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SOCIAL CONFLICTS OVER AFRICAN EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM THE 1940s TO 1976

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Johannesburg 1990

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Jonathan Hyslop

JONATHAN HYSLOP

19th day of November, 1990

ABSTRACT

Contemporary work in the Sociology of Education has been sharply polarized between approaches which emphasize the reproductive role of education systems and those which emphasize the role of popular resistance and culture in shaping the social relations of schooling. That opting for either of these two divergent approaches poses serious theoretical dilemmas is demonstrated particularly sharply by attempts to analyse the South African education system for Africans in the years between the 1940s and 1976. On the one hand, it is widely seen as a system which maintained relations of class and racial inequality; on the other it produced an enormous student rebellion in 1976. The thesis suggests that viewing education systems as part of the state, understood as a contested field of social relations, offers a way of investigating educational conflict which avoids both the functionalism of reproductionist perspectives and the voluntarist tendencies of culturalist interpretations. It enables the valid insights of these theories to be integrated into an analysis without their characteristic drawbacks. On this basis a series of analytical propositions about Bantu Education are generated.

The thesis argues that the relationship between Bantu Education policy and capitalism was changing and contingent rather than fixed, as previous analyses have implied. The state educational bureaucracy did not function as an instrument of capital; rather, at certain times its aims were complementary with the needs of capital, and at other times, largely contradictory with them. The education system reproduced varying levels of skill in the work force across time. Urbanization and industrialization were central forces moulding education policy; the introduction of Bantu Education policy was a response to urban crisis. The thesis argues that the way in which state education policy was pursued was partly shaped by popular movements. There was a battle within the education system between the hegemonic project of government and mass resistance. Changes in popular culture affected the nature of popular responses to educational structures. Teachers' responses were particularly affected by their ambiguous structural position.

The thesis attempts to test these arguments through a historical investigation of the period from the 1940s to 1976. It argues that the roots of Bantu Education policy need to be sought in the social crisis resulting from urbanization and industrialization, which affected South African society from the 1940s. In the education sphere,

this crisis was manifested in the inability of the existing black education system to cope with the needs of urban youth, growing conflict within the mission schools, and disaffection and radicalization of the African teaching profession. In these circumstances dominant class opinion favoured state intervention and restructuring of the education system. The implementation of Bantu Education from 1955 was initially focused on resolving the urban crisis, by providing for the social control of the urban working class and reproduction of a semi-skilled work force. A notable campaign of resistance, in the form of school boycotts by the African National Congress, opposed the policy in 1955-1956, but eventually broke down, primarily because of its inability to rival the state's capacity to provide mass schooling. Other forms of resistance to state policy, such as opposition to the establishment of school boards, teacher activism and student riots, were too dispersed and limited to block it. By the early sixties, a new, state run, cheap education system had been established. However, the grim material conditions in that system, and its racist administration, prevented it from exploiting opportunities to win active popular support. In the 1960s, government, enjoying favourable political and economic conditions, moved to a more rigid linking of education policy to the enforcement of territorial apartheid, especially by preventing the

expansion of urban black secondary, technical and higher education in the urban areas. It appeared that a degree of popular acquiescence in the education system was developing, with the stabilization of popular participation in the school board system and in conservative teachers organizations. However, the system was generating new tensions. Industry was adversely affected by skill shortages increased by government educational policy. In the early 1970s industry launched a strong campaign for change in educational policy, which resulted in a government shift toward expansion of urban schooling. By the mid-1970s the changing political situation outside and inside the country, changes in youth culture, new ideological influences, and the material problems of the expanding schooling system were creating a new and more politicized culture of resistance amongst urban African youth. The implementation of a new language policy by government produced first the disaffection of school boards and then revolt amongst students. The conclusion argues that the analysis developed in the thesis has justified the claim that the theoretical approach adopted in it goes beyond the limitations of reproductionist and culturalist studies.

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PREFACE

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I was given the opportunity to present earlier versions of work contained in this thesis by the African Studies Institute seminar, Social Transformation seminar, and the Sociology Department seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand, and regional and annual meetings of the Association for Sociology in South Africa.

Earlier versions of sections of this thesis were published prior to its completion. A less developed variant of parts of chapters one and three appeared as "The concepts of reproduction and resistance in the sociology of education: the case of the transition from 'missionary' to 'Bantu' education 1940-1955", Perspectives in Education, Vol.9, No.2, September 1987, pp.3-26. Much of chapter six appeared as "Let Us Cry For Our Children': lessons of the 1955-56 school boycotts", Transformation, No.4, 1987, pp.1-24. Material which has been reworked and used in various chapters appears in earlier versions as, "Teachers and Trade Unions", South African Labour Bulletin, Vol.11, No.6, June-July 1986, pp.90-97; "Food, Authority and Politics: Student Riots in South Africa 1945-1976", Africa Perspective, New Series, Vol.1, Nos. 3 and 4, June 1987, pp.3-41; "State Education Policy and the Social Reproduction of the Urban African Working Class: the case of the Southern Transvaal 1955-1976", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol.14, No.3, April 1988, pp.446-476; "School Boards, School Committees and Educational Politics: Aspects of the Failure of Bantu Education as a Hegemonic Strategy", in P. Bonner, I. Hofmeyr, D. James and T. Lodge, Holding Their Ground: Class, Locality and Culture in 19th and 20th Century South Africa, (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press and Ravan Press, 1978), pp.201-225; and "Teacher Resistance in African Education from the 1940s to the 1980s" in M. Nkomo (ed.)., Pedagogy of Domination: Toward a Democratic Education in South Africa, (Trenton, N.J., Africa World Press, 1990), pp.93-119. Some material

will appear as "A Destruction Coming in: Bantu Education as Response to Social Crisis", in a forthcoming volume of papers from the History Workshop, to be edited by P. Bonner, P. Delius, J. Hyslop and D. Posel and published by Witwatersrand University Press and Ravan Press.

During the turbulent and often gloomy years of the 1980s, it was a great privilege to work with my colleagues of the Sociology department and the History Workshop, who sustained their faith in the value of an engaged scholarship in bad times. For this reason, this work is dedicated to them.

Jonathan Hyslop
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ABBREVIATIONS

RDM = Rand Daily Mail

SAIRR = South African Institute of Race Relations

CHAPTER 1: THEORIES OF REPRODUCTION, RESISTANCE AND THE STATE IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

In the mid 1950s South Africa's Nationalist Party government imposed the policy of Bantu Education on African people. This was the expression given to apartheid policy in the field of schooling. It involved the creation of a tightly state controlled, badly funded mass education system, which was intended to support the social order through channelling black political aspirations toward the racially segregated political structures of rural 'homelands'. After breaking the initial resistance of black communities to its education policies, the regime appeared to have consolidated Bantu Education as a system. In the years from 1956 to 1976 opposition and resistance in the educational sphere was sporadic and circumscribed. The Nationalists seemed to have succeeded in creating an educational mechanism which effectively reproduced apartheid society. Yet in 1976, the schools thus created gave birth to one of the most profound and dramatic revolts of youth in history.

For the student of South African social history, this poses a dilemma. Should one understand Bantu Education as a system which maintained the structures of existing society, or as one which was always rejected by black students, parents and teachers? If the latter view is correct, then

how could the education system have acted to reproduce the apartheid social order? If, on the other hand, the education system did successfully act to reproduce the social order, how is one to account for the massive rejection of it by students in 1976? The passive receivers of a process of socialization or ideological brain-washing surely would not be capable of rejecting the very structures which had formed them. This paradox often leads, in popular accounts of Bantu Education, to a violent oscillation between views of South African educational history centred on an interpretation of Bantu Education as providing the dominant classes with cheap and docile labour and, on the other hand, notions of an unbroken chain of resistance to Bantu Education [1]

This paradox is not exclusive to South African thought on education. Internationally, during the 1970s and 1980s, the renewed vigour of the Sociology of Education has been marked by a division between the work of those viewing education as a process of reproduction and that of those who focus on popular resistance in the education sphere. Some theorists have sought to explain how school reproduces society; this 'structuralist' model explains educational inequality well, but often fails to examine the bases of revolt in education. Others have tried to show how educational social relations are moulded from below by the action of subordinate groups; this 'resistance' or 'culturalist' approach, emphasising the role of agency,

provides valuable insights into educational conflict at the local level, but often fails to address adequately the role of large scale educational structures in perpetuating social inequality. There seems to be an unsatisfactory sliding between an over-emphasis on structure, and an over-emphasis on agency.

This thesis will attempt to investigate the theoretical problem of the relation between reproduction and resistance in education through a historical examination of struggles over the education of African people in South Africa between the 1940s and 1976. In doing so it attempts to develop and utilize an approach to the analysis of educational conflict which can integrate an awareness of both structure and agency. The approach used here attempts to avoid the counterpositions of 'structuralism' and 'culturalism', grasping reproduction and resistance, the objective and the experiential. An excessive emphasis on either side of these binary oppositions is seen as inimical to adequate Historical Sociology. The result, it is hoped, will contribute toward a deeper understanding of the history of black education in South Africa.

This introductory chapter will begin by briefly surveying some of the major contributions to sociological thought on education made by writers within the perspectives of reproduction and resistance. In each case the strengths

and weaknesses of their approaches will be assessed. On the basis of this discussion a theoretical approach to the analysis of stability, conflict and change in education will be developed. In this approach the educational structures of the state will be seen as a contested field of social relations, embodying the struggles between different social forces. Educational struggle will be interpreted in terms of concepts developed from the ideas of hegemony and counter-hegemony. The subsequent chapter will show how these concepts are to be applied to the South African case in the thesis.

Reproductionist Theories

Use of the concept 'Reproduction' in contemporary debates on education theory is traceable to the revival of interest in the categories of Marx's Capital during the 1960s and 1970s. Marx[2] argued that society, in order to survive, has to reproduce itself. This implied that a proportion of what was produced had to be transformed into new means of production. Capitalist production had moreover to reproduce the conditions under which the worker was exploited: it had to maintain the separation of the worker from the means of production, so that the worker would be forced to continue to sell his/her labour power to the employe The reproduction of these social relations necessitated the payment by the employer of a wage sufficient to the reproductive needs of the workforce. In

addition - and this is important for reproductionist accounts of education, although the link is not made in Capital - reproduction necessitated that within the working class there was "a transmission and accumulation of skills from one generation to another".[3] Without such a reproduction of skills the conditions of production no longer exist.

Three reproductionist contributions have made a particular impact on the recent Sociology of Education. Althusser,[4] in his celebrated 1970 essay on ideology, argues that reproduction is secured by the combined working of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) and repressive state apparatuses (RSAs). The RSAs involve predominantly the use of force, whereas the ISAs function predominantly by ideology. In modern capitalist societies, the dominant ISA is the school. In Althusser's view, the schools act to instil young people with the ruling ideology and to allocate people to different forms of labour. The neutral appearance of the school disguises its vital role in reproducing the relations of production. Those teachers who strive to break out of their place as servants of the apparatus do so largely in vain. For Althusser ideology works in an all-pervading way, totally masking real social relations: it constitutes an imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of their existence. Ideologies are material: they are embodied in apparatuses and their practices.

Bowles and Gintis[5] in examining the history of mass education in the USA argue for a "correspondence" between the social relations of production and the social relations of education. Thus "...the educational system tailors the self-concepts, aspirations and social class identifications of individuals to the requirements of the social division of labour."[6] Bowles and Gintis see the social processes which take place in the classroom as mirroring those which occur in the workplace. School prepares the individual for the work environment, by subjecting him or her to an experience of hierarchy, alienated labour, and competition. There are certain key mechanisms through which education reproduces the workforce: by producing individuals with the right technical and cognitive skills for the performance of certain jobs: through legitimizing social inequality: through the rewarding and labelling in school of characteristics appropriate to different positions in the social hierarchy: and through producing a "stratified" consciousness.

In the model of educational reproduction offered by Bourdieu and Passeron,[7] schools reproduce existing power relations through reproducing a dominant culture - the 'cultural arbitrary'. In their terms, a particular type of family background endows the child with a certain 'cultural capital'. The conditions of life of the child produce a habitus, an acquired system of generative schemes, adjusted

to those conditions. For the middle or upper class child the cultural requirements of school are contiguous with those of home. For the working class child they are quite different. It is this circumstance which legitimizes class inequality in education. The equality of requirements creates the illusion of equal chances for all, but there is in fact a far-reaching loading of the rules: those whose 'habitus' is closest to the 'cultural arbitrary' bring a disproportionate advantage of 'cultural capital' to the apparently meritocratic contest. The dominated class's 'misrecognition' of this process as a fair competition allows them to accept the outcomes it provides.

In terms of the historical analysis of education systems a particularly important contribution of the reproduction theorists has been the identification of a number of links between the rise of mass schooling systems, channelling the bulk of the youth population through structured educational institutions for a substantial period of time, and the rise of monopoly capitalism. Four such linkages are commonly identified by reproductionist authors. Firstly, there is the equipping of the workforce with appropriate levels of skill and knowledge. Reproductionists such as Dale and Esland,[8] Bowles and Gintis[9] and Castles and Wustenberg,[10] see the labour requirements of capital as historically changing. The workforce of early, competitive capitalism, composed chiefly of artisans and unskilled workers could be reproduced without a large scale schooling system.

Artisans could be trained through apprenticeship, while the unskilled worker did not need a specific educational preparation. But with the rise of monopoly industry, capital is seen as requiring vast numbers of semi-skilled machine operatives, who must be numerate, literate, and instilled with a certain internalized work discipline. It also requires a multiplicity of managers, technicians, and supervisors who must not only have skills which require extensive formal education, but also a commitment to the structures within which they work.[11] Far more complex mechanisms of reproducing and maintaining the existing social division of labour are thus called for, including an extensive schooling system.

Secondly, reproductionist writers such as Johnson,[12] Platt,[13] Katz,[14] and Dale and Esland[15] have emphasized the role of mass schooling in the social control of urban working class youth.[16] Industrialization and proletarianization are seen to lead to a massive growth of their numbers. This massive youthful urban proletariat is often marginal to the labour market, and thus ends up on the streets, where they pose a threat, in terms of crime and potential riot, to capital. In the early stages of industrialization "philanthropic" organizations may address this issue. But with the rise of monopoly industry, the greater scale of urbanization will exacerbate the issue. As the state develops a role in regulating class conflict,

it creates a mass education system which can draw in working class youth and control them, both in the physical sense, and in the sense of inculcating them with values appropriate to the existing social order.

Thirdly, some reproductionists, such as Bowles and Gintis[17] and Karier,[18] emphasize the role of mass schooling in the dominant class's attempts to legitimize existing social relations. The state is seen as using education as a means of political socialization of the children of people who are in the process of being drawn out of rural areas and transformed into a new working class. These newly urbanized people may have little sense of national identity; indeed, in the case of immigrant working classes they may actually be foreigners. The growing numerical strength of the working class poses the possibility of a threat to the dominant class from proletarian and popular political movements. In order to avert this danger, reproductionists argue, it becomes essential for the state to subject the working class to a schooling process which will inculcate them with a common set of loyalties, based on a political ideology which serves the needs of the dominant class.

Finally, feminist contributors to reproductionist educational thought, such as MacDonald,[19] see mass schooling as involving the imposition of the dominant form of the family. With the disruption of pre-existing forms

of family life during the process of proletarianization, dominant classes are faced with the prospect of a breakdown of the mechanisms of physical reproduction and maintenance of the workforce by female domestic labour. In order to ensure the continued reproduction and maintenance of the labour force, capital has, therefore, to ensure a rapid reconstruction of the working class family. Mass schooling will thus be geared to teaching particular gender roles which can underpin the form of the family required by the dominant class, in order to stabilize the physical reproduction and maintenance of the working class.

However, reproductionist writing is vulnerable to a number of fundamental criticisms.[20] It implies a functionalist view of society. Schooling is seen to have come into being because of the role it plays in the total social system, and to take the form it does because of the system's requirements. This leads to tautological argument, because the origin and form of education in a particular society can always be accounted for by the quite untestable assertion that these were the only ones possible. Fuctionalist thinking tends toward an organicist depiction of society, which cannot easily explain why the educational system may sometimes be dysfunctional to other social institutions, or why it may be racked by internal conflicts. From this functionalist tendency flow a series of other major problems. Reproductionist work inclines

towards a simplistic view of the state as no more than an instrument of capital. It has difficulty in explaining the numerous historical instances of conflict between and amongst educational bureaucrats and capitalists, or historical instances in which educational systems fail to meet the needs of the dominant classes. Instrumentalist views of the state are far too crude to be usefully applied to the study of actual historical processes, and this is true even of the most sophisticated versions of the reproductionist argument such as that of Dale.[21] Dale tries to deal with the dysfunctionality of aspects of state education policy to dominant class interests by suggesting that the various imperatives facing the bureaucracy - the need to support capital accumulation, the need to guarantee a context for capital accumulation, and the need to legitimize the mode of production - can produce policies in response to one of these 'core problems' which are in conflict with the need to resolve another of them. Yet there seems still to be an instrumentalist assumption here that the state must address these problems and that it will try to do so in a way which meets the needs of capital as a whole. This implies a unity of purpose between and amongst bureaucrats and capitalists which needs to be demonstrated historically for a particular case, rather than asserted to exist a priori. Moreover, the reproductionist perspective tends to focus on domination to the exclusion of resistance. Althusser does not investigate how, for example, students may see through the enshrouding

ideological fog sufficiently to perceive something of their real social position, which is surely a requirement for effective political rebellion. Indeed, Althusser's rejection of the validity of individual subjectivity makes this issue difficult to address. Schools are portrayed solely as mechanisms for the imposition of dominant class ideology, and thus his position fails to grasp those moments in which students, teachers or parents resist or ignore dominant ideology. Bowles and Gintis similarly portray values in education as imposed by teachers in a uni-directional manner. They do not adequately recognise that students do not simply absorb and internalise these values, but often generate and bring to the classroom values and beliefs of their own. There is a general over-estimation in the reproductionist literature of the efficacy of ideology in maintaining the cohesion of schooling systems. Children attend school not necessarily because they fully support dominant ideology, or because they accept the legitimacy of the education system, but often because of the need to attain qualifications required in the labour market, or because of parental pressure or legal compulsion. School attendance can be accompanied by apathy or hostility toward dominant ideology, as the work of Corrigan,[22] amongst others, has shown.

Finally, and remarkably for a school of thought in which Marxism is the predominant current, struggle and conflict

in education are concepts notably absent from reproductionist work. Althusser's argument does not explore ways in which formative action from below might mould the education system, seeing it merely as an imposition of the dominant classes. Bourdieu and Passeron see working class youth's revolt against the education system as a doomed protest against ineluctable consignment to their place in the class structure. Bowles and Gintis' account of U.S. educational history sees all the major changes as ultimately serving the needs of capital. Yet these approaches do not enable us to explain the numerous instances in which subordinate groups have imposed their own educational objectives on the dominant classes.

Given these problems of functionalism, instrumentalism, and blindness to questions of resistance and struggle, can anything be rescued from the reproductionist literature? I would argue affirmatively. Firstly, it is important to explore the real historical links between the rise of mass schooling and the process of generation and regulation of a labour force. The historical work of reproductionist influenced writers does provide a strong substantiation for this linkage. It appears that accumulation does require certain minimum conditions of social reprpduction. While there are examples of states where mass schooling preceded monopoly capitalism (for example, regions of the contemporary 'third world') there are no examples of a developed monopoly capitalist social formation which has

lacked a mass schooling system. It is the case that schooling has played an important role in the creation of skills, the social control and political socialization of working class youth, and the propagation of particular forms of the family. Such processes do contribute to the reproduction of the labour force. It is possible to use the notion of reproduction without falling into functionalism or instrumentalism, if we avoid the reproductionists' a priori assumptions. As G.A. Cohen points out,[23] not every argument which states that a specific practice is functional to a particular system of relations is a functionalist argument. An argument is only functionalist if we assert that the needs of one social instance are necessarily and directly the cause of the existence of another social instance. Thus it is perfectly acceptable to argue that an education system provides industry with certain forms of labour. It is only a functionalist argument if we go on to contend that schooling had to emerge in its particular present form as an immediate and unmediated result of a particular labour need.

Reproduction theory does correctly remind us that education systems do usually involve systematic attempts by dominant social groups to impose their ideology and values on other social classes. Where it tends to err is in its assumption that dominant groups based in the state and capital share

the same objectives, that the former are automatically the servants of the latter, and that the education system will necessarily give successful expression to dominant group interests. A reproductive process does occur in education, but it is a much more complicated one than the reproductionists allow for. Any feature of the education system that plays a reproductive role only does so as the outcome of a struggle over policy by various social forces. There is no guarantee that because capitalists need a particular type of labour, the education system will automatically provide it. If this comes about it is only because the representatives of a particular capitalist grouping are able to identify that need and impose it on the educational decision-making process. Their ability to do so depends on their ability to overcome not only any resistance from below, but also the opposition of other fractions, bureaucrats, and officials within the education system. As we shall see, capital often has needs that education cannot meet: and conversely, popular movements are able to pressure educational policy in a way which is not functional to capital.

Finally, despite the instrumentalist tendency of the reproductionist view of the state, reproductionists are justified in focusing so centrally on the state in attempting to understand the social role of education. Mass schooling systems are above all part of the state, and must be understood as such.

Resistance Theory

In contrast to the reproductionist literature, there has come into existence a body of work by Sociologists of Education who have addressed themselves primarily to issues of resistance. These writers share an emphasis on the way in which active popular cultural and political responses shape the social relations of education. Such theorists may, however, be subdivided into two groupings; the 'strong' version of this view totally rejects all the premises of reproduction theory; the 'weak' or 'limited' version of the approach accepts a notion of reproduction but tries to combine it with an awareness of the role of agency in social process.

The more extreme rejection of reproductionism is best represented by the work of Wexler.[24] He charges that by thinking of society as a structure at all, reproduction theory reduces conflict to a contestation within an existing social order. But, he argues, society is in fact constituted by class conflict: there is a constant struggle of self-production, through which classes define themselves - social life is constantly produced by its actors. If one argues that there is a structure of society apart from its actors, one accepts the framework of the existing social order. Instead, Wexler sees social change as a "goal-orientated collective process of realization"[25] of a social group. The appearance of order in society is only the

reflection and result of a balance in class struggle. Resistance cannot be understood as opposition to a structure, but only as the struggle of a subordinate group for ascendance.

Wexler thus rejects the reproductionists' view that social class can be defined in terms of the place of a group in a social order, for example as a relation to the means of production. Instead, he follows E.P. Thompson's view of social class as a sense of group identity emerging out of common experience;[26] society is constituted out of classes defined by experience. Education is thus an arena where classes attempt to constitute their identity. Repression in education represents attempts by dominant groups to block identity formation from below. Educational structures are in fact merely an ideological fiction hiding relational patterns of class struggle. Wexler's affirmation of experiential knowledge as the final epistemological court of appeal results in his rejection of any attempt to distinguish between transformative and non-transformative oppositional behaviour in education. This would presumably be a falsely objectivist imposition on social process.

An approach to the definition of youth's cultural identity with strong affinities to this view is put forward by Jenkins,[27] drawing on the work of Giddens.[28] Giddens tries

to overcome the puzzle of the relation between structure and agency, by denying the validity of thinking of the problem in terms of this duality. For the agency/structure dualism, Giddens substitutes a theory of 'structuration'. Structure cannot, in this view, be said to exist outside of the practices of those who produce and reproduce it. For Giddens, systems cannot be said to have any reasons, purposes, or needs outside the intentions of the human actors whose practices constitute them. Giddens emphasizes the extent to which a social actor knows a good deal about the conditions in which she/he is enmeshed, and thus assigns a strong element of volition to the continuation of existing social practices. In line with these presuppositions, Jenkins' analysis of popular culture assigns immense weight to the subjective perceptions of social actors. He argues that although 'scientific' and 'folk' views of social events are different in kind, they are equal in validity - both try to invest perceived reality with meaning within a particular cultural context. He sees the identities adopted by subordinate groups almost entirely in terms of a highly autonomous cultural process within those groups: group identities within the working class arise from labelling decisions of strategically placed actors. Thus, in his study of working class youth on a Northern Ireland housing estate, Jenkins argues that the division of youths into three distinct sub-cultures is rooted in: their own practices; the practices of significant others, that is, authority figures who can

assign identities and make those identities count by allocating resources or penalties; and the practices constituting the organization of the institutional context (work and school).

Amongst authors who do not engage in such a drastic rejection of any notion of social structure or reproduction, but do try to inject the dimension of agency into our understanding of the Sociology of Youth and Education, an outstanding contribution has been made by Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. Summing up the approach of this school, Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts[29] begin with the concept of culture. Culture is the way in which social groups engage with their social existence. It is a way of life; it provides the 'maps of meaning' which we use to interpret the world. The culture of the dominant class will tend to be dominant in society; but it is only one of the cultures which exist at any given moment. In a class society, different classes have different class cultures. The Birmingham authors argue that the ruling class attains a hegemony - a total social authority - when it is able to lead subordinate social classes effectively, winning the consent of subordinate classes to the existing institutions and structures of society, and laying down a framework within which problems and conflicts are resolved.[30] Hegemony

does not always exist; a dominant class may rule, but the attitude to it of the dominated classes may fall well short of the 'spontaneous consent' which hegemony implies. Even in a situation of hegemony, there is, however, a complicated dialectic between the hegemonic dominant culture, and the subordinate culture of the working class. The subordinate class tries, within the framework of dominant institutions, to 'win space' for itself. In the school, a culture is imposed on working class youth which is at variance with their own culture: in response students develop strategies of negotiation, struggle or resistance. Young people develop sub-cultures based on particular styles and symbols, for themselves. These are specific to youth in that youth have a specific generational experience which is historically different from that of their parents. These sub-cultures derive from, and are sub-sets of, the larger class culture in which youth of a particular social class participate. The sub-cultures are attempts to solve the problems of working class youth at the level of imagination. As such they are doomed to fail in solving youth's practical social problems. What is important about this argument is that it sees reproduction as only occurring within a context of struggle for social dominance, in which the subordinate class is never wholly incorporated in the social order, and possibilities of resistance are always present.

The work of the American theorists, Giroux[31] and Apple,[32] proceeds along similar lines. They are willing to accept the notion of reproduction of the social structure, but stress that no automatic correspondence of school and work-place can be assumed. They stress the notion of the school as an arena of cultural conflict and resistance, with a high degree of autonomy from other social instances. If reproduction takes place it is through a process of cultural struggle: sometimes schooling can, as an outcome of struggle, cut across the prevailing social processes. The cultural process is seen as a crucial terrain on which subordinate social groups can forge 'counter-hegemonic' alternatives to the hegemony of the dominant classes. It is thus seen as important to differentiate between cultural elements containing transformative possibilities, and cultural elements which lack such progressive implications.

The most powerful presentation of such a perspective is that of Paul Willis.[33] Willis understands the response of youth to educational structures as one of cultural production working on, and in the contradictions of, a dominant mode of production. Culture is a human and collective activity of meaning-making: in the cultural moment people use received symbolic, ideological and cultural responses to explore, understand and respond to the social conditions in which they find themselves. Willis talks of 'cultural production' because the process is understood by him as proceeding in the same way as

material production. Agents use tools (meanings, cultural forms) to work on raw materials (their structural conditions) in order to produce a finished product (an active response to and redefinition of their situation). Willis sees popular responses to dominant ideology in terms of a culture which includes both 'penetrations' - understandings by actors of their position in the social whole - and 'limitations' - phenomena impeding such an understanding. Through his case study of working class youth in an English school, Willis shows how 'the lads' constitute a group within the school who create a militantly anti-school culture. In Willis's view this represents in part a penetration: the lads understand the falsity of the official school ideology which exhorts them to attain individual career success by conforming to school rules and making academic efforts. They recognise that their real social position excludes such success, and respond in a rebellious, collectivist manner. But their rebellion allows them to be reincorporated into the patterns of social reproduction. In rejecting official school ideology, they reject mental labour, which they identify with that rejected ideology, while they glorify manual work which they identify with the social prestige of masculinity. They thereby doom themselves to a lifetime of manual work. Thus they reject dominant ideology, but by a route which allows them to be pulled back into a subordinate position, and thus into the reproduction of the

relations of production. This process of recuperation by the dominant order is not presented as universal, however; in the disjunction between the social structure and cultural response, there is always the possibility that cultural production will generate new forms of resistance.

Just as functionalism disables reproductionist theory, the culturalist position, in its extreme variant represented here by Wexler and Jenkins, is disabled by its voluntarism. Its emphasis on the willed action of participants in social processes leads to a rejection of any notion of social structure existing over and above those willed actions. Consequently, reproduction vanishes, for there is no social structure to reproduce. This rejection of the notion of structure is not viable. It hampers attempts to formulate description of the regularities which exist in society. As Cohen[34] demonstrates, it does not follow that because the practices of persons form central components of a social structure, we cannot talk of a structure of society as distinct from the specific practices of the particular persons involved in it. When we speak of a social system we are discussing a pattern of relations which can be discerned in a society, and which cannot be reduced to the relations between the individuals who occupy those positions at any given moment. Moreover, as Anderson[35] points out, if society is seen merely as representing a continuous collision of wills, it becomes difficult to explain why there should be any regularities in society at

all. Anderson argues that explanations of social cohesion that focus on intentionality, ignore the centrality of structures of production in conferring a unity on a social formation while at the same time creating a process of struggle. As a result of this deficiency, the extreme culturalist position refuses to recognise the importance of the way in which patterns of production and reproduction place social actors in groupings which cannot be reduced to their subjective view of their position.

An acceptance of a 'structural' approach to the definition of social class does not, as the extreme culturalists tend to suggest, necessarily lead to a neglect of issues concerning the development of consciousness. As Cohen[36] argues, the definition of social class as common experience advanced by Thompson (and by Wexler) draws a wrong conclusion from a sound premiss. Thompson is quite justified in arguing that production relations do not mechanically determine class consciousness. But there is no logical reason to draw the conclusion from this that class cannot be defined in terms of production relations. It is perfectly valid to ask under what conditions a class can attain a common consciousness. But this is a different question from that of what defines a social class. The Wexler-Thompson view of class confuses the issue of the formation of consciousness with the question of the definition of class boundaries.

Because of its refusal of any notion of structure, the extreme culturalist position fails to recognise the constraints which operate on processes of group self-realization, and the variability in the value of the experiential knowledge generated by group action. The dualism of agency and structure does capture a central aspect of social reality. Namely: that although human beings are capable of various types of acts of volition, most of the acts which we undertake most of the time, do not break through patterns of relations in which we are enmeshed. The experience of most human practice is precisely one of being trapped within larger structures. Many of our actions may be voluntary, but they generally take place within a structured framework of social relations. And if they attack that framework, they have no guarantee of success. Moreover, Wexler's glorification of experiential knowledge obstructs the development of an analysis of popular culture. As Anderson[37] reminds us, people do not always draw the correct lessons from their experience. Clearly some understandings of reality are more accurate than others - a point that culturalism, with its tendency to see experiential responses as superior to analytical thought, does not acknowledge. Social science requires that we try to establish ways of differentiating valid knowledge from invalid: a project which is certain to lead us to question individual and group self-perceptions. Experience is indeed an important source of knowledge, but it is not a privileged medium, equivalent to insight.

The less simplistic version of the culturalist position, represented by Clarke et.al., Giroux, Apple and Willis, does, however, offer a great deal in evolving a Sociology of Education that avoids functionalism without being as tinged by voluntarism as that of the 'strong' culturalists. The understanding that dominant social groups endeavour to construct their hegemony, but that this occurs in struggle with the attempts of popular culture to win space for the subordinate classes, enables us to break away from a simple reproductionist view of education, reintroducing conflict into our understanding of educational processes. The concept of sub-culture provides a basis for exploring youth's responses to their conditions of life. Willis' modified understanding of reproduction enables us to examine the interaction of the attempts of participants in educational systems to carve out their own futures and the processes by which existing social structures are maintained. Finally, these theorists recognise that not all experiential knowledge is analytically valid, and thus that some actions are based on better types of insight into social structures than others, and are thus more likely to lead to social transformation.

However, culturalist writing in general shares with reproductionism a common failing: an inadequate account of the state. Even in more structurally-minded culturalist work this tends to be the case: a residual voluntarism

arising from the focus on willed action. Culturalism tends to neglect the role of national level state structures in the formation and perpetuation of educational systems. It tends to concentrate its attention on local level forms of resistance and to assume that the combined effects of these must modify national education structures. But this will in fact only be the case if local student resistances take place in similar ways, if these pressures are reflected back, through their effect on teachers and officials, to the national education policy process. The emphasis of the culturalists on local resistance tends to play down the qualitative difference between such resistance, and broadly organised and politically articulate movements. The latter type of resistance is far better able to challenge the structures of education than the former. Moreover, it is a precondition for systematically linking up and popularizing existing 'penetrations' of students into their actual social conditions. Culturalist writing thus fails to develop an adequate account of the state, and its relation to popular struggle.

Thus far, it has been argued that theoretical approaches deriving from a reproductionist perspective are flawed because of their functionalist tendencies, which lead in turn to an instrumentalist view of the state's role in education, and an inability to deal adequately with issues of struggle and conflict. However, it has also been argued that the reproductionists have established historical

connections between the rise of mass schooling and industrialization which are valid provided that they are understood in a non-functionalist way. Similarly, it has been argued that it is important to understand the specific methods by which dominant groups seek to further their objectives through influence over the educational system, but that this cannot be seen as occurring automatically. Rather, insofar as it takes place, it is the result of struggles by dominant groups to formulate objectives and impose them on society, which may or may not be successful. Thirdly, it was contended that the reproductionists concern with understanding the state structures of education was justified. In relation to culturalist work, it was argued that its more extreme variants were characterized by a voluntarism which made it unable to deal with questions of social structure, and thus led to a failure to recognize the constraints which exist on willed action in society, and an inability to critically evaluate different forms of action. On the other hand it was argued that a more modulated version of the culturalist position offered an important contribution to our understanding of conflict in education, through the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony, and a development of an analysis of culture and of various forms of cultural and social action. However, it was then argued that even this form of culturalism was, like reproductionism, inadequate in its treatment of the state. It is precisely through an adequate analysis of the

state in educational conflict that the gap between reproductionist and culturalist interpretations can be bridged, and those insights of the two schools which we have identified as valuable can be synthesized.

Reproduction and Resistance: Towards A Synthesis

The starting point of such an analysis of the state is provided by Poulantzas' final work, State, Power, Socialism.[38] In it he breaks sharply with the notion of the state as merely an instrument of the dominant classes. The state is viewed not as a discrete entity but as a field of relations, within which struggle and conflict may take place. Specifically characteristic of capitalism is a separation of economic from political structures. Whereas the structures of production would encourage class identification, the operation of the state acts to divide social classes into individuals, and to 'reunify' these individuals within the state as citizens. But this operation, which arises from class conflict, also takes place within a context of class conflict. The state is thus the materialization and condensation of class relations. Its form reflects struggle within the relations of production. But because it is constituted as a relatively autonomous space, political class struggles also take place within the state. So while, as in Poulantzas earlier work, the state represents and organizes the various fractions of the dominant classes, the struggle of

the dominated classes is also present within the state. In this conception, as the state organizes the reproduction of subordinate classes, it has to cope with their demands and pressures. The state in a monopoly capitalist phase enters, moreover, increasingly into the economic sphere. This means that the contradictions of the production process begin to be directly present within the state. Thus for Poulantzas the state is a field of conflict: on the one hand conflicts between the different capitalist fractions and also between the different state apparatuses; on the other between dominant and dominated classes. The state is thus seen neither as neutral arbiter nor as instrument of domination, but as a battlefield.

Carnoy and Levin[39] have developed an approach to the analysis of education based on this understanding of the state. In keeping with Poulantzas' views, they see state educational structures as a field of relations - a terrain of conflict, the nature of which reflects the struggle between contending class forces. Capitalist fractions struggle to define the reproductive needs that they want the education system to fulfil, and to have those needs met by the state. But dominated classes also attempt to impose their own educational aims on the state. The form that the education system takes is an outcome of these interacting struggles, and is constantly traversed and reshaped by conflict.

