

## Sacos festival

The South African Council of Sports will be staging its first national sports festival in Cape Town in October. Fourteen codes of sports will be participating in the four day festival. Full programme in the next issue of Grassroots.

## 600 people reject new bill

# FIGHT NEW BILL

MORE than 600 residents from Nyanga, Langa and Guguletu rejected the government's "new bill" at a meeting held in the townships.

The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill has been described by the people as a "bad and vicious bill. If it should become law, it will bring unthinkable hardships to Black people."

The Western Cape Civic Association (WCCA) together with women's organisations, youth, sporting bodies, the churches and trade unions will be taking up the issue.

The people are determined to fight the "new bill". They said: "We wish to warn the government, that if this bill should be passed, we will stop at nothing to demonstrate our opposition to it and all other laws like this."

### Freedom

Residents believe that the "new bill" will restrict the freedom of movement of Black people still further. "We refuse to be classified as 'permanent Urban Residents' while our fellow brothers and sisters are called 'illegals'."

The government's homelands policy is not working. Now they are making life even harder for us.

We will not be divided. We all deserve to live and work where ever we want to and on every inch of South African soil", said one of the speakers.

This bill will lead to massive raids to catch so-called 'illegal' blacks. Not only will it separate children from their parents, but will also scare the bosses who would want to employ people who do not have

rights in urban areas.

"We refuse to implement any law that we did not make. The people shall govern and Koornhof cannot make any laws.

After the meeting, the executive of the Civic spearheading the fight against the bill met.

"We call on all organisations to support us in our struggle", said a spokesperson for the Civic.

## Bus objections

MANY community people are expected to attend the busfares hearing of the Road Transportation Board on Monday August 30. Tramways are asking for a big increase in fares.

The hearing will take place in the boardroom on the 4th Floor of Nedbank Building on the Foreshore.

The hearing is open to the public.

MY children are living on bread and jam. I won't even be able to give them that if I am

forced to pay this high electricity account. They will starve."

This is what a mother

said while protesting with more than 50 Woodlands residents.

The people from



## Victory for Woodlands

Woodlands protested with banners at the Civic Centre on Friday, 13 August.

The day before they had received their latest electricity accounts. In many cases the accounts were double the normal amount.

The group met with City Administrator Joe Adams and other officials in a small hall on the second floor of the centre.

Looking around at the expensive decorations, a housewife said: "They've even got carpets on their wall - I can't afford carpets on our floor. Now we know where all our money is going to."

Before talking about the high accounts there was a clash about the press.

### Press

Joe Adams: "There are some people from the press outside. Do you want them to be present during our talks?" The People: "Yes. Let the press come in."

Adams: "But it is not necessary for the world to know... This is just between us."

People: "We want the world to know how the Council is making us

suffer." Adams: "You can only get what you want from us. You won't get anything from the press."

People: "YOU asked us if the press should be allowed in. Why did you ask us if you didn't want us to answer you?" Adams: "I asked you because I thought you'd be honest and say no. After all you came to ask us for something, not the press..."

He then allowed the press in.

### Reading

Joe Adams then said that because so many metre readers had been ill with 'flu, Council had made an estimate based on previous averages. The following month the metre was read for both months.

The estimate was then subtracted from the double reading to get the amount due.

A resident said that the Council only took estimates in black areas. "You are a liar," shouted Joe Adams.

The residents came to the front of the hall to show him and his officials the accounts.

He then agreed that the accounts would not be due until the metres had been read again.

## Afdakkies to stay

AF-DAKKIES to stay! The City Council has agreed to this.

Those of you who still want to build af-dakkies must have a plan. But all af-dakkies already in City Council areas can stay up.

Why did the City Council decide on this?

They heard from the Kensington R & T Association that we were unhappy when the Council men threw down our af-dakkies and other extensions. The association sent 13 people to tell the Council this must stop. The 13 people chosen at a meeting of 200 residents told Council that to live properly as a family we are forced to extend our houses.

They asked Council to give us 2 years to improve our af-dakkies.

Council decided to first send some councillors to inspect the area. A few weeks after their visit, we heard the news: Af-dakkies to stay.

Council sent the civic a report of their

decisions. The report says:

- \* We are now allowed to build extensions with corrugated iron. The corrugated iron must be free of rust and painted regularly.
- \* Those of us who have extensions will be given two years to improve on their appearance.
- \* New extensions will be allowed if they are done according to a plan.
- \* Council will open an advice bureau at the rent office on Saturdays to assist us if we wish to extend our homes.
- \* If we want extensions in brick, Council would build these and increase the rentals by ±R10 per month.

Mrs Johnson of Factreton said: "Council did not take this decision because they are kind-hearted. They were forced to do this because the people of Factreton were united and determined. This forced Council to give in to our demands."

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# 70 000 mineworkers strike

## 'We want mali, money'

MORE than 70 000 angry mine workers went on strike in the last week of July. By the end of that week, 10 workers lay dead with many more injured.

And in a massive show of force by the mine bosses and the police, the bosses dismissed thousands of workers and sent them to the homelands.

The strikes took place in the Transvaal at the mines such as Grootvlei, Stilfontein, Buffelsfontein and others. The scene at the mines was tense as hundreds of policemen dressed in security overalls, with batons and dogs tried to deal with workers who refused to go underground. And in the air, security flying helicopters with sirens watched the tense and militant scene on the ground.

At Westdriefontein, workers shouting 'mali' 'mali' meaning money, money, stood firm as the mine security tried to force the workers underground.

This was clearly not a case of tribal fighting among the workers as the bosses wanted us to believe. Mine workers are not only the lowest paid of all workers but work under the most dangerous conditions.

They are separated from their families and the outside world in

huge hostels which look like prisons. The hostels are built to control unrest.

The bosses have used many tactics to divide the workes. In the hostels Zulu and Sotho workers are separated.

