

**FABO**

**NEWS  
LETTER**

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**Except where specifically stated, all comments  
in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the  
opinion of SASO.**

**COVER DESIGN Omar Badsha**

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P.O. BOX 23, AUSTERVILLE, NATAL.**

## EDITORIAL

The recent "exposure" of President Kaunda by Mr. Vorster has certainly highlighted the issue of dialogue between South Africa and the rest of Africa. (Just for the record, blacks in South Africa accept President Kaunda's version of the story.) The issue to many people is very clear, black Africa must be discouraged from joining in dialogue with apartheid. They argue that South Africa has as yet to show the same willingness to have proper dialogue with "her" own blacks.

At their National Formation school, SASO urged that if and when the black leaders do come, they must be allowed to see some SASO people too so that the viewpoint of black students could be communicated to them.

I am not sure whether this recommendation was made in jest or seriously. To me any black leader from Africa or anywhere else in the world who comes for talks with the South African government is bestowing recognition on a government which cannot really be accepted even by the South African blacks themselves. I am forced to accept that the men who sit in Pretoria and talk in Cape Town are my government. I know that they have power over me. I accept that they can make or break me but this recognition of their power will never force me to accept them as my true Government because I have taken no part in putting them where they are. Not only am I deprived of the say in who shall govern in the land of my birth but I am further defined as a non-citizen who may be shunted around at the will of those in power. They choose my home, almost choose my wife for me, limit the types of courses I can take at varsity and even select where I will work when I finish. No government of goodwill can ever do half the things that are done to us blacks in this country in the name of Separate Development. So then why should any leader in Africa wish to add to the insult by coming to hold talks with the South African government?

If the recommendation by the SASO Formation School was made in seriousness then it is to be

regretted. No one should seek to talk to any black leader who comes here in the name of dialogue. Instead they should be greeted with posters at the airport advising them to go back as soon as possible,

It is clear that South Africa's aims in seeking dialogue with black Africa are very dangerous. South Africa sees herself as the lion of Africa and seeks to extend her tentacles by way of investments and trade agreements to the rest of Africa. In dividing Africa and in sapping the strength of the O.A.U., South Africa stands the change of calling the tune to most of the African States. South Africa's interest in schemes like the Carboru Bassa Dam must be seen for what it is a deliberate move to maintain a White foot hold in this black continent of Africa. Using her position of economic and military advantage, South Africa stands a good chance of entrenching her position and also building up a number of loyal black buffer states around herself who are economically dependant on her. No black African leader must be deluded into thinking that South Africa's position and attitudes on race questions can be influenced by dialogue. We are dealing here with a group of people who are so fanatically determined to maintain power and to cloud their minds with racial bigotry that it will take much more than moral lectures on race relations to even shake them from their prejudices against the black man.

Black students in Africa have rejected the idea of dialogue with apartheid. I support them fully on this and hope that they can bring pressure to bear on their governments to hold firmly on to the principle that White South Africa must first settle its problems with blacks here before thinking of dialogue with foreign blacks. Perhaps it will be healthy to remember that the blacks here are the real South Africans together with those Whites who are prepared to live as people in a non-racial society. The rest who see themselves as exclusively white and therefore meriting special privileges are the real enemies of South Africa.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
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## FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN APARTHEID?

Dear Sir,

The Whites in South Africa suppress the Blacks economically and otherwise for their own comfort and material gain. In my opinion the position of foreign investors in South Africa is not drastically different from that of the "White South African" since both are hopelessly greedy.

Foreign investors in S.A. may be publicly outspoken in their condemnation of apartheid and its evils, but secretly they support it for obvious reasons. They support it because it provides them with cheap labour which they cannot get in their own countries. In this country they employ mute Blacks that are prohibited by legislation to belong to trade unions, and thus have no way to complain or bargain for a better share of the profits made or for tolerable working conditions. Here they use slaves whose remuneration is just less than enough money to buy a bag of mealie meal.

Together with the "White South African", they exploit the Blacks for their own prosperity, self-glorification and well being and of course, for the sinking of the black man and his soul. Therefore, the difference between the foreign investor in apartheid and the "White South African" is just that they are citizens of different countries and the one makes some hypocritical noises about the evils of apartheid while the other is trying but failing badly to justify them. If this were not so, then the foreign investor could have done something more sensible than mere howling.

The foreign investor's government sides with him. The British government knows that Britain is one of the leading investors in apartheid and would like to see this continuing. It sold arms to S.A. to

ensure stability so that their business interests will not suffer. The communist threat in the Indian Ocean is of course one of the reasons. They were clever enough to hammer on the Russian threat than on their business interests.

President Nixon has rejected the recommendation by the African Sub-committee that his administration embark on a tougher policy towards apartheid. The same sub-committee is engaged in a campaign to discourage American investment in apartheid, but I doubt whether its efforts will meet any success at all.

There is nothing ambiguous or misleading and this should strengthen the black man's belief that his salvation will not come from Britain or America. Russia or China will bring more intensified slavery and oppression along. The Black man is his own salvation. Time has long passed when he should have realised this. He must evaluate himself and take a determined stand for his rights. If not strong now, then he must make himself strong so as to be in a position to bargain for a fair share in the country's economy and for his voice to be heard in the administration of this country. He deserves this country more than anyone else.

Delivery from bondage by a foreign power has, in most cases, some strings attached to it which will of course, be a constant and annoying burden to the delivered. We are fortunate that no one is trying to be our good and strong father. If we work hard for our freedom and get it, it will not be contaminated by foreign hands. It will be free of strings, cleansed with our own sweat and thus more precious.

MOSIBUDI A. MANGENA. (NGOYA)

# CAMPUS NEWS

## UNIVERSITY OF THE NORTH:

May 10th was the beginning of a very successful SASO Week organised by the SASO Local Committee under the Chairmanship of Aubrey D. Mokeona, also Vice President of the SRC. The highlights of the week were the opening address by President Barney Pityana on SASO: the Challenge of the 70's. The Economy and the Black Society by E. O. Nkuna a B. Com student and another by Temba Sono on Some Concepts of Negritude and Black Identity. The commemoration of Sharpeville Day was conducted by the Methodist Chaplain Revd Lila, a former student at Fort Hare. All discussions were attended by both staff (the Rector attended the opening address) and students and some members of the community among whom was youthful Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane of the Zionist Church Council. Participation by students showed the keen interest they had in SASO. All the SASO Week papers will be released in pamphlet form in due course. Staff members even the black ones maintained an almost stony silence throughout and a policy of non-vocal participation.

Some 50 students volunteered for a community project at Mankweng Clinic to clean the clinic and the yard and also lay out a garden. Student contributions made it possible for a feeding scheme to be arranged for the people who attend the clinic.

On Saturday May 15th the SRC had discussion with the SRC of Potchefstroom University. It is reported that the Acting Rector was also present at the deliberations. At a subsequent student body meeting the SRC was censured for promoting contact and dialogue across the colour-line. The SRC interpreted the mood of the student as against even the July conference of SRC's organised by Wits and indications are that Turfloop is not attending.

## REESO:

The Reef SASO Local Branch held a meeting on May 8th which was addressed by the SASO President. Among the activities planned is helping teaching at night-schools and generally interesting schools and teachers in the work of SASO. This branch has come out quite strongly against SASO attending or participating in the proposed Consultation "Towards a Social Change" under the auspices of the Institute of Race Relations.

The Chairman of REESO has been very

active really and has addressed meetings of Race Relations, ASSECA, SASO Formation School, etc. The Branch has a very important role of developing into the first truly community-oriented SASO branch and its location in the all important Reef complex establishes a link there with Head Office.

