

FREE

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grassroots

THE PAPER ABOUT YOU NOVEMBER 1985 SPECIAL EDITION

Dear Grassroots Readers . . .

We are proud to present you with this issue of Grassroots. Over the last few weeks, we have been seriously harassed. Our offices have been burnt down, and now six of our staff and executive members are in detention - and others have been forced into hiding.

But we are determined that this will not stop the people's paper. The resistance of our people cannot be broken - and the voice of our people will not be silenced!

Government in crisis as Botha calls:

'EMERGENCY!'

"Botha's government is running scared. They have shown that they cannot govern the country through normal means. What is supposed to be a sign of strength can only be seen as a mark of weakness and fear."

This was the reaction of thousands, as Botha's government declared a State of Emergency in the Western Cape. His move was widely condemned by groups ranging from the UDF to the PFP. And has further worsened South Africa's declining popularity internationally.

For many living in the townships, the State of Emergency is seen as simply legalising what was already going on. But it has dramatically increased the powers of the police, and further hardships to the people of Cape Town.

Since the Emergency was declared,

- * nearly 400 people have been detained, and many others forced into hiding.

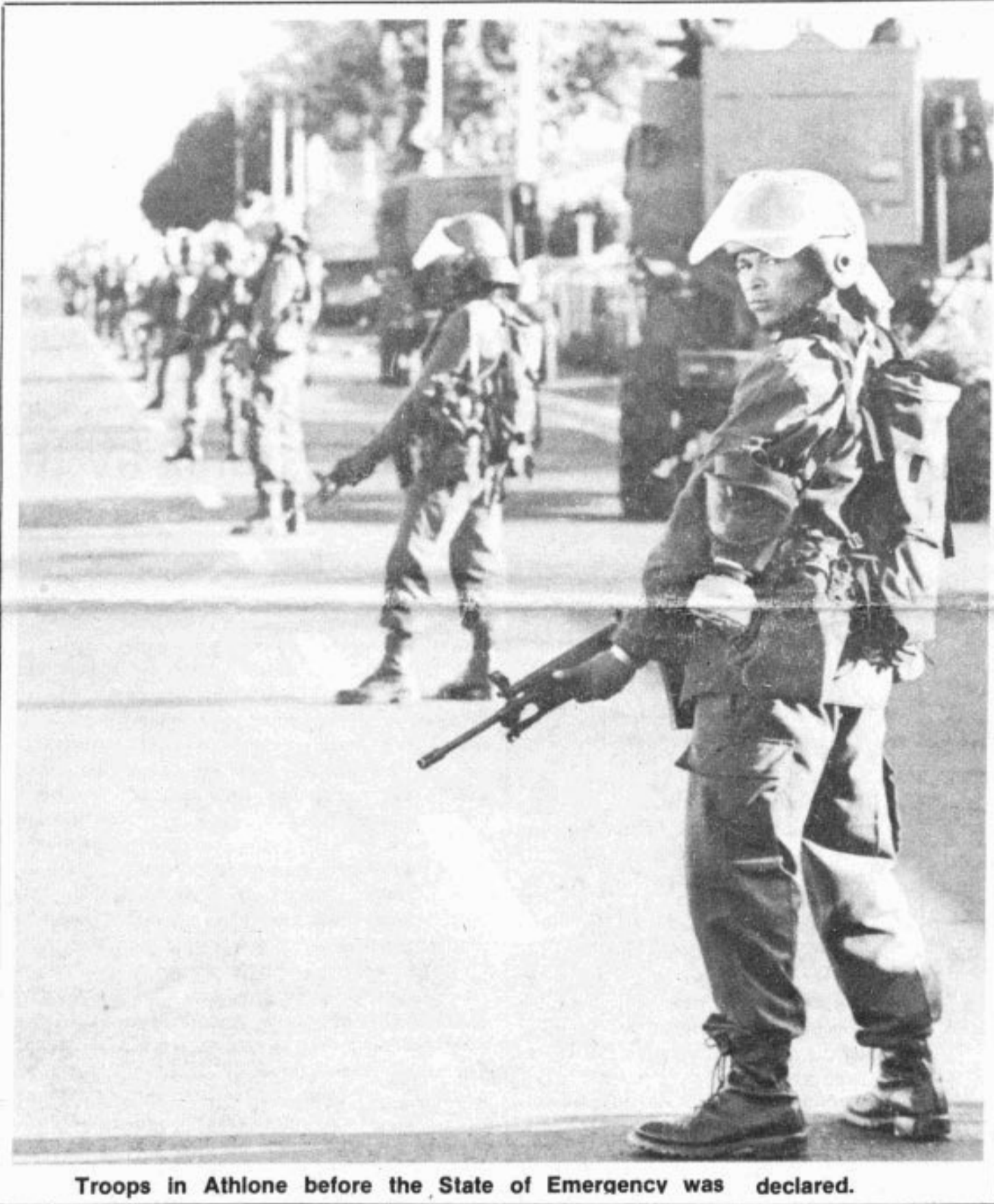
- * the police have been given wide powers to arrest and detain, and are protected from any legal action against them. This protection has been given to police and army forces in all parts of the country - not only to those in the emergency areas.

