

Erasing Sebe's footprints

The new Ciskei military ruler Brigadier Oupa Gqozo is discovering how difficult it is to dismantle the heritage of ousted president Lennox Sebe. When he took power in March, Gqozo was at pains to stress his openness to working with organisations of the mass democratic movement. So far, he has been largely as good as his word, and MDM sources indicate there has been continuing contact over a range of issues. He moved swiftly to accommodate demands of rural communities, whose rebellion played a key role in sweeping him to power. A steady stream of delegations from rural communities has presented demands, asking what the new regime will mean for them. In the case of Peelton, he proved amenable to requests for their land to be reincorporated into South Africa. South Africa was unwilling to meet the demand, probably for fear of creating a precedent. More significantly, Gqozo appears ready to hand over local administration to residents' associations, which are grouped in the UDF-linked Border Civics Congress (Bocco). At a recent meeting with Bocco, he indicated a willingness to accept demands that tribal authorities be dropped, and local administration handed over to residents' associations. Tribal authorities were closely associated with the Sebe regime, and their maladministration and

corruption played a key role in sparking the rural rebellion.

Gqozo offered to pay residents' association officials instead, for the work they are beginning to do in administering their areas. Sources said it was unlikely that the associations would accept payment, although they increasingly exert *de facto* control.

The issue was crucial, but also relatively easy to deal with, as many headmen had already fled their communities and strong residents' organisations were in place in most areas. It remains to be seen whether the same principle will be applied to urban areas, where issues of administration are far more complex, and residents' organisations are not as strong.

The union issue has proved even more difficult. Immediately after the coup, unions began moving into Ciskei factories, sparking substantial nervousness among industrialists. Gqozo initiated a series of discussions between Cosatu and local employers to determine the shape labour legislation should take in the bantustan. (See pages 36 and 37).

On the unionisation of public servants, however, Gqozo has proved less than tolerant. His own efforts to pre-empt unionisation by establishing public servants' associations fell short of effective, and when nurses at Mdantsane's Cecilia Makiwane Hospital went on strike, hundreds were arrested.

A government statement hit at the National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu), making the unconvincing allegation that it was in league with Sebe's Ciskei National Independence Party and bent on overthrowing the new order.

When the teachers' body, Elptu, sought meetings with him, they received a very frosty response.

Meanwhile, Gqozo has moved steadily to consolidate his position with the Ciskei bureaucracy, whose loyalty was always doubtful. On the one hand, he has announced salary increases for a wide range of staff, particularly police, prisons and military personnel.

At the same time, he has acted against some senior officials. Among his first actions was a major shake-up in the upper echelons of the security forces. More

recently, two of the original members of the military council were dropped among mutters of a coup plot. One of them, Col OM Guzana, was detained. The most recent figures to be affected were key security spokespeople, Headman Somtunzi and the police's Avery Ngaki. Both were leftovers from the Sebe regime and had represented its most prominent public face. - Franz Kruger, ECNA

SAYCO

Now just a phone call away

Gone are the code-names, the cheap disguises and the secret meetings on city pavements. The South African Youth Congress (Sayco) is rapidly getting used to the idea of being legal.

It now operates from not one but two office suites, one in downtown Johannesburg and the other in the city's more upmarket Braamfontein area; and access to the organisation's leadership is often no more than a phone call away - a far cry from just 12 months ago, when Sayco was functioning virtually underground.

But growing up hasn't been easy, as the leadership found at Sayco's first-ever national congress, held in the KaNgwane bantustan over the Easter weekend. When toyi-toying young lions were urged to roar, they did just that - and that included roaring their disapproval of several of the methods and decisions of the early years. Sayco's financial policy, and a lack of consultation on key issues such as the



Gqozo: friendly, but not with the unions