuce. The legal demo nstrationis would keep he name of the S I’ beote the public, arid the acts of sallotage would allow the body to find the most prolwisng cadres 1,1 fil ther, as yet uncharted activity. In Septeimber, further niore, tire Sititdiit bodies ill Johinnesburg, ‘ioria and lthe Cape wec Mtll £estv their own .trengths, as well as that (if the state. They. thereftero’ sought nlealis of’ deini istratilg their own power, aid looked to methods whereby this could he achieved.

At the time, tile strike at the Ariiurplate Safety Wiss factory in Springs, described in Chapter Eight, was still in its infancy. It was all event of great importance and raised the entire question of the recognitiol of African trade unions. It is possible that, at some stage in the long ten-week strike, some students made reference to the bitter struggle that was taking place there, but there are no comments on it in the material to hand. In general the actual strikes that took place were not often mentioned by the students.
Yet there is evidence that they, or at least part of the student body, were aware of the importance of the workers in the struggle to change South Africa. In a leaflet entitled ‘The black students’ message to their beloved parents’ issued after the August stay-at-home, education was described as a means to secure ‘a more efficient black labour force to be exploited by those in power’. Throughout the leaflet, which was exceptional in where it laid its stress, the workers were seen as the pivot of the liberation struggle. In the words of the black students:

The students believe that South Africa is what it is, and has been built by the blood, sweat and broken bodies of the oppressed and exploited Black workers, it is a well known fact that the Blacks carry the economy of this country on their shoulders. All the sky-scrapers, super highways, etc., are built on our undistributed wages.

It is because of these facts that the students realise that in any liberatory struggle, the power for change lies with the workers. This was by far the most explicit statement on the role of the black worker. Yet even here there was no mention of the actual strikes going on in the country, no expression of solidarity with workers currently involved in struggles in the factories. It was as if the recognition of the importance of the workers in any struggle remained a theoretical construct that could not be made concrete.

And if that is the case, it could only be because the young students were not able to make organisational contact with the real flesh-and-blood workers in industry.

The SSRC decided on a three day stay-at-home, commencing on 13 September. The leaflet addressed to ‘beloved parents’, foreshadowing the Call, had a special appeal to ‘our parents in the hostels. They described the men as

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‘our parents... [who] are victims of the notorious migrant labour system’, and appealed for a united stand against injustices. The SSRC also held large scale meetings with hostel dwellers on Sunday, September 5, to inform them about the intended strike and enlist their support. The township was then informed in a leaflet addressed to parents (co-operate with us), workers (stay away from work); and hostels (do not fight!). The strike was not aimed overtly at industry and was obviously designed to build township solidarity. The call was: ‘This will be a proof that you are crying with us over those cruelly killed by police and those detained all over the country in vicious prisons without trial.’ The SSW then listed five objections: to shooting by the police; to arrests and detentions; to murders in detention; to a train accident in Benoni; and to ‘the cutting down of our parents' wages who have stayed away from work in sympathy with their killed sons and daughters.’ A special leaflet to taxis urged them not to transport anybody except nurseries. It also requested assistance in informing ‘hostel people’ about the strike.

Soweto stayed at home on Monday the 13th and only nursery and a few workers queued for buses and taxis. There were also massive stay-aways along the Witwatersrand and an attempted strike in Alexandra. At the latter township police made house-by-house raids, pulling out adult males and children and either ordering them to report for work or school, or arresting them. Some 800 spent that
day in the police cells and many of them were endorsed out of Johannesburg - that is, were sent back to the Reserves.

On the next day, the 14th, there were more workers in the faletoie. The threat of lost wages was enough to force some of them to leave the town. The pickets therefore had a harder task and there was shooting by the police, at the railway stations and in the streets, to stop any 'interference' with those who waited for transport.

That night the skirmishes were particularly fierce, as strikers confronted those who had worked. Once again there was a large police contingent present, and they protected the strike breakers. The World estimated the number of dead for the two days at 16, all shot by police.

Despite, or perhaps because of, police terror, the strike held firm on the third day, and it was estimated that half a million were oil strike that day.

Wednesday, 15 September, was a remarkable day in the political normal of black South Africa. In addition to the Titansvaal, honte 2t0liotlodooreld workers, representing about 80 per cent of the work force it tapev I.wn. stayed at home in response to a call for a two-day abitenlitoi oii I S 1100 li. September, and a large (but not usually mentioned) proportion of Afrikan workers also stayed in the Cape Town townships.

There was no acknowledged leadership in 1ape, rowu nid a mitmòli of leaflets, from obviously different sources, appeared in the 4t let% c;AlInt g (0: the strike. One leaflet headed only 'Strike' called for the ejecto 44 41 government sponsored black institutions. The thrust of the appeal wai not to mourning (as in Soweto), but was more political in conritien

The racists do not spare their bullets, Their guns try to cut dowo oar

New Tactics in the Revolt

March for freedom. But the march to freedom must not end. Reject all concessions that the racists grant us. Concessions are crumbs, ...

All black people suffer alike. Get rid of apartheid...

A second leaflet, also of unknown origin, and without any indication of who produced it, called on workers (specifically) to strike in protest 'against a slave system', and declared that the 'rulers' would never allow 'fundamental changes'. The group that issued the call then stated: 'Workers are compelled in defence and in pursuit of a better life to call into being worker organizations in the locations and in the factories.' It then proposed that the slogan around which the 'exploited' should rally was: 'Workers Power and Peoples Power'.

This leaflet went further than the Soweto students' Message to their beloved parents. It not only recognised the central role that the black workers would be called upon to take, but also raised for the first time the possibility of (black) 'workers power'. Without any further indication of the response to the leaflet, and with no indication of how widely it was distributed, it is not possible to appraise the impact of the slogan. There are no known reactions from workers and the slogan does not appear to have been raised again in the months that followed. The sentiment and the slogan therefore appear to have been a possible
portent of the future when, conceivably, they will be a rallying call to which the workers will respond.

The Workers Stay at Home

The response from the workers to the strike call was remarkable. From samples taken by students at UCT, 75 per cent stayed away on Wednesday in Cape Town, and 80 to 85 per cent on Thursday. The clothing industry, staffed mainly by coloured women, was all but closed down. Some 90 per cent of the women stayed away. In Langa and Nyanga, one of the most notable features was the strong solidarity shown by the large work force of migrant labourers.

A number of one-day strikes were called in smaller Cape towns. Most of them were highly successful, and concided with the end of the Cape Town stay-at-home on 16 September.

By Thursday, in the Transvaal, the workers were all at work, even though some of the youth tried to get the action extended beyond the 15th. In the Cape the strike was terminated, as planned, on the Thursday.

Then the workers of Thembisa were summoned to down tools for three days from 20 to 22 September. Many of the Thembisa workers had once lived in Alexandra township, but had been forcibly moved because they worked on the East Rand at Isando, Kempton Park, the airport, or other East Rand towns. They seem to have taken with them the militancy for which Alexandra was famous. The leaflet was issued by an unknown group, but there were indications of political influences at work, and that the students at Thembisa

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were in contact with the Soweto students and possibly with the ANr'11Te leaflet they issued consisted largely of potiolls takel flini tile lile that appeared in August in Soweto, (then produced by il, ANC), auu ext .cts from other leaflets used in Soweto in September. This leaflet, mnin C teha others, caught the spirit of the time, and warrants reproduction ill hill. The fact that it also referred to some strikes (in 1974 and early 1970s is also of interest. (The errors have not been corrected, and provide Some indicAtion of the lack of resources available to the leaders in the townships.)

AZIKWPLWA : TMIIISA
AZIKWELWA ! From MONDAY to WDNUSIAY, 20th-22nd Sept.

The people of South Africa are going into the third phase of their struggle against the oppressors namely OPERATION AZIKIIWE LWA !
The racists in our last demonstration called by the cynics a riot lost millions of rands as a result of the people not going to work. Thui they thought of immediately breaking tile student-worker alliance. They immediately called on workers to carry knokkieries and swords to imider their own children - who are protesting for a right course.

Parent workers, you should take note of the fact that if you go to work, you will be inviting Vorster to slaughter us your children as le has .readly done. In Soweto and Alexandra, Vorster and his gangsters, have already
claimed that this week's shootings were made to protect parents from their own children. You will he giving Vorster a pretext for inmurder'ig ts, if you go to work, Please do not allow Vorster to instigate you to murder your own child. Let him do this dirty and murderous job without niking you a scape-goat! We want to avoid further shootings and this c3n he done by you keeping at home without being stopped. We want to write exams, but we are not so selfish to write even if out brothers are being killed at John Vorster Square. Parents, you should rejoice for having given birth to this type of a child. A child who prefers to fight it out with the oppressors rather than to be submerged in drunkenness, frustration, and thugery. A child who prefers to die from a bullet rather than to swallow a poisonous education which relegates him and his parents to a position of perpetual subordination. Aren't you proud of the soldiers of liberation you have given birth to? If you are proud, supptrt them!! Do not go to work from MONDAY to WEIINESIDAY! Do not shiver and think that we have lost and wasted a year. Iti year will go down in history as the beginning of the end of TIil- OP1’IRNSSIVI SYSTEM, the beginning of the end of the oppressive condition f 01 work in South Africa. Vorster is already talking of home owiership for mlcks in Sowrto and other Black Townships. This is a victory because we, the studentN, your children decided to shed their blood. Now for greater victories; te scrapping of BANTU EDUCATION, the release of prisoners tetaintl during the demos., and the overthrowal of oppression. We the srdvLt% our parents to stay at home and not go to work from MONDAY. Parent-workers, heed our CALL and Atay away fromi wotk like in

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Soweto and Alexandra. We the Black Society have nothing to loose from STAYING AWAY FROM WORK, but our chains! Let our oppressor tremble! Tile people of South Africa are resolved in one word they will be crying: "Kruger, release our children!" "Kruger, we wont abort our children by going to work!"

Our slogan is: Away with Vorster, Down with oppression!! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!!!!!! When have these criminals (Vorster) cared for you? Didn't lie order for killing of twell workers in Carltonville? Were not dogs called when in Croeses people went on strike? Were not pregnant women strangled and battered (beaten) by Vorster's police thugs at Heinemann Factory?
AZIKiWELWA MA1) DA !li)A !
The workers stayed at home, and the industrial complex at Isando was empty on Monday 20 September. The strike remained firm on Tuesday, but by Wednesday most workers had returned to work. Nonetheless it was a eamarkable performance and rounded off the tribute that tile working class paid to the students for their role in the I976 Revolt.
From the Thembisa leaflet, it would seen that the authors meant the stay-at-home to be part of a protracted series of strikes that would conceivably, bring South Africa to its knees. It was the 'third phase', presumably following the demonstration of 1 June and the attempted march on Johannesburg on 4 August.

The support given to the youth in the stay-at-home would have made any leadership euphoric. It seems to have blinded the S81 to the many difficulties they had still to overcome, and it prevented them taking a long hard look at the tactics they were using. Unfortunately there were no other warning voices, because there had been few serious discussions of the tactics used in South Africa in the fifties. Some problems were technical, and with time could have been overcome. Other, more fundamental difficulties arose from the nature of the general strike, and its shortcomings as a revolutionary weapon.

The technical problems, some unique to South Africa, arose from the nature of housing in towns and in industry. The mines, railways, municipal services, power stations, hospitals and many industries maintained compounds at, or near, the places of work. Stay-at-homes, organised in townships, could not hope to will the support of these essential work forces. Thus, for example, the railway conclude could say that their services were not affected: '... fortunately, most of our on-White workers live in compounds outside Soweto'. The other establishments that housed their own workers could say the same.

A second difficulty arose from the fact that the stay-at-homes were called by local township committees, and the dates when did not necessarily coincide. The police, therefore, could he moved from area to area in order to keep local populations under control. Furthermore, residents from more than one township worked in a town, a failure to keep the workers of one of these areas from getting to work weakened the strike. On 13 September, for example, the police moved into Alexandra township, where the student body was less well organised, and forced a sizeable number of workers to report for work.

Problems of the Political Strike

It was not entirely accidental that the first big successful strike (on August 23) was called jointly by the SSRC and ANC. It was the latter movement which used the stay-at-home extensively during the 1950's, with outstanding success on some occasions, and with equally disastrous failures. Far too little thought was given to the nature of the tactic, and the youth therefore adopted it uncritically. Some believed in 1976 what their fathers had thought in 1950-60: that a withdrawal of labour would lead to a collapse of the entire South African economy. It was this belief which led some youth to think that the three-day strike in September should be extended indefinitely, and there were rumours that a three-week strike would be called at a later date.

The townships, with their large concentrations of workers, were obviously easy centres for organisation and directed action. But they were also a source of weakness. In an analysis of the strikes of the 1950's it was suggested that there
were inherent difficulties involved in asking the population to remain in the townships. 
Firstly, the people of the townships cannot stay home indefinitely. To do so is to starve. Even if food is stored in advance the families cannot hold out for long because of the presence of the children, the aged and the sick. The township can be sealed off and starved out only too effectively by small detachments of the army and the police. But far worse, the army and police showed in Langa and Nyanga [in 1960 as in 1976] that they could go from house to house, drag the inhabitants out, beat them up and force them to work. 
Secondly, by staying in the townships, the worker surrenders all initiative. He cuts himself for herself off from fellow-workers in other townships. He divides himself from his allies in the rural areas, and he surrenders the entire economic centre to his enemies.

There were occasions, although obviously not during stay-at-home, when the youth did carry the struggle into the commercial centre of the enemy's city. That was an important move and in Johannesburg, as will be described below, the Whites were horrified by the 'invasion'. No attempt was however, made to mobilise the working class for a similar sortie into the industrial areas.
The relationship between the working class and the youth was complex. Most of the younger generation had been born into working class families. They were aware of the problems facing their parents, and they faced the
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warning, with every intention of killing; the use of tile hostel dwellers to cut down
anyone in their path; the rapidity with which armoured cars were brought into
Soweto; and the speed with which police were deployed all indicated that the
state had been preparing fur insurrection frh some time. For years, recruits to the
army, and these were exclusively white, had been drilled in mock battles in urban
uprisings, and mobile police units had been prepared for similar events. Even if the police terror was not planned for 16 June, there can be little doubt that, in the aftermath of the Soweto rioting that day, the police were ordered to go into the townships and schools, and shoot to kill.

This did not mean that there were no situations in which the workers should have been called upon to embark on a general strike. This would have been a powerful weapon if used at the appropriate time, and if backed by other means of struggle. It did, however, mean that it was a tactic that had to be used sparingly.

The SSRC, however, had nobody to warn them of the difficulties involved in calling the workers out too often. In August, and again in mid-September, they had only to summons the workers to stay-at-home, and they were followed. At the end of October they called once again for a close down of industry, but on this occasion they were badly out of touch with the mood in the townships. The call they issued from Soweto was for a national stoppage - even though their contact with other townships was tenuous or rionexistent. They also called for a full five-day strike from Monday 1 November, and the only slogan they offered was: 'Blacks are going into mourning for their dead.' In a press statement this was supplemented with demands that the government resign; that all political detainees be freed; and that there be consultation with black parents leading to 'settlement and peace'.

The strike call and the demands made were unrealistic. Families did not mourn for the dead by starving, and that would have been the consequence of a whole week's stoppage. Nor could workers be expected to respond again and again when the strikes achieved nothing. The call was ignored.

On 1 November, examinations were due to begin, and these were boycott. The students had not been defeated and they meant to continue the struggle. But after 1 November it became clear that the momentum of the Revolt had ebbed, and that in future the main slogans would be restricted to demands relating to the schools and education. Even when the Soweto students took up township issues, as they did in 1971, there was 41 direct connection between the new campaigns and school issue of, in the case of rent increases, between these increases and student action during the Revolt in June and July 1976.

The other campaigns, and the increased police terror in 1977, also indicated that changes were necessary. The pinnacle had been tea.hed in the September stay-at-home, and the overwhelming response from the workers seemed to open the future for even greater assaults on the state. The fact that the Revolt had lost momentum was concealed by successes in other campaigns, and few seemed to note that the victories were only symbolic and

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brought no tangible concessions. Perhaps it was no accident that the largest gatherings and demonstrations were at the funerals of iet who had died while in the hands of the police. The people mourned, but grief could not topple a police state.

References
I. The story of the SSRC, op. cit., p.
2. CIS, op. cit., p.16.
3. Testimony from a witness, cited in CIS, ibid., p.25.
4. Reports from Nqutu and surrounding districts, from which the men came, indicate that the local inhabitants could not understand the closing of the schools. (Conversation with Elaine Unterhalter, who spent some time in the region in 1977.)
5. The reports were always imprecise, Thus the Star, 13 November 1975, carried reports of two Zulus shot in a hostel room in Soweto. The report also claimed that the men came from the Tugela Ferry district where there was a longstanding feud between Mtheinbu and Mchunlui clansmen. It was also reported that the bitter faction fighting in Natal in December 1976 was a spill-over from differences over events in August. (Conversation with Elaine Unterhalter.)
6. Rand Daily Mail, 27 August 1976,
7. Cape Times, 10 August 1976,
8. Ibid.
9. CIS, op. cit., p.22.
10. Ibid.
11. Quoted in Callinicos and Rogers, op. cit., p.163.
12. See the evidence collected together in CIS, op. cit., pp.24-5.
15. 'Soweto Invaded: why we should remain united and not rest', anonymous leaflet undated but post August strikes.
16. SSRC leaflet, 7 September 0t)76.
19. CIS, op. cit., p.41. Six students died and 35 were wounded that day.
20. The story of the SSR(C, op. cit., pp.6-7.
21. I have not had the opportunity of reading any of the evidence presented at the trial of students, still in progress at time of writing.
22. Printed in Pro Veritate, November 1976, under title 'A Soweto student speaks'.
23. J. Berger, op. cit., V.249.
24. Ibid., p.250.

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
31. Ibid.
32. Die Neue Zeit, quoted in Ibid.
33. Seatsholo, op. cit.

14. The Revolt Winds Down
The March on Johannesburg
Tile mid-September stay-at-home was a remarkable show of solidarity which took in communities right across South Africa. It raised morale and gave many
communities the will to participate further in open battle with the government. The political success was not, however, matched by any real achievement in either factories or homes. The workers had sacrificed three days' pay, and some had been fired, and there was much hard thinking on the Friday when the pay envelope came half empty.

Indeed it is hard to see how it could have been other than grim. The stay-at-home had not been launched in order to improve conditions in the worker's household. Strikes of finite duration, announced at tie inception as being for a limited period, cannot win any betterment for workers. Nor had any of the SSRC demands been pitched at securing concessions from the employers.

When the strike was first called, the SSRC listed five objections. The first three were complaints about the oppressive methods employed by the police. The fourth referred to a train accident. The final objection was to the deduction of wages after the August strike. The response from most employers could have been predicted beforehand. They deducted wages for days not worked.

It seems from the tone of the leaflets which appeared soon after pay day, that the students felt the need to reassure the population. They announced a new stage -- the 'fourth In series', at the same time as Thembisa was announcing the 'third phase of the struggle'. The leaflet, Issued in Soweto. spoke enthusiastically of events in Cape Town and welcomed the coloured people to the common struggle. The main thrust of the document was to call on Soweto to emulate the students' demonstration in the city centre.

In their argument, the authors of the leaflet stated that It was necessary to keep the local police and soldiers busy in order to prevent them being posted elsewhere, and urged that it was not the time to retreat. To return to school would be a betrayal of the nation's cause. The comments were both bitter and defiant:

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
Already his (Vorster's) police thugs are demanding passes at gun.point, already rents have gone higher ....
If we profess to be leaders the first and indispensible character is; Independent thought and moral courage. If we are still looking for favours... [to le recognised I as matriculants, it simply nieans that we are not independent but servants of the system like Ciatsha Buthelezi .... Education is in itself good but the first school for an oppressed people is a revolution.

