

grassroots

THE PAPER ABOUT YOU

FEBRUARY 1982 VOL. 3 NO. 1

We demand to be heard

THE Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC), the organisation spearheading the campaign for "rents that we can afford", has been informed by the Minister of Community Development, Pen Kotze that he will be unable to speak to the people and their elected representatives.

The Minister, in a letter to CAHAC has acknowledged the people's request for a meeting. The letter further refers CAHAC to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Chris Heunis, and the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Piet Koornhof.

"This is once again a blatant attempt by the authorities to stall our campaign and to divide our people along racial lines. What the Minister is basically saying is that "Coloureds" must speak to the Minister in charge

of Coloured Affairs. Africans must speak to the Minister in charge of so-called "Bantu Affairs". This is Apartheid and an effort to divide our people in this campaign. But, we say No. We refuse to be divided. Unite at all times is our stand", said a spokesperson for CAHAC.

CAHAC has also condemned the recent cutbacks in the State subsidies for housing and essential maintenance and repairs of houses. The Department of Community Development has announced that R444 million will be cut back this year.

There is a City Council housing backlog of close to 20 000. "The government simply cannot wish this away. The Group Areas Act has forced removals upon the people causing great harm to community life".

This announcement comes at a time when mass protest is rising against high rents, lack of electricity and poor electricity installations in many areas. One of the demands of the campaign is for bigger government subsidies for housing, but, "this is what we get. Our just demands are shelved for projects which we have not asked for. What does the government do with the hard earned pennies of our people?", said an angry resident.

In a statement issued by CAHAC, it also noted the Minister's recent meeting with the Management Committee of Grabouw. "The Management Committee is not considered to be the elected representatives of our people. The government is well advised to listen to the call of the people", the statement read.

CALL FOR ACTION

IN the wake of the Minister's refusal to speak to the elected representatives of the people, the Rents Action Committee (RAC) under the banner of CAHAC, will be intensifying the campaign.

Plans

Forty-two delegates from community organisations represented on the RAC, took a decision at a meeting recently to launch a day of action against the proposed rent increases. Organisations are now discussing the plans of how such a day of

action could be implemented.

"We call on all the areas and the broader community to work hard to make the day a success. We simply cannot afford to sit back and wait for the Minister. Now, we are told that we must see another minister. Once again, we are being pushed from pillar to post. This is only on a grand scale what happens to us in our daily lives", said a spokesperson for CAHAC.

The Day of Action will be an organised

show of opposition to:

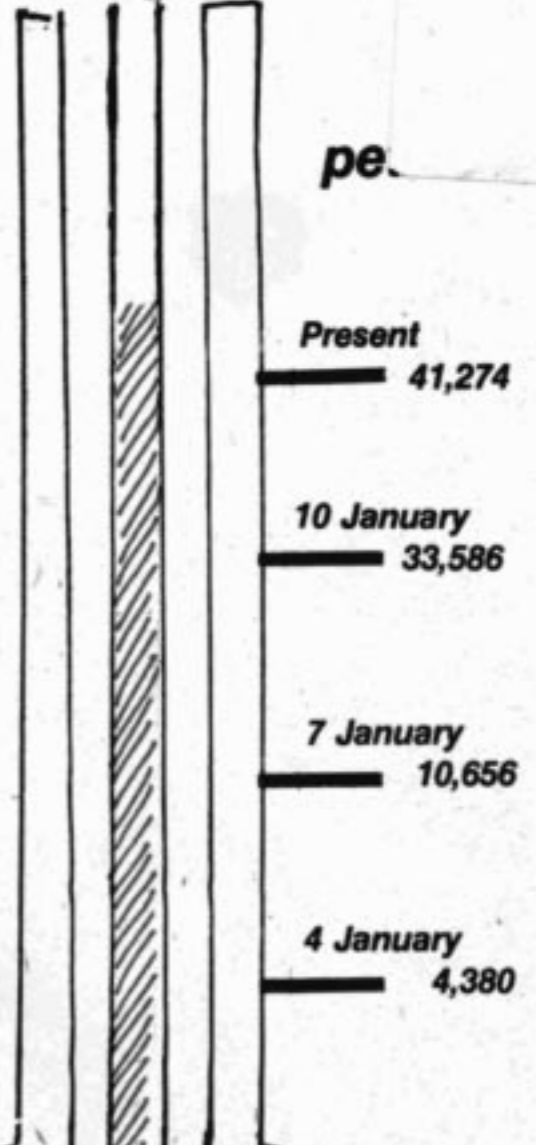
- The Minister's refusal to meet with the people and their elected representatives.
- To press forward in the campaign that rent increases must be stopped immediately. If the Divisional Council could make such costly mistakes at the expense of the people, then there must be something seriously wrong with the way rents are worked out.
- Our long-term demand still stands - We want rents that we can afford.

The campaign against the rent increases is gaining ground as community organisations are continuing to organise in their areas. Already a number of mass meetings were planned in Elsies River, Atlantis, Manenberg and Steenberg to rally the support of the people. Housemeetings are being held in all the areas to keep residents informed of the campaign and to discuss what action should be taken.

Signatures

To date, more than 40 000 signatures have been obtained from

residents all over the Western Cape. Residents have protested in areas such as Lavender Hill and Elsies River against the increases. 50 000 pamphlets and stickers have been issued building up to a mass rally attended by close to 3 000 people. Such is the spirit of the people and the belief that their demand is a just one.



Pass rate low

THE low matric pass rate in black schools has upset parents and pupils and again exposed the system of 'gutter education'.

Only 56 percent of matriculants in 'coloured' schools passed, while the pass rate in some African schools was as low as 10 percent.

The low pass rate comes after examination leaks forced many pupils to rewrite some of their papers.

Parents have condemned the education system for the low pass rate.

"How can our children have proper education if we have no power over what should be taught and how that should be taught," parents have said.

Already, great gains have been made. Areas which have remained unorganised have set up organisations.

"We have rallied the support of the people's organisations and other organisations including the churches, the mosques and the trade unions.

The campaign has taught us that our only weapons are unity and organisation.

Stronger

If we are united and organised, we are in a much stronger position to push ahead with our demands. This struggle is not the fight of the people of Atlantis, Macassar or of Mitchells Plain alone, but of all the oppressed people.

"We call on all areas to give their active support and to join hands to help us press forward in our demands," said a delegate on the Rents Action Committee.

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We won't ride - A short story - page 14

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All about workmen's compensation - page 11

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Food & Canning workers clinic: 'It will make the union stronger'



JOHANNA JULIES is 47 years old. She has been working at All Gold Foods in Paarl for 34 years, since she was 13. She still earns the minimum wage which is R32 at the moment.

She was one of the first patients to attend the Food and Canning Union's clinic in Paarl.

She was very excited that it had been started and not because she gets sick often.

"I am excited because it will make the union stronger," she said.

Union organisers share her view.

The clinic has already led to a number of converts for the union.

The union's medical benefit fund was formed in 1949 by a Conciliation Act agreement between the Union and the employers. This fund has grown slowly in scope and size over the years.

The fund works like this at present.

Each worker pays 20

cents a week to the fund and this is matched by 15 cents from the employer. In return, the worker receives the right to attend one of a panel of doctors in the area.

The doctor charges the fund R2,50 per consultation plus the cost of medicines.

Each worker has a R10 medicine allowance.

After it has been used up the extra cost for medicines must be paid by the worker him/herself.

This has given rise to a number of abuses. Firstly doctors on the Sick Fund panel charge round about R5 for the medicines they supply for each consultation.

Although they supply a slip showing what medicines they have been given, the Fund has no way of knowing whether the medicines supplied and the medicines noted are the same.

There is also no way of knowing how much

of each drug has been supplied or whether the price quoted is a fair one.

In any case a good proportion of drugs supplied probably come from samples left by the drug company reps.

In effect what the fund provided is the full cost of two visits to the doctor (at a cost of about R7,50 to the Fund — composed of R2,50 consultation fee plus R5,00 for medicines) and then a subsidy of R2,50 for each successive visit. The R2,50 covers the cost of the consultation only.

Workers

This was unsatisfactory and many workers felt the benefits they were receiving were insufficient.

So the idea was born that the Paarl branch with a concentrated membership of 3 000 could have one full time salaried doctor who would be able to

The Paarl clinic is the first worker's clinic in the country. It is run by their Union, F & CWU, and controlled by its members.

provide better care at lower prices.

A large room next door to the union office was converted from a store room to a surgery and equipped. This was done at a cost of R1 700 (The surgery was opened on May 7 this year). Medicines were bought in bulk by the Fund.

During the month of June, 70 per cent of sick workers were seen to at the Union Clinic.

The cost of medi-



cines dispensed was well under R2 per visit.

Patients interviewed at the Clinic were highly critical of the panel of doctors.

"They are in such a hurry they barely look at you — our own doctor takes his time and examines you from head to foot" said one.

Another described a visit to a panel doctor as three quick pokes in the ribs followed by "Get away, you're lazy, you don't want to work."

Boycott of Game stores

WORKERS at the Durban branch of Game, the furniture chain group, have been on strike for more than a month after management refused to yield to their demands.

The Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA), which represents the workers, have called for a country-wide boycott of Game stores.

The union's basic demands are:

- A minimum starting salary of R220 which is considered a decent living wage.
- A minimum annual increase of R60 instead of the usual salary increases of between R5 and R30 which is not enough to meet the rapidly rising cost of living.
- Their recognition as a representative union. At present the Game management refuses to recognise CCAWUSA because the union is not registered, although it represents eighty percent of the workers at Game.

"Registration is not

the issue — workers have the right to choose their own union and they have chosen CCAWUSA," a spokesman said.

The boycott is expected to be intensified in the coming weeks. Union sources said it was difficult to get broad community involvement during the Christmas period.

The spokesman appealed to the community not to take jobs left vacant by striking workers and to express their support for the workers struggle by phoning Game management to express their solidarity with the workers demands.

"Management has already tried to woo workers back to work without yielding to their demands. Some workers have fallen for these tactics.

"To them we say: Do not divide the struggle. Together we will win, but divided we will fall.

"To the community we say: Game sells cheap products because they use cheap labour — our people's sweat and tears.

Workers press wage demands

AT a general meeting recently the Leyland workers unanimously rejected management's final wage proposals. The company has now threatened to declare a dispute and to apply for the establishment of a Conciliation Board.

Numarwosa, the union representing the workers is negotiating a new wage and bonus agreement. The old agreement expired on 31st December 1981. Negotiations started late in November and to date no agreement has been reached.

The union opened negotiations with a demand for a minimum wage of R2,20 an hour and the company with R1,71 an hour.

Proposals and counter proposals were presented reaching a deadlock with the union demanding R1,80 an hour for grade one workers and management R1,76 an hour.

The deadlock centres around the wage demands of lower paid workers. A spokesperson for the union said, "prices are rising daily and workers have to dig

into their pockets to make ends meet.

Most of our workers have been hit by rent increases which they simply cannot afford. We are determined to fight this battle on the factory floor."

In May last year close to 2 000 workers went on strike for higher wages. A settlement was reached after 10 weeks to phase in the workers over a period.

Many workers were forced to accept lower paid jobs with the company at the time. Those who did not stay out on strike to the end, were able to get their old jobs back.

A worker said: "We made great sacrifices, some of us did not get our jobs back and had to settle for less with the company.

"We see management's hardheadedness in refusing to accede to our demand of R1,80 as a way of victimising those who stayed out on strike.

"Further, this is clearly a way of sowing disunity between those who were on strike and those who decided to

go back to work. But, we refuse to accept this."

Learning from past experience with the company, the workers decided to include a clause in their agreement that the wages be reviewed by negotiation in June.

In this way, management cannot hold them to the wage agreement for the whole year while costs are increasing daily.

Workers at the Elsie's River and Blackheat plants have returned to work and are determined to continue with the struggle for a living wage.

STOP PRESS

A spokesperson for the Union said 'The workers have decided to accept managements proposal subject to a review in June.'

BELLEVILLE NEEDS A STRONG COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

"The residents of Tupperware and Sementdam in Bellville are organising and getting results", a member of the newly formed Bellville Street Representatives Committee said.

After months of hard work - house-meetings, a community survey to find out what the problems are and with the aid of their own newsletter, Bell News, - a community meeting was held and attended by close to 150 people.

The people spoke about the lack of electricity, poor maintenance of their houses, health problems and overcrowding. A resident said: many people have tried to complain to the Council about these problems. But, for 20 years we have heard nothing else but promises and more promises. The time has come for us to organise

ourselves and speak with one voice.

