

**REPORT
OF
IUS
SOLIDARITY
MISSION
TO
SOUTH
AFRICA**



**Paul
Blomfield**

Paul Blomfield, the representative of the IUS Secretariat on the solidarity mission to South Africa, is a member of the Executive Committee of NUS (UK). The IUS would like to thank the ANC Youth and Student Section for their co-operation in ensuring the success of this visit.

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Introduction

The victories of the people of Guine-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola respectively, led by the PAIGC, FRELIMO and MPLA over Portuguese colonialism and international imperialism fundamentally changed the situation in Southern Africa. New impetus has been given to the struggle of the people and students of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe who, today, are forcing the fascist regimes onto the defensive.

Imperialist and apartheid conspiracies against the Peoples Republic of Angola were decisively defeated by the Angolan people and students backed by international solidarity. The myth of the invincibility of the military might of the racist regime was shattered.

However, recent developments demonstrate that the racist regimes, supported by NATO and the multinational corporations, seek to perpetuate apartheid, racism and neo-colonialism perpetuating the oppression of millions of Africans. Events such as the Soweto massacres; the creation of Bantustans and the so-called 'independence' of Transkei on October 26th; the stage-managed constitutional talks on Namibia; the mass murder of refugees in Mozambique by the Smith regime and the Kissinger initiatives, aimed at a neo-colonial solution in Zimbabwe - all these are further evidence that the racist minority regimes are determined to maintain their economic and political power.

Based on the resolutions of the 11th IUS Congress the IUS Secretariat in collaboration with member and friendly organisations has carried out a number of activities in solidarity with the struggles of the people and students of Southern Africa led by ANC (South Africa), ANC (Zimbabwe) and SWAPO (Namibia).

Amongst these were the Symposium on Apartheid, held in Dar es Salaam, the international student solidarity meeting in Accra, publication of numerous stickers, posters and articles, and the delegation to South Africa.

This trip was widely covered by various news media in socialist countries, capitalist countries in Europe and in Africa and Asia. The preliminary report has been widely circulated.

The trip, which was made by Paul Blomfield, a member of the NUSUK Executive was one of the most important undertakings by the IUS Secretariat in strengthening its solidarity with the people and students of Southern Africa, and in implementing the IUS Congress mandate.

The IUS Secretariat, on behalf of millions of students, expresses great gratitude to Paul Blomfield for his commitment in fulfilling such an important mission, relevant to the struggle of the South African people and students, which was highly successful in meeting and discussing with students and people involved in the struggle against apartheid. It was in appreciation of this commitment to the cause of democracy and social progress that Paul Blomfield was awarded the IUS Diploma.

We hope that this pamphlet and the ideas it expresses will be given maximum publicity by those who read it. This in itself is a great contribution to solidarity activity in support of the struggle of the people and students of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa for political, economic, social and cultural freedom.



Programme

The visit, sponsored by the International Union of Students, received a warm welcome from all sections of the oppressed people of South Africa as a manifestation of the solidarity of the international student movement with the struggle in which they are engaged.

During the ten days I spent in the country I was able to talk with, not only leading activists, but a wide range of ordinary people.

Johannesburg (10th - 13th August)

I arrived as new uprisings were breaking out in the East and West Rand. There was an immediately obvious tension evident just in walking through the streets.

I held meetings with Manas Buthelezi, Chairman of the Black Parents Association and had intended to talk with other members - but they had been detained - a meeting arranged with Winnie Mandela was overtaken by her detention.

I attended the trial of ex-NUSAS leaders and talked later to some of the defendants.

I talked with activists from the ANC and the Human Rights Committee, leading black and white youth, students and workers.

Cape Town (13th - 17th August)

Soon after the black townships of Nyanga, Lanja and Gungleton near Cape Town erupted, I travelled there. On arrival I held discussions with Theo Kotze, regional director of the Christian Institute and travelled to the coloured University of the Western Cape, where students had undertaken major demonstration actions and burnt down the law library. Despite the fact that many activists had been detained, a new leadership had emerged and we talked of the mood of students and future actions. I spoke with four NUSAS leaders about the right wing shift in the organisation and met Dirk Kemp, President of the University of Cape Town SRC, a Progressive Reform Party (PRP) supporter, and leading figure in NUSAS.

I visited Crossroads, the coloured area on the Cape Flats and attended the memorial service of the former SASO and BPC leader Mapetla Mohap, who had died in police detention a couple of weeks before, where I held further discussions with SASO activists continuing over the following days.

I met with Executive members of the Black Women's Federation and Western Cape Workers Advice Bureau as well as local PRP members.

East London (17th - 18th August)

I flew to East London to see black consciousness leaders in nearby King Williamstown, but found out on arrival that they had been detained only hours earlier. I met the 'Daily Despatch' editor, Donald Woods, who had two days earlier been named as a white supporter of black consciousness, and held discussions with a number of journalists from other publications.

I also attended the congress of the United Party.

As I left East London I discovered that the Security Police were aware of my activities and subsequent meetings throughout the visit were consequently made more difficult.

Durban (18th - 19th August)

A meeting arranged with representatives of SASM could not take place due to a large number of security policemen at the rendezvous.

However, I was able to meet members of SASO, black lawyers and workers involved in the black trade union movement.

