

Natal Education Boycott: a focus on Inkatha

THIS article has its limitations. It is not intended as any final statement or analysis of the Natal boycotts, but rather as a springboard for further research.

It was written collectively.

INTRODUCTION

'Inkatha has grown both in stature as a movement and in its capability to win the struggle for liberation. Any movement that has developed to the extent of being able to base its mass action on a sound theoretical basis is indeed already half-way in the liberation struggle'.

'We have the correct strategy and we have the right leader. All we must continue to do is to provide and see to be providing a solid following' (Dr OD Dhlomo, Secretary-General of Inkatha and Minister of Education and Culture, addressing Inkatha Youth Brigade on Sunday, 14.09.80) (Natal Witness, 16.09.80)

ORIGINS OF THE BOYCOTT IN THE WESTERN CAPE

06.04 The education boycott was initially mooted when Western Cape coloured high school representatives met over the Easter weekend to discuss long-standing grievances with 'coloured' education. They threatened a schools boycott, in support of the demands, which they required Minister Steyn to fulfil by the end of the week. They deplored the low standard and poor conditions of their education, specifically

mentioning lack of free text-books and inadequate buildings and facilities. They demanded a 'free education system'; the reinstatement of three teachers dismissed from Crystal Senior High who had supported their grievances; and a general pay increase for teachers.

13.04 The following weekend 20 representatives decided that Steyn's response did not materially change the position of coloured education. Steyn refused to re-employ the teachers, their positions to remain vacant for coloured teachers to replace them, and made qualified, long-term promises about text-books and buildings.

The boycotts would go ahead.

18.04 25 000 students and scholars had already joined the boycott which spread beyond Cape Town to three coloured high schools in the Transvaal. The latter protested in demand of 'equality of education'.

19.04 A committee of 61 representatives of Cape educational institutions was formed. It called for a mass education boycott in the Western Cape from 21.04 to 25.04.

NATAL ADOPTS THE BOYCOTT

The education boycott took root in Natal, firstly among coloured students but was

quickly adopted by the Indian community and a minority of African students at higher institutions. (The emphasis of the national boycott was on solidarity across racial groupings. For clarity in the South African situation 'racial' categories are specified).

21.04 Sechet, a coloured Teacher Training College, was the first institution in Durban to take a stand. They declared a one-week boycott in sympathy with national demands, their own emphasis being on the national pay disparity between black and white teachers and the College's poor sports facilities where, for example, soccer is played on tarmac.

22.04 The boycott ranks were quickly swollen by coloured high school pupils (3 000 from three high schools - Sechet, Fairvale and Wentworth).

The boycott gained momentum at other educational institutions besides Sechet. Natal Medical School protested against racial and inferior education for all blacks. They were joined by University of Durban-Westville students and black students at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Durban University white students convened a sympathy boycott, maintaining that education is a basic human right.

23.04 A number of Indian high schools and the Springfield College of Education joined the boycott. Indian solidarity with the boycott was described, despite press reports, as not only in support of their colored peers, but that they were 'also black students who wanted a better deal in education'.

The boycott spread in Natal, beyond Durban, northwards to Haritzburg, and south to Harding.

In Natal police repression intensified. Police took a hard line in efforts to contain the boycott, using teargas, batons and making arrests.

24.04 Indian scholars from a number of schools who had organised buses to a mass meeting at the UDU, which increasingly became a meeting point during the boycott, were prevented by police from attending. Teargas was used to disperse 300 Centenary High scholars marching to the same gathering.

In Chatsworth, at Meadowland and Mittekop Indian High School, witnesses maintain that students were baton charged by police after being told by police to return to classes or go home. The police deny this, but it was said that 10 scholars were arrested, charged and released.

A march of coloured scholars from Wentworth to neighbouring Fairvale High was disrupted with teargas.

25.04 By this date, almost every indian and coloured high school in and around Durban and the North Coast of Natal, was boycotting. In fact, nationally, only in Northern Natal, Northern Free State and Namibia did police divisions report no incidents.

A SUMMARY OF NATAL STUDENT BOYCOTT DEMANDS

Bachet Training College:

- 1) came out in sympathy with Cape scholars;
- 2) in sympathy with national demands;
- 3) demanded a higher standard of education, more text-books and higher salaries for teachers.

University of Natal Medical School:

- 1) noted the need for a united effort in any stand taken against the injustices of the laws of the SA government;
 - for a real attempt at enlightenment about local, national and international issues that has bearing on our people's struggle against oppression
 - to embark immediately on a symbolic boycott of all academic activities
 - to register support of Cape and elsewhere
 - to use the time to implement the programme of education and re-education of our own student body about issues affecting the black man (sic) in SA and to sensitize it to the condition of the black man (sic) in SA specifically and in Africa in general;
- 2) protested at 'racial and inferior education'.