At about 8.00 a.m. on Thursday 23 September, some 1,500 school pupils met at the central Johannesburg station. Many more had set out that morning but had been stopped along the way by police who were tol in) force. The city centre was about to fill as they started their march through Ehoff Street, the main commercial district of the city. They were joined by sympathetic black workers, and marched behind banners calling for the release of all detainees.
The riot police arrived within a very shoit time with dogs, and covergel on the marchers. Every Black in the area, whether in the demonstration or not, was attacked, and many Whites in the crowd that soon gathered went toi the assistance of the police. One youth who tried to slip ;iway was run diown by a motorist who
accelerated to reach him. Those who were caught were bundled into police vans and taken into detention. These included at least three children under 14 years of age and two (white) students of the University of the Witwatersrand. More than 80 ended the day in police cells, and by 9.30 a.m. the demonstration was over. In Soweto there was less restraint. The police moved through selected areas, shooting at anyone trying to escape their net. Alexaida township was al, sealed off and police moved through the area, arresting people. At the Sland Higher Primary school, children fled when they saw an advancing police cire The police drove in pursuit and shot at the children, killing It least one, mld wounding several. 2

The 'fourth stage' had not been very fruitful, the disruption of the city centre had been minimal, and tile students had suffe at the hands of Ow police. They did not venture into the city again and, except [ti t uioVdS. di not gather in large numbers. They also chan’ed tack, and initiated . I CnlnAign against Christmas festivities, linking this with their stand awainst alcolhol

Alcohol and the Christmas Season

The campaign against alcohol, and raids on bottlestores, beerhalls and shebeens, commenced soon after the Revolt started. Within days of the shooting on 16 June, the streets ran with wine, sherry, brandy and eet 4s the township supplies were destroyed. And on the day the youth oth fangs, Nyanga and Guguletu first marched, the bottlestores were attacked in

The Revolt Winds Down

Cape Town.

The shebeens were not closed completely, however, anti in toidAugust a leaflet, claiming to be 'The voice of the ANC', called on the shebeens to close from the 23rd onwards. The publication was crude and called on Blacks to kill the Whites and burn their buildings, The crudity of style and sentiment renders the leaflet suspect, and it is not at all certain that the ANC was responsible for its production. Nonetheless it was circulated in Soweto, and the call to close these pot-houses was lead by a large audience.

Prior to 1962, Africans were not legally entitled to buy any alcoholic drink except for traditionally brewed beer. When the Liquor Amendment Act was passed, there were mixed feelings in the townships. There were many who supported the new act because they could now purchase their wines and brandies without facing arrest and prosecution. But there were many people who opposed the new law. The women who relied on sales of their own (illegal) home brews complained, and so did religious groups who favoured prohibition. More surprising, perhaps, was the fact that when a poll was conducted in Cape Town, 79 per cent of the Africans opposed the introduction of the new legislation.

The political movements had always kept clear of the controversy although individuals had condemned the sale of alcohol in their private capacities. From exile, Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu maintained that:

One of the things that used to worry [members of the BPCI for quite a
long time was the number of bottle stores in Soweto. You have more bottle stores
than clinics and more police stations than clinics. Every
railway station, and in Soweto you have more than 20 railway stations, had a
bottle store. When our parents leave work with their pay, which is
very meagre, they immediately buy liquor and then they go home without
money .... If you go to Soweto you will find that every small location has a bottle
store and a big beer hall. But since the 16th of June bottle
stores no longer function because the first targets were bottle stores ....
Then, there are the places we call 'shebeens' where they illegally sell
liquor. The government has been trying for the past fifty years to stamp tflem out
but they could not succeed. Now nobody sells liquor because
the students have appealed to their . . .
It is not possible to ascertain from press reports whWat the non-studenit youth
thought. There was at least the section which looted and drank the liquor during
the many raids, and it is possible that the move to declare the township dry' was a
reflection of the tensions between the school youth and the unemployed. Oil the
other hand Ranwedi Nengwokliutu's contention that even 'alcoholics found the
courage to destroy the institution they knew was destroying them' was confirmed
by other sources.
Campaigns against alcohol grew stronger as the weeks went by. At the end of
September graffiti in the streets Of Soweto and ('ape Townt tow nlhips read: 'Less
liquor, more education!'; 'Away with boozars', 'No more liquor till next year.
Please we need sympathy,'

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
Even at this stage the youth rioted the need for concessions to the hostel dwellers.
These single-sex groups were heavy drinkers, and it would not be easy to
convince them to abstain. On I I October a hall on liquor was declared, and in
Soweto the shebeen owners formed an association in order to co-operate with the
youth. Here at least the bun was complete, In cape Town. however, because of the
high percentage of migratory 'single' men, the shebeen owners felt they had more
to lose and they opposed the han strenuously.
it the earlier phase of the struggle in 'ape Town a large ninht r 4 it'
shebeens (one estimate claimed over 100) were dtestri'yed, hnd a another 0, the
bottlestores were gutted. The shebeen owners were able to find allieS amongst a
section of tie migranits, some of whoil had been antaglristi IC II the youth from
early August when the first marches took place. Three they mobilised to protect
their premises, ant the police briotght to reinforceuiig from amongst migrant
workers in the smaller towns. The stldents illade several attempts to approach
these men, obviously prepared for, and ready to go on the rampage. The police,
who were standing by, intervened and drove the students away with tear gas,
Fighting in Cape Town was particularly severe, and the migrants capped with
white doeks (head cloths) killed or maimed many African youti, On
6 December, long after tie clashes had started, the Traaskei 'consul' to Cape
Town, Chief Dumalisi, addressed more than 4.000 residents oft Nyalg and urged
them to stop tile internecine fighting. I Egged on by tile poltieee. however, there
was no end to the bitter struggle and on 31 December student leaders were still urging the migrants to stop drinking. They demanded, 'Show you are with us if you want to enjoy the privilleges of a just society.

At the end of October the SSRC called for a 'period of mourning for the dead'. It called for a boycott of Christmas festivities; a stop to (listmnal shopping; and a continuation of the ban on alcohol. The campaign involved a pledge of solidarity with all those detained and tortured; a call for the release of all political prisoners and an expression of sympathy with all who had lost pay in the September stay-at-home. Through November and December the youth campaigned around the boycott of shopping and won the copet otit of the Soweto population. But their success in the north was not repeated in Cape Town, and by late December there were daily assaults on the township population by the now familiar white-docked hostel dwellers.

The Ministers Fraternal of Langa, Gugililetu and Nyanga, representing the major denominations of the Cape Town region, drew up their report on the events during the Christmas weekend. They made a series of allegations which they supported by eye-witness accounts of men and women who were at scenes of violence. They claimed that:

1. It was the riot police who made possible the appalling killings and burnings of the Christmas weekend in Nyanga, and that if they had chosen, they could have prevented any serious clash.
2. The riot police or a significant section of them encouraged and instigated certain immigrants to attack.
3. Certain migrants were deceived into thinking that they would be stopped from going to work.
4. Some were told to arm themselves to avoid attack when this was not intended.
5. Riot police actually assisted with the attacks -- shooting at residents preventing them from protecting their families and houses.
6. Some riot police actually encouraged the migrants to kill some of the residents by pointing out the wounded on the ground.
7. Petrol bombs were used in attacks. Some were trained, by certain people in authority, on how to make and use petrol bombs.

The report, which was sent to every Member of Parliament, was banned in South Africa on the grounds that it was harmful to race relations and the welfare of the state. This led the Rev. D.P.I. Russell to draw up a memorandum for M.P.s in which he added further eyewitness accounts substantiating the accusations of the Ministers Fraternal. The only response of the police was to demand the names of three of the witnesses quoted in the document. For refusing to supply this information, David Russell was sentenced to three months imprisonment. Despite police harassment and brutality, the campaign against Christmas celebrations was successful. Many small white traders in Johannesburg suffered considerable losses, and the morale in the townships was high. In one respect, however, the Revolt was over. The school year closed for the long summer
vacation and this, at least temporarily, shifted the focus away from the schools.
The students were dispersed and their school base was not available. The year had
ended with few taking the examinations, and very few would accept the school’s
offer that they write the supplementary examinations in the New Year. The
Coloured youth in the Cape had already ended their boycott of classes, and the
vacation provided time for a cooling off period before the new academic year
commenced. The memory of the alliance of August-September was still strong,
but the basis for joint campaigning was past.
The year also came to an end with an ever increasing onslaught by the police.
House to house searches and arrests continued, leading to an exodus of children
who fled to relatives, rural areas, or across the borders. The number detained rose,
and the courts meted out sentences of caning, or of imprisonment. The political
life of any new community leader was painfully short, and new leaders were
picked up in successive swoops. Even leaders of black movements which had not
been involved in overt activities during the Revolt were suppressed. In the closing
weeks of November and through December, 27 trade unionists and members of
the university wages commissions were banned, and so removed from any further
industrial organisation.

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
Divided Counsel on Examinations
Despite all the harassment, 1976 closed with the students in good spirits. The
boycott of Christmas festivities had been successful, and the ANC leaflet of 16
December which called for more recruits to the military arm of Congress,
Unlkhonto we Sizwe, praised the youth: ‘To all of you we say: Forward brave
fighters! Forward brothers and sisters! Maintain your revolutionary unity and
fighting spirit. Together we will raise tile struggle to more glorious heights ...’

The student leaders, in Soweto as elsewhere, faced a difficult problem in the New
Year. The schools were opened earlier than usual, on 5 January in Soweto and
Cape Town. This was done in order to prepare candidates for the Junior
Certificate (third form) and matriculation examinations which had been deferred
from 1976 till mid-February. Other classes would hold internal examinations in
order to allow for the promotion of successful candidates. The new school year
would commence after all the tests were completed.

There was confusion amongst the students. Some wanted to write the
examinations and thus avoid wasting a year. Others stated categorically that they
would not return to school until Bantu Education was scrapped. In every township
they turned to their local SRC for guidance, and these bodies, which had been
established in most areas in 1976, were divided in their counsel. In Cape Town
the decision was to boycott and on 10 January 1977 six schools were badly
damaged by fire in Langa and Nyanga, to prevent any breaking of the ban.
In Soweto, however, a series of contradictory statements were issued by the
SSRC. Their first statement called for a complete boycott of the schools until all
detained pupils were released, and also until black youth received the same
educational facilities as Whites.’2 The SSRC then reversed its stand, and in a
statement published in the press stated:
We are requesting all students and their parents to ensure that every child reports for school tomorrow morning. We warn our colleagues and their parents that these people who speak about the continuation of the boycott are speaking for themselves and do not represent the recognised school body.

We therefore appeal to all students to ignore them because they are nothing but trouble shooters trying to exploit the situation for their own ends. IS

The SSRC was not alone in calling for a return to school, Albert Mahhngu, speaking on behalf of ASSECA, called on the youth to return; the teachers had, in the majority of cases, reported to the schools for duty; and a body calling itself the Soweto Union, led by a former detainee L..M Mat hhathe, also urged parents to send their children to school'14

The senior students were not convinced. At Orlando High School some 60 (out of a student intake of 900) arrived at school, many over an hour late

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Soille 90 (out kil, 800) atived at Ilie, mimis Scliod. Nor was (lik, stitiatiolll.111Y difercrelf 011 (R Jalmaly ;iiiiillily114*, was tiýkýliýally hetter, und titt FiklA'Y lite 10k it secillekt ms ff tlik. lýtýycýy Att Illight lít! least at some id’ Ilie selltitik,
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January it was tiiiyýytilieckl timt inklivotdial Ntkåtlollts emild Jccitic for themselves whether they shoultt cutet for (Ilc exýitiyiiii;titnIN., 15
Cunditions in Ilie seltools liccanie evett nikkre urisettle us, news carile in from other timiships. Unlike Soimeto, it lutkl beett iiitt4>ittice(1 tilat seckinktury schools in Alexandra am lltetkiri (artilingst outiers) Wm11LI C<rttmeellce on 2 february, allti that IIerc wolatl not he exarrriiiiiitiillN at tjoise centreS becatise some huJ written in November lait. Thos skilli) hitil fåfled tl attend would have to repeat (lic ýehool year. The Pretstria primary sellklolswere selieduickl fl olivji on 18 Jaittiary,htzt,tiýte imeiek cttlicr till I I J,itiili;lrýt [lad been antiounced that aii effildren wislång Io register it flit bjlTielit)tiili fligh School Wollikt hitve to prtiikiczkce perlnts imm kl fly Ilie locill superinterldellVs ollice licorr ticillg accepetpý T110 reaskill tor Olig was thut there, wa.% cong NTNio in Ilie ýcfiojkl nutt flutt it was ileecs,,,,ýtry to excldue children wlli had titt r:gIII 4 texikitytk:r, Thiili -star lekt a waive (if protests Which led it) it hilyckitt. o(all Mattiollikt, ,cllk,llN 11 lite beginnting tif Febrintry. A tew klays liter Arteritiqgtville fillpip dimtkekl to 1011(kw (ile Mamolý)lli exanillle, By 8 Fellruary 1110 kivspille kavet exittnirlt(it4etx hitt heckillc a mujkkr mim in Sowelo. Titto .etv rettewt(1 klemunkk. litat Hältu Vklocillion be, seralilled and Illat. Cqual. caltieation bo triýítitittr<,,tt, ,Grol.11)% tir yoltlik moved from - Nchoul (o school 31141 tiýstiiiptt!tl CIMIx tilstik, 110 Pollve njtsved flicit forem (o PrlACK:t

Year of Fire, Year of As’h

schools, and used tear gas to disperse angry students. The situation grew ugly as groups of students faced each other, and those writing tests stoned the disrupters. At Orlando, Naledi, Musi, Meadowlands and Madibane books were burnt, and cars or delivery vans found near the schools were destroyed. Some schools were damaged and furniture was smashed. A large crowd collected in Meadowlands and police used gas to disperse 4,000 youth. Shots were fired and many were injured.

Nevertheless the examinations were proceeded with, and a large number did attend and write. The police patrolled all school areas and they had instructions to arrest any youth not in school during school hours, 11

In Cape Town there was a return to schools before the scheduled examinations, but only after a warning that youth not at school by 4 March, or absent without good cause for more than four days, would be excluded permanently. Pupils having returned, all tests were written with very little disruption.

The SSRC Abolishes the UBC

In mid-February 1977 the SSRC was in disarray. In fact it seemed to have been in crisis ever since Khotso Seatholo was shot by police in mid-January, and had to slip across the border. Daniel Sechaba Montsils and his executive were immediately caught in the middle of the crisis over examinations and were not able to find a solution.

Problems in the schools kept them busy. The fourth formers who were repeating the year complained when successful Junior Certificate students entered their classes. The older youth found themselves having to accommodate groups who had been their juniors, and there was also a dislparity, in levels of knowledge,
between youth in their second year in] the same form, and the newcomers. Yet there was nothing the S&RC could do to placate the disaffected.

The BPC emerged as an organisation in late March, after months of apparent inactivity. They called upon all people to observe a week of mourning for those who had died in Sharpeville (1960), in detention, and in Soweto and elsewhere in 1976. The population was asked to wear mourning during the week and to abstain from all festivities. They also had a message for the Church: We call upon all the churches in this country to respond positively and cc*
operate with the spirit expressed in this nuiesage. We believe that thev trtt Christian gospel supports the struggle for human dignity. We say the true Christian must ask himself, ‘What Nhall I tell the Lord on the clay of
t reckoning? Shall I say I have not been able to put my hand in the efforl to endorse God's image in the black man, as much as in the white msrr

The week was to culminate in a march and a meeting in Orlando. There was a moderate response and the week passed with tio itividen k,

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On the 27th, however, the march was light-hearted 'until a group of soccer. dress clad policemen interfered with the crowd, after which the mood turned ugly'. "8 Over 20 students were detained and pressmen reported seeing children assaulted while being arrested.

It was only in late April that the SSRC seemed to emerge from a long period of relative inactivity. The occasion was the announcement by the West Rand Bantu Administration Board, the government appointed body that managed the affairs of Soweto (amongst others), that from 1 May site rentals were to be raised by 84 per cent - from R6.25 perw nonih to R I 1.50, There were similar announcements in other townships, and in many cases the increases were in the region of 100 per cent.

The students were brought into the campaign against the increase in rents from the inception. They were naturally angry, as were the residents as a whole, at having to find more money tbr their houses. Ever increasing inflation, set against low wages, left every family in dire poverty. The announcement of the increases also took no account of the many families who had lost breadwinners during the nine month long Revolt, nor of the widespread feeling of deprivation that accompanied the death or injury of members of the household.

There was another reason for the students to be incensed. It was stated that rents had to be raised because of the loss of revenue from beerhalls that had been gutted during the Revolt. What had seemed to be a triumph tor the population was being turned into an excuse to exact more money from each householder. That was unbearable!

The SSRC moved on to the offensive and warned the Administration Board not to 'repeat tile mistake made by certain officials of Bantu Education' in 1976. On 23 April there was a large public meeting in Soweto, and resolutions were passed riot to pay the rent increase and to suspend the Urban Bantu Council. .9 The SSRC, the members of which had long opposed any government created institutions, had always clashed with the UBC. Now they had additional reason
for anger. The rent increases had been known to the Council members since February, and they had approved the new rates in March without informing the public. It also transpired that other UBCs (at Kagiso, Dobsonville and Mohlakeng) had also approved the rent increases during March. On 27 April thousands of students demonstrated in Soweto and, following a discoszation with the police officer ill Control, were given permission to mMarch to the Council Claber,
Tile march did not end peaceltlly. Sections oft the crowd stned tle Council building and were dispersed by the police with gas. In tetaialtmion vehicles were stoned ;and two beerhalls set alight, and this lel t shionl lg ld arrests.
The demonstration produced results: tile rent increase wa&smwdldi d The SSRC had reascertted its positioi as the only effective (Irg iid 111dy ill ile township and, for, the first time, had assumed the role t’ a pohlvl orgamd! ation. The student body had been acting politically for appnixoniantely olle

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year, but until April 1977, every campaign had been related to the schools, to the educational system, or to the fate of arrested students. The slogans had inevitably taken in wider issues because Bantu Education was part of the total system of apartheid. In tile many demonstrations concerned with events in the schools starting with the fight against Afrikaans medium instruction the main banners carried demands directly related to education or to the demonstration itself. But as Tebello Motapanyane said in an interview, other slogans had included: 'It happened in Angola - why not here?'; 'For freedom we are going to lay down our lives.' 'Release all political detainees.' 10 [it the central campaign in every instance had been related to school issues,
Having embarked on the rent campaign, it was not possible to stop with the suspension of the increase. The UIBC itself had to go because they had acted as a government agency and agreed to the increase without consulting or even informing the residents.
The SSRC sent two of their members to interview the 1BC, and when they were arrested in the Council Chamber without protest from the Councillo rs, the students forced the resignation of the UBC which took place at the beginning of June.
The collapse of the Council was so unexpected and so rapid that it seemed to many that the SSRC must have applied some secret pressures, and threatened the members with dire consequences if they did not comply. There was, however, little need for force. The SSRC was the only acknowledged body in the township, and it had the support of the vast majority 4A the population. The Councillors resigned because they recognised that whatever powers they had previously seemed to exercise had been taken (vom them.
Yet, even in victory, the SSRC was foiled. The government had already decided to replace all UBCs by Community Councils which would fall directly under the Minister of Bantu Affairs and receive powers delegated to them directly from the Minister. It was also announced that the rentals would still be increased, but in three stages, commencing December 1977.
On 3 June Sechaba Montsitsi issued a statement on behalf of the SSRC, calling on the population of Soweto to form their own representative body to replace the UBC, and to reject all government instituted bodies. 1. When Dr. Nthato Motlana of the Black Parents Association summoned a meeting to form an organisation, representatives of the SSR(C, SASTO mod BP were present. Also in attendance were representatives of the llac k Unity Front, which consisted of Inkatha, the Labour Party and like-minded organisations.

The new body that was launched was called the Soweto Local Council Interim Committee or, more popularly, the Committee of Ten. The chair of the Committee, Clancey, and the other members included two nembers of the SACP, two nembers of the South African Trade Unionists Association, and the principal of the Morn I. High School. The Committee was instructed to investigate ways in which Soweto should be run.

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Within three weeks a blueprint for the future was produced. Soweto, it was stated, should become an autonomous modern city, governed by all elected council of 50 nembers. To provide the required facilities, the N1 of R5,000 million would, it was envisaged, be spent over a five-year period. The money, said the Committee, would be raised from rates and taxes, fines, fees, charges for electricity and licences, and from loans raised at the Organisation of African Unity, the International Monetary Fund, and other international institutions.

