

SASO

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST

1970

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. Editorial	1
2. Conference News	2
3. Other Conferences	5
4. Modern Chemistry	7
5. Campus News	8
6. Africa Series I 'They were colonised before: Are they free now?'	10
7. I write what I like 'Black Souls in White Skins?'	15
8. Selected bits of Poetry	21
9. Financial Situation	22
10. New Executive	23

PLEASE NOTE

The views expressed in articles 4, 6 and 7 do not reflect the views of SASO or of the Publications Committee of SASO but strictly those of the contributors thereof.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS' ORGANISATION, BOX 23, AUSTERVILLE, NATAL.

EDITORIAL

This particular editorial is designed to explain the purpose behind, and the style and content intended for all SASO newsletters.

The SASO publications shall always take two forms: the first is the conventional newsletter type and the second is occasional informative circulars published as a sort of stop press issues of the newsletters, depending on whether the situation does arise or not. Experience in student affairs has taught us that these do in fact arise, hence we make provision for them.

Regarding the newsletter itself, two points must be borne in mind. Firstly the newsletter is meant to be informative. By this we mean it has to be used as a communications media informing us of what happens at other places. The responsibility for conveying information to the central office lies squarely with the centres themselves. It is assumed that each SRC has a man in charge of publications at each centre. This is the man whose duty it is to communicate with us regularly on events at and around his campus. Obviously the newsletter can not be all that up to date since to start with it is a monthly publication. If and when important issues needing immediate attention do arise at a time when the newsletter is not ready for publication, we shall then resort to other methods of disseminating the information to all centres.

The publications committee of SASO consists of the Chairman of SASO Publications as elected by the GSC at its annual meeting plus all people responsible for publications on the respective SRCs. If for some strange reason an SRC does not have anybody responsible for publications, then it behoves them to name one of its members as the local rep. of our publications committee. In either case the name of the person nominated by each SRC to the SASO publications committee has to be with us within three months of the conference.

The 2nd point to note about the newsletter is that it is meant to be educative as well - not in the formal lecture type sense. In this regard we accept articles from anybody on any topic of general interest. If needs be, as evidenced in this issue, the articles may be of serial type. In other words we do not mind columnists writing for us. The situation has not arisen where we have to limit space, so the more the better. The thickness of the newsletter is not strictly regulated - at least not as yet. However, whatever articles are written must be both of high quality and on a general topic such that it can meet the interests of all our readers.

CONFERENCE NEWS

One of the most rewarding experiences one had over the July vacation was to attend the SASO Conference held at U.N.B. Not only was it a great success in terms of emotional and intellectual content but it was also strategically placed and served to launch an idea that is still ringing today in the minds of quite a lot of South Africans.

Represented at the Conference were:-

2 Seminaries	- Mapumulo and St Peter's Seminary
1 Training College	- Transvaal College of Education
5 Universities	- Ngoye, Salisbury Island, UNB, Turfloop, Fort Hare
Others	- Unisa, Wits, UCT, (black students)

In all there were more than 40 voting delegates at the conference. Observers from UNB and from the centres attending the AMSSA congress also attended the sessions.

The conference was run on both 'Western' lines and traditional lines. It was western in that it had a set pattern of commissions and council sittings which adopted the usual debating procedure. On the other hand informal forum-like discussions were catered for on issues affecting the black student world and in fact the black world at large. The commission prepared the ground work for most of the 90 motions considered by the GSC.

None of the resolutions will be quoted here since the full text of the minutes will be sent to all the SRCs in a week's time. However, a brief analysis of the conference will be attempted in order to put the conference into proper perspective.

Ironically, it was the rejection of the press at the very first sitting of the GSC that catapulted SASO into 'fame' and made the conference front-page news material. The 'no involvement with the press' policy is an old one dating back to last year's conference. However when the GSC reaffirmed this same policy and debarred the press from the sittings this served to bring car-loads of pressmen to the conference site, all eager to write a story about the 'no story' declaration by SASO. Hence the Durban Daily News declared that SASO was holding a secret conference behind 'locked doors' and that the President was 'tight-lipped' about what was going on. Inside the so-called 'locked doors' the black student leaders continued to discuss their business once they had dismissed the press and were entirely oblivious of the commotion they had caused by barring them.

A re-examination of the stand of the organisation led to a complete reorganisation of the Preamble to the Constitution of SASO. It was felt that we were being apologetic in our original Preamble. A more positive and forthright Preamble was drawn up and accepted. The Turfloop delegation, having been under pressure from local authorities to seek a change in the SASO Preamble (for different reasons), felt rather reluctant to agree to the changes, fearing that this might be interpreted as capitulation in the face of intimidation. However, the GSC was all for a change.

Following UNB's lead, the GSC decided to scrap all reference to blacks as 'non entities'. Arguing that people should be referred to by what they are rather than what they are not, the GSC decided to call blacks blacks and whites whites.

On the educational level a call was made on the black Universities to make provisions for technical courses for black students. Better facilities and higher qualifications were called for in Teacher Training to offset the education deficit that black pupils experience. A policy resolution was also carried, condemning the creation of separate universities at the expense of good planning and efficiency and also declaring the granting of independence immature. A fear was expressed that the purpose behind the 'autonomy' might well be to lower the educational standards at the black campuses.