While the objectives of the dominant classes in the educational sphere may often be achieved, there is no guarantee of their success. Subordinate classes are sometimes able to impose their agenda for the restructuring of education. Where such changes or reforms are won, their implementation itself becomes an object of struggle, with the dominant class attempting to use its power to give the change the interpretation most favourable to itself. Nevertheless, popular pressures act on the process of change in education, even where the changes being made are not ones with which popular movements would identify.

Carnoy and Levin thus provide us with a model of educational conflict which avoids the pitfalls of both reproductionism and culturalism. It preserves reproduction theory's insight that there is often a link between production relations and educational struggle. But it denies that such a link is automatic. Education can easily be out of kilter with the needs of capital. Like the culturalists' perspective, it focuses on struggle in the social relations of education. But that struggle is understood in relation to the state, and as taking place within a particular objectively existing structure of class relations, which participants seek to reproduce or transform. By focusing on struggle within the state, both functionalism and voluntarism are avoided.

It is this type of interpretation of educational struggle which will be pursued in this thesis. An important modification to the Poulantzian account as used here, will however be in relation to its treatment of bureaucracy. While Poulantzas' later work made a very serious attempt to give due weight to the autonomous dynamics of state institutions, some of his formulations do tend to suggest a residual class reductionism, in which various sections of the state apparatus represent purely condensations of class interests. But as our historical account will show, though some features of an educational bureaucracy do represent outcomes of class interests, other features can only be understood through an acknowledgement of autonomy in the operation of bureaucracy. Administrators do develop their own ideologies, interests and inertia, even if these are constrained and moulded by class forces. In order to understand struggles around the bureaucracy, we need to pursue a more unequivocal anti-reductionism than Poulantzas offers.

In order to do this, I will draw on the work of Theda Skocpol.[40] She argues convincingly that classical Marxism "failed to foresee or adequately explain the autonomous power... of states as administrative and coercive machines embedded in a militarized international states system."[41] Skocpol's work emphasizes that the relationship between the state and the dominant social classes is not a given but varies historically. Bureaucrats may be subordinated to,

or autonomous of capitalist interests. We cannot tell 'theoretically' what their relationship is before specifically investigating a particular state. If we want to be able to argue that the state serves particular interests, we must be able to show concretely what the causal mechanisms are that move the state to intervene actively for those interests. The state must be understood as a set of organizations, extracting resources from society and deploying it in coercive and administrative organizations; it is only by understanding the features and capacities of this organization in historically specific terms that we can grasp the way it acts.

A major problem for the position advanced here may seem to be that the Carnoy and Levin's view of conflict in education is based on an examination of education in a liberal democratic state. It might be argued that in a repressive third world context, the idea of state education structures as an arena of conflict in which the masses are present is absurd. Surely, it might be said, in such a context, education policy is dictated from above rather than influenced from below. But it is precisely because of the limitations in Carnoy and Levin's characterization of educational struggle in America that their work remains relevant to very different contexts. They add to the argument discussed above, an element of American exceptionalism which is scarcely justified. By removing

this element of their argument, we are left with a model that is far more widely applicable.

Carnoy and Levin[42] argue that in the U.S., social inequalities within education are less pronounced than in other spheres of society. This, according to them, is the outcome of a fundamental tension in American society, between the imperatives of Democracy and those of Capitalism. Democracy provides political equality, but in an economic system marked by inequality. The institutions of the state, including the school, are subject to the inegalitarian pressures of the workplace and the egalitarian pressures of democracy. The democratic character of the political system creates the opportunity for less advantaged groups to pressure the education system in a more egalitarian direction.

But while it is clearly true that access to democratic political mechanisms improves the ability of subordinate groups to impose their needs on the state, this separation of democratic politics and undemocratic economics seems unsatisfactory. As Wood[43] points out, such an argument accepts the split between 'economic' and 'political' spheres characteristic of capitalist society. It does not give sufficient attention to the fact that an inequality in economic position means an inequality in access to the means of enforcing one's political rights; it ignores the way in which the ideology of individual political equality

helps to mask class inequality. The argument that the state is not a simple dominant class instrument does not rest on the existence or absence of political democracy; it is an argument about how social relations should be understood. While the absence of democratic institutions may limit the options of popular classes, it does not mean that the state is not traversed by class struggles, or that it can avoid contending with popular pressures. It is possible to analyse repressive third world states in the perspective of the state as a field of conflict. An example of the successful application of such an approach to semi-peripheral countries is Cardoso and Faletto's[44] seminal analysis of the state in Latin America. They put forward a view of the state in semi-peripheral countries which can proceed along similar lines to that of Poulantzas, while at the same time grasping the specificities of Third World conditions. Their view rejects the tendency of dependency theory to see the state in the third world as merely the instrument of metropolitan bourgeoisies. It is their position that while the state can act as a purely 'neo-colonial' force, it will do so only if the specific forces which become dominant in the state are sectors whose interests are linked to metropolitan ones. While the disadvantaged position of such countries in the world economy limits dominant group options, (especially where policies involving the political or economic incorporation of the masses are attempted), it

does not dictate policy in a direct way. The internal features of a social formation are not determined simply by dependency relations, but also by internal struggles. Struggles within and around the state can, however, lead to many different outcomes. Thus as in Poulantzas' work, the state is seen as an arena of class conflict, not as an instrumental entity. An important implication of this is that the state, even if it pursues repressive policies, is subject to mass pressures, and that it can be the site of struggles in the course of which mass movements make democratic gains.

Integrating the Culturalist Contribution

The approach to educational conflict which has been proposed allows us to integrate aspects of the 'limited' variant of the culturalist argument into our conceptual framework. If the struggle of the dominant class to impose its needs on society is to be effective in creating a stable social order, it needs to create an education system of a hegemonic type, in which the subordinate class is fully drawn under its leadership and provided with a framework of life, the horizons of which are defined by the dominant class. On the other hand in their struggle to pursue their own need popular movements develop counter-hegemonic initiatives through which a broad social base for educational alternatives to dominant class policy can be built.

However, an adequate typology of popular responses to education systems must provide us with categories through which to analyse those situations which fall short of, on the one hand, an identification with the hegemonic framework of the dominant class and on the other a rounded development of a popular counter-hegemony.

It will be argued in this thesis that popular responses to education systems often take the form of acquiescence; a response which is one of accepting a particular set of social arrangements, but without a strong degree of internalization of the values which are concomitant with those arrangements. It will be argued that hegemony implies the winning of the allegiance of the subordinate social group to the cultural framework of the dominant group; it implies active identification and commitment. In a situation where the dominant class is not able to construct an effective hegemony, but where the subordinate classes are unable to offer an alternative of their own, the ruling class may secure the willingness of subordinate classes willingness to live within the dominant institutional framework, but without any interior acceptance of its hegemonic claims. Poulantzas' work helps us to understand such a situation.[45] He points out the dangers of a view of the state which polarizes sharply the role of repression and that of ideology. The state does not only force people to do certain things, or trick them. Acquiescence in a particular social order is not given

purely because of fear or ideological blindness. In order to build any degree of popular acceptance, a regime has to make certain concessions to the needs of the masses; it has to provide what Poulantzas[46] calls a 'material substratum' for this support. In Poulantzas' view this is true of even the most repressive regimes. This argument, which accords greater ability to social actors to understand their social conditions than does, for example, the Althusserian position, accords with Corrigan and Frith's[47] critique of the conventional wisdom of reproductionist educational sociology. For them, the idea that the upper classes somehow brain-wash working class youth is inherently implausible - a working class experience of bourgeois institutions is unlikely to produce a total ideological subordination: moral values taught on their own are unlikely to be accepted unless reinforced by other facets of social reality.

Furthermore, as Poulantzas also points out, the repressive role of the state operates not only through violence, but also through the creation of a 'bodily order' involving a differentiation of the very bodies of people in different social classes and the insertion of those bodies into various state apparatuses.[48] It cannot be assumed that the constraints imposed on youth by the school system are primarily ideological. As Corrigan and Frith[49] show, subordinate classes can be institutionally incorporated

without being ideologically incorporated. That large proportions of the subordinate classes attend school is important, in certain conditions, to the maintenance of existing social relations; it provides a means for the social control, in a physical sense, of working class youth. But it does not necessarily signify acceptance of the ideological thrust of the education system. Youth may accept schooling either because of coercive factors or economic forces, without accepting the hegemonic framework of the dominant classes.

I have argued above for a recognition that some forms of social action are more effective than others in creating social change, because they are based on better understandings of real social relations. This leads us to support the view that it is necessary to distinguish between those forms of behaviour which are able to act in a transformative way in society, and those which are not. Some forms of oppositional behaviour arise out of real social conflicts, but are unable to change those realities because of their divisive or purely destructive features; I will designate this as non-transformative oppositional behaviour. Oppositional behaviour which does effectively attempt transformation, is at the same time, not the same as a counter-hegemony. A counter-hegemony requires the organising of a viable alternative to, in this case, the educational structures and practice of the dominant class.

In analysing how these forms of social action change across time, recourse will be made to Charles Tilly's notion of 'repertoire'. Tilly argues that when people act

> ...they ordinarily have a limited number of forms of action - a repertoire - at their disposal. Repertoires of collective action vary from one group to another, but in general they are limited and change rather slowly. Repertoires change as a function of the group's organisation and experience, but they also change as a function of the constraints imposed by other groups, including authorities. 50

What Tilly is pointing to is that forms of social action are not chosen on a strictly rational basis from all the physically possible alternatives. Rather, a tradition develops within a particular class, class segment or sub-culture of acting in a certain way around certain issues. Forms of action are "...learned, historically specific, rooted in the existing social structures and seriously constraining."[51]

This has a number of implications for the study of contention in education. Firstly, it should be possible to trace patterns or types of contention, across substantial historical periods. A repetition of particular forms of action in different times and places signifies conflicts within similar patterns of social relations, and a continuity of specific traditions of resistance within those relations. Secondly, we need to consider the constraints imposed by 'other groups' on students' actions. In the course of this study the links between student

insurgency and national levels of political mobilisation will be investigated. Apart from these 'other groups' whose action constrains collective action, Tilly mentions the 'authorities': it is necessary to examine students' or teachers' actions in the context of the state and educational authorities' responses to them. Thirdly, Tilly's work has the implication that the changing of forms of collective action is not an instantaneous process, and thus new or specific problems may be addressed through old, recognised types of protest action.[52] Elements of an existing form of protest can be changed in the course of struggle but they are unlikely to disappear. The fact that a particular form of action is widely recognised by those participating in it forms part of the basis of their solidarity, even if they are taking part for differing or new motives.

The spectrum of popular responses to education which have been defined appears thus:

Form				
1	2	3	4	5
Dominant Class Hegemony (Sub-ordinate class Allegiance)	Acquiescence (Institutional Incorporation)	Oppositional Behaviour (Reactionary potential)	Oppositional Behaviour (Transformative Potential)	Political Opposition (Counter Hegemony)

Figure 1: Forms of Popular Response to State Education Systems

Each form of response, in any concrete historical situation contains its structuring and constraining repertoire. Of course, within any one education system it is hardly likely that one 'pure' type of response would exist, as is the case with any sociological model. Rather there is likely to be a characteristic combination of these types, with a weighting toward a particular form.

The Specificity of Teacher Responses

The responses of teachers to the struggles within the education system will be a central focus of this thesis. We will seek to investigate reproduction and resistance in schooling not only by examining state policy and mass social movements, but also by examining what happened within the classroom. Teachers, as the pivotal figures in the classroom, must thus constitute an essential focus of such investigations. This then poses the question of developing an adequate framework in which teachers' actions can be understood. Although their responses to changing political circumstances in education will be placed within the typology developed above it is also necessary also to consider the ways in which the specificity of their position in the education system affected their political responses. This in turn leads us back to the central issue considered in this chapter: the relationship between structure and agency in social action. In considering teachers' roles in educational structures, we will pursue

the broader attempt to reject both extreme structuralist and culturalist tendencies. The thesis will attempt to understand both structural constraints acting on teachers and their active role in generating their own cultural responses.

This approach entails a rejection of any notion that the behaviour of teachers can be 'read off' in any simple or direct way from their class location. (All the more is this the case in a society like South Africa where relations of class and race are mutually structuring.) Following Raymond Williams, in this thesis the forces and relations of production are viewed as setting limits and exerting pressure on social actions rather than predicting, prefiguring or controlling their content.[53] However, it will be suggested that the structural class position of teachers is a highly ambiguous one in which the structures and limitations imposed on their actions by their social position are such as to give a particularly high degree of centrality to the political, ideological and cultural context in shaping their responses.

There has been an extensive sociological debate in recent years over how the class position of the 'intermediate strata' - those who are neither clearly proletarian nor members of the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie - should be defined. Some writers such as Hunt[54] and Mandel[55] have

argued that these employees are, by virtue of being wage earners, part of the working class. But this position appears to ignore the specific characteristics of the employment of the intermediate strata - in the case of teachers, that they enjoy a greater degree of autonomy in their work than do ordinary workers, and that they are not involved in the direct process of capitalist production.

B. and J. Ehrenreich[56] have argued that the proliferation of jobs of the intermediate strata type in contemporary society marks the birth of a new class, the Professional Managerial Class (PMC), which is defined by its role in maintaining processes of social reproduction. But the reproduction of society cannot be understood as being based only on the work of those in ideological, bureaucratic or welfare employment. The whole of the process of production contributes to, and must be maintained by reproductive processes. One cannot make a simple distinction between work and work which reproduces society [7] Moreover, this view does not deal with the great range of interests within the intermediate strata, with some occupying very exalted and others a very lowly social position.

The general direction of contemporary class analysis has, however, been to view this social category as one which is defined, in one way or another, by a class location that is neither that of capital, nor that of labour, nor that of a new class. Rather, it tends to be seen as intermediate

between capital and labour and thus as subject to contradictory or ambiguous political and social pressures. Thus, Poulantzas[58] views workers in social services, commerce and service industries, and supervisors, managers and technicians, as a "new petty bourgeoisie". They are differentiated from the traditional petty bourgeoisie by the fact that they sell their labour, but also from the working class by the form of their exploitation, which does involve the extraction of surplus value. However, politically and ideologically, the new petty bourgeoisie is viewed by Poulantzas as sharing the same "effects" as the "traditional petty bourgeoisie", which is seen, in the manner of classical Marxism, as ambiguously placed in its relation to the interests of capital and labour. Carchedi[59] argues that the middle strata combine the 'general function of capital' (that is of domination over the labour force necessary for the extraction of surplus value), with the 'function of the collective worker' (that is the tasks necessary for social production). They are undergoing a gradual process of proletarianization in which the 'general function of capital' becomes less important in their work. Erik Olin Wright's[60] early work develops the notion of contradictory class locations as a way of understanding the position of the intermediate strata. He explains this in terms of relations of domination. Semi-autonomous wage earners (s.a.w.e.s.), such as teachers, occupy a contradictory position between that of the working

class and that of the petty-bourgeoisie. They differ from the proletariat in having substantial control over their own work, but unlike the petty bourgeoisie do not control the means of production. They are not located in the sphere of direct capitalist production, but of petty commodity production. In terms of this model teachers would be pulled socially and politically, toward the position of the working class insofar as they are wage earners, but toward the position of the petty bourgeoisie in that they have not lost all control over their work. The contradictory character of the s.a.w.e.s.' material position makes them particularly susceptible to the political and ideological appeals of the major contending social forces. In Wright's more recent work[61] he revises his argument, explaining the ambiguous social location of the intermediate strata in terms of the criterion of exploitation rather than domination. Exploitation, in his terms, is where the wealth of one group leads to the impoverishment of another. The new middle classes are exploited by employers. But they also exploit the working class: managers and supervisors by their control of organizational assets, and experts, such as teachers, by their control of skill assets.

All of these theoreticians are trying to grapple with a reality in which the social location of employees such as teachers places them in an ambiguous social position where they are subject to conflicting social pressures. Whether

strategies of individual or sectional self advancement are pursued, or whether alliances between teachers and popular movements aiming at social change develop, depends on the pressures encountered at a particular point in time.

A central form of teacher political response to educational struggle which will be dealt with in this thesis is that of professionalism. This form of action arises out of teachers' ambiguous social location, which places various limitations and pressures on their pursuit of it. As Goldthorpe[62] suggests, the delegation of responsibility to the employee, and allowing the employee to exercise a specialist knowledge, requires the existence of a certain basis of trust between employer and employee. This relationship requires a degree of active commitment from the employee, which will only be sustained if appropriate conditions of employment are provided.

This type of work relationship enables teachers to see themselves as professionals, and to pursue a strategy of professionalism. As Larson[63] argues, professionalism proclaims that members of a particular occupation have a special monopoly of knowledge and competence in a particular area of work. The strategy is pursued through the establishment of a professional association, control of knowledge that is accepted as real, attempts to systematize control over training and credentials and to gain full

autonomy at work, and colleague control over the profession. The ultimate purpose is to improve the market position of the professional. However, as Esland[64] points out, a profession, to achieve its aims, must be able to convince a lay public or government of the validity of its claims. Teachers, not being self employed and lacking the rare and specialized skills and training of doctors and lawyers, have, historically been less successful than those professions in attaining the objectives of professionalism. The possibilities of such success have been further reduced by the tendencies in contemporary capitalism toward the proletarianization of intellectually qualified employees noted by Braverman,[65] Mandel,[66] and Carchedi[67] and of teachers specifically, as noted by Harris Such writers argue convincingly that there are strong tendencies in the sphere of social services toward the separation of conception and execution typical of contemporary industry, and thus toward the undermining of the autonomy of professionals such as teachers.

The frustrations which teachers experience may interact with commitments to professionalism in various ways. They may respond to deteriorating conditions by pursuing a traditional conservative professionalist strategy, emphasizing their special claims to better treatment. But they may also be radicalized when they feel that the basis of their profession, their responsibility and ability to deliver a service, are being undermined. This is an

important manifestation of the way in which teachers' ambiguous social position makes the political, ideological and cultural context particularly important in structuring their response.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the later work of Poulantzas provides a basis for the understanding of educational conflict through which the valuable insights of both reproductionist and culturalist approaches can be linked. In the Poulantzian view, developed by Carnoy and Levin, the state education system is seen as a field of relations traversed by social conflict. It exists in the context of a given set of class relations; it embodies the outcome of conflicts. In this thesis, such an approach is modified by Skocpol's understanding of bureaucracy which is viewed as an entity which can either be at variance with, or subordinate to, the interests of the dominant class. In order to describe the process of educational conflict within this state I draw on the concept of hegemony. The dominant classes engage in struggles to establish their hegemony in the educational sphere, as they do in other areas of society. In response dominated classes attempt, at particular times, to construct a counter-hegemony. But they also make a range of less assertive responses, a typology of which has been offered.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. See for example S. Mkatshwa, "Keynote Address", in Report on National Consultative Conference on the Crisis in Education: Organised by Soweto Parents Crisis Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand, 28, 29 December 1985, (Johannesburg, SPCC, 1986), pp.6-16.

2. K. Marx, Capital Vol.1, (B. Fowkes trans.), (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1981), pp.711-724.

3. Ibid, pp.719-720.

4. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", in L. Althusser, Essays on Ideology, (London, Verso, 1984), pp.1-60.

5. S. Bowles and H. Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America, (London, RKP, 1979).

6. Ibid, p.129.

7. P. Bourdieu and J.C. Passeron, Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture, (London, Sage, 1977). A similar argument is advanced by Bernstein. In his conception, the working class child tends to use a 'restricted code' of language orientated to particularistic meanings, while the middle class child uses an 'elaborated code' orientated to universalistic meanings. This is because the middle class child encounters universalistic meanings in a wider range of contexts. This means that the middle class child is sensitive to the symbolic order of the school, which has a universalistic order of meaning. The working class child, on the other hand faces a gap between the school's order of meaning and his or her own particularistic one. See B. Bernstein, "Education cannot compensate for society", in B.R. Cosin, I.R. Dale, G.M. Esland, D. MacKinnon and D.F. Swift (eds.), School and Society: A Sociological Reader, (London and Henley, RKP/ The Open University Press, 1977), pp.64-69.

8. R. Dale and G. Esland, Mass Schooling, (Milton Keynes, The Open University Press, 1977).

9. Bowles and Gintis (1979), op.cit.

10. S. Castles and W. Wustenberg, The Education of the Future: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Socialist Education, (London, Pluto, 1979).

11. This type of account of the changing nature of work accords with that of H. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1974).

12. R. Johnson, "Notes on the Schooling of the English Working Class, 1780-1850", in R. Dale, G. Esland and M. MacDonald (eds.), Schooling and Capitalism: A Sociological Reader, (London, RKP/The Open University Press, 1976), pp.44-54.

13. A. Platt, "The rise of the child-saving movement: a study in social policy and correctional reform", in B.R. Cosin et.al. (eds.), (1977), op.cit., pp.84-94.

14. M.B. Katz, "From Voluntarism to Bureaucracy in American Education", in J. Karabel and A.H. Halsey (eds.), Power and Ideology in Education, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1977), pp.386-397.

15. Dale and Esland (1977), op.cit., pp.23, 37.

16. This approach has recently been challenged in, for example, S. Cohen, "Reconstructuring the history of urban education in America" in G. Grace (ed.), Education and the City: Theory, History and Contemporary Practice, (London, RKP, 1984), pp.115-138. Critics argue firstly that the social is control, i.e. the social necessarily involves forms of control over the individual, and secondly that the position involves a simplistic critique of a process that was not without benefits to the working class. The second of these criticisms has some justification, while the first does not. Of course, all social arrangements involve an element of regulation. But it does seem reasonable to identify with control, systems where the role of coercion is foregrounded. It is, however, true to say that much of the literature indulges in a simplistic glorification of proletarian spontaneity. The extension of mass schooling needs to be thought of in the manner which classical Marxism considered the achievements of capitalism: simultaneously as oppressive to the working class and as clearing away older social structures and creating preconditions for social emancipation.
By bringing working class youth off the streets, mass schooling, as well as providing some educational benefits, also brought about conditions for the development of class identity which was in some ways more favourable.

17. Bowles and Gintis (1979), op.cit., pp.182-191.

18. C.J. Karier, "Business values and the educational state", in R. Dale et.al. (1976), op.cit., pp.21-31.

19. M. MacDonald, "Schooling and the Reproduction of Class and Gender Relations", in L. Barton, R. Meighan and S. Walker (eds.), Schooling, Ideology and the Curriculum, (Lewes, The Falmer Press, 1980), pp.29-49. Attempts to deal with the relation between the reproduction of gender and class relations in education in a more nuanced way, include A.M. Wolpe, "Education and the sexual division of labour", in A. Kuhn and A.M. Wolpe (eds.), Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production, (London, RKP, 1980), pp.290-328; and M. Barrett, Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis, (London, Verso, 1984), pp.114-151.

20. For criticism of reproductionist writing, see M. Sarup, Marxism and Education, (London, RKP, 1978), especially pp.172-184, and H.A. Giroux, "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis", Harvard Educational Review, Vol.53, No.3, 1983, pp.257-293.

21. R. Dale, "Education and the Capitalist State: contributions and contradictions", in M.W. Apple (ed.), Cultural and Economic Reproduction In Education: Essays on Class, Ideology and the State, (London, RKP, 1982), pp.127-161.

22. P. Corrigan, Schooling the Smash Street Kids, (London, MacMillan, 1979).

23. G.A. Cohen Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982), pp.278-285.

24. P. Wexler, "Movement, Class and Education", in L. Barton and S. Walker (ed.), Race, Class and Education, (London, Croom Helm, 1983), pp.17-39.

25. Ibid., pp.20-21.

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27. R. Jenkins, Lads, Citizens and Ordinary Kids: Working Class Youth Life-Styles in Belfast, (London, RKP, 1983).

28. A. Giddens, Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis, (London, MacMillan, 1983).

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30. Their work is, of course, rooted in the Gramscian tradition. For Gramsci's fundamental conceptions, see A. Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1978). From the vast literature on Gramsci, I have found helpful J.M. Cammett, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1967); E.D. Genovese, "On Antonio Gramsci", in E.D. Genovese, In Red and Black: Marxian Explorations in Southern and Afro-American History, (New York, Vintage Books, 1972), pp.391-422; P. Anderson, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci", New Left Review, No.100, November 1976-January 1977, pp.5-94; R. Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory", in R. Williams, Problems in Materialism and Culture, (London, Verso, 1982), pp.31-49; A.S. Sassoon (ed.), Approaches to Gramsci, (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1982); J. Merrington, "Theory and Practice in Gramsci's Marxism", in New Left Review (ed.), Western Marxism: A Critical Reader, (London, Verso, 1983), pp.140-175; and G. Eley, "Reading Gramsci in English: Some Observations on the Reception of Antonio Gramsci in the English-speaking World, 1957-1982", Working Paper, Center for Research on Social Organization, University of Michigan, 1984. See also Giroux (1983), op.cit., pp.274-277.

31. Giroux (1983), op.cit.

32. M.W. Apple, "Reproduction and Contradiction in Education: an introduction", in M.W. Apple (ed.), (1982), op.cit., pp.1-31.

33. P. Willis, Learning to Labour: Why Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs, (Aldershot, Gower, 1981); P. Willis, "Cultural Production and Theories of Reproduction", in Barton and Walker (eds.), (1983), op.cit., pp.107-138.

34. Cohen (1982), op.cit., pp.35-6.

35. P. Anderson, Arguments Within English Marxism, (London, Verso, 1980), pp.51-56.

36. Cohen (1982), op.cit., pp.73-77.

37. Anderson (1980), op.cit., p.57.

38. N. Poulantzas, State, Power, Socialism, (London, Verso, 1980). See also the discussion of Poulantzas' work by M. Carnoy, The State and Political theory, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984), pp.98-124; and M. Carnoy, "Education, Economy and State", in M.W. Apple (ed.), (1982), op.cit., pp.79-126.

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40. T. Skocpol, "Political Responses to Capitalist Crisis: Neo-Marxist Theories of the New Deal", Politics and Society, Vol.10, No.2, 1980, pp.155-201; T. Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions. A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985).

41. Skocpol (1985), op.cit., p.292.

42. Carnoy and Levin (1985), op.cit., passim.

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51. Ibid., p.162.

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61. E.O. Wright, Classes, (London, Verso, 1985).

62. J. Goldthorpe, "On the Service Class, its formation and future", in A. Giddens and G. MacKenzie (eds.), Social Class and the division of labour: Essays in honour of Ilya Neustadt, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.162-185.

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64. G. Esland, "Professions and professionalism", in G. Esland and G. Salaman (eds.) The Politics of Work and Occupations, (Toronto and Buffalo, University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp.213-250.

65. Braverman (1983), op.cit.

66. Mandel (1974), op.cit.

67. Carchedi (1980), op.cit.

68. K. Harris, Teachers and Classes: A Marxist Analysis, (London/Boston/Henley, RKP 1982).

CHAPTER 2: TOWARDS A NEW INTERPRETATION OF 'BANTU EDUCATION'

In this chapter the implications of the theoretical approach elaborated in the previous chapter will be drawn out in relation to the study of conflict in South African education. It will be argued that recent critical academic literature on South African education contains the same division between reproduction and resistance approaches that we have noted in the international literature. It will be shown how the type of approach adopted in the previous chapter can help towards a resolution of some of the key issues in contemporary South African educational sociology.

Reproductionist perspectives have predominated within the new sociology of South African education. In the work of authors contributing to Kallaways' 1984 collection Apartheid and Education,[1] a distinct South African variant of reproductionism emerges, typified by the work of Christie and Collins.[2] This interpretation of Bantu Education is heavily influenced by the so-called 'Cheap Labour Power Thesis' developed in the work of Martin Legassick[3] and the early work of Harold Wolpe.[4] This position, (to sum up briefly a vast and complex literature) centres on the view that the low-wage, migrant labour system of South Africa was made possible by the maintenance

of pre-capitalist production in the homelands, which provided a portion of the cost of reproduction of the migrant and his family. This meant that capitalists were able to pay below-subsistence wages to their workforce, and at the same time capital and the state were spared the expense of providing for the reproduction of an urbanised working class. Apartheid is thus seen as an attempt to maintain, by coercive methods, a cheap labour system founded on migrancy in a situation in which the pre-capitalist sector was beginning to break down. The post-1948 regime, by enforcing labour migrancy, attempted to contain the creation of a politically dangerous urban proletariat, and also to avoid the costs for state and capital that would be attendant on the reproduction of the workforce within the urban areas (implying higher wages and more extensive state provision of housing and services).

This work marked a major advance over the previously dominant 'liberal' view of South African history, which postulated an absolute conflict between the imperatives of racism and capitalist growth,[5] and thus was incapable of explaining South Africa's economic boom of the 1960s. But the Cheap Labour Power Thesis had the defect of moving toward the opposite error of seeing the racial order as perfectly functional to the capitalist economy. In addition, by focusing exclusively on the migrant component of the labour force, it ignored the role of the growing urbanized labour force.

Viewing the reproduction of the labour force within the framework of the Cheap Labour Power Thesis, reproductionist authors such as Christie and Collins tend to analyse the Bantu Education policy, from its inception into the 1970s, as one that provided for the reproduction of an unskilled African labour force within an economy the major characteristic of which was migrant labour. Despite various attempts to disclaim functionalism, the manner in which the arguments of these writers are made tends toward the typical limitations of reproductionist thought. Dysfunctionality between state structures and production; divisions between capital and the regime, and within the bureaucracy; and the impact of social conflict on educational policy are not well incorporated into the analysis. Although making frequent verbal gestures in the direction of recognising such issues, reproductionist writers on South Africa engage in types of explanation in which a model of state education policy as essentially meeting the needs of capital prevails.

On the other hand the influence of resistance orientated thought is apparent in the recent work of Molteno.[6] While Molteno has made a valuable contribution to the literature in providing us with the first good studies of student movements, his work tends to the voluntarism that we have noted in resistance theory. He rightly challenges the inability of reproductionist thought to satisfactorily

account for and investigate popular movements in education. He assigns great weight to the practices of students in generating an alternative school system through a process of cultural production. However, in doing so he tends to remove the analysis of movements from the context of the structures which mould and limit them. Molteno does not sufficiently locate education struggles in relation to the state.

South African education thus seems to have presented similar analytical problems to those facing educational sociologists internationally. In this chapter I will demonstrate how the conceptual framework generated in the previous chapter can provide a way to avoid the polarities of reproductionist and resistance thinking in interpreting Bantu Education.[7] I will outline the ways in which my approach differs from earlier interpretations of Bantu Education. I will then sketch how the thesis will portray the struggles around education policy from the 1940s to 1976.

Central Propositions

In developing an account of the struggles over education in South Africa between the 1940s and 1976, this thesis will develop a number of central propositions which depart from both the reproductionist and the resistance approaches to South African education. For the sake of clarity, these

propositions will be identified here.

The thesis will argue that the functionalist tendencies of reproductionist thought have led it to misconstrue both the significance of Bantu Education for capitalism, and the nature of the interaction between the apartheid bureaucracy and capitalists. The relationship between Bantu Education and capitalist development was a changing and not a fixed one. The view that Bantu Education simply reproduced cheap labour for capital will be shown to be unsatisfactory. In the same way as the liberal view that apartheid schooling necessarily obstructed the capitalist economy[8] cannot explain why economic growth did take place in the 1960s, the reproductionist position cannot account for those periods and features of education policy in which capital's needs were not met by the education system. Rather, it will be contended that at particular moments, and in particular aspects, Bantu Education policy assisted capitalist development, and in other moments and other aspects, obstructed it. This position has affinities with Wolpe's recent argument that

> ...the relationship between capitalism and white domination must be seen as a historically contingent, not a necessary one... the relationship will be both functional and contradictory at the same time - functional for the reproduction of certain relations and class positions and contradictory for others. 9

My rejection of the reproductionist view of the relationship between capitalism and apartheid flows from a

rejection of the functionalist aspect of reproductionist thought. It cannot be assumed a priori that the origins and nature of one social instance, Bantu Education policy, can necessarily and automatically be explained by the existence of another social instance - capitalist economic relations. Where Bantu Education policy served capitalist interests, that result was the outcome of successful political struggles by capital, rather than of any automatic relationship. As well as being functionalist, the reproductionist view of South African education policy suffers from a class reductionism which does not give adequate weight to the racial, colonial aspects of power in society.

It will also be argued that the relationship between the educational state bureaucracy and capital was a contested and changing one. Bantu Education policy cannot be understood merely as an example of how the state acts in the interests of capital. This view is entailed in my rejection of an instrumentalist view of the state. As Yudelman[10] first recognised some time ago, much South African writing on the state is vitiated by reductionism. The thesis will show that there were important policy divisions between capital and the bureaucracy over various aspects of education policy. The bureaucratic political and economic interests which were embodied in the civil service and the National Party government were largely

distinct from those the predominant capitalist fractions. The extent to which there was co-operation between the state and capital at particular periods was the outcome of relatively contingent factors. The introduction of Bantu Education did solve certain problems for capital, but this was because of the existence of complementary interests between a state which faced important economic and political limitations to its ability to introduce a full apartheid programme, and an industrial and mining sector whose aims in terms of social policy change were very limited. In the 1970s, attempts were made to reorganize education policy in a way which better suited capital's new requirements for skilled labour. These succeeded because of economic pressures on the state, greater representation of industry in the National Party, and the need for reorganisation in the bureaucracy. On the other hand, in the 1960s state education planners rode roughshod across the needs of industry, and the policy change of the 1970s provoked an obstructive backlash from important elements of the bureaucracy.

Despite our criticisms of reproductionist theory, it has been argued that the concept of reproduction can offer valuable insights into the creation of mass schooling systems, provided that the use of functionalist assumptions is avoided. The thesis seeks to generate a more refined understanding of the reproductive role of schooling than that which is found in existing South African literature.

It will also seek to utilize the valid contribution of international reproductionist work on the relationship between mass schooling, industrialization and urbanization, in order better to understand the genesis of Bantu Education.

Bantu Education involved the reproduction of varying and historically changing forms of labour, and issues arising out of urban labour markets and living conditions were of central importance in policy struggles over education. This contrasts with the South African reproductionist emphasis on Bantu Education's role in reproducing a poorly skilled, rural based, migrant labour force. In this respect, I draw on Hindson's critique of the Cheap Labour Power Thesis.[11] Hindson demonstrates that the apartheid social order did not have the effect of reproducing only a single type of labour power - the unskilled migrant. Rather, apartheid legislation deepened the distinctions between sections of the labour market, in that the pass laws gave urban residents, migrants and rural people differing levels of access to urban centres. Hindson's 'Differentiated Labour Power Thesis' argues that, by the 1950s, the reproduction of a non-migrant section of the labour force was taking place within the urban areas. Thus the state and employers were forced to intervene to provide conditions of reproduction for this section of the working class within these areas. And while the wages of migrants

could continue on a below-subsistence basis, the need for reproduction of the urban wage force implied that they would receive wages sufficient for subsistence. In Hindson's view, the Cheap Labour Power Thesis has led to a playing down of stratification of the working class, and to a neglect of the urban reproduction process, and the state's role therein. The point is that the specific way in which the concept of reproduction has been used in the South African debate has tended to reduce its focus to a narrow range of concerns. This is apparent in the work of reproductionist contributors to educational studies, such as Kallaway's authors. Firstly, these writers tend to treat the education system as monolithic, and do not pay attention to the probability that the reproduction of differentiated urban and rural labour forces involved different systems of urban and rural education. Secondly, they tend to look at the role of the school in reproducing labour power in abstraction from any understanding of an urban reproduction process, taking place within the parameters of a wage economy and involving the provision of housing and other social infrastructure satisfactory understanding of education requires that it be placed within the context of an understanding of state urban policy. Thirdly, and here I take the implications of Hindson's critique a little further than he does, education policy needs to be understood as aimed, at different times, at producing varying combinations of levels of skill amongst pupils - such differentiation has not been taken

into account by those who see Bantu Education as only reproducing unskilled labour. I will seek to show that Bantu Education policy was not an unchanging policy introduced in 1955 and remaining the same ever after. Rather, it changed in response to social pressures.