Even if all the huge financial difficulties obviously involved could somehow be transcended, the project was still politically dangerous. It accepted segregation provided that the segregation was made less onerous. That is, if an updated, modernised township was erected, and if Blacks could govern the area, the Committee of Ten and its supporters in the Black Consciousness Movement were prepared to accept the situation. There was little to differentiate this preparedness to take control of an urban segregated area, and Buthelezi's acceptance of a base in the Reserves. Buthelezi demanded land consolidation and sought foreign investment. The Committee of Ten would no doubt also negotiate the boundaries of Soweto and needed foreign capital. Buthelezi said that he would use the Reserves in order to gain a base from which to propagate his ideas. It was perhaps no coincidence that, in the heady days following the publication of the Committee's plan for Soweto, there was talk in the township of establishing an urban base from which the anti-apartheid struggle could be waged.

Even if it were objected that the Soweto Committee differed appreciably from Buthelezi in their appraisal of events in South Africa, they would have been saddled with an urban Bantustan if the government had accepted their plan. They were only saved from endless embarrassment by the rejection of the plan by the government. But not before they had themselves riasterminded a scheme for making residential areas part of it segregated South Africa.

The First Commemoration of June 16
Oil 3 June the UIBC had collapsed and the students announced that they were planning to commemorate the dead during the week 13 to 19 June. l)ming that period shebeens were to be closed, On the 16th and 17th all shops in the township were to be kept shut, and there would be a stay-at-home. Students at the black universities also announced plans for commemorating the events of 1976, and school student bodies in other parts of the country also made plans for demonstrations.

The commemorations in Soweto actually started in late May when scholars at individual schools celebrated events that had preceded the June 16 demonstration. On 25 May pupils of the Belle Higher Primary School held their own meeting, and as the days went by the celebrations were taken up by other schools. Some of the meetings took place without further incident, others were accompanied by stonings of official cars. Shots were fired by police, and youth were arrested, so that Soweto was in a high state of tension well before 13 June.

On 10 June Sechaha Montsitsi and 17 members of the SSR were arrested and only two seem to have escaped the police net. One of them, Trofomo Sono, became the new President and the newly selected executive proceeded with plans for tile commemoration.

Tension in the country was building up, and this was heightened when three young urban guerrillas made a machine gun attack on Premises opposite John Vorster Square in Johannesburg and, on 15 June a portion of the raid way line between Umlazi and Durban was blown up.

On Friday the 10th, students at Turfloop boycotted classes and continued the stay-away on the 13th. There was a complete boycott of schools ion 13 June and the township was sealed off by road blocks set up by the students. That evening there was stone throwing in both Pretoria townships and in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth. The schools in Soweto were empty, and about 40 per cent of the work force responded to the stay-at-home appeal. The shebeens stayed closed throughout the week.

On 16 June an audience of some 6,000 gathered in the Regina Mandi Cathedral to commemorate the dead. But the meeting was not allowed to proceed peacefully. The police fired a salvo of tear gas canisters into the church and forced the audience out. In other sections of the township police also fired tear gas into any crowd that collected, and doused several buses to flush the occupants out.

The biggest action on the 16th was in the Eastern Cape, where the main storm centre was at Itenhage near Port Elizabeth. Eleven students were arrested during demonstrations, and in the reaction to police provocation in schools, liquor stores, shops and administration buildings were put to the fire. For two days the youth were out in the streets, defying the police and replying to the shootings with stones and rocks. Once again, the events of the Soweto the year before were being repeated. Over two days 116 were reported dead, 32 wounded, and 280 arrested. Some students drifted back to school on Monday 20 June. but on the 23rd nobody attended in Soweto. Pupils marched through the streets protesting against the educational system, and against the continued detentions of Montsitsi...
and other leaders. They intended marching to Johannesbunm , t join a group at John Vorster Square police station who were holdnin, A vigil for those who had been arrested. Once again the students were stoplod Police barred t le way to Johannesburg, and tie crowd was diprsrd il . In Johannesburg, 146 of those standing outside the police statdio wet arrested after they had been assaulted by baton wielding policemen In Soweto, youth storied vehicles and came into conflict with the podic.e At least one was killed that day and many were wounded. It seemed a3 it th cycle of demonstrations and shootings was to continue without anyone being able to stand up and call for a new approach to the struggle,

Ale Revolt Wincts )own
Just five days later the youth of Mamelodi and of Atteridgeville tried the same tactic, and met with the same response from the police. They too were dispersed by a barrage of tear gas canisters and guns.

SASM Politics in 1977
The SSRC venture into the political field had met with a success that was beyond the expectations of most people. A committee drawn from the schools of Soweto had brought down a government instituted body, the UBC, and appeared as the foremost political group in the community. Nonetheless, the mandate that the SSRC carried was to represent the interests of the students generally, and to press their demands for better facilities in the schools.
The SSRC had therefore to determine what they would do in the future, and decide whether they, as an organisation, could continue to act on general issues.

Approximately 65t1 of their fellow students have been. killed by police bullets, thousands mote wounded or beaten by police batons. Thousands have been detained, imprisoned and tortured and yet they have riot been intimidated or cowed into submission. They have the initiative and they mean to keep it. 21

Troyomo Sono had a few days previously made another statement which supplemented this 'do or die' declaration. On 27 June he reportedly said: 'We still maintain that our aims are not to overthrow the Government but to see Bantu Education driven to hell.’ 24

In one important sense, Chris Wood was correct. The SSRC had taken the initiative over the issue of rents and they were not likely to surrender it. But it must be questioned whether they had the initiative in the broader strategy of the period. The government had moved its police around the country and had killed, maimed, arrested and detained at will. The ranks of the student movement had been sorely weakened, and to the numbers givel by Wood, must be added the hundreds that had fled the country. The initiative that was in the hands of the
students, was deceptive. Furthermore, to surest that they would all die to get rid of the educational system, made good journalistic copy, but poor politics. The problem was to save lives and to protect personnel as far as was possible while conducting the struggle against the government. Mr. Sono eventually fled South Africa, and in so doing he was correct, To have offered his life as a sacrifice or even to risk armt would

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at that stage have been pointless.
The more general statement, that the aim of the SSRC was not to overthrow the government but to destroy Bantu Education, raises problems that do not seem to have been thought out during the entire period of the Revolt. Assuming that the government could be forced into scrapping Bantu Education, and eventually providing universal compulsory education with 'equal' facilities for every boy and girl at school, without itself being toppled, little or nothing would have been altered in the country at large. How were African youth expected to achieve educational parity with white children if they lived in Soweto (even the revamped Soweto they seemed to support)? And if they achieved this parity, how were they supposed to compete for jobs as long as apartheid continued? What, furthermore, was supposed to happen to the youth who would be educated in the Reserves? How could they ever emerge as equals from these glorified rural slums?

By refusing to confront the problems of a class society, the SSRC spokes-men ignored the problem that confronts educationalists in every class society: namely, that offering equal educational facilities to every child does not lead to equal scholastic attainment, nor does it offer equal opportunity, in either higher education or employment.

But perhaps Mr. Sono did not really mean what he said. As long as he was in public office, and working openly, he could not confess to the aim of overthrowing the government. The movement to which he adhered was to meet shortly in conference in Soweto and its viewpoints would be presented to the membership for endorsement.
SASM had its annual general meeting in early July and adopted a set of general standpoints. These were listed as:
the rejection of all government created bodies;
religions should be made more indigenous and should promote the black struggle;
workers should participate fully in the liberation of the country;
wages should be determined by ability;
black professional people should seek to serve their community; and foreign investment was condemned because it promoted apartheid. 1

This set of six points is all that appeared in the daily press, and the annual Survey of Race Relations adds no further details. On the basis of such wanty information it is not possible to examine, in any depth, the opinions held by student leaders in that crucial period before the police moved in to sim sh their organisation.
The points listed consist of a set of political (and social) principles, and only one of them led to immediate action or, to be more exact, to the continuation of action
already initiated. That is, the rejection of all government instituted bodies. This kept alive the struggle against Buthezi and men of his ilk, and also served notice that the students would continue their campaign to force official (black) bodies to resign.

The Revolt Winds Down
The rejection of foreign investment was in line with the stand taken by all anti-government bodies and added nothing new. On the other hand, the adoption of a standpoint on religion, deeply entrenched in the attitudes of members of SASO/BPC and BCP, was new to the school pupils' organisation. The attitude to the role of the workers was, if anything, far more diffuse than the viewpoint expressed in September 1976 when students had stated that, in any liberation struggle, 'the power for change lies with the workers'. In July 1977, the workers seem only to have been called upon to 'participate fully in the liberation', and the centrality of their role in overthrowing the apartheid state was no longer underlined. Even the point on professional people was vague. They were rebuked, as indeed they needed to be, for not always seeking to serve their community.

What had to be faced clearly --- the role of intellectuals in the struggle was thereby fudged, and the class issues which were posed so sharply when the Revolt was at its height, seem to have been blunted in this closing stage of the struggle. At the beginning of July the SSRC had issued an ultimatum to members of the 26 school boards in Soweto, demanding their immediate resignation. After a short delay a number of boards resigned en bloc, and by the end of the month 10 boards had ceased to function. The others followed in August. The student leaders in Alexandra, Atteridgeville and Mamelodi seemed to have made the same demands following the conference and to have secured the required resignations. 26 There was no news of similar action elsewhere in the country, although that could have been the result of poor reporting facilities. In August, it was announced that 17 members of the Port Elizabeth SASM had been arrested.

The Police Move In
Through August and September the policy of repression was pursued by the police. Schools were raided, students were arrested; and, as a result, boycotts deepened in Soweto, Guguletu, Atteridgeville, East London, Hfectown, etc. Even Jabulani, once condemned as 'unreliable', faced police fire and added to the toll of dead.

On 24 August the government announced that the 40 postprimary schools in Soweto would cease to be regarded as Community Schools, They would be reopened as Government High Schools, and all students would be required to re-register by 5 September. The students reacted by calling o) the teachers to resign, and within a short time some 475 had responded positively. They claimed, after resigning, that the government takeover was arrogant and unacceptable and that continued service under Hantu Education brought them into general disrepute. Both students and teachers were now out, and the boycott spread to Kwa Thema (Springs), to Alexandra, and to primary schools in Atteridgeville. Then on 17 September the news of the murder of Steve Biko burst on the country. In a wave of revulsion the schools emptied throughout the land.
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The focus moved first to Vendaland and BophutaTswana, and then to Port
Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Kingwilliamstown, and in October there were riots in towns
throughout tie Eastern Cape, and in towns small and large in every province. In
every case the police used guns and gas, batons and dogs, to disperse the crowds.
Hundreds of youth were thrown into prison cells and summary trials speeded up
in order to get sentences passed.
By the end of the month it was reported that:
In Soweto there would be no matriculation examinations for the second
year running.
In Venda all 357 schools were closed and over 100,000 youth sent home,
In Port Elizabeth all 39,000 youth were out of school,
In Kingwilliamstown, Cradock and Grahamstown the schools were almost
all empty.
In Pietersburg five secondary schools were shut.
The schools of Atteridgeville were all closed.
In Soweto the boycott covered the higher primary and all secondary
schools.
One-third of Turfloop's students had walked out over student rights.,
Other areas were affected in varying degrees, and only in the Transkei and
KwaZulu were the schools functioning normally. ""
In August Sono, last declared president of the SSRC, fled to Botswana after some
20 SSRC members has been arrested. Thereafter the SSR(' announced that it
would be led by a secret committee of six. It contintued to direct student
activities, but could no longer rely on the publicity it had u.sed so effectively
since 16 June, and its work was considerably hanipeled.
Eventually the government moved on 19 October to outlaw 17 African
organisations (most of which could be described as bodies belonging ti the Black
Consciousness Movement) and the Christian Institute. The W4rld. he Weekend
World and Pro Veritale were also banned as were several individuals. At least 42
people were detained. All the funds and property belonging to these organisations
were confiscated, and this included a mobile clinic, a clothing factory and a
boutique (all owned by the B1CP and associated organisations). The total assets
taken over by the state amounted to approximately one million Rand.
The government intention was to end the Revolt, and in this it sue4Id The initial
response in the schools was to intensify the struggle, but II-- was the last spasm of
a struggle that had been ground down by biti ore foic, Arid by an inability to find
new techniques of struggle. The students had 'rehearsed' too often without being
able to move beyond deoronstt--tron
In the New Year (t978) the return to school was not smooth, arid it look several
months before classes filled up. There was still sporadic ulr-.i and students were
tuick to challenge teachers who tried to impose tight dlsrplitre in the classrooim.
Never theless the Soweto Students' League, wuchr tepted the SSRC, altered :ourse
early in the I78 school year. At tit the, .rg'd a
The Revolt Winds Down

complete boycott of the state schools. But they reversed this stand and called for a return to classes, and this time the students tended to agree with them. The classrooms began to fill.

On 22 March the youth mourned the death of Robert Sobukwe (original founder of the PAC), and those that attended his funeral forced Gatsha Buthelezi to leave, but not before his bodyguard had fired into the air. Despite the undoubted appeal Sobukwe's name and martyrdom evoked, this did not unleash the reaction that had been so marked in September when Biko was buried.

The Revolt was not over, It could not he over as long as apartheid reigned. But the phase that had opened up on June 10 1976 was closed.

References
1. Craig Williamson, for SANA, 26 September 1976,
2. CIS, op. cit., p.56.
3. R. Nengwekhulu, opcit. See also Harney Makhatle quoted in CIS, op.cit., p.56.
4. The CIS report, p.57, includes a remark front a 'regular drinker' whit said 'What the kids are doing is right. They had to force a ban on shebeens because we lacked the willpower to do it.'
5. Ibid., p.56.
7. Ibid.
8. American Episcopal Church, Catholic Church, ("hurch of the Province of South Africa (Anglican), Methodist Church of South Africa, Moravian Church, Presbyterian Church of Africa, United Congregational Church of South Africa.
11. 'December 16th is a historic day in the Freedom struptl,' A leaflet commemorating Heroes Day. 12, SRRSA, 1977, p.56.
16. Rand Daily Mal and World, 10 February 1971. 17, See P. Laurene"e,

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23. Ibid. See also the interview with Sono by Thami Mazwai, World.
I July 1977.
24. Ibid.
PART 3 Black Consciousness and the Struggle in S. Africa

15. Anatomy of the Revolt

Origins

On 16 June 1976, following the demonstration of school youth organised by the committee which was to become known as the Soweto Students Representative Council, the police fired at the unarmed crowd and precipitated the events which engulfed South Africa during the next 18 months.

By all previous experience in South Africa - or at least since the massacre of the religious sect known as the Israelites at Bulhoek (near Queenstown) in 1921, and extending to Sharpeville in 1960 the short sharp burst in the street should have struck terror into the hearts of the black population. Atti a few weeks of mourning, the populace should have returned to the life that the government was mapping out for them, and accepted their tutelage under the apartheid regime.

We cannot yet prove that this was the way the government planned events although there is some evidence to show that that was the case. By the time the Revolt spread to the Cape, there can be little doubt about the government's provocative use of riot police to destroy the spirit offive Stwl. children.

It can be said with certainty that the government intelligence forces were aware of the deep ferment in the country, and it is hard to believe that they had not planned some counter-action. Through their battery of informers they knew of the turmoil in the classrooms, and they also had information about the activity of the South African Student Movement. They were mot than aware of the disruption in factories and mines since 1973 (although they seemed quite unprepared for the outbreak of the strikes), and they knew that the bus boycotts of East London, Newcastle and Kwa Thema could have been the prelude to an even larger boycott following the increase in hits, from June 16, 1976.

Irrespective of government plans or machinations, there was deep discontent in the country, and this expressed itself in the strikes, boycotts and riots that had shaken industry and local black communities since 1971. From the Durban docks through to the Coronation Brick and Tile, and then to the Frame Textile Group constituted, geographically, a series of short jumps. Politically these were great leaps forward, and first the workers, and

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lind recovered from lire massive deficits of lire curvy 1960's and were prepared to
take action to their conditions.
During this period of turmoil, the black university stills were being
organizing and making their discontent known. The origin of this struggle was
tentralized into the general sentiment that affected the country. They were
sensitive to the situation that prevailed in South Africa and they were
affected, like their wives of similar status. However, labor leaders, who
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second-class products. They formed their own black organisation and saw
themselves as the leaders of a black move to liberation that would remove
discrimination and allow them to take their 'rightful' place in the country. Their
dreams were embodied in the slogan at Turfloop, which the government
Commission of Inquiry was most concerned about, after the Viva Frelimo rally:
'Vacancies. Government of Azania. Majors, Lieutenants, Captains. Duties: To
train and lead 50 million Blacks. Apply: SASO, BPC before the reach of the 4th
Century of racist oppression.' 1 To he officers, not rank and file. To train, not to
be trained. Such were the dreams of this small, relatively privileged group.
In any other country their class position would be assured. No matter who their
parents were, this would be the petty bourgeoisie. They would aspire to the
comforts of lucrative careers. Some would enter the government. The road
would be open to office in the civil service and in the universities. In South Africa, being
such a small select group, the passage to such employment would have been even
more assured if it had not been for the racial barriers ordained by apartheid.
The students were angry. They hated the constraints on their lives, and they saw
these reproduced on the campuses, All their efforts at school, and now at the
university, seemed to lead to a dead end. Their hopes that they could escape
the poverty of their kin through education had turned sour or had been considerably
dampened by the limited opportunities they now saw as being open to them.
Nonetheless their petty bourgeois aspirations coloured their entire outlook. They
looked inwards to their own problems. They sought 'awareness', 'self-identity',
'liberation from psychological oppression', and some mythical 'black value-
system'. In contrast, the workers sought group solidarity and fought to improve
their standard of living, and the wordy statements that emanated from the Black
Consciousness Movement were meaningless to most of them: few, if any, of the
pretentious statements coming from these young 'leaders' had any bearing on their
lives. Both hated the white oppressor. But the young intellectual interpreted the
discrimination in racial terms; the worker offered no interpretation, but knew that
it was thw, factory boss and the host of supervisors, mostly white, who hated his
wty to better living conditions. The differences in understanding might n.ot have
been so very great, but the approach led the one group to endless philo.
sophising, while the working class tackled the real pro lent of ixphlitt;io1n and embarked on
extended strike action.
The limitations inherent in the workers' actions need to be stressed. They wanted
higher wages (and lower transport costs) and there was little effort to go beyond
this elemental form of struggle. To transcend these demands required a conscious
political organisation that could demonstrate the link between low wages and the
system of exploitation, and there was no such body in the country - or if it did
exist, it did not get the ear of the worker, SASO/BPC did not have that
understanding, and made little effort to reach the workers. There was,
consequently, no possibility of the economic struggle being linked to the Revolt that erupted in 1976. Throughout 1976-77,

