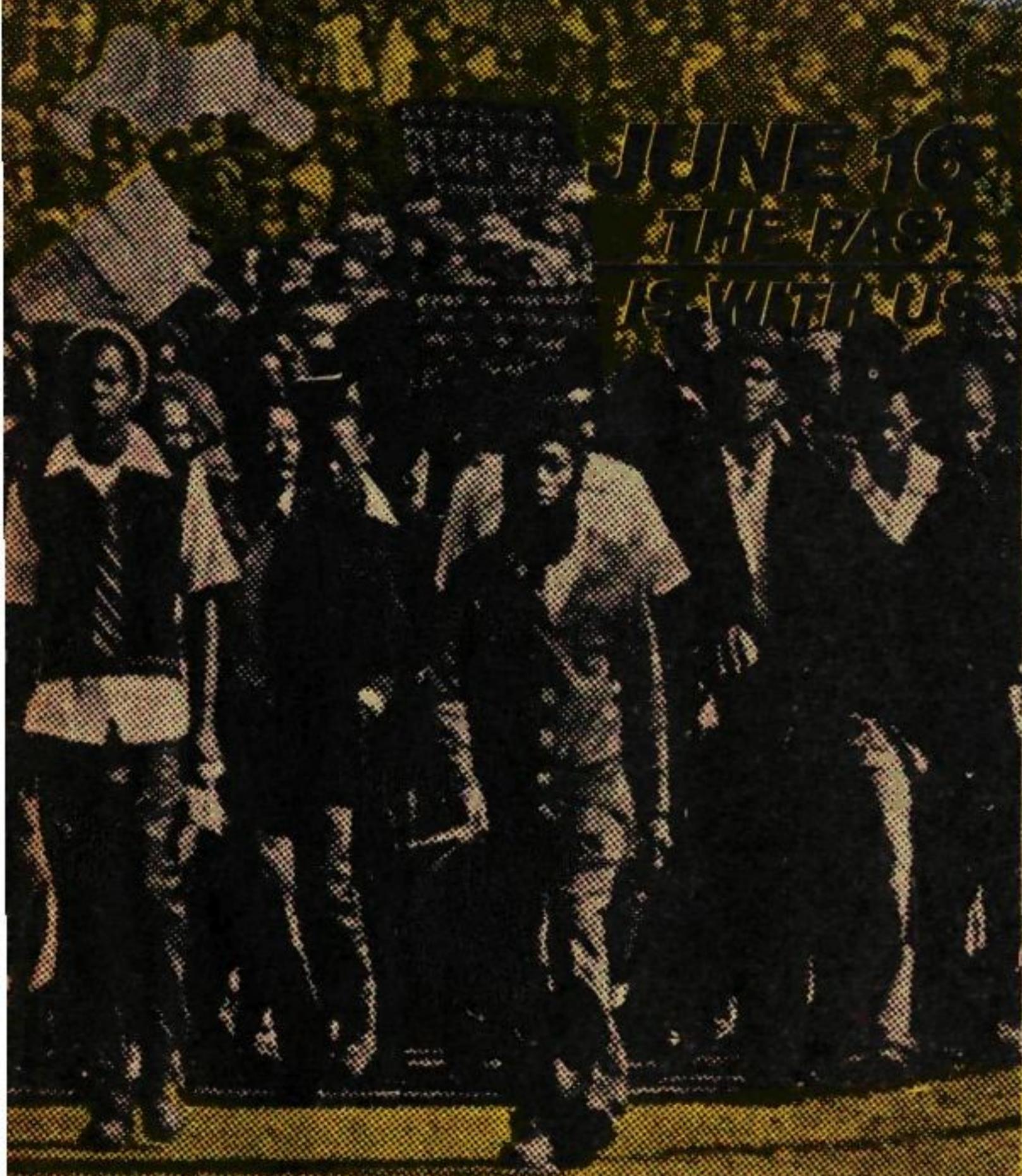


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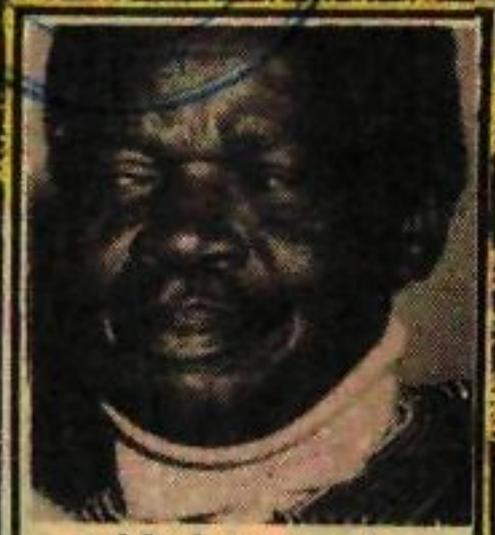
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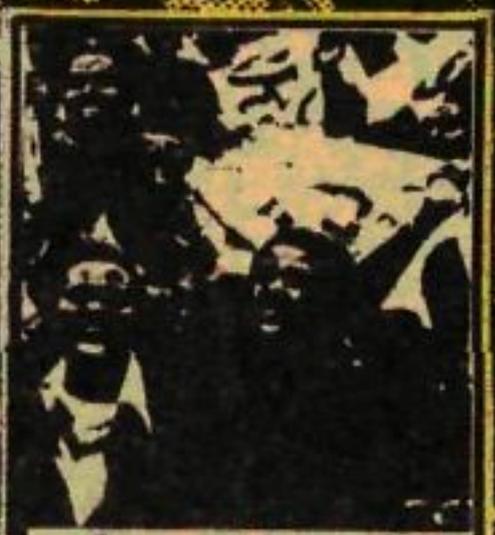
**JUNE 16
THE 17/81
IS WITH US**



**Ex SSRC
leaders on
Soweto '76**
● See centre



**Unbanned
Nkondo breaks
the silence**
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**June 16 and
the politics of
a new era**
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The spark that still smoulders

THIS MONTH marks the anniversary of the uprisings of June 16 1976.

On that day seven years ago Soweto students marched in protest against the use of Afrikaans in their schools. Their demand was reasonable and clear, and the demonstration was a peaceful one.

When they reached Orlando West Junior Secondary School, however, they were confronted by police who opened fire. Hector Peterson, a 13 year old pupil, fell dead. So did hundreds of others.

The shootings provided the spark which was to set the country alight. Over the next year there was no part of South Africa which was not ablaze or smouldering. What started out as a student demonstration against Bantu Education soon became a mass revolt against apartheid domination.

The Soweto Students' Representative Council — always at the centre of the uprising — effectively became the Soweto Representative Council. The students had taken the lead and their parents backed them.

The mass-mobilisation of people in the African townships and the counter-violence of the police and administration boards politicised millions of South Africans, black and white. Out of this cauldron flowed a generation of activists who had seen family and friends lay down their lives for the most fundamental of principles — freedom, democracy and justice.

It was an experience from which there was no going back. Thousands chose to leave the country and take up arms against a system they felt was too repressive to oppose in any other way.

Those who remained behind were harassed, detained, charged, banned, imprisoned. Leaders were jailed and finally in October 1977, 19 organisations were banned.

A system that relies on such extreme repression to make the most intense exploitation possible, will inevitably politicise even the most mundane features of peoples' everyday lives.

These include the conditions of the houses and townships in which people are forced to live; the crippling rents they must pay; conditions in the bantustans and resettlement areas to which they are banished; the cruel shortage of educational facilities and the dismal quality of those that do exist; the poverty wages paid for work often performed under irresponsibly poor and dangerous working conditions; the

relative ease with which they can be retrenched and replaced by unscrupulous bosses who condemn them to the world of structural unemployment in the name of productivity and profit.

These and all the other oppressive features of life in South Africa can never be passed off as fair or natural or right. The domination and exploitation of thinking human beings is always a dangerous business, and it has proved even more so here, where the mechanisms of that domination and exploitation are so explicitly coercive and violent.

The pass laws, influx controls, Group Areas, Population Registration, poverty wage levels, migrant labour, and the bantustans with their large reserves of surplus labour, all form part of a system of structural violence — which can only survive by violence.

Old sayings echo within this catalogue of repression. Those that live by the sword shall die by the sword. Violence breeds violence. You shall reap what you sow.

This month three young South Africans were executed in Pretoria Central Prison. They had taken up arms to defend the people and principles they loved. As the nation and the world mourned, they remembered too those hundreds who had fallen demonstrating against Bantu Education in 1976.



Oscar Mpetha, who dedicated himself to defending the rights and interests of workers, is sentenced as a 'terrorist' along with ten others for his part in demonstrations at the Crossroads squatter camp three years ago. Oscar himself is 73 years old. During his almost three-year ordeal as an awaiting trial prisoner he has repeatedly been hospitalised.

While South Africans ask themselves how much more Oscar and his colleagues have to suffer, they will be reminded of the anniversary of the Freedom Charter on June 26.

Formulated at the Congress of the People 28 years ago, its bold demands assure all democrats that there shall be houses, work and security for all, that the land shall belong to those who work it, that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened.

Reporting on the bomb blast in Pretoria, the City Press lamented the fact that civil war had come. South Africans are killing South Africans. In a memorable observation, well worth repeating, they stressed two truths — unity is strength, and the people shall govern...

SIMON MOGOERANE, Jerry Mosololi and Marcus Motaung, hailed as heroes and martyrs by most South Africans, were hanged at dawn on June 9 at Pretoria Central Prison.

A further three, Anthony Bobby Tsotsobe, Johannes Shabangu and David Moise, had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

Despite national and international calls for clemency, the sentence of death by hanging passed by Judge Curlewis on the three was not commuted.

Mogoerane, Mosololi and Motaung were convicted for high treason in August 1982 for their part in the attacks on Moroka, Orlando and Wonderboom police stations, the Capital Park power station and the New Canada railway line.

The families of the dead men demanded their bodies for burial, but this was not allowed by the prison authorities and they now lie buried in unmarked graves, their friends and sympathisers unable to pay their respects.

Their parents refused to be present at the state burial since their repeated requests for a private burial for their sons had been refused.

According to their lawyers, who saw the three only hours before they were hanged, they were 'brave, strong and ready for death'.

Courage was also shown by the families who had campaigned long and hard for the commuting of the six death sentences. Only three were saved.

Isaac Mosololi, the pensioner father of Jerry Mosololi, said: 'Whether my son Jerry was a terrorist or a guerilla, he will remain my son. I loved him and he loved us all.'

When she heard that her son was to hang, a courageous Mrs Mosololi said she had expected the worst. When she saw her son the weekend before the hanging, she said he was 'as full of strength and courage as ever'.

She said: 'I visited him every day whenever I could. He would encourage me to have strength and that even if he was hanged, he knew he would be dying for the oppressed people of South Africa.'

'His death will not stop the people from waging their struggle. Go well my son, and we shall meet once more. I shall always remember you because you gave me strength, courage, love. I shall be in the struggle until I die. The struggle will continue.'

Mrs Tsotsobe, mother of Bobby Tsotsobe, whose sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, said: 'Kuyafune nje. It is all the same. I shall never again live a normal life with my son. The idea that we shall ever stay together is out. I am more concerned



Thabo Motaung's mother.



Jerry Mosololi's father.

Anger and sorrow at hanging of ANC three

Mogoerane, Mosololi and Motaung 'were as full of strength and courage as ever'



Grief struck at meetings and vigils throughout the country

about the other three men because during the trial and subsequent visits to death row, I had become part and parcel of their fate. I shared the trials and tribulations with their parents, and that is why I say 'kuyafana. It is all the same.'

Meetings protesting the hangings were held across the country. In Durban, over eight hundred people attended an all-night meeting on the eve of the hangings. Speakers stressed that the actions of the three were a political response to extreme repression and violence against blacks.

Before dawn, the vigil ended with a service in the church attended by five hundred people. As the time of the execution approached, mourners marched through Durban. Police with dogs warned the marchers to disperse and arrested 23 people.

At Fort Hare university near Alice, about 400 students overturned a vehicle and stoned others. They were dispersed by police — called in by the university authorities and twenty one were detained.

In Cape Town 700 people participated in a vigil. A speaker said 'When we speak of the three we speak of South Africa today, of 73 year old Oscar Mpetha, of Headley King and all those suffering under the shackles of apartheid'.

Five hours after the three had been hanged, 600 students gathered at the University of the Western Cape to show their anger at the hangings.

Church bells rang at 5am in Soweto and a crowd of people stood in silence with clenched fists at the end of an all night vigil. At a special service at the South African Council of Churches' headquarters in Johannesburg, the men were repeatedly hailed as martyrs. 'In the eyes of the oppressed these men were prepared to fight for their freedom', the United Democratic Front said in a statement.

While the protests were gaining momentum, the government moved swiftly. An order was issued banning all meetings about the hangings for a week. The ban stopped protest meetings in Soweto, a requiem mass at the Anglican cathedral in Johannesburg and a meeting in Lenasia.

Tension and anger over the hangings was forced into silence. Eleven ANC guerillas have been sentenced to death in the past six years but only one — Solomon Mahlangu — was actually executed.

At a 700 strong Azaso meeting in Cape Town a speaker said, 'The death sentence on Solomon Mahlangu and the three will remain in the minds of the people, and so will the words of Solomon as he stood before the gallows: 'My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom.'

Hanged guerilla's presence will be felt in the courts



Thabo Motaung's father

The final statements from the ANC three

IN THEIR last public statement during their trial, the three African National Congress men who were hanged on June 9 said they considered themselves to be 'soldiers', fighting for the freedom of our people.

The three — Simon Mogoerane, Jerry Mosololi and Marcus Motaung said this while giving evidence in mitigation of sentence during their trial in August 1982.

They gave detailed accounts of their upbringing in South Africa, their experiences during the uprising of 1976 and their reasons for leaving the country for military training.

All of them told of the poor quality of the education they received, the pass laws and unequal living facilities when explaining why they had joined the ANC and its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Mogoerane said his experience in 1976 had the effect of 'reinforcing the hatred I already had for the government.'

'As I was growing up, I became aware of certain shortages. Buses, trains and everything were not sufficient. I would see many people cramped together in the trains. One would find some other passengers dangling outside the coaches whilst the coaches allocated to white people were empty.

'A policeman can stop you at any time and ask you for a reference book and the reference book confines you to a certain area. This is only applicable to a black person,' he said.

Asked what he thought was the basic reason for his family's poverty, he said the lack of education and the fact that even if his parents were educated they would have earned less than whites.

'I could not develop an attitude of liking these people. Nobody wants to suffer. I hate the things that are happening,' he said.

In 1976 he thought 'the war had started and that freedom was near.' He came to Soweto because he believed he had to take part as an oppressed person.

'We decided it was pointless making placards, because one would get shot whilst doing so. I decided to go out of this country to go and get myself a gun to fight these people,' he said.

All three also told the court that the ANC had given them a choice of military training or further education.



Mrs Motaung — will take up her dead son's action against police.

She said dressings for the wounds were not necessary.

Snyman failed to write into her report that she gave Motaung painkillers.

She said it could wait until the following morning to give him the necessary treatment. 'I am sorry,' she said. 'I acted in the circumstances that here was a person that had to go and do some very important things before he can go to a hospital.'

'I gave him something for the relief of pain that would have lasted quite a while.'

She said, in response to a question from Motaung's counsel, that it was correct that she deferred to the request of the security police by not putting him in hospital immediately.

The complaint against Snyman was partly heard by the SAMDC, but had

not been finalised by the time Motaung was hanged.

In his application for a stay of execution, Motaung said he wished to rebut the allegation that the police acted in self-defence with his own testimony. He said he was the only person who could give evidence on the truth of his allegations.

Motaung asserted it was a matter of public importance that the conduct of the District Surgeon be investigated and said he wanted to give evidence on her handling of his case.

The action against the police and the complaint against Snyman are still to be heard.

As one lawyer put it: 'Motaung's presence will be felt in our courts and in the chambers of the SAMDC for a long time.'

ALTHOUGH THE three African National Congress guerillas have been hanged, their presence will continue to be felt by the courts for some time to come.

One of them — Marcus Thabo Motaung — instituted an action in August last year against a policeman and the Minister of Law and Order after he was allegedly shot in the penis and hip by the policeman.

The action was instituted before he, Simon Mogoerane and Jerry Mosololi were hanged for the part they played in the attacks on the Moroka, Orlando and Wonderboompoort police stations and on the Capital Park power station and the New Canada railway line.

In the trial before Justice Curlewis Motaung described the shooting incident.

He alleged a security policeman 'came up to me and grabbed me by the collar of my shirt. As he was pushing me, I stood and did not move. When I stopped he moved back and said: 'Ek sal jou skiet...' Then he shot me on the hip.

'After I had fallen he grabbed me again. He fired the second shot shooting me in the base of the penis. I was bleeding and it was very painful.'

Motaung said he started sweating because of the intense pain, and asked to be taken to hospital.

'Major Nel said he would only take me to hospital after I produced the guns. At that stage we were diagonally opposite the GaRankuwa hospital.'

In their plea against the action, the Minister of Law and Order and the policeman alleged they acted in self-defence.

Motaung also lodged a complaint with the South African Medical and Dental Council against the District Surgeon of Pretoria who treated him when he eventually went to hospital.

Motaung alleged that Dr Magdalena Snyman failed to perform her duty as a doctor, and granted the request of the security police for him to be taken immediately for further interrogation.

In her evidence in the trial Snyman told the court she realised the bullet wounds were only a few hours old, but did not administer adequate treatment.

She said she knew some disinfectant was necessary, but did not have it available. 'What I did have was some painkillers and I gave them to him.'

JUNE 16

'I elected to be a soldier. I decided that I had to fight first ... and that education could be considered later and one could also get an education whilst the fight is still going on,' Mogoerane said.

Mosololi said many of his friends had been shot during 1976.

'There was this meeting at the school. We proceeded into the yard of Orlando West High. While we were there, police vehicles came and stood around the school. Then they started shooting teargas at us. We were then ordered by the police to disperse. When we came out of the school yard like school children singing, then the police all of a sudden started shooting,' he said.

'I decided that we had tried to talk to the government and to bring to its attention how we viewed Bantu Education. But because of the police action against us, I decided that the government was not prepared to talk.'

He had chosen to undergo military training 'to enable myself to be able to fight in South Africa for the liberation of the black people'.

Motaung said he had become interested in joining the ANC because of pass raids, the poverty of his people and the poor education he received.

He said he believed all this was caused by racial discrimination and so he had begun to find out if there had ever been an attempt to rectify it. Then he learnt about the history of the ANC, he said. 'Seeing people shot and falling there ... To see children, very young babies of two weeks old being choked by the fumes of teargas entering the houses through windows. These things made me decide that I just have to fight for the liberation of the black person' he said. ■



Thousands attended commemoration services.

Police action marks Soweto June 16 commemorations

WHAT BEGAN as a peaceful day when Soweto commemorated the seventh anniversary of the June 16, 1976 students' revolt against Bantu Education, rapidly deteriorated into a violent clash between armed police and hundreds of youths.

The day started quietly with an evident stay away from work. Three of the townships' railway stations had only a few hundred passengers on their platforms in contrast to thousands of people who normally commute.

The Regina Mundi Catholic Church service was held not only to mourn the victims of 1976, but also the three



Emotions ran high

hanged ANC men. Emotions ran high as speaker after speaker urged more than 5 000 people who were packed into the church to rededicate themselves to the cause of total liberation. The highlight of the service was when the entire crowd stood and



Amanda Kwadi on June 16.

repeated the Freedom Charter after Tiego Masoneke, president of the Black Students Society of the University of Witwatersrand.