University of Durban-Westville:

- Made the following demands -
- 1) non-racial education
 - 2) free compulsory and relevant education for all
 - 3) all education institutions open to all
 - 4) a single system of education under one department
 - 5) parents and academics should decide on the type of education relevant for their children and the community
 - 6) students should have the right to decide the content of syllabi
 - 7) educational facilities should be provided in relation to the real population strength and open to all people, irrespective of race, sex, colour or creed.

The grievances articulated were similar to those resounding nationally during the boycott. The demands above are important in that they make a direct link of education and the community. The demand for parent participation in planning education can be seen as arguing for the right of community-expressed needs in the content of education. At a student body meeting at Natal University Medical School it was resolved to pledge support to organisations such as the Durban Housing Action Committee, who were fighting a rent increase by the Durban City Council. In this manner a

broadening of the struggle is expressed by the students.

NATAL COLOURED AND INDIAN COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Natal coloured and indian parents solidly supported the student boycott. They separately (on 24.04 and 27.04, respectively) responded by immediately calling meetings in support of student demands and to prevent victimisation of students. They elected committees to provide concrete assistance - one such group established a feeding scheme.

A similar threat as had been made by Cape parents was voiced in Natal - parents might use the two non-violent means at their disposal: withdrawal of their consumer and labour power from the economy, if students were in any way intimidated for their boycott action (Daily News, 28.04).

A joint Natal Parents' Support Committee, representing 30 parent committees, was formed to co-ordinate black parents' support and to work closely with the Natal Students' Action Committee (NSAC). A six-person delegation from the Natal Parents' Support Committee (NPSC) was dispatched to Minister Steyn with an ultimatum. Also a ten-person joint parent-student committee was elected to investigate the education crisis nationally.

Such unified, overtly expressed parent support is not to be mirrored in the african parents' response. Although largely supportive in Kwa Mashu, as will be indicated by an initial meeting turnout of 1 000 parents (11.05) and only minority groups actively forcing students back to school or protecting students writing exams, parental response was muted. This was probably due to the vindictive approach of Inkatha towards active adult supporters of the boycott. It would be

important to investigate the composition of the vigilante groups that acted on behalf of Inkatha against boycotting students and their parents. It is also significant, and needs exploration, that Umhlanga parents and students were largely opposed to the boycott.

In Natal coloured and indian teachers were not reported as having taken a significant stand for or against the boycott. In the Cape and the Transvaal teacher organisations threatened to stop work in solidarity (Sunday Times, 04.05). A minority of teachers appear to have attended parents' support meetings in Natal.

From the african teaching community a few sympathetic members attended the pro-boycott meetings. There was, however, no strong encouragement from this sector. The majority seem to have been represented in their views by the Natal African Teachers' Union (NATU) who, on 02.06 urged boycotters to return to school. While they sympathised with student grievances, they argued that only negotiation after a return to classes could hope to succeed. The NATU also maintained that it has its own channels through which dissatisfied teachers can voice their discontent. Besides, it has a 'code of ethics which guides our general behaviour in accordance with recognised ethical standards and we dissociate ourselves completely from anybody who engenders disharmony and encourages strife among pupils, schools, teachers and the community'.

Many principals, nationally and throughout all groupings, played an antagonistic role towards the boycotts, on behalf of the state and of Inkatha. They were the vehicles through which directives, school closures, and student

suspensions were conveyed and, in fact, it was often at their insistence that police intervened to forcibly control students within school grounds. A major exception was a body of Cape principals who refused to act as agents of the state.

Two very different approaches were evident in the indian community with the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) actively in support of the boycott, to the extent that some of its prominent members were detained. The SA Indian Council (SAIC) representatives called for students to go back to classes. They were said to have made their point, and were accentuating only the negative aspects of their education system. Through the SA Black Alliance (SABA), the Labour Party and the Reform Party were identified with what will be shown to be Inkatha's reactionary stand on the students' boycott.

EXTENSION OF THE BOYCOTT TO AFRICAN STUDENTS

Very little was reported in newspapers on african participation in the early stages of the boycott.

21.04 As early as this date the Cape Committee of 61 was reported to have had african schools represented on it when deciding on a mass boycott for the week 21.04 to 25.04 (Natal Witness, 21.04.80). The schools mentioned were Langa and Fezekia High.

