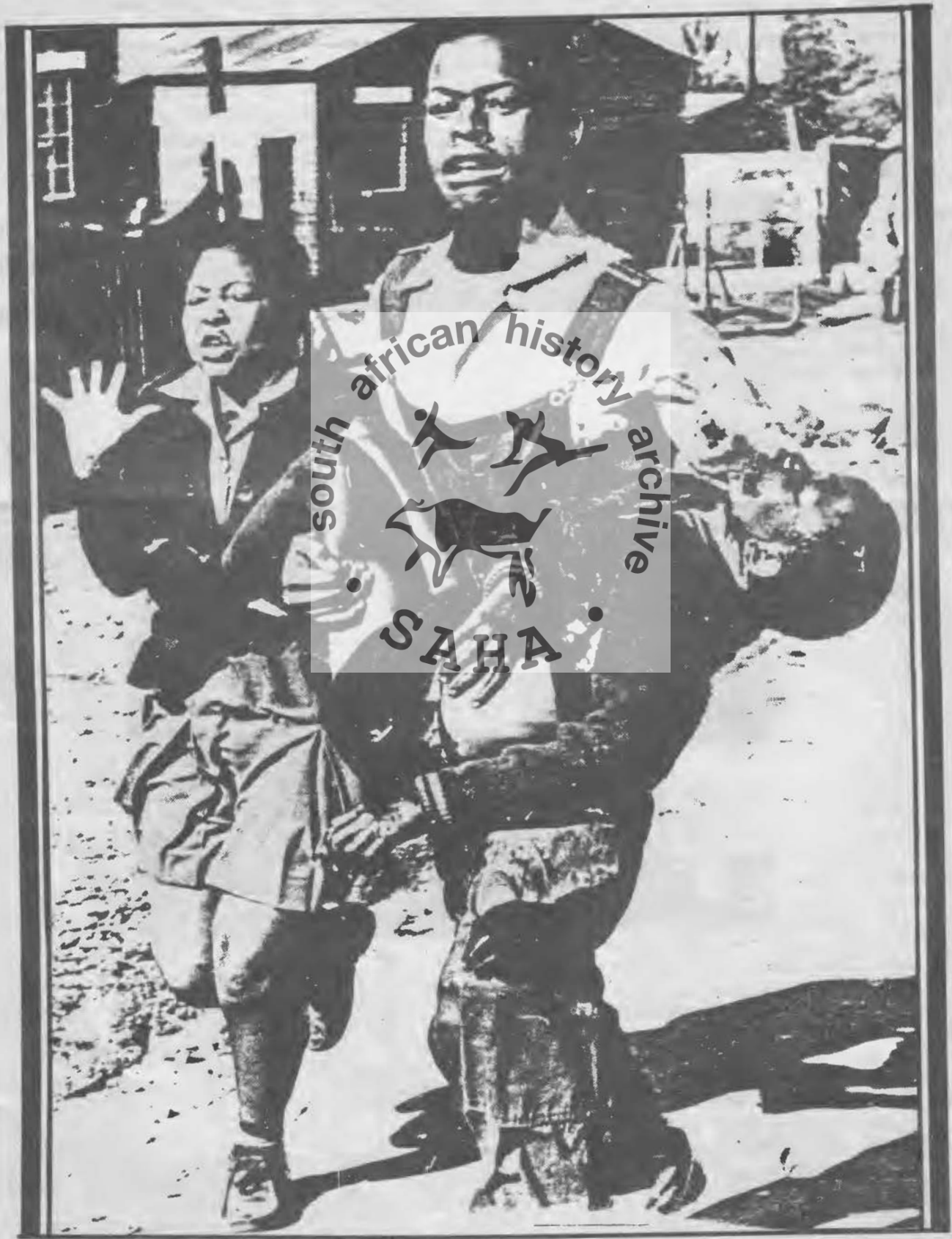


1994'S
JUNE 16

EDUCATION IN CRISIS



"STUDENTS USED STONES AS THEIR BULLETS AND DUSTBIN LIDS AS THEIR SHIELDS"

In this day, 16 June 1976, at about 10.00am began a peaceful demonstration of 20 000 students against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in our schools. The marching and chanting students armed only with their slogans and banners proceeded towards Orlando Stadium their point of assembly, to stage a peaceful protest. As they moved in this direction they were met by soldiers with, police dogs, teargas and bullets. Teargas cannisters were fired into the air and dogs were unleashed. Gunshot sounds filled the air. On that day chaos ruled in the streets of Soweto. By the end of that day the apartheid regime had the live of innocent 13yr old Hector Peterson, 500 others and many injured.

