

# PROGRESS



The ANC comes home

**Back  
to the  
future**

\* SACP

The internal underground speaks

\* ENVIRONMENT

Ozone-friendly politics

\* HOUSING

The money or the matchbox

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**Back to the future: ANC deputy-president Nelson Mandela greets SACP general-secretary Joe Slovo as the ANC delegation jets in for the May 2 talks-about-talks. On Page 6, WIP assesses the implications of the talks. Picture: Benny Gool, Afrapix**

## Editorial

**D**espite the general air of satisfaction resulting from the Groote Schuur talks on obstacles to negotiations, neither side is under any illusion that they will win or lose over negotiating table.

Negotiations are, by their nature, not a great deal more than the formalisation of victories and defeats already acted out, made inevitable, by events and the processes which have unfolded elsewhere.

Thus the African National Congress and its allies have emphasised need to establish conditions outside the talks which will make the direction of future discussions inevitable, and the process itself irreversible.

Central to this is the ANC's attempt to unite all possible political forces in the country behind the single demand for a democratically elected constituent assembly as the only acceptable forum to debate and draft a post-apartheid, non-racial constitution.

A second element in the ANC's thinking is the idea of a duality of power which will see control over the institutions of state gradually lost to the Nationalist government, first to an interim authority and finally to a democratic government.

This has been most explicitly demonstrated by the ANC demand for an early end to the government's monopoly control over the SABC. But the demand has not been made in a vacuum. It comes against a background of initiatives by both the state and capital, explicitly intended to deny control over the SABC to any future democratic government - locking into place a structure invulnerable to any attempts to regain control.

This process is underway in many areas of South African life.

The government's privatisation initiatives represent one example.

Another concerns 'green politics', for which a small but increasingly vocal lobby is emerging in the democratic movement.

Degradation of the land and of its resources is as much a consequence of capitalist enterprise as of Nationalist policies. And a progressive ecological response argues for a greater, rather than a lesser, intervention in the economy.

Both state and capital have recognised this, attempting in recent months to appropriate and de-politicise 'green politics' by their sudden interest in clear air, 'ozone-friendly' aerosols and the like. But the democratic movement needs to recognise that the very system which created the environmental disaster is not likely to produce any remedy.

Housing is a third area in which attempts are being made to take elements of South African life beyond the reach of a future government. The fairly simplistic strategy to 'win-hearts-and-minds' and buy-off sectors of black society by upgrading townships, finds an added dimension in more recent housing initiatives.

This involves an attempt to lock national housing policy into a pattern replicating and reinforcing the thrust towards a post-apartheid society in which a small, white elite is replaced by an enlarged, multi-racial, urban and employed elite. This new elite is seen not only as the primary beneficiary but also the defender of existing economic realities.

Here, however, as WIP's coverage of struggles in shack settlements indicates, the process is not going unchallenged.

Once no more than an unhappy consequence of the massive shortage of formal housing, and subject to vast manipulation by the state, 'squatting' is taking on an explicitly political form in several communities.

Born of necessity, this 'new squatting' could provide the basis for a challenge to the irreversible direction which both business and the state are attempting to give to housing policy.

It will only do so, however, with direct participation by the organised formations in the broad democratic movement. ●

# CONTENTS

## BRIEFS

2

Erasing Sebe's footprints  
Sayco adjusts to legality  
Namibian labour code

## ACROSS THE RUBICON

6

ANC focuses beyond Groote Schuur

## A VOICE FROM THE UNDERGROUND

11

Mass organisation and the SACP

## BEHIND ZINC BATTLEMENTS

15

'Squatters' try new tactics

## OF HOUSING AND CAPITAL

20

A look at financing options

## EDGING TOWARDS PEACE

26

Moving towards an Angolan settlement

## GREENING OF SOUTH AFRICA

29

Ecology and the democratic movement

## CONTROLLING THE AIRWAVES

34

What future for the SABC?

## BANTUSTAN BALANCING ACT

36

Labour challenges new leaders

## LABOUR TRENDS

38

Strikes and disputes  
Repression monitor

### Picture credits

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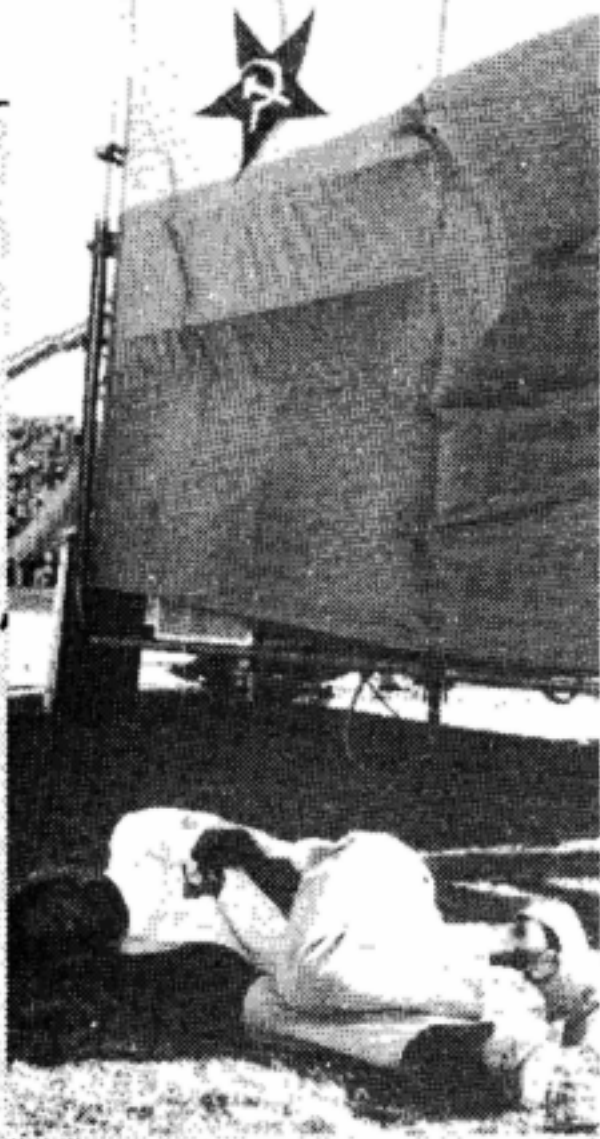
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The Star: Pages 4, 21, 25 and 29.



## CISKEI

# Erasing Sebe's footprints

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

corruption played a key role in sparking the rural rebellion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## SAYCO

# Now just a phone call away

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

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

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



Gqozo: friendly, but not with the unions

ANC Youth League, were the major areas of dispute, and ones which led to lengthy debate during the three-day congress.

'Congress came up with a number of lessons for us', admits newly-elected publicity officer Parks Mphakwana. 'The clandestine methods used by Sayco in the past did reduce the frequency of consultation. We did not use forums of discussion as often as we would have liked to.'

'But as a legal organisation, under the present conditions, we cannot operate clandestinely. The membership will not accept that we cannot consult'. Although the leadership sometimes seemed taken back at the ferocity of questioning at congress, Mphakwana says all agreed that the 'spirit of openness' was a healthy sign. 'Now is the correct moment to raise these issues', he told *WIP*.

'It can only strengthen our organisation, which in turn will strengthen the ANC'. The question of Sayco's relationship to the ANC is obviously a crucial one, yet it did not seem to be fully resolved at the Easter congress.

This was partly because of the absence of input from an ANC Youth Section delegation, who were unable to travel to South Africa because of government delays in granting indemnity to ANC cadres; but there also seemed to be genuine concern within individual youth congresses about the implications of Sayco and the ANC Youth Section 'merging' to form a revived ANC Youth League.

These concerns varied, from fears that those youths to the left of the ANC would be left without a political home, to those who felt the 'merger' was



#### *Sayco: growing up hasn't been easy*

being foisted on the ANC by an impatient Sayco leadership.

According to Mphakwana, the position now is that the organisation's next central executive committee (CEC) meeting - scheduled for the end of May - will draw up a programme of action to be presented to the ANC Youth Section.

'Congress gave the NEC a mandate to discuss the establishment of the Youth League with the Youth Section, and this is what we are doing now.'

'Obviously it will not be a trouble-free process', he says. 'The establishment of a mass-based organisation always has its problems. The ANC itself is having to adapt to being a legal organisation, and to the question of mandates and open discussion ... many people are still not used to open discussion and open

methods'.

Sayco officials are currently working out a timetable which will be implemented if the individual youth congresses agree to the transformation into the ANC Youth League.

The first stage of this programme has already started: the 'relaunching' of all Sayco structures, in line with the congress decision to adopt a unitary structure. This means, for example, that the Soweto Youth Congress (Soyco) will now relaunch as the Soweto branch of Sayco, and operate according to the Sayco constitution, with one logo and one programme of action.

June 16 has been set as a deadline for this, and 'we think the process will be a smooth one', says Mphakwana, smiling - and conceding there may be some youth congresses

which are 'sentimentally attached' to their names and emblems.

'But the benefits are obvious; a unitary structure facilitates communication, and shifts decision-making to a centralised structure rather than individual youth congresses scattered around the country'.

Also on the Sayco agenda is the transformation of the existing 'youth forum' - a loose grouping of Sayco, the SA National Student Congress (Sansco), the National Union of SA Students (Nusas) and the Congress of SA Students (Cosas) - into a fully-fledged Youth Front.

'At the moment this is more of a summit than a front. It must be transformed to marshal all forces of youth into struggle', says Mphakwana. 'It's minimum programme will be an opposition to apartheid, and

the unifying perspectives of the Conference for a Democratic Future'. Does this include the PAC and Azapo?

'If they agree to the minimum programme, they will be welcome', is the answer.

'We feel it is important for all youth sectors opposed to apartheid to participate. If we can come with one forum, the youth can learn to understand each other. We can lay the basis for a multi-party democracy ... we have to learn to co-exist'.

Talking about fronts, what about Sayco's relationship to the United Democratic Front - particularly the congress resolution calling for the UDF to disband?

'We feel the UDF, in its current form, should phase out', says Mphakwana. 'The UDF is no broader than the ANC. We see, rather, a patriotic front with the ANC and its allies at the core'.

To strengthen this front, Sayco says it is building closer links with the SACP and Cosatu, and now has a full-time official to co-ordinate its labour department.

'We want to encourage the youth to join trade unions, and teach them about unionism', says Mphakwana.

'We want the working youth to join our organisation, whether it be Sayco or the ANC Youth League, and to participate in community activities'.

And what about those young lions to the left of the ANC?

'The ANC Youth League must be mass-based, but the Communist Party is different. It is not for everybody. Therefore, the Party youth has to be qualitatively different to the ANC Youth League.'

'Within Sayco, there has been no real discussion around that ... perhaps the

Party will indicate the line of march'. - WIP Correspondent

## NAMIBIA

# Labour code on its way

Namibia is soon to unveil details of a new labour dispensation.

Addressing a May Day rally at Windhoek's Independence Stadium, president Sam Nujoma announced that a labour code for the country was on the way.

The president told the 2 000 to 3 000-strong crowd that collective bargaining between employers and trade unions was essential for sound labour relations.

The government had already formulated the code, he said, and would soon be submitting it to the cabinet for approval.

In addition, a competent labour court would be established in the near future. Nujoma also gave an assurance that his government would not neglect its traditional role of protection for workers in the form of provisions like minimum hours and compensation for injuries sustained at work and for occupational diseases.

The code will be the first real indication of the new



**Witbooi: labour administration will play developmental role**

government's approach to labour. The Namibian constitution guarantees the right of freedom of association and upholds the right of workers to withdraw their labour. It also commits Namibia to joining the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and, where possible, to adhere to its conventions and recommendations. But few details of the nuts-and-bolts of labour policy have since emerged. The legislative legacy of the old South West African administration is a mixture of the antediluvian and some fairly sound law. The main statute governing relations between trade unions and employers is the Wage and Industrial Conciliation Ordinance of 1952 as amended.

The ordinance is in effect the equivalent of South Africa's Industrial Conciliation Act of 1937. It does confer the right for workers to take strike action provided certain procedures, including referral of the dispute to a conciliation board, are followed.

But SWA never had its equivalent of an industrial council system in terms of which agreements struck between unions and employers become binding as law, as applies in South Africa. It also never had a labour court or any provision for concepts like unfair labour practices. On the other hand, the existing provisions for basic protections for workers - the equivalent of South Africa's Basic Conditions of Employment Act - are deemed to be 'acceptable' by labour law experts.

In February this year Professor Nic Wichahn, architect of the labour reforms instituted in South Africa from 1979 onwards, handed to former SWA



**Nujoma: announced new labour policy**

administrator Louis Pienaar the second of two reports of a commission he headed into the territory's labour legislation. It has been left to the new government to respond to its recommendations and the extent to which they have influenced the code referred to by Nujoma is not clear. Labour and Manpower Development minister Hendrik Witbooi and John Shaetonhodi, president of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), also delivered speeches at the May Day rally. Witbooi declared current arrangements for labour administration 'grossly inadequate' and said serious measures would have to be taken immediately. He also said labour administration in the republic would not only perform the traditional role of protecting labour, but it would also play a developmental role. Shaetonhodi signalled that the unions intended to play a pivotal role in Namibia's political life and said workers had to forge their weapons of struggle so that they could also participate in the effective management of the country's industries. He also confirmed the unions would stay in Swapo. Some months ago, when the constitution was being finalised, there was speculation in the press about discontent in the labour movement following a leak of its

provisions. And critics of the new regime have been quick to note that the recent rally attracted far fewer people than has been usual in Namibia, and that a march down Windhoek's main street before the rally drew only a few hundred workers. There have even been suggestions that differences in the labour movement may have led certain factions to boycott the event.

However, Petros Ilonga, general secretary of NUNW-affiliated Namibian Public Workers' Union, denies that labour is discontented. The speculation at the time the constitution was leaked was a product of attempts by Johannesburg newspapers to discredit the federation, he insists. 'Namibian workers voted Swapo into power. We, together with other unions in the federation, submitted our proposals for the new labour code. We have an understanding of our situation and the process that has to occur and there is no unhappiness', he says.

Independent sources would seem to confirm Ilonga's perceptions. 'There might have been some discontent at the amount of consultation involved in the proceedings which produced the constitution, but I would say relations between the unions and the government are reasonably harmonious now. Labour and unemployment are the government's biggest priorities. It has promised reform and if it delivers, the good relations should continue', a well-informed Windhoek told *WIP*. But Namibia also has to attract new foreign investment if it is to alleviate unemployment and Swapo will have to walk the tightrope between the two priorities. Will it get the mix right? - *Robyn Rafel*

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# Crossing the Rubicon – together

*Even as the Groote Schuur talks began on May 2, the ANC had its eyes focused on the next horizon. David Niddrie reports*





**T**he first indication of just how rapidly things were falling into place at the first African National Congress-government talks came just a day after they had started, with two full sessions still to go.

Addressing the Cape Town Press Club, ANC foreign affairs secretary Thabo Mbeki focused on where the negotiating process should go once the talks were over and obstacles to negotiations had been removed.

For the ANC, the next phase should involve preliminary discussions about principles for a post-apartheid constitution and the establishment of an appropriate mechanism for multi-party negotiations.

The ANC had never claimed to be the sole representative of the South African people, Mbeki said, and the next stage would require the participation of all parties claiming a significant following.

The movement believes there is only one guaranteed means of establishing 'who is bigger than who, who commands what support': the ballot box.

It is therefore pushing for national elections to a constituent assembly which will write a post-apartheid constitution and in which representation would be on the basis of demonstrated rather than claimed support.

President FW de Klerk is on record as opposing the idea, saying it

would, in advance, guarantee victory to one party. But the process was used successfully in Namibia just last year, and its ability to sidestep endless squabbles about representivity, make it a difficult proposal to resist.

The ANC is happy to see the decision for a constitutional assembly taken by multi-party talks. De Klerk may describe this negotiating table as a round one incorporating a range of opinions. The ANC believes the table will in practice be two-sided: with supporters of non-racialism (probably including a majority of bantustan leaders) lined up on the ANC's side. On the other, alongside De Klerk's National Party, would be those who claim to speak on behalf of 'racial groups - among them, in all probability', says Mbeki, 'someone who believes he represents seven million Zulus, Chief (Gatsha) Buthelezi'.

A possible obstacle at this stage will be the issue of who runs the country while the constitutional assembly decides on its future, and while the assembly is being elected.

Objections to having the National Party government in place are obvious: it will at that point become one of several parties contesting for support and should, correctly, not continue to enjoy the advantages that come with control.

And however hard De Klerk may have tried to depoliticise the South African Defence Force and police,

the idea of these forces policing the process is a difficult one to argue.

They have a tradition of direct political involvement and a political loyalty to the National Party - or, in the case of many within the police, to parties opposed to the idea of black political participation.

The Namibian independence process has, in any event, tacitly acknowledged the problem - thus the presence of the United Nations' Untag administration and monitoring force during and after Namibian elections.

Using Namibia as a blue-print, the ANC believes that when constituent assembly elections begin, the National Party will have to surrender power to a mutually-agreed interim government. And in advance, all parties will have to agree on how to politically neutralise the armed forces.

To this end, the ANC will put on the multi-party talks agenda a possible role for the international community.

All this lies in the future. Although talks could resume by June this year, ANC officials talk of the process unfolding over the next two to two-and-a-half years.

This looks possible given De Klerk's need to avoid another all-white election with the process still only partially resolved. Under the current constitution the next white election is due in 1994 - but to delay until the last minute will leave De Klerk vulnerable in negotiations.

But there remain many hurdles to cross before that stage is reached.

Although both sides ended the discussions feeling far more optimistic than when they began, the talks about talks have only made a start in eradicating obstacles to negotiations.

The four issues handled in the Groote Schuur talks were:

- \* the release of political prisoners;
- \* the return, under immunity from prosecution, of political exiles;
- \* lifting the state of emergency and scrapping security legislation;
- \* ending political violence;
- \* ending the armed struggle.

The talks also commissioned a joint working committee to define 'political offences' to enable future agreement on which prisoners are 'political' and thus entitled to release, and which exiles are 'political' and thus qualify for immunity.

The government's eagerness to rid itself of the political embarrassment of convicting right-wing gunmen such as Barend Strydom and of having to prosecute police and military hit squad agents has meant the issues of immunity and amnesty have been among the easiest to

resolve.

And its desire to see Strydom and other right-wingers covered may well mean that the definition of 'political' offences will go beyond actions undertaken by soldiers in the ANC's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Umkhonto fighters - and agents for police and military hit squads - are likely to be the first beneficiaries. But the breadth of the definition means people jailed for public violence could benefit too.

It is not yet clear whether those on death row for 'political' offences will actually be freed. At present it seems more likely that their death sentences will be commuted to prison terms.

These details will emerge from the working committee's report which will also include proposals on the mechanisms and time-scales for the release of prisoners and the return of exiles.

A key element of the 'Groote Schuur Minute', the joint government-ANC communique released after the talks, is the mutual commitment to 'a peaceful process of negotiations', rather than on the specific demands laid down by the

two sides.

The only practical programme agreed upon on preparations for the release of prisoners and the return of exiles.

The questions of the emergency and security legislation remain firmly in government hands through an undertaking to review their continued existence. And despite the government's high-profile demand that the question of the ANC's armed struggle be placed on the talks' agenda, the issue is dealt with only obliquely in the joint communique (see 'The Groote Schuur Minute').

The armed struggle itself - rather than public rhetoric on the need for it - appears to have been touched on only lightly in the talks.

When the joint working group presents its proposals on May 21, the ANC national executive committee is likely to have met and re-examined its commitment to armed struggle, according to Deputy President Nelson Mandela.

Assuming there is no repeat of the Sebokeng shootings, this should result in a (probably temporary) suspension of hostilities by the ANC, along the lines suggested by Umkhonto chief of staff Chris Hani earlier this year in *WIP* 64.

## The Groote Schuur Minute

The government and the ANC agree on a common commitment towards the resolution of the existing climate of violence and intimidation from whatever quarter as well as a commitment to stability and to a peaceful process of negotiations. Flowing from this commitment, the following was agreed upon:

1. The establishment of a working group to make recommendations on a definition of political offences in the South African situation; to discuss, in this regard, time scales; and to advise on norms and mechanisms for dealing with the release of political prisoners and the immunity in respect of political offences to those inside and outside of South Africa. All persons who may be affected will be considered. The working group will bear in mind experiences in Namibia and elsewhere. The working group will aim to complete its work before May 21, 1990. It is understood that the South African government in its discretion may consult other political parties and movements and other relevant bodies. The proceedings of the working group will be confidential. In the meantime the following offences will receive attention immediately:

a) The leaving of the country without a valid travel

document.

b) Any offences related merely to organisations which were previously prohibited.

2. In addition to the arrangements mentioned in paragraph 1, temporary immunity from prosecution for political offences committed before today, will be considered on an urgent basis for members of the National Executive Committee and other selected members of the ANC outside the country, to enable them to return and help with the establishment and management of political activities, to assist in bringing violence to an end and to take part in peaceful political negotiations.

3. The government undertakes to review existing security legislation to bring it into line with the new dynamic situation developing in South Africa in order to ensure normal and free political activities.

4. The government reiterates its commitment to work towards the lifting of the state of emergency. In this context the ANC will exert itself to fulfill the objectives contained in the preamble.

5. Efficient channels of communication between the government and the ANC will be established in order to curb violence and intimidation, from whatever quarter, effectively.

The government and the ANC agree that the objectives contained in this minute should be achieved as early as possible.

While leaving Umkhonto structures in place, this will provide the justification for De Klerk to move on the emergency and security laws. The emergency is easy, and potentially an early sign of De Klerk's seriousness: due for renewal on June 10, it could simply be allowed to lapse.

This apparent flexibility allowed to the two sides marks a substantial shift from the deep suspicion, particularly from the ANC's side, marking the start of the talks.

In the four days between the arrival of the ANC exiles on the delegation and the start of the talks, officials of the movement acknowledged they were taking seriously warnings from Angola and Namibia's Swapo - both recent veterans of negotiations with Pretoria - to trust no South African undertaking until it was in writing. 'They warned us that the (South African) regime went back on every verbal agreement they had made', said one official.