of Olv Repolt continued strikes and some local cotititiiti struggics, inclututing al 1e11,41: olle extended bits boycott in Kintitierley," were appareellt ly ignorekt by (ile, survivors of SAS0111PC (st) sorely kectarriated hy police, ution). Tifeke squiln pilpils tt, whotli Ilie trianlcle of leadenstill pa.ssed, altered thefi, approach to tie working, class as (tie struggle gathetekl 1,41 tie mare exaet, tilclir verhal til(1,11ylleieiillet,y ellänged and hecamt. Inore faklial from july firougli kkb September. Later iltýikkYIIIICCIIlelits, ljovvvever, never matched Ilie. statements of tilitl-sc.litetilliet, provlaoffing Ilie centrality iii’ lite WoTkerl in securing elialige in Ilie country, whell Ilie kil’ 16 Junf, was first planled, Ilie studelltls Ihooglt ofily of flicir own resomces, Experience holugililt tilem radldly to lite realisation fikat they klopendel kit t tie assistance, proválek by fikcir parents, and by all the workers in Ilie township. By Augim ficy had called the workers out on a politieate strike, ankl Ificy faced Ilie ivrali oftie men tI'Mzilllllttpe Hostel who were turned ________ them. 115s inable them even more aware of Ilie need to wii Ilie confidence of the wy)rk(yr,,titt hy iiiii(I-Stpteiltilier ffley saw the importance of Ilie workers in lite struggle for ratlieal change. The recognition (lid not, unfortunately, lead to any changes in the central organisation of Ilie Revolt. The students did not, tir could rint, enlarge flicir Comittces, and tijley refeted ari invitation tojoi Ilie ANC - afflimigh their iberoetiel advanc, was partly due to Ilie contnet they hakl matte witil (lic externat iming of Congrem, 111C stutletits callekl upon Ilie workers for snipport, gave them tltietreitael rectignition of theif role, hut ditt not give su fficielt prorninencc to working class tiemands in their slogans or eumpnignis. Nor did tfeley take up Ilie indwstäl strikes as they enlergt (tie grill’ between thetriselves atid the men on lite factory flebor. Utltinately, when tite Revolt had pussd it% 1)eiLk, Ilie stutletnts turned inwards again, and lite slogans screamed Conclerkickl largely Witil ettification, and the selitiols. Tite central rote previously akerrite(1 tt) Ilie workers was replamt by (lie cull to Ilie worker to ‘participa(e liffly’ in fulurc struggles, The sudderi ernergencce offfic seliool pufik as a mobiffising hotly in t11C townships (tiok Ilie BLick ("oorincicitisesNy Wikvemt hy surprise. Although SASM (in particular) used sorric of Ilie hiiek conscitmástiess pliray, colýýgy, ficy owed nti:illegiiitec to SASO, But tficy did udw. Ilie sume langliakte as SASO/ 13PC. Mo(alýýtiviyiiie, ,itkott ifSANNI wm 111 týf't'.Nil(yibt o18ANO, aumerett as follows! ‘11 is not Cortec lit Nay that SANNI was an it'tf,Ott)itt o1NÁSO , , , we did no( hakbre in tillokl it) Copy what SASO way’ bitonig, Mit tilanv itlem% (11,It we tised to 1)týick-t, like, ilklaek ________ instanter. SA80 was alst, pereiciping." Mkot, tisKtlieritigile, frow fat lite wfool tikutbils wen, hy [ile atillommillert, ervatekt [bly SASOMPC tie retýlývt,. Blavk xý i enoveri did r-lav a kolv in skmimfumr 0141
Year of Fire, Year of Ash
Some of the leading members of SASM were in contact with the clandestine ANC, and that body, too, found it expedient to work within the framework of the Black Consciousness Movement. The youth at school, therefore, acquired the language of black consciousness from their political contacts. (The same applies, obviously, to the groups of youth who were in contact with the PAC. The latter movement, even more than the ANC, were inclined to accept the ideas of black consciousness uncritically.)
The students at school, particularly in the urban townships, were much closer to the community than were their seniors in the universities. Their aspirations were also lower. Some did hope to get to the universities, but most would seek employment when they left school. Their futures were very much less bright than those of their fellows in higher education. They would have to find employment locally in commerce or industry, and except for some clerical posts they were not particularly well trained for any occupation.
Their disadvantages were legion. White youth with similar (and even inferior) education would take many of the jobs they aspired to. There was, furthermore, a prejudice against employing those who emerged from the upper forms, because they would not be compliant enough. In the parlance of Whites, they would be 'too cheeky'. Prospects for employment, which had begun to improve in the late sixties when South Africa faced a shortage of skilled and semi-skilled personnel, were once again poor in the light of the severe depression after 1973.
The school pupils also faced problems in the schools which led to a growth of militancy on their part. The language of black consciousness might have 'sensitized' some of them, but it was the reorganisation of the secondary schools which led to the growth of political groupings. The chaotic conditions following the quadrupling of numbers allowed to enter the secondary schools was completely disruptive. Students forced to repeat the year, a lack of staff, shortage of accommodation, and packed classrooms, were not conducive to ordinary lessons being given, or being received.
The introduction of Afrikaans medium instruction was the final straw, and the schools became the centre of new disturbances. The events ff 1971 were the latest in a long history of school boycotts and strikes which extended from 1920 through to the 1960's, and although it would be stretching cedillity to speak of a continuity in the many episodes, there were common Wittu which contributed to the periodic flare-ups. There was the heavy handed paternalism and the shortage of resources, and there was, alst, the disjoint between what pupils were taught and their experience negligent. The prejudices, if not the lies, they encountered in their te octl tk... ruht only lead to disenchantment with the schooling they received. Of the 11 rift successes at school ran counter to the officially held Inythill htt twq -tr iof' capable of such attainment.
Traditions of struggle are rarely established in schools because the time is short, transience, and each event had the mark of uniqueness. Yet each demonstration, and every riot, had in the past prepared an increasing number of young men and women for the existing political movements. If

Anatomy of the Revolt

there were no such open movements to turn to, and this group of young people had themselves to become the political leaders of their community, while conducting the struggle in the schools. It was a role they were forced to adopt, and their inexperience allowed them to take some daring and surprisingly successful actions. But it also led to glaring errors, the first and foremost being their inability to establish a student-worker alliance, despite the claim made in the Thernbisa leaflet.

Motapanyane, in the interview he gave, was not questioned about the effect on scholars of the strikes and bus boycotts. Nor did the issue of unemployment. There is little reason to doubt that many pupils were affected by these events, and that their militancy was the natural outcome of the wider struggle, as well as of their discontent with conditions in the schools. Their perspectives, however, were shaped by their personal aspirations and, low as these were, they still hoped to secure better situations than the less fortunate push-outs. If they faced the prospect of unemployment, they were not brought closer to this large lumpen element. In fact, they desired more than ever to distance themselves from this class of youth. There is no way of knowing how many of these students wanted radical change in May 1976. Their hopes were probably very limited: they wanted the schools to function, they hoped they would halt the introduction of Afrikaans, and they also wanted jobs when they completed their schooling. Some undoubtedly went further, and wanted better education, without the distortions and open racism of Bantu Education. But very few spoke of unsegmented schooling, and nobody seems to have raised fundamental questions about the nature of education provided in South Africa. They wanted, at most, to receive tuition that would make them equals (in achievement) to their white peers. This was a radical demand in the South African circumstances, but not revolutionary.

The bourgeois framework that the black students had been introduced to in the schools was the same as that given to every South African child. It was designed to make products for a capitalist society – but for the Blacks, education for capitalism involved inferiority. The black youths' demand, therefore, was riot for a change in the educational system - only that it should cease being of a lower standard. And on that basis they were prepared to demonstrate and strike. It was only after the first clashes with the police, in May 1976, that their demands became more radical, and after 16 June small concessions would no longer satisfy their newfound aspirations. The entire system of Bantu Education had to go and, with it, much more had to be changed in the country. As long as the students were successful, their expectations soared and ever larger sections were radicalised. When the forces of the state seemed too great to counter, they cut their demands, and spoke only about schools and the education they hoped to receive. In the period of radicalisation they were able to transcend their one time petty bourgeois
expectations. When success no longer seemed feasible many turned their attention again to future careers and job opportunities despite their increased understanding and radicalisation.

Consciousness and (the Revolt)
Preceding the Revolt, the activists of Black consciousness, although most of the participants and publicisers for the movement were careful to deny that they had prepared to revolt by propagating their ideas. Nengwekhulu, one of the permanent heads of SASO, addressing the youth of I.U.E. F. Ill gave this.

Although the Black movement itself was not entirely to repudiate for what is going on in the country, it is not responsible for the information that the students to what they have, being South Africans is lack of idet. logy and fantasy are interwoven in this statement. The Black Movement had not organized SASO, nor were it the Ili who had spread or propagated the ideas of Black consciousness around the country, cutkinly thirtoglie SASO. One could say that it started spontaneously that pet ple have become what is not entirely the responsibility for what is going on in the country, but rather it is the responsibility of the SASO, 11PC and SASM.

One could say that the students started to organize for what is going in the country for a long time out of the students who have always suffered from being South Africans is lack of idet. logy and fantasy are interwoven in this statement. The Black Movement had not organized SASO, nor were it the Ili who had spread or propagated the ideas of Black consciousness around the country, cutkinly that the ideology which people could rally and fight against was not true.

This was not the case. Unless ill was not heard, Prepare to titer, democratization, and prepared to tirge that titer tiley stand fittri ill the face of P(ýlce Prøvoention, tite eveitits of Julie 16 could not lytave iiiitiýte(i yý ýev4lít ý ziri(, iifit hatten tlyt heen for tite matty gt(kipirgý til tite tewna ýhip, reýt(,ly (ti itippkýt( tite Yolitil in tite tilitilis thát followed, (Ile Revolt wýlllikl 11.I”. kNillýtpNøşk wtllliitt a few weeks, Tik ign(i, ic, tikk% backittollrul and say othile Revolt that it wýý is quite ulltrue.

Ilit. wa%, ratherimore, kviting wtleti be elainiril tital blýtke been propagated ‘irktnýt (Ile country’ atul iýiat %ASOIBIC bakl NtililliiNt tite ideology wtleti Blícks had prevòuly hickeil. The extent kik wliýtik tite ideolotty bad ýpret(t tetuttins and it iy vet to tie NIIkiwiit tilit black adeaquatrlry prsývikled lite ikkclltyy tibil W-11N Littr ilt til% addreikin, Nengweklitiilu datillled tktl lir l!VC! lìt WIN bl Ntisýttiy khan ýi%rtlcte tcek-aiii. Ilitý lir’ flâd their ýtífice lhert tind hrê,4u,,t,y SASM tvits errlly,(ýkl there ‘[lir lillýWilk’C kil SASM wî,> inlëtyl , rucial, Wilfikktl lhetyk tite iiiiti,iiivty kaken tty tyl ir l.ýiii(,ih til Ntleýdi Oìlart,ýi ltave l làted Hill fli< liolslic41
The simplistic approach in this account by Nengwekhulu was shown in his claim that the large strike wave was centred in Durban in 1970 [an incorrect date] because SASO had its head office there. Flow SASO affected the strike when (as Foszia Fisher was quoted as saying in Chapter Seven) they had no contact with, and no influence on the workers, is incomprehensible.

But the Black Consciousness Movement, by virtue of its name, and because of the publicity it received, has raised afresh the problem of 'consciousness' in South Africa. We have to ask, then, what consciousness means, and how populations acquire this mysterious ingredient. Even more crucially, the question is one of changing perceptions (or, again, consciousness), and the way in which such perceptions alter under conditions of political stress.

The problem has two distinct dimensions. Firstly there is the development of a political ideology which is usually maintained and propagated by small groups of people. Their understanding of the problems of the country, and the solutions they advance, provide a measure of 'consciousness'. The extent to which they are able to strip away surface phenomena and get to the root of the problems of their society, will ultimately help determine their role they will play, if and when there is revolutionary change in the country. Their final effectiveness will depend on the extent of mass support they call win during periods of transformation.

Secondly there is the problem of raising the 'consciousness' of the people, or of classes in the population. This is not achieved through study, and is not primarily the result of an accretion of understanding. To conceive of consciousness as some kind of linear process, leading to ever increasing understanding (whatever that might mean) is unreal. Social processes do not work in this simple fashion.

It was this problem of the way the masses came to revolutionary action that led Trotsky to an understanding of the social dynamics of revolution and can throw some light on our own problem. The passage quoted refers to the Russian Revolution, but has more general application: The point is that society does not change its institutions as need arises, the way a mechanic changes his instruments. On the contrary, society actually takes the institutions which hang upon it as given once for all, For decades the oppositional criticism is nothing more than a safety valve for mass dissatisfaction, a condition of the stability of the social structure,.. Entirely exceptional conditions, independent of the will of persons or parties, are necessary in order to tear off from discontent the fetters of conservatism, and bring the masses to insurrection.

The swift changes of mass views and moods in an epoch of revolution thus derive, not from the flexibility and mobility of man's mind, but just the opposite, from its deep conservatism. The chronic log of ideas and relations behind new objective conditions, right up to the moment when
the latter crash over people in the form of a catastrophe, is what creates in a period of revolution that leaping movement of ideas and passions which seems to the police mind a mere result of the activities of 'demagogues'. The masses go into a revolution not with a prepared plan of social reconstruction, but with a sharp feeling that they cannot endure the old regime. Only the guiding layers of a class have a political programme, and even this still requires the test of events, and the approval of the masses...Trotzky then outlined the process of change during a revolution, where once again there are jumps of consciousness which are ever leftwards as long as there are no objective obstacles. Thereafter there is a reaction. Disappointments lead to the growth of indifference, and with this the growth of counter-revolutionary forces. The situation in South Africa was not revolutionary, and there was- tever any possibility of overthrowing the regime. Nonetheless the dynamics, of group or class consciousness described above are applicable both to process during the Revolt, the changed attitude to funerals being only one example of tile 'leaping movement of ideas' and tile lengthy period of political inertia which preceded tile Revolt.

It is when the masses entei into the historic process in order to diaiige society that parties and leaders acquire an increased importalice. They constitute not an independent, but nevertheless a very irlortant element in the process. Without a guiding organisation the energy 4t tht masses would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a pistonotx. It nevertheless what moves things is not the piston or the box, hut the sth;uum. The central point, in this set of observations by Trotsky, was that the understanding that came to large groups of men and women in society was 'independent of the will of persons and parties'. Only when conditions were propitious would the innate conservatism be overcome, and people would move to insurrection. Then, and only then, would parties act as guides to large sections of society, and move outside the narrow group activities it which they had previously been confined.

When the masses burst through the constraints that had hound them, they would, in varying degrees, be receptive to the messages offered then by political organisations, But they were not passive receptacles for the pr. grammes of any and every group. In many cases the masses created their own organisations that were far in advance of the established parties, anti created new institutions to meet their new political needs. It was the politic part, s that tended to lag behind in consciousness at these stages. In the Revolt of 1976, it was the school pupils who were pushed to the fo(re by thie events in Soweto, Cape Town and elsewhere, and they were able to take up the challenge where the Black Consciousness Movement faltered and was left behind. And it was during the height of the Revolt tat the clandestine ANC. in particular, was able to join the students in orgatising soue of the vaolit important activities of the Revolt, All that was still to come when SASO/HIPC first raised the matter of
consciousness, In none of their writinpg did they recognise that the develop. ment of consciousness would follow paths that were independent of their

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that. wtcu d liliert , and in faet le t cach bl ack mutn and w ill tit discover anew
their 'perstnial identity'.
The clearest expositiojn of this approach to personal renuascencc w as pioducell
by D)rake Koka, (>ne ni' the ihunding latlior o ni te BIV, In ai short dicumniit
titled '0n bfluck K:)ensit>tsiies.K and bluck solidaurity', lic stated:
Through this philosophy cif Black B'ncouns lack ptuople coulil be
led onto the road of vdicn'... Til. wt)tild evenitualy Jcud to the
selfassertion nf ite Black man's Inner piride, of thie T1 in ini and liras
strerigthen bimi to accept or reject with conifiderie certain things that are being
donc for himi (kr on his beliau' . io. will ckvolop ani attitilde (If %ciireliance
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As sooni as lihieks tieore coniis of t hiselvos ais at fienpe and
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social, poltetil, economicl and Cutlural Spiterm of the C<s)ltni miy ty of willich
they are part, they would be able to deteratine titeir destin'.
Koka, fottander andil Sceretary-(:etierat of Ite lack AfflJtd Workets Union, suid
that that orgarititioti would ]have been usut '... to cultivate thie woiki'rs at grass
ronis lev el. They bad to be mmade aware iii Ittir pittetilti, uuril iigtli' icence in the
job situatlon.'8
Tbc process cif mtaking people aware or' their potenil, ani oj, hilliiig lself-reliance'
was culled leonscientisatis(,n'. Again, in Iete wordfs ni' Koka.
Conscientisation is the process through wliich people aite matdc :onlscig)us
of themselves as persons, their culture and their socio-economic conditions, their political position and their spiritual awareness. The avenues or methods to be used would be through a person to person contact, group discussions, lectures, leadership courses, public rallies, schools, community development programmes, theatre, art, music, attire and every conceivable platform where the message could be carried across to large numbers of people.

The programme of conscientisation' would be advanced, said Koka, through ASSECA (to encourage Blacks 'to see to the education of their children'); BAWU (for creating awareness amongst workers); SASO and SASM; BPC (the training ground for worthy future rulers of any [sic] country); IDAMASA and Af'tA (where the Black man would he made aware of his spiritual values'); the BCP (to make the Black Community aware of their social needs such as health centres, creches, home crafts etc.); and finally the Peoples Experimental Theatre which would reach the people through drama 'and other cultural fields'. The concept that Koka used was so wide that it is difficult to see where it coincides with the 'raising of consciousness' used by politicians. The programme that lie outlined, consisted of a mixed bag of social welfare, social responsibility, and liberal do-gooding. The programme for women can only he called reactionary, and the political content of the entire set of proposals is (or was) of little relevance to the black workers.

So far as SASO/BPC performed a political task, their work led to the formation of small groups of intellectuals, mainly on the university campuses. who undoubtedly absorbed and espoused the ideas of the Black Consciousness Movement. They acquired an 'awareness' through the groups they joined, and in this sense SASO/BPC raised the consciousness of a minute section of the black population.

The establishment of a group with a political orientation was no mean feat in the 1970's in South Africa. Ikspite all our criticisms, tile work oh Koka, Tiro, Biko, Pityana, Nengwekhulu and their comrades, locked in contention with the government almost from the inception, was a significant factor in two respects. Firstly, it allowed them to organise groups on the black campuses, anti it brought them together with cler;4, writers,journalists and other intellectuals, into an organisation that developed a distinctive identity. Through their language, songs, meetings and writings they generated a corporate spirit, and that Pve them an intern strength. This did ot make them a homogeneous group. There were differences at all levels, and we ham rot investigated these closely, because their unity was more prominent lhan the issues that seemed at timers to divide them internally.