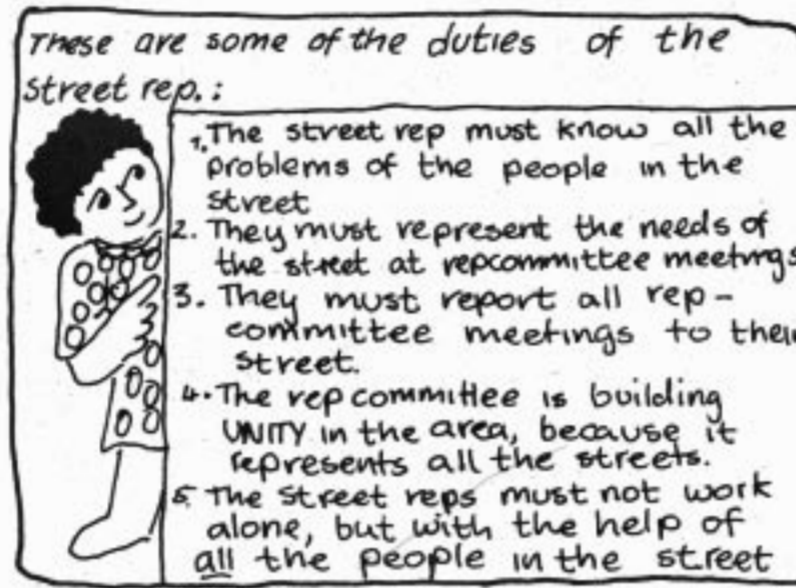
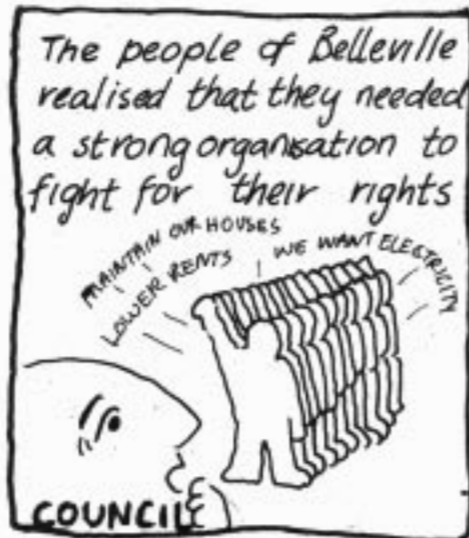
House-meetings have been held in most of the streets and street representatives were elected.

In this way, each street has its own democratically elected representative.

The street representatives meet regularly as a committee and will be co-ordinating the activities in the community.

A resolution was adopted at the meeting to affiliate to CAHAC and to join hands with other people's organisations in the struggle for decent housing.

"The meeting called on the community to organise itself and to fight for what is rightfully ours. Rents have been identified as another major problem which we are hoping to tackle," a spokesperson said.



NURSES SAY NO VOTE FOR SANA ELECTIONS

A FEW weeks ago, all trained nurses in South Africa received papers to vote for members of the South

African Nursing Association (SANA). This is the organisation that all nurses must belong to. In the past, only

whites represented nurses on this body. The new policy is "multiracial", they say. For the first time blacks

will be on the nursing board.

GRASSROOTS interviewed a few nurses to hear what nurses think of the new way in which SANA will be organised.

GRASSROOTS: Are you going to vote in the SANA elections?

NURSES: Definitely not! Even though they say that SANA is now "multiracial", the voting system is still racist, because whites can only vote for whites, and blacks, for blacks.

Also, for our region, there are 11 representatives and 6 are white. So the whites are still in the majority - and that's not what we call democracy.

GRASSROOTS: Do you have any choice in voting for SANA?

NURSES: Many nurses think that voting is compulsory, but in fact it is not. We certainly aren't going to vote in their elections, and we hope our colleagues won't vote either.

GRASSROOTS: So, if you don't want to vote, why are you still a member of SANA? What does it stand for?

NURSES: We are for-

ced to be members, whether we like it or not. And, on top of everything, we have to pay R20 a year.

SANA is supposed to be our union, but all we get from them is a monthly newsletter, telling us what the big shots in nursing are doing.

GRASSROOTS: Have you thought of another organisation which may fulfill your needs and be more representative?

NURSES: In different parts of South Africa, health workers are moving towards organisations which represent all health workers, and not just nurses, porters, clerks or doctors.

We believe that if we all get together as health workers to discuss our problems, it will be easier for us to achieve our goals.

Funds for our projects

ABOUT 1 500 people attended a film premier on December 9 organised by the Lansdowne Youth Movement. This proved to be one of the most successful fund-raising methods used by the organisation.

From October to the end of December LYM went through a slack period due to exam and holiday fever.

Fund-raising was found to be the best activity to keep the group active throughout this period.

Many lessons were learnt during the sale of the tickets by members. Besides fulfilling the responsibility of

bringing money and making the organisation known, they found that it was easier to sell tickets in Lansdowne because of the established relationship which LYM has with residents.

Attempts made to sell tickets on a door to door basis in other areas proved unsuccessful.

"A profit of R800 made us realise that there are resources within our community - in this case cinemas - that should be used," member said.

The money will be used for projects in the area.

Parents' evening - a success

ABOUT 250 people attended the Parents' evening of the Hanover Park Civic Association Youth Wing on December 16.

This was one of two main events held by the wing during the holidays. The other was an outing for more than 100 children who attended the children's group.

"The Parents' Evening was held on a Tuesday night and had to compete with the T.V. If it was held on any other night we would have probably had 500 people there," a PRO of the Youth Wing said. The theme of the

Parents' Evening 'Youth in the Community' was displayed on banners and posters and strongly emphasised in speeches by members of the Wing, the Civic and CAHAC.

A member of the Children's Group spoke about the activities for the year. Later, some children handed over a present to the Youth member in charge of the group. The Children's Group sang several songs, including one about the children's magazine, Molo Songololo

This was composed by one of the members. Although people

could laugh a lot at the Parents' Evening, there was also a serious side, like the speeches about the present rents campaign and the message of unity that was delivered in the sketches about community struggles and victories.

Although the Children's Group played a big role in the Parents' Evening, it was felt they should have a special outing to end off their year's activities.

On the Sunday more than 100 children and quite a few parents came to assist with the children's outing.

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MCA Electricity campaign:

We demand proper electricity

THE Manenberg Civic Association has taken up a campaign demanding proper electricity in the Duinefontein area.

At present the houses are wired only for lights.

In September 1980, Mrs Eulalie Stott, chairperson of the Council's Housing Committee, promised the tenants

that by the end of 1981 all houses in the area would have wiring for essential appliances such as stoves, fridges and irons.

She also said that she knew that the people were using these appliances from plugs they had installed themselves, but would turn a

blind eye to this until the proper supply was installed.

At a civic meeting in November residents complained that at the time the new wiring was supposed to have been completed, council workers were busy removing their extra plugs.

"Without any warning they removed our plugs," a tenant said. "For three weeks now I have had to do my cooking at my neighbour's place.

"We can't use our fridge or iron or television."

Another tenant said that they had spent a lot of money buying kitchen equipment like stoves and refrigerators and were not prepared to go back to using paraffin which was expensive, unhealthy and dangerous.

"Besides electricity is included in our rent. They know we have extra plugs and they charge us for it," said

the resident.

"When they remove the plugs they don't decrease the rent. We have to pay for what they take from us."

A meeting of all Duinefontein tenants was held on December 6.

New facts emerged which angered the residents even more.

The meeting was told: "The Council says they have no money. But they've just agreed to take a loan of R2-million from the government to 'beautify the main roads leading into the townships' and to spend R50 000 on concrete slab walls along Duine-

fontein Road which borders the township. What do they want to hide behind these walls? Who's going to pay for this? We are!"

The meeting decided to send a delegation to the Mayor with a memorandum stating their case.

Trip

The memorandum demanded:

- The installation of proper electricity as promised.
- That the Council immediately stop removing the plugs and trip switches installed by the people until the first demand is met.

The Mayor agreed that the situation was very unsatisfactory and promised to see what he could do.

As demanded in the memorandum the Council replied by December 17. It said that it "recognised the lack of suitable socket outlets has caused tenants inconvenience."

It also agreed that "the actual consumption of each household can only be established by separate metering and ensuring this was one of the reasons for the improvement scheme."

The tenants are awaiting a full reply from the Housing Committee.

BELCA wins bus terminus

A MASS meeting in Belhar elected a new civic association for the area in October last year.

The meeting which was attended by about 300 residents also passed a vote of no confidence in the old association, Brata (Belhar Ratepayers and Tenants Association).

The Belhar Civic Association (Belca), as it is now known, later adopted a constitution

which throws membership open to all residents in the area over 18 years.

Among the association's aims are:

- to strive for the improvement in the living conditions in the area;
- to investigate complaints and problems of residents and to try to solve them.

Already they have received complaints from pensioners about

the long distance they have to travel to get their pensions.

The association has asked the post office to provide a mobile pay point in the area.

Several complaints of assault and robbery were received from bus passengers. The bus terminus is in Eureka and people have to walk through bush and deserted areas to get to their homes.

Successful negotiations were held with the tramways and a temporary terminus was set up in central Belhar.

Terminus

This will be replaced by a new permanent terminus at Unibell station.

The association will also go into the question of taxi owners who overcharge their passengers.

Belca completely rejects management committees and other government created bodies. It intends, however, to co-operate with other bodies with similar aims and objects.

Officials who can be contacted are: Mr G F MacMaster, 71 Banjo Loop (94 9154) or Mr L D Mondo, 25 Protea Avenue (94 0807).

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BISHOP Lavis Action Committee (BLAC) wanted to end 1981 on a high but relaxed note.

This is what made them decided early in November to organise a Big Walk in the area on December 10.

The weather let them down - it turned out to be a rainy day. However, the show had to go on!

BLAC also wanted to gain more support for its electricity struggle and it was felt that the Big Walk could help achieve this.

The committee which was appointed to organise the Big Walk - in an effort to drum up support from other areas - invited as many other organisations as possible to take part.

Also, in an effort to prod Bishop Lavis residents' interest in the electricity struggle it was decided to print a big yellow sticker saying "Support our electricity struggle".

Sticker

The sticker was to be worn by all those taking part in the Big Walk.

On the day of the Big Walk the sticker looked striking.

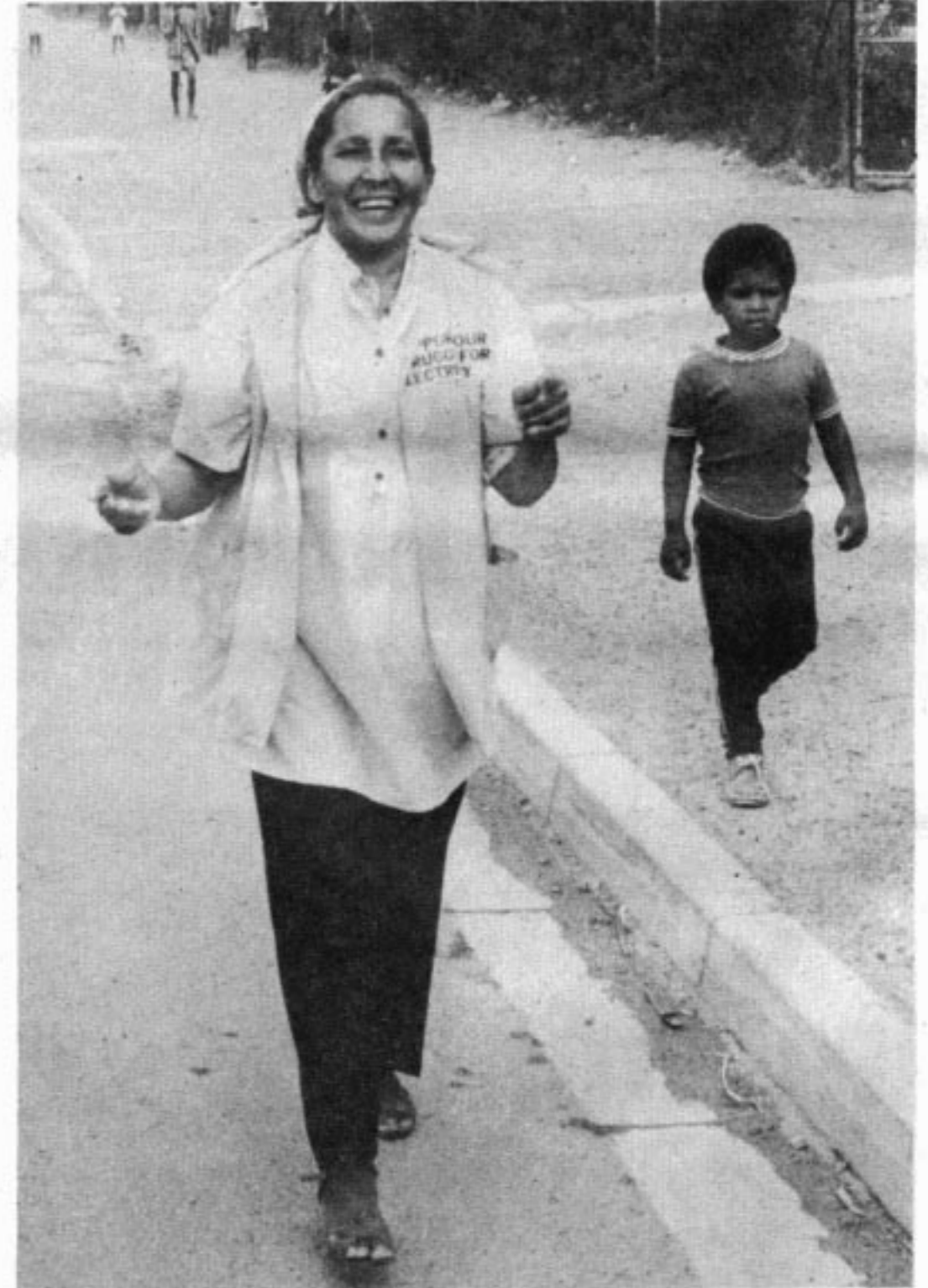
It led to the campaign for lights in the area becoming the main talking point among the spectators.