The processes of urbanization and secondary industrialization are crucial to an understanding of the origins and evolution of Bantu Education policy. In part, this contention derives from Hindson's case for the importance of the urban dimension in state policy. More widely, it derives from our recognition that internationally, the reproductionists have shown important connections between monopoly industrialization and the rise of mass schooling. I have argued that this is an important line of inquiry to pursue, provided that it is understood in a non-functionalist way. It will be shown in the thesis that, as in other countries, issues of skill training, the social control of youth, political socialization of youth and the organization of the family were at stake in the creation of Bantu Education's mass schooling system. What was specific to South Africa was that the creation of this particular schooling system occurred in the context of a society whose whole character was deeply structured by its colonial history. This gave the Bantu Education system its deeply racial and racist character. Bantu Education is the peculiarly South African form of mass schooling. It is

important, however, to realize that it is not unique as an attempt to utilize education for the purposes of social domination in an industrializing society. Its singularity consists rather in the depth of social inequality it involved.

Following Carnoy and Levin's late-Poulantzian view of the state as a contested field of social relations, this thesis views educational systems as shaped by mass struggles and the relationship between popular movements and the state. It thus portrays the imposition and development of Bantu Education policy as the result of a series of struggles traversing the state, and as embodying the outcomes of those struggles. The level of popular resistance to Bantu Education is seen as imposing important constraints on state policy. The popular insurgency of the 1950s was a major pressure on those in power to restructure education in a way which contained popular discontent. It also prevented the Nationalists from attempting to carry out some of the most drastic elements of apartheid policy. This changed in the 1960s when the destruction of popular opposition enabled government to pursue policies such as using education policy to block urbanization, and to aid its attempt to uproot the urban working class. Then again, in the 1970s, rising mass opposition increased the pressure for educational restructuring.

The thesis also attempts to investigate the role of the state educational bureaucracy in the formation of education policy, in a manner which seeks to develop a non-reductionist understanding of the state, of the kind pointed to by the late work of Poulantzas, and more emphatically, by Skocpol. In recognizing the autonomous dynamics of state structures, the thesis stresses the importance of divisions within government and civil service in shaping education policy. Ruptures between officials coming out of the mission school tradition and apartheid ideologies were apparent in the 1950s. The extent of state funding of black education in the 1950s and 1960s, and the policy toward urban secondary education in the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, were objects of contestation within the dominant group. Differentiation and division were present within these circles. Problems of organization within the civil service played major parts in important policy shifts, such as the reorganisation of educational funding in the early 1970s. The internal dynamics and struggles within the state over policy-making need to be recognized.

By inserting culturalist notions of a struggle for hegemony into this Poulantzian interpretation of the state as a contested field of social relations, the thesis attempts to enrich our understanding of South African educational struggles.

It will be argued that the struggle over Bantu Education can be understood in part as a struggle between the dominant groups' attempts to create a new hegemony, and popular attempts to develop oppositional and counter-hegemonic alternatives in education. The introduction of Bantu Education policy in the 1950s was an attempt to create a hegemonic order in education following the breakdown of the form of hegemony embodied in the educational leadership of the missionaries in the 1940s. The resistance to the policy, particularly that of the ANC, included attempts to build counter-hegemonic alternatives, but these were ultimately defeated. However, the Nationalists failed to draw the masses into a new hegemonic order. In education, they were capable of crushing opposition, and of institutionally incorporating black youth in the schools. The provision of large scale schooling served as a 'material subtratum', a concrete concession to mass pressures, which could draw popular participation in the schooling system. But the racial and inegalitarian dimension of the system was too strong for it to win the active popular identification with the system required for hegemony. The best that the state could achieve was what I have described as the 'acquiescence' of the mass of the population. However, the use of Poulantzas' 'material substratum' concept implies that this acquiescence cannot be seen as based purely on the effects of forcible suppression or dominant ideology, although the former played a large role, and the latter a limited one.

There were also material incentives for popular acquiescence in the new system.

Through invoking the concept of hegemony, we can also deal more satisfactorily with the question of what kind of change Bantu Education represented and of interpreting shifts within it. By understanding Bantu Education as an attempt to change the role of education so as to create a new hegemonic social order, we avoid a difficult dilemma which has faced previous accounts. Liberal approaches, which glorify and romanticize mission education, such as that of Kuper,[12] see Bantu Education as an absolute break with previous educational history, ignoring the historic role of the mission schools in maintaining the previous social order. On the other hand, reproductionist authors like Christie and Collins,[13] by presenting Bantu Education as just another phase in the educational reproduction of labour power, inadvertently minimize its significance. While recognizing the reproductive aspects of missionary education, it is argued here, we should see Bantu Education as an attempt to remould education in a way which would enable the Nationalist government to win black popular allegiance to its new social order. This attempt was necessitated by the collapse of the hegemonic role which the missions had exercised amongst black Christians and the black elite up to the end of the 1930s, as a result of social and political change and internal crisis. The idea

of an attempt to recreate a hegemony gives full weight to the impact of the new policy, while recognising that the previous education system had also played a role in domination.

The thesis seeks to integrate the culturalist insistence on the need to investigate popular culture systematically, through its subsidiary focus on the changing culture of youth. I will at the same time attempt to relate this question to my conceptualization of struggle within the state by showing how popular youth culture modified the course of struggles over education policy.

It will be argued, in this connection, that it is important to differentiate between forms of youth oppositional behaviour which were capable of being mobilized in a transformative social process and those which were not. The 1950s found the mass of black urban youth on the streets, involved in a lumpenized sub-culture which was largely resistant to political mobilization. The school riots of the period from the 1940s to the 1960s did contain a more transformative potential, but remained isolated, and were not drawn into a counter-hegemonic project. I argue that the passivity of school-going youth in the 1960s, and the rebellion of the generation of the 1970s reflect different generational experiences. The creation of a mass schooling system broke down the street sub-culture of the 1950s. By placing youth in a common institutional

framework, it gave them a common group identity. However, urban youth initially lacked the repertoire of responses that were needed to express their resentment. The heritage of urban youth cultures could not confront a new set of issues, while the existing tradition of student revolt was located in the mission boarding schools. Urban youth had to evolve its own repertoire of revolt. By the 1970s, the common experience of Bantu Education institutions, the emergence of new urban youth sub-cultures, and a changed political conjuncture allowed such a development. Despite some regressive aspects, the new youth sub-culture showed a much greater transformative potential than its predecessors.

Finally, our analysis of the position of teachers, while informed by attempts to understand the structural constraints imposed on them by their employment position, also seeks to develop a 'culturalist' sensitivity to the effects of the ideological and the political. Teachers' response to Bantu Education is understood in terms of their occupation of an ambiguous social position which exposed them to the cross-pressures of both dominant and subordinate classes. Within this context, however, different teacher groupings developed widely differentiated responses to changing social conditions.

In the great period of political mobilization in the 1950s

teachers were pushed by popular pressures toward radicalization. Even then, however, ideological differentiation generated conservative political trends amongst teachers. The defeat of mass opposition movements by the early 1960s, on the other hand created conditions for conservative and pragmatic teacher groupings to flourish. The ideology of professionalism played an important role amongst teachers in our period as a whole. The mission schools succeeded far better than the subsequent education system in creating a sense of professionalism amongst their teacher trainees, because of their less dominating style, and the better quality of the instruction they offered. Professionalism proved to be a double-edged sword; for some, it was the basis of a conservatism and hostility to politics. For others, it was the basis of deep resentment at Bantu Education's poor standards.

Thus, the thesis will attempt to explain the history of struggles around Bantu Education in a way which avoids the pitfalls of both existing reproductionist and culturalist approaches. The methodology of this study, which flows from the theoretical viewpoint put forward in this, and the previous chapter, is discussed in Appendix A.

Periodization

The propositions outlined in this chapter will be developed through a historical account of the emergence and crisis of Bantu Education. By way of introduction to this, the main features of this historical account will be outlined briefly and periodized. While seeking to provide a national overview of social conflicts around education, the thesis will have a particular focus on the Rand and the Eastern Cape. These two regions were chosen because of their central significance in conflicts over education during our period. The regional focus allows a more detailed exploration of these key conflicts than would otherwise be possible.

The period from the 1940s to the mid-1950s was one of social crisis. Rapid urbanization and industrialization transformed society, giving rise to new social and political movements challenging the state. In the sphere of education, this crisis was manifested strongly. The existing, missionary-run system of black education was unable to meet the dominant classes' needs for the reproduction of the labour force and the maintenance of hegemony. A consequent lack of urban schooling facilities led to ineffective social control over working class youth. The inadequacy of schools generated a shortage of semi-skilled labour. Mission schools were unable to maintain themselves financially, or to cope with the growing demand

for education. Moreover, the rising tide of African nationalism was undermining the hegemony which the missions up to then had exercised over the minds of the African elite. Students in the mission schools took to riot and protest. African teachers became increasingly politicized, militantly organized, and hostile toward the mission authorities.

The introduction of the policy of Bantu Education in the 1950s and early 1960s was an attempt to restructure the education system in the face of this crisis, with an emphasis on dealing with the educational structures of the urban areas. It was part of the Nationalist government's endeavour to restructure and reassert control of the cities in that period. It was also a component of the Nationalists' breaking of mass opposition movements. By rapidly expanding the education system, on the basis of a financing policy which placed the economic burden on black communities, the government quickly attained its short-term objectives.

By drawing a large portion of urban youth into school, a measure of social control over them was established. An emphasis on primary education met some of the labour needs of industry. While these measures were certainly in the interests of capital they do not demonstrate a functional relationship between capital and the state. Rather, they represent a contingent coincidence of interests. The

government was developing its Grand Apartheid political solution, involving the denial of urban political and civil rights to blacks, and the channelling of their aspirations towards rural homelands. But they could not, in the 1950s, pursue these policies too assiduously. They were limited by the strong popular political opposition of the time, and the poor economic situation. These factors pressured them to concentrate on policies which would, socially and politically, provide greater control of the urban areas, and meet the labour needs of industry. But the pursuit of policies which fitted in with the needs of industrial capital was not the result of any necessary subordination of state to capital.

State policy involved an attempt to create a new hegemony, in which black political aspirations would be directed toward the homelands. In education, community participation in school boards and committees was seen by government as an important means of achieving this. However, popular resistance, and the racism of the state educational bureaucracy crucially undermined this aim.

The period of implementation of the policy saw important educational resistance. The ANC attempted to develop the cultural clubs, an alternative school system, which constituted a project of a counter-hegemonic type. But this initiative was unable to sustain itself, and the state

was able to achieve mass institutional incorporation into the new education system because the expansion of the schooling system provided the 'material substratum' which could draw the black working class into the schools. The resistance of teachers' movements to the policy was broken by victimization and the teachers' own factionalism. Student resistance in education remained rooted in rural boarding schools and failed to take on a sufficiently transformative character to be a real challenge to state policy.

The period from the early 1960s to the early 1970s was one in which Bantu Education was pursued in its 'purest' form. The defeat of mass opposition movements and the economic boom meant that there were few constraints on government's execution of apartheid policy. Education was used as a tool of this purpose: urban education was systematically strangled in order to drive people into the rural areas. This policy adversely affected industry, which had a growing need for urban educated labour, but the bureaucracy was willing and able to pursue its own project regardless of this. While the state leadership had succeeded in attaining a large degree of institutional incorporation of the masses in the new educational order, its blatant racism prevented the creation of a new hegemony. Acquiescence was the limit of the education system's achievement. Neither teachers nor students gave their allegiance to it.

From the late 1960s to the early 1970s, conflict began to develop within the dominant classes over educational policy. With the end of the boom of the 1960s, economic restructuring became important and capital began to contest state policy, driven by the lack of adequately educated labour which they faced. The institutional organisation of Bantu Education became problematic, as existing financing policies undermined government's own educational objectives. After a complex political struggle, those sections of government willing to make limited adaptations of apartheid policy won. The financing policy was changed and urban education expanded once again.

The educational restructuring of the years from 1972 in fact inadvertently prepared the ground for the revolt of 1976. The rapid expansion of a poorly resourced secondary school system created a basis for social revolt. This coincided with shifts in the sub-culture of urban black working class youth, and national and international political changes which created a new upsurge of rebellion amongst students. When in 1976, policy divergences in the bureaucracy led to the enforcement of the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, revolt broke out.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. P. Kallaway (ed.), Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans, (Johannesburg, Ravan, 1984). This is not to suggest that all Kallaway's contributors took a uniform position, or that they were unaware of some of the difficulties inherent in reproductionist thought. This is particularly true of Kallaway's own introduction to the volume. Rather, it is to suggest that the lack of a coherent alternative to reproductionist theory and an uncritical attitude to the Cheap Labour Power Thesis interpretation of Apartheid blocked the development of less functionalist approaches to understanding Apartheid education.

2. P. Christie and C. Collins, "Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology and Labour Reproduction", in P. Kallaway (ed.) (1984), op.cit., pp.160-183. See also C. Collins, "Black Schooling in South Africa: Notes towards a reinterpretation of the schooling of the indigenous peoples of South Africa", Africa Perspective, No.17, Spring 1980, pp.4-16.

3. M. Legassick, "South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence", Economy and Society, Vol.3, No.3, 1974, pp.253-91.

4. H. Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid", Economy and Society, Vol.1, No.4, November 1972, pp.425-456. Although Wolpe and Legassick's views were distinct, debates between them resulted in a considerable convergence. This is reflected in their joint article: M. Legassick and H. Wolpe, "The Bantustans and Capital Accumulation in South Africa, Review of African Political Economy, No.7, September-December 1976, pp.87-107. I thus feel justified in treating their position as a common one.

5. For an example of this position see R. Horwitz, Expand or Explode: Apartheid's Threat to South African Industry, (Cape Town, Business Bookman, 1957).

6. F. Molteno "Reflections on Resistance - Aspects of the 1980 Students Boycott", in M. Lawrence (ed.), Kenton-at-the-Stadt 1983 Conference Papers, (Mafikeng, University of Bophuthatswana, 1984),

pp.33-59; F. Molteno "Students Take Control: The 1980 Boycott of Coloured Education in the Cape Peninsula", British Journal of Sociology of Education, Vol.8, No.1, 1987, pp.3-21.

7. My use of Poulantzian ideas in the South African context requires comment. Poulantzas is no longer a fashionable figure in Southern African studies. The work of the Poulantzian school of the 1970s (see for example R. Davies, D. Kaplan, M. Morris, D. O'Meara, "Class Struggle in South Africa", Review of African Political Economy, No.7, September-December 1976, pp.4-30), has been extensively criticized, by, among others, B. Bozzoli, "Capital and the State in South Africa", Review of African Political Economy, no.11, January-April 1978, pp.40-50, and S. Clarke, "Capital, Fractions of Capital and the State: 'neo-Marxist' analyses of the South African State", Capital and Class, No.5, Summer 1978, pp.32-77.

However, the prevailing dismissiveness toward Poulantzas misses two crucial points. The first is that the use to which his concept of factions was put by his South African followers was far from that which he intended. The South African Poulantzians tended to equate a specific capitalist fraction with a particular political party, and changes of electoral dominance with changes of fractional dominance within ruling power block. This represents a reductionism, and a denial of the 'relative autonomy' of the political, which was clearly far from Poulantzas' intention. Thus, the deficiencies of the South African Poulantzians' handling of the concept of fraction certainly do not discredit the concept as a whole. Secondly, it does not appear to be widely realized that Poulantzas' later work, embodied in his State, Power, Socialism, (London, Verso, 1980), represents a considerable break from the rigid structuralism of his early work. Poulantzas' criticisms of Althusser in this book represent an overturning of certain Althusserian notions contained in Poulantzas' own early work. As it was the early Poulantzas whose work was drawn on by South African theorists, criticism of that work does not in fact constitute a case against his later views.

8. For an example of which see E.G. Malherbe, Education in South Africa, Vol.II, (Cape Town, Juta, 1976).

9. H. Wolpe, Race, Class and the Apartheid State, (Paris, UNESCO, 1988), p.8.

10. D. Yudelman, The Emergence of Modern South Africa: State, Capital and the Incorporation of Organized Labour on the South African Gold Fields, 1902-1939, (Cape Town, David Philip, 1983), p.30.

11. D. Hindson, "The Pass System and Differentiated Labour Power", Law Society Seminar Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985; D. Hindson, Pass Controls and the Urban African Proletariat in South Africa, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1987).

12. L. Kuper, An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class and Politics in South Africa, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1965), p.169.

13. Christie and Collins (1984), op.cit.

CHAPTER 3: CRISIS IN SOCIETY, CRISIS IN EDUCATION: THE AFRICAN SCHOOLING SYSTEM IN THE 1940s AND EARLY 1950s

The central concern of Bantu Education policy as implemented by the Nationalists during the 1950s was not, as reproductionists tend to believe, with the maintenance of a supply of migrant labour. Nor was it, as liberal writers tend to argue, with a malicious, ideologically-driven destruction of the mission schools, "butchered", as Edgar Brookes put it, "to make an ideologist's holiday".[1] Rather, it was the crisis of reproduction of the urban labour force that developed in the 1940s and 1950s, a crisis rooted in the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the period, which is crucial to an understanding of government action. It was the inability of the existing education system to control and train urban youth which was the chief focus of state attention during the period in which Bantu Education was first introduced. The state was above all concerned to address these issues.

During the period of the Second World War and its aftermath, social reproductive mechanisms which had operated in the 1920s and 1930s began to break down. In the 1940s the combined forces of collapsing homeland agriculture and expanding secondary industrialization, generated rapid urbanization. This placed the existing provision for urban social reproduction under enormous

strain. Housing, transport, and wages were all inadequate to meet the needs of the growing urbanized working class. Popular initiatives which contested these arenas, such as squatter movements, bus boycotts and trade unionism spread rapidly. In turn, these fueled the emergence of a higher and more radical level of oppositional political activity, marked by the emergence of a new generation of leadership in the ANC. Thus the dominant classes were faced on the one hand with levels of poverty which threatened the very physical reproduction of their workforce, and on the other by new political threats. The National Party's policies of the 1950s were largely addressed to resolving this urban reproductive crisis.[2]

The introduction of Bantu Education has to be understood in the context of the government's restructuring of urban reproductive conditions. The conditions which prevailed in education during the 1940s constituted a major obstacle to social stability. The existing, provincially administered system of black education, in which mission schools predominated, was not extensive enough to reach the mass of black urban youth. This was seen by administrators and educationalists as a crucial reason for the uncontrollability of this youth, manifested in crime, and, they feared, in potential political mobilization. Moreover, the urban workforce was not providing the numbers of workers with the education required for semi-skilled labour in the expanding factories. By the late 1940s and

early 1950s, a wide spectrum of dominant class opinion had come to see the extension of mass schooling as an appropriate response to these problems. Bantu Education policy was initially to be directed to providing the reproductive infrastructure to resolve these problems of social control and labour need.

This viewpoint does not undermine the argument of the thesis that there was no automatic identity of the interests of state and capital. Rather, it is suggested that the major problem arising from urban crisis, that of social control of the black working class was one in which politicians, bureaucrats and capitalists had a common interest. The state's willingness in the 1950s to meet certain industrial labour needs has to be seen as the result of the need of a state in a precarious economic and political position, to maintain economic stability while trying to address urgent problems of urban restructuring and political control.

The crisis of the period was also one of hegemony, with rising popular challenges to the existing social order in the political and ideological spheres. Within the mission school system, there was growing instability. In fact the mission school system was in a state of near collapse. Not only was it too poor and too small to cope with popular demand for education, but it was increasingly riven with

internal divisions between mission authorities, staff, students and black communities. A powerful missionary educational tradition which had, through a long historical period, exerted a formative influence over the rising African educated elite, was for the first time experiencing substantial challenges from below to its claims to authority and knowledge. Verwoerd, as Minister of Native Affairs, sought through Bantu Education not only to replace the missions with a more extensive and economically viable education system, but also to create a new form of hegemony capable of securing the support of popular sectors for the education system and the social relations it embodied. This chapter will seek to explore in detail the nature of the social control problems, labour needs and the institutional crisis in the mission schools which faced the Nationalist government.

The Crisis of Urban Schooling

By the late 1940s and early 1950s, the education system was proving quite incapable of providing schooling for the growing numbers of urban youth. In 1952 school inspectors estimated that of African children of school going age on the Rand, 58,138 were in school while 116,276 were not.[3] At this time the majority of schools were mission institutions with a limited state subsidy:[4] th state thus lacked the educational apparatus to deal with a growing youth population, especially in the urban areas. The state

provision in the Cape was particularly poor; in the early 1950s only 24 out of 2296 recognized schools were state provided.[5] The attrition rate of those who did attend school was exceptionally high: in 1945 only 50% of pupils in the Cape studied beyond the first two years of school, and only 2% reached beyond Standard VI.[6] Secondary schooling was very poorly developed. It was only in the 1930s that St Peter's became the first school in the Transvaal to take African pupils to matriculation level.[7] Mission schools were thus unable to provide education for most African children of school age in the urban South Africa of the 1940s and 1950s. Yet in an endeavour to deal with this problem they expanded pupil intakes drastically, imposing a massive strain on their existing resources.[8] Thus they were failing to perform effectively, either in relation to the majority of potential pupils whom they were excluding, or in relation to the minority of actual pupils whom they took in. The Eiselen Report was thus doing no more than giving a realistic appraisal, from its own perspective, of the actual situation of the existing schools when it said of them that they: "...are providing education for a relatively small proportion of a backward (sic) population".[9]

The squalid level of most of the educational facilities of this period is attested to by teachers in recalling the conditions under which they themselves learnt and taught. A

Sophiatown mission school in the 1930s was "a tin shack"[10] while another in St Mary's, Orlando, in the 1950s was "old looking and dilapidated."[11] A school in Top Location, Sharpeville during the war years:

> "was an old church building built from stone from the quarries. It was so old somebody told me it was just built before the Boer War. It had those plank windows."[12]

The building which housed a state school in the 1950s was

> "...an old library, out in Benoni location. A derelict building, no electricity, one tap, hardly any toilets."[13]

Nor were the teacher training facilities much better:

> "when I was a student, classroom buildings were at a very, very poor level... I remember, when I went for teacher's training, for instance... we had to start by making the floor ourselves... we just took pieces of wood that were meant for rafters, and we built desks." 14

During the 1940s, there was a growing awareness, on the part of a wide range of opinion within the dominant classes, that control over urban youth was fast eroding. This was understood as constituting a major danger, firstly insofar as it implied the spread of crime and socially disruptive behaviour, and secondly insofar as it constituted a potential political threat. The reorganization and expansion of the school system began to be put forward as the necessary means of preventing these dangers. These concerns and putative solutions were first advanced by liberal intellectuals. In his 1946-1947 Presidential address to the South African Institute of Race

Relations, Senator Edgar Brookes called for compulsory education as a "preventative against delinquency and crime."[15] He expressed concern that:

> In our towns thousands of children are growing up juvenile delinquents, and a State which is prepared to maintain a police force and reformatories is apparently not prepared to increase the expenditure necessary to keep them off the streets during their formative years. 16

That Brookes' primary concern was with the urban crisis is confirmed by his suggestion that compulsion could be introduced more slowly in the rural areas.[17]

By the end of the Smuts government's tenure of office, such ideas had penetrated the thinking of significant sections of government and administration. The Secretary for Social Welfare voiced the view that compulsory education was needed to overcome the "scolly" problem: in a pronouncement presaging Bantu Education, he called for a differential syllabus which would include social and personal "hygiene".[18] The De Villiers Commission reported in 1948 that:

> A number of witnesses, including responsible municipal officials contended, in evidence before this Commission that juvenile delinquency amongst Natives was assuming alarming proportions, especially on the Rand, and that compelling all Native children of school age to attend school would reduce the incidence of delinquency. It was argued that these children, being usefully occupied during part of the day would acquire habits of orderliness and industry, and become amenable to discipline. 19

On coming to power in 1948, the Nationalists faced the same problems of social control. The 1952 Van Schalkwijk Committee noted: "an appreciable increase in the juvenile population of the urban areas during the last decade... [who] fall an easy prey to the vice of the towns."[20] The committee bemoaned the fact that "absence of compulsory education in towns... results in greater freedom from supervision of non-European juveniles."[21] In the same year the Afrikaner educationist and head of Diepkloof reformatory, W. Kieser, wrote of how, as he saw it, "thousands of Bantu children loaf around the locations, lacking in goals and without the necessary supervision... daily the number of juvenile delinquents grows."[22]

The state's apparatus for dealing with juvenile crime was very limited: there was only one reformatory for African male youths (Diepkloof), and one for female youths (Eshowe) and four institutions run for less hardened offenders by the Department of Welfare.[23] Kieser supported his argument that lack of schooling contributed to delinquency with statistics demonstrating that, of his charges at Diepkloof, 29% had never been to school, while a further 47.5% had only studied to Standard II or below.[24] There was thus a belief amongst the dominant social groups that juvenile crime was a growing threat to social order, and one that could most effectively be countered by mass schooling.

But control of urban youth was also seen as a problem at the political level. Kieser, for example, noted that the nature and enforcement of the pass and liquor laws had brought the law itself into contempt amongst the urban black community.[25] He also observed resentment of "so-called" discrimination, and bitterness and envy towards white economic privilege.[26] The former he inevitably attributed to "agitation and ideas with a strong Communist influence."[27]

Official thinking identified the issue of township family structures as a further source of weakness in the social regulation of working class youth. The van Schalkwijk Committee saw "the neglected children of divorcees and unmarried mothers and of poor or destitute families" as particularly prone to fall prey to urban "vice".[28] Kieser complained that "The parents are not in a position to give their children the necessary guidance"[29] and also expressed shock at what he perceived as the unwillingness of black parents to discourage their children from engaging in theft.[30] Kieser was concerned at the black family's failure to inculcate Western gender stereotypes, reflected in the fact that one out of eight African convicted juvenile delinquents was female, compared to one out of thirty white delinquents.[31] He was also troubled by the weakness of nuclear family patterns in the urban areas; only 305 of the 839 pupils at Diepkloof came from families in which both parents were present.[32] Thus it was apparent

by the late 1940s and early 1950s that the school system, the reformatories, and the family structures were not controlling urban youth in an effective manner.

In a situation where such fears of crime and political activity were at the forefront of policy makers' concerns, the inability of the existing educational system to reach large numbers of youth became a major problem for the Nationalist Party government. As we have already seen, in laying down the blueprint for Bantu Education, the 1951 Eiselen Commission identified the relatively small proportion of youth reached by the schools as one of the major problems of the existing educational dispensation.[33] Thus, although the Nationalist Party never fully embraced compulsory education, the idea that youth were a central focus of the urban crisis, and that this issue could be addressed by the introduction of mass schooling, was one prevalent in both United Party and National Party circles. As we shall see, the thrust of National Party's urban education policy in the second half of the 1950s and the early 1960s, was directed to containing the problem of social control of urban youth in the way advocated by the supporters of mass schooling in the previous decade.

The coming of Bantu Education also needs to be placed in the context of strong pressures from industry for labour with a greater degree of education, especially for

employment as semi-skilled operatives. It is by no means necessarily the case that, had the United Party (UP) been re-elected to office in 1948, policies significantly more favourable to high-level black skill training would have been followed than those pursued by the Nationalists. There was a far greater degree of policy overlap between the two major white parties on this issue than one might expect. During the 1940s the growth of secondary industry, with an increasingly strong monopoly sector, generated a vast number of jobs for semi-skilled machine operatives. By 1948 two thirds of these were being filled by black workers, of whom 50% were Africans.[34] But the complementary growth of technical and supervisory staff in monopoly industry did not lead industrialists to train blacks for these positions: industry preferred to rely on white technicians and supervisors.[35] Far from encouraging black skill upgrading, the Smuts government's attitude was consistent with this new racial division of labour. The third interim report of the Van Eck Commission in 1941 argued that there should be an increased emphasis on training whites for skilled labour in industry, instead of providing them with unskilled jobs in government departments.[36] The Secretary for Native Affairs outlined the Smuts government's policy to the De Villiers Commission in the following terms:

> The needs of the country for native journeymen and the existing opportunities for their employment in the recognized trades are much more restricted than those for semi-skilled men. Moreover, it can be argued that the generality of

> the Natives should be satisfied with an intermediate position for the time being... the unfolding of extensive Government development schemes in Native areas will bring into being a large number of skilled posts. 37

Thus the UP, as the Nationalists were to do, did not see labour requirements as necessitating black skill training at artisan level or above, and moreover justified this situation on the basis of largely mythical opportunities in the reserves or homelands. The ideological justification of the policy put forward by the De Villiers Commission was representative of current business and government thinking on the issue: "The mentality of the Native", it opined, "makes him peculiarly suited for repetitive operations."[38] There was a recognition by the UP's policy makers that a restructuring of education was required to generate the semi-skilled African labour they sought. The system they advocated clearly prefigures that realized under Bantu Education. The De Villiers Commission urged educational expansion in order that "we could profitably use so many efficient Native man-hours".[39] Just as the Eiselen Commission was to do, they urged the linking of education and work skills: "for their present stage of development [Africans] profit much more from practical subjects than from academic subjects".[40]

The difference between NP and UP in respect of the directly labour market oriented aspect of their education policies lay more in the energy with which the Nationalists moved to restructure education than in their basic perception of

labour requirements. When Kieser wrote that the African student "leaves school with just enough education to make him averse to any manual work"[41] or when the Eiselen Commission wrote that "the general orientation of school work is too academic",[42] they were expressing a perception also present in UP circles and amongst industrialists. While it is true that Nationalist policy was more sympathetic to the labour requirements of agriculture than the UP would have been, their educational policies did not, in the 1950s, obstruct the reproduction of the type of labour that industry by and large required.

The Nationalist government was to prove more receptive to industrial labour needs than their formal commitment to preventing the establishment of a permanently urbanized black working class might lead one to expect. Once it had come to power the Nationalist Party showed a clear recognition that in the short term it could not attempt to uproot urban workers: rather the aim was to gain effective control over the process of reproduction of the urban working class in order to utilize its labour and control its political and social life. By the early 1950s government was able to reassure industrialists that it was quite willing to support the introduction of black semi-skilled workers into industry, providing that this was accompanied by a move of white workers from unskilled to semi-skilled, and semi-skilled to skilled posts. The 'floating colour bar' temporarily resolved potential

conflict between industry and government. The unwillingness of the Nationalists to accept urban artisan level training for blacks was not an important source of friction between industry and government: neither the UP nor the industrialists showed a strong practical interest in training blacks in the trades, even though a shortage of artisans was beginning to make itself felt.[43] Thus the Nationalists were, during the 50s, receptive to industry's main immediate labour need: semi-skilled labour. As we will see this had its impact on the Nationalists' attempt at resolution of the educational crisis.

Thus by the 1940s the existing school system's inadequacy in accommodating the growing numbers of urban youth, and the problems which this posed for those concerned with the policing of society and with the generation of an appropriately trained and socialised workforce, were becoming apparent. The school system's critical condition was not, however, only one of inadequate capacity: within the schools themselves, increasing signs of disintegration were evident.

The Crisis of the Mission Schools

The crisis of the mission schools manifested itself first of all as an economic one. The De Villiers Commission identified "financial starvation" as one of the chief causes of the deficiencies of African education.[44] Brookes

described a situation where almost every training college and high school "had to live from hand to mouth" and where the existing school buildings were "from an architectural and health point of view as well as from a purely educational point of view very unsatisfactory."[45] The Principal of Healdtown complained in 1945 that although teachers were paid by the Province, all other charges, including food and medical attention for 900 people and the upkeep of buildings, had to be met from ordinary income, which consisted almost entirely of fees.[46] At the same time, the traditions of the missions meant that schools did not usually charge pupils for books, bearing these costs themselves.[47] War-time inflation exacerbated this burden, and the ability of the missions to deal with it by raising fees was undermined by the inability of parents to pay major increases.[48] The consequences were disastrous: by 1946 Lovedale was 30 000 Pounds in debt.[49] At the same time, the demand for education was putting pressure on the missions to take greater numbers of students than they could really teach: the inquiry into the 1946 Lovedale disturbance concluded that "...the number of students is too large for the Institution to handle effectively."[50] The luminous educational achievements of a few renowned mission high schools should not obscure the fact that most mission schools were poor primary schools with large drop out rates.[51] The Eiselen Commission was not inaccurate when it stated of schools in this era that:

> "...the rate of elimination at an early stage is very high... the standards of achievement in the schools as measured by examinations and achievement tests is low." 52

There were major problems from the 1940s in maintaining the numbers of white teachers who had traditionally been present in the missions. According to Z.K. Matthews, there was a decline in the proportion of motivated white missionary teachers.[53] The government's insistence that the missions offer white teachers the same wages as their counterparts in white schools made it difficult for the missions to afford them.[54] (The turbulent conditions on the missions and the lack of promotion possibilities outside the state sector reinforced this trend.[55] The impoverishment of mission finances contributed to growing student discontent. Traditionally, students at the mission boarding schools lived on a "starchy and monotonous" diet.[56] This continued into the 1940s, provoking continual resentment amongst students. While more perceptive missionary figures like Brookes came to recognize the negative effect this had on student attitudes,[57] funds were not available for the missions to easily be able to change their practice in this regard. By the 1940s there was no significant sector of dominant class opinion which did not favour greater state intervention in black education. This included the missionaries themselves. At a 1947 meeting of the heads of missionary schools in Port Elizabeth, a statement was issued to the effect that the institutions

could not bear their financial burden without greater assistance from the government.[58]

But the crisis of the mission schools was also a crisis of hegemony. The social relations of mission school life were disintegrating under the blows of social upheaval. A strongly cohesive way of life began to break up. Up to the 1930s, and in many places into the 1940s and early 1950s, relations between the mission schools and their pupils were often warm and friendly. This is reflected in the generally happy memories teachers interviewed in the course of this research had of their school days. A pupil of St Cyprian's, Sophiatown, in the 1920s sees that period as "just one of my best times"[59] and another teacher who attended the same school says "that's where my foundation was laid."[60] This viewpoint is based largely on the close relations which existed between mission teachers and their students, and the resulting high esteem in which teachers were held. A teacher says:

> Even today I still respect my teachers, because they proved to be men of some truth, of good motivation, and they were men of good character. They were noble people... 61

One of the St Cyprian's pupils who later attended St. Matthew's in the Cape: "They held us in high respect also... In fact they loved us very much."[62] A student at Lemana mission in the 1940s says: "The teachers discussed with us. They went to church with us. They were part of us."[63]

A member of the last generation to attend mission school in the 1950s comments:

> The reason why I respected my teachers is that I would say they were dignified. What made them dignified? What made them dignified was that... morally... most of the things they did were right. 64

A largely favourable perception of the quality of mission education underpins this assessment:

> My own time at school was very enjoyable because I'd say the education we got and the teachers we had were very conscientious, I would say, and we could see they looked like professional people. 65

> I feel the missionaries were doing excellently... in my days Standard 4 scholar, let me say the average one... they had better expression in foreign languages, in the three "r's"... the mounting wasn't a difficulty to them, Afrikaans wasn't a difficulty to them, English wasn't a difficulty to them, mother tongue was just... tweets!
> ...people who learnt with the missionaries, they applied what they learnt. 66

> The missionary schools were far superior in their schools than the department. 67

> ...the present student just wants to be spoonfed. During our days a teacher was just there to guide you and you as a student were the one who had to go out and do the reading. 68

The religious and moral content of missionary education had a powerful effect on students:

> ...my education was always connected with church. ...on weekends, Saturday mornings, we used to go to what we call Anglican classes. There we learned catechism, when we finished catechism, we cleaned the church. On Sunday parents, I can say the whole community, went to church... after church we continued again with an hour of classes.

> ...as I consider it today, compare it with those days: obedience and Christianity close to it... 69
>
> When you attended a mission school there was also the influence of the missionaries to take you over to that denomination. 70
>
> ...our schools during those days... always commenced with their daily work and scriptural lessons.
> ...and those lessons played a very important part in building up the atmosphere for the day... 71
>
> ...most of my teachers dealt on the importance of knowledge. Not only knowing arithmetic, that was not important, but they went from arithmetic to scripture and morals. 72
>
> ...what they stressed most was punctuality and cleanliness. 73
>
> ...obtaining high marks, neatness, punctuality and studies. 74
>
> When I was at school, really what the teachers stressed was manners. And... honour your father and mother... I am what I am because of those values. 75

However, during the war years a qualitative change in the relations between mission school teachers and their pupils seems to have taken place. A rising tide of African nationalist militancy combined with the material structural problems of the missions to erode the close relationships which existed up to then.

