



NEWS LETTER

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Except where stated, all comments in
this Newsletter do not necessarily
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86 BEATRICE STREET, DURBAN

EDITORIAL

HASTINGS "KAMUZU" BANDA has gone. The so-called leaders of the fragmented Black communities are hailing Mr. Banda's visit as a major break-through in the Nationalist Party policy. Varying descriptions lauding the significance of Mr. Banda's visit are bandied from various sectors. The White press, the sectional leaders and the intellectuals are just some of these. "A major break-through", "A definite concession", "a revolutionary step in the right direction" are but a few of the statements that are being heard. Editorials in all major papers, front page articles, high-tea discussions and even "Current Affairs" dedicated their discussions to the significance of this Black President's visit.

Obviously the importance of Dr. Banda's presence in South Africa was greatly exaggerated and the comments of praise were largely over-emphasized. Nobody, it would appear, deeply analysed this political manoeuvre on the part of not just the Nationalists but the foreign countries that are becoming more and more involved with South Africa, economically and politically. The glaring example that comes to mind here is the French government that urged the "French-African" countries like the Ivory Coast to support the "dialogue" with South Africa.

This is a great conspiracy on three fronts involving the South African status quo which includes all the opposition parties, the investors in South Africa and "the willing pawns" north of the Zambezi, who are playing this huge game of international politics and economics at the expense of 15 million suffering Blacks in this country.

Primarily, this is a manoeuvre to entrench White South Africa in the African continent economically and politically; to create military buffer states that will prevent infiltration by "boards of militant agitators from the North into South Africa." One can also see the clever move here to confuse the minds of the Black people into believing that the government is attempting to make "concessions" in their apartheid policies. Another important reason for this move is to split the "Organisation for African Unity". And as part of the propaganda machinery, South Africa will use this visit to show the world that "they are at least trying to solve the problem."

Exaggerated press reports claimed that the Black people in this country "loved" Banda. This is an obvious untruth. Firstly, one would like to know if the seven or eight thousand people who went to see Banda in Soweto are representative of the feeling of broad mass of Black people. In any case if we were to investigate the reasons for 7,000 people pitching up at the meeting, we would find that the vast majority went merely out of a sense of curiosity. They wanted to see this Black president from the north. One can be sure that they did not go there with any pre-conceived notions that they were going to see their "saviour".

No, the Black people are keenly aware that it is not Banda who will change the Nationalist Party's policies tomorrow, next year or in the next five years. If they applauded certain parts of his speech it was only because he said the things that these people knew and felt long before Banda appeared on the scene, not because they "loved" him. But these press reports, television cameras and overseas correspondents used this as part of the propaganda machinery to boost the image of South Africa in the eyes of the world. "I am sure if Vorster slapped Banda all the television cameras would have switched off" someone commented in a heated argument about Banda's visit.

Now the world is smiling. The Nationalists are giving in! Not before had this happened — Mr. Vorster and his ministers at a multi-racial tea party! Eyes opened, mouths fell agape. The Nationalist Party is becoming more and more "verlig". Everyone was happy. Banda had caused a mini-revolution!

But the Nationalists are having a quiet chuckle. They have appeased their "opponents" inside and outside the country. The so-called leaders of the Black communities are busy confusing the people, while France quietly signs the contract to sell arms and jet fighters, and then draws up political alliances with South Africa and her erstwhile friends Rhodesia and Portugal. At Addis Ababa one can expect a storm to brew, and the beginnings of a rift in the "Organisation for African Unity."

Back in South Africa "Non-Whites only" signs have not been pulled down yet. Pass offenders are still being picked up. And the whole gamut of assaults on the Black man's dignity continues.

Someone remarked the other day, "What's so wonderful about this?", referring to the photographs of Banda holding two White kids in some Afrikaaner town. "I am sure across the road in a White park you'll see a Black nanny doing the same thing", he said in disgust. One Nationalist minister has already begun to say in no uncertain terms that no foreigner will ever force the government to change its policy. It is ironical that this statement did not receive front-page attention.

No, we Black people are aware of this double game the Whiteman is playing and we must not allow this manoeuvre to trick us into any false sense of security. The only meaningful "dialogue" is between the government and our true leaders who are either in Robben Island, in exile or in banishment. And even then the "dialogue" must be on an equal footing where the Whiteman accepts that we are human beings first and then "Black presidents" and not vice-versa.

Hastings Banda has, in fact, sold himself to White supremacy by conspiring with them to appease the Malawian miners, in particular and the Black people of South Africa in general.

campus news

IN a short, hurriedly arranged meeting with the Students here, congressman, Charles Diggs, was considered much of an "Uncle Tom" when he replied cautiously to students questions on topical affairs.

In the highest percentage poll for many years, a rejuvenated and activist S.R.C. was elected, with former Turfloop student K. Mokoape being president. Also in the office are:

R. A. Goolam
V. Z. Mafungo
A. Pillay
S. Luman
R. Wadwalla (Miss)
F. Parker
K. D. Valjee
B. Maharaj

As evidence of the student bodys' concern not only about maladministration in the University, but also about social injustice directed at the Black community, the A.G.M. this year took a stand in matters such as foreign investment, President Banda's visit to South Africa further suggesting that his visit was purely a "political manouevre by the oppressive regime to window-dress" her racist policy in the eyes of the world and that the people flocked to see Banda out of curiosity rather than idolisation.

Professor Stock, principal of the University, has been strongly condemned for his decision to remove SASO National offices from Alan Taylor Residence without consulting the S.R.C.

After an overwhelming decision to withdraw from Rag, the Rag issue has become a subject of controversy dividing the campus into one side against our moral ground and another for "realistic" ground with self-interest.

Showing the greatest contempt for the much talked about "4-year Medical Course for Bantu Students", the student body unanimously rejected the idea as one of officialdom's strategies to close the doors for the Black people to real academic professional maturity.

Developments with regard to the Phoenix Project are gratifying:

- (a) The impoverished, disease-riddled community is now working hand-in-hand with the students. At the moment, the people are making 20 cents contributions towards the augmentation of water supply.
- (b) Periodical medical check-ups at the newly put-up creché have been started.
- (c) Balanced food-stuff, which are sold to the community at cheap and non-profitting prices, are now available at the Phoenix clinic.
- (d) Two of our students will attend a meeting of the Phoenix Clinic Committee to discuss our Preventive Medicine Programme.
- (e) For the September vacation a group of students will be working on the Phoenix work-camp to help dig trenches for the much-needed latrines.

Another group of students have begun giving lessons at Isibonelo High School, Kwa Mashu, in a bid to help form V students in Maths. The group has established confidence in the whole school and are broadening the outlook of students and advising the class about bursaries.

Whether or not we should remain affiliated to AMSSA — Association for Medical Students of South Africa was under heated debate and a referendum was conducted. The results of the referendum proved that the students wanted the MSC to remain affiliated to the multi-racial AMSSA.

The long weekend in September proved to be a very interesting one. The students from from both universities got into serious discussions about SASO and the Port Hare attitude.



Mr. A. D. Mokoena, SRC President
University of the North.

UNIVERSITY OF THE NORTH

THE elections for the new S.R.C. at this centre have been conducted and the following were elected to the Council:

President — A. D. Mokoena
Vice-President — T. V. Molewa
Treasurer — K. Sehularo
Correspondence Secretary — Miss A. C. Kgware
Minute Secretary — M. Lekota
Pubs and Pubs —
P. Nefolovodwe, S. L. A. Moloto
Constitution — D. Baloyi, D. M. Madiba
S.V.L.T.F. — J. Maleka
Student's Union — E. S. Nkubayi
Cultural Committee — N. Moloko
Sports — P. Mabetoa
SASO LOCAL CHAIRMAN —
T. V. Molewa

Our congratulations go to these successful candidates who took office on the 4th September and will hold office until August next year.

On the 12th August a joint student body and SRC meeting took some major decisions as regards SASO and the University of the North. The meeting declared unanimously and with acclaim the following resolutions: "This student body having listened with interest to the report on the SASO conference,



In a serious moment Mr. Thaba Molewa SASO Local Chairman at the University of the North.

1. Congratulate the University of the North delegation to the conference on the report,
2. Congratulate the conference for stating the policy of SASO on matters, political, social and theological,
3. Undertake to give its financial and moral support to SASO.

The University of the North then took a positive decision on the matter of raising the affiliation fees to SASO. A resolution was passed to this effect.

"That this student body noting the enormous burden on SASO in implementing its projects and smooth running of the organisation, resolve that the normal affiliation fee per capita be increased from 20c to R1,00."

This resolution was carried unanimously with acclaim. In regard to the decision the SRC has already completed negotiations with the Administration for an increase in the SRC fees. The administration has acceded to the request. The SRC has already begun work in regards to the fund-raising projects and we are told that they hope to have raised a thousand rand by conference next year. The outgoing SRC has already made a donation to the SASO National of a hundred rand for which SASO National is very grateful.

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

Activity on this campus was at its zenith during the 2nd Semester. Fired with enthusiasm after the SASO Conference much has been done by the SRC and the SASO Local Committee.

"Antigone in '71", the brilliant production by TECON, which very sensitively examined the confrontation between the State and the individual and related it to South Africa was very well received on this campus. During discussion time many questions were posed and the whole tenet of the discussions revolved around the involvement of Black students in the struggle for identification and with the community.

Themba "Joe" Sono visited the campus to introduce himself to the student body. The president's clear-sightedness and his affable personality succeeded in winning the hearts of the people.

"Day of Compassion" — 24th August was commemorated with an address by the SASO General Secretary, Barney Pityana who presented a paper titled, "Community Development: An Appeal to the Black Man's Compassion." The address was very well attended. Elsewhere in the magazine is reprinted the paper presented by Barney.

The SASO Local Committee organised an informal symposium on the 19th August. The symposium had no defined theme but discussions revolved around a variety of topics all related to the Black student, the Black community and South Africa.

Chief Gatsha Mangosuthu Buthelezi visited the campus on 28th August. A well organised demonstration was geared towards Black Solidarity and to show the Bantustan Chief what the students felt about Chief Buthelezi's stand in the Bantustan system. The various press reports were rather misleading and to a great extent incorrect for at no time at all did the students hail Chief Gatsha Buthelezi as their "hero."

The SASO Local Committee decided to reinforce its numbers and has co-opted Mrs. N. K. Madlala, Miss L. M. Khosa, Messrs. L. M. Magi, M. Shabalala and M. N. Shezi onto the committee.