The second factor was equally important. In the words of Fanon (quoted in Chapter Seven) they made 'the people dream dreamV'. Or at least, they did manage to get their message through to some groups of people who wore
of rh<, Revf dt

see king a lit il it ica l n Iv, SS4W ý m Il were :dtyä d y i tt ca fl å lig (k ca ix is. Vtv c iSCIY 11(iw they retellekl (Irer[ alltionoccc %fill lii lic CXýløtk'kkl, Sktille \velc ilititiiblt)e(7liy ilittftciecel af gatlivfingm. Olltels wen- mm af ffc commmultiv polivets filat were ;111(1 lleew welc Aso petsons Å4,1141 wele glivädy socking a

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live moves towat(1,- tlic Islack SCc111% týat ffie opposition spokesmen fiotil Lchowii attkl wltts ivere expelted Ironi llie Black Rcnaiswwc Cotivention, at Ille of menillers of SA80 (sec Chajitet Svwii 1, Imkl tifiý,!.iiiiyilly heell illvilekl (51 ått(Inkly hy titese 11k111101 111i011110

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Year of"Fire, Year of'Ash
Attivell: So you would not agie that the black worker sphere is in
fact the main sphere in which blacks can lie most effective,
fiko: Not now, certainly."
Biko was ambivalent on the matter of 'fundamental change'. Even in that case it
was only a possibility. In the short run, the workers were not the torj,t that Biko
looked to. lie was to repeat his attitude in January 1977 when he met with Bruce
Haigh of the Australian Embassy in South Africa. Woods reprints Haigh's
account, in which the following was stated:
Given the present attitude of the Nationalist government, liko felt the
prospect for peaceful change in South Africa was not good. He believe,
however, that protests and boycotts had helped to some extent, and he cited the
sport policy adopted by most countries towards South Afriwc as an example.
Despite National party stateimients lie believed they Wre
sensitive to outside pressure, although a lot more was needed before Vht would
consider making tile basic changes necessary to reniove ti re syst'
of apartheid.'
Biko had told Woods, it appears, that he l e hd liked Bruce l i gh t th at li 'O
1completely candid with him'. lie appeared to have ti.scuicled nlld . iq ue Haigh,
but there is no record of any statenmett hat the wotkers wotld ih considered as a
force in any way. I le was certirl that spori Vi , w t I he said in his court
appearance, because:
I think unless white people in this country ire illogical, if you are ,
mix on the sports fields and mix firllly, as is eventually goillg t hrpljqe then you
have to think about other areas of your activity. you h r ve Y .
think about cinemas, you have to think about shows and daning A10 1 .
on, you have to think about political rights. It is a snowball etftet. at t .
outside world is mierely tackling this to bring to tire minds of while ,
Africa that we have got to think about change, and change is art Irreses,' 
process, because I believe in history moving in a direction whmrthi ich, r :
to a logical end.'3
Black Consciousness as an Ideology
Black consciousness, as a composite set of political, legal, religious,, o4Wat
philosophical ideas, or in other words as art ideology, was used hiioth t organise
groups and to define the nature of the struggle in the cos ot i these ideas to which
we must address ourselves next.
From the inception of such an investigation there is a basic difficulty, because the many persons who made statements about back coro r e differed on many points. It is in the nature of broad, umbrella cou i'rtt- &

4 Ati *~ the Re'volt
thley at i aei d ivers-e gik nps WLIi ofte tileil k)Wnit ip t ati ir ' wlat tie ønneepe nteant. hkn k.il'titldg lac.k, åt i likn b:; k sieeie ti i be tile baic ei M~ nN ØVl HMIOi is, t liat iei is g t Litt lke acts anil tite tiliLiugitLý Blikt, foti1 l l, tud I nitt tt ategi M ab 'hat tiwe' is no stielt tidlig aNi a Ilbkek pUljemmn. Any Black manli witt PrOPS Hnw system UMW hati el kMn Hm~ ~ler to b)eing coni tiered part ni the Jthik world .lby are the extrewions of thbe ette my i to nu r rankL~ I 4
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hiardel fildelfilile. Ill (it iii' ti Llttl ' It I i L ole hul 1 It'I I i tQkd. cqlile itt I' Li i iliLlL, V Ù e i e,~ lii il 1 11v k il 15illl anti eljiiilek tb.it tint i o I o i i i i i i i i i i i i i 1st VI i,ii: fii111 i e e ' p' n %v'1 Il ÿi yiiiitiiii illow ý iig 16i inne weln hlumnul tu i taw Il,su4Nun", mW kw ~e' ~ Sii høitiitl Ute cue'l, u 01 sy 'esnld uveile 41 t .w slum .u~ INa Mw hui? r'aciuiun enuld not bei .;ill ii Sl'ls Mueh llhar lu 10 l li:le~ lunta leine thie CUGWM"i~' iit0wa day, h~s~ xl' a w4, iuut I be N" Iills illiL
j-:i:t: wtı nnvLlis ,~ ~lv imuy di.Is..L(i il iintie evte'Ills tiyii fl lwed tite %lnhtW l i , d i hi.a " Iktitiit ng.;; i .iw lv. i iļyū le killedk. Sonne of Lhese ad iAl L I' oL' itnonll'il pat n'sw i hm t m01 ite 1w M i omi u by uvuk i]XWlll S ighet' Li lii gi Ai mi dfn gi ii e of fltse'Li hal .d titiinity. 15 alli' tlekin'S'o SiS nu om %b tlltiit lii liit ill itiki, å niockery tii lii liti""'ss*a dkl1 I trrls'ap Lnilid;w OL ila eli 4i tin uett turtuer, Muæetin dr:intg wsi on 'blg' aind aji.'g'id in t tluant olf thec Utident tildy wIn ommn iin iud t,4%'i dtw for1 dì tìvi soilig Ne a151 klitid it funeral<ii
ømdimem be~ em*! msh'u tin ei dun tnih nui tr nmoi gbniitii in tilly lthe ns 001 'tiSgJ10,frei isslitr;un 0 'iidii t

Year of Fire, Year of Ash
concept as it was used, but none of the many words caught tile anget that helped shape tile ideas. The fury of the youth was reflected ill the poetry, rather than in
the formal statements, Some of this verse was included as evidence against the SASO/BPC Nine:
When did the revolution/war begin?
It began the day the whiteman put his foot on the land.
It began when your forefathers were brought in chains to work the fields
They killed Chaka --- it began
They killed Dingaan - it began
They incarcerated Sobukwe
Mandela
Sisulu - it began
Now it is on - the revolution
- because they killed Brother SIEZI - because they muted our Leaders 17
At times the bitterness crept into talks and there was always the feeling, in all that was said, that these young men and women had had enough. One declaration that caught the spirit of how they felt was voiced by Nyanlieko Pityana:
Many people would prefer to be colour-blind: to thea skill pigmenation is merely an incident to creation. To us it is soniethig much iter
fundamental: it is a synonym for subjection, an identification for tht dis.
handed, the discarded people and the wretched t the eth.
The definition of black consciousness, extracted t'tl ni plograhnlatak statements avoided the emotive tones, and. colltailed sonic eswilili poils. The major themes included a liberatii i ftrm ptyhilological iViprm ssui, ie building ofa new awareness, the establishment of a new basit dignitv, (lie framing of a new attitude of mind, a.l rediscovrer' iif the history of th proph', and a cultural revival. These seemed to be the major components of the dClturie, a s cinmniated by members of SASO and BP(. They marked black ciomiooust ss, ill Ktka' words, as an 'introspective' philosophy, as a toad to '.elf' discovery, aid as a programmme for self-realisaton.
There were few attempts to build up a political docttile, alld the statements that were made periodically on race, cilour, (ri til ally ol the structural probenis in South Africa, were unforturniately very supe fic'il. Before looking at these, it is necessary to establish the fact that the re were two prongs to the slogans that are listed above. Firstly, there was tie call Ito every Black to seek a new inner strength and
assert his Itional right to freedom. Secondly, there was an appeal to the past glories of the people: to the history and the culture that they had been deprived of by the white conquerors.

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Year of Fire, Year of Ash
at one point to raise an army and march South. Howe's appraisal (harsh and polemical as it was) applies to some of Malcolm X's South African counterparts: For the Negroes in his audience, he offered the relief of articulating subterranean feelings of hatred, contempt, defiance, feelings that did not have to be held in check because there was a tacit coincidence that the talk about violence would remain talk...

*.. Malcolm alone among the Negro spokesmen was authentic because . well, because finally he spoke for no thing but his rage, for no proposal, no plan, no program. just a sheer outpouring of anger and pain. And that they could understand.

*.. Malcolm, intransigent in words a obilisthr: in reality, never invoked the possibility of ceilitatirm .f ui xated stiluggle. he never posed tile problems, con fusions and risks lf lia noCuvei, Corlpmromise, retreat. Brilliantly Malcoli spoke ftr a rejection so e oilpte it transformed him into an apolitical spectator...

Black Consciousness and the Rejection of Class Analysis
The leaders of SASO/BPC did not offer any serious new thoughts on the question of racism and colour, and usually dismissed the question of class as being irrelevant. Pityana's approach was typical. this assertion, with little argument, was that colour was the central problem. This was followed by the arbitrary rejection of 'class' as a central factor, and then a lateral statement which allowed him to avoid the whole problem. In his Power and social change in South Africa he stated:
My justification for using colour as a determinant for effectual meaningful social change is well spelt out by Sir Allen Burns in the book Colour Prejudice:
As colour is the most obvious manifestation of race, it has been made the criterion by which men are judged, irrespective of their social or educational attainments, ‘rite light-skinned races have come to despise all those of a darker colour, and the dark-skinned peoples will no longer accept without protest their inferior position...
I know some critics will differ with this thesis. They hold that the crux of the Issue is not so much a colour question but one between the haves and have-nots, Some will even argue that it is basically a class struggle. I believe that a classless society will be created more easily among Blacks, Black consciousness can then be seen as a stage preceding any invasion, any abolition, of the ego by desire.
Pityana granted that some of his critics would argue that the central problem related to class and class struggle. He neither examined nor refuted the position, but moved to the assertion of black moral superiority. They

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would 'more easily' create a classless society, and the class struggle was removed by a sleight of land. Precisely what the last sentence of the quotation meant is not clear, but presumably it equates classlessness with some control of the ego and of desire. Socialism and communism were not mentioned, and the desirable political state was left vague. The first stage was black consciousness, and all else would follow.

It seemed, however, that not 'all Blacks' (Pityana's phrase) aspired to higher values. There was a black middle class, said Mafika Pascal Gwala, editor of the 1973 Black Review, and an exponent of black consciousness. These were the leaders of the lomelaids-governing councils, the nienliders o the Coloured and the Indian Councils, and those who owed their position to 'the white designers of Separatism'. For Gwala, as for Biko, such people were not Blacks: they were 'ion-whites'.
The rot, it seems, had gone further. There were black (or 'non-white') journalists who 'concentrate oil coating the pill to make white lies more palatable'. There were also many others:
The purpose here today is to set to it that the intellectual decides whether to uphold superior status or is ready to phase himself out of the role of being carrier of a white official culture. It is here that we have to begin to accept and promote the truth that we cannot talk of Black Solidarity outside of class identity. Because as our black brother has put it, it is only the elite that are plagued by the problem of identity. Not the mass of the Black people, The common Black people have had no reason to worry about blackness. They never in the first place found themselves outside or above their context of being black. But the student, the intellectual, the theologian, are the ones who have to
Mafika Gwala, although he spoke of Blacks, had Africans in mind. The majority of Coloureds and Indians had not found a basis for identification with Africans, and their intellectuals were still debating, painfully, about their identity as Blacks. It is not altogether certain whether Gwala's assertion about the common Black (African) people was correct. Many (or even most) were not plagued with the problem of identity, but not because they had achieved a class identity. They were black, and they knew they were black. They knew it because they were placed in that context in South Africa. Writing about this, Ezekiel (Zik) Mphahlele said:

Having been born into the dark side of a segregated existence, I've never been encouraged to think anything except that I'm black. For three hundred years this has been drummed into our heads; first by cannon fire, then by acts of parliament, proclamations and regulations. Our minds have been so conditioned that a number of our responses have become reflex: everywhere, instinctively, we look around for separate public lavatories,

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Train coaches, platforms, hospitals. Instinctively, we make sure that wherever we are, we have permits in the form of passes to stay in a particular location, to work or look for work in a particular town, to leave a particular farm, to leave a white man's farm, to look for work in a district.

The question of 'identity', where it was taken up, was the unique problem of one section of the petty bourgeoisie, who sought a political role for themselves. Gwala was correct in stating that this group of petty bourgeois intellectuals had to take a class position in solving the problem. They had in part absorbed particular ethical values, and these were not necessarily foreign. They were the all-pervading values of capitalism, and the students were educated 'to fit into an environment, not change it', as Mphahlele said of his own school experience.

Having seen, even if only partially, that the problem was one of class identity, it was incumbent on Gwala to spell out the consequences, and explain how 'class identity' fitted with 'black identity'. Blacks who did not agree with Gwala had to be seen not as 'not nwhites', but as class enemies. This would also require that those Whites who were not class enemies (because they were prepared, as Gwala demanded, to forget their petty bourgeois interests) be accepted as allies.

It was possible that Gwala, in his black consciousness role, was not really talking about class identity, and was not prepared to think in terms of class struggles. He certainly did not, discuss the political situation in South Africa in class terms, and that lessened the impact of what could have been a significant statement for those who sought a better understanding of the nature of exploitation in South Africa. The failure of Gwala to clarify the issue of class left the Black Consciousness Movement in limbo. There did not seem to be any consistency in the way this problem was tackled in the few years left to SASO/BP1C before they were banned in October 1977. There were a few who sought to extend the concept of
class. Diliza Mji, President of SASO in 1977, stated in his address to the annual congress that 'class interests will always affect the political outlook of people', and that students had to abandon 'middle-class interests' and the corrupting influence of luxuries in the lives of African professional men. But Mji, and even Gwala, proved to be exceptions. The more common view on the subject was to deny that class had any significance for the Blacks, and clothe black aspirations in some mystique of black exclusiveness. Illaku Rachidi, President of BPC, made a statement at a press conference, following the death of Biko. During the interview he expounded on the nature of black consciousness. Black consciousness is not a foreign concept. That is, it is neither capitalism, communism nor Western socialism — hence the ease with which the people understand, accept and adapt themselves to it.

Black Consciousness abhors and detests both capitalism and colonialism with equal contempt, they are both oppressive, one way or another. Black Consciousness is founded on the conviction that blacks being in entity with a history and legacy of standards, political, social and economic; that the black race has an innate ability and capacity to learn, assimilate and adopt that which is good without alienating himself. There were, for Blacks (suitably defined to exclude 'non-whites') presumably, no class divisions and no class struggles. They aspired to a system they called black Communalism, and would opt out of this wicked world of capitalism, colonialism, and Western socialism. The ideal system, adopted by the BPC as their programme, was to be: 'a modified version of the traditional African economic life-style which is being geared to meet the demands of a highly industrialised and modern economy. That is (as the programme explained), a highly centralised state, with rationalised transport, banks and industries; a state controlled trade union movement; and a private capitalist sector engaged in agriculture, commerce and industry. The Black Consciousness Movement and Black Business

The BPC economic blueprint, which envisaged the setting up of a corporate state economy, looked to the future. It could only hope to achieve this end (if the black population accepted this as part of its aspirations), after the country had been 'liberated'. Until that was achieved, they had to shape their economic stake inside existing capitalist institutions. Pityane addressed himself to this problem and urged that they 'see themselves as a functional monolithic structure'. He urged: 'Work towards a self-sufficient political, social and economic unit, for a meaningful change to the status quo'. This was confusion of the very worst sort. There was no possibility of building any position of non-dependence in South Africa, and no way in which black workers, farm labourers, or people in the Reserves could build 'self-sufficient' economic units. What the independent political and social units were supposed to be was never disclosed. Ed. Nor was it clear how these self-sufficient units, or the
sense of prnite attained, wa% going to produce Imeaningful change to the status qu'.

S.M. Motsuenyarie, President of the Natiotal African Federated Chabxlert of Commnerce, also looked to black concit isneh ht his.1 aim was to build up African entrepreneurship, li goal was not econoic leif.suftinieny. hut rather a 'sharedleonomy of part nership' with the Whites, He wanted tot give the Blacks 'a real sktake in the country's economy', and tie right to contibuite 'to the overall economic growth of the country', ' ie spoke in the now fanmiliar language o SASO/BP( ofa 'new intellectual atnd psychological climate', of 'the flowering of a new African persoialty', and tf the 'tvtei coming tf a pervasive rise of subjection, humiliation antd inferiority. ,'

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He continued:
All of us ought therefore to be thankful for the new day of Black Consciousness ... We have every reason to feel proud of what the Lord intended us to be: Human beings, no less than other men! We owe no man an apology for being created Black. Let us therefore echo the slogan of the times: Black is Beautiful!a”

Mr. Motsuenyane demanded higher wages for workers and their right to organise trade unions. But this was not entirely disinterested; he also protested against the fact that 70 to 80 per cent of black buying power was 'dissipated in the white area'. He wanted a higher African income, and he wanted the money to come his way. Hence he argued that:
Something very urgent should be done to curb the steady flow of Black profits and investments into White areas. It is the Black people themselves who must take steps towards solving this problem. A project such as the Black Bank will help to keep our funds circulating among the African people themselves. 'the Black Bank atone is not enough, We are called upon to create as rapidly as we can our own Supermarkets, Chain Stores, Wholesalers, Factories, Insurance Companies and Building Societies etc.
The Central Government should constantly be prevailed upon to open opportunities for Black Development even in the urban locations.3’

This was followed by a seven point programme to achieve economic advancement. The sense of inferiority had to be overcome, African business ventures started, the Homelands developed agriculturally and industrially, more formal and technical education provided and black trade unions formed.

Steve Biko, who was always on the radical wing of the Black Consciousness Movement, also thought along these lines. He condemned 'capitalistic exploitative tendencies' and called for business co-operatives, but he wanted money spent by Blacks to stay within the community: 'We should think along such lines as the "buy black" campaign once suggested in Johannesburg and establish our own banks or the benefit of the community.2

The African Bank, so desired by supporters of the Black Consciousness Movement was set up in November 1975. One year later it had branches in
BophutaTswana, KwaZulu, Transkei and in Soweto. It had over 2,000 individual customers, and was able to provide personal loans and finance hire purchase transactions. But the scope of its business was restricted by short age of funds, and in the first six months of 1976 it was able to provide only five loans and handle an average of 25 hire purchase agreements per month. Even if its capital had been expanded ten-fold it is hard to see how this would have made any difference to the position of the country's black population, The BCP, in setting up small business enterprises in the Western Cape and elsewhere, did not raise their finances from this bank. Instead, they turned to the giant mining and finance group, the Anglo-American Corporation, for

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grants to fund some of their projects.

When eventually, in October 1977, the black consciousness groups were banned and their finances confiscated, the clinics and the businesses operated by the BCP were taken over by the government. These included several small manufacturing concerns, a trust fund to help Former political prisoners re-establish themselves economically, and several small businesses, including a boutique in the Western Cape. The businesses were not run as co-operatives, but were directed by leading members of the BCP who received directors' salaries.

The BCP had, by that time, spawned a considerable bureaucracy and a group of men and women who had a stake in the businesses that had been set up. The banning of their organisation ended their jobs, their salaries, and probably their business careers. Many were also detained and their futures jeopardised. As victims of state repression they earned widespread sympathy - but many had lost all contact with the people they had set out to 'uplift'. As a student critic said:

The extent of the funds flowing into the organisations (which had proliferated) generated a bureaucracy, and a dependence. The ominous feature of organisations which have easy access to funds is that they lose contact with the people on whom they used to depend for legitimacy and material and moral support.

The Petty Bourgeoisie: Urban and Rural

There was little doubt about the hostility shown by members of the black consciousness groups towards the leaders of the Homelands' governments. They were condemned again and again, and the whole policy of separatism was rejected unconditionally. The men who worked the system were condemned as 'parasites', 'collaborationists', and 'middle class separatists'.

These appellations were in most cases apposite and, in the four volumes of Black Review that were published, references were repeatedly made to the venality of Homelands government leaders, to their ill-gotten riches, to their class snobbery, their three-star hotels and beauty salons, and so in,yy

Most Homelands leaders did not bother to reply. They had the power they wanted, and they were prepared to lock up their opponents. Iluthelezi of KwaZulu felt differently. lie had his own political ambitions which extended beyond the borders of his fragmented reserve area, and was not prepared to concede the field
to SASO or BPC. In fact he had contempt for the young persons and maintained that he was the proponent of black liberation. He also sought to describe his black opponents in class terms and sought to use the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin (as he understood them) to condemn the young intellectuals as petty bourgeois.

The occasion was, ironically, the opening ceremony of the Akulu Chemicals plant at Isithebe in KwaZulu. The finances had been supplied by West Germany's Akzo Chemie, and Buthelezi justified the presence of foreign investments and assured his visitors that their investment would be safeguarded. He then chided his critics by citing Lenin. The issue that Buthelezi chose, was the attack on people who were against the spread of capitalist industries in the colonies, which alone would create the conditions for the oppressed people to struggle for their emancipation. Only small businessmen, and intellectuals without roots in the society, said Buthelezi, could oppose what Engels had called 'the revolutionising of all traditional relations by industry'.

Buthelezi quoted this, claiming that it was taken from a paper presented recently by a black journalist, and that he was offering it without comment.

Over R3 million was invested in the new factory, and after two years of operation the total black workforce employed in the plant would be 45. The total profits expected and the share thereof accruing to the KwaZulu government were not supplied. The government bureaucracy would expand, but the creation of the revolutionising proletariat - all 45 of them - would not make much impact on the local society.

Yet, leaving Buthelezi's sophistry aside, the description of the members of the Black Consciousness Movement as petty bourgeois was not entirely incorrect, not because they opposed foreign investments, but because many of them aspired to the positions in commerce and industry that they condemned in the Homelands leaders. Buthelezi (and to a greater extent Matanzima and other leaders) operated on a scale that the urban youth could never emulate. To a large extent, Buthelezi and company used their government appointed roles to enrich themselves. The BCP directors operated on a much smaller scale, and faced the danger of government expropriation. But their aspirations were not dissimilar. Under other conditions, they would compete, as did their peers in independent black African states, for control of the limited resources open to them. In South Africa, they competed from different positions and different geographic locations. The leaders of the Reserves used the apartheid structures to enrich themselves. The rural petty bourgeoisie used (white) state patronage; the urban petty bourgeoisie, under constant threat of removal to the Reserves, had to oppose the state and its controls.

From everything said by Buthelezi and his associates, the leaders of Idatha saw themselves as leaders of a future 'internal settlement'. They wanted a peaceful handover to majority rule, with themselves as the rulers. 'But they also knew that, if the apartheid policy was made to work, their position in KwaZulu was assured. Either way, as they saw it, they would win.'
The urban opposition, on the other hand, were totally opposed to the Homelands policy. Politically it was anathema. But economically it was also unacceptable, and their own futures were bound up with the fate of a unified larger South Africa.

In making such sweeping generalisations we are doing an injustice to many young men and women, who would be prepared to surrender their petty bourgeois status and work for a revolutionary transformation of the country.