Johannesburg (19th - 20th August)

Constant surveillance from the security police made it impossible for me to attend a meeting with representatives of the Soweto SRC. When, however, I managed to lose them, I had further meetings with ANC activists, members of the Human Rights Committee and of the Christian Institute.

Everyone I spoke to from the black community welcomed the initiative of the IUS in making the visit as a concrete contribution to the struggle for a free South Africa.

Historical Background

The apartheid system grew out of the colonial past of South Africa. The violent suppression of the African people by first the Dutch invaders in 1652 (now called Afrikaaners) and then the British in 1800 commenced the oppression of the African people which has continued to this date.

Out of the colonial system developed a more systematic and more vicious form of exploitation - apartheid. Although developed as a primarily Afrikaaner ideology after the success of the Nationalist Party in 1948 it was implemented by the whole white ruling class.

The history of the struggle against colonialism and against apartheid is a proud one. The African National Congress (ANC South Africa) which was formed in 1912, has been at the forefront of that struggle adapting its activities to the conditions of the time. Its members have made enormous sacrifices in the liberation struggle. The mass activities of the ANC have forced the racist regime to introduce more and more oppressive methods from the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 to the introduction of the Terrorism Act allowing indefinite detention without trial. In 1952 the ANC with the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) were in the Defiance Campaign demanding 'one man - one vote'.

In 1955 the Freedom Charter was adopted by the Congress Alliance which consisted of the ANC and other democratic bodies. The 'Freedom Charter' laid the basis for democratic South Africa based on the principle that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white'.

Despite vicious suppression the mass activities of the ANC continued to threaten the Pretoria regime and in 1960 following the Sharpeville massacre the ANC and the splinter-movement, Pan-African Congress (PAC) were banned.

The launching of the underground armed struggle in 1961 by Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the ANC was a historic decision. Despite the most difficult conditions, the arrest of its main leadership, and the might of the South African armed forces the ANC has advanced.

The advances in the rest of Africa especially the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Guine Bissau, Mozambique and Angola have created additional positive conditions. These advances have also inspired confidence in the oppressed people of South Africa and provided conditions for more and more diverse forms of actions.

In 1969 black students turned their backs on the predominantly liberal NUSAS to form their own organisation the South African Student Organisation (SASO) which would meet the demands of black students. Although the history of SASO and other organisations set up at a similar time (eg. the Black Peoples Convention - BPC) has been short it has been steeped in the most bitter mass struggle.

SASO has had the objective of uniting all black students and this has also meant overcoming the racial and tribal divisions within the black community which have been established and exacerbated by the apartheid regime over decades. From the very beginning SASO activists were subjected to intimidation and SASO representatives banned from certain colleges. The closing of the black University of the North, Turfloop, after an anti-apartheid speech by student leader Abraham Tiro led the widespread action in other black colleges and later in some white English speaking universities. Those actions sent a shiver of fear through the apartheid bosses and early in 1973 they arrested virtually the entire SASO leadership. Some NUSAS leaders were also arrested or banned at this time. Since then as new SASO leaderships have appeared they have been either imprisoned or banned by the Government. In 1974 SASO's permanent organiser Abraham Tiro was assassinated by parcel bomb in Botswana. Despite all these difficulties as this pamphlet shows SASO are today an important force, indeed the major force amongst black students, actively organising against the apartheid system.

The events in Soweto illustrate the militancy and confidence now felt amongst the oppressed majority in South Africa. Within the context of the liberation struggle led by the ANC it is clear that the ANC Youth and Student Section is playing a major role in directing all the various aspects of the important role being played by young workers, students and school students.

Popular Resistance

A wave of popular opposition to the racist system broke out on June 15th led by the youth and students of Soweto. Ostensibly, the issue was opposition to the forced imposition of the Afrikaans language as a medium for teaching in the black schools. The protests, however, reflected much more than a resentment to being taught in an alien tongue. To the schoolchildren of Soweto, this was just another symbol of the oppression of the apartheid state. It was not enough for the racist government to destroy the black community politically and economically; they were also attempting to destroy them culturally, to take away their dignity as a people. The reaction was swift; an eye-witness of the events described the first two days.

"The morning of 16th June 1976 dawned well. It was calm and peaceful when train commuters rushed to various stations to catch trains to work - least suspecting that there would be any unrest in Soweto.

About 10 a.m. I drove from the city back to Soweto. On arrival in Dube, I met a 'swarm' of schoolchildren (Primary school) with ages ranging from 10 - 15 years walking in procession down the streets in a peaceful protest against the use of Afrikaans language as a medium of instruction in their schools.

As I drove into their midst, they made way and stood on both sides of the road - forming a 'mock' guard of honour, with their fists raised up and shouting POWER! at the top of their voices. They raised the protest posters made out of exercise book covers, torn card-boxes, white materials, etc. They were really in an extremely jovial mood. The whole atmosphere was quite a happy one - depicting the playful attitude and age of kids. They enjoyed the moment and of course, I enjoyed driving through the 'POWERFUL' guard of honour.

Some of the posters read: 'DOWN WITH AFRIKAANS', 'AFRIKAANS IS DIRTY', 'WE DON'T WANT TO LEARN AFRIKAANS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF AFRIKAANS', 'TO HELL WITH AFRIKAANS', 'BLACKS ARE NOT DUSTBINS - AFRIKAANS STINKS', 'AFRIKAANS IS TRIBAL LANGUAGE', etc.

