# Historical Foundations of Adult Education

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## SPECIAL ISSUE:
## "Adult Education in South Africa"

# HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION

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## Contents



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## Statement of Mission

Historical Foundations of Adult Education is a publication of National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois. Send manuscripts, correspondence and subscriptions to Sean Courtney, c/o National College of Education, 2S361 Glen Park Rd., Lombard, Illinois, 60148.

The purpose of the History Bulletin is

- To promote interest and research in the history of adult education;
- To build a network of people interested in that history;
- To create an agenda for adult education in the present based on analysis and critique of the past;
- To provide an opportunity for scholars abroad, especially those of the Third World, to communicate with their North American colleagues.

## Advisory Board

## EDITORIAL

In assembling a series of papers and reflections on adult education and its history in South Africa, our intention was to show how our field operates in the kind of political context which seems remarkably absent from the American continent. We have become accustomed to seeing in the history of adult education in the United States a highly spontaneous, democratic response to the people's needs whenever and wherever they arise. The telling of our own history is singularly free of struggle, compromise, treachery and intrigue. Apart from the inaccuracy of it all, what does it say about the force for change and progress in a young country that adult education seems so absent from all of the major adventures and struggles, from all of the major causes and political mass movements which have made America what it is today? And yet not so long ago our leaders held up adult education as the (only?) means of solving the great problems of inequality, turning back the tide of communism and tackling the problem of totalitarianism worldwide.

Focusing on the role of adult education in South African society is a catalyst for reflecting on the role of adult education in our own society, and for asking the kinds of questions which have lain around for years. Is adult education a force for change or conservatism? Does the force for change lie in particular methods and techniques or are these irrelevant in the absence of political control? Can adult education lead the struggle for change or is it beholding to political and economic reform? What is our role in society?

Reading the articles prepared and assembled for this volume of the History Bulletin, one reality seems striking. The kind of adult education which we in the United States are accustomed to discussing and practicing, *e.g.*, the whys and wherefores of andragogy, the how-tos of needs assessment, the intricacies of program development, seem dreadfully irrelevant in the South African context. In the main, apart from occasional forays into literacy, they affect Whites only. Thus for approximately three-fourths of the population of this glorious, sun-drenched and hell-driven paradise the dialogue and the very language which is adult eduction here means practically nothing there. How extraordinary. And how stark a reminder that we all live within a world which is not of our own making, a world which constrains our choices, words, and theories in a million subtle ways, ways of which we are mostly unaware. Perhaps that is what Gramsci meant by cultural hegemony.

For the White race in South Africa, adult education is pretty much what we are familiar with in this country. For the Black or African race, it is either nothing or something called People's Education, clearly an ideal expression of a revolutionary consciousness, taking in everything from content to student discipline, from curriculum to the politics of school administration.

II

The Republic of South Africa, as it is known officially, is approximately one-sixth the size of the United States, with about 31 million inhabitants, of whom three-quarters are Black or African. Apart from gold and diamonds, South Africa is responsible for giving the world one of the most odious words in any language: apartheid. Apartheid is both a philosophy and set of legislative acts which were enacted mostly after 1948. Yet for many Afrikaners the significance of apartheid goes back to the very origins of the country, around the time Dutch – later Afrikaner – settlers arrived. Thus, apartheid is an entrenched part of Afrikaner "theology" and for that very reason almost incapable of revision.

The following information on the South African educational system is based on Roger Omond's *The Apartheid Handbook* (Penguin, England, 1985). Education in South Africa is run along racial lines, with separate government departments for each of the four classified racial groups: White, African (or Black), Colored and Indian. Each homeland, of which there are ten, also has its own educational department. During the period of 1982-83, the per capita expenditure on education was as follows (in Rands): for Whites, R1,385; for Colored, R872; for Indians, R593; for Africans, R115. Thus, the expenditure on education for Whites is more than ten times that for Africans. While a government commission recently proposed a single department to oversee the education of all racial groups, this recommendation has not been accepted. "Bantu education" was first introduced in 1953 by one of the architects of Apartheid, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd (see the article by Fr. Mkatshwa).

Education is compulsory for Whites, Colored and Indians and partially compulsory for Africans. However, in reality, of the three million children of school age in 1982, about 2.5 per cent were attending compulsory schools, white and black. According to the government, the same core syllabuses are used in all schools, and university entrance is the same for all racial groups. Each year about 80 per cent of Whites and 50 per cent of Africans pass final school exams. According to some sources the poor showing of Africans can be attributed to poorly qualified teachers: in 1985, one study suggested that five per cent of African teachers were graduates. In 1984, approximately 50 per cent of Whites passed university entrance exams, while the figure for Coloreds was 15 per cent, for Indians 40 per cent, and for Africans, 12 per cent. In 1983, at the four English-speaking universities, 14 per cent of students were African, while the figure was one per cent for the five Afrikaans universities. A total of 224 whites out of 20,000 students attended "black" universities in 1983. Of the total university teaching staff at all universities, White and Black, approximately 93 per cent are White.

Figures on literacy rates and other aspects of adult education, where available, are reported in the articles which follow.

## III

A popular slogan among American activists struggling against apartheid in South Africa is "U.S.A./South Africa -- same struggle, same fight." While the United States and South Africa are different, there are disturbing similarities which make us uncomfortable. Both, for example, are racially stratified societies under European domination. However, the socialization process in America is such that its projection as a pluralistic, multi-cultural society in which all are given the opportunity to participate and to achieve is presumed to be accurate. Clearly, the mythology has not been operative for all groups, but it has provided an ideological framework for nationhood. South Africa also projects itself as multi-ethnic, however, in her case, it leads to exclusion rather than inclusion. With what, therefore, should adult educators concern themselves? Adult education in South Africa, as adult education elsewhere, may serve many interests. The task for those who would use it for change is truly challenging since the clear intent of the government is to preserve the established order.

This volume of the History Bulletin consists of articles, some commissioned for this issue, some appearing elsewhere, correspondence, and extracts from a number of documents we thought important in providing the reader with a sense of what is being said and done in South Africa that does not appear in regular newsprint. Prof. Morgan also prepared a bibliography on education in South Africa and a chronology of South African history for this issue.

The articles speak softly to the system's inequities. Criticism is muddled by politics and censorship is clearly operative. De Vries suggests that the outlook for meaningful change is not rosy given the current political realities, yet he, and we, the readers, are aware of the momentum of change efforts, both clandestine and open. French's discussion of literacy recognizes again the powerful interests of the state, which work against the learner, but at the same time notes the differences individuals have made despite the odds. Father Mkatshwa's keynote address speaks clearly the view of ANC (African National Congress) supporters and challenges the reader to examine the slogan of Soweto's rebellious youth -- "Liberation first, education later." Cynthia Kros's article points out that education for Whites has also failed since critical thinking has not been encouraged; the result is the creation of an entrenched, politically dominant class without the ability to reasonably examine arguments for change. Those of us who recall the Black Studies movement in this country will see something of our own hopes in the fervor of proponents of "People's Power." For us it is a reminder of where we once were and a challenge to re-examine and re-commit.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who agreed to share their thoughts, dreams and beliefs around this intractable subject. We would also like to thank those who wrote for this issue for your patience and understanding. We hope it has been worth the wait.

Sean Courtney, Charlotte Morgan, November 1988

# A SHORT HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: 1953-1986

*By* Peter DeVries*

This historical account will be started from 1953, not that there was no provision for adult education prior to that date, but that date is a watershed which delineates the State's attempts to gain control of the provision for educational as well as extra-educational purposes. This section will concentrate on compensatory adult education as there are few data on the other forms of education.

Education in South Africa has perennially been one of the main acts in the political arena as there has been competition for scarce resources in this case the education budget, and the low provision for black education has provided an entry point from which disadvantaged groups have highlighted this and other social issues. Education structures have thus provided people who lacked another platform to voice their dissatisfaction with an opportunity to present alternative views from the officially stated view of a situation. Legislation enacted in 1953 in respect of the education of adults was in many respects an attempt to nullify the voice of people who opposed the policies of the State and who used that platform to propagate their views.

There is perennially a struggle for the "hearts and minds" of the learner between those in power who wish to propagate a single view of their reality, systems, and policies and the opponents of these views and procedures. People attending adult education classes may not be as impressionable as school children, but they do constitute a captive audience of learners whose views might be moulded in different directions.

Consequently, this account of adult education in South Africa will have to deal with some issues prevalent in the macro-society as they are an integral part of it.

The Bantu (Blacks) Education Act of 1953 brought about changes affecting the provision of all aspects of the education of blacks, including the education of adults. It became illegal to operate a school that was not registered. Effectively, this placed the control of their non-formal education in the hands of the Department of Bantu Education as all adult classes irrespective of their size and sources of funds were subject to this ruling (Horrell, 1964). Adult institutions were required to apply for registration and were required to comply with Departmental regulations regarding inspection, times of operation, the age limit of learners and the race of instructors. The Act also provided prescriptions in terms of the residential area in which the institutions were established. Institutions for black learners established in areas reserved for white persons required the sanction of the (Racial) Group Areas Board. Furthermore, admission to education institutions was restricted to blacks employed and resident in the area, and the control was placed in the hands of whites. On the other hand, institutions in areas reserved for black persons were controlled by the school committees for blacks because the classes were generally held in their school buildings in the evenings.

As a consequence of the centralized and racialistic policy many institutions were disbanded. The night schools in Durban closed down, and in the Cape some institutions had to be handed over to the Department. A dock workers' school in Cape Town which had been staffed by white volunteers was only allowed to continue if the whites were replaced by blacks (Horrell, 1964).

However, no blacks could readily be found to travel from the residential areas for blacks to the docks, nor were there adequate funds; consequently, the white volunteers were forced to terminate their operations in 1961. Eight schools in Pretoria closed because of the problem of transporting the learners to the designated areas to attend classes. It was impractical for many learners, especially live-in domestic workers, to attend classes in townships for blacks. Consequently, the Johannesburg Committee for Non-European (blacks) Continuation Classes had to close schools and was left with 10 classes operating in the industrial areas. Many institutions did not survive; but those that did were granted Group Areas permits and official registration in 1958.

The education in areas for blacks was subsidized by the State to a limited degree but there was no aid for institutions in areas for whites: these had to be supported by outside sources. The state subsidy was in fact cut from R46, 000 in 1958-9, and R20, 000 in 1961-2, to R2, 000 in 1962-3 as it was policy to make classes self-supporting (Behr et al, 1966). Moreover, the declared intention was to make adult education the responsibility of the black people themselves.

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There were also major problems with the teaching: reading matter suitable for adult illiterates was lacking and the curricula used were designed for children but were adhered to slavishly by the instructors.

The basic reasons for the State's imposing its structures on adult education for blacks were threefold: the State wished its views on racial separation to be implemented throughout society; it also wished to quash all opposition to its ideology and to eliminate learning centres as potential breeding grounds for dissent; and, relevant to both of these, it needed to impose control over the centres to ensure that its dictates were complied with. Consequently, those organizations which were prepared to operate within these structures were the only ones that flourished and received support. The South African Institute of Race Relations at this time had night schools operating with the approval of the State and in conjunction with employers, such as the mining houses. The Bureau of Literacy and Literature and Operation Upgrade have operated within the constraints set out above and have achieved a large measure of success (Bird, 1984). They were acceptable to the largely conservative industrial and commercial companies and received company support.

The legislation had a profound effect on the provision of adult education by groups hostile to the State's policies. Many volunteers withdrew their assistance as they did not wish to be party to the system and because they had fewer opportunities to heighten the learners' awareness of political issues in those circumstances. There were attempts to relate language to broader political issues initiated from the Black consciousness movements, but these were short-lived as the State re-asserted its control by banning the providers (Bird, 1984).

The State has established alternative centralized structures to attempt to meet the need for adult education. In 1976 the Bantu Employees' In-Service Training Act was passed to encourage the formation of training establishments at the place of work by offering substantial tax incentives to employers who provided the training.

This has had a limited beneficial effect on adult education even though companies have instituted training programs to improve the productivity of their workers. However, the State does not give tax concessions for literacy classes other than those that are directly relevant to the training. This could be viewed as another form of control over the content of the subject matter taught. (This control is also manifest in the State's banning of a number of editions of "Learn and Teach," a monthly basic education journal as articles that have promoted reading have been written from a worker viewpoint). Organizations offering courses have found increasingly that a certain amount of literacy training is a prerequisite for training in other fields. Consequently, some companies have instituted literacy training at their own costs.

There has been some movement by the State to expand adult education but there has been little change in its fundamental belief in apartheid, and in its wish to maintain control over the provision. Recently, there has been an attempt to raise the age limit for attendance at adult classes from 16 to 18 years of age to prevent radical students expelled from regular day-schools from using these as a platform for their activities; however, after requests from representatives of black communities, the government of the day has reversed this decision. There are still restrictions on learner attendance at classes based on employment and residence; yet the enforcement of such rules is very difficult to monitor and it is doubtful whether they are adhered to strictly.