S.R.C. elections are scheduled for 24th September. Sincerest good wishes to all candidates from the Editor and the readers.

DURBAN-WESTVILLE

ON the 18th and 19th of September this centre held an Inter-Varsity Sports meeting. The meeting was organised by the Central Sports Committee of the University of Durban-Westville. Invitations were sent to the Transvaal College of Education, University of Zululand, M. L. Sultan Technical College, Bechet College, the University of Natal, Black Section and the Springfield College of Education.

Of those invited only the University of Zululand did not turn up. It is learnt that the invitation was not received by the Zululand S.R.C. in time. However, this is not official.

All the centres present participated in Soccer, Netball, Badminton and Table-Tennis. From reports it is learnt that the sports meeting was very successful.

The "interim" S.R.C. presented its draft constitution to the student body. Mr. V. Soni, president of the "interim" S.R.C. says that the constitution was accepted by the student body without any amendments. Elections for the S.R.C. will be held on the 30th September and 1st October. The administration has accepted the constitution "in principle".

To date no general meeting was held by the S.R.C. to discuss the external policy and affiliation to National Bodies. However, the new constitution states that it is the right of the student body to affiliate to any outside organisation it so desires. Other Black centres will be watching with interest the outcome of this University's stand on outside affiliation.

The Editor and readers wish all candidates for election to the new S.R.C. sincerest good wishes.

NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

SASO OPINION

AFRICAN ORGANISATIONS — THE WAY TO UNITY

THE Conference of the African organisations that met in Maritzburg in the middle of August has inspired a number of people with the possibilities sounded there.

The background to the conference is a long one, perhaps dating right back to early March when the SASO Executive organised a series of meetings in Johannesburg with community organisations such as ASSECA and IDAMASA. What transpired at that time was that very little cohesive planning could be arrived at in two cornered meetings and hence, IDAMASA then offered to sponsor a planning conference in Bloemfontein at which all organisations to do with the community work amongst African people would draw joint plans. After this meeting, an interim committee was elected to organise a much more representative conference hence the Maritzburg conference.

There were 26 organisations at the Maritzburg conference represented by some 50 delegates. The overall attendance ran to over 100 in some sessions. The theme was set as the "Development of African Community". Several key speakers were asked to focus attention on the various aspects of the African community and planning was conducted on the basis of discussions arising from these addresses. The following papers were delivered:

1. "Some African Cultural Concepts" — Steve Biko.
2. "Role of the Black Church in New Society" — David Koka.
3. "The Role of Education in Building a New Society" — Mrs. M. Mabiletsa.
4. "Economics and the Black World" — M. T. Moerane.
5. "The Role of Women in the New Society". — E. Kuzwayo.
6. "The Political Future of the African People." — Chief Gatsha Buthelezi.

Discussion arising out of the first papers set out the whole mood of the conference with special reference to Community development programmes and value system analysis.

Self assertion by the women folk onto the mainstream of the strategy building came out of the paper on the role of women, while a very cohesive analysis of our economic possibilities as a cohesive group of determined Blacks came out of Mr. Moerane's paper.

A strong criticism of the educational pattern in South Africa and a bold proposal for re-

orientation of both of the content and effort in the Education of Black children, particularly African, was made by Mrs. Mabiletsa. She asserted that groups like ASSECA whose objective is to attain education for all unretarded children in this country, should receive support from all Blacks.

Perhaps the most interesting discussion arose out of Chief Gatsha's paper. The point at question was the wisdom of operating within the system. While conference was not willing to doubt the intention of well-oriented people within the system, several speakers were of the opinion that the instruments of the system were known best to the architects of the system. Conference then resolved to operate completely outside the system but felt the need for continued dialogue with those fellowmen within the system who refuse to have manhood dwarfed and who continue to try out the possibilities of exploitation of the system towards its own destination.

Conference then went further to take decisions about the future. This to us sounds the most exciting of possibilities. Conference decided to form a confederate Organisation to which shall be affiliated all organisations operating in the African world. A convention towards this purpose has been called for the 16th — 19th December, somewhere in the Rand area. The following points, therefore represent the key decision:—

1. That all African organisations be asked to join in the formation of confederate organisations.
2. That these work in conjunction with other Black groups towards realisation of the Black man's problems.
3. That the proposed organisation operates outside the system but keeps contact with the well-oriented Blacks inside the system.
4. That the proposed organisation devotes itself to representing African opinion on a political basis and to promote community development programmes on education, economical and cultural aspects.

To us this sounds a welcome idea but one must stress once more that the Blacks in general must keep a very cohesive front. It seems to us that there are many difficulties in the way of conjoint organisations embracing the Africans, the Coloured or the Indian population because of the geographical separation of the three groups within the Black world. Yet as long as whatever is set up as a struggle front does not realise the "divide et impera" tactics of the enemy, we shall run the danger of losing sight of who the actual enemy is.

We welcome the assurance by both the Indian Congress and the Conference of African organisations to work towards Black solidarity and to adopt the Black consciousness approach. We hope to see increased consultation amongst these groups and joint programming for the benefit of the Black people of South Africa. We wish both the Indian Congress and the African organisations conference success in their forthcoming conventions!

CRC AND LABOUR PARTY

THERE seems to be great confusion in the ranks of the Labour Party regarding their role in South African politics. In the last session the Labour Party went into the funniest of tantrums. They called for the abolition of the CRC, staged walkouts from the sessions and then came back to debate trivial issues in the same CRC they had recently wished to abolish. In calling for its abolishment they claimed that as elected representatives of the people, they should be in the central parliament.

There is no doubt that the policy-makers of the Labour Party have good intentions. Their aim is to show that the system cannot work and to embarrass the government as much as possible. In the process, however, they are sinking into the trap of "Coloureds only" talk. There is no need for us to prove that the system cannot work. We know it cannot work — not to our advantage anyway. The system is designed to keep the Blacks contained and SASO has long said that by continuing to operate within the system, the Labour Party is playing a dangerous game. At this day and age when, the Coloured people's future is being debated by all White political parties and even adolescent young Whites, it is dangerous to allow the Coloured people to think of themselves as a group which needs differential treatment.

The Labour Party must decide now to pull out of the CRC and to work for its consolidation outside the system and alongside other Black groups. These are the realistic politics of today. The Labour Party must work to abolish certain lingering notions amongst some Coloured people. The first one is the refusal to be seen as part of the Black world. This is often accompanied by imputations of racist tendencies to the protagonists of Black solidarity. Yet the kind of multi-racial contact these people want is a vertical one up the ladder of social stratification. They cry out for equality with Whites — which is only fine, but they inwardly reject equality with Africans which is silly, hypocritical and dangerous. Operation within the CRC has helped to entrench this kind of irrational thinking amongst some of the Coloured folk, particularly the Natal group. The "bruin-Afrikaaner" concept always goes down well with these people. The Wentworth constituency at a rate-payers meeting once tabulated beautiful demands from the government. Unfortunately in the same document was a demand that a "Bantu compound" in the area be removed. This is the kind of nonsense which comes about as result of the ambiguous policies of the Labour Party, which talks non-racial politics but is enhancing a kind of superiority complex amongst Coloured people that makes them forget their African blood and think more about their White origin.

The Labour Party therefore must be realistic. It must have a clearcut direction and the only one we see is to work towards a closer identity with the rest of the Black world. They must reject the CRC as the paper tiger it is, a toy created by the system to keep the Coloured community amused while the rest of the White society goes about its plans for the most perfect subjugation schemes.

INDIAN CONGRESS

MR. MEWA RAMGOBIN and his ad hoc committee have taken a decisive step to initiate the revival of the Natal Indian Congress. Whether the step is in the right direction or not one can only wait until convention which is due to be held on the 2nd October, at the Phoenix Settlement. The mass meeting at the Bolton Hall held early in July gave the ad hoc committee the go ahead to revive Congress.

But the attitude of the 400 or more people at the Bolton Hall was not only geared towards the revival but went further to impress upon the ad hoc committee that they wanted a people's congress. The people were quick to see the danger of sectional politics. A group of young people were determined to show their attitude to the revival of congress.

They placarded the mass meeting with slogans that read, "Black Solidarity? Yes!" "Sectional Politics? No!", "Black Unity Now", "Think Black NOT Indian" and "We want a people's Congress". The placards which were paraded inside and outside the Bolton Hall, set the tone for the mass meeting. As the young people marched around the hall the people applauded spontaneously to show their support.

When discussion was thrown open to the floor the first person to speak called immediately for a people's congress and he was given tremendous support. And it was on this understanding that the ad hoc committee was given its mandate to revive the congress.

The ad hoc committee would do well to remember the meeting at the Bolton Hall. The mandate was given on an unquestioned understanding that the congress would work towards a People's Congress. At present there are a number of branches that have joined the march towards a revived Congress. We hope that the ad hoc committee is at all times reminding these new branches of the feeling of the people at the mandatory meeting.

Convention is not faraway and the stage is set for the new Congress. We hope that convention will not make the mistake of succumbing to the evil of sectional politics, as Congress will be in a position to strengthen the ties between the African, Coloured and the Indian people because of its past history. Opting to work within the system will merely alienate the various groups and restrict the workings of the Indian Congress to gaining little 'privileges' for the Indian community only.

Convention must remember that we cannot afford to fight for just the Indian Community, that our struggle is intricately interwoven with the broad mass of the Black People of South Africa and that the success of the various puppets

organisations created by the White power structure is no success but the gaining of little privileges in the "Black spots" of South Africa.

Convention must work towards the consolidation of the Indian people and then relating their struggle with the other Black groups in South Africa. The new congress must work outside the system; it must keep contact with the other Black groups that work outside the system; it must work towards the creation of a people who are self reliant and proud of their culture, heritage and their colour, and are at all times aware of who the real enemy is.

PRESS STATEMENT ON BANNING

WE of the South African Student's Organisation condemn in the strongest terms the totalitarian actions of the South African government and its White people as manifested in the banning orders, house arrests, detentions without trial and the general flouting of the rule of law. We interpret these actions as being a direct assault on the freedom of the individual to voice his legitimate protest against what he feels is wrong. Indeed, we are being persuaded to believe that the South African system is bordering dangerously on being a Police State.