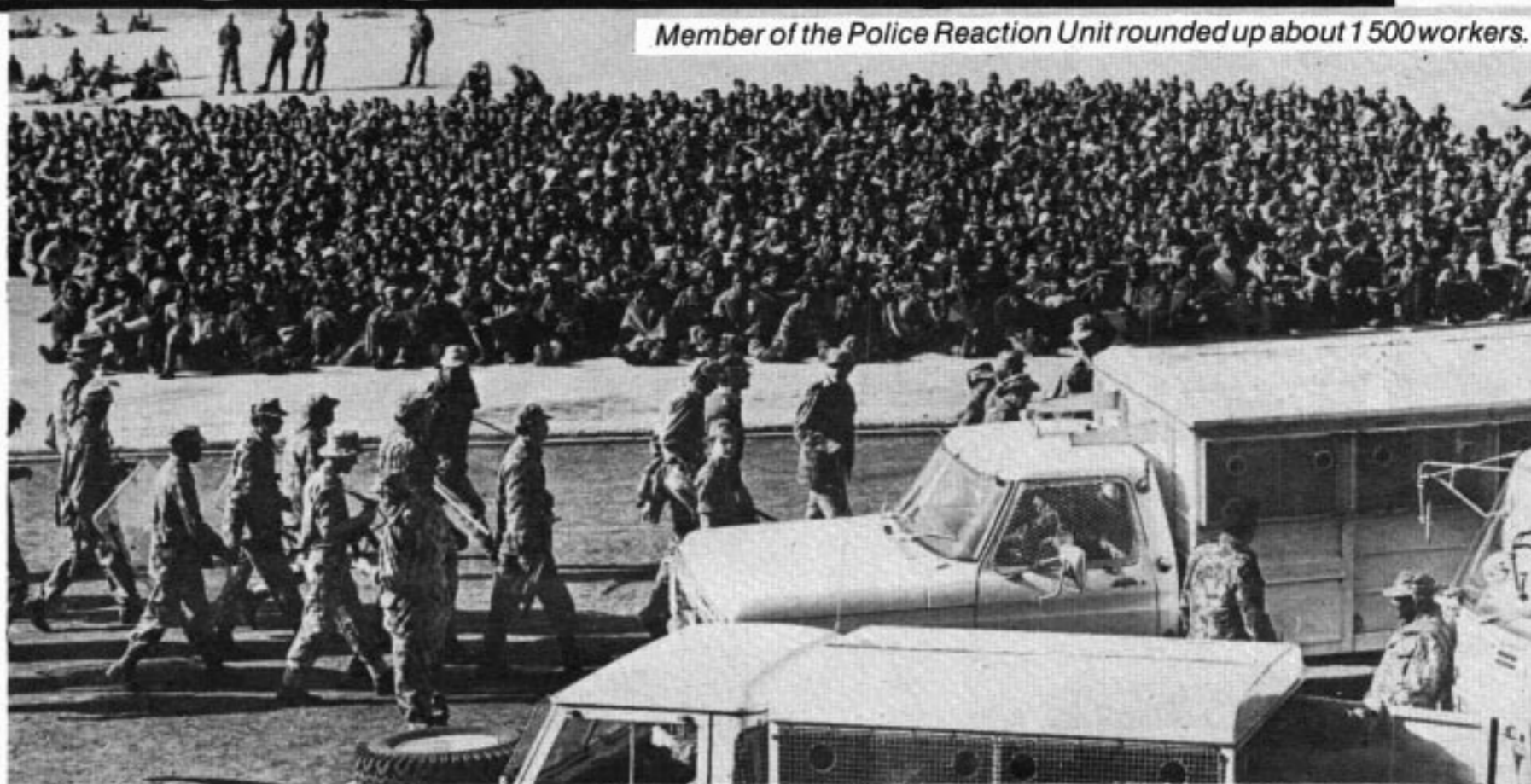
In this way, the mine bosses hope to prevent workers from standing united.

The weeks before July are always a tense time on the mines. This is the month when the mine bosses usually announce wage increases.

### Wages

This year the workers were filled with hope that they would receive wage increases which would help them to make ends meet.

But when the increases were made known they were the lowest that the mine bosses had offered in many years. In fact, with the rise in the cost of living, there was actually a drop in the income of the workers. ers were offered R129 and workers on the ground a R100 per month. The two mine bosses, known as the Gold Fields of South Africa called GFSa, and the General Mining Union Corporation called Gencor, offered workers the lowest wages. Widespread strikes took place at these mines.



Member of the Police Reaction Unit rounded up about 1 500 workers.

Why have the mining bosses offered the workers lower wage increases this year? The gold bosses have been hard hit because of the drop in the gold price and because business is bad this year.

In spite of this, the bosses are still making huge profits. The profit this year was R602 million at the mines

where the strikes took place.

The workers refused to settle for a cut in their wages at a time when the bosses are facing a small drop in profits.

At the same time, the white mine workers were also up in arms. They too were not prepared to accept a smaller wage increase. And so

the fight was on of who was going to get the biggest slice of the cake. The white mine workers or the black workers? As in all the major strikes of 1922 and 1946, the bosses favoured the white miners to keep them satisfied.

They received bigger wage increases than the thousands of black

miners.

All these grievances led to one of the biggest strikes on the mines since 1946. To keep wages low, the mine bosses have used many different ways of keeping the workers divided and powerless. The miners are not organised into a strong democratic trade union. The bosses have seen to it.

United action by the workers is crushed by force. "Troublemakers" are victimised. Recently the white Boilermakers Society helped form the Black Mine Workers Union.

This Society is affiliated to Tucsa and it has been rumoured that the constitution has been written by the Chamber of Mines.

## 'Work or go home'

*MAKOZI, 19, lives in the village of Mlambi in the Mount Frere district of the Transkei. He was one of thousands of workers dismissed and sent back to the homelands after the strikes on the gold mines in July.*

*This is the story in his own words of what happened during the strike:*

"I lived in West Driefontein number two hostel. We were promised a wage increase

but when we saw in our pay such a small increase we got angry.

We agreed the people on the next shift (the night shift) must not work. Some tried to go to work, but the older workers stopped them. Some people were beaten up but they were not really injured.

### Grievances

The next day people threw stones on the windows because the compound manager would not listen to our grievances.

Mine police then

threw tear gas at the workers, but they could not control it.

Then strange police in army uniforms came on foot and in helicopters and fired tear gas at us.

We also heard firing in the other compounds and we heard a man had been shot dead in hostel 6. I never saw any shooting because I ran out the compound in fright. I spent the night in the bush.