ANC suspicions may have been genuine or a strategy to put De Klerk's nine-man delegation - himself and eight cabinet ministers - on the defensive. But the result was that the government team went in highly-conscious of the need to demonstrate their goodwill.

The ANC delegation's enthusiasm after the talks suggests De Klerk succeeded.

The 'give' in the give-and-take the government called for seems to have come mainly from the government. But the benefits did not go only one way.

When De Klerk flew out on a nine-nation tour of Europe just four days after the historic talks-about-talks, he went in a chartered jet bearing the insignia of the South African presidency.

It is the first time a South African president has been able to advertise himself in this way. In the past their chartered planes have been discreetly unmarked, the aerial equivalent of the plain brown envelope used to disguise potentially embarrassing items sent through the post.

The outcome of De Klerk's tour, however, will be crucial in deciding whether Pretoria continues to lean over backwards as it did at Groote Schuur.

Before jetting out of South Africa, De Klerk said he would be arguing that the way European governments and business interests could encourage reform and ensure progress in negotiations would be to ease sanctions and invest in this



**A SACP supporter at the report-back rally in Johannesburg**

country.

This was a rather different message from that given, in advance of the Groote Schuur talks, by government officials briefing journalists on the trip.

At that point the agreement reflected in the Groote Schuur Minute was by no means guaranteed, and the officials asserted that on his tour De Klerk would be taking no initiatives on sanctions nor raising the issue in his discussions.

The contradictory positions reflect a government recognition on the sensitivity of the sanctions issue and the need to avoid its becoming a sticking point.

Clearly, however, De Klerk is hoping to benefit from the international goodwill generated by the May 2 talks.

And he will be using the talks to argue strongly to European bankers the need to roll over a part of the R6-billion foreign debt South Africa is due to repay this year - a figure uncomfortably close to the country's total current reserves.

Right now, with the gold price more than \$30 down on its February 2 \$400-plus high, the state's R6-billion foreign currency and gold holdings cushion has been seriously eroded.

With already-rescheduled foreign debts looming, De Klerk urgently needs to talk about a further rolling-over of the payments.

If he succeeds, there will be less pressure on him to keep the negotiation process on track. ●

## Lord Charles: A hotel full of contradictions

**T**he discreetly opulent Lord Charles Hotel, nestling in the hills above the quiet seaside hamlet of Somerset West outside Cape Town, is a vivid symbol of white economic and political privilege.

Here Nelson Mandela and his 11-person African National Congress (ANC) delegation returned every night after meeting President F.W. de Klerk and officials of his white government.

The three days of talks took place at Groote Schuur, traditional home of white prime ministers in Cape Town.

But with the threat of far-right assassination attempts against the ANC team, government security agents insisted they should be housed out of the city and somewhere easily protectable.

Eighty kilometres outside Cape Town, out of sight of the main coast road, in its own strip of forest and with a substantial security team of its own, the Lord Charles Hotel was an ideal venue.

Several of the ANC delegation, used to more humble accommodation, made uncomfortable guests in the hotel's quiet pink-and-grey pastel decor - a discomfort they shared with some of the hotel's other temporary guests, the several dozen police guards set to protect them.

Burly white men with moustaches haunted all parts of the hotel, several carrying unlikely brief-cases - apparently housing machine-pistols.

Several were visibly unhappy with the job they have been given - guarding men against whom they have been waging an undeclared war for three decades.

It was, the National Intelligence Service official overseeing the government protection unit acknowledged wryly, 'a unique and unusual task'.

His own politics, the official said, approximate those of De Klerk, who legalized the ANC three months ago and began talking to them on May 2.

But the previous three weeks had produced evidence from two judicial commissions of direct police and military involvement in the assassination of anti-apartheid activists, and the ANC had its own armed guards in the hotel,



*Slovo: the government tried to have him excluded from the talks*

specially trained members of the ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe army.

The sight of revolutionaries walking through the hushed corridors of one of South Africa's most prestigious hotels was not the only stark contrast in the next three days of historic talks.

The make-up of the delegations was, itself, sufficient explanation of why the talks need to take place at all.

**M**andela led a team of eight black delegates, two white, one 'coloured' and one Indian - a close approximation of South Africa's national racial demographics. It included two women - the only two in the talks - while the age gap between the oldest and youngest delegates is 35 years.

De Klerk's team, by contrast, was made up entirely of middle-aged white men, all members of one of the three pro-government Afrikaans-language churches - part of a 3% minority which has exercised a monopoly on political power for the past half-century.

Conscious of the need to speak to and for all sections of South African society, even white Afrikaners, the ANC included in its delegation Beyers Naude, an internationally-renowned anti-apart-

heid cleric and an Afrikaner.

A former moderator in the Southern Transvaal Synod of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, Naude has been reviled in the Afrikaner community since resigning publicly from the Afrikaner Broederbond.

During the talks, ANC officials also paid special attention to the handful of Afrikaans-language journalists among the several hundred from around the country and abroad in Cape Town to cover the talks.

The movement produced press releases in both English and Afrikaans, and held separate briefings, in Afrikaans, for journalists from Afrikaans-language newspapers.

The movement did not, however, attempt to concede to all the biases of white South Africa.

When he met De Klerk in March, Mandela rejected a private plea that the ANC exclude Joe Slovo, white general secretary of the South African Communist Party and former head of the ANC guerilla army, from the team. Still unhappy, however, government officials attempted to persuade the ANC to exclude Slovo from the post-talks ANC rally at Soweto's soccer city. ●

*Legalised with the ANC on February 2, the communist party has yet to go public. A senior member of the party's internal underground emerges briefly from the shadows to explain why, and to outline the party's thinking for the immediate future.*

*David Niddrie reports*



# Out of the black and into the red

**Q:** The SACP is now legal but has not yet established a public presence. Why not, and how and when does it plan to do so?

**A:** It is necessary to be clear that the unbanning has not truly created conditions where the party can exist freely.

Technically and legally, there is still a host of laws circumscribing the work of communists. The propagation, the actual work of organising a communist party is still illegal in this country under the Internal Security Act.

And even in its discussions with the African National Congress, the regime tried hard to persuade the ANC to drop a known communist, our general secretary Joe Slovo, from the delegation.

But despite (the many restrictions on us) the party intends to fully

occupy the legal space opened up by the unbanning - possibly by the third quarter of this year.

It is currently engaged in consultation and an examination of how it should occupy that legal space.

The consultation and discussion are focusing on how the party should emerge publicly, what sort of image it should have, how it should structure itself to ensure that it roots itself in the black working class, in the militant youth and among radical intellectuals.

The process may seem slow to an onlooker and to the immense mass base which supports many of the platforms of the communist party. But our party has been illegal for almost 40 years. There is only a handful of comrades with any experience of existence as a legal party.

Generation after generation of communists has been nurtured and has grown to political maturity under conditions of extreme repression. They have developed a style of work which is peculiar to those conditions.

The process of consultation is thus vital. It means that the legal communist party will bring into it the best traditions of underground life - traditions of discipline, dedication and unwavering commitment to the cause of socialism. But there is a whole baggage of experience which will have to be shed ... the style of work that comes with living a totally conspiratorial life.

An open party has to face not only the challenge of legality, but also of the negative experiences of building socialism.

That process was initiated slightly before the formal unbanning of the ANC and SACP and is continuing. It involves consultations with groups and individuals, with contacts visiting the party outside, as well as the networks inside the country.

**Q: Do you expect the government to ease the restrictions on your emergence as an open party?**

**A:** Present indications are that the discussions are moving in the right direction. But clearly the Nationalist government is firmly committed to an anti-communist path. It often engages in rhetoric indicating a huge gap that it will have to cross between its current status as an autocratic government to one committed to full democracy. Indications are, though, that at least it stands at a point where it recognises, within itself, the bankruptcy of apartheid.

The signs are good, but the way events unfold depends not only on what De Klerk and his colleagues decide. It depends on the exchange of views in discussions between the government and the ANC - but even more importantly on what our people do and what the international community does.

There is a fluidity in South African politics: yes, De Klerk has moved and it would appear that he has made a firm commitment to the abolition of apartheid. But the reality is that apartheid exists, the security establishment exists, activists and even spontaneous mass activity of resistance still faces the barrage of repression.

The party would very much like to disclose itself fully. Not because it wants to do so with regard to the regime, but because it needs to do so with regard to its constitu-

ency and to the mass of the people.

But it cannot react to current reality on the basis that what is happening is irreversible and that the recognition by the regime that apartheid is untenable means that the regime has committed itself to true democracy.

But we hope that our people can force a condition where the developments become irreversible. And, and as De Klerk and his colleagues move towards a commitment to total democracy and take practical steps to abolish apartheid, the party will present itself fully.

When that is depends on how far developments move. We are all actors, the white community, the black community. The reality of South African politics is that the initiative today rests with the oppressed masses. A further reality is that we are faced with a government which has for the first time in the history of 340 years of white rule in South Africa begun to show a responsiveness to the struggles of the black oppressed.

We are optimistic. The granite of apartheid has cracked. But we have an immense job ahead to ensure that the monument of apartheid is smashed.

**Q: You refer to the party rooting itself in various sectors of society and (the SACP journal) Umsebenzi has effectively invited workers, the militant youth and radical intellectuals to join the SACP. This suggests a move towards establishing the SACP as a mass party.**

**A:** This is a matter long debated in the party. But while we were totally illegal, it could not move out of certain parameters. Specifically it related to how communists work in fraternal and mass organisations.

From the initial periods of clandestinity, communists had to learn how to work in the mass organisations without dictating to the mass organisations, or reducing themselves to a conspiratorial group meeting in secrecy and imposing their views on the mass organisations.

One of the most important terrains where communists were able to learn and overcome the tendency of a group imposing its views has been in the alliance of ANC, SACP and Sactu. This has paid off well in equipping communists for the period of legality.

But at the same time one of the key elements of the debates going on with regard to the emergence of the party is to understand the constituency that has grown up behind the banner of the party.

Despite areas of overlap between support for the ANC, for the party or for the armed struggle of Umkhonto, there is a firm (party) constituency within the working class, within the militant youth and within a small but growing radical intelligentsia.

So the question of mass party has, correctly, been raised in Umsebenzi. Discussions so far indicate that by the time the party launches itself the question will have been settled.

We have an immense constituency. But we have to contend with a situation in which the positive developments cannot be allowed to be made reversible. And a key element in ensuring irreversibility is to develop an organised mass formation.

The ANC undoubtedly has the capacity of becoming an organised formation of at least 1-million members, if not more, this year.



*The SACP's hammer and sickle: the flag's public, but the party isn't*

The party cannot aspire to such ambitious membership. It has more consciously to look at the class formations it draws into its ranks.

That is not to say that anyone who wants to be a communist, who believes in the principles of communism, who supports the programme and strategies of the party will be excluded - or even can be excluded.

But we have to bear in mind that the social force that is going to create, and has the uncircumscribed interest in building, a society free of exploitation of man by man is the working class.

The party therefore has to ensure that it is rooted in that class.

Personally I believe there will be difficulties if the party in legality sets rigid rules for selection.

For example, as an illegal party we developed strict rules for probation. Those who wished to join or were approached to join had to provide an exhaustive background and had to serve an extended period of probation. The rules adopted with the last constitution made it necessary to serve a six-month probation under supervision, both of study and of activity in the struggle. It was after that probation that the potential comrade's performance helped to determine whether he or she was admitted.

It would be difficult to maintain probation. If we want to

take the constituency that has been shaped in struggle and mould it into a meaningful force, we will have to be very careful about how we present ourselves in terms of selectivity.

I feel the question of a mass party is unavoidable, but I don't want to pre-empt decisions emerging from these consultations.

**Q: What form are these consultations taking?**

**A:** At the last party congress, held last year under conditions of total clandestinity and when the developments of this year were hardly imaginable, it was decided that the next congress would be held inside South Africa, whether under conditions of clandestinity or not. Since then the party has decided that its next congress will be held in 1991, hopefully to coincide with the anniversary of the party in July.

A special congress now is unlikely. Time is against us. The party has to conserve its resources and yet find a way to engage in extensive consultations.

One of the problems is that discussing the matter within the confines of existing cells does not help the comrades to open out and debate the issue beyond the ranks of the four or five who constitute that cell.

The ideas generated in that debate are confined to the experience of that tightly-knit group, used and accustomed

to conspiratorial life.

The party has been looking for ways to overcome that. It has regional structures within the country which usually grew up to coordinate and provide overall supervision to the cells in each region.

That provides for some cross-cell feeding of ideas, but it is not enough.

But the consultations have even taken the form of the discussions between the party and Cosatu in Harare last month. There Cosatu had about 31 delegates from within the country, including communists. The communist party brought to that meeting 28 members. It was an important forum for sounding out not only how members of the party feel about the form in which the party should emerge, but how others in the working class feel.

We are also consulting trade unionists, people in the broad democratic movement. We believe that out of it all will not only come a better and wider experience, but also a visible demonstration of the democratic character of the party.

**Q: What are the implications of a mass party for its relationship with the ANC?**

**A:** A legal ANC will obviously become an area of intense ideological debate.

And there are possible dangers that our close alliance can be driven to a framework of competitiveness. But I do not think, given the history of the alliance, the experience of decades of sharing the trench, where communist and non-communist have learned to treasure each other's lives, the party and the ANC leadership will allow the alliance to become a relationship of rivalry.

There are forces, particularly in white politics and fringe elements in black politics, which would dearly love to see the party and the ANC in competition. But both party and ANC are conscious of that and have reaffirmed, in the current phase, their adherence to the alliance.

But we are in a phase where, for the first time, as we see the prospect emerge of a truly non-racial and democratic country, the contest of ideas over what type of South Africa we want must be embarked on. We will have to feel our way to developing the rules within which the ideological contest takes place. Some of us will have to learn to restrain ourselves, others to be more forthcoming.

My own experience of the alliance suggests there is no way we will be driven into a relationship of rivalry. For the party, the issue is that, as an open party, it must now extend democratic practices within itself and make itself publicly accountable. In doing so, any incipient danger that the two organisations will be driven into a path of rivalry will be overcome.

**Q: How do you foresee the relationship developing then? Do you foresee, for example in elections to a constituent assembly, both formations contesting for seats?**

**A:** How we should present ourselves at that moment

is looking pretty far ahead in terms of phases, although it may not be that far ahead in terms of time. But it is early days.

The (Groote Schuur) discussions with the government are only at the first stages of ensuring that the government removes obstacles towards a negotiated resolution of the conflict. And already the removal of those obstacles is pretty stony ground. The regime has certainly decided to move ahead, but it seems to want to engage in this process of removing these obstacles by making it appear that the liberation forces and their positions present obstacles. This is an area of intense contest, where the rules of the game are changing. It is necessary to convince the regime both by the actions of the mass of our people, through intensification of the struggle, and by the debates around the table.

That is where we are today.

The alliance has clearly committed itself to the Harare declaration and there are specific phases if there is to be a negotiated solution.

It is at the point of a constituent assembly that we will be able to say: yes, truly South Africans have decided that the resolution will take place and that the people will participate in that process.

If it is necessary at the time that the party presents itself with an independent face, that it emerges in the constituent assembly as part of the alliance, the mechanics of that will have to be looked at. Not only from the point of view of the party-political interests of these two giants of the liberation struggle, but how to ensure that the ordinary people of our country participate fully in the writing of that constitution.

**Q: Can you expand on the announcement after last month's Harare meeting between the party and Cosatu of an alliance between the two?**

**A:** There has been an alliance of the party, the ANC and Sactu. Sactu has since decided to merge (with Cosatu) on the basis that Cosatu is *the* workers' federation.

Already the ANC formations within South Africa have had formal meetings with Cosatu. At those meetings the presence of the general secretary of the party as part of the ANC delegation facilitated that those bi-lateral discussions also took into account the party as a member of the alliance.

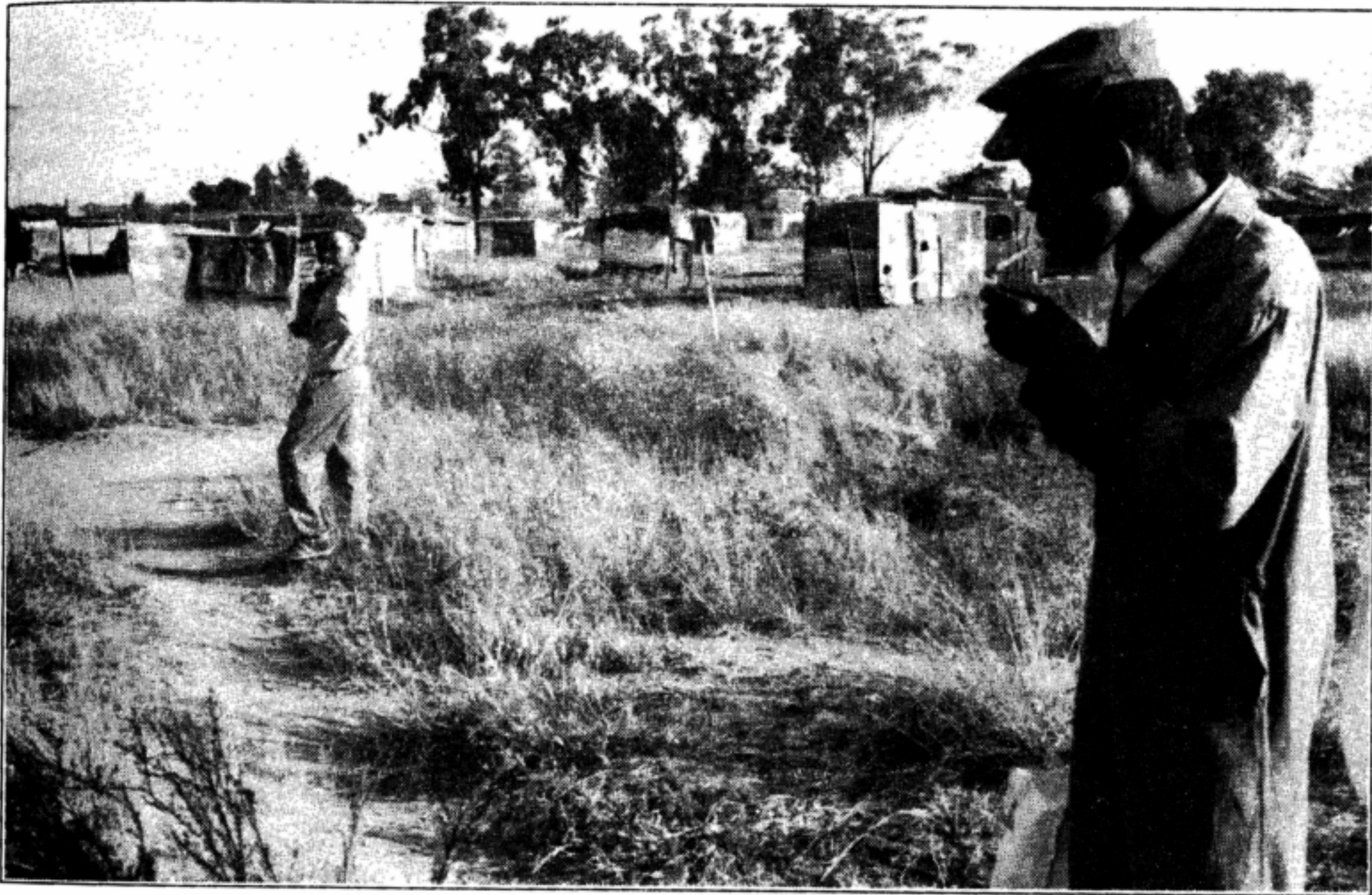
It is inevitable that those discussions will have to look at the creation of formal mechanisms of consultation and for developing common platforms and programmes of action.

It is not a question of the party or the ANC going to engage in discussions with Cosatu with ready-made programmes. We are engaged in a process in which we recognise the independence of the formations in that alliance, but also the inter-dependence of those formations.

So the discussions have moved beyond a declaration of intent that we are allies, to now formulating the mechanisms and giving flesh and life to our proclamations. ●



# Sharing the land



*New strategies in the struggle for land and housing are being devised by civic associations around the country.*

*Jo-Anne Collinge visited the sites of two such struggles:*

*Freedom Square near Bloemfontein and Oupa Qineba Village outside Heidelberg*

**C**rossroads, reduced to smouldering ruins in mid-1986 by the marauding Witdoek vigilantes, posed the question: How can shack settlements be made immune from the state's divide-and-rule strategies and be secured in the broader struggle against apartheid?

The people of Crossroads were a militant symbol of resistance. Year after year they weathered pass raids, deportation and demolition. But in time they were defeated by deep divisions which developed among them in response to the state's cooptive strategies. Finally, the Witdoeke who destroyed Crossroads and its surrounding settlements came from within.

Since 1986, in the post-pass-law years, shack settlements have exploded into being in urban areas. Estimates of the number of people living in informal housing run as high as 5,65 million for the Cape, Transvaal and Natal alone, excluding most areas of the 'independent' bantustans.

Organisation of informal settlements in

the urban areas of 'white' South Africa has more often than not been purely defensive - to prevent the destruction of shacks and removal of the people at the hands of police and local authorities.

But in a few instances shack settlements have actually been born of the broader struggle against apartheid. They have been initiated by civic associations committed to the total transformation of South African society. And they are seen as part of that transformation.

This is the case in Bloemfontein, where the Mangaung Civic Association (MCA) has established the 2 500 shack settlement of Freedom Square in what was for years a racial no man's land - the 'buffer' strip between the coloured township of Heidelberg and the black township of Mangaung.

Shortly before the land invasion the 'buffer' area was actually zoned for coloured occupation.

The MCA is also responsible for several

smaller squatter settlements, including Tambo Square which consists of about 200 shacks right on the doorstep of the Bloemfontein central business district.

MCA secretary Sekhopi Malebo asserts: 'When we put up these informal areas we do it consciously as part of the repossession of the land'.