It is in this light that we view the imposition of a banning and house arrest order on Mr. Mewa Ramgobin, the courageous Black leader, who is the driving force behind the revival of the Natal Indian Congress. It is quite clear to us that this action is a deliberate manoeuvre by the government and its people to undermine the work of the Natal Indian Congress Ad Hoc Committee of which Mr. Ramgobin is the Chairman. It is also a deliberate manoeuvre to further intimidate the Black community and to force us to relate to the phoney System-created platforms which SASO and Mr. Ramgobin reject unequivocally.

We know that the NIC Ad Hoc Committee and the entire Indian Community will continue working with renewed vigour, determination and selflessness towards the creation of the NIC — the only legitimate voice of the people. We also know that the rest of the Black community will close ranks behind Mr. Ramgobin and that more leaders of his stature will emerge.

SASO calls upon all its branches and centres to hold protest meetings to demonstrate solidarity with Mr. Ramgobin and to show the White fascist government that the struggle of the Black people cannot be nullified at the stroke of a pen.

We wish to remind the White people and their government that intimidation of a community has never succeeded before, instead it merely increases tensions and frustrations and will culminate in an uncontrollable situation. These irresponsible and violent actions by the unrepresentative government can only succeed in provoking untold retaliation from the Black people.

THE SASO OFFICE

THE SASO Head Office, will move from its present premises, at the Alan Taylor Residence, Wentworth. The offices will be now housed at 86 Beatrice Street, Durban. By the 1st October head office hopes to be well settled in its new premises.

After our decision to move into central Durban, SASO received a letter from the University of Natal authorities, asking SASO National to quit the premises by July 30th. This of course, was impossible as at that time SASO had not acquired any offices in town.

In any case SASO National felt it an affront on the part of the authorities to write directly to SASO, as we were occupying the UNB S.R.C. offices at the invitation of the S.R.C. We felt it would have been good manners, on the part of the authorities to write to the S.R.C. and ask them to give SASO National orders to quit. In a meeting between the principal of the University of Natal, Professor Stock, and Secretary-General, of SASO, Mr. Barney Pityana, Barney intimated this to the principal who gave some vague reasons for approaching SASO directly. It was at this meeting that the principal conceded and said that he would allow SASO to remain in its office until the 30th November. The Secretary General then made it quite clear that SASO would only quit the premises "when and if SASO found alternate accommodation". This meant that SASO would not have left the offices at Alan Taylor Residence if we had not been lucky enough to obtain ideal premises in Durban.

SASO is sure that it will operate more smoothly now that we are in town, and would like to thank the Students' Representative Council and the Students themselves of UNB for all the help and support they gave us while we were on the campus.

BLACK THEOLOGY

a re-assessment of the Christ

By Vic Mafungo

WHEN I THINK of Black Theology, I consider it in the following pattern:

1. The Black man, Religion and Politics;
2. The Philosophy of Black Theology;
3. The Practical application of this Theology in our situation.

1. THE BLACK MAN AND RELIGION

I feel it incumbent upon me to draw your attention to the place of religion in the life of the Black man. That this has relevance will become apparent as we proceed with this section.

The Black man is essentially religious in his outlook towards life. First, let us consider very briefly the African. Throughout his history the African has practised religious rites. His whole life has always been guided by his religious beliefs. Whether these beliefs were based on an "absolute" truth or not is largely an academic affair. The point to understand here is that the African (and indeed all other peoples) always believed in a deity to whom he had some responsibility . . . and to believe in a deity implies having some type of religion. This is evidenced in their daily lives: in health and in illness. The concept of a transcendental existence is not (and never was) foreign to him. The best-known evidence for this assertion is the "ancestor-worship" so prevalent in African communities. This can be equated to the concept of "saints" of western religion (not that the analogy is in any way meant to elevate or defend Black religion).

Now to cast a quick glance in the direction of Indian theology. Here again we find individuals who have internalized the concept of a deity and the religious principles associated therewith. They, in fact, have mastered themselves to such a great extent that they can perform incredible feats. A strong faith, indeed!

And yet, when western religion arrived on the scene, the above theologies were categorized along with other "heathen" philosophies. What western theology failed to see (or more probably ignored) was the fact that the religion of the Black man was an everyday affair, intimately integrated with the cultural patterns of the societies concerned. The religion of the Black man was the meter which guided the functioning of the community. No communal affair occurred without an offering of gifts (beer, wealth) to the ancestors, who in turn would watch over the community and intercede for that

community at the feet of the deity. Thus the religion of the Black people was never one of "holy" people only. It was not one of specific days. It was a theology of the people for the people for every day of their lives. It was a theology that believed in and ensured the practise of fair play amongst all concerned. There was consequently no scope for hypocrisy or treachery. It was a religion which encouraged respect for the next man and loyalty, particularly to those of your own kind.

We note also that, in addition to the transcendental, Black religion had an eschatological dimension as well. The example? Ancestor worship again. The Black religion was not ignorant of the concept and spiritual implications of death. The Black man did not have to be persuaded into believing in an after-life and the ideas of salvation. He believed in a God which was all-loving and all-caring. And he believed in the ability of his ancestors to either intercede for him or to plead for pardon on his behalf if he performed some shameful deed. This implies, of course, that his God could be pleased as well as angered.

He believed in rewards from his God via his ancestors and in punishment via same. It does not, however, imply that he believed in eternal damnation for "irreparable" moral damages. To them (the Black people) a God as harsh as to condemn a man to perpetual "weeping and gnashing of teeth" just did not exist. They knew that godly punishment could be severe. But it was inconceivable that their God could ever make such punishment everlasting. Their God was a good God.

The belief in a God of evil and evil spirits had nothing to do with permanent damnation. After all, how could a good God send anyone to a god of evil? It just did not make sense. The god of evil was necessary to explain the evils which presented themselves as a constant threat to the essentially good nature of man. Since the Black man believed in the essential goodness of his nature as man, he strove to protect this quality, even if he had to be harsh to do so.

He knew that the goodness of his nature bestowed on his humanity a specific dignity, interference with which was almost sacrilegious, for this dignity proceeded ultimately from God. Thus when a man was stripped of his God given dignity, he was almost on par with the beasts of the forests. Only his reasoning capacities then saved him from complete identification

with the latter. Such would be the fate of a hypocrite, tried and sentenced by a public tribunal.

Forgiveness was also not foreign to the Black man. One merely has to go through the numerous proverbs of the Black man to realize that he is by his very cultural training a forgiving being. He realized the importance of fair play in his community if such a community was to thrive at all.

Then came the "Christian" missionaries. The Black man suddenly found himself in an inextricable situation where, on the one hand, he was threatened by agents of a "powerful deity" who would brook no nonsense from any body. You either believed in him or you were doomed . . . he would see to that! That such a God existed was beyond the wildest dreams of even the most imaginative Black man. How could anyone be the essence of goodness itself and yet be capable of such cruelty? Don't ask questions. It is not good to question the ways of this "new god" (the "true" god). Furthermore, don't try to understand him, least you commit a heresy. A heresy? What's a heresy? Never mind that. Just do as you're told! But I've been a good tribesman all my life! Sure, but that was to a pagan god . . . a god whom you must abandon; who, in any case, does not exist. We've got all the answers and we're going to ram them down your throat and into your soul with a Bible and Hell! What's a Bible? it's a book with all the answers (and you'd do well to ignore all the contradictions it contains!). O.K. . . . and what's hell? That's where the good God sends you if you don't behave and continue to ask too many questions . . . !

And the Black man was first framed, then blackmailed! And whilst he was still confused they stole the land right from under his feet. The missionaries certainly were thorough in their job. Full marks to them!

The classical and most severe blow that the Black man sustained as a result was his loss of self-respect, self-confidence, and respect for his culture to such an extent that he began to despise himself and his culture. He became ashamed of himself for ever having been a "pagan". He watched his sublime culture get trodden into the dirt by the armies of the stronger god. Little did he realize that that "stronger god" was an economic situation thousands of miles across the seas to the north. Little did he realize that by succumbing to this "new" religion he was in fact welcoming subjugation of all types: economic, political, religious and social. And, for the first time, he was introduced to the concept of slavery.

SUBSEQUENT RELIGIOUS TRENDS

The basic theme of western religion had found root in the fertile, unsuspecting Black minds. Colonialist knew its value as a tool. Thus "Operation Conversion" proceeded to a higher phase: the training, or rather, programming of Black religious instructors, to carry out their "mission work" under the supervision of White ministers. This Black ministry was eventually to have devastating effects on the minds of Blacks:

1. It dispelled any doubts in Black minds about the motives of colonists.

2. It led to positive rejection of Black customs and culture in general.
3. It led to Blacks acquiring greater faith in the Whiteman than was warranted and than they had in themselves and in their community.
4. It led to active acceptance of the "infallibility" and "superiority" of the European interlopers.
5. It led to complete reliance on the "White fathers" in almost all fields of human interaction, with complete acceptance of western standards and values, which were glorified beyond all reasonable proportions at the expense of Black culture.

The creation of the Black ministry was thus another nail in the coffin of the Black man and what he held dear culturally. The Black man failed to notice that he was never put in full charge of his own people. He was probably only too glad to have the White man dictate the needs and aspirations of Blacks to Blacks. The brain-washing had been a major victory for the imperialists. And for this the Black man paid dearly.

EMERGENCE OF BLACK POLITICS

Then suddenly, the Black man began to ask awkward questions: Am I truly less human than the White man? Is my culture indeed intrinsically evil and inferior? Am I indeed predestined to remain the subject of the White man? Am I really meant to have no say in the Government of my life, my country? These and similar questions had been delved into by many of the great Black leaders long before this. Such men (whom we have been taught to despise!) had gone to war with the White man in an attempt to preserve their human dignity. That, however, was before western religion had found an uncompromising foothold in the Black minds. When the Black man next asked these questions, all types of legislation were produced to keep him in check. Meanwhile the Church made sporadic half-hearted protests in favour of the Blacks. The Church might have appeared good at the time but it became increasingly clear that those were disguised tactics designed to keep the Blacks subdued and oppressed. The Church has been most successful in this role all the time.

Need one then wonder that the Black began to question the authenticity of the Church? Why remain loyal to a philosophy designed to keep you under? How much truth was there in this religion? It was indeed disturbing that this religion seemed to cater only for the needs, specially the material needs, of the White man. Something was obviously very much out of order here. There were two possibilities:

1. This religion was never meant for the Black man.
2. Assuming it had some degree of authenticity, then some aspects of it, vital to the well-being and development of the Black man, had deliberately been left out or distorted, to make the whole beneficial to the White man only.