Missionary institutions had a long record of student disturbances. The earliest recorded of these was one at Lovedale in 1873 in which a section of the students protested against alleged discrimination in favour of the Fingos.[76] There seems to have been some increase in

incidents after the First World War.[77] Student revolts took place at Kilnerton[78] and Lovedale[79] in 1920, and at Blythswood in 1929.[80] In 1940 there was a strike at Clarkesbury[81] and in 1941 a stone-throwing incident at Lovedale.[82] However, it was generally agreed by mission authorities and educationalists that there was no precedent for the great upsurge of student revolt that struck the missionary institutions at the end of the Second World War. Hirson has sought to argue that incidents in the 1930s were hushed up by the government, and that this accounts for the limited numbers reported before the 1940s.[83] But this seems to attribute a greater degree of control over the press to the government than it actually possessed. It is more likely that the political and social conditions of the 1940s generated something of a student upsurge.

Lovedale's Principal, Rev. R.H.W. Shepherd, said at the time of the 1946 Lovedale riot that there had been sixteen incidents in mission educational institutions in the last two years,[84] while the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) counted 20 disturbances in the 1945-1947 period.[85] From 1947 there appears to have been some decline in the number of incidents - then in the early 1950s conflict revived. I have found evidence of four major conflicts during 1950 (Adams,[86] St Matthew's at Keiskammahoek, St John's at Umtata and Shawbury);[87] two during 1952 (Mfundisweni - Faku Institution[88] and

Bensonvale);[89] four in 1953 (Bethal,[90] Indaleni,[91] Mariathal,[92] and Healdtown);[93] and one in 1954 (Mvenyane).[94]

The most important of the mission school revolts of this time was that at Lovedale in 1946: it will serve as an illustration of the intensity of the conflicts of this period. At 9.30 on 7 August, the institution, one of South Africa's leading missionary educational centres, was hit by an explosion of student anger. A crowd of 150 to 200 male students stoned the houses of some of the staff and set fire to some small buildings and equipment. Staff who tried to intervene were themselves stoned. When police arrived to disperse the riot students threw stones at them as well. The police fired warning shots and the students fled to the hill behind the school. At dawn they gave themselves up and 157 students were arrested. On 10 August, in defiance of orders from the mission authorities, about eighty male students marched into the town of Alice to visit their jailed fellows. On the return of the marchers, the women students, who up to then had been fairly quiet, became rowdy. The next day, Sunday 11 August, women students participated in stone throwing and ringing the church bell, while male students boycotted church. A letter from the students was handed to Shepherd demanding that those who had been arrested should not be subject to double punishment by the Lovedale authorities, and announcing that a boycott would be maintained until

this issue was resolved. On the Monday none of the women students and only thirty of the men turned up for classes. Shepherd suspended classes and sent all the students home. On 16 August the pupils who had been arrested were tried in the Alice Magistrate's Court. 152 were found guilty and of these sixty-four who were under nineteen years of age were sentenced to between six and ten cuts, while the remainder were given sentences of 5 Pound fines, or two months imprisonment.[95] The supposed cause of the whole incident was students' discontent about the rationing of sugar, but as we shall see, the meaning of school violence was far more complex than this.[96] Before the Lovedale events were over, Healdtown, the Eastern Cape's other outstanding missionary educational institution, was shaken by similar troubles. Again, supposedly in protest over the food - in this case a reduction of the bread ration - a small group of pupils unsuccessfully tried to stage a boycott and riot on Wednesday, 14 August, and then set fire to a school building and cut the telephone line to Fort Beaufort. A number of the leaders of this action were expelled, and the Institution's authorities referred the cases of those involved in cutting the wires to the police.[97]

Why should previously stable educational institutions have entered such a period of near-insurrection? By the 1940s, the mission system was breaking down at all levels. This breakdown affected not just institutions which were

competent in their teaching or administration, but the elite levels of the system. Lovedale and Healdtown, for example, which were plagued by student unrest, were institutions which between them provided during the early 1950s, half of the African students passing Cape Senior Certificate, and a majority of students at Fort Hare, the country's only black University.[98] The resource-stretched missions were affected by a situation in which black youth was increasingly influenced by African nationalist aspirations. While for the mission authorities the riots were a sort of political Rorschach test which tended to summon up fantasies of all kinds of conspiracies, it is certain that students were in reality becoming increasingly aware of national political issues. This was certainly noticed by observers. The SAIRR commented in 1947 that the mission riots "appear to be symptomatic of a general unrest among the African people throughout the country";[99] one missionary wrote in 1953 that "...in the present ferment of things all over Africa all our institutions stand in the same danger of riot as we have lately seen active...";[100] while another commented on the Healdtown disturbances, "many things are contributing to a spirit of defiance and resentment in the sphere of race relations."[101] The Rev. A.E.F. Garrett wrote in 1953 of the "growing disregard for discipline and authority in every area of life..."[102]

There was also a certain amount of political agitation taking place in the mission schools. A missionary

memorandum opined that "many forces, all too often negative, mischievous and injurious in their approach combine to inspire irresponsible and unworthy reactions to the church and its institutions."[103] Rev. B.K. Hazell of Faku Training Institution wrote in 195_ that "subversive" literature had been distributed in his district for some time, mentioning particularly the Unity Movement publication, "The Torch".[104] In November, teachers had sold pupils copies of "The Student" which Hazell identified as "the product of clever Communist agitation" and which contained a "garbled" account of the recent Healdtown riots with "the suggestion that other students in other institutions should arise in the same manner."[105] An awareness of international politics certainly played a role in the development of the strike wave. J. Radebe, trying to motivate his fellow students to strike at Healdtown in 1946 said:

> There is only one way of getting our way. Look at overseas. The only language the Europeans understand is to go on strike. It is the only way by which things can be put right, and we shall do that here. 106

Some contribution to the politicization of the missions may have been made by returning war veterans, radicalized by their service experiences, who went for teacher training on their return. A case in point is Potlake Leballo, later a major leader of the PAC. After leaving the army, Leballo went to Lovedale where he participated in the leadership of

the 1946 riot.[107] He then managed to obtain entrance to Wilberforce Academy, where the headmaster, Rev B.S. Rajuili described him as "qu interested in the disturbance of authoritative administration."[108] He subsequently led a sit-down strike at Wilberforce, in conjunction with a group of teachers.[109]

The testimony of former pupils of mission schools seems to confirm the proposition that there was an important shift in political attitudes amongst them during the war years. Whereas a pre-war mission graduate says that "In those days there was no politics - not at all",[110] another who attended school until the early part of the war says of the student riots of this time "Well I think... that was the beginning of the spirit of nationalism among the blacks."[111] Speaking of an incident at his school he says "The spirit of revolution was already in, it was already all over... revolting against whites in general, let me say. The impression I got was that the students were revolting against whites."[112] At St. Matthew's the boarding master, a former Australian prison warder, provoked a riot in which buildings were burned because: "His general attitude was that of a white man against blacks."[113] A student at Pax Training College, Pietersburg, from 1943 to 1945 did not experience any major incidents, but was nevertheless clearly influenced by the mood of the times:

> "...as long as you don't see, if you accept everything given, it was good. I remember when I began questioning - the white want to appear to

> the black children as superior in mind, in everything."[114]

Of the missionaries he says: "...their purpose was to delay what we need now".[115] A student at a Catholic Mission in Lesotho in the late 1940s and early 1950s, came to realize his differences in political outlook with a conservative Canadian history teacher, during his History lessons. He disapproved of the teacher's view of South Africa's past: "like for instance the Xhosa Wars. The Xhosas stole from the Boers, and then the Boers reclaimed the cattle."[116] Their clash of outlooks extended to other questions: "about the French Revolution we had a little difference."[117]

There was some influence on students from politicized African teachers who would discuss political issues with them: this was alleged to have been a part of the background to the Lovedale rising in 1946.[118] At Faku in 1953, as just mentioned, staff were selling radical literature to students.[119] But such activities clearly were not very systematic. There is no evidence of a 'plan' by mass organisations to 'subvert' the schools of the kind in which the missionaries believed. Rather, what was happening was that the political developments of the time were creating an atmosphere in which students were more likely to rebel.

The missionaries had formidable moral and ideological weapons which they could deploy against the threat of rebellion:

> ...being a good boy was paramount. Even though we may have had complaints, we never exposed them, because of the tendency that if you speak out you are marked as a bad student, or a bad Catholic, or something like that." 120

These weapons could also be deployed against actual rebellion: after one school strike over food

> ...immediately we do that, we were called to church, we had to pray and pray and pray you know, and then in fact prayer made us submissive and... we could realise, well, we have offended serious ." 121

Nevertheless, by mid-1940s it was clear that the rising tide of nationalism was able to provide a legitimacy for rebellion that weakened the moral pressures of religion and authority in the mission schools.

The combination of the breakdown of the missions' infrastructure and the political changes of the time produced a breakdown in the authority of the missions over their students. The inquiry into the 1946 Lovedale riot noted that until 1939 discipline had been no problem at the school but now the students identified "the European staff in the institution as part of the Government machinery" and some students "behaved in a most unseemly way towards the teachers".[122] One of the teachers commented that "The

feeling among the students is that the teachers are against them."[123] The situation at Lovedale, others noted, was such that it was very difficult to preach in the church because of the students' tendency to make fun of the preacher.[124]

The lack of trust also extended to strong feelings amongst students that the white missionaries were appropriating the resources of the schools for themselves. When J. Radebe was trying to persuade his fellow students at Healdtown to rebel in 1946, he denounced the fact that "the new latrine is not finished and the Governor builds himself a new house. The money that should have gone into latrines is being used on a new house."[125] While the implicit charge of corruption was almost certainly unjust, what is important in this speech is the perception involved - missionaries could not be trusted to refrain from using their power in a way which bolstered their privilege as whites.

The students distrust of the mission authorities was also underpinned by their sympathy with African teachers who were subjected to discrimination within the schools. The Lovedale inquiry noted that African staff saw the differentiated treatment to which they were subject as having "an unsettling effect on the minds of the students."[126] It also seems likely that the increasingly militant attitudes of African teachers was contributing to

a breakdown of the mechanisms of social control within the schools. At Lovedale, when new rules were instituted by the head of the high school in 1946, to "improve discipline and co-operation", these were not enforced by certain members of staff, and the attitude of some of them was described as one of "passive resistance".[127]

A particular source of student resentment was the prefect system. At a meeting between delegations from the Association of Heads of Native Institutions and the Cape African Parents Association in 1947, the Rev. J.A. Calata argued that students resorted to strikes because they had no other way of making their grievances known, as prefects did not convey the complaints of students to the authorities, while the students themselves were forbidden to approach Principals directly.[128] Certainly prefects were resented by other students for the privileges which they enjoyed, such as being able to go out to movies, dances and concerts.[129] And this was compounded by the way in which the vast age range in the mission schools produced a situation where 'junior' pupils were often older than 'senior' ones who were supposed to keep them in order.[130]

The way in which disciplinary systems were falling apart under the strain of the tensions of the times is well illustrated by the events which led to a 'stand-up' strike at Healdtown in 1953, when students refused their meals and

refused to be seated in the dining hall, in protest against the placing of a prefect at each dining hall table. In response to this the authorities sent about 100 students home.[131] The prefect system had been under strain at Healdtown for some time. In 1952 there was a mass resignation of prefects, who felt that their position was being undermined by the unwillingness of the Housemaster, Mr Mncube, to take action on disciplinary matters. Mncube's failure to prevent fights between 'Port Elizabeth' and 'Transkei' students and the fact that students had been collecting weapons in the dormitories then came to light; he resigned and the prefects re-assumed their positions.[132] The institution of prefectship was clearly not fulfilling its Arnoldian purposes. Students accorded the prefects no legitimacy. In an anonymous letter to the authorities the Healdtown students complained:

> The most important point which causes us to scribble this is because our representatives are not taking out complaints to you... these rules are not for all our students but for the juniors and seniors who have no say in your Aristocratic form of Government... what is the use of these prefects as being our Reps, they should be called your tools for making us. 133

The feelings of resentment toward the prefect system were precipitated by the action of placing prefects at tables, which intensified the resentment of other students at being supervised by younger people. The older students felt their 'dignity' had been insulted[134] and demanded the withdrawal of "Junior Prefects in the Senior Area in the Dining Hall."[135] Other grudges of the students related to

the quality of the food, the refusal of permission to visit the women's hostel[136] and the carrying out of manual work, (in this case getting up at 3.00 a.m. to bake bread.)[137]

The issue of manual work seems to have had a particular significance, featuring in other mission disturbances. There was a long standing resentment of it on the part of mission pupils: two teachers who attended mission school well before the war, replied when asked what they liked least about their schools:

> ...the type of thing I did not like very much was manual labour, 138

and

> ...the manual work... we dug trenches, we dug holes. 139

The new militancy of the 1940s and 1950s seems to have sharpened these resentments. At Lovedale in 1946 "the toolshed and gardening tools were singled out for destruction."[140] One may legitimately surmise that it was the social inferiority which manual labour symbolized that was the issue at stake. Students' unwillingness to obey the disciplinary system of the missions was thus both a symptom and a cause of the crisis into which the missions had entered.

It was the riot over food, however, which was the most common item in the repertoire of student protest. Food, though, was often a nominal cause of these actions which masked their real meanings. Frequently, the issue of food

became a metaphor for issues of power and authority. There were certainly genuine inadequacies in the food in mission boarding institutions. Dr Cooper, the medical superintendent of Lovedale admitted, in 1946, that while the food in the Institution was adequate in quantity and was fairly well balanced, "it was monotonous and there was a shortage of vegetables."[141] Students at Lovedale in this period did not get tea or milk in their diet either.[142] A former mission school student, asked to comment on what he disliked about school says: "Well the condition of the building was not really of the best, say the food, ja, the food definitely."[143] Recalling an incident in 1945 when students at the Diocesan Training College, Pietersburg, refused to eat their food, a former pupil describes the food as follows:

> ...we had yellow mealie meal and... the relish was kafferbeans... these brownish ones. So when it was cooked, well... yellow mealie meal it's never just beautifully cooked, it always tastes half cooked, and then the beans had... weevils inside. Then we tried to eat, no good. 144

Throughout the mission system such deficiencies in the food provided were made worse by supply problems and government rationing measures during the war and immediate post war period,[145] and the financial difficulties of the Institutions made it difficult for them to make major improvements in this area.[146] Thus, as was certainly widely recognised, that the food in the missions was unsatisfactory.[147]

Food was thus a material grievance for students. But the true significance of the food riots cannot be understood purely in these terms. A closer examination of food riots suggests that for the students the inferior quality of their food became a symbol of the forms of social domination they experienced in their daily lives. The issue of food often emerged as one which embodied the unjust relations of a racist society. Thus a host of issues relating to questions of authority, power and politics condensed around, and were symbolized by the issue of food. The riot became a form of protest which was well known and widely accepted within the student culture of the mission schools. By focusing on one universal issue of consistent discontent, it could unite students motivated by disparate grievances. The riot over food was thus only partially about food; over time it was the expression of a changing set of challenges by students to the power structure of their schools and of protests by them at the power structure of the society. The food riot was so central and persistent a feature of the repertoire of protest precisely because of its ability to absorb new underlying agendas.

Frequently linking into these disturbances was a feeling on the part of students, that the poor food represented a contempt on the part of the missionaries for their pupils, a lack of concern for them. An anonymous student at Healdtown wrote to his headmaster in 1953:

(i) We have been eating sour and dirty bread and raw porridge but because you do not eat these you don't worry.

(ii) In the time of Rev. S. Mo we were given fresh fruits and fresh vegetables but see to what you give us. 148

(and on a related theme)

(iv) Just see to what you give us as a Doctor a mere fool. (sic) 149

The way in which food grievances focused other discontents is well illustrated by several instances. In the 1946 Lovedale disturbances the students put forward the reduction of the sugar ration as the reason for their riot. However, both Shepherd and the Housemaster had discussed this issue with student delegations and had pointed out there was a sugar shortage. Moreover, students were still getting a pound of sugar a week.[150] It thus seems highly unlikely that the sugar issue itself was the real issue at stake. Similarly in the 1946 Healdtown disturbances, those students accused of being instigators by the authorities stated their motive as the reduction of the bread ration and its replacement by mealie porridge. However, when told by the teachers that the need for this had been explained to the student body, who had accepted it, they admitted that they were really motivated by a desire "to do what Lovedale has done".[151] An even clearer illustration of how food became a metaphor for power was the incident which occurred at Mvenyane Institution, Cedarville, in 1954. On 9 March women students complained that the mealie porridge

was smelly. Biscuits were given to them instead. The school authorities investigated and found that some bags of mealies were rotten. The bad mealies were picked out and only good ones used for the next meal. A new supply of mealies was ordered, but they were not immediately available, and this position was explained to the students. Staff tasted the porridge made from the selected mealies and pronounced it good, but students refused to eat it. They also rejected good yellow mealies which were offered. On Saturday, 13 March, staff members again tasted the porridge and found it adequate. But the women students then all walked out of the institution. Both the District Surgeon and parents who brought back their daughters tried the food and found it acceptable, but despite this, on 14 March the male pupils carried out their own mass walk out.[152] Here the food issue was clearly the focus of a power and authority struggle rather than its real content. This incident is typical of the place which food conflicts occupied in student protest.

A minor role in the disturbances of the 1950s was played by ethnic conflict. Some missions certainly housed their students on a 'tribal' basis[153] which must have emphasised any tendency to ethnic definitions of conflict. At Lovedale in 1946 the discontent of students was intensified by the fears of non-Xhosa students that they would be excluded from the Institution, an erroneous impression

created by the dropping of Tswana and Sotho as language subjects because of insufficient numbers.[154] In the Natal missions which had played a significant role in the development of a Zulu ethnic particularism,[155] such incidents were particularly intense. In 1950 when the Principal of Adams College banned a Shaka day celebration by the Zulu society, an incident erupted in the aftermath of which he expelled 175 pupils.[156] In a later incident at Ohlange Institute in 1956 there was fighting between Zulu and non-Zulu students;[157] the comment of The Torch that "at the Ohlange Institute the Zulu students are made to feel proud, different and even arrogant"[158] is probably valid in view of Ohlange's origins in the work of the father of modern Zulu particularism, Rev. John Dube.[159]

One aspect of mission education in the 1940s and 1950s which seems to be absent from its popular image is the way in which mission authorities were willing to use stern repression against their students in cases of disorder. The missionaries were no less willing to summon the constabulary and to engage in mass expulsions of students than their successors. At Mariathal, Ixopo, in October 1953, after students had thrown stones at the Rector's office, one of the Catholic brothers fired a warning shot; and the police arrived to restore order. Four days later three car loads of police escorted away 26 students.[160] On 14 May 1953, 184 students at Bethal Training Institution were arrested after a riot and only six days later another

42 were arrested after an arson incident at Ndaleni College.[161] These are just some examples of the widespread use by mission authorities of the police in response to student rebellion.

Relations between the missionaries and police during these times of conflict seem to have been cordial. The Governor of Healdtown wrote to the Officer in Charge of the South African Police at Fort Beaufort in 1953 thanking him for the "most ready and willing assistance" which the force had given during tensions at Healdtown.[162] Not that this relationship was always untroubled. In the same period the Principal of Healdtown complained that a group of black and white SAP men had infuriated his students by driving through the grounds of the Institution making congress salutes and yelling "Afrika!".[163] The missionaries, as we have seen, themselves dealt harshly with students who strayed and mass expulsions were frequent.[164]

It was not only students, but also black communities, which were turning against the missions. It was true that the older and more conservative section of the rural elite still felt strong links to the missions. G. Bikitsha told the Blythswood Governing Committee in 1946 that there was much "disappointment" with recent student actions, and he praised the Principal of Blythswood for allowing meetings of local associations and attending them: "good

understanding, goodwill and harmony have resulted and displaced or replaced misunderstanding."[165] But already these close, paternalist relations were disintegrating under the impact of the social crises of the 1940s. Black opinion was increasingly unwilling to give missions the benefit of the doubt. Brookes commented in his 1946-1947 address that during the Lovedale disturbances:

> ...large sections of responsible Bantu opinion seems to have condemned the authorities and the missionary bodies without condemning the indiscipline and licence which lies behind such action on the part of adolescents. 166

A teacher recalls that what seemed like a deterioration in the quality of the mission schools

> ...with the forties brought, you know, some doubts from the communities and when it reached to the fifties it started simmering and working. 167

The 1946 riots were followed by numerous appeals on the part of the expelled students.[168] Govan Mbeki, in his capacity as General Secretary of the Transkei Organized Bodies (TOB), lobbied the Secretary of the Asaociation of Heads of Native Institutions (AHNI), calling for an inquiry into the issue,[169] and led a TOB delegation which met Shepherd about the dismissals.[170] In 1950, following disturbances at St Matthews, the Rev. J.A. Calata, as President of Cape African Parents Association (CAPA), convened a public meeting on the issue near the school.[171] CAPA sent a letter to the AHNI attacking the mission for calling in the police, for discriminating against Africans

in appointments and administration, and not fully warning those involved in the riots.[172] Following the events at Healdtown in 1953, the Rev. S. Pitts was widely criticized for his disciplinary action against students.[173] A group of Port Elizabeth parents led by W. Tshume circulated a Memorandum complaining that "the relationship between the Institution and the parents have (sic) deteriorated for the past two years."[174] Popular sentiment was no longer with the missionaries.

A further important feature of the crisis within the education system was the breakdown of the hegemony which white mission authorities had exercised over black teachers in the years preceding the Second World War. The subsequent decade and a half saw growing conflict within the education system. The mission system was becoming unviable in terms of its claims to guidance over teachers. The gradualist integrationism of the leading missionary ideologues was unacceptable to a rising generation pulled along by the tides of social crisis and radical nationalism. As we shall see, Bantu Education was to try to address this collapse of the existing order's outer ideological ramparts by attempting to construct a new hegemonic discourse in education. Missionaries began to be aware of the new unwillingness of black teachers to accept a subservient position. Shepherd noted in 1945 that:

> African teachers, particularly graduates, are claiming exactly the same treatment and to have the same customs as Europeans who are their fellow teachers... African teachers feel that their salaries, as compared with European teachers doing the same work are too low and this leads them to think that there can be little or no claim on extra services. 175

Shepherd was responding to an observation by Rev. D.W. Semple of Blythswood that he found his African teachers unwilling to undertake extra-curricular activity.[176] It was hardly surprising that black teachers were increasingly resentful. Lovedale, for example, had a whites-only top table in its dining hall[177] and its senior posts were occupied by whites.[178] There was a strong suspicion on the part of teachers that the missions passed over suitably qualified African teachers for such posts in favour of whites: in 1952 the local branch of the Cape African Teachers Association criticized Healdtown on this score.[179]

Conclusion

The late 1940s and early 1950s thus saw the education system in crisis. The lack of official interest in the expansion of black schooling before the late 1940s had created an immense gap between the scale of school provision and the numbers of black youth of school-going age. In the urban areas the consequence was that the state lacked the institutional means to regulate the lives of black youth. Without educational opportunity, many urban youths roamed the streets, becoming part of a criminal sub-

culture and posing a potential threat to the political order. The low levels of efficiency of the schooling system as a whole inhibited its ability to generate the growing numbers of semi-skilled workers required by industry. Within the mission schools themselves, financial difficulties were undermining their infrastructure. These material problems combined with a rising tide of African nationalist sentiment amongst students to generate a wave of student disaffection and revolt in the years after the Second World War. The relations between mission authorities and black teachers and communities deteriorated sharply as a result of the same pressures. The next chapter will provide a detailed study of the part played by teachers in the educational crisis of this period.

This chapter has suggested that the travail of the education system in this period was part of a wider social crisis. From the late 1940s the dominant classes as a whole were grappling with the issue of how to deal with the challenges they faced in education and in society as a whole. Chapter 5 will explore the particular form of the attempt to restructure education by the Nationalist government during the 1950s, in response to this critical situation.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

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CHAPTER FOUR: TEACHERS AND THE EDUCATIONAL CRISIS OF THE 1940s AND EARLY 1950s

The previous chapter outlined the crisis which developed in education during the 1940s and early 1950s. This chapter explores in detail the role of teachers in that crisis. It seeks to show how the dramatic socio-political changes of the era impacted on teachers, and how their disaffection itself became a central component of educational crisis. The analysis presented here is informed by our conception of hegemonic struggle in education. What is described in this chapter is the rise of a challenge by teachers to the dominant hegemony, and various defensive attempts to counter that challenge. The loss of effective hegemony over African teachers constituted an important aspect of the collapse of the educational system confronting the dominant classes. The next chapter will, among other things, discuss how, with the introduction of Bantu Education, the state sought to create a new hegemonic order in education which could reincorporate teachers.

Much of this chapter draws on interviews with teachers who lived through this period. For a discussion of the methodology informing this research, the reader should refer to Appendix A.

While African teachers' organizations had existed in the various regions of the country for decades, they had

previously shown little sign of militancy. It was a mark of the gravity of the situation facing the education system and the society, that from about 1940, teachers adopted increasingly aggressive stances over both working conditions and political issues. This culminated in the early 1950s, in the emergence of radical leaderships in both the Transvaal and Cape teachers' organizations, and hard fought battles waged against state education policy by teachers in those provinces. (A comparable political shift does not seem to have occurred in Natal and Orange Free State teachers' organizations).

This chapter will explore the origins of the teachers' revolt, viewing it as part of the wider crisis in education. It will be suggested that the rise of radical sentiment amongst teachers needs to be understood in relation to three crucial factors. Firstly, it will be argued that the existing culture of mission-educated teachers was not simply conservative and professional. It also contained important elements of emphasis on service to the community, which could form an important ideological and cultural basis for teachers' rejection of the state's attempt to control and direct black educational aspirations. Secondly, the new radicalism was rooted in the structural, socio-economic problems facing teachers, especially the very poor position in relation to pay and conditions prevailing from the time of the Great

Depression, and the diminution of professional autonomy and status which the educational policies of the Nationalist government brought about. Thirdly, a vital role in shifting teachers' political perceptions was played by the political intervention of African Nationalist forces amongst them, especially of young teacher-activists entering the profession in the 1940s. The chapter then goes on to describe the forms which teacher rebellion took, as well as the attempts by conservative sections of teachers to resist the rising tide of radicalization.

This account seeks to avoid attributing political mobilization either, in a voluntarist fashion, solely to the role of political activists, or, in a structuralist fashion, purely to the impact of objective changes in the structural position of the teachers. Rather, political and ideological interventions and structural changes are seen as acting on one another, while it is also suggested that teachers' existing culture and ideology provided them with important cultural resources which affected their response to these forces. In this way the argument seeks to steer a "middle path" between the tendency of structuralist approaches to see particular political responses as the objectively determined impact on a particular social category of certain circumstances, and the tendency of culturalist writers to reduce the explanation of political behaviour to a matter of volition. An attempt is made to relate the culture of a social group, the intervention of

political organizations, and the structures of material life in explaining why particular forms of politics developed. Facing a crisis in society and education, teachers did not simply respond to the call of their own occupational culture, the deterioration of their professional position and the appeals of political activists. Instead, their actions were shaped by the interaction of all of these. As we shall see, the differential interaction of these factors in different regions and amongst different groups of teachers produced a range of responses to crisis. Some were of a conservative colouration: but the predominant trend of this era was toward teacher radicalization.

Teachers and Ideology

It was argued in the first chapter that teachers occupy an ambiguous position which makes them particularly vulnerable to the contradictory pulls of dominant and subordinate class interests. This was especially the case in South Africa's racial order of the 1940s and 1950s, where they were the most substantial sector of blacks in an intermediate occupational position. Teaching was the main career opportunity open to blacks with some education. In 1946 there were 13,953 African teachers, compared with 3,203 nurses, 2,697 clergymen, 289 interpreters and translators, less than 100 doctors, lawyers, journalists, lecturers, and law clerks, and 69 social workers.[1]

How teachers reacted to ideological and political pressures is however extremely complex. The very ambiguity of their position allowed for differing responses. On the one hand some, fearing loss of their relatively prestigious employment, took deeply conservative positions. On the other hand, economic hardship, and the pull of popular radicalism turned others towards a politically oppositional stance. Which path was taken was a result largely of ideological responses to the situation. In this respect, the existence of a culture of 'professionalism' amongst teachers had important effects. Professionalism could clearly underwrite conservative political responses insofar as it tended to emphasize the distinctions between teachers and other employees. But to the extent that it emphasized the specialist competency of the teacher, and an active commitment to education, it could be a radicalizing factor. Degrading treatment and contempt for teachers' skills on the part of the authorities could and did produce an sense of outraged professionalism amongst teachers which could turn politically radical. The form of professionalist ideology which existed in the missions was, it will be argued, a particularly ambiguous one; it contained an emphasis on education as a social service which could underpin a sense of grievance at educational injustice.

Let us first examine the aspects of teacher ideology and culture which made for conservative responses to their

situation. For most teachers, their access to teacher training often made the difference between a professional career and a life of manual labour. A teacher who attended a mission school orphanage from 1925 to 1931 recalls that his contemporaries there generally became farm labourers. By going on to attend Pax College from 1932 to 1937, he was able to join a stratum who went on to obtain skills and professional qualifications. Within Pax itself, different streams of instruction provided entrance to careers of differential levels of prestige. At the college while some "took teaching, others took tailoring and carpentry."[2]

Teachers' outlooks often represented a strong identification with aspirations to upward social mobility. The lack of other opportunities for educated Africans meant that teachers formed a prestigious top layer of African communities. "During my time," says a St. Peter's graduate, "...teachers were regarded by the community as highly respected people, and behaved themselves properly."[3] The social prestige of the University graduate teacher was vast and could awaken longings for social advancement on the part of their pupils. At one state High School on the Rand, on Parents Day, a teacher recalls, the Headmaster would:

> parade his staff...in front of us in their gowns and then if I tell you we had a staff of thirty two, then twenty six of them were graduates, you understand if they stood there, twenty six of them in their gowns with their various colours, you looked at a wonderful scene, and this motivated you to reach that stage. 4

Another teacher had the same experience:

> ...when I first saw them in their gowns, as graduates, I said "I must get that gown". 5

Finally, teachers often had before their eyes grim reminders of what happened to those who failed in the profession. The strain of attempting to attain educational success was such that many collapsed under it. Of his contemporaries at St. Peters, the most prestigious of mission schools, a teacher says, poetically:

> ...some have become lawyers,
> some have become doctors,
> some have become teachers,
> some have become jailbirds,
> some have become drunks. 6

The political implications were complex; for some teachers the fear of losing what they had won through immense personal struggles, inclined them to caution. This made them receptive to ideologies which emphasized the separation of education from politics and from community life. It underpinned for them, the appeal of the most conservative elements in mission education's ideology and culture. The missions provided teachers with a set of ideological values, originating in the culture of 19th century (mainly British) muscular Christianity, which were to be an important support to the tendency of some teachers to see themselves as a caste apart. This ideology was to provide a basis of group cohesion well after the end of the missionary era. It provided a set of symbols and images

which were unintelligible to the society around the teachers, and thus helped to keep them out of contact with politicizing social pressures from below. The High Victorian character of this culture is quite startling. To give two examples: in 1959 teacher organizer W.D. Ntloko wrote:

> The temptation to quote Tennyson when I introduce myself to the teachers is quite irresistible.[7]

while in 1968, G.L. Kakana told his audience at a Cape teachers conferance that the ideal teacher was "a Christian gentleman."[8] Such an outlook could tend to sway some teachers toward an a-political view of their role which emphasized the need to maintain the continuity of educational services, and stay aloof from social conflict. We shall explore such conservative groupings later in this chapter.

Yet there was another side to the ideology and culture of mission education. By emphasizing the social responsibility of the teacher, especially in setting a moral example to the youth, it also provided the basis for a strongly developed social conscience on the part of teachers, which could help to make them responsive to the needs of their communities. For one teacher, his training at St. Matthew's in 1937-9 emphasized:

> First, as a teacher, you had to set an example... you should lead an exemplary life...to the society and to the children too...Next, I should

> be in constant touch with the community I am serving...And be conversant with what is taking place in the lives of the people I'm working with...I agreed with [these ideas]...they helped me very much. 9

In interviews, teachers trained in the period from the early 1930s to the mid 1950s often expressed a strong sense of the intrinsic value of education and of community service:

> ...The most important thing in teaching is to assist the student. Well the cheque comes because in order to be able [to] live you need money, but then the money must not be the most important aim. 10

This service is often seen as providing personal fulfilment:

> ...I enjoy being useful to the children and guiding them and exchanging views with them of whatever issues - social, political, etc. 11
>
> ...I have been involved with so many people who are happy they ever met me. 12
>
> I took up teaching as a calling... I wanted to serve African people... I think I've been able to accomplish it throughout my teaching career. 13

The ideal of service through education was propagated by dedicated African mission teachers. Of the teacher who arranged for him to do teacher training a respondent says:

> His dedication to the education of the people... yes, that is what brought us into the game. 14

The uncle of another black teacher "influenced me towards helping the black community in teaching." 15

simplistic critiques of the colonial character of mission education, such as the well known text by Majeke,[16] miss the ambiguities in such an ideology. The emphasis on service to the community could provide resources for radicalism as well as conservatism, as this chapter will show.

The sense that teachers were delivering an important service, which underpinned their committment to their work seems to reflect their positive experiences of their own teachers. Among both African teachers and white missionaries a remarkable degree of elan and enthusiasm seems to have prevailed, and to have transmitted itself to their pupils. A number of mission trained teachers educated in this era talked during interviews of how they had experienced their instructors as inspirational or exemplary:

> ...the way he taught us made us like teaching. 17

> ...At high school I found that the teaching of a child, the method the teachers had brought to us was one of the most inspiring ideas in life. I was very keen on educating other people. 18

> ...even when I was still at the primary school, I dreamt myself being a teacher. And I dreamt myself being a teacher and just working like a certain mistress, Janet, who was one of my teachers... and conducting my lessons like she did and even being playful with children like she used to. 19

A student of Lemana mission in the 1940s tells how he named his first-born son after two of the mission's brothers.[20]

Another says that he wanted to teach because he didn't want to disappoint the missionaries who had arranged his schooling.[20] This strong sense of vocation on the part of teachers existed in state as well as mission institutions; at Alexandra schools between the 1940s the teachers, according to one of their pupils:

> ...strived very hard to do their work... and they motivated us a great deal, and they were almost role models for what we aspired to. 21

The culture of mission education did advance certain conformist and imperial values, which had the effect of inducing some teachers toward conservatism. But that culture also emphasized the responsibility of the teacher to the community he or she served, and the need for the teacher to make an exemplary contribution to community life. It generated amongst many teachers a strong sense of commitment to education and especially to the educational aspirations of his or her pupils and the African people as a whole. In the 1940s, facing deteriorating conditions in the schools, and in the 1950s, faced with a state determined on a policy which many teachers saw as attacking African educational achievements and aspirations, many teachers felt compelled by deeply ingrained cultural values to oppose this process. The ambiguous ideology of professionalism had helped create certain elements of teachers' culture which could provide cultural and ideological sources of rebellion. Amongst the teachers

quoted above who speak so warmly of mission-era education, quite a number were involved in the teacher militancy of the 1940s and 1950s and some in the ANC's educational campaigns of the mid 1950s. The resources of conviction which generated teacher revolt in this period came from unexpected sources.

Pay and Conditions as Radicalizing Issues

The second feature of teacher radicalization in the 1940s and 1950s was a revolt against low pay. Austerity policy pursued by the state from early in the 1930s held down teacher's wages, and wartime inflation worsened the teachers' plight. By the early 1940s teachers were moving to wage militancy. This reflected, simultaneously, a fear of deteriorating status, and a reduced social distance from the working class. Structurally, teachers' economic conditions posed a threat to their professional and 'middle class' social standing. Indeed, the relatively high prestige which teachers enjoyed inside black communities bore no relation to the low wages which they received.

