

AB34

A. STRUCTURES

At Wit, there very few structures that have access to a large number of students. These are BSS, SRC, Projects Comm, Wits Women's Movement, M.S.A. SAUTS and SMA. Of these structures only the BSS, SRC and Projects Comm. are directly under progressive control. With these structures we have retained our autonomy, but have nonetheless worked on joint campaigns when necessary e.g. Shapeville and May Day. In other instances they have played a supportative function as in the case of the National Day of solidarity. The Wits Women's Movement has not been totally steered by the progressive and as such our relationship with them is virtually non-existent. The MSA, while not directly under progressive leadership, has this year displayed an increasing tendency to provide a progressive content to their activities. We have worked jointly with them on May Day and they had actively joined our call to boycott classes on the 30th of May. As far as SAUTS and SMA is concerned, our relationship with them exists across the battle-lines.

Despite the fragmentation at our constituency B.S.S. is still by far the dominant black student organisation on campus. The reasons for this would well be attributed to

- i) our long history of political agitation
- ii) our ability to correctly respond to political issues that face students
- iii) consistency and
- iv) the inactivity of the 3rd Force.

B. BRANCH

We have ± 15 core members in our branch, but have at points been able to secure the participation of about 25 other people who have worked with us in the past. A large part of the core is made up of students who have been active on the campuses that they have previously student on.

B.S.S. has spent lengthy periods at time attempting to restructure our branch. The following proposals have been made. - i) that we have the following sub-committees media, womens, Azaso, Area, Sport, Education and Training. Each of these sub-committee were to have been made up at ±5 people.

ii) that we set up a co-ordinating² committee to be made up at the conveners of the different sub-committees + the exec. members. This committee was to preside every alternative week.

iii) that we retain the open working forum where the general membership will discuss relevant matters. The meetings of this forum was to take place in between successive co-ordinating committee meetings.

iv) Hence the exec. as such formal positions and was not a functional entity.

The process of initiating activity was to be as follows - the sub-committees were to work out periodical programmes. These programmes were then to be compiled and co-ordinated by the co-ordinating committee. It was then that the broad working committee (containing all members of sub-committees) would finally ratify other decisions. Once general decisions have been taken then each sub-comm. was to have its autonomy to implement.

To date we have been unable to successfully implement this process. Many attempts have collapsed and in so doing disorganised us. With the result that in some instances we have appeared to be sluggish and incapable to proceed at the required pace.

C. THIRD FORCE

After last years abortive attempt to take over BSS the 3rd force have not surfaced publicly again. Their underhand and disruptive tactics has resulted in them isolating themselves from students.

Last year the 3rd Force existed in the organisational form of U.S.B.C. (Bursary Organisation)

At Glyn Thomas the 3rd Force seemed to have sustained some kind of presence. They have held regular meetings at times.

At Mofolo house - the 3rd force tendency seems to be emerging.

But on the whole they have not posed a direct threat to us. Despite the absence of a formal 3rd Force presence - we have not relapsed into a false sense of security.

We are aware that they are able to exert an influence at an informal/individual level. Therefore, we have realised that the only way to keep them at bay would be through our own consistent hard work. Up to now our relationship with the 3rd Force is cordial for there exists no open antagonism and hostility between us.

D. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

We have not developed systematic methods to recruit new members. We have relied on informal and individual contact as a means to draw in new people to BSS. As a result we have only succeeded in recruiting a handful of new people. This year no training programmes have been conducted, but the ranks of B.S.S. have swelled mainly because of an influx of experienced activists from other campuses - these activists have played an important role in sustaining activity.

At some points, however, B.S.S. has been able to secure the services of over 30 activists, eg. 30th May boycott and G.T.H. Food boycotts, etc. - but we have failed to consolidate this participation of students over long periods of time. We were hoping that the leadership training Programme which was to be held in April this year would have been of great help.

The attempts at restructuring was not only seen as a means to absorb new people in activity. It is hoped that as the sub-committees and co-ordinating committees, act themselves out, we would be able to ensure continuity and leadership.