## T.C.E.

The Department of Indian Affairs has refused to ratify the decision of the Student body at TCE to affiliate to SASO. Representations are being made to have this decision reversed.

The Republican Celebrations were met with strong protests from the student body. The whole student assembly refused to sing DIE STEM. They refused to heed the command of the Chief Inspector of the Dept. of Indian Affairs to "either do as prescribed or leave the college". At all times the students stuck together and the Acting Rector dismissed the entire student body claiming that they wanted "to take over the administration of the college". The students, however, returned to school the following day.

TCE is hoping to host a meeting of all Indian SRCs and also that of all black teacher training colleges with a view to closer association and also to discuss "common problems".

## ZULULAND:

Here, too, the students took part in demonstrations against celebrating the autonomy of the university. None of the functions were to be attended by the students. The Rector informed the SRC that he regarded this decision of the student body to be void and of no effect. He warned that further talk of boycott would render that meeting illegal and all students participating in it will be guilty of misconduct. The students boycotted the celebrations because:

- (1) it was felt that blacks have no share in the celebrations and in the victory of separate development.
- (2) they were against the division of black students into ethnic groups.
- (3) the boycott was also seen as a reaction to the numerous restrictive rules and regulations and the resultant increase in expulsion and suspension of students for petty offences since independence.

On May 31st all sporting activities were voluntarily suspended by the students as they expressed themselves against the Republican Festival. No

music was played and the Recreation Room remained closed for the day. All students were in black attire on Monday 31st and Tuesday 1st June as a symbol of mourning.

A lecturer in the Department of Economics is reported to have said during a public lecture to the students that there is no point giving land to people who don't know how to use it. This utterance caused a spontaneous walk-out by the students. The following day he sought to apologise to the SRC for the 'misunderstanding' but the SRC referred him to the student body which felt insulted as black people by his irresponsible statements. A letter which purported to be an apology was posted on the notice board where he expressed regret that his statement was misunderstood. He had sought to present academic facts as truthfully as his discipline allowed him. It was not his intention to insult the students. Understandably the students were not taken-in by this 'apology' and it was regarded as a further insult.

A Local Committee of SASO has been elected at Unizul. The following form the committee:

- i. Miss R. Sokudela,
- ii. Mr. V. Made,
- iii. Mr. W. Khuzwayo.

The Chairman of this committee is Siphon H. Nxumalo who is a member (without portfolio) of the SRC. The Committee has already published a manifesto and held a very successful symposium on May 31st.

The President of the SRC, Mr. C. Ngidi, has had to resign from the SRC in the wake of mounting student dissatisfaction about his administration. The erstwhile Vice President, Alex Mhlongo has been elected President. Messrs G. Mpama, S. Nxumalo and W. Khuzwayo were elected in by-elections to fill the existing SRC vacancies. Congratulations!!

#### **UNIVERSITY OF NATAL – BLACK SECTION**

In a very heated and intelligent debate the SRC was instructed not to attend the Conference of SRCs organised by Wits in July. Students felt that nothing good would be served by attending such a meeting. In a lively debate the decision was taken with an overwhelming majority.

A Local Committee consisting of eight (8) members was elected at the beginning of May. Vic Mafungo the Deputy Vice President on the SRC is Chairman of this Committee. The Committee has already actively undertaken some projects like the New Farm Project on Preventive Medicine, getting students to help at the Mahatma Gandhi Clinic over weekends.

Promoting contact among black students in the vicinity has also been the task of this Committee. A whole-day meeting of sports and debates was arranged on the 23rd May with the University of Durban-Westville. Similar occasions are being arranged with Ngoye, Springfield and Bechet Colleges.

#### **UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN – WESTVILLE:**

The students decided to form a caretaker SRC and they will decide in September whether they will have an SRC after all. The members of this council have been elected but their names have not been released to us. The question of affiliation to SASO will be raised at SRC level.

#### **FORT HARE**

The decision of majority of the student body in March to accept the institution of an SRC in principle seems to have divided the student body here as quite a large percentage is still not reconciled to the idea of having an SRC. This seems to have affected the standing of SASO on the campus. The SASO Local leadership has apparently lost favour with the students. The group that does not want an SRC is apparently also agitating for representation at the Wits Conference in July. The idea of an SRC has apparently been now dropped, for the time being at any rate.

Taffy Adler, the SRC President of Wits has been seen on this campus and is working very hard to interest Fort Hare students to attend. Miss V. Mashalaba, of the SASO Executive visited the campus for SASO DAY on May 10th (ironically the same day Adler had received permission to talk to the students). Her visit has apparently inspired the women-folk (who have always felt neglected at Fort Hare) more than anybody else.

#### **WESTERN CAPE: BELLVILLE**

Following the visit of the SASO President to Bellville in March, various students have been applying for individual affiliation to SASO in the absence of an SRC. At the end of May a branch was formed by thirty students and they hope to affiliate to SASO as individuals until such time an SRC is established there at which time a motion for affiliation will be put through the SRC to the student body.

Barney was scheduled to address a symposium on "The Role of Black Students in South Africa" on the 11th of June but the seminar had to be cancelled because of the onset of the exams.

It was gratifying to note the interest of Adam Small, a black poet and philosopher, David Curry, the deputy leader of the Labour Party and Fr Clive McBride who is on our Advisory Panel in SASO.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SASO INVITED TO A CONSULTATION BY SAIRR

An invitation to a consultation organised by the South African Institute of Race Relations was received sometime ago. The consultation was scheduled for the 22nd until the 25th of June. Invitations were sent to almost all known student organisations, a number of religious organisations, and other dissident groups in South Africa.

The SASO president put forth a questionnaire to his constituencies asking for their opinion. All of those who replied advised that such a broadly based type of consultation would lead more to an intellectual exercise than any meaningful contribution in the direction in which we are working. Hence all to a man, our branches called upon the executive not to send any delegate to the meeting. It appears that some of the black religious groups asked to attend also declined.

### LUSA CALLS FOR A PAN-AFRICAN STUDENT ORGANISATION

The Lesotho University Student's Association has called upon student unions in Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe to come together and form a Southern Pan-African Student's Organisation as a first step in the formation of a continental Pan-African Student's Organisation.

SASO hails this as one of the most important decisions to come out of the caucus of African Student's Union which attended the Association of Commonwealth Students in Ghana last December. The preamble to a declaration by the All-African Student Movement formation is quoted below:—

“Whereas we, the students of the Africa continent, having realised the African's bitter experiences of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism and all their impli-

cations and ramifications, having realised the need for a reawakening of the continent and the people therein,

having also realised the need for a union of the African people,

having realised that slavery, colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism have aborted the realisation of the aspirations, of the African people; and

having also realised the common plight of our brothers in one other continent,

NOW RESOLVE to organise ourselves, by this KUMASI declaration, into the PAN-AFRICAN STUDENT ORGANISATION; herein after referred to as PASO.”

PASO is intended to be part of an international student organisation comprising of student unions from Africa, Asia and the Carribeans.