A commission was appointed by the State President following the 1976 riots among black school pupils about the quality of their education. The Commission's report concentrated on formal schooling though it did make some *en passant* statements on non-formal education which are also applicable to adult education. It gave prominence to the establishment of a positive relationship between formal, informal and non-formal education by the public and private sectors (Human Sciences Research Council, 1981). It also saw as its top priority the establishment of an infrastructure for the provision of non-formal education.

The government responded to the report in the White Paper of November 1983. Its response was explicitly linked to its new apartheid constitutional structure, in terms of which education is divided into "own" and general affairs. All educational matters that related solely to a specific racial group were classified as "own affairs" of the population group concerned, but aspects of education which affected all groups, such as financial norms and standards, salaries and conditions of employment of staff, were treated as "general affairs" under a new fifth Ministry of Education. The structure for the provision of non-formal education was placed within the framework of "own affairs" and thus fragmented, and, in the case of whites, a primary role was given to the technical colleges as providers.

No reference was made in the White Paper to the problem of illiteracy in South Africa.

In 1984 the National Policy for General Education Affairs Act was passed to give statutory effect to the State's intentions regarding general educational affairs in the White Paper. The Act empowered the Minister of General Education Affairs to decide on policy in non-formal and adult education.

A co-ordinating body, the South African Council for Education (SACE), may advise the Minister on non-formal education and may constitute committees and sub-committees to assist it in its functions.

In addition, the Report on Informal and Non-Formal Education in South Africa (1984) by the Science Committee of the President's Council recommended that a single statutory body be created to plan and co-ordinate non-formal adult education at a national level. This Report indicated that there is a consensus among education experts on the "urgent need for government involvement in planning the provision of non-formal education and in support to and co-ordination of all efforts, but that the implementation should not be administered by central government" as bureaucratic administration would be harmful to its flexibility.

A Work Committee of the Human Sciences Research Council, with the title Non-Formal Education, was established in 1983 to research the area of non-formal education. The Work Committee established its research priorities as follows:

The investigation of the importance of non-formal education as part of a national development strategy;

The design of liaison mechanisms between formal and non-formal education;

Research regarding financing models for non-formal education;

The training of trainers and the possibility of a national register for different categories of training personnel;

The three main priorities of the Working Committee are concerned with financing, training and curricula. Whether it will be able to produce findings that are innovative enough to resolve the logjam in adult education, especially for blacks, is a moot point. If it recommends a structure radically different from that recommended by the de Lange Commission, the Working Committee's recommendations like those of the de Lange Commission are likely to be watered down to comply with exigencies of the apartheid policies of the government of the day. This will render them as ineffectual as the de Lange Commission's findings which have not led to much substantive change in the education provision for blacks. On the other hand, if the Working Group's findings are an endorsement of the apartheid structures for education, they will merely perpetuate the current dispensation and embellish it to some degree. There can be no equal education in an unequal society. The problems are more deep seated than those encompassed in the Working Committee's brief. Consequently, the chances of their achieving real change in adult education are not great.

In addition, The Urban Foundation, an organisation sponsored by the private sector, undertook a study of non-formal education in South Africa in 1981. The main thrust of the Report was on the extent to which non-formal education could be an instrument for achieving the goals of the private sector (Swanson, undated). These goals were for a better educated and trained work force so that productivity, and thus profits, could be increased. The benefits to the persons receiving the education accrue from their complying with the dictates of private enterprise. In this respect, the Report provides some useful data on the need for adult education.

The Department of Manpower also undertook an investigation into in-service training in 1980/81. The report lists the practices, personnel procedures obtaining in training and shows major problems with the provision which have been mentioned above.

Research and development work, mainly in the field of literacy, is being carried out at most of the universities. These are relatively new developments and the findings are beginning to be made known.

The above investigations were being conducted by State or private enterprise sponsored or appointed organisations that were interested in maintaining the status quo regarding power structures. And when they proposed solutions that deviated from the status quo, the sponsoring body (the State) applied the "necessary" correction to bring the proposals in line with its dominant ideology. About the Urban Foundation study, Swanson (undated:17) points out that it was not stated to what degree the investigations were expected "to transcend or to reinforce the vertical and horizontal partitioning of society in the RSA." The investigations were in essence about blacks and their education system as this has been considered to be inadequate to meet the needs of the country for economic growth. However, the black people for whom the arrangements were being made were not consulted.

Their consultation is indeed a problem as the government does not recognize certain banned political groups like the African National Congress (ANC) as the voice of the black people although there are indications that many black people do recognize them as such.

The government-appointed black representatives are increasingly being regarded by black people as unacceptable to them as their representatives. In this impasse to plan the provision of adult education for the country is an exercise in futility. It is highly unlikely that the plans will be regarded by blacks as meeting the needs of the black people as they were not consulted and did not have a significant role in formulating them. Blacks in the latter part of 1985 and in 1986 have begun to organize themselves independently. They have formed a body: the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) which is currently examining the education system for blacks (adult education as well). This body which appears to have nation-wide support among blacks but little official legitimacy, has yet to report on its findings.

The extension of adult education has been limited by political factors. The perceived need by the State to maintain control over the provision and to impose ideological constraints on it has impeded its growth.

The prospects for meaningful change in the provision of adult education are not rosy. The government of the day did not accept the de Lange Commission's recommendations for a unitary system of schooling in the country, but instead maintained its apartheid policy in education. These policies pervade the fabric of South African society and are not likely to be changed for the sake of adult education.

Yet, in the likelihood of there being change, the practice of discrimination in appointments to jobs on the shop floor and in general in society will be maintained as that is how the society operates, and will continue to operate while blacks lack the power to change their roles. Adult education should not be considered in isolation; it is an integral aspect of its society; it is molded by its society; it is constrained by its society; little can be achieved with adult education without changing the society that moulds and constrains it.

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# ADULT LITERACY WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA: A HISTORY TO BE MADE

*by* Edward French*

Unless a history of literacy work in South Africa went into minute detail it would be decidedly thin. Adult literacy is vaguely acknowledged by educated people here to be an important matter, and adult literacy work is thought to be worthy, but on the whole industrialists, educationists and political activists alike would prefer to get on with more exciting tasks. In short, adult literacy has a certain ambiguous glamour and virtually no status among social and educational priorities. In this paper I offer an outline of what has been done in the promotion of adult literacy in South Africa, look critically at the present situation and spell out some of the constraints on development. Many of the problems faced in adult literacy here, social, economic, and cultural, are experienced elsewhere. My focus will be on the impact of political factors.

## MORE THAN READING AND WRITING

It is important to note at the outset that the definition of literacy, as in other complex multilingual communities, is fluid in South Africa. Apart from sharing in the world-wide polemic about the content, objec-

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tives and value of literacy programmes, linguistic diversity and the proximity and interaction of rural and industrial worlds affect the definition.

The country has two official languages, Afrikaans and English, and nine other indigenous languages. The great majority of illiterate adults have one of the latter as their first language. All of these languages have been established as written languages, with regular, reasonably "phonetic" spelling; this, together with the open syllabic character of the languages, offers advantages for literacy learning. However, there are limitations to vernacular literacy. The range of reading matter in any of the languages and their scope for wider communication are restricted. In the urban areas various language mixes are in common use, so that it would seem that the classical "deep" Zulu, for example, which is taught in schools and written in books, is remote from the language spoken by many Zulus. Illiterate adults are often aware of the limitations of literacy in their own language and sometimes aspire more ardently to literacy in English. This does not mean that literacy in the mother tongue is not valued. In a country in which families are very often separated by the institution of migrant labour, correspondence is a major objective of the literacy learner, a recurring theme being the desire for privacy and control over personal information. City dwellers with little formal education know that English may enhance their life chances, giving them some possibility of access to information, better jobs or any work at all and, perhaps more than anything, to the status of the educated. The issue of work is complicated by the commonness of Afrikaans in the workplace. The variety of contexts of literacy, which may be found together in the needs of the adults in a single class, is touched on later.

Literacy work is thus seldom merely the teaching of reading and writing skills, but is likely to include second, and possibly third, language instruction, either as a supplement to mother-tongue literacy, or as the site of literacy acquisition itself the latter a practice which is only justified by the personal commitments and needs of the learners. In official schemes the literacy programme is sometimes treated as the initiation into a formal school curriculum adapted for adults. As numeracy and other aspects of everyday knowledge or political awareness may be included in programmes, one is tempted to renounce the word "literacy" on the grounds of its imprecision and speak of adult basic education (ABE). However, this is also problematic, and I prefer to keep the idea of literacy because of the rich connotations which it has acquired.

## FRUSTRATED POSSIBILITIES

Although literacy arrived in South Africa with the establishment of the Dutch refreshment station at the Cape in 1652, it was introduced to many of the peoples of the sub-continent by the missionary movements of the nineteenth century, the extension of white colonization and the industrial revolution centering on the discovery of diamonds and gold. By the end of the century most of the indigenous languages had been encoded and vernacular Bibles and other religious texts had been published in them. Teaching methods and primers were developed, but there appear to have been no early efforts directed expressly at teaching adults literacy. The story of the introduction of literacy to South Africa has not, however, been investigated in any coherent fashion, and remains a matter of conjecture.

The standard histories of education in South Africa make virtually no reference to adult education. Bird[1] has made a start to a history of adult education with her chapter on the growth and decline of adult night schools on the Witwaatersrand the industrial heartland of South Africa from the 1920s to the 1950s. She reveals a tale of repression by legislation and neglect.

The industrialisation of South Africa accelerated rapidly during the Second World War. At the end of the war there seems to have been some feeling on the part of the United Party government of having to cater for a new society which would accommodate returning troops and the workers of the war effort. One of the expressions of this was a commission of inquiry into adult education which set up a plan designed to foster local efforts[2]. In practical terms the commission was mainly concerned with guidelines for state subvention of independent projects.

Enabling legislation was passed, but before it could be implemented on any scale the National Party came to power in 1948 on a segregationist platform. It did not look with favour on the often liberal or radical institution of night schools; the relevant legislation was not rescinded, but the decline of night schools was achieved by attrition. For example, applications for support were neglected or delayed. At the same time the sheer burden of legislation directed at residential segregation, general control over education for blacks and state security made it discouraging, if not impossible, to conduct adult education. Independent organizations could seldom run classes without finding themselves at odds with some law or another. Even adult education

organizations with an accommodating attitude to state authority have found themselves entangled in the legal net. The state has acted for the most part with benign neglect towards voluntary projects, even those with fairly explicit radical features. The educational authorities have *de jure* powers over any education for blacks, but have tended to use this largely to prevent malpractice by commercial bodies seeking to profit from the educational aspirations of the disadvantaged.

Various factors led to a growth in the provision of literacy services in the 70s. The economic growth of the 60s increased pressure from the industrial sector regarding the need for a more skilled work force. The influence of the world-wide literacy movement was felt by educationists concerned about the rate of adult illiteracy and aware of the inadequacy of formal education provision, while the resurgence of resistance reflected in the 1973 Durban strikes, the 1976 Soweto uprising, the growth of the Black Consciousness movement and the plans of exiled liberation movements may have made a two-fold contribution to the awareness of the issue of adult literacy: on the one hand there was some growth of literacy work linked to notions of liberation, on the other hand the authorities are believed by some to have moved into literacy work to pre-empt its use by radical movements. The emphasis on political factors should not be overemphasised, however. Most people directly involved in literacy work in South Africa, including those in official projects, are moved not by extrinsic motives but by a sincere concern for the plight of the illiterate. In any case, although one may talk of an increase in concern and activity, literacy work has been so marginal that it can hardly be called a movement or be taken seriously as a force for change.

## THE LITERACY ORGANISATIONS

The first South African adult literacy organisation was initiated in 1946 under the auspices of the liberal Institute of Race Relations. It was registered as an independent organisation, The Bureau of Literacy and Literature (BLL), in 1964. In its early years the Bureau was strongly influenced by the Laubach organisation and its methods, but in the late 60s, believing the classic "Laubach method" to be inefficient, the organisation moved to the linguistics–oriented approach championed by American mission workers such as Marion Halverson, who visited the Bureau in a consultative position, and Sarah Gudshinsky. In the 70s, supported by American foundation grants, BLL grew into a large literacy organisation in South African terms, with a staff of more than 20 at times, and a separate commitment in Namibia. It published course books in the majority of Southern African languages and ran a variety of standard training courses for literacy instructors, co-ordinators and writers. Its services were used largely by local churches, mission organisations and the mines, and later in a number of official schemes.

This was to be the model for literacy work in South Africa, in which an organisation provides materials, and training in basic methods for staff, but is only peripherally concerned with running the classes themselves. Two similar organisations with divergent orientations were established:

Operation Upgrade, in 1966; a Laubach affiliate which has published materials using the original Laubach method in most of the South African languages, and which has also published cheap easy readers in many languages on health, practical skills and Christian teachings. Its work has been used on the mission field, in industry and in official education department schemes, and has been characterised by proselytising enthusiasm.

Learn and Teach, in 1972; an organisation originally sponsored by the Catholic Church, with a Freirean orientation in its recommended methods and in its political commitments, and somewhat more closely involved with its clientele, such as community organisations and trade unions; it also publishes a regular magazine in accessible English.