Then I drove back into my town - almost forgetting that there was anything like a protest by kids. On my way to town, passing through Orlando West, next to the High School, I met a convoy of police cars racing to the scene of the demonstration. It was the sight of Police and their cars that infuriated the kids. Police

fired shots into the air ordering the pupils to disperse. Kids replied back with the throwing of stones at the Police. Police retaliated by firing at the kids - killing the initial 4 pupils, including a 13 year old kid. This sparked off the riots Within minutes cars - police cars, and commercial vehicles were stoned, damaged and burnt by the students. The first day, 16th June 1976, of the riot had started. It took the pattern of violent destruction aimed at the police and all Government property.

On the first day as I drove around the townships,

- i) I was several times stopped, rioters asked if the car belonged to me, and allowed to pass with the show of the Power sign.
- ii) The rioters stated that they were looking for White man's cars - which they destroyed to ashes. Thus nearly all commercial vehicles were destroyed or badly damaged. Drivers of these vehicles, were pulled out of the vehicles, not hurt, unless they resisted.
- iii) No school, no church, no clinic, no shop was damaged nor burnt down despite the fact that some were quite adjacent to Municipal or Bottle Stores.
- iv) All administrative offices, Post offices, Beer halls and Bottle stores were destroyed. The rioting kids were quite clear of where to spend their fury which was quite inflamed by the presence of police and their shooting and killing of black kids. The destruction spread as the rioting got out of hand. Most of the buildings destroyed were done in broad daylight from 12 noon onward into the night.
- v) The so-called 'looting', on the first day of the riot was really committed on the Bottle Stores. I saw rioters taking out beer bottles in cartons and breaking them on the pavements. Some were shouting 'LESS LIQUOR, BETTER EDUCATION', 'WE WANT MORE SCHOOLS AND NOT BEERHALLS!', and of course others helped themselves to the booty. It was at this point of burning any building that was a symbol of Government oppression and the breaking of Bottle stores that the police started to shoot indiscriminately, - mowing down quite a number of teenagers and by-standers. Hundreds of youths were killed. I was, personally, nearly shot down when I started taking photos of police and the smouldering buildings. At the Dube Office

and Bank, my camera was taken by police and the film was destroyed.

The night of 16th June was marked by Soweto being turned into an inferno of the burning 'official' buildings. No residential houses were burnt down, and no Black officials, teachers, leaders, etc. were harmed. We moved around freely fearing no evil - except from police who even shot at the car of the President of the Black Peoples Convention, Mr. Kenneth Rachidi, and also shot and killed a local teacher, Mr. Kgongwane who was driving home.

The second day, 17th June 1976 was marked by uncontrollable fury and burning hostility of the people. It was on this day that certain shops were destroyed. The rioters went to shop-keepers and asked them to show their trading licences. If the shop was found to be owned or partly owned by a white man, it was burnt down forthwith. All shops which were suspected to be owned by or in partnership with whites were destroyed. Shopkeepers (Black) were not harmed unless they resisted.

Police, also, assumed another attitude. They shot at random, and at anyone who would raise a fist and shout 'Power', into their face. I got into one area of the Township where the residents alleged that the young white police (average 18 - 25 years) shot and burnt the fallen corpses on the spot. I didn't see this personally, but the rumour was quite strong. The riot then spread to the rest of the Reef townships - Alexandra, Krugersdorp, Springs, Germiston, Pretoria etc. The chain reaction was quite spectacular.

We, (BAWU, BCP, BPC, SASM and SASO) put our field workers on the field to help the wounded and fallen in 'battle'. They assisted quite a number of brave Black medical doctors who abandoned their surgeries to administer unto the wounded. The duty of the field workers was, also to count the dead, and record how they died. I personally spent four hours at the Orlando Police Station counting the dead bodies as they were loaded into Police trucks to the Government mortuary. Within that period I counted well over 150 persons - mostly teenagers below the age of 19 years. I noticed that the majority died of bullet wounds - including a seven year old naked kid who was shot in the head.

I saw the wounded being brought into the Police station. They all had gun wounds, I counted over 200 of these.

They were detained at the Police station - pending charges varying from 'Assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm', 'looting' and 'sabotage'. I saw these charges on some of the charge sheets. Some Black police collaborated and co-operated with me in giving out some of the facts.

A report from some of our field workers was that: We estimated that well over 500 people were killed in Soweto alone on the first and second day of the riot - not counting the wounded."

Soweto residents told me of the extent of the police action - of a mass grave in the middle of the township, of children laid on the ground and marched over by troops, of anything up to 1000 children, students and working people slain by the security forces in Soweto alone. Even in the face of this repression the peoples' confidence grew and hours after the first events in Soweto, the township of Kagiso erupted. A resident said:

"In Kagiso the unrest started at about 3.30 p.m. on 17th June 1976. The whole thing was spontaneous. The police had apparently heard of a white man who was being beaten up by a mob of students who were on a short school break.

When the policemen came to the scene with camouflage uniforms and armed with sub-machine guns and F11 rifles, the number of students had increased and the atmosphere was tense. Although the white salesman had escaped in his window-shattered car, the police provoked the students by using teargas on them. Their teargas was replied with stones and bricks from the students which sent them running into their vans and driving to the police station.