No doubt SASO's stand and recommendations will be discussed at the SASO conference to be held in July from the 4th to the 11th. One interesting point of course is the question of membership. According to the draft constitution of PASO, membership is open to all” national unions of students in Africa or recognised student bodies from countries where no national union exists.” According to Resolution 10/70 of the SASO GSC, recognition by black students in SASO was withdrawn from NUSAS as a national union. Later on NUSAS herself admitted that SASO was “well able” to represent black students in this country and that NUSAS could not claim to really represent them. Also interesting is the fact that NUSAS was kicked out of this same conference at which the above declaration was taken. However, one should also mention that NUSAS has a positive attitude towards the questions of student Pan-Africanism, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism as reflected in her entrenched resolutions.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND 2ND GSC OF SASO

The annual conference and 2nd GSC of SASO will no longer be held at the University of Fort Hare. Instead the venue will be the University of Natal, Black Section in Durban. This comes as a result of the ban on Barney Pityana, President of SASO, on the Fort Hare campus.

Barney was banned from Fort Hare as a result of the 1968 student unrest at Fort Hare. He was amongst those expelled from Fort Hare as alleged leaders of the student unrest.

The Fort Hare authorities have declared that SASO is welcome to have its conference at Fort Hare provided that Barney Pityana does not set foot on the campus. All representations to the authorities there by SASO came to naught. At the time of printing the Advisory Council of the University had been approached to take up the matter but has as yet not met. The executive decided that instead of waiting for the decision, they should go ahead with arrangements for another venue. The dates and programme remain the same.

Matters of crucial importance will be discussed at the conference – which promises to be a very interesting one. Already mentioned, is SASO's attitude to the call by LUSA. A further definition of community projects and stepping up our involvement in this direction is also indicated. The question of black universities and their role in the political, social and economic life of the black people of South will also be looked at. Suggestions for the establishment of a permanent commission consisting of black educationists, professional men, academics and students have already been made.

The conference will be opened by Mr. C.M.C. Ndamse. The views of black people on Apartheid will be discussed at a public symposium. On the panel amongst others will be, Mr. Adam Small, Dr. Bala and Mr. Ramgobin. This is an attempt by SASO to get a representative analysis of apartheid by blacks in this country.

On the cultural angle, SASO has invited top black theatre groups to share their thoughts with students attending the conference.

## ATTITUDE OF BLACKS TO "CELEBRATIONS"

If nothing else, the recent "republican celebrations" have indicated that though defeated the blackman in South Africa still retains some of his pride. Not only were there mass boycotts in the cities but even schoolchildren demonstrated a wonderful spirit of resistance. The various South African newspapers carried day after day reports

of how organised functions flopped through meagre attendance.

Elsewhere in this issue we report of incidents in which our own students were involved in boycotts of republican celebrations. Messages of support came from as far as N.U.S. in London.

In Durban a "No Celebration Rally" was organised by a number of students at UNB. Invited to speak were Dr. W.F. Nkomo, Mr. Barney Pityana and Mr. Mewa Ramgobin. The gathering was attended by close to a thousand people in spite of local police attempts to tamper with the publicity and to intimidate students a few days before the meeting. The meeting was indeed a very lively one and clearly indicated that students and the black community at large are wide awake to the forces of destruction that constantly plough through the black community.

### Dedication

eleven years ago  
they fell  
under the  
inexorable onslaught  
of stens and saracens  
we remember  
irrepressible dignity  
undying courage  
a fervent belief  
in themselves  
against an army  
of oppression and violence  
rooted  
in an insane fear  
bestial instincts  
survival in blood  
ravishing them in travail  
killing innocence  
in the name of justice  
the black armbands  
don't forget  
the fires continue  
to be lit  
in commemoration  
this part of us  
forever lost  
forever gained

Sunday 21st March 1971  
unb-durban

saths cooper.



## From The President's Desk

"In South Africa itself, the dispute takes up most of parliament's time; almost every issue is debated on terms of race politics, the Press devotes an inordinate amount of time to it; people have become passionately committed,; and the whole issue is so charged with emotion that a rational discussion is almost impossible".

These are the words of one Dr. Piet Rousseau, Vice President of the South Africa foundation, the organisation that has set itself the task of improving the image of South Africa overseas. More important still is that Dr. Rosseau, the S.A. industrial magnate, is Chancellor of Fort Hare University.

I also recall a statement attributed to the Rector of the University of the North to a SABRA Congress to the effect that educated blacks produced by the universities should command the respect of everybody as an attempt at improving race relations.

These two statements exhibit a concern for what is called 'race relations' in South Africa. However, they both manage institutions which have a record of non-regard for the worth and dignity of the black man. If only Dr. Rosseau would realise that the solution to what he calls "the race problem" need not be acceptable to both the government and the Opposition but, I submit, to the broad masses of black people whom the 'system' wishes to see as non-people, and, only in the light of white South Africa.

It is the 'white problem' that forms passionate debate in Cape Town as the white politicians outwit each other in the game of grounding the black man. It is among the students in the black universities (of which Dr. Rosseau and Prof. Boshoff are officers) that an attempt is being made to grapple with the problems that affect the black man. The motivation among blacks is not to avoid "harming South Africa's international position" but it is a basic struggle for survival and a determination TO BE and to assert one's humanity.

As long as free expression is stifled on the part of both staff and students and a free interflow of ideas is non-existent; as long as expulsion of students, is the immediate reaction to the critical student voice which has the effect of submerging truth and the spirit of dialogue with the authorities; and as long as the majority of the lecturing

staff are engaged in imparting and defending 'policy' to people who envisage their role as ridding their people even of that policy so that the whole black community may develop and establish itself as people self-reliant, confident and filled with pride of being black;

THEN there shall always be confusion on the race scene and "our very survival" (according to Dr. Rosseau) will be at stake because when " . . . . . things will fall apart The centre cannot hold."

### REPUBLIC:10 YEARS

The Republican celebrations have come and gone. The frenzy, emotion and anger that characterised the different moods of the people (depending on whether you celebrated or not) are things of the past.

In their wake, however, they have left scars to individuals and families of those who decided, that they would register their disapproval of the celebrations.

- \* an 18 year old crippled black school-girl was expelled for scribbling an anti Republican slogan to her teacher.
- \* some 10 high school boys were quizzed by the Security Police for allegedly writing anti-Republican slogans.
- \* 11 students of the University of Durban-Westville were detained in connection with painting of slogans and breaking into a school for the same purpose.
- \* some black students were interrogated in Durban for distributing pamphlets.
- \* Security police are still hounding many students suspected of partaking in anti-republican activities.

It is understandable why these parties should be driven to the actions they took when they consider the arrogance of being made to celebrate their ignoble defeat at the hands of the white man. It is a predictable reaction (at least to those who still have a soul to protect) to a system that preaches obedience even to slave-master. We urge black people to see the provocation to which they were subjected these past few weeks.

### STUDENT ACTION

I sent messages of congratulation to the Transvaal College of Education, Springfield and

University of Zululand on the occasion of their demonstrations during May about the Republican Celebrations for the first two and against the attainment of university status for Zululand. Further information is reflected elsewhere.

We supported these actions because they exhibit an attempt by students to make their voice heard and, in the circumstances, they use the weapon that is best understood by the authorities.

### **FORMATION SCHOOLS:**

I took part in two Formation Schools during the months of April and May.

The Eastern Cape Formation School was held in Alice during the weekend of the 24th April. Some 25 students from Fort Hare and the Federal Seminary attended the School regularly. The seminar took the form of 'in-depth' discussions in groups and at plenary sessions and participants together looked at the relevance of SASO. The Seminar was not aimed at presenting any findings but basically to give students the opportunity to discover SASO's role in society anew and also to build up their own commitment to SASO and its programmes. Comments received later on proved that the participants appreciated the value of the exercise.