E. ASSESSMENT OF CAMPAIGNS

a) Ngoye Crisis

- i) 8 activists involved
- ii) 150 students attended meeting.
- iii) pamphlets, graffiti wall
- iv) joint mass meeting with UDF and Azapo.
- v) the crisis came during exam time, and we were unable to maximize our politicization.
- iv) exams.

b) Orientation

- i) 15 activists involved
- ii) 250 signed up BSS members
- iii) challenge, Bill-boards, posters, meeting notices, sold - TShirts, play slides tape show
- iv) old students do not attend everyday and new students only attend on registration days. Therefore we find to engage in activity that would normally attract large student participation.
BSS finds itself having to compete with numerous other clubs in order to make a significant impact on new students.

c) Sharpeville

- i) 12 activists
- ii) ± 4000 students participated
- iii) leaflet, posters, banners, wall
- iv) joint meeting with projects comm. plus G.T.H mass meeting
- v) We failed to take the overall initiative on this campaign. Because of our sluggishness we were forced to go on a joint campaign with Project Committee.
The 3rd Force tried to disrupt the G.T.H. meeting.

d). National Focus on Repression

- i) 20 activists
- ii) 1000 signatures
- iii) pamphlets, Azaso Newsletter, Bill-Boards, petition, video - on rural relocation and Press - release posters.
- iv) mass meeting
- v) we did not properly co-ordinate the various activities around the focus week.

c) May Day

- i) 20 activists
- ii) ±400 students participated
- iii) pamphlet and posters

- iv) Mass meeting with MSA and Projects Committee and G.T.H Meeting which was unfortunately badly attended.
- v) We did not take the initiative over the campaign
Confusion and controversy over the inclusion of MSA on the May Day Campaign.

f) National Day of Solidarity/Republic Day

- i) 30 activists
- ii) 4000 students participated
- iii) challenge, pamphlets, Bill-boards, posters, press-statements, banners June 16, T/Shirts
- iv) mass meeting (1000) demos outside Great Hall and DCT offices boycott and march
- v) Press wrongly projected Nusas as Spearheading the Campaign.
Followed by exams and difficult to consolidate our gains.

h) Million signature Campaign

- i) all our activists participation, one stage of the campaign. This campaign staggered
- ii) 1200 black students signed
- iii) seminar, article in challenge, posters
- iv) major blitz orientation, UDF focus in May Baragwanath Blitz, JHB town Blitz
- v) Lack of consistency of activists
Nusas participation did not allow us to reach to all black students
the campaign on campus was not well planned.

F. EDUCATION CHARTER CAMPAIGN

At Wits we have no formal education Charter Committee. The national executive members of our branch we attempting to fulfill the required tasks. This informal grouping try to play an initiating role on other campuses in the region and planned an regional festival and workshop. The regional festival failed because the regional committee was unable to get itself into order.

The workshop met with minimal success. It was attended by +30 students from Witz and the STTC. We only completed half programme of the workshop and never continued. Despite no actual activities around the Education Charter, numerous attempts were made to popularize the campaign. The Campaign has been advertised in our pamphlets, statements, community newsletter and progressive journals like Africa Perspective etc. but this is not sufficient.

G. ISSUES

This year we have taken up the accomodation issue. /Swaziland. The issue was taken up because it provided us the opportunity to

- i) organise students around their material problems,
- ii) present Azaso as an organisation capable of fighting to advance the interests and demands of students,
- iii) to popularise and to extend the influence of Azaso.

a) Accomodation

- i) 15 activists involved
- ii) 250 people
- iii) pamphlets
- iv) mass meetings
- v) No adequate follow-up
lack of student military. and
Student apathy
Overestimation of problem by leadership.

b) Swaziland

- i) 16 activists
- ii) none
- iii) leaflet, banner, statement
- iv) -
- v) No consultation between Azaso and other prog. organisation
Lack of info on the issue
Problem of legality
Lack of direction from NEC

c) Food boycott at G.T. House

- i) All GTH students and activists were involved
- ii) All GTH students and activists were involved.
- iii) None
- iv) Meeting
- v) Boycott petered out because of the lack of planning
Lack of active student interests.

d) Entrance requirements

This was not taken at a mass level, but discussions did however take place with the administration.

e) Sports Tournament

- i) 20 activists
- ii) 200 students
- iii) posters, informative leaflets
- iv) none
- v) bad organisation
many activists were forced to attend other political activity
The 3rd Force in GTH refused to participate.

