

THE LONG MARCH



OSWALD

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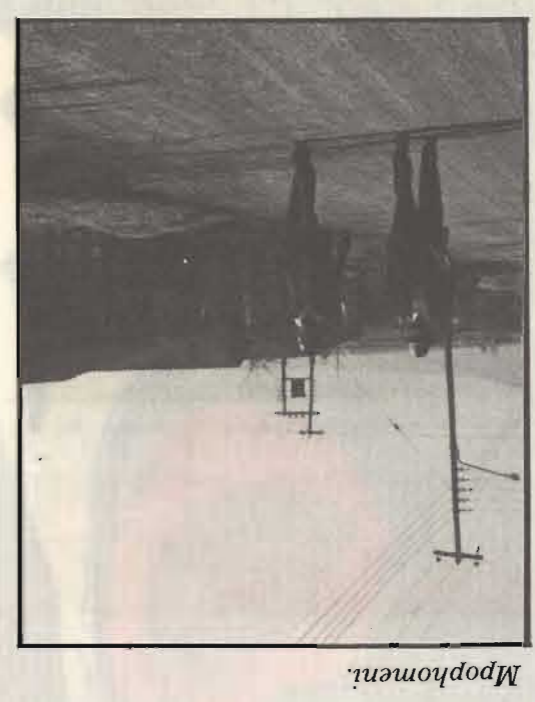
Strikers march in Imbali.



Agriculture Co-operative

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Mophomeni

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Dedication

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Strikers attending the court case.

Songs from the play

Ye She Samsoni
 Ye she Samsoni ye she!
 Hey Samson, hey!
 Awa ye she
 Yes indeed
 namhlanje lamanqamu
 Today is today
 uzo sayina ngempela
 You must sign
 isivumelwano.
 the agreement.

Amagwala
 Aya najikaza
 They are doubting in
 aye saba amagwala
 their minds, the cowards
 ahi ku ngecono
 they are afraid, they
 asi buyele emuva
 say it is better to turn back
 qiniselani
 hold strong,
 nani maqhawe
 brave ones
 se kuse duze lapho
 soon we are going to
 stya khona.
 conquer.



The long March

bosses responding to the stayaway

Working for Sarmcol

Many of today's strikers watched their fathers' fighting similar issues at Sarmcol. It is this experience which has given the strikers the determination to continue their struggle. They are doing it for their children, so that they are not forced to work under the same conditions and fight the same old battles.

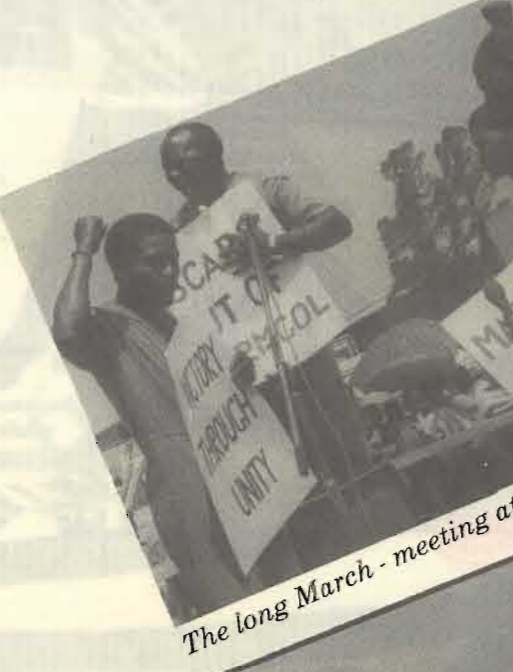
Simon Ngubane remembered his father telling him about struggles at Sarmcol. "Father would tell us about Harry Gwala coming to organize. That he was a strong man and not afraid of the police. It was through his union that the workers managed to win their demand for overalls and £1 a day. But the management was not happy and together with the police and the government crushed the organization. After that things got worse at Sarmcol. I started there in 1973. Our worst problem was retrenchment. When MAWU started organizing that was one issue we took up. They helped a lot. Now we are on strike. When I look at my children, I don't want them to work at Sarmcol. I want them to have an education and go to University and that is why I will not give up our struggle. It is not only for us, but for our children."



The long March - Owen Green talks to Maggie.

Lament

Sengathi Inkosi
 May the Lord
 Ingabonani
 Be with you
 Macomrades lapho



The long March - meeting at Mphophomeni.



Photographers: Pauline Stanford, Ian Bessel, Jeewa Raugopal, (AFRAX), Aron Mazel, Debby Bonnin.



Making the play

The idea of making a play about the Sarmcol workers struggle came from one of the first meetings at which the co-operative was discussed. Workers who were staying in the compound reported that they had been working on a small sketch. Part of the experience of being on strike is to relay the message and relieve the experiences instead of just sitting and trying to re-interpret the events. It was decided that the Sarmcol workers would come together and make the play. Six strikers volunteered and they, together with workers from the Durban Cultural Local and other cultural activists, workshoped the play.

None of the people who gathered had acted before, yet their experiences only had to be evoked in workshops for these comrades to discover their strengths as actors. The play was made in a collective way. Nobody wrote a script. For example everybody sat down together and discussed a particular event. The group broke up into smaller groups who worked out how to act the scene. Instead of speaking about their experiences the strikers acted out what had happened to the workers and their community. With the help of skilled people these situations were sharpened. After a week of intensive work, a basic story had been workshoped. It was now time to test the play.

The first performance was held at Mphophomeni. The results of the weeks' work had to be shown to the shop stewards and other strikers. The play's first performance was enthusiastically received. Where the shop stewards felt there



were problems with some of the scenes, changes and additions which they recommended were made. The play was now ready to be used to further the Sarmcol struggle.

The play has since travelled all over South Africa, playing for workers, communities and concerned people. These groups have all seen the story of the Sarmcol workers' struggle. They have given their support to the strikers — but they have not only given this — they have also been inspired to increase their efforts to win workers' rights.

The process of tightening the play has been continuous. In December 1986 when one of the actors, Simon Ngubane was murdered by vigilantes, the people in the play continued with their work but were forced to find another comrade to take his place.

The play was created by:

- Khehla Phillip Ngubane
- Bongani Mchunu
- Isialah Mzimandeni
- Clement Mnguni
- Joseph Mithali
- Nelson Muelase
- Thomas Shlembe
- (late) Simon Ngubane
- Pete Mkhize
- Mi Hlatshwayo
- Debby Bonnin
- Alfred Qabula
- Ari Sitas
- Astrid von Kotze
- Ramalao Mckhene
- Patti Henderson
- Lawrence Zondi
- and Sarmcol Shop stewards

Keywords in our struggle

Amandla	power to the people
amagundani	literally rats, scabs
amabutho	armed vigilantes
amabuthu	racist whites
amaphoyisa	police
amacomrades	young comrades
amaqabane	workers
abasabenzi	we were forced to move
asasuba	from one place to another
phambili	forward with the struggle
umazobazo	excitement
amasimba	

Handwritten text at the bottom right corner of the page, including a date '1987/11/24' and the word 'DUPLICATE'.