The question of "SRC or no SRC" at Port Hare and Salisbury Island was examined. It was felt that we have reached a stage where continuation of this sort of boycott had ceased to be meaningful and was in fact more of a disadvantage to us. Difficulty of communication with the respective centres was cited as an example. The logic behind the boycott of the SRC should be placed in context. The GSC felt that the greatest compromise one was called upon to make was that of having to attend at the S.A. 'universities', both black and white. It was felt that once you decide to attend then all the other compromises that you make concerning your presence at the university are logical in terms of the first one. However the GSC felt that it should merely state its beliefs but not dictate to either of these centres since they alone knew their local situations.

Concern was expressed that the students were still too aloof from the community to be able to bear witness to their roles as future leaders of the community. Hence provision was made for intensive field work schemes starting with the December vacation. The purpose of such welfare work being to educate both the students and the community in the art of working together.

The GSC noted that an Intervarsity committee had been

set up at an inter-SRC cum AU meeting at Ngoye during the intervarsity this year. Hence the portfolio of Sports Director was established to work hand-in-hand with the Intervarsity Committee. The Sports Director is supposed to raise funds and organise trophies for the occasion. He is constantly looking out for areas where SASO can help on the administrative side as well. Part of his duties are also to promote competitive sport at the Seminaries and Teacher Training Colleges. In this regard he shall work closely with ICSA as well.

A SASO Bursary Fund was created with the purpose of providing financial assistance to needy black students who cannot afford University education. Part of the incentive behind the scheme is the knowledge that lots of funds meant for use by black students are now being administered by white organisations. The GSC felt that SASO should build up the fund and make it operative as soon as possible.

The decision to withdraw recognition of Nusas as the national union, while passed only after a short but fairly unanimous debate at the 6th sitting of the GSC, seems to have come as a shock to people in general, particularly the white world. However, the reasons behind this sort of move are self-evident to all black students. Even Nusas acknowledged this at their subsequent conference.

Geoff McMinn was rather cut short in his ill-timed attempt at gaining a black following for NAPSAS. He could not have chosen a worse time, since, after the symposium on "Black is beautiful" and the debate on Nusas, the students were in no mood to see any value in yet another white-dominated organisation. It was made clear to him that he had only been allowed to address the conference in order to stop him from wasting his time going to the individual black campuses.

Perhaps the most important event of the conference was the symposium on 'Black is beautiful'. Not only did it serve to focus attention sharply on untouched aspects of our involvement but it also illustrated how badly needed dialogue between student and non-student sectors of the 'black intelligentsia' is. I will not try to condense the discussion on these pages. It is enough to say the speakers - Messrs Moerane M.T., Madala Mphahlele, Ben Khoapa, and student speakers from Unisa, Turfloop, Fort Hare and UNB - dealt with the topic beautifully.

All in all the conference demonstrated that SASO is fulfilling a long awaited need not only at student but also at a broader level. Certainly the black students have demonstrated that they have 'a much clearer sense of objective'.

ooOoo

OTHER CONFERENCES

In accordance with the SASO aim of keeping contact with other student organisations in the country, the SASO Executive sent observers to the conferences of NUSAS and UCM held also during the month of July. The following is a condensation of their reports on the two conferences.

University Christian Movement

The UCM conference was held at Wilgespruit over the period July 10th to July 17th. The conference was in two phases - firstly an exploration of the various ways of communication, inter-personal, mass-media communications, group communications etc and the formal part of discussion assessing UCM's role in the country, the position of the two groups - black and white - within the Movement and the broad direction to be taken by the movement in pursuing further plans. A detailed report on the conference can only be given by the UCM people themselves. What we shall concern ourselves with in this report is an assessment of UCM and a review of what we saw in terms of Black-white relationships within the organisation.

Lastly, like all other mixed movements, UCM seemed to be suffering from some loss in terms of the direction they should take. Concerned primarily with ecumenism initially, and designed to be a sort of umbrella wherein all Christian students could find shelter, UCM seems to have drifted to the position where they have developed their own sort of clique theology, far in advance of the country's conservative Churches. Hence the supporting churches called for a halt and are threatening withdrawing their support. Despite the fact that the Churches have named as objections moral considerations like sex, drink etc., it is an open secret that the real bone of contention is the ultramodern approach that UCM is taking on theological questions, coupled with UCM's political stance.

Then again UCM faces the same question of diverging aspirations. The blacks on the one hand are not impressed with a highly elaborate and intricate, though modern, theology that reaches ethereal heights and leave the people suffering at rock-bottom level. They are calling for a more relevant theology that shall concern itself with the problems affecting the masses. They argue that as it is religion is acting as a soporific on the people and that it is very irrelevant in content. On the other hand the whites in UCM have joined the movement in order to find sanctuary in the Movement for their rather different religious views from those held by their orthodox Churches. Hence though they can accommodate a modern

version of the old-style approach, it has to be fairly related to the original in substance. Hence the tendency to hide behind lots of words and allowing for a little permissiveness.

Besides the split on theological considerations there was also a manifestation of the now familiar Black-white ecchism on straight political topics. For a brief moment it did appear that UCM might break apart as the blacks started questioning seriously the use of nonracial bodies and the more radical of the whites retorted by asking them what they wanted in the first place in an organisation they knew to be nonracial and therefore non-effective as they claimed. People saw value in UCM in the fact that it served to crystallise racial attitudes and therefore to 'give birth' to a rather angry black wing which may be useful if it filters through to the black organisations. This negative type of value was questioned by quite a number of people who felt that the 'mid-wife' role of UCM died when the blacks at the 68 Conference decided to go it alone as a prelude to SASO.

