



bidden to live. Cultural and recreational opportunities are limited, except for what the people create themselves. Apartheid laws forbid Blacks from setting up establishments that provide more than basic necessities, ruling out any substantial economic sector in Soweto.

BANTU EDUCATION

School children made Soweto famous with their 1976 uprising and school boycott that lasted for months. They were protesting having Afrikaans (the Boer settlers' language) imposed as the main language for instruction instead of English. The students correctly saw this change as part of the whole system of Bantu education designed to keep them in ignorance, fit only for menial jobs, rather than being educated citizens, equipped to fight for their rights. They were protesting financial starvation of their schools, makeshift classrooms with an average of sixty students per teacher, inferior academic and sports facilities. They were protesting that their parents had to pay for their schooling, while education for white South Africans is free. They were protesting the blatant lies told in the schools, like that their own ancestors migrated to South Africa in 1652, the same time the first white colonialists arrived in the Cape from Europe.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli policy is similarly to make the Palestinians ignorant. This is enforced via the curriculum which, with the 1967 occupation, was purged of all mention of Palestinian history, and has moreover not been updated to meet modern standards. The Israeli policy is also enacted materially. There are simply not enough classrooms and teachers. Instead of new schools being built for a

growing population, some have actually been closed after 1967. In the UNRWA schools, there is an average of 50 children per class. In 1984, the Israeli authorities refused to allow UNRWA to build new classrooms to alleviate overcrowding. There are no secondary schools in the refugee camps, so children must walk or bicycle for miles, past Zionist checkpoints where they are frequently harassed.

As a result of the hardships of occupation, fewer students are finishing secondary school than before 1967. Many drop out to work to help provide for their families. Other contributing factors are the limited access to higher education and the lack of job opportunities for those who do continue their education. The only university in the Strip is the Islamic University, opened in 1978 after Egypt closed its universities to Gaza students in line with the Camp David policy. This university is only three years and thus cannot grant degrees, and the Zionist authorities have so far refused requests for a license for the fourth year.

SHARED DESTITUTION

In 1948, UNRWA considered 600 families in the Gaza Strip destitute. Palestinians who work in the Israeli economy receive 40% less than the average Israeli wage, and those working in the local economy may earn even less. Yet substandard wages are only the latest symptom, not the original cause of Gazan poverty. The basic reason is the Zionist occupation's systematic destruction of the local economy. Citrus fruit production, a major source of income, has been almost halved in the last decade, due to Israeli restrictions on marketing. The fishing industry, from which almost 30,000 Gazans draw sustenance, has

Text of a protest leaflet during the 1976 Soweto school boycott: «Parents, you should rejoice for having given birth to this type of child... a child who prefers to die from a bullet rather than to swallow a poisonous education which relegates him and his parents to a position of perpetual subordination.»