850 african students from the Nathamal Nyaluze Secondary School in Grahamstown joined in the boycott immediately. The Rand Daily Mail (10.05.80) reported that they were given an expulsion warning if they persisted with their three-week old boycott.

22.04 As previously mentioned, african medical

students and the Black Students Societies on university campuses in Johannesburg and Natal joined the boycott.

28.04 1 500 african scholars from four schools in Mamelodi township, outside Pretoria, encouraged by a meeting held by Cosas, joined in a sympathy boycott, as well as in protest at the arrest of 32 african scholars en route to the unveiling of Solomon Mahlangu's tombstone. Their attempt to call a mass boycott by the 33 000 students in the township was unsuccessful.

FOCUS ON NATAL AFRICAN EDUCATION BOYCOTT

Kwa Mashu, a township to the north of Durban but delineated within KwaZulu, was the first and only area in which the african schools boycott grew, despite the state and Inkatha's attempts to control it.

01.05 1 500 african scholars from Nzuvele Secondary School in Kwa Mashu marched to Isibonelo High, intending to encourage other schools in the township to join them in the boycott. Riot police intercepted them and, operating on a 'divide to rule' policy, they separated the scholars into three groups along the railway line opposite Isibonelo. The scholars dispersed under a hail of stones that were reportedly thrown by passengers from trains and onlookers (Daily News, 01.05).

Private and police cars, as well as Putco buses were damaged. The police followed the scholars, firing on them with teargas.

A looting spree took place in the township later that day. A township spokesperson didn't believe that scholars were responsible for the stoning and looting incidents - 'There are bad

elements who are provoking these attacks. And some of the children caught up in the havoc are simply following suit. But the majority are trying to keep it non-violent', he said (DN, 02.05).

A section of the marching column (430 people) headed for Dr Dube High. A spokesperson for the KwaZulu Education Department reported that when Dube scholars refused to join them they stoned windows of the school. This school was financed by an Urban Foundation loan to KwaZulu (Natal Mercury, 02.05).

Another contingent of the column walked to nearby Newlands East, hoping to link up with coloured colleagues. However, they allegedly found the latter in their classrooms, so returned.

At the outset of the boycott the police called on the support of the KwaZulu government to intervene in order to control the boycott situation.

02.05 Police arrests of students totalled 50, but this included both Chatsworth and Kwa Mashu scholars in separate incidents. They were later released into the custody of their parents.

INKATHA'S INITIAL RESPONSE

Inkatha made the same call as the state with regard to the boycott: the scholars must return to school. They should refrain from the boycott which Inkatha described as extreme, violent action, in opposition to the movement's non-violent strategy. In its explanation of the cause of the boycott, Inkatha resorted to similar scapegoats as the state: outsiders, agitators, and troublemakers.

02.05 Ndlovu, Assistant Secretary for Education in KwaZulu, called on scholars to keep calm and go back to school. They should state any grievances they have, but limit themselves to dialogue. They should not become involved in the struggles of teachers and other groups, and he emphasised the seriousness with which his department would regard their being incited by coloured and indian students (NM, 02.05).

Following this admonition, Dhlomo, Minister of Education and Culture in KwaZulu, praised three schools for refusing to be intimidated and for following the (Inkatha) President's policy of non-violence (DN, 02.05). These same schools later came out in support of the boycott.

Buthlezi sympathised with the grievances of coloured and indian students and scholars, but called on african scholars and students to remain uninvolved - thereby ignoring that they shared common grievances. He argued that they must discipline themselves if they wanted to avoid falling into the hands of black and white extremists (Sunday Times, 04.05).

09.05 Several thousand african scholars from four high schools in Kwa Mashu and one each in Umlazi and Lamontville gathered at a KwaMashu cinema and decided to continue their boycott in defiance of pleas by KwaZulu and Inkatha officials. A student spokesperson maintained that the KwaZulu government was powerless, could achieve nothing on their behalf, and that it was merely a 'post office' for the central government. They, therefore, would pursue their own struggle against the education system in which clearly

the state and Inkatha were closely associated. Inkatha's response was muted in the face of such blatant rejection.

SE Mtolo, the mayor of Kwa Mashu and a member of Inkatha's Central Committee, said he regretted the pupils decision to persist with the boycott. Dhlomo refused to comment (NM, 10.05).

11.05 Parents, teachers, scholars and students met in a Kwa Mashu cinema to discuss the boycott. The 1 000 parents present condemned Bantu Education and elected a parents' committee to support the pupils and students in their demands. The grievances were: enforced uniforms; lack of qualified teachers; inadequate schools and overcrowded conditions; poor sporting and other facilities. No threat was made to withdraw their consumer and worker power by african parents in Durban, which contrasts strongly with coloured and indian communities nationally.