H. Communication

No real problem of communication with NEC - fortunate of the presence of executive members in our branch. We would however desire more contact between branches.

I. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

By far the major problem in BSS has been our inability to develop an efficient organisational machinery

- The restructuring process started very late
- The restructuring process was unnecessarily prolonged
- Failure to successfully draw in new members
- Failure to consolidate at points of heightened activity
- low level of organisation in the residences
- Lack of co-ordination between campus and residence
- Activists became slack
- Failure of an adequate grassroots, low-keyed approach.

But despite these major problems, BSS has successfully been able to mobilise large numbers of students at various points. In addition we have succeeded in maintaining and projecting the progressive ideology.

1

COMBINED COLLEGES REPORT

HEWAT:

1. Structures on campus;
 - A rep from each class forms SRC
 - Sports and Cultural Councils under SRC; rep from each on SRC exec.
 - Projects Comm. - Third Force control - limited liason between Projects and AZASO.
 - ASA - Some members progressive

2. Progressive controlled structures:
 - Film and Magazine societies
 - SRC partly progressive - working relationship with AZASO members.

3. AZASO is not the dominant Black student organisation.

BRANCH/WORKING GROUP

4 Active members and 3 interested.
Decision making follows democratic procedure
Semi-organised working group

THIRD FORCE ELEMENTS

Traditional third force base
Fairly strong and well organised
Have contact on SRC and have working relationships within this body

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Person to person contact - very limited
Much pamphleteering - AZASO literature

ASSESSMENT ON CAMPAIGNS

Many pamphleteering campaigns were done exclusively by AZASO.
Some success on UNITRA campaign

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Too few people, student apathy, group not well organised.

EDUCATION CHARTER CAMPAIGN

ECC represented on regional EC steering Comr.

ISSUES

Published June 16, UNITRA, MAY DAY and Conscription.

COMMUNICATION

Extensive communication with NEC. Some disappointment with some NEC members not keeping appointments.

PENTECH:

STRUCTURES ON CAMPUS

SRC - Representing all 6 different faculties.

Rector has constitution drawn up by lawyer - imposed on students.

Hostel committee and Sports Board under progressive control.

MSA very weak.

WORKING GROUP

10 Active members

Distribute pamphlets and conduct Education and Training and discussion.

Democratic decision making.

THIRD FORCE

Virtually non-existent

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Person to person contact - very limited

Much pamphleteering - AZASO literature

ASSESSMENT OF CAMPAIGNS

Appeal to SRC for Mass Meeting - permission refused

Issue of "African Students" on hostel - had SRC response - issue still receiving attention.

EDUCATION CHARTER CAMPAIGN

No progress

COMMUNICATION

Contact with Western Cape NEC rep.

WESLEY

STRUCTURES ON CAMPUS

No SRC, Projects Comm. 10 members - AZASO contact extremely limited.

Sports Board - Controls all clubs - strongest body - No clear Political direction.

WORKING GROUP

No AZASO working group - 5 interested people
Some AZASO literature distributed eg. calendars.

ATHLONE

STRUCTURES ON CAMPUS

SRC - 12 members
Sports Board - under SRC
Hostel Comm.
VCS

WORKING GROUP

No AZASO working group
SRC Chairperson + 1 SRC member are third force, rest pro. UDF.

ISSUES

Conducted a food-boycott on Hostel - SRC lost credibility at hostel because of way it handled the boycott - meanwhile Hostel Comm. gained credibility. Local pro UDF Civic assisted.