But, he adds, the shack towns are also a consequence of real need. Whenever the civic called meetings to discuss service provision in the township it was asked about the problems of the homeless and concluded that occupation of vacant land was the only possible solution.

'We felt that in the spirit of the defiance campaign we should go and occupy the land in the buffer zone which had been rendered useless by the apartheid system'.

The huge demand for housing is largely a result of the building freeze that applied in Bloemfontein's townships between 1968 and the mid-'80s. Most housing built since then has been costly private development and the people's demand for homes has gone largely unmet by the township's planners.

From January onwards the civic organised groups of 100 to 150 families at a time and measured out stands for them on the sloping stretch of land that was to become Freedom Square. It organised a group which acted as town planners, measuring out stands and providing for roads.

The land allocation is intended to be permanent. Shacks are dotted rather than clustered on the veld and sufficient room has been left for the installation of services such as sewerage and electricity at a later stage.

'We enlisted the support of a progressive professor of architecture who helped us come up with an alternative to the apartheid town plan', says Malebo.

'Our people were divided into defence units. In the event that there was any attempt to evict them, they were prepared to defend their homes'.

Malebo cites as an example of residents' determination to defend their territory their reaction to a large-scale police 'crime prevention' operation at the end of April. People actually mobilised with every makeshift weapon or implement they could find, he says, and were ready to confront the armed forces when their leadership intervened.

'In Freedom Square people have a seSotho saying which translates as "Come what may" - it means they will choose death over life if necessary'.

The intervention of any authority - not only the armed forces - is a matter of debate in Freedom Square and the smaller shack towns. 'These places have been won by the people without any assistance by the puppets. Our strategy worked and we have embarrassed the Mangaung council which could not get land for our people. Should we hand our land over to the administration of these people (the councillors) or administer our areas as semi-liberated zones'?

In some respects a compromise has been struck. When provincial authorities expressed their concern at a possible health hazard developing, the MCA conceded that the province should be allowed to lay-out certain sections of the camp and grade the roads.

In Freedom Square the road-grader has become a sign of the permanence of the area, even as in other squatter camps the bulldozer has spelled destruction.

Also, when the council offered to lay on water tankers twice a day this was accepted.

Zwelinzima Jacobs, a worker at the Ikageng Advice Office in Mangaung, adds that 'we refused to give the councillors a chance to address the people (when they supplied the water). We said they should make no political gains from the suffering of the people'.

But the MCA hopes political gains will be made for those seeking a non-racial society. They aim to alter the racial geography of Bloemfontein irreversibly, to 'close the gaps of apartheid', as Malebo puts it.

**H**e argues that the Zimbabwean experience has important lessons. 'In Harare it is very clear that apartheid is being maintained by privatisation', he observes. Whites had acquired large areas of land between the old townships and the predominantly white suburbs and left this land undeveloped - in effect, the equivalent of the apartheid 'buffer zone'.

The MCA is determined that its homeless supporters will not be forced into areas expanding apartheid-wise, further and further from the city.

It is no accident, says Malebo, that people have chosen to live in Tambo Square, from where they can walk to work. 'We are prepared to defend this to the hilt'.

Not all those who wish to live in the MCA controlled settlements are accepted, however. Weekly meetings of applicants are held in various townships - including the coloured township of

Heidedal - and the MCA's expectations of those who move into the settlements are made clear. Certain people are automatically excluded - for instance those who already own/occupy property and are seeking to expand the land they own.

'We explain how housing and land are used as political control and how people need to take political action (to secure their housing needs)', Malebo says.

'One old man said to me, "For the past 50 years I've never had a home to be proud of, to offer my children. But where I've put this tin shack I am proud because I fought for it"'.

Mike Makwa is chairman of the Freedom Square Committee. He has a rudimentary shack there - but spends more effort on building organisation than improving his home.

He believes that people are well aware of the political implications of their land invasion and were not merely hungry for shelter. 'They wanted to scramble apartheid. They wanted to see if the Group Areas Act was abolished. So they took the land and they won. We are here to stay'.

Most of the people were too poor to afford the rents or repayments for formal housing, says Makwa. Others - teachers and nurses - could have paid but mysteriously were never allocated houses by the council.

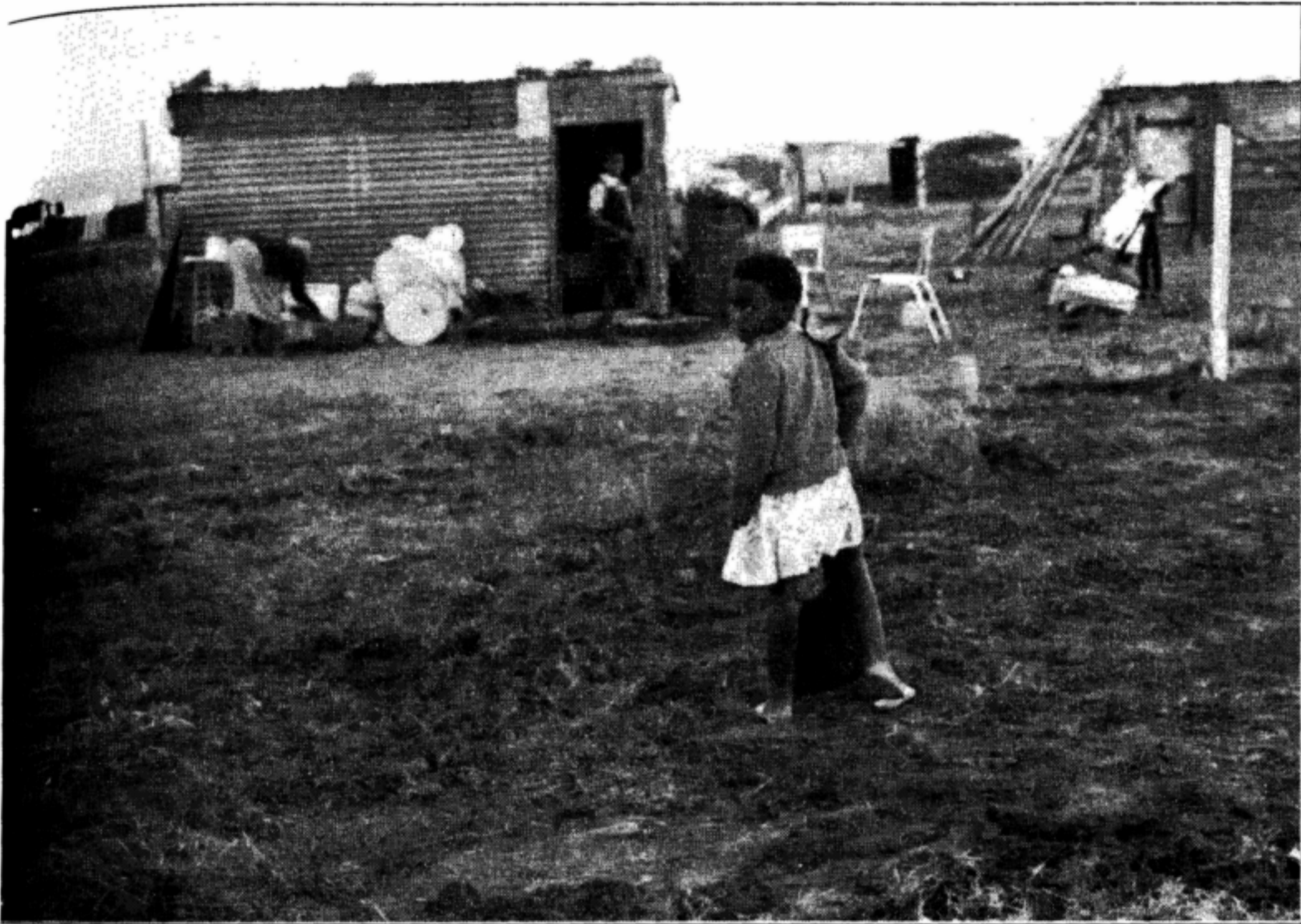
Despite the humble nature of many of the shacks 'they feel very proud of having homes and having the land, which they never had before', he believes.

Makwa reckons most residents of Freedom Square are prepared to build their own homes according to their financial capacity. But that they regard it as the job of the authorities to provide services.

Jacobs of the Advice Office is not as clear on whether housing should, in the long term, be a private concern. 'It is a collective demand and not an individual one, so we would expect some provision from a post-apartheid government'.

Jacobs argues that the residents have not gained their land free of charge - they have paid in the risks they have taken. Moreover, 'with what we are targeting, those buffer zones, it amounts to allocating state property, and therefore the people's property'.

However, he also observes that part of the political agenda of opposition groups is to avoid creating problems for a post-apartheid government. And so residents are themselves addressing the immediate problems of transport and



*Bloemfontein's Freedom Square: a stride forward for the landless*

other services.

If Freedom Square is a tremendous stride forward for the landless, it remains a shack town with all the shortcomings of this flimsy form of shelter, Jacobs acknowledges. He sees the introduction of community health and welfare services as vital to combating some of the problems likely to arise.

The MCA is also looking towards ways of transforming Freedom Square from a village of zinc to one built in bricks and mortar.

Malebo observes that many people reject the idea of housing bonds. 'They see it as just another burden. Instead they are prepared to buy their houses five bricks at a time if necessary'.

The civic association hopes to be able to set up a 'house-building clinic where ordinary people can get an idea of how to build a good but cheap house'.

For the funding of the housing clinic the MCA is looking not to foreign development aid, but to a foundation set up by a South African company with strong links to the Consultative Business Movement.

When it comes to mobilising finance for individual homes, co-operatives and traditional ways of pooling money through stokvels are in the minds of the MCA leadership.

Along with this is a concern to neutralise the stigma of homelessness and inferior housing. 'We try to help people understand that it is because of bad salaries that they cannot build houses for themselves, because of apartheid exploitation. We say to them, "You don't have to feel bad about yourself because of this"', Malebo says.

When he talks of organs of peoples power, it is this wide range of representative and service organisations he refers to - from the MCA itself and the elected settlement committees, to the proposed consumer co-operatives.

He does not regard the much publicised 'people's court' which allegedly sentenced a policeman to be executed by stabbing in mid-April as an organ of people's power. Malebo acknowledges that the killing occurred in a shack settlement, but states that it was not a section under MCA control. He adds

that the MCA intervened immediately after the killing, partly because it feared that there might be official reprisals against the whole community in the form of widespread demolitions.

No such demolitions occurred and the MCA has halted the expansion of shacks in the area concerned until its authority among existing residents is assured. The local United Democratic Front committee also regards the so-called execution as a plain criminal act that cannot be justified in the name of the struggle.

It could be argued that Freedom Square and Tambo Square are products of the period of transition - that it is logical in this time of liberalisation and negotiation that shack dwellers be left in peace to pursue alternative housing strategies.

But a quick survey of developments elsewhere makes it clear this is only partly true. Shack demolitions have bedevilled many areas - from the Cape Peninsula to the Reef - in recent months.

Nor is this an accident. The new Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act became law by virtue of a President's Council

decision (overriding the opposition of the houses of Delegates and Representatives) as recently as last November.

While deputy minister of constitutional development and planning Roelf Meyer emphasised the Act's 'new concept', namely that 'for the first time informal housing is being given legal recognition', its critics had plenty to complain about, including:

- \* the presumption in law that those accused of squatting were guilty until proven innocent;

- \* the compulsion on the courts to order the demolition of shacks of those found guilty of squatting. In earlier legislation the courts had had a discretion in this respect;

- \* dramatically increased penalties for squatters and land owners who permit squatting. In the case of the former the maximum penalty became R2 000 or 12 months' jail and in the case of the latter R12 000 or five years;

- \* the empowerment of local authorities to monitor and act against squatters - and for the provincial administrator to fulfil these functions if the local council failed to do so;

- \* the provision for ill-defined 'committees' to monitor and evict squatters from areas outside of local authority jurisdiction.

Clearly the new Act gives the government the power choose which of two sharply contrasting courses of action to take in relation to any given 'squatter' problem. It ensures the state absolute power to destroy shack settlements which it finds inconvenient or threatening, and equal power to confer its legal blessing on settlements which defuse the demand for housing without undermining other established interests.

Bloemfontein's Freedom Square is clearly a candidate for state blessing and future legalisation. Several factors may have influenced the authorities to take this option.

Firstly, the bulk of the land in question had not been sold to any private owner or developer. Its long-standing 'buffer' status had rendered it economically inert.

Secondly, while Freedom Square certainly challenges the geography of apartheid and the notion of apartheid cities in a concrete way, it does not impinge directly on the daily life of white residents of the city.

It is probably significant that it is the buffer between the coloured area and the black township that is filling up with shacks, and the strip between the town-

# Is the tin town here to stay?

**M**aria Maliqhwa Mofokeng, mother of six children, had lived in her shack in Oupa Qineba Village for just two weeks when she got notice to quit within 24 hours. She ignored it and was still there six weeks later.

'We are prepared to stay here for as long as it takes for us to get houses,' she says.

Maria Mofokeng is the wife of a building contractor who has worked 29 years building houses for other people but has never been able to secure his own home.

Eventually the Mofokengs and hundreds of other families living in backyard shacks in the Heidelberg township of Ratanda helped themselves to a piece of land, which they swear they will not leave except in return for housing of a permanent nature.

The residents of Oupa Qineba Village are what the Ratanda Town Committee chief executive DJ van Rensburg calls illegal squatters.

Van Rensburg says that Ratanda also has 'legal squatters', who are being temporarily accommodated in shacks in a municipal camp serviced by water tankers and bucket toilets. To him it is sheer perversity on the part of the Ratanda Civic Association (RCA) to organise 'illegal squatting' when temporary legal sites are available.

He points out that Oupa Qineba Village was started on March 19, while the local authority set up its camp on April 4. 'They moved when they knew that we had plans, saying "we will go to an area where we want to stay, not where you want us to stay".'

RCA spokesmen are quite candid

that the invasion of land which they coordinated was indeed a reaction to the council's housing policy.

In January they had staged a mass march of 10 000 people in support of the demand for homes. When two months later the council responded with an offer of a temporary shack town, RCA leaders considered the time had come to implement a land occupation plan approved by the homeless about a week earlier.

When thousands of desperate homeseekers heard that their destiny was a 'temporary' camp, many of them marched out of the gathering at the council offices - to collect their implements, their zinc and cardboard and head for the land of their choice.

The RCA took charge of allocating and measuring stands. A grader belonging to a contractor was used to make roads. The authorities allege the grader was hijacked. The RCA says it was used with permission.

On the very first day, a 12-year-old child, Oupa Qineba, was shot dead by police during the land invasion. According to residents, Oupa was coming from school towards the site of the shack town when he was shot. They point to a depression in the ground where the child died and a piece of metal with two holes in it, allegedly made by live ammunition used that day.

The settlement bears Oupa's name and his family continues to live there.

For Robert Mofokeng, brother-in-law of Maria and head of the village committee, the death of Oupa has affirmed his resolve to stay.

Apart from anything else, he sees little prospect of their demands being

ship and the station-end of the city. Would the response be quite as mild if the buffer adjoined a white suburb and housing values there were threatened by a permanent shack presence nearby?

Indeed, there are signs in the PWV area that the reform era has called into being a new 'buffer', determined on socio-economic grounds rather than in terms of race. New middle-class townships are beginning to edge closer and

closer to the white suburbs. Sometimes township and suburban houses are no more than a highway apart - and almost indistinguishable. They prevent the invasion of open land by the homeless; they 'protect' whites from the poor.

It is probable that the authorities appreciated that sooner or later they would have to address the problem of the homeless, landless, poorer residents of Bloemfontein. The Verwoerdian plan

met. 'I don't believe anymore I will get a house out of this council. With all the applications I have made I should have had a house long ago'.

For residents and the RCA the issues are:

- \* The fact that all the council is able to offer them is a prolonged stay in 'temporary' homes in the approved camp. Van Rensburg confirms that it will probably be at least two years until permanent sites will be ready because mineral rights have to be expropriated before the land is occupied and this typically takes two years. After years - or even decades - of camping in other people's yards, residents of Oupa Qineba Village want their own permanent homes.

- \* The fact that the land they have taken has already been sold to a private developer. Mofokeng says people find it unacceptable that 'the councillors sell land in a way where we don't know how the money's being used'. They feel that land developers should have got second option and that the readily available land should have been allocated to relieve the greatest need immediately.

Van Rensburg says that 240 houses, a shopping centre and a school are due to be developed privately on the land presently occupied by shacks. This would not even dent the housing demand of shack dwellers (supposing they could afford such homes). Van Rensburg estimates the total number of shacks at 2 300, with about 500 situated 'illegally'. The RCA estimates that Oupa Qineba village is significantly larger than 500 shacks.

- \* The need to keep their plight visible. RCA members reckon that shacks strategically placed along the highways are far more likely to yield results than occupation of a 'temporary' camp hidden in the bowels of the township.

The local authority's position is clear: it wants the land vacated so that building can commence.



**Mofokeng: prepared to stay**

'We're going to negotiate with these people (in Oupa Qineba Village). We will try to settle matters peacefully', says Van Rensburg. 'But failing that we'll have to take action. Probably go to court for an order'.

The council seems in a strong position, wielding both the carrot and the very sturdy stick provided for in the 1989 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act. If it gets a conviction for illegal squatting, it also gets an automatic demolition order.

Furthermore, it is in a position to develop the official shack town and deny services to those on private land. 'We have been meeting with the Transvaal Provincial Authorities about finance for servicing. But the illegal squatters will not get a single cent or a drop of water from us,' says Van Rensburg.

Mofokeng concedes that some of those swept up in the bold land invasion have since had second thoughts and retreated to the local authority camp, known locally as the 'wagplek' (waiting place).

'Some people are not trusting this place mainly because they are being threatened that they will be moved by force if they do not move', he said.

People are also dependent on local householders and hostel dwellers for water and responsible for digging their own pit toilets.

Yet people continue to move into Oupa Qineba Village, though not in the initial large numbers. Residents are laying out gardens, digging toilets, erecting fencing.

Against the threats and resources of the council the RCA has only its organising ability. Its defence of Oupa Qineba Village will depend in large measure on linking this struggle to broader struggles in the community.

It has in its favour:

- \* An established position in the community, having come into being more than six years ago, having weathered the state of emergency and its leadership having returned from detention committed to the struggle against apartheid.

- \* An adversary - the Ratanda Town Committee - that is not popular and which has been shaken by resignation of members.

- \* A broader housing struggle among occupants of Ratanda's formal housing, which has taken the form of a rent boycott.

The RCA is well aware of the fact that the wholesale evacuation of backyard shack dwellers has caused some hard feeling among former landlords who depended on the shacks for income. It is attempting to prevent this dividing its constituency.

The RCA intended its land occupation to seriously address the problem of homelessness. It has been confronted on all sides by opponents with vested economic interests in the land. Whether the local state decides to invoke the draconian squatting laws is likely to be decisively influenced by the weight of the economic interests. ●

of shipping the city's black people off to Botshabelo (some 40 km away) and declaring that area part of QwaQwa had failed. Not only did many people refuse to go, but the Appeal Court ruled that the incorporation into QwaQwa was invalid.

To endorse an organised popular initiative is certainly a much more astute move on the part of the authorities than to attempt to foist onto the homeless a

top-down 'emergency housing camp' solution.

From the perspective of the MCA, Freedom Square and the smaller camps bear very clearly the marks of the transition from apartheid. They are a legacy of defiance campaign of 1989 and of the refusal to bow to apartheid structures of authority. They bear traces of the debate on the future distribution of resources.

And they were born in the clear belief

that a popular government will take the reigns of power in the foreseeable future. How many other shack towns have taken real account of the legalisation of the African National Congress and the imminent return of thousands of exiles?

'In fact, when we were making the sites the people came with the suggestion that some should be saved for the exiles who are coming home', recalls Makbo. ●

*Recent developments in urban social policy could either be a unique opportunity with major positive consequences for urban communities, or could result in an urban restructuring process that could displace people on a scale similar to the forced removals of the 1950s and 1960s. Mark Swilling reports. In WIP 67 Mark Swilling will outline an alternative policy proposal*

# The money or the matchbox

**O**n May 2, Beyers Naude voiced for the first time the idea that if the negotiating process between the government and ANC failed, disaffected youth might defect to the PAC.

The rapidity of the events of the past few months have demonstrated that the mass democratic movement must quickly, and seriously, begin to consider policy issues if it is to meet any of the expectations of its constituency.

If this does not happen soon, the social base and bonds of solidarity that underpin our social movements could be weakened. But if creative and effective strategies are adopted, grassroots power could be enhanced by exploiting opportunities which present themselves.

The state is rapidly formulating new policies in a number of areas. Some of these, such as its decisions around Group Areas and other legislation, can only be dealt with indirectly through protest and lobbying. But there are instances where democratic forces can directly influence the direction of future policy.

One such opportunity lies in their participation in the Special Fund President FW de Klerk announced on March 15 this year. The R2-billion destined for housing and related urban development, will be overseen by Jan Steyn,

former chairman of the Urban Foundation.

As always, the cities are where the most crucial battles for state power and hegemony are fought out. In the 1960s, Grand Apartheid coincided with repressive de-urbanisation. In the late 1970s, the reformist neo-apartheid strategies were complemented by the rural-urban divide inspired by the Rieker Commission. In the early- to mid-1980s, reformist confederalism was premised on 'orderly urbanisation' and regional spatial ordering. In the mid- to late-1980s, securocratic consolidation was coupled to the WIAM ('winning-hearts-and-minds') programme that combined repression of independent social movements with the lifting of influx control, selective upgrading and privatisation.

Grassroots social movements resisted all these policies and neither side achieved their original objectives. The legacy of these past struggles has resulted in a new round of battles with major class interests at stake.

