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MAYDAY

THE DAY OF THE WORKERS

MAY Day will be celebrated this year by millions of workers throughout the world.

The history of May day dates back to 1886 when 350 000 workers in America went on strike and took part in demonstrations.

They had taken action in support of a campaign for 8-hour working day.

In 1890, the International Workers Congress accepted May Day as an international day of solidarity for allworkers of the world. Since then workers around the world have celebrated May Day and demanded it as a paid holiday.

In South Africa May Day has been celebrated since 1904. 1986 saw the biggest demonstration of workers power in the history of this country with close to 2 million workers observing May Day with huge stayaway.

May Day is a dedication to the millions of workers who are the backbone of their countries, who create the wealth so that all may prosper.

In South Africa it reminds us of the bitter struggle of the workers to rid our country of exploitation and oppression.



May Day 1986: A mine worker at the COSATU rally at Soweto's Orlando Stadium. Almost two million workers nationally took part in a stay-away.

IMAY Day kulo nyaka iuakubhiyozelwa zizigidi zabasebenzi kulo lonke ilizwe.

I MBali yeMay Day isukela kunyaka ka 1886 mhla abasebenzi abangama 350 000 kwelase Melika bagwayimba baza bathatha inxaxheba ekukwayeni.

Baya bathahta inxaxheba ekuxhaseni ukuba kuse-tyenzwe iiyure eziyi 8 ngemini.

Ngo 1880 i International Workers Congress yay-amkela i May Day Njengosuku lwabasebenzi kwilizwe lonke. Ukusukela ngoko abasebenzi elizweni lonke bawubhiyozela lo mhla baza bagunyazisa ukuba ibe yiholide ehlawulwayo. EMZANTSI AFR- IKA i MAYDAY yabhiyozelwa ukusukela ngo 1904.

U1986 ubonakele njengonuka apho abasebenzi babonakalisa amandla abo kwinbali yeli. Yaba zizigidi ezibini zabasebenzi ezahlala phansi zikhumbula olusuku.

IMay Day kukuzinikezela nokuqiniseka kwabasebenzi abangumqolo weli nabenza imveliso yeli lizwe besenzela ukuba wonke ubani axhamle.

Apha emzantsi Afrika olusuku lusikhumbuza ngemizabalazo enzima nebuhlungu uabasebenzi abafuna ukusuka ungicikivo nangcinezelo.



Workers celebrate their unity at the COSATU Western Cape launch early last year.



The people must govern

AS the day for the racist white elections comes closer, the Nationalist government is once again facing widespread revolt. The massive three day stayaway in Soweto, strikes involving more than 60 000 workers from the railways, mining, food and other industries, class boycotts at a number of schools and universities, and clashes with the security forces in many parts of the country has once again shown the determination of our people to destroy the inhuman apartheid system of oppression and exploitation.

The events of the last few weeks have clearly shown the irrelevance and undemocratic nature of

the coming elections. The people have clearly demonstrated that the answer to this country's problems cannot be found within parliament. The solutions are to be found outside parliament where millions of ordinary South Africans are struggling for a free and democratic South Africa based on the will of the people.

The outcome will have no bearing on the future of this country.

Choose your leaders

WE would like to hear from our readers who your would choose to lead our country if you had the vote! Send your 'vote' to GRASSROOTS, P.O. Box 1161, Cape Town. The people I would like to lead my country are:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Age: Area of residence

DETAINEES

RELEASED

GRASSROOTS executive member John Neels and UWC student Melvin Fourie were released from detention recently.

They were both held under Section 29 of the Internal Security for a period of 2 months.

Neels was arrested at his parents home in Grassy Park while Fourie was arrested in Worcester.

They had not received any visits during their detention and their families were not informed where they were being held.

THE launching of the South African Youth Congress at a secret venue in Cape Town at the end of March has been described as one of the most significant political developments in the history of the liberation struggle in this country. On its formation Sayco brought together 500 youth organisations nationally, uniting its half a million members under one banner. But there are many challenges which face this giant organisation. Grassroots briefly looks at some of these challenges and examines the organisation at a regional level.

SAYCO

Facing future challenges

A few weeks after its national launch the South African Youth Congress (Sayco) accomplished another achievement - it produced and distributed its first national newsletter. The newsletter went out to all corners of South Africa, in many instances being distributed under conditions of severe repression.

In some areas the newsletters had to reach the communities despite a strong presence of security forces. The newsletter declared that Sayco was a people's victory and said: "Today as we launch Sayco, we pay tribute to comrades who sacrificed so much and without whom SAYCO would never have been possible."

Sayco outlines its primary tasks as building organisation and unity at every level and it also emphasises the need for youth to be vigilant. It states: "Let us take organisation to every corner of our land from urban to rural areas, in factories, mines, farms, schools and communities. Let us deepen our organisation to give them that ability to survive all tests of history. Street, village and block committees - organs of peoples power - must be built."

On unity Sayco points to its importance now more than ever - "when the racists are campaigning

to crush peoples organisations."

Sayco also urges youth and other members of the community to be vigilant. "We must not expose ourselves to assassinations and abduction. We must be vigilant of state provocateurs and deviationist elements from leadership to street committees. Our vigilance will save our organisation and enable the people to intensify the assault."

Despite severe state repression in most parts of the country, the killing and detentions of hundreds of youth members during the last two years, Sayco leadership is confident that the organisation will grow. The processes which was started in the early 80's will continue.

The possibility of a national youth organisation began to become more real in 1983 with the mushrooming of youth organisations all over the country. For the next three years the idea was discussed by hundreds of thousands of youth.

The past six months has seen solid groundwork being done in preparation for the national structure with ten regional youth congresses being launched in secrecy.

Today regional congresses exist in Southern, Northern and Eastern Transvaal, the Southern, Western

and Northern Cape, Border, the Eastern Cape, Natal and Orange Free State.

The regions of course, are of varying strengths.

In terms of membership the leading regions are the Northern Transvaal, Eastern Cape and Southern Transvaal with 120 000, 110 000 and 60 000 members respectively. But Sayco certainly recognises that large membership alone does not necessarily imply strong organisation.

The initiation and development of strong mass based structures and the ability to ensure proper co-ordination of activities are strong factors determining the strength of any of the different regional congresses.

Southern Transvaal

The Southern Transvaal Youth Congress (Stayco) was launched in November 1986. It brought together about 35 youth congresses with a membership of 60 000. Areas included in this region are Johannesburg, Pretoria, Vaal, East and West Rand and Western Transvaal.

Northern Transvaal

Ex-Robben Islander Peter Makoba elected President of Sayco, comes from the Northern Transvaal. The Northern Transvaal Youth Congress was launched in

December last year. It linked up about 150 local congresses - 40 in Sekhukhuleni alone - over an area stretching from just north of Pretoria to far northern Transvaal. It has a combined membership of over 100 000.

Eastern Transvaal

Regional structures were formed in November last year. The presence of security forces in townships and villages poses a serious threat to progressive organisations. Vigilante groups or death squads as they are now called are active in the region.

The Inyandza Youth Movement which allegedly co-operates with the SADF recruits and works with the unemployed in the region. The Movement is especially strong in the Leandra area. The Youth Movement apparently assists the SADF in its propaganda campaigns. The Eastern Transvaal Region consists of about 75 youth congresses with a total of 20 000 members.