Apart from these there are several more recently created organisations. On the one hand there is a grouping of organisations loosely affiliated (and including Learn and Teach) which call themselves "alternative" or "learner-centred" organisations. They run their own classes and supply support for approved voluntary workers and institutions, catering for a range of needs from those of workers needing basic literacy to the newly urbanized in need of English communication skill and access information. On the other hand there are a few commercial organisations working as agencies for industrial corporations involved in ABE projects for their workers.

In the mid-70s the state became directly involved in literacy work, with the establishment of adult education sections in the education departments for blacks. The provision of formal education in South Africa is fragmented racially, and even the education for blacks falls under some eleven autonomous departments serving the homelands or "national states" and "independent republics." Eight of these departments have literacy programmes and use the services of either BLL or Operation Upgrade, although three of the eight have recently embarked on

the creation of their own materials and methods. Adult literacy classes are held in schools and are taught by school teachers for supplementary pay.

## A CRITICAL LOOK AT THE CURRENT SITUATION

The need for adult literacy work in South Africa can hardly be doubted in terms of the statistics. The adult white population has been more or less fully literate since early in the twentieth century (97% in 1980) while the literacy rates for Asians and so-called coloured adult populations have reasonably high levels of literacy (80% and 69% respectively). Even among whites the 3% means some 80 thousand people potentially in need of help, but illiteracy outside of the black community tends not to be noticed because the numbers involved are so much smaller than the number of illiterate blacks. Literacy statistics in South Africa are possibly more problematic than elsewhere. Apart from the difficulty of definition discussed above, there are good reasons to suspect under–numeration. Parts of the country are excluded from the most recent censuses and the relevant questions have changed from decade to decade. In the last published census (1980), self-reported literacy among blacks over fifteen years of age was 67%. However, using the more reliable figures for education completed, for various reasons five years of formal education has been chosen as the minimum for basic literacy, Ellis finds that 55% of the black adult population, or some 5 million people, may have been illiterate in 1980[3]. Wedepohl has argued that the number of functional illiterates could be as high as 9 million in a total adult population of about 14 million[4]. According to Ellis the rate of adult literacy among blacks increased by one percent per year between 1946 and 1970, largely due to growth in the provision of elementary formal education[5]. The increase in literacy would seem to have been sustained or may even have accelerated since then, although this is impossible to prove because of the inadequacy of the data. However, the population is growing rapidly and it is possible that the absolute number of illiterate adults is also growing.

Against this, against the increasingly technical nature of life and work, against the continuous acceleration in urbanisation and against the human need for education in a modern environment even if the education is equivocally liberating, the provision of adult literacy education is quite inadequate. A minuscule fraction of the national expenditure on education is devoted to the large sector of the population constituted by "under-educated" adults. Because of the fragmentation of the literacy effort and the poverty of records and evaluation it is impossible to know with any exactitude how far the need for literacy is being met by current provision. In a comprehensive survey of the promotion of literacy in South Africa in the early 80s, I made an optimistic estimate that less than 50,000 adults were completing literacy courses annually – approximately 23,000 in official centres, 22,000 in mining and industrial centres and 5,000 in voluntary centres.[6] This was not only less than one percent of illiterate adults, it was a mere fraction of the number of people reaching adulthood every year without any schooling or without completing sufficient schooling to be considered literate. There is very little reason to think that this situation has improved; subsequently, it may have worsened.

The short-lived boom in 1979-80 raised hopes that the private sector would, in its own interests, make a decisive contribution to literacy programmes. Since then, rising unemployment and a chronic "downturn" have gone together with political uncertainty, revolt and repression. The effect on the promotion of literacy has been noticeable. The official programmes have been hampered by low budgets in a period of high inflation and have been disrupted in certain areas by the unrest of the past year. The "mainline" literacy organisations, BLL (now called Litsa) and Operation Upgrade have each been reduced recently to running with only one member of staff, and have had to be content with distributing stocks of ageing materials. The ambitious programmes run by industrial management have either been terminated or are running with a low profile. Recommendations for the development of non-formal education suggested by an official commission of inquiry into education in the early 80s[7] have not been followed through in any concerted manner. The "alternative" organisations have maintained a certain buoyancy, but their influence as centres of awareness is perhaps greater than the scope of their educational programmes. In a study of the potential of national broadcast television in the promotion of adult literacy, I was presented with several serious problems that undermined any likelihood that the medium could be used in a fruitful way under present circumstances.[8] Apart from ambiguities about the performance of the medium itself in ABE and doubts about promoting literacy through a medium controlled by the government, a problem regarded as insuperable by authoritative consultants was the inadequacy of the base of existing adult literacy services to handle the demand which a television project might engender.

## SOME MAJOR PROBLEMS

Many of the problems facing literacy work in South Africa are experienced in other parts of the world: low priority and status among other educational objectives and needs, little national commitment, inadequate funds, thinly spread supportive services, poorly trained teachers often themselves caught in authoritarian practices especially unsuited to adult education and little worthy of the name of evaluation. In the survey mentioned above two problems were reported again and again; in urban areas the tiredness of learners who worked long days and commuted long distances, combined with the hazards of getting to classes at night, had a serious effect on progress. In rural areas programmes were affected by seasonal demands, taboos and prejudices.[9] Another problem is the prescriptive nature of major programmes, designed in the hope of compensating for the poor training of the teachers. This not only leads to a conflict with the demands of adult life, especially in rural areas, it also means that the diversity of needs which adults bring to the learning situation are seldom met. In a single class one may find a learner who is literate in Setswana and wants literacy in English, a backyard mechanic who can read simple English but who wants help in understanding automobile manuals, a learner who does not quite know why she is there and might prefer a sewing class, a learner who had the bit between her teeth and who could already have finished the class, and another who has never caught up since the second lesson, all tracing letters in a copy book[10], or being put through a session of half-baked "conscientization" telling them what they already know and don't know what to do about. Ideally, any large scale literacy effort would have to cater for considerable differences of needs in terms of urban and rural constituencies, entry levels, languages, occupations, and even of the generation gap; research currently being conducted in one deprived area shows decided differences between the perceptions of younger and older women about the nature and benefits of education.[11]

But arching over all these problems is a major issue which creates an impasse for development on anything but a small scale, and which undermines the feasibility of any attempt to shape a movement out of the fragmented efforts of the present. This is the twin issue of legitimacy and authenticity.

South African society is polarized, and literacy work has become one of the areas in which contending forces and ideologies seek to establish their legitimacy and their territorial imperatives. From a long-term view of the struggle for a democratic, non-racial South Africa, this is understandable, but there can be little doubt that the illiterate are at present being disadvantaged by the impasse.

Characteristic positions are, in a simplified form, as follows: the state and business, inasmuch as they are concerned with literacy, see literacy and related adult education either as a vague charity or as an aspect of politically neutral technical development which can play a modest part in their reformist vision of a future South Africa. The motivation for literacy is centred on notions of coping, in which the individual illiterate is seen as deprived through not being able to participate fully in the modern political economy, as consumers, beneficiaries of technology, and as subject of bureaucratic organisation. The radical opposition to this position sees it as a procedure for co-opting those who have had no choice concerning the structures which determine their fates. They see the literacy process as one which should lead to awareness and effective communal action, ostensibly in an uncoerced, unimposed manner. State and business people are puzzled by the position of the radicals, finding it difficult to see why there should be any problem about the self-evident value, for all concerned, of promoting skills in the most efficient way possible. For the opposition this is a demonstration of the blindness of the powerful to the multiple hegemonies which they exercise, and of their "technicism."

The actual differences in adult literacy classes run by the various sectors are sometimes minimal; one may find "liberating" qualities in lessons in state and industrial centres, one may find oppressive and domineering approaches being enacted in suposedly liberating programmes. Similar problems may be faced in all sectores, and in all sectors the actual achievement in terms of skills, awareness or personal growth is difficult to estimate. Without denying the importance of the arguments for certain approaches to literacy work over others, the gravest issue remains that of legitimacy: it is not so much the nature of the education being provided as who is seen to be providing it; who, as it were, claims the right to seve the interests of "the people" or "the workers." Thus the state education departments may show some willingness to listen to "alternative" ideas on literacy and even to take over elements of their terminology, but their practice is dominated by an institutional commitment to structures and control. The "alternative" organizations, seen by the establishment as ineffectual, idealistic or revolutionary, have increasingly

clarified their position in the heightened conflict of the past few years and have recently made an explicit statement of their policy of not working with, or giving recognition to, state or business structures.

The broad effect of this is that while much of the most intense commitment to literacy work is to be found on the left, the material resources are largely on the other side. There is an acceptance among the committed of the inevitable small scale of present work and a sense of doing the groundwork for the future. The increasingly powerful trade union federations would seem to provide ideal bases for literacy programmes with real grassroots support in industry. However, the unions have only been free to develop in the present decade. Their overwhelming educational concern has been with organisation, mobilisation and instruction in union issues and procedures. Only lately have they started constructing their own literacy programmes. On the other hand the focus of state educational expenditure is on the expansion of formal education; a large and growing proportion of the black population consists of youngsters of school-going age. At the same time the state is ostensibly committed to a policy of privatization, decentralization and deregulation which leads to a reluctance to create anything as centralized as a national literacy campaign. Literacy programmes in the business sector have suffered from the problems of identity experienced by capitalist enterprise which it engages directly in social responsibility programmes.

The question of authenticity is troublesome in South African literacy projects, for they have all – left, centre, official, private – been initiated and structured by whites, and many of their ideas and practices are shaped abroad. "The Freedom Charter" of 1955, which is subscribed to by the African National Congress, the United Democratic Front and other organisations which lead the extra-parliamentary opposition to the ruling regime, makes the running of a national literacy campaign into an explicit commitment of its educational and cultural policy. But this is a policy for a "liberated" South Africa. Although blacks have taken over the running of some literacy projects, there has been no groundswell of demand either from the potential clientele for literacy work or from their immediate communities. This is in part a function of the political setting, and a feature of literacy work, which may perform better with levels of mobilization not conceivable here and now. The illiterate, more than any other sector of the population, lack a voice. Moreover, they and their communities may feel that basic literacy will not make much difference to their lives; pressing material needs to which literacy can make little contribution and the adequacy of the remnants of a rich oral culture diminish the importance of literacy. Whatever the case, the need for literacy has so far been defined on their behalf by others relatively distanced from their lived reality.

## THE FUTURE?

It is difficult to see an end to the impasse in literacy work. A powerful state, while unwilling to engage in a literacy campaign of its own, would certainly not permit a large-scale popular adult literacy movement to succeed. And even were the state to develop a whole-hearted commitment to the promotion of literacy, its efforts would be denied legitimacy by an opposition which questions its ability, or even its right, to serve the interests of a people to which it denies franchise and the full rights of citizenship.

The situation is not entirely bleak. In all sectors there are caring and committed people at work, conscious at once of the value of what they are doing and of its inadequacy to the need. Within the ferment in our country the notion of "People's Education for People's Power" has gained currency. Whether this will remain little more than a slogan or become a movement is unclear, but the surge of demands that the clientele exercise control over the education they are offered may give reason to hope for more authentic efforts. At the other end of the spectrum, major universities in South Africa have only recently established departments of adult education; some of these are taking a special interest in literacy work. And here and there, one comes across some small but heartening development: a mining corporation taking its literacy programme seriously, an official programme developing an identity of its own, an alternative group creating researched and practical learner-centred materials, a magazine for those with little formal education which could hold its own anywhere in the world.

But, all considered, the history of adult literacy work in South Africa remains, not only to be written, but to be made.

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# EXTRACTS FROM THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE ON THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION, JOHANNESBURG, DEC., 1985.

*by* Father Smangaliso Mkatshwa

Fellow compatriots, comrades, distinguished guests, members of the press, ladies and gentlemen: it is with fear and trepidation that I stand before this assembly this morning. The reason for saying so is because an historic conference such as this should have been addressed by Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Kathrada and all other authentic leaders of this country who are either in prison or in exile.



I am glad that all shades of opinions are represented here. In the name of all freedom loving South Africans I want to congratulate the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee for their initiative in organising a long overdue national consultative conference on Black Education. Today's conference is reminiscent of the 1955 Congress of the People which had a more ambitious programme. Although modest in its aim this consultative conference is nonetheless an historic event.

Like the organisers of the Congress of the People, the SPCC consulted widely before calling this conference. However, due to the urgency of the education crisis, the SPCC could not canvass all the opinions in this country. They have invited the widest possible variety of progressive organisations. Taking part will be representatives from students, parents, youth, residents, workers, teachers, community organisations, women and churches.

Now it seems to me that there are four important words that characterise this conference. These are crisis, consultation, education and power. The theme of the conference is PEOPLE'S EDUCATION for PEOPLE'S POWER. This theme makes it quite clear that we do not want just any type of education. People's education is a devastating indictment on Apartheid slave education. The call is now for education for liberation, justice and freedom. It is a demand for full participation in all social structures.

