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the **FIRST REPORT**
of the **BASUPATSELA**
YOUTH ORGANISATION

JUNE - DECEMBER

1955

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THE FIRST REPORT ON THE BASUPATSELA YOUTH ORGANISATION.

The Basupatsela Youth Organisation came into existence on the 4th June, 1955, with only twenty small boys as pioneers (founders) of this historic movement. On that date these boys joined hands under Five Principles, which do not only serve the existence of the Club but also call for tolerance and a humanitarian attitude to the problems which often beset a human being in his long journey through life. Although these principles have been printed separately, it will be quite proper to write them in this report so that they can serve as a guide and attend the coming into existence of future branches of this Youth Club, throughout the country. The basic purpose is "to give the Youth creative recreation so that in turn they should serve their people and country."

The Five Principles of Basupatsela:

1. To Keep Clean in Body and Mind.
2. To Learn and Teach.
3. To play Games and Keep Fit.
4. To Serve My Country.
5. To be a Good Masupatsela.

These are the Five Principles which, undoubtedly, without obstructions in the future, will be recorded in the annals of our history as a step which could not have been left out without disaster by its architects in moulding and producing future responsible citizens in every department of our life. Therefore having presented a brief outline of this Youth movement, the next step is an outline of the different parts which form this vital report.

MEMBERSHIP.

As it has already been mentioned above, the pioneers (founders) of the Basupatsela Youth Organisation were only twenty. With their smart appearance in the uniform of the club, i.e., a short black pair of trousers - which is popular in all Transvaal schools - a green shirt and a yellow scarf, they attracted the eyes of many people. After three months the membership had risen to fifty, including some girls. Then a couple of weeks later, but not contrary to expectation, this figure fell to thirty. When I point out that it was not contrary to expectation, it is not an admission of having been pessimistic concerning the architectural plans of this Youth Organisation. Firstly, it is because the organisation is open to all Youth from the age of seven (7) to seventeen (17) years of age and, on examining this age group, especially some difficulties are bound to arise. Secondly, a setback here and there is characteristic of any undertaking especially in its initial stages. Therefore our concern should be why this happened and how to avoid its recurrence. At this stage we can only guess the remedy that can be applied in the coming days.

By giving the children enough equipment for playing games during the couple of hours they spend in their meetings on Sundays, this being the only day on which they can meet, and also by telling them interesting stories, creative recreation is given them. They must also be encouraged to discuss freely, good and constructive issues of the world in which we live. At the same time to admit that this drop in membership is a true indicator of some lack of initiative in the organisational work will not be an undermining of oneself but a good service will emerge because it is a truism that one cannot succeed in criticising others without giving oneself a brushing act first. Therefore, having recognised these petty mistakes, the right way of advance in the direction to our goal is clear.

At the same time we can turn back and throw a glance at the work which has been done for this Youth Club in the short period of six months of its existence, only to smile and feel proud. The greatest thing which can determine the existence of a human undertaking - Nucleus - was created and firmly established. Therefore without an advent of disastrous obstacles in the future, we can face the future

without hesitation, and rest assured of reaping a rich harvest where we have toiled after sacrificing some enjoyments of life in order to pay our contribution to the history of this country.

At the very start of this undertaking some things for playing games were bought for the members. These were in the nature of draughts, dominoes, snakes and ladders and cards. A football was also amongst these but unfortunately was rendered useless and was passed on to the girl's section for use as a basketball.

It was with far less difficulty for all the members to master the different kinds of games and the use of the playthings. They also performed some exercises under the guidance of the energetic Mr. B. Mathole with whom I have worked closely in trying to create history. As a result of these performances their physical outlook was enhanced because in reality, judging by the work which has already been narrated above, every fibre of their existence is exercised in a proper manner. Therefore with the co-operation of the public by helping every step of this great adventure to succeed, the purpose of making this practical work has already been justified and its success achieved. Therefore in future, with more equipment for games, (each and every game in the world), future sportsmen and athletes are ready to take their place not only in a national but also in an international society. This shall have come through the blessing of the people.

ADMINISTRATIVE.

So far this Youth Club has been administered by three Committees, each consisting of the Chairman as the leader; the Secretary, who records each and everything of the Club; the Treasurer, who cares for the finances of the movement; and two additional committee members, thus bringing the number of officials to five.

The Chairman as a leader has powers both over the committee and the movement as a whole. During the weekly meetings of the committee he takes charge of its deliberations. He is not a boss over the members but a colleague. The members are responsible to him provided he pays the same duty to them, and of course, every member, irrespective of rank, is part and parcel of the organisation. Definite measures have been taken to see that pure democratic principles and actions are observed in everything concerning the movement.