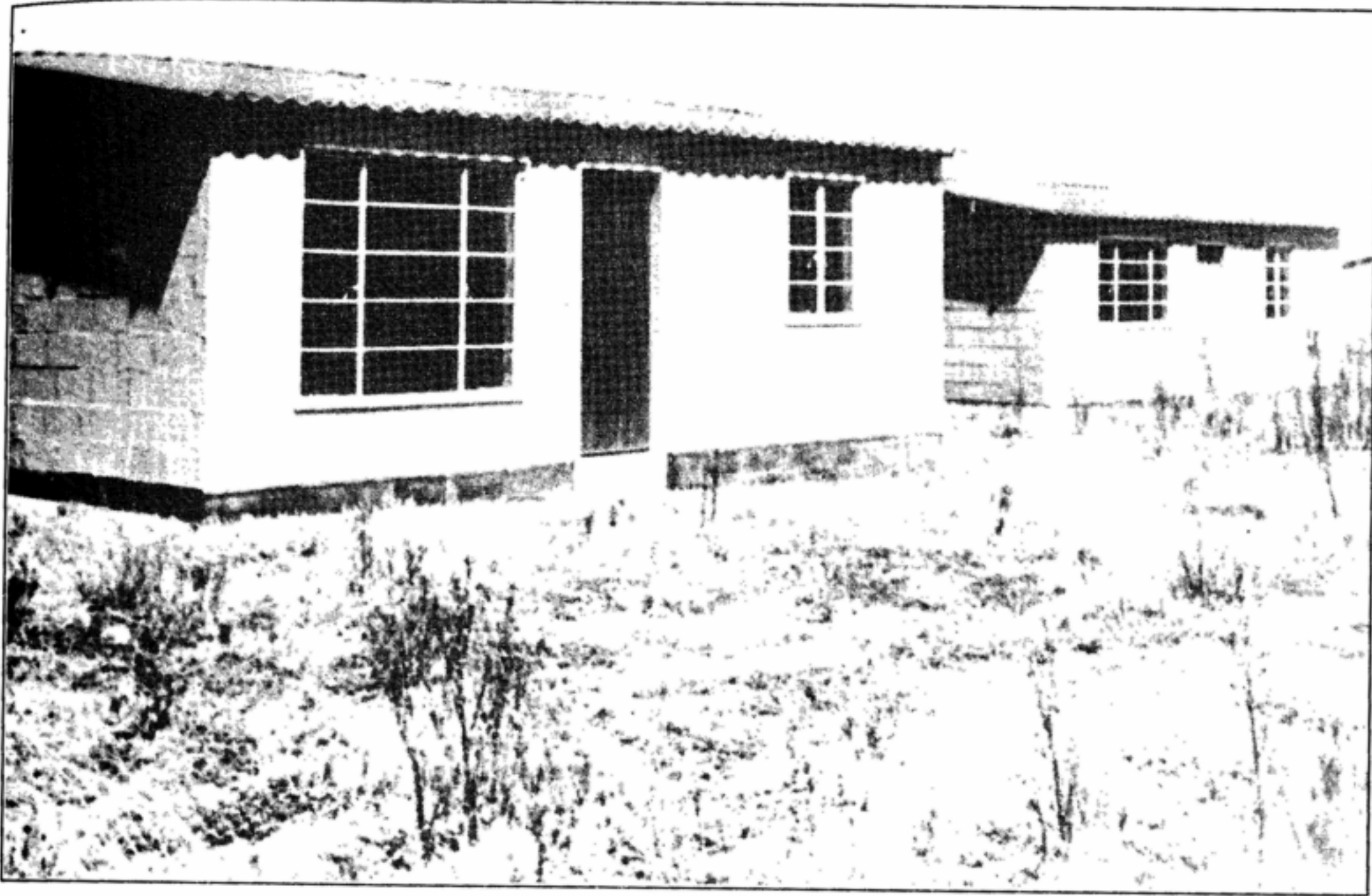
The De Klerk administration wrested power from the securocrats, and replaced the WIAM programme - which was the basis for the state's urban policy - with a policy framework that

has been formulated largely by the 'econocrats' - urban policy planners of big capital in the Urban Foundation (UF), liberal economic reformers in the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) and state officials.

The new urban policy framework coincides, in the eyes of big capital - with political transition to a post-apartheid constitutional order, and will be backed financially by the major financial institutions, big corporations, conservative foreign governments and now the state's fiscus. This policy development is, therefore, probably the most important component of the liberalisation phase that will precede the democratisation process that is to follow.

The four main components of the state and capital's new policy of deracialised urbanisation proceed from the same starting point - that racial discrimination is dysfunctional. And all four envisage a similar outcome - deracialised capitalism. These initiatives are:

- \* the UF Urbanisation Unit's new ideological vision of the city;
- \* the October 1989 UF announcement of its Loan Guarantee Initiative - involving approximately R1-bn;
- \* De Klerk's 1990 announcement of the R2-billion Special Fund initiative;



\* the Development Bank's new municipal finance system developed in response to the Soweto Rent Boycott.

These initiatives clearly contain the ideological parameters of the new urban policy, its financial mechanisms and possible decision-making system. Understanding these initiatives will make it possible to identify the effects of this emerging policy framework on ordinary people's lives and will enable popular organisations to generate some alternative responses.

Certainly, new urban policy will not be implemented exactly as its designers intend - popular struggle will play its part too.

These initiatives could either be a unique opportunity with major positive consequences for urban communities; or, if left unchecked, could result in an urban restructuring process that could displace people on a scale similar to the forced removals of the 1950s and 1960s.

Both the state and capital base their policy on the assumption that racially-based state interventionist urban policies can be replaced by market-based, non-statist urban policies that will allocate resources according to class rather than racial cleavages.

Mass-based organisations must then

## Special Trust Fund

The Special Trust Fund will be headed by former Urban Foundation chairman, Jan Steyn, who accepted the job on condition that:

- \* the government abolishes all race laws which inhibit development;
- \* the trust will be independent of the state.

The areas which have been targeted for intervention include: education and training, health and welfare, job creation and small business development. How this will be done and what fiscal policy will be applied still has to be negotiated. But Steyn has indicated his support for two things:

- \* that money will not be in the form of outright grants - resources will have to be re-circulated to sustain the fund;
- \* the resources could be used to gear up additional finance via schemes similar to the Loan

Guarantee Initiative.

Steyn has also been given the freedom to set up his own board of trustees. How this trust will intervene clearly depends on the response of mass-based formations.

If they boycott the trust, the funds will most probably be used to finance and subsidise the accumulation strategies of finance capital, the construction industry and black business.

At the same time, it would be fatal for the ANC and other mass-based formations in the liberation movement to participate at board level without first stipulating how the fund should dispense development funds and how it should interact with local communities. If they fail to do this, then they may well find themselves party to decisions about the allocation of resources that could easily divide and disempower local communities.

develop and adopt an alternative democratic urban policy framework that could result in a socially just outcome for the oppressed urban communities.

**T**he clearest public presentation of the urban policy vision of the UF and South African big capital - whose views the Urban Foundation often reflects - appears under Anne Bernstein's name in an article entitled *'Focus on the Cities - Towards a New National Agenda'* in the June edition of *Social Dynamics*.

The theory underlying UF policy is the liberal thesis that, as Bernstein says 'apartheid ideology has come into conflict with ... the reality of a single interdependent economy'. From this comes the fundamental principle at the heart of the deracialised urbanisation: remove all apartheid controls so that rational economic forces can determine the form and function of the city.

This is expressed as a commitment to a 'new urbanisation strategy' based on 'freedom of movement' and 'full citizenship for all'. Freedom from racial controls rather than economic redistribution, therefore, is the thrust of this policy.

Bernstein says South African cities face two obstacles: 'the negative consequences of apartheid'; and how the millions of urbanised blacks can be 'integrated into our urban society, economy and service networks'.

Economic exploitation is not identified as a 'serious obstacle'.

She identifies ten 'key policy issues' that should constitute the new 'national agenda'. These include focusing on providing jobs, services and facilities, and planning integrated urban regions, giving cities 'functionally derived' rather than racially defined boundaries and divisions

The old conception of colonial town must be done away with, says Bernstein, in favour of a vision of 'thriving urban entities' which attract investment from national and international sources.

And any city planning must allow for massive growth in population as a result of deracialisation, with integrated urban development as it is not enough to have a 'few good projects that create islands of privilege in a sea of poverty', says Bernstein.

She argues that the poor should be included, not excluded, through the legalisation of informal unregulated residential areas - because it is in these areas where the new 'city builders' are build-

ing 'prolific and affordable shelter'.

Lastly, Bernstein says, all leaders at local and national level 'must seek to develop popularly accepted and effective processes, and ultimately institutions, that will develop and then communicate a shared vision of the future'.

Bernstein's ten policy issues present five basic themes: de-racialisation; functionality, ie technical rather than political criteria should be the basis of planning; economic growth; effective management; and integrated development.

The UF framework is a step forward because it commits big business to a far-reaching anti-apartheid deracialisation programme. Indeed, some concerns of the union and civic movement are implicit in this rather general and abstract vision. But the omissions in the UF agenda are so serious that it is unlikely to become the basis for a 'shared vision of the future'. Ultimately the UF framework does not deal adequately with the root cause of our urban crisis.

Most importantly it fails to deal with the role of the market; the nature of ownership; access to and control over development capital; and the central role of community participation in planning.

Clearly, in the UF's view there is no need to spell out the connections between economic growth, urban development planning and the market. The UF assumes market-based, unregulated allocation of resources.

Also, the UF view assumes private individual ownership as the juridical basis of the development process. This becomes more apparent when seen in the light of the UF's development finance proposals.

The UF vision also takes for granted that the state and capital will be the dominant interests in the decision-making process, with institutions like the UF, SAIIT and DBSA to be the conduits for channelling development capital into the communities.

Nor does the UF vision see community participation in planning as a key issue in its own right. Instead, it is referred to as one of a number of other 'new methods' of management or 'participatory processes'.

The UF's final assumption is that racial controls rather than economic constraints are the greatest obstacles the urban poor faces in securing access to services, facilities, shelter and land.

Until these assumptions are defined exactly, it will be difficult to achieve a 'shared vision' between capital, the state

**On October 5 1989, the Urban Foundation announced it had 'linked major Western countries and International business with a South African private sector-led venture that will mobilise more than R1-billion in home loans for low-income families - money which could be enough to house no less than 250 000 people in 40 000 homes. A further R2-billion could be made available by banks and building societies.**

**This new package will enable financial institutions to give loans to low income home owners without reducing their profit margins or increasing their risk. Instead, the costs of risk, profit security and loan administration will be transferred to the individual home owner.**

**To date, banks and building societies have refused to provide loans for less than R35 000. This excluded 90% of those who require homes. The new package will provide loans of between R12 500 and R35 000, making it possible for the top 40% of those who require housing to get a loan.**

**For banks and building societies, giving loans to poor people is riskier than giving loans to rich people as it is assumed poor people are more likely to fail to meet their commitments.**

**Traditionally, the banks and building societies provide home loans for 80% to 95% of the value of the property. If the owner stops paying, the property is sold and proceeds cover the debt.**

**To reduce their risk in the small-loans sector, banks and building societies want to limit their loans to cover only 60% of the value of the property.**

**The institutions would therefore give 80% loans, but 20% of the loan will be covered by a special new insurance designed by a consortium of insurance companies. This insurance will be a compulsory policy on bonds of R35 000 or less.**

**A second, optional, policy equal to 15% of the property value can be taken out by those who cannot afford the 20% deposit normally required by banks and building societies. People taking this**



## The Loan Guarantee Initiative

option will then only pay a 5% deposit, and the bank or building society will still be guaranteed its full 20% deposit.

But insurance companies would not issue these insurance policies if they did not have their own guarantees. This comes in the form of the Loan Guarantee Fund: R20-million in direct contributions from the British, German and Swiss governments, BP South Africa, Caltex Oil, Japan South Africa Fund, Toyota, Anglo-American, Anglovaal, Barlow Rand, First National Bank, Gencor, Liberty Life, Nedcor, Rembrandt, Sanlam, Southern Life, Standard Bank, Tongaat-Hulett, United Building Society, Nedperm Bank, Saambou, Santambank, Standard Bank and Volkskas.

The Loan Guarantee Fund was necessary to convince insurance companies to come into the deal and to reduce their risk so that they would be prepared to allow a low premium on the two policies.

The premiums for all the insurance guarantees are paid by the home buyer. So, to get a loan for less than R35 000, the home buyer must pay the premiums for the compulsory 20% insurance policy and the optional 15% deposit insurance. These costs are not carried in any way by the financial institutions, the Loan Guarantee Fund or the state.

So-called 'small loans' are also not profitable for banks and building societies. The LGI scheme, however, has devised a way to resolve the profitability from small loans problem.

Banks and building societies make their profit from the interest paid on the loan which is repayable over 20 or 30 years. The insurance scheme which covers 15% of the loan means home buyers will be paying back a 95% loan rather than the usual 80% loan. And the two insurance policies provide cover for a total of 35% of the value of the property in the event of non-payment and repossession.

Collateral, therefore, is no longer primarily a cash deposit, it has been turned into an additional

source of profit.

The banks and building societies have always argued that small loans are unprofitable because they cost more to administer than large loans. While the administrative cost for every loan is identical - you need personnel, stationery, postage, computer time, legal advice - the cost as a percentage of the total profit is higher for small loans.

This problem has been resolved via amendments to the Usury Act which regulates what costs the banks and building societies can charge to the home buyer and what costs should be carried by the banks and building societies.

Business has convinced the state to include an 'initiation fee' of R175 (to cover the costs of approving the loan); a 'security variation fee' of R100 to help cover paperwork costs incurred when home buyers change jobs - documenting the name of the new employer who stands security for the bond; and a 'monthly ledger fee' of R5 to cover expenses.

The UF argues this additional R280 must be measured against the reduction of the existing 'valuation fee' from R250 to R100.

The biggest constraint on how much a bank or building society can lend out is the size of their capital reserves. By law, the smaller the capital reserves, the less a bank may lend out. But banks and the government now have a common political and financial interest: how to get profitable loans to poor black home buyers. The government has thus re-negotiated the capital-lending ratio enabling banks and building societies to lend out more money.

The solution lies in, literally, manufacturing a new class of capital. Capital can be created - without acquiring more fixed assets or investments - by issuing a certificate with a set value that can be sold on the financial market to any investor. The money from this sale becomes a form of capital.

The banks and building societies are going to issue a ten-year, non-redeemable, variable,

convertible debenture. After ten years it will become a preference share. It is defined as a debenture because it is a fixed interest-bearing security.

The Reserve Bank's approval for this new class of capital is required and it has been given.

The new special loans for less than R35 000 will be issued against this new class of capital and not against traditional capital reserves.

This means that each bank and building society will have two 'loans books', one for traditional loans against traditional capital reserves and one for special loans against this new class of capital.

Special lending criteria to regulate the special loans book have been devised:

- \* only loans of R35 000 and under apply;
- \* the property value may not exceed R45 000;
- \* the average loan size must equal R25 000, to ensure that most loans are not in the upper range.

The number of special loans a bank or building society can grant will depend on the number of debentures it issues. All special loans will be at normal interest rates.

Finance capital has praised this whole deal with all its various components because it provides a way of locking millions of black families into privatised individual contracts with financial institutions without increasing risk or reducing profit margins.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the UF has received undertakings from banks and building societies and that collectively these institutions will be able to make available R3-billion in special loans on the terms outlined above.

The UF would also like trade unions to direct the major pension and provident funds to buy the debentures. The UF argues that by doing so, the unions will be making a direct investment in workers' housing while simultaneously investing pension or provident fund money at market rates.

and the urban poor.

But when it comes to building hegemony, capital's trick is to avoid raising contentious issues. Instead, it discusses policy principles generally and abstractly, backing this up with vast lists of commissioned research material - that will take a long time to read - hoping to hide conflictual issues in an over-arching statement of goodwill that hides more than it reveals. Alliances built on these generalisations however, increase the risk of a conflict of interests emerging later.

**T**he scenario that emerges from the state and capital's new policy framework has far-reaching implications for the unions, civics and all other mass organisations concerned with the future of the oppressed communities.

This framework has a clear-cut ideological vision for the future of our cities premised primarily on deracialisation, up to R3-billion in loan money for home buyers, a R2-billion Special Fund from the central fiscus for (let us assume) infrastructural development and a new racially-neutral market-based municipal financing system.

To put it bluntly, around R5-billion is to be pumped into housing construction and urban development over the next five to ten years. This could provide nearly two million people with shelter of one sort or another, going some way to alleviate the current housing crisis.

If unions and civics do not develop a policy response, this will be done on terms determined by finance capital, construction capital and the state. It will be racially neutral and couched in the language of deracialisation and the market: freedom of movement, choice, association and residence. The result, however, will be to restructure our cities and communities along class lines.

Why is this so? Largely because the common glaring theme that pervades all policies that state and business agencies are putting together is deracialisation. Deracialisation is a good thing. However it is being used to mask privatisation and deregulation measures that could have disastrous consequences.

The Loan Guarantee Initiative (See separate box) will subordinate low-income home owners to the interests of financial capital through a complex package of deracialised financial transactions, private ownership and a secondary housing market.

## New municipal financing system

**The Report on Finances and Economy of Soweto**, which was written by Dr Simon Brand of the Development Bank and released late last year, addresses the financial crisis in Soweto, caused in part by the township's three-year-old rent boycott.

The report is significant because it maps out a municipal financing system that is clearly designed to deracialise control and market mechanisms to effect the restructuring of the composition of the Soweto community. According to the report, this can be achieved by privatising the housing stock and increasing the cost of municipal services. But this will result in the exclusion of the poor and the inclusion of the house-hungry upwardly mobile sectors of the black population.

The principles that underlie Brand's urban development framework are privatisation and deregulation. He argues forcefully for the transfer of houses to the registered tenants at minimal or no cost. But he says that this should be coupled to the following measures:

- \* the stimulation of the secondary housing market;
- \* tariffs for trading services (electricity, water and refuse) to recover costs;
- \* the privatisation of services;
- \* the abolition of site rent and its replacement with an assessment rate high enough to cover the non-recovered cost on trading and non-trading services;
- \* transfer the cost of maintaining the housing stock to the residents.

These measures will increase the economic burdens of the poorer sections of the community which, in turn will increase the pressure on them to seek 'cheaper' residential areas.

It will also greatly strengthen the black middle class in the following sectors:

- \* the transport sector: further deregulation coupled to a strengthening of commuter links with Johannesburg will consolidate the market for black transport businesses;
- \* the black construction sector: the deregulation of building standards and control will enable black construction businesses to exploit the huge housing construction market in Soweto;
- \* black commerce and industry: the opening up of new commercial and industrial business areas will help consolidate Soweto's commercial and industrial sector.

If the financing mechanisms succeed in squeezing out the poorer sections of the community and higher income groups are attracted into Soweto, there will be a corresponding rise in the average disposable income of the community as a whole.

In short, Brand's municipal economic paradigm could, by way of various complex inter-linked measures, exclude the poor and include the wealthy. The result could be increasing inter-class tensions within the community and the gradual breakdown of the bonds of solidarity that currently underpin the civic movement in the townships.

The Special Trust Fund of R2-billion (See separate box) has been handed to the private sector to manage, on the understanding that all racial laws that prohibit development will be abolished.

And the Development Bank's proposed new de-racialised municipal financing systems (See separate box) will restructure the urban tax base and divide urban communities along class lines.

There are two issues at stake: the geographical consequences created by

market-based urban development; and the class consequences of the dominant role of financial capital in the urban development process.

In cities around the world an unregulated urban economy usually works against the urban poor. There are many and complex reasons, but the basic causes are:

- \* land becomes increasingly expensive as the population increases and more land is needed by commercial, indus-

trial and finance capital for investment and development;

- \* houses become more expensive as the cost of materials increases and the demand for houses outgrows the supply;

- \* certain areas inhabited by the urban poor are targeted for urban improvement or 'gentrification'. This is done by using municipal finance charges (such as service charges and rates) to make it increasingly expensive for the urban poor to remain in a particular area. As they move out, commercial development is encouraged to attract a higher income group.

The result is poor people are forced to move from one area to another for reasons related to their lack of wealth.

This is already happening in our communities. But this is still limited because the state still owns the bulk of the existing housing stock.

Deregulation, privatisation and the free market - all created under the guise of deracialisation - will turn land, services and houses into commodities that will be exchanged on the market irrespective of the social consequences. The bottom-line is simple: when poor people live on land and in houses that have become more 'valuable' in market terms

than what these people can afford, they will slowly but surely get pushed out by the relentless pressure of better off owner-occupiers and by various forms of investment capital that require the properties for a range of purposes. This is extremely difficult to resist collectively, because the process involves hundreds of thousands of individual market transactions and not a single act by some outside agency on the community as a whole.

If all the various schemes work out as intended, the role of finance capital will change from being a minor element in a state-dominated urban power structure, to being the dominant force in a new deracialised urban system. This has major implications for power relations within communities and between communities and capital.

The role of capital in society cannot be understood purely in terms of an individual contract between the financial institution and the home buyer. The small handful of banks and building societies lend money out to millions of people in similar material circumstances. These institutions, in turn, are part of think tanks like the UF who have a

certain pre-conception of how society should be organised and what constitutes rational and acceptable behaviour. They can also afford, through the mass media, to promote the notion of nuclear families in privately-owned dwellings.

Financial institutions - through their control of the finances and the publicised notions of how homes should be organised into communities - are in positions of great power over communities.

Previously the white state controlled these ideas, now they will be generated by a self-portrayed 'non-racial' economic power that will relate to the communities via the apparently non-racial and neutral market. The power relations that the deracialised market hides, however, are class rather than racially based.

