

CALL TO BOYCOTT

GRAHAMSTOWN ACTION GROUP

The present boycott

On Monday 2 September residents in Grahamstown's African townships began a third boycott of all businesses in the white area.

This boycott is an action intended to achieve the following:

- *An end to the state of emergency.
- *The release of detainees
- *The lifting of bans on public meetings
- *Assurance that members of the community in hiding can return without fear of arrest or harassment

The boycott demands stated by the Grahamstown Burial Action Committee (GBAC) have been articulated as vital pre-conditions for continued negotiations around township grievances.

Without recognised and credible leaders who can speak freely and without fear on behalf of the township community, and without due process of consultation permitted within the township community itself, real negotiation is - quite simply - impossible. The present boycott is thus designed to restore a situation in which negotiation can take place.

The original boycott demands

Demands voiced by township organisations as reason for the earlier boycott in Grahamstown in June this year included the following:

- *Social and economic conditions in the township, particularly the housing crisis
- *Employment practices - an end to unfair dismissals of black workers and the institution of a minimum wage
- *Petty apartheid - like the opening of restaurants and hotels to people of all races
- *Withdrawal of the SADF from the townships
- *Scrapping of institutions of

'grand apartheid' like the Rhini Town Council



The boycott has left Grahamstown streets deserted.

How to join the boycott

The boycott by whites should be as complete as possible. However this may cause problems. Discussion of these problems has suggested the following:

Exemptions

*Metro and ICS food outlets are wholesalers who supply township shops. They are a source of many basic supplies and can be exempted from the boycott. A wholesalers buying card may be needed to obtain supplies.

*Grahamstown Home Industries is exempt from the boycott since it is a co-operative.

*In line with a decision taken by

Rhodes students, the Rhodes Kait is exempted.

*Albany Road shops in the 'coloured' township have been exempted by the GBAC and can supply essential consumer items.

*Essential services such as petrol stations, pharmacies, electricians and so on are exempted.

*The purchase of essential items for children is exempt from the boycott.

*If essential supplies cannot be obtained in any of these ways you should exempt from the boycott a single 'cafe' in your area. (Let the cafe-owner know that you are doing this).

Co-operatives

To join a boycott requires a great deal of co-operation. Some households have already started co-operative schemes to obtain regular supplies. You are strongly encouraged to join one. (Contact GAG)

GAG has established that the following items can be bought by co-operatives from suppliers in the Grahams-town area - generally more cheaply than from retail outlets:

- | | |
|--------|-------------|
| *Milk | *Eggs |
| *Meat | *Bread |
| *Fruit | *Vegetables |

Co-operatives will also arrange bulk-buying.

It is hoped that co-operative schemes can form the basis of longer term co-operation between Grahams-

town families. We hope that you will join in!

Four useful maxims have developed from GAG's discussions of co-operative participation in the boycott:

- *1. Always borrow before buying
- *2. When in doubt, bulk-buy then sub-divide
- *3. All purchases pre-paid in cash
- *4. Share packing and distribution - it's a good excuse to visit friends!

Pamphlet issued by:
GRAHAMSTOWN ACTION GROUP
2 HAYTON'S BUILDING
HIGH STREET
GRAHAMSTOWN

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We believe such demands are legitimate and reasonable. They express the extreme dissatisfaction of a community which has been systematically denied the most basic economic necessities and the most fundamental political and human rights.

WHY A BOYCOTT?



1

First: the strategy of an economic boycott is a non-violent yet cohesive and powerful means of protest - a unified stand taken when all other means of voicing discontent have been cut off.

2

Second: a boycott is an expression of community frustration. It is a plea to the white community to recognise the many hardships faced by black residents.

For too long now whites have been able to sidestep the issues and disclaim responsibility. The boycott is a way of jolting white Grahamstown into realising how severe the problems are and into doing all it can to make the government meet the demands of township residents.

3

Third: this boycott makes us all realise the interdependence of black and white communities in Grahamstown. The black consumer is a part of the economy of our city and yet is denied political rights.

