

Using the following documents, analyze the causes of and responses to the June 1967 student uprisings in South Africa.

Historical Background: South Africa was a member of the British Commonwealth until it voted to form a republic in 1961. The policy of Apartheid (racial separation) was introduced in 1948. Under Apartheid, South Africans were divided into four broad racial categories: black, white, “coloured,” and Indian/Asian. The last two groupings had further sub-groupings. Beginning in 1970, all non-white political representation was abolished and official racial segregation was enforced.

On June 16, 1967, students in the township of Soweto began protesting against the policies of the South African government.

- *township*: areas on the outskirts of “white” cities reserved for nonwhites who worked in those cities.
- *Afrikaans*: a language spoken by descendants of Dutch settlers in South Africa.



Document 1

Source: The Sullivan Principles (1977) created by American religious and business leaders for corporations to follow as a condition for doing business.

1. Non-segregation of the races in all eating, comfort, and work facilities.
2. Equal and fair employment practices for all employees.
3. Equal pay for all employees doing equal or comparable work for the same period of time.
4. Initiation of and development of training programs that will prepare, in substantial numbers, blacks and other nonwhites for supervisory, administrative, clerical, and technical jobs.
5. Increasing the number of blacks and other nonwhites in management and supervisory positions.
6. Improving the quality of life for blacks and other nonwhites outside the work environment in such areas as housing, transportation, school, recreation, and health facilities.

Document 2

Source: 2006 interview with Obed Bapela describing his experience in overcrowded Bantu education schools in Alexandra Township outside of Johannesburg.

... the school that I went to was an overcrowded school, there were quite many of them in Alexandra that were overcrowded, there were not enough schools to take care of all of us so we used to share classes. There would be a morning class that goes up to 11 o'clock and then we'll go home and then other kids of the same grade will come after 11 o'clock up to 2 o'clock and therefore the teachers will then run two sets of class ... in some situations they will even use a tree in the schoolyard... We were around 70 to 80 [pupils in class] when I was in grade 1 and grade 2.

Document 3

Source: Photograph taken by photojournalist, Sam Nima, on July 16t, 1976 of a student carrying the body of Hector Pieterse, at the student protests in Soweto. Hector's sister is on the left.



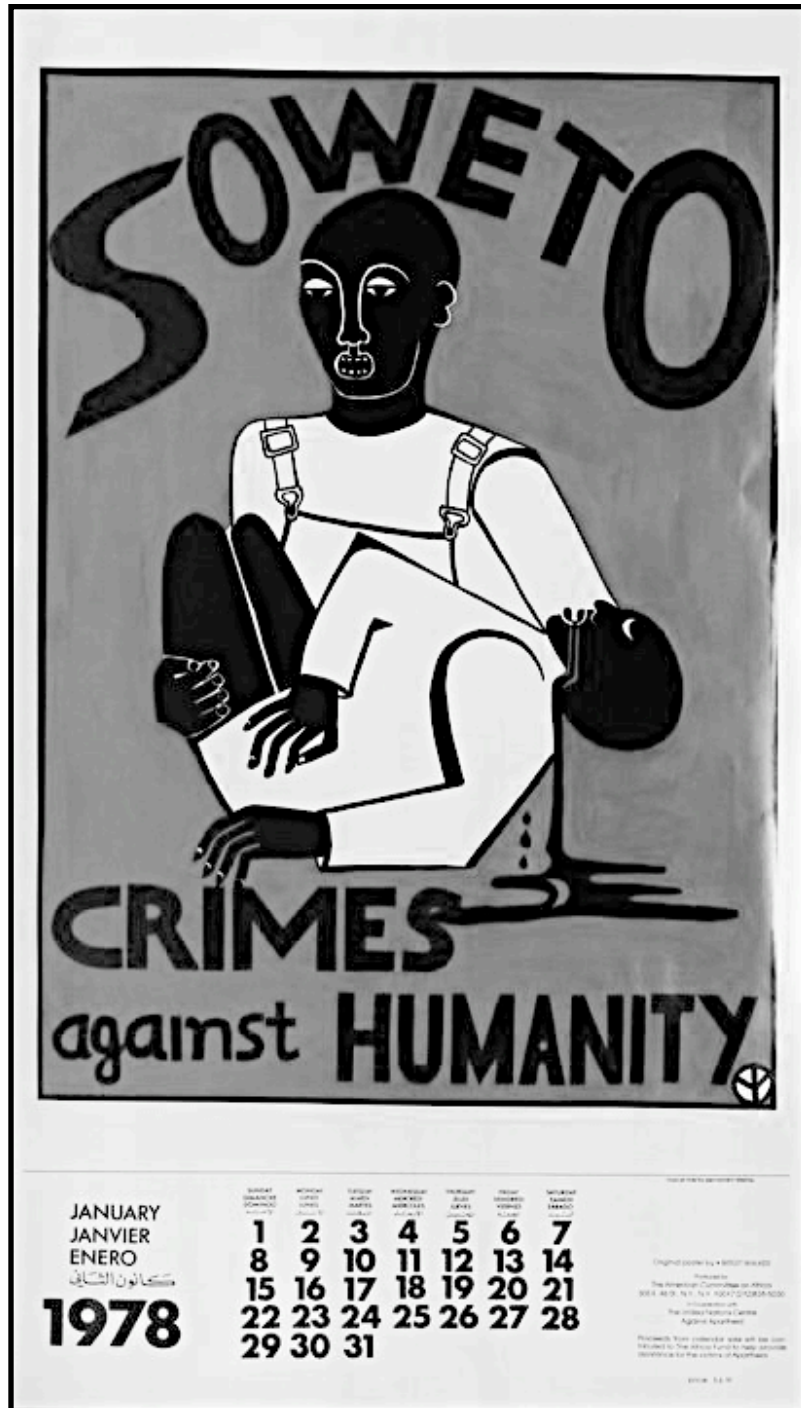
Document 4

Source: Punt Janson, Deputy Minister of Bantu Education (1976)