At first elections were conducted monthly by the boys to get them used to the idea. After the first two elections, things were allowed to take their course and the result was that the out-going committee has been in office for the longest period - three months. The girls have had one election, partly because of their lack of enthusiasm in taking part in our activities and also because of the difficulty I had to face in managing both sections. These two committees have been working together, with the one of the boys taking the leading part. The present committees will dissolve at the beginning of January, 1956, and from then onwards, elections will take place after every three months. One committee from both sections will take the place of the present two committees and thus abolish the current system dividing the children of one family. The boys constitute the majority of the members and therefore will have not less and not more than three representatives in the committee of five, and girls being in the minority will have two - thus safeguarding their rights in the club. After two years the elections can take place half-yearly or annually but experience will determine the right course which shall have to be followed then.

These children have been shown how and have been encouraged to discuss freely constructive topics and to air their opinions in conspectu omnium concerning the behaviour of members and their work in the movement, but not behinds someone's back. Much has been done in this particular respect, and much will be achieved in days to come, as has been seen in this short period. With the

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organiser seeing to their needs and pointing the right direction of advance to the chosen goal, they are starting to sift the good things and improving their organisation.

OTHER DUTIES PERFORMED.

The basic principle of this Youth Organisation is:- To serve my people and my country. So when the greatest event in our history took place on June 25th and 26th, this Youth Club went to Kliptown to witness the next chapter of our national history being unfolded by the people of this country from every walk of life. Again, in September, they took part in the picnic which marked Dr. Dadoo's forty-eighth birthday and also played their part during the celebrations of the Tenth Anniversary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, under the auspices of the Youth of South Africa. At the beginning of this month they killed two birds with one stone by going to see what an airport is and also to welcome one of their fathers, Mr. Kotane, from England. Some of the members took leading parts in the play which was presented during the closing of the People's School at Gandhi Hall this month.

Four months after the club was started, the members received from the World Federation of Democratic Youth a congratulatory note because of the adventurous step they took in forming themselves into an entity ready at all times to serve its peoples and country.

FINANCIAL REPORT.

Each and every member of the Club is required to pay a monthly subscription towards the expense of the undertaking which is for their benefit. Much importance is attached to this collection of these subscriptions. Firstly, because money provides a sound foundation for any human society. Secondly, in times of hardship and frustration, a member will be helped by the Club whenever possible to settle the particular need, and, of course, pay back the Club. This is in view of the fact that not all of us are from well-to-do families. At the same time a spirit of friendship and trust are cultivated in the minds of the children.

The Club itself, without pressure from outside (Organiser), decides how to use its pennies, but the organiser is ever-present to see that no extravagance takes place, and that everything is done in a humanitarian and orderly manner. This money will also be used for picnics and other activities - such as entertaining visitors of the Club from other branches in the country as will be the case in future.

The last financial report by the Treasurer, a week ago, was that the Club had twelve shillings and a sixpence out of the member's subscriptions. Not a good sum, anyway, but one who has eyes to see and grey matter to think can readily appreciate and laud the efforts of children between seven and fourteen years of age, without any previous knowledge of all these things which have been enumerated in this vital report. In any event, seventy-five per cent of these faults lie with the organiser whose name shall be known later. With the frequent absence of his supervision, and his colleague paying attention to his needs in the past, there was nobody to remind the committee now and then to collect membership subscriptions.

All these our past mistakes being recorded in this report, and every member of the Club being aware of them - that they stem from the organiser - a great hurdle in the direction of advancing to a higher level shall have been removed. The organiser has been organising on a part-time basis. With the coming of the new year and before it wears itself out, a new universe with a brighter future shall have unfolded itself to these young and bold pioneers of the untrodden path.

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GENERAL REMARKS.

The Basupatsela Youth Organisation has not been limited to African Youth. Branches have been started by the Indian Youth and the European Youth. It shall be the task of the organisers to unite the various groups into one powerful Basupatsela Youth Organisation.

Many centres in the Transvaal have shown an interest in the work which is being done for the children of South Africa. Also the age of these children has amazed them because no-one has ever dreamt of young children from seven to seventeen years of age being able to compete with adults in showing such a sense of responsibility.

Therefore if this Youth movement can spread its tentacles, as is the ultimate aim, my greatest ambition and self-appointed mission in life shall have been achieved. There is nothing one can hope to see in our country and in this world, better than all the people living happily together irrespective of their self-chosen departments in life. Humanity forms an indivisible entity and as such must live to exist untampered with.

These centres which have promised to form branches of this Youth Club are cordially welcome and to contact the mother body. This Youth Organisation is open to all children of our country. Every individual is required to contribute to this movement either by offering constructive criticisms or otherwise. It is a step that everyone can be proud of, provided he values friendship.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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