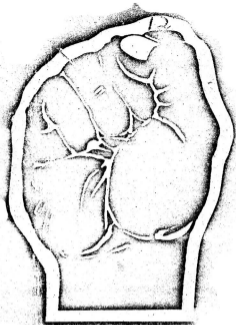


SASO ON THE ATTACK



An Introduction
to the
South African
Students' Organisation
1973

Since the banning of our Editor Strini Moodley, this issue has been revised and edited by Ben Langa.

Message From The Vice President

The present generation of young black people was borne in the womb of an insecure community squeezed day in and day out by the oppressive clutches of white ascendancy and; for a long time, continued to live a docile life dominated by fear and hollow individualism. Small wonder our life was almost devoid of sanctimonious socio-political values.

In time, however, it became very clear that this whole decrepit system of values had to be re-done. Black people needed a new system of values carefully worked out, capable of providing answers to the challenge posed by their situation and justifiable by their Black experience.

In order to establish this priceless value system black students arose to organise their experiences so as to exert the black influence not only within themselves as a group but within the entire black community as well. This was the beginning of organised black student effort – SASO.

Simply stated then, SASO is an organisation which continually probes the various areas of black life and existence. It is a body which by means of critical analyses and evaluative processes seeks to make it possible for black people to stand tall and take their rightful place in the community of nations. Moreover, SASO is a trade union of black students. It is a machinery whereby black students co-ordinate their efforts and channel their aspirations in a singular direction – the direction of liberation.

You as students registering for the first time at institutions of higher learning are expected to be bubbling with the dynamism of youth.

This, coupled with the idealism of studenthood places you in a particular position of responsibility. It is expected of you to be creators of history and not for history to create you. To be creators of history implies at being masters of your circumstances, means to know your locus not only in terms of time and space but also and, primarily, in terms of the correct perspective of your role in and attitude to the black community. It is the part you play which will determine both your individual destiny and that of the whole black community.

This part can never be a neutral one. There can, just as well, never be abstentions on this choice of parts. You are either for or against the black people. However, let your choice be as it may. All that can be said now is: for the duration of the struggle, let your consciences be your judges !

Our problems are defined our strategies cut and dried but our commitment still leaves much to be desired. It is about thime this commitment is heightened for the sense of importunity in our community is overwhelming. We cannot afford to stand in the corner with spilt minds and shudder. We cannot shirk the responsibility to transform this society for fear of offending the entrenched white racist political interests. Now is the time to stand up and be counted. Now is the time to demonstrate self-reliance.

We have created a climate of black opinion on the campuses. But this climate will not affect you until you expose yourself to it. This exposure can only mean one thing – the acquisition of blackness by participation in a meaningful organisation. Where do you stand ?

H. E. ISSACS
(Vice-President)

SASO- Historical Background

The emergence of SASO was a manifestation of a mood which had been spreading in the black campuses ever since the collapse of other black student's organisations which preceded SASO.

The complexity of the South African scene makes it impossible to have a pluralistic organisation that satisfies the aspirations of all member groups. Social and political stratifications in the country coupled with preferential treatment of certain groups results in different aspirations prevailing in the different segments of the community. Thus it often becomes almost impossible to show allegiance to both sides of the colour line. Attempting to keep both opposing segments more often than not results in internal strifes within the organisation. This is the mood in which black students have decided on several occasions to go it alone.

Dissatisfaction with the white dominated NUSAS led to the establishment of several black student organisations. The Durban Students' Union and the Cape Peninsula Student's Union who later merged to form the Progressive National Students' Organisation, were fanatically opposed to NUSAS initially and adopted the emotional slogan of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) - "non-co-operation with the collaborators". The CPSU refused to co-operate with NUSAS in their protests and other forms of activity. They saw NUSAS as a student wing of the imperialist front whose interest was to control the blacks.

In 1961 and 1962 the African Students' Association (ASA) and the African Students' Union of South Africa (ASUSA) were established. Both ASA and ASUSA were concerned much more with national issues and saw themselves as student wings of the national movements. The differences between ASA and ASUSA were ideological. Attempts to unite the two organisations failed. Perhaps the fact that the blacks never attained a strong solidarity on the campus was attributable to these divided loyalties. Lack of co-ordination

prevented progress in any recognisable direction as the various groups were bound to compete with each other. Moreover at the time NUSAS was by no means a spent force on the black campuses and commanded quite a following which capitalised on the differences of opinion between ASA and ASUSA. The fact that this was coupled with intimidation and victimisation of the individual leaders of these organisations served to hasten the collapse of both ASA and ASUSA.

A period of isolation of the black campuses followed the collapse of ASA and ASUSA. The new University Colleges which had been established in 1960 for blacks were born into a tradition of restriction. Their SRCs were under strict surveillance and served more the function of a prefect body than that of student representatives. Not one of the Colleges was allowed any interaction with NUSAS although branches existed underground on some of the campuses. In the meantime NUSAS assumed the role of being a Spokesman for these campuses. More often than not this accompanied debates on the "Separate Universities" Act.

The formation of the University Christian Movement in 1967 gave black students a greater chance of coming together. Because of its more radical stance and also because at that stage it had not developed a "bad" complexion politically in the eyes of the black campuses' authorities, UCM tended to attract more black students to its conferences and this opened channels of communications amongst the black students.