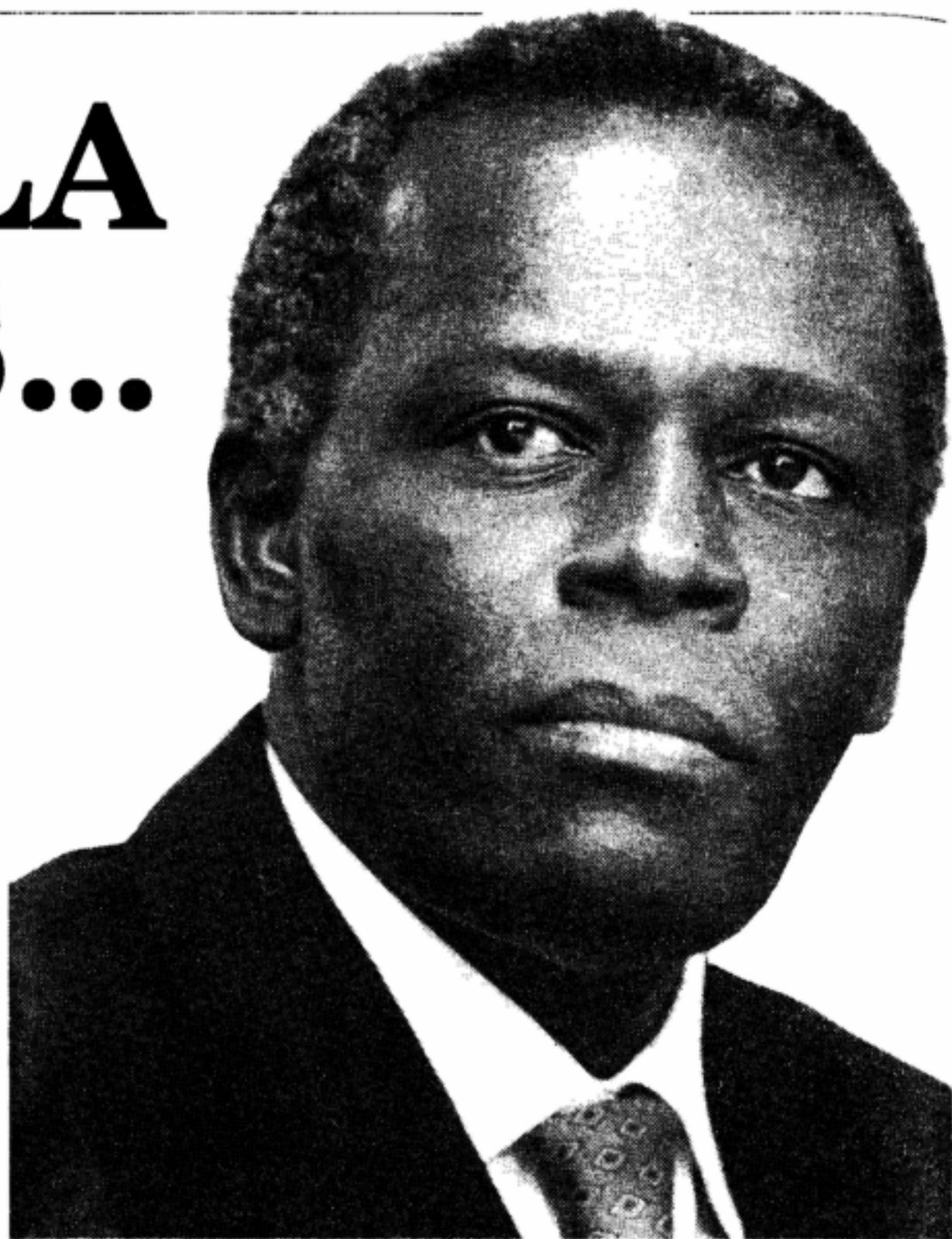
If the state and capital implement their urban planning vision, communities will become divided along class lines and the urban poor will soon be subordinated to finance capital and its partners.

A very different outcome, however, is possible if the mass-based organisations decisively and quickly seize the moment and intervene with clear-cut policies and proposals. ●



*Homelessness: an issue of priority for the MDM*

# ANGOLA EDGES...



*Angola is well on its way to reaching a settlement. The two parties to the 15-year conflict have already met face to face - and will continue to do so.*

*David Coetsee from SouthScan  
Features reports*

In the past months there have been signs that the inevitable settlement in Angola is inching closer. For the first time it has been officially acknowledged that the two sides to the 15-year conflict have met face to face - and will continue with a series of meetings.

But Unita and the government have also intensified military activity. The government threatened the southern Unita headquarters of Jamba, and the rebel force replied with sabotage attacks in the capital of Luanda, and a heightened offensive in the north.

There are developments in Luanda itself which might lead to an accommodation with the rebel force Unita - a preparedness for political reform not directly forced by Unita or its main sponsor, the US.

Unita seems to be seeking to establish a new zone of operations in the north of the country. This change of tactics comes after the loss of the southern town of Mavinga and the bombardment of its Jamba headquarters in March.

The intensified action is also aimed at strengthening its hand in the approaching peace talks.

There have been reports of increased rebel activity around the Quimbele strong-

hold in Uige province, involving active help from Zaire. It is believed that in early May the government only retained complete control of two municipalities in Uige and two in Malange.

There have also been persistent rumours that a number of small but significant towns have at various times in the past month fallen under rebel control, if briefly - notably Gabela in Kwanza Sul. There has also been a spate of Unita attacks in the central highlands, including an artillery attack on Huambo itself.

Luanda and surrounding areas have also been the target of increasing sabotage. The city's electricity was cut off for a period, and Unita hit the city's water supply for the second time in three months.

On the government side, it is likely that in March the Angolan armed forces, Fapla, launched a fresh offensive in the south to build on earlier gains at Mavinga in the south east. The airforce's bombing raids of areas near to and surrounding Jamba have apparently continued.

But as *WIP* went to press there were reports that government troops had pulled back from Mavinga - possibly as part of a diplomatic deal to facilitate a settle-

ment.

Despite intensified warfare, adherents of both sides - and other groupings - have met in peaceful surroundings in Portugal.

The first congress of Angolan expatriates took place in Lisbon on April 28, just after the official government-Unita talks in the town of Evora. The event was officially unconnected, but was welcomed by both sides to the dispute. It was organised by Francisco Viana, son of a well-known former MPLA figure, Gentil Viana.

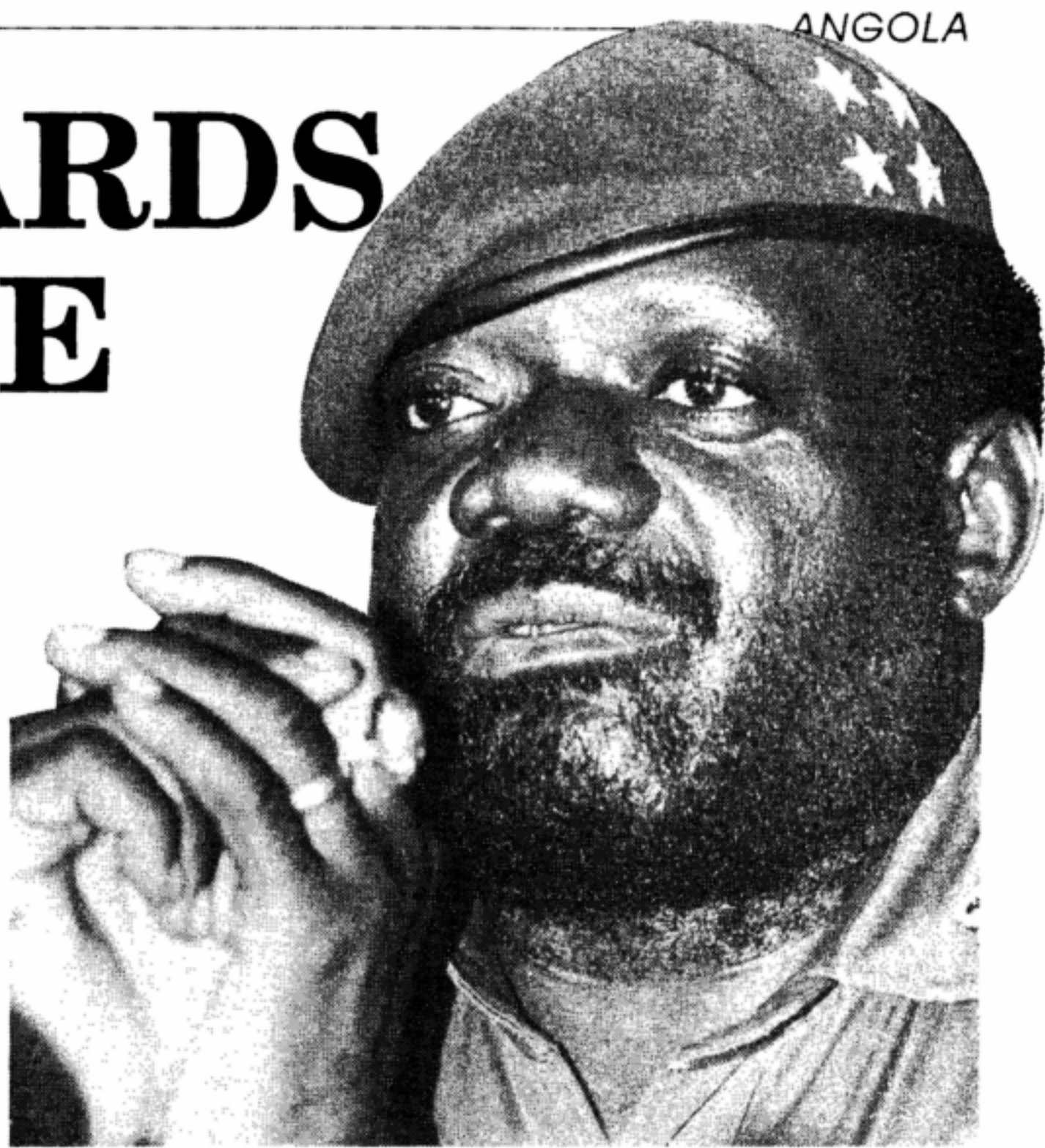
In a conciliatory statement, the participants, who came mainly from Portugal, called for peace, for a society which respected differences, and for freedom of expression.

The congress was attended by the Angolan ambassador to Portugal. Unita also subsequently expressed its approval.

Participants said that for the first time Angolans from both sides of the political divide, and from other, non-party quarters, could meet on common ground.

There has also been intense discussion in Luanda about the overall direction of the country. Pressure for political reform has grown as the economic restructuring package (SEF), on which

# TOWARDS PEACE



so many had banked, failed to get off the ground. Once a major exporter of coffee and diamonds, Angola now relies on its oil industry for over 90% of its income. It ploughs half of that back into war spending. However, Angolans no longer blame the economic crisis solely on the war and its effects - they see government policy as a major cause.

Earlier this year a key figure in SEF development, Lopo de Nascimento, said that without political reform economic reform would fail. It is apparent that the new constitutional proposals are an attack on entrenched bureaucracy.

The document outlining the planned political reforms said: 'We have seen that carrying out our economic reform programme has been complicated by the absence of political and administrative changes creating the right conditions for its implementation'.

'We now need to define an outline of the country's economic recovery in a different situation, in which the gradual establishment of a peacetime economy becomes one of the bases of our policy', it said.

**V**iews have been canvassed on the proposed constitutional reforms, and the government has named 1990 'the year of the expansion of democracy'.

There has been an added impetus for change: international economic aid for the drought-stricken south has not been forthcoming at the levels needed, and observers believe it will not come until an inert bureaucracy is removed.

The proposed reforms include: separate government and party functions; a prime ministerial post appointed by the president; a time limit for holding party jobs. There is also a concession on the right to strike - as a last resort.

On the issue of multi-party elections, President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos said last month: 'We don't feel a pressing

need to change our system, but it's possible that the evolution of the system could lead, in the future, to a new system which includes several parties'.

Dos Santos was speaking after the MPLA central committee drew up the reform proposals to be put before a party congress in December.

However, many in the party apparatus in Luanda believe multi-party elections should come much sooner, and there is impatience with the constitutional guidelines, which is seen as a politically defensive document.

One sector which has already seen a response to its impatience is the media. The document cites new arrangements for press freedom - involving the creation of a ministry of information and the permitting of non-party publications for the first time.

The MPLA's director of information and propaganda Joao Miranda said in an interview with agencies last month: 'We came to the conclusion that we had mechanically transplanted the form of socialism, and this has been problematic for various reasons'. Miranda said Angola was not yet ready for a multi-party political system, but added: 'In the medium to long term, it will be admitted

in this country'.

'After the congress there should be radical changes - a prime minister, separation of party and government, the revision of constitutional and electoral law', Miranda said. 'I think that if all these changes take place we could see elections before the end of this electoral period (in 1992)'.

Many cadres inside the ruling party say the majority of the MPLA party now wants faster change - and some believe this will come in the next couple of months. The main opponents of change are described as those who kept tight control after the trauma of the ultra-left Nitista coup bid in 1977, which brought in its wake a much tougher and more centralised approach.

Today opposition parties are still not permitted, but the government has allowed 'civic associations' to canvass support.

The president of the country's first non-political organisation, Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, leader of the Civic Association of Angola (ACA), told reporters: 'Most people here are neither MPLA nor Unita. All these people are dreaming of a third voice, a third force'.

After meeting in the Portuguese city

of Evora on April 24 and 25, the Angolan government and Unita set out their preliminary negotiating positions.

However observers in Luanda believe Pinto de Andrade has the support of the US, Unita and Portugal in forming a 'third force' to take on the MPLA in elections.

The Portuguese government described the meeting as exploratory. The facilitator was foreign affairs secretary of state Jose Durao Barroso - who subsequently received effusive praise from Unita for his role.

Earlier the Luanda government had refused a US suggestion that the talks should be held in Geneva with Zaire President Mobutu's mediation, and with US and Soviet technical support.

According to President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, there are now two main issues under discussion.

First is the recognition of the present legal order, 'leading eventually to the recognition of our state and govern-

ment'.

Second is the multi-party system.

Dos Santos said on April 30 that if the issue of recognition was resolved there could be movement on the multi-party issue.

**U**nita, for its part, is refusing adamantly to recognise the Angolan government.

It has, however, declared that it will no longer engage in hostile propaganda, other than to make 'objective criticism of the government's social and economic programmes'.

In a statement on May 1, the organisation's political bureau said that there had been 'extremely positive results concerning everything that happened in Portugal regarding Angola'.

It recognised the Angolan state 'which has a leader with whom Unita, as armed opposition, wants to negotiate'. It would not, however, recognise the legitimacy of the government.

On the issue of mediation, Unita said the only channels between the opposing parties should be the Portuguese government, Zaire's President Mobutu, 'the official mediator', and the US and Soviet governments. Mobutu's position as 'mediator' is, however, becoming increasingly nominal as direct contacts between the two sides have become a reality.

Unita has also called for observers from the US, the Soviet Union, Cuba and Zaire to be present at the talks.

Dos Santos again accused the US and South Africa of continuing to send arms to Unita via Zaire.

The possibility of multi-party elections is a clear enticement to Unita. And another statement was clearly aimed at rebel leader Jonas Savimbi himself.

Dos Santos, in his new year's message enumerated eight points which had made up the Gbadolite agreement. Since Namibian independence and the Windhoek regional summit another point appears to have been added.

This concerns the special treatment which will be given to Savimbi in any peace deal.

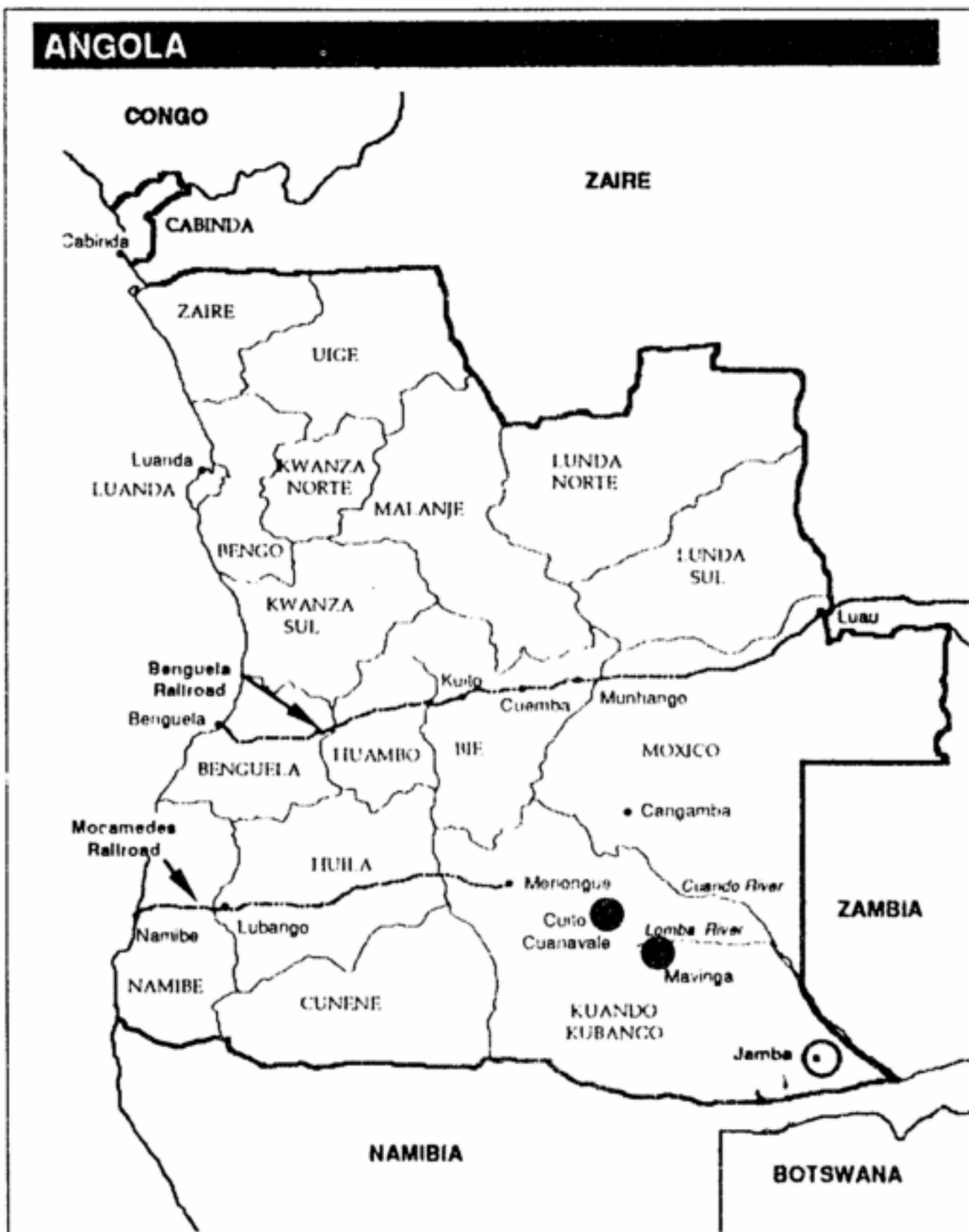
If the new point in the Luanda plan means Savimbi being integrated into government as part of the integration of Unita into existing structures, as set out at Gbadolite, then Luanda has moved far down the path set out by Washington for its client.

During the mini-summit at the time of Namibian independence in Windhoek, US secretary of state James Baker told Dos Santos the US was prepared, in the context of a ceasefire and the beginning of a good faith negotiation, to improve relations with the government of Angola.

The Americans believe Dos Santos became prepared to see a ceasefire as a prerequisite to any political negotiation. Early in April Unita had said it was 'ready to cease hostilities immediately without pre-conditions even if the MPLA maintains its (military) positions', in the area around Mavinga (reversing a previous demand).

Also, if internal MPLA pressure for multi-party elections proves unstoppable, the US will have no ostensible reason for not dropping its long war with Luanda.

At present much is still being decided on the field of battle. But the two parties to the war - as well as many of their adherents - have met face to face, and will continue to do so. Another unstoppable Southern African political event may be beginning. - *SouthScan Features* ●



# Ozone-friendly politics



*The struggle for human rights only makes sense when human existence is certain.*

*Jacklyn Cock states the case for green politics*

**G**reen politics, with its fundamental concern for the environment, is often greeted in South Africa with a response that would do credit only to the ostrich or the laboratory rat.

Ostrich-like, many South Africans overlook the fact that the struggle for human rights only makes sense when human existence is certain. Right now humanity, along with the environment, is seriously threatened - above all by nuclear war, a danger all too remote in South African thinking.

The 'laboratory rat mentality' is reflected in those who can only run in the familiar maze of conventional politics with its focus on issues of race and class. Environmental issues are viewed as a diversion and a luxury - or as quite irrelevant.

In 'Green politics' the concept of 'politics' is understood very broadly to embrace all aspects of the distribution of power and resources in society. Green politics links the struggle to end the exploitation of the environment with

the struggle for peace and human justice.

In South Africa environmental issues, ranging from the Third World types (such as soil erosion) to First World issues (like acid rain) are deeply political. Small wonder that the Ecology Party, which aims to operate outside of politics to promote environmental awareness, has had difficulty getting off the ground. Rupert Lorimer has commented that this strategy is not really feasible, because 'ecology is not the only issue'.

In fact ecology is *the* issue, but it is deeply embedded in a mass of other issues to do with the distribution of power and resources.

Challenges from below to the existing power structure have often included environmental issues. A grassroots environmental movement existed in embryonic form in 1984-86, the days of 'people's power'. Through people's courts and street committees a great deal was done to organise garbage col-

lection and establish 'people's parks' with small rockeries and colourful painted tyres in many open spaces in townships throughout the country.

But these efforts were only a small part of a much broader struggle against apartheid. Japhta Lekgetho, president of the Soweto-based National Environmental Awareness Campaign (Neac), has emphasised that apartheid is at the core of environmental degradation. 'Blacks have always had to live in an environment that was neither beautiful nor clean. We have not had proper housing, roads or services because the authorities would not accept that we were a permanent part of the city scene'.

Last year Neac members demonstrated with placards saying, 'Provide housing for the poor and homeless', 'Protect our environment by removing the Group Areas Act and the Land Act' and 'Apartheid makes our townships dirty'.

It is also apartheid which has excluded the majority of South Africans from some of our most beautiful beaches

and mountains.

Despite clear areas of common interest in the anti-apartheid and environmental struggles, there is still a danger that conservation will become discredited in the eyes of the majority because conservation projects have often disregarded human rights and dignity.

For instance, the establishment of the Pilansberg Game Reserve meant social dislocation and distress for many local people.