Is it not therefore logical that the Black man found such a "uniplanar" religion totally

irrelevant as taught by the White man? Can you blame him if in his desperation he sought a meaningful interpretation . . . his interpretation . . . in this religion, assuming that point (2) above had a ring of truth about it?

2. THE PHILOSOPHY OF BLACK THEOLOGY BLACK IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST

If the Black man accepted (2) above, then it became necessary for him to identify with an acceptable example in the Scriptures. He was prepared to accept Christ's existence as historical fact. He discovered that Christ was a man who had a message to the oppressed. Once the oppressed could identify with Christ as one who had suffered under the yoke of Roman oppression, religion took on an entirely different light. This became in fact the prime factor in the new theology . . . Black Theology. Christ's oppression and his true relationship to his fellow-oppressed was the missing link. Christ's position makes him relevant to inhabitants of the Third World. He had a message for them and it is up to them to find and decipher it. No one will do this for them. And this is what Black Theology attempts to do.

There are two theories that we can go on:

- a. Christ was an existentialist. This is indeed a potent theory. It suggests that Christ lived at a time when politics went very much against the grain of his philosophy. He had to find a solution and present this to his people. His people were oppressed and the only solution any politically oppressed people could be interested in was that concerned with freedom. Thus the second theory:
- b. Christ came as and was a liberator. Contrary to what we have been taught to believe over the past three hundred years, Christ was very much interested in the liberation of his people, i.e. all oppressed, from political domination and slavery.

Thus Black Theology is a situational theology . . . a specific theology with a specific message for a specific people (the oppressed) with specific problems. It wrestles with the problems of the oppressed as experienced by them. It takes into account the psychology of the oppressed. It seeks to eradicate their difficulties in all spheres of human interaction. Thus, action, development and responsibility are germane to this theology. It seeks to re-instate into the souls of the oppressed their God-given sense of humanity, a healthy pride, self-confidence and the ability to decide for themselves, on their own terms what they need, want and shall have by way of culture . . . this to include their religious and political aspirations. It is thus a theology of the Black peoples of our country facing the problems of political deprivation, insecurity, malnutrition, humiliation and dehumanization.

Through it the people must come to an understanding of what they are, what their experiences are, and the nature of their suffering. Through it the people must find the strength and courage to shed their chains of bondage and see themselves in a new light of humanity equal to that of any man who ever lived or will ever walk upon this earth. In it they must find the good sense to rid themselves of their own psychological oppression of themselves and reject the toxic mentality of inferiority to the White man, along with the lackey-mentality.

This can only happen when the Black man understands fully the significance of human interaction and fair play.

Black Theology, then, is the creed of the down-trodden, of the "man with his back to the wall". It is the duty of such a man to seek the relevance in the Scriptures to his own life situation. He needs to explore the images of God which are not filthy reflections of the White man's authoritarianism and greed. He needs an image which can teach him the value of unity, consideration, co-operation, justice and love for and amongst his own kind. Above all, he must explore and study the images of Christ, the Liberator, Christ the Truth, Christ the Way to Freedom.

3. SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS; TRAINING OF BLACK MINISTERS

We do not doubt that Black Theological Colleges try to give men a sensitive theological perception of life. However, far too much time is spent on such irrelevancies as the history and doctrine of the early Ecumenical Councils, Papal encyclicals, the Reformation analysis of dogmas, the Doctors of the Church (Aquinas and Augustine). This state of affairs leads to a student concentrating on passing his examinations to the exclusion of any reflection on his life situation. This is probably convenient, for an ordained man holds a fairly comfortable social standing in any community. But what's the use of this if a man fails to relate directly to his community? Let me hasten to say that if our seminary training is able to give students the basic equipment to go on to higher degrees, that's O.K. But if this is done at the expense of enabling Black students to reach a theological understanding of their socio-political situation on the basis of which they can plan a significant ministry to their parishioners, then I must agree with those who think it "irrelevant at best and positively harmful at worst."

In the selection of Blacks for the ministry the following should be considered:

1. Enthusiasm in solving the political and social problems of the Black people and an ability to see this as an essential aspect of the meaning of salvation.
2. The consideration of the Black aspirant to the ministry of himself as part of the Black community with whom he shares a longing for liberation.
3. The possession of leadership qualities (potential or already apparent) by the applicant for the Black Ministry.

THE LAY BLACK YOUTH

1. Explore the possibilities of sitting on Church Councils with a view to positively steering thought and consideration in the direction the liberation of Blacks.
2. Develop and nurture a sense of identification with your people, bearing in mind that their problems are your problems also; the aim is to form a tight bond of brotherhood with them. Once that has been established, it is easier to spread the principles of Black Theology and Black Power amongst them, who need these most. Remember, we are the custodians of a new trend in religion. Let us not be disheartened when anybody accuses us of being intellectual parvenus who "distort the truth" to suit our own political ends.

I WRITE WHAT I LIKE

by **FRANK TALK**

FEAR — an important determinant in South African politics

It would seem that the greatest waste of time in South Africa is to try and find logic in why the White government does certain things. If anything else, the constant inroads into the freedom of the Black people illustrates a complete contempt for this section of the community.

My premise has always been that Black people should not at any one stage be surprised at some of the atrocities committed by the government. This to me follows logically after their initial assumption that they, being a settler minority, can have the right to be supreme masters. If they could be cruel enough to cow the natives down with brutal force and instal themselves as perpetual rulers in a foreign land, then anything else they do to the same Black people becomes logical in terms of the initial cruelty. To expect justice from them at any stage is to be naive. They almost have a duty to themselves and to their "electorate" to show that they still have the upper hand over the Black people. There is only one way of showing that upper hand — by ruthlessly breaking down the back of resistance amongst the Blacks, however petty that resistance is.

One must look at the huge security force that South Africa has in order to realise this. These men must always report something to their masters in order to justify their employment. It is not enough to report that "I have been to Pondoland and the natives are behaving well and are peaceful and content." This is not satisfactory, for the perpetrators of evil are aware of the cruelty of their system and hence do not expect the natives to be satisfied. So the security boys are sent back to Pondoland to find out who the spokesman is who claims that the people are satisfied and to beat him until he admits that he is not satisfied. At that point he is either banned or brought forward to be tried under one of the many Acts. The absolutely infantile evidence upon which the State builds up its cases in some of the trials does suggest to me that they are quite

capable of arresting a group of boys playing hide and seek and charging them with high treason.

This is the background against which one must see the many political trials that are held in this country. To them it looks as if something would be dangerously wrong if no major political trial was held for a period of one year. It looks as if someone will be accused by his superior for not doing his work. The strangest thing is that people are hauled in for almost nothing to be tried under the most vicious of Acts — like the Terrorism Act.

It is also against this background that one must view the recent banning and house arrest imposed on Mr. Mewa Ramgobin. No amount of persuasion by anyone can convince me that Ramgobin had something sinister up his sleeve. To all those who know him, Mewa was the last man to be considered a serious threat to anyone — let alone a powerful State with an army of perhaps 10,000 security men and informers. But then, as we said, logic is a strange word to these people.

Ajme Cesairé once said: "When I turn on my radio, when I hear that Negroes have been lynched in America, I say that we have been lied to: Hitler is not dead; when I turn on my radio and hear that in Africa, forced labour has been inaugurated and legislated, I say that we have certainly been lied to: Hitler is not dead".

Perhaps one need add only the following in order to make the picture complete:

"When I turn on my radio, when I hear that someone in the Pondoland forest was beaten and tortured, I say that we have been lied to: Hitler is not dead, when I turn on my radio, when I hear that someone in jail slipped off a piece of soap, fell and died I say that we have been lied to; Hitler is not dead, he is likely to be found in Pretoria."

To look for instances of cruelty directed at those who fall into disfavour with the security police is perhaps to look too far. One need not try to establish the truth of the claim that Black people in South Africa have to struggle for survival. It presents itself in ever so many facets of our lives. Township life alone makes it a miracle for anyone to live up to adulthood. There we see a situation of absolute want in which Black will kill Black to be able to survive. This is the basis of the vandalism, murder, rape and plunder that goes on while the real sources of the evil — White society — are suntanning or on exclusive beaches or relaxing in their bourgeois homes.

While those amongst Blacks who do bother to open their mouths in feeble protest against what is going on are periodically intimidated with security visits and occasional banning orders and house arrests, the rest of the Black community lives in absolute fear of the police. No average Black man can ever at any moment be absolutely sure that he is not breaking a law. There are so many laws governing the lives and behaviour of Black people that sometimes one feels that the police only need to page at random through their statute book to be able to get a law under which to charge a victim.

The philosophy behind police action in this country seems to be "harass them! harass them!" And one needs to add that they interpret the word in a very extravagant sense. Thus even young traffic policemen, people generally known for their grace, occasionally find it proper to slap adult Black people. It sometimes looks obvious here that the great plan is to keep the Black people thoroughly intimidated and to perpetuate the "super-race" image of the White man, if not intellectually, at least in terms of force. White people, working through their vanguard — the South African Police — have come to realise the truth of that golden maxim — if you cannot make a man respect you, then make him fear you.

Clearly Black people cannot respect White people, at least not in this country. There is such an obvious aura of immorality and naked cruelty in all that is done in the name of White people that no Black man, no matter how intimidated, can ever be made to respect White society. However, in spite of their obvious contempt for the values cherished by Whites and the price at which White comfort and security is purchased, Blacks seem to me to have been successfully cowed down by the type of brutality that emanates from this section of the community.

It is this fear that erodes the soul of Black people in South Africa — a fear obviously built up deliberately by the system through a myriad of civil agents, be they post office attendants, police, C.I.D. officials, army men in uniform, security police or even the occasional trigger-happy White farmer or store owner. It is a fear so basic in the considered actions of Black people as to make it impossible for them to behave like people — let alone free people. From the attitude of a servant to his employer, to that of a Black man being served by a White attendant at a shop, one sees this fear clearly

showing through. How can people be prepared to put up a resistance against their overall oppression if in their individual situations, they cannot insist on the observance of their manhood? This is a question that often occurs to overseas visitors who are perceptive enough to realise that all is not well in the land of sunshine and milk.