Amongst the black students, one of the most talked about topics was the position of the black students in the open organisations like NUSAS and UCM. Concern was expressed that these were white-dominated and paid very little attention to problems peculiar to the black student community. In fact some people began to doubt the very competence of a pluralistic group to examine without bias problems affecting one group, especially where the unaffected lot is from the oppressor camp. It was felt that a time had come when blacks had to formulate their own thinking, unpolluted by ideas emanating from a group with lots at stake in the status quo.

At the 1968 UCM Conference about 40 blacks from Fort Hare, Ngoye, Bellville, Theological seminaries, Turfloop, UNB and teacher training colleges resolved themselves into a black caucus and debated the possibility of forming a black students organisation. The UNB group was asked to investigate the chances of holding a conference of black student leaders that same December.

Back at home the UNB representatives openly argued the case for a closer co-operation amongst the black centres and as a result the student body mandated the SRC to convene the Conference.

SASO was ultimately formed at the 1968 December Marianhill Conference of black student leaders and inaugurated at the 1969 July SASO Conference at Turfloop. At both conferences the student

leaders were faced with a complex problem. On the one hand there were accusations by the right wing elements on the black campuses to the effect that the move to establish a blacks-only student organisation was a manifestation of conformism. This attitude was more expressed in liberal White circles.

Then, too, there were several warnings from the middle-of-the-roaders that SASO wouldn't survive for long and therefore its establishment did not warrant the breaking of old ties.

In the face of this the SASO leadership adopted a cautious approach to the "relations" question. While still maintaining their recognition of NUSAS as a National Union, SASO constantly took a very critical stand regarding NUSAS and refused to consider the possibility of affiliation to the organisation. They maintained their distance from NUSAS and gradually explained themselves to their black campuses with whom they quickly found favour.

In 1970 SASO Conference the attitudes that had been carefully hidden came to the surface. At once SASO withdrew its recognition of NUSAS as a National Union believing that "the emancipation of the black peoples in this country depends on the role the black peoples themselves are prepared to play (and) ... aware that in the principles and make-up of NUSAS, the black students can never find expression for aspirations foremost in their minds". Since the 1970 Conference SASO has been much more positive in its outlook and is working towards a much more intimate involvement with the black community.

1971 saw SASO rapidly increasing her membership and gradually consolidating her position within the black community. The statement that "we are BLACK students and not black STUDENTS" was thoroughly substantiated as SASO set about consulting with many black community organisations in an effort to completely weld the student efforts with those of the rest of the community in this great surge towards attainment of the black man's aspirations. Black Consciousness was highly stressed by SASO as the philosophy and approach to be adopted.

For SASO the year 1972 must be regarded as the most productive and historic of her existence. It was in this year that many of her plans were put into effect.

Her community development projects were methodically brought into operation. So much progress was made in this direction that it became necessary for SASO to increase her staff. Publications, Literacy and Community Development programmes ensured that SASO was reaching out to the millenium of Black people. High school students, varsity students, social clubs, organisations, sports groups — all of them began to join the mainstream of Black endeavour and self-assertion.

Saso's input and initiative saw the setting up of a "Black Workers' Project" which would work towards the setting up of a National Black Workers' Council by the middle of 1973. An independent Black Press Commission comprised of individuals who showed keen interest in a totally Black run newspaper was sponsored by SASO soon after her 3rd General Students' Council meeting. "Culcom" — a new dimension in SASO's work — deals specifically with the whole cultural effort of the Black peoples and seeks to unite this effort so that we work towards a common end.

At this point it is important to dwell on the student strikes of May/June 1972. Looking at the strikes SASO can claim that there is no basic difference in what Black people were saying or thinking. O. A. Tiro a final year student at the University of North was invited by the SRC to deliver a welcome speech to the parents of the graduating students. Basically, Tiro's speech constructively opened the eyes of the people to the flaws and evils of the racist educational structure. But this Black truth was turned into a white lie by the authorities at "the North" who saw it fit to expel Tiro.

The students at the University of the North saw fit to stand by their Black brother and refused to attend lectures until Tiro was re-instated. The subsequent action of the rector — to expel all 1,146 students — resulted in Black students throughout the country making history. SASO's role in the strike was clear. As a student union it was her duty to enunciate and guide the students through this trying period. And this she did to the best of her ability considering the numerous pitfalls and obstacles that were in her path. The now famous "Alice Declaration" was successful to the extent that it proved to the world that Black students were indeed, united.

To date SASO has come to be accepted as one of the most relevant organisations in this search for the black man's real identity and of his liberation. The involvement of students with the community by way of community development projects remains a testimony of the oneness of the two, both in plight and in efforts.

SASO AND POLICY

AIM: To represent the interests of students on all issues that affect them in their academic and community situation.

(a) Education

- (i) SASO rejects the concept of separate universities and asserts that the basic aim in the establishment of "black" institutions was never altruistic but merely to control the education of blacks in South Africa.
- (ii) SASO rejects the discrepancies in salaries and conditions of service between black and white professional men.
- (iii) SASO believes that education for "blacks" as presently constituted is completely irrelevant to the pressing needs of

the black community and is derived from a model that is not in keeping with the cultural and historical ethos of black people.

- (iv) for this purpose SASO has set up a commission on education to study ways of making education for blacks relevant to the community.
- (v) At its December 1972 National Formation School where the theme was "Towards Black Education" some very important findings and decisions were made in its investigations the School completely overhauled the entire education system as it is for Blacks and gave it a completely BLACK perspective. From creche right through to university level.
- (vi) The major break through in its findings was the "Charter for a BLACK UNIVERSITY" which succinctly lays the basis for a true BLACK university.
- (vii) A CHARTER FOR A BLACK UNIVERSITY

(1) MOTIVATION:

Many years of bitter experience of the Black people being stultified by education for domestication and subjugation; and we, realising that the onus is on us to eradicate these evils, do hereby this CHARTER lay out as the foundation of education for liberation, self-reliance and development aimed at a communalistic and egalitarian society.