By 6 p.m. there was general anger among workers who had arrived and the students who were shouting slogans and the waving of the clenched fist as a show of solidarity. By 7 p.m. beerhalls and bottle stores were broken into, looted and put to fire. At 8 p.m. police reinforcements arrived and started shooting at people who were near the beerhalls and the bottle stores. Three people died on this night and many were taken to hospital wounded.

Friday saw the death of two more young men who, the

police claim, were hit by stray bullets - during the day. There was no rioting of any kind where the two men were brutally killed.

Many people have disappeared and they can't be traced anywhere. There is still suspicion that they may have been killed by police and put to fire with petrol poured on them. This suspicion is very strong."

After Kagiso, Alexandra, Lanja, Nyanja, Gungleton and other townships around the country rose up in an unprecedented wave of popular opposition. The Afrikaans language issue had burst a bubble of deep bitterness and resentment in the black community after decades of constant repression by the regime and denial of fundamental human rights.

Having taken the initiative the people were not to be easily halted either by the brute force of the regime of their so-called 'representatives' on the Urban Bantu Council. (UBC)

At a mass meeting of 3000 parents, students and other members of the community, the UBC failed completely to win the confidence of Soweto residents on their handling of the Afrikaans language issue - the initiative passed to the community and student organisations.

The students were no longer alone in their struggle. Despite the massive problems of poverty-level wages, no trade union rights and mass unemployment that they faced, workers came out rapidly in support. The detention of hundreds of students not only infuriated their fellows, but added to the wave of anger in the community as a whole. So when the students called for a strike on 4th August to demand the release of detainees, white Johannesburg was crippled as tens of thousands of workers stayed at home. A student spoke of the response:

"Once more Soweto has gone up in arms. The students' posters have gone up again. Their call this time is:
RELEASE OUR BROTHERS!

Students gave a warning the previous day to all workers that there would be no going to work. They distributed themselves in small groups at all railway stations to notify workers of their intentions. Buses, taxis and private car drivers were told to stay at home in sympathy with those in detention.

In the morning of 4th August, I drove to all stations to observe developments. From Naledi station to Mzimhlope (8 stations) the response was excellent.

No commuters boarded trains. They obeyed the students call. No violence or intimidation was used on the workers. They all complied at their own free-will. They understood the position. Crowds gathered at the various stations for curiosity sake. Anti-riot police came in their "hippo" cars. They dispersed the crowds with teargas. Teargas bombs were thrown at the by-standers and at the marching students.

I joined the marching students, about 25,000, for about 6 kilometres towards the Johannesburg city. The student march was aimed at going to John Vorster square, where the detained were kept. The march was quite peaceful and jovial until the crowd reached New Canada station on the outskirts of Soweto. The police blocked the march. Students insisted on passing, police opened fire - killing 3 people and wounding 18 students. The students dispersed in all directions. They later re-gathered and then marched back into Soweto. At this point, they were in quite a vengeful mood. In retaliation to the police shooting, wounding and killing of some children, the crowd marched to the houses of the Black security policeman and put them to fire, to avenge the blood of those killed by the police bullets. 3 policemen's houses were burnt down. An attempt was made on the house of the so-called Soweto mayor Mr. E. Makhaya, who together with his bunch of system stooges had misrepresented students' demands to the Minister of Justice.

Despite this provocation by police, still no damage on either private or government property was done. The burning down of the above houses was in revenge of the police shooting.

Towards the end of the day, all went quiet. Students went to their various homes.

On the following day, all seemed quiet and some students assembled at one local high school to discuss and review the happenings. More than 5,000 students had gathered. At about midday, police squads drove to the venue of the meeting. They ordered students to disperse. Students walked out of the school and started another march. Police opened fire. They fired teargas and bullets - killing one student and wounding 13 children.

The firing by police is the real cause of the ugly mood that is now reigning in Soweto. I cannot predict how it will end. But, I think we are heading for a real bloody confrontation. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Kruger seemed to be determined to take a hard line.

Students are just as determined. Soweto residents are getting bitter."

After the second day of the strike the Minister of Justice and Police, Jimmy Kruger, 'challenged' the Black Parents Association (BPA) to prove its claim to leadership by ending the uprisings. The black people turned the challenge back on the regime. I discussed the situation with BPA Chairman Manas Buthelezi, who said quite firmly that it was only the government who could end the unrest by removing the root cause and taking up the grievances of the people. The response to his challenge soon followed. I arrived at his office on the morning of 12th August to hear that he had been detained along with the rest of the BPA Executive. The police later released him apologising for the 'administrative mistake', but Winnie Mandela (wife of ANC leader Nelson Mandela) and the other BPA members were kept in prison without charge or reason. The workers too gave their answer to Kruger. A statement issued by the Black Allied Workers' Union stated:-

"We call upon Mr. Kruger and the government to prove their responsible leadership to the whole country and the world and:-

- 1) Remove all police units from the scene of students' protest march.
- 2) Receive Black parents deputation and view the students memorandum objectively without prejudice.
- 3) Start consulting with the peoples' real leaders - and not the Government paid so-called leaders of the Homelands, on matters of Black education and the future of Black schools in this country.
- 4) Black workers demand all obnoxious laws that are cause to racial hostility and friction in this country to be revoked."

The unity forged between students and workers by the events will not be halted by the repression. A woman from the African township of Langa near Cape Town described to me the arrest of a neighbour's son and the fate of his eight year old brother who went to the police station to demand his release and was shot down. She appealed, "We seek only freedom, we seek only peace, why do they kill us?" Such acts are those of a regime desperate to cling on to privilege and power as the tide of history turns with the peoples' recognition of their own strength.