The next day (Saturday) I returned and was dismissed and given a train ticket home, but we had to wait in the

compound until the next Thursday before we could go. What really made us angry during the strike was that management would not listen to us.

They only sent the monitors around with pamphlets saying we must either work or go home.

There were threats that if we did not go to work we would be arrested by the police.

In the time I was there, we were never satisfied when the monitors went with our grievances to management.

There was a monitor in each room and a senior monitor for the whole compound. Management made many promises but they never kept them.

We were never told about trade unions. I still want to work even though work on the mines is hard, but they told me I would never work again on the mines.

My parents are elderly and they cannot support me. I have passed standard seven, but there is no money for me to go back to school.

## Workers unite to protect each other

ABOUT 200 workers from Dorman Long Swan Hunter, an engineering firm, are protecting each other from retrenchments by all taking three months unpaid leave.

The workers, all members of the General Workers' Union, were told recently by management that 30 - 40 workers would have to be retrenched because of a "downturn in the engineering industry".

The GWU workers' committee, which is recognised by management negotiated a retrenchment procedure with management. The workers decided they did not want any workers to be retrenched because of the hardships retrenched workers have to suffer in times of high unem-

ployment.

They proposed to management that all of them take three months unpaid leave in cycles over a period of about two years so that no-one would have to be retrenched.

A spokesperson from the GWU said it was very hard for workers to be out of jobs even for three months.

"But they decided it was better for all of them to suffer some hardship than for a few to suffer extreme hardship by being retrenched," she said.

The spokesperson added it was important for management to negotiate retrenchment with workers.

"Management must use the gains of the

boom to help soften the blows of the recession, which always fall hardest on the workers," she said.

She said the sacrifice made by the workers of Dorman Long was a "real show of unity between organised workers".

"It shows the extent to which they are prepared to stand together to protect each other," she said.

Just more than a month ago 13 Trident Marine workers with rights to remain permanently in Cape Town volunteered to be retrenched first so that contract workers would not lose their jobs.

These workers were also members of the GWU.

## Sipho fears for his life

SIPHO is a mine worker. Every day he goes down a shaft. Walking a few kilometres along narrow passages, he climbs into a small hole.

This is where he will work for the day alongside eight other men. Above him lies three kilometres of rock. The fear hangs over him that the rocks will crumble and close down upon him.

He works for eight hours. It is dark. The only light comes from his battery-powered light attached to his helmet.

The work is unhealthy. It is heavy and dangerous. Often, a fellow worker is hurt losing a leg or an arm.

The work is tiring, the sweat pours.

But at last, there is



the long trek back to the top. There are always delays in getting a lift up. The white miners must go first.

It is 10 hours after starting work that Sipho makes it back to the hostel to wash and eat. He must rest. To-

morrow it is down the shaft again.

Every day he is afraid that he will not make it to the top alive.



# A bad and vicious bill

DR PIET KOORNHOF has once again promised a "new deal" for Black people. His "new deal" will not allow Black people to move freely between ten O'clock at night and five O'clock in the mornings. They will be arrested if they do not have permits to be in the cities. If found guilty, the government will fine them R500 or send them to jail for 6 months.

We must understand these bills. We must know what it means for millions of African people in our country. In this way we will be able to organise ourselves to fight these bills from becoming law.

The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill was introduced in Parliament in the dying hours of this year's session. The government wants to scrap the old Urban Areas

Act. People who used to have section 10 rights, will now be called "Permanent Urban Residents". There is another bill called the Black Community Development Bill. These two bills have now been passed to a commission of enquiry who will report back to parliament before the bill becomes law.

The bills are bad because the people will not be able to fight it in court. If an official decided that Mrs Nkondo cannot have a permit to be in Cape Town, it will be final.

Further, contract workers from the Transkei, the Ciskei and other homelands, will only be able to come to the cities for a definite period. The years that they have worked for one boss will no longer give them the right to become permanent resi-

dents. This is so because the government says they are not South African Citizens.

Ciskeians and Transkeians make up 90% of the Black population of Cape Town. If the bills are passed, they will not be able to become permanent residents of Cape Town. Nor will their children if they were born after the date on which the homeland from where they come, became independent. The government says that their children were never South African citizens.

So many African families suffer daily under the government's harsh laws. But this will make life even harder for them. Children can only become permanent residents of the cities if both their parents have rights to be here. If their parents were never married, the children will

not be able to live here. The bill also says that:

- Unmarried children and grandparents of permanent residents can stay in town but,
- visitors must have a permit to stay in the cities at night. No-one can have a visitor's permit for more than 14 days in one year.
- black people from rural areas who work night shifts in the cities, must get a permit for the job. Only then can they stay in town at night.
- Blacks who do not have jobs, who are registered to look for jobs, must apply for a permit to stay in town at night. The Influx Control Officer can refuse to give someone a permit to stay in town at night.

The Officer can do this if he thinks that they can travel to their homes every night.

If the bill becomes law and any person is found breaking it, this is what will happen to them.

- You can get fined R500 or sent to prison for 6 months for being in town at night without a permit.
- You can be fined R500 or sent to prison for 6 months for allowing a Black person to stay in your home without a permit.
- If you look for work in town without a permit, you can be fined R500 or sent to prison for six months.
- Any boss who gives work to someone who does not have a permit can be fined R5 000 or sent to prison for 12 months.

## Support for Fort Hare students

PROTEST at the University of Fort Hare has once again resulted in the closure of the university and the suspension of 1500 students.

The strong arm tactics of the university authorities with the help of the Ciskeian police have been condemned by students and parents throughout the country.

The students are now demanding to be reinstated unconditionally. They are organising to get the support of the community and already five parent-student committees have been formed. The committees have also decided to take the matter to the Supreme Court.

### Struggle

The Azanian Students' Organisation, called AZASO, has come out in support of the students' demand. They have called on students on all the campuses to pledge their support to the struggle of the Fort Hare students.

And at the University of the Western Cape, students have held a one-day solidarity boycott. Close to 200 students marched to the administration with placards demanding that the university authorities take a stand on the Fort Hare crisis.

It is the second time this year that the University of Fort Hare has been closed. In May unrest took place when students walked out of the graduation ceremony in protest against Chief Lennox Sebe's presence.

They were determined to register their rejection of the independence of the Ciskei

of which Sebe is the President.