(2) EDUCATION DEFINED:

Education is a process for the development of the individual, physically, spiritually, morally and socially for his own welfare and for that of society. It is a process of inculcating a way of life, of transmitting a cultural heritage, of acquiring knowledge and ideals, and of developing the critical faculties of the individual.

(3) AIMS AND OBJECTS OF BLACK EDUCATION:

- (a) Black education must be aimed at actualising our aspirations for an egalitarian and communalistic society;
- (b) Black education must act as a catalyst for political, social and economic change;
- (c) Black education shall serve to unite Black people and promote community endeavour and foster a spirit of Black communalism;
- (d) Black education should at all times inculcate into the Blackman a sense of initiative, enquiry, creativity and self-reliance that will equip him with the tools to make him a meaningful member of his society.

(4) THE UNIVERSITY AND ITS MISSION TO THE COMMUNITY:

- (a) the university must promote the interests and aspirations of the community;

- (b) it must raise its cultural and intellectual level;
- (c) it must provide knowledge and expertise so that the community may undertake schemes for development;
- (d) it must promote community endeavour and strike a balance in communal interaction;
- (e) it must incorporate the entire community more effectively into the structure, values and functions of society;
- (f) it must seek to find foundations for a spiritual awareness, a religious redirection which is essential in promoting the soul of Black folk;
- (g) it must remove from the community the older epoch of backwardness, dependence and immobility; these must be replaced by one of economic orientations, industrialisation, greater national economy, class mobility and communal solidarity.

(5) ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES OF THE UNIVERSITY

Academic disciplines must be geared at dynamising the basic perspectives on reality which have usually been of profound pessimism and fatalism, by enabling the student to gain awareness of his capacity to shape his environment, and tools to harness it for his survival.

GENERAL ORIENTATION WILL BE ON DEEPER RESEARCH INTO BLACK STUDIES:

- (a) AFRICA, the people, their origin, their aspirations, their philosophies, their literature and language, their government, life-style and their culture.
- (b) and relate with the rest of the world society in making a truly harmonious place for all humanity to live in.
- (c) the Black experience in all these aspects must be given content and direction;
- (d) the divine mission of a Black university will be to render the hopes and aspirations of the Black people possible; instil pride and confidence in their Blackness, their traditions and their indigenous way of life;
- (e) an aspect of the above endeavour would be to discourage elitism and intellectual arrogance which promotes alienation, acquisitiveness and class structures.

(viii) At the July 1972 Conference the Commission on Education laid out clearly a "Black Students' Manifesto" which echoed the true wishes and desires of Black students in South Africa.

(ix) Black Students Manifesto

We, the Black Students of South Africa, believing that the Black Man can no longer allow definitions that have been imposed upon him by an arrogant White world concerning his Being and his destiny and that the Black Student has a moral

obligation to articulate the needs and aspirations of the Black Community hereby declare that:

A. WE BLACK STUDENTS ARE:

1. An integral part of the Black oppressed Community before we are Students coming out of and studying under the oppressive restrictions of a racist education,
2. committed to a more disciplined involvement in the intellectual and physical work among the Black Community and to the consistent search of the Black Truth,
3. committed to work towards the building of our people and to the winning of the struggle for liberation and guided by the central purpose of service to the Black community on every technical and social level.

B. WE THEREFORE, REJECT THE WHOLE SPHERE OF RACIST EDUCATION AND COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

1. The intellectual and physical development of our community and to the realisation of liberation for Black peoples of South Africa.
2. the definition that education in South Africa is unashamedly political and we therefore, believe that Black education is tied to the liberation of the Black people of the world.

C. WE HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

1. the assertion, manifestation and development of a sense of awareness politically, socially and economically among the Black community,
2. the belief that Black Students should maintain a spirit of fraternity amongst themselves, free from the prejudice of white fallacies by virtue of their common oppression,
3. attempting to break away from the traditional order of subordination to whites in education and to refuse to be educated for them,
4. encourage and promote Black Literature relevant to our struggle,
5. ensure that our education will further the preservation and promotion of what is measured in our culture and our historical experience.

(b) SASO POLICY MANIFESTO:

1. SASO is a Black Student Organisation working for the liberation of the Black man first from psychological oppression by themselves through inferiority complex and secondly from the physical one accruing out of living in a White racist society.
2. We define Black people as those who are by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations.