One parent described Bantu Education since its inception in 1953, as changing only in name, but essentially still inferior and racial education. This analysis is inaccurate in one important respect - 'Inkatha' in all KwaZulu schools since 1979 (see box below).

INKATHA AND EDUCATION.

Recent trends indicate that Inkatha aims to be absorbed into the existing structures of power with South Africa's capitalist economy. The Inkatha Institute reveals a drive towards the incorporation of Inkatha into a position of power in planning and implementation of reformist change in South Africa in various fields. This was demonstrated in the economic sphere at a recent meeting of the Pinetown and New Germany Chamber of Industries. Buthlezi called for the forging of partnership links with industrialists. Because of the way in which Inkatha has

defined itself as a political force, we find that in certain instances state strategies and Inkatha strategies are complementary. The Inkatha Institute signifies a culmination point in Inkatha's development politically.

Inkatha politicians frequently use the concept of 'liberation struggle' rhetorically. What Inkatha means by liberation struggle remains ill-defined by them. However, in the light of the above, Inkatha's struggle appears reformist in nature - a struggle for the redistribution of power and wealth within the existing confines of existing relations.

An education system is a dominant ideological apparatus through which the ideas, values and norms of the ruling class are transmitted. In 1979 Inkatha was in a position of strength in relation to exploiting the avenues of ideological insertion in KwaZulu schools. "Inkatha" was introduced as a 1 hour per week compulsory subject at all levels of schooling. The Inkatha syllabus is a far-reaching and all embracing attempt at preparing KwaZulu school children for their "role in the liberation struggle". The establishment of a syllabus with its emphasis on the Youth Brigade clearly is an attempt to provide the youth with avenues for channeling growing political awareness and the need for political participation and involvement. It is intended, simultaneously, to draw them into Inkatha structures.

The inculcation of Inkatha ideology is implemented in varying concentrations and complexities from 'Sub-A' to Form V. This calculated attempt at mobilising strong and unified black youths in support of Inkatha aims is carried through specifically set out content courses. They are:

1. Inkatha.
2. History of Black Africa.
3. African culture.
4. Modern life styles.
5. Environmental studies.
6. Religious studies.
7. Practicals.

The content of each course provides insight into Inkatha's direction. The "Inkatha" section deals mainly with the history of the movement, organisational structure, significance of the constitution, discipline and conduct of Inkatha members, role of leaders and led, role of the Youth Brigade and the importance of rallies, leadership and training.

The "Modern life styles" section develops thinking along the needs and problems of rural and urban life; Africa and

economic development and the need for african business enterprise.

"Practicals" include singing and dance, and self defence, among other activities.

The nature of Inkatha ideology to which the youth are exposed is mediated partly by an appeal through traditional customs and norms. Through the Inkatha Syllabus, Inkatha attempts to mould and harness the black youth into the force needed for the strategy of Inkatha developed by the petty bourgeois and conservative traditional leadership in KwaZulu.

A parent argued that Bantu Education (BE) is an education of domestics and labourers and not to train men and women to take their rightful place in the future of South Africa. Another parent spoke disparagingly, questioning which government was in control: 'We are told that the KwaZulu government is our government but yet we find that it has no power'. This is a similar assertion to that made at the previous student meeting and the challenge that Buthelezi, Inkatha and KwaZulu were determined to disprove by attempting to control the boycott.

The parents were adamant that there were no agitators behind the boycott, but rather legitimate grievances voiced over the years.

12.05 The boycott had, by this time, 100% participation in Kwa Mashu, but was minimally supported elsewhere in KwaZulu (5 schools were involved in Umlazi and only one known to be boycotting in Lemontville). Parents and the majority of scholars in Umlazi were said to be opposed to the disruption of classes by the boycott. The five Umlazi schools maintain they were persuaded against their will to join the boycott (NM, 13.05). Even Kwa Mashu scholars attending schools in Umlazi

attempted to catch their trains, but were picketed by scholars and prevented from doing so on 14.05. Clearly different responses were articulated by Kwa Mashu and Umlazi communities. Umlazi represents more of an Inkatha stronghold than Kwa Mashu. It is suggested that an examination of the class structure of the two townships may throw some light on the different responses, perhaps revealing Kwa Mashu as having a broader working class base than Umlazi.

INKATHA'S RESPONSE

Rather than attack the underlying cause of the mass dissatisfaction, a conspiracy theory was adopted as an explanation, and a strategy of stamping out the boycott at all costs followed.