Yet this is a dangerous type of fear, for it only goes skin deep. It hides underneath it an immeasurable rage that often threatens to erupt. Beneath it, lies naked hatred for a group that deserves absolutely no respect. Unlike in the rest of the French or Spanish former colonies where chances of assimilation made it not impossible for Blacks to aspire towards being White, in South Africa whiteness has always been associated with police brutality and intimidation, early morning pass raids, general harassment in and out of townships and hence no Black really aspires to being White. The claim by Whites of monopoly on comfort and security has always been so exclusive that Blacks see Whites as the major obstacle in their progress towards peace, prosperity and a sane society. Through its association with all these negative aspects, whiteness has thus been soiled beyond recognition. At best therefore Blacks see whiteness as a concept that warrants being despised, hated, destroyed and replaced by an aspiration with more human content in it. At worst Blacks envy White society for the comfort it has usurped and at the centre of this envy is the wish — nay, the secret determination — in the innermost minds of most Blacks who think like this, to kick Whites off those comfortable garden chairs that one sees as he rides in a bus, out of town, and to claim them for themselves. Day by day, one gets more convinced that Aimé Césaire could not have been right when he said "no race possesses the monopoly on truth, intelligence, force and there is room for all of us at the rendezvous of victory."

It may, perhaps, surprise some people that I should talk of Whites in a collective sense when in fact it is a particular section i.e. the government — that carries out this unwarranted vendetta against Blacks.

There are those Whites who, will completely disclaim responsibility for the country's inhumanity to the Black man. These are the people who are governed by logic for 4½ years but by fear at election time. The Nationalist party has perhaps many more English votes than one imagines. All Whites collectively recognise in it a strong bastion against the highly played-up "swaart gevaar". One must not underestimate the deeply imbedded fear of the Black man so prevalent in White society. Whites know only too well what exactly they have been doing to Blacks and logically find reason for the Black man to be angry. Their state of insecurity however does not outweigh their greed for power and wealth, hence they brace themselves to react against this rage rather than to dispel it with open-mindedness and fair play. This interaction between fear and reaction then sets on a vicious cycle that multiplies both the fear and the reaction. This is what makes meaningful coalitions between the Black and White totally impossible. Also this is what makes Whites act as a group and hence become culpable as a group.

In any case, even if there was a real fundamental difference in thinking amongst Whites vis-a-vis Blacks, the very fact that those disgruntled Whites remain to enjoy the fruits of the system would alone be enough to condemn them at Nuremburg. Listen to Karl Jaspers writing on the concept of metaphysical guilt:

"There exist amongst men, because they are men, a solidarity through which each shares responsibility for every injustice and every wrong committed in the world and especially for crimes that are committed in his presence or of which he cannot be ignorant. If I do not do whatever I can to prevent them, I am an accomplice in them. If I have risked my life in order to prevent the murder of other men, if I have stood silent, I feel guilty in a sense that cannot in any adequate fashion be understood juridically or politically or morally . . . That I am still alive after such things have been done weighs on me as a guilt that cannot be expiated.

Somewhere in the heart of human relations, an absolute command imposes itself: **In case of criminal attack or of living conditions that threaten physical being, accept life for all together or not at all.** (emphasis mine).

Thus if Whites in general do not like what is happening to the Black people, they have the power in them to stop it here and now. We, on the other hand, have every reason to bundle them together and blame them jointly.

One can of course say that Blacks too are to blame for allowing the situation to exist. Or to drive the point even further, one may point out that there are Black policemen and Black special branch agents. To take the last point first I must state categorically that there is no such thing as a Black policeman. Any Black man who props the system up actively has lost the right to being considered part of the Black world; he has sold his soul for thirty pieces of silver and finds that he is in fact not acceptable to the White society he sought to join. These are colourless White lackeys who live in a marginal world of unhappiness. They are extensions of the enemy into our ranks. On the other hand, the rest of the Black world is kept in check purely because of powerlessness.

Powerlessness breeds a race of beggars who smile at the enemy and swear at him in the sanctity of their toilets; who shout "Baas" willingly during the day and call the White man a dog in their buses as they go home. Once again the concept of fear is at the heart of this two-faced behaviour on the part of the conquered Blacks.

This concept of fear has now taken a different dimension. One frequently hears people say of someone who has just been arrested or banned — "there is no smoke without fire" or if the guy was outspoken — "he asked for it, I am not surprised". In a sense this is almost deifying the security Police; they cannot be wrong; if they could break the Rivonia plot, what makes them afraid of an individual to the point of banning him unless there is something — which we do not know?

This kind of logic, found to varying degrees in the Afrikaaner, the English and the Black communities, is dangerous for it completely misses the point and reinforces irrational action on the part of the security police.

The fact of the matter is that the government and its security forces are also ruled by fear, in spite of their immense power. Like anyone living in mortal fear, they occasionally resort to irrational actions in the hope that a show of strength rather than proper intelligence might scare the resisters satisfactorily. This is the basis of security operations in South Africa most of the time. If they know that there are some 3 missionaries who are dangerous to their interest but whose identity is unknown, they would rather deport about 80 missionaries and hope that the 3 are among them than use some brains and find out who the three are. This was also the basis of the arrest of about 5000 during the so-called "Poqo" raids of 1963. And of course the laws from which security police derive their power are so vague and sweeping as to allow for all this. Hence one concludes that the South African security system is **force-oriented** rather than **intelligence-oriented**. One may of course add that this type of mentality, in this country, stretches all the way from State security to the style of rugby Whites adopt. It has become their way of life.

One will therefore not be surprised if it proves very difficult to accept that "there is room for all of us at the rendezvous of victory". The tripartate system of fear — that of White fearing the Blacks, Blacks fearing Whites and the government fearing Blacks and wishing to allay the fear amongst Whites — makes it difficult to establish rapport amongst the two segments of the community. The fact of living apart adds a different dimension and perhaps a more serious one — it makes the aspirations of the two groups diametrically opposed. The White strategy so far has been to systematically break down the resistance of the Blacks to the point where the latter would accept crumbs from the White table. This we have shown we reject unequivocally; and now the stage is therefore set for a very interesting turn of events.

PRIORITIES IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT —

An appeal to the Blackman's compassion

By **BARNEY PITAYANA**, Secretary-General of SASO

This paper was read at the University of Zululand on the 24th September — The Day of Compassion. SASO commemorates this day as one where all Black people reflect on the indirect acts of violence committed against our people. Bus disasters, train disasters, flood disasters — all come under the indirect act of violence.

"THE GREATNESS of a nation consists not so much in the number of its people or the extent of its territory as in the extent and justice of its compassion."

This inscription from the famous Horse Memorial of Port Elizabeth erected "in recognition of the services of the gallant animals which perished in the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902" has a message for us, Black students today as we seek to define the meaning and significance of compassion towards community development and self-reliance. The inscription, ironically motivated by the selfless service of horses during that war which marks the turning point of our history since it set the path for the inevitable collusion between Boer and Briton with the aim of establishing White supremacy, has a message to the oppressed Black people of this race-torn South Africa of the 70's.

Compassion is a fellow feeling for the sufferings of another. The Executive resolved to commemorate this Day of Compassion in order to intensify this sense of belonging and common suffering of all Black people. The Day of Compassion seeks to make us aware of the instances of subtle violence in our affluent society. Poverty and malnutrition are the direct result of the imbalance in economic opportunities between Black and White, the haves and the have-nots, hence the mortality rate of Blacks, mainly that of infants is very high.

One also notices a definite trend lately of so called train and mine disasters, suffocation in police vans, floods and deaths and bus accidents. These things happen right under our noses and we are expected to thank God for them. The "Day of Compassion" undertakes to bring to the fore the need for students to engage themselves in community action and help in some way to alleviate the suffering, and elicit concern from Blacks at large about the sufferings of others.

Community action and development are indeed liberating concepts. The basic method for enabling community concern is by being able on the one hand to change the situation in order to help a person become aware of the inadequacy of his present responses, alternatively to enable him to act or respond differently so as to become aware of the possibility for change regardless of his situation. Thus the aim of the Black man here should be to create a just and healthy community in which he could realise and actualise his potentialities.

Perhaps the man who has established himself as an authority on community development and self-reliance is President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. He enunciates his theory of UJAMAA by holding that a sense of belonging and common brotherhood was the cornerstone of the traditional 'extended' family. Kaunda echoes him when he says "There is no doubt at all that the greatest blessing bestowed on Africa, if one can generalise, is that we have always had a gift for Man enjoying the fellowship of Man simply because he is Man." This is at the heart of our traditional culture. Acquisitiveness for the purpose of gaining power and prestige for their sake were frowned upon and regarded as greed. According to Nyerere:

"Society itself should look after him or his widow or his orphans. This is exactly what traditional African society succeeded in doing. Both the 'rich' and the 'poor' individual were completely secure in African society. Natural catastrophe brought famine, but it brought famine to everybody poor or rich. Nobody starved, either of fodo or of human dignity, because he lacked wealth; he could depend on the wealth possessed by the community of which he was a member."

These are great insights into the values and concepts of a truly African society. "... the

extent and justice of its compassion" was something taken for granted by the community. This extended family system constituted a social security scheme which has the advantage of following a natural pattern of personal relationship. The modern Black man needs to recapture this philosophy. The inroads made by the exploitative civilisation and culture must be done away with. The fast tempo of life, the qualities of the education for oppression and subservience must all be relegated to less prominent positions in our lives. The moral of the idiom 'ISANDLA SIHLAMBA ESINYE' must forever emphasise the high valuation of MAN and respect of human dignity which is a legacy of our tradition.

We have been watching awe-struck as some White people who consider themselves the guardians of 'our Bantu people' have master-minded our destiny. We know that the Black man's contribution to the immense economic development that this country boasts of and proudly takes its place as one of the 10 richest, economically stable and viable countries in the world. We know also that the Black man has reaped nothing from this wealth.

Authorities inform us that a baby is dying somewhere within every 35 minutes and the commonest causes are poverty, ignorance (of the parents) hence the disease cannot be prevented. Those who manage to live are so affected by malnutrition and kwashiorkor that they are doomed for the rest of their lives as dull cabbages with no hope of cutting a niche in society. His own contribution to the development of the country is reduced.

Hospitals, mainly in the rural areas reveal agonising statistics of the rate of deaths due to poverty and sometimes inadequate care. Protein-giving food is inadequate and expensive. It has been reliably learnt "that the endorsing out of Africans to reserve areas is exacerbating the malnutrition seen there, and undoubtedly the population increase is contributing to the problem. Moreover, surveys have repeatedly shown the importance of family stability and responsibility in causing malnutrition to occur in families in which the father is separated from the family."

