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on First National Formation
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[late 1969/early 1970?]

COMMISSION ON "NUSAS RECONSTRUCTION"

The specific purpose of this commission was to take a look at the proposed idea of reconstruction Nusas in terms of:-

- (1) How necessary it is
- (2) What could be charged if any charge was necessary

The commission decided to examine the whole idea on the basis of the suggested framework and, additionally, to throw in other ideas where necessary.

1. AIMS

The aims of Nusas as they stand on black and white might be alright but it is the feeling of this commission that Nusas has no programme of action. Instead of having long term offensive programmes Nusas has relegated itself to the role of being reactionary. This smacks of being nothing much more than publicity seekers whose effectiveness is very little. Nusas protests are also opportunist programmes. Nobody doubts the sincerity of at least some of the students but to reveal oneself only in protest after the fact and keep quiet during the rest of the year shows a grave lack of a principled programme and of real clarity about one's goals and how to achieve them.

While criticising Nusas' day to day activity the commission is nevertheless prepared to acknowledge the sincerity of the problem with which she is faced. However it has to be supposed that when the aims were coined it was in full sight of what lay ahead and any deviation for an unqualified attempt to achieve these goals should meet with criticism.

Some constructive suggestions about what we are hinting at might be useful at this stage.

- (1) Since suffering of the millions of oppressed is a daily experience probably getting worse by the day Nusas has to maintain an initiative programme of protest throughout the year. This can best be done by appointing a series of national days for this purpose e.g. "Sharpeville day", etc in the line with the national day on Academic freedom.
- (2) Rather than having colourful speeches only these should be precluded by meaningful protests with the speeches as the final event.
- (3) Dissemination of information literature by way of pamphlets should be calculated to reach the man in the street.
- (4) There must be an intensive drive to involve more students from each campus.
- (5) The reactionary type of protest which follows a major upset should be abandoned since it fails to change the situation and its subsidence leads people to believe that the value of protest is very little. Only when a situation serves to focus attention upon a particular item on the programme should it be used. One strong feeling in the commission was that Nusas must always differentiate between the specific and the general. Protesting at the fact that Mafeje's appointment has been cancelled is different from protesting against the erosion of academic freedom or University Autonomy. Thus difference must always be made clear.

PRIORITIES

- (1) Nusas' priorities must be long-term projects i.e. projects which will result in permanent ^{96%} for those affected e.g. education. The different forms of education obtaining in this country cannot possibly be equal and need a constant surveillance by an unbiased group that will always expose inadequacies where these are apparent.

This is but one example. Lots of other longterm projects could be seen to.

- (2) On the other hand one can indulge in a few meaningful short term projects like fighting against illiteracy. The significance of these is to alleviate the ills that have occurred as a result of the policy of apartheid. Here too there are lots of other examples.
- (3) Self education seems to be badly needed by members of Nusas. There is no doubt that very few white students taking part in the activities of Nusas really understand some of the "principles" they talk ^{about} ~~stately~~ about. This is understandable in a way since the bulk of them were born after 1948 and have had the medicine of apartheid infused into their blood. However to credicate this lip service being paid to beautiful principles.

Nusas must:-

- (a) make use of the genius of professional men in planning her formation schools such that the principles of nonracialism are thoroughly examined and the doctrine clearly onunicated to ~~all~~ dedicated supporters.
- (b) concentrate on creating a hard core of students who shall bear the responsibility of planning and putting into effect Nusas' programme for the year.

BENEFITS

- (1) Not much can be added here except to point out that there is an increasing tendency for Nusas to be sectional in the distribution of the so called benefit. All Nusas officials will want "student discounts" "vacation jobs" etc amongst other things all of which have never been experienced by the nonwhite students of our era. Perhaps some of the blame could lie with local organisation but it is the responsibility of the matter body to see that all promises are fulfilled and when this fails we shall be point a finger at nobody else other than the parent body.
- (2) There is also a growing feeling that money collected overseas for use by nonwhite communities never reaches the intended people or at best only a small portion does so. This is very hard to substantiate since none of us have any knowledge of what funds come from where and for what purposes but nevertheless it is a point worthy of mention if only for the fact that noise is being made about it.
- (3) Unlike other trade unions, Nusas must be made aware that its members while presumably enjoying equal shares within the organisation itself, they are nevertheless far from equal terms of political rights economical and social privilege. Therefore it becomes imperative the treatment noted out must be in favour of the less privileged because of the difference in starting points.
- (4) Racial privilege in "benefits" should not be allowed to be reason for interracial strife within the organisation and therefore Nusas must ~~by~~ ^{have} scholarships such as "Abe Bailey Scholarships".
- (5) It is belief of this commission that Nusas must make scholarships available for students studying at University Colleges (where possible) The point to be made here is that all universities in Southern Africa are deferent in one way or the other and therefore do not qualify for the ~~from~~ University. Hence one may refer to them as tribal colleges. Since scholarships have been granted to students studying at universities other than the university colleges we believe that the ^{argument} ~~argument~~ that giving university college students bursaries is furthering the aims of apartheid does not hold water for reasons mentioned above.

CULTURE

Much fuss has been made about our differences in culture and the need to obscure this fact. We believe that all South Africans are not mature enough to examine their differences in culture without the danger of this enhancing racial prejudice. The commission therefore believes that Nusas must do away with all provisions for perpetuating culture cleavages through or unnecessary cataloguing of our cultural differences. Rather than lavishing time studying our differences Nusas should concentrate on similarities.