Our own impressions about UCM are that it remains of value only in so far as it still has the machinery and manpower to make black theology, not a topic to be discussed but a way of life to be followed by black people who still value religion. Of some value too are the welfare programmes that UCM has outlined provided that the black students who comprise the majority in UCM take advantage of them to foster black - orientated programmes.

NUSAS:

A fully drawn circular setting out our impressions about the Nusas congress and outlining suggested frameworks for future relations with that body will be sent out soon. What appears below is indeed a very brief summary of the Congress.

The Nusas Congress was designed to arrive at a constitution that would embody all the ideas suggested during the course of the year on restructuring the organisation. There were three constitutions introduced. One was rejected more or less completely whereas the other two were merged together to produce what has become the new constitution of Nusas. In brief it makes provision for three loosely connected associate organisations - Aquarius (cultural), Nused (education), Nuswel (welfare) - all related to the central Executive of Nusas.

The debate on the three 'bills' had to be suspended to accommodate debate on SASO which some people felt was central in the whole programme of restructuring. However, though a motion was ultimately passed, recognising SASO's legitimate claim to represent blacks, it was watered down by lots of ill-considered amendments which reduced the motion almost an insult.

MODERN CHEMISTRY

Chemical Analysis of a Woman (Woo)

Symbol: Woo - thought to be a member of the human family

Atomic Wt.: Accepted at 120, though known isotopes vary from 100 to 180.

Physical Properties: Seldom found in the pure state. All colours. Boils at nothing. Freezes without reason. Unpolished specimens tend to turn green in the presence of polished ones. All varieties melt with proper treatment. Very bitter if used innocently. Density not evenly distributed over the whole atom - very dense upstairs but rather loose below. Pure specimens assume a rosy tint when discovered in the natural state. Exhibit magnetic properties especially in the presence of noble metals.

Chemical Properties: Highly explosive (watch out!). Rather dangerous except in experienced hands. Possesses affinity for gold, silver, platinum and other precious metals. Has the ability to absorb great quantities of most expensive edibles. Many explode spontaneously when left alone with men. Undissolved by liquid but activity increases when specimen is saturated with spirit solution. Tends to yield to pressure. Magnetic attraction inversely proportional to age. All specimens tend to age rather rapidly. As they age, the most frequent feature is polymerisation.

Uses: Chiefly ornamental. Certain isotopes used as tracer elements in criminal investigation. Probably the most powerful reducing (bank a/c) agent known. Illegal in most countries to possess more than one specimen although a certain amount of exchange is thought to be permissible.

Distribution: Occurs both naturally and otherwise all over the world. Always in close proximity to a man. Found in especially great numbers at bioscope cinemas, night clubs, beaches, etc. Seldom found in places requiring mental exertion like lecture theatres, parliamentary buildings etc. Never found in places requiring physical exertion like the army, rugby field, etc.

Salisbury Island

Students at Salisbury Island, in one of their rare Student Body meetings, decided on the 12th of this month to dissolve all committees on the campus in an effort to expand their cultural boycott of the University College. This decision was a sequel to the boycott of SRC elections. Since the inception of the College, students have consistently refused to elect an SRC under the present constitution. Now the boycott has been extended to all student committees.

Following the spate of meetings held towards the end of the term before the June vac, a number of students were directly or indirectly held responsible for the failure of the students to come nearer the decision of forming an SRC. It is known that at least one student decided to withdraw from the College rather than face a barrage of questions from the College D.C.

Ngoye

Following the resignation of the SRC President Mandla Makhaye and member, Boardman Mbele from the SRC two new members came in at a by-election last term. These are, Reggie Ngcobo and Archie Msomi. A third vacancy which occurred as a result of the resignation of Miss Guma at the beginning of this term has not been filled. Mr Andries Ngcobo is now the President. Students at Ngoye claim that they have not been fully let in into the reasons that resulted in the resignations. They felt let down particularly by the resignation of Mandla Makhaye who was extremely popular on the campus and was regarded as one of the best SRC Presidents at the black campuses.

Members of a SASO delegation that went to address a Student Body meeting at Ngoye on Saturday 8th were welcomed to an at first rather rowdy but later very lively meeting where they were thoroughly taxed on all aspects of the SASO policy. Not only had the crowd obviously prepared for the meeting but they were also quick to follow the inner aspects of the SASO policy and to question them. A comparison was frequently made between the SASO philosophy and classical theories.

Ngoye students will be going to the polls soon to decide at a referendum on the question of affiliation to SASO. If the meeting is a reliable yardstick we expect the students to decide in favour of affiliation by a very comfortable majority.

Transvaal College of Education

The SASO "Old Mutual Trophy" - a floating trophy - has gone to Mr Farouk Majam of T.C.E. this year. This trophy is presented to the winner of the SASO Best Speakers' Debate held during the conference each year. This year Mr Majam took the trophy (plus R15 prize money) and was followed by Mr Charles Sibisi at second place. Congratulations!!

Mr Guru Kistnassamy, recently elected as Director of Cultural Activities at the last conference of SASO, has tendered his resignation from the Executive. The decision follows undisclosed domestic problems. It was taken after consultation with the SRC of which Mr Kistnassamy is the President. As far as we could assess, the SRC at TCE is favourably disposed towards SASO.

