

- (1) Background to Jeffrey SRE.
- (2) Handwritten - Lipped Pleas -
statements of Accused.

BACKGROUND TO THE TURFLOOP S.R.C.

The University of the North started functioning as from 1959. According to the act of Parliament, the University Council is the highest policy making body of the University of the North. This Council is empowered with the duty of creating sub-councils or body that are to pay alligience to it, (University Council) in all matters relating to the management of the university. This University Council has also its own Executive Council. The Council is composed of members of the white community and those of the Black community. It should be realised that the University of the North is created only for the Sothos, Vendas and Shangaans, and in which case the Council of the University is composed of members from the 3 tribal groups.

As one of its duties, the University Council has created "The Student Representative Council" to deal with matters affecting studends at this University. All complaints and grievances from students are discussed by the SRC legal representations can be made to the University authorities (See SRC Constitution). The SRC is charged with, inter alia, the following :

- (a) students extra- activities;
- (b) student discipline;
- (c) to represent students at all levels in matters affecting them both internally and in national organization.
- (d) to deal with immediate students problems and make a representation to the University authorities via

a committee also created by "the university council" called "The Students Affairs Committee".

The SRC has its own constitution which can be amended from time to time subject to the approval by the University council. Since the beginning of the Turfloop University there had always been an SRC at the university. From 1959 up to 1967 there were no reported incidents of the differences between students and the university authorities. This was so because of a very few number of students who registered at the university. But if one looks through the minutes of the SRC's who were in power then, one could see the trends of student thoughts and their attitude towards the administration of this University. I propose to deal with this matter, i.e. students attitude towards the University authorities - at a latter stage but during the course of this historical background, I will always refer to this matter, as I think it is the core of what was finally expressed by students in the form of placards. Also the fact that Black students are aware of what is happening around them internally in South Africa and internationally with specific reference to Africa.

(a) /

(a) 1967 - 1968 SRC :

Firstly it must be noted by counsel that the election of a new SRC takes place in September/October of every year. That is the term of office from September of one year to September of ~~April~~ the following year.

Elections are open to all students, and this is conducted by Electoral Officers appointed by the Executive of the Out-Going SRC.

The 1967-1968 SRC WAS Under the leadership of Eric Mulligan Mafuna who is now working in Johannesburg as a personel manager. During his term of office students went on a strike against the Administration, but latfer decided to continue with classes. The students did not want to attend a Sabra meeting, and ~~i~~ an athletic function organised by SABRA.

This was the starting point of the differences between the student and the university authorities. At a day when the function~~s~~ was~~s~~ supposed to take place, students decided to stage a stay away from the function.

The function never materialised. The then Rector Mr. Potgieter who is now a Commissioner General for the Shongaans called upon Mr. Mafuna and warned him strongly, as the Rector was of the opinion that it was through Mafuna's influence that the students did not want to attend the function. The reason behind the protest was that SABRA is a Government orientated body

and /

and therefore it does not cater for the need and/or aspirations of the Black Students. It must be noted that at this stage SASO had not been formed.

(b) 1968 - 1969 SRC :

The SRC was under the leadership of Patric Machaka Vice President was

Minutes Secretary was Mohale.

Correspondence Secretary was Henry Ranwedi Mengwekhulu (the banned Permanent Organizer of SASO now in exile in Botswana).

1968-1969 should be regarded as the turning point of the thinking of Black Students at the University. It should also be realised that during the years 1967, 1968 and years before, the SRC of this university used to send delegates to NUSAS conferences. These delegates were always appointed by the student body, and after every conference of NUSAS, the delegates would report to the students what actually transpired at these conferences. Of interest was the white students' attitude to Blacks at the conference particularly to the experiences, aspiration and problems that are all Blacks in South Africa. Leadership of the student union was always confined to White students. The only attitude that white students had

towards /

towards Black students was a paternalistic acceptance of Black students generally and an admiration of the more articulate Black student leadership. The black students of the University of the North always wanted to be allowed to affiliate to NUSAS. The administration of this University always refused the SRC to affiliate on behalf of the students.