- * hundreds of homes, classrooms and offices have been searched.

- * meetings of almost 100 organisations have been banned.

These restrictions make organisation difficult. But they certainly have not stopped it. "We are finding new ways of organising all the time" said Naseegh Jaffer, organizer of the UDF interim executive. "The brutal actions of the security forces have made people more angry and militant than ever before. The support for the UDF has grown enormously in the last few weeks. We are finding new ways of co-ordinating and communicating. And if anything, we are stronger and more disciplined than before."

When Botha declared the State of Emergency nearly four months ago, he promised that it would restore "peace". Instead, the conflict has escalated alarmingly, more people have died, and conflict has spread to many other areas. It has proved clearly what many have been saying for years: "More repression, more arrests, more laws will never bring peace. The only road to peace is justice, giving all an equal share in the wealth and government of their country."



Troops in Athlone before the State of Emergency was declared.

The International Voice of Anger!

Last week, 60 000 people marched through London, to be addressed by Oliver Tambo - ANC President. They were protesting against their Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, supporting Botha's apartheid government.

In Australia, the trade unions have also taken action against South Africa. Dock workers refuse to unload SA ships; Postal workers refuse to handle SA mail and phone calls; Shop workers won't handle SA products; Airport workers won't service SAA aeroplanes. Many workers in other countries are taking similar actions.

These protests are just some examples of the growing "International voice of anger" against apartheid. As scenes of police brutality flash across TV

screens all over the world, as Botha drags SA deeper and deeper into repression and violence, the International community strengthens its commitment to end apartheid. They are demanding that their governments take action - through sanctions, and economic and political pressure.

Of course, Botha still has some friends. Ms Thatcher and Ronald Reagan continue to fight sanctions against SA. But people in Britain and USA are forcing them to change. The USA has imposed limited sanctions - no further investment in South Africa, banning of computer sales to the SA government, ban on the sale of Kruger Rands. These sanctions are a victory for the US people supporting the struggle against apartheid.

We hear many brave statements from PW Botha and Pik, like "We don't need the outside world", "Sanctions will hurt you more than it will hurt us." But Botha and his government desperately need International support - politically and economically. Apartheid is expensive - and SA's economy has been crippled by the cost.

Botha seems to think that banning Foreign Press from the townships will improve SA's image overseas. But, as Rev Jesse Jackson said "TV didn't create apartheid - it only exposed it." Banning the press won't fool anyone. There is only one way to avoid sanctions and international pressure: Make South Africa a free country which everybody feels they can morally, and justly support!

BLACK-OUT!

'If we pretend it's not happening, perhaps it will all go away'

The government has drastic new restrictions on the reporting of township resistance.

The new laws prevent reporters from photographing, filming or taping any "public disturbance, riot, strike, boycott, damage to property, assault or killing, or any conduct of a member of the force with regard to the maintenance of public safety." Even drawings of these events cannot be published.

The only reporters allowed will be those who have been accredited by the South African Police. Even once they have been accredited, they have to first report to the officer in charge of the police in the area concerned.

For many weeks, reporters have been harassed by the police. In Cape Town, and other areas, they have been beaten, teargassed, arrested, forced out of the area, and had their equipment confiscated.

Journalists, newspapers, and a wide range of other groups have condemned the new law. A spokesperson for the Foreign Correspondents Association said it was "a severe form of censorship" of the government to blame foreign journalists for inciting unrest.