University of Natal - Black Section

The UNB SRC has at last decided to tackle the issue of the name of the centre with the Senate. The matter was raised at a staff-student liaison meeting. The correlated resolution stated that students would refer to themselves as black for reasons of positivity and would term what was originally referred to as 'white' 'non-black'. The meeting decided to accept only the 1st part of the motion.

The 8-day food boycott at UNNE was called off on Friday 7th with open threats to resume it without notice if favourable decisions were reversed. The food boycott was against poor quality, little quantity, exorbitant prices and general poor and indecent service at both the residence and the Medical School canteen.

It seems the results of the strike are fairly measurable, especially at the Medical School canteen where prices over certain items have had to be cut down.

ooooOoooo

Overseas Students

In the course of the month July, we had occasion to meet students from the various West European countries - England, Scotland, Germany, Norway, Finland and Denmark. These students had come to represent their respective Unions at the various conferences over July.

It was significant that all these students were, by the time they left, fully in agreement with the lines we have taken and stated quite categorically that if they were forced to make a choice between SASO and any white dominated student organisation, they would go along with SASO.

The following is a prelude to a number of articles that will appear in subsequent issues of SASO newsletter on individual African states. These will attempt an in-depth exploration of their history, heritage, present state and prospects.

AFRICA SERIES I

THEY WERE COLONISED BEFORE; ARE THEY FREE NOW?

We in the Southern tip of Africa often get twisted and inaccurate accounts of the Black and Arab scene in Africa, so much so that some of us are tempted to conclude that newly-independent African states failures are due to premature independence. We are given the picture of inchoate and simple tribal societies where barbarism and internecine warfare reign supreme. African governments are portrayed as inept and corrupt despotisms, hopelessly out of time with 20th century motivations.

African progress is never mentioned except for a line or two in the occasional overseas journal that gets to South Africa. How many of us know for instance that since independence the Ivory Coast has maintained a growth rate of over 8% p.a. (favourably comparable to any in the world) and that a U.N. Aid official is quoted as saying "If they told us at independence that they were planning to do all this, we would have laughed at them." Few of us are aware that Zambia's rate of economic development and investment increased tremendously after independence. Fewer still are aware that Kenya is experiencing an agrarian revolution in the making. A lot of us know, however, that Africa's record of military coups is second only to that of Latin America.

There is often shallowness in perception regarding Africa's specific 'teething problems' (as some rather simplistic white liberals rather naively term them), largely the result of the South African press and the Western mass media.

When African states became independent, their boundaries often simply represented the points where one colonial army met another. There are very few nation states in Black and Arab Africa - with the possible exception of the former High Commission territories in the Southern part of the continent. The new states then were faced with the herculean task of making the diverse conglomeration of tribes dialects and customs into national entities. (Nigeria for one has about 400 different dialects.) Add to this the fact that boundaries often cut across tribal and kinship

lines, making people who felt themselves united in blood bond, citizens of different 'nations', and you have a potentially explosive situation.

The grinding poverty of most African states, stemming from industrial and agrarian inadequacy, renders them subject to widespread internal and external disruptions.

Internally, poverty eventuates disease and hunger qualities which result in diminished per capita productivity. Then again the hot, humid tropical climate and the multiplicity of diseases it effects further diminishes productivity. The net result is that the productivity of the average African worker is well below the level necessary to attain economic sufficiency within, say, the next 20 years.

Externally, poverty renders the African states dependent on handouts (economic aid) for their development capital. Some, like Lesotho, even need external help to balance the budget. Aid seldom comes with no strings attached. African states are thus placed in the invidious position of having to tailor their policies to suit the whims of the donor nations. Witness the case of Guinea which was virtually subjected to economic sanctions by France when she would not go along with other Francophone countries on matters of economic and foreign policy. African countries were colonised before, but they certainly are not free now. Neocolonialism stalks the continent in various guises.

Probably Africa's greatest liability is the colonial legacy which presents itself in diverse forms. The colonial powers sought from their colonies raw materials for their burgeoning industries. A specific product was sought from a specific colony, so that today most African states have single commodity economies. This is an extremely undesirable state of affairs as the the industrial output, the national economy and hence the national well-being often is dependent on the fluctuations of the specific commodity on the international marketplace. A state may enjoy all boom in one year and suffer a recession in the next (at least theoretically). The fall of cacao in the marketplace has had a deleterious effect on the Ghanaian economy. To offset this then African states have had to make attempts at diversifying the economy, after independence. Some, notably the Ivory Coast, have met with some success. The major stumbling block has been the plain fact that too many of these states are just too small to be able to establish sizable industries. In the whole of West Africa Nigeria is the only country large enough to have a meaningful steel industry. This again can be blamed on the fragmentary policies of the colonial powers.

Independence has often meant little change in the life-styles of the people. The men who took over from the colonial governments in many ways adopted a colonial mantle, receiving the same pay and privileges as their former colonial masters. The absorption of the intelligentsia into the government bureaucracy and administrative functions created a new black elite - aloof and cut off from the impoverished masses. In East Africa the new elite has been dubbed the Wabenzi because of their Mercedes-Benz limousines, the new status symbol of the successful African. A top post in the civil service and a fat cheque that goes with it is the surest way to 'success' in the new states. This has bred quite a bit of corruption as ambitious men sought to bribe their way to the top or sought to maintain their positions by 'gifts' to their superiors and associations. In spite of it all, in my opinion, the wonder of the new Africa is not that there is corruption but that there is a little of it, given the facts of the situation, and also the fact that it is discussed so freely, frequently rooted out and the culprits brought to justice.