## I. THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY

Education cannot be discussed in isolation from the rest of society. Education cannot be discussed outside the social-political setting. To understand education one must of necessity understand the nature of society. One needs to identify the interplay of social forces and contradictions as a precondition to deciding the form of struggle that we should adopt.

We can speak first of what has been called the PRINCIPAL DETERMINING CONTRADICTION. In one sense, in that it reproduces capitalist relations and forces of production, South African society is very similar to that of the U.K., U.S.A., France and other capitalist states. There is a class of workers who are forced to sell their labour-power at a wage in order to exist. They sell this to the bosses who own the factories, mines, large farms, etc.

The value of what they produce is greater than what they are paid as a wage. The difference generally goes into the pockets of the bosses.

Out of this contradiction between the interests of capital and labour, there is a class struggle between workers and the bosses.

In addition, we have in South African what has been called a DOMINANT CONTRADICTION, arising from the situation where all whites enjoy political freedom while all blacks, and especially the African majority, irrespective of class, endure national oppression.

Not just the white bourgeoisie, but also the petit-bourgeoisie and workers enjoy access to power in varying degrees. The whites form an alliance of classes who lord over all blacks. The alliance is not, however, stable or without contradictions. It has undergone changes at various stages of South African history and it is under stress right now.

The black people, in contrast, have been denied their right to self-determination, to control their own country. All blacks, irrespective of class, are victims of this oppression. Written into the structure of the South African state is this systematic national oppression of all blacks. Profits are thus higher in SA than in most other states because of these political disabilities which blacks endure.

These, then, are two basic contradictions which cannot be resolved within the existing state. There are, in addition, certain non-basic contradictions between sections of capital, between capital and the petit bourgeoisie, between the Nationalist party and capital. On the side of the oppressed there are also contradictions between the petit-bourgeoisie and workers, between rural and urban dwellers, etc.

These are not basic because they do not represent the fundamental cleavages of the society and may be resolved without a fundamental social transformation in the case of the forces of apartheid, and without undermining the national democratic movement in the case of the people.

While they are not basic, they are nevertheless very significant. The extent to which contradictions within the ruling class/bloc are exacerbated, to that extent their capacity to rule is impaired. Equally, the extent to which divisions within and contradictions between sections of the people are promoted, to that extent the national character of the struggle cannot be adequately asserted.

The form of our struggle is national democratic, and the main content of it is the liberation of the African people, *i.e.*, the majority of South Africans denied their right of self-determination.

For those of us who are socialists these are not two totally distinct struggles. When we struggle for a national democratic society we are advancing the struggle for socialism. Socialism cannot be achieved unless the people govern. For workers to isolate themselves from the National Democratic Struggle is to weaken that struggle; for them to join with other classes in the national liberation struggle, is simultaneously to advance the struggle for socialism. The link between the fortunes of workers and that of other oppressed is expressed in the formulation that the main content of the struggle is the liberation of the African majority, led by the working class.

I have tried to identify the two basic contradictions that operate in S A, and how their interrelation secures the national oppression and class exploitation of the majority of South Africans.

## DYNAMICS OF CHANGE: ORGANISATION

If we continue to identify the form or type of struggle in which we are engaged as National Democratic and its main content as the liberation of the African people, led by the working-class, what are the dynamics of such change?

To achieve fundamental change we need to be organised. Our forces need to be gathered together and harnessed in the most effective way possible instead of being dispersed in different directions, each doing his or her own thing, trying to achieve such change in the way each person considers best. So we are speaking of consciousness, mobilisation, organisation and discipline and, finally, struggle.

1. By CONSCIOUSNESS we mean people's understanding of the nature of the reality that they confront, achieving a consciousness of the nature of their oppression and exploitation, as well as an awareness that this can be changed and how, a confidence in their own capacity.

2. By MOBILISATION we mean drawing on the anger and drive for action of thousands of people who reject their present misery, towards concrete actions and activity.

3. By ORGANISATION we mean consolidating these forces into disciplined corps capable of acting effectively, flexibly, dynamically, so as to endure any repression that might be inflicted, yet to rise again to continue the struggle, indeed to intensify it, or to take to planes or areas not previously penetrated.

A social system does not disappear through logic alone. Apartheid is evil, it is decadent. It must go, but it will not simply disappear through its irrationality

or immorality. To achieve fundamental change we develop consciousness, mobilise and organise in struggle against forces of reaction, those which protect apartheid.

In a national struggle, we confront these forces on every plane – ideologically, politically, on the shop floor, in the communities, schools, universities and in the rural areas. It is a struggle to eradicate a social system. The existence of the apartheid order is not something to be negotiated. We struggle till it is no more.

## WHERE ARE WE?

When we wage our struggle, in organising for fundamental change, we need to be able to identify where we are, that is, what level of organisation we have achieved, our subjective strengths and weaknesses. We do not look at ourselves romantically, if we are pursuing this struggle seriously. We need to be honest about our own shortcomings.

## APARTHEID AND BANTU EDUCATION

We have said that education is inextricably linked with the social system. In Paulo Freire's book, *Cultural Action for Freedom*, pg. 9, we read: "education like all other processes of socialisation, tends to reinforce the over-determination of people within the social system."[1] From the inherent ambivalence of education, namely its capacity to bring about what is least determined in man, as well as to programme and determine this, Paulo Freire derives what I think is his fundamental thesis: that there is no neutral education. Education is either for domestication or for freedom. Although it is customarily conceived as a conditioning process, education can equally be an instrument of deconditioning. This is because people are essentially capable of knowing what conditions them, capable of reflecting on their action and behaviour.

Amilcar Cabral has added:

> the struggle for liberation which is the most complex expression of the people, of their identify and their dignity opens new perspectives for its development. Manifestations of culture, of which education is one of the most important, take on new content and forms of expression. They become in this way powerful instruments of information and of political formation not only in the struggle for independence, but in a larger battle for progress. The dynamics of the struggle require a practice of democracy, of criticism, of analysis of self criticism. The growing participation of the people in taking charge of their own lives, their own literacy, the creation of schools and health services, the formation of cadres, who come from the midst of the peasants and workers and many other developments which impel people to set forth upon the road of cultural progress.[2]

The ruling social classes know that by maintaining a tight grip on education, they can control the minds and indeed the destiny of the oppressed people. To fully understand the present system of black education, one must be aware of the history and ideological underpinnings of that notorious system. In 1936, 18 years before Bantu Education, the Welsh Commission foreshadowed the Bantu Education Act, when it said:

> A. From the evidence before the committee, it seems clear that there still exists opposition to the education of the native on the grounds that it makes him lazy and unfit for manual work.
>
> B. It makes him cheeky and less docile as a servant.
>
> C. It estranges him from his own people and often leads him to despise his own culture."

Again the same commission observes,

> some of the witnesses of the committee maintained that there is no difference in the ultimate aim of education, whether you are educating black people or white people but the two social orders for which education is preparing white and black are not identical and will for a long time remain essentially different. It is not that only the methods to be used are different, the ends themselves are different in the two cases.

It goes on

> The education of the white child prepares him for a life in a dominant society and the education of the black child prepares him for a subordinate society. There are for the white child no limits in or out of school. For the black child there are limits, which affect him chiefly out of school. It is no use shutting our eyes to that fact. An ostrich-like posture aims for native education which the very circumstances of South Africa makes impossible to realise. Merely because these aims are laudable we should like them to apply to the black people as well.[3]

In 1953 the Bantu Education Act was introduced. The Minister of Native Affairs, Verwoerd, said

> more institutions for advanced education in urban areas are not desired.

Deliberate attempts were made to locate institutions for advanced education away from the urban environment and to establish them as far as possible in the native reserves. He went on,

> it is the policy of my department that education will have its roots entirely in the native reserves, the native environment and the native community. There, Bantu education must give itself complete expression and there it will perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the levels of certain forms of labour. Within his own community however all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption into the European community where he cannot be absorbed. Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze. This attitude is not only uneconomical because money is spent on an education which has no specific aim, but is also dishonest to continue. It is abundantly clear that unplanned education creates many problems, disrupting the community life of the Bantu and endangering the community life of the European.[4]

## RESISTANCE TO APARTHEID EDUCATION

Education and the other structures of society whether economic, political or social structures as a whole are completely intertwined and therefore it is almost ridiculous to wage a struggle for democratic education and ignore the forces that are at work in the society.

Now an interesting feature of the rejection of black education was that it was led primarily by parents of pupils as well as by the members of the teaching profession. Teachers' opposition to Bantu education came mainly from two sources, from the Cape and Transvaal African Teachers associations known respectively as CATA and TATA. The ANC's claims in 1943 had called for free compulsory education, provided by the state.

Black communities themselves were willing to make considerable sacrifices, raising the money for extra teachers' salaries, classrooms to be built and equipment as well as establishing their own independent schools. Shanty secondary schools existed in Orlando, Western Native Township, Brakpan, Atteridgeville and other black areas. In Alexandra, an independent primary school called Haille Selassie School founded in 1950 was to play a significant role[5].

The resistance to Bantu education was masterminded by adults and there are instances when mothers and fathers stopped their kids from going into particular schools and actually promoted boycotts of schools.

Verwoerd made little effort to conceal official hostility to the struggle that was waged by the members of the teaching profession. He had the following to say:

> the Bantu teacher must be integrated as an active agent in the process of the development of the Bantu community. He must learn not to feel above his community, with the consequent desire to become integrated into the life of the European community. He becomes frustrated and rebellious when this does not take place and tries to make his community dissatisfied because of such misdirected ambitions which are alien to his people.[5]

The 1976-77 School Boycotts and subsequent uprisings in the schools and black universities ushered in a new era in the struggle against slave education. Students took the initiative and assumed leadership. Unlike before, this stage of the struggle generally excluded parents and teachers. There were, however, exceptions. The point underlined here, is that resistance against Bantu Education has a long history.

Although 1976 marked a turning point, it must be seen in perspective. The students had made tremendous sacrifices both in terms of loss of their own lives as well as intensifying the struggle for the total liberation of this country. Their efforts have forced the government to introduce superficial reforms in the sphere of education and the country as a whole.

The contribution of the now banned COSAS (Congress of South African Students) founded in 1979 cannot be applauded enough, because their sustained pressure, the struggle for democratically elected SRC's would otherwise not have seen the light of day. In short, the work of the students in promoting the broader popular struggles should be recognised. However, in order to take the struggle further, it is imperative that there should be a closely-knit alliance between all the communities, students, teachers, professionals, etc. The National Democratic struggle demands that no individual leader or organisation or group should act in isolation. We accept that different groups or categories of

people will continue to play different roles in the struggle. But the decision as to what needs to be done, where and when, is taken democratically.

## ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Students can be vulnerable to countries with imperialist or other designs. The bait for better education is a very attractive one, but when we speak of alternative or people's education, we mean one which prepares people for total human liberation; one which helps people to be creative, to develop a critical mind, to help people to analyse; one that prepares people for full participation in all social, political or cultural spheres of society. Education based on values of consumerism or affluence, of military adventurism and aggression and on racism is certainly not our ideal type of education.

There are three examples in the history of South African education to which one can look to assess the possibilities and limits of alternative education today:

1. The experiment of Elias Wellington Buthelezi in setting up alternative schools in the Eastern Cape in the 1920s.[7]

2. The Cultural Clubs of the ANC which were established in the 1950s to provide an alternative schooling to Bantu Education.[8]

3. The 'awareness programmes' of the Committee of 81 during the school boycotts of 1980.

## WHAT ARE THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM THESE EXPERIMENTS?

Before looking at the lessons, it is important to note some key differences between each:

1. The first two were attempts to provide alternative schools. This was possible as schools before the 1950s, for blacks, were not a national state-controlled enterprise. Missionary schools were organised in an unplanned way, according to the aims, standards etc., of individual mission societies. They organised their own funding, by and large, and their own teachers whom they trained in mission-controlled teacher training institutions. The early attempts to start alternatives must be seen in this context: the absence of a central, state department controlling funding, teacher training, etc.

The third attempt, in 1980, did not attempt to start alternative schools. This would have been impossible, because students and those concerned did not have access to resources for the funding of education and the training of teachers. Instead, awareness programmes or "alternative education" were conducted within the confines of schools.

The distinction between alternative schools and programmes is important. In the current context we live in a highly industrialised society with mass schooling provided in a racially segregated manner to millions of students; it is not possible to provide alternative schools. That is why current schools must be taken over and transformed within, but bearing in mind that ultimately this cannot be done without access to national resources and power to plan on a national basis for a new education.

The importance of the crisis and demands of progressive educationists at the moment is that we have been placed in a position to experiment, on the basis of realities, and learn for the future when we do control national resources.

For this reason, every step of the process must be carefully examined and planned, with a view to how this experiment will be useful for the future as well as for now.

We must show our alternative conception, but we must also take into account the problems; plan creatively; see what works and what doesn't, and use this moment as critical in creating the education system, and a new concept of education, for the future.