Natal

The Natal Youth Congress is active in the Midlands, Pietermaritzburg North and South Coasts and consists of 47 youth congresses with 6 000 members.

South Cape

The Southern Cape Youth Congress (Socayco) is active in areas

such as Mossel Bay, Oudtshoorn, Knysna, Plettenberg Bay and George.

Socayco consists of seven youth organisations with about 2 000 members. The state of emergency has had a severe effect on organisations in these areas.

Eastern Cape

A total of 110 000 youth belong to the Eastern Cape Youth Congress. Repression in the Eastern Cape is very intense. Youth leaders and key activists are either in detention or on the run and find it difficult to assist with organisation in the area.

More than 2 million people, mainly youth, are unemployed in the Eastern Cape.

Northern Cape

The Northern Cape does not have a regional structure but the different youth congresses have a total membership of 2 000. Organising in the areas has been made difficult by the activities of death squads who are active in areas like Vryburg. There are many youth still in detention.

Western Cape

Sayco's main affiliate in the Western Cape is the Cape Youth Congress which has branches in 36 local townships with a membership of just under 1 000.



The Sayco banner hangs high at a recent rally at UCT organised by the Western Cape Students Congress (Weesco)

14 to face subversion charges in Oudtshoorn

FOURTEEN residents of Oudtshoorn's Bhongolethu township who face subversion charges will appear in court for the third time on May 22.

Their case was postponed when they appeared in the Oudtshoorn Magistrates Court on April 10.

Details of the charges are not yet known. The accused have not been asked to plead and no evidence has been led.

Among those to stand trial are Bhongolethu pensioners Mr Kleinbooi Klip, 69, and Mr Qondela, 65. Mr James Nakuphi another accused, is also believed to be in his 60's.

A high ranking churchman, Bishop Masete of the Church, is also to stand trial.

Some of those charged have been in detention since the emergency was declared on June 12.



Mr Kleinbooi Klip

They are former Bhongolethu Youth Organisations President Mbulelo David Grootboom, Moses Dikgacwi, Thembalakhe Joe, Msukisi Mooi, and Rufus Mbuku.

Others charged are: Mbulelo Lesley Stuurman Johannes Goduka Ntomjeni, Clifford Tenge, Derrick Tenge and Dede-ba Phillips.

Two of the Accused - Mbulelo Grootboom and Moses Dikgacwi were both acquitted recently of furthering the aims of the banned African National

Congress.

The case will be the second in which Oudtshoorn activists have been

charged with subversion. The first arose out of the consumer boycott of August 1985.

Humphrey Joseph, former organiser of the Southern Cape community newsletter Saamstaan and its treasurer Louis Noemdoo were both acquitted at the end of that trial.

CALL OF ISLAM JOINS THE UDF

THE Call of Islam held its first national conference in Johannesburg over the Easter Weekend, with 70 delegates from different parts of the country attending.

During the two day conference delegates assessed the role of the organisation, its methods, policies and general direction.

The decision by the Call of Islam to affiliate to the United Democratic Front is significant but by no means surprising.

Since its inception in 1984 The Call of Islam has worked closely with the UDF.

Delegates at the conference further resolved that the organisation should try and broaden its base by actively organising in the community at a Grassroots level. Efforts would also be made to make contact with mosque committees, madressa committees, and other groups in the Muslim community.



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Concern grows over harsh sentences

IN August 1985, Cape Town joined the rest of the country in mass protest against apartheid. Thousands of students and youth took to the streets in running battles with the police.

By Christmas 1985, 93 people were killed in Cape Town streets and more than 500 people were injured.

In the months that followed, hundreds of youth were brought before South Africa's courts to face charges of public violence.

In most cases, the State alleged that they were involved in incidents of stone-throwing, petrol bombing and destruction

of State property.

Most of the people charged were found guilty and sentences ranged from one year to five years.

Many attempts to appeal against these harsh sentences were refused, and many young, first offenders went to prison where they are forced to serve their sentences with ordinary prisoners.

The community has not been silent. Organisations were formed to protest against these sentences and hundreds of people petitioned the Chief Justice to have the sentences dropped.

But with no avail. Hundreds of youths reported

to South African prisons to begin their long sentences.

Mr Esham Palmer, a former magistrate has been deeply involved in campaigns against harsh public violence sentences.

"Harsh sentences embitter communities politically and cause social frustration," he said.

"Terms of imprisonment imposed on young students destroy their chances of fulfilling their ambitions, not to mention the psychological damage resulting from incarceration."

Even lawyers have been shocked by the harsh sentences imposed on young offenders.



More than 30 000 signatures were collected in an attempt to keep eight Wynberg pupils out of jail. Here some of the pupils and a parent collect signatures at the champs of champs held recently.

When five minors in Zolani were sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for public violence, lawyers added their voices to the growing outcry.

Professor Dennis Davis of the University of Cape Town law faculty said the sentences were "absolutely extraordinary and horrific".

The public has been

effectively mobilised around the issue of public violence sentences. More than 30 000 signatures were collected in just over a week in an attempt to keep eight Wynberg pupils out of jail.

While students and young people go to jail for public violence, the people responsible for their deeds have gone un-

punished.

The Zolani youths were brought to trial after battles with vigilantes, who were never brought to trial.

After the infamous Trojan Horse incident, 13 people were charged with public violence. The railway police who killed three youths from the

back of the Sats truck were never charged for their deeds.

Even though the 13 were acquitted, they were scarred for life.

"You can't forget something like this. I'm scared of the police and of being arrested again," one of the accused said after the trial.

Railway workers tell of strike



SIX Sats workers involved in the seven-week strike at the City Deep depot in Johannesburg came to Cape Town last week to speak to their fellow workers and encourage them to support them. GRASSROOTS spoke to the workers about the strike.

How is the strike developing?

We are not fighting. It is a peaceful strike. We do not understand why Sats gets the police to fire at us and kill us. If they can just give us what we want we will be very happy. Have your demands changed?

No we are still demanding the reinstatement of our fellow worker Andrew Nentenda. And we want the right to belong to the union which we choose to represent us. SATS has blamed the workers for burning of the railway carriages last week. Were the strikers involved in this?

No, it is not true. We are peaceful, we are not damaging anything. Every day we clock in at the depot then we go to the Sarhwi office where we hold meetings. The community supports us and that's why trains are burnt. We are not blaming the community.

How are the strikers supporting their families.

We have no money. There is no strike fund. But we don't care. When we were working for Sats we were suffering every day. Why should we care now.

Has SARHWU membership been strengthened by the strike?

People are joining in the hundreds. Some days we can't even get into the Sarhwi office because people are queuing in the corridors to join up. Sats says we are forcing them to join, but that is lies. SATS says there is only 18 000 workers on strike. Is this true?

There are more than 22 000 workers on strike. There are workers all over the Transvaal and the Orange Free State on strike. Even in the small stations workers are striking.

They also said that you went to their union, Blatu, for help.

We don't support Blatu. It is toothless. We will never go to them for help. In what way can the community support the strikers

We want the people to be behind us 100 percent. Sats must be hurt. We want them to feel it. Enough is enough. We are not going to take it any longer."