Malnutrition is prevalent in the distressed areas covering practically the whole Cape Province including the greater portion of the Transkei, three-quarters of the O.F.S. and the entire North-Eastern Transvaal. The following statement shows the deliberateness of the situation:

"I am shocked at the number of cases of malnutrition, of the deficiency diseases Kwashiorkor, pellagra, scurvy (often severe) of skin infections, scabies and anthrax, of the severe ravages of simple infections such as measles and chicken pox in protein-deficient children". Most of the patients should never have been ill. Many of those treated for malnutrition returned sometimes in only a few weeks as bad or worse than before. Amidst all this abject poverty the Minister of BAD is reported to have admitted that only 6.9% of the country's budget is spent on the 15 Million Africans and still R8½ million paid salaries for White personnel. The corresponding figure spent on defence (during peacetime) is alarming, to say the least. Black people pay direct taxation on the PAYE scheme, addi-

tional and general tax and also poll tax. Don't forget that levies are paid for school, hospital, tribal authorities, etc. The Black consumer rate has also increased hence the boost to their indirect taxation.

We have experienced too many Coalbrooks, Effinghams and at one time in Soweto there have been not less than 4 train disasters in a matter of months. Blacks are huddled to remote townships and are expected to work for the White man and rush back home in the evenings. No transport system can ever be adequate to transport a whole population to any satisfaction and unfortunately it is the Blacks who must pay the price for the flaws in the "system".

For too long we have moaned to the White man for these injustices. We had taken it for granted that he held the key to our salvation. We expect him to give up power and affluence by gentle persuasion. Christian ethics and conscience had made us believe that even the White man was inherently just and moralistic. Power has no moral basis. We must now rely on our own resources to stimulate change and activate our hopes and potentialities. This message is inherent in the BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS IDEAL.

"SASO defines Black Consciousness as follows:

- (i) BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS is an attitude of mind, a way of life.
- (ii) The basic tenet of Black Consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity.
- (iii) The Black man must build up his own value systems, see himself as self-defined and not as defined by others.
- (iv) The concept of Black Consciousness implies the awareness by the Black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of Black Consciousness.
- (v) BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS will always be enhanced by the totality of involvement of the oppressed people, hence the message of Black consciousness has to be spread to reach all sections of the Black community.

Part III of the Ausha Declaration on Self-reliance also rings true in this context;

WE have been oppressed a great deal;
we have been exploited a great deal;
and we have been disregarded a great deal.
It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now we want a revolution — a revolution which brings to an end our weakness, so that we are never again exploited, oppressed or humiliated.

The message is simple BLACK MAN YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN. Like Nyerere we must minimise reliance on external aid. No one in a position of power and prosperity can offer such aid as would threaten his own security.

Aid will also compromise the meaning of Black consciousness through self-help and self-reliance. It is exactly the reliance on White support which attaches strings to it and will only bring about humiliation and self-pity and the independence to dictate terms will be lost forever.

Thus an ideal community should furnish to its human environment:

- (i) Security of life etc;
- (ii) Economic well-being through an efficient system of productivity;
- (iii) Physical well-being, health and sanitation;
- (iv) Constructive use of leisure time or recreation;
- (v) Ethical standards or system of morality supported by the organised community;
- (vi) Intellectual diffusion;
- (vii) Free avenues of expression or means by which all the elements of the community might freely express themselves.

A community is a socially homogeneous entity characterized by a group interaction stresses consensus, identification, a common way of life, shared interests and values, and joint effort. It should be viewed as a self-contained, self-sufficient, self-propelling and viable unit possessing distinguishing social, political, economic and educational characteristics which set it off from other communities. Whenever, man live together they develop in some kind and degree distinctive common characteristics. These are the signs and consequences of an effective common interaction.

Thus the way of living of the Black men in South Africa has acquired a distinctive image and posture. It stands on trial today. No longer can it remain taken for granted. No longer can it be considered secure, solid firm. Instead it is struggling for survival.

But in the process we have made a costly mistake. We have neglected social dynamics and community awareness. We have destroyed our oneness by apathy. There was a time in the Black community when co-operation and community pride were characteristic of life.

They were a part of life. It was a simple, unadulterated life — intimately human, warm and personal.

When there was a problem to be solved the people knew that unless they got busy and solved it for themselves, it would not be solved.

Instinctively they knew that if the job was to be done, they must do it together. Families and groups of families pulled and worked together to provide what they needed. And whatever they needed they created together. The principles of work, thrift, responsibility, initiative, were the natural spiritual products of a rich community life. There was a natural frame-work for the exchange of ideas and human spirit, a fertile environment for human interaction. It was a natural breeding ground for such qualities as leadership, civic integrity and statesmanship.

But as apartheid intensified the Black community began to decline and lose its moral and spiritual fibre. Vital community life is creative.

It is integrated and conscious for one another. There is a sense of belonging in an atmosphere of neighbourliness and mutuality and a spirit of unity and community solidarity. But we have somehow acquired the habit of letting someone else shape our lives for us.

Community organization is the process of dealing with individuals or groups who are or may become concerned with social welfare services for the purpose of influencing the volume of such services, improving their quality or distribution, the attainment of such objectives.

It is the art and process of discovering social and community needs and of creating, coordinating and systemizing instrumentalities through which group resources and talents may be tapped and galvanised towards the realisation and actualisation of group ideals, and the development of the potentialities of group members.

The involvement of students is not an attempt at getting the people to pay respect to the adolescent student. It is an attempt at inspiring and infusing them with those values of life as would make life worth living. The role of students would be to identify issues and pilot a way through to the creation of a dynamic, self-reliant compassionate family. We are deeply involved in the creation and building of a nation, conscious of its position and aware of its directions and loyalties.

There is no gainsaying the fact that in this scheme of things we must be aware of our starting point in terms of what is possible and what will bring about the best fruits. It must be realised that most Black universities are situated in the rural areas and around their point of operation are scores of ignorant people who employ primitive peasant methods to get sustenance from the soil.

It is significantly in such areas too that one finds oneself in the midst of abject poverty, ignorance and disease. While rejecting the findings of the Riekert Commission because I refuse to see any part of South Africa as a "homeland" that needs to be developed separately but all these areas must be seen as parts of a greater South Africa, I submit that these rural areas offer us a very tidy starting point. Black people have no capital (money) to start business or industry and they lack in most instances the technical know-how. Thus an indigenous attempt to industrialisation must be ruled out at this stage. Readily available are the commodities land, tools and human effort.

ILLITERACY: Over 55% of Africans in South Africa are illiterate. It is also clear that with some 40% of the school-age population not achieving literacy, the adult illiteracy rate will stay fairly high. Literacy for the neglected peasants and workers must aim at reducing the education and communication gap and help them become more productive and effective in their work, in their social and personal relationships, and as citizens. Such education, if it is to be effective, must be relevant and of immediate value to the learners economically, socially and personally. The UNESCO Mwanza Project has as its objectives:

- a. to teach illiterate men and women basic reading, writing and to solve simple problems of arithmetic utilising as basic vocabularies the words used in the agriculture and industrial practice;
- b. To help them to apply the new knowledge and skills to solve their basic economic, social and cultural problems;
- c. To prepare them for a more efficient participation in the development of their village, region and country;
- d. To integrate the adult literacy and adult education programmes with the general agricultural and industrial development of the country;
- e. To provide the necessary and adequate reading materials, to impart the knowledge of community and personal hygiene, nutrition, child care, home economics, which will help to improve family and community life, provide opportunity for a continuing education and avoid relapse into illiteracy.

Thus literacy training is the very basis of whatever action-oriented programme will be indulged upon.

The New Farm Project at Inanda which started as a research-cum-counselling scheme had to be altered because the students experienced crippling communication problems. Now that literacy trainers are available a full-scale vacation project is planned for December. Literacy instruments will be geared towards basic hygiene, budgeting and preventive care. Other literacy schemes are planned for DUDUDU in the South Coast and mission stations near IXOPO.

AGRICULTURE: Surely agriculture is likely to be the mainstay of our rural populations. Students must equip themselves with the basic elements of economic and productive agricultural principles. Areas like Natal with rich soil and adequate rainfall could make a living out of the fruits of the land. They must prepare not only for home consumption but also sell at the produce market. Corporate agriculture must be stimulated and the community must share the fruits of its labours.

It is clear that such a scheme will require some skills. Students in the agricultural colleges and faculties can be much more useful in this regard. Methods of irrigation, crop rotation and cattle feeding must be the direction counselling will take. So also must people help each other or that no one man or woman should be a beggar.

In my travels I've seen a great potential for such a development. It will involve students spend their entire vacations with these people. Our Research Officer is also investigating other parts and is interesting sheep and headmen in the scheme.

WORKERS' SCHEME: In every suffering community the position of the worker has been a very interesting one. Not only the welfare of the worker must be protected but he, himself, must be increasingly stimulated to appreciate the necessity of making meaningful demands. In order to do this workers must be organised. We must never make the mistake of trying to

create a grateful and contented worker.

We have been invited to ask students to make themselves available over the coming vacation for employment in factories, mines and other industrial concerns on the Reef so that they can live and experience everyday life of a worker and then assess his role in the struggle for improving their conditions.

We have also set ourselves the task of investigating wage schemes, benefits, etc. in some of the major overseas firms with a view to strengthen our case for disengagement and also to establish some form of rapport with the workers. The importance of such liaison cannot be underestimated.

PHYSICAL PROJECTS:

These consist in:

- (1) building schools,
- (2) drawing water supply,
- (3) drainage system and all other needs where the population asks for help from the students.

Care must be taken that the people must themselves be equally involved and the project must be a co-operative venture.

Such physical schemes are promised for Fort Beaufort and Dimbaza near King Williams town.

CONCLUSION:

My analysis of priorities for community development is meant to arm you and give you a clear perspective so that you can use the standards and motivations set out, to have the drive and initiative to undertake your own projects. The university must be in community with the people it serves. As long as this university turns out graduates and not leaders, as long as the Black students are divorced from the needs and problems and sufferings of its environment, then it has lost its social content and is of no value to the people. Then this university shall be failing the Black people of South Africa miserably and will effectively invalidate the message on the Horse Memorial. We are all in various ways working towards creating a great Black nation imbued with a sense of togetherness that will propell it to greater heights. I say again, it shall be the Black people who will take charge of these affairs as dictated to him by his own goals, needs, priorities and aspirations. In this way we shall be increasing "the extent and justice of its compassion". Thus my appeal is directed at the very core of a Black man's being: compassion.