Mrs Sarah Mosololi, the mother of Jerry Mosololi, one of the three ANC men hanged in Pretoria, was given thunderous applause when she related events leading to her son leaving the country.

Uniformed and camouflage police, wearing masks and carrying truncheons, who had earlier watched proceedings from a distance, used sneeze machines and fired teargas to disperse the youths. As hundreds of youths scattered in different directions, some turned around and stoned the police vehicles. The commemoration marked the return of the dreaded 'hippo' and several other shielded police vehicles. A police helicopter hovered above the township and seemed to be monitoring the scenes of violence.

Several people were injured and treated at the Baragwanath Hospital. As smoke billowed around Regina Mundi, members of the Soweto Fire Brigade battled frantically to extinguish the numerous burning vehicles, which comprised company and Wrab trucks.

Mpetha found guilty after two year trial

A HEAVY police cordon surrounded the Cape Supreme Court when sentence was passed in the marathon trial of veteran trade unionist and community leader, Oscar Mpetha and ten young men in Cape Town on the 28th June 1983.

The trial, which began in March 1981 arose out of incidents near Crossroads in August 1980 during the bus boycotts.

The effective sentences which were given are: Mpetha 5 years; Sparanyi 7 years; Makubala 15 years; Tshangana 15 years; Kube 18 years; Sabuwa 12 years; Baardman 10 years; Hlapo 20 years; Diba 15 years; Mpondo 20 years and Nyongwana 10 years.

Mpetha has subsequently been released on bail of R100 pending an appeal against judgement. The other accused have also been given leave to

appeal, but have not been released on bail.

Numerous state witnesses gave evidence in the lengthy trial many of whom had spent long periods in detention. The trial was also marked by a number of trial-within-trials, to test the admissibility of statements made by the accused in detention. Seven of these statements were admitted as evidence.

Judge Williams and his two assessors found Mpetha guilty of 'terrorism' on the basis of detainee state witness evidence. Mpetha is said to have stopped his car near marching youths on August 11, 1980 (the Cape day of commemoration of children killed in June 1976).

He is then said to have given a clenched salute and have told the crowd to sing a freedom song. This, according to the court, was done with

the intention of endangering law and order making Mpetha guilty of participating in 'terroristic activities' under the old Terrorism Act.

Five accused were found guilty of two counts of murder and one count of terrorism. Makubala, Kube, Hlapo, Mpondo, Nyongwana.

Four of the trialists, Sparanyi, Sabuwa, Baardman and Diba were convicted for murder and terrorism. Tshangana was found guilty of both murders. This was based on evidence in a statement made while in detention.

Seven of the accused were acquitted on all charges. One of these, Boo, was redetained for participation in events alleged to have arisen from the Sobukwe funeral. He is being held in Graaf Reinet.

The decision regarding leave to appeal is being awaited.

New body set to unite PE youth

CLOSE ON the heels of the formation of the Cape Youth Congress (Cayco), the Port Elizabeth Youth Congress (Peyco) was launched at a rally in New Brighton in mid-June.

The rally was addressed by the organising secretary of Cosas, *Ishediso Matona, ex-Azapo president*, Curtis Nkondo and representatives from the Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union (Macwusa), the General Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa) and Pebco.

The decision to launch regional youth organisations was taken last year at the annual congress of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas).

The president of Peyco, Mkhuseleli Jack spoke to Saspu Focus about the new body.

The idea of an organisation among the youth started to be popular at the time when Pebco, the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, was still strong in PE.

Many young fellows in Port Elizabeth at the time were interested in forming a youth organisation.

No agreement could be reached. In fact the idea of a youth organisation was completely frustrated as some people felt the youth organisation should take a black consciousness stand and others favoured a non-racial position.

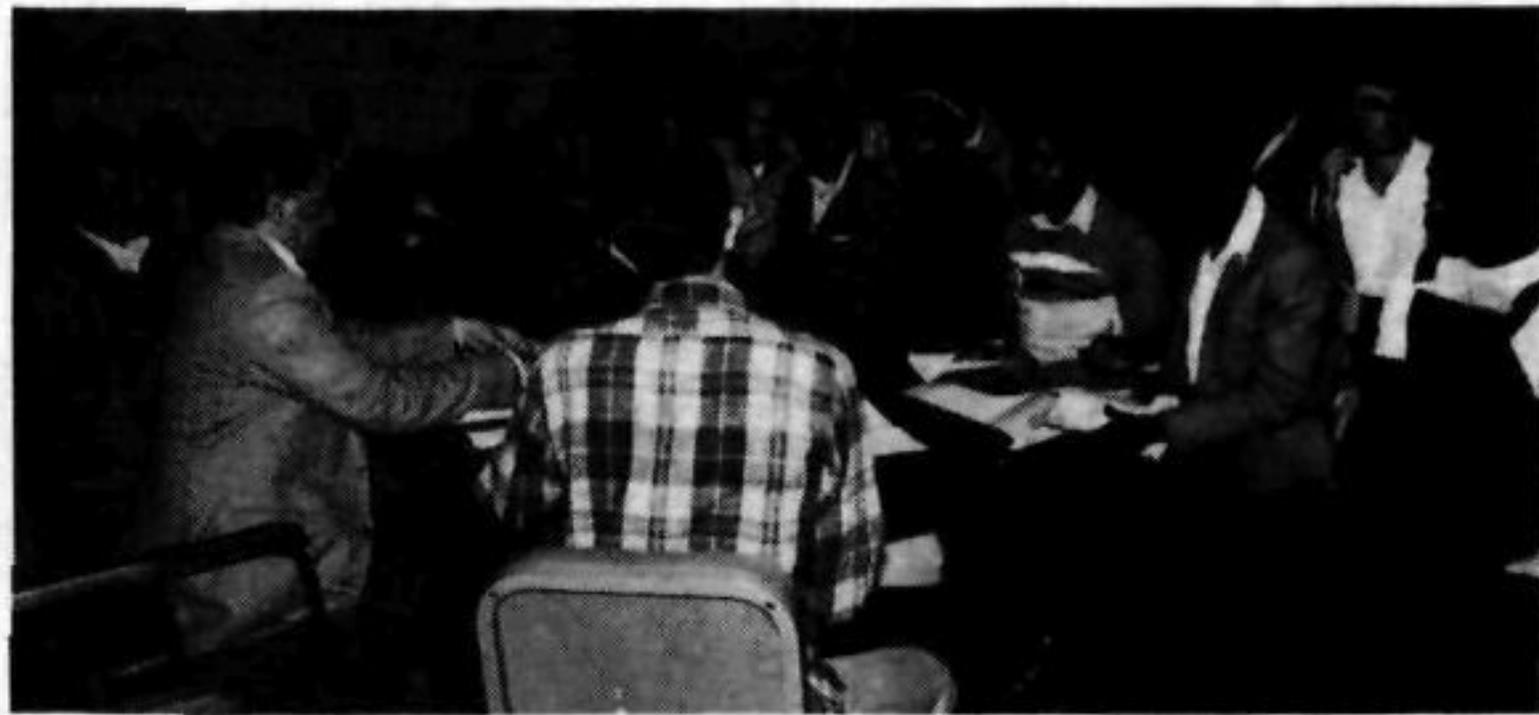
At that time the non-racialists decided to drop the plan in order to gather more support for non-racialism and for the sake of unity.

Then in 1980, during the school boycott, the students and the youth showed their common interest. The students formed the Port Elizabeth Students' Committee (Pesco) to co-ordinate and direct the boycott.

The youth at the time were not organised in Port Elizabeth. But many young people who were not at school wished to participate in the boycott. Many of them were involved in sporadic acts of violence and this was not directed.

After the student boycott in 1981, when it was officially called off and Pesco was dissolved, many students did not go back to school.

In May 1982, at the annual congress of Cosas in Cape Town, there was a general feeling that people who are not full-time students should not be members of the organisation. Originally part-time students doing



The Transvaal Council of the United Democratic Front in session.

UDF steps forward

THE UNITED Democratic Front took a step forward recently when its Transvaal Council elected a 14 member consultative committee of representatives from trade unions, community, student and women's organisations to carry out the UDF's immediate tasks in the region.

The committee will take responsibility for drawing up a programme of action to mobilise people and organisations in opposition to the government's constitutional proposals.

A secretariat to do the day to day

work and to implement decisions was also constituted. The secretariat and the consultative committee will meet on a regular basis while the general council of representatives of all organisations which are part of the UDF will meet every six weeks.

Members of the consultative committee include Dr. R.A.M. Salojee, chairperson of the UDF interim committee and Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) office bearer, Mr Amos Masondo of the Soweto Civic Association (SCA), Mr Elliot Shabangu of the General and Allied Workers

Union (GAWU), Mr Piroshaw Camay of the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), Prof Ishmael Mohamed of the Anti-PC Committee, Dr Nthato Motlana of the SCA and representatives from Nusas, Cosas and Azaso in the region.

The committee will attempt to draw other organisations in the province into the campaign and to hold seminars.

The meeting ended with a message of support of the 'Save the Six' campaign. ■

private study could be members of Cosas.

Cosas decided to include only full-time students, because the congress realised the 1980 boycotts were successful because students were led directly by bona fide students. State propaganda could not say it was the work of outside instigators and agitators.

The congress felt that in order to strengthen the students' base, students must run their own affairs.

But it was felt that students who were no longer at school, including those affected by the age restriction on scholars, those who had been detained for long periods or those who had no money to return to school, should not be left out. So a youth movement was seen to be necessary. The congress agreed unanimously on the formation of the youth organisation.

At first it was suggested that a national youth organisation be formed immediately. This view was opposed because it was generally felt that people should go to their various regions and start to form their youth congress.

At a later stage a meeting could be called to form a national youth body.

As such a national co-ordinating committee was elected to see to the formation of the regional youth congresses.

The Port Elizabeth Youth Congress (Peyco) was first to implement the decision. A steering committee was formed consisting of myself, Mandla Komfi, Mthwabo Ndube and Sithembele Kawe. Later a full executive was elected consisting of 10 members, with Mpumelelo Odolo as vice-president.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To normalise the relationship between youth and parents.
- To create a spirit of trust, responsibility and understanding and creative companionship among the youth.
- To directly involve ourselves in community projects.
- To instil a spirit of health and determination in disillusioned young people.
- To encourage the youth to strive for a better system of education and complete their academic education full-time or part-time.

Peyco is open to all youth and is non-racial. Peyco's future plans include the formation of a national youth body; to strive to break the Pretoria-made racial barriers; to invite and visit youth groups with the same goals as ours and to have seminars and symposiums.

We also want to recruit widely, not just political activists. To involve greater numbers, we will be arranging recreational activities for the youth such as sport and camping outings and indoor games.

In terms of community action, we pledge to support any move that will benefit the oppressed people — such as in rent and bus fare struggles.

We have already forged strong ties with other progressive community, worker and student organisations. Locally we work in close co-operation with Pebco, Macwusa, Gwusa and AFCWU.

Peyco intends to build among the youth a spirit of peace, justice, freedom, mutual respect and understanding in order to promote equal rights for all human beings and economic and social progress. ■

Boycott council election Soweto residents urged

Soweto's Anti-Community Council Committee aims for a total boycott



SCA member Popo Molefe.

Ciskei cops clamp down on Cosas

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION and victimisation of Cosas members by the Ciskei Central Intelligence Service (CCIS) continues.

Cosas says their support in the region is growing even though the CCIS has 'declared war' on the organisation. Membership has more than doubled in two months.

In the latest act of blatant intimidation 20 CCIS soldiers arrived at the home of Cosas Publicity secretary Sindiswa Sifingo, in two cars and an armoured vehicle. They raided her home and seized Cosas documents.

Sifingo was detained in February and again in March this year.

This is not the first time Cosas members have alleged assault by CCIS police. The branch chairperson, Mzukisi Meyane said he was assaulted in detention earlier this year. Recently four Cosas members alleged they were beaten up at one of their homes, and were then taken to a police camp in Fort Jackson. When they were released later it was already dark and they were forced to walk miles back to their homes in Mdantsane.

Virtually all Cosas members in Mdantsane have been visited by Ciskei police after membership cards and lists of names of subcommittee members were seized in raids.

The main purpose of the frequent visits seems to be intimidation. And many have been threatened with detention if they don't resign from Cosas.

Cosas members say they're not only harassed in their homes but in the schools too. Last month the Ciskei Director of Education gave instructions to high school principals to expel all Cosas members, and the CCIS has supplied them with members' names.

Despite harassment Cosas continues to fight for student rights and a number of schools in the region are at present negotiating for SRCs and have full student support. In keeping with the Cosas slogan 'Each one teach one', extra tuition classes and study groups are being organised.

A Cosas spokesperson said 'neither harassment nor detention will deter us. We are striving for a free, dynamic and compulsory education. We will continue with the student struggle until our demands are met and our goals are reached.

The 1983 Cosas theme — 'Student Worker Action' — is also being put into practice in the East London region.



Diepkloof Civic member pledges support for the campaign.

WITH THE possibility of Community Council elections in the near future, the campaign to crush these unpopular bodies is gaining momentum in Soweto.

At a meeting in Diepkloof recently, Soweto residents pledged opposition to the 'Koornhof Bills', and urged all residents to boycott the elections planned for September or early next year.

Community Council elections have

been postponed for the last few years because of resistance to the bodies.

Amos Masondo, a Soweto Civic Association committee member said the aim of the campaign should be a total boycott of the elections.

Even a six percent vote for members of the new body would be an 'insult to Soweto', he said.

The Soweto Civic Association, which is the umbrella body of civics in

the Soweto area, will spearhead the campaign against the Community Councils.

The Anti-Community Council Committee will liaise with worker, student, church and other bodies to help co-ordinate a vigorous campaign to boycott the elections 'to render the setting up of government institutions like the Community Councils a farce.'

The committee already has the support of the main organisations in Soweto, including the Soweto Civic Association, Cosas, Azaso, the Women's Federation, the General and Allied Workers Union, the Detainees Aid Movement and the Council of Unions of South Africa.

High electricity bills are another major grievance in Soweto. At the recent Diepkloof meeting, Dr Nathato Motlana, chairperson of the Soweto Civic Association, said residents of Soweto were being 'ripped off'.

He was referring to the fact that all households have to pay a R20 a month tariff for the electrification of the township, regardless of whether they have electricity or not.

Motlana said it was not Soweto residents' fault they lived where they did. The township developer, and in this case the government, should bear the major cost of upgrading services in places like Soweto, he said.

union representing students approached the administration to secure the release of the detained students, and called on the registrar to meet them. The administration refused to recognise the student representatives or to aid the arrested students.

The police have raided the campus every day since then and the hostels are patrolled. The students are watched constantly.

The chairperson of the Rhodes Black Students' Movement, Ntlanla Damoyi, appealed to other organisations to contribute to a fund set up to defend the detained students.

He noted the oppressive conditions under which black students studied and condemned the harassment of the Fort Hare student body.

Fort students held

26 FORT Hare students have been detained by Ciskei police after a march across campus on June 8 to oppose the execution of three ANC guerrillas.

As part of large-scale protests students resolved at a meeting after the Wednesday march to boycott lectures the next day. Ciskei police then broke up the meeting and searched the nearest men's hostel, Wesley.

28 students were detained, including some who had not participated. Two women were later released.

That night men in camouflage uniforms patrolled the campus. After the next day's boycott of lectures, some students were beaten by police.

The cultural club and the athletic



Satha Cooper addresses the National Forum Committee audience

Groups oppose alternative to Charter

CONTROVERSY surrounds the launching of the National Forum Committee at a meeting of about 200 in Hammanskraal this month, and the manifesto outlining the NFC's demands.

Four organisations have denied press reports claiming participation and endorsement of the NFC and its manifesto. They say they attended as observers and were not part of the 30 organisations represented at the meeting.

The South African Allied Workers' Union (Saawu), the General and Allied Workers' Union (Gawu), Cosas

and Azaso have disassociated themselves from the manifesto as they say it is in opposition to the Freedom Charter.

In a statement, the four organisations reiterated their support for the Freedom Charter 'as the only democratic document drafted in the history of the liberation struggle.'

'The Charter stands out from all other alternatives for change in South Africa, not only because of the manner in which it came into being, but also because of the demands reflected in it.'

'It can never be substituted without

the will of the majority. Any attempt by an individual or a group to discredit or undermine it can only be seen as an act of betrayal to the aspirations of all South Africa's people.'

At the NFC conference speakers included Azapo vice-president Saths Cooper, Azapo president Lybon Mabasa, Bishop Desmond Tutu and John Samuels and Neville Alexander from Sached.

Papers indicated a shift in the philosophy of black consciousness openly favouring socialism and the central role of the working class in the struggle. They also showed a shift

from an exclusive blacks-only approach to a guarded admission of a small number of whites in the struggle for change.

Three commissions met to discuss the Presidents Council proposals, the Orderly Movement Bill and ways in which organisations could work together regardless of political affiliation.

A manifesto was adopted, which the NFC claimed was endorsed by a wide range of organisations including some affiliated to the United Democratic Front, an umbrella body opposing the new constitutional proposals and the Orderly Movement Bill.

Despite the statement denying this, Saths Cooper said, 'Cosas people were there and they participated and were actively involved in the commissions.'

A Cosas spokesperson said his organisation had not been officially represented and 'we are not prepared to endorse any document other than the Freedom Charter.'

The NFC also came under attack from other quarters when meetings were held to mark the Freedom Charter's 28th anniversary.

The Federation of South African Women called 'upon all the people of this country to treat with suspicion any document emanating not from the people, but a group of ideologues who seek to divert the people rather than concentrate their effort in working to eradicate oppression and exploitation.'

Unions to check out federation in CT

A FEASIBILITY committee into the formation of a federation of the entire independent trade union movement is due to meet in Cape Town next month.

The committee, which was formed at the last trade union summit, will be convened by the General Workers Union (Gwu) on July 1 and 2.

At the last summit seven unions committed themselves to taking part in the feasibility committee which will investigate the way in which a federation will be formed.

They are the General Workers Union, the General and Allied Workers Union (Gawu), the Food and

Canning and African Food and Canning Workers Unions, the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu), the Cape Town Municipal Workers Association (CTMWA), the Commercial and Catering Allied Workers' Union (Ccawusa) and the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu).

Other unions at the last summit said they had to get a mandate from their members before taking part in the committee.

So far the Council of Unions of South Africa (Cusa), the Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union (Macwusa), the General

Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa) and the Municipal and General Workers Union of South Africa (Mgwusa) have reported that they too will be attending the meeting.

Each union will submit recommendations for a structure. In addition they will discuss the Solidarity Action Committees set up at the first summit and their relationship to the proposed federation.

Each delegation will consist of at least three worker representatives and two union officials.

At this stage it is not known if the Orange Vaal General Workers Union and the Engineering and Allied Workers Union will attend.



Pietermaritzburg students and staff march through the town.

Cosas three convicted on terror charge

THREE MEMBERS of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas), Andrew Mokone (19), Vulindlela Mapekula (22), and Reginald Nkosi (21) were recently found guilty of taking part in the activities of the banned African National Congress.

The three accused, the court was told, had on separate occasions visited and received money from ANC members in Botswana.

They were also charged with having formed an ANC cell, distributing ANC literature and conveying messages from ANC members in Botswana to people in South Africa.

After their arrest all three accused made statements to a magistrate admitting connections with the ANC. Mokone's statement was, however, ruled inadmissible after he alleged he had been tortured by Zeerust security policemen.

Two state witnesses Mahlodi Mgia and Mathabala Kabate, refused to testify in the case and were sentenced to 18 months imprisonment.

Mokone was sentenced to three years, with one suspended, while Mapekula and Nkosi both received three year sentences.