Many others have expressed fear at what the security forces will do if they are protected from the public view. "They are vicious enough in front of TV cameras" a township resident said. "I dread to think how they will behave now."

These laws may help the government hide resistance - but they won't help them stop it. All they can do is create a more polarised society, where some communities - particularly the white community - are even more isolated and unaware of what is really going on in their own country.

'Boycott helps us win'

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"Things are moving in Beaufort West. In the old days, it was "jtaan buite, kaffir". Now its "Goeie more, meneer". Why? Because the white traders are feeling the pinch of the consumer boycott!"

So said a spokesperson for the UDF in Beaufort West. "The traders are being forced to meet with us now, and listen to our demands - something that was unheard of a few months ago."

"But the boycott is not the only thing. The African township in Beaufort West is just mud pondokkies - built by our fathers and grandfathers. But we have to pay high rents to stay there."

"For years we have been demanding that they rebuild the township. But nothing was done. So a few weeks ago, we decided not to pay rent until we have decent houses. Now they have sent in building contractors to start working on a new township!"

"Another thing: there was never a post for a black nurse in the town. Four weeks ago, the town clerk came to the chairperson of our civic. He said there was now a vacancy for a black nurse, and the Civic must find a suitable person for the job!"

Beaufort West is just one area where the people are making their demands felt. In many other small towns,

people are finding that under a State of Emergency, actions such as the consumer boycott are one of the ways they can still use to fight for their demands. And all over, white traders and municipal authorities are being forced to recognise the democratic organisations of the people, and to listen to their demands.



In Cape Town, the UDF has called on people to strengthen the consumer

boycott. In a recent town meeting said:

"The bosses profits are falling. Bazaars profits fell by 50%. Hepworths is closing. Edgars is feeling the pinch."

"The profits of the apartheid - for the food and clothes for the bullets. We will not buy their profits."

"We will not buy in while our children are in school. We will not buy in while our leaders are released. We will not buy in while the last apartheid law is in force."

Black Christmas

Dear GRASSROOTS

I think that we in the Western Cape are not supporting the consumer boycott as we should. By making the consumer boycott work is one way to support our children and organisations in the fight for peace and justice in our country.

It is about time we mothers and fathers unite and fight. I want to suggest that this year's Christmas be a Black Christmas. Don't buy new clothes, don't buy luxuries, don't paint your house, don't buy new furniture and curtains. Every year the big shops make millions out of us at Christmas time. Don't support our fight for justice.

Hundreds of parents will not have their children with them because they have been calously killed by the army and police. They will be mourning. Their Christmas will be sad. Let us show solidarity with them and at the same time support the consumer boycott. Ask our churches to organise mourning services and programmes instead. Let us put into practice the slogan that says "An injury to one is an injury to all"

From a mother desperate for our freedom.
 J. Mackay
 Lansdowne.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LETTERS

WRITE TO GRASSROOTS, AND SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH ALL OUR READERS!

To: Grassroots
 P.O. Box 1161
 Cape Town
 8000

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Nurses stand by the struggle.

Dear GRASSROOTS

For the past 12 weeks we, as nurses, find ourselves being confronted daily by the casualties of police and SADF brutalities both in our work situations and in our communities. A lot of nurses are under tremendous stress - trying to give good care while faced with terrible conditions outside. Several young people are being killed daily by police fire, and as many wounded.

Many nurses are married with families to look after. They wake up earlier than other members of the family and have to see their families first before going to work. A lot of nurses have to walk for distances of up to 5 km, before they get to a bus to go to work. The work that nurses do is both physically and emotionally strenuous. It is impossible to go to work and not think of what the police and army are probably doing to our children. Nurses are keeping the service going at a great personal cost.

The violence that is affecting the majority of people in SA is completely contradictory to the whole essence of nursing. We condemn the action of the police and SADF in South Africa. We find it impossible to accept the stand of neutrality as expressed by our professional body in the latest Nursing News (October 1985). The 14th precept of the International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics reads "The nurse should participate and share with other citizens the responsibility for initiating and supporting action to meet health and social needs."

It is impossible to separate nursing from what is happening to the communities outside. If we did then it would be separating it from the very people we want to serve.