As rural worker Richard Clasey has stated: 'If conservation means losing water rights, losing grazing and arable land and being dumped in a resettlement area without even the most rudimentary infrastructure and services - as was the case when the Tembe Elephant Park near Kosi Bay was declared in 1983 - this can only promote a vigorous anti-conservation ideology among the rural communities of South Africa'.

There is a dangerous parallel in the way women's issues and environmental issues are sometimes viewed as middle-class concerns. Feminism is often deemed bourgeois and divisive - concerned with extending privileges for an already privileged group of middle-class women.

Similarly, environmental issues are sometimes viewed as limited to the conservation of large, cuddly and spectacular creatures such as the blue whale, the tiger or the giant panda bear. It is not certain how much the people who frequent fashion shows and art exhibitions to raise money for conservation care about human rights and welfare. Infant mortality rates in the bantustans do not seem to have the same fashionable appeal as the conservation of the black rhinoceros.

But environmental issues do have relevance to people of all classes.

Eddie Koch and Dirk Hartford have argued that environmental issues actually have the potential 'to build alliances across the divides of class and race'. But this is often not the case. Even the example they cite - the fight against indiscriminate use of pesticides - guarantees no easy convergence of class and race interests.

In the first place the pesticide industry is a source of enormous profit. Secondly, vegetable farmers in Natal, who have suffered from the indiscriminate use of pesticides such as the Agent Orange-type herbicide, are able to mobilise public opinion and demand state action.

Middle-class consumers have access to knowledge of the link between pesti-

cides and cancer and have the purchasing power to buy organically-grown produce from expensive health-food shops.

The real victims are the poor who do not have either this knowledge or this purchasing option. Among them, as Koch and Hartford point out, are the agricultural workers who spray the pesticides as well as the factory workers who manufacture them.

Toxic waste also affects us all, but - again - differentially. Those most affected are the workers directly handling these hazardous materials. There are reports that workers at Thor Chemicals, a multinational company which imports highly toxic mercury waste into South Africa, are suffering from a severe nervous disorder induced by mercury poisoning.

Green politics links the struggle against such exploitation of people with the struggle against the abuse of the environment.

In South Africa Green politics has to be firmly anchored in the needs of the majority. For many of our people living in the rural areas the lack of clean water and sanitation are priority environmental issues. They need to be addressed urgently - but will only be addressed by a democratic government, which is accountable to the people and which prioritises their interests.

Instead South Africa has a deeply authoritarian, repressive and undemocratic government. The contempt of its ministers for ordinary people is illustrated by response of the minister of environmental affairs, Gert Kotze, to The Star's petition to save St Lucia. At the time it had attracted the support of more than 200 000 signatories.

**T**he minister was unimpressed. He told a Cape audience that 'most of these people did not know what they were signing'; that such people cause development to be delayed - and 'as we all know, time is money'. He also said that half the signatures were those of children. In Kotze's opinion, people who support 'Green' movements are 'fanatics who do not listen to reason'.

Such arguments have been used against environmentalists, even in less repressive societies. Rachel Carson's book, *The Silent Spring*, was the catalyst for the American environmental movement. It was branded as part of a communist plot to undermine the United States economy and Carson was dismissed as a 'spinster who should have no concern

for genetics'.

In South Africa we desperately need state regulation to protect the environment. The recent Sappi chemical spill which devastated the Elands and Crocodile rivers in the Eastern Transvaal raises a number of questions. For example, who allowed a paper and pulp mill to be located on a then pristine river?

Clearly we need something like the United States Environmental Protection Agency, which was founded on two principles:

- \* The right of people and nature to exist unendangered by pollution. Regulatory protection should make this possible.

- \* The necessity of a framework aimed at the control of polluting industries, whose imperatives have been to compete for markets and to increase profits.

The problems of enforcement experienced by the EPA are well known. The degree of actual protection offered by environmental laws depends on their creative and vigorous enforcement. This requires officials who are environmentally committed and immune to bribes and intimidation. In South Africa such persons are in short supply.

Official corruption is strongly suggested by the recent cycad scandal in which 700 of these protected and rare South African plants suddenly arrived at a private home in Madeira without proper export and import licences. It is frequently alleged that South Africa is a conduit for ivory and rhino horn poached in countries as distant as Tanzania and Zaire.

Behind corruption is the even more powerful force of the profit motive. Not surprisingly, then, the co-option of Green issues by capital is another (particularly insidious) problem which environmentalists face.

The recent book by Brian Huntley, Roy Siegfried and Clem Sunter, *South African Environments into the 21st Century*, deserves praise for setting out key environmental issues in clear, accessible language and in a readable style. But there is something deeply worrying about the book.

It is structured around the notion of choice - clarifying certain choices the reader has to make between different scenarios. But there are two assumptions in the book which are not opened to choice - instead they are treated as givens. Both are highly controversial.

The first is that nuclear energy is both necessary and desirable. The second is that free enterprise is the only viable economic system.



Both these assumptions need to be subjected to critical scrutiny and debate.

There are many serious people who believe that nuclear energy is too expensive to be a viable alternative energy source for the future. They argue that the human factor involved in all stages of nuclear technology, military and non-military, makes accidents unavoidable. These accidents release highly poisonous radio-active materials into the environment.

One of the worst possibilities is the melt-down of a nuclear reactor. The impact would be similar to that of an atomic bomb. Thousands of people would die from immediate radiation exposure; more deaths would occur later from acute radiation sickness.

**M**any nuclear accidents have already happened and major catastrophes have often been narrowly avoided.

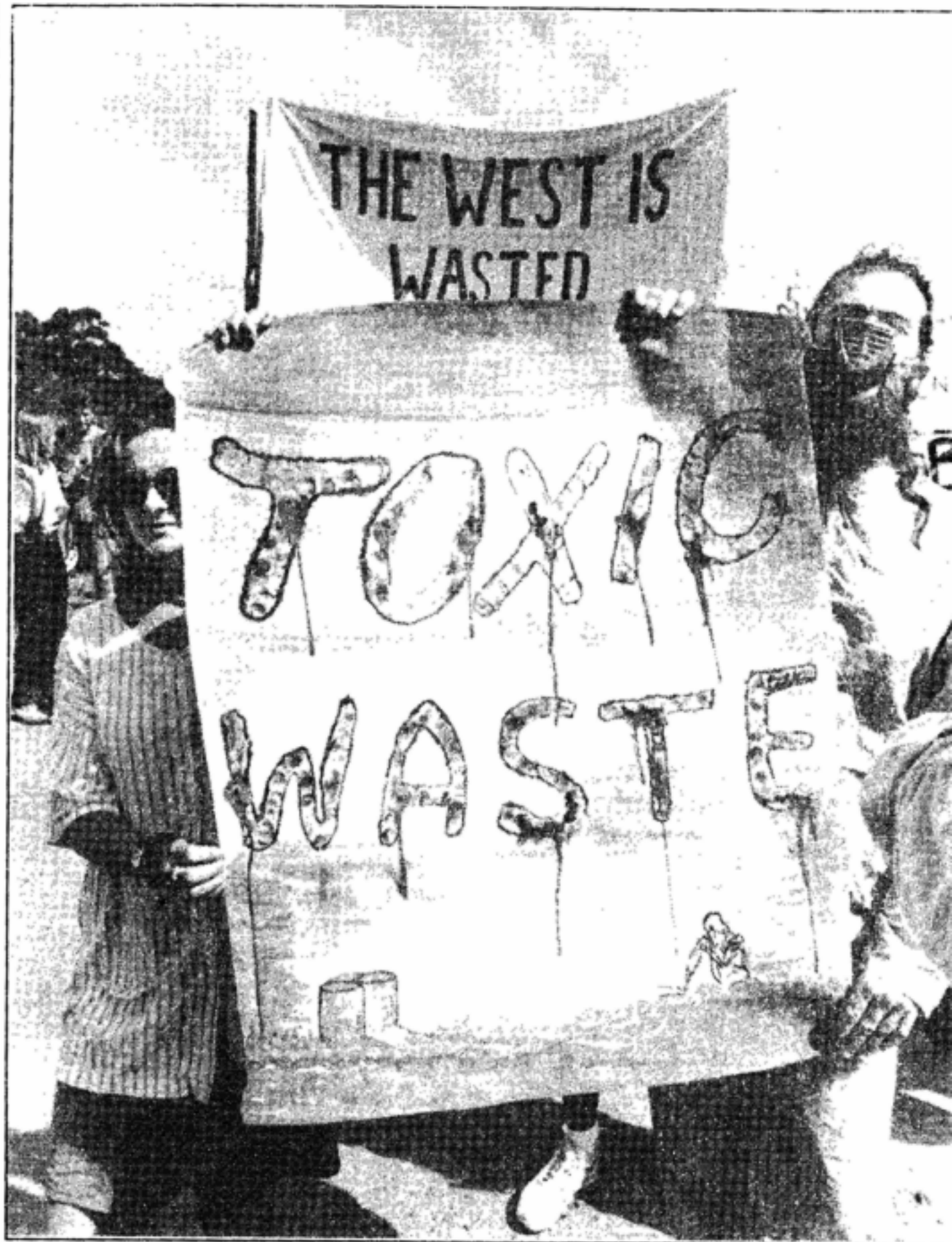
Another problem of nuclear power is the disposal of nuclear waste. Each reactor annually produces tons of radioactive waste that remains toxic for thousands of years. Plutonium remains poisonous for at least 500 000 years. No human technology can create safe containers for such an enormous time span.

The other unexamined assumption of Sunter and his co-authors relates to the free enterprise system. They assert that 'the Greens have gone wrong'. The Greens contradict themselves by demanding socialism and a clean environment at the same time. Socialism leads inevitably to the malfunctioning of the economy, which means that no money is available for conservation.

'... Man is a born opportunist. By denying that self-interest as a valid principle, socialists are suppressing people's innate ability to think in an efficient manner. Communism is an unnatural philosophy inflicted on mankind'.

This is a very contentious argument. There are many who argue that one simply cannot cure today's problems with the means that have produced them. They believe that it is capitalism, an economic system obsessed with growth and expansion, that has created many of our environmental problems.

Jonathan Porrit, director of Friends of the Earth, has argued that capitalism means ecological disaster. 'Capitalism can indeed survive only through permanent expansion - which in turn means the accelerating contraction of our life-support systems ... Capitalism as we



*Protestors outside Thor Chemicals In Cato Ridge, Natal*

know it simply cannot provide the pre-conditions for an ecologically sane, humane economy'.

It is capitalists, who - in the name of 'growth' and 'development' - are destroying our coastline and restricting its use to those who can afford to buy property in their costly marine developments. It is capitalists who are destroying the finite resources of our finite planet in their quest for profit.

Both the developments which mobilised widespread public environmental concern in South Africa recently - the Sappi spill and the proposal to mine the St Lucia dunes - are motivated by profit.

Before the Ndongwana spill, Sappi had already killed the Mandini River in Zululand. The company had a permit to discharge effluent into the Mandini which

was literally an industrial sewer. Even the deputy director in the Department of Water Affairs described the quality of the effluent as 'shocking'. This is the company - with a net income of almost R500 million in 1989 - which sponsors the 'Sappi Collection' of nature photographs!

Sappi absorbs about 50 percent of the South African production of kaolin, which is a fine white clay. A Sanlam subsidiary, Serina (Pty) Ltd, has applied for rights to mine kaolin on the slopes of Chapman's Peak. It is estimated that the 30 years of mining applied for will scar 27 ha of this lovely landscape on the scenic route from Cape Town to Cape Point.

The only possible gain is to the mining company which estimates that the

mine would generate about R700-million over the proposed 30-year contract.

Like Sappi, Shell promotes its image by making major contributions to wildlife and ecological projects. But this does not erase its role in the dieldrin scandal of 1985, when it was revealed that although the pesticide was banned in South Africa, it was manufactured in Durban and sold by Shell from this country to Botswana, Swaziland and elsewhere. These actions are all undertaken for profit.

Among the extraordinary ironies in the conservation cause was the election of Naas Steenkamp as the Wildlife Society's current president. Steenkamp is chairman of Gencor, which is a shareholder in Richards Bay Mining - the company bent on mining St Lucia.

It is widely agreed that to achieve the aims of Green politics - to end the exploitation of people and the environment - change is required. But what is hotly contested is the nature of the change.

Many people seem to believe a few adjustments to the system will do - less pollution, less destruction of vital resources and more environmentally conscious consumption.

As Kirkpatrick Sale put it, the problems 'are to be wafted away through the mechanism of the very force that created them and without anybody having to make any very substantial changes ... There is no suggestion anywhere that we should stop producing vast amounts of unnecessary electricity with coal plants that create acid rain; no thought that we should change our absurd dependence on the private automobile even though it is bound to produce toxic emissions no matter what miracle fuels we come up with; no hint that we should eliminate the industries that routinely produce toxic chemicals'.

Sale is one of a number of environmentalists urging middle-class people to change their lifestyles, to reduce consumption, to move away from a consumer to a conserver economy.

Just as feminism or gender equality is not compatible with male chivalry and protection, it is clear that a beautiful, unspoiled environment is not compatible with the present high levels of consumption in the developed world.

We cannot have it both ways.

As Fritz Schumacher has stated: 'We must live simply so that others may simply live'.

He is one of the advocates of a 'voluntary simplicity', who argue that sim-



*People's parks for people's power: one of the parks built in Oukasie during 1985*

plification of life in the First World is important because:

- \* We are running out of crucial non-renewable resources - for example cheaply available petroleum and natural gas.
- \* We are polluting ourselves into oblivion with massive discharges of waste from industrial production.
- \* Each day children in the Third World die from the effects of malnutrition and poor health care. They do so while massive military expenditure absorbs much of the First World's resources.

The greatest threat to our environment is the mobilisation of resources for war. The threat lies not only in the awesome destructive capacity of the weapons but in resources invested in this process.

**W**orld-wide military expenditure now amounts to more than \$900 billion a year. There are now more than 50 000 nuclear warheads in the world. The total explosive power of the world stock of nuclear weapons is about equal to one million Hiroshima bombs.

In 1981 there were about 50 million people who were either directly or indirectly engaged in military activities.

Militarisation usually refers to the mobilisation of resources for war against people. The concept can be expanded to include war against the environment, which shares many features of the war against populations.

Firstly, both are about maintaining power and maximising profit.

Secondly, they involve similar technology. For instance, there are many similarities between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. The technical process is the same in both civilian and military uses of nuclear power. Nuclear fission occurs in a nuclear reactor and in a nuclear bomb. The only difference is that in a reactor the fission process is controlled by the use of control rods halting an ever-expanding chain reaction. That chain reaction is uncontrolled in the process at work in a nuclear bomb.

Nuclear energy and nuclear weapons use the same raw materials. Presently there are only two raw materials which can undergo a number of fissions to produce a chain reaction. One of them is uranium-235, the other is plutonium-239. One or the other is essential for the production of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons.

The links between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons are conclusive enough, critics assert: we cannot do away with the one and keep the other.

Chemical weaponry and pesticides constitute another illustration of the similarities in technology in the war against nature and the war against people.

In *The Silent Spring*, Carson highlighted this. Nerve gases developed for World War 2 were used as pesticides in agriculture after the war. Likewise, herbicides developed for agriculture before the Vietnam War were used as defoliants in that war and by the South Africans in Angola.

Carson's biographer, Patricia Hynes, writes: 'The destruction of people and

nature with chemical poisons constitutes the same failure to solve problems other than by force'.

Carson's central warning was that the methods employed for insect control may 'destroy us along with the insects'. In 1985 the 'Hiroshima of the chemical industry' occurred when an accident at a pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, caused the death of at least 2 000 people and injured 200 000.

Both the war on nature and against people involve attitudes which legitimate killing and see violence as a solution to conflict. Both value domination, conquest and control. Both involve a disrespect for human and other forms of life.

Plans to mine titanium, a mineral used in missile systems, are at the centre of the St Lucia battle. Conservationists have objected to the mining of the dunes because it will upset the ecological balance of the area and restoring the dunes to their present state will be impossible.

Many people are not aware that large areas around St Lucia are already closed to the public because they are missile testing sites. Capetonians are certainly aware of the large areas around Arniston which are closed to the public for similar reasons.

The SADF is the largest landowner in South Africa outside of the game parks. Much of this land is devoted to training people and testing weapons for death and destruction. Surely conservationists should raise their voices against this as well as other ecological issues.

Finally the connection between war against nature and people must be judged in terms of the effects of such war. Speak to anyone who has visited Angola lately. It is widely suspected that Unita, which the SADF supported extensively, finances its operations by ivory poaching. Last year an American environmental group gave sworn evidence to the United States Congress that Unita had killed thousands of elephants to finance its war in Angola and that the SADF had helped channel the contraband along illicit trading routes.

Green politics, with its fight against the arms race and militarisation, clearly demands the total transformation of our society. At the Conference for a Democratic Future late last year, Earthlife called on 'the liberation movement to campaign wherever possible for the protection and rehabilitation of the environment'. Although this motion was passed, securing environmental issues a

central place in the South African liberation struggle will not be an easy task.

Conservation also demands the support of the labour movement. But with few exceptions, workers are often too concerned with wages to relate to issues of health and safety at work, let alone the wider issues of environmental health.

Sometimes environmental awareness means rethinking what is a taken-for-granted measure of the 'good life' and a primary aspiration of many working people - a motor car.

**T**he motor car is presented in the media as a symbol of freedom, power and - for many working people who travel to work - an escape. Yet the motor car is an environmental disaster. Its noxious exhaust gases contribute to acid rain and global warming.

The number of cars in the world is now said to be over 500 million. They emit a total of 547 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year, accounting for more than 20 percent of total release of carbon dioxide - the major cause of global warming. In many large cities cars are also the main cause of smog, which leads to various respiratory diseases.

Furthermore, traffic accidents are a leading cause of death in industrialised countries. More than 200 000 people are killed in traffic accidents worldwide every year. In South Africa alone, road accidents claimed nearly 10 000 lives last year. That is 27 deaths a day, or 1,14 an hour. Road accidents cost the South African economy an estimated R5-billion a year, according to the Automobile Association's 1990 report.

The car is anti-social for other reasons too. In a paper on the 'social ideology of the motor car', Andre Gorze has written: 'Mass motoring effects an absolute triumph of bourgeois ideology on the level of daily life. It gives and supports in everyone the illusion that each individual can seek his or her own benefit at the expense of everyone else'.

Gorz recalls the remark of an East German friend of his, after observing the spectacle of Parisian road traffic: 'You'll never have socialism with that kind of people'.

Apart from selfishness, cars promote materialism. It is often accepted that a car is a kind of social yardstick.

Contrary to conventional thinking, the car does not even provide us with an efficient transport system. Ivan Illich has estimated that 'the typical American devotes more than 1 500 hours a

year to his or her car (that is, 30 hours a week or four hours a day). This includes the time spent behind the wheel, both in motion and stopped, the hours of work to pay for it and to pay for petrol, tyres, etc'.

The transport of oil for these cars has created the global problem of the pollution of beaches. In March 1989 nearly 11 million gallons of crude oil flowed into the sea off Alaska, probably the worst environmental disaster in the United States. The spilled oil killed more than 36 000 migratory birds, fouled an estimated 1 000 miles of pristine shoreline and played havoc with one of the world's richest salmon fisheries. Exxon, the owner of the tanker which spilled the oil, is well able to pay whatever fine the United States imposes on it. The company reported 1989 profits of \$3,5 billion.

In South Africa the minibus option is clearly preferable to the poor public transport services provided by the railways and bus companies. But thousands of people are reported to have died in minibus accidents.

This raises questions about whether the black taxi service is the success story that the champions of free enterprise claim. Clearly the solution is efficient public transport services. This is the only way to realise the ethics of social justice and 'green consumerism' - learning not only to consume better but to consume less.

Green consumerism is part of 'deep ecology', the philosophy behind Green politics. Deep ecology denies that human beings are separate from and superior to the rest of nature and stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing worldview of technocratic-industrial societies which has become increasingly obsessed with the idea of dominance - of humans over non-human nature, masculine over feminine, the wealthy and powerful over the poor.

Deep ecology is against dominance and for equality. It is not anthropocentric - it does not focus on our own species.

Earlier this century Albert Schweitzer observed: 'It was once considered stupid to think that coloured men were really human and must be treated humanely. This stupidity has become a truth. Today it is thought an exaggeration to state that a reasonable ethic demands constant consideration for all living things'.

In South Africa we have an urgent struggle to overturn such 'stupidities' and 'exaggerations'. ●

# A new tone for His Master's Voice

It is no accident that, despite its recently improved South African television image, the African National Congress has put the issue of government control of the country's near-monopoly broadcasting networks high on the pre-negotiations agenda.

ANC foreign affairs secretary Thabo Mbeki raised the issue publicly only hours after the Groote Schuur talks had started.

The issue of who controls the airwaves is vital in a period increasingly dominated by a contest of ideas.

In a country where daily newspaper sales fall far short of 2 million, the SABC commands an estimated 14-million listeners a day through its 23 internal radio stations.

Add the viewers of its four television channels, and the SABC's daily audience on occasion nudges 20 million - almost two-thirds of the total South African population.

With well over half the adult population functionally illiterate - thus exclusively reliant on radio or TV for anything other than word-of-mouth information - SABC exercises a powerful influence on the thinking of millions of South Africans.

For 40 years it has used this influence exclusively in support of the National Party government and its policies - rigidly segregating its stations and programmes on race and language lines when grand apartheid was in motion; stealthily adding black faces to TV screens and black voices to radio as Pretoria's policy shifted towards establishment of a multi-racial buffer against demands for non-racial democracy.

Nor has the corporation's assistance to the government's shifting priorities been limited to cultural reinforcement - with programmes demonstrating that white people can cohabit with certain classes of black people, as in 'People like us', a series whose title vividly indicates its political objectives.

An SABC-led 'task force', appointed late last year, is examining options for the future of broadcasting which parallel the broader privatisation programme of president FW de Klerk's government.

Deputy ANC president Nelson Mandela has described privatisation as a strategy to deny a democratically elected government control over the public sectors of the economy.

The SABC's initiative appears to be intended to maintain a similar advantage for the state and the economic interests it is attempting to defend.