Another purpose of the Big Walk was to raise funds for a local community newsletter due for release soon.

Despite the bad weather, more people than expected turned up for the Big Walk - about 100.

The people who organised the Big Walk could not have hoped for a bigger success. On an organisational level wonders were achieved.

The committee who organised the Big Walk were made up of a number of fairly inexperienced (in terms of



The last walker reaches the end of the line.

Big walk ends year on high note

organising) residents.

In the process of organising the Big Walk they definitely acquired a number of organising skills.

Financially the Big Walk was also a success.

Enough money (R232,00) was collected

for BLAC to bring out its first newsletter.

The last and most important gain was that BLAC's youth movement was able to recruit many new members as a result of the Big Walk.

Many of those who

took part were young and most of them enquired about the youth movement after the Big Walk.

The BLAC youth eagerly informed them about their organisation and invited them to the next youth gathering.

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WOMEN STAGE PROTEST



The Macassar branch of the United Womens' Organisation staged a demonstration late last year against the management committee. Residents realised that they needed a strong organisation to speak for them. This move led to the formation of the Macassar Civic Association.

Woodlands Rent Survey

Tenants cannot afford increases

THE Woodlands Action Committee has conducted a survey which shows that more than 74 percent of the residents cannot afford the old rents let alone pay the increases which range from R2 to R60.

The survey was conducted in September and October last year - by then the residents had already received notification of the increases they would have to pay from January 3 this year.

Three hundred families were surveyed about their incomes and their expenses.

Of these 223 (74,1 percent) could not afford the old rents.

After they had paid rent, food, lights, transport and hire purchase they had nothing left over for other essentials such as doctors, medicine and "emergencies".

This meant they had to continually borrow at work or from friends.

The other 77 families surveyed had something over, but in most cases it was only R10 or R15.

All of those surveyed (100 percent) said they would not be able to afford the increased rents.

Many families were so badly off that they could hardly pay their water account - 40 of

those surveyed had not paid water since they moved in.

Some water accounts were in arrears for R120.

Of those surveyed 238 paid rents of between R8 and R20 before they moved to Woodlands.

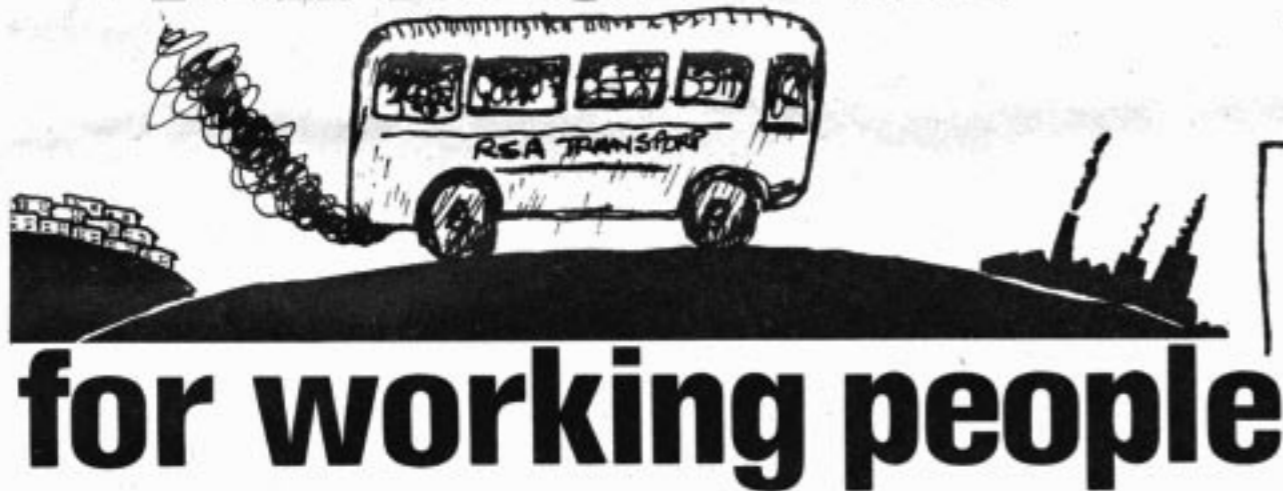
Now their rents ranged from R38 to R100.

WAC (an affiliate of EPC) is now busy with a fresh survey.

So far 312 families have been surveyed and out of these 196 are still paying the old rents.

"They just can't afford the increases," a WAC spokesperson said.

TRANSPORT



TRANSPORT for working people is a 30 page booklet with interesting cartoons published by Diakona in Durban. It looks at

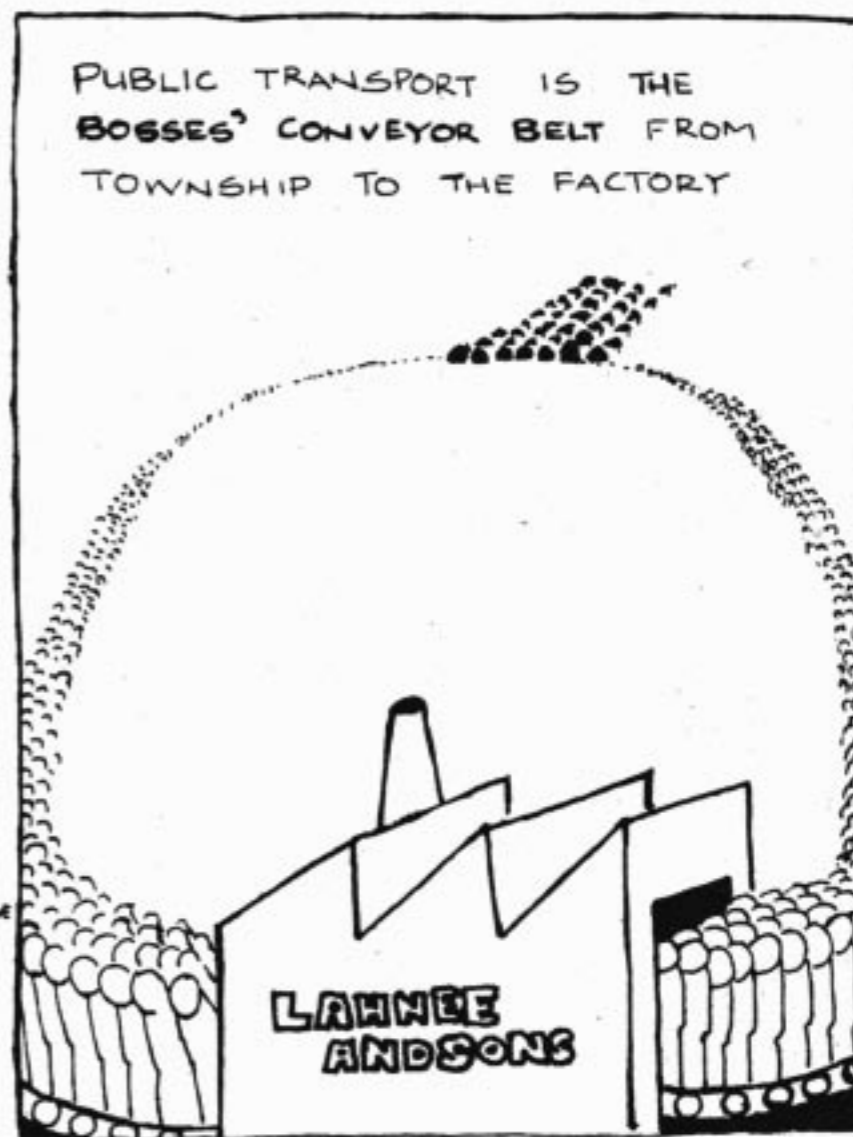
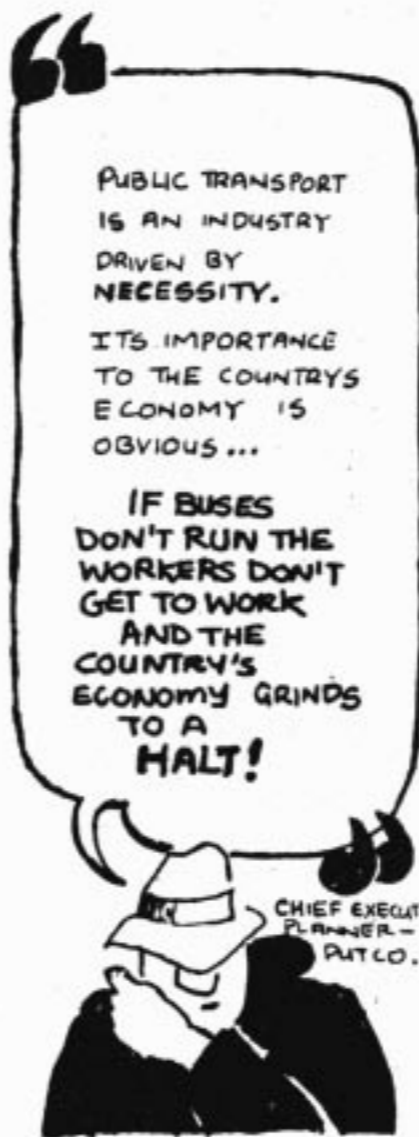
- the day to day experiences of working

people on the buses and trains

- why is transport a problem?
- what can working people do about the problem?

A useful booklet for community organisations and trade unions. Diakona has limited copies available. If you are interested write to Diakona, P.O. Box 1879, Durban 4000.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS ORGANISED FIRST OF ALL TO SERVE THE BOSSSES AND NOT THE PEOPLE WHO USE IT



comment

The people's demands are just

AN increase in rent was the government's new year's present to thousands of Western Cape residents this month.

Having forced the increases on to the people, the Minister, Mr Pen Kotze has told the organisation opposing the increases, CAHAC, that he has no time to discuss the matter now.

Instead, he chooses to make time to speak with management committee members who have been rejected by the people.

He must meet with the elected representatives of the people.

The Minister is ignoring the reasonable demands of the people for rents they can afford. It makes no sense to impose high rents on people which will only force them out of their houses.

Is this what the government wants?

United action

Housing is a right and not a privilege. While the people battle to pay their high rents, rows of flats stand empty in white areas. They have to pay the price for Apartheid today. Why must they bear the cost of a system which they were never consulted about?

The demands of the people's organisation, CAHAC, are just.

The Minister must not ignore the 40 000 people who have signed the petition opposing the increases.

He must put a stop to all rent increases. And the people must not rely on the few leaders who will be part of the delegation to solve their problems.

They must unite and act to see to it that their demands are met.

Forward we shall march

THOSE who thought that the new year had great promise in store for the people, have already been proved wrong.

Working families are going to be hit even harder this year by the rising cost of living. Already City Tramways has applied for increases in busfares in Mitchells Plain and Atlantis. The government and the bosses have hinted at the need to tighten their belts as the economy is once again entering a bad patch.

Build organisation

We cannot accept this with our hands down. The only way forward is to continue to build mass based people's organisations in the areas where we live and on the factory floor. We also need to organise the unorganised by bringing them into our local struggles.

Furthermore, while we need to strengthen our base, we also need to break the isolation between the different people's organisations, the trade unions and the community organisations. The rents campaign has been a great success in uniting the people and breaking this isolation.

We have started the year on a good note. With this experience, we can tackle the great task facing us in the months to come.



LETTERS

THE EYE



Pretoria newsletter informs and educates in the interest of the community

A COMMUNITY newsletter, *The Eye*, was launched in Pretoria towards the end of last year.

The newsletter was started after community organisers in the townships in and around Pretoria saw the need for a paper that would serve the interests of the communities.

The people responsible for *The Eye* cer-

tainly made a sound and solid first attempt.

In the first edition, completed in September, the *Eye* effectively highlights community and worker struggles.

It brings to the fore the problems experienced by the people of Shoshangave, Atteridgeville, Saulsville and other townships.