The factors mentioned above, plus the fact that many African political parties, initially at least, tended to lack grass-roots involvement with the people and of the people (as inevitably occurs when an essentially revolutionary organisation casts off the revolutionary mantle and assumes a bureaucratic complexion) engendered frustration and disillusionment among the working classes in particular. The new breed of African military officers, newly graduated from Sandhurst and viewing everything in strict law and order terms felt compelled to step forth and assume power. It could happen that others were driven by just plain ambition and greed for power (and also by a few CIA dollars). Thus the shots that cut down Togo's Sylvanus Olympio reverberated throughout the continent.

As mentioned earlier, artificial boundaries drawn up by the colonial rulers created states that were little more than a conglomeration of regional groupings and tribes and separated people of closely-linked cultural and historical experiences. This made for the stresses and strains that were partly responsible for the Congolese, Nigerian and Sudanese civil wars, and the conflicts between Morocco and Algeria, Kenya and Somalia, Ethiopia and Somalia. The role of extraneous forces in the generation of the conflicts in many of the states is often not given the attention it deserves; Union Minière in the Congo, while the CIA and the K.G.I. have been rumoured to have been largely involved.

The failure of the parliamentary systems of government based on Westminster and Paris, should have appeared inevitable to anyone with a perceptive eye to continental conditions. The system lacked the historical foundation necessary for its successful stay. More important, it was hopelessly inadequate

to deal with problems peculiar to Africa; hence the response has been in many cases either a coup and a military dictatorship or adoption of a one-party system by the incumbent government.

The argument in favour of a one-party system of government is that it favours clarity of purpose and direction. It focuses attention on functional aspects of government, while agreement on broad matters of policy is arrived at by consensus of opinion in the one-party structure. It also makes long-term planning possible - a vital ingredient towards economic development in Africa.

The tendency amongst many observers of the international scene has been to associate one party systems with totalitarian and oppressive regimes, a tendency based on observations in other parts of the world. In Africa, however, and notably in Tanzania, the one-party framework has been used to consolidate and expand democratic principles. In multiparty systems strict adherence to party discipline and full acceptance of the party platform are required. Unorthodox views are not tolerated. The voters have merely to vote for one party or the other. In one-party systems considerable debate within the party framework is permitted and thus the people have a direct say in the formation of policies and the day to day operation of the government. This makes possible infrastructural consolidation of the people's resources which is necessary if the people are to be an effective watchdog over their country's direction. The criticism often labelled at the one-party system (and the imputation of totalitarian motives which it often implies) is the product of a mind that believes that totalitarianism per se is to be abhorred. Such a mind lays greater emphasis on the mechanics of government than on the aims of government. African states in increasing numbers are beginning to lay more stress on the aims than on the mechanics of government.

Independence day left the new states with policies and practises based on the capitalist system. But Africa soon discovered that she could scarcely afford the luxury of a system that is basically exploitative in intent and hence makes possible the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. On the other hand orthodox communism dehumanises the personality and depersonalises the individual and is, in the final analysis, just as exploitative and selfish as is capitalism. Some African leaders then sought a system that would result in a more equitable distribution of the fruits of collective endeavour while guaranteeing human freedom and dignity. The term 'African Socialism' has been used by Ghana's Nkrumah, Guinea's Toure, and Mali's Keita to describe such a system. It was Tanzania's Nyerere, however, who with

his Arusha programme began to put into practice this policy. Arusha lays stress on collective self-help and diminishes emphasis on foreign aid for developmental purposes.

From the above the conclusion might be drawn that although most African states are still not entirely free from the colonial legacy in all its myriad manifestations, many are striving hard to attain freedom. They are bold enough to challenge old established norms and to experiment freely with new. Young and vibrant and possessing a rich cultural heritage, Africa may, in time, bestow upon the rest of the world the greatest gift possible - a more human face.

Charles Sibisi -VPIR

oooooOooooo

Quote

I. "To a certain extent, we in Africa have always had a gift for enjoying Man for himself. It is at the heart of our traditional culture, but now we see the possibility of extending the scale of our discovery by example to the whole world. Let the West have its Technology and Asia its Mysticism! Africa's gift to world culture may be in the realm of Human Relationships. The Colonialists may talk condescendingly of the things they have taught us, yet I honestly believe that we have all the time been much nearer to the heart of things than our Western teachers. After all, don't the scientists tell us that Africa was the cradle of Man? The way things are going, Africa may be the last place where Man can still be Man."

"I think that two elements have gone to make up what might be called the African philosophy of Man. These are the African's relationship with Nature and the psychological impact upon him of centuries of existence within tribal society....Those people who are dependent upon and live in closest relationship with Nature are most conscious of the operation of these forces; the pulse of their lives beats in harmony with the pulse of the Universe. They may be simple and unlettered people and their physical horizons may be strictly limited, yet I believe that they inhabit a larger world than the sophisticated Westerner who has magnified his physical senses through invented gadgets at the price all too often of cutting out the dimension of the spirit!"

Kenneth D. Kaunda.

ooooOoooo

I WRITE WHAT I LIKE

The following is the first of a series of articles under the above topic, that will appear regularly in our Newsletter.

Black Souls in White Skins?