"We reject the government's Homeland policy as part of the grand Apartheid plan", they said.

When students returned to the campus after the holidays, they found that there were no lights in the hostels.

Many students were forced to study by candlelight. The situation got worse when the examinations started.

Many students obtained low marks and faced the possibility of not being able to write the final examinations.

A boycott of classes was started.

The Students' Interim Committee was mandated to meet with the Rector to solve the problems on campus.

Instead of listening to their grievances, the Rector called in the police and dissolved the Interim Committee. The students decided to continue with the boycott of classes.

The university authorities responded by calling the Ciskeian police who invaded the campus and assaulted the students.

The students have now returned to the different areas from where they come and are determined to continue with the fight to be reinstated unconditionally.

The Azanian Students' Organisation has circulated petitions on the various campuses. Azaso has called on all people in South Africa to pledge their solidarity with the students and to register their 'disgust at the actions of the Fort Hare authorities and the Sebe police'.



600 residents from Langa, Nyanga & Guguletu rejected the government's 'new bill'.

## 'We want schools'

RESIDENTS of Tafelsig and Eastridge have been told that no schools would be built in their areas by next year.

This has angered the residents. They were told earlier this year that the schools problem would be sorted out by next year.

Recently the Department of Internal Affairs announced that schools

will probably only be built in Tafelsig in 1984.

When they heard this a busload of members of the Tafelsig Residents' Association (TRA) went to the Department's offices in Wynberg to protest against the lack of schools.

They had posters which read: "We don't

want buses - We want schools" and "We are not fools - We want schools".

They demanded that the Department build schools before next year.

Residents said they were scared to let their small children travel alone by bus to school. They said they had many problems with

the buses.

Children sometimes got lost or came late for school.

"All these problems would have been sorted out if there were schools in the area," residents said.

Many small children of schoolgoing age went with their parents to protest in Wynberg.

They do not attend

school because their parents cannot afford the busfares to send them to schools outside the area.

A department official told the people that schools would only be opened towards the end of next year.

Residents started moving into Tafelsig and Eastridge at the start of this year.

## Tribute to Albert Luthuli



SUNDAY, August 15, was remembered as National Luthuli Day. It was a day to show the people's respect for Chief Albert Luthuli as a leader of the people. The Chief died 15 years ago.

Meetings were held in different parts of the country. In Cape Town, close to 400 people attended a memorial meeting at St Marks Hall in Athlone. At the meeting many speakers paid tribute to the Chief. There was also music, poetry, singing and a play showing how badly workers are treated.

Chief Albert Luthuli was President of the banned African National Congress from 1952 until his death in 1967. Speaker after speaker said that the Chief was a wise and brave leader who spoke for all the oppressed people in our country.

One of the speakers said that "the Chief stood for unity among our people. He was also the first to see the need for organising our people in the rural areas."

He also said that "Chief Luthuli was at the head of a movement in the country against many unjust laws. There was the defiance campaign of 1952 when thousands protested against

unjust Apartheid laws. There was also the campaign to draw up the Freedom Charter in 1955 which set out the demands of all the people of South Africa."

He pointed out that not much has changed in the last 30 years. "The people are still fighting for lower rents and bus fares, for housing, security and comfort. For higher wages and equal education. The demands of the Freedom Charter have still not been met.

Messages of support for the memorial meeting came from the Natal Luthuli Committee; the United Women's Organisation; Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO).

A Cosas speaker said, "We say, Luthuli still lives with us. He will not die for as long as Apartheid and exploitation exists.

The only way in which we can honour his memory is to organise wherever our people live and work."

"The chief dedicated his life to freedom and justice. We should draw courage and inspiration from his life and work", said a representative from Azaso.



# Kensington rejects rates increases

KENSINGTON residents are angry. The authorities want to double the value of the land. This will mean rates will go up.

The people refuse to accept this. They say there are poor sports fields, a shortage of creches and libraries. Very little improvements have been made in the area.

The Kensington/Factreton Ratepayers and Tenants Association called a meeting last month to discuss the

problem. Only 100 people came.

"We must have the meeting and speak to those who were too lazy to attend", an elderly resident said.

"But this should not stop us from fighting the problem."

30 people then volunteered to collect objections from the other residents.

The people agreed what they would point out when the object of the revaluation. This was:

- The samples selected by CPA were not representative of the whole area.
- There had been no improvement to facilities in the area.
- The cost of land in Black Areas was being increased because of the Group Areas Act.

The value of R6,50 per square metre decided upon by the CPA for the area was therefore too high.

After the meeting the Association had only one week before the closing date for objections.

In this time volunteers collected more than 500 letters of objection. The number would have been closer to 2 000 if more people had helped and they had more time, the volunteers said.

This shows us the people in the area responded well to the problem.

Representatives of the Association handed the 520 letters of objection to the Secretary of the Valuations court on the closing date.