For the past five months the government-appointed task force has privately been juggling options. Only after Mbeki's statement did it hastily broadcast a request for contributions from the public.

The composition of the force strongly suggests the directions in which it is looking. In addition to the fairly predictable representatives from the SABC itself, and the Departments of Information and Posts and Telecommunications, it includes the chaplain-general of the South African Defence Force and a strong showing from the government's two major intelligence agencies, Military Intelligence and the National Intelligence Service (NIS).

This is not a grouping any normal society would naturally associate with public - and, at least in theory, publicly accountable - broadcasting.

But NIS and Military Intelligence have been central to the government attempt to formulate the process of reforming apartheid without surrendering power.

And there are strong pointers to suggest that their attempts to restructure South African broadcasting are moving in the same direction.

The first public indication of the task force's work came last month, with the announcement that SABC was scuttling large sections of its foreign broadcasting service, Radio RSA - which, until then, had contributed to international broadcasting a far higher proportion than would reasonably be expected from a relatively small country.

Announced only days after the legalisation of the ANC and South African Communist Party, the decision reflects a shift in government strategy.

Originally underpinned by the theory of a 'total strategy', government thinking held that to defeat its opposition, it was necessary to internationalise the country's conflict, pushing its opposition physically as far as possible from South African soil. A corollary to this thinking was that the propaganda battle takes place substantially on the international terrain.

The reality that the South African struggle could not be won on the for-

*The ANC is demanding  
that De Klerk surrender  
his party's monopoly  
control over SABC.  
David Niddrie reports*

eign battlefields of Cuito Cuanavale, but remained essentially a struggle between local forces, has seen De Klerk shift strategies.

By drawing the ANC back into the country and offering to talk, Pretoria has taken on the movement in a contest of ideas on a battlefield where the state has command of the heavy weaponry of propaganda.

For broadcasting, the implication is clear: international broadcasting is increasingly a wasted effort, a diversion from the main contest.

SABC has thus embarked on a process of scrapping its foreign-language, international services to concentrate its resources on the local market.

In similar vein, SABC is combining the African language TV2 and TV3 channels.

At most, however, these measures have only the medium-term benefit of increasing the capacity of a National Party-dominated SABC to intervene in the contest of ideas.

They will not help the present ruling group much if the SABC is politically 'neutralised' during a transition period, as Mbeki seemed to urge. Nor would they help once the ANC or an ANC-led alliance, having taken power (as even De Klerk regards as probable), inherits the broadcasting corporation.

Even in advance of the task force's appointment, government and pro-government media managers have been investigating possible mechanisms for denying a post-apartheid government access to the massive influence the SABC has provided the National Party.

At least four years ago Ton Vosloo, MD of Nasionale Media, publishers of Die Burger, Beeld and other National Party mouthpieces, was arguing strongly for privatisation of regional broadcasting networks, and the licensing of local stations for individual cities or towns.

Vosloo's Nasionale, which had just acquired the bi-weekly City Press newspaper as a vehicle to drive government policy into the townships, was on the lookout for further vehicles.

KwaZulu's Gatsha Buthelezi, whose Inkatha movement had just bought the Zulu-language Ilanga, was another potential buyer.

But the Transkei-based Capital Radio and Johannesburg's Radio 702 were beginning to demonstrate the potential impact of broadcasting not

directly tied into SABC's Auckland Park headquarters. So, at the time, the authorities could not bring themselves to take the risk of breaking with deeply entrenched traditions of a government-controlled near monopoly.

The task force has re-opened the debate.

Among the reasons for this was growing pressure from M-Net, a fifth TV channel launched in 1986 with a licence specifically prohibiting the broadcast of news or current events. Owned by the country's major newspaper groups, but with Vosloo's Nasionale as the biggest single shareholder and directly responsible for managing the channel, M-Net has been agitating for a second channel with the right to broadcast news. It also wants the right to do so openly, rather than through the costly decoders currently needed to see all but two hours of M-Net's daily diet of 12 hours of mainly North American trivia.

The M-Net bid has brought major commercial considerations into play. And on this as well as other initiatives for private broadcasting, SABC's resistance has gone beyond the original political objective of keeping the airwaves under official control.

Just 22% of SABC's income comes from its 2 million TV licence holders. More than 60% of its 1988 income of R600-million comes from advertising. And although M-Net has drawn away just R30-million in advertising revenue, according to SABC officials, news broadcast rights could both destroy SABC's advertising base, and finally wrest control of the country's dominant information media from Pretoria's direct control.

Dominated by the pro-government Nasionale group, M-Net might not radically transform TV news coverage. But once the precedent had been set, demands from other quarters for



**Mbeki: questioned the government's control of SABC**

their own licences would be difficult to ignore.

The issue is still awaiting a government decision. But broadcasting sources say M-Net is quietly shelving its plans for a TV news service - possibly because of the prohibitive cost of generating TV news, but equally possibly as part of a government compromise which will give M-Net its second channel, but without a news slot.

At least one of the independent radio stations has extracted a similar deal. Although no official announcement has been made, Radio 702 is about to supplement its existing medium wave channel - less accessible than on the FM frequencies so far monopolised by SABC - with an FM stereo channel. This will greatly boost its attractiveness to advertisers, but it will also be broadcast without medium wave 702's increasingly assertive news programmes.

A second process of de facto privatisation has been underway virtually since the launch of SABC TV in 1976.

This has involved tendering out documentary and drama production to private film companies, in terms of an SABC-defined mechanism which effectively excludes all but a handful of the country's dominant private producers.

This preference given to the major producers, known derisively as 'the Broeder Five', is similar to the process of preferential government printing contracts - for telephone directories and other large government orders - by which Pretoria has, over the past four decades, guaranteed the profitability and survival of the two main pro-government newspaper groups.

Disgruntled private producers say the SABC system has recently been formalised, with single-programme tenders now replaced by long-term, multi-programme contracts. This effectively means that, with the exception of sport and news, there is little of SABC's locally-produced content not in private hands.

Whoever inherits SABC will thus be both contractually locked into a system which denies it direct control of what it broadcasts, and - even if it chose to break that tie-in - without the physical resources to produce alternatives.

Thus the ANC's concern that the question be addressed - and urgently.

**T**he democratic movement has had to develop new creative strategies in the bantustans to manage the complex relationships demanded by the ANC decision to bring bantustan leaders to the negotiating table as allies.

For their part, the new generation of bantustan leaders - aware of the necessity of retaining the economic base of their territories - has had to exercise great diplomacy, with an eye to foreign companies, which were originally wooed to the bantustans by the vision of a profit paradise.

In the community, bantustan residents are beginning to take control of their lives through civic associations, while in the workplace unionists and workers are compelled to continue the fight against unsympathetic employers.

Workers in the bantustans believe industrialists are playing for time, 'squeezing the sponge of its last possible drop' before unions grow strong enough to assert workers' rights. In the Transkei unionists believe industry is 'hiding behind the government saying that there are still no laws to allow unions'.

In Ciskei there are rumours that foreign companies, many of them Taiwanese, are pulling out before they are kicked out by the new government of Brigadier Oupa Gqozo for refusing to stop extreme exploitation.

In the Transkei, military leader General Bantu Holomisa commissioned Professor Nic Wiehahn, the architect of South African labour legislation, to make recommendations on a labour dispensation for the territory.

Workers there requested interim legislation to force employers to recognise workers' right to organise. Holomisa would go no further than encouraging management and workers to co-operate and talk to each other. Workers say Holomisa's call had little effect on management attitudes.

Members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) say employers victimise workers involved in union activity. Mongani Dyanti of the Butterworth Workers Co-ordinating Committee says the dismissal of shop stewards is rife. 'Workers are fired for intimidation and for assaulting management but they are so militant because of the frustrating lack of channels to air grievances'.

Fawu members see Holomisa as caught in a Catch 22 situation: on one side he faces extreme worker dissatisfaction, and on the other he has to appease investors who were drawn to the bantustan by the guarantee of stable and cheap

# Striking a balance

*Dramatic changes in the bantustans have brought Cosatu into direct negotiations with industry and government on the shape of a new labour dispensation.*

*Thumida Maistry reports*

labour. Workers charge that Holomisa's numerous trips to recruit foreign investment show that his allegiance lies clearly with employers.

Despite this, the Cosatu local in East London, which has been assisting Transkei members to organise, and worker leaders in the bantustan, are positive they have made maximum use of the relaxed atmosphere to strengthen organisation.

The lack of previous organisation and the pent-up frustrations of years of exploitation in sweat-shop conditions have led to militant worker action, sometimes spilling over into aggression and even violence.

After Holomisa announced last year that unionism would be allowed, a wave of strikes swept through factories in the main industrial areas of Umtata and Butterworth. There were many allegations of assaults by groups of workers, and Holomisa was forced to concede to demands for protection from both workers and management.

It was clear to all parties that strong unions would be able to discipline their members. But unionists say companies now regret their initial enthusiasm for the introduction of unions, which have rapidly consolidated their organisation and begun educating their rank and file members.

The initial wave of wildcat strikes has made way for more disciplined actions, but there are still regular reports of strikes. The recent visit to Transkei

by ANC leader Nelson Mandela took place against the backdrop of a strike by over 1 000 municipal workers, which brought public services to a halt.

Wiehahn has now completed his proposals on Transkei labour legislation, but so far only government officials and industry have seen the report. Unions have not seen the document. The Department of Manpower said copies were still being printed, and that those available for study had been provided by Wiehahn himself.

The Workers Co-ordinating Committee in the Transkei oversees union developments in the area. It is an interim forum, acting until Cosatu can discuss the establishment of a separate region for the Transkei at its next congress.

Workers discussed the possibility of the Transkei falling under the Cosatu's Border office in East London, but it was felt there were issues and conditions unique to the bantustan which warranted a separate structure. In the Transkei, there is need for training and education on basic issues, such as the role and function of shop stewards.

**C**osatu has held workshops on a new policy towards the sympathetic bantustans - although it does not recognise the political legitimacy of these structures. Bones Skulu of the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) referring to events in the Ciskei, explained: 'The bosses wanted a breathing space until reincorporation, and they wanted labour legislation as their companies had been rocked by wildcat strikes. Workers also wanted a breathing space to air their grievances. This together with the openness of the new government brought about Cosatu's willingness to enter the space in the homeland'.

In the Ciskei, the looting and burning of factories after the March coup was followed by a move among industrialists to withdraw from the bantustan. But this soon changed, particularly among South African companies, many of whom



**Workers hoisted ANC and SACP flags at the re-burial of Chief Sabata Dalindyebo**

were convinced that the destruction would not be repeated. It also seems it will be some time before workers can demand the same levels of pay and benefits as their counterparts outside the bantustan.

In one of his first statements on labour issues after the coup, Ciskei's Gqozo said his government was committed to democracy which 'assumed the right of labour to organise itself in unions of its own choice'.

Speaking to unco-operative industrialists, he added: 'Those still firmly locked into the labour philosophy of the early 19th century must realise that they can no longer phone a despotic head of state and arrange for uniformed louts to beat up their labour when it dares to disagree with management'.

In line with this approach, Gqozo initiated talks between industrialists and Cosatu. Workers demanded the immediate recognition of unions pending reincorporation of Ciskei into South Africa. Learning from the Transkei experience, workers knew a clear framework within which to operate should be set up as soon as possible.

Gqozo said that whatever the two parties agreed as the basis of their relationship would be tabled and adopted by his government.

Following discussions, Cosatu lawyers submitted a proposal outlining the minimum rights of workers. The document, 'The Basic Rights of Recognition Act', aims 'to foster collective bargaining in the Ciskei, to provide for basic

trade union rights and to provide for the implementation of such rights'.

By mutual agreement, there have been no public statements about the progress of the discussions, but it is believed that initially industrialists had few amendments to make to the draft. Later, they demanded a guarantee that there would be no strikes if they allowed unions to operate. Unions viewed this as a delaying tactic.

**G**qozo has accepted the importance of unions, but has said that both parties should agree on a working document. Recently the direct talks between employers and Cosatu ended, and teams of lawyers representing employers, the unions and the Ciskei government have begun meetings to thrash out a draft labour law. This is expected to provide for union recognition, dispute procedures and other related matters.

Gqozo's attitude to the organising of public sector workers has contrasted markedly with his approach to the private sector.

He has launched repeated attacks on the National Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu), accusing it of causing numerous strikes.

Although Gqozo has founded his opposition on the argument that essential services should not be disrupted by strikes, a fear of losing power also appears to play a part.

The Ciskei leader came out strongly

against the nurses' strike at Mdantsane's Cecilia Makiwane Hospital, in which at least four patients are reported to have died. Nurses were arrested, and Gqozo told them that they were being manipulated by Nehawu to topple the government. A major conflict between Gqozo and the union was averted when the mass democratic movement intervened.

Nehawu has denied involvement in the strike, saying that only a third of the strikers are union members. Nehawu's Benson Mjebeza said the strike had been spontaneous and arose from extreme dissatisfaction and frustration.

Nehawu members are, however, sensitive to Gqozo's accusations that they intend to overthrow the government. A member said it was possible that individuals or groups still bent on restoring the luxurious nest Sebe had provided were looking for bases to launch their plans to destabilise the new ruling council.

However, he added that the matter was being investigated and that structures would tighten as Nehawu consolidated. He also said that it was more likely that the new governing council wanted to retain power over the public servants so that it could hold onto its own power.

The claim that Nehawu is colluding with Sebe's old party, the Ciskei National Independence Party, seems highly improbable. But it does reflect Gqozo's concern with the loyalty of the public sector which he has inherited from Sebe.

The health service clash has threatened the delicate alliance between the MDM and the new government. It appears that the UDF has accepted Nehawu's explanation, after initially accusing the union of irresponsibility in the light of the deaths caused by the hospital strike. Cosatu affiliates have also come out in support of Nehawu and has advised it to strategise more carefully.

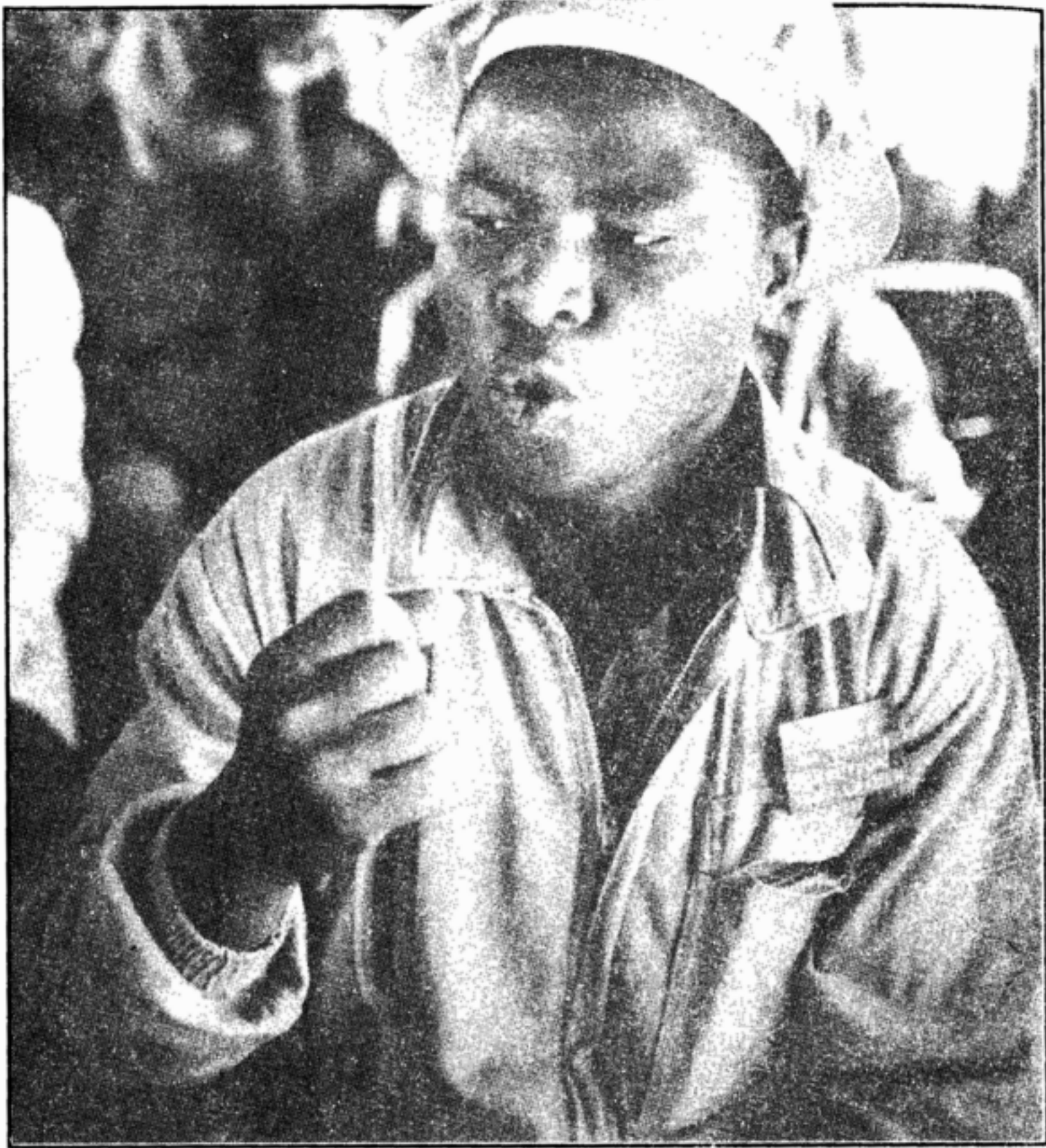
Union pressure to push the ruling council further is getting the support of the MDM, which was previously careful not to do anything to isolate sympathetic leaders. Its caution was apparently reinforced by fears that South Africa might pull the plug on its errant child. But now that grassroot structures of the MDM have taken control, there appears greater confidence to exert pressure on Gqozo.

At the same time, both Holomisa and Gqozo are walking the road the ANC will soon be exploring: bargaining with industry to stay - but also to recognise the rights of workers. ●

In the six-week period under review, WIP monitored 116 strikes and lock-outs involving over 71 787 workers. The level of industrial action, which escalated dramatically in February and March along with heightened political mobilisation and conflict, remained high although there are signs that this is tailing-off. The decrease is reflected in the fact that over 50% of the strikes monitored began before the 15 March, the start of this review period.

The stabilising of the political climate and the response of bosses to increased militancy might account, in part, for the reduction in industrial action. The number of lock-outs increased and there was an attempt to regain lost control over the factory floor. Lock-outs were used most frequently in the Eastern Cape and Border regions where the workforce has been particularly militant. In some cases lock-outs were intended to pre-empt collective industrial action (as at Renown in Port Elizabeth) or they constituted a response to absenteeism, unprocedural stoppages and political demonstrations (as at Mercedes, Volkswagen and Furniture Industries). A third reason for the tailing-off of wildcat industrial action is the start of national wage negotiations in many sectors and the possibility that workers may have to save their energy to take action over wages in the near future.

Nevertheless, the level of strike action for this period is still comparatively high particularly since national wage negotiations have not reached an advanced point. In addition to strikes there were a number of regional



## Unions braced for national wage talks

stayaways aimed at influencing local political issues. These occurred at Uitenhage, Maritzburg and Durban, Bushbuckridge and in Gazankulu. They are not reflected in the strike tables. Increased expectations and militancy among workers were expressed mainly through wage demands, which triggered 42% of strikes. This represents an increase on the overall proportion of wage-related strikes for 1990, which

stands at 37,5%. Disciplinary procedures and dismissals remained the second most frequent 'cause' of action - together accounting for 19% of strikes. In strikes of this sort over half were related to discrimination and racism. Protest against racial discrimination continued to generate action in the mining and public sectors. The third most frequent trigger of strikes was the struggle for recognition

(15%). In addition to the pre-emptive and disciplinary use of the lock-out, management responded primarily through mass dismissals, using this in 23% of cases. However, in strikes where all channels to resolve the dispute had been exhausted, unions won the reinstatement of workers in almost all cases. In a number of strikes, management used racial and ethnic differences to



divide workers. Coloured and Indian scabs have been used to replace striking Africans. In other cases where the workforce was dismissed, hostels were used as recruiting bases for replacement labour. This recruitment often took place along ethnic lines. Repression of union activities in the form of detention of union members, security force action against marches and pickets and attacks by vigilantes has also increased over the last two months. While a repressive approach to industrial relations by the state and employers has been the norm for several years, both these parties are currently considering changes to labour law which do grant some rights and protection for workers. The agreement between Cosatu-Nactu and Saccola which will recommend changes to the Labour Relations Amendment Act is significant in that it marks the first time workers and employers have jointly proposed labour legislation. It is also significant because the proposals begin to limit the ability of the state and employers to use the law as a weapon against workers. The proposal entrenches the right of all workers to collective bargaining and to take strike action. It recommends new dismissal and retrenchment procedures in line with International Labour Organisation convention and recommends that the definition of unfair labour practices revert to the form it took before the LRA was amended in 1988. It also recommends that unions will no longer be liable for damages in wildcat strikes. The National Manpower Commission proposals which, according to the NMC acting chairman Frans Barker, are designed to bring about 'less

governmental involvement in labour affairs' suggest the extension of worker and trade union rights. Strikes will be decriminalised but still regulated under unfair labour practice definitions and the main legislation extended to cover civil servants (excluding police and security services) and municipal workers not involved in maintaining essential services. But the NMC does not recommend that all workers be covered by the main legislation. It is noteworthy that farm and domestic workers remain excluded, although the NMC says these sectors could be included by proclamation. Extending the main legislation to cover civil servants could help regulate the volatile relationship between the state and its employees but the militance in the public sector is unlikely to be tempered unless major adjustments in conditions of service are made. In the period under review, action in the public sector was second only to that in the metal/motor/engineering sector. Since the beginning of the year public sector workers have been responding to extremely low wage levels, the threat of privatisation which will result in further retrenchment, and poor and discriminatory conditions of service. In the six-week period under review:

- \* Ten municipal strikes were recorded.
- \* 1 000 teachers in the Border region held sit-in strikes.
- \* 1 000 teachers marched through Durban during working hours.
- \* Hospital workers at 11 TPA hospitals went on strike.
- \* Hospital strikes also occurred at Ngwelezane (Empangeni) and Garankuwa.
- \* Civil servants in

Gazankulu and KwaZulu stayed away from work.