3. SASO believes that:
 - (a) South Africa is a country in which both Black and White live and shall continue to live together,
 - (b) That the White man must be made aware that one is either part of the solution or part of the problem.
 - (c) That, in this context, because of the privileges accorded to them by legislation and because of their continual maintenance of an oppressive regime, Whites have defined themselves as part of the problem,
 - (d) That, therefore, we believe that in all matters relating to the struggle towards realizing our aspirations, Whites must be excluded.
 - (e) That this attitude must not be interpreted by Blacks to imply "anti-Whitism" but merely a more positive way of attaining a normal situation in South Africa,
 - (f) That in pursuit of this direction, therefore, personal contact with Whites, though it should not be legislated against must be discouraged, especially where it tends to militate against the beliefs we hold dear.
4. a. SASO upholds the concept of Black consciousness and the drive towards black awareness as the most logical and significant means of ridding ourselves of the shackles that bind us to perpetual servitude.
 - b. SASO defines Black consciousness as follows:
 - (i) BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS is an attitude of mind, a way of life.
 - (ii) The basic tenet of Black Consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity.
 - (iii) The Black man must build up his own values systems, see himself as self-defined and not defined by others.
 - (iv) The concept of Black Consciousness implies the awareness by the Black people of power they wield as a group, both economically and politically and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of Black Consciousness.
 - (v) BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS will always be enhanced by the totality of involvement of the oppressed people, hence the message of Black Consciousness has to be spread to reach all sections of the Black community.
 - c. SASO accepts the premise that before the Black people should join the open society, they should first close their ranks, to form themselves into a solid group to oppose the definite racism that is meted out by the White society, to work out their direction clearly and bargain from a position of strength. SASO believes that a truly open society can only be achieved by blacks.
5. SASO believes that the concept of integration cannot be realised in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust. Integration does not

mean an assimilation of Blacks into an already established set of norms drawn up and motivated by white society. Integration implies free participation by individuals in a given society and proportionate contribution to the joint culture of the society by all constituent groups. Following this definition therefore, SASO believes that integration does not need to be enforced or worked for. Integration follows automatically when the doors to prejudice are closed through the attainment of a just and free society.

6. SASO believes that all groups allegedly working for "Integration" in South Africa . . . and here we note in particular the Progressive Party and other Liberal institutions . . . are not working for the kind of integration that would be acceptable to the Black man. Their attempts are directed merely at relaxing certain oppressive legislations and to allow Blacks into a white-type society.
7. SASO, while upholding these beliefs, nevertheless wishes to state that black consciousness should not be associated with any particular political party or slogan.

(c) DIALOGUE WITH MULTIRACIAL ORGANISATIONS:

- (i) SASO believes that dialogue with student organisations such as NUSAS and UCM should only be engaged in when absolutely necessary i.e. in matters affecting either one or all as student organisations or where so doing is in the interests of black students.
- (ii) SASO believes that there can never be cause for joint consultation with any of these organisations on anything relating to the SASO political stance.

(d) NAMIBIA:

SASO recognises the indisputable right of the people of Namibia to conduct their own affairs without any interference from South Africa and expresses solidarity with the students and the people of Namibia to rid themselves of this unwarranted occupation.

(e) ON DIALOGUE BETWEEN AFRICAN STATES AND SOUTH AFRICA:

1. SASO rejects all attempts at dialogue between African States and South Africa.
2. SASO believes that South Africa is intent on stretching her tentacles through trade links throughout Africa so as to hold Africa in her grip.
3. SASO further believes that no amount of preaching will alter South Africa from her course towards total and lasting subjugation of the black peoples of South Africa.

(f) SPORT

Although there is no official policy on sport, the sentiments expressed in the resolution quoted below perhaps expresses the

ADVISORY PANEL OF FIVE

Is elected by OSC. The present panel consists of—

Dr. Cive McBrine (Cape Town)
 Mr. J. A. Khigisa (Durban)
 Revd. Robert De Maat (P.E.)
 Mr. C. M. Sornelle (P.E.)

The fifth member did not respond to the invitation to sit on the panel.

GENERAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL

The "GSC" is the highest policy making body for the organization. It meets once a year during the winter vacation. It is composed of delegates from different campuses and branches. The size of the present GSC is about 60 but is constantly going up with new affiliations. The 4th GSC will meet in the Winter Cape from the 1st to 8th July, 1975.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

It made up of—

President Permanent Organizer
 Vice-President Publications Director
 Secretary-General SRC Presidents and Branch Chairmen of affiliated campuses and branches.

All present Executive Council members are 19 in number. Four for SRC Presidents and Branch Chairmen, all Executive Council members are elected by the General Students' Council. They may remain in office for one year but may stand for reelection. The executive council meets twice a year — once in December and once in May.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL — SASO LOCAL BRANCHES

It is these bodies that bring forward to the council the feelings, the policies and the attitudes that students feel SASO should adopt on various issues. It is also these bodies that maintain the contact link between the Executive Committee and the student community. The Student Representative Council is not automatically a part of SASO but may become so if the student community so desires. The SASO local branch is essentially the official wing of SASO on the campus. However, it is usually the SRC President who sits on the National Executive Council.

STUDENT COMMUNITY

It made up of the student bodies of the various campuses and branches. It is here that the real power of SASO lies. The student community formulates and takes decisions also SASO's policies. Student bodies elect their delegates from among themselves and these delegates will bring to conference the attitudes, the decisions and the policy that the majority of students would want SASO to follow.

STUDENT

Being a student organization, SASO represents the student and it is the student that gives SASO its character, its credibility and its leadership. This is the individual who truly is the organization — the STUDENT. Rooted in the student is the catalytic element that sets the pace the Black community and becomes its future leader. It is the student's individual as well as his collective commitment that is reflected in the ordinary or otherwise of SASO.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The President, the Secretary-General, the Vice-President, the Publications Director and the Permanent Organizer all form the Executive Committee which is in charge of the day to day running of SASO affairs.