As a result of Mokone's alleged torture by the security police, an action has been instituted by him against the Minister of Police.

Speed up pace says Council

THE WESTERN Cape region of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) held its annual council from the 10th to the 12th June in Woodstock, Cape Town.

The Council meeting brought together elected delegates from the different branches in the Western Cape to review the progress made by Cosas and plan for the future.

The Council opened with delegates representing seven out of the ten Western Cape branches in Cape Town, Paarl and Worcester.

Advocate Zac Yacoob spoke on the national democratic struggle, and discussion sessions were held on the role of students in the struggle for change.

Delegates expressed the need to speed up the pace of organising the unorganised students and to strengthen the existing branches.

Anti-Quota Bill march rocks Pietermaritzburg

LUNCHTIME SHOPPERS in Pietermaritzburg's Main Street were stopped in their tracks recently when they saw thousands of people taking part in a march led by Chancellor of the University of Natal.

But their astonishment led to disbelief when placards were hoisted at the back of the procession and the silence was ruptured by the shout 'Amandla Ngawethu', followed by the enthusiastic singing of freedom songs.

The march was organised by the university authorities to object to the proposed Quota System restricting the number of black students at white universities.

It ended in a mass meeting in the City Hall addressed by Alan Paton.

Permission to hold the march was obtained from the Chief Magistrate but it had to be silent and protestors had to walk in rows of four.

The first two thirds of the three thousand marchers filed past silently, many of them draped in academic dress.

Crowds lining the street were amazed as students danced and sang. Two students held a banner quoting the Freedom Charter which read 'The doors of learning and culture shall be open to all'.

Police kept a low profile, although some could be seen watching from the



Marchers oppose the Quota Bill with their own demands.

tops of buildings.

As the first placard-carrying students moved into the street from the churchyard, a traffic policeman urged students to be silent. Students turned and laughed.

At one point traffic policemen restrained two men in the crowd from attacking marchers.

The march took place against a backdrop of intense nationwide opposition to the Quota Bill.

Students at the Pietermaritzburg campus have already marched on the administration buildings where they presented a petition challenging university authorities to take 'concrete steps' to oppose the bill and to agree not to implement the bill should it become law.

A similar petition was circulated on the Durban campus and protest meetings have been held on all Nusas campuses.

Victory return for suspended Medunsa two

Medical Student Council members readmitted after boycott.

THE MEDUNSA Disciplinary Committee has ruled that two students, whose suspension led to a boycott, be readmitted after university authorities failed to substantiate allegations of intimidation against them.

The boycott began after two members of the Medical Students' Council (MSC), Paul Sefularo, and Confidence Moloko, were given two hours to leave the campus after the acting rector, Professor Thomas Dunston, accused them of intimidating first year students into boycotting the State Theatre in Pretoria.

Students demanded the unconditional reinstatement of the two, and

said they would continue their boycott until they were readmitted, despite numerous calls by the acting rector to return to classes.

A statement released by the students, shortly after the boycott began, said the suspension of the two was 'unjust and unwarranted, as Dunston had failed to prove allegations of intimidation'. It went on to say that students at Medunsa were 'morally bound to support the suspended students, because they were elected by them to execute the very duties for which they were victimised.'

Students met regularly throughout the boycott, and formed regional committees to facilitate communication and organisation, and to formulate strategy.

A Parent Committee was mandated to present the students' demands to



Confidence Moloko.

university authorities, but the authorities refused to reinstate the two suspended students.

A report-back meeting was held in a church in Ga-Rankuwa, in which many people are reported to have been injured by baton and cane-wielding police.

Another meeting held in Johannesburg, two days before the Disciplinary Committee hearing, re-

MSC president Paul Sefularo. The boycott began after he and Moloko were told to leave campus.

jected Dunston's deadline for students to return to classes, saying that it was a threat which showed that the university authorities were avoiding their demand.

The students gained widespread support from progressive organisations in Johannesburg. The three national student organisations, Azaso, Cosas and Nusas condemned Dunston's strategy.

An Azaso statement said they welcomed the news of the reinstatement of the two suspended student leaders.

'We see this as a major victory, not only for the Medunsa student body and the national student movement, but for all progressive democratic forces.'

'This victory proves to us once again that it is only united mass action that brings change.'

'We believe that the initial decision taken by the rector to suspend these students was immature, reckless and shortsighted.'

'We cannot have people of this calibre serving as the heads of our institutions of learning, and thus support the call made by the Medunsa students and their parents that Dunston be removed from his post.'

A statement from Nusas said, 'We condemn this victimisation of two elected student leaders, both of whose campus support has been clearly shown in the students' boycotts.'

'Their suspension constitutes intimidation of student leaders currently spearheading student demands for the right to democratic representation. Nusas supports Azaso in its call for the immediate reinstatement of all students.'

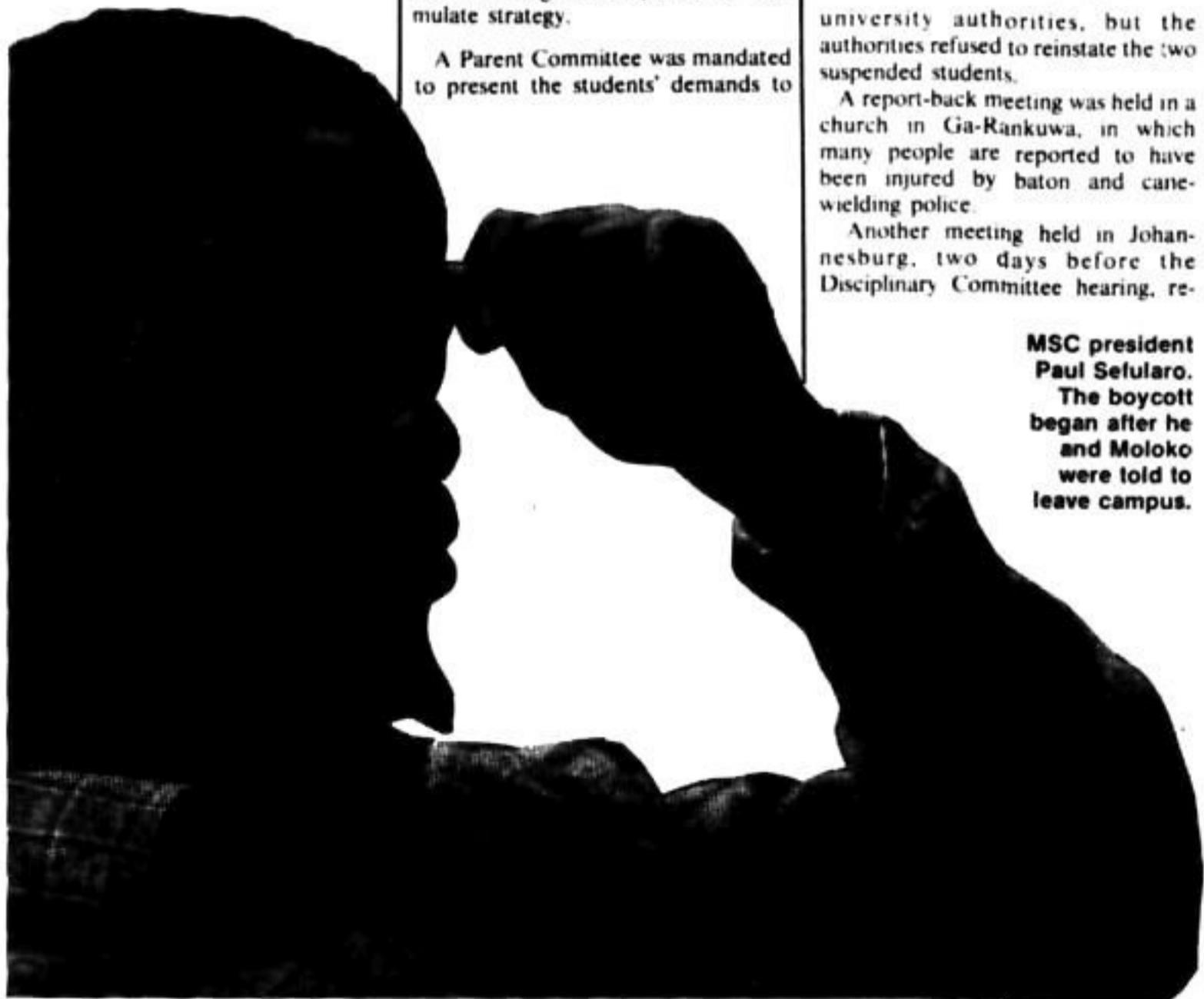
Sefularo and Moloko were prominent campaigners for democratic student representation through the MSC. Before the boycott, the student body was involved in a struggle with the university authorities over the recognition of their MSC constitution.

They were part of an Ad-hoc Constitutions Committee, elected by the student body to negotiate with authorities, after students rejected what they called an admin-imposed constitution.

Dunston said the MSC rejected the constitution because they saw it as a threat to themselves. He is reported to have told students the MSC elected itself, and that it controlled student opinion.

Students see this as part of a campaign by Dunston to undermine the MSC and democratic student representation. They say they believe in mass participatory democracy and all decisions are taken democratically.

Shortly before the boycott the student body had passed a motion of confidence in the MSC and their leadership. ■





Tom Rikhoto — a personal victory that has implications for thousands like himself.

THE COURT ruling allowing migrant worker Tom Rikhoto to stay permanently in Germiston gave hope to thousands in the same position. But this has now been threatened by government plans to introduce legislation preventing their wives and children from coming to the cities unless they have 'approved' accommodation.

Linking entry of migrant workers' families to the cities with housing — of which there is a chronic shortage — will effectively prevent workers from bringing their families to the urban areas.

Dr Koornhof, Minister of Co-operation and Development, said of a total of 800 000 contract workers, a maximum of 143,000 would stand to qualify for legal permanency in the cities. However, he indicated that if the government succeeded in its approach to implementing the Rikhoto judgement, as few as 5 000 contract workers could benefit.

Rikhoto is a migrant worker from Gazankulu. He started working in Germiston in 1970 with Hagram Engineering, returning to Gazankulu each year to renew his contract.

Rikhoto's life was ruled by Section 10 (1) of the Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act 25 of 1945 which puts a blanket ban on blacks remaining in any prescribed area, including all urban areas, for more than 72 hours. The few not restricted by this law are people who were born in that area and migrant labourers who qualify only for as long as they are employed.

To remain permanently in Germiston and to bring his family to join him, Rikhoto had to qualify for the exemption in Section 10 (1)(b) of the same Act. This allows a black to remain longer than 72 hours in a prescribed area if 'he produces proof...that he has worked continuously in such an area for a period of not less than ten years...and has not...been sentenced to a fine exceeding R500 or to imprisonment for a period exceeding six months'.

In 1981 Rikhoto completed his tenth year of employment in Germiston and applied for permanent urban residence. His application for Section 10 (1)(b) rights was turned down by the East Rand Administration Board (Erab) and Germiston's labour officer argued Rikhoto did not qualify

Rikhoto ruling a glimmer of hope for thousands

The pressure is on to force the government to grant permanent urban rights to the thousands in Rikhoto's position

because, as a migrant worker, his employment was not continuous but consisted of ten separate one-year contracts.

Assisted by the Legal Resources Centre, Rikhoto brought an action against the two state agencies and for the next two years thousands waited to see if he and others in the same position would continue being denied permanent residence in the city close to their place of work.

At the 1981 hearing, in the Witwatersrand Local Division of the Supreme Court, Justice O'Donovan ruled Rikhoto had been continuously employed and ordered the labour officer to endorse his reference book allowing him to stay permanently in Germiston.

But this did not happen. Rikhoto had to wait until June 1983.

Erab appealed against the Witwatersrand court

decision and the case was heard by the Appellate Division on May 20 this year. Ten days later Appellate Judge van Heerden confirmed the decision that Rikhoto's reference book was to be endorsed.

The successful judgement has been a test case for thousands of migrant workers, giving them the chance to get permanent urban residence.

It has made it settled law that any black South African who has worked for the same employer in the same area for at least ten years is entitled to Section 10 (1)(b) rights.

Administration Boards under Koornhof's department were at first reluctant to give Section (1)(b) endorsements. Applicants were told to return in a months time. Other delaying tactics such as workers being told the Erab computer had broken down or instructions were being awaited from Pretoria, were also reported.

General Workers' Union secretary Dave Lewis said, 'It is interesting that the Western Cape Administration Board, which justifies its excesses at KTC squatter camp by insisting that inhuman laws should be respected, should now be unwilling to implement a decision of the country's highest court.'

Cusa has warned it would be forced to act if the government tried to override the decision, and the Black Sash has said it would aid workers who qualify but are denied the endorsement.

The Erab has since started to issue endorsements, but other administration boards are not yet implementing the judgement.

Koornhof said legislation would be introduced before the end of the current parliamentary session to prevent wives and children who were outside the urban areas before May 29, 1983 — the date of the Rikhoto judgement — from coming to live with their husbands, unless the men possessed approved housing.

This is seen as a way of introducing the controversial provisions of the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill through the back door. The Bill, which has been suspended until the next parliamentary session, aims to tighten up influx control and link the right to urban residence to the availability of housing.

More bread

A SOUTH African Allied Workers' Union (Saawu) affiliate, the Bakery and Allied Workers' Union, this month concluded a recognition agreement with Park Bakery, a Fedbaki (PTY) subsidiary. The union is regarded as a collective bargaining representative, for conditions of employment and other issues affecting workers at this plant.

Paper tiger

ABOUT 400 striking workers were fired at the Nampak Paper Factory in Mobeni last month.

The workers, who were demanding a refund of their pension contributions and the recognition of their union, the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu), were told to return to work while negotiations were underway. According to a spokesperson for Nampak they refused and were fired.

A union spokesperson said the workers were locked out and that police patrolled the area with dogs.

Underground

THE TSUMEB Corporation's Otjihase mine in Namibia saw a massive show of unity by workers recently, when the mine's entire black workforce struck.

The strike was initiated when 100 mechanical operators 'walked out' because of a new regulation, and demanded that the senior official responsible for the introduction of the regulation be dismissed.

After management decided not to dismiss the official, several miners boarded buses and left the property.

The mine's general manager said the striking workers would be re-employed, without any deductions being made for the time they had not worked, as long as they returned to work within 50 days.

Head on

ABOUT 400 Putco drivers struck last month, after one of their colleagues was dismissed.

The workers, members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, were told by Putco that the dismissal was due to an enquiry into a serious accident caused by the driver, and that he was able to appeal against the decision. The workers returned to work, pending talks between management and the union.

Minefield

640 MINERS downed tools at the Beisa Uranium Mine after 16 miners died, and 50 were injured, in a methane gas explosion at the mine in April.

Not intimidated

AFRICAN FOOD and Canning Workers' Union (AFCWU) workers went on strike at the Eastern Cape Agricultural Co-operative Creamery recently.

The union alleged a foreman had shot and wounded a worker before the strike. AFCWU's chairperson, Tandi Madikane, was arrested at the time of the strike, and charged under the Intimidation Act.

Although the charges were subsequently dropped, Madikane was re-arrested and is again due to face charges under the Intimidation Act.

All the striking workers were dismissed.



After a three-day work stoppage by their workers, Krost Brothers has agreed to keep them on the payroll and continue to pay their unemployment insurance contributions. Talks between management and the shop stewards are to continue.

Take five

53 GENERAL Workers' Union of South Africa (Gwusa) workers were dismissed recently after striking in demand for night shift allowance.

A union spokesperson said workers were given five minutes to return to their posts, and were prevented from doing so by service personnel, who, told them they were all dismissed.

The police were then called by management and the workers ordered off the premises.

Bosses booted

ABOUT 400 workers from the Paper, Wood and Allied Workers' Union at the Carlton Paper Factory in Wadeville recently staged a six-hour sit-in which resulted in an agreement with management to meet their demands.

The workers demanded the reinstatement of a dismissed worker, the provision of safety boots for each worker, and paid tea breaks for all workers. No wages were deducted for any of the workers involved.

Keeping tabs

THE ORANGE-VAAL General Workers Union (OVGWU), in Vereeniging, recently received a warning from the Department of Manpower to submit its membership records, or be subpoenaed to appear in court.

Before the recent amendments to the Labour Relations Act, only registered unions were required to submit records.

At the wheel

THE NATIONAL Automobile and Allied Workers Union (Naawu), recently signed a recognition agreement with BMW in Pretoria.

Ciskei jails two in security trial

IN A Ciskei security trial, one of the first in an 'independent' homeland, two people have been sentenced to jail.

Two Ciskeians — Nomakhe Nsatha (25) and Mcekeleli Peter (21) — were sentenced to jail for five and three years respectively.

Nsatha and Peter were detained in November 1981 by the South African Security Police some time before Ciskei's independence.

They were later charged with being members of the banned African National Congress, recruiting people for military training, and possessing and distributing banned publications.

Both accused claimed statements they had made were as a result of intimidation, assault and torture.

Mohapi widow allowed appeal

KING WILLIAMS Town — Nohle Mohapi, widow of Mapetla Frank Mohapi who died in Kei Road police cells on August 5 1976, has been granted leave to appeal 'in forma pauperis' against a judgement that dismissed a claim by her against the Minister of Police for damages as a result of her husband's death while being detained under Section 6 of Act No 83 of 1967.

Mohapi had sought damages of R35 000 as mother and guardian of her two daughters, but she had to prove her husband died as a result of police assault.

The hearing is set for August 22-23.

Peyco call to free detainees

THE NON-RACIAL Port Elizabeth Youth Congress (Peyco) has called on the security police to unconditionally release three members detained earlier this month.

A Peyco spokesperson said Nceba Faku and Michail Xhego, both former Robben Island prisoners, were detained on June 1. He said a third member, Tuli Bobo, was arrested about three weeks ago.

Peyco said in a statement that it was aware of the overall security police campaign of intimidation aimed at disrupting the organisation's official launching.

'Peyco has been watching the police harassment of its members and will not be intimidated by such action. Continued detentions can only worsen the already explosive situation in the townships.'

Sandwiched

NINE CCAWUSA workers struck at Sam's Food in Johannesburg last month, in protest against low wages, bad working conditions, and the withdrawal of transport facilities.

After the intervention of the union, the workers were re-instated and their complaints seen to. Discussions over wages are to take place.

Checkmate

A STORE manager from Checkers Southdale was transferred from his position after a strike demanding his removal by Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Ccawusa) workers in several Checkers stores on the Reef.

Status quo

MCEBISI MQHAYI, President of the Engineering and Allied Workers' Union, asked the Industrial Court for a 'status quo' order to temporarily reinstate him to his former position with Van Leer (SA), until his dispute with the company has been resolved.

'I refuse,' Swapo man tells SADF

IN A remarkable court application which could have international repercussions, a young Swapo member has refused to do national service on the grounds that South African law is not valid in Namibia.

In papers filed before the Judge President of Namibia, Justice Hans Berker, 20-year old Erick Binga described South Africa's passing legislation for Namibia as a totally illegitimate exercise of power.

Binga was called up for military service in November last year and according to his call-up papers was due to receive training from the Second South African Infantry Battalion at Walvis Bay from January 10 to January 4 1985.

All Namibian males are eligible for national service in the South West Africa Territory Force (SWATF), although males from Ovamboland, Kavango and Caprivi war zones are rarely conscripted, the official reason being there are sufficient volunteers. Windhoek observers, however, believe it is because compulsory conscription in this area would result in mass conscientious objection.

South Africa's mandate to administer Namibia was terminated by the United Nations on June 21 1966.

In papers filed by attorneys for Binga, he said he had joined Swapo in June 1977.