Carol Van Der Rheede of Mitchells Plain holds her 5-day-old daughter Jody. Her husband Neville, a Bonteheuwel schoolteacher was detained in April last year, months before Jody's birth. Neville is now on trial with 14 others in the Cape Town Supreme Court.

WIVES OF TRIALISTS HAVE GROWN VERY CLOSE

WHILE 15 men are charged in the Cape Town Supreme Court of terrorism, furthering the aims of the African National Congress and belonging to the ANC, a group of women are watching the proceeding with keen interest and expectations.

The women mainly wives and mothers of the accused - have been deeply affected since the first accused was detained more than a year ago, on

April 23.

But they have not sat back in self-sympathy. They have come together at least once a week - first to take food and later to visit the men at Pollsmoor Prison.

"When we feel frustrated, we call or visit each other. We have suffered the same," she said.

When the men went on a hunger strike recently, the women were very concerned.

"These men were taken away from us since April last year already. They were held for six months under Section 29 and we did not know where they were. Now we heard they are on hunger strike. We are deeply affected by all this," June Esau, sister of Cecil Esau, said

One of the women, Pina Ncata, also spent a period in detention last year.

She was detained with

her two-month-old baby when police came to arrest her common-law husband, Lizo Ngqungwana, on April 23 last year.

She was only released after she had to go to Valkenberg Mental Hospital for observation.

Lizo is the first accused in the trial. The state alleges that he was commander of Umkhonto We Sizwe, in the Western Cape. The accused are

Theminkosi Theophilus Mzukwa, Joseph Malusi Ngoma, Temba Lucas Tshibika, Sazi Livingstone Veldtman, Mthetho Douglas Myanya, Joseph Susele Mkhuhlwa, Anderson Zingisele Ncivata, Reed Zwelethu Macozoma, Quentin Deon Michels, Cecil Esau, Neville van der Rheede, Gladwin Mthethili Mabengeza, Cyril Moyisis Ntabeni and Norman Siseko Macanda.

COMMENT Resistance grows . . . and grows

THE last two years has seen the most vicious assault by the Government and its armed forces, the army and police, against the oppressed and exploited people of this country.

We are presently living through the second state of emergency in less than two years.

Each and every community throughout the length and breadth of our country has had bitter experiences of witnessing their loved ones detained, killed, brutally beaten with sjamboks and clubs. Millions of people have been attacked with teargas, have seen the funerals of their loved ones disrupted by agents of the state. Many have either been attacked or seen their homes destroyed by apartheid agents, the vigilantes or death squads.

Thousands of political activists, young and old, have had to flee their homes, fearing detention under the state of emergency.

In terms of the state of emergency, the Government has severely restricted the press, troops occupy the townships with wide powers to take action against the people, meetings of organisations are banned or restricted.

Under the emergency rule our people have suffered as they have never suffered before. The Government has gone to extreme and brutal lengths to crush the peoples resistance.

But it has badly underestimated the determination and courage of our people. Our people are determined to end this brutal and inhuman apartheid system.

In our townships, villages, factories and mines, our people continue to organise. The formation of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) in March is a great people's victory. In addition we see the launching of the Western Cape branch of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) and a national structure of the Release Mandela Committee.

More than 60 000 workers in a number of industries are presently on strike. Trade unions are growing in leaps and bounds.

The spirit and determination of our country's railway workers is the indication of the general spirit of our people.

More clampdowns and detentions and shootings can be expected from a Government that desperately tries to cling to its privileges.

But the people have decided that the march to freedom is on. And there is no turning back.

FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE



'It is very hard for people to survive.'

GRASSROOTS spoke to two young Botshabelo workers about the Living Wage Campaign. Paul and Faried are both members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CIWU), an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

How you discussed the living wage campaign in your union?
Paul: Yes, it has been discussed at the factory floor level and shop stewards councils as well as the executive structures. It is a very important campaign. It is not only economic but definitely political as well. It is political because it is obviously the capitalist economic system of apartheid which creates the need for a living wage campaign.

Can workers survive on their present wage?
Faried: It is very hard for people to survive, especially those who are married with children. A friend of mine who is married cannot come out every month. And he has no children yet. Workers who have children cannot survive.

Transport is very expensive. I have to pay R2,50 a week just to get to work and back. And I live close to the main roads.
Paul: Workers who live further away and have to catch buses to the stations have to pay even more. The cost of food is also high. OK and Pick and Pay have these adverts on TV telling us that prices are low but when my member goes shopping the goods all her money but comes home with very little.

How do you see the campaign being solved?
Paul: It will be taken up in industrial and residential localities. Residential localities are workers from different factories who live in the same area and meet in places like clubs. Industrial localities are workers from different factories in one area.

In the campaign locals will meet with community organisations, students and other affected by the campaign. Locals have worked well in other parts of South Africa and they are fairly new in the Western Cape.
Paul: What will be the role of community organisations in the campaign?
Cosatu has taken a policy decision to take up joint work and it is important for Cosatu to do that. Organisations can assist in the campaign.
Students especially are directly affected because it is their parents who are fighting for a living wage.

- A LIVING WAGE FOR ALL.
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- NO TAX DEDUCTIONS.
- A MINIMUM OF SIX MONTHS PAID MATERNITY LEAVE.
- AN END TO THE HOSTEL SYSTEM AND DECENT HOUSING NEAR OUR WORK.
- THE RIGHT TO DECENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

These are the main demands in the Congress of South African Trade Unions's Living Wage campaign which was launched recently.

The decision to embark on the Living Wage campaign was made following discussions among thousands of workers in COSATU affiliates country-wide.

COSATU says: "Our economy is dominated by a handful of giant monopolies. Nearly ninety percent of the wealth we produce is owned and controlled by just ten big companies.

Our struggle for a living wage is the struggle to make sure the wealth we produce come back to us, to meet our needs. We need strong and powerful organisations to challenge the mighty monopolies in the struggle for a living wage. The Living Wage campaign is a direct challenge to the capitalist system in this country."

For years now apartheid capitalism has been built upon the system of cheap and controlled labour which has caused workers and their families extreme suffering and hardship.

"While workers build the mines, factories, farms and everything of value in our country, the only thing they get in return was poverty and starvation.

New workers have had enough. And they intend using their organised strength under the banner of Cosatu to demand a living wage for all.

The living wage campaign will have a National Co-ordinating committee (NCC) and Regional co-ordinating committees. Each union will also elect a co-ordinating committee which will be represented in the NCC (2 delegates for unions with more than 15 000 members and one for unions with less than 15 000 members nationally plus national office bearers of Cosatu) and the RCC (2 delegates for unions with more than 5 000 members and one for unions with less than 5 000 members regionally plus regional office bearers of COSATU). Locals can play a very important role through local living wage committees in mobilising, educating through publicity material and holding general meetings.

May Day and June 16 will be high points of the campaign.



There is no exact figure as to what exactly would be a living wage as needs differ from worker to worker. But worked out on a basis of the basic requirements of any person, there are many who say that a living wage could be anything from R900.00 upwards. But definitely not less than R200.00.

However, each union in Cosatu is working out its own demands for a minimum wage. One of Cosatu's biggest affiliates, the Metal and Allied Workers Union (Mawu) has already demanded a minimum wage of R14 per hour and a guaranteed personal income across the board of R1 per hour.

The campaign will not be an easy campaign to win. Massive Living Wage campaigns have been fought by Cosatu unions over the past few years.