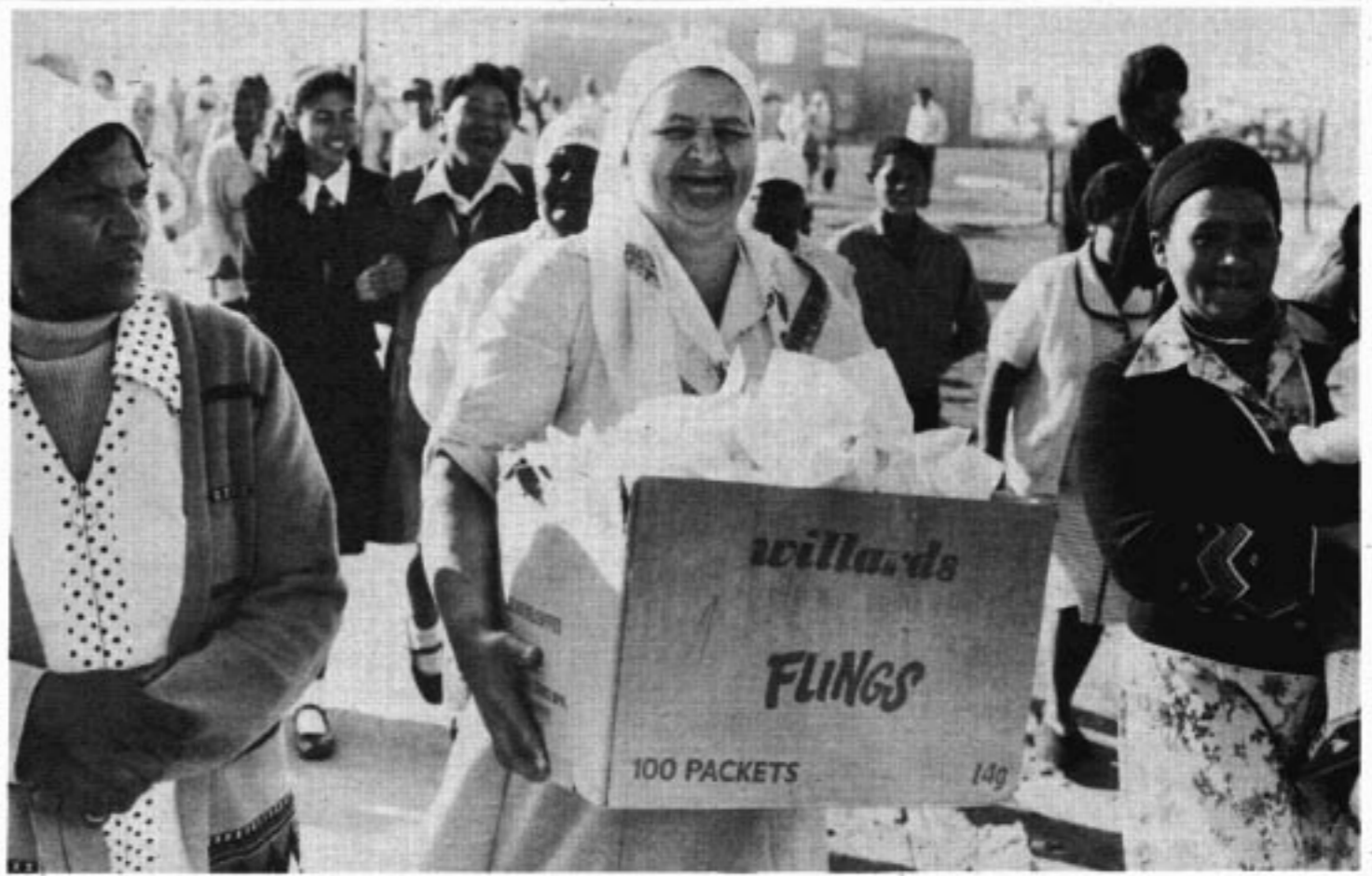
The Secretary, Mr van der Lith, said: "I have never seen so many objections."

"This will disrupt my programme."

Delegates learnt that valuations in most white areas had decreased while most black areas faced increases.

A sub-committee was elected to co-ordinate further action on the issue.

It was decided to work very closely with other organisations who had objected.



80 women took the torn up forms to CHL.

# Lavis tenants tear up survey forms

RESIDENTS of Bishop Lavis tore up survey forms sent to them by the Citizens Housing League.

The people did this

at a meeting called by the Bishop Lavis Action Committee on Monday July 29. More than 400 angry residents attended the meeting.

The residents received survey forms before the meeting offering them three ways in which they could get electricity.

One way, was for residents to pay R31,00 more on their rent. CHL said the extra money would make it possible for them to get a loan to install electricity in the area.

But the people of Bishop Lavis have been waiting for this loan for five years already.

At the meeting, one angry resident said: "CHL behandel ons met minagting, en ons sal hulle met die selfde minagting behandel."

He then suggested the people present tear up their survey forms and everyone agreed.

The people then decided to take the torn up forms and a letter to CHL. The letter said the people would continue the fight for electricity and that the survey form was used to trick the people.

Eighty women turned up on Monday, August 2, and took the letter and the torn up survey forms to CHL.

Their action shows the people of Bishop Lavis are still determined to achieve their demand - "Ons will lektriek hê."

# Bus victory for Houtbay

THERE will be no more late coming for Hout Bay scholars. The bus will take them right to the school gate. For years only white scholars were taken to their schools.

The Hout Bay Youth decided to change this. They sent a letter to City Tramways demanding:

1. That a school bus depart from Hout Bay Harbour at 06H50.
2. That this bus drop all students in front of their school gates or at a central point, eg. Wynberg Station, except where schools are on route.

City Tramways replied, saying that the letter was receiving attention. The Youth decided to send a delegation to Tramways because they did not want



to be late for school any longer.

When they came to school late, they have to stay after school.

They will no longer have this problem. The Hout Bay Youth helps young people to solve such problems.

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26 years after the march .....

# WOMEN FIGHT ON



"WOMEN fight on, struggle, mobilise, unite". This was the message of the United Women's Organisations (UWO) commemoration of the 26th anniversary of National Women's Day.

The meeting was attended by more than 1 000 people at the Bonteheuwel Civic Hall on Sunday 8th August.

The Chairperson of the UWO called on the women of South Africa to stand up and fight. "We need these 20 000 women who undertook the march to Pretoria in 1956", she said.

The march to Pretoria against passes showed the courage of our women and their ability to organise. In their letters to Prime Minister Strijdom, they said, "We have come not to plead or beg, but to ask for what is our right as women, as workers and as citizens of our country".

The guest speaker, Mrs Helen Joseph, who helped to organise the march to Pretoria in 1956, told the story of the past and the lessons for today.

She relived the months of preparation for the march, efforts by the system to disunite the women and then, the triumph of the protest of 20 000.

The crowd at Bonteheuwel sat in silence as they listened to this tireless fighter for a free and undivided South Africa.

And then they rose



Helen Joseph and Dora Tamana marched with the women in 1956.

to pay tribute to her in a special song. "Igama li ka Helen Joseph, malibongwe" (Let's praise the name of Helen Joseph).

Helen Joseph has been banned many times, house arrested and jailed.

The day's programme included plays by the different branches explaining high prices and child care.

These are the two uniting themes of the organisation.

Posters and picture displays told the story of the suffering of our

women. Children also had a special part to play in the programme.

The Nyanga Playgroup put on a Gumboots Dance while two choirs trained by the Guguletu branch of the UWO sang songs of determination and hope in the future.

Throughout the day, the women sang their songs. The cold weather did not dampen the warm spirit of the meeting.