High water, electricity and rent accounts,

bad roads, lack of facilities, non-maintenance of homes which results in serious ill health, are only some of the problems plaguing these areas.

Coverage is also given to the struggle by Sigma and other workers for higher wages and improved working conditions.

The *Eye* fulfills its necessary function of

informing and educating its readers and making known the needs of the community.

It shows how people have organised themselves to fight the hardships which have been imposed on them.

One article which is of particular interest, shows how the youth in Atteridgeville and Saulsville formed the funeral

brigade.

Some of the duties of the Funeral Brigades was to go to the home of the deceased, and to assist in the washing of utensils, slaughtering of animals and erecting and removing of tents.

They did this in an effort to normalise the parent/youth relationship, to create a spirit of trust and co-operation.

There are a few things which could be a problem, one such being the language used in certain articles. It needs to be simplified somewhat.

Function

Many of the minor problems should however sort themselves out with every edition.

If this happens, then the *Eye* will not fail to fulfill its main function - serving the interests of the community.

- Community Worker

No benefits for tenants

THE Cape Town City Council have once again found it necessary to increase rents.

This has become an annual tradition over the last 10 years. During this period my rent increased by 100 per cent.

I cannot take it any more.

I have had enough. The reasons given for the increases in the beginning still don't make sense to me.

All that I can see is that I am Black and must pay for the conveniences of the Whites.

They just had a new pavillion in Muizenberg while we in Schotsche

Kloof have nothing.

When we ask for facilities, we are told there is no money.

The people of Bonteheuvel, Manenberg and Heideveld are in the same position. Our houses are poorly maintained, the quality of services and administration are poor. Why

must we pay for things that we do not benefit from?

I support CAHAC (Cape Areas Housing Action Committee) and hope that they will bring some relief for our suffering poor.

Resident of Bo-Kaap.

UNEMPLOYMENT

MR JANSEN is an ordinary working person. He lives in Mitchells Plain and has worked in a factory in Paarden Island for the past 12 years. Life is hard for Mr Jansen. He has to leave his home early in the morning to travel the long way to work.

Most evenings, he comes home late from working overtime. Everything is so expensive these days that he has to work a lot of overtime just to stay alive. The bus fares to work are high, food, clothing and education for his children; everything costs more and more. And now they've put up the rents as well!

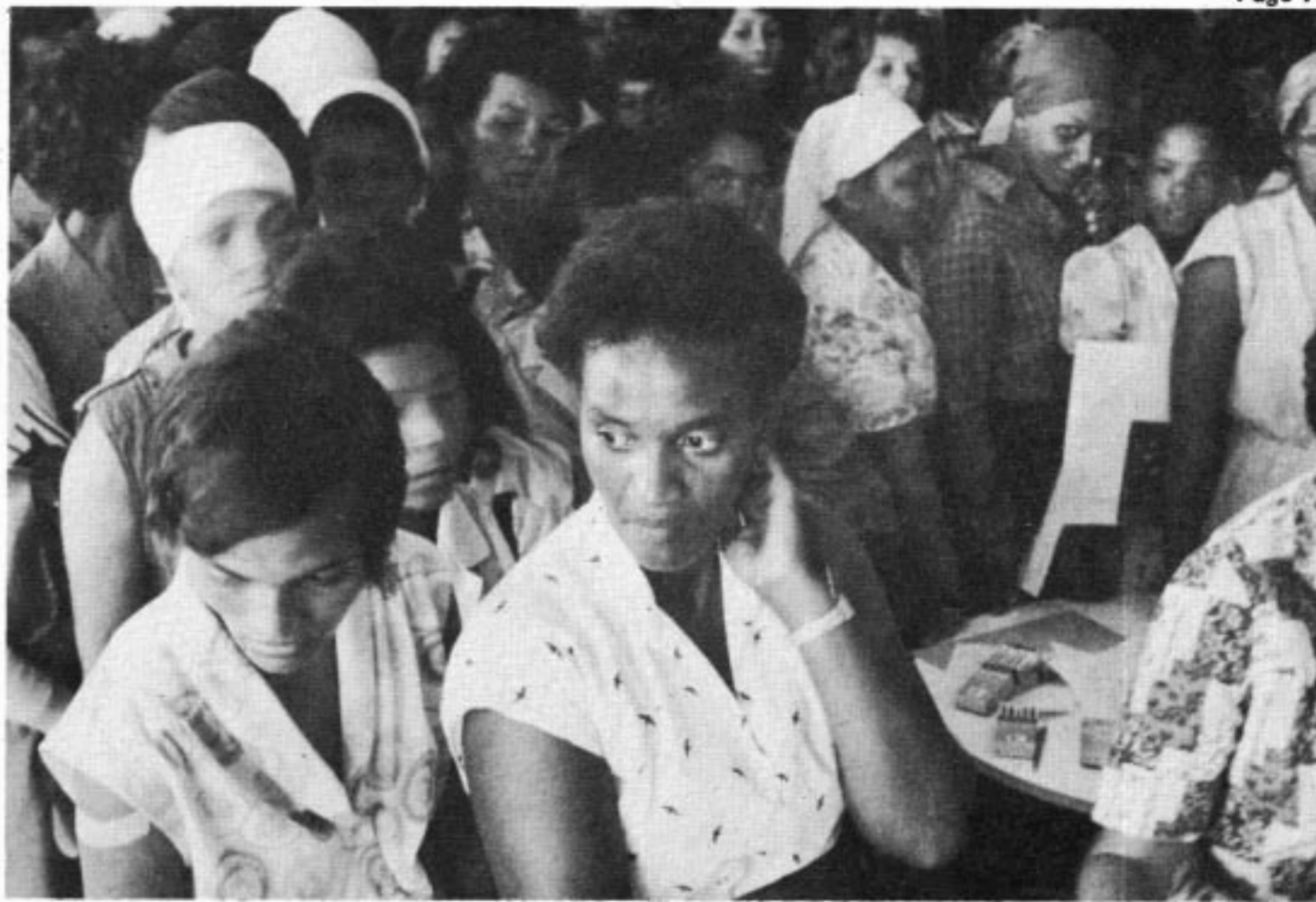
Last week, Mr Jansen lost his job. Many people were laid off at

the same time. The boss said that times were hard, there wasn't work.

Mr Jansen will have to find a job very soon. He does not have savings to live off. If he can't pay the rent, he will be evicted. And if he falls behind on his payments, his lounge furniture will be taken back.

In 1977 already, there were 2.3 million people like Mr Jansen. In other words, one out of every five people could not find a job. That is only counting those people who are looking for work. It does not include people who do not need jobs, like children and old people.

So it will be difficult for Mr Jansen to find work. There are simply too many people needing work.



Sacrificing Jobs for Profits . . .

THERE have not always been so many people without jobs in South Africa. Many years ago, all the people living here were able to feed themselves. They owned cattle, and lived off the land. When the white settlers came, they also wanted to start farming. But they needed people to help them work the land.

Many were not satisfied with producing enough food for themselves and their families. They wanted bigger farms to be able to sell some of the food they produced.

This is why they needed people to help them, because they could not work such big farms all alone.

But the people who lived here did not want to work for the settlers. They had enough of all the things they needed. So the first settlers had to bring people from other countries to work for them here. Many slaves were brought here from Malaya, for instance.

Later on, gold and diamonds were discovered, and mines were started. Soon, factories were started. But the mines and the

factories also needed workers, just like the farms of the settlers.

And most of the people still did not want to work there. They preferred to live off the land, because conditions in the mines and factories were very bad.

This was a problem for the farmers and bosses of the mines and factories. They had to offer high wages to get enough people to work for them. And this meant that their profits were not as high as they wanted.

So the bosses tried to think of ways of creating unemployment. They knew when there is competition amongst workers for few jobs, wages will be low. When people are desperate for jobs, they will be prepared to work for low wages.

The government helped the bosses by forcing people off the land. In 1913, for instance, they passed a law that said that black people were only allowed to farm on a very small part of South Africa.

They knew that it was only enough for a very small number

of black people to be farmers. The rest would have to look for work. They also passed a law saying that the people had to pay tax in money.

Rising Profits

They knew that the people did not have money, and could only get money by working in the mines, factories or on the farms.

Slowly, the situation got better for the bosses, and worse for the people. More and more people needed jobs to stay alive, and could not get them, because there were more people than jobs.

And so wages dropped, and the profits of the bosses grew. (Remember that a worker may get more money in his or her pocket but if he can buy less things with the money because of rising cost of living then his or her wage has actually gone down.)

Today, there is more unemployment and more hardship amongst the people, than ever before.

Now the bosses are getting

worried. They know that when conditions are too bad, the people get angry, like they did in Soweto in 1976 and in Durban in 1973, when thousands of workers went on strike.

This is where the government helps the bosses again: their police and army control the people. The pass laws and homelands system means that people who are looking for jobs are not allowed into the towns, but have to wait for work in the homelands.

They cannot be dangerous for the bosses' mines and factories.

There are many different reasons why people lose their jobs. For instance, the bosses may buy a machine that can do the work of many workers. With the help of machines less workers can produce more goods. So by buying machines, the bosses can lay off workers and save their wages, and their profits will go up again. Besides, machines never join unions or go on strike.

Of course, there are not always the same number of peo-

ple out of a job. Sometimes, when there is a lot of work in the factories, there will be less people unemployed. This is called a "boom".

At other times, when there is little work, there will be more unemployed. Such a time is called a "slump" or "recession."

South Africa is now at the start of a slump. In the next few years, the bosses will not be able to sell so many of their goods, and so they will have to produce less in their factories. But this will mean that their profits will go down.

The only thing they can do to avoid their profits going down is to cut back on their costs. The easiest way to do this is by laying off workers, and this is why many people will lose their jobs during a slump.

So we can see that the high numbers of unemployed serves the interests of the bosses, by keeping their profits high. They fought for a long time to create the large group of unemployed that exists today, and they make sure that it stays large.

When times are hard, it is always the workers who suffer. They get fired so that the bosses' profits will stay high. The jobs which people need are sacrificed for profits.

THE HARDSHIPS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

"LIFE is difficult here in Hout Bay. If I had known how difficult it was going to be, I would never have come here."

These are the words of Joyce, a worker at the I & J fish factory in Hout Bay that recently laid-off 26 workers.

On October 16 last year, I & J closed down because of a shortage of fish.

Half of their workers were sent to Woodstock to work there, but 26 workers were told that there was no work for them.

Joyce is one of those workers.

"I received no money from I & J when they fired me. I can't apply for UIF because I didn't work for more than a year at I & J" she said.

Joyce has two children, Steffie and Pamela, with nobody to provide for them.

"I went back to I & J

on Monday to ask them for my job back. I cried when they told me they can't take me back. Where am I going to get money for food for my children?"

Food is expensive in Hout Bay. Joyce has to do her shopping in Wynberg. She can't even afford the busfare of R1,30.

Joyce is more fortunate than the other laid-off workers. She lives with her stepfather in a compound owned by the factory and therefore has no rent or electricity to pay.

Janice is 17 years old. She left school after completing Std 5 to work in the factory. She was also laid-off on October 16.

"I was just told that the factory was closing down and that I didn't have to come back to work," she said.

Janice cleaned fish

'The bosses don't think about the workers' families when they lay us off.'

and earned R38 a week. She and her mother were the only people working in a household of seven people. Her father was a fisherman but is now sickly and unable to work.

Her mother works at Snoekie Snoek and earns R42 a week.

"We now have to pay the rent of R28,44 and R20 for electricity out of my mother's wages only," Janice said. "I don't know where we are going to get money for food. I have two sisters at

school whose uniforms and books have to be paid for."

"The bosses don't think of the workers' families when they lay us off."

Janice received no money from I & J, only one week's pay.

She now has to look for work elsewhere. Work is scarce in Hout Bay and travelling costs are high when working out of the area.

"This means that I will actually be earning less money now," Janice said.

The Union speaks

GRASSROOTS spoke to the General Workers Union about the problem of unemployment and what workers can do about it. This is what they told us.

GRASSROOTS: Will unemployment go up in 1982?

GWU: Well, unemployment has been the pattern for some time now, but we are expecting increased reduction in staff in 1982.

In some cases it is just a cover, people who want their rights in the factories and are prepared to fight for them lose their jobs under the cover of a reduction in staff.

Already, factories have begun to lay off workers.

GRASSROOTS: What does increased unemployment mean for the union?

GWU: Unemployment weakens the union and the workers because it affects the stronger workers.

It intimidates other

workers, because they think that if they continue their activity they will be affected.

It also strengthens the employers because they know that if people put forward demands there are 100 other people outside prepared to work for half the price.

GRASSROOTS: Does the government support people who lose their jobs?

GWU: Well, there is a fund to pay people unemployment, but there are problems.

It is often difficult for people to get their unemployment insurance.

Often they get tossed about by the BAAAB. If we had a government that looked after the position of people, better compensation could be given to people.