Eventually at the beginning of 1969, the NUSAS issue became so hot that it ended up in a demonstration organised by the SRC. Meetings after meetings were conducted to discuss the Rectors' refusal to allow the SRC to affiliate to NUSAS. The then acting Rector Professor Engelbrecht insisted that black students were being used as instruments by NUSAS, and that black students should form their own organization. The NUSAS issue was not the only issue at stake, the other issues were also discussed at the meetings. Some of the issues were highly domestic like

- (i) food problems;
- (ii) recreational facilities for students, the recreational facilities for students formed part of the thorny issues that were discussed at this meeting;
- (iii) another important issue was student lectures relationship with particular reference to white

lecturers. /

lecturers. Black students felt that it was time that white lecturers stop to think that they are doing a favour to Black students by availing themselves to help the students.

Some of the lecturers came from Afrikaans Universities, and as such could not express themselves well in English, which is used as a medium of instructions at the university.

Black students felt that in all sincerity and in all fairness no man who received his University and educational training in Afrikaans, and whose home language is Afrikaans can be able to convey academic knowledge in a way that could be beneficial to Black students.

It is very important to note that during 1968 the Turfloop SRC sent delegates to the U.C.M. Conference ~~of~~ that was held at Forest Sanctuary Conference Centre in Stutterheim. The following people from Turfloop were sent : Evodie Masebola, Bob Kgware, Manana Kgmane and others. At the conference a Black caucus meeting was held in which meeting the idea of forming a black only organization was mooted. Subsequent to the Black caucus meeting, a meeting of Black campuses was called under the leadership of Steve Biko (first President of SASO from UNB). This meeting was held at Marianhill. The major reasons behind the calling of the meeting was a recognition of the need for Black students to discuss their own problems and also the need for contact amongst Black students at various campuses. Delegates from

Turfloop /

Turfloop were :

Pat Machaka - President (SRC).

Dick Lenamele - Treasurer.

Manana Kgwane - Secretary.

SASO was actually formed at the meeting and its first constitution was read to the delegates. Delegates from Turfloop reported to the students at Turfloop what the meeting decided and this was accepted by the students. All in all Turfloop had always been present at all meetings that led to the formation of SASO and it is no surprise to find greater support for SASO at Turfloop campus.

In July, 1969 the Turfloop SRC acted as a host to the Inaugural Conference of SASO. Pat Machaka who was the Turfloop SRC president ended up being elected the first Vice President of SASO. Steve Biko became the first President of SASO at this meeting.

At the end of 1969 it was announced by the University authorities that the University was acquiring its autonomy. Students at Turfloop University felt that by acquiring autonomy the ~~student~~ standard of teaching was going to be low. Students always suspected white lecturers of

Black students. In a

mass /

mass meeting a resolution was passed rejecting the idea that the university should be autonomous. At this stage it was still under the university of South Africa. It was stated clearly in the resolutions that students see this move as "another calculated move by the powers that be to subjugate Black students". This was so because even the idea of separate universities is only but not accepted by Black students.

(c) 1969 - 1970 SRC :

In 1970 the University of the North was to attain its autonomy. A day for the celebration of the occasion was arranged by the University authorities and students were also called upon to attend the "big" occasion. The SRC which then under the leadership of Mr. Pry Moshidi called on a mass meeting to decide whether to attend or not. The celebrations were coupled with the installation of the University Councillor the then Commissioner General of the Northern Satho, Mr. Einsten. A mass meeting decision was taken by the students not to attend the celebrations. The Rector was now Professor J.L. Boshoff (now still the Rector). The reasons for non-attendance were :-

(i) /

- (i) The students felt that the idea of autonomy for the University was a calculated move by the Whites to lower down the academic standard.
- (ii) Einstein who was to be the first Councillor was connected with the drafting of separate development and therefore separate universities, and could therefore not represent Black students as their councillor.
- (iii) It was felt that if whites were sincere in what they were doing for the Blacks why do they decide not to install a Black Councillor who would identify himself with the needs, ideals and for aspirations of the Blacks.