- (i) The President — is chief executive officer of the Organization. His duty is to represent SASO where necessary, to speak on behalf of the organization and to preside at all meetings of the organization. His term of office is held in an honorary capacity.
- (ii) The Vice-President — his duties are to assist and/or deputise for the President wherever and whenever necessary. He also maintains international relations for SASO. His term of office is held in an honorary capacity.
- (iii) The Secretary-General — is the administrative head of the organization. He is on the full-time staff and is in charge of all finances, correspondence and general running of business in the organization. His appointment is on a 3 year basis renewable yearly by OSC.
- (iv) The Permanent Organizer — is also on the full-time staff. His job is to act as liaison between the Executive Council, the centres and the general membership of SASO. He regularly visits all campuses to co-ordinate SASO community projects and for assist in the programming of projects. His appointment is also on a 3 year basis renewable yearly by OSC.
- (v) The Publications Director — He is in charge of all publications put by SASO and gives directions to the Editor of SASO Publications. His term of office is held in an honorary capacity.

STAFF

Staff is made up of: 4 regional secretaries, 1 Secretary/Bookkeeper for Head Office.

1 Typist
 1 Part-Time Clerk
 Director of Literary
 Field Officer for Black workers project.

Appointments to staff positions are made by the Executive Committee. The SASO staff is on a full-time basis and most of our staff are situated at the head office in Durban. An Administrative Assistant and Regional officer, a Secretary/Bookkeeper, a typist/book and a part-time filing clerk make up the administrative staff at the SASO head offices. Other staff appointments are the Director of Literary and Regional secretaries for the Transvaal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape Offices. The Eastern Cape offices are in King Willem's Town and the Western Cape Office are in Elites River, Cape. The other staff appointment is for the Black Workers' Project. The post is at the moment vacant owing to the untimely death of our late brother Mkhuli Shezi.

attitude GSC would adopt towards sport. This resolution was carried unanimously at the National Executive Council held at Edendale from 1-3rd December, 1972.

20/72:

THAT THIS NEC NOTING THAT

1. South Africa is increasingly finding itself isolated in the international sporting world;
2. this isolation stems from the fact that the white racist regime claims to be the representative of S.A.
3. this claim has met and is meeting with vociferous rejection by the international sporting community.
4. this isolation is also directed towards and against 'non-white' sportsmen.

AND FURTHER

5. realising that the so called non-racial sporting organisations are in fact either completely Black or white and a provision relating to the multi-racial nature of these organisations is meant and designed to deceive international organisations.
6. there is a move by the white regime to create what is generally known as 'multi-national' teams.
7. this move is a fraudulent design to deceive and swindle international sporting bodies.

THEREFORE RESOLVES

- (a) to mandate the Executive to take appropriate step to place on international record the fact that the white racist regime has no right to claim the right to represent S.A. since she belongs to the Black people of South Africa.
- (b) that the Black sportsmen should be allowed to represent South Africa in international sporting events;
- (c) that the Executive be given leeway to react and respond to requests for support from the international sporting world.

SASO AND PROJECTS

AIM: To heighten their sense of awareness and encourage them to become involved in the political, economic and social development of the black people.

To project at all times the black consciousness image culturally, socially and educationally.

(a) INTRODUCTION

SASO's major involvement to date has been her projects dealing with Community Development. Up until 1972 she has been busy laying the foundations for what she hopes will be her major thrust into the community. Basically, SASO sees community action and development as "inherently liberating concepts". She recognises the fact also that the aim of the Black man in South Africa is to create a just and healthy society in which he would be

able to realise and actualize his potential.

And thus it is that the components of an ideal community are categorized by SASO as the following:—

- (a) Security of life.
- (b) Economic well-being through an efficient system of productivity.
- (c) Physical well-being, health and sanitation.
- (d) Constructive use of leisure time or recreation.
- (e) Ethical standards or system of morality supported by the organised community.
- (f) Intellectual diffusion.
- (g) Free avenues of expression or means by which all the elements of the community might freely express themselves.

SASO is painfully aware that the above does not obtain in the Black community — in one form or another. And in keeping with her constitution section 2 (3):—

“to heighten the sense of awareness and encourage them to become involved in the political, economic and social development of the Black people”.

SASO has made it her prime duty to foster and broaden her community programmes.

LITERACY PROGRAMMES

The basic need required “to heighten the sense of awareness and encourage them to be involved” would be to make our Black people literate. It hardly needs to be emphasized that where there is illiteracy there is poverty, starvation, diseases and innumerable other maladies. It is also an accepted fact that at least to some extent literates are able to face the changes and make changes that are a part of technological and societal development. It is the literate who is equipped to meet the mechanization of labour and still survive sufficiently in this exploitative world of ours.

The reduction and elimination of illiteracy in the Black community can influence development both economic, social, political and cultural in a variety of ways. It can improve the productivity of Blacks in their community and assist the political, economic and social awareness and consciousness by permitting wider communication and conscientization.

As a result of the important role literacy can play in bringing the Black community closer to liberation SASO set up a Literacy department with a director of Literacy to plan, execute and set up Literacy classes throughout the country.

Working closely with a group of trained people the Director has evolved an effective and yet simple, Literacy method which incorporates various other methods that have been used.

Working under the Director are the regional secretaries who will assist the Director in training people to conduct the campaigns. 1973 will see vigorous activity in this field. The Director and trained assistants are scheduled to go on tour throughout the country visiting all campuses and city branches.

This challenging task that SASO has undertaken can only be successful if students are prepared to play their role in the sensitizing of our community.

HOME EDUCATION SCHEME

This scheme is a natural follow-up of the Literacy Project. In the circular advertising the scheme SASO says, "This (Home Education) is by and large the most neglected sector of the Blackman's development". Having established this the circular goes on to explain, "Literacy training introduces illiterates to the world of learning. After they have acquired the basic skills most will prefer to continue studies for certificates hence gaining better qualifications, better opportunities and a higher rate of commitment to service to their community".