GRASSROOTS: Can the union help unemployed workers?

GWU: Sometimes the union can help people

to get jobs. If we do know of a vacancy, we tell other workers that there are jobs. But this is not our main role, we just do it when the situation arises.

GRASSROOTS: What can workers do to fight unemployment?

GWU: Workers can devise means of demanding that they work shorter hours to curb people being laid off.

Then everyone suffers a little bit, rather than a few people suffering a lot.

In some factories, we have agreements with management which lay down procedures.

This means that the bosses have to give people enough notice, and that the people who have worked in the factory longest get fired last.

Also, the workers can demand that when people get re-employed, that the fired workers get taken back before new workers get hired.

Rents we can afford

Rent Increases

• Atlantis - a wage increase from R150-R151 means a rent increase from R23.92 - R25.85

Evictions

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• 250 were actually evicted.

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Our rents campaign

RESIDENTS WORK FOR UNITED ACTION

Lavender Hill

PLACARDS reading "No to High Rents in 1982 - Lam Food for Us" and "Sign the Petition" expressed the true feelings of the residents and children of Lavender Hill.

Under the banner of this organisation, angry residents and children staged a peaceful demonstration before Christmas outside their homes to rally support for the campaign and to urge residents to sign the petition.

A spokesperson for the Lavender Hill Civic Association said: "This is the kind of Christmas that the Council is giving the people of Lavender Hill".

Elsies River

More than 100 Elsies River residents burnt Divisional Council notices informing them of the rent increases at a protest meeting in December.

Residents were shocked when they were informed of increases which had doubled in some cases.

As a result of the protest, the Secretary of the Divisional Council announced that there had been a mistake in the calculations and that this would be rectified.

A resident said at the time, "we are burning their notices because we want to show the Divisional Council exactly what we think of them".

We need facts

One way in which residents armed themselves against the housing authority, was to conduct community surveys in their areas to find out:

- how many people were affected by the increases and
- what the actual increases were.

These facts have helped to strengthen the case of the people. In this way, facts and figures could be presented to counteract the Council's claim that the increases were not above normal.

Bishop Lavis Action Committee, and the Electricity Petition Committee, organising in Mitchell's Plain, released figures of increases of up to 110%.

One of the organisers of the campaign said that this has undoubtedly strengthened the campaign.

ON the windows and doors of blocks of flats and rows of houses in townships all over the Western Cape, is a rent sticker which is not only the symbol, but at the heart of one of our most significant campaigns - the struggle for rents that we can afford.

This is the demand of thousands of tenants who are faced with rent increases of between ten and 100 percent. Year after year, tenants are faced with rent increases. But this year, they are determined that the increases must be stopped. "The only way is for us to organise ourselves to resist and show our weight behind the struggle", said one of the organisers of the campaign.

The campaign against the increases was started in December last year when tenants were shocked by higher rents effective from 1st January which was way above their small savings.

Forty-two peoples' organisations - civics, trade unions, churches and where there were no organisations, committees were formed - joined hands under the banner of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC), an umbrella organisation of civic associations, to fight this battle.

Support has been mounting as this issue is clearly in the heart of many people. Not even the Christmas holidays could stop them from organising.

To date, nearly 40 000 residents have signed a petition in protest. In some areas, residents took to the streets to make their voices heard. While in others, tenants burnt rent papers to show the Council what they think of the increases.

A high note of the campaign was a mass rally attended by close to 3 000 tenants in the Cape. This was not only a show of support for the campaign, but a display of strength and unity among the oppressed.

Speaker after speaker spoke about the hardships of our people and their

struggle to survive in the face of the rising cost of living, low wages and small wage increases which are being eaten away by higher taxes to fill the coffers of the government.

In return, tenants in need of poor maintenance of the house, lack of facilities and services in the area and waiting lists for houses dating back to 1969. A banner at the rally expressed the views of the people - housing, security and comfort is a basic right of the majority of the people and not only of a privileged few.

Others spoke about the effects of the Group Areas Act and the days when some of us lived at Goodwood Aikens and District Six, only to be dumped in townships far from our places of work, family and friends.

Aired great applause and shouts of "dit is mos" (it is true), residents stated their message loud and clear - we refuse to bear the burden of paying for Apartheid. Further, we know that this is so because our people do not have a say in the decisions and the laws which are made about us daily lives.

With this in mind, a resolution was adopted by close to 3 000 people calling on the central government to take full responsibility for all housing and to provide bigger subsidies for housing. The meeting also resolved to send a deputation to the Minister of

Community Development to lay the objections and the demands of the people at the doors of the government where it belongs.

But, we cannot blame the government alone. The bosses in their chase for profit, work hand-in-hand with the state to condemn our people to a life of hardship and misery.

Workers have no say over minimum wage levels, yet, they are expected to feed, clothe and house their families. Further, most working families live on or below the breadline. Minimum wages are not based on what it costs to live today, but on what the bosses can afford to pay their workers.

The gains that workers have made over the past year in their fight for higher wages will be eaten away by the rent increases, the rising cost of transport and general cost of living.

And, as mass protest is building up with threats of boycotts of rent increases by tenants, the Dept. of Community Development has announced that there has been a major error in the calculation of rents in Divisional Council Areas. This is clearly a costly mistake at the expense of working families. Without organised resistance and united action on the part of the people, this 'mistake' would certainly have gone unnoticed.

This is no doubt a victory. To date, tenants have not been informed of their revised rents.

The struggle must continue until the rents structures which is one of the main causes of the problem, is revised so that tenants will pay rents that they can afford.

In the light of such costly errors, the people are not unreasonable in their demand that all rent increases be stopped.

The call from the CAHAC is for us to join hands in the struggle. To organise ourselves to resist the increases.

Mass rally

They came on foot, in cars, buses and coaches, all of 3 000 residents from Worcester to Macassar, Scotts Kloof to Hanover Park to add their voices to the growing protest against rent increases.

The meeting was organised under the banner of CAHAC, an umbrella body with 42 member organisations. Support came from the churches, and mosques, the trade unions and the Fort Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (FEBCO).

The organisers announced at the meeting that 33 568 people throughout the Western Cape signed the petition.

A speaker said: "We are forced to pay for the cost of Apartheid. The time has come to unite for definite action. A people united will never fail".

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Parents and children stage placard demonstration in Lavender Hill

Div. Council R1 000

• Paid R1 000 for reception of Chilean cabinet minister BUT

• Elsie's River and Grassy Park refused grants of R100

Macassar

• 68% of tenants had little or no money for food after paying rent

Macassar on the move

IN this busy Grassroots looks at how one of the organisations on the RAC went about organising in its own area.

The Macassar Civic Association (MCA) was formed at a public meeting in November.

Residents are hopeful that this body, unlike many others in the past, would be more successful in representing the people of the area.

A spokesperson for MCA said: "The civic can only be successful if it has the support, the confidence and the co-operation of all the residents".

Just after the elections, the MCA had to deal with huge rent increases, more than double in some cases.

Housemeetings were held to find out what the increases were and what action needs to be taken. Two public meetings were held in the area and attended by more than 500 people.

Residents took a decision to join in the rents campaign organised by CAHAC.

"So far, we have held meetings, distributed pamphlets, sold rent stickers to popularise the campaign and to get signatures for the petition.

Response

"We also encouraged residents to attend the mass rally. The response was very good. Two buses, 5 coaches and cars transported more than 250 delegates to the rally. Many others could not be accommodated because of a lack of transport," said a member of the civic.

It is the feeling of the MCA that by taking up this issue they have been able to build their civic association.

"We have reached many people in the community. The rents campaign has also helped us in losing how to organise in our area."

The future of the campaign

AT the mass rally, close to 3 000 tenants adopted a resolution to send a deputation to the Minister of Community Development, to present the people's demands and a petition in protest against the rent increases.

But, the Minister of Community Development, Mr Kotze, has once again found reasons to delay a meeting with the elected representatives of the people. Many residents see this as an attempt to stall the people's resistance and to disorganise the campaign.

A spokesperson for the RAC said: "We refuse to give up so easily. We cannot sit back and wait for the Minister to decide when he is going to see us. Now is the time, more than ever before, to step up the campaign and to exert mass pressure on the authorities to listen to the demands of the people".

The struggle will be a long and hard one. There will be no easy victories. The battle to have the electricity due date changed in Mitchell's Plain lasted for seven months before victory was achieved.

Grassroots spoke to representatives from the RAC about the future of the campaign. This is what they said:

- The future of the campaign depends on the active participation and involvement of all the people.
- Only informed people can make informed decisions. The campaign moves so fast that it is not always easy to keep the community informed about what is happening.
- This can be done through housemeetings, smaller public meetings in the areas, pamphleteering and through community newsletters. Street committees could also be organised.
- When we know the facts, we can make informed decisions about what action to take.

All residents should think hard about what action needs to be taken.

This must be an organisational decision. When we decide on future action, it is like playing a game of cards. Do we keep one card up our sleeve while we play the other? When is the time ripe to play our final trump card?

We should also know our strengths and weaknesses. How strong is our organisation? How hard has our area been hit by the increases?

Do we have the support of the people?

It is only in this way that we can decide on a line of action which will advance our campaign.

- We can only take action if we have mass support. If we don't, how can we go about getting it?
- The co-ordination of the campaign is as important as the campaign itself.

Your representative on the RAC is the messenger of your organisation. It is at meetings of the RAC that joint action can be decided upon after all the messages from all the people's organisations have been tabled.

It is in this way that we can co-ordinate the campaign and act democratically at all times.

- Many voices are better than one.
- If you are not part of the campaign, join your local civic organisation and your trade union. Rally the support of the organisations and religious bodies in your area.
- Bring your friends and neighbours to the meetings.
- Some areas are not so seriously affected by the increases. But, they have joined the campaign because they believe that it is not the struggle of the people of Athlone or Mitchell's Plain alone, but of all the oppressed people in our country.



Kewtown residents set up a stall in Athlone as part of their drive to get signatures for the petition.

"After careful discussion and weighing up all the options, a decision is taken. It is very important that we operate democratically so that everybody feels that their voices, views and opinions are heard.

"It is only in this way that we can have united action.

"We also have a situation where some areas are better organised than others.

"Where some areas are harder hit than others by the increases.

"All this has to be borne in mind when we make decisions about what action to take. In Macassar for instance, residents decided at a public meeting not to boycott the increases because they were not strongly organised. They said: "We can only boycott when we have the entire community behind us".

"Because of these differences between the areas and the need to consult with the people at all times, we have to coordinate the activities of the campaign - that is the job of RAC.

Also, an organising committee which meets regularly to ensure that the work gets done.

"The delegates on RAC bring a mandate from the organisation in their areas.

"The organisations in our area have the responsibility of reporting to the committee on the decisions or issues raised by the RAC.

"This is then fed back via the delegates on the committee.

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Workers have no say over minimum wage levels, yet, they are expected to feed, clothe and house their families. Further, most working families live on or below the breadline. Minimum wages are not based on what it costs to live today, but on what the bosses can afford to pay their workers.

The gains that workers have made over the past year in their fight for higher wages will be eaten away by the rent increases, the rising cost of transport and general cost of living.

And, as mass protest is building up with threats of boycotts of rent increases by tenants, the Dept. of Community Development has announced that there has been a major error in the calculation of rents in Divisional Council Areas. This is clearly a costly mistake at the expense of working families. Without organised resistance and united action on the part of the people, this 'mistake' would certainly have gone unnoticed.

This is no doubt a victory. To date, tenants have not been informed of their revised rents.

The struggle must continue until the rents structures which is one of the main causes of the problem, is revised so that tenants will pay rents that they can afford.

In the light of such costly errors, the people are not unreasonable in their demand that all rent increases be stopped.

The call from the CAHAC is for us to join hands in the struggle. To organise ourselves to resist the increases.

CAHAC, an umbrella organisation of civics in the Western Cape took up the issue in December when it was announced that rents in Divisional Council, City Council and Bantu Administration Board Areas would receive rent increases as from 1st January.

A Rents Action Committee (RAC) was formed under the banner of CAHAC.

The RAC was open to all civic organisations, trade unions and religious organisations. As the campaign gained momentum other organisations joined. To date, 42 organisations are represented on RAC.

CAHAC spoke to the organisers of the campaign about how the committee works. This is what they said:

"We have one delegate per organisation on the RAC. The RAC co-ordinates all the work that needs to be done. There are also sub-committees which have specific tasks such as, fund-raising, publicity and liaising with the press.

Also, an organising committee which meets with organising in the communities where help is needed such as, arranging a public meeting.

In this way we can ensure that the work gets done.

"The delegates on RAC bring a mandate from the organisation in their areas.

"The organisations in ours have the responsibility of reporting to the community on the decisions or issues raised by the RAC.

"This is then fed back via the delegates on the committee.