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The events of 1976-77 were a clear indication of the seriousness with which the youth, both urban and rural, were prepared to struggle. When eventually politics moved out of the realm of talk, and the struggle against apartheid was taken into the streets, Buthelezi and the other Reserve leaders stood up as the protectors of private property and of the status quo. Many of the more vocal Black Consciousness spokesmen retired into the background, but some found a place amongst the militant crowd: the tragedy at that stage was that the ideology they had espoused offered them no guidelines in the struggle they had spoken about for so long.

When the black consciousness organisations were banned, Inkatha remained intact. More than that, the moderate Committee of Ten obtained support front the Soweto branch of Inkatha, and it was also Inkatha's rejection of the elections to the Urban Bantu Council that allowed the boycott to go forward with such widespread support. Although the Homelands policy was still largely rejected, the failure in the past to discuss Buthelezi's political opportunism allowed his organisation to continue its career unimpeded. All the available literature, however, indicates that Buthelezi (with all his faults) would have been acceptable to the overwhelming majority of SASO and BPC, if only he had refused to accept office in the KwaZulu ministry.

The extent of co-operation between leading members of Inkatha and members of the Black Consciousness Movement has not always been clear. It would be incorrect, however, to believe that the organisations had no overlap of membership. Dr. Nyermibezi, Inkatha's leading spokesman in Soweto, and H. Bhengu, also of Inkatha, were both members of the board of directors of the Black Community Programmes in 1977.9 Since 1975, the BCP had been by far the most active body inside the Black Consciousness Movement, and was responsible for issuing Black Review, organised the Movement's clinic, the co-operatives and the trust fund for political prisoners. Steve Iliko and many prominent personalities in the black organisations were employed by BCP in one or other of their projects that is, until they were barred or incarcerated. The appearance of Inkatha members on the BPC's inner councils of this key organisation made the party almost wholly committed to working with those who had previously been its ideological opponents, or their peers.

The issue went far beyond collaboration and working in government created institutions, and SASO/ BPC relations never settled that Bluthelezi and his Inovenrelt represented the newly emergent petty bourgeoisie in the Reserves. Buthelezi was not merely a man who worked in an apartheid body,
but a man determined to protect his interests of his class. To claim that he could be supported if only he resigned from the KwaZulu government indicated that the Black Consciousness Movement had failed to understand the basic dynamic behind the Inkatha movement. This failure was no academic error, and in 1977 it was Buthelezi who was left with an impenetrable base in Natal, with massive workers' support, a clean sweep in the KwaZulu election, and increasing support in the urban townships.

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In order to undermine, if not oust him, it was necessary to go beyond the use of epithets. Describing the Bantustan leaders as 'middle class' was insufficient. Their place in the context of capitalism and of capitalist state relationships had to be explained. This the members of SASO/BPC/BCP were not prepared to do because that would have required an interpretation of South African politics in class terms, not in terms of ethnicity, race, or colour. That alone might have led some of the Black Consciousness Movement leaders to a new understanding of the nature of South Africa, and allowed them to avoid the confusion which only promoted the fortunes of Buthelezi. In the process they would, in the words of Cabral, have committed 'class suicide', and taken a clear class stand with the proletariat against discrimination and exploitation. This would not have appreciably affected the outcome of the Revolt, but it would have given them a new base to prepare for the struggle which must come.

References
2. There is little information on this bus boycott. It started on 26 June 1977 and continued for over 3 weeks. See SANA, July 1977/4.
4. R. Nengwekhulu, op. cit.
5. Leon Trotsky, (1932), The Russian Revolution, (Gollancz), Preface.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Personal communication from a leading delegate to the Black Renaissance Convention.
12. Ibid., pp.94-5.
13. Ibid., p.144.
The consciousness of being black, or at least of being different, has a history that stretches back through the centuries in Southern Africa. The existence, side by side, of conqueror and conquered, settler and native, master and man (or woman), slave owner and vassal, immediately introduces a knowledge of difference. The factor of colour only helps to stress the separation between interloper and victim. But the consciousness of being black (or brown, or yellow) was not the same as black consciousness. The first marked an obvious physiological difference, while the second introduced connotations of social or political awareness. There would be little purpose in attempting to list those occasions on which 'consciousness' was seen to be raised. Any movement inside a community, ranging from the rallying of a tribe behind traditional institutions, through to the mobilisation of a large section of the population in a political organisation would
have to be included. And the significance that each such move had for the community on a local or national plane would depend as much on conditions outside the will of the persons concerned, as on the effect of the organisations on their communities at the time.

Even a rough classification presents some difficulties. There were moves within tribes that aimed at restoring or replacing a chief; at retaining land or expanding land resources; at uniting the tribe or splitting it. There were moves to found local (and sectional) organisations to defend the interests of communities small and large: organisations of the Indian people by Mahatma Gandhi, or of the Coloured people by Dr. Abdurahman, and of the African people, in the Reserves, in the Provinces, and then nationally.

The organisations formed were not all ostensibly political, although most had political implications. There were the separatist churches, starting in the Cape in 1884, and there were industrial organisations commencing with the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (ICU) in 1919 in Cape Town, and spreading to the four Provinces by 1923. There were also township groups which emerged to fight a particular regulation - involving part of or, at times, the entire local population. In many cases our knowledge of these bodies is shadowy, and it is not always possible even to trace the smaller

Black Consciousness in South African History groups that were merged together when such activity was conceived and planned. And what is conceived so dimly in the urban townships has often been completely overlooked in the rural areas. The many revolts in the rural hinterland are only now being rediscovered by fresh research work. Only when much more is known will we be able to chart the ups and downs of consciousness in the larger communities of the country.

It was not only the revolts that marked upsurges of awareness. They were only those manifestations of stirrings most obvious in an area and most easily observed by the historian. The local separatist church, the chiliastic leader, the defiant chief, the stirrings against agricultural innovation leading to the overturning of dip tanks, or the pulling up of survey pegs and the tearing down of fences all represent some awareness that, by being expressed, marked a change in the community.

The way by which these changes are subsequently described is of little interest to the people involved at the time. Their slogans and banners do not proclaim 'We are aware', but are far more prosaic and to the point. It is the prerogative of the social scientist to say, usually at a later date, that there was an 'awareness' or a growth of consciousness, and to add, dependent on his or her viewpoint, that it represented a growth of national, racial, colour, or class consciousness.

There are occasions, however, when the initiators of a new movement themselves use the language of 'awareness', and claim that a new 'identity' is being established. Members of Marxist movements debate the growth of 'trade union' or of proletarian and class consciousness, which they counterpose to petty bourgeois or bourgeois interests. Members of nationalist movements speak of national awareness or of identity, and deny the existence of class divisions inside an
oppressed people. To ask whether this is or is not 'false consciousness', is to miss the point. What have to be sought are the class interests of the men and women who use these concepts, and these can usually be located by examining the activities they engage in, and charting the course of their organisational activities. The most explicit statements on black awareness, from inside the national liberation movement, were those made by members of the Congress Youth League in the mid-1940's. The CYL had had a long gestation. Groups of young African intellectuals, some of them graduates of the Anglican secondary school, St. Peters, in Johannesburg, others graduates of or expelled from Lovedale, Hlalldtown, Adams, Fort Hare and so on, had formed small ephemeral organisations in the late 1930's. Some of the individuals involved reappeared in the CYL when it was launched in 1944, were active in the revived ANC during the 1950's; and a few were even to reappear in the 1970's when the BPC was launched. William Nkomo, Menossah Moerane and Jordan Ngubane were all involved in associations of African youth prior to the second world war. During the early years of the war they were joined by a new generation of intellectuals - Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu (one of the few who had not been able to enter secondary school), Nelson Mandela, and the

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two men who were to lay their stamp on the future Youth League, Anton Mziwakhe Lenibede and A.P. Mda.

The impetus for change in political thinking came from conditions inside South Africa in that period. When South Africa entered the war ill September 1939, all African organisations were in a state of disarray. The ANC in each Province consisted of several factions who disputed amongst themselves and participated in little public activity. The All African Convention was all but dead, after its short spate of meetings and lobbying against the Native Bills of 1936-37. The African trade unions were practically defunct and were being slowly restarted in 1937-39, and the remnants of the old left movement were gathered together in the Non-European United Front. This was an antisegregation and anti-war alliance, led by Dr. Dadoo and others, who were either members of or sympathetic to the Communist Party.

Both the ANC and the AAC supported the government in its war effort, and did not seem to be able to offer any effective opposition to the continued exploitation and discrimination of the black people. However, major structural changes brought about by an expanding economy, and the shortage of skilled and even unskilled workers, was accompanied by the turmoil in the towns and in the countryside, which led to new tensions in the country. The peasants in the Northern Transvaal were near revolt, and rumours of clashes in the Zoutpansberg filled Johannesburg. African trade unions, mainly in Johannesburg and along the Witwatersrand spread rapidly, and were involved in the longest and most sustained series of strikes that the country had ever known. Shops, municipal services, factories, and even power stations were affected. In some instances workers gained substantial advances: in others they were shot down, or the strike
was broken by police action or, in the case of the power stations, by the use of coloured troops.

There were also protests in the townships, and longstanding discontent with the bus transport gave rise to the first of the great bus boycotts at Alexandra in 1943, and again in 1944. A new leadership appeared from amongst a number of men who were directly or indirectly associated with Hyman Basner, former Communist, and Native Representative in the Senate for the Transvaal and Orange Free State. These individuals were grouped together largely in the newly launched African Democratic Party, and it was this group, and not the ANC, which played the active role in Alexandra. In 1944, Sofosonko ('We shall all die') Mpanza, a member of the Orlando Advisory Board, led thousands of tenants from their overcrowded lodgings and started the first of the many shanty towns that were to galvanise the City Council into building new houses for the township.

Once again, it was Basner and the ADP which gave this movement active support, while the ANC remained quiescent and stood aloof. The young intellectuals, some already seeking a new leadership, gathered together in 1943 and resolved to form a pressure group that would reactivate the Congress. They were not homogeneous, and many different ideologies existed in the ranks of those who assembled together in the hopes of forming their own organisation inside the ANC. Lembede, who was to become their

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most prominent ideologue and spokesman was a passionate nationalist, lie contributed the theory of 'Africanism', which included concepts that were later to be called African socialism throughout the continent; black exclusiveness and a call for self-awareness, very little different from (he later black consciousness of the 1970's; anti a virulent anti-Communism. A.P. Mda and others, mainly from the Eastern Cape, brought a passionate belief in the boycott tactic which they had learnt largely from the All African Convention and its main protagonist, I.B, Tahata. Mda also believed in the unity of all Blacks which Lembede dismissed as unattainable. These ideas were reinforced, supplemented, or at a later date amended, but they contained within them that core of ideas which set the black movements on the road to exclusive nationalism. The one major split that occurred inside the ANC (in 1959) revolved, programmatically, around the interpretation that should be given to the meaning of Lembede's 'Africanism', and the men who led the disaffected faction had all been active members of the CYL in the 1940's. First the young men had to persuade Dr. Xuma, President of the ANC, that a youth section of the organisation should be established and, despite some misgivings on his part, it seems that lie saw a Youth League as an invaluable lever against the new ADP, and in this he was correct. The ADP was never able to rally the youth to its side partly because of opposition from the Youth League, but also because their politics proved to be so inept. A formal resolution at the conference of the ANC in December 1943 led to the establishment of the CYL, and also of a Woman's Section which only flourished during the 1950's. The youth group was always a small body which during the period
1943-49 contented itself with propagating its ideas and drawing up manifestos and declarations. But it eventually in 1949 secured the passage of a Programme of Action through the ANC annual conference. In the process the CYL were able to ensure that Dr. Xuma resigned from the presidency, and that a more pliant man took his place, so opening the parent body to their increased influence. Before this happened, the CYL won a notable victory at Fort Ilare by becoming the premier organisation there and removing the AAC as a potential threat to their political control. This they did by winning to their side a number of young men who were later to become part of the national leadership of the ANC. They recruited Godfrey Pitje, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe (the first President of the PAC after the 1959 split), Joe Matthews (an erstwhile anti-Communist who was later to become a member of the Central Committee of the SACP, before being later expelled when he declared his support for Transkeian independence), Duma Nokwe, and others.

The Fort Hare section of the Youth league was always more active than others, partly because they were involved in student struggles, but also because their close association with the nurses of Lovedale involved them directly in the struggles of these trainees. Robert Sobukwe, presenting the address on behalf of the graduating class in October 1949, spoke about the struggle of the nurses, invoked the image (or was it spectre?) of Marcus Garvey, and declared that freedom was on the way. His speech, then, was as dramatic as that of O.R. Tiro nearly a quarter of a century later at Turfloop. Despite the eclecticism in his ideas, the tenor of his speech was radical, and upset the authorities. He was not expelled because he had completed his course, but there can be little doubt that what he said did not assist him when he sought employment. For many years he taught in small provincial schools before he was appointed 'language assistant' (that is, second-class lecturer) at the University of the Witwatersrand. The address was long, but the spirit of his words can be demonstrated in some extracts:

The trouble at the Hospital, should be viewed as part of a broad struggle and not as an isolated incident. I said last year that we should not fear victimisation... And we must pay the price. The Nurses have paid the price. I am truly grieved that the careers of so many of our women should have been ruined in this fashion. But the price of freedom is blood, toil and tears....

Education to us means service to Africa. In whatever branch of learning you are, you are there for Africa. You have a mission; we all have a mission. A nation to build we have, a God to glorify, a contribution clear to make towards the blessing of mankind... if you hear us talk of practical experience as a modifier of man's views, denounce us as traitors of Africa....

I wish to make it clear again that we are anti-nobody. We are pro-Africa. We breathe, we dream, we live Africa; because Africa and humanity are inseparable.... The future of the world lies with the oppressed and the
Africans are the most oppressed people on earth. ... We have been accused of blood-thirstiness because we preach 'non-collaboration'. I wish to state here tonight that that is the only course open to us. History has taught us that a group in power has never voluntarily relinquished its position. It has always been forced to do so.2

The Fort Hare branch, however, was exceptional in taking up the nurses' struggle. Except for isolated individuals who happened to be active members of a trade union, or the teachers organisation in the Transvaal, few Youth Leaguers became involved in practical organisational work or in the day-to-day struggles before 1950. They played little noticeable part in the organisation of the strike wave, the bus boycotts, the shanty towns, or the teachers' demonstrations for higher wages in the Transvaal. They seldom included reference to these events in their leaflets, manifestos, or articles. Only in August 1946, when some 70,000 workers on the Witwatersrand gold mines came out on strike in support of their claim for higher wages, and were brutally suppressed, did the CYL respond to the workers' struggle. They called for support for the strike - but they avoided mention of the African Mine Workers Union, led by Communists who were anathema to them.2

The general lack of activity had not gone by without comment. Jordan Ngubane, a member of the inner circle of the CYL at the time, and editor of

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the Inkundla ya Bantu, was scathing. He called on members of the CYL to ... come down from the arid academic heights and settle down to practical work which, alone, will free the African. Let others do all the preaching and speaking, but the League must act; lead peaceful demonstrations, take part in protests against oppression, educate the people on how to fight oppression.

[The community wants young people] whose only passion is to do more solid work and talk less; organise workers in factories; volunteer for night school work; preach the gospel of liberation through Congress on the farms, on the mines and in tile locations.4

The same words could have been employed in the 1970's against the members of SASO/BPC. The strikes, the bus boycotts, and the stirrings in the townships helped generate the (CYL, as it did the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970's. But the youth never understood this. While political unrest gave rise to the CYL and later to SASO/BPC, these groups, blinded by their rhetoric, were to believe that they had themselves rekindled their people through their own writings and speeches.

The Message of the CYL Leadership
Anton Lembcede soon became the recognised spokesman of the CYL, and his articles exerted considerable influence on this small group of intellectuals of the time. In February 1945, a small mimeographed journal issued by the short-lived African Youth League, Inyaniso, published an article by LerUbede entitled 'Some basic principles of African nationalism'. The six principles consisted of:

The philosophical basis: [after rejecting communism and nazism] Man is body, mind and spirit with needs, desires and aspirations in all three
elements of his nature. History is a record of humanity’s striving for complete self-realisation.

Tie scientific basis: Charles Darwin ... pointed out the profound significance of the law of variation in Nature. , , Each nation has thus its own peculiar character or make-up. Hence each nation has its own peculiar contribution to make towards the general progress and welfare of mankind. In other words each nation has its own divine mission ....

Historical basis: We... [must I commemorate the glorious achievements of our great heroes of the past, e.g. Shaks, Mosheshoo, Hintsa, Sikhukhuni, Khama, Sobuza, and Moellikazi, etc ... Economic Basis: The fundamental structure of Bantu society is socialistic. There was for instance no individual ownership of land in ancient Bantu society.... Land belonged virtually to the whole tribe and nominally to the King or Chief. Socialism then is our valuable legacy from our ancestors, Our task is to develop this socialism by the infusion of new ideas.

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and modern socialistic ideas.

Democratic basis: In ancient Bantu Society, the worth of a man was not assessed by wealth. Any man could rise to any position.... In our Councils [or] Khotlas any citizen could take part in discussions, and if a man was being tried, anyone could ask questions and cross-examine the accused. The main point is the assessment of human value by moral and spiritual qualities. There is a legacy to be preserved and developed and highly treasured in our hearts.

Ethical basis: The ethical system of our forefathers was based on ancestor worship. People did certain things or refrained front doing certain things for fear of punishment by the spirits of dead ancestors. We must retain and preserve the belief in the immortality of our ancestors but our ethical system today has to be based on Christian morals since there is nothing better anywhere in the world. Morality is the soul of society. Decay and decline of morals brings about the decay and decline of society - so History teaches. It is only African nationalism or Africanism that can save the African people. Long live African Nationalism!

This piece, written in 1945, marked Lembede as being in advance of other nationalist thinkers in Africa. His ideas on cultural awakening, African communalism and African socialism, although not new, were only to be taken up a decade later by Senghor of Senegal, Nkruznah of Ghana and other leaders of African nationalist movements. Lembede was, in fact, following in the footsteps of the great nationalist leaders of the world. The myths lie helped weave were in the tradition of the dreams spun by nationalists everywhere, and his roseate view of the past flowed from the deep feelings that a renaissant African people would inherit the country.

Any criticism of Lembede, and of those who followed him later, must flow from an appraisal of the meaning of nationalism in South Africa, and that in turn would depend on the interpretation of the social and economic structures in the country.
Lembede's views on this were made explicit in an article on the policy of the CYL which appeared in Inkundlaya Bantu in May 1946. He started his contribution with a stirring call to the African people:

The history of modern times is the history of nationalism. Nationalism has been tested in the people's struggles and the fires of battle and found to be the only effective weapon, the only antidote against foreign rule and modern imperialism...

All over the world nationalism is rising in revolt against foreign domination, conquest and oppression in India, in Indonesia, in Egypt, in Persia and several other countries...

A new spirit of African nationalism, or Africanism, is pervading through and stirring the African society. A young virile nation is In the process of birth and emergence...

There followed a list of seven 'cardinal principles' on which Lembede claimed African nationalism was based:

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i. Africa is a hliltakman's countryv ....
2. Africans arc onc. Out of the heterogeneous tribes, there must emerge a homogeneous nation. The basis of national unity is the nationalistic feeling of the Africans, the feeling of being Africans irrespective of tribal connection, social status, educational attainment or economic class ...
3. The leaders ofthe Africans will come out oJ their own loins, No foreigner can ever he a true and genuine leader of the African people because no foreigner can ever truly and genuinely interpret the African spirit which is unique and peculiar to Africans only. Some foreigners Asiatic or European who pose as African leaders must he categorically denounced and rejected. An African must lead Africans. Africans must honour, venerate and find inspiration from African heroes of the past:
Shaka, [and so on] ....
4. Co-operation between Africans and other Non-,uropeans on common problems and issues may be highly desirable. But this occasional co-operation can only take place between Africans as a single unit and other Non-European groups as separate units. Non-European unity is a fantastic dream which has no foundation in reality.
5. The divine destiny of the African people is National Freedom. Unless Africans achieve national freedom as early as possible they will be confronted with the impending doom and imminent catastrophe of extermination.
[ Lembede then listed disease, infant mortality, moral and physical degeneration, loss of self-confidence, inferiority complex, frustration, idolisation of white men, foreign leaders and ideologies, and juvenile delinquency as a result of industrial and educational colour bars.]
Now the panacea for all these ills is National Freedom....
6. Africans must aim at balanced progress or adancement.... Our
forces as it were, must match forward in a co-ordinated manner and in all theatres of the war, socially, educationally, culturally, morally, economically, and politically....