In conclusion let us remember those who endure suffering and lack privileges and opportunities because of poverty and disease. Let us remember the families of those who are suffering in the jails of oppression, those who lost their lives in 'accidents' of mines, trains and buses which are all eliminatory effects of the system. Let us then, as per the Preamble to the SASO Constitution resolve to:

"commit ourselves to the realisation of the worth of the Black man, the assertion of his human dignity and to promoting consciousness and self-reliance of the Black community."

The following is the text of an address given by Steve Biko, the 1969/70 President of SASO, to a Black Theology seminar in Maritzburg on the 28th August, 1971.

black consciousness and the quest for true humanity

IT IS PERHAPS fitting to start off by examining the real reasons which make it necessary for us to think collectively about a problem we never created. In doing so, I do not wish to appear to be unnecessarily concerning myself with the White people in this country, but I sincerely believe that in order to get to the right answer, we must ask the right questions; we have to find out what went wrong where and when; we have to find out whether our position is a deliberate creation by God or an artificial fabrication of the truth by power-hungry people whose motive is authority, security, wealth and comfort. In other words, the "Black Consciousness" approach would be irrelevant in a colourless and non-exploitative egalitarian society. It is relevant here because we believe that the anomalous situation we find ourselves in is deliberately man-made for the reasons mentioned.

There is no doubt that the colour question in South African politics was originally introduced for economic motives. The leaders of the White community had to create some kind of barrier between Blacks and Whites such that the Whites could enjoy privilege at the expense of Blacks and still feel free to give a moral explanation for the obvious exploitation that pricked even the hardest of White consciences. However, tradition has it that whenever a group of people have tasted the lovely fruits of wealth, security and prestige they begin to find it more comfortable to believe in the obvious lie and to accept it as in fact quite normal that they alone are entitled to privilege. In order to believe this seriously, they need to convince themselves of all the arguments that support the lie. It is, therefore, not surprising that in South Africa, after generations of exploitation, White people on the whole have come to believe in the inferiority of the Black man, so much so that while originally the race problem was an off-shoot of the economic greed exhibited by White people, it has now become a serious problem on its own. White people now despise Black people, not because they need to reinforce their attitude and therefore justify their position of privilege but simply because they actually believe that Black is inferior and bad. This is

the basis upon which Whites are working in this country. This is what cuts out South Africa to be a racist society.

The racism we meet is not only on an individual basis; it is also institutionalised to make it look like the South African way of life. Although of late there is a feeble attempt to gloss over the overt racist elements in the system, it is still true that the system derives its nourishment from the existence of anti-Black attitudes in the society. To make the lie live even longer, Blacks have to be denied any chance of accidentally proving their equality to the White man.

It is for this reason that there is job reservation, lack of training in skilled work, and a tight orbit around professional possibilities for Blacks. Stupidly enough, the system turns back to say that Blacks are inferior because they have no economists, no engineers, etc. even in spite of the fact that they make it impossible for Blacks to acquire these skills.

To give some kind of authenticity to their lie and to show the righteousness of their claim, Whites have further worked out detailed schemes to 'solve' the racial situation in this country. Thus, a pseudo-parliament has been created for 'Coloureds' and several 'independent Bantu states' are in the process of being set up. So independent and 'lucky' are they that they do not have to spend a cent on their defence because they have nothing to fear from White South Africa who will always come to their assistance in times of need. One can of course see the arrogance of Whites and their contempt for Blacks even in their well-considered modern schemes for subjugation.

The overall success of the White power structure has been managing to bind the Whites together in defence of the status quo. By skilfully playing on that imaginary bogey — "swart gevaar" — they have managed to convince even the die-hard liberals that there is something to fear in the event of the Black man assuming his rightful place at the helm of the South African ship. Thus after years of silence we are able to hear the familiar voice of Dr. Alan Paton shouting from as far away as London

— “perhaps apartheid is worth a try”. ‘At whose expense, Dr. Paton?’, asks an intelligent Black journalist. Hence Whites in general reinforce each other even though they allow some moderate disagreements on the subjugation schemes.

There is no doubt that they do not question the validity of White values. They see nothing anomalous in the fact that they alone are arguing about the future of 17 million Blacks — in a land which is the natural backyard of the Black people. All proposals for change emanating from the Black world are viewed with great indignation. Even the so-called Opposition has the cheek to tell the Coloured people that they are asking for too much. A journalist from a “liberal” newspaper like the “Sunday Times” describes a Black student — who is only saying the truth — as a militant, impatient young man.

It is not enough for Whites to be on the offensive. So immersed are they in prejudice that they do not believe that Blacks can formulate their thoughts without White guidance and trusteeship. Thus, even those Whites who see a lot wrong with the system make it their business to control the response of the Blacks to the provocation. No one is suggesting that it is not the business of Whites of liberal opinion to oppose what is wrong. However, to us it appears as too much of a coincidence that liberals — few as they are — should not only be determining the modus operandi of those Blacks who oppose the system but also leading it, in spite of their involvement in the system.

To us it looks as if, in fact, their role spells out the totality of the White power structure — the fact that though Whites are our problem it is still other Whites who want to tell us how to deal with that problem. They do so by creating all sorts of red herrings across our path. They tell us that the situation is a class struggle rather than a race one. Let them go to van Tonder in the Free State and tell him this. We believe we know what the problem is and will stick by our findings.

I want to go a little bit deep in this discussion because I feel it is about time we killed this false political coalition between Blacks and Whites as long as it is set up on a wrong analysis of our situation. I want to kill it for another reason also — that it forms at present the greatest stumbling block to our unity. It dangles before freedom-hungry Blacks promises of a great future for which no one seems to be particularly working in these groups.

The basic problem in South Africa has been analysed by liberal Whites to be apartheid. They argue that in order to oppose it we have to form non-racial groups. Between these two extremes, they claim, there lies the land of milk and honey for which we are working. The thesis, the anti-thesis and the synthesis have been mentioned by some great philosophers as the cardinal points around which any social revolution revolves. For the liberals, the thesis is apartheid, the anti-thesis is non-racialism and the synthesis very feebly defined.

They want to tell the Blacks that the integration they see as the solution is the ideal society. Black Consciousness defines the

situation differently. The thesis is in fact a strong White racism and therefore, ipso facto, the anti-thesis to this must be a strong solidarity amongst the Blacks on whom this racism seeks to prey. Out of these two situations we can therefore hope to reach some kind of balance — a true humanity where power politics will have no place. This analysis spells out the difference between the old and new approaches more than any more words can show. The failure of the liberals is in fact that their anti-thesis is already a watered-down version of the truth whose close proximity to the thesis will nullify the purported balance.

This is the failure of the SPROCAS commissions to make any real headway, for they are already looking for an ‘alternative’ that shall be acceptable to the White man. Everybody in the commissions knows what is right but all are looking for the most decent way of dodging the responsibility of saying what is right.

It is much more important for us Blacks to see this difference than it is for Whites. We must learn to accept that no group, however benevolent, can ever hand power to the vanquished on a plate. We must accept that ‘the limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress’. As long as we go to Whitey begging cap in hand for our own emancipation, we are giving him further sanction to continue with his racist and oppressive system. We must realise that our situation is not a mistake on the part of Whites but a deliberate act and that no amount of moral lectures will persuade the White man to “correct” the situation. The system concedes nothing without demand for it, formulates its very method of operation on the basis that the ignorant will learn to know, the child will grow into an adult and therefore demands will begin to be made. It gears itself to resist demands in whatever way it sees fit. When you refuse to make these demands and choose to come to a round table to beg for your deliverance, you are in fact calling for the contempt of those who have power over you.

This is why we must reject the beggar tactics that are being forced down our throat by those who wish to appease our cruel masters. This is where the SASO message and cry becomes very relevant — “BLACK MAN, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN!”

The concept of integration, whose virtues are often extolled in White liberal circles, is full of unquestioned assumptions that embrace Whites values. It is a concept long defined by Whites and never examined by Blacks. It is based on the assumption that all is well with the system save for some degree of mismanagement at the top by irrational conservatives. Even the people who argue for integration often forget to veil it in its supposedly beautiful cloth. They tell each other that, were it not for job reservation, there would be a beautiful market to exploit.

They forget that they are talking about people. They see Blacks as extensions of brooms and additional leverages to some complicated industrial machine. This is White man’s integration — an integration based on exploitative values in a society in which the Whites have already cut out their position somewhere at the top of the pyramid. It is an integration in

which Black will compete with Black, using each other as stepping stones up a steep ladder leading them to white values. It is an integration in which the Black man will have to prove himself in terms of these values before meriting acceptance and ultimate assimilation.

It is an integration in which the poor will grow poorer and the rich richer in a country where the poor has always been Black. No one wants to be reminded that it is the indigenous people who are poor and exploited in the land of their birth. These are concepts which the Black consciousness approach wishes to eradicate from the Black man's mind before our society is driven to chaos by irresponsible people from Coca-cola and hamburger cultural backgrounds.

What is Black Consciousness? In essence this is an attitude of mind and a way of life. It is the most positive call to emanate from the Black world for a long time. Its unadulterated quintessence is the realisation by the Black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression — the blackness of their skin — and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. It is based on a self-examination which has ultimately led them to believe that by seeking to run away from themselves and to emulate the White man they are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them Black.

The philosophy of Black consciousness, therefore expresses group pride and the determination by Blacks to rise and attain the envisaged self. Freedom is the ability to define one's self, possibilities and limitations held back, not by the power of other people over you, but by your relationship to God and to natural surroundings. On his own therefore the Black man wishes to explore his surroundings and to test his possibilities, in other words to make real his freedom by whatever means he deems fit. At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by Blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

If one is free at heart, no human-made chains can bind one to servitude; but if one's mind is so effectively manipulated and controlled by the oppressor as to make the oppressed believe that he is a liability to the White man, then there will be nothing the oppressed can do to scare his powerful masters.

Hence thinking along lines of Black consciousness makes the Black man see himself as a being, entire in himself. It makes him less dependant and more free to express his manhood. At the end of it all, he cannot tolerate attempts by anybody to dwarf the significance of his manhood.

In order that Black consciousness can be used to advantage as a philosophy to apply to people in a position like ours, a number of points have to be observed. As people existing in a continuous struggle for truth, we have to examine and question old concepts, values and

systems. Having found the right answers we shall then work for consciousness amongst all people to make it possible for us to proceed towards these answers. In the process towards the answers we have to evolve our own schemes, forms and strategies to suit the need and situation, all the time keeping in mind our fundamental beliefs and values.