Threats were made hinting that Zulu anger might ominously overstep the bounds of a non-violent strategy. Inkatha's target was a list of agitators who were 'orchestrating' a challenge to Inkatha's power. For an organisation that aspires to be non-ethnically based the description of these scapegoats was racist and ethnic in nature. It was emphasised that Inkatha has a strategy for the liberation struggle, although it was never elaborated. However, it was asserted that this blueprint does not include an education boycott nor recognises the leadership of 'children'.

12.05 A 4 1/2 hour debate, 2 1/2 hours behind closed doors and 2 hours in public, was held on the boycott in the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly (KLA). Buthelezi threatened to adjourn the KLA so that Inkatha could deal with people who were organising and agitating

among african school children in Kwa Mashu.

A statement of this nature indicates the interesting relationship between Inkatha and the KLA, as well as highlighting a mystificatory analysis of the real causes of the boycott.

Buthlezi listed those 'agitators' as including: 'pundits from Reservoir Hills' (an indian residential area); 'intellectuals from the University of Durban-Westville and the Black Medical School'; 'activists sitting in white newspaper offices' - he specified reporter Subramoney, then of the Daily News, who was warned by a KLA member that he must be very careful because he was very close to the Indian Ocean and that the Inkatha current was very strong.

This response was elicited because Subramoney was the only reporter not rejected by Kwa Mashu scholars at a meeting when black Ilanga reporters were chased out.

Buthlezi included three black lawyers in his list of agitators. He argued that they were soliciting funds overseas to defend cases arising out of the boycott. The lawyers were named by Assembly members as Mxenge, Poswa and Skweyiya, who were decried as Xhosa-speaking, Transkeian scavengers.

These agitators were said to be non-Zulu, 'political opportunists', 'paid imbeciles' and an 'extra-Natalian radical faction' who sent their children to elite Swaziland schools. Their motivation, according to Buthelezi, was to 'challenge the Zulu people through Inkatha'. The Assembly members elaborated further, saying that the instigators 'think the Zulus are easy prey, and they want to 'convince the world that the youth was spurning the leadership of Inkatha'. Buthelezi threatened: 'I wish to issue this warning. Behind the facade of



Dr Oscar Dhloho, secretary general of Inkatha, Chief MG Buthelezi, and Mr Gibeon Thule, Inkatha's urban representative in the Transvaal.

courtesy and smiles that you see on the face of the Zulu there is an anger the like of which does not exist in any other group in this country'. After this display of chauvinism, an Assembly member crudely assured that 'we will go and get them'.

Education and Culture Minister Dhloho stated that the government knew of and sympathised with the grievances of 'the students. In fact, they were part and parcel of the liberation struggle being waged by Inkatha. He argued that Inkatha has a 'clear strategy' of which 'the boycott of classes and the breaking down of school buildings is not a part'.

He insisted that they were 'not prepared to be led by children', that 'we do not believe that children have the intellect to devise strategies under which the Black man (sic) is to be liberated'. He referred to 'our foolish children ... being led by instigators, are breaking down the very structures which their parents have sweated to put up'.

This tactic to drive a wedge between parents and students/scholars was frequently exploited by Inkatha during the boycott.

Dhloho introduced a resolution strongly warning parents supporting the boycott, and scholars not re-registering at schools on Sunday, 18.05, and back in classes on Monday,

that they would be 'severely dealt with'.

Justificatory and self-legitimizing comments were thrown to the community: "we must not be blamed for any action we take... we must not be blamed if we lose patience". It is through comments such as the above that the mask of a so called non-violent strategy drops, and Inkatha is exposed in a violent and repressive organisational light, favouring reformist change.

It was decided that the 130-strong Assembly attend a meeting of residents, parents and scholars at the soccer stadium in Kwa Mashu on Sunday 18.05, at 8 am. After the Assembly all the Durban members left for home, and attempted to diffuse trouble in the township. Methods of achieving this aim were not defined.

12.05 In preparation for the rally, the

KwaZulu government made statements and, with the help of Inkatha members, distributed pamphlets calling for: attendance at the stadium meeting, compliance with the de-registration drive, and a tough expulsion threat if all did not return to school on Monday, 19.05.

16.05 600 students met at the Kwa Mashu

cinema to plan their strategy for the forthcoming stadium meeting. KwaZulu officials tried to break up the gathering. Police dispersed the crowd with teargas, but not before the students had released the handbrake of a KwaZulu official's car which subsequently crashed.

18.05 10 000 people (it is disputed to be half this figure) attended the rally at the Prince Magogo stadium in Kwa Mashu.