Basically the South African white community is a homogenous community. It is a community of people who sit to enjoy a privileged position that they do not deserve, are aware of this, and therefore spend their time trying to justify why they are doing so. Where differences in political opinion exist is in the process of trying to justify their position of privilege and their usurpation of power.

With their theory of "separate freedoms for the various nations in the multinational state of South Africa" the Nationalists have gone a long way towards giving most of white South Africa some sort of moral explanation for what is happening. Everyone is quite content to point out that these people - meaning the blacks - will be free when they are ready to run their own affairs in their own areas. What more could they possibly hope for?

But these are not the people we are concerned with. We are concerned with that curious bunch of nonconformists who explain their participation in negative terms: that bunch of do-gooders that goes under all sorts of names - liberals, leftists etc. These are the people who argue that they are not responsible for white racism and the country's 'inhumanity to the black man'. These are the people who claim that they too feel the oppression just as acutely as the blacks and therefore should be jointly involved in the black man's struggle for a place under the sun. In short, these are the people who say that they have black souls wrapped up in white skins.

The role of the white liberal in the black man's history in South Africa is a curious one. Very few black organisations were not under white direction. True to their image, the white liberals always knew what was good for the blacks and told them so. The wonder of it all is that the black people have believed in them for so long. It was only at the end of the 50s that the blacks started demanding to be their own guardians.

No where is the arrogance of the liberal ideology demonstrated so well as in their insistence that the problems of the country can only be solved by a bilateral approach involving both black and white. This has, by and large, come

to be taken in all seriousness as the modus operandi in South Africa by all those who claim they would like a change in the status quo. Hence the multiracial political organisations and parties and the "nonracial" student organisations, all of which insist on intergration not only as an end goal but also as a means.

The intergration they talk about is first of all artificial in that it is a response to conscious manoeuvre rather than to the dictates of the inner soul. In other words the people forming the intergrated complex have been extracted from various segregated societies with their in-built complexes of superiority and inferiority and these continue to manifest themselves even in the 'nonracial' setup of the intergrated complex. As a result the intergration so achieved is a one-way course, with the whites doing all the talking and the blacks listening. Let me hasten to say that I am not claiming that segregation is necessarily the natural order; however, given the facts of the situation where a group experiences privilege at the expense of others, then it becomes obvious that a hastily arranged intergration can not be the solution to the problem. It is rather like expecting the slave to work together with the slave-master's son to remove all the conditions leading to the former's enslavement.

2ndly, this type of intergration as a means is almost always unproductive. The participants waste lots of time in an internal sort of mudslinging designed to prove that A is more of a liberal than B. In other words the lack of common ground for solid identification is all the time manifested in internal strifes inside the group.

It will not sound anachronistic to anybody genuinely interested in real intergration to learn that blacks are asserting themselves in a society where they are being treated as perpetual under-16s. One does not need to plan for or actively encourage real intergration. Once the various groups within a given community have asserted themselves to the point that mutual respect has to be shown then you have the ingredients for a true and meaningful intergration. At the heart of true intergration is the provision for each man, each group to rise and attain the envisioned self. Each group must be able to attain its style of existence without encroaching on or being thwarted by another. Out of this mutual respect for each other and complete freedom of self-determination there will obviously arise a genuine fusion of the life-styles of the various groups. This is true intergration.

From this it becomes clear that as long as blacks

are suffering from inferiority complex - a result of 300 years of deliberate oppression, denigration and derision - they will be useless as co-architects of a normal society where man is nothing else but man for his own sake. Hence what is necessary as a prelude to anything else that may come is a very strong grass-roots build-up of black consciousness such that blacks can learn to assert themselves and stake their rightful claim.

Thus in adopting the line of a nonracial approach, the liberals are playing their old game. They are claiming a "monopoly on intelligence and moral judgement" and setting the pattern and pace for the realisation of the black man's aspirations. They want to remain in good books with both the black and white worlds. They want to shy away from all forms of 'extremisms', condemning 'white supremacy' as being just as bad as 'Black Power!'. They vacillate between the two worlds, verbalising all the complaints of the blacks beautifully while skilfully extracting what suits them from the exclusive pool of white privileges. But ask them for a moment to give a concrete meaningful programme that they intend adopting, then you will see on whose side they really are. Their protests are directed at and appeal to white conscience; everything they do is directed at finally convincing the white electorate that the black man is also a man and that at some future date he should be given a place at the white man's table.

The myth of intergration as propounded under the banner of liberal ideology must be cracked and killed because it makes people believe that something is being done when in actual fact the artificial intergrated circles are a soporific on the blacks and provide a vague satisfaction for the guilty-stricken whites. It works on a false premise that because it is difficult to bring people from different races together in this country therefore achievement of this is in itself a step forward towards the total liberation of the blacks. Nothing could be more irrelevant and therefore misleading. Those who believe in it are living in a fool's paradise.