These struggles have brought workers into direct confrontation with the bosses. And the bosses have fought back hard.

Now for the first time the efforts of all Cosatu unions are being co-ordinated in a national campaign.

Unemployment low wages, is the reality for millions.

LOW wages, a high cost of living, unemployment and job insecurity, broken homes and squalid townships are very much part of the daily lives of millions of South African workers.

If we look around us on the streets of Cape Town, we will daily see thousands of unemployed people walking the streets for jobs. Unemployment in South Africa has never been as high as it is today.

More than half of the workers who are capable of working are unemployed while in the Eastern Cape this figure is even higher with 60 out of every 100 people being jobless.

The problem of inflation (of rising prices and costs) is something which seriously affects all workers. In 1986 the cost of living went up by nearly 19 percent, the highest since the 1920's.

Many people expect that the inflation rate will be even higher this year. The past twelve years has not seen an inflation rate of below 10 percent.

Even though many workers may get increases every year, the increases are normally less than the rate of inflation.

The means, in fact, that there has been an actual drop in the real wages. The average wage increases in 1985 was 30.6 percent while the inflation rate was 16 percent.

This means that many workers have suffered a loss.

This year the Government and the bosses have said that wages might go up by 14 percent. Many people believe, the inflation rate could be in the region of 20 percent.

Workers are losing out on the deal all the time. The result wage increases is normally accompanied by a huge increase in basic foodstuffs, rents, transport etc.

This argument is supported by a recent study that says people are eating less food in South Africa. This is despite a three percent growth in the size of the population.

Poverty for the producers of wealth



Each and every day about twelve million South African workers report for work at their places of employment. These are the workers who build the cities, the mines, the hospital buildings that are admired by all.

And it is precisely these workers who suffer exploitation and oppression of the worst kind. They receive poverty wages, face overwork and unemployment.

When they return home from work, they go home to overcrowded slum houses. Their children are forced to accept an inferior general education.

It is through the apartheid system that the whites have had the best of everything in this country. In 1985, the average white household earned R1958 per month, while Indians earned R1198, Coloureds R699 and African households R352 per month. In most cases each African worker supports up to nine people on wages which are not enough for the basic necessities of life for one person.

All the wealth goes into the pockets of a small group of people who own the factories, mines and farms. It is they who control the wealth of this country and keep it to themselves with the help of the government.

Studies have shown that about 1300 families own and control 50 percent of this country's wealth. Some of these people are being paid over R300 000 a year.

While many workers with families to support are expected to survive on R300 a month - and sometimes even less.

With this money workers are supposed to feed and clothe themselves and their families, pay rates and electricity accounts, pay for their children's education, pay for transport to and from work and provide other household necessities.

But now the workers have united. Under the banner of Cosatu they have said enough is enough. They have vowed to campaign tirelessly for a living wage.

The people shall share in the country's wealth - The freedom charter

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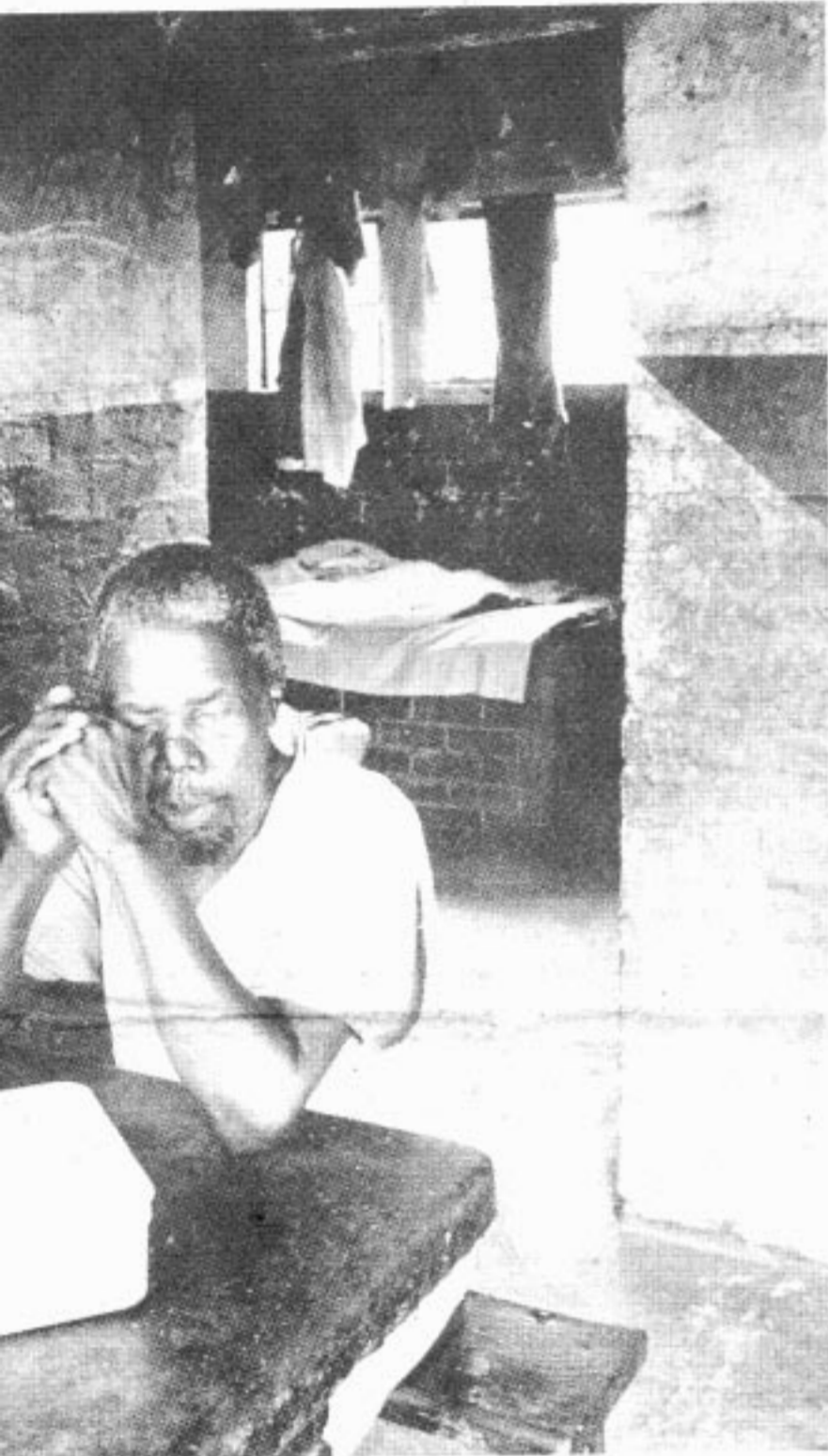
Remember Moses said
To his people: "O my people!
Call in remembrance the favour
Of Allah unto you, when He
Produced prophets among you,
Made you kings, and gave
You what He had not given
To any other among the peoples.