The Great Depression had serious adverse effects on the economic position of African teachers. The first national salary scales for African teachers were gazetted in March 1929, to be retroactive to April, 1928. But because of the onset of the depression, the state introduced drastic cutbacks in expenditure and, consequently, the scales were

not implemented.[23] The Transvaal African Teachers Association (TATA) brought a successful legal test case against the Transvaal Director of Education over this issue, and about 500 teachers were, as a result, able to claim back pay from the provincial administration.[24] But the pattern had been set for a decade of retrenchment, stagnant or declining real wages, and pay cuts. In early 1931, a cut of 15% was imposed on the salaries of some teachers.[25] Between 1932 and 1934 a 7% cut was inflicted on the salaries of urban teachers, and an 8% cut on those of rural teachers earning more than 50 Pounds a year.[26] A policy was introduced of treating all newly appointed teachers in the Transvaal as unqualified teachers for salary purposes. In 1937-1938, those who had suffered cuts in 1932-1934 received a refund, but teachers who had been penalised by other austerity measures obtained no compensation whatsoever.[27] The early 1940s brought only very limited improvements in the pay position. Following an interview between a teachers' delegation on the Secretary of Native Affairs in late 1941, teachers salaries were raised in 1942, and thereafter annual pay rises were instituted.[28] However, considerable discontent over pay remained, and was exacerbated by the effects of inflation. The price of clothing more than doubled between 1938 and 1948, and food prices also rose sharply in the same period.[29]

In response, TATA in 1941 launched a salary campaign. The leadership of the campaign included S. Lesolang (Chairman), David Bopape (later an important member of the Communist Party), and A.P. Mda (who was to become the theoretician of the Africanist current within the ANC).[30] Bopape, who was secretary of the campaign, travelled all over the province, organising a mass protest meeting, which was held at the Bantu Men's Social Centre, Johannesburg, in late 1941.[31] It was as a consequence of the campaign's activities that the official interview of 1941, leading to pay improvements, was secured.[32]

This was followed by the 'Blanket Campaign'; teachers took to wearing Basotho-style blankets to work, "to signify that they were unable to buy themselves suits or dresses".[33] However, a need was felt for more militant forms of action, and to obtain broader support, especially from parents.[34] Accordingly, a mass demonstration was called, to be held in central Johannesburg on Saturday, 6th May, 1944.[35] At 9 a.m. a "mile long procession of teachers, parents and school children" left the Bantu Sports Ground.[36]

The excitement of this demonstration still lives in the memories of participants. A teacher recalls:

> I think the whole Reef came together in the Bantu Sports and they demonstrated through Eloff Street with placards... 37

Another teacher speaks in similar terms:

> ...all the teachers who could afford it came into Johannesburg and we moved street by street carrying posters...Eloff Street, Bree Street, in fact the whole of Johannesburg. 38

Banners and posters were raised - some demanding free universal education and more schools,[39] while others bore the slogan "A Hungry Teacher Cannot Teach A Hungry Child".[40] An attempt was made by the police to stop the demonstration from proceeding; but the teachers called for women to go to the front of the demonstration, and because of the reluctance of the police to attack them, and the determination of the demonstrators, the police had to give way.[41] The rally after the demonstration was addressed by Dr. Xuma, President-General of the ANC, who pledged his organisation's support for the teachers.[42]

The demonstration might have been a prelude to even more militant action; but the actions of some of TATA's leaders, and the government's shrewd handling of the situation, prevented this from occurring. The organizers of the pay campaign had planned a one day strike to follow the demonstration. But the possibility of this occurring was forestalled when, during the post-demonstration rally, the President of TATA instructed teachers to go back to work on the next working day.[43] The government responded to the demonstration by sending the Minister of Native Affairs, Major Piet van der Byl, to address the TATA conference at Witbank in July.[44] They subsequently raised the level of

teachers' annual increase,[45] and appointed a commission of inquiry into African Teachers' salaries, which recommended a uniform salary structure for the whole country and all-round increases.[46] Although the inquiry's recommendation were not implemented until 1948,[47] the government's actions seem to have been sufficient, in combination with the passivity of the TATA leadership, to bring the campaign to a halt.[48] The TATA conference bemoaned the inadequacy of the new pay scales, but it organized no protest against them.[49] The association seems to have been incapable of mobilizing the continued discontent of teachers over the pay issue. A former member still feels that the improvement in pay after the demonstration was "a meagre one, not worth mentioning at all."[50] Yet TATA activism over pay faded away.

Part of the reason for TATA's lassitude may have been corruption amongst its leadership. According to a former member, the considerable resources mustered in the aftermath of the demonstration were embezzled by at least one official:

> Let me tell you thousands, hundreds of thousands of funds were offered by the able, sympathetic people along the Reef and Pretoria alone. We were unfortunate that money wasn't properly looked at, because shortly after that we only got information that _____ had resigned. His resignation leaving our purse, our treasure wth no pay. 51

However, the demonstration was an extremely significant event, being the first example in South African history of teachers organizing in a 'trade-union' fashion, seeking to gain their objectives by mass action.

This period saw a growth of teacher discontent over wages in the Cape as well as in the Transvaal, even though in the former province it did not manifest itself as dramatically. In June 1944, the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA) held a "mammoth" meeting at Willowvale threatening militant action over pay demands.[52] CATA's journal, Teachers' Vision kept up a strident demand for better pay, for example commenting acidly on the Royal Family's visit in 1947:

> We hope that [the new pay scales] will coincide with the arrival of His Majesty and his family in South Africa so that the latter may see the good things our democratic government is doing for us.[53]

The material privations which teachers experienced during the depression and the war, and the undermining of their social position which this implied was thus a fundamental aspect of the transformation of their consciousness in this period.

The Impact of Nationalism

The third major factor contributing to teacher radicalization in the 1940s and 1950s was the work amongst them of African Nationalist activists. Material problems cannot on their own account explain why teachers' political attitudes shifted into the particular form they did - that of an increasing receptiveness to African Nationalist political ideology - during this period. Although the initial wage agitation was conducted in terms of a fairly 'non-political' ideology, it seems to have fed into the growing political self-assertion of teachers in subsequent years. The fact that teachers' material discontents did not only manifest themselves as 'trade unionism' needs to be explained partly in terms of the active work by political movements to develop 'counter-hegemonic' attitudes amongst teachers in this period. At a political and cultural level an important impact was made on teachers in this decade by the emergence of a new generation of young radicalized teachers linked to the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) and the Non European Unity Movement (NEUM). This tendency toward the politicization of the teaching profession was reinforced by the first signs of black urban community organization around educational issues. This would become pronounced during the turbulent decade of the 1950s. It certainly began to place teachers under popular pressure to act on political issues in the education field.

The 1940s saw the entry of a growing number of young teachers into active participation in the nationalist movement, and especially into its radical Africanist wing. This radicalization originated to an important extent amongst teachers who were graduates of Fort Hare University, which during the 1940s, became a highly politicized institution. Many of its graduates of that decade subsequently became major leaders of the ANC or the PAC. These included Nelson Mandela (who graduated in 1940), Oliver Tambo (1941), Robert Sobukwe (1949), Tennyson Makiwane (1947), Duma Nokwe (1949), and G.M. Pitje (1944).[54] Tambo was secretary of Fort Hare Student Representative Council (SRC) in 1941; following a dispute between the students and the University authorities, he was expelled for refusing to sign a pledge of good conduct, and was thus unable to complete his studies for his post-graduate teachers' diploma.[55] Student strikes took place in 1941 and 1942.[56] A branch of the ANC Youth League was founded at the University in 1948. It gave support to a nurses' strike at Lovedale, and this, together with other clashes with authority, led to its banning by the University Senate.[57] Sobukwe headed the SRC in 1949, while at the same time playing a leading role in urging a more radical political programme on the Cape region of the ANC.[58] Many Fort Hare graduates were to enter the teaching profession, carrying their political convictions with them.

When the founding meeting of the ANCYL, the emerging core of young radical leaders in the ANC, was held at the Bantu Men's Social Centre, Johannesburg, on Easter Sunday, April 1944, teachers played a leading role[59] and many of them had gained their political experience in students' or teachers' organizations.[60] Despite their commitments in the broader political sphere, the Youth Leaguers were active in TATA. Oliver Tambo, for example, played a prominent role in the association's 1947 conference at Lemana, raising the issues of compulsory education, TATA's relations with political bodies and trade unions, and the ill-treatment of farm labourers in the Bethal district.[61]

A related development which was to have a significance for the teacher resistance of the 1950's, was the emergence in the Transvaal of the school boycott as a form of community and student resistance to the state, with the Brakpan stay-at-home of 1944. This movement erupted when Dr. Language, head of Brakpan's Native Affairs Department, (and in his spare time, the Ossewa Brandwag's "native expert") persuaded the Nationalist Town Council to have David Bopape, a leading political activist who was then teaching at the Amalgamated Mission School in the town, sacked. The motive was apparently Language's displeasure at Bopape's involvement in community politics. In protest against the sacking, the community organized a boycott of classes by 2000 pupils, and a stay-at-home by the entire 7000-strong workforce of the location, lasting for one day.[62] This

event was an important pathbreaker of combined action by students and community on political issues relating to education.

The radicalization of teachers in the Cape followed a different route from that of the Transvaal. The politics which became dominant in CATA derived primarily not from the mainstream of African nationalism represented by the ANC but from the All-African Convention (AAC), by this time an affiliate of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), a smaller, Cape-based black nationalist organization. The Unity Movement is often characterized in a way typified by Roux's comment:

> African intellectuals, particularly teachers, found that their profession made it impossible for them to participate in mass movements involving physical danger or imprisonment. At the same time they were more politically conscious than the masses and realised the enormity of the colour bar. They therefore sought psychological compensation in extremist programmes which in fact were never implemented. 63

A similar view is expressed by H.J. and R.E. Simons,[64] who see the movement as largely confined to 'Coloured' and African intellectuals. In their view the Unity Movement emphasized the tactic of the boycott as a way of avoiding direct conflict with state authority, and concentrated on passive propaganda activity, much of it directed toward sectarian attacks on other organizations.

How accurate is this view? There is more than a grain of truth in Roux and the Simonses' assessments. As will be shown, the NEUM did rely heavily on teachers for its active support. Unlike the ANC it was unable to create long lasting structures of mass support. The NEUM's emphasis on the boycott as the be-all-and-end-all of political strategy did often lead to mere passivity. It generally failed to put forward any tactical or strategic proposals beyond the unification of black organizations within its 'federal structure' and the carrying out of boycotts of state political institutions. It was virulently sectarian toward other organizations.[65]

But the NEUM was not as marginal to conflicts during the 1940s and 1950s as such criticism may lead one to expect. The implication that the social composition of its leadership led inevitably to a cautious form of politics seems a rather reductionist argument; the leadership of the ANC and PAC also drew heavily on the black 'middle class'.[66] Nor does it seem entirely accurate to interpret NEUM's political behaviour in terms of concern for its own safety and professional position; its members faced considerable repression from the state and combatted quite vehemently those teachers who advocated protection of their professional position as a priority. The boycott tactic did not always lead to passivity, as for example in the Eastern Cape during the 1950s, when the NEUM achieved some brief successes in stimulating activity by rural people in

boycotting government attempts to impose new systems of agriculture, local government and education. While the NEUM was often quite as sectarian, arrogant and abstentionist as its critics suggest, the movement was far from being a totally marginal force in popular struggles in the Cape during the 1950s.

This was particularly so in the field of education. With the foundation of the NEUM in 1943,[67] its affiliate, the AAC, began to spread the movement's influence amongst Cape African teachers. The CATA journal Teachers' Vision, carried articles by writers who advocated Unity Movement views. One of these, writing under the pseudonym "Vuy-Vuyi", propounded a Marxist-influenced account of South African society: "We are oppressed not because we are black but because we must be exploited."[68] Vuy-Vuyi advocated the AAC's political line, without mentioning the name of the organization, and argued that CATA should take a more overtly political stance.[69] The AAC militants took the view that the African teacher could not organize in a purely 'professional' manner, because the racial inequalities of South African society would always prevent them from making progress in that way; the only solution to teachers' problems was for CATA to abandon its existing strategy of lobbying the Education Department, and to link up with a political mass movement. Vuy-Vuyi wrote on this theme:

> How can professional dignity abide in the tin shanties we use as classrooms? How can we feel dignified in hunger and rags and in the presence of the starved and sickly children whom we have to teach? And when we realise that all these disabilities are an outcome of our being discriminated against by reason of our colour, we cannot help but feel that smug respectability is our greatest enemy...
>
> ...holding annual conferences and forwarding resolutions to the Department is a feeble and hopeless method to fight the odds against us. 70

Already, at the 1944 conference of CATA, affiliation to the AAC was unsuccessfully proposed (an attempt to affiliate the association to the ANC also failed).[71] However, the AAC was working on fertile ground: the manifold discontents of the Cape African teachers gained its growing support. These discontents were manifest in Teacher's Vision, which carried numerous articles critical of the national political dispensation,[72] and frequent complaints about such matters as racist language.[73] There were also attacks on the official prohibition on teachers' participation in politics.[74] CATA was committed to the principle of "education of the whole community wholly financed by the state",[75] and advocated a single education department for all race groups,[76] demands which in themselves raised questions of national politics.

While the Unity Movement was generally insignificant in the Transvaal, it did manage, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, to exert an ideological influence over limited numbers of important individuals in Transvaal teachers'

politics. Indeed, Eskia Mphahlele claims that at one stage the AAC's influence on Rand teachers was greater than that of the Africanist current of the ANC.[77]

Thus in the 1940s, the preconditions for a radical teachers' movement emerged. Teachers had suffered economically. They had been pushed into mobilizing in an active and militant manner for the first time. The politicization of Fort Hare, and the rise of the ANCYL and the NEUM brought an infusion of political activism into the profession. And the Brakpan events provided a new model of political action involving community, school students and teachers. With the coming of the National Party (NP) to power and the impending implementation of plans for Bantu education, new radical teachers' leaderships were able to yoke this legacy to teachers' concern over the degeneration of education and their own social position, to create a considerable wave of teacher resistance to state education policy in the 1950s.

The Rise of New Teachers' Leaderships: 1948-1955

Thus far, this chapter has identified the origins, during the 1940s and 1950s, of teacher radicalization. This section of the chapter will be devoted to an examination of the forms that radicalization took in the period following the NP's accession to government in 1948. In doing so, it develops the argument that education system faced a major

crisis in this era. That crisis was one of hegemony: the mission teachers, along with other popular sectors, were increasingly challenging the existing authority relations of the education system and the society. Teacher resistance became a central feature of the disintegration of schooling, which the NP would have to address if it were to restore the hegemony of the dominant classes. As we shall see in the subsequent chapters, reasserting control over teachers and attempting to create a new hegemonic order which could incorporate them, were central features of Bantu Education.

Wage militancy, teacher political activism and community action, and growing moral revulsion over state policy were trends which prepared the way for dramatic changes in teachers' organizations. The end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s saw the two leading African teachers' organizations in the country swing strongly to the left, and began a period of political combativeness on the part of teachers. Undoubtedly the election of the NP Party government and the ennunciation of its black education policy in the Eiselen Commission report (1951) were important precipitants of these trends. The NP's victory undermined African hopes of a retreat from segregationism and thus weakened gradualist ideologies of social change amongst teachers. The Eiselen report with its apartheid orientation and proposal for centralized

government control of education, was seen by teachers as an obstacle to African aspirations and as a threat to teachers' professional autonomy. These events speeded up and intensified tendencies amongst teachers toward oppositional activism which had been apparent earlier in the decade. By the late 1940s and early 1950s there was a very perceptible change in the mood of teachers. New radical leaderships took over the Transvaal African Teachers Association (TATA) and the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA). Both bodies waged vigorous campaigns against the introduction of 'Bantu Education' policy and were able during the early 1950s, to raise considerable support amongst teachers for this stance.

In the Transvaal this leadership came from a loose grouping based in Johannesburg's Orlando township. The social dynamics of the township help to explain why teacher radicalism was centred there. Orlando was established by the Johannesburg Municipality in 1932; it was to be a 'Model Native Township'.[78] As was initially more attractive to higher-income sections of the African population,[79] who were probably drawn by the relatively good quality of the housing available there.[80] Consequently, it came to have a much larger intermediate social stratum than any other township.[81] But despite its size, the 'middle class' of Orlando was not particularly privileged. It shared the township with growing numbers of

the urban poor.[82] Transport costs and living expenses were high.[83] According to a Johannesburg municipality study in 1948, 96% of the population of Orlando lived in unsatisfactory and unhygenic housing conditions, because of overcrowding.[84] Overall, the middle class of Orlando had little to show for its academic or commercial achievements.

The resulting frustration was an important force behind the politicization of Orlando in the late 1940s. Orlando East ANCYL and ANC branches were the second largest in the Transvaal.[85] They were not regarded as amongst the most radical branches,[86] but Congress influence was strong, and affected pupils and teachers. When G.M. Pitje came to teach at Orlando High School in 1945, he found that the school students were highly politicized, in many cases members of the ANC, and were attending meetings conducted by the major figures in the ANCYL.[87] To sum up then, the Orlando teachers were part of a 'middle class' which was numerically stronger than in other townships, particularly frustrated, and thus open to political activity.

The new leadership of TATA arose in the course of conflicts within the association in the later forties. After the 1944 demonstration, there was a backlash from rural teachers, who saw their colleagues on the Rand as being too militant.[88] This sentiment produced an ineffective and conservative, rural based TATA leadership from 1945. E.M. Malepe, President from 1945 to 1947, failed in his attempts

to set up a permanent office in Johannesburg, and to establish TATA's magazine, the Good Shepherd as a monthly publication.[89] The President from 1947, J.M. Lekgetha, showed himself unable to comprehend the political issues posed for teachers by the coming of the NP to power in 1948. At the TATA conference of that year, in Lydenburg, he commented that he hoped the new government would do more "for African Education as the Prime Minister had held out hopes of fair play and justice towards the Africans."[90] Finally, at the 1949 conference, the more radical urban teachers revolted. After an all-night sitting filled with acrimony and allegations of intimidation, voting took place at 5 a.m.[91] Lekgetha was thrown out of office, and replaced by R. Tshaka, the candidate of the urban faction.[92] This led to a split at the 1950 conference of the association, when, after the end of the discussion, the rural delegates remained behind and resolved to break away from TATA.[93] Their new organization, the Transvaal African Teachers Union (TATU) had a base in the rural north and west of the province, but TATA retained the allegiance of the urban Southern Transvaal, especially the Rand, Witbank and Pretoria; TATA thus became largely an organization of politically aware urban teachers - in Es'kia Mphahlele's words, "a hard core who believed in the African and took no instructions from the Transvaal Education Department."[94] It was this constituency which in 1951 elected a group of young radical teachers from Orlando High School to the

leadership of TATA: Zeph Mothopeng became President, Es'kia Mphahlele became Secretary, and Isaac Matlhare editor of the association's journal.[95]

The TATA executive appears to have been the first group of leaders of an African organization in the country to address the sweeping implications of the Eiselen report and TATA mounted a campaign against the commission's recommendations. It was to be a number of years before the attention of the mainstream of the African nationalist movement became focused on the significance of the proposed new educational system. Mphahlele commented recently that "The African National Congress was caught with its pants down as far as the introduction of Bantu Education was concerned,"[96] and that "it took the ANC a long time to digest the message of our campaign in 1951 and 1952."[97] The TATA executive launched a speaking tour of the Transvaal, during which they elaborated a sharp critique of Bantu Education. Their views in many ways anticipated what was to become the standard African Nationalist analysis of Bantu Education as a mechanism of racial domination. According to Mphahlele:

> We travelled to various parts of the Transvaal to address teachers' and parents' meetings...We warned people against the dangers of the proposed system not only for the child but for Africans as a people with a historical destiny. This education for slavery had to be resisted because its philosophical underpinnings were wrong. 98

At least some teachers of his generation share Mphahlele's high estimation of the role of contemporary teachers' organizations in opposing Bantu Education. One says of TATA and CATA:

> They were the group who knew the dangers...They were aware that the government was removing these things from the missionaries and not giving them equal education. 99

The TATA executive convened two conferences on the Eiselen Report in March 1952, one in Johannesburg and one in Pretoria.[100] Both rejected the report, and manifested their animosity toward white liberals by voting to refuse an invitation to discuss the issue with the Institute of Race Relations.[101] The meeting also decided to boycott the upcoming festival commemorating the three hundredth anniversary of Van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape.[102] The organization tried to strengthen its links with the community by building or re-vitalizing parent-teachers associations - but this was only successful in a few cases. The Orlando radicals thus led an active campaign which had a real impact. But the response was a mixed one. Mphahlele comments: "...most of the teachers did not understand the full implications of what we were saying."[103]

Their activities quickly brought the three TATA leaders into conflict with the Principal of Orlando High School, Godfrey Nakene, who enthusiastically supported the plans

for Bantu Education.[104] He was allegedly involved in financial corruption over school fees and text-book purchases, and his staff was divided between his supporters and antagonists.[105] Nakene reported the TATA leaders to the Transvaal Education Department (TED) for being involved in the production of a community newspaper, The Voice.[106] They then received a letter from the TED, referring to the paper as a 'subversive publication' and asking them to confirm or deny their connection with it.[107] They replied, denying their involvement, and asking the Department for the source of its information.[108] (In fact it seems that Mphahlele and Matlhare, but not Mothopeng, were active on the paper).[109] The Voice had carried material critical of the Eiselen report, and this presumably attracted official displeasure.[110] Following a visit by a Special Branch officer to Orlando High School, Mphahlele and Khabi Mngoma were charged with publishing a newspaper without printing their names and address; however, they were acquitted on a technicality.[111] The TATA leaders then sent a memo to the department, detailing Nakene's mismanagement of the school, in a bid to unseat him.[112] But Nakene arranged for the TED to institute a Commission of Inquiry into the school's staff relations.[113]

Nakene had little difficulty in convincing the Commission of his point of view; it devoted most of its efforts to unsuccessful attempts to find evidence that the three had

tried to spread their political views in the classroom.[114] In July 1952, Mothopeng, Mphahlele and Matlhare were sacked, with one months pay in lieu of notice.[115] TATA responded with a statement noting that they had never been charged with any breach of regulations, and asserting that the real reasons for the dismissal lay in TATA's opposition to the Eiselen Commission, the Department's policies, and the Van Riebeck Festival.[116]

It soon became apparent that the Orlando community would not accept the sackings. When Nakene announced the dismissals to the school, he was booed by the students.[117] On 10 August, a mass meeting was convened at Donaldson Orlando Community Centre by a 'Parents Protest Committee'.[118] About 500 people attended and a resolution was sent to the Director of the TED warning that a school boycott would be called, and alternative classes organised for students unless the three were reinstated.[119] A resolution of no confidence in the school board was passed, and its replacement by one elected by parents demanded.[120] The meeting also called for the resignation of Nakene within seven days.[121] The community thus demonstrated support for the TATA leaders, confirming TATA's success in mobilizing popular support for the campaign against Bantu Education.[122]

When the Department failed to respond to the community's demands, a definite decision was taken to launch the school student boycott on Monday 25 August, and to set up the alternative classes.[123] When the boycott began, it received the support of more than two thirds of Orlando High School's students.[124] Over 100 attended the alternative classes at the Donaldson Centre.[125] On the second day of the boycott, the authorities struck back; Mothopeng, Mphahlele and Matlhare were arrested and charged with incitement to public violence.[126] The boycott began to lose momentum, and students started to return to school.[127] However, on Thursday 4 September, a successful student rally boosted support, and a big parents rally was held on the Sunday which also helped to revive the campaign.[128] An initiative was launched to sue the TED for wrongful dismissal of the three.[129] When the three appeared in court on the 8 and 9 September, the Crown's case rapidly fell apart.[130] It was alleged that at a meeting at the Donaldson Hall on the first day of the strike, the accused had urged boycotting students to use violence on those who continued to attend school.[131] But students called as Crown witnesses denied that the three had incited them to violence; they said that they had given statements to the effect that the three urged violent tactics, only because the police had threatened them with three years in Diepkloof Reformatory if they did not co-operate.[132]

On the second day of the trial, the prosecutor dropped the charges. The TATA leaders were also able to score a moral victory during the trial when their lawyer was able to publicly humiliate Nakene, who was called as a Crown witness, by raising the allegations that he was making a profit on the sale of school books by denying students the 10% discount to which they were entitled.[133] (An interesting side-light on the case was that the instructing counsel for Mothopeng was his ANC colleague, Nelson Mandela.)[134] The three had won an important psychological victory.

After this success in the court case, the student boycott gained the momentum to continue for some time. A TATA emergency conference at Brakpan on 13 September, which was described as 'the largest ever', supported the threes' demand for reinstatement, expressed confidence in their leadership and voted funds for their defence.[135] Addressing the conference, Matlhare argued that the sackings were an attack on those African intellectuals who had "turned their backs on the old reactionary road of deputation and humble requests to authorities."[136]

The boycott came apart when, in October, a shooting incident outside Orlando High School gave the police an opportunity to arrest a substantial number of students; eighteen of them appeared in court in early November on

charges of public violence.[137] The tide of opinion in TATA turned against the three with the boycott's failure. Mothopeng, Mphahlele, Matlhare and their colleague V.K. Ntshona, who was Assistant Secretary, were all voted from office at the TATA Conference in July 1953.[138]

An important factor in this defeat seems to have been the authorities' refusal to negotiate with TATA as long as the radical group was in the leadership. This resulted in a "standstill" in relations between teachers and the authorities which tended to generate frustration on the part of the association's membership.[139] In the words of one veteran teacher:

> ...the Department would not have any discussions with the teachers' organization as long as it was led by those men, because of their political views...Their case was turned down, and the teachers voted these people out... 140

Thus many teachers, while sympathizing with the Orlando group's cause, were susceptible to the argument that the organization was not representing them effectively to the authorities. The new leadership seems to have been constituted through an alliance between relatively conservative teachers such as S.P. Kwakwa, the new President, and a section of the more radical teachers led by G.M. Pitje of the ANC, who became magazine editor.[141] This alliance appears to have been based on a common emphasis on the importance of reuniting with TATU, a position which the previous leading group rejected.[142]

Kwakwa's success was partly based on his being seen as a man who could restore negotiating relations between the association and the department:

> The only progress which was made in the negotiations came when Mothopeng was succeeded by Kwakwa. Kwakwa was acceptable to the Department...to negotiate, to have discussions with. 143

The ANC's attitude to TATA and its leaders had been a complex one. ANC militants intervened in the structures of TATA; Congress members in the Orlando TATA branch tried to persuade their colleagues to support the 1950 ANC/Communist Party strike against the suppression of the Communism Act, while Pitje disseminated the ANCYL's Africanist ideology at TATA meetings.[144] Orlando ANC gave active backing to the three during their reinstatement struggle; the Parents' Protest Committee was headed by the ANC branch chairman, I.M. Maseko[145] and ANCYL members served on it.[146] But, at a national level, the ANC displayed limited interest in TATA's campaign against Bantu Education. Mphahlele approached Congress leaders about the political implications of the new education system during 1952, but failed to elicit much response.[147] Perhaps because the ANC was not, at this stage, giving priority to educational issues, the Unity Movement's affiliates, especially the AAC, appear to have some following amongst Rand teachers at the time.[148] The Unity Movement paper, The Torch, gave regular coverage to the Orlando teacher's struggle, and its

Cape teachers affiliates CATA and the 'Coloured' Teacher's League of South Africa held meetings to support the campaign.[149] The Unity Movement's orientation to education issues allowed it to gain some influence over teachers. Given the hostility between the NEUM and the ANC, largely generated by the NEUM's sectarianism, it becomes more understandable why the suspicion of the Orlando group having links with the NEUM should have generated such hostility from an ANC leader like Pitje.[150]

However, the Orlando teachers leadership was far from being politically homogenous in their outlook. Mphalele seems to have been influenced by both the ANCYL and the NEUM; during the mid 1950s he moved rapidly toward the ANC, and was the main speaker on culture and education at its 'Congress of the People' in 1955.[151] Mothopeng, a long-standing member of the Africanist current in the ANC, became a prominent leader of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)[152] What united such politically diverse individuals in the 1951-53 period was that they developed a critique of Bantu Education, and fought for their ideas, at a time when the mainstream of the nationalist movement had not yet fully addressed itself to the political significance of educational issues.

To fully understand the politics of TATA, we need to note the central role of Orlando, and especially of Orlando teachers, in the rise of Africanist opposition in the ANC and, eventually, in the emergence of the PAC. The May day

strike of 1950, in which the ANC co-operated with the Communist Party divided Congress into a non-racial faction, which supported the alliance, and an Africanist one which opposed it.[153] Africanist dissent on the Rand crystallized around the leadership of three Orlando teachers - Mothopeng, Peter Raboroko and Potlako Leballo. Under Leballo's direction, the Orlando East ANCYL became increasingly critical of the ANC's links with non-African organizations and the influence of 'foreign ideologies', as well as of the ANC's view that the boycott of state institutions was a tactic rather than a principle.[154] Africanists in the leadership of the school boycott included not only Mothopeng, but also the ANC branch chairman, Maseko, who led the 'Parents' Protest Committee'. In 1953, Maseko became involved in an Africanist ANC faction known as the 'Bafabegiya', and was consequently expelled from Congress in the next year.[155] Teachers were extremely prominent in the Africanist opposition with nine out of the fifteen most prominent Africanists being present or former teachers,[156] and many teachers within Congress tending toward the Africanist faction.[157] This Africanist trend was reflected in the handling of education issues within the Orlando ANC; in 1955 there was a move to set up a breakaway branch of the organization in protest against the national leadership's postponement of the implementation of the school boycott of that year.[158] The role played by Orlando teachers in the development of

Africanism can partly be accounted for by the factors discussed earlier in this chapter. As part of an unusually large and confident township 'middle class' these teachers found their aspirations frustrated by the conditions of material life in Orlando and responded by focusing their hostility on the occupants of the social positions which they coveted; whites as a group. On top of this came the diminution of teacher's status and autonomy, as they were subjected to the controls of Bantu Education. Gerhart suggests a further reason for the feelings of frustration that fostered Africanism: the lack of professional mobility; of the fifteen most prominent Africanist leaders nine attempted, without success, to break into the fields of medicine or law.[159] The emergence of Africanism in Orlando may thus be attributed, in large part, to the economic, political and career frustrations of a 'middle class' consisting largely of teachers.

In the Cape, the rise of a new leadership in the teachers' association came slightly earlier than in the Transvaal. The pro-AAC wing of CATA, which came to be known as the "progressives",[160] did not have it all their own way: some teachers voiced annoyance at what they saw as the progressives' neglect of basic material issues,[161] while the President of CATA, H. Masiza, opposed a more political orientation, arguing that until a strong class of wealthy Africans emerged, "so long will our leaders, politicians and organizations clamour vainly for our rights."[162] But

the general trend of events was in the AAC's favour and at the 1948 CATA conference they were able to secure the affiliation of CATA to the AAC.[163] At that Conference, CATA adopted a 'Statement of Policy' which declared that "Our struggle is inseparable from the general struggle of the African people"[164] and committed CATA to come together with other bodies in order to: "...co-ordinate their struggles in the fight against their common oppression - the fundamental oppression of the Black man."[165] While 'other bodies' was interpreted in a sectarian sense, meaning only other NEUM affiliates, this shift toward full political commitment represented an important change in the political attitudes of CATA's base. A prominent CATA member, R.S. Canca, vividly described this process in 1949:

> For a long time the African teacher imagined himself to be somewhere between the oppressed and the oppressor. Hence we refused to identify ourselves with the struggling masses for we considered ourselves to be above them. We mainly believed that the oppressor would suddenly change his heart and admit us into his society. But events show us that all laws that affect the miner, the garden boy, the kitchen girl affects us too...We cannot so much as attain a single one of our objectives unless and until black South Africa has attained its freedom. 166

CATA's affiliation to the AAC involved the incorporation of the Unity Movement's political strategy into every aspect of the Association's activity. Even those demands of CATA relating specifically to education were seen as confronting wider questions of political power:

> To seek equality between the white and black teacher is to seek full social, economic and political equality between black and white South Africans. Our slogan 'Equal Pay for Equal Work' therefore implies that our struggle is the general political struggle for the emancipation of the African, 167

declared Teachers' Vision.

The accession to power of a new leadership in CATA had a galvanizing effect on its organizational growth. Membership rose from a mere 612 in July 1949 to nearly 2,000 in June 1950, and to about 3,000 in July 1952; these figures representing, respectively, about 10%, 33% and 50% of the total number of African teachers in the Cape.[168] This spectacular growth indicates a receptivity on the part of a substantial section of teachers to CATA's new approach.

During this period CATA undertook a number of initiatives. The association was active in campaigning on the issue of salaries.[169] During 1950 it used the hearings of the Eiselen Commission as a platform to voice its views. A memo was submitted to the Commission demanding state financing of education "at the same rate per child irrespective of race or colour"[170] and urging the use of English as the medium of instruction.[171] It also opposed regulations introduced by the authorities to reduce the school population as a solution to school overcrowding, instead drawing attention to the numbers of unemployed teachers.[172] Efforts were made to build up link with

African teachers' associations in other provinces, but these did not meet with great success, largely because of the grip of conservative strains of 'professional' ideology on those bodies, and because the relevant organizations in other provinces objected to CATA's AAC affiliation. At a meeting of the Federal Council of the African Teachers Association (FCATA) at Bloemfontein on 17th December 1949, the Cape delegation were told that although teachers in other provinces were:

> ...just as political minded (sic), if not more so, than their brothers in the Cape...they had learned the importance of divorcing duty from political convictions, and they would not subject their professional associations to the chaperonage of any other bodies, which it was feared may only result in professional inefficiency. 173

While the TATA of the early 1950s had a certain amount in common with CATA it never forged closer links, despite a meeting to discuss unity between the CATA leaders and Ntshona and Mphahlele in Kimberley in April 1953.[174] Naturally, more progress was made in constructing links with the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA), the Unity Movement affiliate organizing 'Coloured' teachers in the Cape. CATA and TLSA leaders met in Port Elizabeth in March 1951 and formed the Cape Teachers Federal Council as a co-ordinating body.[175] And in June 1952 CATA and TLSA held a joint conference in Cape Town, at which L. Sihali, the president of CATA proclaimed that "we have realized it is high time that these artificial barriers were knocked

down."[176] However, the NEUM never succeeded in creating a teachers' union embracing all black teachers in the Cape.