The circular goes on to explain the objects of the scheme. They are:—

1. to boost adult education where post-literacy awareness and the wider horizons builds in them an urge to study further;
2. to provide tuition from formal school to university level;
3. to stimulate literary skills and encourage leadership, group discussion and debates".

The Home Education Scheme operates in the following manner:—

1. Groups near a university will arrange tuition classes;
2. Vacation schools will be held in select areas during the winter vacation;
3. Students preparing for supplementary examinations in February or March will benefit from a similar school which will be held in January.

Thus far SASO has had one successful school running. The school is situated a DUDUDU where private tuition is given to corresponding students. This scheme will be picked up in the first semester of 1973. Plans are underway to arrange vacation schools for those corresponding scholars who are preparing for final examinations in 1973.

The Permanent Organiser and the Director of Literacy are investigating requests to start similar schools in other areas. At the same time SASO Local Committees at Universities will be briefed as to how they can conduct the Home Education project in their surrounding areas.

In the plan for this Home Education Scheme is envisaged Library and Resource facilities, which are intended for use by the members of SASO and the corresponding scholars of the Home Education Scheme.

PHYSICAL PROJECTS

Inherent in the philosophy of Black Consciousness is the concept of self-reliance. And SASO has irrevocably committed herself to developing this concept among the Black peoples.

This summer vacation projects have been undertaken where students work together with the community to solve problems that face the particular community. In some communities there is a need for water thus dam-building is undertaken; or schools in another community are badly in need of repairs; or yet another community is rife with disease and therefore medical advice and treatment is needed; very often violent storms damage or destroy homes and emergency repairs are needed.

It is these situations that SASO makes her presence felt. And in all these cases methodical steps or phases are undertaken to ensure smooth progress.

In some instances SASO finds it difficult to make progress because of the numerous opposing forces that militate against the efforts of SASO in these projects. However, this has not prevented SASO from making headway in this field.

To date four successful projects have been undertaken. As this pamphlet goes to print there is work being done at one of them. A community centre is being constructed by students and the community together.

Health and Preventive Medicine projects were conducted at two other areas and at one of them the "medicine project" was followed up with a survey and preparation for a water system. At the moment negotiations are under way with engineers who will advise as to sites for drilling and running of water pipes.

Another project in the Eastern Cape has been completed. A dam was constructed by SASO students from Fort Hare and members of the community. It is reported that the dam is successfully serving a large community.

For the year 1973 SASO will launch experimental projects which she hopes will attract many more students. It is hoped that detailed programmes involving lectures, films, get-togethers with the community as well as the actual work will be devised. These "action-seminars" will cover the entire summer vacation and half of the winter vacation.

The idea behind these "action seminars" is to relate on a more inter-personal level with the community and at the same time provide relief for students who want time of to enjoy the festive season. This idea of the "action seminar" developed out of the evaluation forms that have been distributed for completion by participants at past seminars and projects.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

Another dimension introduced into SASO's programmes, to bring about positive and creative development of black youth.

In the hands of the Permanent Organiser, this project it is hoped will nurture the leadership potential that exists in youth.

The programme will organise leadership courses and seminars. It will reach out to clubs, societies and make contact with social workers who serve youth and offer relevant contributions. SASO recognises the inter-group suspicion that exists among youth and one of the aims of the project would be to encourage inter-group communication with a view to establishing healthy relationships.

Looking at education SASO realises that black youth find it frustrating and non-liberating and the programme it is hoped will give vocational guidance to young people. This will be done in conjunction with interested teachers and other relevant organisations in the field.

To date SASO has held two leadership seminars one in Natal and one in Transvaal. Both have been extremely successful. The Natal seminar resulted in the formation of the Natal Youth Organisation (NYO). Attached to NYO are various smaller youth clubs from areas like Umlazi, Kwa Mashu and Lamontville.

The Transvaal seminar gave birth to an ad hoc committee which would take charge of the formation of the Transvaal Youth Organisation (TRAYO).

Plans are already underway to have similar seminars in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape.

BLACK WORKERS PROJECT

Since its inception SASO has always remained overtly quiet in so far as the worker was concerned. Always a delicate field to operate in – especially where students are concerned – SASO has established this project in conjunction with Black Community Programmes which is an independent Black effort attached to SPROCAS 2.

SASO had appointed a field officer to work with the field officer of Black Community Programmes. A death blow was struck by the forces of whiteness to SASO's field officer, the late Mtuli Shezi, who had done a great deal of work in this aspect. In the next month or so the new field officer will join Bokwe Mafuna, the field officer of the Black Community Programmes.

To date Black Workers' Project (BWP) has made itself known to every Black trade union in the country. Contact has also been made at worker level and the response has been extremely encouraging.

BWP is working towards a national conference of workers to set up a Black Workers' Council which would meet the needs of the worker in all aspects.

At SASO's 3rd G.S.C. the resolution calling for the setting up of the BWP in part reads – in reference to the Black Workers' Council:–

- (a) to act as a co-ordinating body to serve the needs and aspirations of the black workers
- (b) to unite and bring about solidarity of black workers
- (c) to conscientize them about their role and obligation toward black development.
- (d) to run clinics for leadership, in-service training and imbue them with pride and self-confidence as people and their potential as workers.

The BWP is set on the road towards the unification of Black workers. The aim of the BWP is to set up the Black Workers' Council within the next 6 to 9 months.