2. In each of the three experiments mentioned, the content of what was taught differed. In the case of Elias Wellington Buthelezi, who drew thousands away from mission schools, religious and political institutions formed the essence of the curriculum. Lessons were designed to promote African values. One missionary reported that Buthelezi's teachers taught "...that the people must not pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because they were Gods of the white people, but they should pray to the God of Mtirar, or Langalibele', as it was known and argued that mission schools were imposing alien cultural values and ideologies on African children, divorcing them from traditional beliefs and conditioning them to accept subservient positions, in the Church-dominated system.

In the Cultural Clubs of the ANC, run in the Eastern Cape and on the East Rand, primary school children were taught on an informal basis, without much religious content. Children were taught through a programme of songs, stories and games. The rudiments of mathematics, geography, history and general knowledge – a modern curriculum. In addition, political education took place more clearly

through the Freedom Charter. Modest fees were charged. This allowed for progressive teaching material to be photocopied and used by teachers.

In 1980 awareness programmes involved education in the history of South Africa, the nature of oppression and exploitation, the role of education in a capitalist society etc. Through discussion, films and songs the political education of the students was enhanced.

What these examples point to is the importance of the curriculum in any alternative programme. What curriculum or content is to be taught? To what end? Is the aim the re-instatement of an entirely new curriculum – history, geography, mathematics, science, etc. or is it designed to achieve a certain amount of political education alone? It might be possible to restructure the entire curriculum, without much planning or consultation in an alternative mission school in the 1920s, or in primary schools; is it possible now? What kind of political education programme is possible and desirable?

It seems that the 1985 experiment will raise these questions, too. Given the inadequate training of the majority of teachers in progressive curricular content, and given the lack of resources for alternative teaching material, it might be worthwhile considering programmes of education through the Freedom Charter.

3. The three attempts were all run differently: the first two by parents, the community and teacher, the 1980 one by students assisted by teachers. We are now trying to combine both!

## WHAT BROUGHT EACH ATTEMPT TO AN END?

Each attempt had marked successes, but each finally died. Why?

1. Buthelezi was banished from the territory. This was a blow. But in addition, most schools operated only a few years before inadequate funds and lack of qualified teachers forced them to close.

2. The cultural Clubs came to an end because of harassment of those involved, because the salaries of the teachers could not be paid and because of the gradual absorption of children into government schools. But, according to Lodge, "they represented the first sustained effort by Congress members to attempt to flesh out in educational terms an alternative world view."[10]

3. The 1980 awareness programmes came to an end for a variety of reasons, one of which is important for our purposes: the inability to sustain the programmes in the absence of resources, teachers, etc.

We must remember that this was when Neusa was formed. Alternative education has been vital to Neusa's understanding of itself. Neusa has tried both to provide resources needed in such a context and to train teachers to be ready when needed to engage in any such a programme.

## WHAT ARE THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM THE THREE EXPERIMENTS?

1. Alternative schools cannot realistically be provided. Alternative education programmes can be.

2. Alternative education programmes should embody within them, education of a general and political kind. The content and the method should be equally important. To realise a truly alternative education programme, one which educates politically, prepares for the future and opens horizons, it needs to be both general and political.

3. History teaches us that lack of qualified (*i.e.*, skilled and politicised) teachers and the absence of resources have, in the end, stymied all alternatives. Teachers need to be prepared for alternative education and through alternative education for the future.

In conclusion, without in any way attempting to anticipate the resolutions to be taken by the conference, I'd just like to appeal to you comrades to pay special attention to the following three items:

1. A clear statement on the school situation in 1986 is needed.

2. There is a slogan "Liberation first, education later." I want this conference to look at this slogan and put the slogan into perspective.

3. The type of educational system which we want, especially in a society which hopefully would be non-racial, democratic and united. What is our attitude as a conference, to the SADF (South African Defense Force) and SAP (South African Police) in black residential areas, to the banning of progressive organisations, to the continual imprisonment and harassment of authentic leaders of our people.

Finally, what do we say about the state of emergency?

Comrades, I want to end my address by pointing out that the government in this country is in big trouble, that the people have reached a point of no return, that whatever decisions we take, the people

in the struggle for liberation have to move forward on all fronts and that we should be united in our struggle for a free and democratic South Africa.

Amandla!

**FOOTNOTES**

1. Paulo Freire, *Cultural Action for Freedom*

2. Amilcar Cabral, *Return to the source*, 1970

3. Rose, B., & Tunmer, R. (Eds.). (1975). *Documents in South African Education*, pp. 228-239. Johannesburg: A. D. Donker.

4. *Ibid*, pp 258-267.

5. Lodge, T. (1984). The Parents' School Boycott: Eastern Cape and East Rand Townships, 1955. In P. Kallaway (Ed.), *Apartheid and Education*. Johannesburg: Raven Press.

6. Rose and Tunmer, *op. cit.*

7. Edgar, R. (1984). African Educational Protest in South Africa: The American School Movement in the Transkei in the 1920's. In P. Kallaway (Ed.), *Apartheid and Education*. Johannesburg: Raven Press.

8. Huddleston, T. (1956). *Naught for your Comfort*; Lodge, T. *The Parents School Boycott...*, in Kallaway, op. cit.

9. Edgar, in Kallaway, op. cit.

10. Lodge, in Kallaway, op. cit.

## HISTORY FOR DEMOCRACY: *

by Cynthis Kros

*A preliminary critique of the presentation of history in white South African Schools, with a view to the future.*

People's Education came out into the world, bloodied by renewed state repression, in the wake of the banning of COSAS (Congress of South African Students) and the breakdown of the final (Dept. of Education and Technology) DET examinations at the end of 1985. But its appearance was exciting and invigorating, a live birth after all, for it connoted an important change in oppositional strategy.

Growing despair about what was happening to schools in the townships and to students themselves led many students to favour the slogan: "Liberation before education." But at the NCC (National Consultative conference) at which 145 organisations were represented, held at Wits in December 1985, speakers argued for transformation from within using the state schools themselves. The theme of the conference "People's Education for People's Power" captured the imagination of people with diverse progressive political allegiances and quickly acquired a national compulsion and international support. But, while this was a remarkable feat, it meant that there were potential problems too. For it appealed simultaneously to the heady euphoria of those who thought the final countdown to The Revolution had begun and to those who warned grimly that the struggle would be long and hard and the road to a truly democratic education a tedious and treacherous one.

Among the latter could be counted national chairman of the NECC (National Education Crisis Committee) Vusi Khanyile, who carefully stressed that the call for People's Education was not for academically inferior education and that its implementation would entail discipline and hard work.

Muller points out that there was no time for the weighty considerations of curriculum issues that this demanded and that the immensely complex issues of accountability in education were, likewise, stowed away in the rush to deliver some tangible package.

Some very competent academics were involved in this rush job and were harshly criticised in some quarters, notably by Wits Professor Es'kia Mphahele in an article in *The Sowetan*, in which he accused certain academics of "intellectual dishonesty," for promising to deliver alternative educational material, before they could possibly have reflected sufficiently on the philosophical basis of an alternative educational system.

My impression is that the feverish rush to produce material, particularly in English and history, was less the product of intellectual dishonesty than of a well-intentioned frenzy to take advantage of the gap created by the State's momentary dithering at the end of 1986. Furthermore, many people embraced the history commission's pack, intended only to be used in the classroom as supplementary material, as a new 'textbook' because, for any shortcomings it may have had, it represented an unimaginable advance on all that had gone before.

* *Reproduced from: Lengwitch. The Journal for Language across the Curriculum, Vol 4 No. 1 March 1987. Cynthia Kros is with the Johannesburg College of Education.*

Since then the State has composed itself and has decided that People's Education represents a real enough threat and harsh new restrictions have been introduced to suffocate it in its infancy if possible and to incapacitate many of its progenitors. It is another setback for the apocalyptic vision of the Revolution. But, perhaps there can now be more considered reflection on what democratic education might mean. Indeed, there are signs that such a process has been set in motion. In the last month a meeting has been held under the aegis of Tuata (Transvaal United African Teachers' Association.) Some of the speakers talked about looking beyond the "narrow view" of People's Education and trying to determine how best to meet "black aspirations."

People's Education was intended from the outset to be a unitary educational system, but I have an uneasy feeling that somewhere along the line the iniquities in white education have been forgotten. It is a strange and unusual complaint. But it is important to try to understand how white education fails to equip students for democracy. Since most of my experience and observations are rooted in the "white" education system, it is this angle I would like to take. In particular, I would like to pose the question: How can the teaching of history help prepare students for participation in a democratic society?

At the height of People's Education fever one of the academics who had been approached by the NECC for help with producing alternative material, historian Colin Bundy, was quoted by *The Star* as saying: "History as taught in South African schools ... not only distorts the past, but maims it. In content it is exclusive, elitist and shallow, it is silent or misleading on the historical experience of the majority of South Africans." Essentially I think one can have no quibble with Bundy's critique. There are gaping and profound silences in South African school history, the most obvious being the absence of the history of resistance, other than that of Gandhi's passive resistance campaign, which we are meant to assume culminated in the full recognition of Indian rights for all time.

The grotesque deformities of the past are also everywhere in evidence. In white junior primary history classes, children are still learning about how little Helena Lotrie saved the life of her wounded father by spreading her skirts to catch the deadly spears of the fierce black hordes.

But the notion of "the past" conveyed by Bundy in this particular instance has overtones of a solid and tangible past, which simply awaits discovery and revelation by a more honest set of historians. That, to me, is an immeasurable simplification of the historical process. Historical interpretations are constantly shifting and the views of the past which they deliver, change accordingly.

The truth about the past in history does not lie waiting as a reward for those who faithfully follow the requirements of the quest. It is elusive and complex and the quest itself infinite. Historians might feel that they are uncovering part of the truth or that they have some sense of the whole, but even so, the wisest among them know to keep in reserve the feeling that they may have been duped. Historians, like archaeologists, work with many tangible artifacts, but they understand that these are witnesses (most often partial) to reality and not reality itself.

I want to argue that the iniquities in our school history amount to more than the silences and distortions in South African history brought about by omissions or inaccuracies in content. It is the way students are taught to regard the past and the discipline of history which ensures that they are usually fundamentally passive recipients of so-called "historical knowledge" and that, even when they sense that something is wrong, they do not know how to raise an effective challenge.

For three years I have tried to give my own second year college students an overview of Anglo-Zulu War historiography, culminating in a decisive refutation of the thesis that culpability for the War lay with aggressive, maturing Zulu men, impatient to be initiated into manhood through "washing their spears in blood." I have presented students with relatively recent writings which argue that, on the contrary, it was the machinations of various British officials which were responsible for the outbreak of War in 1879. Students have become incensed with the "wicked" British imperialists and although most of them are white, I have sensed quite genuine indignation and an imaginative empathy with the thousands of Zulu who suffered cruelly during and after the War.

Then I have shown the by now rather worn copy of the film *Zulu* made in 1963. Ironically, in this film, it is the British soldiers whose manhood is forged in battle. Its viewpoint is from within the tiny camp at Rorke's Drift faced with wave after wave of "savage" Zulu warriors. This last year the students were warned of the film's bias. But they quickly became intensely involved in the action and there was general cheering every time a Zulu warrior was slain.

At the next lecture I asked the students: "Who did you side with in the film?" There was a chorus of "The British" and then a deep, shamed silence. One student then called out "But they *made* us, they *made* us side with the British." (Her emphasis)

I was alarmed by the mass transfer of allegiance effected by a third rate movie. They claimed that they had been coerced, but it was only with considerable guidance that they were able to identify the mechanisms of manipulation and coercion. One of the students was bold enough to claim that it was I, as lecturer, who had been manipulative. Her comment is illuminating. "Ms Kros," she wrote subsequently, "indoctrinated us about the Anglo-Zulu War with facts and slides." Left to themselves, the students were unable to make a real choice between the two versions of "the past" with which they had been confronted. For them, both versions had the solid appearance of "fact."

In the case of the SABC's *Shaka Zulu* a similar trend is exemplified. Academic historians have waxed eloquent about the distortions but many non-academic viewers enjoy the series and thought of it as "true." Critic Willie Currie may talk about the implications of positioning the viewer on the side of the profligate Henry Fynn, but the question of viewpoint does not occur to most of the viewers.

Historian Julian Cobbing questions the evidence *Shaka Zulu* was based on, calling the Fynn diaries a "series of fantasy articles" written long after Shaka's death and subsequently moulded for specific political purposes. Cobbing provocatively suggests that Shaka was really a weak, ineffectual king caught up in a process of change and re-orientation – at about the furthest remove from the "vengeful, brutal and ambitious despot" Currie describes being shown on SABC TV. But what does all this wrangling about evidence mean to the thousands of viewers who have taken Henry Cele's Shaka to their hearts, much as they once took Larry Hagman's J.R.?

Most viewers are not in a position to detect bias, standpoint or any of the ideological sleights of hand which the academics see at once. It is not all the fault of their education but white schooling has fostered a deep passivity which is at least partially responsible for what a repentant Albert Speer describes as "an atrophy of moral sensitivity," the very condition that enabled Hitler to co-opt the Weimar intellectuals.

Antonio Gramsci, reflecting on the influence of Fascism on Italian education in the early 1920s and trying to envisage an alternative, in the confines of his prison cell wrote: "Democracy must mean that every citizen can govern and that society places him, even if only abstractly, in a general condition to achieve this."