- \* Rand Water Board employees went on strike.
- \* There were at least five strikes by postal workers.

Activity in the postal sector is likely to continue. Potwa tabled a demand for a living wage of R1 100 in October last year. The Post Office has offered R670. An additional factor is privatisation which is likely to result in the loss of thousands of jobs. Particularly vulnerable are temporary workers - who make up more than 80% of the coloured and African workforce. The important process of annual wage negotiations has just begun. Mostly it is too early to tell whether workers will resort to industrial action. But Numsa has warned employers that, in a context where workers' expectations are high, it would not be surprising if members were to lose faith in the bargaining process if their demands were not 'treated with seriousness'. The NUM has also warned the Chamber of Mines that if tangible and positive moves are not taken on the issue of racial discrimination, more protest action can be expected. Talks in the mining industry are about to begin - the NUM will table a demand of an average 35% wage increase and new minima of R543 for surface workers and R600 for underground workers. Metal talks are entering the fourth round. Numsa - which formulated comprehensive bargaining demands at its national bargaining conference - has demanded a R2-an-hour across-the-board increase. The last Seifsa offer of an average 11% increase on the minimum rates was rejected by all unions in the talks. Numsa points out that

the Seifsa offer does not include a guaranteed personal increase - so workers earning above the new minima may not receive an increase. The increasing frequency of sub-contracting and employment of temporary labour in the industry has also made job security an important Numsa demand. This and the demand for action to eliminate racially discriminatory training are awaiting a response from Seifsa. Deregulation of small business has already become a point of contention in the talks. Seifsa has argued that exempting small businesses from the main agreement will stimulate growth and employment. Numsa has contested the idea that deregulation creates jobs and has argued that all workers should be covered by the main agreement. In the clothing and textile sector, where bargaining takes place in several regional and industry-specific councils, workers are discussing ways of improving their bargaining strength and the possibility of centralised bargaining. Wage negotiations in the clothing sector deadlocked in the Eastern Cape with workers demanding a R30 across-the-board weekly increase and management offering R17 from 1 May and a further R4 from November. A dispute has been declared and although the option of mediation has been put forward industrial action appears likely. Eastern Cape workers are hoping through their demands to equalise wages and learning periods in the industry. If they are successful, the agreement could lay the foundations for national bargaining.

- \* The strike table reflects only strikes which involved more than 50 workers.●

## STRIKES AND DISPUTES March 15 to April 30

### Transvaal

Company	Union	No.	Date	Event
Achromat Isando	Sacwu	250	12 March	The workforce was locked out when all procedures in a wage dispute were exhausted. Workers were demanding a 18% across-the-board increase. Management offered 16%. The minimum wage at the company was R935.
African Telephone Cables Brits	Numsa	512	13 March	Shop stewards were suspended when workers failed to arrive at work due to violence in Bophuthatswana. In protest against the suspension, workers went out on strike.
Akasia Town Council Pretoria	NUPSW	600	March 2 days	Workers held a two-day strike to demand a minimum wage of R600. Wage negotiations were under way.
Allied Chemicals Alrode	Sacwu	70	15 March	Workers involved in a legal wage strike were locked out.
Alrode Cleaning Materials Wadeville	Sactwu	85	5 March 26 March	An agreement was reached that striking workers would return to work and the union would look into the wage dispute.
Artafina Springs	Cawu	52	13 March 14 March	Negotiations were continuing after a one-day strike to demand recognition.
Astas Benoni	Numsa	213	23 November	Workers went on strike against racism when management failed to use its disciplinary code after a white worker assaulted a black worker. Workers were dismissed and interdicted to keep away from plant gates. After negotiations failed to resolve the strike the dispute was referred to the industrial court for final determination. Management has sent telegrams to some of the workers calling for a return to work.
Automa Kempton Park	Numsa	200	5 April	Workers went on strike to demand that a director who assaulted a Numsa member be disciplined. Management issued disciplinary warnings and dismissed nine workers on their return to work after two days. The workforce went out on strike again and was dismissed. The company has agreed to reinstate all workers except for the nine who were originally dismissed. The union has asked for arbitration on the nine. Discussions were still under way. Automa is a German company and the union is preparing to lobby support among workers from other German companies and at the IMF.
Cedar Radex Wynberg	Sacwu	80	20 February	Workers were locked-out and the company has indicated its intention to dismiss workers on strike over wages. The union demanded a weekly across-the-board increase of R40. The company offered R21. The union has applied for a conciliation board hearing regarding the dismissals.
CIK Boksburg	Cawu	150	5 March 7 March	A two-day strike over recognition ended when management agreed to negotiate an agreement.
Craig Concrete Benoni	Cawu	85	19 March 19 March	The union is negotiating a recognition agreement and substantive matters with the company after a one-day strike.
Eclipse Foundries Benoni	Numsa	300	13 February	Workers were dismissed and scabs employed after an illegal strike which made demands on working conditions and health and safety. The company refused to negotiate further. The union proposed arbitration. The company is allegedly employing Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers.
Eigen Bou PWV sites	Cawu	350	20 March 22 March	Negotiations are proceeding for the drawing up of a recognition agreement after workers went on strike.
Elida Ponds Wadeville	CWIU	240	1 February 20 March	Management employed scabs and interdicted workers for intimidation in a prolonged legal wage strike. The settlement included a new hourly minimum of R6,99, two weeks back-pay, a 40-hour week, 1 May, 16 June and 21 March as paid holidays and other conditions of service. Workers also agreed to work shifts - a major point of contention in the dispute - after shift allowances were agreed to. The strike caused sporadic shut-downs in production due to conflicts between strikers and scabs.
Fednis Phalaborwa	CWIU	500	March 26 days	A five week legal wage strike was settled.
Ferro Products	Sacwu	164	15 March	Workers went on strike in support of wage demands.

GFB (Combrink)	Union	311	29 November	
Johannesburg				Workers were dismissed after numerous strike actions were taken over a six month period in support of wage demands. Scabs were employed to work on the Old Mutual city centre construction site. A worker was shot dead and another paralysed after picketing workers were shot by a security guard. The union met the company in the industrial council and an offer to pay-off strikers was rejected by the union. If negotiations fail the dispute will be referred to the industrial court.
Goldstein Pretoria	Cawu	150	March 2 days	A strike for recognition was settled when management agreed to recognise the union.
Hall Longmore Rodepoort	Numsa	80	2 April	Workers went on strike to demand that the company make provision for regular meetings with shop stewards.
Hultrans	TGMU	78	April April	Striking drivers and general workers were dismissed. The company later agreed to reinstate them with no increase and loss of benefits.
Kanhym Food Enterprises Germiston	Fawu	400	20 April 21 April	Two plants held a sleep-in to demand the reinstatement of a worker. The dispute was referred to arbitration.
Kenitex Africa Wynberg	Sacwu	90	5 April	Negotiations between the company and the union were underway to resolve a strike over short-time.
Leonard Brushware Johannesburg	PPWAMU	160	12 March	Workers went on a legal wage strike to demand an increase of R30 on the weekly minimum of R82,50. Management offered R11 at the CB hearing.
Maxwell Tubes Springs	Numsa	180	26 March	Workers on strike for a service increment were dismissed and the company has refused to negotiate further. The company is hiring a new workforce - allegedly recruiting Zulu speaking people from local hostels. The union has declared a dispute.
Mondiply Boksburg	PPWAMU	150	19 February 2 May	Workers returned to work after a 10 week legal wage strike with no improvements in the wage offer.
Mondi Waste Alrode, Tulisa Park	PPWAMU	150	19 February 23 April	Workers returned to work after a nine-week legal wage strike with no improvement in management's last offer.
NCD Boksburg	Fawu	512	16 February	Workers demanded that management take action against a supervisor who assaulted a worker. The demand led to stoppages after which workers were locked-out and interdicted to return to work. Workers were subsequently dismissed. The parties could not agree on arbitration and talks were under way between legal representatives.
OTK East Rand	Fawu	178	2 November	Workers who went on strike over unequal increments and for recognition were dismissed and locked-out. After negotiations 40 workers were reinstated and the union was negotiating for the rest. The dispute was referred to the industrial court.
Putco Wynberg	Zatawu, TGMU	450	23 February	The demand for the dismissal of a manager led to a strike and the voluntary resignation of a manager. After the resignation, workers continued the strike to demand wages for the period on strike. Putco agreed to provide back-pay but at the same time announced it would be retrenching 150 workers and relocating operations to the Dobsonville depot. The union was still negotiating with the company.
Rand Water Board Alberton	MSFAMU	500	23 April	Disciplinary action against a union shop steward sparked-off a strike.
Rolfes	CMIU	550	26 February	The union declared a dispute with the company over the demand that the company join the union-initiated provident fund. After balloting, workers engaged in two-hour daily work stoppages, as a result of which the workforce was dismissed. Marching workers were dispersed by police. The company later agreed to reinstate all dismissed workers.
Sappi Enstra	PPWAMU	800	7 February April	After a worker was shot dead by company security and SAP who opened fire on picketing workers, workers proposed arbitration in the 11 week wage strike. The terms of reference were not settled before the return to work.
Sappi Kraft Mill Ngodwana	PPWAMU	800	7 February 9 April	Strike action in the paper/wood sector spread and workers downed tools in legal wage strikes. Workers at Ngodwana accepted management's offer for a new minimum of R5,46 after a two-month strike. The offer was not an increase on previous offers.
Shoredits Pretoria	Cawu	300	March 2 days	A strike over recognition led to the signing of an agreement between the company and the union.
STC Benoni	Numsa	200	18 April 18 April	A section of the workforce went on strike to protest the unfair promotion of a newly employed worker. Management conceded to workers' demands.
Tilley Macmill Wadeville	Numsa	200	March March	The threat of dismissal against workers who embarked on a defiance campaign against segregation led to a strike in which 200 workers were dismissed. The matter was settled by arbitration and all workers were reinstated.
Transiton	TGMU	70	12 April	Workers were locked-out after they refused to sign new contracts.

Xeratech Johannesburg	Numsa	100	6 March 17 April	Workers went on a legal wage strike after mediation failed. Workers demanded a 21,5% increase across the board. Management offered merit increase between 13% and 15%. The current minimum is R850. Workers accepted the management offer and returned to work.
Zimco Industries Katlehong	Numsa	120	23 February 28 March	Workers went on strike to demand a transport subsidy due to the relocation of company premises. The company agreed to pay a percentage of costs.

### Cape

Aberdare Cables Port Elizabeth	Numsa	540	15 January 19 March	The nine-week strike at Aberdare Cables was settled and workers won increases from 20c to 22c over and above the industrial council rate. The company has initiated disciplinary procedures against the 22 suspended workers on charges of intimidations and assault.
Acem Engineering Port Elizabeth	Numsa	350	March 1 day	Workers went on strike to demand centralised bargaining with the company.
Babcock Port Elizabeth	Numsa	300	March 4 days	A wage strike was resolved after four days.
Bell Essex Port Elizabeth	Numsa	350	March 1 day	Workers held a one-day strike to demand bargaining with the company as a group.
Brian Porter	Numsa	100	April 2 days	The company granted shop steward rights after a two-day strike.
Burg Head Engineering Uitenhage	Numsa	50	14 February	The workforce was locked out and dismissed after they left work early without permission on account of conditions in the Uitenhage townships. The previous day workers had also staged a demonstration to celebrate the release of Nelson Mandela. The company has refused to reinstate the workers. The union has declared a dispute with the industrial council.
Cape Contractclean Belville	TGWU	170	27 April 27 April	A strike of cleaners contracted to the University of the Western Cape ended when UWC agreed to supplement the wages of workers.
Cape Foundries Paarden Eiland	Newusa	150	12 March 4 April	Strikers returned to work after management negotiated a health and safety agreement and death benefits. Management also agreed to negotiate wages and working conditions at plant level. Workers were demanding a minimum rate of R10 which is double the industrial council rate.
Cape Sun Cape Town	Saccawu	72	21 March	Striking workers were dismissed and interdicted to leave the premises and to refrain from interfering with non-strikers. Workers who were on strike over grievances, marched through the hotel causing disruption to business.
Cape Town City Council Cape Town	Samwu	250	16 March 21 March	Clerical assistants and plan filers went on strike against racial discrimination and promotion procedures which are effectively apartheid barriers. The union is in dispute with the council and the matter has been referred to the industrial court.
Cash and Carry Port Elizabeth	Saccawu	100	March 28 days	The company agreed to recognise the union after a month-long strike.
EL City Council Mdantsane	Samwu	568	March 1 day	Municipal workers won recognition in a one-day strike.
City Park Hospital Cape Town	Nehawu	115	August	Negotiations between the union and management to discuss the reinstatement of workers dismissed in a legal wage strike last year were continuing. Management offered to re-employ 10 workers immediately and others as soon as vacancies arise. The offer was rejected by workers.
Consol Glass Belville	CCWIU	300	28 March 4 April	Workers downed tools in a one-day strike to protest internal company practice and racial discrimination. The response of management prompted a full-scale strike.
Dancarl Mines Kimberly	NUM	300	17 March 19 March	Workers went on strike over the lack of water at the hostel and general hostel conditions.
Dispatch Town Council Dispatch	Samwu	156	March 2 days	Municipal workers went on strike demanding the implementation of salary grades and increases due to them. Workers suspended their strike after two days.

Donkin Manufacturers Port Elizabeth	Numsa	200	March March	Workers were involved in a strike over wages. Negotiations to settle the dispute have been set up.
E H Walton Port Elizabeth	PPWAMU	56	November	Workers were locked-out after they took industrial action to demand the reinstatement of workers dismissed during maternity leave. The company's offer to pay-off striking workers was refused. The dispute was referred to the industrial court.
Formex Industries PE	CWIU	150	10 April 12 April	The workforce went on strike after 15 workers were arrested during a lunchtime protest. The protest was a result of the company's refusal to negotiate on substantive issues. Workers returned to work when their arrested colleagues were released on bail. Management has issued written warnings to all workers who participated in the stoppage.
EL Furniture Ind. East London	PPWAMU	230	April April	The workforce was locked-out for a week after a go-slow during a wage dispute. The workforce had voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action if the negotiations with management are unsuccessful.
Gesco	NUM	560	26 March 31 March	Workers at one shaft went on strike over the introduction of a new pay code.
Gonubie Town Council Gonubie	Samu	120	2 April 2 April	Municipal workers won recognition in a one-day strike.
Johnson and Johnson East London	CWIU	500	13 April 24 April	Workers were fired when they went on strike against racism after management failed to use its disciplinary code against a white artisan who assaulted a black shop steward. The workers were reinstated after an agreement was reached between the company and the union.
KPL Mossel Bay	Mewusa	170	April	KPL workers doing contract work for Mossgas were dismissed when they downed tools for the third time in two months, this time to demand clarification over a medical aid scheme. Workers had been paying into the scheme for nine months but had not been issued with cards. Management locked-out workers in the presence of the SAP and dismissed them.
Macarthy Holdings Cape Town	Numsa	400	April 2 days	The company agreed to regional bargaining on divisional lines after a two-day strike at all plants.
Micro Finish Port Elizabeth	Numsa	350	March 1 day	Workers went on strike to demand centralised bargaining with the company.
Mondi Bruply Stellenbosch, Elgin	PPWAMU	470	8 February 8 April	Workers went on a legal wage strike. Management offered 48c increase against the unions demand for 90c. The strike was settled when management improved its offer by 2c. Strikers were interdicted to keep off company premises.
Multi Mech Epping	Numsa	114	5 February 4 May	Workers were dismissed in an illegal wage strike in support of a 50% wage increase. The union met the company in the industrial council and agreed on monetary settlement of the dispute.
Neill tools Epping	Seawusa	130	20 March	Striking steel workers were dismissed when they refused an ultimatum from management to return to work. Attempts at mediation in the week-old strike had failed.
Queenstown City Council Queenstown	Samu	497	4 April 9 April	Striking workers at Queenstown City Council were dismissed but later reinstated when they went on strike over wages and for recognition. The council agreed to recognise the union.
Repco Port Elizabeth	Numsa, Eawusa	300	25 January unknown	Workers on strike in support of wage demands were interdicted to return to work or face dismissal. They were demanding a R3 increase on the Seifsa rate. Management offered 25c and 25c on the year-end bonus.
Sentech Industries PE	Numsa	110	March 3 days	A strike over wages was settled after three days.
Spirvin Bottling Company Uitenhage	Fawu	170	5 March 9 April	Workers were involved in a five-week strike over conditions of work, recognition and retrenchment. The company agreed to recognise the union and a retrenchment package was agreed on.
Welfit Oddy Perseverance	Numsa	600	9 January	Mediation failed and successive failures in arbitration of the four-month old strike, in which the entire workforce was dismissed, prompted the intervention of MDM community leaders, who were involved in meeting the company. Lawyers were also negotiating new terms of arbitration. So far 34 workers have been arrested and charged for violence against non-strikers. High bail amounts were set. The dispute arose out of a strike when the company failed to pay full attendance bonuses for workers who stayed away on 5 and 6 September last year.
Window/Office Clnrs Port Elizabeth	TGMU	200	9 April	Workers went on strike demanding a minimum of R3,50 an hour and improved safety conditions.

## Natal

Chrome Industries Merebank	CWIU	220	2 April	Workers went on a legal wage strike in support of wage demands. The company refused to raise its wage offer.
Dorbyl Shipbuilders Durban	Numsa	500	26 March	Workers who downed tools to protest the importation of Portuguese nationals to do skilled work were dismissed by the company. Workers complained that foreign workers were given far higher salaries and kept in hotels at company expense. They argued that their skills should be upgraded rather than importing labour. The strikers, many of them members of a boilermakers' union, also began signing up with Numsa after the strike. Dorbyl workers and their families marched through Durban to present a demand to the Department of Manpower that work permits of foreign labour should not be renewed.
GVL Isithebe	Numsa	71	April 3 days	Workers were locked-out after they complained to management about the dismissal of a union member. After negotiations between the company and the union, workers were reinstated.
Lion Match Durban	PPWAWU	400	13 March	After five months of unsuccessful wage negotiations between the union and the company, workers went on a legal wage strike. Negotiations have deadlocked since the start of the strike. The union demanded an increase on the minimum to R1 237 a month. Management's offer was R1 048. The company has employed scab labour.
Unilever Maydon Wharf	CWIU	900	11 April 19 April	Workers returned to work after management met their demand that a worker dismissed for poor performance be reinstated. The dismissal had taken place without the dismissal procedure being followed.

### REPRESSION MONITOR February - April

February - A worker was killed and another paralysed when strikers at a Johannesburg building site were shot by a security guard. The workers, members of Bcawu, were fired by Combrink Building Construction after a dispute.

February - Eleven Sats workers at the Salt River Depot were hospitalised after they were attacked by non-strikers on 12 February, in the aftermath of the Sats strike. The weapons of the non-strikers were allegedly stored on work premises.

February - A Fawu organiser and his assistant were arrested during a strike of contract workers at Spruitdrift Winery near Vredendal. Management called police and dismissed workers, who were sent back to the Transkei.

March - Police disrupted strike meetings in Port Elizabeth. On one occasion, when five strike meetings involving 1 550 workers were held simultaneously, police cordoned off two buildings and marched Weifit Oddy strikers in groups of ten past a combi with one-way windows. In the parade, 14 workers were identified and charged with acts of vio-

lence and intimidation. Many arrests were made in connection with strikes in PE. So far 34 Weifit Oddy strikers have been arrested and bail ranging from R500 to R1500 per worker has been set.

March - Harsh action was taken by police against strikers and their supporters in Bophuthatswana. Three striking Department of Justice employees were detained under the emergency regulations when strikers arrived en masse to turn themselves over to police at Garankuwa police station.

Two academics and Udusa office-bearers, Paul Daphne and Mandla Magwetyana, were detained under the Internal Security Act in connection with the strike at the University of Bophuthatswana. A third academic, Jon Lewis, was ordered to leave Bophuthatswana. Four foreign academics were also briefly detained.

March - Mine security at Vaal Reefs used teargas and rubber bullets to disperse marching workers. Thirty-eight mineworkers were hospitalised. Security also ordered shaft stewards at gunpoint to vacate union offices in Klerksdorp. Repression on the

mines, including Harmony and Freddie's, has been particularly high as campaigns against racism have escalated.

March - Police arrested two PPWAWU shop stewards from Mondiply Boksburg. Strikers had been interdicted from entering factory premises. The shop stewards were arrested alighting from a bus allegedly well clear of the factory.

March - A striker and PPWAWU member was killed when a picket outside Sappi Enstra was dispersed by company security and police using rubber bullets.

April - A NUM shop steward at Finch Mine in the northern Cape was detained briefly on 12 April but freed after 300 workers went out on strike to demand his release.

April - Fifteen CWIU members at Formex Industries in PE were arrested during a lunchtime protest and charged with attending an illegal gathering. Workers at Formex went on strike until the 15 were released on bail.

March - A Uitenhage shop steward was detained under the emergency regulations. Workers at Volkswagen responded by

striking and he was released a day later.

April - Sarhwi members in Durban and the Transvaal were attacked by Sats workers and two people were killed. It is alleged that weapons are being manufactured in Sats workshops and stored on Sats premises.

April - Five PPWAWU shop stewards from Sappi's Enstra Mill were detained for alleged intimidation.

April - Strikers from Rolles in Isando who had planned a peaceful protest march were confronted by police and dispersed when the Boksburg City Council withdrew permission for the march.

April - Three Mwsa members were detained under section 29 of the Internal Security Act. Still in custody at the time of going to press were Mwsa general secretary Sithembele Khala (detained on 23 March) and Sowetan sports editor Horatio Motjuadi (detained on 12 April). SABC journalist Vincent Mfundisi was held for a week.

A fourth Mwsa member is being held under the Bophuthatswana state of emergency.

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