Role of Students

It is the black students of South Africa who are at the centre of the uprisings. It is not only that they struck the first blow in Soweto, but they had been working for long before that establishing the pre-conditions for the mass support their actions won. Through the black consciousness movement the South African Students Organisation (SASO) in the Universities and Colleges and the South African Students' Movement (SASM) in the schools have worked to generate a new level of understanding in the community as a whole. They are engaged in health, literacy and community development projects within the townships which aim to politicise the people. I discussed with students the disease among children in Crossroads, the squatter camp accommodating thousands of homeless blacks in the Cape flats. Instead of providing them with health kits the students analysed the source of the disease and presented the facts to the people around which they could agitate. The role of the projects was clear - not welfare programmes to help people accommodate their social situation, but educative initiatives intending to provide them with the tools to transform it. The ideas promoted by students have channelled the people's feelings in new and positive directions.

On the campuses themselves, students reacted clearly to the events. On 17th July those at the black Fort Hare University held a mass meeting to discuss their responses to the continuing disturbances in Soweto. There were two options - a 'sit-in' or a withdrawal of students en masse in protest against the Bantu Education Scheme. The lengthy debate was interrupted as police broke into the meeting. Quickly, it was decided to adjourn until the next day. The following morning students found notices from the acting Rector to the effect that there would be no mass meeting because there was 'tension amongst members of the student body'. The students ignored the threat and decided to stage a protest. One reported:-

"As we were marching towards the womens residence we saw police forming a barricade with automatic rifles we passed on and ignored them. Before we could reach the womens residence the police starting chasing us throwing teargas At that stage Fort Hare was completely surrounded by an army of police. The male students were again chased by police and were held prisoners in the Great Hall five of them were picked up and detained."

The University authorities responded by closing the institution and sending the students home. At home they received an edict from Mr. Coetee, the Acting Rector, laying down harsh conditions for those returning when the University re-opened on 16th August. The letter they received laid down six measures:-

1. "No mass meetings of students will be permitted for the rest of this year.
2. All regulations will be strictly applied.
3. Students undertake to refrain from any violent, disorderly or subversive action.
4. The University authorities will arrange for regular police patrols on and around the campus for as long a period as is deemed necessary to prevent any recurrence of damage to University property and to ensure the personal safety of students and staff.
5. All indemnity deposits already paid for 1976 will be forfeited to pay for damage already caused to University property.

A new indemnity deposit of R50 will be payable in advance by all students seeking re-admission.

6. The Rector is authorised to close the University for the rest of the year if circumstances arise which in his judgement justify such action in the interests of the University and in such event, there will be no refund or remission of fees."

On 14th August I visited the coloured university of the Western Cape where only a few days previously, students had burned down the law faculty during demonstrations protesting against the Bantu Education system. Many of their leaders had been detained but already a new leadership had emerged, developed by events. We discussed the events and the demands being posed by the mass of students. It was made clear that the protest was not only directed against the sub-standard quality of higher education they received, but against the whole apartheid system of which that was just a manifestation. Feelings were running high as the students prepared for the following week's boycott. On the Sunday I joined some of them and hundreds of local people at a memorial meeting for Mapetla Mohapi: the ex-SASO leader who had been killed by the police while in detention. Speakers from the African National Congress, SASO and the local community were given a tumultuous reception as they spoke of the need to overthrow the government and the imperialist interests which fed on it, to build a new society based on justice democracy and freedom. Again the message was clear - exploitation would not end with apartheid unless a new system was established giving the people real control over their lives.

White Student Organisations

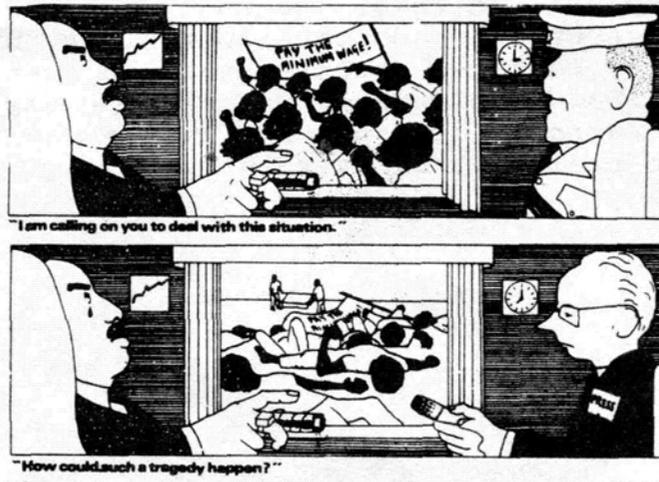
A clear example of apartheid exists in education. Although the white population is the minority, the vast majority of students in higher education are white, and education is segregated even within the black population along racist and tribal lines.

White students in higher education are taught through the medium of Afrikaans or English and there are two corresponding national student organisations, Afrikaaner Studenten Bond (ASB) and the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).

The ASB has consistently supported the apartheid policies of the Nationalist Government and is strongly influenced by Afrikaaner ideology. It has never existed as a mass organisation, but has consistently put forward reactionary and racist ideas that assist the regime in minimising student opposition amongst white students of Afrikaner origin.