"Because of these differences between the areas and the need to consult with the people at all times, we have to coordinate the activities of the campaign - that is the job of RAC.



Kewtown residents set up a stall in Athlone as part of their drive to get signatures for the petition.

The future of the campaign

AT the mass rally, close to 3 000 tenants adopted a resolution to send a deputation to the Minister of Community Development, to present the people's demands and a petition in protest against the rent increases.

But, the Minister of Community Development, Mr Kotze, has once again found reasons to delay a meeting with the elected representatives of the people. Many residents see this as an attempt to stall the people's resistance and to disorganise the campaign.

A spokesperson for the RAC said: "We refuse to give up so easily. We cannot sit back and wait for the Minister to decide when he is going to see us. Now is the time, more than ever before, to step up the campaign and to exert mass pressure on the authorities to listen to the demands of the people".

The struggle will be a long and hard one. There will be

no easy victories. The battle to have the electricity due date changed in Mitchell's Plain lasted for seven months before victory was achieved.

CAHAC spoke to representatives from the RAC about the future of the campaign. This is what they said:

• The future of the campaign depends on the active participation and involvement of all the people.

• Only informed people can make informed decisions. The campaign moves so fast that it is not always easy to keep the community informed about what is happening.

This can be done through housemeetings, smaller public meetings in the areas; pamphleteering and through community newsletters. Street committees could also be organised.

• When we know the facts, we can make informed decisions about what action to take.

All residents should think hard about what action needs to be taken.

This must be an organisational decision. When we decide on future action, it is like playing a game of cards. Do we keep one card up our sleeve while we play the other? When is the time ripe to play our final trump card?

We should also know our strengths and weaknesses. How strong is our organisation? How hard has our area been hit by the increases?

Do we have the support of the people?

It is only in this way that we can decide on a line of action which will advance our campaign.

• We can only take action if we have mass support. If we don't, how can we go about getting it?

• The co-ordination of the campaign is as important as the campaign itself.

Your representative on the

RAC is the messenger of your organisation. It is at meetings of the RAC that joint action can be decided upon after all the messages from all the people's organisations have been tabled.

It is in this way that we can co-ordinate the campaign and act democratically at all times.

• Many voices are better than one.

If you are not part of the campaign, join your local civic organisation and your trade union. Rally the support of the organisations and religious bodies in your area.

Bring your friends and neighbours to the meetings.

Some areas are not so seriously affected by the increases. But, they have joined the campaign because they believe that it is not the struggle of the people of Athlone or Mitchell's Plain alone, but of all the oppressed people in our country.

Div. Council R1 000

• Paid R1 000 for reception of Chilean cabinet minister BUT

• Elsie's River and Grassy Park refused grants of R100

Macassar

• 68% of tenants had little or no money for food after paying rent

Macassar on the move

IN this busy Grassroots looks at how one of the organisations on the RAC went about organising in its own area.

The Macassar Civic Association (MCA) was formed at a public meeting in November.

Residents are hopeful that this body, unlike many others in the past, would be more successful in representing the people of the area.

A spokesperson for MCA said: "The civic can only be successful if it has the support, the confidence and the co-operation of all the residents".

Just after the elections, the MCA had to deal with huge rent increases, more than double in some cases.

Housemeetings were held to find out what

the increases were and what action needs to be taken. Two public meetings were held in the area and attended by more than 500 people.

Residents took a decision to join in the rents campaign organised by CAHAC.

"So far, we have held meetings, distributed pamphlets, sold rent stickers to popularise the campaign and to get signatures for the petition.

Response

"We also encouraged residents to attend the mass rally. The response was very good. Two buses, 5 coaches and cars transported more than 250 delegates to the rally. Many others could not be accommodated because



Parents and children stage placard demonstration in Lavender Hill

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PENSIONS:

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

AFTER a long struggle, Preservation of Pensioners Interests Bill. But there are still many objections to pension schemes as they exist now.

People's Workbook

People's
Workbook

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But there are still many objections to pension schemes as they exist now.

In the last issue of Grassroots, the main objections to the Bill were outlined. If the Bill had become law, it would have meant that a worker could only claim his or her pension when he or she turned 65, even if he or she retired long before. The workers also objected because they saw that the bosses simply wanted to be able to use the workers money for their own benefit. The workers wanted a say in the way in which their money was used.

This is a big problem with the existing schemes.

Workers are not able to find out how much they have contributed, or what is happening to their money.

Another big problem is that workers who have paid in money for

many years, do not get their money unless they ask for it themselves.

It is up to the workers to claim their money, and they often do not know how or where to get it.

Dissatisfied

In most schemes, the bosses pay some money into the fund, usually about the same as the worker pays in.

But often, the bosses only begin paying in a long time after the worker has started working for them, sometimes as much as 10 years.

If the worker is fired before the 10 years, he or she never gets the money the bosses should pay into the pension.

There is also much dissatisfaction because there is such a low interest rate on pension contributions.

This is usually 2% or even less. The workers feel that they could get much more if they put their money into the bank.

The workers are forced to join these pension schemes when they sign their contract.

They have no say over how the schemes are run, how the money is invested and cannot take the money back when they need it.

And yet it is their money.

All the dissatisfaction will continue until the workers and their unions are directly involved in drawing up all rules governing pension funds.

In November last year, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) adopted a resolution to continue with the struggle.

Botswana Arts Festival Planned

A HUGE and wide-ranging arts festival is scheduled to take place in July this year in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana.

Although it is not necessarily the festival's intention, it could be seen as an alternative to the Grahamstown Arts Festival in its aims and scope.

The festival organisers are hoping to attract as many relevant artists working in the different communities in South Africa as possible.

Obviously the Cape Province, and especially the Western Cape, is seen as a fertile area of art activity and the organisers are hoping to attract as many entries from the region as possible.

The festival is open to painters, sculptors, graphic artists, photographers, film-makers, drama groups, dance groups and musicians.

An exhibition of fine arts will be mounted from early June till August by the Botswana National Gallery and Museum, the chief organisers.

The week of July 5 - 11 will include the staging of plays, dance events, musical concerts and the screening of films and arts symposium.

A series of sym-

posiums will be held to focus on different aspects of art in South Africa.

One of the organisers, former student at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, Gordon Metz, said planning for the festival had begun two years ago. "It was decided to have an exhibition which drew on artists from all the communities in South Africa," he said.

Metz, who currently heads the graphic and visual aids department at the Museum, said the festival had been partly prompted by the many exhibitions individual South African artists had staged at the gallery in the past.

"The idea grew to include not just painting but all forms of the arts," he said.

Leading poet Mangone W Serote, who lives in Gaborone, spoke of the need to draw South African artists together in one big forum and expose them to each other, "Especially those involved in community projects," he explained.

"Community-oriented art institutions often work at cross purposes to each other. They need to discuss their differences to be able to work more effectively towards a

common goal, and we're hoping the festival will provide the right impetus."

Serote called for a new vitality in South African art where artists did not dwell on the past but rather "forged new directions based on understanding the political environment and traditional cultures"

Expose

The Botswana National Museum and Gallery is also expecting to reap dividends from the festival. Museum director, Mrs Doreen Nteta, said it was hoped to widen the dimension of art in the minds of the local population.

"There isn't much here in Botswana in the way of art and we would like to see people here stimulated by exposure to such a big festival.

"In the past we have relied mainly on South African artists for the exhibitions we stage. We felt the time was right to hold this festival and get to know who's who in South Africa and maybe even buy some of the exhibits.

"We also see ourselves as helping those artists who are unable to exhibit in South Africa."

ADVICE

EACH year there are about 300 000 reported accidents at work in South Africa. These accidents cause the death of 2 000 workers every year and result in 3 000 workers being permanently disabled.

Dangerous working conditions also result in 3 000

workers being compensated every year for diseases that they get from work. (These figures do not include the mines).

Unsafe working conditions are causing great harm to South Africa's workers and the high accident rate shows

no sign of going down. Many workers do not know their rights to compensation after an injury at work. GRASS-ROOTS explains these rights and gives an example of how the General Workers Union helped one worker to get his compensation money.

WORKERS AND THEIR RIGHTS TO COMPENSATION

When do you get compensation?

- when you are injured at work
- when you get a disease from your work
BUT it is very difficult to get compensation for a work disease, because you have to prove that you got the disease from working in one particular factory.

If you are injured at work, what will Workmen's Compensation pay for?

- part of your lost wages
- medical expenses
- compensation if the disability from the injury is permanent
- compensation for your family if you die from the injury
- funeral expenses if you die from a work injury.

Workmen's Compensation will pay:

Wages
No wages for the first three days, unless you are off work for more than two weeks.

Three quarters of your wages for the rest of the time off.

You will always lose wages if you are off work because of an accident. You will lose the full wages for the first three days (very few workers are put off for more than two weeks after an accident). You will lose one quarter of your wages for the rest of the time off.

Medical Expenses
The whole bill for the doctor, hospital and medicines.

Compensation for Permanent Injury

The amount you get depends on how serious the disability is and on how much you earned at the time of the accident.

If you can never work again you will get a monthly pension of three quarters of your wages at the time of the accident. This is called permanent total disability.

If your disability is permanent, but it doesn't stop you working, you will get compensation because your earnings will be reduced by the disability. The amount of compensation you get and the way it is paid depends

on how serious the disability is. Remember: the Workmen's Compensation Commission decides how serious the disability is.

For example: if you lose a leg in an accident at work, you will get a monthly pension of half your wages at the time of the accident.

If you lose an eye in

an accident at work, you will get a lump sum payment of one year's wages. This is all you will get - you will not get a monthly pension.

Compensation for your family if you die

If you are a man
Your widow will get a lump sum payment of

twice your monthly wages (this lump sum will never be more than R300) and a monthly pension of one third of your monthly wages.

If you have children under 18, the pension will be more.

But your family's pension will never be more than three quarters of your monthly

wages.

If you are a woman
If your husband is disabled and when you die you are supporting him completely, he will get a lump sum of twice your monthly wages (this lump sum will never be more than R300) and a monthly pension of one third of your monthly wages. If

you have children the pension will be more.

If your husband is not disabled, he will get nothing.

If you do not have a husband, your children will get a monthly pension until they are 18. The amount for each child will be one sixth of your monthly wages. For example: if you

earned R150 a month each child will get R25 a month. But the total pension for all your children will never be more than three quarters of your monthly wages.

Funeral Expenses

Workmen's Compensation will pay up to R400 for the funeral.

Mr Kabuhle's fight for compensation

MR Kabuhle came to the General Workers Union complaints service in July 1980 with a problem about Workmen's Compensation.

In March 1980 while working for a construction company he injured his arm in an accident. He was taken to hospital but his arm was so badly injured it had to be amputated just below the shoulder. It took three months before Mr Kabuhle could have an artificial arm fitted so that he could go back to work. The construction company gave him a job doing light work. He could not do his old job with an artificial arm.

Union

Mr Kabuhle wanted compensation for his injury, but he did not know how to get it by himself. He was told by the union that under the Workmen's Compensation Act he was entitled to:

- Seventy five per cent of the wages that he would have earned in the three months he was off work because of the injury.
- Because he had been permanently disabled by the accident, he could claim a monthly pension from Workmen's Compensation.

The amount of the pension would be worked out at a rate set by

the Act. According to this a person who has lost an arm at the shoulder is considered to be 65 per cent disabled.

This meant that Mr Kabuhle should receive a pension of R67 a month. His wages had been R137 a month.

To help Mr Kabuhle the complaints service had to do a number of things.

First they wrote to Workmen's Compensation in Pretoria to find out if Mr Kabuhle's bosses had reported the accident.

It is the duty of the employer to report accidents. If this had not been done it would have been very difficult for Mr Kabuhle to get his compensation.

After a delay of some months Workmen's Compensation wrote back to say that the accident had been reported and that Mr Kabuhle could collect the money for his lost wages from his employer. This was R280.

Report

Mr Kabuhle could not yet claim his pension because the doctor who treated him had not sent a final medical report to Pretoria.

The complaints service checked that Mr Kabuhle received the correct amount for his lost wages.

The doctor who had

Compensation is not Enough!



treated Mr Kabuhle when he was injured was asked to send the final medical report to Pretoria so that Mr Kabuhle could start to get his pension.

In March 1981 the complaints service wrote again to Pretoria

to find out about Mr Kabuhle's pension. They replied that they were still waiting for the medical report from the doctor and they needed to know Mr Kabuhle's date of birth.

The complaints service spoke to the doc-

tor again and drew up an affidavit with Mr Kabuhle stating his date of birth and sent it to Pretoria.

In July 1981 Mr Kabuhle's pension was approved by Workmen's Compensation. He got a cheque for his pen-

sion money from August 1980 to June 1981. This was R631,53. Since then he has received a pension of R67 every month. The amounts that Mr Kabuhle received were checked to make sure they were correct.

Demand a safe work place

MR KABUHLE'S story shows some important things about Workmen's Compensation.