Umlazi supporters of Inkatha had formed a self-appointed impi guard at the gates the previous evening and during the meeting marched around the outside wall. Inkatha officials were apparently disappointed at the poor turn-out of Kwa Mashu supporters for this task. The aim of the impi was to safeguard their chairman who admitted that he had had a threat to 'tear (him) to threads if (he) came to Kwa Mashu'.

Significantly absent from the meeting were 500 student and scholar boycotters who held their own gathering at the cinema. The South African security police escorted two student delegates to the stadium with a request that Buthelezi address this separate meeting. They were refused by Mr Mthethwa, the minister of justice in KwaZulu, who declared that it was not Zulu tradition for youth to approach their elders with such a demand, and that furthermore it would not be granted because they had all been invited to attend the one big function. After reporting back to students and scholars one of the latter returned to say that they would still not come to the stadium because they feared being assaulted.

A 200-strong impi, wielding knobkerries, spears and knives, marched from the stadium to confront the students and scholars but police intervened. The same impi, after repeatedly harassing a religious minister, Mr Mbambo, for allegedly being behind the boycott, eventually stormed the stage at the stadium, to which the minister had been called to speak. The impi assaulted him. Inkatha officials and police had to rescue him. Buthelezi was seen to reprimand the impi. During the proceedings, a Ms Mnguni, a

Kwa Mashu councillor, was also attacked by angry women for the same reason.

These incidents serve as a forceful warning to those who opposed Inkatha's wishes, whilst at the same time bolstering Buthelezi's image as a moderate man.

INKATHA RALLY SPEECHES.

Buthelezi maintained that KwaZulu and Inkatha placed 'education as a priority', and that 'no other race group faces as enormous an obstacle' of disadvantage in this field; hence, while believing in the 'oneness of blacks', (he quoted participation of Inkatha in the SA Black Alliance as evidence of this, yet so far members had not called on Inkatha to adopt a common strategy in the boycott), called on black scholars, rather than staying away from lessons, to 'get as much education that is available as possible. This is far better than no education at all'. Buthelezi validated this stance to scholars by explaining: 'Everyone of you who perseveres through school into high school has before you the possibility of leading a liberation battalion in the market place and in the factories'. He did not contemplate the alternative that schooling attempts to train a passive, disciplined population and workforce.

He reiterated his perception of a 'total onslaught against Inkatha' by 'scrawny, scraggly, tattered cockerels, a new inclusion being the trade union movement, dancing to the tune of pied pipers from an international band orchestrated by no-good clerics (the churches joined his list of agitators), and long-haired intellectuals', amongst whom he specified the 'brave new

left writing Marxist analysis on Inkatha's role'. He once again warned the opposition to Inkatha that although he was personally committed to non-violence the anger of the people may result in cracked skulls.

Finally he belittled protest politics, the 'stupidity of school boycotting' which 'clamoured for the white boss to give us better goodies'. However, he certainly did not envisage its replacement by revolutionary politics, and the question of how exactly Inkatha intends to achieve social change remains.

Dr Dhlomo, KwaZulu Minister of Education and Culture provided the apology for KwaZulu's provision of poor education and emphasised its redeeming hard-won features. Because of KwaZulu's stand against independence it received no assistance from the central government: hence funding was short and relied on parent contributions. However KwaZulu was against Bantu Education. It had reduced mother tongue instruction and he announced that Matriculation and Standard 8 examinations would be written under the Natal Education Department rather than the National Education Department. This reformist approach fails to critically assess the quality and content of white education, which it attempts to adopt.

Dhlomo excused the overcrowding of classes by mentioning that many Johannesburg students had been enrolled after the Soweto schools boycott of 1976 (Natal Mercury, 19.05.80).

19.05 With Inkatha's encouragement to stop the boycott at all costs and Umlazi's record of minimal involvement in the stay

away from classes, residents assaulted Kwa Mashu students allegedly brought to vocational schools in Umlazi to persuade scholars there to withdraw from lessons.

Meanwhile in Kwa Mashu the minister of Justice, with the support of Kwa Mashu councillors, attempted to arrange police protection for scholars who might want to return to school. Later, on 22.05, a few Kwa Mashu parents armed with sticks and knobkerries routed boycotting scholars, some of whom were forced back to classes. This is the first reported instance where Kwa Mashu parents acted overtly against their children, and it appeared to involve a minority of Inkatha supporters.

INKATHA 6th ANNUAL CONFERENCE ADDRESS.

In an address to the 6th annual conference of Inkatha, Buthelezi admitted the organisation's failure in its responsibilities- it had so far been unable to contain the school boycotts and undisciplined scholars. From this experience, he said, Inkatha should learn some lessons. He outlined two possible future strategies.