NUSAS, on the other hand, has had periods of mass activity, and has at certain times in the past adopted positive positions. Regrettably, discussions with the NUSAS leadership revealed that the progressive position taken in the early 70's has been decisively undermined. The attacks by the Government, especially from 1973 onwards have distorted and corrupted many of the advances made at the beginning of the decade. The arrest of many leading NUSAS officials, especially its President and Executive and the naming of NUSAS as an "Affected Organisation" have removed from its ranks those most dedicated to the elimination of the apartheid system. The privileged position of the mass of white students has meant that once under political attack they have returned to their liberal and apolitical posture. In real terms this has resulted in NUSAS membership rapidly declining and its present leadership failing to challenge the apartheid system.

Small groups and individual white students still carry on the fighting under the most difficult conditions of police harassment, possible detention and social rejection. Such groups work closely with black organisations and recognise that it is the oppressed majority rather than isolated groupings of whites, who are and will be leading the struggle.



Significance of the Uprising

Soweto, like Sharpeville, came as a timely reminder to the world of the vicious oppression of the apartheid regime and the lengths to which white supremacy is prepared to go, to maintain its dominance. Within South Africa itself, though, the uprisings have been a political milestone of a qualitatively different and more significant nature. They have symbolised a new level of determination and consciousness among the oppressed people. There is a wide understanding not only of the oppression, but of the nature of that oppression amongst youth, students and working people.

There is a clear conception of the need for unity amongst all sections of the oppressed people. This was clearly manifest in Cape Town recently where Africans and Coloureds united to take their protests out of the townships and into the heart of the white state, demonstrating in the streets of the cities. The coloured community thus have finally severed their links with white aspirations and firmly placed themselves on the side of the liberation struggle. 'Tribal' divisions are being undermined as the effectiveness of a united black force has proved itself in political action.

The so-called 'independence' of the Transkei and the Bantustan 'solution' is utterly rejected; firstly because of the inhuman mass deportations, brutally described by G. F. van L. Foweman of the racist government as:- "The African labour force must not be burdened with the superfluous appendages such as wives, children and dependants who can not provide service."

The rejection is also based on a clear and growing assessment of the 'divide and rule' intent of the South African government by splitting the people into their so-called tribal homelands.

Alongside the rejection of the bantustans is also a growing isolation of the Bantustan 'leaders'. Gatsha Buthelezi of the Kwazulu who, at one stage, commanded considerable support among wide sections of black people is now rejected following his calls for an end to student initiatives. The 'Mayor' of Soweto, Mr. Makhoya, Chairman of the Urban Bantu Council, was forced to flee the township with his wife and belongings. Chief Kaiser Matanzima has been forced to detain the growing number of opponents to his regime in the Transkei. The leader of the Coloured Representative Council in Cape Town needs a heavily guarded residence. The message is clear, as a man from the Coloured Dis-

trict of Athlone in Cape Town told me - "They are government stooges."

The people are clear that they want more than just a change in the colour of the faces in government. Their anger is directed not against whites as such, but against the apartheid system and the economic forces of western imperialism that have sustained it. A black porter in a Johannesburg Hotel summed up the feelings of many people I spoke to when he talked of US Secretary of State Kissinger's initiative in Southern Africa saying:- "We know why Kissinger has moved now - if he had any real concern he could have acted long ago - he sees American interests threatened by the uprisings. The people will not accept any neo-colonial solution."

There is a deep bitterness towards western support for the racist regime. The support provided by French arms, British investment, German trade, American diplomacy etc. The people realise that they must free themselves not only from their racist rulers, but from the forces of international capitalism and imperialism.

There are many factors that have led to this new understanding. The victories of the MPLA and FRELIMO in Angola and Mozambique were closely followed. People told me of crowds gathered around television sets cheering the pictures of MPLA and Cuban soldiers and booing the South Africans. The advances of the liberation movement within Zimbabwe, the increase in SWAPO actions in Namibia were mentioned as further inspiration to the people, clearly portraying the advance of the forces of peace, progress and self-determination. But above all, the continuing and growing activities of the African National Congress within South Africa has emphasised the real possibilities for liberation. The changing situation around South Africa, speeded the development of the black consciousness movement. The leaders of the movement to whom I spoke were clear on their role - to take on the hegemony of apartheid ideology, to challenge the cultural and psychological oppression of the black community and prepare for the political tasks which lie ahead.

The significant contribution to the struggle for decades, but particularly today, comes from the continuous work of the African National Congress. Obviously, as an underground movement, deeply embedded amongst the people and their organisations, it is difficult to see ANC activities at first glance. However, it becomes obvious that political guidance to the overall struggle comes from the liberation movement - ANC slogans are given widespread prominence - and the people regard the leadership of ANC as the leadership of the entire people, especially those like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulo, Andrew Mlangeni and Wilton Nkwanzi imprisoned by the regime on Roben Island.

The new confidence and understanding amongst the people is such that the vast wave of detentions and murders cannot quell the resistance. Each new leadership arrested, each new example of brutality only strengthens their resolve. The regime may be able to postpone the coming revolution, but they cannot avoid it. The mass of the people are determined and united.



International Student Solidarity

The resolution on Southern Africa adopted at the 11th IUS Congress (see Appendix) lays the basis of the international student solidarity campaign.