A significant feature of CATA's activity in this period was that it began to forge links with the rural population in certain areas of the Eastern Cape (and especially the Transkei). This was to have important consequences in the mid and late 1950s. Unity Movement leaders saw CATA members as a cadre of activists through whom the organization's influence could be spread into the rural area.[177] K. Hassim, a notable Unity Movement figure, comments in retrospect that "it was the teachers who were often our link with the countryside."[178] After World War II the AAC responded to the government's soil rehabilitation scheme and the various unpopular forms of black representation with a campaign for a boycott of them.[179] Peasant organizations and vigilance committees sprang up, with which the NEUM claimed to have links.[180] It is difficult to determine the accuracy of the NEUM's claims as to their influence in the rural Eastern Cape and Transkei in this period, but CATA members were certainly active in rural agitation. A few examples may serve to illustrate this point. On 15 March 1952, a meeting of Iso Lomzi (Vigilance Committee) of Willowvale was held at Ciko school; it was addressed by three CATA activists, N. Honono, Makasi and Jadazweni, who attacked the Bantu Authorities Act.[181] On 30 March of the same year, the conference of the Transkei Organized Bodies was held at

Baziya. The main speaker was W.M. Tsotsi, a CATA member who had become General Secretary of the AAC, who spoke about inequalities in access to land between blacks and whites. N. Honono played a prominent part at the conference in attacking Bantu Education and the Bantu Authorities, which, he said, made people responsible for their own oppression.[182] In 1954 it was reported that the authorities had called a celebration of the establishment of the first Bantu Authority in the Cape, at Willowvale. Teachers were asked to bring a bottle of brandy each, and parents to bring sheep, goats and a bullock. But the celebration was successfully boycotted by CATA and AAC supporters: only two sheep materialized as donations and no teachers participated: "the local magistrate became very hostile toward the teachers."[183]

The report of the Eiselen Commission was published in 1951. Its recommendations were embodied in legislation in 1953, but this was only put into full effect in 1955.[184] There was thus a lengthy period between the government giving notice of its intention to transform the system of African education, and the execution of that design. During this period CATA was very active in propagandizing against the proposed new system. Its publications emphasized its view that the government sought to use education as a way of generating cheap labour. The Teachers' Vision commented in 1954 that "The aim [of Bantu Education and Bantu

Authorities] is to increase the power of the 'herrenvolk' by producing ignorant, docile CHEAP LABOUR, CHEAP TEACHERS, CHEAP GOVERNMENT (sic) of an oppressed people divided into suicidal factions and feuds amongst themselves - 'Bantu Culture'."[185] CATA's critique of Eiselen's system underlined the ethnically divisive role that it would play. T. Tsotsi told a CATA meeting at Mfula on 2 October, 1951, that the government aimed "at starving Africans of education, sending them back to tribalism."[186]

The 1952 CATA annual conference called on its members to organize the people and to explain to them the significance of the report.[187] The main tactic advocated by CATA in opposing Bantu Education was that of a boycott of the school boards and committees which the government was seeking to establish in every community. Its view was that by setting up these bodies, the state was attempting to make the African people operate the 'machinery of their own oppression'. In order to prevent this happening, it argued, no one should serve on the boards or committees or in any other way support the administration of the new schooling system.[188] The immediate difficulty with this strategy was that it did not provide any scope for action in the period before 1955, when the new community based administrative apparatus had not yet been set up. CATA was therefore limited to propaganda activity: but they were very active in this field. For example, on 3rd November, 1953, the Western province branch of CATA held a public

meeting of more than 500 people in Langa to denounce the Bantu Education Act.[189] On 14 December, 1953, CATA held a nation-wide teachers conference at Queenstown to consider how to fight the Act, which two hundred delegates from all over the country attended.[190] During 1954 CATA issued and distributed two pamphlets attacking Bantu Education, "Yemk' Imfundo" and "Verwoerd Speaks Out".[191] In April of the same year, 220 Transkeian teachers and some parents attended a conference on Bantu Education, convened by CATA at Davies Mission School. They passed a resolution condemning Bantu Education and affirming solidarity with CATA.[192]

The active political role of CATA attracted hostile state attention. The Cape Education Department, which had for many years recognized the association as a representative organization of African teachers, withdrew recognition in 1951.[193] Chief Inspector F. de Villiers explained to a CATA delegation that this had been done because the association had affiliated to a political organization which aimed to "upset the present policy of the government."[194] Dr. W. de Vos Malan, the Superintendent General of Education in the Cape, publicly threatened teachers and school managers who engaged in politics,[195] while Dr. Eiselen himself threatened CATA in a radio talk in December 1953, during which he warned teachers not to

attend the Queenstown conference.[196] From 1953 onwards, Special Branch members began to attend all CATA meetings.[197] In November 1952, CATA president L. Sihali, and M. Moerane, chair of the local CATA branch, were sacked from the Bantu High School, Queenstown, apparently for political reasons, while two members of the association, M. Mali and J.N. Hlekeani of Cradock, were instructed by the police not to teach for six months.[198] On 19 July 1954, the police carried out a series of raids on the homes of CATA activists, in which books, papers, minutes of meetings, accounts and address lists were confiscated.[199] The early 1950s were thus characterized by a level of political activity by teachers, as an organized occupational group, which was quite unprecedented. This was a measure and a part of the crisis in education.

The Rise of Teacher Conservatism

As has been argued earlier, the conditions of the early 1950s did not lead to uniform teacher radicalization. There were amongst teachers those interested in preserving professional status and material benefits (such as they were). Conservative elements of the prevailing professional ideology served to tilt sections of teachers away from attempts to transform their organizations. These factors resulted in the birth of teacher groupings which conceived their professional role as one of avoiding any participation in wider social conflicts, in order to ensure

both the maintenance of educational standards and secure their own social position. This section will outline the development of these conservative groupings. Many teachers felt strongly that they had something to lose by engaging in militancy. Teaching provided most of the opportunities of employment open to Africans with some education in this period; the loss of a teaching post thus threatened the teacher with a precipitous fall into the proletariat. Obviously this was a basis for caution on the part of many teachers. In addition, sections of teachers felt that their social position was undermined by activities which reduced rather than emphasized the differences between themselves and the African people as a whole. Given the struggle which attainment of a teaching post represented for the individual and his or her family, it is not surprising that many were unwilling to put the opportunities it represented in jeopardy. There were elements of the ideologies present in the mission education tradition, which underpinned political quietism. These pressures toward conservatism were manifested amongst teachers by the development, during the early 1950s, of groups and organizations which reacted against the new radicalism. This too was an aspect of the crisis of the educational order: there was no precedent for such a polarization amongst teachers, and the struggles between the right and left wings of the teachers' movements certainly added to the fragmentation of the education system in this period. Notably though, the more

conservative organizations were generally weak in the 1950s. The temper of the times, with a rising African Nationalist movement holding the promise of drastic social change, made the ideological attractions of cautious co-operation with the authorities very limited. It was to be only in the 1960s, when hope gave way to despair, that the pragmatic approach of the 'professionalist' teachers' organizations established in the 1950s would flourish.

The defeat of the TATA radicals and the determination of the new leaders to unite with the a-political TATU were to have severe consequences for the development of teachers' politics in the Transvaal. Although for a while the legacy of the 1951-1953 period lingered, in that some campaigning activity was mounted against Bantu Education, the bland unity appeals which had been used to defeat the former leaders allowed an a-political grouping to dominate TATA. The reunification with the more conservative TATU in 1957 cemented the hegemony of the right wing, and allowed Transvaal teachers to become dominated by a conservative organizational machine which retained its grip throughout our period.

Substantial anti-Bantu Education activity did continue throughout late 1953 and early 1954. In October 1953 TATA held a special conference in Pretoria to consider the Bantu Education Bill. The Bill was rejected, and methods of

fighting it were discussed.[200] TATA continued its efforts to organize strong parent-teacher associations (PTA's).[201] In November 1953, the founding meeting of the Moroka - Jabavu PTA, attended by 200 people began planning a boycott of schools in protest against the Bantu Education Act.[202] In February, the PTA convened a meeting of 500 parents and teachers at Morris Isaacson Hall which supported the boycott, although it seems that the planned action never took place.[203] The meeting was clearly influenced by the Unity Movement; a report on their Queenstown anti-Bantu Education Conference was made, and a resolution was passed which, in true NEUM rhetoric, pledged the meeting "to teach the people not to work the machinery of oppression themselves."[204] By mid 1954 there had been TATA activity toward forming PTAs in Sekukuneland, the Johannesburg townships, Lady Selbourne (Pretoria) and the East Rand.[205]

However the deeply divided 1954 TATA conference at which KwaKwa and Pitje fought bitterly with Unity Movement supporters, was not auspicious for the future development of the association.[206] These hostilities were manifested when the Klipspruit branch, of which Ntshona was chairman, was censured for sending a delegate to the Queenstown Conference.[207] The conference passed a resolution expressing disapproval of sending delegations and resolutions to the Education Department,[208] but this was the last gasp of TATA militancy. The association demonstrated its turn away from political action when in

1955 it refused to participate in the ANC's school boycott on the grounds that children should not be 'used' in the struggle against Bantu Education and "that even a Bantu Education was better than no education at all."[209]

The bland appeals to unity raised by TATU[210] found a ready response in the KwaKwa group. TATU was plagued by organizational and financial weaknesses, and thus was increasingly interested in a merger.[211] Following negotiations conducted by KwaKwa, TATU and TATA finally amalgamated at a 1957 conference in White River to become the Transvaal United African Teachers Association (TUATA).[212] The second half of the decade, during which Bantu Education was effectively implemented, saw an absence of oppositional response from organized teachers in the Transvaal.

A much clearer split between right and left developed amongst Cape teachers. Two pressures were crucial in this development. On the one hand, more conservative teachers became alarmed at the political stance of their organization, and, at the same time, were intimidated by the prospect of conflict with the state. On the other hand, the authorities saw CATA as an obstacle to the introduction of Bantu Education, and the Cape Education Department was strongly hostile to CATA. The resulting tensions in CATA led to a break-away and the formation of

the Cape African Teachers Union (CATU). This split was primarily over whether, as CATU believed, a teachers' organization should represent purely 'professional' interests, or, as CATA argued, it should concern itself with broader political questions. It divided those who felt that the post-war radicalization of teachers had undermined their social position from those who saw their interests as lying in political action.

The right wing in CATA comprised two groupings. One was the North Western Districts Teachers Union (NWDTU) which was the constituent organization of CATA in the Kimberley area, and the other, a group led by I.D. Mkize, the Principal of Langa High School in Cape Town. NWDTU amalgamated with CATA in 1947,[213] but the graft never took. After 1948, at CATA conferences, NWDTU delegates opposed the association's political orientation, and made unsuccessful attempts to disaffiliate CATA from the AAC.[214] The Kimberley branch defied CATA discipline by giving its own evidence to the Eiselen Commission without consulting the executive.[215] Their militantly a-political outlook was voiced by a speaker at a 1950 NWDTU meeting, who attacked both the ANC and the AAC:

> Are we going to achieve...change by preaching any one political philosophy? My answer to this is an emphatic NO. Rather we will achieve this end, by helping the child to such wholeness of development that he cannot only adapt himself to, but co-operate in devising new social forms. 216

Thus, the NWDTU counterposed education to politics as a means of achieving social uplift. On 4 August, 1951, the NWDTU broke away from CATA, on the grounds of the latter's AAC affiliation.[217]

I.D. Mkize's history was very different; he was President of CATA from 1947 to 1950, and at that time supported the association's pro-Unity Movement policies.[218] However, for reasons which are unclear, his political views thereafter shifted rapidly to the right. During 1952, his actions precipitated a major conflict in CATA. The majority of the association became incensed over Mkize's participation in the Van Riebeeck Festival, which CATA had committed itself to boycotting, and over his attendance at an Institute of Race Relations Conference (which they regarded as a "collaborationist" action).[219] Clearly, these incidents were merely pegs on which were hung far more weighty differences; Mkize had abandoned CATA's refusal to participate in state-run or liberal institutions in favour of a gradualist strategy of seeking partial reforms and concessions. Conflict escalated, and CATA charged that Mkize had tried to sabotage its 1952 conference by complaining to the Cape Town Native Commissioner about the associations use of certain funds.[220] At the conference an attempt to disaffiliate CATA from the AAC was heavily defeated.[221] On 18 August, Mkize split the annual general meeting of CATA's Western Province section (the Western Province Bantu Teachers' League) taking 62 members with

him.[222] From mid 1952 to mid 1953, he was active in attempts to found a Secondary School principals' association or a new teachers' association.[223] These efforts successfully culminated in the founding conference of CATU, held in the Municipal Hall, Grahamstown, from 23 to 25 June, 1953, which brought together the NWDTU and Mkize's supporters.[224] In his presidential address to the congress, Mkize gave a thorough summary of the views of the split supporters. Following 1947 he claimed, "there was growing on the teacher an unhealthy interest in politics", which led to the disintegration of CATA and harm to African Education, the undermining of the loyalty of staff to principals, bad results, the closing of some schools and the lowering of prestige of others.[225] C.N. Lekalake's Vice-Presidential address explained that the union sought recognition by the Education Department because an exchange of views between the two parties was "essential and beneficial to the profession."[226] That the authorities also sought such a relationship was made clear by the guest speaker, Dr. E.G. Schnell of the Cape Education Department, who stressed the need for a "responsible body of African teachers to advise the Department on Native Education."[227] Recognition of CATU was granted by the Department before the union's next conference.[228]

In the period after its formation, CATU was successful in building links with other provincial African teachers'

associations which were prepared to co-operate with the education authorities, and it became the Cape component of the Federal Council of African Teachers Associations (FCATA).[229] However as an organization which was committed to the special interests of teachers and rejected political campaigning on community issues, it had little ability to attract broad support in a period of political upheaval. When, in August 1953, Mkize convened a public meeting in Langa at which Chief Inspector de Villiers was to speak, less than ten people showed up, a number of whom were Unity Movement supporters who proceeded to denounce the CATU President.[230] While CATU was able to establish the kind of professional lobbying relationship with government envisaged by Mkize, with FCATA delegations being received by the Native Affairs Department,[231] this did not mean that CATU members were necessarily content with all aspects of their lot. They were all aware of the adverse effects of aspects of Bantu Education on their position as teachers, and even to some extent of its political role. Thus at the 1954 CATU conference, harsh criticisms of Bantu Education were made. The discussions "disclosed convictions (sic) that the Africans were going to be given an inferior type of education"; fears of lower exam standards, and criticisms of the double shift system and of the fact that teachers had no say in the adoption of syllabi were voiced.[232] Thus while the concrete issues which alarmed CATU members were ones which adversely affected their

professional autonomy and status, there was also a strong suspicion of the basic aims of Bantu Education. This underlines that it was not differences on educational issues as such that were behind the CATU/CATA split; rather it was differences over whether or not teachers' organizations should take an overtly political stance, and whether the relationship of teachers to the authorities should be one of confrontation or co-operation.

The split posed some difficulties for CATA. In April 1953, Pondoland Region disaffiliated at its conference and visits to the district by executive members and an emergency conference were needed to bring it back into line,[233] while in November attempts to disaffiliate Xalanga and St. John's branches were defeated.[234] But in general CATA weathered the split fairly well. Its leadership positively welcomed its 'purifying' effects: L. Sibali told the 1954 conference that: "CATU was a new organization today because it was free from traitors, collaborators, and disrupters."[235]

While this response reflects the lack of realism of CATA's leaders, it was indeed the case that the conservative teachers were not in a position to attract a strong following during the 1950s.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted a detailed study of the impact on teachers of the social and educational crisis of the late 1940s and early 1950s. It has been argued that during this period the outlook of teachers was transformed, away from a close identification with the existing educational dispensation, and towards a far more oppositional stance. The origins of this are to be sought in the combination of resentment over deteriorating pay and conditions, the political and ideological influence of a rising generation of African nationalist political activists, and the mobilization of teacher's commitment to education in response to the Nationalist government's attacks on black educational aspirations. Mission educational ideology was inherently ambiguous and capable of contributing to a culture of resistance, rather than one which straightforwardly reproduced existing social relations. The coming to power of the Nationalist government and the propagation of Eiselen's blueprint for Bantu Education brought the process of teacher radicalization to a head. The early years of the 1950s saw teacher militancy at its height in both the Transvaal and the Cape. But professional aspirations, the vulnerable position of teachers, and the more conservative components of mission ideology also generated conservative currents amongst teachers. However, the insurgent political climate of the 1950s was not conducive to the flourishing of such groups. The

disaffection of teachers was thus a central component of the critical situation facing the Nationalist government in th educational sphere. Regaining control over teachers and attempting to win their allegiance were to be major aspects of the restructuring of the National Party's restructuring of black education during the period from 1955. This restructuring and its effects are the subject of the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

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5. Interview No.10, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986.

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8. UNISA AAS 212, F.M. Tonjeni "1968 CATU Secretary Report to ATASA at Kroonstad".

9. Interview No.11, Soweto, 1986.

10. Interview No.6, Soweto, 1986.

11. Interview No.16, Soweto, 1986.

12. Interview No.18, Soweto, 1986.

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32. Ibid., p.6.

33. Phago (1966), op.cit., p.11.

34. Bopape Interview (1982), p.6.

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36. Peteni (1978), op.cit., p.55.

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42. Inkundla ya Bantu, Vol.7, No.82, 17 July 1944, p.3, cited in Molteno (1984), op.cit., p.84.

43. Peteni (1978), op.cit., p.55.

44. Phago (1966), op.cit., pp.11-12.

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130. The Torch, 16 September 1952.

131. Idem.

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222. The Torch, 9 September 1952.

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CHAPTER FIVE: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'BANTU EDUCATION' POLICY IN THE LATE 1950s AND EARLY 1960s

The two previous chapters have argued that South Africa faced an urban social crisis in the 1940s and early 1950s. The inadequacies, failures and internal conflicts of the existing educational system were, it was contended, in large part a product of this wider crisis. This chapter will argue that circumstances impelled the Nationalist government, during the 1950s and early 1960s, toward relatively pragmatic policies aimed at addressing urgent problems of social control and labour reproduction in the urban areas. Their policies were a response to, and a form of resolution of, the urban crisis of the previous decade. Bantu Education policy, as pursued by the state in this period, was primarily directed toward the social control of urban youth and the re-organization of urban life, and the reproduction of the labour force.

State education policy in the period 1955-1962 shows the features of a policy forged under the pressure of the urban crisis. Firstly, a much larger education system than had ever existed before was created, allowing the state, for the first time, to draw the bulk of urban working class youth into the schools: education was thus set on a much more firm footing than before, as an agency of socialization. Secondly, financial mechanisms were

developed which allowed the state to create this new education system on the basis of exceptionally low levels of expenditure, thus overcoming political and economic obstacles to educational expansion. Thirdly, the re-organization of education provided a new articulation between the labour needs of industry and the school, in which the requirements of industry for semi-skilled labour were far more adequately met than had previously been the case. Fourthly, the Nationalist government utilized education in its attempts to create a new hegemonic social order. In particular, it attempted to incorporate black parents into the running of the school system through the establishment of school boards and committees. It also attempted to generate divisive ethnic identification with African cultural and linguistic groups, by emphasizing the use of African languages in the schools. The aim of such practices was to create a political consciousness which would accord with the ethnically divided Bantustan system.

The fact that central aspects of this new educational dispensation, such as the closer linking of education and labour need, and the more effective social control over the urban labour force were clearly in the interest of capital does not undermine our earlier critique of the view that the state was automatically impelled to act in a way which was functional to capital. Verwoerdian bureaucrats on the one hand, and predominantly Anglophone industrialists on the other had distinct ideologies and interests. Rather,

it is argued that the specific circumstances of the 1950s induced the former to act in a way which was not in conflict with the needs of the latter. The depth of the urban crisis, the scope of political mass mobilization and the delicate state of the economy forced the state to address the urban issues most urgently, and to refrain from major attempts to uproot the urban workforce. The consequent urban restructuring was in line with capital's needs. But there was no reason why, in different circumstances, the complementary character of this relationship would continue. Indeed, in the end, it was to break down.

This chapter provides support for several of the major propositions advanced earlier. In arguing that Bantu Education was, in its first phase, a response to urban social crisis, it provides evidence for the argument that the policy must be understood in relation to the processes of urbanization and industrialization. Insofar as it shows how state policy tried to control youth and contain political dissent, it suggests how struggles traverse, and are embodied in, the structure of the state. By arguing that the education system became orientated toward the reproduction of semi-skilled labour, it emphasizes that Bantu Education involved the reproduction of varying and historically changing forms of labour. In stressing the struggle for hegemony within the education system, it seeks

to show the usefulness of understanding such struggles in terms of the concept of hegemony.

The Nationalist Response to Urban Crisis

Crisis, originating in the phenomena of the collapse of reserve agriculture, secondary industrialization and rapid urbanization, threatened the social order in fundamental ways. On the one hand, slum housing, crime, inadequate schooling facilities and poverty threatened the very reproduction of the working class as a work force with the appropriate level of skills, work discipline and physical capacity required by urban employers. On the other, the community movements, trade unions and African nationalist political campaigns which arose in response to these conditions, posed direct political challenges to the dominant classes. The urgency of the situation dictated that the policies of the period before about 1962 were driven more by pragmatic considerations of social control and labour reproduction than by the Nationalist's long-term ideological vision of the establishment of autonomous black political entities and of a purely migrant black workforce in white areas. The 1950s did see the setting up of the legal and administrative equipment necessary to the implementation of Verwoerd's 'Grand Apartheid' dreams. But this apparatus could not be fully utilized until the existing urban crisis had been resolved. The Nationalists realized that they could not wish away the existing black

working class. It was, therefore, necessary first of all, to provide minimal conditions of social reproduction within the urban areas. This the Nationalists did by permitting major expansion in urban housing and education. They also followed a largely pragmatic policy in relation to urban employers' utilization of black labour, deviating considerably from their formal commitment to migrant labour and the relegation of blacks to unskilled work in the urban area. At the same time, a pre-condition of more thorough-going apartheid policies was the destruction of the popular and working class political resistance. This the government energetically set about, culminating in the crushing of the ANC, the PAC and trade unions in the early 1960s. The period up to 1962 can thus be seen as one in which the NP followed a relatively pragmatic attitude toward the urban proletariat, seeking to 'stabilize' it by, on the one hand, changing its conditions of social reproduction, and on the other, crushing its political organizations. There was little indication of outright subordination of the labour needs of urban industry to the NP's long term ideological goals.

Bantu Education policy did, in the short term, and in combination with the strengthened security and economic position of the state from the early 1960s, achieve success in stabilizing the education system. However, in the long run, it created new problems for the state that were to

help generate a greater crisis by the 1970s. The low level of expenditure on black education ensured that material inequality would continue to be a major grievance. The attempt to establish a new hegemony might assist in creating some social forces willing to work with the government, but it generated new sources of resentment by damaging the education system, and was in the long run, incapable of winning the allegiance of the mass of the people. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, government's insistence on emphasizing primary education, together with the policy of job reservation, was to generate chronic shortages of skilled labour; while the creation of a mass education system was eventually to turn school students into a powerful social force with a common identity. The victory of Bantu Education was a decisive, but a very temporary one.

Schools and Social Reproduction

While Bantu Education was a particular ideological form of resolution of the crisis of the social reproduction of youth, it did address a task which wide sections of the dominant classes believed, had to be resolved. As argued in chapter 3, there was widespread agreement between NP, UP and liberal political forces that a state directed restructuring of education was urgently necessary. It was at the level of the ideological processes that entered into the formation of Nationalist Party education policy that

Nationalist practice differed from the education policies advocated by UP and liberal circles. The NP's Sauer Report of 1947 advocated a strongly restrictive attitude to black urbanization. The migrant labour system was to be reinforced and the black middle class was to grow in the reserves, which were to be the centres of black development. This reflected, in part, the weight of agricultural interests within the NP, whose access to supplies of plentiful cheap labour was threatened by the drift to the towns. The UP's Fagan Commission (1948) on the other hand advocated a gradual and controlled move toward a permanently urbanized labour force, and toward fostering an urban black middle class.[1] Fagan's findings reflect the need of industrial capital for a permanent, 'stabilised' urban work force.[2] In practice, the NP's policies during the 1950s did not conflict with the needs of industry to anything like the degree that these ideological differences might suggest. The NP did show a clear recognition that it could not sweep away the urban working class, and needed to regulate reproductive process in order to utilize and control the working class. The NP leadership accepted that the black urban proletariat would stay in place for the foreseeable future.[3]

In key areas, government policy harmonized with the need of capital to secure the reproduction of a permanent urban proletariat: the state was obliged to impose its solution to the problems of the urban areas before it could proceed

to move to grandiose social engineering. Housing policy is a centrally important case in point. Mass housing schemes were developed during the 1950s in Soweto, Kwazakhele (Port Elizabeth), Duncan Village Extension (East London) and Nyanga (Cape Town), to name only the most important. Much of the burden of this was borne by the communities themselves, and by employers, through taxation.[4] This massive growth in housing was accompanied by a growing differentiation in the types of housing provided in the townships, not only in that migrants were placed in hostels and residents in houses, but also in that, increasingly, different types of houses were provided for different economic strata.[5] Thus, housing policy clearly played a central role in the reorganizing the reproductive process of urban workers.

The establishment of the Bantu Education system formed a crucial part in this state-directed reorganization of the reproduction of the urban working class. It was a turning point in providing an educational system capable of exerting social control over black youth, and reproducing the labour force. The mission school system had manifestly been unable to do this. The introduction of Bantu Education began the establishment of a mass education system embracing the bulk of working class youth. For the first time the state was able to draw the majority of black urban youth into its education system on a large scale.

1955 marked the first year of the implementation of the measures provided for in the Bantu Education Act of 1953. In the decade from 1955 to 1965, the numbers of African students in school doubled from about one million, to about two million.[6] The 1950s saw this educational restructuring focused on the urban areas: for example, school student numbers in the urban Southern Transvaal grew faster in the 1957-1962 period than those in mainly rural Northern Transvaal.[7] (See Figure 1.) Thus the late 1950s marked a dramatic adaptation in the education system to the tas of containing and controlling urban youth.

	AFRICAN PUPIL NUMBERS	
Year	(Rural) Northern Transvaal	(Urban) Southern Transvaal
1957	243,688	231,143
1962	299,144	310,784

Figure 1:

Growth of African school student population in the urban Southern Transvaal outstrips that in the rural Northern Transvaal. 8

As in the case of housing, education policy unfolded in a way which was not centrally in conflict with the needs of employers for a stable, permanently urban and semi-skilled work force. Though the NP's educational blueprint

projected a rural based future for black education, this thrust was not rigidly implemented. The new form of education met the criticisms which had been put forward in the 1940s and early 1950s, by both the NP and the UP, of the ineffectiveness of the missionary dominated school (discussed in Chapter 3). By bringing the bulk of urban African youth into a few years of basic schooling, Bantu Education provided a mechanism of social control which could be used to fight crime and political militancy, and at the same time generate a semi-skilled work force. To a large extent, the Eiselen Commission report met the demands of liberal educational spokesperson. Just as in the directly economic field, there was a considerable degree of practical convergence between liberals, the UP and the NP, especially over the need to counter urban youth crime and political agitation through schooling, and also on the need for closer alignment of schooling and the labour market. Opposition politicians like the liberal Margaret Ballinger[9] and D.L. Smit, and liberal administrators like J. Dugard welcomed the Eiselen report.[10] They supported Eiselen's call for central government control of African education, (while disputing whether this should be under the control of the Department of Native Affairs),[11] and did not object to the commission's advocacy of vernacular languages in primary school, as this was already standard practice up to Standard IV.[12] The white opposition, whether liberal or mainstream UP, concurred with the NP aim of providing a

'basic elementary education' for all children as rapidly as possible.[13] It was only when it became clear how strongly linked to apartheid policy, and how under-financed Bantu Education would be that white politicians to the left flank of the government became seriously critical of state education policy.[14]

The grossly racist and inegalitarian character of the new system should not obscure the fact that it was the first time that a mass education system effectively including the black working class had been put in place in South Africa. Important parallels can be drawn between the imposition of Bantu Education and the establishment of mass schooling in industrializing societies elsewhere. If one examines the growth of mass schooling in late 19th Century Europe and North America, for example, one sees noteworthy similarities to the South African situation: there too schooling was seen by dominant social groups as a response to the need for social control over working class youth, as a way of producing appropriately trained labour, and as a means of political socialization of youth.[15] Bantu Education was unique in the form of its racial ideology; but it was far from unique in its role in providing an educational structure appropriate to monopoly industrialization.

The Financing of Bantu Education

The new education system took a form which enabled the state to solve the problem of how to institute a mass education system while keeping costs as low as possible. The NP government of the 1950s was constrained from providing adequate finance for black education by a number of factors: its own racist base and ideology generated strong political pressures against expenditure on black education; employers were unwilling to pay, through taxes, for social services for their employees; the South African economy was less robust than in either the preceding or the subsequent decades. The new policy enabled the state to reconcile its need for a new mass education system with its unwillingness to pay for it, largely by transferring the economic burden onto the shoulders of black communities, thereby enabling the state to institute an educational reorganization at a particularly low cost to itself.

The NP built Bantu Education on a shallow foundation, characterized by rigid cash limits. In 1945, J.H. Hofmeyer, as the UP's Minister of Native Affairs, had decoupled expenditure on black education from the income from black taxation, to which it had previously been linked: black education became a charge on the general revenue.[16] However, with the passage of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, the Nationalist government adopted the policy that all expansion of expenditure of African education had to

come from expansion in the level of African taxation revenues.[17] In 1955 the statutory contribution of the state was pegged at R13 million, a level at which it was to remain until 1972; four fifths of taxation received from Africans was to be channelled toward education.[18] Dugard suggests, interestingly, that this was in fact a concession by Dr. Verwoerd to the most extreme wing of the NP, who were opposed to any substantial spending on black education.[19]

The policy put an enormous financial strain on the resources of the education system. Per capita expenditure on African education fell from the equivalent of R17-08 in 1953 to R12-46 in 1960.[20] The consequence was a grossly inadequate level of material provision in the education system constructed by Verwoerd. A teacher comments:

> It got worse in that the population of school-going children increased and funds were tied. So the material progress did not match the human population that was coming in. 21

The concrete breeze-block buildings thrown up in the townships of this period provided cheap school accommodation at the expense of any modicum of comfort:

> ...when it became too hot the children tended to fall asleep and no amount of motivation would make them alert, and in the winter [it] would be too cold so they were more concerned in trying to keep themselves warm. 22

Another teacher comments that whereas mission school classrooms <u>looked</u> like classrooms once one entered a Bantu Education school:

> it took time to acclimatise to a place that looks like a stable. 23

As a result of government educational financing policies, pupil teacher ratios worsened from 42,3 to 1 in 1946 to 54,7 to 1 in 1960.[24] In some cases:

> teachers...had to teach classes of up to 65 or 70 per session. 25

As a further cost saving device, government introduced the concept of double session teaching. Under this policy, primary school teachers took two separate classes a day in shifts.[26] This had severe and deleterious consequences for the quality of the education provided:

> The teachers would be too tired to teach in the afternoon, they would find it boring teaching the same subject, the pupils who would come in the afternoon wouldn't be as alert as pupils who came in the morning. 27

> The morning group up to eleven thirty, they were alright. Now when those coming in the afternoon ...it was impractical. They didn't learn much. The children came, they played a bit, became tired. 28

By 1958 seventy per cent of primary schools were teaching double sessions,[29] and there are reports of instances where teachers had to take three sessions a day.[30]

The approach of the state to the financing of black education harmonized with the desire of capital to avoid as far as possible, subsidizing social services through taxation. Maximal effort was exerted to make the wages of African workers, rather than taxation of employers, provide the basis for the reproduction process in the townships. The state sought, for example, to avoid any expenditure on

the care of pre-school urban children: when Ekutuleni Mission, the only Nursery School Teachers' Training College for African women was closed in 1958, a Native Affairs Department spokesman commented that: "We would be glad if Bantu parents would take more responsibility for this type of thing."[31] The state also sought to extricate itself from any responsibility for the maintenance of students by aiming to replace boarding schools with day schools,[32] and by reducing expenditure on school feeding from R893,000 in 1955 to R50,000 in 1964.[33]

The consequences of government refusal to spend adequately on education, combined with their attempt to use education to further the bantustan system, led to a growing demoralization amongst teachers:

> I think the mission schools provided a better type of education since they prepared the child for a higher..calling and they also prepared the child for a meaningful role in life. Bantu Education on the other hand apparently deprives the child of his self, of his personality and of his realisation. 34

Such feelings resulted in the decision of many experienced teachers to resign from the new education system:

> ...Here in Johannesburg...we had teachers who resigned - they never came back... 35

> ...The older teachers knew the differences and implications between Bantu Education and the old system, the Transvaal Education Department. So they resigned. 36

This outflow of committed teachers led to a further diminution of the quality of the educational services.

These resignations and the simultaneous development of larger scale low grade teacher training programmes resulted in a decline in the average level of teacher qualification.[37]

Though in the 1950s such educational horrors occasioned little comment from business, by the end of the next decade, official parsimony in education spending would become a serious issue, as industry became aware of the gross deficiencies of such an education order in providing skilled labour and social stability. But in the 1950s such considerations did not disturb the smooth meshing of industrial needs and state educational policy. The brutal financial policies in the educational field imposed by the NP had allowed them to create cheaply a mass education system. It was a successful response to the conflict between the state's need to restructure urban working class life and the unwillingness of conservative politicians, apartheid ideologists, and industrialists to pay for it.

Educational Re-organization and Industry

Bantu Education provided a new kind of articulation between the reproduction of new forms of skilled labour in schools, and industry. To say this is not to adopt a functionalist conception in which capital simply has its labour needs met by the state. There is almost always, in educational policy formation, a battle between different dominant class

interests, bureaucratic interests and mass pressures from below, which all go into deciding the outcome. However as suggested earlier, in the 1950s the state was not yet attempting to uproot the industrial working class (as it was to try to do in the 1960s) and was willing to accommodate industry's immediate need for urban semi-skilled labour. By semi-skilled labour I mean that in monopoly industry, automation increasingly eliminates the split characteristic of small, competitive, industry between unskilled hands and artisans. As the skills of the artisan are increasingly replaced by machinery, the high grade technician capable of repairing and setting up factory machines comes into his own. On the other hand the machine operator emerges as a new kind of labourer: the semi-skilled worker who requires skills of literacy and numeracy and an internalized work discipline.[38] The generation of such semi-skilled labour was an important part of the new education system's early aims. It was widely believed by state officials that four years of schooling was sufficient to provide basic literacy and some knowledge of English and Afrikaans, and a basis for further education. Thus these first four years were seen as capable of providing a level of education appropriate to semi-skilled work. The initial thrust of Bantu Education was thus toward the expansion of these first four years of schooling.

A flexibility was shown by the state in reconciling its formal commitment to job reservation with industry's need for semi-skilled labour. It was the utilization of black labour in these semi-skilled positions, rather than in artisan positions, which was really at issue. Potential conflict between government and industry was largely averted via the device of the floating colour bar: white workers were upgraded and blacks moved into the positions vacated by them.[39] The United Party itself had, when in government, followed such a policy, seeking, as Lewis puts it, "to reorganise the division of labour to maintain racial hierarchy."[40] The Nationalists took a similar approach, allowing blacks to move into semi-skilled occupations as whites moved out of them.[41] Clearly there were differences of long term interest between industrialists and government, especially around whether blacks would ultimately provide urban artisans. By this time it was becoming increasingly clear that white labour could not provide a larger proportion of artisans:[42] But demand for black skilled and clerical labour was low during the 1950s, compared with that for semi-skilled labour. Conflict was further postponed by the slow growth resulting from the slump of the late 1950s. For the time being government policy on labour did not present major obstacles to urban industrial employers.[43]

Bantu Education was not an exception to the complementarity which existed between the Nationalist's policies of the

1950s, and the skill needs of industry. The educational policy put in place by the NP in the mid 1950s concentrated on building up the first four years of primary education, as its main initial objective. J. Dugard, a Regional Director of Bantu Education at this time, says of his r that "Our first aim was to promote literacy by making it possible for as many children as possible to complete the first four years of school."[44] The basis of this four year emphasis was spelled out by the Minister of Bantu Education, W.A. Maree, in 1964, when he asserted in a parliamentary debate that a Standard 2 (i.e. four year) education gave a child an ability to read and write in his own language, a reasonable knowledge of the two official languages, and a basis for further education.[45] The point is clear: four years in school was seen as providing a basis for semi-skilled labour requiring a minimal numeracy, literacy and work discipline, and it was schooling at this level that the state sought to encourage. Thus, given that industrial employers were interested in using black urban labour primarily at a semi-skilled level, the basic thrust of government policy was in line with their needs. (It may be objected that four years of schooling could not possibly provide the skills identified by Maree: however what is important for our purposes is that policy makers believed that it could.) In the urban areas this emphasis was encouraged by the state's policy of making it possible for white municipalities to finance the building of African

lower primary schools, whereas higher primary and secondary schools could only be established where community based school boards paid half the cost.[46] This priority was even built into the physical structure of the townships: plans for township expansion in this era included space for new lower primary schools, but old buildings had to be used for higher primary and secondary schools.[47]

Although in the field of technical education, racist ideology triumphed over capitalist 'rationality' and the number of technical training places for blacks sharply declined,[48] this was not a major issue for employers, who as yet did not show much interest in the training of black artisans. The state also showed a willingness to assist industrialists in obtaining suitable employees through more systematic channeling of persons with appropriate abilities into different levels of the school system toward different levels of the labour market: during the 1950s the National Bureau of Education and Social Research embarked on a project to develop intelligence tests for use in African schools.[49]

Whereas missionary education had provided a high-level academic education for a small elite, and failed to reach or to educate effectively primary school students. Bantu Education provided mass primary education. This change of emphasis fitted in with industry's need for semi-skilled labour, and its lack of interest in training blacks for

skilled or managerial positions. Whatever the ideological differences between Verwoerdian bureaucrats and industrialists, the educational policies of the state up to the early 1960s did not give manufacturing industry major cause for complaint.