Firstly he proposed the closing of Ngoye University and opening a new one, a 'true university of the people of KwaZulu'. This would stop students being subjected to tuition by academics whose aims conflicted with those of Inkatha. Buthelezi, as Chancellor of this institution, and due to preside at the forthcoming graduation on Saturday, 24.05, had been warned by the boycotting students through their SRC spokesman, not to arrive accompanied by an entourage of Inkatha members in uniform and bearing arms. When he ignored this warning and approached the

university with an impi, students attempted to prevent their entry in a scene of violence and arson. After the meeting the SRC president was assaulted. Finally the students called on Buthelezi to resign as Chancellor at a student body meeting the following week, on 27.05. He refused, indicating that he was not appointed by the students but elected by the university Council and would see out his 7-year term 'as a service to blocks' (Daily News, 28.05.80).

Secondly, he insisted,

it is time for Inkatha to establish training camps where branches and regions are schooled in the employment of anger in an orderly fashion....to be able to control riots....to conduct meetings in the middle of chaos which other people try to create. We need to tone up our muscles so that the dove of peace sits easily on the spear'.

He is clearly referring to training impis and to the establishment of a paramilitary force. He had previously defended the impi's role in the stadium meeting when they were accused of disorderly conduct. He proclaimed them an integral part of Zulu tradition and the Zulu nation (Natal Mercury, 20.05.80).

KWAZULU/INKATHA DIRECTIVES.

A directive was sent from Ulundi ordering all scholars to be back in school by Friday, 23.05. Principals were enlisted to hand over names of those still boycotting by this date to the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture.

The deadline for returning to school was extended to Friday, 30.05, and Buthelezi released figures to the Assembly that showed a marked increase in Kwa Mashu school attendance. The Natal Witness (29.05.80) however, still reported it to be below 50%.

A few schools admitted that less than a quarter of scholars were present (Mzuvela and Isibonela where the boycott first began were amongst these latter). The Chlanga School scholars had that day walked out en masse due to discrimination against them by the staff.

The threats Buthelezi now issued increased in magnitude. Boycotting scholars no longer had intimidation as an excuse, for instance, as Inkatha officials and a few Kwa Mashu parents guarded students wanting to attend the Mzuvela school. He could no longer give them grace, he said, and they would face instant dismissal.

INKATHA ABDUCTION.

28.05 11 students (some from Mzuvele High) as well as a few people known to be non-students (at least 2 were workers), were forcibly removed from their homes by a group of adult male Inkatha members late on the evening of 28.05. Some were initially taken to the garage of Bhengu, a KwaZulu MP, ostensibly for interrogation. All were later assembled at C Section Hall in the presence of the Regional Secretary of Inkatha, Mr Mjwara, and a Kwa Mashu councillor and Inkatha member, Mr Mkize, who were to accompany them to Ulundi.

They were loaded into a kombi in the early hours of 29.05, and deposited at the Inkatha offices for a lecture on Inkatha and its role in the liberation struggle, and then led into the Legislative Assembly of KwaZulu. Here they were announced as instigators of the boycott and were required to explain the reasons behind continuing the boycott. Significantly, they were not asked to

elaborate on the grievances motivating the boycott. They were then handed over to a Major in the KwaZulu policeforce to be 'spoken to' and for protective custody.

On their return to Kwa Mashu they were forced to attend an Inkatha meeting at C Section Hall, where their names, addresses and schools were noted to show how serious the members were in carrying out the threats they made: to destroy their homes, assault them and their relatives, and ensure they were detained. These warnings have since all been implemented against some of the students and their families. The detention of a few of the same students shows especially the close association between Inkatha and the state in repressing the boycott.

Buthelezi described in the Assembly how a counter-attack had been staged by Gugulebashe School students in Kwa Mashu when they were urged to join the boycott. Because of such intimidation he found it necessary to go back on previous directives - absent students would not necessarily be expelled. However, those not sitting for half-yearly examinations would not be accepted in schools in KwaZulu.

Buthelezi and the Assembly managed to identify further 'agitators'; Fort Hare students had joined the Medical School students and, disguised in balaclava caps, were stopping students trying to go to classes. An unidentified white man was said to be paying students R10 each a day for staying out. The SAP and BOSS were probably responsible, they claimed, because they refused to take strong action against students. The latter's neglect spurred Buthelezi to introduce, under the Police Bill, the need for KwaZulu to have an

independent police and security police force. It seems that they would be commissioned to do a better job than the state forces were capable of.

