

# Mass detentions, now a curfew

## Over 1 500 detained since July 20

USING the special powers granted to it by the declaration of a State of Emergency, the South African Police has declared a curfew in a number of Eastern Cape townships.

The police is also attempting to crack the school boycotts, which in some areas have been on the go since October last year, by bringing in special measures which allow it to control school pupils. Special 'control over petrol' regulations are also being enforced.

In terms of the emergency orders, the 10 pm to 4 am curfew applies to eleven townships around Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Fort Beaufort. These are: New Brighton, Kwazakele, Zwide, Walmer, KwaNobuhle, Kabah, Langa, Fingodorp, Tanti, Makannaskop and Joza.

Although, this is the first time that a curfew has been legally declared, workers in many areas affected by the State of Emergency have reported that an informal curfew has existed in the townships since July 20.

At a Special Central Committee meeting held on August 3, regional representatives from the Eastern Cape and the

Transvaal said that groups of night-shift workers returning home were being attacked by police.

Because of this, many factories in the Eastern Cape have demanded that management adjust the shifts. In one company where this has been successful, day-shift workers are allowed to leave before 6 pm and the night-shift workers now arrive at that time.

In terms of the new orders controlling school boycotts, students may not leave their classrooms 'unless it is during a prescribed break, or except for the purposes of visiting the dressing room or to change classes'.

And a virtual 'street curfew' also applies to 'registered pupils' who do not attend classes — a special law virtually bans them from leaving their homes.

Students are also not allowed to take part in any activity at a school which is not supervised by a teacher and which does not have a 'direct bearing' on normal school activities. Only students and staff are allowed on the school's premises.

These school boycott orders apply in the 11 Eastern Cape townships, in six South Western Districts areas, 13 East Rand townships and seven on the West Rand.

Once again, Eastern Cape workers reported that the police were taking action against students before these new orders were announced.

They said that it had been announced in the townships that the police expected students to be in the class rooms between 8 am and 2 pm and at night to be at home.

The special 'control over petrol' now in force on the West Rand and in the South Western Districts bans the possession of petrol in any container 'excluding the petrol tank of a motor vehicle'.

And 'no person shall siphon petrol tank from the petrol tank of a motor vehicle into a container of whatever nature' except with the written permission of a member of the security forces.

These 'control over petrol' measures have obviously been introduced in an attempt to stop petrol being used for 'acts of violence'.

ONE of the major reasons for the State President, P W Botha, declaring a State of Emergency in 36 magisterial districts was to justify the mass detentions of some 1 500 people since July 20.

The government already have the powers to detain people without reason under the Internal Security Act, however the detention of so many people would have provoked a more widespread condemnation both internationally and locally than has been seen thus far.

Most conservative governments and their supporters believe that the State of Emergency is necessary in order to 'normalise' the situation in this country's townships. The detentions are part of this process.

Few people are able to see that the iron fist of repression is no solution to the growing dissatisfaction with the government's fake reforms.

Those detained have been mainly from civic associations, student and youth organisations, political organisations and trade unions.

There are a number of FOSATU organisers, shop stewards and members among those who have been detained. These are: James Tamboer (full time shop steward at General Motors); Patrick Williams (Ford full time shop steward); Wilson Jonas (Ford full time shop steward); Molefe Nhlapo (SFAWU organiser); Dan Thulare (SA Breweries shop steward); Isaac Kgasago (Jabula Foods shop steward);

Siyolo Mashiqana (CWIU shop steward); Isaac Setoave (SFAWU member); L Mawela (CWIU shop steward); J Leshodi (SFAWU shop steward); and S Mathlaika (retrenched MAWU member from Siemens). Some of these have been released.

Another 'advantage' of the State of Emergency has been that now any member of the security forces (army or police) can detain someone for at least 14 days without a warrant. This 14 days can be extended by the Minister of Law and Order.

Under the Internal Security Act a person could only be detained after a warrant had been signed by a high ranking police officer.

Also, in terms of the Emergency regulations, detainees have even fewer rights than normal detainees.

Even whistling and singing are an offence under these regulations and can be punished by either forced labour duties, a fine, corporal punishment, or the taking away of one or more meals.

The State of Emergency also makes it possible for the security forces to restrict what is printed in the press about the detentions. It is a criminal offence to report the detention of anyone held without the permission of the Minister.

Newspapers have been forced to rely on the lists of detainees being handed out by the police. There is no knowing whether the list contains the names of all the detainees.

## Botha's new 'weapon'

PRESIDENT P W Botha has discovered a new weapon in his attempts to combat the increasing international pressure for economic sanctions against South Africa.

He has threatened to send home all the migrant workers from neighbouring states and cut all economic ties with these countries.

It is highly unlikely that President Botha would put this threat into action but if he did so, the worst hit industry would be the mines.

The mines employ nearly

200 000 foreign workers — 40 percent of its workforce. Nearly half of these are from Lesotho and the rest are from Mocambique, Botswana, Malawi and Swaziland.

Many of families in these countries depend upon the wages sent home by migrant workers for their very survival. Last year the mines sent R434 million in wages back to the home countries of foreign workers.

The declaration of the State of Emergency and the mass detentions has led to increased

pressure being brought to bear on overseas governments to take some form of economic action against South Africa.

Since November last year in the United States of America thousands of people, including huge numbers of union members, have been demonstrating against apartheid.

Recently, the biggest anti-apartheid demonstration yet held took place in Washington when thousands of people carrying 50 black cardboard coffins in a symbolic funeral procession marched to the State Department.

## 30 000 in KwaThema funeral march



Moses Mayekiso

FIFTEEN coffins were carried in a mass procession of over 30 000 people to the graveyard in the Springs township of KwaThema on July 23. This was the first funeral to be held after the State of Emergency had been declared. Most of people wanting to attend the funeral must have been wondering whether the police would intervene using the new powers they now had under the Emergency regulations. At 10 am, when it was scheduled to start, only a handful of people were present. But, as the coffins began to arrive the KwaThema stadium quickly filled up. Hundreds of workers obviously took time off work to attend, judging from the large number of people wearing FOSATU union T shirts. Young men and women in union T shirts stood guard alongside the 15 coffins with fists raised. In one of the coffins was Metal

and Allied Workers Union member Elias Negoase who was shot dead by police on his way home from visiting a friend. Everyone from the youngest to the oldest fervently sang freedom songs while they waited for the speeches to begin. MAWU organiser, Moses Mayekiso told the crowd, 'We can see that freedom is near. You must unite. You must not be scared.' Bishop Desmond Tutu, Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, concluded the funeral by leading the mourners in a mass recital. 'We dedicate ourselves anew to the struggle for freedom for all of us, black and white.' It was only as the marchers drew nearer to the graveyard that the police presence became more obvious. About 20 Casspirs were parked nearby and police watched the proceedings through binoculars.