To support this, he handed in his Swapo membership card which read: 'I work in solidarity for justice and freedom'.

'It is impossible for me to identify myself with the conflict waged against Swapo,' he said.

His father, Eduard Binga, a Nama-speaking assistant farmer from the Vaalgras reserve in the south said in supporting his son's application that he himself was a believer in the 'justice of Swapo's struggle'.

'Swapo is a movement I see as the only organisation fighting for the true liberation of my country.'

He added that he was convinced 'the conflict between the South African armed forces and Swapo's military wing is the result of the unfair treatment our people are receiving in this country due to the laws of South Africa.'

His older son, Ismael Mangwe Binga left Namibia in 1978 and 'I suspect that he is now a member of the military wing of Swapo.'

CURTIS NKONDO knows what it means to be an activist. He has been detained several times and was banned in 1981 for two years. His son has been forced into exile. Nkondo, known for his vocal opposition to Apartheid, talks to SASPU FOCUS about the ideas the government tried to silence.

Nkondo on bannings:

What the government hopes is that a banning order will intimidate the masses from taking part in the struggle. It may create a fear among some, but it is better to be afraid of being banned or detained than to be afraid of freedom. Banning orders cannot control people completely, or stop them from being active. They cannot restrict their ideas. The more people the government bans, the more they will force other people up into leadership positions.

The people continue to struggle for two reasons: they know they will succeed, and know it is better to suffer or die struggling for a free society than to remain alive in a dictatorship.

On the Freedom Charter:

Most people accept the Charter because it is a reasonable document. Others reject it because it was drawn up in a process that included whites. This leads to a contradiction: if you say that blacks alone should draw it up then it cannot be regarded as a non-racial or a democratic document. The Freedom Charter is increasingly popular because it is the document of the whole people, and represents their aspirations.

I think we should now pay special attention to getting the masses — and especially the workers — to understand the whole document, and not only the section which applies to them. The power of the Charter is in its totality, and this is how it should be seen.

Each of the ten articles should be explained carefully. If one only says to the people — 'The land belongs to those who work it', a lot will be left unclear. It may mean that we will be free and live the life we want to. But it also means there shall be an equitable distribution of wealth and that, if South Africa belongs to us all, together we should own everything in it.

Also the struggles of women, workers, students and communities are contained in the Charter. If you deal with all the articles you will refer to all the problems confronting us

Three years banning has not altered support for the Freedom Charter, says Curtis Nkondo



Curtis Nkondo

now.

For example, if we take 'There shall be houses, security and comfort', we can immediately think of the huge waiting list for houses. The Charter says there shall not only be houses for all, but decent houses in which people are comfortable. We talk of decent houses as opposed to barracks, and townships of decent houses as opposed to locations of slums.

On Non-racialism:

Non-racialism says people should act together and discuss things as equals. If blacks impose their idea of what is progressive on whites, or vice-versa, we would have no idea of non-racialism. There should be the

blending of ideas, and people should lose sight of colour and see only how to win the struggle for freedom.

Sacrifice and commitment will be made by all, and all will be affected by repressive laws despite their colour. This is the case now more than ever as more non-racial forces join the struggle.

On 'reform':

The government realises people are struggling to transform society and tries to stop this by introducing 'reforms'. But the flaw is that behind every reform there is repression.

For example, since 1976 students have wanted to get rid of Bantu Education. So the name was changed to Education and Training. Technikons were set up to 'train' students, offering skills free of charge. But they are being prepared as better qualified labourers in jobs for which they will still be poorly paid. The advantage is not for those who are skilled, but for the employers who exploit those skills.

Another example: Soweto is being electrified, which looks like reform. But people are still living in matchboxes and the bills are very high, proportionately higher than the richest pay.

So repression is not simply a policeman arresting people. It is more — it is being subjected to a whole range of painful experiences.

On the United Democratic Front:

The unions have said 'An injury to one is an injury to all'. That is the case not only in the factories, but for everybody in all places. An injury to a worker is an injury to a student and an injury to a person in the community, and vice-versa. That is why civics, student groups, women's organisations and trade unions should come together from time to time to deal with problems in common.

The UDF is bringing organisations together over the problem of government structures. If it has democratic structures and is willing to take the government on, then it is going in the right direction. The UDF must have a programme in which it sees the organisations within it having common direction in mobilising and organising the masses.

In the past we have been fighting small separate battles. Now these battles need to come together. We must unite in action.

OAU alive and kicking

SUDDENLY the SABC went quiet. After two unsuccessful attempts last year, the OAU finally held its 19th annual summit in Addis Ababa last week, shooting down speculation that it would not hold together.

The crisis began with the decision in 1982 to grant official status to the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. The Saharan Republic, declared independent from Morocco by the Polisario Front, has been a thorny issue for African countries.

Morocco and some African countries objected to the official status given to Polisario, and refused to take part in OAU meetings with Polisario present. In the interests of unity, however, Polisario offered to withdraw from the OAU.

In return Morocco agreed to hold a referendum in the Western Sahara to decide the fate of the territory.

Before this agreement was reached the South African authorities were hailing the impending collapse of the OAU.

The summit ended on another bad note for the West and South Africa. Haile Mengistu Mania, Socialist Ethiopia's head of state was elected the new chair of the OAU.

In closing the summit he called for unity between the African states and attacked the South African government for 'its inhuman policies against its people and terrorism against the frontline states in the region.'

Suspended rap for Varsity journalists

THE ADMINISTRATION of the University of Cape Town has come down hard on 18 'dissent' student journalists.

The university court charged them with defying an order given by the vice-chancellor not to publish the contents of a lecture given by the Minister of Cooperation and Development, Dr Piet Koornhof, to students.

They were found guilty and sentenced to be rusticated (expelled) from UCT for two years, suspended for two years.

The 18 journalists took part in the publication of a 'Varsity' broadsheet in which Koornhof's contentious speech to the Political Studies Department was quoted.

The suspended sentence will come into effect if any of the students again disobey a direct order of the vice-chancellor.



Lamontville on the march at community leader Harrison Dube's funeral.

Rents we can afford!

Jorac spearheads struggle against rent increases

RESIDENTS IN areas falling under the Joint Rent Action Committee (Jorac) have called for the complete withdrawal of rent increases which have been postponed from May 1 until August 1.

Minister of Cooperation and Development, Piet Koornhof, granted a three month moratorium on the increases affecting all areas under the control of the Port Natal Administration Board (PNAB) after a meeting with Jorac following weeks of protests spearheaded by the organisation.

In addition, R250 000 was made available and a further R4 250 000 is being negotiated.

Jorac represents residents, including hostel dwellers, in Lamontville, Chesterville, Shakaville, Hambanathi and Klaarwater.

At the report-back meetings in these areas after the Koornhof meeting, residents strongly rejected the August 1 increase, repeating the slogan which characterised their earlier protests — 'Asinamali' — we have no money. Whose economic position will have improved by then? they asked.

The maintenance allowance granted was seen as a 'pittance' and residents condemned what they saw as attempts to deprive them of their Section 10 rights.

The meetings expressed their confidence in Jorac's leadership and rejected Community Councils.

Reasons given at the meetings for the rejection of the rent increases included:

- The community was not consulted and the Community Councillors failed to represent the people.



'Asinamali' — we have no money.

- Workers' wages had not kept up with the increasing rate of inflation. Existing rentals were already a great burden to people and increases would make the situation intolerable.

- Basing rent increases and calculation of rents on total household income was unfair and completely unacceptable.

- It is the responsibility of the government to provide housing for all at rents people can afford.

- The rise in rentals in the townships is an attempt to force people out of the urban areas to dump them in the homelands where the standard of living is even worse. This is another way of making people lose their urban rights which they are entitled to as South Africans.

- Housing shortages; no maintenance

of homes; unsatisfactory refuse collection; an absence of community facilities and deteriorating conditions exist in the townships. There is no guarantee that a rent increase will improve these problems.

- The reluctance of the government to build more homes has left a critical housing shortage resulting in extreme overcrowding and danger to the health of the community.

- The authorities have not provided suitable recreational facilities; this has led to a high incidence of alcoholism, crime and delinquency.

- People pay a school levy as part of their rent but they don't know how this money is used. Schools are very poorly equipped to offer a meaningful and relevant education.

- The PNAB had an accumulated surplus of R44 million. There has been no satisfactory explanation of the utilization of this money. It is believed the Board has suffered considerable losses through investing in dubious ventures such as the Rondalia Bank.

Jorac feels the postponement indicates the authorities' complete failure to understand the people's position on the matter.

The authorities have completely disregarded people's concern for their living conditions and their plight financially. This has led to them underestimating the anger felt about having to pay increased rents for what they can't see, says Jorac.

This was after it became clear that Jorac was the only organisation in the area that represented the people.

Jorac was formed after meetings of the Lamontville Rent Action Commit-

Clairwood's future hangs in balance

Durban Council rethinks fate of 6 000.



Residents rally together against removal threat.

AFTER MONTHS of action and organisation by the Clairwood community, the Durban City Council has promised to 're-think' its decision to remove 6000 residents and industrialise the area.

The wrangling over Clairwood's future has a 20-year history. Indians have lived in Clairwood for over a century, and have built a closely-knit community with a number of community halls, schools, and places of worship.

But, two decades ago, when Clairwood's population had risen to 60 000, the area was frozen for industrial development.

Since then, the Durban City Council has refused to reconstruct or renovate old buildings, and no new construction has taken place. No electricity, sanitation, or rubbish collection has been provided.

Despite attempts by residents to hold the community together — they have even built their own schools and mosques — by the beginning of 1983,

54 000 people had left Clairwood.

Then came the Durban City Council's final decision. They asked the Administrator of Natal to rezone Clairwood's land for 'light industrial' use.

The Council then began Pressurising Clairwood residents — even before the Administrator's decision about the rezoning. Cars were permitted to be dumped on vacant lots, although this is illegal in residential areas. Home renovations, including basic painting and repairs, were stopped by Council inspectors.

On February 28, 1983 the community responded.

At a mass meeting, the residents demanded that:

- All residents should be allowed to stay in Clairwood.
- Property owners should be allowed to build and reconstruct houses.
- Rates should be based on residential property scales, and not on the as-

sumption that Clairwood land was to be used for factories.

The Clairwood Rate Payers' Association (CRPA) was elected at the meeting to represent the residents.

Since the initial meeting, the CRPA has campaigned vigorously to reverse the Council decision. A letter was sent by the association to the Administrator of Natal, urging him to heed the residents' case. The CRPA also tried to arrange a meeting with the Administrator, but were refused. Letters were sent to the Durban Town Clerk, but received no reply.

The CRPA was then told that they should negotiate with the South African Indian Council (Saic), rather than with the Administrator.

The CRPA refused to meet with the Saic, on the grounds that it was 'not a representative of the people', and voiced objections to the City Council, the Administrator and the Town Clerk.

In March, the Billet Commission recognized the CRPA as the true representative of the people of Clairwood.

On April 16, Clairwood residents received a big boost when 63 organisations attended a conference to support the CRPA. Petitions were distributed to the organisations and a support committee was elected. All organisations guaranteed their support and resources.

Throughout this period, the CRPA continually negotiated with the City Council. By the end of May, the CRPA had won three important victories:

- The Council was forced to freeze any industrial development until the issue was settled.
- Residents were promised no more people would be removed in terms of the old Slum Act.
- Residents were allowed to reconstruct, renovate, and paint their homes.

The removal of Clairwood residents also won't solve Durban's unemployment problem. UND's Dr Jeff McCarthy says: 'Durban does need industrial land, so that it can provide jobs for all. But, we need hundreds of thousands, not the 15 000 that the City Council hopes to create in Clairwood.'

Residents also argue that there are alternatives to using Clairwood for light industry. 'Why,' they say, 'can't the Council use the Clairwood racecourse or the vast expanse of land set aside for an abattoir in 1979, which has not been built?'

Opposition to the removals culminated on June 3, when the CRPA, together with Butler-Adams, McCarthy and Davie, presented residents' arguments to the Council. ■

tee and the Hambanathi Residents Association and later expanded to include all areas and hostels under the PNAB.

In areas where no organisations existed, action committees sprang up rapidly, especially as people increasingly saw the inability of the Community Councils and Advisory Boards to represent their interests.

The campaign under Jorac's leadership soon gained momentum with mass meetings in the areas leading to a high level of youth involvement.

Apart from the widespread mobilisation of people affected by the rent increases, Jorac also won the support of other organisations in the area including the Durban Housing Action Committee (DHAC), Diakonia, Black Sash and opposition MP's.

Court action to combat the increases was initially planned by Jorac but this has been suspended.

Jorac is now planning to launch an extensive socio-economic survey as part of its campaign for rents people can afford. ■

Plans afoot to move Cape 'legals'

PLANS FOR developing a new black township in the Cape Peninsula — Khayalitsha — are going ahead, and Minister of Co-operation and Development Piet Koornhof has announced that residents of Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu would eventually be moved there.

This could mean the uprooting of more than 125 000 people to Khayalitsha, about 40 km away, near Mitchells Plain.

This has confirmed suspicion that Khayalitsha, already said to house about 200 families, and seen as a massive long-term development capable of housing as many as half a million people within 20 years, would threaten the rights of existing blacks in other parts of the Peninsula.

In the words of a National Party MP, no 'illegals' would be housed in Khayalitsha and the project was being undertaken in the interest of orderly movement in the Peninsula.

The Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac) condemned the decision and said people should have the right to move where they chose and should be consulted before decisions affecting their lives were taken.

The United Women's Organisation said nothing caused more bitterness than the uprooting of settled communities. ■



Huhudi residents: we will not be moved

Forced removals kill

Resettlement means starving say threatened Huhudi residents

RESIDENTS OF Huhudi held a rally on May 28 to protest against forced removals.

The meeting was organised by the Huhudi Civic Association (Huca), and was the first of its kind in the area.

G.H. Galeng, chairperson of Huca, welcomed guests to the meeting. He said he and other residents were uncertain of their citizenship and to which part of the country they belonged because of Piet Koornhof's 'harassment' of the people.

Guest speakers at the meeting included representatives from the Federation of South African Women (FSAW), the Soweto Civic Association (SCA), and the Seoposengwe National Party (SNP). Dr N Motlana, chairperson of the SCA, also sent a message of support for the residents of Huhudi.

The SCA representative said the government had failed to force the people into submission. 'But now it wants to starve them, by driving them to places where they cannot eke life from anything,' he said.

He explained how difficult it would be for residents to move from Pudumong — a resettlement area marked for Huhudians — to their place of work in Vryburg 55 km away.

He said, 'Residents should support Huca, rather than thinking of community councils as representatives of



Huca chair, G.H. Galeng

the people.'

The FSAW representative said there was a need for a women's organisation. She said women should improve the standard of the township clinic and the only creche in Huhudi, which was 'below standard' and a threat to the security of children.

An official of the SNP expressed the party's opposition to Huhudi's removals. 'Such moves are intended to make people foreigners in their birthplace,' he said.

'Huhudi is our home, Soweto is our home, Pudumong is our home, but my staying in any one of them should be my voluntary decision,' he said. 'It should not be imposed.'

The General and Allied Workers Union (Gawu) said in a message that there needed to be a correlation between people as workers and as residents. 'The conditions under which people work design their way of living,' the message said.

'Salaries people receive as workers are used to pay rent, food, clothing costs and school fees.'

Most of the workers in Vryburg are employed in factories or as domestic workers, and receive as little as R30 per month. Most of them spend between R25 and R31 per month on rent. Night raids by police are commonplace for those who cannot pay rent in time.

In his closing speech, a Huca spokesperson said there was a need for 'unity in action'.

'Huca has not been formed by people who want to be sensationalist, but has been prompted by a need to counter the undemocratic institutions appointed by the government.

'People in Huhudi and those already forced out to Pudumong should not see each other as enemies, but should identify the real enemy,' he said.

He assured residents that Huca would never participate in community councils, and would work hard to oppose community council elections.

'But we expect Koornhof to impose them on us again,' he said.

Tracos rips into Dbn newspaper

THE TRANSVAAL Council of Sport has denied allegations that it was unhappy with the formation of the Transvaal Indian Congress.

The accusation was contained in an interview with an unnamed member of Tracos in a Durban newspaper 'The Graphic'.

'The Graphic' — owned by an ex-President's Council member — launched a smear campaign against the TIC, quoting an unidentified source 'within progressive democratic circles' as saying that young people were disenchanted with the TIC because of its ethnic connotations.

In Johannesburg Tracos called a meeting after the article appeared, and issued a statement condemning 'The Graphic' for its inaccurate reporting.

They said 'The Graphic's 'informant' was not instructed or authorised to make any statement on behalf of the Council.

Slogans land musicians in jail

JOSEPH CHARLES and Rufus Radebe, both musicians in the reggae group Splash, were recently sentenced to an effective four year jail term under the Internal Security Act.

The two musicians were convicted in the Johannesburg Regional Court for taking part in the activities of the African National Congress (ANC). They received six year sentences with two years suspended for five years.

The court found that the two accused had sung revolutionary songs at the University of the Witwatersrand's Free People's Concert in Roodepoort on February 12 this year, and that by advocating violence they were creating support for the ANC.

The state alleged the two musicians had chanted ANC slogans and sung four songs, including one entitled 'Freedom to Mandela'.

It was also alleged they had shouted to the crowd: 'Who killed Neil Aggett?', and the crowd had responded, 'The police'.

Charles said the group had sung about Mandela because he had been imprisoned for such a long time.

The two musicians also said the rastafarian movement to which they belonged was non-violent, did not take part in organised politics, and was open to all races.

The battle to forge links to break the chains of apartheid



The start of the Anti-Saic campaign.

TOTAL ONSLAUGHT. Total Strategy. That couplet has been repeated so many times by so many government functionaries that it's become an almost automatic response. Any problem, real or imagined, and any 'solution', possible or impossible, falls under that banner.

Like most cliches, they have their basis in fact. The system of racial capitalism that is the rather peculiar South African way of life is under serious attack — from without certainly, but mainly from within. In response, those that rule, from their positions of power in business and the government, have attempted to mobilise every available resource to defend their interests.

Internationally, South Africa is high on the list of the world's most hated nations, and there is no international forum of any integrity that has not condemned Apartheid. Diplomatically, the ANC continues to win recognition. Militarily the government faces the threat of increasing acts of sabotage against strategic targets.

But it is from within that the real challenge comes. Ordinary working people have started to organise and are determined to change their lives for the better. In the ghettos, factories, schools and universities organisation has sprung up and grown. Not at the instigation of agitators as the government would like us to believe, but in response to the appalling conditions under which they are forced to live and work.

Even the taking up of the most routine issues by grassroots organisations is seen as a threat by those who hold political and economic power in this country. The socio-economic system that has developed rests on such a narrow, contradictory and antagonistic base that a challenge to any of its aspects is seen as a challenge to the system as a whole. And so it is.

The government hopes that by banning organisations and detaining leaders for up to a year they can suppress the tide of black opposition sweeping through the country.

They are wrong. In the place of the top heavy, intellectual black consciousness organisations that dominated the political scene during the early seventies emerged a new generation of democratic organisations.

The experience of '76 had taught activists that people make their own history and that change will come

through united mass action. For this to happen the people themselves would have to be involved in organisation. This was a problem however, since people were struggling to survive and so did not have the time to involve themselves in organisation.

Nor for that matter, were they always interested in organisation. Activists found that people responded far more enthusiastically to programmes that took up immediate problems and grievances than to those expressing abstract principles.

