



## WHAT TYPE OF REPRESENTATION?

School is just one place where there are structures which control our very lives. Here, like in the mines and factories, there is authority which divide and rule. There are usually two kinds of structures found at school. They are the Prefect System and Student Representative Council (SRC). While we can draw many comparisons let's look at what we know about them:

### THE PREFECT SYSTEM

Appointed by the principal and staff.  
 Usually only senior students (those in Matric) are appointed as prefects.  
 Prefects act as "Police" or "watch dogs" for the staff.  
 Their duties are determined by the staff.  
 They represent the staff's interest.

Their duties consist of:

Maintaining discipline and order by backing up on those who:-

- \*do not wear uniform (from head to toe)
- \*make noise
- \*arrives late at school
- \*litters

- \*smokes during break time and school
- \*enter forbidden areas/zones on school premises
- \*go to nearby shops to have their meals, during breaks.
- \*act as guards at different points, pointed out by the principal/staff.
- \*act as spies for the principal at or outside school.

Students who fail to listen to the prefects are severely punished by the principal.

### THE SRC (STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL)

\*Elected by the students who have a say in who they want as their representatives.  
 \*Each class is represented on this structure which makes it easy for all students to channel their views.  
 \*An executive committee is elected (president, secretary, treasurer, publications representative, etc.) which act as:

- \*the voice of the students,
- \*a body to promote a link of better relationship between parents - staff - students.

\*All other members are elected to serve on sub-committees or societies to see to the needs of students, e.g. sports, drama, history, debate, discipline, etc.

#### THE DUTIES OF A SRC IS:-

- \*to represent students at school
- \*to articulate grievances and aspirations of students.
- \*to create a good working relationship between the students and the staff and parents.
- \*to help students understand and expand their knowledge of school affairs.
- \*to make students aware of the laws which protect their interests, e.g. laws concerning corporal punishment, about uniforms not being compulsory, etc.
- \*to have a say in matters affecting the students.

#### THE SRC STANDS FOR GENUINE

##### REPRESENTATION:

- \*those elected must have the interests of the students at heart.
- \*they must be reliable.
- \*they must be clear in what they want to achieve.
- \*they must know the situations students are experiencing.
- \*they should represent the wishes of the students.
- \*they should see to regular consultation between them (representatives) and the represented (students).

\*THE STRENGTH OF THE REPRESENTATIVES LIES WITH THE SOLIDARITY OF THOSE PEOPLE THEY REPRESENT!

#### WHAT CAN WE DO?

In many cases the prefect system is being disguised, e.g. students are given the right to elect their so-called "representatives" who are then approved and given instructions in their duties, by the principal. Never theless, you can spot a jackal in sheep-skin.

Obviously there are many difficulties that students encounter in establishing SRC's, especially where there are already prefect systems existing. It is also very true that, as students, we cannot run away from the things that affect us first, that is, life at school - where we spend 6-9 hours everyday.

It is here that we experience, share our joys and sorrows, live and learn together as a community. Our first responsibility is towards what happens at school, how we progress, how we are treated or treat each other, etc. Here is the place where we have to concentrate our actions first.

Like in the factories, workers are actively involved in their Trade Unions.

We have a responsibility to each other. Let us not run away from it!!

ARE YOU INVOLVED IN YOUR SRC? DO YOU HAVE A SAY IN MATTERS AFFECTING YOU?

## IS YOUR S.R.C.



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