My observation of matric (ulation) writings convinces me that, on the whole, the basic tools for historical understanding are absent. I have studied about 200 essays recently, on Modern European history, safely removed from the tumultuous concerns of South African history, one would have thought. The student authors are predominately, but by no means all white. However, most come from middle class backgrounds.

In these writings there is a lack of analysis beyond simplistic racial or national typifications. Thus, students conclude that the Weimar Republic, which preceded Hitler's regime, was an inherently fragile democracy. They suggest that its failure was predetermined because the German people were not used to democracy. It never occurs to them to ask how "used" other people in Europe were to democracy. Universal male suffrage was only granted in 1918 in England, for example. If we distil the most important reason for Weimar's failure out of the myriad of complex arguments advanced by scholars, we might see that the Weimar Republic was not a full democracy. It entrenched the power and privileges of the landowners and employers whereas the majority of Germans were workers. It failed to match expectations because it was not a real democracy. This is very different from saying that the German people couldn't "work" democracy because they were unfamiliar with it. But, the impression persists, partly reinforced by careless textbook writing, that some people/nations are better suited to democracy than others.

When race or national origin are not used to account for historical phenomena, individual personalities are. So, according to these students, Hitler's imperialist fantasies were actually fuelled by the cowardly Neville Chamberlain, who sought to appease him at all costs. The constraints on Chamberlain – his electorate's war-weariness, the distraction posed by Bolshevism and the state of British military resources and their rationalisation – are rarely mentioned.

Historical individuals are not contextualised within their specific period and societies. They act idiosyncratically and often make their way presumptuously into the present. Chamberlain is the softie who would let "terrorists" get their way; Churchill is the arch-guru and eternal guardian angel of "democracy." He is never seen as a conservative

politician who rejoiced on the occasion of Britain's first test explosion of the A-bomb with the words: "we had one and we let it off and it went off beautifully!" Hitler becomes an odd and not totally reprehensible mixture of strong-man Rambo, rising out of the ruins of Weimar to "save his country" and of Ronald Reagan, in his more lucid moments, devising cunning plans to revive the economy. The statistics of economic recovery in Germany after 1933 are not subjected to scrutiny and the possibility that political discrimination against women and Jews may have helped to shrink the unemployment figures, is never looked at.

The students are unable to identify the political viewpoints, either of the historical actors themselves, or of those who are telling their story. They are taught that politics has no place in 'real' history, just as they are taught that political policies and economic policies must always be studied separately, as if they had no bearing whatsoever on each other. The students do not know how to weigh up and evaluate reasons and causes – these have been reduced to lists for memorisation, robbed of their explanatory value. They do not know how to assess the validity of the evidence they are presented with because they do not understand its partial and value laden nature. They do not even know that historians work with evidence and that history is not ready made.

This is only partly the fault of the much maligned textbooks. Some of them are atrocious and are promoted by an exam system which blatantly favours the worst of them. But there are approved textbooks, such as those by A.N. Boyce, which at least offer the vista of alternative views. The problems are more complex than poor textbooks. Current ideology interposes itself between the subject and the student's understanding of it one needs only to see how often the word 'unrest' crops up in essays ranging from the Sudeten crisis to prerevolutionary Russia. The relationship between past and present is a vexed one and, of course, there are ways in which the past intrudes on the present. But, rudely to break down the barriers between past and present and to use the past as a kind of allegory for the present is nothing less than propaganda.

Teachers contend with a cultural milieu that glorifies Rambo-Reagan and often with their own inadequate training or syllabus paranoia. Even if they once received a sound methodological training, a few years in a school puts them in a desperate panic to "cover all the facts" and discuss "later if there's time."

In Denis Hirson's recent autobiography: *The House Next Door to Africa*, there is a wonderful satire of the way South African history is taught at white schools. History, from van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape to plant vegetables up to South Africa's mining revolution, is mercilessly compressed. The Voortrekkers gallop across the plains, "slitting lions and turning them into shoes" when they are not warring with the "marauding tribes" in the "empty interior." With a few breathless changes of identity the voortrekkers become Afrikaners and the marauding tribesmen are lining up for health inspections before going down the mines.

It is not "the silences" that offend in Hirson's account, for everything happens so quickly that we can hardly be conscious of them. Everyone is packed into the story; no one is left out, except possibly some of South Africa's indigenous inhabitants prior to 1652. But there is no time to ask "How did the tribesmen become workers?" or, "How did the voortrekkers become Afrikaners?" What kinds of explanations do historians offer for these processes? It is a monologue delivered at break-neck speed, by a teacher with her eye on the number of periods left before the exams and on the door through which the inspector might come at any moment. It is a senseless, mind-numbing monologue which pretends to be a "factual" account, but its very lack of coherence means that the students can never intervene. They can never do anything with it, except learn it off like a catechism.

How then can they take even the first hesitant step towards the "moral and intellectual creativity, autonomy and initiative" that Gramsci, in his prison dreams, envisaged for the "mature scholar" who would be able to control those who governed him? How will they ever acquire the skills of logical thinking, which Gramsci argued were rarely automatic but which, once acquired, could lead students to their own intellectual revelations and to mastery?

Gramsci's own programme, influenced by his historical position and his personal suffering, was rigorous and rather inflexible. His emphasis on formal latin grammar and the classics is a little shocking to the imported liberalism in South Africa, which favours open ended and pupil centred learning. But his concerns for teaching all students the skills of logic and analysis, while simultaneously giving them an insight into the breadth of vision he imputed to the classical authors, are of considerable interest.

In a democratic education system in South Africa what role will the teacher play? Will there be a planned programme of study? What will the desired

end-point be? How will the difficult issues of intellectual autonomy and political accountability be resolved? Is intellectual autonomy on the agenda? These are some of the questions I think need to be discussed and worked through carefully by all the interested parties, and the extraordinary hopes that People's Education for People's Power aroused may yet be vindicated.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*The following represents a correspondence selection, exchanged between the editors and other interested parties and which we felt was significant enough to be included here.*

From Ana Gobledale, who with her husband, Minister Tod Gobedale, works with the U.C.C.S.A's Ministry in Zululand, South Africa. Ana was formerly a doctoral student in the Adult Education Program, Northern Illinois University.

Died 9 April 1986

Themba (Hope) Ntuli

Born July 1985, 9 months ago

A son of a son.

The Ntuli future.

Home: Matshana Black Spot
no fresh water
no electricity
no plumbing or sewage
dirt roads
overcrowded
5 kms from Empangeni
a prosperous
whites only town
Father: employed by
Kwazulu Police good job
stationed in Traansvaal
350 kms from Matshana
last home in January

Mother: employed in Durban

200 kms from Matshana

last home 29 March to bring money on regular month-end visit

Funeral 12 April 10 am

Themba's coffin, draped by a soft blanket, is bedecked with a small plastic dome full of plastic flowers. We women have gathered in the narrow room to share in the grief of his mother. She sits, her face shrouded by a blanket, still.

A dirge rises in the stillness. Like echos we join in the chant, muffled by the heavy rain on the iron roof. We wonder how the men are progressing on their task of digging and preparing the tiny unwelcome grave.

A few latecomers ask to view Themba's tiny head, serenely shrouded in white ruffles, to say a last good-bye. Coins clink in the dish beside the ever-burning candle.

A prayer. A blessing. Communion. Remember, "God is with us." We process behind a pick-up bearing Themba on his last earthly journey. Singing, over the rain-filled ruts of a road to the cemetery behind the Lutheran church. Barren land. Grandfather, walking with us, comments, "we are lucky to have had this site allocated when they used to give land to the churches. Now they give nothing." Is it anger or despair that I hear in his voice?

The men wait, shovels and picks in hand, drenched and muddy. Grandmother whispers, "My son has arrived in time to say good-bye to his son," tears in her eyes. The tiny casket is opened one last time, for a final meeting of father and son, strangers.

We approach the grave, dug by family and friends. The rows of tiny graves rise up around this one. Some marked with wooden crosses, some with a single stick. Others recognizable only by the settling mound.

Some with names. Most nameless. On Themba's left; Sibongile (we have given thanks) Mgubane, 5 months. On the right; Nomusa (Mercy) Mbuli, 9 months. South Africa's children. The future.

My mind wanders to the American children I know who died; death of children has been much of a stranger to me. Here in South Africa in one year I have buried four children. Causes of death... Black in South Africa. Medical reasons...measles, asthma and malnutrition.

GOD GIVES, AND GOD TAKES AWAY?

We would be sinful to defend this situation as God's intervention in the lives of these children. God takes away in old age, while nature takes away by catastrophe or incurable illness...but measles, asthma and malnutrition: HUMAN BEINGS are killing these children.

* GOD does NOT keep them hungry.
* GOD does NOT take parents away.
* GOD does NOT insist on pit toilets, or no toilets.
* GOD does NOT make fresh and clean water a luxury.

* GOD does NOT make a profit off food sales to the poor.

* GOD does NOT covet medical care for a chosen few.

* GOD does NOT favor people-without-color.

GOD GIVES EACH ACCORDING TO HER/HIS NEED?

But people take away from others what God has given to meet basic needs. And God has not created a world in which cups emptied by greed are divinely refilled.

ACCEPT THY LOT?

Often this is the message "of the Bible" given to Black South Africans. But what does it mean? What did it mean for Themba? For his parents? Is the "lot" of a nine-month-old to die of malnutrition? Is the lot of 21 million Africans-of-colour to be victimized by a 3 million White minority? Or is their (our) lot to recognize and work for the "lots" of things to be changed and equalized?

RENDER UNTO CAESAR WHAT IS CAESAR'S?

What does this mean in South Africa? Is God calling Themba's family, and all other Black African families in South Africa, to render to the White's National Party Government their children's lives?

* Their family life? *their homes? *their education?

*their livelihood? *their fresh water? *their dignity?

Surely we are called to judge what is truly "Caesar'" to be rendered unto him.

... Themba's grave is filled. The spot for the next grave is clearly marked... ready...waiting. When will this procession of children to their graves to be stopped? God, forgive us that we might turn from our evil ways and walk with you on the path of love.

This is our fifth letter from South Africa, written in the middle of our third year here. We've been struggling with the decision as to whether or not extend for a fourth year here. After painful deliberations which included times of anguished prayer, counseling, conversations with church leaders here, we have agreed to stay. Not because we have seen meaningful change in RSA, not because we see an end to apartheid, but because we see more troops in the townships, more graves in the cemeteries. And now the State President suggests to dissolve the constitution and establish a "period of reform"---a dictatorship.

What can we, Tod and Ana, do? Very little. But at least our presence offers a witness. Please, your prayers and actions to build a new South Africa are the voices in the wilderness, the lights in this dark place.

——End of Letter——

To: Dr. Harold Wolpe
Dept. of Sociology
University of Essex
Wivenhoe, Essex
England
April 20, 1987

Dear Dr. Wolpe,

Your name was suggested to me by John Morgan of the University of Nottingham. I have been corresponding with him in connection with a publication which I edit and produce here in St. Louis (please see enclosed).

Currently, I am preparing to devote the next issue of the journal to a History of Adult Education in South Africa. My co-editor will be Dr. Charlotte Morgan, a historian in the Dept. of Black Studies of Lehman College in New York.

I would like your help in locating men and women, scholars or otherwise, who would be prepared to contribute a paper or book review to this journal on the subject of South Africa. What I am looking for can take any of the following forms: a paper devoted to a single aspect of adult education history, focusing on a particular area, such as literacy, or institution, or individual, *i.e.*, a leader in the field. It might also be a review of a book, monograph, etc., on adult education in South Africa, whether historically-oriented or not. Finally, it might be a personal account of someone's experience with the adult education system, particularly if this relates to aspects of minority Black culture.

My colleague, Charlotte Morgan, has been trying to contact the Funda Center in Soweto, and other black cultural and political groups. She is also trying to have the ANC contribute something. To date, however, we have not had contact with black groups nor with scholars in the other universities of South Africa. Perhaps you could help us here.

Sincerely,

Sean Courtney, Editor

Reply: To Sean Courtney

Many thanks for your letter of April 20th which puts me in something of a quandary because your attempts to put together an issue on South Africa seem to be in breach of the cultural and academic boycott which I, as a member of the ANC, support.

This is not to suggest that no south African writer working inside the country should be approached but you have gone directly to institutions which must be considered to be either part of the apartheid system and regime (Human Sciences Research Council) or at least not to have sufficiently put itself into opposition. There are, of course, organisations and people in the field of adult education who can be considered to be part of the mass democratic opposition and if they accepted your invitation, that would have been fine since there is no desire to isolate those organisations. The decision to participate would be taken, not by individuals, but by organisations who would make political judgments about the contribution of the enterprise to the anti-apartheid struggle. I have in mind those organisations who are providing education to the black trade unions, organisations which have joined the United Democratic Front and so forth. In particular, the appropriate contact would have been with the National Education Crisis Committee.