"O my people! enter
The holy land which
Allah hath assigned unto you,
And turn not back
Ignominiously, for then
Will ye be overthrown,
To your own ruin.
To your own ruin.
They said: "O Moses!
Is this land not a people
Of exceeding strength?
Never shall we enter it:
Until they leave it:
If (sooner) they leave,
Then shall we enter."
(But) among (their) God-fearing men,
Were two on whom
Allah bestowed His grace:

They said: "Assuredly there
As the (proper) Gate:
When once ye are in,
Victory will be yours:
"But on Allah put your trust
If ye have faith.
They said: "O Moses!
While they remain there,
Never shall we be able
To enter, to the end of time.
Go thou, and thy Lord,
And fight us two,
While we sit here
(And watch)."
He said: "O my Lord!
I have power only
Over myself and my brother:
So separate us from this
Rebellious people!
Allah said: "Therefore
Will the land be ours
Of their meek for forty years:
In distraction will they
Wander through the land:
But sorrow thou not
Over these rebellious people."

AGE

A campaign launched recently by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) for a living wage for all workers is a direct challenge to the entire system of capitalism and apartheid in South Africa. Grassroots looks at how workers have suffered and continue to suffer under apartheid capitalism and focusses on aspects of the Cosatu campaign.



Unemployment low wages, is the reality for millions.

LOW wages, a high cost of living, unemployment and job insecurity, broken houses and squalid townships are very much part of the daily lives of millions of South African workers.

If we look around us on the streets of Cape Town, we will daily see thousands of unemployed people walking the streets for jobs. Unemployment in South Africa has never been as high as it is today.

More than half of the workers who are capable of working are unemployed while in the Eastern Cape this figure is even higher with 60 out of every 100 people being jobless.

The problem of inflation (of rising prices and costs) is something which seriously affects all workers. In 1986 the cost of living went up by nearly 19 percent, the highest since the 1920's.

Many people expect that the inflation rate will be even higher this year. The past twelve years has not seen an inflation rate of below 10 percent.

Even though many workers may get increases every year, the increases are normally less than the rate of inflation.

The means, in fact, that there has been an actual drop in the real wages. The average wage increases in 1985 was 10,6 percent while the inflation rate was 16 percent.

This means that many workers have suffered a loss.

This year the Government and the bosses have said that wages might go up by 14 percent. Many people believe, the inflation rate could be in the region of 20 percent.

Workers are losing out on the deal all the time. The small wage increases is normally accompanied by a huge increase in basic foodstuffs, rents, transport etc.

This argument is supported by a recent study that says people are eating less food in South Africa. This is despite a three percent growth in the size of the population.

and a guaranteed personal increase across the board of R1 per hour.

The campaign will not be an easy campaign to win. Massive Living Wage campaigns have been fought by Cosatu unions over the past few years.

These struggles have brought workers into direct confrontation with the bosses. And the bosses have fought back hard.

Now for the first time the efforts of all Cosatu unions are being co-ordinated in a national campaign.

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Cosatu's biggest
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crowded slum houses. Their children are forced to accept an inferior gutter education.

It is through the apartheid system that the whites have had the best of everything in this country. In 1985, the average white household earned R1958 per month, while Indians earned R1109, Coloureds R690 and African households R352 per month. In most cases each African worker supports up to nine people on wages which are not enough for the basic necessities of life for one person.

All the wealth goes into the pockets of a small group of people who own the factories, mines and farms. It is they who control the wealth of this country and keep it to themselves with the help of the government.

Studies have shown that about 1360 families own and control 80 percent of this country's wealth. Some of these people are being paid over R300 000 a year.

This while many workers with families to support are expected

to survive on R300 a month - and sometimes even less.

With this money workers are supposed to feed and clothe themselves and their families, pay rents and electricity accounts, pay for their childrens education, pay for transport to and from work and provide other household necessities.

But now the workers have united. Under the banner of Cosatu they have said enough is enough. They have vowed to campaign tirelessly for a living wage.

are in the country's wealth - The freedom charter



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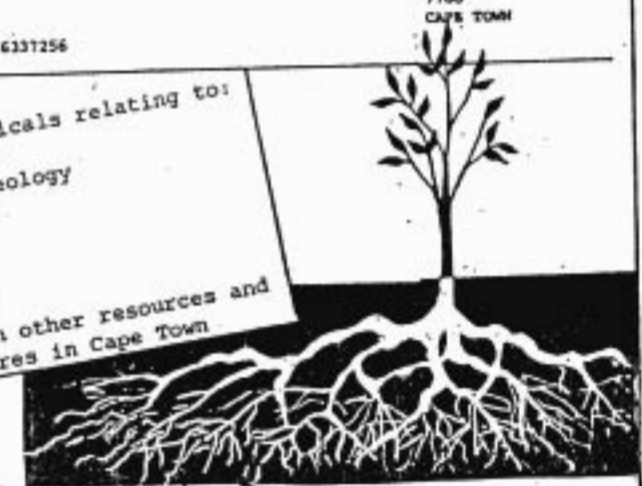
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Remember Moses said
To his people: "O my people!
Call in remembrance the favour
Of Allah unto you, when He
Produced prophets among you,
Made you kings, and gave
You what He had not given
To any other among the peoples.

"O my people! enter
The holy land which
Allah hath assigned unto you
And turn not back
Ignominiously, for then
Will ye be overthrown,
To your own ruin.
They said: "O Moses!
In this land are a people
Of exceeding strength:
Never shall we enter it
Until they leave it:
If (once) they leave,
Then shall we enter."
(But) among (their) God-fearing men
Were two on whom
Allah bestowed His grace:

They said: "Assault them
At the (proper) Gate:
When once ye are in,
Victory will be yours;
"But on Allah put your trust
If ye have faith
They said: "O Moses!
While they remain there,
Never shall we be able
To enter, to the end of time.
Go thou, and thy Lord,
And fight ye two,
While we sit here
(And watch)."
He said: "O my Lord!
I have power only
Over myself and my brother:
So separate us from this
Rebellious people!
Allah said: "Therefore
Will the land be out
Of their reach for forty years:
In distraction will they
Wander through the land:
But sorrow thou not
Over these rebellious people."

Apartheid's death squads

A NEW form of terror has raised its ugly head in townships throughout South Africa. Right-wing vigilantes, also known as death squads, have been formed in many areas to counter the rapid growth of progressive and democratic organisations.

Since early 1985, these deaths squads, often armed with knobkerries, sjamboks and pangas, have been trying to impose their rule on the townships.

In many cases there have been claims that they have the support of the police and the local community council. In some cases, the police have denied this.

Whether or not they have official support, the vigilantes have been doing the dirty work of apartheid. They have tried to crush progressive and anti-apartheid movements where the police and army have failed.

In many townships, especially in the Northern Transvaal and Eastern Cape, thousands of activists had to go in hiding - from the police but also from the death squads.

Wherever these squads have been formed, they have brought with them senseless destruction and violent killings.

In the different areas, they have chosen different names, the most popular the "A-Team", seemingly after the popular TV series.

They call themselves "A-Team" in Thabong (Welkom), Tumahole (Parys) and Seeisoville (Kroonstad). In Soweto, they are called "Russians", in Durban they are the Amabutho, in Kwandebile they are Mbhokhoto and in the Western and Eastern Cape, they call themselves "witdoeke" or "fathers".

Whatever their names, they have one thing in common. They have the same targets, the members and leaders of groups associated with resistance to apartheid or homeland rule.

They also share a common brazenness and courage that come from believing that they have official sanctioning and that they cannot be brought to court.

Recently, the bodies of eight young people were found in Natal after they had been abducted by a death squad. The young people had belonged to a progressive organisation.