Although the issues were local and short term they had the potential to lighten the burden borne by ordinary people. Victories — and even losses — on this level gave people confidence in their ability to act and change their lives. It gave them useful experience of democracy and administration, and, by reflecting on their involvement, they could understand more of the system of oppression and exploitation under which they suffer.

These activists realised that although the issues taken up at a grassroots level were specific only to one group of people in one place at one time and were often not explicitly political. They were the essential starting point of a process of organisation, mobilisa-

tion and education.

This was obvious at a tactical level in that few people were politicised to the point where they were willing or able to become involved in political action. It was necessary therefore to first involve them in grassroots organisation around local issues.

What's more these issues had to come from the people themselves, had to represent their priorities rather than those of the politically advanced leadership. Without this close identification people would not see the organisation as acting in their interests, and without some short term victories to give them substance, the support and confidence of the people could easily be lost.

Over and above these tactical considerations, however, people have felt that there are more basic and important reasons why organisation, mobilisation and education should

begin with specific local issues and not with national political ones. Their struggle is one against racial oppression and economic exploitation.

This process of exploitation relies on the domination of the working class. In South Africa racial oppression forms a major part of this class domination.

Without this domination workers would never submit day in, day out to boring and strenuous work for poverty wages. The very notion that the majority of the people should sweat and toil to produce wealth and value which then belongs to a tiny minority seems absurd when one thinks about it, and yet somehow it happens, and has happened on an increasing scale throughout South African history.

The reason is twofold: on the one hand people simply have no choice. Their land was taken away from them



Soweto '76... when limited demands gave way to larger issues.

by means of the 1913 Land Act. They then had no option but to work on the white owned farms, mines and factories in order to make enough money to survive and pay their taxes.

Having destroyed people's means of survival the government and the bosses found that there were more people than there were jobs. They immediately ran into problems controlling and allocating both the employed and the surplus labour force. This forced them to develop tighter and more extensive controls over the movement and residence of people.

In order to increase the controls over the urban working class the government manipulated services like education and housing. In moves that have become infamous, they designed Bantu Education to ensure that people received only sufficient education to equip them for semi-skilled labour, and developed a housing policy that ensured that there were not enough houses to meet the demand created by the inflow of people from the rural areas.

In both cases they seriously miscalculated. Black people were not willing to passively accept an education system designed to keep them subservient, and nor were they going to let the shortage of houses deter them from coming to the urban areas in search of jobs and money. Starvation proved to be a greater propellant than the deterrents erected by the government.

In both cases the government was trying to accommodate a contradiction which they themselves had created in their drive to create a cheap and ultra-exploitable work force. The relationship between workers and bosses is fundamentally antagonistic. All mechanisms which those in power have constructed to keep the system operational have not been able to overcome this basic antagonism. Instead they are products of it.

For exploitation to take place the working class must be controlled through a wide range of measures, starting off with the removal of land and any other form of subsistence from the people, and continuing with the multitude of apartheid provisions limiting people's access to housing, education, jobs, urban areas, organisation and political decision making.

The domination and exploitation of one group by another however, can never be a peaceful process, no matter how smoothly or effectively it may occur at times. The interests of the

dominated and the dominating differ completely and the one can only realise its interests at the expense of the other. This conflict of interest is what makes all of the mechanisms of control like Bantu Education, Influx Control, Group Areas, Bantustans and the Security Police necessary.

Control obviously generates a lot of conflict itself, given that it is preserving a fundamentally antagonistic relationship between the dominated and the dominator. Far from removing that conflict they express it: the essential antagonism between the minority owning the wealth and the majority who produce it.

The problem is that this relationship is pretty effectively disguised. It's quite obvious that if everyone realised that they were being dominated and exploited they would decide to change that situation, particularly if they are in the majority. Unless, of course, they can be persuaded or coerced into believing that the status quo is right, that their position of subordination and subservience is natural and correct.

This is exactly what happens. The fact of domination and exploitation is explained away by concealing the nature of that domination and exploitation and putting it down to factors such as race, sex, nationality, religion, age, parental background,

educational status, even one's physical appearance.

We need only to look at how often Afrikaners are blamed for apartheid and hence for the oppressive conditions under which we live and work to find a perfect example. The possibility that apartheid is a way of ensuring the domination and exploitation of one class by another is obscured by the anger directed at the Afrikaners as an ethnic group.

Before challenging this system of class domination activists have stripped away its camouflage and laid bare the class core that lies within. Class domination is experienced in its camouflaged form, however, and the challenge has begun at that point. It is a challenge directed at problems and grievances that are not seen as products of class domination. Consequently these challenges have not demanded an end to class domination and exploitation but consisted of demands which can be accommodated

within the current structure of class domination.

This leaves a mammoth problem since the starting point is immediate local problems affecting one group of people — which are not seen as class issues. What's more, although they may be class issues in essence, the link between the appearance and the essence is usually indirect and very obscure. To demonstrate to ordinary working people the link between high rents or bad roads or inadequate street lighting and exploitation is no simple task. Without drawing out this link in the course of organisation around that particular local problem no logical demands can be made that involve the scrapping of domination and exploitation.

Activists see their task as beginning with the issues they confront in everyday life and stripping away the camouflage that conceals their class nature, by demonstrating how they make possible that domination and exploitation.

Each challenge mounted tells people something more about that issue, taking them one step closer to seeing the issue in its true perspective. Eventually its essential class character will be seen and the challenge will be one directed at the underlying class causes of the problem rather than at the camouflaged symptoms of the



The Congress of the People where the Freedom Charter was adopted.

It is from within that the real challenge comes. Ordinary working people have started to organise and are determined to change their lives for the better.

problem.

This implies different levels of struggle. Just as there are different levels to the issues involved, so the form of organisation and mobilisation varies.

At the first level problems affect a particular group at that point in time, and organisation would be limited to that aspect of oppression as it affects that group of people. An organisation may be formed to fight increases in rentals or to demand that houses be properly maintained. Such organisation would be specific to that type of problem. Trade unions, for example, take up problems which arise in particular factories at particular times, but are defined not only in terms of those particular problems which may vary and change but in terms of the different and antagonistic interests of workers and bosses. As such the existence of the union is based on an ongoing contradiction rather than on a temporary issue.

The union is nevertheless still limited to the problems that workers experience in the factory. These problems cannot be viewed in isolation, because the exploitation that takes place there is dependant on the overall domination of the working class. It is inseparably linked to the other mechanisms which ensure the domination of the working class. Working class organisation eventually draws out those links, and extends beyond its initial form of organisation.

As issues broaden out to reveal their connection with other aspects of the overall structure they necessarily extend beyond the initial form of organisation and mobilisation. Issues affecting only one category of people in one place at one time become is-

suues affecting wider categories of people at different times in different places. Finally they are defined as issues affecting an entire class and which will continue to afflict that class so long as they remain subordinate and exploited.

It is in the course of broadening issues out to situate them in their overall social and political context that forms of organisation develop which extend beyond the specific constituencies encountered at the first level. Whereas the first level of organisation is concerned with immediate local issues taken more or less at face value, subsequent stages of organisation and mobilisation and education are geared towards the location of that issue in terms of an overall system of domination and exploitation — to drawing out the class and political nature of that issue. Part of this process involves clarifying the links between the different issues which confront different groups of people at different times.

Over the last couple of years we have seen democratic organisations linking high rents to low wages, low wages to migrant labour, migrant labour to the bantustans to the land act to the lack of political rights and so on.

The problem has been to establish the correct or appropriate organisations through which to wage these broader struggles. Community, student, women and factory organisations have firmly rooted themselves at a grassroots level, while a succession of campaigns have mobilised people around explicitly political demands.

In most of the cases the campaigns have begun at a point way beyond the organisation, mobilisation and educa-

The trick is to initiate activity and define issues which systematically expand organisation mobilisation and education without leaping straight to the national political level.

tion achieved at the first level.

Instead of serving as the next phase of that process of organisation, mobilisation and education which begins at the grassroots, local level and ends with a national democratic movement, the campaigns have slotted in at the level of the national democratic struggle, leaving too large a gap in that process.

This is not to say that national political campaigns are not seen to be important. On the contrary, they are considered essential since first level activity would be very limiting in the long run if there were not simultaneous and closely related political activity through which to extend the struggles and demands thrown up at the first level. By the same token, political struggle without participative grassroots activity underlying it would ultimately be a self-defeating exercise because it would not have the expanding base for aware and active people which only the grassroots organisations can provide.

The trick, say activists, is to initiate activity and define issues which systematically expand organisation, mobilisation and education without

leaping straight to the national political level.

The United Democratic Fronts which have been formed in most parts of the country offer particularly interesting possibilities in this regard. They represent a coordinated thrust to resist the intensified offensive currently being waged against the oppressed masses, and against the African working class in particular. As such they encapsulate a number of different issues, aspects of what has become known as the government's reform initiatives. These include the Koornhof Bills, the Orderly Movement Bill, and the new constitutional proposals.

The wide range of issues involved means that all the different spheres of first level organisation — the unions, community organisations, student and women's groups — can incorporate the UDF campaign into their programmes. By highlighting the aspect of the UDF resistance that most directly affects their constituency, and by defining the issue in a way that takes into account the strategic priorities facing their organisation, they can effectively integrate the UDF into their programmes and use it to extend the potential of their current programme.

This would ensure that the UDF has a direct, organic link to the issues and demands that form the core of grassroots activity in the different constituencies, and at the same time that it provides a bridge between those issues and the broader political struggles being waged. Without such bridges the risk is of losing the essential relationship between the local, first level of organisation, mobilisation and education and the national, political level.

For this to happen the UDF would have to be broadly defined, and the different elements which make up the government's current offensive would have to be well researched and publicised so that the various organisations locking into the campaign would have clearly defined issues to relate to. They in turn would incorporate the issue in a way appropriate to their current level of activity, taking into account their strengths and weaknesses.

Handled in this way the UDF could become the first overtly political campaign in the last few years to effectively provide intermediate levels of organisation and struggle between first level grassroots activity and the national democratic struggle.



A rents campaign in Soweto . . . one of the many grassroots campaigns of the '80's.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF
SOWETO.





**The 1976 uprising
changed the course of
history.**

**It announced a new era
of mass resistance . . .
and mass repression.**

**At the head of the
Soweto Students
Representative
Council, Sechaba
Montsitsi and 'Prof'
Morobe became
national heroes.**

**Seven years later, in an
interview with FOCUS,
the 'Robben Island
Graduates' retrace the
steps of the struggles
and strategies that
shook the nation.**

INTERVIEW

JUNE 16 means a lot of things to a lot of people.

To Sechaba Montsitsi and 'Prof' Morobe June 16 has a special meaning. They were among those jailed in 1978 as leaders of the uprising that surprised a nation and changed the course of South African history.

The courts called their activities 'sedition', and sent them and others to Robben Island for their 'crimes'.

Seven years have passed since Sechaba Montsitsi was elected president and 'Prof' Morobe vice-president of the Soweto Students Representative Council.

To commemorate June 16, the recently released pair spoke to SASPU FOCUS about what actually happened during the reign of the now banned SSRC. They also provide a new assessment of the events of Soweto.

Q: Was the protest on June 16 planned or spontaneous?

A: When we talk about June 16, we talk about two processes that took place on this day. There was the march, and then there was the violence that broke out later in the day.

It would be wrong to say the demonstration was a spontaneous thing as this was definitely planned. People were mandated to organise it and the demonstration succeeded. But it would be true to say the violence which eventually broke out was spontaneous action on the part of the people.

If people had not been shot, we would have gone back home and contemplated what to do next. When the firing started, people reacted and that changed the complexion altogether — this changed the course of June 16, which is well known.

Q: Was the demonstration against Afrikaans, or were there other issues involved?

A: The demonstration on June 16 was essentially against the enforcement of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and generally against the entire system of education in this country.

Q: When was the SSRC formed?

A: It was only when the situation subsided in August that some form of reorganisation took place. The SSRC was formed which was able to channel students' efforts in a particular direction.

With the SSRC, different techniques came into

play. Campaigns became more political, stay-aways were called, and by the end of the year, boycotts against certain products and institutions were initiated. That in itself is an indicator that it was a process unfolding and that people adopted different strategies at particular times.

Q: Why did the SSRC decide to use the stay-away tactic?

A: The stay-aways were called because it had become clear to us that if students were to go it alone, they wouldn't succeed. The practical realities led us to see we had to change our approach and way of operation.

'They thought guns and teargas would solve the problems. But they missed the point.'

June 16 took most of our parents by surprise, as they didn't know that such a thing was going to happen. This element of surprise was good for June 16, but for subsequent campaigns it would not hold. We saw the need to consult with other forces such as workers, church leaders, community organisations and so on — they had to be put into the picture.

After the shootings, the situation had totally changed and actually went beyond the classroom to engulf everybody. As time went on the involvement of workers changed the nature of the events. People realised students on their own couldn't hope to achieve results. We were trying to come to grips with these things. We were reacting to a situation and didn't have a grand strategy. We were learning and trying to come up with solutions.

With the stay-aways, we reached an important stage — a bond was established between students and workers that had not been there before. The alliance existing today between workers, students and community organisations did not exist, but it started to grow and progressed in leaps and bounds.

When stay-aways were called, leaflets would be distributed and students in schools were told to in-

form their parents. If we look back we see stay-aways were called in sympathy with students who were detained like the August 4 stay-away — which called for the release of all students and people detained since June 16. As time went on, the pamphlets no longer spoke only of classroom issues — other demands like for the resignation of Vorster and Kruger were made.

Although there was a more political line emerging, it was not clear as it is today. The difference between the '76 uprisings and those of 1980, includes a difference in analysis and strategy.

In December, the five-day stay-away was called — which was not very successful. It showed the extent to which students and organisers had gone beyond the classroom to raise issues affecting working people at large. The Afrikaans question had more or less receded as it was clear the government would not continue with it as a medium of instruction.

Q: How did repression affect the SSRC's ability to mobilise people?

A: Despite state repression, people never sat down and said 'ag, we are giving up, we can no longer take it.' What the state failed to realise was that this community had serious grievances. The mistake was they thought guns and teargas would solve the problems. But they were missing the point. As experience shows, the reaction of the people was contrary to the state's expectations.

Despite the state's increasingly harsh measures, we have been able to have campaigns non-stop until the 80's. As state repression becomes harsher, people become more sophisticated in their attempts. That is the difference between the campaigns of the 70's and those of the 80's with the development of the worker movement.

Q: Are you saying the attitude of the students changed when the violence started?

A: You come to see violence and experience things by actually being in a violent situation wherein you either survive or die. I remember in Doornkop while we were advancing, we were carrying a coffin and then the shooting started. I remember a young student clad in a school uniform — she was a girl — she got it in the chest. She fell right in front of me and I saw blood flowing from her white shirt... The girl was initially shouting and chanting slogans, she just fell dead by my feet.

In another incident, I saw two young boys — they were about eight and nine and were carrying articles from the shop. I was standing with some friends — it was in Diepkloof. It was late in '76. There were shots and one fell down and died.

I remember another incident that had taken place at school. We had to take the names of some of the students for identification and then I had to go and identify some of them who were dead. I remember one young girl from Rockville. She was actually bleeding from her ears, her mouth and



**'Prof'
Morobe
and
Sechaba
Montsitsi
jailed as
leaders
of the
uprising**

even her eyes. It was a terrible sight.

Now, given this type of violence, definitely it does transform one. It makes one a bit harder. This is the violence of South Africa.

Q: Did students see the struggle in racial-terms?

A: The politics of that time was a racial affair. We actually perceived the problem to be the whites — that you can't be part of the solution if you are a problem, and all the whites were actually regarded as the problem. We thought that if the whites had not come here we would not have had a problem. But when the reality gripped us at a later stage, we were able to see that all those who live in South Africa are South Africans, that the major struggle is between workers and capitalists. With a higher understanding of politics, we were able to see the contradictions are essentially those of labour and capital.

But people saw things in terms of colour because of the divisions in the working class. White workers are appeased by the super-exploitation of the Africans, Indians and coloureds. Because of this you find that they play a very passive and reactionary role and most are not engaged in politics. This can only be understood with a thorough political analysis — that white workers are being bought off by the business bosses.

As people gained this understanding and saw the contradictions, we see that most students affiliated to a non-racial political position.

Q: When did people start identifying with the progressive political position?

A: During the '76 era, activities were not overtly guided by progressive politics. All us students on the SSRC for instance didn't see things in terms of BC and progressive and so on — you would find all shades of opinion in the SSRC. The point was at that stage the issues were an affront to all irrespective of whether you were BC or what. That enabled us to work together. At that time we didn't know how to reconcile contradictions — the theoretical part of it — but we were able to sit together and discuss common issues.

But as time went on, we were aware of these different trends when the contradictions between BC and progressives intensified. But progressive students were there in the SSRC — it was only a question of profile. But we were able to co-exist until a chasm developed and these two groups could no longer work together. In the future, some reconciliation might be reached, but at this stage it looks remote.

Q: What different campaigns were there?

A: The August 4 stay-away was primarily to demand the release of all detainees. Whereas in the beginning the call concerned student detainees the pamphlets showed we gradually called for the release of our political leaders — release Mandela

INTERVIEW

and so on. As the campaigns gained momentum, the consciousness of the people increased.

Later on we had a campaign against Kissinger who was coming to visit Vorster which shows students beginning to relate their situation not merely to the Vorsters and the Krugers, but also to the international situation. Subsequent to this, we had a march on September 23 to Johannesburg which was not very successful.

After August there was not much activity and so a lot of groupings in Soweto were calling on people to do this and that. Some of them, out of sheer ignorance and opportunism called people to take pangas and assegais and go into town and slaughter and kill the whites. It was later shown that one man was responsible for that, but we were able to issue press statements and discourage people from that. What I'm trying to point out is that people were ready to take up anything and that such opportunists are dangerous.

We realised it was much safer having demonstrations in the city centre than in Soweto in terms of the incidents of shootings. In Soweto 'daar sal nie wê mense wees nie ... sommer skop, skiet en donner.' And so, for instance, we came up with the September 23 demonstration. It came after much pressure from students wanting to take up the campaign and we had to stage that demonstration in town.

Q: When did the stay-aways begin?

A: When the SSRC was launched on August 2, we decided to call a stay-away on the 4th, which was coupled with the march to John Vorster Square. The two day margin which separated the SSRC's establishment and the stay-away has been questioned, but we had a problem in trying to prolong certain campaigns which we were afraid might have to be aborted because repression was high.

But in spite of the tense period, we were able to rally most of the people behind the campaign on the 4th — that was in fact the biggest turn out we had. The march, on the other hand, was turned back at New Canada.

We couldn't afford to waste too much time on an idea before implementing it or we would end up with all our campaigns being failures. Also we were trying all the time to keep the situation fluid as we couldn't afford a lengthy spell of lull between the campaigns. At that time the people's eagerness to participate was heightened — the fact that they were so ready to take part in these campaigns kept us on our toes. Of course one must confess that in the process mistakes were made, and some of them very serious, because we always had this pressure of trying to come up with something to fill in the vacuum.

Also, the banning order on public meetings imposed on June 16 lapsed on August 3, but was reimposed on August 5 after the stay-away. We had to keep in step with these restrictions while trying to maintain the momentum.

Another problem was that while students stayed away from classes, you could not keep the campaigns going because without students coming to school and with the ban on meetings, they could not be organised in their base — the school. So we had a situation where we had to call meetings from time to time to try and encourage students to come back to school. It was only when they were in school that we were able to talk with them and embark on campaigns.

Q: At what stage did the SSRC attempt to mobilise workers?

'The workers were always prepared to carry the banner of liberation against exploitation'

A: Although we did not have a well formulated theory of struggle at that time, we still tried to take up issues affecting the community at large. Interestingly, the workers, as our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, came to see the need of joining up and fighting alongside students to change South Africa.