The women's Day commemoration ended with a dedication to

build unity and democracy in the organisation of women.

The women have taken 20 years to come together again after the march to Pretoria. But they have gained strength from these women and their struggles.

Following the women of the 50's the UWO appeals to all women not to be divided by their differences but united by their common need - the need to struggle against the hardships suffered by all oppressed and exploited women.

## Fight high prices

A SPEAKER from the UWO outlined the issue of High Prices, the Uniting theme of the UWO.

"Everyone has a right to proper housing, proper medical facilities and job security. These are the government's responsibilities," the speaker said.

"But in South Africa, we are denied these rights. It is a disgrace that in this land of plenty, people die of starvation. No doctor writes a death certificate saying "Starvation is the cause of death". But we know that cholera, TB and other diseases are caused by starvation.

We are told that these illnesses arise because we are ignorant, lazy or dirty. We know that this is not so. If people don't buy proper food, it's because they can't afford it.

The effect of high prices on the lives of working people came out in the play of the UWO Gardens branch and the Masekululeke Drama Group. The group showed how a family forced to live on R30, a week tries to survive. Heart-

broken parents end up taking their children out of school and sending them to work.

A trade union speaker talked about Wages and High Prices. "In these times we see that the amount of goods that a worker's wages can buy decreases regularly. This hits us specially hard when we, as mothers, cannot meet our food accounts and we watch our families suffer. But we must not be afraid to unite and stand up against these prices."

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- The UWO is working in all areas to inform people about why prices are high.
  - The UWO calls on people in their communities to take up the issue
  - The UWO calls on the trade unions to unite with the community in this struggle.
- "High prices affect us all," a speaker said, "let us take up the campaign together."

## Big polio epidemic

NEARLY 500 children have caught polio since the polio epidemic first began four months ago. Forty-five children have died.

Most of the cases in the recent outbreak have happened in the bantustans - Gazankulu, Garankuwa and Lebowa. Only one case has been found in the Johannesburg area. Most of the ill

children are being treated in the former mission hospitals of Letaba and Shiluvane, near Tzaneen in the North-eastern Transvaal. Both are run by the Gazankulu authorities.

There is much poverty and malnutrition in these areas and health services are poor. Polio is only one of the diseases which

might kill a child before it reaches adulthood. Tuberculosis, Kwashiorkor and cholera are just some of the diseases which the undernourished children of poor families are vulnerable to.

Although the authorities are very busy vaccinating all the children in the area now, there have been reports that some of

the first batches of polio vaccine which were sent up to Northern Transvaal after the epidemic first broke out were no good. It is essential to keep polio vaccine cold and apparently, some of these batches were kept in normal temperatures for some time so that even children who had been vaccinated were not protected from the polio.



The polio ward at Letaba hospital in the Transvaal.

### Shiba's Shoe Stores

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CHILDREN R7.99  
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**MARS BOOTS**  
SIZES 5 - 10  
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with leather insole

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**COMMENTS**

**Fighting high food prices**

OVER the last few years, communities in the Western Cape and elsewhere have stood together in the fight for better housing and living conditions.

Students have organised against inferior education and workers have fought with great militancy for higher wages, better working conditions and the right to elect democratic factory representatives.

Yet, one issue which has not been taken up by our organisations in the past few years is the rising food prices. The average working family spends at least 40% of their wages on food. Wage increases won by trade unions are slipped out of our people's pockets by rocketing food prices.

This is one issue that we must take up.

Recently, striking motor workers demanded a minimum wage of R502 per month. Many may think that this wage demand is too high. But, workers are saying if we want to be able to keep our families healthy, this is the wage that we need.

And, while the people are struggling to feed their families, the food firms are making huge profits. Almost all the food factories in the country are owned by two major companies. These companies are Premier Milling and Tiger Oats. Between them, they feed off the people making huge profits each year.

The workers who produce the food do not benefit. But this is the tragedy of life in South Africa for all workers. To overcome this, we need to stand together and join democratic people's organisations such as our unions, civics and women's organisations.

This year, the United Women's Organisations adopted the theme "fight high food prices". A food committee has been formed by the organisation to understand the issue and to prepare the organisation for a campaign. We see this as a step in the right direction.

**Students fight on**

THE University of Fort Hare has been closed. 1 500 students have been suspended. Instead of doing something about the grievances of the students, the university authorities chose to settle the matter with the help of the Ciskeian police.

Throughout the country, parents and students have condemned the high handed actions of the university authorities.

The students have called on all student organisations and the community to support them in their demand for unconditional reinstatement. We must support the students in their fight.

The struggles of the students for one equal educational system is till fresh in the minds of many. This is an ongoing fight. We need to strengthen the organisation of students at schools, colleges and universities through such campaigns and by taking up the issues facing students.

The Fort Hare crisis shows clearly that only when students are organised and have mass support, can they press forward with their demands.

*Passes or Permits  
what's the difference?*



**LETTERS**

We want to hear your views. Write to Grassroots, P.O. BOX 181, Athlone 7760 Or telephone our office at 22-0264. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Call for women to get organised**

FOR some time now I have been attending meetings of the United Womens Organisation and have listened to our peoples' problems and grievances.

It is only when we come into contact with the less privileged sections of our community that an awareness is created of their plight,

their hardships and their frustrations.

It is only through involvement with the community that one realises the suffering of those who have to endure endless misery because of the colour of their skins.

But what have we as women done to alleviate

the hardships experienced by the greater section of our community?

There is so much that can be achieved by participating in the activities of organisations which strive for the upliftment of all our people.

For, far too long

have we remained in the comfort of our homes when there are so many people in our community for whom suffering and hardship is part of their daily lives.

I would earnestly like to appeal to the women from the Rylands and Cravenby areas to form their own

groups and become affiliated to the United Womens Organisation thus creating a feeling of joint community awareness of the plight of our underprivileged.

I am sure you all have problems; and it is only by coming together and discussing them that solutions may be found to matters that affect our daily lives and our future.

The notorious Group Areas Act has separated us, but let our actions unite our objectives. Please do not let us wake up when it is too late. The time is now!

UWO member

**Thank you**

THE Woodlands Action Committee held a film show in aid of Grassroots funds. We realized R18,00 which is enclosed.