02.06 - 07.06 Open violence engulfed Kwa

Mashu, harassment and assault being conducted by roaming groups, largely adults alleged to be Inkatha supporters. The violence was aimed against boycotting students. Many of the students required medical treatment at the local polyclinic. Attorneys intervened on the students' behalf, requiring police to halt the rampage of assaults. Ma Nguni, widely known to have challenged Inkatha over its boycott stand, after being personally assaulted at the stadium meeting had stones pelted at her home. There were other incidents of similar intimidation.

On the other side, the Inkatha office was the site of an arson attack. A KwaZulu MP, Mr Bhengu, felt it essential to establish an impi guard at his garage after it had been set fire to. He blamed ANC-inspired youth and adults for the attack on Inkatha supporters.

08.06 5 000 people, including Labour Party leaders, attended a prayer meeting at the Prince Magogo Stadium.

INKATHA SPEECH.

Conscious of Inkatha's weakness in the face of mass boycott action, Buthelezi used this opportunity to discredit the ANC. He distinguished between the irrelevant fringe strategy for liberation conducted by the exiled ANC, and Inkatha's claimed mandate by the people to wage the liberation struggle.

He described the ANC as the oldest liberation movement in Southern Africa, yet its dreams and efforts had not borne fruit. It could not hope to adequately communicate with the masses nor intimidate the white minority by an isolated refinery attack, however much publicity it received, whereas Inkatha could marshal consumer and worker power for change. He did not try to identify when Inkatha has, or will, pursue this power struggle.

Students and scholars would only understand the superiority of Inkatha's role in the liberation struggle if they continued with their education. It was up to students to come to him with realistic concrete schemes of how to achieve reform. He set out only two options for the struggle: radical change of the socio-economic and political system of South Africa, and survival in suffering. They are not alternatives, according to Buthelezi. Those who refuse the second challenge have no right to respond to the first.

10.06 The KwaZulu government sent a circular to school principals which they had to read three times to scholars in the morning assembly. It reasserts the KwaZulu government's rejection of Bantu Education, and emphasises their awareness of students' legitimate grievances. It points out that the Zulus have moved furthest away from Bantu Education because of action taken by the KwaZulu government. However, it once again rejects boycott action. It outlines a resolution passed in the Assembly this year to appoint a commission of enquiry to do away with the philosophy underlying Bantu Education. This would be subsumed under the Buthelezi

Commission (which has a research institute attached) to consider the collective destiny of all the people in Natal. One of its tasks would be to study the education system. The acceptance of Inkatha's constitutional proposals for Natal by the wider community preoccupied Buthelezi during the boycott period, and is likely to dominate Inkatha strategy in the future. It would be interesting to pursue the influence this had on the movement's conservative stand in the boycott.

16.06 A spate of violence ensued in Kwa Mashu. 77 buses were stoned, six bus drivers were injured, 3 robbed, and 40 Administration building windows smashed, allegedly by youths in Kwa Mashu. Six youths were arrested in connection with these incidents. Another three buses were stoned the following day, bringing the total to 80, 60 of which belonged to Putco. Damage was estimated at R7 000.

No analysis was undertaken by Inkatha of growing student frustration. Despite their continued boycott protest, the struggle for change was being smothered by the combined forces of the state and Inkatha. Rather, debates on strategies for change were confined to the higher echelons of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly.

23.06 In the light of boycott action it was suggested, at the Inkatha annual conference, that the Natal African Teachers' Union co-ordinate workshops to explore possible improvements in the quality of education. Youth Preparedness programmes in which, amongst other input, would be lessons in self-defence, and parent-teachers associations to improve communication would be discussed. Besides

being an enquiry into preventative reform, it could be that Inkatha was attempting to assure, through these programmes, better control over students, parents, and teachers for the future.

03.07 Every conceivable pressure was utilised to get students to return to classes on the first day of the third term. The Natal Medical School and the University of Durban-Westville had gone back on 30.06, and the coloured and Indian schools boycott was terminated nationally at the beginning of July.

In Kwa Mashu students resolved to continue as their demands had met with no response. On the other hand, principals decided to sit down and talk with students in a desperate attempt to return to 'normal'. The battle of forces - the boycotting students versus Inkatha and the state - faded in Natal when classes were eventually resumed. It continues among African students in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and the Orange Free State.

CONCLUSION

The boycott of black educational institutions in Natal highlighted the limitations of student boycott by itself in the face of state power. Of great value, however, was the 'crisis' of a mass student boycott which forced Inkatha, despite claims of representing the youth, workers and middle-class interests, into revealing a reactionary tendency in this situation. Inkatha was unable to respond positively to the student struggle, offering no concrete alternative, and in a rejected position revealed these reformist and conservative tendencies.