Workers were always prepared to carry the banner of liberation against all oppressive and exploitative laws.

Workers responded to the calls to stay away from work, and at the same time filled church halls to commemorate important events in our struggle. Many events showed the defiant spirit of the working people, and that we cannot divorce the education issue from the general political, economic and social conditions which prevail inside the country.

Q: How were workers mobilised in the absence of trade unions?

A: Most of us did not know much about trade unions and the workers struggle. But what we recognised was the power which the working class could wield. This power could only be effective if, and only if, they are well organised into bodies such as trade unions.

In 1976 the vast majority of the working people were not organised. So when stay-aways were called we were faced with serious problems of mobilisation. This, it would only be fair to mention,

was one of the factors responsible for some of the nasty incidents we experienced, such as the Mzimhlope incident. This was one of the darkest moments in our campaign, and it had serious strategic implications for the SSRC.

Some might argue that we should have consulted with the Black Allied Workers Union. But this would not have borne fruit because Bawu was a very weak union. The position then was completely different since today there are independent and non-racial unions and community organisations. In our opinion, incidents such as Mzimhlope would not have happened if we had them then.

Q: So was it difficult to mobilise people?

A: Well, people had to be contacted through pamphlets and by word of mouth. This obviously could not have been 100 percent effective means of mobilising the working class. Of course, there would be those who would want to go to work, but this must be seen in perspective: it was not because they did not agree with the campaign, but because they had to deal with other pressures like their employers at work, being fired and so on. Bearing in mind the economic burden they have to carry, it is quite understandable that some of them refused to stay at home. Some did not understand this outlook and that is why there were incidents like stopping people at the stations from going to work. Sometimes force was used which led to incidents like when the Mzimhlope Hostel inmates retaliated. The lack of strong worker organisations put restrictions on us. But as time went on there developed greater co-ordination of activity in various sectors of the community. In the campaigns it was important to have everyone's support.

Q: Why did the Mzimhlope incident happen?

A: Mzimhlope was in line with the divisive techniques of the government. As we have said, some of these people wanted to go to work when most people in the location did not. The Mzimhlope hostel inmates came from the rural areas to the towns to work. They sign contracts anything they do not do to the employers' favour may be counter to the contract and they will be fired. They are in a very shaky position.

Now, when an issue like a stay-away came up, not much work had been done among the inmates. Because of their secluded position we could not presume that they would know what was going on. These people, because of their conditions, tend to identify with each other and not with the township residents. Our problems were a bit removed from them. Anyway, what happened after they had gone to work was that some of the workers who stayed away got very angry. They beat some of them up.

On that day, coincidentally, I passed by Mzimhlope on my way to an SRC meeting. I saw a group of these inmates standing there. There was one policeman who had climbed on top of a van.

**Counting
victims of
repression ...
'impossible
task', says
Montsitsi**



He had a loudspeaker and was addressing them. Just next to them was a bakery van. I couldn't hear exactly what was being said, what the address was all about, because I couldn't get closer.

Later on the hostel inmates attacked the neighbouring residents. It is interesting to see in some of Peter Magubane's photos that day some of the boots and trousers of these inmates. That was the so-called 'horde of Zulu impis' that attacked the Soweto residents. It was quite a massacre. One elderly woman lost three sons that night. There was looting at the same time, women were raped, and wanton destruction of property. People had to abandon their homes and flee to the inner parts of Soweto.

This whole thing might have been a genuine mistake on our part because we concentrated on people in the townships with children at school. Those school children could take pamphlets to their parents. But we cannot exonerate the hostel inmates completely. They could have got the call in the newspapers or from pamphlets distributed around the stations. They must have known about the stay-away. The pamphlets explained in Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho and even English why we were hav-

ing the stay-away. But our problems were a bit removed from them and our organisation in that respect was inadequate.

The Mzimhlope incident was examined in a very sober way to avoid reaching absurd conclusions.

We eventually managed to strike some crucial contacts with inmates from the hostels, including Dube hostels. With the police keeping a tight presence around these places we had to slip through unnoticed and meet with some of the influential residents. These talks took about two days and agreement was reached that there should be no aggression from either township or hostel residents. It was an important development because we pledged to strengthen communication with them and inform them in time of whatever campaigns we intended having.

Tensions eased after this, but the scars remained, this was another indictment of the government and its divisive influx control laws.

Q: Do you think other practical mistakes were made?

A: While, for instance, we were successful in being able to get students involved, we made a serious mistake in overlooking other areas. We used to get complaints from other centres in the Cape and Natal and so on — people wanting to find out what is the next step. It was only later that we started sending people out to other areas to try to co-ordinate these campaigns. Despite that, this was not explored to its fullest — the question of communication and contact, nationally. Because the campaigns were too localised they couldn't be sustained. This put other areas in a disadvantaged position of having to follow in the footsteps of Soweto.

Q: You've spoken about a lack of theory at the time. What were the implications of this?

A: We were poor...

with workers instead of waiting for issues like rents and removals to respond to through campaigns.

The students today are politically superior to the students of the '70's.

Q: Are you saying workers should have played the leading role?

A: Well, for example, for the stay-aways to be successful it was necessary for workers to provide the muscle — at least 80 percent. They really depended on whether the workers supported them or not and so it would seem logical that workers themselves should take the leadership role. But the initiative could not have emanated from the workers in that particular situation. In terms of organisation, the level of activity and profile, it was the students that had to call the stay-aways. Because of the lack of coherent worker organisation, it was logical that the students had to call such campaigns. Whilst the consciousness of the workers was low, the students lacked a well-developed and progressive theory of struggle.

Q: How have students developed since 1976?

A: We notice that students today have overcome the problem of working in isolation. People are wiser and better organised. They've learnt from previous experiences and mistakes, and that is why now for instance, we have organisations like Cosas and Azaso. The '76 era has helped a great deal in shaping people's opinions and so on. Nobody is immune from change. And after 1976, we could either get more scared or more determined to go ahead rather than chicken out.

Of historical importance is that organisations such as Cosas and Azaso have come out in full support of the Freedom Charter — the people's document. This is significant because it proves again that the Freedom Charter is an ever-green document of the people. The people are united under the Freedom Charter. To engage in exercises that are calculated to deceive the masses by trying to deride the Freedom Charter and come up with opportunistic manifestoes should be scorned because in our eyes it smacks of opportunism.

Student press bounces back

THE ALL future editions ban on Saspu National and Wits Student has been dropped after the two newspapers lodged an appeal with the Publications Control Board (PCB).

The two newspapers were banned under Section 9(2) of the Publications Act, which forces editors to submit the publication to the PCB for 'approval' before distribution.

The South African Students' Press Union sees this clause as an all future editions ban as the newspapers would have to express views acceptable to the Government to get permission to distribute.

Saspu president Annette Griessel said, 'Saspu National and Wits Student have consistently opposed the apartheid system and publicised ideas supported by the majority.'

'While the Government has continuously acted against the progressive press, it has missed the point. They can ban publications, but they cannot suppress the beliefs of most South Africans.'

Saspu acknowledges the unbanning of the two newspapers and they will continue as usual.

Griessel said, 'The progressive press will not be silenced in the same way as bannings, detentions and harassment will not halt growing resistance.'



June 16 commemorations were held all over the country.

Betray the Freedom Charter and you betray the people — Mandela

ZINZI MANDELA, daughter of jailed ANC leader, Nelson Mandela, has labelled those who reject the Freedom Charter as 'traitors'.

She said this at a meeting organised by the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) to commemorate both the Soweto uprising of 1976 and the three ANC members recently hanged.

She did not specifically name the targets of her attack, but said they had rejected the Freedom Charter and 'diverted the struggle'.

They had decided to sell out the cause because of petty ideological differences, she said. Their purpose, however, was only to divert the struggle.

'We consider it treason to turn against the people's demands as set out in the Freedom Charter,' she said.

These people also spent much time attacking political leaders who could not reply because they were in jail, she said.

They had no relevance to the popular movements and only attacked apartheid because they wished to govern under a similar system themselves.

'The ANC is the future government of the country,' she said.

Dr Essop Jassat, president of the TIC, said 'some people' had met recently under the guise of unity.

He also did not name the targets of his attack, but said these people had used the guise of unity to attack democratic bodies such as TIC. They had described TIC as an ethnic body.

'We reject this with the contempt it deserves. We are proud of having resuscitated an organisation that

was at the forefront of the struggle in the 1950's as a member of the Congress Alliance.'

'The greatest acts of unity came from that alliance, led by the ANC,' he said.

'We will be judged by our actions. Our actions will show our critics whether we are an ethnic body.'

'We are totally dedicated to one struggle for a unitary South Africa that belongs to all who live in it.'

'Certain forces find it uncomfortable to be with us. We say good luck to them, but they must remember the majority of people accept the Freedom Charter and the only hope for South Africa lies through the Charter,' he said.

Sarah Mosololi, mother of one of the ANC members hanged in Pretoria, said she had never cried for her son because he had told her to be courageous.

He told her not to put flowers on his grave or slaughter a beast, since he was going 'where he needed to go,' she said.

Her son had said he was prepared for death and 'nobody could take away what was inside him'.

'He said to me that where he left off, others would carry on. He said I should tell all the people who had been fighting to save his life that he was happy,' she said.

'He gave me courage that child. I said go well, child. I will never forget you,' she told the meeting.

Daniel Mogoerane, father of another ANC member who was hanged, said that freedom would cost many more lives and would not be easily obtained. But the hanging of his son would not stop freedom coming, he said.

Executions of ANC 3 condemned world-wide

THE STATE President's announcement that the clemency plea for Simon Mogoerane, Jerry Mosololi and Marcus Motaung had been turned down and that they were to be hanged on June 9 sparked off worldwide protest and condemnation.

'In trying to stamp out by bloody repression the struggle of South African people, the authorities can only arouse even stronger resistance,' said a spokesperson of the Chinese government. French president Francois Mitterand said, 'The deaths will only serve to stir up passions and postpone useful solutions.'

Several demonstrations took place outside South African Embassies around the world. In London's Trafalgar Square, 500 people stood singing freedom songs as wreaths bearing pictures of the three were carried in procession and placed on railings outside the South African Embassy.

The conservative British government remained silent on the issue. Opposition leader Michael Foot condemned the hangings as 'brutal and calculated to inflame'.

Two ANC organised demonstrations were held in front of Washington's White House in the USA, while on the steps of the House of Representatives, several US congressmen and their staff held a candlelight vigil for the condemned men. US State Department spokesperson, Alan Romberg, said the deaths would not contribute to peaceful change in Southern Africa.

In a statement from Lusaka, ANC secretary-general Alfred Nzo said, 'The African National Congress extends its condolences to the families of the martyred heroes and salutes the international community for their noble efforts to save the lives of the three patriots.'

The European Economic Community, the United Nations Security Council and the UN secretary general all condemned the executions. Pretoria was accused of refusing to listen to the numerous clemency appeals from the international community.

Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi said the hangings were 'atrocious'. 'There can be no peace in Southern Africa until apartheid is ended.'

Statements also came from India, Sweden and Italy. ■



IN A REMARKABLE show of union unity, five unions in the East London region have joined hands to take up workers' protests against the transfer of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) money to the independent homelands.

After a decision at a May day meeting in East London, the five unions, the South African Allied Workers' Union (Saaawu), the General Workers' Union (GWU), the African Food and Canning Workers' Union (AFCWU), the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (MWASA) and the National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union (Naawu), organised a mass meeting attended by over 3000 workers.

Union organisers in the area said workers objected very strongly to the transfer of their UIF funds, and many come to union offices to complain.

The meeting demanded the transfer of UIF money be stopped and UIF deductions be suspended pending the outcome of negotiations with the Department of Manpower. A worker delegation from the five unions presented East London workers' demands to the Minister of Manpower.

Workers at the meeting gave reasons for their stand on the issue:

- Workers are not represented in the UIF and were never consulted about the fund or its transfer to 'independent states'.
- The 'newly-independent states' are impoverished and are trying to use migrant workers and commuters as a source of income.
- There will be long delays in receiving unemployment benefits because of inefficient homeland civil services.
- Unionised workers have experienced an antagonistic attitude towards them from Ciskei authorities and such prejudice can be expected in the future.
- Workers trying to get unemployment benefits would have to travel long distances while they were looking for work.
- There could never be co-operation between the homelands and unionised workers on unemployment benefits.



With no jobs, and little hope of work, many rely on UIF.

Unions in EL unite to fight UIF fund transfer

The workers' delegation met the employers' bodies in the area, the Border Chamber of Industries (BCI) and the Border Chamber of Commerce (BCC) to outline workers' demands. The employers said some companies had stopped deductions after the transfer and some had put UIF deductions in a separate 'suspension fund'. They said they would express their concern about the state of the UIF to the Department of Manpower.

At a meeting with the Director General of Manpower Dr P J van der Merwe in Cape Town a week later, the worker delegation again presented worker demands and asked for clarification on UIF issues.

While both parties agreed the UIF was a necessary social benefit, van der Merwe supported the transfer of UIF

funds to the homelands. 'Must we deprive the workers from the new states of social benefits such as UIF?' he asked.

The delegation responded by strongly objecting to the transfer.

Questions were also raised about the Unemployment Insurance Board (UIB) and the Unemployment Insurance Committees (UIC), UIF investment schemes, and the position of workers excluded from UIF benefits.

Van der Merwe said 'representative unions' could forward nominations to the UIB. Tuusa was already on the board in the East London region.

He said there were investments in Escom, municipalities, government stocks and in 'schemes to combat unemployment'. The UIF could be approached for grants.

The exclusion of domestic, farm and South African Transport Services (SATS) workers from unemployment insurance was being considered by the UIB and the Manpower Commission, he said.

No conclusion was reached on the transfer of UIF money. After the meeting the delegation briefed Cape Town unions, including Naawu, AFCWU, GWU and Ccawusa (Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union) on development. All expressed support for the workers' stand and called for further discussion and action.

At a report-back in East London, workers restated their demands that their UIF contributions be kept in South Africa. They also called for worker participation on the UIB and the local region.

Other resolutions were:

- To hold further discussions with the BCC and the BCI about the suspension fund.
- Rally support from unemployed and unionised workers and invite them to future meetings.
- Contact other organisations nationally for support.
- Circulate a petition after consulting other unions and once the Department of Manpower had responded to worker demands. ■

The 1913 golden rule: if you own the gold then you make all the rules

The 1913 Land Act celebrates its 70th anniversary. FOCUS traces its meaning for today.

PEOPLE, it is said, make history but often in ways they do not choose or understand.

If ever this saying has been proved right it was in 1913 when the Native Land Act was passed, restricting 87 percent of the population to a mere 13 percent of South Africa.

The architects of this legislation, and the government that passed it, have become part of our history even if we would prefer to forget those associated with the Act that made most South Africans outcasts in the land of their birth.

But, whatever people feel, one thing is certain — the Land Act set the ground on which Apartheid as we know it today was built, and erected one of the major points of conflict throughout the following years.

There were many reasons why the 1913 Land Act was 'necessary'. The mines needed cheap labour, but Africans preferred living on the land to risking their lives working in mines for little pay.

So, Africans who could make a living on the land resisted attempts by the mine-owners who, with the help of the government, tried to force them onto the mines.

Taxes were imposed first on the people themselves, then on their huts, dogs and cattle to force them to earn money. Those who could not pay tax were jailed.

Taxes could only be paid in cash leaving two options open to the African peasants — either to produce more food to sell for cash, or to earn money by working on the farms and mines.

Again it was logical for those who could, to produce more crops and sell them.

To work on the mines, people would either have to be very poor and without any land or cattle, or be desperate for a job.

Once again, the mine-owners and all those looking for cheap labour, came up with a 'solution': Take the land away from the Africans and they will lose their ability to make money. Once they can't make money by farming, they will have to go to the mines and industries to earn money to pay tax.

If everyone is able to produce all they need to survive, they don't have to work for money, unless they want something they can't make themselves. They could also produce more than they need and sell the surplus.

Or else, instead of money, people could swap things with each other and in this way get things they want.

If people can't produce a surplus to sell, then the only way to get money is to sell their labour by working for someone else.

If the Africans could not produce enough for themselves plus enough to meet the government-



Sprawling urban locations sprang up after the passing of the Group Areas Act

imposed taxes, then working for wages would be essential to survive.

Through this understanding, the mine owners realised by kicking the Africans off the land they would be forced onto the mines.

The white farm-owners also had their hand in it. They argued that the Africans should be working for them instead of competing with them on the market and so supported the idea of making it illegal for the Africans to own land outside certain areas, or rent land from white farmers.

As is well known, where there is a demand there comes a supply. The owners of industry demanded, and the government, lawyers and politicians supplied.

Thus the 1913 Natives' Land Act came into being.

Africans who had been secure in their ownership of land, or at least their occupation of fertile land,

were suddenly faced with removal.

So in the early part of the century, there was a struggle between the owners of industry, mines and farms and the Africans.

The owners wanted the Africans to work for low wages so they could increase their profits. The Africans, however, were trying to resist being forced into the mines and factories by producing enough to support themselves.

In the first years of the century they were resisting having to work at all in the industries owned by the white capitalists rather than resisting low wages as such.

It was only later when they had no choice but to work for money that they became concerned with ways of pushing those wages up.

The 1913 Land Act was one of the most powerful weapons the bosses used to force Africans to work.

It enforced restrictions on them to certain areas, and prevented them from renting or buying any land outside the reserves.

Millions who rented land owned by white farmers were forced either to leave for the reserves or give all their livestock to the owner and start working for him.

To most this was no choice at all. Giving to the landowner all their cattle meant giving up their life's savings and all future security.

Sol Plaatjie, a journalist and activist of the South African Native National Congress (the forerunner of the African National Congress) was around at the time.

He describes how Africans moved from farm to farm hoping in vain that this law did not apply everywhere.

'After the farmer had wondered from farm to farm, occasionally getting into trouble for travelling with unknown stock, and at times escaping arrest for he knew not what, he sold some of his stock along the way, besides losing many which died of cold and starvation'.

'After having lost much, he eventually worked his way back 'home' with the remainder, sold them for anything they could fetch and went to work for a digger.'

The suffering and misery the Land Act caused can't be measured, and the number of people forced into the reserves cannot even be guessed at.

The African population was split in two directions: some went to the reserves while others went to the towns.

The people forced into the reserves still had to pay taxes, and so even more left for the mines to



Urban workers — denied citizenship in the land of their birth.

earn money.

The African urban population increased dramatically during this time, with those who left for the towns working in nearby factories.

This situation was healthy for the mine-owners because the Africans were now desperate to get work to survive and were forced to accept very low wages.

The bosses said they did not have to pay the workers wages which would support their families as well, because they were taken care of by the food produced in the reserves.

Since the bosses only paid wages which would allow the men to survive, the workers were highly exploited, and the profits of the mines and industries were high.

In the beginning it was true the reserves could support the African population if they farmed only for their immediate needs. But after a few years of farming, and with an increasing population, the



The face of migrant labour . . . scars of hard work and deprivation.



Overcrowding in the cities . . .



. . . impoverishment in the rural areas.



The rural ghetto . . . barren wastelands of hunger, poverty and overcrowding.



Rural despair: little chance of survival.

quality of the land — which was not the best in the first place — deteriorated.

When Africans found they could no longer produce enough for their needs, they were forced into the towns. Whereas before it might only have been the man that went into the mines and industries to earn money, the whole family now left the land in the hope of finding work.

The Land Act did its work. Africans were now without enough land to meet their survival needs, and were forced to work for white owned business.