NURSES' SUPPORT GROUP

State of Emergency
 CAPE TOWN
 SPEAKS

★ ★ ★ ★

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'We won't write' say students



Students at rally at the start of the schools boycott in July.

"I am a matric student. At the beginning of the boycott, I felt like writing. But now, nobody is going to force me into writing, not even my parents. You know why I'm not going to write? Because my friends were killed by the police and I cannot go on writing exams with a guilty conscience. I personally would feel like a traitor."

This is the feeling of thousands of students. They have demanded that exams be postponed, since they feel it is impossible for students to write under the present conditions. But their call has been ignored by the Minister of Education - and exams are going ahead under police guard at the Faure Military Base and the Cape Showgrounds.

The Inter Regional Forum, representing over 80 high schools, has taken a strong stand against the writing of exams. In a statement, an IRF spokesperson said, "We have democratically decided and have been mandated by thousands of students, that we as students of the oppressed and exploited

community will not write examinations. We appeal to the handful of students who intend writing, to support our stand. We need the united support of all oppressed communities."

The call not to write exams has been supported by many organisations. A spokesperson for the 2000-strong Western Cape Teachers Union said "to write examinations now, under these conditions, would be perpetuating gutter education in its worst form."

WECTU has called on teachers to refuse to mark or invigilate examinations. "We believe that the date for examinations must be decided in consultation with parents, teachers and students.

The Peninsula African Teachers Association has supported the decision not to write exams. "We are part of our community - and must show our solidarity by suffering with it," they said.

The National Tertiary Institutions Student Organisation, representing colleges throughout South Africa, refuse to write

examinations until their demands are met. And several hundred students at UCT and UWC have refused to write - and are appealing to authorities to let them write exams at a later stage.

The UDF has supported the call not to write exams. "How can we write exams" they ask "when the army and police are daily invading our schools, * when so many students are being arrested with no good reason, * when our teachers and leaders are in jail, * when our meetings have been banned,

"All the organisations of the people agree: We cannot write under these conditions. Exams are a small sacrifice when so many of our brothers and sisters have been arrested, shot, killed on our doorsteps."

In deciding not to write exams, students face victimisation from the authorities - and are forced to make extreme personal sacrifices that could affect their lives seriously. But they are determined to stand by their decision.

STUDENTS SPEAK

GRASSROOTS spoke to students at a high school in Cape Town to find out their views.

EXAMS

'Al wil ek so graag skryf gaan ek nie skryf nie. Ek wil nie graag skryf nie met 'n polisie wat langs my staan. Ek sal nog altyd druip as dit die geval gaan wees. En ek dink dis nie reg as daar mense doodgaan en jy sit lekker en nie worried nie.'

'Ek dink is 'n goeie ding dat ons nie skryf nie want toe ons die skole wil reopen het, het Carter Ebrahim die skole gesluit en ouers, kinders en onderwysers geslaan. Baie onderwysers was detain en ouers was gevang.'

'Ons word gese dat ons onder polisie sal skryf. Ons weier volsterk om onder hulle te skryf. Hulle maak ons mense dood maar dan moet ons onder hulle besig skryf. Hulle "beskerm" ons maar dat maak hulle dood.'

(Std. 8)

SADF

'Ek het altyd gedink en vir myself gese dat ek in die SADF wou wees. Maar toe die boikot begin het my oë oop gegaan en ek het besef dat ek self moord sal pleeg as ek daar moes wees.'

(Std. 7)

STATE OF EMERGENCY

'Die Noodtoestand is die grootste gevaar vir ons mense. Dit gee polisie alle regte om ons mense te skiet. Ons gebruik geweld omdat die polisie het geweld op ons gebruik.'

(Std. 7)

'Botha het die noodtoestand ingeroep om die skool boikot te stop. Die polisie het alle mag. Ons het nie eens mag in ons eie huis nie. Waarom moet ons rent, water en lig betaal as hulle net in kan stap en mense vat net soos hulle wil?'

(Std. 8)

THE SCHOOLS BOYCOTT

'At first I thought it was stupid to boycott. But my eyes went open when they started to kill our people.'

'I think we must boycott for equal rights, and because we don't want harmless children to get hurt. Why does Mr Botha send the army? Does he think that will bring order to our townships? I think Botha must come face to face with the people and the students.'