The National Seminar was held at Roodepoort during Ascension weekend in May. There were 35 students from all the affiliated centres except Federal Seminary and Zululand. Discussion papers on issues like Black universities, Dialogue and the African States, Foreign Investments and an assessment of the structures of SASO were used as the basis and recommendations were tabled for consideration by the G.S.C. with a view to policy-making.

The Seminar was a rousing success and participants took part in the discussions and exhibited a keenness to look objectively at the issues. The recommendations of the Seminar are reflected elsewhere

### **FINANCE**

Will all branches and affiliated centres kindly send their affiliation fees as soon as possible otherwise, as per constitution, they will not be able to sit in Council session and will not vote.

This is very important because our running costs with an office and staff far exceed our income. This is one problem that GSC shall have to look into squarely otherwise we shall have to declare ourselves insolvent so that we don't prejudice our creditors – we don't even have assets !!

### **SASO DAY:**

This event was held for the first time this

year as a national event. It was started at Turfloop last year as an attempt to heighten the student's sense of awareness and commitment to the SASO Programme. It was this year recommended to all centres and the success has been no less rousing.

Gatherings in some of the major centres were addressed by members of the Executive. I opened the SASO week at the University of the North. The rest of the week was used for symposia on "The Revival of Black Consciousness" and discussions followed. Student and non-student speakers addressed the congregation. At Ngoye, Charles Sibisi spoke and Vuy Mashalaba was the main speaker at Fort Hare and Federal Seminary where she spoke on Communication as a Facet of SASO Policy. Steve Biko and Gees Abram shared the platform in a symposium on Positivity in Negritude at UNB. All these papers will be circulated and are available on request.

### **MEET THE PEOPLE:**

Operation "Meet the People" is the project the SASO Local Committee at UNB is undertaking on Preventive Medicine at 'New Farm'. This study and research project was the subject of E. Mundayziwa's presentation to the Clinical Conference of the Medical School, Durban whereby he won a prize. The students are also helping the Mahatma Gandhiji Clinic at Phoenic Settlement and the students are also involved in house visiting, literacy projects, health education, balanced-diet and economic budgetting. SASO Local was invited to conduct emergency operations when the heavy rains washed away the frail houses of the people.

The culmination of SASO Week at the University of the North saw a group of students visiting the local clinic at Mankweng, conducting cleaning-up operations and providing food for a feeding scheme.

Fort Hare has been invited to build a church at the Resettlement Township of Dimbaza in the Eastern Cape during the long vacation and also to build a school in the rural area in Fort Beaufort over the Winter vacation. The operation will have to start with the manufacturing of bricks, etc.

These community development projects should be not seen only as another opportunity "to do a good turn" in the charitable idiom of the Boy Scouts but an involvement with the people in self-reliance and facing the challenging issues that even the humblest of black people has to contend with in his daily life. The operation has to promote the awareness by black people of the forces that bog them down and also to give students an opportunity to relate intimately with the community and locate mass solidarity. This is black consciousness at work.

## I WRITE WHAT I LIKE

by FRANK TALK

# Fragmentation of the Black Resistance

Just who can be regarded as representative of black opinion in South Africa? This question often crosses my mind in many conversations with people throughout the country and on reading various newspaper reports on what blacks have to say on topical matters. Once more the issue was highlighted during the debate on whether or not to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the "Republic" of South Africa. On the one hand Mr. Pat Poovalingam in Durban was urging the Indian people to celebrate whilst, on the other, people like Mr. Mewa Ramgobin and the Labour Party argued the case against celebration. In Zululand Chief Gatsha Buthelezi stated that the Zulu people would celebrate whilst elsewhere pamphlets were distributed from various black sources reminding the people that they would be celebrating the countless sins of the Nationalist government. The interesting thing of course was the conspicuous silence of the urban African people except for the hushed objections of Soweto's U.B.C. Not at any stage did anybody state a representative opinion.

Anyone staying in South Africa will not be completely surprised by this. Political opinion is probably very clear-cut on issues of this nature amongst the African people especially. However, since the banning and harassment of black political parties – a dangerous vacuum has been created. The African National Congress and later the Pan-African Congress were banned in 1960; the Indian Congress was routed out of existence and ever since there has been no co-ordinated opinion emanating from the black ranks. Perhaps the Kliptown Charter – objectionable as the circumstances surrounding it might have been – was the last attempt ever made to instil some amount of positiveness in

stating categorically what blacks felt on political questions in the land of their forefathers.

After the banning of the black political parties in South Africa, people's hearts were gripped by some kind of foreboding fear for anything political. Not only were politics a closed book, but at every corner one was greeted by a slave-like apathy that often bordered on timidity. To anyone living in the black world, the hidden anger and turmoil could always be seen shining through the faces and actions of these voiceless masses but it was never verbalised. Even the active phase, thuggery and vandalism, – was directed to one's kind – a clear manifestation of frustration. To make it worse, no real hope was offered by the output from the recently created black universities. Sons and fathers alike were concerned about cutting themselves a niche in a situation from which they saw no hope of escaping.

After this brief spell of silence during which political activity was mainly taken up by liberals, blacks started dabbling with the dangerous theory – that of working within the system. This attitude was exploited to the full by the Nationalist party. Thus the respectability of Matanzima's Transkei was greatly boosted by Ndamse's decision to join hands with him. Clearly Ndamse, being a one time banned man, convinced many people by his decision that there was something to be gained out of these apartheid institutions. Soon thereafter the Coloured Labour Party, operating on an anti-apartheid ticket was formed to oppose the pro-apartheid Federal Party within the all-Coloured Coloured Representative Council. People's logic became strangely twisted. Said a member of the

Transkei's opposition Democratic Party:

"We know that the Transkeian parliament is a stooge body. We ask you to elect us to that stooge body!"

But it seems that nothing influenced people more to "accept" the "working within the system" theory than the decision by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi to join in and lead the Zulu Territorial Authority. Chief Gatsha Buthelezi had for a long time been regarded as the bastion of resistance to the institution of a territorial authority in Zululand. Then one morning a newspaper intimated that he might just agree to take it up and within weeks Chief Gatsha Buthelezi was indeed the Chief Executive Officer of the Zululand Territorial Authority.

Following the capitulation of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, a burst of activity manifested itself in these apartheid institutions. On the one hand the Labour Party was making full use of the sanctified platform – the CRC – to air their grievances against the government, on the other Chief Gatsha was fast becoming an embarrassment to the government with the kind of things he was saying.

I believe it is just here that the confusion over who are the leaders of the black world began to arise. Because of the increased verbalisation of black man's complaints, the people – especially the white world – began to take these various voices as speaking on behalf of and as leaders of the Black world. This kind of picture was particularly built up by the English press, who followed in detail everything people like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi did and said. Of course in the absence of any organized opinion it began to sound even to some black people themselves as if this were the case. The fact that Matanzima also joined in the band wagon of militant demands has made everyone sit back and clap. People argue that the Nationalist have been caught in their own game. The black lion is beginning to raise its voice. This is a gross over simplification.

What is fact is happening is that the black world is beginning to be completely fragmented and that people are beginning to talk sectional politics. I would rather like to believe that this was foreseen long ago by the Nationalist Party and that it is in fact a part of the programme. After the kind of noises made by Buthelezi, the Labour Party and of late Matanzima, who can argue that black opinion is being stifled in South Africa? Moreover any visitor is made to see that these people are fighting for more concessions in their own area (13% of the land). They accept that the rest of South Africa is for Whites. Also none of them sees

himself as fighting the battle for all black people. Xhosas want their Transkei, the Zulus their Zululand etc. Coloured people harbour secret hopes of being classified as "bruin Afrikaners" and therefore meriting admittance into the White laager while Indian people might be given a vote to swell the buffer zone between Whites and Africans. Of course these promises will never be fulfilled - at least not in a hurry – and in the meantime the enemy bestrides South Africa like a colossus laughing aloud at the fragmented attempts by the powerless masses making appeals to his deaf ears.