BLACK PRESS COMMISSION

The desire for a Black Press to represent the needs of the Black people has been prevalent in the Black community for over a long period.

At her 3rd GSC SASO expressed this desire in no uncertain terms and went on call upon SASO "to initiate the setting up of an independent Black Press Commission"

The resolution went onto call for a seminar on "The Role of the Black Press in South Africa". That at this seminar Black representatives from as many newspapers, organisations and business homes be invited to attend.

On the 9th and 10th October a seminar entitled "Towards a Black Press" was held in Johannesburg. The seminar turned out to be very successful. New direction was made with regard to the Black reporter and an action committee of Black reporters was set up.

The Black Press Commission was also set up and they were charged with duty of fund raising, setting up a Black Company which would be responsible for publishing a Black newspaper and other periodicals and magazines.

Articles of Association and the Memorandum have been drawn up and the members of the commission are at work speaking to prospective shareholders for the Company.

CULCOM

Culcom is the "Cultural Committee" that was initiated by the Commission on Culture at the last GSC of SASO.

Born out of a realisation that Black Culture is an integral component in the search for Black dignity and liberation, Culcom was charged with the duties of initiating a Writers' Club – Film, Music and Art Studios and a Theatre Council. CULCOM consists of a committee of four with the Publications Director as an ex officio member.

Arrangements have been made with various music groups in preparation for a Black music studio. In the near future a Poets' and Writers' Workshop is going to be set up. At the present time CULCOM is making contact with the relevant poets and writers with the intention of calling up a seminar on Black writing.

CULCOM would like to work in conjunction with other groups similarly involved so that a unified effort can be made to achieve a common end.

As far as the theatre world is concerned CULCOM will encourage campuses and branches to initiate drama groups that would spread the message as far and as wide as possible. Students are urged to form drama groups or contact the head office if they need assistance of any kind. Depending on the response CULCOM gets in the sphere of drama she will contemplate a drama workshop to give enthusiasts some direction and technical assistance.

CULCOM's first major project should come of around April or May to raise funds for her various projects. At the time of going to print CULCOM is planning a major National Black Arts Festival for the 1974 winter season.

It is hoped that this festival will attract black South Africa's major Black artists, dramatists, writers, poets and musicians. The idea of the Festival will become a bi-annual affair rotating to all major centres in the country.

SASO AND UNION PROGRAMMES

AIM: To promote contact, practical co-operation, mutual understanding and unity among all black students in South Africa.

MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

In essence SASO is a student organisation, that is, a trade union of students. It is, therefore, the responsibility of SASO to look after and nurture the interests of students as would a trade union of workers nurture the interests of its workers.

SASO today can claim a membership of over 6,000 students likely to be increased at the beginning of this year 1973. Membership to SASO is opened to:—

- (a) All black students studying at institutions of higher learning i.e. Universities, Seminaries, Teacher training and Technical colleges.
- (b) organised school groups applying en block for membership. Associate membership may be granted in terms of Section 3 of the SASO constitution but who nevertheless subscribe to the aims and objects of SASO.

Affiliation to SASO is done through the SRC of a campus affiliating either on behalf of the student body or through a mandate from the

student body. In some instances a majority student body decision to affiliate to SASO is taken. This is the case especially where there is no SRC. Individuals affiliating in a non-affiliated campus, may if more than 10, constitute a branch.

To date SASO has the following affiliated centres and branches.

AFFILIATED CENTRES:-

University of the North
Transvaal College of Education (not ratified by own authorities)
University of Zululand
University of Natal (Black Section)
Lutheran Theological College (not ratified by own authorities)
Federal Theological Seminary

UNIVERSITY BRANCHES:-

University of Fort Hare
University of Western Cape

CITY BRANCHES:-

Reef SASO Local Branch (REESO)
Pretoria SASO Local Branch (PRESO)
Springs SASO Local Branch (SPRISO)
Kimberley SASO Local Branch (KIMSO)
Durban-West SASO Local Branch
Bloemfontein SASO Local Branch (BLOEMSO)

The idea of the city branch mushroomed from a need to foster communication between the correspondent student and the full-time student. It was later realised that this kind of branch became instrumental in sidestepping the vicious action of the university authorities who have banned SASO on the campus. Many off-campus branches are now catering for students at full-time universities.

Many more branches are being formed in Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, East London, King Williamstown and Umtata. A new branch was formed at Middelburg in the Northern Transvaal but their affiliation has not yet been ratified.

STUDENT BENEFITS

(a) FREE UNIVERSITY SCHEME

The Free University Scheme was a direct product of the May/June student crisis. With the massive walk-outs from the tribal universities by students who were completely frustrated by the inadequateness and racist policies of these universities SASO felt it incumbent upon her to initiate a scheme such as this.

This scheme is geared at providing facilities for those students who have walked out or have been victimized by university authorities. However with the development of the scheme SASO will attempt to cater for students who wish to join the Free University.

The initial plan is to get "walk-out" students to apply for financial assistance to SASO who is in a position to give out a limited number of loans. Once these students have received their loans they can then apply to UNISA for registration in the degree the student so desires.

SASO, in the meantime, will organise tutorials and seminars for these students. The tutorials and seminars will include orientation lectures on subjects outside the specific curriculum relating to the Black experience e.g. African studies, African philosophy, etc. This will be done outside the normal tutorials which will be organised by SASO for examination purposes.