But this success for the owners and government also threw up new problems for them. They were now concerned as to how they were going to control the workers they had forced into existence.

Between 1904 and 1921 the numbers of Africans in the towns and cities rose by 71 percent, from about 300 000 to about 1,1 million. Obviously, this caused overcrowding. On the Witwatersrand, for example, the African population doubled in twenty years, and the number of people per square mile tripled.

There were not enough facilities like sewerage, transport and garbage disposal, and to provide these the government would have had to spend money or cut into the profits of white businesses by increasing taxes.

The developing militancy of Africans also posed a threat. Once they were forced to work together in the industries and live together in squalid conditions, new values replaced the old which were based on traditional customs of land cultivation.

People experienced common hardships, and had no hope of returning to the old way of life, and so took up problems in ways which differed from before.

Now they struggled to get as good a deal as possible within the capitalist economy, rather than struggling to stay out of it. They started challenging the bosses to pay more money, and were prepared to strike to force through their demands.

For example, there were huge strikes in 1918 and 1920 by miners and sanitation workers.

How to control the African worker militancy and

their supply in the urban areas, was again offered a solution by the perverse thinkers in the government legal offices.

In 1923 the first Urban Areas Act was passed which controlled the place of residence of Africans in the towns on a national scale.

Besides controlling Africans, this legislation also promised to keep the whites and blacks separate — an important ideological consideration at the time.

Many white farmers were not either able to farm successfully and in desperation were forced into the towns to find work. These poor whites had little money and had to live in the cheapest areas, often side-by-side with Africans.

This was unacceptable to the government who believed that the races should be kept separate. Whites, in their view, should not be 'degraded' by living in the same street as Africans.

The idea of racial superiority became an established control. In the mines, for example, whites were put in charge of African workers to see that they worked as hard as possible and in the 'correct' way, thus increasing output and the bosses' profits.

It was this dominant position which needed to be held onto at all costs. South African capitalism depended on racism to keep its huge profit margin, and enforced separation would help maintain this.

Another threat would be if black and white workers were to get together to oppose the bosses. Indeed, at that time, there were attempts by white unionists to form non-racial unions to fight for better living conditions and pay for both groups.

By the 1920's there was an increasing number of Africans going to the cities to find jobs. This meant the government had to spend money on housing them adequately, which it felt was a waste. It

New book queries evidence of Rabie

Aggett inquest shows need to hear detainees' side of the story, say lawyers



'Illegals' in Johannesburg.

preferred to spend this on building houses for whites to maintain their standard of living and separate them out from the Africans.

Somehow the government had to regulate the flow of Africans into the towns, and once they were in the towns regulate where and how they lived. They also needed the machinery to push the Africans out of the towns when they were no longer needed or when they began to pose a threat.

If the population was not satisfied and if they could not survive even in the urban areas, there was a danger they would revolt.

So new ways to further control the labour force were introduced. The Urban Areas Act, which took away the rights of Africans to own land in the urban areas, and replaced it with the right to merely lease the land, was one

This was a very simple but effective control: Africans could not live where they chose. The government came to own all the land and could determine where and how much land an African could lease, and could group them all in one area.

Later Urban Areas Acts were even more harsh. The 1930 and 1937 amendments made the local authority, under the government's guidance, responsible for the Africans in its area. They had to provide separate areas for Africans and whites to live in and set up machinery to register Africans' service contracts.

Each local authority was responsible for controlling the influx of Africans and removing any not employed in the area. Curfew regulations forced them to be in their homes from dusk to dawn.

This confirmed Sol Plaatje's prediction. In 1916 he wrote: 'It will only be a matter of time before we have a Native's Urban Areas Act enforced throughout South Africa. Then we will have the banner of slavery fully unfurled (of course under another name) throughout the length and breadth of the land.'

The names over the ages are well known: first it was called segregation then separate development, Apartheid, vertical differentiation and so on.

If Plaatje was around today, he would no doubt still call it slavery under another name.

THE RABIE Commission of Inquiry into security legislation — which led to the new Internal Security Act — was misled on fundamental matters, according to the Lawyers for Human Rights group.

The group recently published a special study called 'Any hope for detainees? The Aggett Inquest and Rabie Report compared.' It was written by Professor John Dugard, head of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, and Mr Gilbert Marcus, a Johannesburg advocate.

In the study they analysed the uncontested evidence at last year's inquest into the death in detention of trade unionist Dr Neil Aggett.

They compared this with the evidence considered by the Rabie Commission which published its report only two days before Dr Aggett's death and which recommended the tightening up of security laws under the 1982 Internal Security Act.

The Rabie Commission held its hearings behind closed doors and did not hear any evidence from former detainees, district surgeons, psychiatrists or doctors with a knowledge of the effects of solitary confinement.

Much evidence however was heard from such people at the lengthy Aggett inquest, although the study only used that evidence that was not contested.

They concluded that the Rabie Commission was not presented with an accurate account of the system of detention.

The result, they said, was that the provisions for the protection of detainees under the new Internal Security Act were inadequate and fall far short of the standards demanded by a humane and just legal system.

The report of the Rabie Commission assumed that the system of police interrogation of political detainees was carefully supervised and controlled and sought to protect the health of detainees.

This was based on Rabie's finding that the magistrates visit detainees regularly to ascertain whether there is anything wrong with the detainee, and that police officers watch over the detainee's welfare.

But, the lawyers argue, these findings were seriously contradicted



by evidence in the Aggett inquest. For example, the inquest was told by a magistrate that he was once unable to see Dr Aggett when he called at John Vorster Square.

The Inspector of Detainees told the court he was refused access to Dr Aggett by a security policeman who said Dr Aggett 'was out on an investigation.' It emerged during the inquest that in fact Dr Aggett was being interrogated on the notorious 10th floor of John Vorster Square.

The inspector, Mr R Moutang, told the inquest court that detainees sometimes preferred not to report instances of maltreatment to him as they feared that his information would be forwarded to the security police.

The inquest also showed that the police failed to have regard for Dr Aggett's welfare, the study said.

The police had shown no concern for the effects on Dr Aggett of lengthy interrogation by teams of policemen and had ignored his need for sleep.

They had also failed to visit his cell every hour as required by regulations and had falsified the police records to conceal this.

They had also ignored his right to daily exercise, the study said.

Major Arthur Cronwright, head of the investigation of Dr Aggett, had said he was prepared to detain him for a year in order to get a statement from him. 'This showed a cruel and callous attitude,' the study said.

The study also said the directive issued by the Minister of Law and Order on the treatment of detainees was inadequate. Earlier this year, the Minister issued a set of directives for security policemen handling detainees.

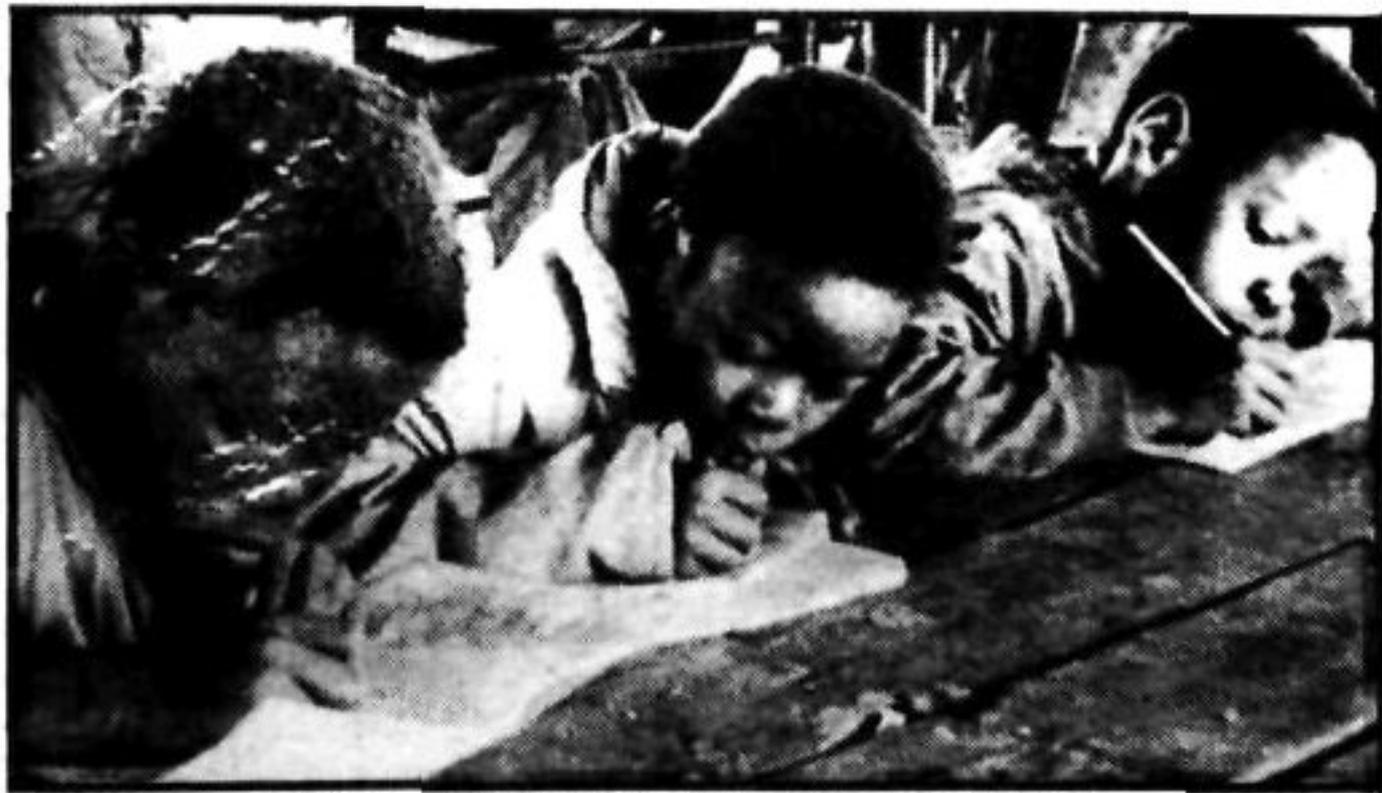
Since indefinite detention was in itself inhumane, it was incongruous to issue a directive telling policemen to apply it in a 'human manner', they argued.

They recommended that the Minister's directives be given the force of law, that an independent ombudsman be charged with ensuring that policemen comply with this law and that policemen be properly taught about the dangers of detention and the effects on the health of detainees.

But, they added, as long as the Internal Security Act continued to allow people to be held indefinitely, any improvements would be cosmetic.



Mozambique's president Samora Machel.



School . . . 'a condition for the training of new person'

A hard look at the future in Frelimo

Frelimo's 4th congress . . . critical to plan ahead.

THE PROGRESS of the Mozambican revolution in labour, education, culture and housing was discussed at Frelimo's recent congress.

In the field of labour, the congress decided to create trade unions. Existing worker organisations, the production councils, were set up in 1976 to mobilise the Mozambican working class to plan and control production, and to fight against 'enemy sabotage' and 'discipline incompetence and ignorance in its own ranks'.

These councils were criticised for a 'tendency to bureaucratism and to solving questions administratively' and for 'liberalism and populism'.

On education, the congress reported that since 1975, 430 000 pupils have completed four years of primary education. This figure far outstrips anything achieved under colonial rule. Secondary education expansion has mainly benefitted rural areas.

Major efforts had been made in teacher training, and in technical and professional education in order to overcome the shortage of qualified labour power that confronted Mozambique at independence.

The report says the new system of education is 'a condition for the training of the new man' and 'an integral part of the strategy for building socialism.'

On information and culture, the congress noted an increase in Radio Mozambique's information, cultural and recreational output. Since the last congress in 1977, Radio Mozambique had also set up an external service in English.

Newspapers and magazines linked to the armed forces, education, the ministry of justice and other state bodies had been set up. The congress also paid attention to the social com-

munication project which now covers 40 communal villages and urban neighbourhoods. The project seeks to provide rural communities with the means to gather, produce and divulge local information.

A congress report stresses that with independence in 1975, an immense creative explosion was possible, expressing 'new revolutionary values'. It cites the National Festival of People's Dance, among other major artistic

events held in the last six years.

On housing, the congress heard that 47 percent of Mozambican families now possess a lavatory or latrine. This compares with a mere three percent at the start of the 1970's.

The communal villages programme has supplied water to thousands of people, as well as introduced improved rural building techniques. In the towns the nationalisation of rented property in 1976 allowed more than a quarter of a million Mozambicans to move to the 'cement neighbourhoods' previously reserved for a bourgeois and essentially foreign minority.

Despite this the existing housing with mains services only satisfied the needs of a fifth of the urban population. There remain serious problems in the management of the state housing body, APIE.

However there has been an increase of twenty four percent in the volume of building work in Mozambique between 1977 and 1981. New buildings were erected to extend the school, health transport and service networks, and to expand production in agriculture and industry.

The state accounts for 90 percent of all building work in the country. Since independence it has piped water to more than a million urban Mozambicans. Nearly 500 000 peasants have had water provided to them. ■



The rate of literacy continues to improve.

Congress stress on economy

'INCREASINGLY THE centre of gravity of the class struggle is located in the economic domain,' says the report of Frelimo's Central Committee read at the Party's fourth congress.

In its review of economic and social development, the report gives as crucial changes during Mozambique's seven years of independence:

- The foundation of a Marxist-Leninist party which leads both state and society.

- The strengthening of people's power through the election of the People's Assemblies, and the establishment of People's Tribunals.

- The strengthening of the armed forces, the People's Militias and the Vigilance Groups.

- The setting up and strengthening of mass democratic organisations, and of cultural, economic, religious, socio-professional and sporting associations.

- The increase of goods and services and social benefits.

- The access enjoyed by workers and peasants to management positions in economic, social, technical and other spheres.

There is also a specific reference to the 'increased struggle for a popular style of economic management'. This struggle originated with the launching of the 'political and organisational offensive' against corruption, incompetence, negligence and red tape in early 1980.

The report points out that several industries such as fabrics, radios and pipelines have now surpassed the levels of production attained under colonialism. But production of cooking oil, domestic utensils and footwear has been irregular, and production of sugar and drinks has declined.

80 percent of industrial production now figures in the central state plans, and the state-owned industries account for 65 percent of production, says the report. Gross industrial production in Mozambique rose by 13.7 percent between 1977 and 1981.

However, the total value of industrial production in 1982 was 2.2 percent less than that achieved in 1977. The statistics, says the report, show that industrial capacity is not being properly used. Difficulties are particularly sharp in industries that depend on imported metals and chemicals.

One fifth of retail trade in Mozambique is now carried out through 1300 consumer cooperatives that supply about 20 percent of the total population, says the report.



Trading in the Maputo market is brisk.

In agricultural marketing, '63 marketing brigades, 270 fixed sales posts and investments in transport have put a great part of peasant production on the market'. The trading network, left in ruins when the Portuguese settlers abandoned the country in 1975, is now being progressively re-established.

However, the report criticises over-centralisation in the marketing process which 'does not stimulate creative capacity and trading exchanges at local level'.

Today, reveals the report, 1.8 million Mozambicans live in communal villages of which there are about 1350. The document praises this as a significant step forward in the socialisation of the countryside.

But advances in agricultural production have been slower. State support for agricultural cooperatives 'did not keep pace with the enthusiasm of the peasants'. In congress debates, pea-

sants reinforced these points.

The report links Mozambique's present economic problems to the fact that the country has been in a state of war for the past twenty years. For example, the report notes that 20 saw-mills have been destroyed by 'enemy action'.

It also refers to the economic crisis of international capitalism since 1974 which, together with the sharp rise in oil prices, has reduced Mozambique's exports. Also mentioned is the drought which affects four million Mozambicans and which is increasing peasant migration to the towns.

Some mistakes were made during Mozambique's struggle for development, says the report. Despite party guidelines priority had not been given to agriculture, particularly food production. The peasant family had not got the support necessary from the state. State farms were too large for their limited management capacities.



A consumer cooperative member

Weaknesses in agricultural marketing are pointed out as is the tendency towards over-centralisation of decision-making. This, says the report, tended to marginalise the people, and reduce their enthusiasm.

All these factors, plus armed aggression and internal sabotage, led to an overall decline in production in most sectors between 1981 and 1982. This had negative effects on the life of the people, says the report.

Amongst the recommendations made by the Central Committee is 'the permanent and balanced linking of small-scale and large-scale projects'. This linking 'will lead to the definitive eradication of underdevelopment', argues the report.

It also recommends that in allocating resources, priority should be given to small-scale projects, to defence and to making the optimum use of installed capacity.

The report further suggests that the struggle against hunger be defined as 'the essential aspect of the general lines for development in the short to medium term'. All the state companies, cooperatives and private concerns, and the people in general, should be mobilised for this struggle.

A heavy stress is also laid on using local productive capacities and local markets.

On 'the socialisation of the countryside', the report stresses the need to concentrate state support for agricultural cooperatives in priority districts, and to give priority to organising cooperatives amongst poor peasants who will draw immediate benefits. The document also argues for a pricing policy to give incentives to peasants to market their produce.

In terms of supplies, the report says that the state 'must ensure priority for workers' and organise appropriate mechanisms for this. 'In this way', it continues, 'we will combat parasitism, and give privileges to those who work.'

Surplus people are damned to the wastelands by Apartheid

A Surplus People's Project report exposes the widespread horror of relocation

MILLIONS OF South Africans have been brutally torn from their homes, uprooted, and removed, in order to fit in with the design of 'grand apartheid'.

In a report released recently, the Surplus People Project (SPP) shows the stark reality of black population relocation. Their findings show that, since 1960, three and a half million people have been removed, and another two million are under threat. These startling figures mean that one in every four black people in South Africa have been, or shortly will be, directly affected by involuntary government removals.

The victims of the system are mainly black, and the uprootings and dumpings move one way — to the homelands, or to land shortly to be incorporated into homelands.

The largest number of removals are from 'white' farms, as tractors and mechanisation make the labour of black farmworkers more expendable. 'Black spot' removals also account for large numbers (these are pieces of land, purchased on freehold by blacks, but which the state has decided is too close to white settlement). Finally, the report shows, group areas removals, of mainly Coloured and Indian people, have displaced over three quarters of a million people.

The SPP report argues that, while the system of control and movement of black people has been particularly harsh since the National Party came to power in 1948, the repressive process was set in motion at a much earlier stage. The 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, for example, gave rise to the present system, allocating only about 13 per cent of South Africa's land to 80 per cent of her population.

The Surplus People Project is well named: the study shows that those who are the victims of removal are the very old, the very young, the disabled, sick and unemployed. Above all, it is women who bear the greatest burden, especially since they are expected to



The desperate plight of relocated people.



Commuters to 'white' South Africa.

fend for their family and keep them alive in terrible conditions of poverty.

Removals are about what one Cabinet Minister has 'called' 'superfluous appendages' — those whose labour cannot be used, or is no longer needed by employers on farms or in cities. The plight of relocated people is desperate. The survey shows that they are usually dumped in barren places, far from places of work, with no crops in fields to reap, and usually in over-populated areas where there's no land to cultivate.

In these dumping grounds, migrant labour is the only means of survival, yet this makes family conditions even worse — one area studied, Mahodi, has only 26 men to 100 women. Despite government promises to only move people to 'improved' conditions, the report shows this never takes place. Even Dimbaza, now the 'show-piece' relocation area, has a 35 per cent unemployment rate.

The release of the four-volume report could not be better timed. Removals seem to be gaining momen-



Women bear the greatest burden of removals.