A Black man may be trained to work on a farm or in a factory. He may work for an employer who is either English-speaking or Afrikaans-speaking and the man who has to give him instructions may be either English-speaking or Afrikaans-speaking. Why should we now start quarreling about the medium of instruction among the Black people as well? ... No, I have not consulted them and I am not going to consult them. I have consulted the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

Document 5

Source: Calendar created by the American Committee on Africa, an American human rights organization whose purpose is to promote social justice in African nations.



Document 6

Source: Afrikaans Medium Decree, 1975.

*Northern Transvaal Region
"Regional Circular Bantu Education"
Northern Transvaal (No. 4)
File 6.8.3. of 17.10.1974*

*To: Circuit Inspectors
Principals of Schools: With Std V classes and Secondary Schools
Medium of Instruction Std V - Form V*

1. It has been decided that for the sake of uniformity English and Afrikaans will be used as media of instruction in our schools on a 50-50 basis as follows:

2. Std V, Form I and II

2.1 English medium: General Science, Practical Subjects (Homecraft-Needlework-Wood- and Metalwork-Art-Agricultural Science)

2.2 Afrikaans medium: Mathematics, Arithmetic, Social Studies

2.3 Mother Tongue: Religion Instruction, Music, Physical Culture

The prescribed medium for these subject must be used as from January 1975.

In 1976 the secondary schools will continue using the same medium for these subjects.

3. Forms III, IV and V

All schools which have not as yet done so should introduce the 50-50 basis as from the beginning of 1975. The same medium must be used for the subjects related to those mentioned in paragraph 2 and for their alternatives. ...

Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated.

*(Sgd.) J.G. Erasmus
Regional Director of Bantu Education
N. Transvaal Region ...*

Document 7

Source: Sibongile Mkhabela remembering her high school days in Soweto in *Open Earth and Black Roses: Remembering 16 June 1976*.

The church was central to our family life. We were part of the then popular and dynamic Pimville district of the Methodist Church in Africa ... The YWCA had facilitated a positive reawakening among young people. It was exciting to listen to people such as Dr Ellen Khuzwayo, the then president of the YWCA, Bro Tom Manthata of the Black People's Convention, George Wauchope and other South African Student Organisation leaders who were organising students through the work of institutions such as the YWCA and convening seminars which addressed the political and social issues of the day. It was as a result of these seminars that young minds began to shift more and more towards a critical awareness then promoted by, and linked to, the philosophy of Black Consciousness ... We were feeling the impact of the activities of SASO as well as the University Christian Movement and Students Christian Movement. Through my links to the YWCA and other township youth clubs, I was exposed to seminars at the St. Aingers Ecumenical Centre and the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre. My schoolbooks started to bear slogans such as 'Black man you are on your own', 'Black and Proud', 'Black is Beautiful' etc.

Document 8

Source: "Anti-Afrikaans Pupils go on Strike in Soweto" *The World* (A black South African newspaper) 18 May 1976.

Students threatened to beat up their headmaster and threw (Afrikaans) textbooks out of classroom windows in a demonstration against being taught some subjects in Afrikaans. The 600 students from Phefeni Junior Secondary School, Orlando West, then went on strike and refused to attend any classes.

In a violent display of pupil power yesterday the students also demanded the re-instatement of Mr Mahlangu, chairman of the school board, whom they claimed had been sacked because he was against using Afrikaans for teaching. The demonstration started after the morning assembly when students from Form One and Form Two refused to go to their classroom ... Some let down the tyres of the principal's car. They then confronted the principal, Mr S. C. Mpulo, and demanded that he call the school inspector. They said the inspector should come and explain why difficult subjects were taught in Afrikaans ... The head went away and when he came back he told the students that the inspector had refused to come.

Note: Forms 1 and 2 in the British system of education are roughly similar to grades 7 and 8 in the American system.

Document 9

Source: police diary of events on the evening of June 20, 1976 in Katlehong Township presented to the Cillie Commission, a commission created by the South African government. It didn't present its findings until 1980.

19h30: Gatsha Buthelezi sighted at Natalspruit Hospital and was being watched by the police. Information about an alleged plan to attack railways and buses on Monday 21 June.

20h20: Unrest at Kwesine Hostel. Ambulance set alight.

21h15: All ERAB staff removed from the hostel.

21h20: SAP also withdraws from the hostel.

22h20: Hostel set alight.

01h30: Police suppress unrest at Kwesine hostel.

Note:

- a. Gatsha (Mangosuthu) Buthelezi was an antiapartheid leader and the founder of Inkatha Freedom Party.
- b. Hostels were places where migrant workers slept.
- c. ERAB is the East Rand Administrative Board. East Rand is a region of the of the greater Johannesburg area.
- d. SAP is the South African Police
- e. 19h30 is 11:30 pm on a twelve hour time system.