"The Transkei is the Achille's heel of the Nationalists" claim intellectual politicians who are always quick to see a loophole even in a two-foot thick iron wall. This is false logic. The Transkei, the CRC, Zululand and all these other apartheid institutions are modern-type laagers behind which the whites in this country are going to hide themselves for a long time to come. Slowly the ground is being swept off from under our feet and soon we as blacks will believe completely that our political rights are in fact in our "own" areas. Thereafter we shall find that we have no leg to stand on in making demands for any rights in "mainland White South Africa" which incidentally will comprise more than three quarters of the land of our forefathers.

This is the major danger that I see facing the black community at the present moment – to be so conditioned by the system as to make even our most well-considered resistance to fit within the system both in terms of the means and of the goals. Witness the new swing amongst leaders of the Indian community in Durban. (I must admit I say this with pain in my heart). Ever since word was let loose that the Indian Council will at some near future be elected, a number of intelligent people are thinking of reviving the Indian Congress and letting it form some kind of opposition within the system. This is dangerous retrogressive thinking which should be given no breathing space. These apartheid institutions are swallowing too many good people who would be useful in a meaningful programme of emancipation of the black people.

Who are the leaders of the black world then if they are not to be found in the apartheid institution? Clearly, black people know that their leaders are those people who are now either in Robben Island or in banishment or in exile – voluntary or otherwise. People like Mandela, Sobukwe, Kathrada, M.D. Naidoo and many others will always have a place of honour in our minds as the true leaders of the people. They may have been branded commu-

nists, saboteurs, or similar names – in fact they may have been convicted of similar offences in law courts but this does not subtract from the real essence of their worth. These were people who acted with a dedication unparalleled in modern times. Their concern with our plight as black people made them gain the natural support of the mass of black people. We may disagree with some things they did but know that they spoke the language of the people.

Does this necessarily mean that I see absolutely no advantage in the present set up? Unless the political astuteness of the black people involved in these various apartheid institutions is further sharpened, I am afraid we are fast approaching an impasse. The new generation may be right in accusing us of collaboration in our own destruction. In Germany the petty officials who decided on which Jews were to be taken away were also Jews, Ultimately Hitler's gangs also came for them. As soon as the dissident factors outside the apartheid institutions are completely silenced, they will come for those who make noise inside the system. Once that happens the boundaries of our world will forever be the circumference of the 13% "black spots".

Perhaps one should be a little positive at this stage. I completely discourage the movement of people from the left to join the institutions of apartheid. In laying out a strategy we often have to take cognisance of the enemy's strength and as far as I can assess all of us who want to fight within the system are completely underestimating the influence the system has on us. What seems to me to be logical at this stage, is for the left to continually pressurise the various apartheid institutions to move in the direction of testing the limits of possibility within the system, to prove the whole game a sham and to break off the system. I will take the example of the Labour Party because it sounds as the most well-organised dissident group in the system.

The Coloured Labour Party stood for elections on an anti-apartheid ticket and won most of the elected seats. Further, the Labour Party wasted no time in spelling out its anti-apartheid stance and revived political activity to a great extent within the Coloured community. In fact the growing consciousness of the possibility of political action amongst the Coloured people is due to the Labour Party. Pretty soon the Labour Party will find that it is singing the same tune and whatever they say will cease to be of news value. In the meantime Tom Swartz will start making demands for the Coloured people and will probably gain a few

concessions. The Coloured people will then realise that in fact a positive stand like that of Tom Swartz's is more welcome than a negative attitude like that of the Labour Party who keep on saying the same things. Then the Labour Party will start falling into disfavour.

This is not just theoretical. It has happened in the past with Matanzima and Guzana in the Transkei. Guzana's party – once the pride of dissident Transkeians who wanted to demonstrate their rejection of the system – has now been relegated to the background, operating even on the right of Matanzima's Party whose militant demands are being seen as a more meaningful opposition to the system than a rehashed debate on the protection of white interests in the Transkei.

Therefore I see the real value of the Labour Party being in galvanising its forces **now**, organising them and pulling out of the Coloured Representative Council together with the support of all the Coloured people. The longer they stay in the CRC, the more they risk being irrelevant. "Pull out and do what"? this is the next question. There is a lot of community work that needs to be done in promoting a spirit of self-reliance and black consciousness among all black people in South Africa.

This is what the Labour Party should resort to doing. By now they have sufficiently demonstrated that the CRC is rejected by the Coloured People. Further operation within the system may only lead to political castration and a creation of an "I-am-a-Coloured" attitude which will prove a set back to the black man's programme of emancipation and will create major obstacles in the establishment of a non-racial society once our problems are settled. This to me sounds the only way of turning a disadvantage into an advantage. It is true of not only the Labour Party but also of all black people of conscience who are now operating within the system.

Thus in an effort to maintain our solidarity and relevance to the situation we must resist all attempts at the fragmentation of our resistance. Black people must recognise the various institutions of apartheid for what they are – gags intended to get black people fighting separately for certain "freedoms" and "gains" which were prescribed for them long ago. We must refuse to accept it as inevitable that the only political action the blacks may take is through these institutions.

Granted that it may be more attractive and even safer to join the system, we must still recognise that in doing so we are well on the way towards selling our souls.

# Africa Series — Ivory Coast

CHARLES SIBISI

Vice-President International Relations

This French-speaking West African state has been much in the news lately, mainly because of the decision of its president M. Houphouet Boigny to spearhead the black African move for dialogue with South Africa. The fact that the song of the Ivory Coast has remained unsung these past ten years is most remarkable since the country is one of the most impressive in Africa today. It is reported that a high-ranking United Nations economist, on visiting the country in 1969 remarked "If they told us at independence that they planned to do all this we would have laughed at them." Standing on the balcony of his air-conditioned, luxury hotel and surveying the hustle and bustle of downtown Abidjan, the official had good reason to be surprised, for the Ivory Coast is an economic miracle if ever there was one.

Since independence the Country has maintained an annual growth rate of over 8% – the highest in Africa. Agricultural production has soared and industrialization has paced ahead at a dazzling speed. The capital, Abidjan, at independence a sleepy "colonial" town, is now a bustling metropolis of 500,000. As this article is being written, architects and technicians are busy laying plans that will transform the Abidjan countryside into the Riviera of Africa which it is hoped will more than double the Ivory Coast's already high tourist revenue.

The ingredients of success are the natural resources, an industrious populace, sound economic policies and stability. The Ivory Coast has all these plus a remarkable president. M. Houphouet Boigny is at 65, one of the three grand old men of African politics, the others being Jomo Kenyatta and Haile Selassie. A former French cabinet minister, M. le President is a fiercely conservative statesman. He holds an intense dislike for ideologues and bureaucrats, and has staffed his civil service with efficient technocrats, many, of whom are expatriate Frenchmen. Indeed, so dominant is the French presence in the Ivory Coast that M. le President has been accused by his critics, with some justification, of being a Black Frenchman first and an Ivorian second. He was a very close friend of the late

French President Charles de Gaulle (and is reported to have wept on hearing of his death, one of the few occasions the president has shown emotion). He encourages private enterprise and foreign investment (especially French). In fact he even makes it difficult, so rumour goes, for indigeneous Ivorians to enter commerce which is French dominated.