SURPLUS PEOPLE



Left: Cold plank homes in Glenmore. Right: A Fort Beaufort community resisting removal

tum as homeland consolidation becomes a priority. The system is at the sharp end of the government's structural violence against the people of South Africa. This relocation of unwilling people causes death, not only by direct violence like the case of Saul Mkize, but also through a long, slow suffering process — malnutrition, starvation, and the diseases of poverty.

The SPP researchers offer a small glimmer of hope. Sometimes, resistance to removals, if the community is united and strong, can succeed. But this is rare. One value of resistance is the publicity it gains — there is wide spread shock at the treatment of the Driefontein community; without its resistance, the public would not know.

Herein lies the real value of the S.P.P reports. What they show, is how central relocation is to apartheid, and how widespread it is. Removals lie at the heart of the system of control and repression, through which the government divided and rules South Africa.

Finally, the reports are not afraid to address the solutions, which they see as deep lying and fundamental. They argue that the system is based on power, and that power must be placed in the hands of all South Africa's people.

They call for the repeal of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, along with all discriminatory legislation. They also demand the uniting of all South Africa into a unitary state based on a non-racial democracy. Only then, SPP argues, can democratic decisions be taken by people exercising free choice, and people may farm productively instead of being mere labour units being paid wages. ■



One in every four black people are affected by government removals in South Africa.



New houses closely guarded

THE SURPLUS People Project report is an excellent example of interventionist research. The government has, over the years, tried to hide the worst effects of its policies by burying them in 'homelands', then giving those places 'independence' under puppet leaders.

The press seldom goes to these places, they are hidden. The report retrieves that information, brings it back, and confronts South Africa with it, like a nightmare it would rather forget.

The research was conducted under very difficult conditions. Government officials were reluctant to help, and tried to block research; the security police harassed researchers on a number of occasions.

Yet the achievements are great. Over fifty people participated in the research, mostly on a voluntary basis under a part-time national coordinator. It drew together community workers, priests, health workers and academics. The coordination and clarity that emerges from this group is an inspiration to other researchers to try collective research. ■

Njikelana on UIF:

'The UIF issue has proved beyond all reasonable doubt that the unions can work together'



Saawu vice-president Sisa Njikelana

then that national structure can be reinforced by the establishment of regional structures, even if it is done simultaneously as is the case right now, with the feasibility committee in existence.

Q: Would you say establishing a national structure should be the culmination point? or that regional organisation should be developed first?

A: A federation is a national structure but the pillars of that are viable regional structures. Even now the workers in East London have appealed to national organisations to approach employers on a regional basis — we feel this is the way to consolidate support — particularly on the UIF front.

Regional activity ensures contact and participation with more members from each and every organisation involved. For example, we have had joint mass meetings and inter-union branch meetings throughout the UIF campaign.

Q: Are you saying the workers themselves are not interested in divisions between the different unions but are more interested in worker unity to deal with issues like the UIF?

A: Whatever kind of antagonism exists between the union leadership has been overcome by the workers demanding concrete action now — among

all unions.

The UIF issue has proved this beyond all reasonable doubt. I bore witness to that with workers coming together irrespective of organisational affiliation because the enemy was one — the transfer of their money to the Ciskei, which they detest.

We have been harassed, we have been intimidated, we have been evicted from our homes, we have all been subjected to repression from the Ciskei, irrespective of trade union affiliation.

Q: Do you find this show of union solidarity encouraging?

A: Yes. Saawu's view is that here we have made an effort and irrespective of union affiliation, workers have taken joint action against an issue which they felt was against their interests. Organisational identity was put aside — all that mattered was that we are workers and we are affected by the UIF transfer.

It is also encouraging in the sense that active participation of workers from these unions has set a basis for future co-operation amongst the workers from the different unions.

The workers have gained confidence in themselves and will be more prepared to respond to matters of a similar nature in the future. This is obviously quite important for developing organised power on a mass basis, as well as trust among the workers.

Moreover, such joint ventures serve as safeguards against opportunism amongst leadership though that may not be as significant. Whenever divisionist tendencies are introduced by leaders within an individual trade union; joint actions by workers from various unions will effectively check such reactionary actions.

Q: Was it a Saawu leadership initiative to respond to the UIF?

A: The coming together around the UIF issue has been the workers' initiative — it wasn't a leadership initiative — it's what the workers were demanding. Leadership responded by giving guidance on how to successfully tackle the issue.

A lack of response to such initiatives and a tendency to isolate workers, preventing them from joint action with other workers will lead to their frustration, since it suppresses their expectations to support one another and stand united against any offensive.

And we must remember, workers working in different factories, belonging to different unions stay together in one area and relate to each other and influence one another about issues affecting them at work, especially on how to respond to them.

Q: Why do you think it is the workers in East London who have come together whereas this hasn't happened to the same extent in other areas?

A: There is a saying — repression always unites the repressed — in the East London area workers are harshly repressed and they respond to this more vigorously — whatever form it takes — victimisation in the factory, detention in the Ciskei and South Africa, threats of eviction, intimidation in the homes and in the workplace and so on. They have responded enthusiastically, they have united themselves — this they have done for themselves.

If you look at the history of struggle all over the world — the more people are repressed — the more they realise the need to defend themselves from the enemy.

Q: What led to the East London workers taking up the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) issue?

A: In East London the level of conflict between unionised workers and the Ciskei government is so high that if anything directed at the workers is related to the Ciskei, the workers will react. This was the case with the UIF issue.

There was almost a work stoppage at the one factory — simply because the workers heard their money in the UIF was going to be transferred to the Ciskei.

Q: Was worker opposition to the UIF uniform among all unions?

A: Every worker in East London employed or unemployed, unionised or ununionised is affected by this issue.

So this is why at the May Day meeting we announced what the situation was with the UIF and proposed to other unions there — GWU, FCWU, Naawu and Mwasu that all five unions should call a meeting of all the workers of East London irrespective of membership to air their views about the UIF.

At this stage there was already vigorous reaction from a growing number of factories. Rather than react the way workers did during the pension issue, some felt that we should have a joint view on the matter.

Q: What is the significance of this development?

A: The UIF issue has proved beyond all reasonable doubt that the unions can work together if the workers are committed to respond to the issues affecting them, and if the trade union leaders are committed to give direction — to arouse the consciousness of the workers in a disciplined manner.

Q: Have there been other cases of unions working together in the East London area?

A: The other main issue was the independence of the Ciskei. During November 1981 the three unions, Saawu, FCWU and GWU met to discuss how we should respond to the imminent independence celebrations.

These meetings were, in practical terms, an embryonic development of the regional solidarity we are seeing today.

Q: What happened in between? Why has it taken until now for this solidarity to develop again?

A: The massive state clampdown on trade unionists in 1981 interrupted these efforts. More energy was spent on maintaining and developing organisational structures. But again later, in 1982 there were attempts to establish a joint response to protracted harassment by Ciskei authorities. Unfortunately there was not much progress due to pressure of work amongst the three unions who were involved — Saawu, GWU and AFCWU.

Anyway, during recent mass meetings more pledges for solidarity have been expressed by workers and leaders from various unions, in view of the continued state repression from both the Ciskei and South Africa.

Q: Does Saawu see the establishment of solidarity action committees as the bottom line for trade union unity?

A: We are not dogmatic about the SAC's, that must be clear. But we feel if we are to make a joint effort to form a national structure or a federation

Who's who after the Kraal Coup

What's up in Swaziland now the straw mat's been jerked from under Prince Mabandla's feet

'CONSIDER IT this way man.' He leant conspiratorially over his Black Label and said softly: 'Swaziland's political arena is like a cattle byre. Us journalists are like chickens scratching around in the dirt, occasionally uncovering the odd bit of truth in all the bullshit lying around. Nobody gives you the story straight here, man; their press statements have the consistency of a turd dropped out of a tall cow.'

He laughed uproariously at his lavatorial wisdom and then banged his fist so hard on the table that the beer bottles jumped in alarm. 'You want the definitive statement on what's happening here?' he asked when he'd composed himself again. 'Nobody knows what the hell is going on! There's a lot of manure around, and all it's doing is fertilising the imagination.'

The Kraal Coup is over and former Prime Minister Mabandla is in disgrace after the upheavals that have recently shaken the troubled little kingdom that rests like a tick on the hide of Africa.

Coups are very convenient affairs for journalists spiked up on sensationalism, and more often than not coverage of Third World power struggles tends to mystify the underlying issues rather than explain them. But on the other hand, information control by African propagandists can be just as mystifying, neatly diverting attention away from the growing gap between the mass of people and the waBenzis, that new elite that takes its name from superior German automation.

Mabandla's fall from grace, however, is the first public spectacle of the intense behind-the-scenes wrangling and factionalism that's left the Swazi-in-the-street dizzy with rumours and counter-rumours.

We must understand that all this wrangling is mostly within the kingdom's ruling class — the debate is entirely over which field that fat, glossy bullock, the status quo, should be led to graze. Opposition to the system itself has succeeded in disorganising itself out of existence over the past two decades.

The two main choices that overshadow all the petty politicking and personal power plays that characterise Swazi politics can be divided into two camps (journalism is a licence to categorise, remember) — the royalists and the republicans.

The royalist enclosure contains most of the traditional hierarchy — the Liqoqo or governing council, the district chiefs and those members of government who owe their positions to their relationship to, or in the Dlamini clan.

Opposed to them are what we'll call the republicans — those Swazis who'd favour the



scrapping of what they see as empty traditional mumbo-jumbo and the establishment of a republic with a clearly defined constitution. Their main followers are the new class of educated westernised youth, frustrated in their political and commercial ambitions by what they see as the nepotism of their elders. Their figure-head is none other than the out-of-work Prince Mabandla.

'Now Mabandla's always had a whiff of controversy about him,' said the journalist, gazing fondly at his second Black Label. 'He's of the royal blood, make no mistake, but at one time in the sixties, he was a supporter of the Ngwane National Liberation Front, which was outlawed by the king when he suspended the constitution in '73.'

'Prince Mabandla was made Prime Minister in November '79, a surprise choice by Sobhuza the Steward, to offset the most politically ambitious, who, of course, have only their own interests at heart.' He paused, and then smiled frothily. 'Choosing a Prime Minister here is like a Miss World competition — nobody knows who's going to win until the judge's decision is announced. Mabandla arrived at the Lobamba meeting as a manager on a sugar estate, bedecked in a floral shirt and driving a bakkie, and left it rather bewildered as the country's new Prime Minister in a large black limousine.

Obviously, this choice upset certain quarters. They were even more upset when Mabandla's first major step was a hard one on traditionalist toes — he announced a drive against corruption and launched a commission of enquiry into it.

This commission met with strong opposition from certain cabinet ministers who, shall we say for the sake of politeness, felt their 'interests threatened.' Under pressure from this lobby, which included the diminutive Ministers of Justice and Education, Polycarp Dlamini and Canon Siphethse Dlamini, Sobhuza was forced to curtail Mabandla's enthusiasm for an honest government. Although the commission was halted on the grounds that it 'infringed on the work of the police' Mabandla gained a lot of popular support for his efforts.

When Sobhuza died last August, Mabandla rekindled all the old animosities by hinting at a rejaunch of the inquiry. The royalists, already jittery after the death of the subcontinent's great rain-maker (and everyone wonders why we're going through the worst drought in 200 years), saw this as another attempt to erode their power base.

Another issue that widened the gap between Mabandla and the royal family was the land deal with South Africa. Although Mabandla never publicly commented on the plan to give Swaziland Ingwavuma and Kangwane, his opposition to the deal was an open secret. Possibly he saw Swaziland inheriting a social problem of unsolvable dimensions as well as submitting even more to the domination of Pretoria.

'The crunch came with the opening of parliament, which more or less rubber-stamps the wishes of the Liqoqo,' said the journalist, by now intimate with his third Black Label. 'It's hard to say exactly what happened, but it seems that the Liqoqo got wind of Mabandla's opening address for more power for parliament which the Liqoqo took as a political affront and drew up another version for him. Mabandla stuck to his original version, and boy did the proverbial dung begin to fly!'

The journalist drew me closer: 'After that,' he whispered. Mabandla was summoned to Lobamba where he had a confrontation with Prince Mfanasibili. Obviously it must have been a tense

Mabandla arrived at the Lobamba meeting as a manager on a sugar estate, bedecked in a floral shirt and driving a bakkie, and left it rather bewildered as the country's new Prime Minister in a large black limousine.



number because soon afterwards the police swept in, hauled off Mfanasibili and a Liqoqo cohort, Chief Maseko.' He glanced over his shoulder before

continuing excitedly: 'They were also after Prince Gabheni (Minister of Internal Affairs) but apparently he beat it down to the royal palace before the police arrived at his house.' He leaned back and laughed. 'A real nest of vipers, that.'

'Maselo and Mfanasibili were charged with sedition and were refused bail. There were big shots at the hearing — including Sishaya Nxumalo,' (Swaziland's roving ambassador and one of the land deal negotiators) said the journalist, his eyes widening to prove the gravity of his point.

Then the odds turned against Mabandla. He had tried to hive Polycarp off to America as an ambassador, but Polycarp had the support to stand firm and refuse. Then the Attorney General refused to prosecute the terrible twins and they were released. Hell man, they shot off down to Lobamba as fast as tourists lose their money at the Spa,' he knocked back the remainder of his beer just as fast.

'By this time Mabandla must have known his time was getting close. Lobamba was like a hive of angry activity and the Queen Mother Delizwe, who actually had a soft spot for Mabandla, was forced to agree to his dismissal to keep her flock's feathers intact.'

Mabandla's actual sacking was a how-not-to in diplomacy. The Prime Minister first heard of his dismissal via an SABC news flash and angrily dismissed it in reply to journalists questions which were starting to buzz around his office like flies attracted to a corpse.

On March 18 the confusion was cleared — a government gazette was published unknown to the Prime Minister's office, stating unambiguously that Mabandla was no longer in the employ of the Swazi government. The axe had fallen.

Amid rumours that he was facing a charge of high treason, Mabandla took off to South Africa, where he is today, refusing to comment on his ousting. A report in the Times of Swaziland that he had met with Kangwane's maverick chief minister, Enos Mabuza, to formulate a common opposition front to the land deal has been denied by all parties concerned. This writer, however is willing to bet five goats that Mabandla's political career isn't over yet. He'll bide his time while his property in Swaziland is sold, and keep an eye out for the right opening to return. Certainly he has the support of the police and a large slice of Swazi society.

But what are the implications of the Kraal coup?

The journalist shrugged: 'Who knows at this stage? For starters, the new crew under Prince Bekhimpi are all fervent traditionalists, so we can expect a shake-up in the administration and perhaps a little witch hunting to eke out Mabandla's protege's especially in the police force.

'Also, the new leadership consists of all the land deal negotiators — foreign minister 'RV' Dlamini, George Msibi, Sishaya Nxumalo. They're all in strong enough positions if the rumoured election is called. But more significantly I think, they're all guys who've been in continual touch with Pretoria. If the land deal is revived, there'll be less opposition from this side.

'Perhaps Anglo-American's take over of Usutu forests, which was called off earlier this year by the Swazi government, will go ahead now. The joke that's doing the rounds is that Harry O is bent on swapping Ingwavuma for Usutu.

He smiled, and then was serious only briefly: 'Whatever happens, this hasn't solved Swaziland's problems — we're firmly in the apartheid fold now, on a bloody collision course with history.'

He sighed and then called: 'Waiter....'

Poor little rich countries

THE UNITED States of America has long treated Central America as its 'backyard'.

It dominates Central American countries and has even occupied two of them - Nicaragua and Guatemala.

It hides behind 'communist scare' propaganda to rationalise military aid to the repressive El Salvador government and to Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries. In fact, this aid is given to maintain US interests in the region.

Nearly 50 percent of goods imported by the US pass through the Panama Canal and the Gulf of Mexico. This channel is crucial to the US.

There are also attractive oil reserves in Mexico and Venezuela and possible oil reserves in Guatemala. These need to be protected for later use.

As far back as 1823, in the Monroe Doctrine, the US declared that it would not tolerate any other country competing for influence in Latin America. For this reason, the US invaded Cuba to 'liberate' it from the Spanish in 1898.

They introduced the 'Platt Amendment' into the Cuban constitution, giving themselves the right to establish military bases and intervene in Cuban affairs. As a result, the US still has a military base in Cuba.

In 1904, US President Theodore Roosevelt introduced a policy that gave his country the right to 'exercise international police power' at any time to prevent 'chronic wrong-doing or impotence' of any country in Europe, Asia and Latin America.

This was extended after the Second World War to include intervention in any country threatened by 'communist aggression' or 'communist-inspired activities'.

The Cuban revolution in the late 1950's was a shock to the US. It fuelled the determination of the Latin Americans to fight against their inhuman living conditions.

The US began to train Latin American armies in counter-insurgency warfare in Panama and at their International Police Academy in Washington DC they taught internal security techniques.

Latin America emerged as an almost unbroken chain of well-equipped military or police states from Guatemala to Argentina.

In the early 1970's, Jimmy Carter was elected President of the US. Many people hoped he would usher in an era that would 'make Americans feel good about being Americans' again.

He talked about self-determination and human rights. He preferred moderate reformers to the more repressive rulers. But under the 'national security states', most were dead or imprisoned.

By the mid-1970's, the US could no longer fill its role as policeman of the non-communist world. The Trilateral Commission was formed to bring in its allies to help.

The commission - which placed more importance on stability than on anti-communism - included Nelson Rockefeller, president of the Chase Manhattan Bank, and possibly South Africa's own Harry Oppenheimer.

Then, with the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979, the US lost its oil supply and the Cold War reached a fever pitch.

The Sandanista guerrillas were driving the Nicaraguan dictator, Somoza, out of their country



The fight in Latin America is the centuries-old fight of the people to determine their own future against wealthy elites supported mainly by the United States

and a wave of resistance was sweeping El Salvador and Guatemala.

The US saw all these events - including the rise of a Leftwing government in Granada and a social democratic government in Jamaica - as proof of its weakness in the face of a 'Soviet-Cuban threat'.

Carter's response was to establish normal diplomatic relations with the new Nicaraguan government and he arranged an economic aid package for them in the hope that encouraging moderate elements amongst them might change the situation.

But he had also authorized secret CIA support for the moderate press and labour unions and began to supply arms to El Salvador.

Carter was replaced by the rightwing Ronald Reagan. His secretary of state, Mr Alexander Haig, felt the US should not get bogged down in Central American wars, but should go to the 'source': Cuba.

Latin American governments were encouraged to break links with Cuba and economic sanctions were tightened. Within Central America, military and intelligence activity increased.

In Nicaragua, the Reagan administration first attempted to strangle the new government by suspending the Carter aid programme and giving military aid to rightwing regimes in Honduras and El Salvador.

In 1981, Reagan authorised the CIA to contact dissident Nicaraguans in exile. This year, 5 000 fighters trained in Honduras and armed with US and Nato weapons are going into action against the Nicaraguans under the banner of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force.

The US has also trained Honduran security forces in intelligence gathering and interrogation methods. Newsweek magazine last year reported that there were about 50 CIA men serving in Honduras.

But many US citizens now oppose the country's involvement in Latin America and elements of the press and congress have criticized CIA plots to unseat the Sandanista government.

With the rising influence of Mexico and Venezuela, the US is no longer all-powerful in the region.

Reagan remains convinced that the Soviet Union is instigating revolution in the area.

In the words of Jeanne Kirpatrick, US ambassador to the UN: 'If we can't use American power in this case (Nicaragua), there is going to be a general assumption in the world that the US can't use power any place.'

The struggle of the Latin Americans is thus firstly a struggle to free themselves from US domination, a struggle for the freedom to determine their own future, to create the systems, institutions and alliances that will serve their needs.



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