A sit in was staged in protest to this function and no single student even attended any of the celebrations, but later it was decided to continue with classes.

During the same year 1970 students of this University decided to affiliate to SASO as a centre, and this was automatically carried out by the SRC on behalf of the students. The Turfloop SRC was in actual fact one of the first SRC's to affiliate to SASO as a centre.

(d) /

(d) 1970 - 1971 SRC :

This SRC was under the leadership of Abraham Tiro (killed at Botswana).

Vice President was Aubrey Mokoena (detainee).

In 1971 the SRC made contacts with the students of Stellenbosch University. The white students from Stellenbosch University visited our campus and subsequently the Rector, Professor Boshoff, congratulated the SRC for the move. The students called for an extraordinary mass meeting in which meeting the SRC was nearly deposed. In the same meeting two resolutions were adopted by the students:-

(i) the SRC was warned very strongly by the students.

(ii) a resolution of policy on contacts with white organizations and/or universities was adopted; According to the resolution contacts could be made with white organizations only when it is necessary and beneficial to Black students.

(e) 1971 - 1972 SRC :

President : Aubrey Mokoena (a detainee);

Vice /

Vice President : Thabo Molewa;
Min. Secretary : Lekota (Accused No. 3);
Secretary : P. Kgware;
Treasurer : Schularo;
PUB & PUBS : P. Nefolohodwe (Accused No. 6) & Others.

It must be noted at this stage that from 1970 the SRC of the North was always an affiliated centre of SASO. This SRC had as one of its Sub-Vommittees the SASO Local Committee under the leadership of the Vice President, Thabo Molewa. Many projects were carried out by this Committee in the name of SASO. In 1972 Abraham delivered a speech during a graduation ceremony which speech led to his . A demonstration was staged to ~~the~~ demand the re-admission of Tiro. This led to a mass expulsion and all the SRC members were subsequently expelled from this University. Following the mass expulsion at the University for the rest of theyear 1972 (see document submitted to Shun Chetty on Turfloop situation since 1969).

(f) 1973 - 1974 SRC :

This SRC was under the leadership of Isaac Nkwe. This is the same SRC which was deposed March, 1974. During 1973 the University Registrar, Mr. Galloway, died and students were invited to his funeral. A mass meeting

was /

was called upon to decide whether to attend or not. A resolution was adopted to the effect that students must not attend the funeral. Very few students attended the funeral. Students claimed that Galloway, as a Registrar, throughout his term did not serve the students satisfactorily and therefore his family could not expect any sympathy from the students. This is very important to note as there was no SASO at this stage on campus.

Again during the course of year 1973 the SRC under the leadership of I. Nkwe was deposed by the students. The students felt that the SRC was not serving the students properly. The reasons for the deposition were :-

- (i) the inefficiency of the SRC in general;
- (ii) the fact that the Executive members of the SRC attended a party with Whites (University authorities) without prior consultation with the students. The attendance of such party was to the traditional consultation vis-a-vis the SRC and the administration. This is very important as there was no branch of SASO at this stage.

After the deposition of the SRC, the University authorities via the student Dean re-instated the SRC. The reason forwarded by the authorities to this was that constitutional technicalities were not observed in the meeting that deposed the SRC.

Students /

Students were very much disappointed by this move, and as it was near the examination nothing could be done to reverse the issue. The students shelved the matter up to 1974.

(g) 1974 SRC :

This was under the leadership of P.J. Nefolohodwe (Accused No. 6). Instructions have already been given by the Accused pertaining to this SRC.

(h) August - September, 1974 SRC :

This was under the leadership of K. Sedibe (Accused No. 7) instructions already forwarded to Counsel. (See the Memorandum drafted by the Black Academic Staff Association - pp. 9-19).

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-E

Document Title:- Background to Turfloop SRC