In Thabong, in the Free State, death squads killed three people in a reign of terror from February to June 1985. They lost four of their own members. The "Phakatis" were believed to include a number of community councillors. The council now has its own official "law enforcement unit".

In Tumahole, five people were killed after A-Team members went on the rampage against anti-apartheid activists. This followed a successful rent boycott and the growth of militant trade unions.

In Seeisoville, three community councillors allegedly tried to kill prominent UDF activist, Denis Bloem. Bloem failed to get Supreme Court protection when the councillors said they carried guns for their own protection.

In Huhudi, the Huhudi Civic Association (HUCA) came under attack from disgruntled community councillors who saw they were losing support in the area. HUCA leaders were attacked, their houses burnt down and their rallies disrupted. Police arrested HUCA members for public violence after they were beaten up by vigilantes.

In Leandra, death squads killed popular leader Chief Ampu Mayisa of the Leandra Action Committee. They brazenly admitted to newspapers that they had killed the chief, but none of them were ever arrested.

Since then, it has not stopped and is continuing in townships throughout South Africa.



A victim of death squads in Moutse. This man was lucky to live

Youth set up defence committees

DEFENCE committees have been formed by youths in many areas in response to the threat posed by right-wing vigilantes.

One of the areas where right-wing death squads pose a big threat to progressive organisations is the Northern Transvaal.

The 120 000-strong Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (NYTC) has formed defence committees in the area and is planning to involve youth and unemployed workers on a mass level to deal with the vigilante forces.

The NYTC claims the death squads are backed by Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) bandits in some areas.

At the recent launch of the 500 000-strong South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), to which the NYTC is affiliated, the campaign against vigilantes received top priority.

Sayco has committed itself to stopping the recruitment of young people by vigilante groups, the Inkatha Youth Brigade and Lebo-wa's Inyandza Youth Brigade.

Sayco president Peter Mokaba said at the launch: "Innocent people are being recruited... simply for money or because they have a personal grudge."

"The high level of unemployment is being used to recruit people into being permanent vigilante groups."

Sayco has encouraged the formation of defence committees to protect youth against vigilantes.

Crossroads killers still run free

"I DID not know that if somebody killed somebody else, he will not be arrested for that. Many people were killed at Crossroads last year but the killers were not brought to court."

These words, by Nyanga Extension squatter leader Alfred Siphika, express the frustration of thousands of people who lost their houses and loved ones in attacks by Witdoek vigilantes from Old Crossroads in May and June last year.

Almost one year after the destruction of Nyanga Extension, Nyanga Bush and Portlant Cement Works squatter camps, most of those left destitute are still living in uncertainty while the witdoeke are anxiously awaiting to benefit from the upgrading of the ransacked areas.

About 40 000 people were left homeless and more than 50 died in the single biggest operation by vigilantes ever in South Africa.

The systematic destruction of the three squatter camps, and later part of the KTC, by witdoeke - allegedly backed by security forces was the worst act of violence ever seen in the Western Cape.

The government has refused to deny allegations in court that the witdoeke were backed by police and army personnel.

After KTC residents won a final Supreme Court order restraining the witdoeke, police and army from attacking them, residents of the four camps compiled claims totalling millions of rands against the government. These claims must still be heard in court.

In some quarters, it was said that the fighting at Crossroads was faction-fighting.

Those who understood what was happening saw it a part of a total plan to forcibly remove people to Khayelitsha, a resettlement area which has been widely rejected, especially by the people whose camps have now been destroyed.



Witdoeke prepare to attack in Crossroads last year. More than 50 people were killed but no-one has been charged with murder.

Curfews and terror in Zolani

WHEN the residents of Zolani, near Ashton, hear a siren about 9 o'clock at night they rush to get inside their houses and lock their doors. They know that if they are found outside by the "homeguards" or "amasolomzi" (the eyes of the township) they will be assaulted.

Details of the way vigilantes control the lives of about 3 500 people in the small Boland township were revealed recently in the trial of four men charged with public violence.

The men had attacked the house and car of two known vigilantes in the area. The judge made history when he did not send the men to jail but asked them to pay compensation and do community service in Zolani.

Dawie Bosch, who used to work in the Montagu/Ashton Community Services (MACS) advice office, gave evidence in mitigation of the four men.

He told the court of the frustrations of Zolani residents who lived in fear of the vigilante while it appeared the police were not prepared to do anything about the situation.

Bosch said the vigilantes started operating in Zolani in November 1985. They were appointed "temporary guards" by the Administration Board in April last year.

Even before they were officially appointed, they used the board vehicles to carry out arrests and the board's offices to interrogate and assault people.

He said police were present during some of these assaults. This was denied in court by the police.

Bosch said the advice office had approached the police on many occasions to do something about the violence but the station commander, a warrant-officer De la Guerre, said he was not prepared to do anything.

AT the beginning of July 1987, a new system of local government is to begin in Cape Town. The Regional Services Council system will also soon be in effect in most parts of the country.

The RSC system is part of the Government's new brand of apartheid. It will have a direct bearing on our daily lives. It will carry out functions like providing housing, water, electricity, roads and recreational facilities etc.

But at this early stage it is clear that the RSC's do not provide any hope of improving the lives of our people. If anything, it will only impose further hardships and suffering on our people.

In this and following issues, Grassroots will take a detailed look at all aspects of the Regional Services Council system.

The first part examines where and why this new plan has come about, what effect it will have on our people and how it will work.

THE new system of local government, called the Regional Services Council system is expected to start in Cape Town on July 1st 1987.

Many people are asking what exactly these new Regional Services Councils (RSC's) are all about.

The RSC's are part of the tricameral system. It is part of the plan to keep wealth and power in the hands of a minority. It also seeks to further divide the oppressed people by trying to co-opt (buy over) middle class elements. It seeks to divide workers as well by offering a little more power to homeowners than to tenants.

We look first at how the new system is structured. At present there is a single level system of local authorities. Cape Town City Council, Divisional Council, Bellville, Stellenbosch etc. all fall under the Provincial Administration and this falls under central government.

Under the new RSC system there will be two levels of local authorities. At the very bottom level will be local authorities which are much smaller and weaker than present local authorities. These have been called Primary Local Authorities or P.L.A.'s.

PLA's will be defined on a racial basis. In other words, there will be PLA's in Athlone, Mitchells Plain, Elsies River, Atlantis and Athlone. There will be an Indian PLA in Rylands. A black PLA will cover Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga and the Cape Town City Council will be changed into a small "whites only" P.L.A. All these PLA's will fall under the regional services council

which will be a body covering the whole of the Cape Metropolitan area.

The RSC will carry out all the major and important services such as water, electricity, rubbish removal, main roads, public transport etc. All the smaller local services such as local roads, local parks, local libraries, will be carried out by the PLA's.

It is clear that the new system will fit in neatly with the tricameral system.