The suave, diplomat president likes driving around Abidjan in his Lincoln Continental Limousine admiring the growth and acknowledging the cheers of the crowd. He is impeccably dressed, and speaks impeccable French and holidays regularly in France. Madame Houphouet Boigny visits Paris more frequently – to shop at Dior's. She is reputed to be one of Africa's best-dressed women.

The president practises what may be called "benevolent Authoritarianism." Opposition is allowed; but only just. Vocal opponents are locked up for a cooling off period. Then the President summons them for a private audience when, in hurt tones, he enquires why they damage the Ivory Coast by opposing him. After a lengthy lecture on the virtues of national unity they are allowed to go home. Many, it is said, subsequently behave themselves. Students who make a nuisance of themselves are customarily drafted into the army.

The president has wrought an economic miracle but the fruits are still largely enjoyed by the expatriate Frenchmen who run industry and commerce, as well as the few elite Ivorians. For the mass of Ivorians poverty is still a reality, and this could portend trouble for the Ivory Coast in the days to come. Calls for Africanisation are being made with increasing frequency. Instead of responding to the calls, the president has in the past been quick to smooth ruffled French feathers. It is clearly an anomalous situation that has to be righted. After all, the ordinary worker is not concerned about the virtues of balancing a budget and keeping inflation fettered. He is more concerned about the size of his pay-packet. Perhaps M. le President has a surprise up his sleeve. After all, the fanfare surrounding his press conference about dialogue with South Africa surprised those who know him as a low-keyed man who favours the diplomatic approach.

# The Theatre and Black South Africa

How do we as a black, oppressed class react to theatre both as audience and actors? Now, when theatre is becoming increasingly popular amongst all sectors of the black community, it is important to examine this question. But, before doing so it is necessary to examine the concept "theatre".

What is theatre? An inane question to many, at surface level. But let us scrape beneath the surface; beneath the facade that theatre is pure entertainment; that theatre is restricted to evening gowns, collar and tie and "coffee bar after discussions" on the merits and de-merits of this particular actor or that particular director. I think theatre is far more important than just these superficial dabbings by the "sleek baldheaded bourgeois" or the intellectual who, continually, make the claim that theatre is "pure art". The term often bandied about by so-called professionals is: "theatre is being bastardized."

Theatre began as a religious ritual in Greece, India, China and in Africa. Before going to war, at some sombre religious celebration, during times of rejoicing man enacted his hopes, his fears, his wants and desires. And so began the development of theatre. But, always, the theatre related to man. From the pen of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides came religious piety, tragic ambivalence and angry agnosticism, respectively. Following the thread of development through the medieval era it began with religious certainty during the dark ages giving way to uncertainty, futility and despair. During the renaissance everything was in doubt. The voice of theatre was screaming now for its independence. Shakespeare and his contemporaries introduced the brutal comedy, tragedy lost its clear definition and good and evil began to be confused. But it took the Romans to banish God from the stage and this carried through to the fake idealism of the restoration comedy or the brutal cynicism of the heroic play.

The theatre was becoming political – political in the sense that it examined everyman in all his nakedness. Man's greed, his hunger for power, his atrocities – all were being examined.

Today the theatre of revolt has established its validity. The theatre picks out and accuses the perpetrators of evil. It denounces the oppressor, it rejects war and it advocates revolution. Professor Robert Burstein in his "The Theatre of Revolt" says, "Revolt is the energy which drives the modern theatre, just as faith drove the theatre of the past." But, it does not end there. The theatre of revolt

is not the popular theatre for it attacks the very people on whom it feeds – the bourgeois. It attacks his complacency, his mediocrity, his compromise, his cowardice, his hypocrisy and his greed.

This, aptly, applies to us here in South Africa. What is our theatre to do? At present, there are theatre groups that slavishly pander to the likes and dislikes of the bourgeois audiences. The black, second class bourgeois is more and more becoming slave to the pretty, well-acted play of entertainment. The vast majority spurn and keep away from the honest and valid theatre that holds up a mirror to their "bad and dreary lives." (Chekhov). Black audiences prefer the technically cold plays put on by white theatre groups that have special shows for "non-whites." Black theatre groups attract the liberal white who comes to pay penance to and keep track of black thought. These people have become redundant to theatre groups that believe the theatre is one didactic mean to an obvious end.

In the black ghettos of South Africa the theatre groups that succeed, financially, are those that present hashed, soap-box dramas. Brain-washed by a wholly inadequate press the people are content with variety concerts, meaningless musicals and indistinct revues that touch the superficialities of our "colour problem."

But all is not lost! meaningful drama related to the examination of ourselves is invading the country. Those that are known are the Serpent Players of Port Elizabeth, the Phoenix Players in Johannesburg and Tecon in Durban. These three groups are picking up the thread of vital theatre. Serpent Players' "The Coat" is a searching experience into the lives of people who are affected by the brutality of the system in South Africa. "Black and Blue" a jazz poetry presentation by the Phoenix Players followed the mood and thought of black people who are concerned with the plight of black people. Tecon's "Into the Heart of Negritude" was also a jazz poetry presentation, that examined the concept negritude - and through its music and poetry, affirmed the path of black assertion.

The cultural revolution has started. It is, now, for other theatre groups to examine themselves not as an isolated quantity but as a force that reacts within the community it serves. Theatre, for the time being, at least, must serve a dual purpose – to act as a didactic means and to present entertainment, to the black people of South Africa.

“ . . . into the heart  
of negritude . . . ”



**ABOVE:** The cast and musicians of TECON'S searching production of "Into the Heart of Negritude" which played to rave audiences at UNB and Ngoya.



**'The Malombos'** who formed an integral part of the production with their basic Afro-Jazz music which is surely the only original jazz-music to come out of South Africa.



Below we reprint a paper delivered by a philosophy student at the University of the North, Temba Sono, to a SASO Week seminar at the same University

# SOME CONCEPTS OF NEGRITUDE AND BLACK IDENTITY

by TEMBA SONO

Allow me to make this observation before I briefly state my point. The Black philosopher, before he can even formulate his philosophy concerning the destiny of the Black man, is faced with the twin dilemmas: that of **Identity** and that of the **discrepancy between principle and practice**.

First the **dilemma of identity**. The Black student, to a very limited extent has achieved a sense of inner identity. Yet it is true that the term identity suggests a fixity, a fixation, a stability and closure. And still it is this identity that has to comprehend and assimilate the concepts of a personal future and a 'life work'. Yet these concepts are forever more hazily defined. They are so defined because the idea of identity suggesting fixatedness and stability, as it surely does, must still find expression in a context of flux i.e. the employment of life forces to seek change in oneself, redefine oneself. So it becomes clear that the fluidity and openness that I have just referred to, are counterbalanced by the fixity and closure which permeate all life. This then creates a very complex situation, a situation compared to the rigidity of an amoeba when feeding to the flexibility of this amoeboid locomotion. To many, it then spells a death-knell to initiative, it then recreates doctrinaire postures that simply peter out since the vision of the personal and collective hope is nullified.

Secondly, the dilemma of the apparent dis-

crepancy between **principle and practice**. This conflict, inherent in the principle-practice chusion translated into social political terms has alarming proportions. Filial awareness of the mores of our culture generate a spirit of ultra-sensivity. The Black youth cannot reconcile himself to the parental endorsement of the principle of independence and self-determinism since when the occasion presents itself in a concrete form for the parent to apply that principle he then shows a curious amalgam to what Aristotle called a **roi faneant** of an ontological evolution of form and matter. That is, the parent refuses to grant that independence and self-determination.