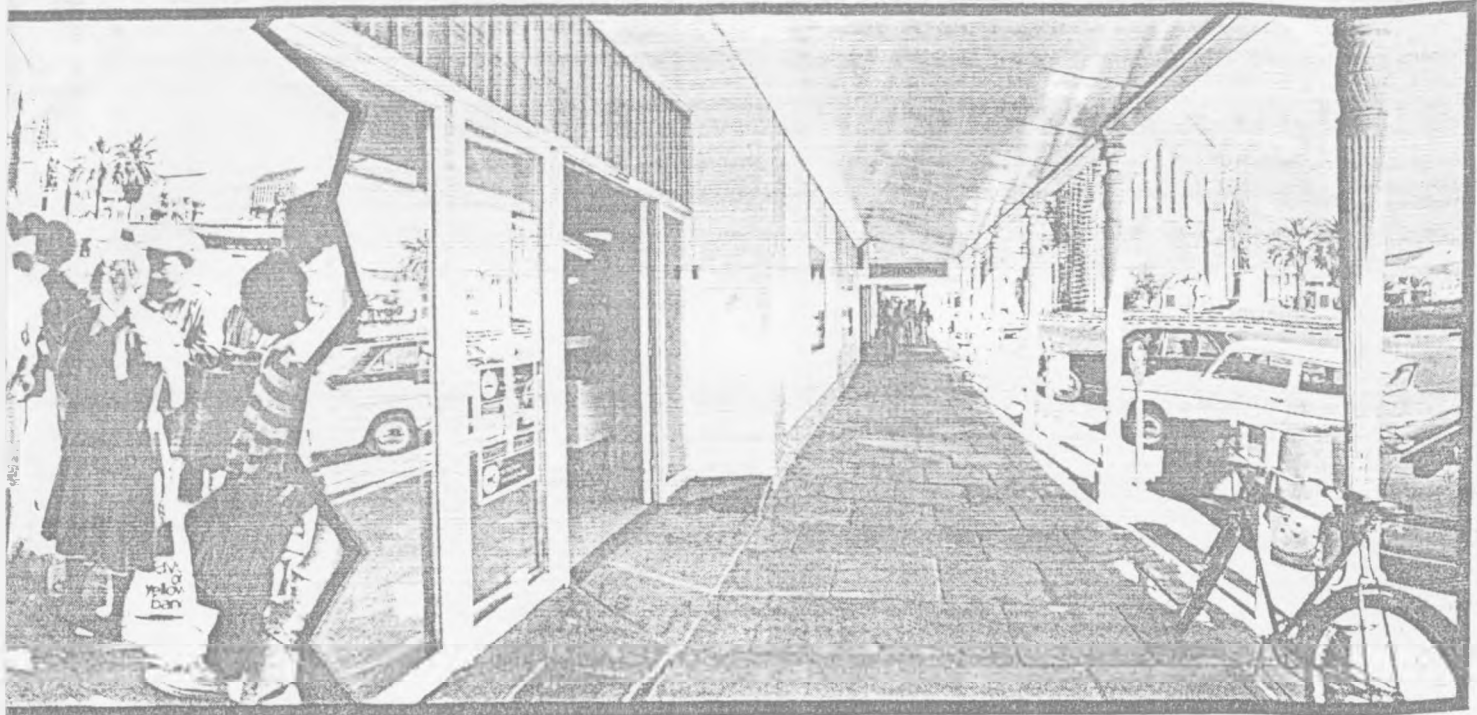
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Fourth: the boycott is a challenge to those who have influence - particularly the Chamber of Commerce and the City Council - to take up these grievances.

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Finally: the widespread support the boycott obviously enjoys in Grahamstown demonstrates clearly the solidarity and unity of purpose of township residents.

More broadly, the rapid spread and success of consumer boycotts nationally points to both the frustration of blacks living under apartheid and their ability to mobilise against an unjust and unstable political system.



Why whites should join the boycott

The GBAC has called upon white Grahamstown to demonstrate support for the consumer boycott. A request like this has never come from organisations in the township before. It indicates clearly that our support is wanted. We cannot allow such a call to pass unheeded.

By demonstrating our solidarity with the township, Grahamstonians can:

- *Show our commitment to a non-racial future
- *Hasten the return to negotiation around legitimate demands
- *Strengthen the unity of township residents in the boycott
- *Express our opposition to the state of emergency.

Whites in Grahamstown must give a clear signal to township residents

that we are genuinely sympathetic to their grievances and support non-violent means of addressing them. Township organisations who asked for our support did not specifically call upon us to join the boycott.

Grahamstown Action Committee (GAG) believes, however, that we can best show our support by embarking upon a boycott of businesses in the white area. In this way we can demonstrate our solidarity with township residents and our commitment to non-violent action.

GAG recognises, however, that a boycott causes great inconvenience for Grahamstown families. We have taken steps to reduce these as much as we can. As a result, we believe we are calling for a feasible protest action, the success of which depends wholly on your support. We urge white Grahamstonians, therefore, to join us.