Today, every tactic available to the capitalist forces is being used to try to defend imperialism's interest in Southern Africa. But the voice of the oppressed people of Southern Africa has been heard throughout the world, giving strength and courage to all those fighting the twin evils of imperialism and racism. Within the capitalist countries themselves the voice of progressive forces is gaining strength as the attempts of imperialism to thwart the aspirations of the liberation movements is further exposed.

There is an immense contribution that international solidarity can make to the liberation of Southern Africa through political and financial support for the liberation movements and through attacking and undermining the actions of the imperialist forces and their agents.

It is only the support of the capitalist countries that has given the racist regimes the ability to oppress the black majority. Whilst spouting its apparent indignation at the excesses of apartheid, capitalism is each day reaping fat rewards from the self-same system. The advances of the liberation struggle have forced the Western Governments to change their tactics and openly advocate the ending of minority rule. It is by this tactic that they aim to maintain the forces of imperialism in Southern Africa and create diversions and divisions within the liberation movements.

The most urgent solidarity task facing the international student movement is to intensify support for the forces struggling against apartheid, especially the African National Congress (South Africa) and its allies.

Such solidarity provides not only urgently needed material aid but also gives masses of students throughout the world a clear understanding and commitment to the struggle for peace and democracy in Southern Africa which can only be achieved by the decisive defeat of imperialism and racism.

The contribution of international solidarity to the people of Angola at the beginning of 1976 is a valuable example. Such

solidarity, which was at a very high level in the student movement, assisted the MPLA to defeat imperialist and racist aggression. By limiting the ability of the imperialist countries to act as openly as they would without the intervention of the people and putting pressure on governments in many parts of the world, international solidarity contributed to the victory of the Angolan people over the aggressors and forcing world wide recognition of the Peoples Republic of Angola.

The government of the USA and other capitalist countries know the power of international solidarity and will constantly seek to confuse, divide and divert it. Political consciousness in many countries means that these lies and deceptions will be immediately rejected - but in many others, especially the capitalist countries, the state, with its control over the mass media, will need to be constantly restricted in its support for racism in Southern Africa.

There are numerous examples of national student organisations responding to general or specific needs of the liberation movements. The struggle for liberation requires diverse forms of support ranging from support for refugees, medical aid, propaganda and military needs.

In thwarting the various conspiracies of imperialism, the international solidarity movement has and will play a critical role in support of the liberation movements. The isolation of the racist regime in Southern Africa, especially South Africa, is a critical necessity in weakening the basis of imperialist support. The tasks of the liberation movements would, as a result, become a little less difficult. This places a major responsibility on the solidarity organisation and student organisations.

Firstly there is the necessity to prevent any renewal of Vorster's 'detente' policy and prevent the apartheid regime presenting an image which attempts to hide its obvious violent and oppressive character.

Secondly, there is the necessity to extend the boycott of apartheid South Africa in every field. This includes working for every government to support mandatory sanctions at the UN. The boycott of South Africa has already had significant effect in weakening and demoralising the racist minority regime. Boycotts against apartheid sports teams have been successfully organised in virtually every corner of the world. South African racist sportsmen were denied international recognition in every major sport. More and more governments have acted against their nationals participating in sporting events in South Africa. Though the sports boycott has received most publicity, it is

the economic boycott that really frightens the Pretoria regime. Apartheid is initially dependant on foreign investment and its denial of decent wages and living conditions to the majority of its own population make it dependant on external trade.

Thus a boycott of trade and investment hits the bulwark of apartheid at a very vulnerable point. Student action against investment especially where it is of a public character has already taken place in many capitalist countries. Linking in with the organisations of working people, students can play a decisive role in undermining foreign investment in South Africa.

The sale of South African goods which are disproportionately cheap in many areas because of the oppression of the black labour force, is still prevalent in many countries. Activities like canteen boycotts, also being extended to local shopping centres, can provoke more widespread action and create public awareness against buying South African goods.

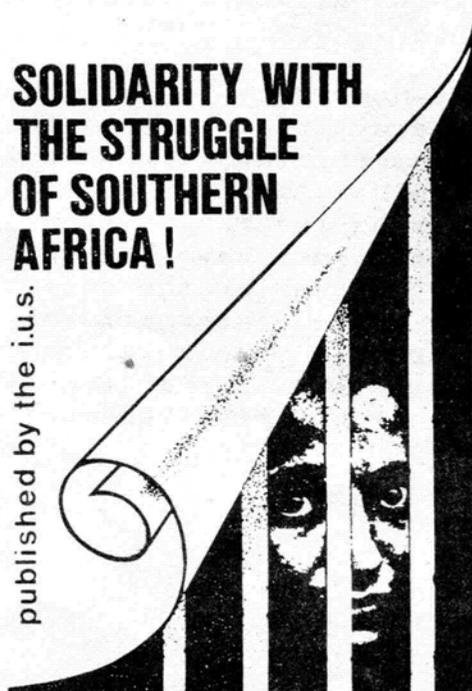
In the capitalist countries, there is a fight to prevent the emigration of white skilled workers to South Africa, bolstering the apartheid state. In the same countries the implementation of the UN arms embargo and its extension has to be achieved, to weaken the arsenal of weaponry already developed by the apartheid state.

In the cultural field as well the need for the isolation of South Africa exists. Cultural ties are often the predecessors to economic and diplomatic ties as well as representing a further racist aspect of South African society.

