

OPPRESSED STUDENTS-

UNITY/ MILITANCY

Almost everyday there is an article in the newspapers about students in one school or another boycotting classes. In the last few months many students have been suspended, some have been arrested and a few have been killed as a result of police action against student protesters.

The student boycott of classes reached its peak during the last two weeks of August. It coincided with the election of candidates for the House of Delegates and the House of Representatives in the new 'Tri-racist' parliament.

A week before the elections representatives from about 40 schools in the Transvaal came together to discuss the new laws of the government, sometimes called the 'New Deal', and how these laws would affect their future. They also discussed problems that were specific to certain schools, problems like the recognition of SRC's, age-limit regulations, victimisation of students who play sports under the SACOS umbrella, and soldier-teachers in their schools. The representatives decided to form an inter-high school co-ordinating committee in order to plan joint action against the 'New Deal' and support each other.

Vuka/Arise spoke to a student from Ibhongo High School in Soweto, who was elected to a sub-committee in charge of co-ordinating the 'awareness programme' in various schools as well as publicising the students' demands.

Vuka/Arise: Both the Rev. Allen Hendrickse and the minister of law and order have condemned the boycotts as being the work of outsiders and agitators. Can you comment?

Student: The only outsiders that could have agitated the students to boycott are the likes of Hendrickse and the minister of law and order and the system they seek to maintain. The initiative to boycott came from the students themselves. We felt we needed to show our parents and the world how strongly we feel about this latest trick of the government.

V/A: Was it difficult to get all the representatives (from the various schools) together and to co-ordinate activities?

Student: Because attempts are continuously made to divide oppressed people along 'ethnic lines', and because we have been forced to live separately in different townships there was a problem of transporting students to a common venue. But we succeeded, and it was encouraging to see black students from Soweto, Riverlea, Lenasia, Eldorado Park, Fordsborg and Bosmont discussing and planning with each other. This unity itself was a victory. Also many students belong to different student organisations so there was friction but because

of the overriding and common problems facing us we reached consensus on major issues in an atmosphere of non-sectarianism.

V/A: Why do the students feel so strongly about the New Deal?

Student: As part of the "New Deal", education will be restructured. From next year our parents will have to pay high fees for our education. Many of our parents will not be able to pay these fees thus forcing us to look for jobs in a country where millions are already unemployed. Students will be forced into different streams- the majority of black students will get an education that will bar them from attending university. The army will play a bigger role in our schools, already they are trying to indoctrinate us as shown in schools like Eldorado Park where many of the students have been molested and defence propaganda distributed. We have seen that many of us will not be able to continue schooling nor will we be able to find jobs, in this way forcing many of our brothers into the army, and one day they will be forced to turn their guns onto us. Also, the Rajbansi's and Hendrickse's will be in control of our education. We see how our fellow students in the Bantustans suffer under the yoke of the Sebe's. The same fate awaits us. The collaborators have shown that they can be more vicious than their white masters.

V/A: Certain demands were made by the inter school co-ordinating committee. Can you name them?

Student: There were 8.
1) The immediate opening of all suspended and closed schools.
2) SRC's elected by us, accountable to us and not to dictatorial principals.
3) An end to soldier-teachers and government and army propaganda in our schools.
4) An end to corporal punishment.
5) An end to victimisation of students who play SACOS sports
5) An end to age-limit regulation.
7) An end to sexist teachers and teachers who abuse their
3) An end to the victimisation of progressive teachers.

V/A: Students also workshopped what they called long-term goals. What were these?

Student: These were:
1) A unity nation free from OPPRESSION and EXPLOITATION, and where all shall have DEMOCRATIC and EQUAL voting rights.
2) State provision of FREE and COMPULSORY education for ALL and that this education be geared towards liberating our people from ALL FORMS OF OPPRESSION, EXPLOITATION AND IGNORANCE.

V/A: Can students achieve these goals on their own?

Student: Definitely not. These goals can only be achieved by the Black Worker- Student alliance.



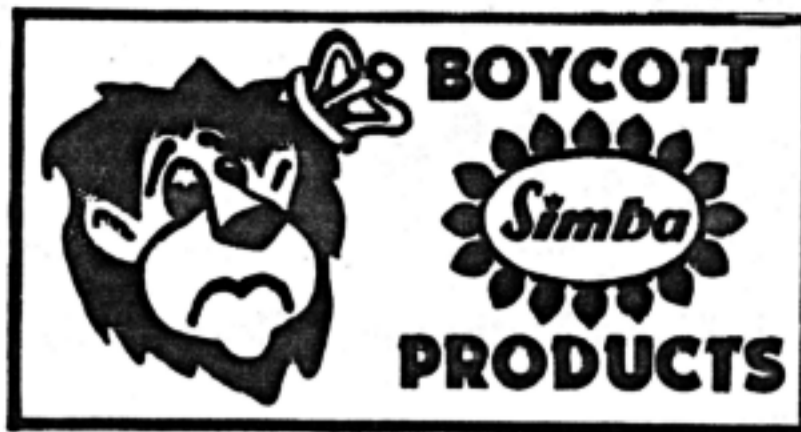
Students march in Lenasia.

UNITED ACTION COMMITTEE

The united action committee was formed soon after the events of August 28 in Lenasia. It offers assistance to the numerous victims of police action all over the Transvaal. The committee consists of a team of doctors, lawyers and volunteers who are prepared to offer free medical or legal advice. Doctors on the Committee told of untreated injuries they have come across in the Vaal Triangle area recently.

Said one doctor: "It seems that people just do not know whom to turn to or where to seek assistance. What is more, is that it was quite obvious that many of them were even too scared to seek treatment especially at hospitals. It appears that they fear being arrested as 'rioters' if they were to seek treatment for their injuries from police batons, whips, or rubber bullets."

Victims of the recent unrest who need assistance - medical or legal are requested to ring the following number: Basheer Lorgat 852 3707 [up to 9pm].



- Two workers were fired for refusing to work double job.
- One worker was dismissed for throwing a potatoe (one) into a container.
- Shop-stewards negotiated with management to have the 3 dismissed workers re-instated, but to no avail.
- They even refused to negotiate with the Union Official (SFAWU), claiming its their prerogative to hire and fire.
- The Union is recognised here since 1982.
- 464 Workers were subsequently dismissed for striking in solidarity with their dismissed fellow workers.
- "Scab" labour is employed to take-over our jobs

S P O R T S A C T I O N C O M M I T T E E

Once the Tri-cameral parliament comes into effect many "powers" will be vested in so called management committees. As sports-persons we will definitely be affected. We will have to apply for the use of facilities to these puppet bodies. As members of SACOS, we will rightfully refuse to do so.

However, many sportspersons will not be aware of the dangers that lie ahead. Many sports organisations will adopt different stances to the problem. We feel that the facilities in our area are dismal, to say the least. Furthermore, we feel however dismal they may be, these facilities belong to us. Therefore, these gutter opportunist must not purport to represent us in the allocation of these facilities.

Never before in the history of the sports struggle has there been the dire need for unity. Only if we are united in thought and action will we be able to counteract the new deal. Only if we are united will we have strength and common action. Fragmentation of our forces will leave us shattered and defeated.

Viewing the above and also the might of the force that rule, we at Western Areas Table Tennis Association seriously consider the information of a Sports Action Committee [SAC] in the various areas in our province as vital. We feel that the SAC's must be democratically elected and be representative of all the sportspersons in the particular area. A SAC has been initiated by us. For further info write to: P.O. Box 678 Lenasia.