In all aspects of Black-White relationship both in the past and at present we see a constant tendency by Whites to depict an inferior status to what is Black. Our culture, our history and in fact all aspects of the Black man's life have been battered nearly out of shape in the great collision between the indigenous values and the Anglo-Boer culture.

The first people to come and relate to Blacks in a human way in this country were the missionaries. These people were brought to the vanguard of the colonisation movement to "civilise and educate" the savages and to introduce to them the Christian message. The religion they brought was a highly suspicious religion quite foreign to the Black indigenous people. African religion, in its essence, was not radically different from Christianity. We believed in one God. We had our own community of saints through whom we related to our God. We did not find it compatible with our way of life to worship God in isolation from the various aspects of our lives. Hence worship was not a specialised function that found expression once a week in a secluded building.

Instead, it featured in our wars, in our beer-drinking, in our dances and in our customs in general. Whenever Africans drank, they would first relate to God by giving a portion of their beer away in a token of thanks. When anything went wrong at home they would offer sacrifices to appease God and to atone for their sins. There was no hell in our religion. We believed in the inherent goodness of man — hence we took it for granted that all people on death joined the community of saints and therefore merited our respect.

It was the missionaries who confused the people with their new religion. They scared our people with stories of hell. They painted their God as a demanding God who wanted worship "or else . . .". People had to discard their clothes and their customs in order to be accepted in this new religion. Knowing how religious the African people were, the missionaries stepped up their terrorist campaign on the emotions of the people with their detailed accounts of eternal burning, the gnashing of teeth and grinding of bone. By some strange and twisted logic, they argued that theirs was a scientific religion and ours a superstition — all this in spite of the biological discrepancy which is at the base of their religion.

This cold and cruel religion was strange to the indigenous people and caused frequent strifes between the converted and the "pagans", for the former, having imbibed the false values from White society, were taught to ridicule and despise those who defended the truism of their indigenous religion. With the ultimate accept-

ance of the Western religion down went our cultural values!

While not wishing to question the basic truth at the heart of the Christian message I wish to state that there is a very strong case for a re-examination of Christianity. Christianity has proved to be a very adaptable religion which does not seek to supplement existing orders but — like any universal truth — to find application within a particular situation. More than anybody else the missionaries knew that not all they did was essential to the spread of the message.

But the basic intention went much further than merely spreading the word. Their arrogance and their monopoly on truth, beauty and moral judgment taught them to despise native customs and traditions and to seek to infuse into these societies their own new values. This then sets out the case for Black theology. While not wishing to discuss Black Theology at length, let it suffice to say it seeks to relate God and Christ once more to the Black man and to his daily problems.

It wants to describe Christ as a fighting God and not a passive God who accepts a lie to exist unchallenged. It grapples with existential problems and does not claim to be a theology of absolutes. It seeks to bring back God to the Black man and to the truth and reality of his situation. This is an important aspect of Black consciousness, for quite a large proportion of Black people in this country are Christians still swimming in the mire of confusion — the aftermath of the missionary approach. It is the duty therefore of all Black priests and ministers of religion to take upon themselves the task of saving Christianity, by adopting the Black Theology approach and thereby uniting once more the Black man to his God.

Then too a long look should be taken at the educational system given to Blacks. The same tension situation was found as early ago as the arrival of the missionaries. Children were taught, under the pretext of hygiene, good manners, etiquette and other such vague concepts, to despise their mode of upbringing at home and to question values and customs prevalent in their society. The result was the expected one — children and parents saw life differently and the former lost respect for the latter.

Now in the African society it is a cardinal sin for a child to lose respect for his parent. Yet how can one prevent the loss of respect between child and parent when the child is taught by his know-all White tutors to disregard his family teachings? How can one resist losing respect for his tradition when in school his whole cultural background is summed up in one word — barbarism?

Thus we can immediately see the logic of bringing in the missionaries to the forefront of the colonisation process. Whenever one succeeds in making a group of people accept a foreign concept in which he is an expert, he creates out of them perpetual students whose progress in that particular field can only be

evaluated by him and to whom the student shall constantly rely for guidance and promotion. In being forced to accept the Anglo-Boer culture, the Blacks have allowed themselves to be at the mercy of the White man and to have him as their eternal supervisor. Only he can tell us how good our performance is and instinctively all of us are at pains to please this powerful, know-all master. This is what Black Consciousness seeks to eradicate.

As one Black writer says, colonialism is never satisfied with having the native in its grip but, by some strange logic, it turns to his past and disfigures and distorts it. Hence, the history of the Black man in this country is the most disappointing history to read about. It is merely presented as a long lamentation of repeated defeats. The Xhosas were thieves who went to war for stolen property. The Boers never provoked the Xhosas but merely went on "punitive expeditions" to teach the thieves a lesson.

Heroes like Makana who were essentially revolutionaries are painted as superstitious trouble-makers who told the people lies about bullets turning into water. Great nation builders like Shaka are cruel tyrants who frequently attacked smaller tribes for no reason except for some sadistic purposes. Not only is there no objectivity in the history taught us but frequently there is an appalling misrepresentation of facts that is sickening even to the uninformed student.

Thus a lot of attention has to be paid to our history if we as Blacks want to aid each other in our coming into consciousness. We have to rewrite our history and produce in it the heroes that formed the core of our resistance to the White invaders. More has to be revealed and stress has to be laid on the successful nation-building attempts by people like Shaka, Moshoeshe, Hintsa. These are areas calling for intense research work to provide some desperately-needed missing link. It would be too naive of us to expect our conquerors to write unbiased histories about us anyway. We have to destroy the myth that our history starts in 1652.

Our culture must be defined in concrete terms. We must relate the past to the present and demonstrate a historical evolution of the modern Black man. There is a tendency for people to think of our culture as a static culture that was arrested in 1652 and has never developed since. The "return to the bush" concept seems to suggest that we have nothing to boast about except loins, sex and drink. We are aware that when colonisation sets in, it devours the indigenous culture and leaves behind it a bastardised culture that many thrive at the pace and rate allowed it by the dominant culture. But nevertheless we also have to realise that the basic tenets of our culture have succeeded to a great extent to withstand the process of bastardisation and that even at this moment we can still demonstrate that we enjoy Man for himself. Ours is a true Man-centred society whose sacred tradition is that of sharing.

We must reject, as we have been doing, the individualistic cold approach to life that is

the corner stone of the Anglo-Boer culture. We must seek to restore to the Black man in general the great stress we used to lay on human relationships, the high regard for people, their property and for life in general; to dwarf the triumph of technology over man and to reduce the materialistic element that is slowly creeping into our society.

These are essential features of our Black culture to which we must cling. The term Black culture above all implies the freedom by us to innovate without recourse to White values. This innovation is part of the natural development of any culture. A culture is essentially the society's composite answer to the varied problems of life. We are experiencing new problems by the day and whatever we do adds to the richness of our cultural heritage as long as it has Man as its centre. The adoption of Black Theatre and drama is one such important innovation which we need to encourage and to develop. Our love for music and rhythm must be made to assume some relevance even in this present day.

Being part of an exploitative society in which very often we are direct objects of exploitation, we need to evolve strategy to our economic situation. We are aware of the fact that the Blacks are still colonised even within the borders of South Africa. Their cheap labour has helped to make South Africa what it is today. Our money from the townships takes a one-way street to White shops and White banks and all we do in our lives is to pay to the White man.

Capitalist exploitation tendencies coupled with the overt arrogance of White racism have conspired against us. Thus now in South Africa it is very expensive to be poor. It is the poor people who stay furthest from town and therefore have to spend more money on transport to come and work for White people; it is the poor people who use uneconomic and inconvenient fuel like paraffin and coal because of refusal of the White man to instal electricity in Black areas; it is the poor people who are governed by many ill-defined restrictive laws and therefore have to spend money on fines for "technical" offences; it is the poor people who have no hospitals and are therefore exposed to the exorbitant charges from private doctors; it is the poor people who use untarred roads and therefore experience the greatest wear and tear on commodities like shoes; it is the poor people who have to pay for their children's books while those from Whites get them free. Of course it is the Black people who are poor.

Needless to say therefore we need to take another look at how best to use our economic power, little as it seems. We must seriously examine the possibilities of establishing business co-operatives whose interests shall be ploughed back into community development programmes. We should examine more closely such lines as the "buy Black" campaign once suggested

in Johannesburg and to establish our own banks for the benefit of the community. Organisational development amongst Blacks has only been low because we allowed it. Now that we are aware we are on our own, it is more than a duty for us to fulfill these needs.

The last step in Black Consciousness is to broaden the base of our operation. One of the basic tenets of Black Consciousness is totality of involvement. By this we mean that all Blacks must sit as one big unit and no fragmentation and distraction from the main stream of events must be allowed. Hence we must resist the attempts by the protagonists of "seperate development" to fragment our approach. We are oppressed not as individuals, not as Zulus, Xhosas, Vendas or Indians. We are oppressed because we are Black. We must use that very concept to unite ourselves and to respond as a cohesive group. We must cling to each other with a tenacity that must shock the perpetrators of evil.

Our preparedness to take upon ourselves the cudgels of the struggle will see us through. We must completely remove from our vocabulary the concept of fear. Truth must triumph ultimately over evil. The White man has always nourished his greed on this basic fear that manifests itself in the Black community. Special branch agents will not turn the lie into truth and one must ignore them. In a real bid for change we have to take off our coats, be prepared to lose our comfort and security, our jobs, and our positions of prestige, our families; for just as it is true that "leadership and security are basically incompatible", it may well be true that a struggle without casualties is not worth its salt. We must ultimately accept that prophetic cry by Black students "Black man, you are on your own!"

Some will charge that we are racist but let us not take heed, for these people are using exactly the values we reject. We do not have the power to subjugate anyone. We are merely responding to provocation in the most realistic way. Racism not only implies exclusion of one race by another — it always presupposes that the exclusion is for the purposes of subjugation. Blacks have had enough experience as objects of racism not to wish to reverse the tables. While it may be relevant now to talk about Black in relation to White, we must not make this our pre-occupation for it can be a negative exercise. As we proceed more towards the achievement of our goals let us talk more about ourselves and our struggle and less about Whites.

We have set out on a quest for true humanity and somewhere in the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible — a more human face