The problem is that the steps you have already taken may mean that none of these bodies would want to participate. I suggest that you should now approach the NECC and, in doing so, provide them with the information contained in your letter to me. If they agree to co-operate with you then I will be able to make a number of suggestions, although in any event, I would be unable to contribute given your deadline.

I'm sorry to be so unhelpful but I'm sure you will understand that there are important issues at stake here.

Yours sincerely,
Harold Wolpe.

To: Dr. Harold Wolpe
London, England
May 28, 1987

Dear Dr. Wolpe:

Many thanks for your prompt reply to my letter of April 20.

Quite coincidentally your letter arrived along with an issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education (see enclosed) in which the issue of a cultural boycott of South Africa was on the front page. I have read and reread that article along with your letter to decide what our position should be. The Chronicle article says that the boycott is a "subject of continuing discussion among (ANC) constituents and allies." Based on that and the fact that we have had a letter from Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College supporting our project, I plan to go ahead with this issue on South Africa, subject of course to the agreement of my co-editor.

Let me state categorically that no issue of the journal will appear without some representation of the viewpoints of significant opposition groups inside and outside the country. Anything less would make this project meaningless. That is why we have written and will continue to write to appropriate members of the opposition as well as mainstream academics (see enclosed letters.) Apart from the response from Freedom College we have also been in touch with Morobung Nkomo, the author of *Education for Blacks in South Africa: Deconstructing the Myth* among others, and we are hopeful that he will contribute a piece. We will also write to the NECC.

We will press ahead. If you still feel you cannot help perhaps you could point us in the direction of others who might. Again, thank you for your prompt and informative reply to my query. Your country is in considerable torment. Having grown up in a country (Ireland) which has seen its share of racism and colonial rape I appreciate the depth of your political commitment. Did you know, by the way, that the word "boycott" came into use when a certain Captain Boycott, a British landowner in the West of Ireland became the center of an agrarian campaign to drive landlords out of Ireland by cutting off all commercial and personal contact with them. In the case of Captain Boycott the "boycott" was successful.

Sincerely,
Sean Courtney

——End of Exchange——

African National Congress (South Africa)
Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College
To: Charlotte T. Morgan
Dept. of Black Studies
Lehman College
The City University of New York
2 April 1987

Dear Charlotte,

I thank you for your letter of 24 February 1987 which I received on the 24 March 1987. It is also gratifying to learn that an interest has been aroused

in the content of the whole educational system of South Africa and from your point of view, adult education in particular. As you know in my country South Africa, education for blacks is so structured that the blacks receive scanty education just to enable them to service the lucrative industry. Education is not seen by the racist regime as the springboard and the only avenue to mankind's cultural advancement.

Consequently, and understandably so from their perspective, no attempt whatsoever has been made to pay serious attention to adult education of the black masses.

At Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, we have just started with adult education programme. A lot has still to be done. The significance of this school is to lay down a solid foundation of the educational system for a free and democratic South Africa from nursery to adult education division.

With regard to the material for your bulletin, I have passed on the copy of your bulletin to comrade Pearl Serote, Head of the Adult Education Division. She will get in touch with you in due course and I hope you will continue to send us copies of your bulletin.

In the Year of Advance to People's Power!
T K Maseko

## REPORTS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS: EXTRACTS

*The editors received more material than could be included in its full form in this issue of the bulletin. Selections from that material are included here. The interested reader is referred to the authors' of the pieces for further information.*

### ST ANTHONY'S ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE, BOKSBURG, JOHANNESBURG: A CASE STUDY

*By* Sr. Magdalen Greene and Josephine Ewart Smith *

An historical outline of St. Anthony's is essential if one is to appreciate its uniqueness. Back in the 1930s, the position it now occupies was in the middle of the black township of Stirtonville. Most of the residents were migratory workers employed on the mines. In 1965, Stirtonville was declared a Coloured area and renamed Reiger Park. The Black community moved twenty kilometres away to the new township of Vosloorus.

That same year, Father Stan Brennan, a Franciscan from Ireland, was appointed Priest in charge of the new Coloured community. He was given three acres of land and dilapidated school building. His task was to gather a flock and build a church. Father Brennan soon found that it was education his parishioners hungered for. Many were illiterate while others had through political or financial pressure been forced to abandon classes and go out to work at an early age. His parishioners saw education as the key to a better standard of living.

With the aid of volunteer tutors, classes were established. The records show the attendance for early 1966 as only ten, but friends tagged along, books were donated and two old classrooms were turned into a 'library' and the foundations of our impressive centre were laid. Within the year attendance had risen to 100 and electric lights were strung between the trees under which the eager students sat. Tuition was given at literacy, junior and senior certificate levels.

By 1971, the Centre was catering to 900 students. Misereor, a Church organisation in Germany, donated R300,000 for a multi-purpose building that was utilised as a social and cultural centre at weekends and for classes during the week.

In 1973, skills training was introduced at the request of residents and with the support of industrialists. It was only in 1977 that the beautiful church of St. Francis was built with funds raised by the local community.

The future of St. Anthony's stood in the balance when, in 1977, the authorities ordered that the Centre be closed because the Group Areas Act was being contravened. Large numbers of Black students were attending classes in a Coloured area! However, pressure was brought to bear by the German and British Consuls as well as Church authorities and the classes continued. At that point, the Centre had to be registered with the Department of Education and Training, and a Sister of Mercy was appointed Principal.

The student riots of 1976 had highlighted the dissatisfaction Black people felt for the government education system, and more than ever they were looking to the Church for assistance. But when the Department of Education and Training established a section specifically for adult education, it became illegal for a tuition centre to operate unless it was registered with the Department, and St. Anthony's

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had no option but to register. Student enrolment reached the 2,000 mark that year, and the scope of the education provided was broadened to encompass everything from literacy training through to matriculation examination.

More than 60% of the 200 literacy students in 1977 were migratory labourers working on the local mine or in industry. Their need was to communicate with their families all over Southern Africa as far afield as Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Transkei and Lesotho.

At the other end of the scale were some 600 students needing assistance with their matriculation studies. There were learners who, due to inadequate facilities for education in the rural areas and the urban township riots of 1976, had been unable to complete their education in normal circumstances. By 1977, it was obvious that the Church had an important role to play in Adult Education in South Africa. Several teachers at St. Anthony's set out to study the immediate needs of the students and to help each other understand adult learners. Staff seminars were arranged and studies done on some of the literature available e.g. works of Knowles, Lovett, Lovell, Berger and Freire. These workshops helped our staff see their students in a new light. The result was a shift in emphasis from "teaching" to "learning," a realisation that our adults like all adult learners in other parts of the world, were people with life experience and that if educators were to succeed in helping them, then it was of prime importance that this aspect be taken into account. Minutes of one meeting reflect, "our learners are mature, experienced individuals, capable of directing their own lives they are parents, teachers, nurses, domestic workers, men employed in the mines and industry ..." so the strategy for instruction moved slightly away from transmittal techniques to experiential learning taking cognizance of the life-experience of the learners.

Education is now seen at the Centre in a much broader sense and includes opportunities for the students to examine the society in which they live and work to meet and discuss problems that affect them in their daily lives.

Between 1977 and 1982, a total of R1,5 million was poured into further development at the Centre. Donations from the German Catholic organisation, Misereor, and local commerce and industry, meant the building of a large education block to accommodate the 2,000 evening class students, a computer-based education centre, two new science laboratories, more classrooms and lecture theatres, and a comprehensive new library. The local community also contributed to a parish hall built in 1982 and a 'centre of concern' for the aged the following year. St. Anthony's nurtures the spirit, mind and body, and there are facilities for swimming, tennis, squash, table tennis, billiards and darts.

——End of Reprint——

*Editor's note: Below is the introduction to and the table of contents of a volume of documents circulated by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education.*

From the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17, Bellville, 7530, R.S.A.

## BACKGROUND TO THE CENTRE FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION (CACE)

The CACE was established at the University of the Western Cape in April 1985. At present there are five staff members. The majority of projects are privately funded. They include:

1. Community Organisation Research and Education (CORE).

In this project we have to date published one research report.

"The struggle for Democracy. A study of Community Organisations in Greater Cape Town from the 1960's to 1985." We have also published a popular education booklet. "The struggle for Democracy: The story of one community organisation in Cape town in the 1980's." A data bank of material on community organisations has been developed. CORE aims to help preserve the history of community organisations and so contribute to their ongoing development.

2. Second Chance to Learn. This project is concerned with compensatory adult education from basic literacy to high school education. A first research report has been published, "Second Chance to Learn: A preliminary survey of compensatory Adult Education in Greater Cape Town."

3. Certificate in Adult Education. A part-time certificate is being planned for 1988. The course aims to reach adult educators in night schools, community organisations, agencies, trade unions, health services etc. We plan to use a distance education approach in order to reach people who may not have easy access

to the university. The entrance qualification is at least a standard 8 plus 3 years experience in adult education.

4. Popular Education Project (PEP). This project has two facets: worker education on the one hand and community education on the other. It involves working with organisations in the development of nonformal educational programmes and resources.

——End of Reprint——

From the Report of the National Consultative Conference on the Crisis in Education Organised by Soweto Parents Crisis Committee at University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 28, 29 December 1985

## PEOPLES EDUCATION: A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES, DECEMBER 1985 TO MAY 1987

This reader is intended as a resource for all those in the university who have an interest in the development of People's Education. It aims to make more widely available and accessible a series of key articles, speeches and documents.

The reader is a by-product of a preliminary study on People's Education undertaken by CACE. The project aims to locate People's Education in its national and international context. In the process, we have collected a range of material on People's Education in South Africa. We are gathering information and material on popular education and political struggles in other countries, such as Brazil, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the Philippines.

In the meantime, through this reader, we would like to circulate material which can contribute to the debate and development of People's Education. It is by no means intended to be a complete or definitive collection.

The first section includes the most significant NECC documents and statements. The keynote speeches from the two conferences are central.

The second section tries to give an understanding of the work of the People's Education Commissions. Examples are the development of alternative History and English teaching.

In the third section papers consider the role and task of the universities and academics. Two NECC representatives, Eric Molobi and Vusi Khanyile, raise important issues on this theme.

The debate and some of the problems are analysed and summed up in the fourth section. Ken Hartshorne and Johan Muller discuss the current state of education, the contribution of the NECC and the possible future directions of People's Education.

People's Education extends beyond the schools to literacy programs, non-formal education, worker education and so on. It is particularly here that the experience and struggle of the people of other countries is important. The articles in the fifth section touch on these issues.

People's Education is developing all the time. As further material is collected or more specific needs are identified, further readers can be compiled. Feedback and suggestions would be most welcome. Hopefully this collection will facilitate easy access to material which furthers our understanding of People's Education.

## CONTENTS: NECC DOCUMENTS



## PEOPLE'S EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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11. Eric Molobi – South Africa: Education under Apartheid (Keynote Address, Conference on United States Initiatives for the Education and Training of South Africans and Namibians, Michigan State University, 23 November 1986

12. Vusi Khanyile – Speech to ASP Conference (Pietermaritzburg, November 1986)

13. Eric Molobi – The University as White Elephant (extracts from Richard Feetham memorial lecture, University of the Witwatersrand, 1987)

14. Mluleki George – It's False to Follow the Oxford Model (extracts from Richard Feetham memorial lecture, University of the Witwatersrand, 1987)

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——End of Reprint——

**BRIEF BACKGROUND TO THE SOWETO PARENTS CRISIS COMMITTEE AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE WITS CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE**

The educational crisis gripping the country is an integral part of certain weaknesses in the South African way of life – deficiencies that weigh heavily on black South Africans. The core problem remains apartheid, from which flows unequal allocation of facilities, unequal allocation of State money per child, unqualified teachers and thus, inevitably, an overall inferior educational system for blacks. It needs to be emphasised that the denial of meaningful access to the central political machinery of the country, where decisions are made for blacks and about blacks without their participation, remains the bottom line that causes anger in every black person's heart. Other experiences such as the pass laws, brutality by the police and army, detention, bannings and economic exploitation are all rooted in the process of disenfranchisement. There is, therefore, no way in which the crisis in black education can be isolated from the whole political and social complexion of present South Africa.

By October 1985, conditions in the black schools reached a new low point. With final examinations little more that a month away and with the continued presence of the SADF in the school yards and the townships, it seemed as if a stalemate had been reached. Numbers of students had been shot and killed at school, the authority of school Principals was subverted, and normal schooling has been comprehensively disrupted. Detention increased dramatically in October, and with the banning of COSAS, the students found themselves without a means for coordinating a central strategy. All indications were that the final examinations would be a fiasco. It was at this point that the Soweto parents decided to act.

The Soweto Civic Association, an organisation concerned with civic issues such as rent, electricity and bus fares called a meeting to discuss the schools issue. The meeting was promptly banned and two of the organisers, Vusi Khanyile and Isaac Mogasi, were detained for a while. This was not the first setback that the parents had received: at the beginning of 1985, a National Parents Committee had been set up, but in the face of DET intransigence had disbanded in frustration. The SCA, however, persevered, and called a second meeting which drew 2700 people to the Diepkloof Roman Catholic Church. At this meeting, the major grievance of the students, centering around the continued presence of the SADF in the townships, were articulated, and it is out of the meeting at Diepkloof in October 1985 that the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee emerged.