7. After national freedom, then socialism. Africans are naturally socialistic as illustrated in their social practices and customs. The achievement of national liberation will therefore herald or usher in a new era, the era of African socialism. Our immediate task, however, is not socialism, but national liberation.

Our motto: Freedom in Our Life Time.7

The plans of the CYL were outlined in innumerable statements and articles in Inkundla ya Bantu, and in two manifestos issued by the executive committee. Lembede, in particular, was also frequently attacked in the columns of the Communist Party organ, Inkululeko, for anti-Communist statements he made at conferences and things he had reportedly been involved in. The Youth League was avowedly anti-Communist, and also opposed to white liberals. Lembede publicly denounced all whites who pretend to, or pose as leaders of, the African people at a Congress meeting In Orlando, and the following year he moved a resolution at the conference of the Transvaal ANC, calling for the expulsion of all Communists from the ANC. He also advocated the absorption of African trade unions into the ANC, in that way

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freeing them from 'foreign ideology disseminated by demented political demagogues and their agents'.0 Joe Matthews, then one of the Fort Hare leaders, condemned the Communists for misunderstanding the nature of South African society, and warned Africans to be careful of these foreign theories that come with cut-and-dried solutions to our problems'.1

The attack on the CP was already embodied in the 'Basic policy' of the CYL in 1948. Under the heading 'Vendors of Foreign Method', it was declared that:

There are certain groups which seek to impose on our struggle cut-and-dried formulae, which so far from clarifying the issues of our struggle, only serve to obscure the fundamental fact that we are oppressed not as a class, but as a people, as a nation. Such wholesale importation of methods and tactics which might have succeeded in other countries, like Europe, where conditions were different, might harm the cause of our people's freedom .... 12

The bitter fight against the CP and the left was closely associated with CYL economic policy. Lembede's contribution to this subject consisted of his reaffirmation of the value of the communal system of land holding, which he hoped would be updated by 'the ifksion' of new ideas. Tie 1949 CYL Manifesto called for the redistribution of the land to 'all nationalities in proportion to their numbers', and the application of scientific methods to agriculture. They also declared themselves in favour of 'the reclamation of denuded areas' (in the Reserves), at the very time when the peasants, throughout the country, were engaged in battle against the government rehabilitation scheme.13
The Manifesto continued by calling for the full industrialisation of the country 'in order to raise the level of civilisation and the standard of living of the workers; the abolition of industrial colour bars; and the full right to trade union organisation. The CYL also pledged itself to 'encourage business, trading and commercial enterprise among Africans', and to encourage co-operative saving, trading, etc. The overall policy was stated to be the ending of race domination and exploitation; to give all men and women an equal opportunity to improve their lot; and to ensure a just and equitable distribution of wealth among the people of all nationalities'.

An editorial in Inkundla, written by Ngubune, took the economic argument further. He was furious at the attack by the left on black capitalists, and argued:

... while our leftists work for their millenium, let the African use the weapon of oppression against oppression. The Indians are doing that today.

And, on the other hand, let the average African realise that the businessman in his own community is his surest friend and champion of his liberation. Let every African, therefore, support stores run by Africans. By so doing they could be bringing national liberation nearer... Your child cannot become a manager in a white or Indian firm, but he can rise to the top in an African establishment. As a good African, why not support it then?'

Ngubane, writing in the same issue of Inkundla under the pseudonym 'Tswana', returned to the theme. The African businessman, he said, had the responsibility of making a success so that he could employ more Africans. He also stated that if Africans won the franchise on the morrow, they 'would be in a very unhappy position without economic power. Economic power is the dynamo that drives the political machine.'

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There were few, if any, African economists in the 1940's and, except for Govan Mbeki, there was no African in the ranks of the ANC who addressed himself to problems of economic development during the 1950's. The few articles that did appear referred to African purchasing power, or to the impoverishment of the Reserves, and there were appeals to Africans to use their 'economic muscle' by buying from black traders. This was generally associated with the further observation that no African businessman humiliated his customers by calling them insulting names.

Nevertheless, the programme of the CYL, and more particularly its 1948 Manifesto, contained sections on the economy of the country. There they recognised, as indeed they had to, that there had been profound changes in the country which had been introduced by capitalism. Whatever they thought about the capitalist system (and in fact the membership of the CYL usually condemned capitalism on the grounds that it was incompatible with the socialism their forefathers had once lived by), they still wanted more industrialisation and more
technology. They also wanted African businessmen and, if possible, African co-
operative ventures.
The economic section of the programme, however, did not necessarily intermesh
with other parts of the CYL demands, and at times it seems as if economic
demands were divorced from other sections of the programme. Alternatively, the
framers of the programmes could not square their ambitions for African business
enterprises with their desire to present nationalism as a goal that was uninfluenced
by problems of economic interpretation. They were so Insistent on their
standpoint that Africans were 'nationally oppressed' and that the 'dynamism to
make a successful struggle is the creed of Arrican Nationalism' that they closed
their eyes to economic realities.
It is thus, perhaps, not surprising to find in the 1948 Manifesto an attack on
tribalism, coupled with the following statement on nationalism:
Some people mistakenly believe that African Nationalism is a mere triballat

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outlook. They fail to apprehend the fact that nationalism is firstly a
higher development of a process that was already in progress when the
white man arrived, and secondly that It is a continuation of the struggle
of our fore-fathers against foreign invasion."
Continuities can be established in the history of every people, and in that respect
the statement says nothing exceptional. Insisting, however, that tids was a
development of a process already in progress before the white man came, even if
at a 'higher' stage, is patently absurd. Whatever process was at work (presumably
at the time of the great dispersion, or Mfecane', in the 1820's and 1830's), it was
violently disrupted by the appearance of the Whites in the hinterland of South
Africa and in Natal (as they named it). African tribes were conquered or
dispossessed of their land, and the people were forced into restricted areas which
later became the Reserves. Those allowed to stay on the newly acquired white
farms learnt how to bargain with the farmers in order to gain whatever
concessions they could, but were ultimately allowed to stay only as long as their
services were required.
When, in the wake of the discovery of diamonds and gold, railways were built,
and finance capital poured into the country, the reserve system was put to new
use. The African subsistence economy, already much altered by white control,
was 'conserved' in order to induce the men to go out to work in the mines and the
new factories. The older racism, associated with slavery and the indentured
system of forced labour, was replaced by new ideologies (‘segregation' or
'trusteeship') designed to control a highly exploited prole. tariat. The Reserves and
tribalism proved to be invaluable to capital. The poverty of these overcrowded
areas, together with the need for cash, forced the young men to emigrate to the
farms and (when required) to the towns. The Reserves did not consist exclusively
of labourers or potential labourers, but the entire system was necessary for the
social reproduction of the labouring class, and the discriminatory practices were
therefore extended to cover the entire population. There had been some
recognition of the anomalies created by this system in the thirties and forties,
when an increasing number of clerks, teachers and professional men, and even some urbanised workers were given exemption passes to free them from some of the more onerous controls. However, the regulations which permitted this were withdrawn later by the Nationalist Party, and all Africans were apparently equally discriminated against.

The response of the, African people to discrimination altered with time, with place, and with class interest, but the centrality of land in oppression was an overwhelming factor which helped define African demands. Land, labour, and colour were intimately associated and all Africans saw themselves as oppressed even when, favoured by traditional status or by modern education, they had found means of accommodation to the existing power structure.

Discriminatory practices were expanded to meet new economic, social and political needs. But the government always defined the measures in racial terms, and the reaction from Blacks was inevitably framed in the same terms. It would indeed have been remarkable if a new law, heavily loaded with racial implications, was attacked in terms other than race. Whether consciously, or otherwise, the government (or was it the employers?) chose to confuse the issue by couching regulations in colour rather than in class terms.

The men who emerged as leaders of the African people often had a clearer perception of their class interests than has been recognised. They preferred to couch their statements in terms of colour and race, but more often than not they used this to conceal their class interests. What they stated privately has not often been published, and it is only in a few instances that research has turned up evidence to show how clearly class forces were perceived. One instance is quoted in a recent paper: Sol Plaatje, a founding member of, and leading official in, the ANC, was approached in 1918 by the General Secretary of De Beers diamond company with the urgent appeal that he stop the African workers from joining their white colleagues in strike action. In reply, Plaatje reported:

I had to attend the Native Congress at Bloemfontein to prevent the spread among our people of the Johannesburg Socialist propaganda.... The ten Transvaal delegates came to the Congress with a concord and determination that was perfectly astounding to our customary native demeanour at Conferences. They spoke almost in unison, in short sentences, nearly all of which began and ended with the word 'strike'.

... It was only late in the second day that we succeeded in satisfying the delegates to report, on getting to their homes that the Socialist method of pitting up black against white will land our people in serious disaster. 19

Plaatje's contempt for men who spoke 'in short sentences' went side-byside with a hatred of 'black bolsheviks'. This was repeated in the decades that followed and set the tone of many of the declarations of the black nationalist leaders. The economic roots of 'segregation' (as of 'apartheid' later) were generally ignored, and capitalism (local or international) seldom appeared in the lexicons of black leaders. It needed local tensions and the impact of world affairs to make the
nationalist leaders transcend their narrow parochial ideas. It also needed some remarkable men to sweep aside the cant, and describe the struggles in terms of class, of capital, and of imperialism. At such times the entire conceptual framework was overturned, and new insight gained into the nature of oppression, South African Blacks had just witnessed the white electorate return the Nationalist Party to power, when Robert Sobukwe spoke at the Fort lare 'Completers' Social' in 1949. Taking stock, he surveyed what was happening throughout Asia and (more tentatively) Africa, and electrified his audience with the word:

We are witnessing today the disintegration of old empires, and the Integration of new communities, We are seeing today the germination of

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the seeds of decay inherent in Capitalism: we discern the first shoots of the tree of Socialism.... We are witness today of cold and calculated brutality and bestiality, the desperate attempts of a dying generation to stay in power, We see also a new spirit of determination, a quiet confidence, the determination of a people to be free whatever the cost. We are seeing within our own day the second rape of Africa; a determined effort by imperialist powers to dig their claws still deeper into the flesh of the squirming victim. But this time the imperialism we see is not the naked brutal mercantile imperialism of the 17th and 18th centuries. It is a more subtle one - financial and economic imperialism under the guise of a tempting slogan, 'the development of backward areas and peoples'. At the same time we see the rise of uncompromising 'Nationalism' in India, Malaya, Indonesia, Burma, and Africa! The old order is changing ushering in a new order.20

Sobukwe was echoing the sentiments that came from sections of the left in the post-war era. The popular (radical) press was filled with accounts of constitutional advance in India; battles with the Dutch in Indonesia; new fighting in Indochina; and successes of the Red Army in China. Stories also appeared of massacres in Madagascar. riots in Algeria, and constitutional changes in the Gold Coast, and the United Nations Trusteeship Council offered hope that changes would also be wrought in the one-time mandated territories in Africa. The anti-imperialist struggles in the colonies were seen as harbingers of change in South Africa and, even if the current enthusiasm for Nehru, Sukarno, Azikiwe and other nationalist leaders v as naive and uncritical, this speech of Robert Sobukwe took him giant steps beyond the writings of Lembede or the CYL Manifesto of 1948.

There was still no analysis of segregation or apartheid in class terms, but the enemies of African nationalism were seen to be capitalism and imperialism. Sobukwe poured scorn on the possibility of 'development' in Africa and Asia as long as finance capital and imperialism dominated the world, and he placed the destruction of capitalism on the order of the day.

The question of co-operating with Whites was also raised by Sobukwe, and again he spoke the language of the radical. He condemned the missionaries as a group that had in the past only helped divide the Africans and so prevented unity against
oppression. He also condemned the Liberals for doing the same in the twentieth century, and he claimed that the missionaries had returned to this, their role, in the subjugation of the Africans.

This was a remarkable speech, given the relative backwardness of theories of racism in South Africa in 1949, and it seems today to be a landmark amongst statements made by Youth Leaguers. But it was soon forgotten, and no attempts were made, outside the left, to deepen the understanding of apartheid. Sobukwe never again spoke. In these terms, and in July 1949 he was a co-signatory of the CYL's proposed Programme of Action, (together with Rev. James Calata, Godfrey Pitje, G.B. Secenywa, and A.P. Mda). In this the economic demands were confined to a call for the establishment of peoples co-operatives and the incorporation of African trade unions into the ANC.2?

Black 4.4tn.rcioujress in South Afrciai History
The Progrmnntn (if Action, finally endorsed by lte ANC in D)ecember 1949 was even more niebulous. It called for lte establishinoint of comricular, industri[, transport and other enterprises in both urban and rurat areas'; and rar the consoliffitionl of trade unions to inmprove thle standard of living of thle workers.22
The ANC and the Prograinme of Actionl
The entire activity of the CYL, dluring 1948-49 seenied tt) have liten directed lowards the fot(y)litionj ofât Programine of Action. Thlis tiley thenl meant to introduce into thie parent hotly, and in the proccss transformi the politics of thei liberation inoveinent. By Julie 1949 A.1. Mila, in ant artiec en) titled TCongress at lte C rossroukd s', luid downi a 1t> pol iit progr aninic for any person thatt sougi t office in t'ure.1isincilled the ecjec1tionl of lte itolotir har and the deniatid for lte ffuull vo te . lit( ticceplanienie ofi locait;..i t olnlsi anld of thec boveott wealiott aga.inlst lite oitsi of pi lit ie segregattion-

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Matthews thtt added ti at lte <iitt mco' Actiton flad twi inportalit aspects: '(1) it recognises (thenees.itY for eotsenstis anid platted nationbuilding; (2) it is ta prograninie of stoiggle.' And later in tie samne ;article tio opined that: 'The nation-huilding aspect of Ilhe Nationalist Progratilne is probably tbc most ii>tportatu.114
On thle olne handi, thlere wa.s stuggle. On the, other hintid, there was to be some form of iiatitt-h.uibluiiug, That presutably rel'errett to) those itelsn in1 thle Progrannune which called tir thie 'estabiirýcitt of utationtal cerlkesS of educatiun' andl of a 'naitionaal academy of arts and science', and for tbc euniting of 'th eutrral withi the ellucltitionil and. national IttuRRIle'35
Drafts had already been published in the press, and did not seem to warrant such extravagant language. Dr. Xuma, who was invited by the (YL, to stand in the elections in December for the Presidency, refused to discuss the matter with the young men the YL dismissed as upstarts. It at published statement he wrote to be read was not prepared to accept any preconditions for the elections, and he insisted th that the Youth (Sisut, Mandela and Tambo) that, while he could accept their ideas on Africa for the Africans and on African Nationalism, he would not endorse the boycott weapon, on the grounds that it was divisive." Dr. Xuma also stated that the CYL had nonetheless declared that they would vote for him because they knew where he stood. In the event, they only nominated and supported Dr. Moroka (who until then had not been a member of the ANC) at the last moment. But, said Dr. Xuma, the CYL 'strangely enough, supported me fully for the executive. This suggested political immaturity, confused thinking, and insincerity'.

Dr. Xuma never understood the changes that took place. His castigation of the youth was not far off the mark. Many of them were immature and confused, but the mood in the country had changed and a new leadership was called for. The issue was not the boycott, which was never put into effective operation, nor even the slogan of 'Africa for the Africans'. There was widespread discontent in the country, and some movement had to place itself at the head of the populace and voice their demands. Whether the revamped ANC did this successfully or not, does not concern us here. It was seen to do so in 1949 and it did excite the imagination of tens of thousands of people in some of the campaigns that were organised through the 1950's. This gave the Programme of Action a distinctive place in the annals of the liberation struggles, and it derived a significance from those struggles which transcend the brevity of the document which was adopted with such acclaim at the ANC Conference of December 1949.

The central message of the Programme of Action was contained in its opening lines:

The fundamental principles of the programme of action of the African National Congress are inspired by the desire to achieve National freedom. By National freedom we mean freedom from White domination and the attainment of political independence. This implies the rejection of the concept of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship, or White leadership which are all in one way or another motivated by the idea of White domination or domination of the White over the Blacks. Like all other people the African people claim the right of self-determination. There were few attempts to expand on the meaning of this passage, and little attention was paid to the claim for 'self-determination' or 'political independence'.

The basic slogans around which all campaigns were conducted were 'Freedom in our lifetime' and an end to white domination. There was, indeed, a basic inconsistency between a call for self-determination and the one political demand that appeared in the document, namely: 'The right to direct representation in all the governing bodies of the country - national, provincial, and local, and we
resolve to work for the abolition of all differential institutions or bodies specially created for Africans. . ."

The Programme of Action did not even evoke much action, and it was only after much bickering about a May Day demonstration organised by the Black (onsiou.inrss in South African History

Communists in 1950, that a one day stay.at-home was called for 26 June. An anti-
red campaign was started inside the ANC which involved many leading members
of the (CYI, and the issue was confused by claiming that the CP was led by
whites. The matter or white leadership, cmodenrned ih tile IQ49 document, was
taken ip by the hard core of the CYL who claimed the martle o1Lembede, and it
eventually led to their splitting the Congress iove., ment in 1958.
In 1952 the ANC, together with the South African Indian Congress, pre. pared the
ground for a campaign to secure tile repeal in ulnljut legislation, and the Defiance
Campaign was launched oll June 2t . Sonle S(.)O ('ollgress volunteers were
arrested before new draconrail legislation brought tie action to an end. Other
ANC campaigns, in 105.1541, against the removal of the African township S
iphiatown ill Johall nesboUg and agailust the inlplenlentation of Bantu Education,
proved ineffectual against a well entrenched government. In these circumstances a
suggeston that a Congress of the People be summoned, at which the demands of
the men and women of South Africa could be expressed, was taken up
enthusiastically, and was organ|ised for 25-26 June 1955. At the gathering a
Freedom Charter was formulated, and replaced the Programme of Action as the
central Congress document.
The Freedom Charter, adopted by the ANC in 1956 at a special cunterence after a
long and hitter debate with the faction which called itself Africanist, explored
problems that were never mentioned in tile Programme of Action. It declared that
the land would be redvided; that the banks, mines and industries would be
transferred to the people as a whole; and that every person would have equal
rights in a new, liberated South Africa.
But, in the process, something had been lost, Freedom from white
domination, the key to the Programme of Action, was replaced by the more
nebulous 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white. . .'. The earlier
claim of the 'right to self-determination' which is the centre-piece of a nationalist
programme, was expunged, and in its place there appeared the 'right of all the
peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised'. The
Freedom Charter, furthermore, did not discuss tactics, and there was no parallel
document to take tip the issues of boycott and civil disobedience, which figured
so prominently in the 194Q Programme.
The Africanists, organised around a paper of the same name, and strongly
entrenched in Soweto, cried treason. They would have none of' tile iormu. latlon '.
we, the people of South Africa, black and white, together equals. countrysmen and
brothers. . . ' and they denied that South Africa belonged 'to all who live in it'. The
nationalism that shaped the ANC', they claimed, depended on the Africans
standing on their own, and liberating themselves.
Tile inspiration of the Africanists (and later the PAC) was, inevitably, Anton Lembede, the early CYL documents, and also Nkrutlth or Ghanra, who proclaimed the right of all African peoples to independence. The Programme of Action was held to contain the un tarnished truth. The demand for self-determination and political independence, which had never been critically appraised, was taken up by the Africonists in their claim to be the true heirs to 1949. The ANC on the other hand, without opening the debate in order to examine the nature of exploitation, claimed to be both the heirs to the Programme of Action and the upholders of the Freedom Charter. The dispute raged through the late 1950's, and the various movements of protest that emerged in the rural areas, and some in the towns, took second place to the internecine sniping between these two groups. The bus boycotts in Evaton in 1956 and in Alexandra in 1957 suffered as a result. The women's struggles in Zeerust, Sekhukuneland and Harding proceeded without ostensible assistance from either group. The PA' heaped abuse on the leaders of the ANC and brought up a full armoury of anti-Communist slogans. The ANC, in turn, cast scorn on the PAC and accused its leadership of being in the pay of the government or the CIA. There were few attempts to see what the Africanist programme involved, in class terms, outside of the ranks of the Communist Party and left groups in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

By the time such articles or documents appeared the movements were in disarray, and both the ANC and the PAC had been banned. Nor can it be claimed, unfortunately, that many of these analyses were incisive. The applications of general class principles to South Africa were not made concrete. Class analysis of South Africa was based on dubious empirical data, and did not provide a sound theoretical base for describing the structure of the society, or for understanding the struggles of the time.