- Firstly, it shows it can be difficult for workers to get their full compensation money. Mr Kabuhle probably would not have got his pension without help from his union.
- There are long delays in getting

compensation money.

- The amounts that Workmen's Compensation pays are always less than the wages a worker would have earned if he was not injured.
- Workmen's Compensation does not pay workers anything for the pain and suffering of being injured.
- Workmen's Compensation is very

important for workers who are permanently disabled. A year after Mr Kabuhle had gone back to work he lost his job. Like many disabled workers Mr Kabuhle now has great difficulty in finding another job. His pension means that he and his family will not starve.

- Finally, Workmen's Compensation

does not help to make factories and work safe.

If workers want to prevent pain, suffering and disablement that comes from accidents they cannot rely on Workmen's Compensation.

It is only through their own organisation that workers can prevent the harm done by accidents.

ADVICE

Causes of Diarrhoea and what to do

WHEN a child has loose or watery stools, he has DIARRHOEA. It is common. Many children become very sick from it, and it is especially dangerous in babies.

Diarrhoea has many causes.

One important cause is germs, which cause inflammation in the gut.

Another cause is underweight. The child who does not get enough of the right kind of food does not have enough protection from diarrhoea.

So, with good hygiene and good food, most diarrhoea can be prevented.

Here are some other important suggestions for preventing diarrhoea:

BREAST FEED
Milk from the breast

is clean, and never causes diarrhoea. It also helps babies to fight the germs that cause diarrhoea.

On the other hand, milk from a dirty bottle often has many germs which cause problems. These germs grow in the bottle because it is hard to keep it clean.

WASH HANDS

We must prevent germs in our own gut from getting onto the food we touch.

We can do this by always washing our hands after we go to the toilet, and before touching food.

All mothers should wash their hands when they cook their children's food.

KEEP FLIES AWAY FROM FOOD

A fly's feet can easily

carry germs from the toilet to a child's food. So, cover his food to keep the flies away.

STOP DIRT GOING INTO A CHILD'S MOUTH

There are many germs on the ground. Do not let a child eat food which has fallen onto the ground. If possible, find a clean place for children to play.

WHAT ABOUT THE TREATMENT?

For most cases of diarrhoea, no medicine is needed.

The biggest problems with bad diarrhoea are **UNDERWEIGHT** children, who don't have enough food, and the **LOSS OF TOO MUCH BODY WATER**, which makes the child dried out.

So, the most important part of treatment has to do with giving enough liquids and good food.

A child with watery diarrhoea must drink a lot of liquid. It is best if this liquid is made up from boiled water and the salt tablets and glucose which you can get from the clinic.

If you only use glucose in the water, you can make the child more sick - you must use salt tablets also.

A child with diarrhoea also needs food as soon as he will eat. This is very important in small children who are already underweight.

So, a baby with diarrhoea should go on breast-feeding.

A small child, who is thin and weak, should get plenty of body-

building foods (protein) and energy foods all the time he has diarrhoea - and also when he gets well.

So we see that most diarrhoea can be treated successfully in the home.

BUT you should go to the clinic or the doctor

- if the child is very sick or weak
- if the child is vomiting everything
- if there is blood in the stools
- if the child looks dried out or is very sleepy
- if you think the diarrhoea is bad

Diarrhoea is always worse in the summer, when there are many flies around and children can become dried out more quickly because of the heat.

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VALUE FOR MONEY

More about constitutions

IN the previous issue of GRASSROOTS we discussed the role of the officials. Space did not permit us to define the function of the President and the Trustee.

PRESIDENT

The President usually holds an honorary post in an organisation. He presides at public functions of the organisation such as conferences, social gatherings and so on.

In many cases the President fulfils the same task as the Chairman. But in such cases the organisation does not have the post of a chairman and the function of a Chairman is covered by the President.

The positions can be compared to that of the President and Prime Minister of a country, with the Prime-Minister having the same status as the Chairman.

In certain countries like the United States of America, all the executive powers are vested in the President, and such countries usually do not have a Prime-Minister.

In other countries all the executive powers are vested in the Prime-Minister and if such a country has a President, it is usually an honorary position. South Africa has such a system.

In an organisation where the post of a President is an honorary one, usually a person who can bring honour and esteem to such an organisation is elected to the post.

In such cases the President is not directly involved with the administration of the organisation. He is called upon to serve the organisation when the

occasion arises, such as a public function.

Nothing however, prevents an organisation from dividing the administrative powers between its President and Chairman. The Constitution can, for example, provide for the President to preside at all General Meetings and the Chairman to preside at all executive meetings.

France is a case in point where there is a division of power between the President and the Prime-Minister.

The President usually submits a Presidential Address to the Annual General Meeting and in it he sets the vision and direction of the organisation for the coming year.

TRUSTEE

The Trustee holds a position of trust in an organisation. He is legally responsible for all the assets of an organisation. He also represents the organisation in any legal matters.

He signs all legal documents on behalf of the organisation and can sue or be sued on behalf of the organisation.

The Trustee is not personally liable for the debts of an organisation. He is merely responsible in a representative capacity.

An organisation can have more than one Trustee to serve its needs and they act jointly.

The function of a Trustee is administrative and he usually serves on the executive committee.

The Trustee cannot act on his own. He must be authorised by the organisation to act.

In the next issue we will deal with meeting procedure.

ADVICE

Girls talk about their relationships with parents and boys

IN the next few GRASSROOTS you can read how young people feel about their relationships with each other and the relationship between them and their parents.

GRASSROOTS will talk to boys and girls in youth groups and ask them to air their views. How do the two sexes treat each other and what do they expect from each other?

Can young people discuss problems with their parents and what answers do they get?

We hope that these articles will help young people and their parents to talk more openly about topics that were only whispered about in the past.

For this story we spoke to girls.

GRASSROOTS: What do you expect from a relationship?

"Well, there are qualities that I admire in a boy. I expect him to be loyal and not to talk about me behind my back." This is the view of a 16 year-old girl from Hanover Park.

"I don't allow boys to mess around with me. Many girls allow themselves to be used by guys. They think they will lose popularity if they refuse to be pushed around."

COMMON

Several girls we spoke to said it was quite common to be approached by a strange boy who says that he loves her and wants her to make love to him.

In some areas this is known as "proposing a girl".

A 20-year old woman



feels that girls should learn to have more courage to take a stand.

"Some girls just accept this kind of behaviour as normal and are very hurt afterwards.

"I tell them they should dare to be themselves and resist. I admire guys who respect my wishes as well."

GRASSROOTS: What problems do girls experience?

• Several girls said that jealousy and possessiveness break up many relationships.

"Guys feel they have the right to go out on their own but they don't trust us

in the bushes.

HAIRSTYLE

"Some parents are more concerned with a boys hairstyle or standard of education than with his personality," said a 16-year-old girl.

Girls we spoke to would like the parents to give them a fair chance of choosing their friends.

GRASSROOTS: What can be done to improve relationships?

• The girls felt that the first step is to talk about problems. Boys and girls should feel free to discuss relationships with each other and with their parents.

Youth leaders could organise workshops to encourage such discussion.

• One of the girls said she was keen to start a discussion group in which young people could help each other to learn more about relationships.

"After all, how can we build unity if we can't deal with personal and family relationships?"

UNDERSTAND

• Very few young people understand how their own bodies function. Perhaps community organizations can organise some educational programmes for young people.

So here you have the female side of the story. But all stories have more than one side.

Be sure to read the next issues to find out how BOYS and PARENTS feel about relationships. Write or 'phone GRASSROOTS if you want to join the discussion.

to do the same."

• Many parents don't like their daughters to bring boys home.

"Parents should be fair and allow their children some freedom. They must understand that times have changed."

A few of the girls considered themselves lucky to have parents who trust and understand them.

A 14-year-old girl felt that girls whose parents don't trust them are more likely to get into trouble because they are forced to meet boy-friends in the street or

Organising against unemployment

IN the last issue of Grassroots we read about the vicious circle of unemployment.

Here is a way that people can get together at a grassroots level to organise for employment. It is the people and not the profits that are important.

A few women who live near each other could get together to sew. The women with special skills in cutting patterns or using a sewing machine could teach other women. If there is a spare room in a house or a church, this could be used as a work place.

They should decide together what hours they would work. As they build up trust working and planning together they would make it possible for each other to take time off to go to the doctor or any other place that they have to be without bad feelings.

There would be no boss so that each person plays an important part. They could share ideas about what to make and where to sell their goods. They would plan together how to use the money they make.

They would decide together how their money would be shared between wages, buying materials and paying for machines.

If their ideas work, they could share these ideas with other people.

Some organisations in the community that work this way have learned that they must make items of good quality. Workers bring ideas about places to sell their goods. Often this is amongst friends. Other people may ask the workers to make goods for fetes and bazaars.

A regular stall could be set up where a lot of people gather. This is better than buying in big stores (shops) where the bosses put up prices to make a profit. This profit is often not given to the workers but put in the pockets of the big bosses.

If there are people in the community who would like to start this kind of work, Grassroots has a list of organisations that you could go to for further advice. The Grassroots office, phone number is 43-2117.

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AZIKWELWA!

'WE WILL NOT RIDE!'

A short story
by
James Matthews

HE did not have to walk. He looked over his shoulder at the hundreds coming along behind him, all walking, and in front of him hundreds more, walking. It was the fifth day of their long walk to Johannesburg and it was his first.

He was one of the few Coloureds who walked along with the mass of Africans.

They were old and young, big and small, foot-firm and limping; mothers and sons, fathers and daughters, grandparents and school children; some dressed in neat clothes with horn-rimmed glasses and attache cases, and many were in torn overalls and shoes with soles paper-thin feeling each stone they trod on.

They were all walking the long walk to Johannesburg.

Nights before the boycott was due, the location's fast-beating heart increased its pace. Where'er a man raised his voice, a group formed around him, and as the hours passed, there were many such groups until the location was one huge meeting place. There were the wild ones whose eyes only saw violence and their cry was: "Burn the buses!"

Then there were those who whispered: "Accept the terms." But then there were also the many who shouted defiantly: "Azikwelwa! We will not ride!"

When they started their walk the sky was still dark under the pulsating stars. He watched them from the inside of his room, and after a time went back to the warmth of his blankets. He had a bus to himself



streets poured rushes of walkers, and the mass of people flowed through the gates of the location.

On his left walked an old man who used a stick to help him along, and in front of him waddled a fat woman with a bundle of washing balanced on her head. He looked around him. There were many such women, and some had babies strapped to their backs, the heads of the babies joggling with the motion of their mothers' hips.

It was still early and the first mile not done and they were in a holiday mood. Bicycles carried two passengers. The location's ancient cars, which always threatened to fall apart, were loaded to capacity and wheezed their way forward.

One man, his boots tied around his neck, joked with his friend and said that it made for easier walking.

All joined in the laughter. They were walking the long walk and they were proud.

The miles passed and the road was long and there was less laughter but still they walked. The old, the sick, the weak dropped behind. The front of the column was wide but behind it tapered off to a thin line of stragglers.

Then suddenly there were the police and the cars standing in rows and the people inside pulled out and forced to the side of the road. And the owners protested that the cars were not used as taxis, but they were still charged with overloading. The harsh demands for passes, the fearful swelling as they waited for the vans to take them away.

Then the next block of police waiting with outstretched hands and ready batons for those who had not the slips of paper which gave them the right to move. There were many who slipped down side streets to escape the police, for the police wanted them to ride and not walk, so that there would be no strength of will and so that they should be without voice.

"Pass! Waar is dit?" he was asked. The owner of the voice did not bother to look at him and only when he did not reply, turned his eyes.

"I don't carry a pass."

"Then what are you doing here?"

"I'm walking!"

"Are you a kaffir or are you a communist?"

"I am walking!"

He walked past the policeman, who had already grasped another victim by the shirt front demanding his pass.

A large car pulled to a halt in front of him, behind the wheel a young white woman. She opened the doors on each side and cried aloud; "Come on. Women and old people." No one moved. Then a woman with a child on her back and a

suitcase in one hand shyly approached the car and got into the back. Others followed. The old man shook his head saying that he was not too old to finish the long walk.

More cars stopped and its drivers were white and they took those who wanted to ride.

A car stopped and the driver asked the young policeman by whose orders he was stopping the car and demanding the removal of the passengers. He stood undecided and the car pulled away. He rushed to the nearest man and screamed; "Julle Kaffirs dink julle is slim!"

Messages were relayed from those arrested to those free. Messages to tell a father a son had been arrested, to assure an

them, and some said aloud that they did not believe it. One man said what they all had on their minds. "Why is it that we were not approached? Are we not the people who walk? Does the bus company think because it has spoken to a few men, we, like sheep, will now meekly ride instead of walk?"

The last question was directed at one who wore the colours of the boycott organisation on his breast in the location.