STRUCTURE

While upholding the principle that any progressive organisation must constantly examine its role and direction we nevertheless feel unhappy and suspicious about the new moves by Nusas to examine its direction. This is sparked off by utterances from some of the executive members which seem to indicate that the general direction is towards a more conservative Nusas with an implied aim of concentrating on items apparently applying to whites only. While there have been denials of this from the top we nevertheless cannot see Nusas changing for the better i.e. in terms of structure. It is therefore the express wish of this commission to request SASO to do all it can in persuading Nusas to retain its general structure as a students Union while effecting changes in the above topics. We are not opposed in any case to minor constitutional changes which are calculated to enforce participation by all other centres within the S.A. students community.

We note however that because of paucity of numbers the nonwhite voice is hardly heard within the organisation. To partly alleviate this we would recommend the incorporation of more heads of centres, even the smaller centres, into the Standing Committee

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COMMENTS:

- (1) We wish to point out that all the above points have been examined in an effort to articulate some of the ~~gambles~~ ^{gambles} constructively heard from the nonwhite sectors.
- (2) While doing this we wish to reiterate that SASO is by no means linked with Nusas and has merely done this effort in a spirit of cooperation in accordance with her aims. Our cooperation should not be interpreted by mean anymore than a mere presentation of nonwhite thinking in so far as we can interpret it.
- (3) We further wish to attend the deliberations and to press on some of the points mentioned in this memorandum.
- (4) We hope that these findings will be of use to the organisation.

COMMISSION ON "SASO PUBLICATIONS"

All SASO publications must be controlled by an Editorial Board. This shall consist of an editor appointed by the SASO executive and editors from each of the SRC at different centres. In time the editor for SASO publications shall have to be elected by the SASO General Students Council.

Every publication issue shall include a progress report by the Executive, local SASO news on each campus, current topical events on other campuses, news about other student organisations and, where applicable, news on international student topics.

The publications shall take two major forms:-

Newsletter: This should be on a fortnightly or monthly basis. Its major purpose being to expose all aspects of the organisation as seen in its functions on the various campuses. This will be the official organ of the SASO executive.

Magazine: This shall include articles written on various topics. Its major function will be to foster some thoughts on a number of topics and to encourage debate on current matters within the student population. It shall also strive to correlate training at university with participation in the general society and the various facets of life. Contributions by way of articles for the magazine will be open to everybody with the exception that the editor shall have the right to censor.

"Stop press" publications These will be resorted to in times of emergency wherever a need arises.

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RACE AND ECONOMICS IN SOUTH AFRICA - by Keith Gottschalk

The phrase "apartheid vs economics" is, in one permutation or another, currently a popular debate. This phrase is misleading and obscures part of what is going on in the Republic. To explain and predict the workings of our society we must understand the relationship between race and economics in South Africa. This paper examines the three main alternate views of the relationship between race and economics in our society, how the society works, and why it has an intrinsic, built-in tendency to more race discrimination, an increasing black white wage gap, and growing repression to maintain the whole system.

The three main alternative hypotheses on the relationship between race and economics are:

- that "the imperatives of economic growth" will ultimately cause apartheid to wither away.
- the second view, that economic growth will adapt itself to the existing pattern of race discrimination; and
- the third theory, that race discrimination will increase with industrialisation to neutralise its political consequences, and apartheid will finally slow down the rate of economic growth.

The first hypothesis is that economic growth, /foreign investment/raising the gold price, will wither away apartheid and colour discrimination. Big business, its academic sympathisers, the business-owned daily press, and official and un-official agencies supporting white supremacy, from the Department of Information to the South African Foundation, all plagiarize the Beatles' refrain: "Its getting better all the time." The view that if only South Africa is left alone economic growth will make things better for everyone is endlessly publicised by such captains of industry and finance as Dr Frans Cronje, Jan Marais, Harry Oppenheimer, Anton Rupert and Albert Weseloh (1) with academic sympathisers such as Ralph Horwitz and F. van den Bogaerde.

These pillars of Holland Street are supported by some Marxist intellectuals, such as Raphie Kaplan and the late Prof. Eddie Roux, who add the rider that the inexorable withering away of apartheid by capitalism will be inexorably followed by some sort of socialist revolution.

The lengthiest exposition of the view that economic growth, the industrial revolution, will recede apartheid is found in the writings of Michael O'Dowd, a director of Anglo-American and the English Academy of South Africa.

Very briefly, O'Dowd says that as all states undergo their industrial revolution feudal-type systems are undermined. Society is disrupted by the industrial revolution, inequality increases, rioting protests are crushed by intensified government repression lasting not longer than 30 years at most, after which liberal constitutional reforms usher in some form of the welfare state.

This hypothesis is vulnerable to severe criticism. O'Dowd based his theory on Rostow's stages of economic growth theory, which has met with academic scepticism. Only a minority of countries in Western Europe followed O'Dowd's pattern of gradual constitutional reform leading to democracy and the welfare state. Some countries, Bolivia or Syria for example, have many violent swings or coups; other states (Libya, Qatar, Mongolia and Yemen) went straight from a feudal ancient regime to a socialist or Communist regime; still others (Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, Argentina, Japan, Korea) moved from a feudal-type government to a short-lived, multi-party liberal democracy, which was overthrown by a fascist or semi-fascist military regime, which in turn was overthrown and replaced by either a capitalist government (W.Germany) or a communist government (E. Germany).

The second hypothesis, that the industrial revolution adapts itself to pre-existing patterns of racialism, is argued by Herbert Blumer, a Californian professor, and Frederick Johnson, a fellow of St Anthony's College, England.

COMMISSION CHAIRMEN

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