N.B. - Colleges are under direct control of administration of Coloured Affairs. Rector has limited powers - cannot make decisions without consulting dept. 85% dependent on bursaries which are used as a form of blackmail.

RHODES UNIVERSITY CAMPUS REPORT
(BSM/AZASO BRANCH)

Rev "AB 34"

- A. Black students are represented by Black Students Movement (BSM). BSM was affiliated to AZASO in September last year. AZASO is the dominant Black Students Organisation on the Rhodes Campus. Of 300 Black students, 50% belong to AZASO.
- B. We have 25 students who are continually active but this number increases depending on the nature of the issue. BSM has 7 sub-comms. They are Education, Projects, Sport, Media, Women and Culture. BSM also has a core group of activists who supplement the Exec in all its work. The core group has been meeting on a regular basis (fortnightly) whereas the sub-comms have been meeting infrequently. Most of the work that has been done on campus has not been the sole responsibility of any one sub-comm. eg. core group takes over May Day which is usually task of the Projects Comm. The Exec of BSM meets once a week. We have had 6 general meetings this year. Mass action is usually planned at general meetings and day to day running of org. is done at Exec level. The core group is usually where the issues emerge from - it is taken to the general membership/Ad-Hoc comm. Is mandated to execute membership directives.
- C. The third force elements on campus are confined to a few individuals who are totally inactive. Recruitment methods are usually emotionally orientated with minimal success.
- D. Initially students are introduced to topical issues via speakers at mass meetings, videos, seminars, workshops. This is followed up by personal visits and thereafter students are drawn into the org.
- E. The core group serves as a training group for leadership and continuity. No specific training programmes have been initiated thus far. All programmes were first preceded by workshops which served as organisational training programmes. It is difficult to assess whether methods employed have been successful. Membership response has been very positive in this respect.
- F. Campaigns:
Ngoye - a mass meeting was held on campus a day after the call was made by NEC where speakers outlined the reactionary role of Inkatha. Publications issued by NEC were also distributed.
Orientation - two student meetings were held where speakers delivered papers and new students were introduced to life on a liberal campus.
Sharpsville, - a mass meeting was held
National focus on repression - issue was taken up by local branch of NUSAS
Mayday - a mass meeting was scheduled - speaker did not arrive. Video was shown.
National day of Solidarity - a stay away was called at a mass meeting. Alternative programmes were arranged for that day.
- G. Student Issues
Accommodation crisis - a failed campaign due to 1) problem resolved prior to action being taken 2) lack of general student interest 3) failure on part of members to fulfill tasks

Rag and Sports Boycott - A phenomenal success - addressed by speaker on Multi-National sports. Meeting addressed on counter productive role of Rag. The meeting put forward a motion rejecting Rag and calling on Black students to boycott Rag.
Disciplinary code - The Rhodes University Disciplinary Board operates within a law of its own. Black students who are brought before the board are victimised and handed unjust punishments. The case of an unfairly dismissed student was taken up by the Exec. More militant action other than writing a letter was not possible.

- F. The idea of an Educational Charter Campaign has been introduced and discussion has been held on a formal and informal basis. The campaign has had regional problems and has therefore not been launched as such.

MSC:

Activists that were involved - no of activists that have been involved in the blitzes in the town and townships has been fluctuating. The highest no of activists that have been involved is 20. This is not satisfactory. The explanation given is exam prep. No of students that participated in campaign - the general student body participation has been very minimal. The main problem here is apathy. The methods used were successful to a certain degree but they need to be improved to be able to yield the required results. BSM was highly involved in the MSC launches in the two townships in Grahamstown. We were involved at prep. level. The problems encountered are

- a) Lack of absolute support and co-operation from exec and general membership.
- b) Organisational problems between NUSAS and BSM
- c) Preparation and actual work for the campaign has sometimes worked to the detriment of branches

GENERAL PROBLEMS:

Grahamstown being a small town, lacking in progressive activities; students are expected to take the initiative. This has caused in many cases our activists to be involved in sports org. and civic matters. The end result has been that activists have been more active outside campus than on campus. This has put us in a dilemma in a sense that we cannot pull out of the off-campus activities in fear of leaving a vacuum in the community.