June 16 will always be a watershed in the struggle for liberation in South Africa. This day will never be forgotten by the people of this land. It was the day the youth led the way in the streets of Soweto, their blood mingled with the staleness of ghetto gutters as they cried "Away with the Bantu Education, away with gutter education."

In 1980 a wave of uprisings caught the country again. It was clear that the students of South Africa who had faced the bullets of 1976 were more determined to continue the struggle for democratic education system.

In 1984 we witnessed yet another wave of revolt revolts all over the contry. Students at Atteridgeville, Port Elizabeth, Cradock and Graaf Reinet stood up to challenge apartheid education. Issues at hand were age limit regulations, demand for democratic SRCs, high failure rate, State repression etc. We also see a similar response from Unitra, Fort Hare and Ongoye students stood up against State and Bantustan represion.

These struggles being waged under the guidance of COSAS and AZASO are gaining momentum and support from many people in our community and outside. Let us commemorate this historic in our thousands as a commitment to fight our struggle until VICTORY.



After more than a year and a half of continuous confrontation, the focus of the students demands shifted for a rejection of Afrikaans to a rejection of Bantu Education; from student grievances to those that incorporated the parents. As the revolt spread it became clear that it was struggle against the social and economic conditions that generated the education system. This education is designed to keep us forever exploited and oppressed.

STUDENT MILITANCY IS DISPLAYED AS STUDENTS MARCH THROUGH THE STREETS

PRESENT CRISIS IN EDUCATION

The crisis in education has again flared into proportions we have seen in 1976 and 1980. We do not only see uprisings in schools but Universities have also taken up their issues vigorously. The high failure amongst matriculants last year was shocking and this was an indication for everyone to worry about Black education.

At Atteridgeville, Cradock and Port Elizabeth were with a problem of age limit regulations imposed by the department. The students demanded the abolition of these together with

recognition of their legitimate SRCs. These grievances were typically met with detention of student leaders and the closure of schools.

Again at Unitra Matanzimas government is intent on a campaign to harass students. Detention of student leaders sparked aboycott by students and closure of the campus. A similar situation occurred at Ongoye and Fort Hare where Gatsha and Sebe wanted to impose their rule over students.

The number of students engaged in these serious struggles run into thousands.



STATE REACTION TO PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION.

UNCOMPROMISING STATE REACTION

Since 1976 the State has never shown any willingness to respond positively to student s problems. Instead they have been more intransigent and rected through more repression and "reforms" intended to tighten more control over the students.

On each situation in the past the state has responded by detaining and harassing student leadership as well as closing down the schools. Surely if they were changing heart they would negotiate with the student leadership. Other measures used were introduction of age limit regulations, harassment of sympathetic teachers and principals, and refusal to negotiate with genuine parents representatives.

On the other hand the State has also built Elite schools like Pace college and isolated double-storey schools with high security fences for a selected few as an attempt to coopt them into accepting the present system. The basic problem of providing proper schools for the mass of students elsewhere particularly in rural area is not attended to.

The governments White paper on education again confirms its commitment to separate and inferior education for Black students. The gap in State expenditure for each population group is evidence of this, where R137 is spent on a black child and R1 400 for whites. The education has been tailored to better serve the interests of Capital than our community.

STUDENTS RESPONSE

The students as their first step have rallied together under the banner of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO). This has facilitated mobilisation and unity of many other students for a more coordinated and effective struggle.

The Education Charter Campaign spearheaded by AZASO^a COSAS is a method through which our demands and struggles can be coordinated.

Some of the objectives of the campaign is to

1. Nationally unify students in responding to such crises which face us today. Our attitude to events that have happened at Atteridgeville, Cradock, Graaf Reinet or Uitenhage, Fort Hare and Ongoye is "AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL". We therefore need to react jointly as students in order to strike a blow to our enemy.

2. Concretise the demands of the students. As we all know that the State has shown no preparedness to react to our basic demands, the crisis in Education is therefore enlarging and is bound to be worse in future. The need to crystallise these demands and be acceptable to a large number of our people in form of this document is also increasing.

Our enemy is working all the time and making use of anyone who is willing, to be able to perpetuate the present order. Therefore for us to wage a successful struggle each one of us as a student needs to contribute in building our genuine student organisations. Organising ourselves into these structures will ensure that we all participate meaningfully through our daily lives in concrete struggle for a Democratic, nonracial, free and compulsory education for all.



STUDENTS ARE ORGANISING THEMSELVES

FORWARD WITH THE STUDENTS STRUGGLE

FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLES STRUGGLE

FORWARD TO LIBERATION