Istly the black-white circles are almost always a creation of white liberals. As a testimony to their claim of complete identification with the blacks, they call a few 'intelligent and articulate' blacks to 'come around for tea at home', where all present ask each other the same old hackneyed question 'how can we bring about change in South Africa'. The more such tea-parties one calls the more of a liberal he is and the freer he shall feel from the guilt that harnesses and binds his conscience. Hence he moves around his white circles - whites-only hotels, beaches, restaurants and cinemas - with a lighter load, feeling that he is not

ke the rest of the others. Yet at the back of his mind is constant reminder that he is quite comfortable as things are and therefore should not bother about change. Although he does not vote for the Nats (now that they are in the majority anyway), he feels quite secure under the protection offered by the Nats and subconsciously shuns the idea of a change. This is what demarcates the liberal from the black world. The liberals view the oppression of blacks as a problem that has to be solved, an eye-sore spoiling an otherwise beautiful view. From time to time the liberals make themselves forget about the problem or take their eyes off the eye-sore. On the other hand, in oppression the blacks are experiencing a situation from which they are unable to escape at any given moment. Theirs is a struggle to get out of the situation and not merely to solve a peripheral problem as in the case of the liberals. This is why blacks speak with a greater sense of urgency than whites.

A game at which the liberals have become masters is that of deliberate evasiveness. The question often comes up 'what can I do?'. If you ask him to do something like stopping to use segregated facilities or dropping out of university to work at menial jobs like all blacks or defying and denouncing all provisions that make him privileged, you always get the answer - 'but that's unrealistic!'. While this may be true, it only serves to illustrate the fact that no matter what a white man does, the colour of his skin - his passport to privilege - will always put him miles ahead of the black man. Thus in the ultimate analysis no white person can escape being part of the oppressor camp.

" There exists among men, because they are men, a solidarity through which each shares responsibility for every injustice and every wrong committed in the world, and especially for crimes that are committed in his presence or of which he cannot be ignorant"

This description of 'metaphysical guilt' explains adequately that white racism 'is only possible because whites are indifferent to suffering and patient with cruelty' meted out to the black man. Instead of involving themselves in an all out attempt to stamp out racism from their white society, liberals waste lots of time trying to prove to as many blacks as they can find that they are liberal. This arises out of the false belief that we are faced with a black problem. There is nothing the matter with blacks. The problem is WHITE RACISM and it rests squarely on the laps of the white society. The sooner the liberals realise this the better for us blacks. Their presence amongst us is irksome and of nuisance value. It removes the focus of attention from essentials and shifts

it to ill-defined philosophical concepts that are both irrelevant to the black man and merely a red herring across the track. White liberals must leave blacks to take care of their own business while they concern themselves with the real evil in our society - white racism.

2ndly, the black-white mixed circles are static circles with neither direction nor programme. The same questions are asked and the same naivete exhibited in answering them. The real concern of the group is to keep the group going rather than being useful. In this sort of set up one sees a perfect example of what oppression has done to the blacks. They have been made to feel inferior for so long that for them it is comforting to drink tea, wine or beer with whites who seem to treat them as equals. This serves to boost up their own ego to the extent of making them feel slightly superior to those blacks who do not get similar treatment from whites. These are the sort of blacks who are a danger to the community.

Instead of directing themselves at their black brothers and looking at their common problems from a common platform they choose to sing out their lamentations to an apparently sympathetic audience that has become proficient in saying the chorus of "shame!". These dull-witted, self-centred blacks are in the ultimate analysis as guilty of the arrest on progress as their white friends for it is from such groups that the theory of gradualism emanates and this is what keeps the blacks confused and always hoping that one day God will step down from heaven to solve their problems. It is people from such groups who keep on scanning the papers daily to detect any sign of the change they patiently await without working for. When Helen Suzman's majority is increased by a couple of thousands, this is regarded as a major milestone in the 'inevitable change'. Nobody looks at the other side of the coin - the large scale removals of Africans from the urban areas or the impending zoning of places like Grey Street in Durban and a myriad of other manifestation of change for the worse.

Does this mean that I am against intergration? If by intergration you understand a breakthrough into white society by blacks, an assimilation and acceptance of blacks into an already established set of norms and code of behaviour set up by and maintained by whites, then YES I am against it. I am against the superior-inferior white-black stratification that makes the white a perpetual teacher and the black a perpetual pupil (and a poor one at that). I am against the intellectual arrogance of white people that makes them believe that white leadership is a sine qua non in this country and that whites are the divinely appointed pace-setters in progress.

I am against the fact that a settler minority should impose an entire system of values on an indigenous people.

If on the other hand by intergration you mean there shall be free participation by all members of a society, catering for the full expression of the self in a freely changing society as determined by the will of the people, then I am with you. For one cannot escape the fact that the culture shared by the majority group in any given society must ultimately determine the broad direction taken by the joint culture of that society. This need not cramp the style of those who feel differently but on the whole, a country in Africa, in which the majority of the people are African must inevitably exhibit African values and be truly African in style.

What of the claim that the blacks are becoming racists? This is a favourite pastime of frustrated liberals who feel their trusteeship ground being washed off from under their feet. These self-appointed trustees of black interests boast of years of experience in their fight for the 'rights of the blacks'. They have been doing things for blacks, on behalf of blacks, and because of blacks. When the blacks announce that the time has come for them to do things for themselves and all by themselves all white liberals shout blue murder!

"Hey, you can't do that. You're being a racist. You're falling into their trap."

Apparently its alright with the liberals as long as you remain caught by their trap.

Those who know, define racism as discrimination by a group against another for the purposes of subjugation or maintaining subjugation. In other words one cannot be a racist unless he has the power to subjugate. What blacks are doing is merely to respond to a situation in which they find themselves the objects of white racism. We are in the position in which we are because of our skin. We are collectively segregated against - what can be more logical than for us to respond as a group? When workers come together under the auspices of a trade union to strive for the betterment of their conditions, nobody expresses surprise in the Western world. It is the done thing. Nobody accuses them of separatist tendencies. Teachers fight their battles, garbagemen do the same, nobody acts as a trustee for another. Somehow, however, when blacks want to do their thing the liberal establishment seems to detect an anomaly. This is in fact a counter-anomaly. The anomaly was there in the first instance when the liberals were presumptuous enough to think that it behoved them to fight the battle for the blacks.