Education and the Nationalist Bid for Hegemony

Christie and Collins[50] have rightly drawn attention to the hegemonic character of the Verwoerdian design for Bantu Education. Verwoerd and his cohorts did aim to create mechanisms for the incorporation of blacks within the new political order which they were propounding. The 'homelands' would provide the arena within which black political advancement and educational development would take place. The Nationalist government therefore sought to establish a means by which the allegiance of sectors of the black population to a conception of their future as in the homelands could be secured. In order to do this, structures would have to be set up within which such incorporated sectors would come to see themselves as having a role in determining their future. This illusion of self-determination would enable the dominant social groups to exercise control without being perceived to be doing so.

Verwoerd quite explicitly outlined his aims in education in these terms in his 1953 speeches to Parliament on Bantu

Education. In these he called for a form of black participation in black educational administration

> ...which will make him ["the Bantu"] feel that he is co-responsible for his education but that he is also assisted by the guardian ["the European"] in so far as he is incapable of assuming co-responsibility for it... 51

The school boards and committees were the means chosen for this purpose. Not only would they play the essential ideological role of winning parents' allegiance to Bantu Education, but they would also provide a means of squeezing black communities financially, in order to subsidize the kind of cheap mass education which the National Party was aiming at. Thus Verwoerd argued that black parents should be made co-responsible for their children's education and

> ...that co-responsibility is two-fold - it is co-responsibility for control, but associated with that is co-responsibility in respect of finances. 52

Thus Bantu Education sought to construct a new hegemony, which could secure the allegiance of large sections of blacks to the new educational arrangements and thus to the new social order. In this sense contemporary Marxist analyses which see the system as purely about the creation of black labour power at low levels of skill, fall short of the mark.[53] Verwoerd was a sufficiently shrewd political actor to understand that he could not rely exclusively on force to dominate a subject population, with any chance of success. Nor was he sufficiently foolish to believe that it would be possible to maintain black subordination while

holding the barriers to career advancement at 'certain forms of labour'. The point of Verwoerd's rightly notorious, but widely misinterpreted orations on Black Education of 1953-54, is precisely that while he intended to impose strict limits on black educational and career advancement in white areas, he held out on the other hand a new hegemonic vision to co-optable sections of blacks on the other.[54] Verwoerd was essentially proposing homeland structures as a key part of the 'material substratum' which would secure black acquiescence. Discussions of Bantu Education often treat Verwoerd's strictures on black career advancement as if they were new features of political discourse. But of course they were not: 'civilized labour' had a long and broadly based history in white politics. What was new was his aim toward opening new structures of black incorporation through the homelands.

Accordingly, the Bantu Education Act (No.47 of 1953) gave the responsible Minister sweeping powers to provide for black participation in educational administration by establishing "such regional, local, and domestic councils, boards, or other bodies as he may deem expedient"[55] or to place any government school under bodies such as the 'Bantu Authorities'.[56] As we shall see, the sweeping powers over such bodies granted by the Act to the Minister were not always used in a way which was consistent with their hegemonic design.

Regulations laid down that the school committees, which were immediately responsible for a particular school, would be partly elected by the parents. In both rural and urban areas, four to six of the committee members could be elected by parents;[57] clearly this was aimed at drawing local communities into the new system. In order to strengthen the strata participating in homeland structures, in the rural areas, the local authority was given the right to nominate six of the members of the committee.[58] However these nominations were subject to approval by Pretoria, and the Secretary of Native Affairs could appoint a further two members of the committees.[59] In the urban areas, the remainder of school committee members, comprising a majority, were direct appointees of the department or the Local Native Commissioner.[60]

The committees were to be the key link to the community, controlling school funds, erecting new buildings, and advising the school boards.[61] What real power was embodied in the system subsisted however, in the school boards. These were wholly appointed bodies, with one school board controlling a group of school committees. In the urban areas all the members were appointed by the Native Affairs Department.[62] In the rural areas the members were nominated by the department and by the 'Bantu Authority'. It seems that as the homeland system developed, the proportion of homeland authority appointees was allowed to increase.[63] The boards had considerable powers over local

schools and teachers. From 1955 all African teachers' salaries were paid as subsidies to the School Boards, which meant that the boards effectively controlled hiring and firing (although the department could force the Board to sack a teacher by withdrawing the subsidy in respect of a particular person).[64] From this brief description some of the inherent weaknesses of the system ought to be apparent. The hegemonic aims of the school committee structure were undermined by the Native Affairs Department's reluctance to concede real control to parents, by insisting on a majority of appointees. The Native Affairs Department wanted parental participation without giving up real control. The boards did something to strengthen the power of homeland authorities. But their appointee dominated structure, their control of the school committees under them and the fact that they were not responsible to the parents of local students, also undermined their legitimacy. This structure tended to encourage the emergence of tyrannical school boards, subservient to Pretoria and resented by local parents and teachers.

But despite these inherent weaknesses and fierce organized opposition from popular movements (which will be discussed later), the establishment of the boards went forward with a degree of success for government, especially in the less politically volatile rural areas: by 1956 4,000 committees and 300 boards had been established.[65] Certainly, this did

not constitute a particularly effective social base for Bantu Education: but it did demonstrate that there were substantial social groupings which Verwoerd could rally around the new system.

Another dimension of the Verwoerdian attempt to develop a new hegemony was the greater emphasis given to African languages in schooling. Under the mission education order, English (or in some cases Afrikaans) was used as a medium of instruction within the primary phase of education. Sometimes this began from the earliest years of schooling.[66] But Verwoerd's attempts to emphasize ethnic diversity amongst black 'tribal' groups led to a reversal of this policy. Now African languages would be the sole means of instruction in primary school, and English or Afrikaans was only used as the medium of instruction in secondary education. Teachers who experienced both systems perceive the result as having been a sharp falling off in the standard of English amongst secondary school pupils, and even university students. For teachers this policy was a destructive one, not only because it sought to increase linguistic differentiation amongst blacks, but also because it made it so much more difficult for pupils to succeed at the secondary schools:

> Before Bantu Education was introduced it was so easy to teach students, man. You find that... those children can write English, speak English, official languages, easily, easily, easily...It's different now, teaching in a High School is difficult. 67

> One of the greatest problems we had in secondary schools, with children who had been taught in the African medium...is the inability to express themselves freely in the English language. 68

> Now you talk of a mine where gold and the rest are dug, the trouble is now this child has been taught for about eight years in mother tongue. Now merely spelling of a mine, you find that it's writing m-a-n-e. 69

> When they go to Universities they can't even express themselves fluently, because they are used to an African language... 70

Teacher resentment of this policy was sharpened by the feeling that African languages often did not possess the vocabulary to explain some of the concepts that they were required to teach:

> ...we had such a difficulty in for instance the teaching of arithmetic in the vernacular. Take a thing like Geography in the vernacular, when you come to something like the "Roaring Forties", what do you say in Zulu or Xhosa? 71

This problem could even affect the task of explaining concepts to secondary school students who had a weak background in English:

> You can't teach a student in matric some of the very difficult words used to explain a simple name that can be given in English. You haven't got it. It makes it so difficult for the teacher and worse for the child to grasp those new terminologies. 72

As the teachers' comments suggest, Verwoerd's strategies were inherently flawed as tools for building hegemony. The authoritarian manner in which his policies were imposed, and the failure to concede any real autonomy to communities and teachers in educational policy making, meant that any gains the regime might make might be undermined by new and deep resentments.

Conclusion

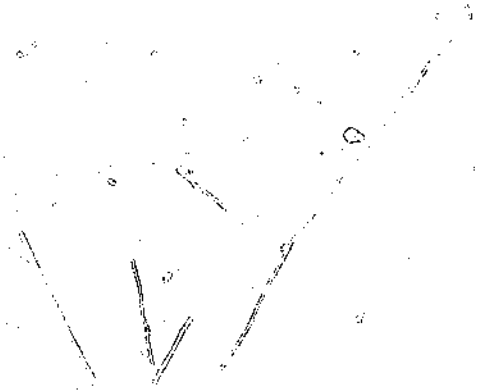
At one level, what this chapter has argued is that Bantu Education provided a solution to central aspects of the crisis of social reproduction of the urban working class which had arisen during the 1940s. A much larger education system than had existed before was created, and despite its low level of financing, it was far more effective than the previous education order in drawing in, and maintaining the attendance of primary school students. A set of financing mechanisms was created which enabled government to institute this mass education system very cheaply. Education policy was orientated to the levels which would provide the semi-skilled labour with which industry was most concerned. State education policy thus did meet the needs of capital for regulation of the reproductive process of the urban working class. This argument therefore follows Hindson in foregrounding the significance of urban social reproduction in explaining state policy in this period.

This does not imply a functionalist explanation of education policy, in which the state automatically and necessarily intervenes to resolve the problems facing capital. What I have contended is that the economic and political constraints on state policy makers in this period pushed them toward addressing the urban crisis as a priority. The same circumstances meant that it was

difficult for the state to act other than sympathetically toward the labour needs of capital. To have concentrated on homeland policy and the uprooting of the black urban working class would have been to risk urban conflict, greater mass political opposition and the plunging of the economy into intense depression. There was thus a coincidence of interests between capital and the state. But this outcome was not inevitable; as we shall see in subsequent chapters the primary commitment of the Verwoerdian bureaucracy was to apartheid policy. When circumstances permitted in the 1960s, it would pursue such policy even where it cut clean across capital's interests. If the outcome of the educational policy of the 1950s was in some sense functional to the needs of capital, this was a product of the conjuncture and not of an inherently functional relation between the state and capital. The particular ideological form given to Bantu Education by the Nationalist leadership is further evidence of the impossibility of reading off state policy from the needs of capital. The utilization of school boards and committees, and education in African languages, to strengthen Bantustan structures, was a specific political and ideological strategy which cannot be simply derived from any need of capital. The interests and ideology of the Verwoerdian bureaucrats and politicians are their source.

There is a further sense in which functionalist views are

rejected in the above analysis. None of the measures introduced by the NP were complete solutions to the problems facing the dominant classes. Indeed every solution generated new potential sources of conflict. School expansion with limited resources was to generate a strengthened sense of identity and grievance amongst black youth; a policy emphasis on reproducing semi-skilled labour led in the long run to a failure to train the skilled labour which industry would need in the next decade; the incorporation of some social sectors via boards and committees led to the disaffection of others. Every short-term solution prepared the way for a long-term conflict.



FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

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2. J. Lewis, Industrialisation and Trade Union Organization in South Africa, 1924-55, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp.121-123.

3. Hindson (1985), op.cit., pp.16-17; D. Posel, "Interests, Conflict and Power: The Relationship Between the State and Business in South Africa during the 1950s", Association for Sociology in Southern Africa conference paper, Cape Town, 1985, p.4, 12.

4. S.S. Hlope, "The Crisis of Urban Living Under Apartheid Conditions: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Soweto", in M.J. Murray (ed.), South African Capitalism and Black Political Opposition, (Cambridge, Mass., Schenkman, 1982), p.582, 590; J. Dugard, Fragments of My Fleece, (Pietermaritzburg, Kendall and Strachan, 1985), p.103; T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, (Johannesburg, MacMillan, 1981), p.341.

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10. Dugard (1985), op.cit., pp.82-88.

11. Ballinger (1952), op.cit.; Dugard (1985), op.cit., p.82.

12. Dugard (1985), op.cit., p.82.

13. Ballinger (1952), op.cit.

14. Dugard (1985), op.cit., pp.87-89.

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18. Kane-Berman (1979), op.cit.; 187; M. Horrell, A Decade of Bantu Education, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, 1964), p.13.

19. Dugard (1985), op.cit., p.89.

20. The Star, 23 May 1966.

21. Interview No.18, Soweto, 1986.

22. Interview No.7, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986.

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24. P. Christie and C. Collins, "Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology and Labour Reproduction", in P. Kallaway (ed.), Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans, (Johannesburg, Ravan, 1984), p.179.

25. Interview No.7, Soweto 1986.

26. Idem.

27. Idem.

28. Interview No.13, Soweto, August 1986.

29. The Torch, 4 February 1958.

30. Fighting Talk, July 1956.

31. The Torch, 7 January 1958.

32. CL MS. 16 598/5, J.W. Minty, Superintendant Rayner School, Tsomo, to Rev. S. Pitts, 4 April 1955.

33. R.D.M., 22 October 1964.

34. Interview No.7, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986.

35. Interview No.1, Soweto, 1986.

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37. Christie and Collins (1984), op.cit., pp.178-179.

38. This argument draws on H. Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1974).

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41. Posel (1985), op.cit., p.4.

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43. Posel (1985), op.cit., p.11.

44. Dugard (1985), op.cit., p.91.

45. R.D.M., 3 June 1964.

46. Dugard (1985), op.cit., p.138.

47. Ibid., p.103.

48. Christie and Collins (1984), op.cit., p.180.

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53. e.g. E.N. Mathonsi, Black Matriculation Results: A Mechanism of Social Control, (Johannesburg, Skotaville, 1988).

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55. Act No.47 of 1953, Para 12(1), Statutes of the Union of South Africa 1953, (Pretoria, 1953).

56. Idem.

57. The Torch, 12 April 1955; Horrell (1964), A Decade of Bantu Education, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, 1964), p.45.

58. Horrell (1964), op.cit., p.45.

59. Idem.

60. The Torch, 12 April 1955; M. Horrell (1964), op.cit., p.45.

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62. Horrell (1964), op.cit., p.43.

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67. Idem.

68. Interview No.11, 1986.

69. Interview No.19, Soweto, 1986.

70. Interview No.8, Soweto, 1986.

71. Interview No.13, Soweto, 1986.

72. Interview No.4, Soweto, 1986.

CHAPTER SIX: RESISTANCE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'BANTU EDUCATION': i. THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS SCHOOL BOYCOTT 1955-56

By the early 1960s, the Bantu Education system had been securely established throughout the country. Yet during the period in which it was being set up, sufficiently widespread resistance to the policy arose for this outcome to have appeared far from a foregone conclusion. The dire material and political consequences of the new policy, as outlined in the previous chapter, made such resistance almost inevitable.[1] Thus the question must arise: why was the state so successful in implementing its policy? Why was Dr Verwoerd, as Minister of Native Affairs (to 1958), and later Prime Minister (1958-1966) able to bring into being an education system that accorded so well with his Grand Apartheid designs and which made, apparently, so few concessions to the widespread hostility it encountered? It is these issues which this chapter and the next seek to answer. The questions cannot be answered simply with reference to the strengthened position of the state in the 1960s, following its successful repression of oppositional political movements and the development of the economic boom. Most of the resistance to Bantu Education had been subdued well before the end of the 1950s. Resistance to Bantu Education broke down for reasons quite specific to the dynamics of the social movements involved.

This chapter investigates why popular resistance was unable to block or retard the implementation of state educational policy, through a detailed examination of the most coherent and vigorous campaign of popular resistance to Bantu Education, the ANC's school boycott of 1955-1956. This involved not only keeping large numbers of students out of primary school, but also the establishment of 'Cultural Clubs' - effectively, alternative schools - through a body called the African Education Movement (AEM). Despite its considerable achievements, the campaign eventually collapsed for reasons which throw much light on the dynamics of educational conflict in South Africa.

Firstly, a striking feature of the campaign, considered in the light of present day events, was its inability to evoke a mass political movement of youth. It will be shown that this was part of a wider problem for the ANC - the low level of responsiveness of the urban black youth of the 1950s to the appeals of political organizations. I will argue that the social conditions of the 1950s, characterized by rapid urbanization and lack of schooling and employment opportunities, generated a 'lumpen' urban youth sub-culture which tended to be a-political. This underscores the argument made in chapters one and two that it is necessary to understand the impact of popular culture on educational conflict. The point also supports the distinction that was made in the theoretical chapters between oppositional behaviour with and without

transformative potential. The behaviour of urban youth in the 1950s was certainly marked by a rejection of authority, but this took criminal, individualistic and anti-social forms; it did not generate transformative possibilities.

Secondly, although the Cultural Clubs constituted a bold attempt at creating a counter-hegemony in the field of education, it miscarried because the initiative lacked the resources to sustain itself, and did not have a viable conceptualization of its role. The AEM was unable to provide the material resources for alternative schooling for more than a tiny proportion of black youth, and the attempt to sustain alternative schooling over a long period of time became even more unrealistic. Moreover, sectors of the ANC themselves developed unrealistic expectations of the possibility of sustaining educational alternatives on a large scale outside the state system, and this hampered the organization in developing a workable policy. The ANC made a significant attempt, through the AEM, to engage in struggle for hegemony in the educational field. But the practical limitations on its initiative undermined its credibility as an alternative to existing educational institutions.

Thirdly, I will show that the new capacity of the state to provide a mass education system drew the mass of urban youth and their parents into the new system, thus fatally

undermining the attempt of the ANC to build opposition to government policy through a strategy based outside the state system. The ability of Bantu Education schools to provide some form of child care, and educational certification which could be used to obtain employment, made them sufficiently attractive for the large majority of black parents to consider it worthwhile sending their children to attend.

Conventional accounts of Bantu Education fail to deal with its astounding success in drawing black youth into a new education order. That is not to say that it attained much popular support at a political level. But Bantu Education triumphed partly because it met some of the needs of subordinate classes for educational provision. The increased availability of educational provision was sufficiently attractive to township parents that it overcame their scruples about its ideological content and impoverished material character. Just as the building of vast townships in the 1950s was not only a defeat of battles by dwellers in inner city slums to hold on to their localities, but also an attempt to contain the pressures of mass squatter movements and attendant discontents, so Bantu Education was not only about the crushing of ideological diversity in the schools, but also part of an attempt to contain the potentially explosive needs of urban youth and the educational aspirations of parents.

This argument derives from the Poulantzian view, developed in the early chapters of this thesis, that the state should be understood as a field of relations within which struggle and conflict takes place.[1] This implies that the struggles of the subordinate classes should be seen as present within the state. The form of reproductive institutions is not the simple result of a state actions which create structures unproblematically functional to capital, but the outcome of battles between an array of social forces.

The establishment of Bantu Education thus cannot be explained purely by repression or purely by ideology. As Poulantzas argues, in order to attain popular acquiescence in the existing order, the state has to provide a 'material substratum'.[2] It has to provide material changes in the social infrastructure in response to the pressures of the popular classes, even though the state will often attempt to shape these into a form congruent with dominant class needs. The success of the state in stabilizing Bantu Education in the 1960s required both the successful use of force against popular movements and a struggle (only fragmentarily successful) to impose a new educational ideology. But it was underpinned by the establishment of a new school system which provided a decisive material element in consolidating popular acquiescence. The school boycotts and other campaigns against Bantu Education failed to gain their professed objectives. But they did also increase the pressure on the state to attempt to contain

educational aspirations through further school provision. All of this is not to minimize the drastically racist, discriminatory, and materially impoverished character of Bantu Education; it is merely to state that it represented the outcome of a struggle over educational restructuring in which the popular classes were not passive bystanders. It will also be contended that the apparent victory of the state nevertheless contained the seeds of destruction of the new education order. The very success of Bantu Education in creating a mass education system would provide a common institutional location and basis of experience for black youth, which would be a basis of future rebellion.

The Course of the Boycott

This chapter seeks to analyse the 1955-1956 boycott rather than to provide a detailed history of it, as this latter task has already been very adequately undertaken by Lodge.[3] Nevertheless, it may be useful briefly to recapitulate the chief events of the boycott. The ANC was initially slow to respond to the passage of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, and to the governments plans for its implementation during 1955. However, at an ANC conference in Durban in December 1954, a decision was taken to launch an indefinite boycott of primary schools beginning on 1 April 1955. In March, because of the lack of membership response, the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) decided to postpone the boycott of schools and instead to concentrate on a boycott

of school boards and school committees. But in the Transvaal there was considerable pressure from members and local leaders for the school boycott to go ahead. As a result a new conference to consider the issue was held at Port Elizabeth on 9-10 April; the principle of an indefinite boycott was supported. It was decided that the date for the national implementation of the boycott would be left to the NEC, but that local boycotts could begin earlier with the NEC's permission. By 12 April a boycott was launched on the East Rand, spreading to those townships nearer central Johannesburg. From 23 April boycotts took place in the Eastern Cape. Thousands of school pupils participated: but the boycotts did not spread significantly beyond these two regions. On 7 May, the AEM was established at a conference in Johannesburg. It then set about creating and servicing 'Cultural Clubs' - alternative educational facilities for school students. The Cultural Clubs sustained a vigorous functioning well into 1956. But outside of a few areas of particular militancy, the vast bulk of the black school-going population stayed inside the school system. Gradually support for the boycott eroded, and by late 1956 the ANC decided to abandon the strategy.[4]

Youth Culture and Politics in the 1950s

Since the mid-1970s youth has played a central part in political struggles in South Africa, to an extent which can have few historical precedents. It thus comes as something

of a shock to realize, when one turns to examine youth politics in the 1950s, that the urban youth of that period seem to have been relatively unpoliticized, and to have proved difficult for the ANC to organize. I will argue that this was partly the result of organizational problems on the side of the ANC, but was mainly due to the culture generated by the structural position of urban youth in the 1950s, which made them far less open to politicization than their counterparts of the 1970s and 1980s. Social, and particularly, educational changes help to explain why the boycotts of the 1950s proved far less explosive than those which came later, and why they were more clearly and abruptly brought to an end.

From the early 1950s, the ANC made efforts to recruit substantial numbers of young people.[5] However it faced an important organizational difficulty. Its youth wing, the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), had emerged in the 1940s as, essentially, an intellectual ginger group of young leaders, who were trying to change the policy of the ANC in a more militant direction. The ANCYL thus entered the 1950s as an organization ill adapted to attracting young people to its ranks. As a Congress document of the early 1950s put it, the ANCYL

> consists mainly of intellectuals who feel they must watch over the policy of the ANC and no attempt is made to organize sections of young African workers, scholars or peasants". [6]

Consequently, a situation prevailed where, as a Youth League publication admitted, the ANCYL "has but scratched the surface in its efforts to create a genuine Mass Youth Movement in this country".[7] The geographical base of the Youth League was limited to those areas where the ANC had very strong support. At its 1954 conference there were only delegates from the Cape and Transvaal, with no representation at all of Natal or the Orange Free State.[8] Moreover, details of an ANCYL Provincial Conference in 1955 show that its Transvaal organizational structures were basically confined to the Rand, with no branches in the Pretoria or Vereeniging areas or the rural areas.[9]

In order to try and overcome this situation, the ANC leadership began, from the early 1950s, to direct the ANCYL toward changing itself into a more substantial organization. In 1953 Robert Resha, the ANCYL's Transvaal leader, called for Youth Leaguers to establish Congress and ANCYL branches throughout the Transvaal.[10] Walter Sisulu, the ANC's Secretary General, subsequently called on the Youth to make 1954 a year of "Mass Youth Action against Fascism".[11] Duma Nokwe, the ANCYL's Assistant National Secretary, advanced a policy of creating a 'Mass Youth League' through the holding of "Mass Youth Conferences".[12]

The ANCYL's 1954 conference resolved to strengthen its activity and organization so as to fulfil its "historic

task of rallying the masses of South African Youth".[13] This direction toward the building of a mass youth organization was continued into the period of the boycott.[14]

Some quite vigorous attempts were made by Youth League members to implement these policies in the period 1954-1955. They embarked on a drive to convene mass meetings of youth at some of which new ANCYL branches were formed.[15] By 1955, the Transvaal ANCYL were able to claim at least six new branches on the Rand, and one in Klerksdorp.[16] The ANCYL showed a much greater involvement in practical political campaigns than before, for example playing a prominent role in resisting removals in Sophiatown/Western Native Townships and in Germiston.[17] In particular it was logical that the Youth League should play an important part in the education boycott campaign. A plan was drawn up by a Youth League working group which spelled out their tasks. Students' committees were to be formed at all levels to organize students, and special organizations for students were to be revived or set up: mass meetings were to be held and bulletins on Bantu education were to be distributed: Youth Leaguers were to make contact with parents and teachers. The Youth League was to be involved in the establishment of the broadly based Anti-Bantu Education Committees which were to co-ordinate the boycott in each area.[18] To some extent these plans were implemented: for example on the Rand, there was considerable activity by the

Western Areas, Germiston, Natalspruit, Benoni, Brakpan and Alexandra ANCYL branches in the anti-Bantu Education Campaign.[19]

However these attempts to organize youth politically on a mass scale were, generally, extremely unsuccessful. At the ANC conference at the end of 1955, the year which had seen the school boycott at the height of its strength, the National Executive commented that the ANCYL had failed to become a mass movement of the youth, and that its relation with the ANC was far from satisfactory.[20] The Transvaal Youth League's report for 1955 explains that despite the establishment of some new branches, some of the established branches had begun deteriorating and had collapsed. Although most branches had recruited members, most had also lost members.[21] By 1956 the ANCYL seems to have been at extremely low ebb:[22] Youth League leader T. Makiwane commented that the Youth League's work in the Transvaal was "at a vitrual standstill".[23] By 1956 the ANCYL were once again reconsidering the problem which had originally faced them - the creation of a mass youth movement.[24]

To some extent these difficulties arose from the organizational structures and style of the ANCYL, which found it difficult to break away from being an organization aimed at an older and more intellectual constituency. A 1954 ANCYL publication urges readers "have you enrolled

your son/ daughter in the Youth League"[25] thus suggesting something of an inability to address young people directly. Similarly, a 1956 edition of the same journal identifies 19 to 36 year olds as the target group for ANCYL recruitment,[26] showing a lack of interest in recruiting teenagers which was clearly incompatible with the aim of a "mass youth organization". This emphasis is particularly strange when one remembers that the school boycott was directed at primary schools;[27] those who aimed their recruitment efforts at people in their twenties must clearly have missed opportunities opened up by the boycott.

The ANCYL was also handicapped by a number of more technical organizational considerations. Its members were frequently used by the ANC 'mother body' as foot soldiers in its campaigns and thus were forced to neglect building up the Youth League.[28] There was a lack of infrastructure: the Transvaal Youth League for example had not one full time official.[29] A frequent leadership complaint was that the Youth League was unable to organize cultural activities to attract young supporters.[30]

The work of the ANCYL seems to have been disrupted by the long factional battle between the Congress leadership and the Africanist grouping. This battle centred on the Transvaal where the Orlando Youth League branch under Potlake Leballo was the Africanist's stronghold. The oppositionists were particularly opposed to the ANC's

Congress of the People initiative, and highly critical of the education boycott. Controversy with the Africanists seems to have absorbed an enormous amount of the ANCYL leadership's energy.[31]

Thus the problems experienced by the ANCYL related to its own internal difficulties. But it would be unfair and inaccurate to identify these as the main cause of its inability to evoke a mass response from urban black youth during the 1950s. The fact is that the level of mass politicization of youth was negligible. The contrast between the 1970s and 1980s with their massive eruptions of both semi-spontaneous and organized student movements could not be sharper. The ANCYL faced a potential constituency who were far less easy to mobilize than that facing student militants in the post-1976 era. As an ANCYL journal put it in 1955, "many of our young people still believe that they are not interested in politics".[32] In similar vein the ANCYL's Sophiatown branch executive warned in its 1956 report against the danger of directing the League's efforts at the "mighty few politically serious youth".[33] The Sophiatown Youth Leaguers clearly found that the majority of young people had interests quite distinct from theirs: "We can strengthen [the branch] by catering for the ordinary sporting and social youth. By having interests in their activities. (sic) They in turn will have interest and confidence in the CYL movement".[34]

What explains the contrasts between the political volatility of urban black youth over the last decade and a half, and the unenthusiastic response of youth to the political activists of the 1950s? I would argue that the inadequacy of state provision for the reproduction of the working class in the 1950s - whether in education, housing or mechanisms of social regulation, resulted in situation where urban youth was to a very significant extent drawn into a 'lumpenized' sub-culture. The absence of an effective school system, the lack of employment prospects, and the relatively recent formation of a permanently urbanized proletariat, all militated toward a situation where youth tended to seek individual, and often criminal, rather than collective and political, solutions. Don Mattera, himself a member of a Sophiatown gang, captures very clearly the way in which the 'lumpenization' of urban youth made it difficult for the ANC to organize them:

> But at this time there were more Tsotsis and gangsters than people at work. So there was this social problem. So the politician could not organize successfully because he was being hampered by the social disorder. 35

As I will attempt to demonstrate in Chapter 10, it was in fact the advent of Bantu Education that was largely responsible for changing this youth culture in the 1960s and 1970s. However the township youth of the 1950s were patchily reached by the school system, and where they were, largely went through the relatively benign missionary

system. Bantu Education on the other hand drew in a larger proportion of youth to at least some experience of an under-resourced and repressive education system. What this rapid expansion of the education system did was to provide youth with a common set of political problems, and a common identity within which they could react to those problems. While Bantu Education subjected the youth to a far inferior education than that provided by the mission schools, it reached a far greater number of students for (on average) longer periods of time. It thus created a far bigger education system, with a far harsher character than its predecessor. The changing education system thus provided the structure which would bring youth together and give them a common frame of reference against which they would rebel. Such a unifying set of common institutional experiences and grievances was absent in the 1950s.

While a somewhat anarchic spirit prevailed amongst the bulk of urban youth, on the other hand amongst regular school-goers of the 1950s, parental authority appears to have been much more intact than in more recent times. In its way this too tended to inhibit the emergence of self-organized school student movements. The tendency of young people to impose their political will unilaterally on their elders became a major political problem for oppositional movements in the 1980s.[36] By contrast, the 1955 boycott was a purely adult controlled action. The ANC did not appeal to the school students to boycott the schools, but rather to the

parents to withdraw their children from the schools.[37] Posing the issue in this way was in the circumstances appropriate: there was no sign of autonomous school student activity. It was only through parents that most young people could be drawn into the boycott. Nor is there any evidence that students' participation in the boycott undermined the power of the parents: there was no evidence of clashes of opinion of any substantial scale between students and parents. It thus seems probable that between the 1950s and the 1970s there was a shift in authority relations within the family, which is as yet unexplained, but which must be central to an understanding of post 1976 student movements.

'People's Education': Strengths and Limitations

The first limitation of the boycott's possibilities was then, the lack of self-organization and political awareness of youth. The second was the material inability of the AEM to provide a working counter-hegemonic institutional alternative in the education field. The ANC clearly did envisage that it was providing a different vision of education, as part of a wider political challenge to the regime. The emergence of 'People's Education for People's Power' as a major slogan and strategy of popular political movements in South Africa since late 1985[38] has tended to be perceived as an entirely new development. But in a strictly historical sense People's Education is not at all

a new concept. During the 1955-1956 boycotts, leadership elements of the ANC advanced the slogan of People's Education in exactly the same sense in which it has been used in the recent period - mobilization to transform education as an intrinsic part of a strategy for overall liberation. An ANC leadership document of 1955 defines "People's Education" as "Democratic-Liberatory education... It will be Democratic in control, organization and purpose... It will be Liberatory in object because its main object will be to equip the people and the youth to fulfil their historic task of liberating themselves".[39] The impact of the concept was however limited during the 1950s. There was some attempt, during the decade, to popularize the slogan - Peter Ntithe, a Congress Youth League activist, for example, greeted a 1955 Sophiatown conference on Bantu Education with the words "Long live(s) the People's Education".[40] But the slogan was not widely taken up. It was not until the 1980s when there was a far more substantial mass challenge to the education system, that the 'People's Education' approach really came into its own, and the term was widely used.

What did People's Education achieve during the 1950s? It did briefly sustain a remarkable level of organized alternative schooling activity, although as we shall see, in national terms it was limited in its impact and hampered by a lack of resources. The alternative educational

facilities provided by the African Education Movement during the 1955-1956 boycotts were known as Cultural Clubs - the Bantu Education Act prevented them from presenting themselves as schools or teaching formal courses. Considering the lack of available resources and funding, the AEM did a remarkable job, sustaining networks of clubs on the Rand and in the Eastern Cape through the period of the boycott. ANC members, and also members of the white Congress of Democrats, provided co-ordination and support for these projects. The best of the Cultural Clubs were well run: one at Korsten in the Eastern Cape, for example, provided "games, physical exercises, health talks and singing" as well as a feeding scheme for the children.[41] In New Brighton an effective club was run for about 1,000 children which boasted a well trained choir.[42] At Veeplaats 900 children were in the cultural club[43] and at Brakpan 800.[44] At Kleinskool the club was so effective that even after a year 75% of the children in the area were attending its programme of "games, bible studies, singing..."[45]

The back-up provided to clubs by the AEM was very competent, considering its lack of financial resources. A timetable and guidelines for club leaders were provided.[46] Training groups for the club leaders were held once a fortnight,[47] and larger scale training courses were also run occasionally, especially during 1956.[48] At these

training courses talks were given by prominent figures like Resha, J. Radebe, Norman Levy, Helen Joseph and (on one occasion) Eddie Roux.[49] The AEM also supplied clubs with good quality educational material, on roneoed sheets, covering games, stories, history, geography, maths and English.[50] Most of the material did not have a specifically political orientation, and was broad in its scope. Recommended reading included Paton's Cry The Beloved Country, an interesting choice considering the disfavour into which the book later fell in African Nationalist circles.[51] Culturally the material drew on diverse traditions: African folk tales and Western nursery rhymes featured in it.[52] The material for the most part was directed to the passing on of real skills, and to the transmission of moral precepts of the type: "We must not think of the present only, but we must always prepare ourselves for the future".[53] However some of the material did address social and political issues. A well written history lesson sought to make quite complex points such as that the 17th century Dutch colonists thought in terms of a Christian/heathen rather than a White/Black distinction; and that South Africa had been settled by Blacks before the arrival of the Whites.[54] Cultural Club leaders were advised to explain the Bantu Education Act and the campaign against it to their students,and to teach them the Freedom Charter.[55] One draft programme for the Cultural Clubs recommended, as well as a "talk by Anglican priest or any

other denomination", discussions on the lives of radical leaders like Johannes Nkosi, Bill Andrews, Dr. Dadoo, Moses Kotane, Albert Luthuli, J.B. Marks and Mao Tse Tung;[56] this recommendation is not really characteristic of the general tone of AEM material however. The participating children nevertheless seem to have identified clearly with the aims of the boycott: Huddleston records that when Sophiatown children passed the Bantu Education school they would give Congress salutes and yell "Verwoerd, Verwoerd", and that those attending the cultural clubs sang the song:

> There are only two ways for Africa... one way leads to Congress and one way to Verwoerd. 57

The AEM's activities were thus an exemplary use of extremely limited resources. Within months of the call for a boycott there was in existence a network of Cultural Clubs and training facilities for leaders and a supply of educational materials which could be used in the clubs.

Nevertheless, the achievement of the AEM should not be exaggerated. As a whole it reached a very small proportion of the school population. We have detailed figures for student attendance at the Cultural Clubs. As of mid-1955, the numbers at Cultural Clubs on the Rand were as follows:

Alexandra Township	200
Benoni	327
Brakpan	800
Germiston	320
Jabavu	89
Moroka	49
Natalspruit	289
TOTAL:	2,074 [58]

Attendance in the Eastern Cape, as of the beginning of the boycott, (or early 1956, according to the availability of figures) stood at:

Malmaison Location (1956)	141
Missionvale (1956)	50
New Brighton	1 000
Fairview	(not given)
Despatch	287
Uitenhage	455
Veeplaats	900
Korsten	600
Kleinskool	102
Walmer	60
Kirkwood	296
TOTAL:	3,891 [59]

Given that the boycott did not really take hold outside these two regions, it seems that the total number attending the Cultural Clubs was of the order of 6,000. While this was a considerable achievement, it ought to be remembered that by 1955 there were over one million African children in school.[60] While in the areas where the boycott was strongest the proportion of those attending Cultural Clubs was very large, in national terms they reached only just under one school student in every one hundred and sixty-six. This clearly did not constitute an alternative system of education.

Nor could the AEM overcome the problem of the lack of political structures for youth. In June 1955 an attempt was made to launch a youth organization known as the Baputsela. It was modelled on the Scouts and Guides

movement, but had a radical political content.[61] However, it seems to have rapidly faded away. Despite considerable enthusiasm from the youth for participation in the Cultural Clubs, the AEM did not solve the problem which had faced the ANCYL - that of structuring a mass youth politics.