'Ek glo nie daaraan dat mense uitgebrand word nie, want dit laat die ander wat saam met die vryheid van die land wil help afskrik.'

'The boycott has made me realise what I can do for my own people. I never knew I was capable of so much giving. I have learnt a lot at meetings. But I have become so hard inside towards the government. Some of my friends have been detained. I could not believe it when I heard.

We must go on fighting - though there will be blood and more will be detained. Although I am giving my full support to the boycott, I can't but wish that it would end, so that all the heart-break will be over.'

'Ek verloor wel 'n jaar se skool werk, maar dis die moeite werd, sien dat daar soveel mense gesterf het in die onruste, en baie mense in detensie is. Dit is eintlik te min opoffering.'

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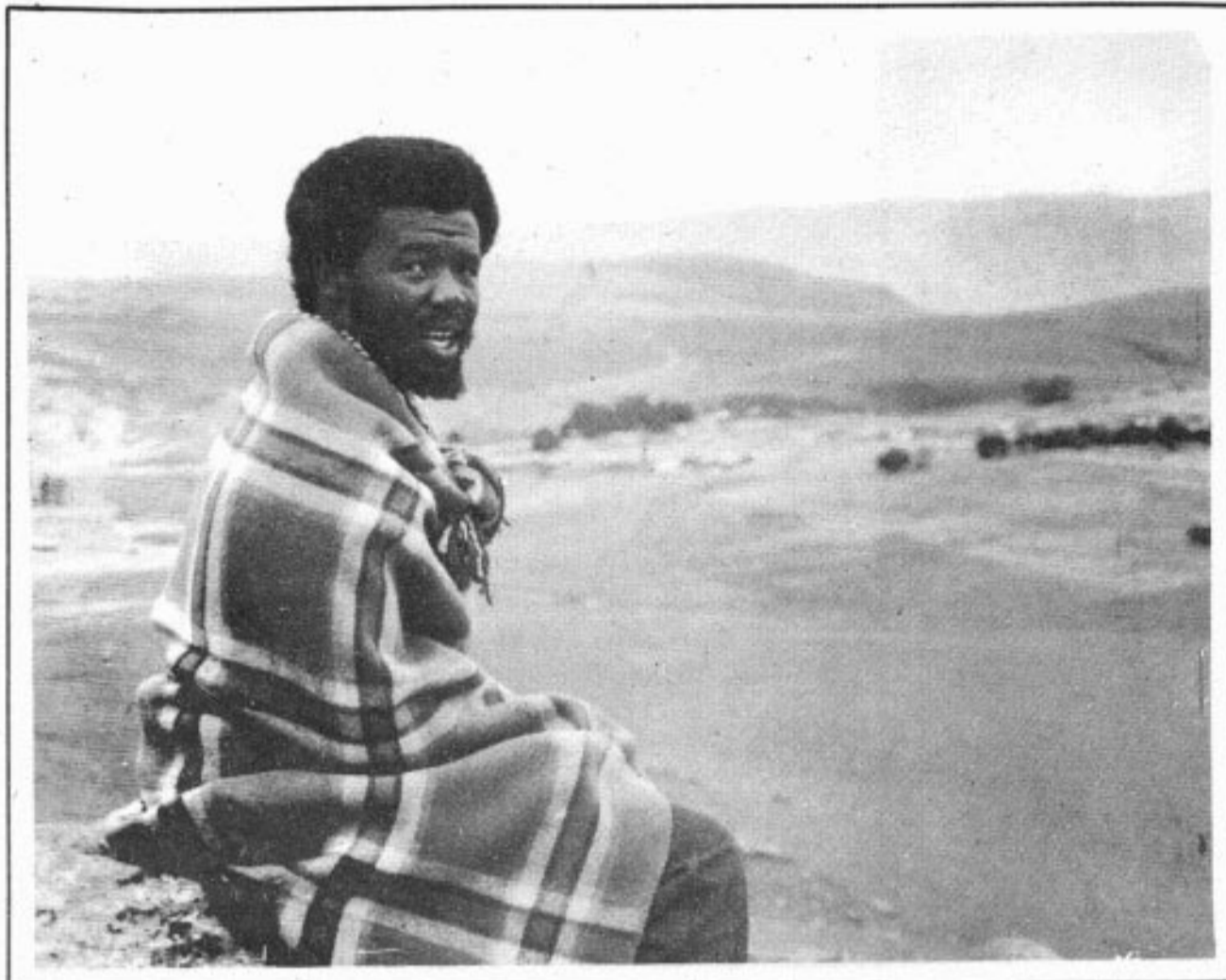