The liberal must understand that the days of the Noble Savage are gone; that the blacks do not need a go-between in this struggle for their own emancipation. No true liberal should feel any resentment at the growth of black consciousness.

Rather, all true liberals should realise that the place for their fight for justice is within their white society. The liberals must realise that they themselves are oppressed if they are true liberals and therefore they must fight for their own freedom and not that of the nebulous 'they' with whom they can hardly claim identification. The liberal must apply himself with absolute dedication to the idea of educating his white brothers that the history of the country may have to be rewritten at some stage and that we may live in 'a country where colour will not serve to put a man in a box'. The blacks have heard enough of this. In other words, the liberal should serve as a lubricating material so that as we change things in trying to find a better direction for South Africa, there should be no grinding noises of metal against metal but a free and easy flowing movement which will be characteristic of a well-looked after vehicle.

"Frank-talk".

oooooooooooo

Selected bits of Poetry

of Africa

Naked woman, black woman
Clothed with your colour which is life, with
your form which is beauty!
In your shadow I have grown up; the gentleness
of your hands was laid over my eyes. . . .

Naked woman, black woman
I sing your beauty that passes, the form that I
fix in the eternal,
Before jealous fate turns you to ashes to feed
the roots of life

Leopold Senghor
(Senegal)

of the assimilate (white-inclined African)

My brother, you flash your teeth in response to
every hypocrisy
My brother with gold-rimmed glasses
You give your master a blue-eyed faithful look
My poor brother in immaculate evening dress
Screaming and whispering and pleading in the
parlours of condescension.

"The Renegade"
Daïd Diop
(Senegal)

THE FINANCIAL SITUATION

One of the most disturbing features about black organisations in the past has been their inability to be financially stable. It does seem that SASO will also be unable to escape this handicap. Of the total amount that came into SASO coffers from July 1969 to July 1970 only less than a third - R458.80 to be exact - came from the centres themselves. A breakdown of this shows some interesting figures:-

<u>Affiliation fees</u>	Turfloop	I24.80
	U.N.B.	90.00
<u>Conference fees</u>	Turfloop	99.00
	Mapumulo	I5.00
<u>Grants</u>	Turfloop (1969)	50.00
<u>Loans</u>	Turfloop (1969)	80.00
		<u>R458.80</u>

The SASO Executive was therefore kept very busy trying to raise finances from external sources. This we managed to do to some extent but we need a much more concerted effort on the part of the member centres to maintain the organisations. In fact all black centres, affiliated or not should make it their responsibility to keep the organisation financially sound. Fund-raising by local committees and/or SRCs has to be started almost immediately.

SASO was smeared at Nusas circles. Some zealous supporter of Nusas claimed that SASO gets its other component of its finances from the Special Branch. At least if this were so it would be a steady source. Unfortunately this is not the case and hence we do not have a steady source. Up to now we have been assisted by an international student group with long term loans while we secure our selves some sponsors. Prospects are fairly bright but all in all we favour an all out attempt to attain self-sufficiency. Hence the need for vigorous fund-raising.

It goes without saying that SASO is particularly impressed with Turfloop for its support, both emotional and material. A look at the above figures shows that R353.80 of it came from Turfloop one way or the other. In the same breath, one needs to mention UNB too which has allowed us to operate very cheaply by letting us use their equipment offices etc. In fact one student commented that he could not understand how we happened to be still at large with so many handicaps.

THE NEW EXECUTIVE OF SASO

The Executive elected at the last sitting of the 1970 GSC stands as follows

President	Barney Pityana
Vice-President	Lindelwe Mabandla
Vice-President	
International Relations	Charles Sibisi
Ass. General Secretary	Vuy Mashalaba

Regional Directors

Eastern Cape	Perry Motlhabane
Transvaal & OFS	Pry Moshidi
Natal	Mncedisi Jekwa
WeternCape	vacant

Specific Portfolios

Education	Chappie Palweni
National Sports' Director	Boyce Baloyi
Cultural Affairs	Guru Kistnassary
Field Work	Frank Hlangwane
Publications	Steve Biko

CHANGES MADE TO COMPOSITION OF EXEC.

New Portfolios Created

General Secretary

The GSC decided to scrap the portfolios of Secretary and Treasurer as provided for in the old constitution and to replace both by a fulltime post of General Secretary to be appointed by the Executive and to be a voting portfolio in the Executive but not in the GSC. The General Secretary will start functioning as from January 1971. In the mean time the GSC elected a provisional General Secretary to function as such and to be designated Assistant General Secretary.

Vice-President - International Relations

Anticipating expansion on the international level, the GSC decided to institute the post of VPIR to regulate the expansion.

Specific Portfolios

These were instituted to serve specific functions as laid out in the amended constitution of SASO.

ooOoo

Collection Number: AD1719

State v S Cooper and 8 others.

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand

Location:- Johannesburg

©2012

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

DOCUMENT DETAILS:

Document ID:- AD1719-J

Document Title:- South African Students' Organisation (SASO) - Newsletters