In a political context similar dilemmas arise. Many of our parents espouse in principle the cause of political freedom, yet are themselves not involved in politics and they oppose their children's involvement lest they 'jeopardize their record' or ruin their later career.

Granted, no society ever fully lives up to its own professed ideals. Since, it is also true that the gulf between creedal values and actual practices generate a motive power for social reform and social change. In a society like South Africa where social change is very slow and the Establishment is powerful and entrenched and unchanging, the Black man, aware of this impasse, reaches a crisis point. This is where many fall off, this where very

few if any survive the struggle for the dignity of the Black man. This is where many academics become direct or accidental apologists for the Organised System. This is where even in an institution like this University of ours there is evidence of a collapse of an intellectual identity. This is where the atmosphere of academic discussion and freedom is obliterated by the icy breeze of fear and incompetence and inertia. This is where when new ways ought to be sought, where ways that combine action with reflection upon action, where ways that fuse engagement in the world with understanding of it, one simply reaches an intellectual, therefore by extension an **ethical straat loop dood**. This is then the genesis of the Great Conception of Negative thinking, of **the birth of Scape Goats**. This then is the great abortion of the ontological evolution of the Black man, the point where the great potential of the power of Black thinking is forever negated, the point where a new dictatorship enters, the dictatorship of the Black man by the Black man. This in short explains the tragedy and futility of the Black man's struggle for dignity and in its wake there emerges a colossal monster that shall need all pur might to destroy. This monster is not the White man, it is neither the Afrikaner, the liberal nor the Communist. This monster is the institutionalization of hypocrisy. And the Church is greatly responsible in perpetuating this issue. The Black student dutifully and routinely learns when it is 'reasonable' to expect that the values people profess will be implemented in their behaviour, and when it is not reasonable.

So when I spoke on the need for the transvaluation of values I was referring to the need for the **evolution of stable institutions or rules for defining hypocrisy**; to the need for the removal of the conflicting sets of values experientially related to childhood, and the ideologies and dogmas and principle riddling our adult and ethical action. This is the only lever than can be effectively used to rid oneself of a colonial slave mentality. This is the philosophy of Negritude, this is the Black humanism of the 20th Century which Leopold Sedar Sengor propagated, this is the existentialistic confrontation of the Black man with the world, this is the same vital force which Mphahlele and Chinua Achebe ridicules, this I think, is the **modus operandi** of SASO in its refined form.

Before I attempt a synthetic application of this humanism into the fabric of the SASO vision as I understand it, permit me once more to make this observation.

The Black youth today, thwarted in his attempt to express his independence and self-determination, must then seek newer ways of identification and the activation of his **will-to-dignity** within a collective medium through which

he endorses his objectives i.e. the creation of new life styles within the framework of that obliteration of the hideous: Institutionalization. The search for this life style must find expression in representative agencies relevant to the Black man's lifeview. Today our society is very complex, so for an unthinking Black student the path is a tough one. Today the world is a psychedelic colouration where flux is more obvious than fixed purpose which in turn lead to the swift flight of ideologies. Since ideologies come and go, since revolutions are supplanted by revolutions, a way of action which in a way must be ethnocentric must be embarked upon whereby the emphasis must shift from fixed goals and constancies of behaviour to self awareness.

The umbilical cord uniting the elements in the Black man's generational identification is, curiously enough, psychological disconnection. The Black student by making himself psychically fluid, disconnects himself by a process of psychological dialectics from his past generations. He therefore rejects the tactics employed in the past. As a result, generational consciousness necessitates the motivated creation of his own moral area of action, of his tactics and objectives.

As you are aware, I hope, this process is highly personalistic in content and it therefore entails privatism and a recoiling away from world involvement. Yet because of the genetic colouration of this life style (and unhappily it manifests itself in a terrifying ethnocentricity) it becomes necessary for the Black man to depersonalize himself by projecting his identity through his cultural values into the world. In order to achieve his goal, as a strategic tactic he must accept the 'I-Thou' relationship. It is not a contradiction in terms and thought to state that the Black man's ultimate measure of his life is not in goals but is in the quality of his personal relationships. Yet the quality of these relationships is directly proportional to the degree of involvement of the Black personality in the 'I-Thou' relationship. This I think is what Ezekiel Mphahlele is trying to say and promote but it is the means which he disagrees with. I know Mphahlele would fumigate his spleen on me for aligning him with this struggle via the African personality. Yet he was right, for I think it is a cardinal sin to fail to relate oneself to others in a direct, vis-a-vis, one-to-one relationship. This is the common humanity which he so shrilly tries to vindicate.

The obverse of this view is the discomfort of an objectified, exploitative relationship. To support this view Kenneth Kiston writes: 'Manipulation, power relationships, control and domination are at violent odds with the 'I-Thou' mystique... Even with opponents the goal is to establish intimate confrontation in which the issues can be discussed openly'. Quite true, but only if that is our goal, it so happens but unfortunately that we shall

differ with Kiston because we categorically stated that we are not that interested in the fixed goals and constancies of behaviour than we are interested in self-awareness. This is the SASO Creed: the awareness of the dignity and identity of ourselves. It is not an end in itself. It leads to the mental liberation of the Black man. Happy would be the day when all Black people irrespective of social standing, academic qualification would cease to insult the White man by calling him Baas.

Because at this stage the Black man, due to the preponderance of the element of fixity over that of fluidity, in his conception of himself as an identifiable person, is unable to search for his personal and organisational inclusiveness. Inclusiveness as a vital force is an attempt to include both in a personality infra-structure and in an intra-process of political consciousness, all elements, however discordant, however alien. As a psychological vital force this activation involves a strong attempt to accommodate all facets of one's psychosomatic feelings and impulses and fantasies; it is an attempt to synthesize and intergrate rather than repress and dissociate; not to reject or exclude any part of one's personality or potential. This is the great issue which makes Mphahlele and his votaries of young African intellectuals disagree with the Chief protagonists of Negritude. The Chinua Achebes and the Mphahleles of this world are crying for common humanity – for a universal humanity even before they have identified themselves. Chinua Achebe is right by saying that the tiger has no need to declare its tigritude but simply because it has confirmed its tigritude by the simple argument that it belongs to the feline division and it, by virtue of its contribution in that division, then negates the need for its declaration of its tigritude. Further more the protagonist of this protest against negritude misinterprets the concept in his haste to associate himself with the Universal man by believing that this concept is an inferiority complex.

Interpersonally, the concept of inclusiveness refers to the moral capacity for involvement with and an identification with those who are superficially alien. Quite true, Mphahlele is right, but then my simple question is at what level does this involvement take place. If it is at an ethical level then Mphahlele must forever keep quiet about Negritude. If it is outside ethical involvement then my simple question is, is there such a reality in Human action?

Therefore, seen along these lines African existentialism is a positive affirmation of one's worth, of one's values. It is a positive creed that SASO is presenting to the world, because SASO believes that it expresses the idea of the dignity of the Black man. SASO declares then, if my assertion is correct, the dignity of Black Africa through Negritude, like the introspective 'novels' of Richard-

son and Rousseau. But then what is Negritude?

God has said I am that I am. Shakespeare, the universal voice of humanity asks what is man, is man no more than this. The Black man states I am Black that I am Black. The black man is Negritude because he cannot hate himself, he cannot hate his being without ceasing to be. Being cannot be non-Being. Black cannot be Non-White. Only in South Africa does a group of people become the negative of another. So Negritude i.e. Black identity, is never self-negation. Yet curiously it is not affirmation for affirmation implies a psychological inadequacy of oneself at a certain stage. It is what I referred to the other day as self-consolidation, a rooting of oneself in oneself, confirmation of one's being. The phrases "African personality" the thing Ezekiel Mphahlele denies whose presence and "black personality" are the approximations of, if not Negritude itself. After the First World War the Black poet Lanston Hughes wrote, 'We, the creators of the new generation, want to give expression to our black personality without shame or fear. . .