Thanking you,  
Yours in the Civic struggle.

N. Truter  
Treasurer of Woodlands Action Committee.

A big thank you -  
GRASSROOTS Fund-raising Committee.

**'Crossroads spirit goes to sleep'**

READING through the GRASSROOTS Vol 3 No. 3 I came across a story on page three telling us about Crossroads' spirit which has

gone to sleep. I am writing most about poverty and deprivation which is an overwhelming dialogue in Africa.

**CROSSROADS MASSACRE**

To all the people living in the Crossroads District down in Cape Province  
We felt much discontentment  
And we are shedding tears for blood.  
Yet living conditions are getting worse daily  
They stand at least a chance in planting,  
But their soil is fertile  
They can still yield sufficiently  
But now!  
Then it is too late.  
They were supposed to leave behind their own soil.  
I saw the Crossroads Blacks marching out of their own soil  
To unknown destinations.  
They were marching slowly with their children

I for one would quote again: "Rome was not built in a day." About 70 per cent of the Blacks in Africa are liberated.

Because they left their land reluctantly.  
I saw them chatter and chatter as they moved.  
A mass rock stood ahead of them  
They all stood, stood by the rock in a mob.  
A militant young man stood within them  
And with polite voice said:  
"Brothers and sisters we are not here  
To bury one of the Party  
But to share equal ideologies  
To aid in the search for safe land where  
We are allowed to exercise ability.  
Today we are like the Israelites in captivity nearby the river of Babylon  
They were ill-treated like slaves  
Like the people of Crossroads Like the Israelites in Babylon  
Alfred Maseko - Sebokeng

It needs a major effort to liberate that part remaining.

Here is one of my poems about Crossroads.



# DO WE DESERVE THIS?

Are you walking the streets looking for a house to live in? You are not the only one. The council's housing list is getting longer and longer every day. And now the government has decided to spend less money on housing for us. They say they have no money. They say they must save money when they build our houses. How do they plan to do this? What will this mean for us?



MOST of us in this country earn too little to build our own houses. The government therefore has to build houses for us. Governments all over the world do this.

"We believe that all people should have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed and to raise their families in com-

fort and security."

This is what Cahac believes.

Cahac, which stands for Cape Areas Housing Action Committee, is the organisation fighting for better houses in Cape Town.

Cahac believes in decent housing for all. Is this what the government believes in?

In 1974, the government set down certain standards for houses.

They said all houses built with government loans must have a store-room, shelves in or near the kitchen, inner doors to all bedrooms, a bathroom, toilet and a kitchen sink, electricity, floor coverings and ceilings in most cases.

Does your house have all this?

A few weeks ago, the government decided to change these standards.

And instead of making them better, they have made the standards worse.

The new standards will be for all of us who earn less than R150 a

month. Houses that are built for us will have no ceilings, no electricity, no paint on the inside walls and no floor covering.

Is this what we deserve? What will this mean for us?

When the Bishop Lavis Action Committee, Blac, started their fight for elect-

ricity and ceilings, they learnt many things.

- They found that people living without electricity spend up to R80 a month on wood, paraffin and gas. This is four times what most people spend on electricity.

- They found that houses without ceilings are very hot in summer and very cold in winter.

Water often drips from the roof making the house damp. The dampness gives the people chest complaints.

- Living without bathrooms or doors on bedrooms means that people have no privacy.

These conditions are bad for the health of our people. Many of us suffer from TB and other diseases.

If these conditions are bad for us, why then has the government decided to lower the standards?

The government wants to build more houses because they can see we are beginning to fight for this right. By lowering the standards, they will be able to build more houses without spending more. They do not want to spend more because they need all the money for buying guns and seeing to the army.

The new standards will apply only to some of us. Does the government want to keep some of us poor?

People must discuss this matter in their organisations. With the great shortage of houses, it will not be easy for us to refuse to move into such houses.

But must we be silent?

Do we deserve this?



PLANS are underway to set up a Legal Resources Centre (LRC) in Cape Town. This will make it possible for people who cannot afford to pay lawyers fees to get good legal advice and fight their cases in court.

An LRC has existed in Johannesburg for the last three years.

It has taken up community and workers' grievances such as bus fare increases, unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation and pensions.

The proposed LRC would consist of a centre headed by three or four experienced attorneys and advocates. This centre would

- \* fight cases in court
- \* organise and supervise various legal aid clinics in different communities and townships staffed by university law students
- \* support community plans to set up advice offices.

Before an LRC can get off the ground in Cape Town several important issues have to be faced.

The first is the question of funding. LRC's cost a lot to run even though they are non-profit making organisations. This is because their staff includes leading advocates and attorneys. They run a wide range of services, and fight costly cases in court.

This year's budget of the Johannesburg LRC is R290 000. As the clients do not pay for the legal assistance, this money has to be raised elsewhere.

## Should we take money from big business

The Johannesburg LRC was started with funds from three American foundations. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Now additional funds come from other American donors as well as corporations in South Africa, a newspaper charity fund and the Wits Rag fund.

From these contributions the Johannesburg LRC has over two hundred and thirty rand towards its 1982 budget.

Additional funds will have to be found if an LRC is to be opened in Cape Town. Most community organisations and trade unions in Cape Town have said that they will not be able to support an LRC who receives money from unacceptable sources.

In particular they are strongly opposed to funds being obtained from the Urban Foundation,

which is financed by big business.

The Urban Foundation came into existence after the 1976 uprisings. Because uprisings threaten to decrease profits, capitalists realised the need to maintain 'law and order'. The Foundation goal is to upgrade living conditions like housing and so lessen the real grievances of our people. It is rejected by many people because it is seen to have a political motive aimed at building up a "black middle class" and weakening demands and pressures for fundamental political and social change.

Another major issue is the role of the proposed LRC in relation to community organisations. For an LRC to operate successfully, it would have to make sure that community organisations participate in the direction and management of the centre so that it remained

responsive to community perceptions and relevant to community needs.

Community organisations also believe that an LRC should concentrate on cases that do not only concern a single individual but have an affect on the wider community and strengthen community organisation.

Community and worker

organisations involved in the discussions concerning the establishment of the LRC are consulting their members before they take a position on the project. Several have indicated that they support the idea in principle, as long as the issues of funding and community participation are properly addressed.