From Africanism to Black Consciousness

The youth of the late 1960's and early 1970's heard of the banned movement from their parents, from books (where these were available), and knew the names, and some of the ideas, of the former Congress leaders. The entire time period from the inception of the CYL to the formation of SASO was only 25 years, and Dr. Nkomo and Menassah Moerane were members of the groups that launched both the CYL and the IPC. Dr. Nkomo, in fact, was reported as telling an audience in 1971 that: 'There was a time when black people were apologetic in this country, but young men like Anton Lembede came and told the blacks that they should not be apologetic, and said this is your country.32

The basic problems had remained unaltered over the 25 years, although the Reserves were even more impoverished and the women could barely supplement the pittances they received from their men in the towns. Many more Blacks were employed in industry, and a large number had become semi-skilled operatives. And because the Blacks were more militant, discrimination had become more marked and the level of political oppression had deepened.
The proponents of black consciousness ascribed their miserable conditions to colour, dismissing any mention of class oppression. This has already been documented in the pages above and need not detain us here.

Black consciousness in South African History

There were two issues that did mark the later movement as being in some way different from earlier groups. The first, and less significant, difference arose from the active interest shown by members of SASO/BPC in Black Theology. This close association between the members of SASO and Black Theology arose from a combination of factors, including their gestation period inside the UCM, and the influence that they felt from the black American experience. The BPC was also deeply impressed by what had happened in the US, and profoundly influenced by events inside the CIA and the South African Council of Churches. Members of the CYL, and particularly Lembede, Mda, Tambo, and many others, had been deeply religious. So too were Pityane, Biko, Koka and other leaders of SASO/BPC. Some of them were loyal members of established churches, while others spoke of a syncretist movement in which traditional African practices could be absorbed. There was no basic difference between many of the youth over the 25 year gap on the issue of religion, and the greater prominence given to the subject in the 1970's was partly due to black American influence.

The second major difference between the CYL and SASO/BPC arose on the issue of the Reserves. There was no 'Homelands' policy in 1945 and the CYL did not concern itself with the Reserves as a special political issue. In 1951 the Bantu Authorities Act was introduced, and the notion of having local, district and regional councils of chiefs was then condemned by the ANC as being unworkable, as well as undesirable, flat during the 1960's the legislative assemblies were established in the Reserves and the issue of 'independence' was raised for the first time. No movement could ignore these new instruments of division, and the matter demanded political attention.

When, furthermore, Buthelezi of the KwaZulu region, and Leon of the Coloured Representative Council, together with opposition leaders of the Transkei and others, espoused their own brand of black consciousness, new tensions emerged. The leaders of SASO/BPC asserted their right to the title of Black Consciousness, and branded the opposition as traitors to the cause. Buthelezi was equally scornful of the youth. Symbolically the two sides clashed at Sobukwe's funeral, and Buthelezi was routed. The victory, however, was hollow because Buthelezi remained firmly entrenched, while his opponents were hounded by the police. Biko could exorcise 'collaborators' by declaring them to be non-black, but they did not go away. No more than capitalism ceased to exist because Rachidi said that Blacks would have none of it, or class struggles disappeared because Pityane said Blacks were oppressed 'as a people, and not as a class'.

By 1976 the paradoxes in the movement had become clear, and the editor of Black Review, 1975-76, pointed to the strains. At one level he noted the existence of two 'variant attitudes':

There are those who are taking Black consciousness as being chiefly of cultural interest,
There were those who wanted to transform mere Identity into positive Year of Fire, Year of Ash support for initiative towards defined socio-political change. On this issue he commented: There had been a danger of the intellectual groups succeeding in creating a reality that would only be available to themselves, a reality that, according to the more militant youth, would in effect be fictitious, since as one South African Students Movement member put it, 'a reality of pretending to be at least free in the ghetto'. This, however, was the smaller of the problems facing black consciousness. Black Review, edited from within the movement, stated: As the Black Consciousness organisations were almost succeeding to prise loose the grips of white liberal agencies in social welfare for Blacks, it was seen that the inner and outer contradictions of Black Consciousness were becoming more acute. The contradictions of Black Consciousness had thrown focus on the nature of Black Consciousness as understood by those political groups operating on Separate Development platforms such as the CRC Labour Party, the Inkatha Cultural Liberation Movement led by KwaZulu's Chief Gatsha and the Transkeian opposition party, the Democratic Party, led by Mr. I.B. Ncokazi. On the issue of Inkatha, the editor concluded: 'Until now the question of Inkatha's national claims has not been answered. Unfortunately for the leaders of the BPC, the contradictions could not be resolved. Or at least not within the ideological framework which they had erected. As long as they saw the problem in colour terms, the leaders of Inkatha, or the Labour Party, Democratic Party, and so on, had as much claim to the title of black consciousness as did BPC. And in part BPC recognised this. They seldom criticised Buthelezi, or Leon, or Ncokazi, for the things they did. They did not criticise their campaigns or their activities: neither in the strikes, nor in the bus boycotts, nor in any of their many activities, except over the issues related directly to the homelands policy and the associated matter of foreign investments. And yet, Buthelezi should have been taken to task for his role in many of these events. His behaviour during the long strike wave should have been criticised, his actions during the Soweto event condemned. To talk only of his 'working' the government institutions, bad as that was considered to be, was indicative of political myopia. But to criticise Buthelezi effectively, BPC would have had to evoke class analysis, and this they would not or could not, apparently, do. Black Consciousness and Violence The long record of events in the 1950's indicated that the CYL (and the CYL Black Consciousness in South African History members who assumed leadership of both the ANC and the PAC) were opposed to violence. Despite every brutality perpetrated against themselves or their movements, they kept steadfastly to 'peaceful' methods. There was an irony involved in their holding so firmly to non-violence because every campaign they
initiated led to, and they knew it would lead to, police violence. Few demonstrations or strikes ended without broken heads or lost lives. And the more ‘militant’ the language, the less inclined were the movements involved to engage in any but non-violent means. The state insisted that this was a front and, in the many trials of the 1950's including the mammoth Treason Trial of 1956-61, it made every effort to demonstrate that the ANC was prepared to resort to violence. Yet, almost to a fault, the members of the ANC, despite some flippant talk, had eschewed violence. Only after the movements had been banned in 1960 did thoughts turn to other means of defeating the government and, starting in 1961, campaigns of sabotage were initiated in the country.

Most of the original internal movements were destroyed or severely crippled by mid-1964, but groups in exile continued training for, and talking of, incursions into South Africa and of eventual guerrilla warfare. SASO/BPC leaders, in contrast, were resolutely opposed to the use of violent methods, and quite how they saw themselves overturning the government, is not certain. Some claims have been made that part of the leadership was considering the use of arms, but there is no firm evidence that this was the case, nor that any concrete steps were being taken in this direction. During the early life of SASO, when little was done off the campuses, the question remained academic. By the time the matter needed urgent attention, there was little left of the student body. The youth in the schools had to look to their own resources and find ways of countering police terror. In the process, early contacts with the external ANC, fully wedded to the need for sabotage and guerrilla war was readily accepted by the SSRC. (The same may perhaps be said of the youth at Kagiso and their contact with the PAC, and conceivably of other groups, about whom nothing is yet known.)

The Suicide Squad of the SSRC was established within three months of the first shooting, and was operative almost immediately. The experience of the external movement was, quite evidently, speedily transmitted to young men who had no previous training in, or experience of, such techniques. The first such attempt was smashed by police activity, and there was no early opportunity for a new group to be established inside Soweto. Instead, the external wing of the ANC prepared for and organised subsequent attacks on transport links. It would seem that there is little likelihood in the future of any purely peaceful campaign being successful in the face of government intransigence, and political movements which hope to introduce radical changes will have to find military training and military support. Buthelezi, who has come to the same conclusion, but for other reasons, has asked the government to ensure that no guerrillas enter KwaZulu across its northern boundaries. He does not wish to entertain the idea of a clash with the government, and has nothing to

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gain from a victory of liberation movements that oppose his basic policy of working within apartheid institutions. His role, as he prefers to see it, is to wait in the wings until the government find it necessary to employ him for purposes of an internal settlement.
The ANC has the initiative in its hands now, in being the only movement with the capability of mounting some armed incursion. It also has the following and it has the goodwill of large parts of the population. Its leaders would be foolish to squander these possibilities, and need to take a careful look at the political, as well as the military, possibilities of attacking the state. In the process it is to be hoped that false claims will not be made. It was wrong to claim in 1976, and it would still be wrong to claim that: "These racist murderers who were so eager to machine-gun unarmed kids and women took to their heels when they came face to face with armed freedom fighters of Umkhonto we Sizwe in Zimbabwe in 1967 and 1968."1 There is still much to be done before Umkhonto, or any other liberation force, is able to inflict defeat on the armed forces of Vorster/Botha.

Even more than a tempered approach to military incursion into the country, the political movements abroad need to refine their political analyses. Amilcar Cabral was only rephrasing a well known maxim when he declared that, "...if it is true that a revolution can fail even though it be based on perfectly conceived theories, nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory."37 This requires a hard look at the class forces amongst the Blacks of South Africa, their relation to one another and to the oppressors, their revolutionary (and counter-revolutionary) potentials, and the means by which they can be mobilised in the struggle which is not far off in South Africa. This was the first task that Cabral undertook in his own country, and no less can be expected in South Africa, where the forces opposing the liberation movement are so much more powerful than elsewhere in Africa, so well entrenched, and so well armed.

One of the stories told in the aftermath of the Revolt concerned a section of the school students in late 1976. This youth sought socialist literature and requested titles like Emile Burns' What is socialism? and Leontiev's Political Economy. These were books that circulated widely in CP circles before the passing of the Suppression of Communism Act in July 1950, and the youth would have heard the titles from their parents, or members of the ANC with whom they were in contact.

The books they were looking for would, if available, have been of little use to them, but it was the fact that they were searching for such texts that was significant. For over 25 years the government had banned all such literature, and there was very little socialist or Marxist literature available in the townships. Now, in the heat of a bitter struggle, the youth sought new answers to old problems, They were no longer content with simplistic answers which ascribed all the ills of society to skin colour. Their need, perceived then if only in part, was to understand the nature of capitalism, of state power, of imperialism, and above all, the nature of the class struggle.

Black 'onsciousness in South African History
In the months and years to come, the youth of South Africa will search increasingly for an understanding of these problems. They will confront these problems in their daily lives, but will have to search far and wide for literature to help them understand these phenomena. It will he the bounden duty of those who are at present in exile, to stretch out their hands and share with the young men and
women in South Africa, on whom the brunt of the struggle must fall, an understanding of the forces they face. Only thus will the external wing of the liberation movement share fully with their comrades inside South Africa the task of transforming the country into the socialist world they desire together.

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4. Inkundla ya Bantu, October 1945 (1).
6. Ibid., p.317.
7. Ibid., pp.317.8.
8. Inkundla ya Bantu, 30 September 1944.
14. Karis and Carter, op.cit., Vol 2, pp.324-S. 15. Inkundlaya Bantu, 17 November 1944. 16. Jordan Ngubane wrote the editorials and also the columns under the names of Twana and Khanyise. he also drafted the first manifesto of the CYL together with Anton Lembede, according to P. Mda, writing in Drum, May 1954.
17. See, for example, Editorial in nkundla ya Bantu, 5 March 1949. 18. 'Basic policy of Congress Youth League, manifesto issued by the National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1948', in Karis and Carter, op.cit., pp.32331.

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29. Ibid.
30. The Africanist case was stated by P. Nkutsoeu Raboroko, 'Congress and the Africanists: the Africanist case', in Afriea South, Vol. 4, No. 3,
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African: The majority black population of South Africa, Originally referred to in legislation and in literature as Natives, and later as Bantu. The size of the African population is uncertain, but estimates range between 17 and 25 million. They are not represented in the elected bodies of the Republic of South Africa, and may not vote for any of the White controlled institutions.
Afrikaans: The language spoken in South Africa by the Afrikane rs (Whites of mainly Dutch and German extraction). It is the home language of some 65 per cent of the Whites, and of the majority of Coloureds. It is also the language most commonly used in the administrative services.
Bantu: A word originally used to describe the group of languages spoken by the African peoples of South Africa. Later used as a term to designate African people themselves.
Bantustans: See Reserves.
Black Consciousness Movement: A term used to designate the various groups which espoused the ideology of black consciousness in South Africa. There was no organisation that assumed this name, but the various groups which propagated black consciousness were often referred to collectively as the Black Consciousness Movement.
Boer: Literally farmer. The word 'boor' (plural, boere or boer s) is often used as a collective noun for Afrikaners.
Chiefs: The traditional leaders of African clans and tribes were called 'chiefs'. The premier chief of an ethnic group was designated the Paramount Chief or, In the case of the Zulu, sometimes referred to as King (and occasionally as Prince).
Coloureds: The population of mixed ethnic origin, sometimes identified (legally) as persons of mixed blood, but also sometimes defined as that section of the population that is recognised as coloured by custom and by acceptance. The coloured population numbers some 2.4 million. Coloured men of the Cape and Natal enjoyed a limited franchise until 1956, when they were finally removed from the common roll.
Compounds: Barracks built near the mines, and near some municipal and industrial sites, to house the all-male African labour force.
Doek: A cloth, or head cloth, used by hostel dwellers in 1976 to distinguish themselves from other sections of the population.

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Europeans: The Whites of South Africa. Their total number is approximately 4.3 million. They alone have the full franchise, and only they may own land and property in the 'white' region of the country, comprising some 87 per cent of the land surface.

Homelands: A euphemism used to describe the Reserves, in which nine (or latterly ten) African populations will exercise 'full' sovereignty. All Africans will, according to government plans, be attached to one of the homelands and will become citizens of those territories.

Indians: Descendants of indentured labourers brought from India from 1860 onwards to work on the Natal sugar plantations. Indians may not move freely between Provinces and are prohibited from entering the Orange Free State without permission. The majority still live in Natal. The Indian population is approximately 750,000.

Natives: The term most favoured by the government for the African people until altered by the Nationalist Party government to Bantu. There are separate administrative bodies employed to handle the large extent of regulations and laws controlling the individual and activities of Africans. These were centralised by a department within the Native Affairs Department, the latterly ten.

Push-Outs: A term introduced to refer to children whose parents failed an examination and were not allowed to progress to the next class, or whose parents could no longer afford to keep them.

The Rand: From 1910 to 1961, the South African currency was the pound, which was usually at par with the pound sterling. In 1961, a decimal currency was adopted, with the Rand as the basic unit. Two Rand was declared equal to £1 and each Rand was equal to 100 cents. In 1967, the pound sterling was quoted as equal to R1.4826.

Reserves: The land, constituting less than 13 per cent of South Africa's land surface, in which some Africans may own land under communal (and occasionally private) tenure, and keep livestock. The population in these areas is said to be between 8 and 10 million, and an increasing proportion...
of these people are landless. The Reserves have also been called, more recently, Bantustans or Homelands,

Schools: Until 1975 there was a 13 year school structure for Africans. There-

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after it was reduced to 12 years, by dropping the sixth standard which was unique to African institutions. There are four stages of education:

Lower Primary: Sub-standards A and B and Standards I and 2.
Higher Primary: Standards 3 to 5 (and previous to 1975, standard 6).
Junior secondary: Forms I to III.
Senior secondary (sometimes called High Schools): Forms IV and V.

Students: Youth at schools are called, interchangeably, pupils and students. The youth more usually referred to themselves as students.

Townships: Also called locations, they are areas reserved outside all towns, for the accommodation of Africans who worked in shops and factories of the neighbouring urban area or areas. Residence was only open to persons who could show that they were legally employed in the area, who had recognised business in the area, or were entitled to be present because of their profession or occupation. The limited leasehold rights, once available to a small group of Africans, had been stopped by the Nationalist government. A limited leasehold right for 30 years was granted after the Soweto Revolt.

Tsotsi: African youth in the townships, accused of being delinquent. The name was derived from the 'stovepipe' trousers that were once fashionable amongst these unemployed, and often delinquent, young men. (Their coloured counterparts were known as Skollies).

When Did It Happen?

A Chronology of Events

1799 First school for Africans opened.
1820 Lovedale Mission Station opened.
1834 Liberation of the slaves.
1841 First grant to mission schools in the Cape.
1853 Amamzimtoti Institute (Adams College) opened in Natal.
1854-61 Sir George Grey, Governor of the Cape. 1867 Discovery of Diamonds at Kimberley.
1886 Discovery of Gold on the Witwatersrand.
1910 Union of South Africa formed.
1912 ANC founded.
1916 Fort Hare University College founded.
1920 First recorded school strikes at Lovedale and Kilnerton.
1924 NUSAS founded.
1938-46 Strike wave at mission schools and Fort Hare, 1943.44 CYL founded.
1945 Fort HaTe joins NUSAS.
1949       Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe delivers 'Completer's Social' address,
1950       Suppression of Communism Act passed,
1951       Bantu Authorities Act passed.
1953       Bantu Education Act passed.
1955       Boycott of schools in Southern Transvaal and Eastern Cape,
1957       Nursing Act Amendment Act passed.
1959       Extension of University Education Act passed.
1960       Shooting at Sharpeville and Langa-Nyanga, ANC and PAC banned.
1960-67  African university colleges demand right to join NUSAS. 1965
         Christian Institute forms AICA.
1967       University Christian Movement launched.
ASSECA started.
Urban Training Project formed,

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1968       UCT students strike over Archie Mafeje issue.
1969       Durban dock strike fails.
SASO launched.
1970       African Students Movement (later SASM) formed.
Gatsha Buthelezi becomes Chief Executive Officer of KwaZulu.
Anglo American Corporation offer of money for Soweto classrooms vetoed,
1971       First steps to formation of BPC.
Official price of gold raised from $35 to $46.5 per fine ounce.
TEACH launched for black schools.
Sales and Allied Workers Union started.
June       International Court of Justice ruling on Namibia.
Sept.      Durban workers threaten strike action and get wage increase.
Dec.       Ovambo workers strike.
1972       O.R. Tiro addresses Turfloop graduands and is expelled.
March      SASM launched.
June       PUTCO strike, in Johannesburg.
July       BPC formed.
Aug.       BAWU formed.
Oct.       Dockworkers strike, in Durban and Cape Town.
Widespread university strikes and clashes with police.
1973
Jan.-Feb.  70,000 workers in Durban-Pinetown-Hammarsdale on strike. March
Strike at Tugela mills; B. Dladla involved.
June       NAYO formed.
Sep. 11    Carltonville strike and shootings.
1974       Strikes spread to rest of country, and continue on mines.
Inkatha Yenkululeko Yesizwe launched.
Caetano government falls in Portugal.
Aug.       Schlebusch Commission reports on NUSAS.
Entrance to African secondary schools doubled by lowering
examination requirements. Sep. 25 Viva Frelimo rallies called.
1975 Trial of SASO 9,
Trial of NAYO 7.

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Trials of ANC, SACP, and Okhela members.
1976
Feb. Trouble at Thomas Mofolo school over Afrikaans medium instruction.
Bus boycott at KwaThema.
Buthelezi calls rally at Soweto. Apr.-May Strikes at several Soweto schools.
June 16 Demonstration called in Soweto. June 18 Theron Commission reports.
School unrest throughout country. Aug. 2 UWC boycott lectures.
Aug. 4 Soweto students try to march to Johannesburg.
Aug. 6-8 Schools burnt down in BophutaTswana. Aug. 9 BophutaTswana Legislative Assembly buildings alight.
Oct. 24 'Suicide Squad' bombs Jabulani police station. Oct. 27 Shebeens in Soweto ordered to close.
Anti-Christmas celebrations announced. Nov. 1-5 Five day stay-at-home falls to materialise.
School examinations boycotted.
1977

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April 23 Campaign against increased rents in Soweto. June Soweto UBC forced to resign.
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