THE NEW SYSTEM FURTHER DIVIDES OUR PEOPLE

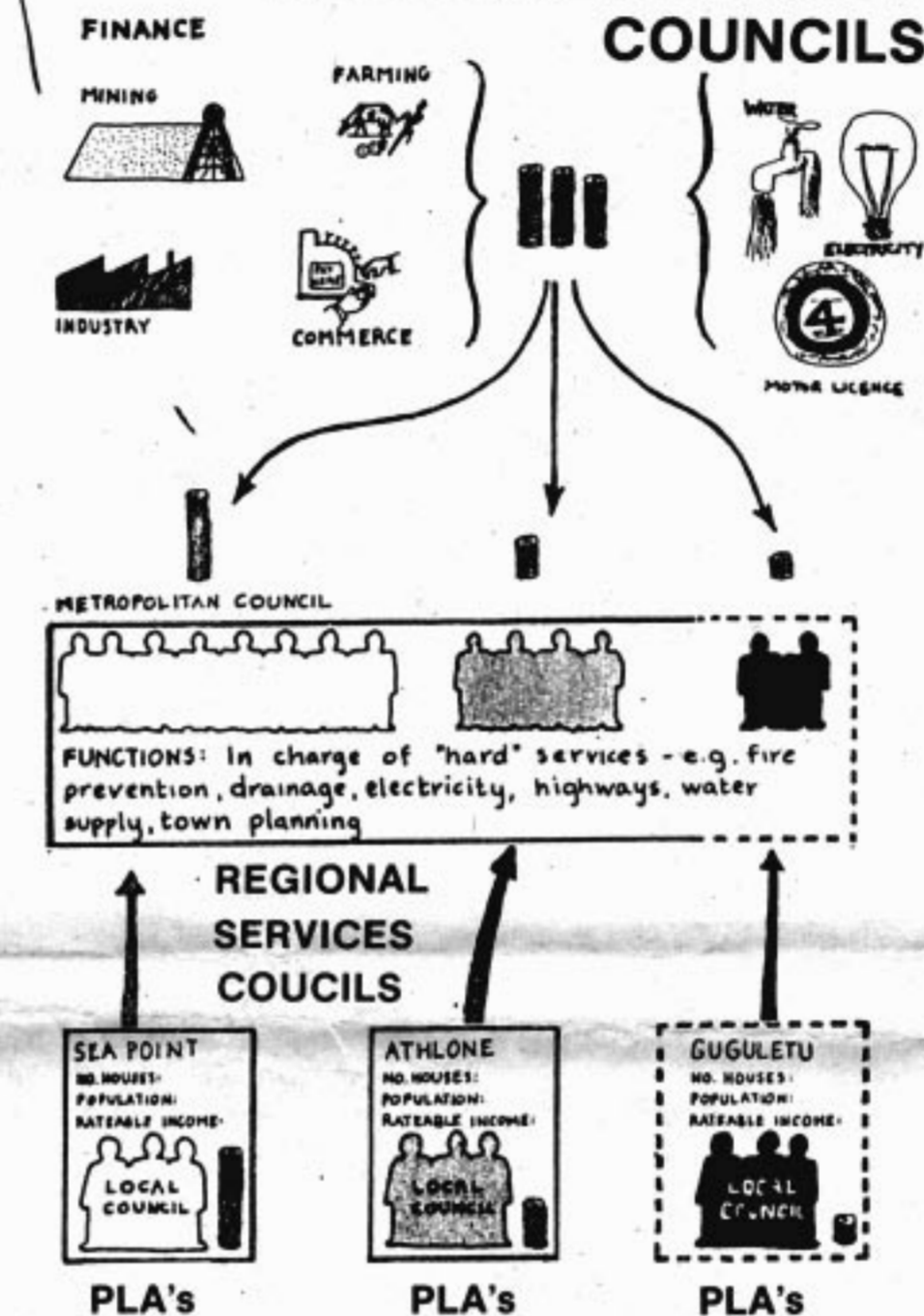
The new system is designed to buy off people at different levels. Businessmen will be given a bigger say as also professionals, teachers, lawyers etc; What is more, sections amongst workers are also going to be bought off. For example, tenants who do not own property will have one vote. Home owners will be entitled to two votes. People who own businesses will get extra votes for each business they own.

The new system therefore attempts to place a little more power in the hands of certain sections of the oppressed.

It is also clear from the above that the white PLA's will be very powerful because most of the wealth is concentrated in the white areas. Whites, together with a small privileged group of blacks, coloureds and indians will therefore control the RSC's.

Regional Services Councils . . . Another new face of Apartheid

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS



WHO WILL PAY FOR THIS NEW SYSTEM?

The new PLA's will get their money from rates and rents in their areas. Obviously the poorer PLA's will never be able to raise enough money in rents and rates to cover their costs.

The services in areas like Mitchells Plain, Atlantis, Athlone, Elsies River and Guguletu will still be limited and inferior. So nothing will change.

According to the new plans, the RSC will obtain money from a new tax on all businesses in Cape Town. But we know that it will be the oppressed masses who have to carry this burden in the end. Prices for food and essential services will be increased, no doubt.

WHO WILL CONTROL THE PLA'S.

Elections for these local authority structures will only be held in 1988. Until then areas will be represented by the disgraced and undemocratic management committees and community councillors.

These bodies have been rejected by millions of South Africans over and over again. When elections for these bodies are held very few people vote.

The main responsibility for PLA functions in coloured areas will rest with the House of Representatives and the Labour Party. The financing and administration of housing in coloured group areas will therefore fall directly under the Labour Party.

RSC's Part of 'Reform' Strategy

THE idea of the regional services council (RSC) system is not something which simply appeared from nowhere. It is part and parcel of the Government's strategy of reform.

The Regional services council are nothing but an extension of the tricameral system.

The idea of reforming apartheid first started during the 1970's.

It had become clear to the Nationalist Party that it could no longer rule in

the same old ways. Old-style apartheid was causing them problems. The economy was sinking. Unemployment was growing and there was a major shortage of skilled workers because of poor education and training.

Trade Unions and community organisations had grown rapidly and in 1976 there was a nationwide uprising.

The Government's answer to all this was the so-called reform strategy. It

promised many wonderful changes. But it was clear from the start that they merely wanted to adjust the apartheid plan. It was simply going to be apartheid in new clothes. Through its "reform" strategy, the Government is trying to give the impression that it is sharing power with other groups.

It also tries to make it seem that it has taken a "back seat" in the running of the country. In the past the hand of the

Government could be seen in almost every aspect of peoples' lives and as a result most of the people anger has been directed at the Government and its agents. Through the "reform" strategy the Government is trying to put forward the economy and "free enterprise" as the main controlling factor in South Africa.

By doing this the Government can push some of its responsibilities on to

the shoulders of others. But, although the Government will appear to be less involved in certain areas, this does not mean there will be less central Government control.

With housing for example, the Government will still control where, and how much land is made available for housing. The Government will be able to control where people live as much as it did in the past.

The majority is excluded

THE RSC system excludes more than half the African Population of Cape Town.

African people who are migrants and those who the Government has defined as illegals do not get a vote on their own local authorities at all.

This is part of one of the cornerstones of apartheid in which the government sees it fit to decide who is a citizen and who is not.

Many African workers are classified as Transkeians and Ciskeians. This means they are not regarded as being citizens of South Africa.

Only those who accept the inhuman homeland system and the denial of citizenship to the majority of South Africans can take part in the RSC system.

New system rejected

PROGRESSIVE organisations like the United Democratic Front (UDF) the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the Azanian People's organisation (Azapo) have rejected all aspects of the RSC system.

These organisations have always called for a single universal franchise at all levels of Government.