Apathy - a problem which we still need to overcome.

Lack of venues off campus - all venues controlled by management committees and town councils.

Most students who study at Rhodes are not from Grahamstown, as a result when they leave campus on vacation a vacuum is created.

Communication with NEC - although attempts by the NEC to improve communication has been made, this needs to be improved, especially the timing of announcements of issues to be taken up by the branches,

OKSK.

STRUCTURES ON THE CAMPUS.

SRC - elected by second and third years from 2nd & 3rd Sports board.

Media Comm. - strong debating society - under progressive control.

People generally dissatisfied with SRC because 1st years not represented and cannot vote.

Strong VCS.

WORKING GROUP.

10 members: mostly engaged in ET meetings.

Pamphlets only for group use - no general pamphleting takes

PLACE.

No college opposition to pamphletering.

Decision-making is democratic; well-disciplined.

Meet regularly in private homes - one lecturer in working group.

THIRD FORCE.

SACOS presence - doesn't oppose UDF & AZASO.

RECRUITMENT.

4 original members, others recruited in mass meeting & one person-to-person basis.

E. C. CAMPAIGN.

None started but aware of it.

TS SUES.

Debating society took up PC, very well attended and successful. Sowe.to & June 14 - taken up by SRC under progressive direction during college hours, full attendance, not many gains made.

BOYCOTT - Students called for a boycott because of dissatisfaction with exam time-table; in a mass meeting students decided to boycott and have programmes on campus for one week: the Rector intervened: SRC went along with Rector's decision. Students then had programme for 1 day & boycotted certain exam subjects, all the same. This was fully supported. Students dissatisfied with SRC for upholding Rector's decision. SRC has lost some popularity. Bought Azaso time-tables.

E. CAMPAIGN

Not formally taken up - limited to publications. Azaso member did support the campaign.

1) Orientation.

Not formally taken up because of pressure from Admin. Attempts were made on a small scale - not very successful - limited to pamphlet.

c) Sharpeville

Prayer meeting held in case, because not under admin. control. Large no. people attended.

d) National focus on repression

Azaso had a workshop on campus. Had the effect of drawing more people into AZASO. Not a campaign as such - just a focus. Pamphlets distributed.

e) Mayday

Campus pamphletting, done in mainly activists and

1) National day of solidarity

All Durban campuses had a joint meeting at Howard College.

g) Million signature campaign

About 2000 students signed on campus. Others off campus. Repression by Admin. Activists helped out campus in blitzes. Also helped to collect signatures in factories in the morning.

L. Education Charter campaign

At a very lowebb. No committee. A workshop was organised however. General attempts were made to engage in activities, but activists have not really asserted themselves. Students are aware of the Education Charter, but their knowledge of the campaign is very vague.

ISSUES TAKEN UP

a) The accommodation issue

Other students than Indian students are not allowed to live in the hostels. A memorandum was drawn up. The majority of students signed a petition to Admin. But Admin. response was to ignore and remain silent.

We were asked to attend to the accommodation issue by the students. Mass meetings were held. We also took it up to boost the SRC A.C., which is progressive. The effect of drawing African students towards Azaso. It alienated Admin. and made them totally discredited in the eyes of students. The mass meeting and petition had the effect of uniting students.

b) THE SRC campaign

A No. of activists showed interest. However, only those activists involved in the SRC A.C. could participate more directly. The whole student body was involved in decision-making about the campaign. Extensive use of pamphlets, debates, seminars and discussions. Attempts were made to divide students on the issue, but it was ensured that the SRC A.C. emerged as the genuine students representation.

F. COMMUNICATION

We do not have a N.P. rep. on our campus. However, communication is satisfactory. I have contact with the comrade vice president and the comrade treasurer.

Collection Number: AK2117

DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989

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 the collection records 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.

This document is part of a private collection deposited with Historical Papers at The University of the Witwatersrand.