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Hambe kahle, Batwanda Ndonde

'All these social, economic and political injustices should be done away with for an alternative that people need'

Batwanda



On 24 September, a white van pulled up in the dusty streets of Cala, a small town in the Transkei. Men pushed out Batwanda Ndonde, and in full view of the residents, pumped him full of bullets. He was 22 years old

Batwanda's death is yet another of the unsolved brutal murders of our people and leaders. And it was one of many acts of terror which happen in the Transkei every day. The people of the Transkei have been living under a state of emergency since 1960.

Batwanda dedicated his short life to the struggles of his people against these conditions. From an early age, he faced repression as members of his family were detained and imprisoned in 1976 - when he was only 13 years old.

In 1981, he registered at UNITRA as a law student. He was elected onto the SRC executive in 1983. He led the struggles of the students until he and other SRC members were expelled in 1984.

In April 1985, he started work-

ing for the Health Care Trust as co-ordinator of the Village Health Worker project in the Cala district. He was known and loved for his work in fighting the health and other problems of his people.

After his death, the police continued to harass his family and friends. They detained two of his cousins and house mate. And they detained the lawyer investigating the murder case.

Last week, they were released from detention, and were banished to separate, remote areas of the Transkei.

On 30 October, the Health Care Trust called a mass meeting in Rondebosch to mourn the death of Batwanda. A few hours before, the meeting was banned.

But the spirit of Batwanda lives on - in the hearts of those who knew and loved him, and in the hearts of all those who strive for freedom. Hambe kahle, comrade Batwanda Ndonde. Your struggle continues...

ADVICE → We all feel the pain

They took my son away at 5.30 in the morning. I don't know what to do now. They say he will be in jail for many months, but how many they do not tell me. I must be strong in the struggle but inside I feel so helpless and weak. I want to break down and cry, what can I do? (Ebrahim, 38, Athlone)

I feel so helpless and powerless. They shoot at us with guns from their casspirs, but we just have stones. Inside I am very angry. But I am also sad. Look at what they are doing to our youth. Sometimes, I just want to run away and give up. (Janine, 21, Mitchells Plain.)

In these times of increased struggle you might be feeling like Janine or Ebrahim. You might be feeling helpless inside and feel like giving up in the

struggle. Maybe you are not sleeping well at night. You might be having bad dreams. You might feel irritable towards your family and shout at your children. Or maybe you are feeling dizzy in the head and are having problems with your nerves.

Other people might have different feelings to you. They might feel increased anger, fear or frustration. Different people often have different feelings in the same situation.

WHY ARE PEOPLE FEELING LIKE THIS?

To understand what causes us to feel like this, we must look at what happens around us. We are now living in a State of Emergency. Townships are occupied by the Police and SADF. Our daily lives have been dis-

rupted by state repression.

Repression may be one of the reasons why you are feeling like Ebrahim or Janine. Detentions of our comrades, families and friends can make us feel helpless and frustrated. Shootings, injuries and deaths can cause us to feel hopeless, powerless angry and sad. It is often the things that happen around us, that cause us to feel troubled and give us worries.

EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

We all know we have to be strong in the struggle. We might think that our troubled feelings are signs of weakness. Some of us hide our feelings and try to be strong.

But we are allowed to have these feelings. We all feel weak

and down at times. At this time there are so many people who will have the same feelings as you. People have a right to be sad, upset or on their nerves.

You also have a right to express your feelings. It often helps to talk about your troubles with others. Sharing these troubles with others is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength. It shows you are able to cope with your troubled feelings. We all need to support and listen to each other. If you can deal with your irritations and feelings, your contributions to the struggle will be of greater use.

COMRADES HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE FEELINGS!

COMRADES HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE FEELINGS!

Need Help?

If you need advice or help with arrests, injuries, detentions, police/army activity in the townships, or if you have information on these activities contact

*THE RELIEF CENTRE
(Repression Monitoring Group)
Church House Tel. 23 1253
Queen Victoria Street 24 3782
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*THE CRISIS CENTRE
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