He was a short, wiry man and his eyes blinked owlishly behind the thick-lensed glasses he wore. He took them off, wiped the lenses nervously with his handkerchief, and replaced the glasses on the bridge of his wide, flat nose.

He cleared his throat before speaking and then in a surprisingly loud voice said: "Do not believe it, my brothes. It is not for our leaders to say we walk or ride before first asking the will of the people of the location. The men of the bus company must think our leaders are but children to be so easily swayed by their words. Pay no heed to what is written in the newspapers because it is the word of the white man."

His words reassured them but there were the few, already tired of the long walk, who said that it was a good thing. "The white man has seen that the Black man is also a man of his word." Now they would ride.

Jonothan was filled with doubt. Always,



employer that an employee would come back to his job, to tell children not to worry and to help each other.

And those who walked were still many and their hearts were heavy, but they walked. Then the long walk was at an end, for below them was the city. The people of the city looked at them with disbelief and their shoulders straightened and their heads lifted and they smiled. They had done the long walk one more day.

It was late when he entered the chemist shop where he worked as a delivery messenger.

"Jonothan, why are you late?"

"I walked."

"All the way?"

The white man in the white coat looked at him with surprise.

"All the way!"

"But why? You're not one of them."

He could not tell the white man of the feeling inside him, that when he was with them he knew it was good.

He joined them on the square at midday. They sat with mugs of coffee and still-hot fat cakes bought from the portable coffee stalls of the vendors. Some sat around draught boards, using bottle tops as counters, but most were clustered around those with newspapers.

There were pictures on the front page showing the many walkers, and the reports stated that the boycott would soon be over and that the leaders of the boycott had come to an agreement.

There were angry murmurs among



he was with those who suffered without protest. Always, he was with those without voice. Always, he was with those who had to bear the many pains. Always, he was with those unwanted and always they lost.

He had secretly thought that the boycott would only last the first day, then the people of the location, with their tired limbs, would once more ride the buses and their purpose would die. But when it entered the second day, the third day, and the day after that, his hopes mounted, hoping that this would be the one time they would prove themselves men. It had become a symbol to him.

As long as they walked, his life would not be altogether meaningless. He would be able to say with pride that he too was one of those who had walked the long walk when they proved to the bus company that they had a will of their own and were not to be silenced into obedience by words.

To page 15



on the ride to the station. There were angry voices when he boarded the bus, but those who shouted loudest were restrained by others with rosettes pinned to their breasts.

Then, when the bus passed the long, firm line of walkers, he heard their cry again. His return from work found them homeward bound, a song travelling their length. A stone hit the side of the bus and he peered through the rear window. Four men were shaking a youth by the shoulders and they all disappeared from view as the bus turned a bend in the road.

As if by a pre-arranged plan, the location's streets swarmed with people who embraced each other and sang at the top of their voices. In the backyards of the shebeen queens, skokiaan flowed freely for those who had the money to pay for it. And even those who came with empty pockets were given something for their thirst. As they faced one another they cried: "Azikwelwa, my brother!"

Four days he watched them walk the long walk and four nights he saw them dance and drink their ache away, and the



spirit of their pride filled him. Their word was as good as that of the white man. They said they would walk the many miles before paying the extra penny the bus company demanded.

There were many whites who scoffed at their determination; and this was their answer — the line of empty buses. On the fifth morning, when the first wave of walkers passed his door, he joined them. From side

YOUTH RALLY BUILDS UNITY

THE message of unity was spelt out in songs, poetry and sketches when youth groups from all over the Western Cape came together at a rally in Bishop Lavis.

The rally was called for December 12 by the Paarl branch of Cosas (Congress of South African Students) to give the youth an opportunity to express through ideas on stage how they saw their role in the struggle against oppression.

Unity

Youth groups from Paarl, M'bekweni, Grassy Park, Worcester, Zwelentembah, Hanover Park, Ravensmead, Bishop Lavis, Heideveld, Bonteheuwel, Lansdowne, Steenberg and Mitchells Plain were involved in the planning of the programme.

The aims, objectives and usefulness of the rally was discussed by youth groups and also at inter-youth level.

All the groups felt the need for youth groups to unite by forming working relationships that would have to be built up over a period by having joint projects such as discussions, entertainment and other such programmes. It was felt a cultural rally could serve to initiate this kind of relationship.

It was agreed that a rally is not an ongoing activity, but confined to an afternoon cultural programme.

Past cultural rallies were looked at and, in terms of the needs of present youth organization, it was found that cultural rallies need to focus on giving youth groups clearer

directions as to their role in helping to build mass-based organisations. It was also their duty to draw the masses into the struggle by involvement in the day to day problems of the people.

Programmes

At the rally, a speaker, long involved in the struggle told of how she became aware. She spoke about how she became involved and called for more commitment from the young people.

A Raso-student spoke on how to go about building collective leadership and mentioned kinds of youth activity.

Youth from Heideveld, Bonteheuwel and M'bekweni recited poems written by young people suffering under

the present conditions. They said the conditions affected them as young people and made them dedicated to work towards a better future.

Blac and Hanover Park produced sketches about their present community struggles, like the Bishop Lavis electricity campaign.

Youth from M'bekweni produced some good traditional Gumbo dancing while youth from Zwelentembah and Heideveld entertained the audience with good singing. At some stage during the dancing session the audience were found raised from their chairs.

Forward

The audience was mostly young people

from Bishop Lavis, youth from various organisations and a few older people who responded warmly and lively to the youth productions. Besides the freedom songs, the entire audience was found to be dancing.

The spirit of seeing things afresh and wanting to go forward to change conditions was truly present.

Assessing

Many lessons were learned during the period of organising the rally which could be improved on in the future. Misunderstandings regarding the positions amongs the youth organisations were clarified and openings and contacts were made for the various groups, especially in the outlying areas to work together during 1982.

TUITION CLASSES IN MANENBERG

The Manenberg Civic Association has been running "extra-tuition" classes since June last year.

"The need for these classes was brought to our attention when the 'practical course' was done away with at one of our schools, through the united action of the community," a member said.

"These students had only six months in which to do a year's work and wanted help. When the classes started on Saturday mornings, other students arrived with problems.

"The classes were expanded to cater for all high school students. Some people doing correspondence courses also joined."

At the end of last year, a "stay-awake" was organised. The programme included music, drama, a film, games and discussions. Many students felt that they would have benefitted more if they'd started classes at the beginning of the year and attended regularly.

"This year we also plan to expand our classes to include working people who want to get their Std six, eight or 10. But a lot of work is needed to make our activities a success. This can only be achieved with the active involvement of the community.

Anyone interested in attending the classes, forming new classes or helping out is welcome. Registration is on January 30 at the Catholic Church, Manenberg Avenue, at 9.00 a.m.

AZIKWELWA - we won't ride

From page 14

During all his deliveries Jonathan was depressed, and when he read the afternoon paper his despair swamped him, and he felt cold in the afternoon sun. He felt betrayed. The paper stated that an agreement had been reached and that the following morning the buses would be filled. The boycott would be over.

To forget, he busied himself with his work and was relieved when given a stack of deliveries that would keep him occupied for the rest of the afternoon.

Work done, he joined the line of walkers ascending the first incline out of the city. They were a silent lot, and when someone asked if it was to be the last day of the long walk, he was answered with a shrug of shoulders and shaking of heads in bewilderment.

The lines merged into one long column of heavy hearts and dragging feet. There were no jokes, no laughter. Only doubts and uncertainty. The ringing footsteps turned into drumbeats of defeat.

The walk was long and the road without end. The cars stopped and they looked without interest at those who climbed inside. With apprehension they passed the first group of grinning policemen. Their

betrayal seemed complete when they were not stopped.

A youth raised his voice: "Azikwelwa!" And he was cursed by those around him. But he would not be denied and he repeated it louder, his voice carrying farther. "Azikwelwa, my brothers and sisters!" Those who heard the youth's outburst turned their heads and stared at him and they buzzed with curiosity.

"Has news been heard?" "Do we do the long walk tomorrow?" "What has happened?" they shouted but there was no answer.

Then a voice cried: "We will hear tonight in the location," and it was taken up and passed along the ranks. The stride of the walkers increased, and Jonathan's heart kept pace with their footsteps.



They passed further blocks of police-

men. There were no stoppings, and neither the demand for passes. And the cars loaded with the people passed unchallenged. And the miles slipped behind as they hurried to the location.

Supper ended, Jonathan walked with the others to the football field where the boycott organisation held its meetings and pushed himself to the front. The field filled, and when he turned his head, the back of the field was blocked out by the bodies of the many people.

A speaker mounted an upended crate, hands held aloft. It was the same man who had spoken on the square during the afternoon. His voice roared.

"The bus company has taken it upon itself, after speaking to those who could never speak for us, to have it printed in the papers of the white man that the boycott is ended! Is done with! That we have, like little children, agreed to their talks and will board the buses tomorrow. But they are wrong! This is our answer. Azikwelwa! Azikwelwa!"

The rest of the speech was lost in the clamour pouring from the open throats. And when other speakers tried to speak they met with the same result. The people

of the location needed no further speeches, and the crowd spilled apart.



'Johnathan felt a surge of love sweeping through his body and raised his mug to the woman. "Azikwelwa my sister!"

Again the backyards of the shebeen queens were flooded and skokiaan was to be had for the asking.

Jonathan sat on a bench with his mug of skokiaan untouched, a bemused smile on his face. Opposite, a drinker was slumped against the wall and his wife looked boldly at Jonathan. Looking at her, and the people swarming around him, Jonathan felt a surge of love sweeping through his body and he raised his mug to the woman.

"Azikwelwa, my sister!"

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WHILE on a deputation to the Council last year the residents of Tafelsig and Eastridge demanded two attached homes in each area for use as creches and community halls.

The Council agreed and the houses have now been handed over.

"We are just waiting for the Council to break down the inter-leading walls", a spokesperson for the residents said.

"We are also negotia-

ting with Grassroots Educational Trust for assistance. Donations of furniture by the public would be very welcome.

"However, the buildings will by no means solve the creche needs in the areas. The two buildings will only be able to accommodate about 30 children each. This is hopelessly inadequate as so many mothers of small children have to go out to work in order to make ends meet".

Kloof Community Centre. People of all ages are welcome to register.

Ideas for other classes are also welcome.

Registration closes after the first week in February.

For further information contact: Achmat Davids, 203 Longmarket Street, Schotsche Kloof (phone 43-5459).

Lights query for Council

A DELEGATION of Kew Town residents have complained to the City Council about high electricity bills, poor electrical service, bad roads and inadequate road signs.

The delegation - sent by the Kew Town Residents Association - met with officials in the roads and electricity departments.

Residents complained of electricity accounts of more than R40 monthly. One woman said her account was more than R100.

They said meter rooms were neglected, meter readings were not properly done, switches were faulty and many electricity boxes were not in working condition.

New youth group

A NEW youth movement has started up in the Crawford area. An action committee was set up with individuals from the old youth movement (Movy) and members of the Crawford Civic.

It has had a games evening to recruit members which was very successful.

The movement will be formally constituted once enough people have shown lasting interest.

Classes start in Bo-Kaap

THE Boorhaanol Recreation Movement is once again calling for registration to their educational classes for this year. The evening classes offered are:

- Senior typing
- Junior typing;
- Shorthand;
- Accountancy (book-keeping);
- Dress-making

These classes will take place during weekdays in Schotsche

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They asked that all houses in Kew Town be rewired. The Council officials promised to investigate their claims.

The residents' complaints about the state of roads in the area followed a recent bus accident in Dr Abdurahman Drive.

They asked that this road be widened and warning signs be put up, especially at bends.

Schools too full

MITCHELLS Plain parents are up in arms because of serious overcrowding in the schools in the area.

"Our children will never even get a half decent education under present conditions," commented a parent.

"There is just no plan-

ning taking place when it comes to building schools."

Rallies planned

A NUMBER of mass meetings are due to take place in protest against the rent increases.

On Sunday (January 31) there will be a mass protest meeting in Elsie's River (at the Panormaa Cinema).

This meeting has been organised by the Rents Action Committee (Rac) of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC).

Two meetings are set down for Monday (February 1). One in the Facticeon Community Centre.

The other is at the Avondale Community Centre in Atlantis.

TO raise funds for the

rents campaign there will be a screening of Lady Chatterley's Lover at the Luxurama in Wynberg on February 15. Tickets are R2.00.

ANOTHER mass meeting is also planned for residents of Nyanga. It is to be held in the St. Holy Cross Hall in Nyanga East on Sunday 31 January 1982 at 2 p.m.

Bus protest

BOTH CAHAC and EPC (Electricity Petition Committee) have announced that they are to oppose the application for busfares increases for Mitchells Plain and Atlantis.

Last year increases asked for by City Trams and the bus companies in Mitchells Plain and Atlantis were refused after a three-day hearing.

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