The African National Congress has appealed for International Solidarity. There is no national student organisation that cannot play its part in answering that call.

**SOLIDARITY WITH
THE STRUGGLE
OF SOUTHERN
AFRICA!**

published by the i.u.s.



The people and students of South Africa will need the maximum international solidarity in their struggle. That struggle will not be easy and will entail a great deal of hardship and suffering, but as outlined in the Manifesto of Umkhonto we Sizwe (ANC armed wing).

"The time comes in the life of any nation when there remains only two choices - submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means in our power in defence of our people, our future, and our freedom!

VICTORY IS CERTAIN!

AMANDLA NGAWETHU!

MAATLA KE ARONA!

Appendix

RESOLUTION ON SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLES AND STUDENTS OF SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE

The 11th IUS Congress meeting in Budapest, Hungary, May 7-14 1974

Considering

- the victories scored by the national liberation movements of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, led respectively by the ANC, SWAPO and ZAPU, against the alliance of the colonial, racist, white minority, illegal and fascist regimes in Southern Africa;
- that these regimes, together with the Portuguese government, have formed the Lisbon-Pretoria-Salisbury alliance which continues to attempt to strengthen its domination over the people by co-ordinating their military activities, expanding the existing military bases and constructing new ones and by undertaking joint economic ventures aimed at intensifying the exploitation of the resources of the people and their land, such as the Cabora Bassa and Cunene dam projects, perpetrating massacres of large numbers of people, creating Bantustans and aldeamentos, settling white immigrants from Western Europe and North America on the fertile, rich parts of the land, using force against those neighbouring independent African states that offer support to the liberation movements, particularly Tanzania and Zambia, and employing puppet regimes, like the Banda regime of Malawi, to expand their interests in the independent African states;
- that the so-called Smith-Home Settlement was a fundamental betrayal of the Zimbabwe people and that it further stressed the collusion of the British government with the Ian Smith regime;
- the intensified armed struggle waged by the peoples of Southern Africa against the Vorster and Smith regimes;

Stressing

- that these oppressive racist regimes are able to maintain their positions only because of the political, economic and military support they receive from the developed capitalist countries, particularly those in NATO, as well as Japan;
- that the support of the NATO countries and the multinational corporations is helping to consolidate these regimes and that it is aimed not only at completely subjugating the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe to a racist colonial

alliance, but primarily at the political, economic, military and cultural reconquest of the African continent and the permanent subjection of the African peoples to imperialist domination;

NOTES WITH APPRECIATION

- that despite the incessant criminal acts of oppression against the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, led by their respective national liberation movements, the ANC, SWAPO and ZAPU have scored many victories and dealt heavy blows to the colonialists, racists and their allies thanks to the intensification of political work among the people, the co-ordination of policies and the support of the anti-imperialist forces all over the world;
- the massive rejection of the fraudulent Smith-Home Settlement on Zimbabwe in 1971, by the masses of the people of Zimbabwe;
- that there is an upsurge of public opinion against the criminal oppression of the colonial and racist regimes and in support of and in solidarity with the struggle of the people of Southern Africa and their popular liberation movements and that this has been reflected even in the United Nations and its agencies by a number of positive stands and actions, albeit often sabotaged by the imperialist powers, particularly the United States;
- that the students and their organisations in many parts of the world have initiated or participated in various campaigns against the rule of the Lisbon-Pretoria-Salisbury alliance and the hostile activities of the multinational corporations and monopolies;
- that the IUS has not only organised concrete activities in support of the struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa in the form of so idarity meetings and conferences, material assistance, etc., but also, through publicity, has exposed the atrocities of the oppressive regimes and has propagated the struggle and just cause of the peoples of Southern Africa led by their popular national liberation movements;

UNFLINCHINGLY SUPPORTS the struggle of the people of Southern Africa and their popular national liberation movements, the ANC, SWAPO and ZAPU;

VEHEMENTLY CONDEMNS

- the rule of the regimes of the Pretoria-Salisbury axis;
- the so-called Smith-Home Settlement in Rhodesia;
- the political, economic and military support given to the racist regimes by the countries of NATO and Japan;

- the presence of the multinational corporations and their hostile activities against the interests of the African people;
- the British government for its complicity in maintaining colonial power in Zimbabwe;
- all countries which maintain trade relations with the Southern African white minority regimes;

CALLS FOR an immediate halt to the colonial war in South Africa, the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from the territories of Namibia and Zimbabwe and especially the dismantling of all military bases in all countries of Southern Africa.

DEMANDS

- independence and majority rule for all the countries of Southern Africa;
- that the UN fulfil its obligation towards the trust territory of Namibia by taking every action, including military action, against the racist, apartheid regime of South Africa;
- the recognition of the popular liberation movements as the only representatives of their people;
- the immediate release of all political prisoners in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa;
- that all states refrain from maintaining economic, diplomatic, military and other relations with the white minority regimes in Southern Africa and make every effort to isolate the regimes in all spheres;

CALLS UPON the students of the world and their organisations, particularly the IUS member organisations, to intensify their solidarity actions with the struggle of the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe;

MANDATES the IUS Secretariat and Executive Committee to take every possible action, such as campaigns for material assistance, seminars and conferences, demonstrations against the colonial and racist regimes, intensive propaganda in the various IUS publications, etc., to further support the struggle of the people of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