The UDF rejects these racist and undemocratic

structures which it sees as an attempt by the Government to further divide the oppressed and exploited majority while maintaining power in the hands of a privileged minority.

Cosatu is totally opposed to the RSC system because it will divide workers and because it will create an elite at every level within the community bought off by the Government in the

hands of a dictatorship controlled by the military.

Cosatu says that the Government is trying to relieve itself of its financial responsibilities of providing services such as housing, recreational facilities libraries etc.

Cosatu demands that the central government take full responsibility for housing and not pass the buck to poor workers and so-called private enterprise.

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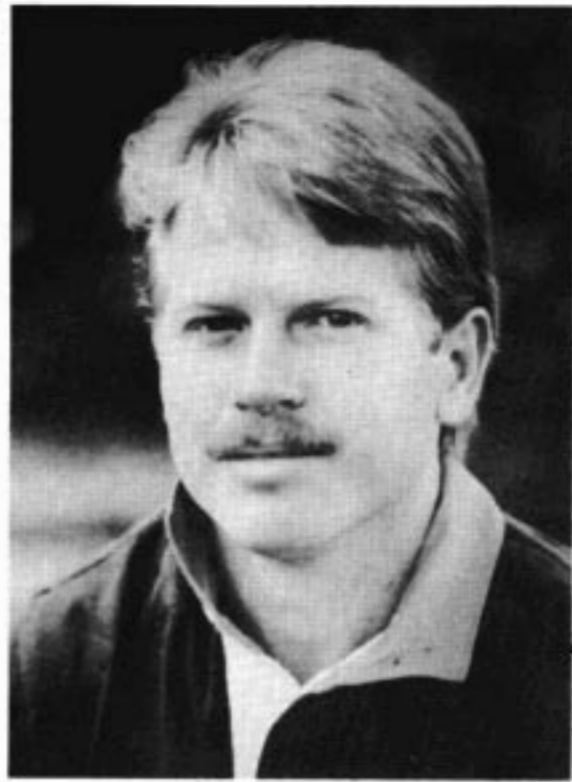
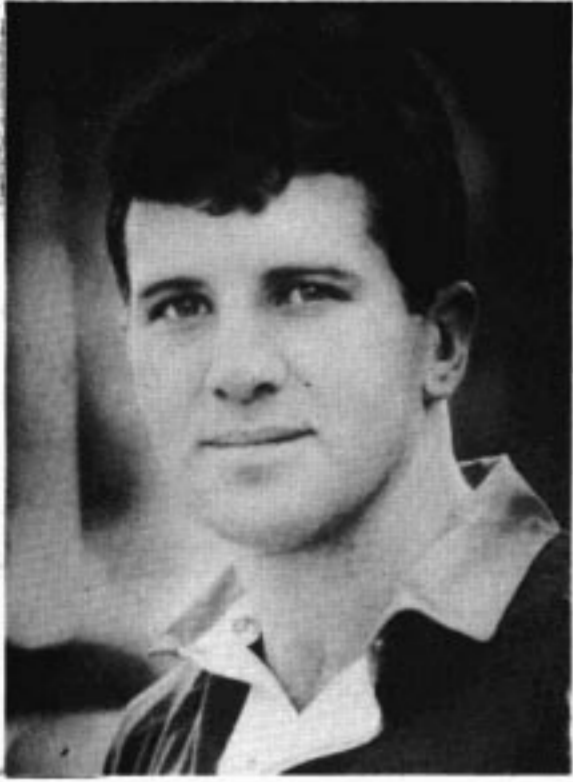
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Look who's making anti-apartheid noises



WHAT'S NAAS AND COMPANY UP TO?

HAVE you noticed recently how establishment sport has become increasingly political? All the "big names" of establishment sport - the Clive Rices and the Graeme Pollocks are making political calls almost every week. They seem to be desperate to develop an anti-apartheid political profile.

It started in March, when Natal schoolboy Nkululeko Skweyiya was banned from a school athletics meeting in Pretoria by Menlo Park

High School. While this kind of thing happens all the time, the Skweyiya case was seized upon and gained national publicity.

A petition was launched calling for "an end to racism in sport". It was immediately backed by dozens of "big names" from Cricket and Rugby through to Boxing and Golf - Clive Rice, Barry Richards, Bob Hewitt, Naas Botha, Wynand Claasen, Hugh Baiocchi, Bruce Fordyce and Brian Baronet all announced their support.

More recently, sport has begun to play a role in the whites only election. The PFP calls on white voters to support them if they "want to see the Springboks thump

Wales at Cardiff Arms Park" or "want to see Diego Maradona playing at Ellis Park". Once again Morne Du Plessis, Graeme Pollock, Clive Rice and the rest have come out publicly condemning the government, and supporting the PFP/NRP and Independents.

Why all this eagerness suddenly to get involved in politics from those who have always complained that sport should not be mixed with politics?

Barry Richards gives the answer, when he says that white sports stars should speak out against apartheid because "we must get back into international sport". The white sport establishment has realised that the world rejects apartheid. They believe that if they can convince the world that South Africa sport is "normal", they can break the isolation.

The white sports establishment wants to sidestep

the question of apartheid, and create the illusion that there can be normal sport under apartheid.

They have created a sophisticated plan to smash the international boycott. The plan, exposed by the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC), involves sending black "sports ambassadors" overseas, and spreading misinformation about South Africa. One important aspect of the plan is that prominent white sportspeople should make statements condemning racism. They hope to build their credibility in this way and isolate SACOS and non-racial sport.

Spurs will clinch the cup

THE 1987 FA Cup Final sees Tottenham Hotspur (the original 'Spurs') facing Coventry City at Wembley on May 16. It is a clash between one of Britain's greatest clubs and an unglamorous but determined small-town opposition.

London-based Spurs have a great record, including the first ever League and FA Cup 'double' in 1961, and recent FA Cup victories in 1981 and 1982. Coventry, on the other hand have never won the FA Cup, and spend most seasons at the bottom of the first division fighting against relegations. So, the odds must heavily favour Spurs.

Coventry should not be written off, however. They have had one of their best seasons in the League, and will look to Wembley to bring home a trophy for the first time in years.

Although they have few big names, Coventry have some players of considerable talent. Cyrille

Regis was one of the best strikers in England when he was at Watford.

It is a tradition in the FA Cup that the underdogs play well above themselves - Coventry's players will run and tackle as if it was the World Cup Final, putting the pressure on to Spurs. They should give Spurs a run for their money.

Money, unfortunately, makes the difference in professional football, and in this department Spurs completely overshadow Coventry. Spurs manager David Pleat has been able to spend over R12 Million to bring some of the hottest talent in England to his club.

To a squad that already included Glenn Hoddle, Ossie Ardiles and Clive Allen (the R3 Million striker who has already passed the 44 goals in a season record at the club set by the great Jimmy Greaves) Pleat added Richard Gough and Mitchell Thomas England World Cup stars Chris Waddle and Steve Hodge, and star Belgian World Cup striker Nico Claasen.

Add to this the likes of Gary Mabbut, Gary Stevens, Danny Thomas, Paul Allen and Tony Galvin, and you see why Pleat's biggest headache will be who to leave out on May 16.

With that array of talent, and some of their best form ever, it would be a foolish gambler who bets against Spurs. One thing you can be sure of; it will be a day of unforgettable football.

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