. . . We know we are handsome. Ugly as well. The drums weep and the drums laugh.' If we align ourselves with this view, and I think every thinking African does, then, it becomes clear that Black awareness is a formidable mental weapon, a humanistic instrument of the spiritual liberation of the Black man.

It was a West Indian poet, Aime Cesaire, who coined the word Negritude. But we sharpened the concept into an armament of our existential confrontation with the world. The Black man has no need to apologise to anybody. The Black man owes no other race in this world a living. There is no reason for our black lecturers to earn lower salaries than their white counterparts. The White is not yet aware that the Black man has power, and who can blame him. The White man has been educating the Black man to think and do as it would perpetuate the White man's status quo. Listen to what Loram in his Book 'The Education of the S.A. Native' writes about what the White man thinks of us: . . . "the black man is an inferior creature, and that he cannot escape from the inferiority!" So with a naive omniscient dispensation they declare that it is God's will that the Black man should be thus. This would mean that if you attempt to raise the Black man from that position of inferiority you interfere with God's plan and you can only bring trouble to yourself and him. The other day I referred to the anthropomorphic conception of God as a futile exercise. If we keep on looking for the colour of God's skin, suppose we find Him White, the White man would say did we not tell you that God made man in his image and that that image is reflected in us the white men? If we find God Black will the White man still not say did we not tell you that God wanted you to be the sons of

Ham; did we not tell you that God was ashamed to be associated with you in this life? If we look around and did not find Him the White man may still say that yes you drove Him into the caverns of darkness and that is why you are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. So Negritude, in defining one's being operationally, involves the reconditioning of the Black man to unlearn him of the stereotypes that white is the hallmark of God and black the badge of evil. So SASO's ideal then is the confirmation of this liberated soul.

To the Black man there is no equality of opportunity. Many of the Black people with immense potentials never get anywhere simply because they do not have the chance – they destroy chances for themselves by not projecting like the Afrikaaner did against the English – their beingness. The pathetic, apologetic figure of the Black intellectual goes about today cap in hand begging to be pensioned off at old age with a professorship as if he never deserves it. So this same academic so conditioned to have no vision is always begging from an unheeding God for an accidental deliverance from the temptations that can ruin a man's chances in ten ages.

So apart from these self-employed constraints of the spiritually Pavloved Black man, there is of course the fetters that confine the generality of men, these additional shackles that bind the Black man and contract his opportunities still further. The problem becomes acute and even assume tragic proportions when the intellectual leader fails the follower and the follower in turn resigns himself and lives zestfully, even, rapturously, however short the tether. The masses may even find it a relief to be able to excuse themselves from their educated brother's struggles (if any) for Black dignity on the plea that the struggle will avail them nothing anyhow. This is where the centre cannot hold, this is where things fall apart. This is still the point of turning time. This is where we remain the Black Rip van Winkles. But it is also the point when Negritude enters to restore the balance offsetted by Black inertia. This is the rallying message of SASO; SASO being the epitome of the clarion call of Black unity, Black brotherhood.

SASO and Negritude are not slogans. Black identity is not the 'burn, baby, burn' spurious call of the lazy thinkers. Negritude is the vital force of the liberation movement in men's mind. It is the

Black Renaissance. Black identity is not a political movement. It is an attitude to life. It is an ethical commitment to life as the Black man sees himself in this world. It is as Leopold Sedar Senghor says an active presence in the world, or better still, in the universe. So we need Black people who believe in Mind power, who have a vision of the reality of the Black man. It is something which the young African writers of today do not understand. It is something that corresponds to a life attitude of Oriental mystics. It is some mental Yogi, some Buddhist spiritual attitude that can and must withstand the vicissitudes of life. Black consciousness is not a school of thought; it is what the German's would call a *lebenswelt*, a *ding an sich*. Yes ladies and gentlemen, Negritude by its ontology is a combination of matter and spirit which manifests itself in energy and force, not kinematic as a network of radial forces which are tangential and radial energies i.e. external, material, and quantitative on the one hand and internal, psychic and qualitative on the other. It is a centripetal force that has organized itself into a complex centre-to-centre relations.

Finally the Black man must realize that the heritage of the *tuo-mond mars* is the concentration camp in various forms and the power behind this regards man as a 'thing' and the black man as a 'sub-thing'. And things in monetary form have abrogated the role of a person. People are de-animated, robbed of their psychic validity and things usurping the prerogatives of animate beings.

This world has, therefore, reversed the qualities of things and people. The world is now demonically motivated. Modern psycho-analysts tell us, like some of the best English novels, that in this world occult forces are operating not only in people but also in things. As we see it, if people turn themselves or are turned into things metaphysical, order can be established only if we think of things as turning themselves into people, acting under an evil drive similar to that which motivates human aberration.

According to Leopold Sedar Senghor, Negritude is:

"the sum of cultural values of the Black world, as these are exposed in the life, the institutions and the work of the negroes . . . In this respect this open negritude is a Humanism."

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## BLACK SOLIDARITY?

**How important is the link between African, Coloured and Indian to the future of South Africa?  
We invite comments from readers on this topic.**

**a poem . . .**

wait on the sidewalk  
 watch  
 the  
 sparrow fornicate in the gutter  
 and smile  
 because you remember your night  
 penned in the narrow confines  
 of your tenement halls  
 and then your colour  
 comes flooding  
 into the harsh existence of your two bit lives  
 you  
     sitting  
             in the gutter  
 maybe your blackness kills you  
 as you succumb  
 to the routine following  
 of this emasculated dinarchy  
 hear  
 the distant hum and roar and hoot  
 of the 2000 ad existence  
 red stop amber caution green go  
 controlled  
 forever kept in check  
 sleep at night  
 dream wake at day  
 no stir  
 no change  
 only the distant rumble  
 of darkening premonitions  
 death night  
 death day  
 systeming  
 check mated  
 rattling bullets  
 bared teeth of dogs  
 conscious genocide  
 soldiers collect heads in north vietnam  
 here they collect baton crunched skulls  
 and passless masses  
 of black domiciled eyes  
 wiping the shit from their childs arse  
 but will no longer drink the shit from  
 their masters mouth  
 of separateness  
 on an equal basis

The SASO Newsletter sets out to achieve the following aims:—

- † to establish proper contact amongst the various black campuses and between black students and the community at large.
- † to stimulate discussion amongst blacks on current matters of topical interest.
- † to make known black opinion on matters affecting blacks in South Africa.
- † to make known the stand taken by students in matters affecting their lives on and off the campus.
- † to examine relevant philosophical approaches to South Africa's problems.
- † to contribute in the formulation of a viable and strong feeling of self-reliance and consciousness amongst the black people of South Africa.

Contributions by way of articles are welcome from the readers of the Newsletter. Special contributions from non-students in certain fields will be invited. All articles meant for publication must be at the Head Office by the 15th of each month.

A special appeal is made to the black community to help students in the maintenance of this magazine. There is a sad lack of an independent representative black press. It is our intention to contribute in the gradual closing of this gap.

All contributions should be sent to:—

The Editor

**SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS' ORGANISATION  
P.O. BOX 23, AUSTERVILLE, NATAL.**