The committee consists of the following members: S Mohajane, V Khanyile, Rev Tsele, H H Dlamlenze, M R Moutingoe, Rev Monyaku, I Mogasi, Dr W Motlana, Net Ramokgopa, E Molobi. Their first action was to contact the DET, the SADF, and the Department of Law and Order. A meeting was arranged which only the DET attended. The most pressing demand presented by the SPCC was postponement of the final exams, which the DET seemed reluctant to do. As November progressed

and the exams drew nearer Job Schoeman of DET announced that exams would not be postponed, drawing a public challenge from the SPCC. The day before the exams were due to start, the SADF announced that they would increase their presence in all 11 exam centres in Soweto. On the very day the exams were to start, the principals agreed at a principals meeting to call off the exams. Only 4 centres started writing on Friday, the day on which exams were due to commence. By the next Monday, the exams had collapsed in Soweto.

Minister de Beer of the DET requested an urgent meeting with the SPCC, also attended by Minister Vlok representing the police and security forces. At this meeting, the SPCC presented the Ministers with a list of students who had been shot and detained and urged upon them the importance of an immediate withdrawal of the SADF from the townships. de Beer appeared conciliatory, but Vlok responded by questioning the representativeness of the SPCC. In addition, Vlok emphasised that the demands for an end to the state of emergency, the withdrawal of the SADF and the unbanning of COSAS were national issues and could not be regionally negotiated. It was at this point in November 1985 that the SPCC realised that the struggle for black education was indivisibly a national issue and that they needed to obtain a national mandate from the people. The idea of a national consultative conference was born. The need for this became even clearer to the SPCC when they met de Beer in early December for the third time. He made it plain then that, although the DET exams has been deferred, his hands were tied as far as the other demands were concerned.

The SPCC resolved to create as broad a base as possible and began to have intensive discussions with student groups, teacher organisations, parents and community organisations, the churches, organised industry and commerce and the ANC. A matter of extreme concern to the parents in particular was the fact that 1986 would be the 10th anniversary of the Soweto School Uprising, and that it had been declared the "year of Remembrance." The SPCC consequently sent a delegation to meet the ANC in Harare in December. The meeting made clear to them that the students should be urged to go back to school, that the need for learning could not be postponed, and that the school was the only place in which the students could become organised.

With the help of students, the first National Consultative Conference was organised and held at the University of the Witwatersrand on 28 and 29 December 1985. One hundred sixty-two organisations representing seven regions attended. The rest of the proceedings in this booklet represent the speeches, deliberations and resolutions of that conference.

A major resolution of the conference was that students would return to school on 28 January 1986 conditional upon certain demands which would be met by the end of March 1986. Failing this, it was resolved that a second conference would be called by a National Education Crisis Committee where appropriate action would be considered. This national committee was formed on 6 and 7 March, with one representative from each of the eight regions (Transvaal being divided into North and South Transvaal), three representatives from the SPCC, and with the power to co-opt relevant people. The NECC has called the second National Consultative Conference for 29 and 30 March 1986, since it has become apparent that the government's response to the demands put by the Wits Consultative Conference falls far short of the expectations of the mass of the people.

# A CHRONOLOGY OF SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

*by* Charlotte T. Morgan

| | |
|---|---|
| 1458 | The Khoi Khoi community had its first contact with Europeans at Walvis Bay (Namibia). |
| 1510 | The Khoi Khoi executed European interlopers for sexual crimes. |
| 1652 | The Dutch East India Company used indentured European servants from Holland to establish a settlement at the Cape. |
| 1658 | The company imported slaves from other parts of Africa in an effort to have a controllable labor force. |
| 1658-1660 | Occurrence of the first of several Khoi-Khoi wars of resistance against European attempts to enslave and steal their land and livestock. |
| 1670's | Commandoes (quasi-military units of Europeans) began punitive expeditions against the San who were resisting invasion. San survivors of raids were made "servants." |
| 1778 | Restrictions placed on movements of Khoi Khoi and San in areas of European settlement. |
| 1806 | British control over Cape Colony (an aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars) was entrenched. |
| 1812 | Forced removal of 20,000 Xhosa from Fish River area (eastern coast). |
| 1815-1824 | Ascendancy of Zulu nation under King Chaka. |
| 1828 | British authorities legislate legal equality for non-Europeans. Movement restrictions extended to Xhosa. |
| 1833 | Slavery abolished in British territories including South Africa. |
| 1836 | Boers leave coastal areas and Cape Colony in an attempt to escape British rule and maintain power over the Africans. |
| 1838 | Zulu nation defeated by Boer invaders at Blood River. The defeat initiates European control of the Natal region and the decline of the Zulu. |
| 1841 | Glasgow Mission Society established Lovedale School (for Africans but open to Europeans).<br>In an effort to limit Boer intrusion, King Moshesh of Basutoland (Lesotho) allows Britain to establish a Protectorate over his country. |
| 1858 | Large scale theft of livestock from the Basuto leads to war between Boers and Basuto. Initial Basuto victory is overshadowed by fears of Boer-British alliance. Moshesh ultimately cedes more land establishing the foundation for the Orange Free State. |
| 1867 | Discovery of diamonds leads to influx of thousands of Europeans. |
| 1879 | A resurgent Zulu nation rises and defeats the British invaders. |
| 1886 | Discovery of gold leads to a second influx of Europeans. |
| 1899-1902 | Anglo-Boer War over control of land and its resources fought between Boers and British. Result was the recognition by the Boers of British sovereignty in |

South Africa (Treaty of Vereeninging). The resolution of differences between the Europeans was costly for the Africans who were not involved in the decision.

1904 Compulsory education introduced for all whites in Cape Province and Natal.

1906 Zulu-Bambata Uprising caused by imposition of a poll tax and desire of Zulu to avoid servitude under Europeans. In colonial Africa, the poll tax was one way of forcing Africans to work for Europeans. Such employment was often the only source for revenue to pay the tax.

1910 The Union of South Africa was established by the Europeans bringing British and Afrikaner states together.

1912 Organization of the African National Congress (ANC) to speak for the rights of Africans.

1913 Passage of Native Land Act - the economic foundation of apartheid. Africans were restricted to designated areas, moved off of locations not designated specifically for their use, and forced into the wage labor market.

1919 ANC launches first demonstration against the pass system.

1923 Passage of Native Urban Areas Act - Africans denied rights in urban areas of white settlement. Africans were considered units of labor to be used as needed and returned to the reserves when the needs of the state were satisfied.

1926 Passage of the Color Bar Act – gave support to the concept of job reservation for whites; it ameliorated fears of whites regarding possible replacement by Africans. Three years earlier, whites had rebelled at the prospect of losing job security.

1927 Native Administrative Act – placed all Africans under executive authority of the government, thus bypassing parliamentary procedures.

1942 Youth League of ANC established to harness new energy for the movement.

1948 Victory of the Afrikaner Nation Party (Boer Nationalists) leads to consolidation and strengthening of racial legislation under the policy which would be publicized as "apartheid" – a Boer word meaning to separate. Various acts provided for limitation on African movement into urban areas, forced removal of Africans from areas of settlement no longer approved by the government, government classification or re-classification of racially exclusive areas, exercise of local government rights in areas known as Bantustans or reserves, and prohibition of inter-racial social contact, *e.g.*, mixed marriages, segregation in sports, theaters, public accommodations, etc.

1950 Suppression of Communism Act – Police state tactics used to control resistance to draconian legislation. All who advocated change toward racial equality were labeled communist. It allowed banning and additional restrictions on movement.

1952 Massive display of African resistance (The Defiance Campaign) throughout urban and rural areas.

1953 The Bantu Education Act enforced principle of separate systems for Africans. It was designed to eliminate expectations of acceptance and position in European society and end practices in education thought to conflict with the goal of white supremacy. An ANC campaign against this form of education was launched.

1958 Pan-African Congress (PAC) organized to push for an all-African, anti-apartheid movement.

1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act sets up "independence" for the Bantustans. Some social segregation policies were relaxed. This "reform" of apartheid is labeled "Separate Development." Bantu education principle was extended to higher education. Five new racially exclusive universities were established.

1960 Sharpeville Massacre – Sixty-nine Africans killed (most shot in back) by police during a peaceful demonstration. This action aroused world opinion against the newly declared Republic of South Africa which was forced out of British Commonwealth of Nations. Albert Luthule, president of ANC and advocate of nonviolent resistance was given the Nobel Peace Prize. He called for international sanctions against the government.

1961 ANC and PAC give up the nonviolent approach and adopted a campaign of armed resistance and violence to meet violence; both were banned. The United Nations General Assembly declared South Africa a threat to international peace and security.

1964 Imprisonment of Nelson Mandela.

1969 South African Students Organization (SASO) formed by Steven Biko and others helped initiate a Black Consciousness movement among nonwhites which rejected all forms of cooperation with the government's apartheid policies. A guerilla struggle led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) was started against South Africa's continued illegal control over Namibia.

1973 Massive strikes by African workers led to recognition of some trade union rights.

1976 Soweto Uprising - Massive spontaneous demonstrations of African discontent led by youth and influenced by the ANC, PAC, and the Black Consciousness movement. Continuous student protest against Bantu education was begun.

1977 Steven Biko (SASO Leader) killed during detention by police. Most Black consciousness groups were banned. Government attempts to divide Africans by allowing some reforms (more privileged Blacks given right to long term leases for houses and some social segregation eased) were continued.

1978 The Anzania Peoples Organization was formed. It assumed leadership of the various Black Consciousness groups.

1979 African University students organized the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). Black labor unions were legalized.

1980-1982 Various education related laws and supposed reforms of the political aspects of apartheid were the focus of sustained protests against apartheid. The Government reacted to increasingly sophisticated acts of sabotage by the ANC by mounting attacks on ANC bases in neighboring countries.

1983 The United Democratic Front (UDF) under the leadership of Allan Boesak and others was formed to oppose apartheid constitutional reforms which continued the denial of participation to "Bantu" but extended minor roles to colored and Asians.

1984 African protests against apartheid political structures incorporated in the "reforms" and individuals associated with the reforms increased. The

strengthened African resistance incurred violent police repression. Bishop Desmond Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and he called for sanctions as did his predecessor, Chief Albert Luthuli.

1985 Labor organizers form the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) – the largest federation of black workers in South African history. Rent boycotts and civil unrest spread to more than fifty townships throughout South Africa. The government declared a state of emergency.

1986 The National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was formed to urge students to end the class boycott and undertake other forms of protest. Increasing violence and insecurity lead the United States to apply sanctions, major U.S. firms to withdraw, and colleges and businesses to divest holdings related to the South African economy. A new state of emergency was declared. Legal repression increased to allow detention without trial even of children and unlimited police freedom in areas of "unrest."

1987 Mounting university protests against government policies which set conditions on the granting of state subsidies occurred. The government action was taken to prevent university support of African aspirations. Govan A. Mbeki was released from prison at the age of 77 after 24 years of incarceration. He vowed to work for a peaceful solution, but ultimately his pronouncements were banned. South African trained army led a counter-coup in Transkei (a former Bantustan) against alleged influence of communists in the first coup.

1988 UDF and other major anti-apartheid organizations were banned. Alan Paton, internationally known opponent of apartheid, died. Violent resistance continues, including violence among Africans over local political control and collaboration with the apartheid regime. More legislation passed to end some forms of social and economic segregation, but the spirit of apartheid, the maintenance of white supremacy, still survives.

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*by* Charlotte T. Morgan

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## GLOSSARY

**Africans:** The indigenous people of South Africa, also known as blacks. South African government records have also used the terms "native" and "Bantu."

**Afrikaner:** A descendant of the Europeans, primarily Dutch, who came to South Africa beginning in 1652 as either indentured servants or employees of the Dutch East India Company or settlers. They have chosen the name for themselves, and it is symbolic of their sense of historical identity and their role as South Africa's "white tribe." Their language which evolved from 17th century Dutch is called Afrikaans.

**ANC:** The African National Congress, which was formed in 1912 and banned in 1960 after the Sharpville massacre.

**Apartheid:** The term, of Afrikaans origin (literal meaning "a part from"), used for the form of segregation practiced in South Africa. The reformulated policy considered by some to be reform is known as "separate development."

**Bantu:** People who speak an African language. The term was developed by linguists to refer to those Africans whose languages had a specific structure, whose culture was based on cattle-keeping, and who lived in the lower half of the continent. It was used to distinguish them from the Africans of the West coast whom the linguists called Negroes. "Bantu" was adopted by the South African government to refer to non-Europeans who are neither Asian or Colored. Bantustan refers to the reserves or so-called homelands set aside for blacks.

**Boer:** (pronounced, though not to be confused with, "boor") another name for Afrikaner.

**Colored:** A person of mixed African/European ancestry. Many individuals in this category are descendants of unions between Europeans and Khoi-Khoi (also referred to as Hottentots – considered derogatory by today's standards) during the formative years of the State.

**SADF:** South African Defence Force.