Tutorials conducted for the Free University scheme will be open to all interested students but loans for study will preferentially be given to walk-out and victimized students. In time SASO hopes that the Free University can develop to the stage where it can operate the kind of syllabus that will be meaningful to the Black student.

A "Free University Trust Fund Committee" has been elected; made up of relevant individuals and members of the Parents' committees that were set up during the May/June boycotts. This independent "Trust Committee" will administer funds and lay down the policies of the Free University arrange tutorials and seminars, and make loans available to applicants of their choice.

The Secretary-General and Permanent Organiser of SASO will also sit on the "Trust Committee". SASO has already written to a number of overseas universities asking them for their syllabuses and for extension of their correspondence courses into the Free University Scheme. Many universities with a "Black Studies" department have responded very well.

The endeavour of SASO is to develop the scheme so that each major centre can operate the Free University for students in that particular area. Moreover, SASO hopes that this Free University will cater for students who wish to study in a more open and objective environment where freedom of thought and expression can be exploited to the full.

(b) PROMOTION OF BLACK EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT TRUST (PROBEAT)

Just as SASO sees it her obligation to cater for the drop-out and victimized student she also sees it as her duty to cater for the needy student who is at the so-called Black university. For sometime now SASO has been inundated with requests from students wanting scholarships and/or bursaries. Unfortunately SASO has not been able to meet these requests because of her own precarious financial position. SASO realised, however, that this was to be the true challenge of her aim to represent the interests and welfare of the Black student and to motivate them to be of service to their community.

SASO is undertaking a massive fund-raising scheme with a target of over R100,000 to make PROBEAT a successful service.

Implicit in the PROBEAT aims is the inculcation of Education for

Self-Reliance. In the Plans for PROBEAT it is hoped that a Student Voluntary Service be set up. This service will have a regular task force of students who will use their summer and winter vacations to repair school buildings and desks and to provide other facilities and equipment like free supplies of books, laboratory equipment, etc.

This task force of students will also assist in the setting up of well-equipped libraries in the schools where they are needed.

Another aspect of PROBEAT is to set up soup kitchens aimed at mobilizing black public opinion and action towards eradicating the evils of malnutrition and child neglect. Soup kitchens will be set up at schools that are located near the campuses so that even during vacations the soup kitchen can run even though the schools have closed down.

Because students are themselves finding it increasingly difficult to maintain themselves financially at the university, part of the PROBEAT scheme would be to set up a loan study fund, aimed at committing the student to make the fund on-going so that every opportunity is given to future generations to benefit as well from the fund.

The loan study fund will be made available to those students who are willing to commit themselves to be of service to the Black community.

The SASO head office has drawn plans to raise at least half the sum internally. Major fund-raising projects will be undertaken in the major centres.

An inter-varsity library service is to be initiated by SASO. The library service will be aimed at meeting the needs of students who find it difficult to purchase their own books.

A resource centre will be set up to house the library which already has a small but growing number of valuable books. It is anticipated that a resource centre will be set up in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

To be able to achieve the various aspirations of PROBEAT it is anticipated that volunteers from student ranks will come forward to offer their services to the Student Voluntary Service, the Loan Book System and the Soup Kitchen.

(c) EDUCATION BY EMPLOYMENT (EDUPLY)

For the winter and summer vacations arrangements are being made for students to obtain opportunities for employment in situations that vary greatly.

The motivation is to place students in jobs where they can live and work with the Black people in their various areas, so that students can observe the situation of Black workers and subsequently apply themselves meaningfully in the environment.

EDUPLY then plays a dual role. It gives the student an opportunity to earn some money and more important it commits him to applying his skills in the worker field and thus strengthen the relationship between worker and student.

(d) NATIONAL SEMINARS

The National Seminars conducted by SASO are held thrice a year — one in December, one in January and one in May. All these seminars are geared at developing the leadership potential of students and other interested people in the Black community.

Covering a wide field of subjects the seminars have dealt, in the main, with Management and Administration; Community Development; The understanding of Black Consciousness and Black Solidarity; Black Education.

Other fields that are to be covered in these seminars include Strategies and Planning; a fresh view of Community Development and a look at the Black student scene.

Occasional seminars are called to initiate new direction, new organisations and fresh avenues of involvement by the Black community. The most recent of these has been the seminar "Towards the Black Press" which was called to initiate the Black Press Commission. The National Seminars are thoroughly prepared in advance and the leadership training programmes thus incorporated offer the most relevant training to students. They are designed to make students efficient not only in running their own committees but also for future participation in creative black community programmes.

(e) COMMUNICATION

Perhaps the most refreshing benefit that SASO offers students is the chance to meet fellow Black students where you can have the opportunity to meet and share experiences and ideas. The various seminars, meetings and the conference brings all Black students together to give them the opportunity to feel as one solid block of people with similar problems, similar ideals, a common philosophy and differing techniques. The exciting and high powered debates; the inter-personal contact between student and student; and the thrill of being involved in "our own thing" is surely an experience that cannot be forgotten.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Although not high on SASO's priority list another dimension in her Union programmes is to provide discount schemes at Black stores and businesses, and also to provide travelling holiday schemes for students.

Head office is arranging with well disposed travel agents to work out schemes to tour the Republic, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Rhodesia and Angola. If the numbers warrant it overseas tours will also be embarked upon at student rates.

Insurance schemes for married students and various other insurance schemes to benefit members of SASO are being looked into. Although there is much debate about providing this kind of scheme as it goes against the grain of SASO involvement as a Union SASO has to meet the moral and physical needs of her members.