Despite the great courage and imagination that the activists of the 1955-1956 boycott showed, the fact remains that they suffered an absolute and crushing defeat. During the second half of the 1950s enrollment in Bantu Education schools rose from less than one million to over a million and a half,[62] and the schooling system was effectively restructured along the lines envisaged by Verwoerd. So the boycott was unable to block the implementation of Bantu Education. It thus seems important to ask the question why it proved impossible to sustain a People's Education initiative alongside Bantu Education. Obviously, state repression and the kind of tactical and organizational vicissitudes to which any political movement is subject played an important role in undermining the boycotts. But I will suggest that these were not the decisive reasons for the ultimate failure of the boycott. Rather, the attempt to create 'People's Education' did not succeed because there were underlying ambiguities and difficulties in trying to provide a counter-hegemonic education system which were not squarely faced. These difficulties, I will argue, are endemic to attempts to provide an alternative

education in the context of a state which is capable of sustaining itself.

Repression by the state certainly confronted the boycott movement. In April 1955 Verwoerd expelled from school 7,000 children who were taking part in the boycott in the affected regions; in July he decreed that they were to be readmitted the following year only if their parents gave undertakings about their behaviour, and if their case had been investigated by the School Committees.[63] In the same period, 116 teachers were removed from their posts.[64] There were 'constant' raids on Cultural Clubs by the police;[65] this placed severe limitations on the type of activities which the clubs could offer, as an item like a blackboard could be used by police as evidence of an illegal school.[66] The state strove to disrupt AEM activities: for example, in January 1956, 30 Eastern Cape Cultural Club leaders were restricted from travelling to Johannesburg for a training course at Alexandra. In view of this the AEM decided to hold a course in Port Elizabeth at Easter. But the imposition of a ban on meetings forced them to move it to Uitenhage. On the second day of the course, the Special Branch and the location superintendent arrived and took away organizers Helen Joseph and Norman Levy. Municipal police tried to take the names of those at the meeting, but the delegates refused to co-operate. The SAP then arrived in force and ordered the meeting to disperse, which it did after singing to show defiance. The

next day the conference continued, in secret, in the countryside.[67] The police also discouraged hall owners from allowing the Cultural Clubs to use their facilities.[68] Where students mounted pickets at schools, these were broken up by the police.[69]

However, the boycotts lack of success cannot really be accounted for by these realities. Police action and Verwoerd's threats did not drive the bulk of those participating in the Cultural Clubs back to school: the clubs sustained themselves well into 1956. Moreover, the repression was very limited compared to the situation in the 1970s and 1980s: there are no reports of the use of fire-arms against school students nor of arrests of substantial numbers of them. Yet in the 1970s and 1980s boycotts have sustained themselves far longer than in the earlier period. The boycott and the AEM clearly did face a greater deal of harassment at the hands of the authorities, but this does not in itself explain the campaign's lack of success.

Problems of organization and tactics were another factor which may have had an impact on the anti-Bantu Education campaign's fate. The ANC certainly had difficulties in the area of organization. At its 1954 conference, the NEC complained about bad administration at the provincial committee level, and the unwieldy size of branches, which

could run to a thousand members;[70] while at the 1955 conference the NEC pointed out that it was handicapped by the local leadership's inability to efficiently forward membership fees and levies to the national organization.[71] There were also some tactical problems in the way in which the school boycott was organized. At the 1954 ANC conference, the issue was 'handed over' to the womens' and youth sections of the movement,[72] a development suggesting that it tended to be seen as a sectoral issue, of interest to women and youth only. At the ANC's 1955 conference the NEC pointed out this [illegible]er, noting that Bantu Education was directed against "the entire liberatory struggle" and that the campaign "should not be handled in isolation from other campaigns".[73] The wrangle within the ANC as to when and where the boycott should start also caused difficulties for the campaign. According to the ANC's Cape organizer, T.E. Ka Tshunungwa, it created "a confused situation" and "dampened spirits throughout the country".[74] These setbacks seem to have been linked to problems of local-level organization. When the NEC met in March 1955 to decide on whether to go ahead with the boycott, no local reports were available to it.[75] Ka Tshunungwa felt too, that the leadership did not adequately communicate conference decisions to members.[76] But again, these tactical and organizational issues do not provide the key to the boycott's limited impact. Despite such problems, the ANC was able to launch campaigns which drew enormous popular support during the 1950s. Whatever problems they

experienced in organizing their initiatives do not seem to have prevented them from drawing a widespread following. There is thus no reason to assume that organizational difficulties dealt a fatal blow to the anti-Bantu Education campaign.

The fundamental weakness of the campaign was, I would argue, its lack of clarity on the issue of whether or not it was seeking to provide a permanent alternative system to Bantu Education. In ANC policy discussions and activity three distinct views of the role of the Cultural Clubs emerge: these three views were not in reality separated out, but were often used in some combination. The AEM's activities were variously portrayed as:

* a protest against the Bantu Education Act, which would be of limited duration;
* a temporary provision of cultural activities and child care, but not an all-round education for school students, during the course of a boycott of indefinite length;
* an attempt to establish an alternative, popular education which would continue until the collapse of the Nationalist government;

This lack of clarity created in the minds of some ANC supporters the idea that the movement could permanently provide education for their children - an impression which led inevitably to disillusionment.

A popular movement can create its own educational structures on a mass scale in periods of mass mobilization. But in a modern industrializing country with millions of school students, no movement can sustain such a popular educational system outside of state structures for long. A popular movement which does not control the state simply cannot find the material resources to support the tens of thousands of teachers, the rudimentary educational equipment, and the complex bureaucratic planning which is required for the maintenance of any permanent mass education system. Popular education movements are therefore likely to be undermined by their material weaknesses. But they are also liable to be debilitated by their own status as 'alternative' institutions. If an existing social order remains intact, the student is going to be faced with the need to enter the labour market. It rapidly becomes clear to both parent and child that the student who has been to a state school will have a form of certification which will be accepted by employers, while a student who has been through an 'alternative' education system will not only lack certification, but will be negatively affected in terms of employment opportunities if the employer knows of his or her background. The result of these factors is likely to be a steady drift of students away from 'People's Education' and towards state schools. Thus a 'People's Education' movement which tries to maintain itself as a separate entity from the state system

is liable to wither away. More viable for such a movement is a strategy of providing some limited alternative activities for students inside the state system, combined with a political struggle to change aspects of state education policy and to transform school practises through community and student activity at a local level. In this way, a long-term struggle for a popular education programme can be carried on by attempting to block the state's educational agenda, and to impose a popular agenda on it instead. The 1950s boycotts did not face these issues squarely. Given the fact that there was no prospect of the ANC coming to power, the idea which was prevalent in the boycott that a new educational system could be built outside that of the state was totally unrealistic, and led, inevitably, to the failure of the campaign and disillusion on the part of parents and students. This analysis will now be substantiated through an examination of the boycott's attempt to build an educational alternative.

When the notion of a campaign on the Bantu Education Act was first floated by the ANC at its December 1953 conference in Queenstown, no tactics were specified, but the aim was identified as the repeal of the Act.[77] This conception of the campaign as a short-term protest against the Act seems to have been carried on by the ANCYL working committee set up to plan the campaign. In its view it should attempt to be a "country-wide demonstration" and should try to counter the effects of Bantu Education

"primarily by raising the political consciousness and understanding of the Youth and Students".[78] The action should take the form of "withdrawal of children from schools for a defined period".[79] However, once the boycott movement developed some momentum it began to open itself up to the idea that Congress could provide children with a permanent educational alternative; the way for such an understanding of the campaign was prepared by the use of such ambiguous terms as "alternative educational and cultural activities for African children",[80] in the planning of the boycott. This ambiguity was quickly transformed by some elements of the ANC into an understanding of the Cultural Clubs as a permanent alternative to Bantu Education. "Once the people have rejected Bantu Education" a Congress publication stated in November 1955, "they will find an alternative to Bantu Education and to the entire slave educatio of this country".[81] Similarly a Congress of Democrats document of the same year describes the AEM programme as "a direct alternative to the school education."[82] This grew into a somewhat triumphalist view of what the Cultural Clubs and the boycott could achieve. At the 1955 conference of the Transvaal ANCYL the campaign was prematurely described by the Provincial Executive as a "victory" and the Executive went on to assert that "The uncompromising implementation of the decision to withdraw the children must lead to

destruction [of Bantu Education]".[83] Because of the practical and legal difficulties of carrying out formal schooling in the Cultural Clubs, the AEM evolved the idea of a system of Home Education, in which the AEM would provide material which students could study under parental supervision.[84] Not only did such a scheme have even greater material problems inherent in its realization (provision of study kits, illiteracy amongst parents etc.) but it was also interpreted in a way which fed into the idea of an AEM 'alternative', setting out to provide "a start in formal education".[85] The rampant ambiguity about the future of the boycott is demonstrated by a 1955 article by an AEM activist. Having written "'How much of an alternative do [Cultural Clubs] provide?'...frankly we must answer: '...not very much'", she goes on to assert, contradictorily, that "There will be Cultural Clubs as long as there is Bantu Education".[86] In fact substantial elements of the Congress leadership were clear from the beginning about the limitations of what they could provide in the educational sphere; their problem was that the creation of the Cultural Clubs generated unrealistic expectations. Robert Resha had told the conference that launched the boycott of the "practical impossibility of providing alternate primary education", and saw the Cultural Clubs as strictly limited to cultural and recreational activities.[87] In assessing the campaign at the end of 1955, the ANC's NEC recognised the difficulties

which had been created by the ambiguity on the issue;

> We must beware of creating the false impression that by isolated local boycotts the Bantu Education Act can be defeated...we must not deceive ourselves or the people into believing that in the immediate future we can, with our resources, substitute a national education system. We have no state budget behind us. 88

By late 1956, the NEC had followed through the logic of this view by calling off the indefinite boycott.[89]

In the course of the boycott, the ANC came increasingly to realize the material difficulties standing in the way of any alternative educational system. At the conference held in late 1955, the NEC criticized the 'undue emphasis' laid on alternative facilities; this, they concluded, had strengthened the argument that Bantu education was better than no education (presumably because of the disillusionment caused by the limitations of the service AEM could provide).[90] As Congress leader Z.K. Matthews commented in retrospect, "The boycott failed principally because of the difficulty of organizing an alternative programme for the children".[91] By late 1956, the Cultural Clubs were in a state of collapse, chiefly because of a simple lack of funding.[92] A discussion of the clubs presented at the 1956 conference of the Transvaal ANC identified lack of money to pay Cultural Club leaders as the main problem which was undermining the clubs: many club leaders had left because of the lack of an income, and the remainder were expected to do so at the beginning of the next year.[93] But even before this collapse, the Cultural

Clubs were placed in a position where they simply could not provide adequate resources for the numbers of children attending. For example, in September 1956, the Brakpan Cultural Club reported that with "about eight" leaders it was endeavouring to cater for 758 children, divided into 13 separate groups, and all meeting in the open air.[94] Even given the limited extent of the boycott, the AEM simply did not have the material resources to undertake the task it was attempting.

Bantu Education As 'Material Substratum' for Acquiesence

The most important reason for the defeat of the boycott was however the capacity of the state to provide mass schooling. "We must cry for our children" said an ANC speaker in Moroka in June 1955, even as he urged parents to participate in the boycott.[95] Parents' concern for the future employability of their children first limited support for the boycott and then undermined it. Boycott organizers were never able to counter this problem effectively. Only the state schools could provide a route to certification acceptable to employers, and, given that the existing social order would clearly not change in the short term, the inexorable forces of the labour marker pushed school students away from an alternative system. From the first, the NEC found the response to the boycott "not enthusiastic".[96] As the NEC recognized in its assessment of the campaign at the end of 1955, all it could

offer a parent through the campaign was an act of 'political conviction'.[97] Parents were generally unwilling to make this sacrifice of their children's futures except in a few highly politicized areas of the country, as even strong proponents of the boycott like Father Huddleston acknowledged.[98] Even amongst parents who could be persuaded to participate in the boycott there was a steady decline in support. The Veeplaats Cultural Club, for example, started with 900 children in 1955, but this had fallen to about 500 at the beginning of 1956.[99]

The restructuring of education enabled the schools to draw in vast numbers of new pupils: the schools of Bantu Education thus provided part of a 'material substratum', which could secure the acquiescence of the urban working class in the new social order which was to prevail from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s. This was, precisely, acquiescence and not allegiance: but the absence of widespread resistance in education from late 1956 to mid-1976 surely cannot be satisfactorily accounted for in terms purely of coercion or brain-washing. The Verwoerdian educational outlook failed to hegemonize significant urban social forces. But the material reorganization of the education system in the period did help to defuse potential opposition.

The urban working class parent desperately needed the

schools: not just for their role in education but also for their role in taking care of the child. As Z.K. Matthews put it, in explaining the failure of the school boycott, schools kept pupils "safe from accidents and juvenile delinquency" while their parents were at work.[100] Alternative schools did not have the material capacity to replace regular schools in this role. In addition, the tremendous numerical expansion of schooling undoubtedly generated some supportive reactions from parents who had not previously been able to keep their children in school. While politically conscious people and most teachers rejected Bantu Education, others, especially those who had previously not had access to the school system, welcomed it. A teacher who was working at the time comments:

> Now most of the parents were illiterate, they felt that now anyone can get educated...Those who realized the set up reacted with more support to the missionary schools... 101

The same teacher found that parents often did not grasp the reasons why teachers were resigning in protest against Bantu Education. He believed that the expansion of the numbers of students made a favourable impression upon communities and that it was only those aware of education issues who grasped the meaning of the new school system:

> ...it appeared that the changes meant that you could pursue any type of education you desired... It is only those who knew education, and what it must consist of, who knew that it was a destruction coming in. 102

Other teachers comment in similar terms:

> It was mainly activists who reacted. Black communities just didn't know about [the]

differences...[between mission and bantu education]. 103

...the people did not understand the change from missionary education to Bantu education. They did not. My father for instance did not understand that. People like Mr _____, he knew what was happening - they knew, they had been in the field for a long time...the community in general did not know what was happening. 104

I would say it was a small percentage [who resisted]. The majority sent their children to school. 105

The expanded material provision of schooling underpinned the attitude of those sections of black communities who were prepared to live with the new system. A veteran teacher, now in his seventies, says of his community's response to the educational expansion of the late 1950s and early 1960s:

...I think they liked it - because the state built attractive schools. That's what I think - better than the mission schools. They had in mind that these are good for us. 106

In a similar vein, another teacher takes the view that:

[The community] were pleased because the department built more state schools and as a result more children could be accommodated. 107

In one interview a teacher expressed the opinion that his community viewed the expansion of the education system during the early years of Bantu Education

...with approval because indeed...this is one positive side of Bantu Education, that more people used to come, were able to get into school. 108

One interviewee's comments suggest that there was existing black feeling in favour of greater state intervention in

education, (if not of the form it in fact took) on which the Department of Native Affairs could capitalize:

> ...the Blacks felt that the time had come now when the government should also take over the education of the Blacks. That was the major change which the Africans advocated at the time. 109

The ideological elements of Bantu Education were also able to exert a certain appeal. The remark of a woman teacher suggests how the Verwoerdian attempt to mobilise ethnicity in the new education policy met with a degree of success:

> [The community] thought that it was a good thing, that the use of bantu language would make it easier to cope. 110

In line with the arguments I have made concerning the low level of politicization of youth, she also found that initial student reaction against Bantu Education was not widespread:

> I think they didn't know it then, that this Bantu Education was killing them. 111

One teacher interviewed felt that with the exodus of politically conscious teachers from 1955, the teaching profession itself became increasingly reconciled to the new system, especially with the influx of teachers trained under the new system:

> Most of the teachers are children of Bantu Education. So I don't know what you think about your mother. Generally, the younger teacher seemingly has no odds against the department. 112

The power of the schools to attract parents' support despite the social inequalities which they embodied is

borne out by the events surrounding the 1955-56 boycotts. The numbers of students in schools nationally increased during the schools boycott by about 85,000.[113] Even in the ranks of the ANC itself, members were suspended in about 25 Cape branches for sending their children to school.[114] Ultimately the question came down to this: the state could provide expanded capacity for education and child care, albeit on a grossly inegalitarian and racist basis; the Cultural Clubs could not compete with it on this terrain.

Conclusion

By late 1956, the major campaign of resistance to Bantu Education had come to an end. In part, this was the result of repression. In part, it was the result of the ANCs own tactical and strategic uncertainty over the aims of the campaign. But there were more fundamental reasons, beyond the control of the ANC, for its lack of success. The attractions of an expanded school system, however poorly equipped and racially structured, were sufficient to draw hundreds of thousands of new pupils into the system in a very short space of time. Alternative schools run by the Cultural Clubs could not provide the material wherewithal for the care of youth or the educational certification that could get them employment. In a situation where the state was not under immediate threat, these factors ensured that the vast majority of black parents would try to keep their children inside the state education system.

But at the same time, popular demand for education was part of the pressure on the state to expand the school system. And in the expansion of schooling there were hidden dangers for the regime. The creation of a mass education system would, in the long run, forge a new culture of youth which would in the 1970s show a receptiveness to politicization which was absent in the youth of the 1950s.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. The focus of this thesis is on the state and popular movements in educational conflict. Therefore it does not deal with the largely symbolic opposition to Bantu Education of the South African Institute of Race Relations, which co-ordinated a campaign of publicity criticizing the Bantu Education Act (see SAIRR, A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa (1952-53 (Johannesburg, SAIRR, 1953), pp.66-87), or the also largely symbolic opposition of the churches to the Act (see A. Hastings, A History of African Christianity, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979) pp.103- ; M. Horrell, A Decade of Bantu Education, (SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1964), pp.22-34).

2. See Chapters 1 and 2.

3. T. Lodge "The Parents' School Boycott, 1955" in B. Bozzoli (ed.) Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1983a). pp.365-395; T. Lodge Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, (Johannesburg, Ravan, 1983b), pp.114-38; T. Lodge "The Parents' School Boycott: Eastern Cape and East Rand Townships, 1955" in P. Kallaway (ed.) Apartheid and Education, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1984), pp.265-295.

4. T. Lodge, (1983a, 1983b, 1984), op.cit.

5. C. Giffard, "'The Hour of Youth has Struck': The African National Congress Youth League and the Struggle for a Mass Base 1943-52", B.A. (Hons.) dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1984, passim.

6. UW AD 1812 Ea 3, The Youth Movement in South Africa, n.d.

7. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, Afrika n.d.

8. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.1, Youth Prepare 1954: Report of ANCYL Conference at Kabah township, Uitenhage, 26 June, 1954.

9. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.2, Executive Report to the 12th Provincial Conference of the African National Congress Youth League (Transvaal): Report of the Credentials Committee, 1955.

10. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The African Lodestar, April 1953. This paper was sometimes titled in this way, and

sometimes as simply 'The Lodestar'; its numbering and dating were also erratic.

11. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.3, D. Nokwe, Circular letter to Executive, 14th January 1954.

12. Ibid.

13. AD 1812 Ea 3.1, Programme for the Building of a Mass Youth League, (Resolution passed at ANCYL Conference, Uitenhage, 26 and 27 June, 1954).

14. AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.9, African National Congress Youth League (Cape), 3rd November 1955.

15. AD 1812 Ea 3.3, D. Nokwe, Circular Letter, 18 January, 1954; AD1812 Ea 3 The African Lodestar, October, 1954.

16. AD 1812 Ea 3.1, J.P. Manne OPO's Round Up n.d.

17. AD 1812 Ea 3.1, J.P. Manne, OPO's Round Up, n.d.; AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report to th 12th Provincial Conference of the African National Congress Youth League (Transvaal).

18. AD 1812 Ea 3.2.2, Working Committee of the ANCYL Draft Plan for the Campaign Against Bantu Education 1954.

19. AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.2, Presidential Report to Provincial Conference Tvl African National Congress Youth League, 1955.

20. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference of the African National Congress held at Bochabela Hall, Bloemfontein on the 16th to 18th December 1955: Executive Report.

21. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Presidential Report to Provincial Congress of ANCYL (1955), op.cit.

22. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The Lodestar Vol.10, No.1, August 1956.

23. UW AD 1812 Ea 3, T. Makiwane, Circular letter, for ANCYL (Tvl.), November 1956.

24. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.5.4, Draft Resolutions Presented to the Eastern Cape Regional Conference of the African National Congress Youth League, 23 June, 1956.

25. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The African Lodestar, May 1954.

26. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The Lodestar Vol.10, No.1, 1956.

27. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report to the 12th Provincial Conference (1955), op.cit.

28. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.9, T.E. Ka Tshunungwa, The African National Congress Cape Provincial Secretariat Report: January - November 1955: 16 November 1955.

29. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.3, Y. Putini, Circular Letter, 23 September, 1955.

30. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.9, T.E. Ka Tshunungwa (1955), op.cit.

31. UW AD 1812, Copy of Notes made by Solomon Dunga of a Meeting of the African National Congress Held at Alexandra on 8.4.56: Report by Phineas Nene; UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.2, Resolutions of the Annual Conference of the African National Congress Youth League (Transvaal) Held on Sunday 23rd May 1954 at the Trades Hall 30 Kerk Street, Johannesburg; UW AD 1812 Ea 3.3, Y. Putini, Circular Letter 25 August 1955; UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The African Lodestar 1954-5; UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report to the 12th Provincial Conference (1955), op.cit.

32. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The African Lodestar, 1955.

33. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report Sophiatown Branch ANCYL, 2 August 1956.

34. Idem.

35. D. Mattera, interviewed in P. Stein and R. Jacobsen (eds.), Sophiatown Speaks, (Johannesburg, Junction Avenue Press, 1986) p.14.

36. See for example the comment of Z. Sisulu "People's Education For People's Power", Transformation, No.1, 1986, especially pp.113-115.

37. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.3, Resolutions of the African National Congress Annual Conference, 1954.

38. Fr. S. Mkatshwa, "Keynote Address" in, Report on National Consultative Conference on the Crisis in Education: Organized by Soweto Parents Crisis Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 28-29 December 1985, (Johannesburg, SPCC, 1986), pp.6-16.

39. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.11.2.3, National Secretariat, document attached to "Anti Bantu Education Action Committee Conference held at Matabe Hall, Sophiatown on Sunday the 9th January, 1955".

40. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The African Lodestar, 1955.

41. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, Report of Cultural Club Activities in the Eastern Cape, (Uitenhage Conference) Easter 1956.

42. Idem.

43. Idem.

44. Fighting Talk, November 1955.

45. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, Report of Cultural Club Activities... (1956), op.cit.

46. Fighting Talk, November 1955.

47. Idem.

48. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.2.1, Material on Alexandra Training course, 9-13 January 1956; UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, Untitled document relating to conference of Cultural Club leaders, Port Elizabeth, 4 March 1956; UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.2 to Ca 3.4.3, Group Leaders Conference, Port Elizabeth, 19 July 1956; UW AD 1137 Ca 3.3.3, Material relating to training meeting at Benoni, 15 September 1956.

49. Ibid.

50. Fighting Talk, November 1955; UW AD 1137 Ca 4.2.2, material from the AEM.

51. UW AD 1137 Ca 4.1.3, Draft Programme of Activities for Cultural Clubs, n.d (1955-6 presumably). For a representative example of African Nationalist criticism of Paton, see the remarks of the Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in N.wa Thiong'o, Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature, (London, James Currey, 1986), pp.12, 69-70, 91-92.

52. UW AD 1137 Ca 4.2.5, AEM material, n.d.; UW AD 1137 Ca 3.3.4, AEM material.

53. UW AD 1137 Ca 4.2.5, AEM material.

54. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.3.4, Part 3. The Cape Under Dutch Rule, n.d.

55. UW AD 1137 Ca 4.2, Bantu Education Training Courses: Material for Group Leaders, 23 July 1955.

56. UW AD 1137 Ca 4.1.3, Draft Programme (n.d.), op.cit.

57. T. Huddleston, Naught for your Comfort, (London, Collins, 1981), pp.131-32.

58. Fighting Talk, November 1955.

59. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, Report of Cultural Club Activities (1956), op.cit.

60. Horrell (1964), op.cit., p.41.

61. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.5, The First Report of the Baputsela Youth Organization, June-October 1955.

62. Idem.

63. The Torch, 19 July 1955.

64. The Torch, 21 June 1955.

65. Fighting Talk, November 1955.

66. Fighting Talk, November 1955; Huddleston (1981), op.cit., p.131.

67. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, document relating to conference of Cultural Club leaders, Port Elizabeth (1956), op.cit.

68. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report to the General Annual Meeting of the African National Congress Youth League Sophiatown Branch held on 2nd August 1956.

69. Idem.

70. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7.3, The Annual Report of the National Executive Committee to the 42nd Annual Conference of the African National Congress held at the Bantu Social Centre, Durban, on the 16th to the 19th December 1954.

71. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

72. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7.3, The Annual Report of the NEC to the 43nd Annual Conference... (1954), op.cit.

73. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

74. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.9, Ka Tshunungwa (1955), op.cit.

75. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

76. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4.9, Ka Tshunungwa (1955), op.cit.

77. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, Resolutions Adopted by the 41st Annual Conference of the African National Congress held at Queenstown on 18th - 20th December 1953; UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, Resolutions Adopted by the National Conference 20th December 1953.

78. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.5, Working Committee of the ANCYL... (1954), op.cit.

79. Idem.

80. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7.6, Resolutions Adopted at the Special Conference of Organisations Opposed to the Bantu Education Act Port Elizabeth, 1955.

81. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.14.1.4, Congress Voice, November 1955.

82. UW AD 1137 Ca 1.1.1, COD, Education for Knowledge, 1955; for a similar view see UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4, The Lodestar, vol.10, no.1, August 1956.

83. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.4.2, Executive Report to the 12th Provincial Conference... (1955), op.cit.

84. UW AD 1137 Ca 1.1.1, COD (1955), op.cit.

85. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.2.1, The Cultural Clubs and Home Education, (Alexandra Township Training Session, January 1956).

86. Fighting Talk, November 1955.

87. Counter Attack, 18 April, 1955.

88. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

89. New Age, 6 December, 1956.

90. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

91. Z.K. Matthews and M. Wilson, Freedom for my People: The Autobiography of Z.K. Matthews, (Cape Town, David Philip, 1983), p.131.

92. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.11.2.6, Our Cultural Clubs, (document from the 1956 Conference of the Transvaal ANC) Lady Selbourne, 3 and 4 November 1956.

93. Idem.

94. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.3.2, Brakpan Cultural Club, Benoni, September, 1956.

95. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.8.3, Notes Made by N/D/Sgt. Douglas Ndaba of a meeting of the African National Congress Held at Dadoo Square Moroka 19 June, 1955.

96. Matthews and Wilson (1983), op.cit, p.179.

97. UW AD 1812 Ea 1.7, The Annual Report of the 43rd Annual General Conference... (1955), op.cit.

98. Huddleston (1981), op.cit., p.129.

99. UW AD 1137 Ca 3.4.1, Report of Cultural Club Activities... (1956), op.cit

100. Matthews and Wilson (1983), op.cit., p.131.

101. Interview No.18, Soweto, 1986.

102. Ibid.

103. Interview No.16, Soweto, 1986.

104. Interview No.14, Soweto, 1986.

105. Interview No.6, Soweto, 1986.

106. Interview No.13, Soweto, 1986.

107. Interview No.6, Soweto, 1986.

108. Interview No.5, Soweto, 1986.

109. Interview No.11, Soweto, 1986.

110. Interview No.8, Soweto, 1986.

111. Ibid.

112. Interview No.4, Soweto, 1986.

113. Horrell (1964), op.cit., p.41.

114. UW AD 1812 Ea 3.2.4, T.E. KaTshunungwa, The African National Congress Cape Province Secretariat Report: January-November 1955, 16 November 1955.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESISTANCE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'BANTU EDUCATION': ii. OPPOSITION TO THE SCHOOL BOARD SYSTEM, TEACHER RADICALISM AND STUDENT RIOT

The ANC school boycott was not the only form of resistance to Bantu Education. Boycotts of school boards and committees, teacher resistance in the Cape, and continuing, deepening protest in the mission schools were other manifestations of popular resistance to the restructuring of education. This chapter analyses these other forms of educational resistance. Our focus here is on the struggle for hegemony in the educational sphere. It is suggested that the educational bureaucracy was able to defeat or contain these forms of opposition during the period between the mid 1950s and the early 1960s, when Bantu Education policy was being implemented. The school board system was effectively established despite the attempts of popular movements to disrupt this process. Victimization of teacher activists in the Cape ground down their organization. No coherent social movement of school student resistance emerged. To some extent the educational authorities were aided in winning this victory by internal problems of the oppositional movements; for instance sectarian division amongst the Cape teachers was important in undermining their organization.

These defeats appeared to open the way for the creation of a new Verwoerdian hegemony in the educational sphere.

Indeed, signs that officialdom had the capacity to draw sectors of the oppressed into willing support of the new educational order began to emerge. There was growing participation in the school boards and committees. But in looking more carefully at the changes unfolding in the period, it will become apparent that the new dispensation in education was not in fact successfully creating a new hegemony. The best that it could achieve was what I have characterized as acquiesence: an acceptance of existing social arrangements, but one falling well short of alleigance to or identification with them.

The school boards and committees would operate with a lack of real authority which prevented them from building a permanent and secure social basis. Teachers might be reduced to political passivity but were alienated from the education system by the arbitrary behaviour of the school boards and the racism of education department officials. And, while the tradition of student riot faded in the rural boarding schools in the 1960s, it was to re-emerge to much greater effect, in urban schools in the 1970s.

Resistance to School Boards and School Committees

The boycotts against school boards and committees attained wide support during the period of their inception in the mid 1950s. Yet within a few years the boards and committees had been securely established. This was in part

a result of the success which they attained in giving more conservative members of local communities a degree of control over teachers, who had previously enjoyed an elite status, as well as the tempting opportunities for corruption and patronage which participation in the system opened up. The attractions of these factors were sufficient to draw large numbers of participants into the boards and committees. However in the longer term, the arbitrary actions and corruption of the boards and committees further alienated teachers from the new education system and became an obstacle to ensuring their willing participation in it.

The School Board system was immediately challenged by the political movements of the time, which saw it as an intrinsic part of Bantu Education's imposition of a totally separate and inferior education system. At the meeting of the ANC's National Executive Committee in Durban on 6 March 1955, a call was made for a boycott of the boards and committees.[1] The Unity Movement also opposed the board system, and indeed, unlike the ANC, saw such a boycott as the main strategy against the Bantu Education.[2] Although nationally insignificant compared with the ANC, the Unity Movement was in a position to affect the struggle over this issue in the Cape, because of its control of the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA).

During the two years following the introduction of the board and committee structure, there were numerous instances of resistance to its establishment. J. Dugard, then Regional Director of Bantu Education in the Cape, writes that:

> ...where the ANC was active only very brave men would agree to be government nominees on the boards and it was quite impossible to organize meetings to choose representatives of parents. 3

In the Eastern Cape and Transkei there was fierce opposition to the boards and committees. A Grahamstown meeting to elect a committee was broken up by ANC members from East London.[4] In Tsomo and Mt. Ayliff districts about 25 out of 30 school committees were subject to successful boycotts.[5] The magistrate at Peddie admitted, in September 1956, that he had experienced so much difficulty with school committee elections because of local opposition to the committees that he had been reduced to nominating them.[6] In Elliot district in 1955 the boycott was so successful that the authorities were unable to find a single local dignitary to sit on the school committees and the School Inspector, Education Department Regional organizer, and Predikant (all white) had to constitute themselves into a school board.[7] At Tsolo the local people voted to refuse to hire out their school buildings to the Native Affairs Department (NAD), and also voted to boycott the school boards and committees.[8] A spokesman at a public meeting called by the Native Commissioner and the Circuit

Inspector at Whittlesea, Queenstown district, in early 1956 told the officials:

> We are a progressive community and don't want Bantu Education. We want the same education that's given the Whites, and possibly something better if the brains of the Whites are so degenerated that they can't progress. 9

A major meeting at Bumbana in the Umtata district on 10 February 1956, broke up without discussing Bantu Education after the authenticity of the chiefs present had been challenged, and officials of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) brusquely treated.[10]

The campaign against school boards and committees also achieved some success in the Western Cape. Cape Town proved a particularly difficult nut for officials to crack; initial attempts to get parents at Langa township to elect committees failed.[11] On 31 August 1955, a further attempt was made, with election meetings being held at five schools. However only one of these meetings agreed to organize elections, and in that case, the vote was taken as a rather suspect secret ballot conducted by the Sub-Inspector.[12] At the Methodist School, an audience of a hundred shouted down the Native Commissioner, S.J. Parsons, when he tried to speak, and informed him that they would have nothing to do with any committee he set up. Not a single person supported the election of a committee.[13] Langa High School parents verbally attacked Rev. Mbizela who supported the idea of the committees, urging that

"those who accepted the Act be treated the way witches were treated in the olden days."[14] By September 1955 only six out of 19 "Bantu" schools in the Peninsula had elected committees.[15] Renewed NAD initiatives to organize elections in early 1956 were no more successful. At Langa High School the Rev. Lediga, the chairman of a meeting to set up a school committee, had to run home to escape from an angry crowd.[16] At Langa Methodist School those refused admission to an election meeting forced their way in - "the women led the men in", and after the parents had refused to allow the chairman to close the meeting, he left via the window.[17] The School Board members failed to show up for the meeting they had convened at St. Cyprians, and "the people reaffirmed their stand against any form of assisting in the mental enslavement of their children."[18] The Secretary of the School Board in Athlone, Ngo, arrived under police escort for an election meeting. Finding that the meeting refused to make nominations for the school committee, he was reduced to making the nominations himself, with the C.I.D. as seconders.[19] There was resistance in some places in the Western Cape outside Cape Town as well; parents at Langabuya High School in Paarl voted at a meeting in May 1955 not to elect a school committee after a speaker suggested that "...it would be better if Dr. Eiselen came to explain things himself.[20]

The school boards and committees thus met a great deal of opposition at their inception, which to some extent stamped

them, in the popular imagination, as organs of an oppressive system. This was clearly a major threat to the achievement of government's aims in implementing the board and committee structure. But just as there were sectors of the dominated groups who resolutely rejected this structure, there were also those who sought to enter it. Those who were participating in the 'Bantu Authority' system in the homelands, urban elites who hoped for advancement through the advisory board system, and less educated people who resented the relative social prestige of teachers, were prime candidates for such incorporation. Furthermore, there were those opposed to the existing order, but who did not see the boards and committees as worth opposing. All of this is reflected in the fact that despite strong opposition, the state did manage to put the system in place. By 1956, in the country as a whole, there were 300 school boards and 4,000 committees in existence.[21] Education officials found that in the rural areas it was not difficult, in most areas, to find "men and women of some standing in the community" to serve on the boards.[22]

In urban areas building support for the boards and committees was more difficult for the NAD - the boards often consisted of clergy and ex-teachers who lacked much popular support.[23] But some prominent figures, such as Dr W. Nkomo and Paul Mosaka, could be found advocating the idea of joining school boards in order to fight Bantu

Education from within.[24] It seems too, that not all ANC members adhered to their organization's line of a total boycott of the committees. At an ANC public meeting at Dube in June 1955 a speaker advocating a school boycott argued against a boycott of the boards. He argued that those who emphasized the boycott of the boards:

> forget that in School Boards there are elements [who are present] only because they are getting their bread. 25

It seems that in New Brighton in Port Elizabeth, some ANC members participated in the election of a school committee.[26] These events should be seen in the context of the fact that it was only in the 1950s that the ANC moved away from judging participation in state structures on tactical grounds.

What aspects of popular consciousness enabled the boards and committees to attain a degree of support? Interviews with teachers suggest that the way in which the board and committee system gave ordinary members of the community a degree of control over the formerly prestigious teaching profession mobilized feelings of envy in order to build a support for the system:

> [Board and Committee members] could say what they liked to teachers, they could threaten teachers with dismissal. They were usually ordinary workers, and they wanted to show teachers they were the bosses. 27

> ...[boards and committees seemed] popular with the community because they were regarded as overseers who would discipline teachers. 28