- A similar problem faces people in the Kewtown area where the big petrol company, Mobil, has given money for houses to be built.

THE BBSK Residents' Association gave their view to Grassroots:

BABS and Mobil have just completed what tenants have come to call 'die metjie-box huise' in Kewtown. The people see the BABS-Mobil project as nothing but another infill scheme. Now the Council has stepped in with plans to build 102 more houses amongst the flats in Kewtown. The people of Kewtown through BBSK want to fight against this.

BABS-Mobil have advertised their scheme as the way to 'community progress'. The BABS-Mobil houses are 'koophuise' with initial rents of R66,00 per month - about 3 times more than what the majority of Kewtown tenants presently pay. BBSK insists that progress will only be made once every single family is decently housed.

Rich companies get richer from the enormous profits they make by paying low wages to their workers. These workers struggle to survive with their low pay packets and as tenants live under terrible conditions. The interests of all rich companies, as expressed via BABS-Mobil and the Urban Foundation are totally opposed to those of the expressed and exploited.

Tenants will not be deceived by the false claim that the BABS-Mobil scheme is the way to 'community progress'. Real change will only come with the collective struggle of workers and tenants led by their own organisation.



# LOWER THE PRICES WE ARE HUNGRY!



Grassroots compares the prices of food for 1975 and 1982. The price we have crossed out is for 1975. The other price is what we pay for these items in the shop today.

"Fryse styg, pryse styg  
 Die base word ryk, die base word ryk  
 Die werkers se lewe word swaarder en swaarder  
 Ons kinders word daagliks maerder en maerder  
 Ons werk word ook harder en harder  
 Pryse styg, pryse styg."

THIS is the song which all the people are singing. This is the song which tells of the hardship of our lives. These hardships are caused mainly by the rising food prices. Families need to cut down not only on how much food they buy, but also on what kinds of food.

Every day we see prices go up. Yesterday the price of milk increased. Today the price of bread and eggs increases. Tomorrow cheese and butter will go up. Meat is so expensive that we only eat it once a month, or on Sundays. The cost of living increases all the time. Every day it is more difficult to live on our wages.

Not only do food prices rise, but rent, bus fares, electricity and clothing prices go up all the time.

The only people who are not suffering from high prices are the ones who make profits out of our basic needs, like the big food firms, the City Transport and the people who push up our rents.

Food prices do not rise because there is too little food. In fact, when there are too many eggs or bananas for people with money to buy, then the owners of these products dump them in the sea. Eggs are sold for 97c a dozen in Cape Town while South African eggs cost 34c a dozen in Japan. The owners are too greedy for big profits. They do not want to sell food cheaply: they will rather dump it, or sell it in other countries for a lower price.

On this page, Grassroots looks at all the problems related to food prices, and most important, what we can do. In future editions, we will look more closely at the reasons for high prices, and will explain any other questions which our readers ask us. Why not write to Grassroots and tell us of your problems with food prices?



AN average family in Cape Town needs at least R90 per week to stay alive and healthy. If you earn less than this, your health and the growth of your children will suffer.

The father of this family works as a labourer in the building industry. He earns R44 per week. This is half the amount needed to support his family. Most of this money is spent on food and rent. Food prices rise every day. This means less food for the family.

"Ous bet slaars 'n roofoed kos geskik, dan is die berde al lang", the mother told us.

Here, the mother will be forced to go to work to earn enough money to improve things at home. The children will be left alone, with no one to look after them properly. What will then happen to them? Many drop out of school.

Some may join street-corner gangs, and so become involved in more serious crime later on. Some will go to work, with no qualifications, and earn low wages - and so, they in turn will struggle to make ends meet.



The Face of Hunger

Of Child Your stomach is a den of lions, roaring day and night.



PEOPLE cannot live without food. They need to feed their families. Even if they women and complain about higher prices, they cannot refuse to buy food.

The food industry is for this reason always able to sell their bread, fish, oil, meat and other foodstuff. They can always make a profit at our expense.

Who is to blame? Two very big firms in South Africa control almost all food factories. The one is Tiger Out, which owns bakeries, factories where they make peanut-butter,

margarine, pet food, sweets, cereals, flour and other foods. This is the biggest food firm in the country. It made a profit of R70 000 000 last year.

Premier Milling Company, the other firm owns Epic Oils, 2 biscuit factories, 46 bakeries, Epsol pet food and many chicken farms. Their profits too, are very high.

The millions of rands which we spend on food each year surely increase the profits of these two firms. It is in their interest to always increase food prices.



If the mother of this child, in 1975 bought only the food pictured above, she would pay R3.27. Today she has to pay R8.31 - almost three times as much.

No wonder the child is crying and his bottle is empty. The food she has in her basket is less than what is needed to keep him healthy, but it is all she can afford.

At school kids are told to eat lots of fresh fish, meat, cheese, vegetables, fruit and to drink lots of milk if they want to grow up stronger.

Instead, mothers are forced to buy food which fills their stomachs.

DOES THIS KEEP THEM HEALTHY? Obviously not.

FEEDING their families has always been a problem which mothers have faced. Forty years ago already, people came together to protest against food prices.

In 1943, while many blacks fought in the war, their families suffered under a shortage of food and prices which rose daily. When a bus company in Alexandria near Johannesburg increased the bus fares, the people could take it no longer. Firstly, they fought the bus company, boycotted the buses and forced the busfare down again.

Then the mothers came together, and in Transvaal the People's Food Council was formed, while in Cape Town a similar body, the Women's Food Committee, was started. These two organizations united the struggle against high food prices right across the country.

This fight which already started then, is today being continued by the United Women's Organisation (U.W.O.).



Grassroots spoke to the U.W.O. about the food price problem.

This is what they said: "It is specially women who carry the burden of high prices. At times of high unemployment, it is women who lose their jobs first. Women must try to make the household budget stretch to food and clothes for their families.

For these reasons, U.W.O. has chosen 'High Prices' as its writing theme for this year.

A Consumer Committee has been set up to collect information so that the women of U.W.O. can educate themselves about high prices, and work out ways of taking action together against these rises.

The fight for food we can afford can only be won when men and women join civics, trade unions and women's organisations. Only by coming together, by talking about it, by doing something, can their demands be met.



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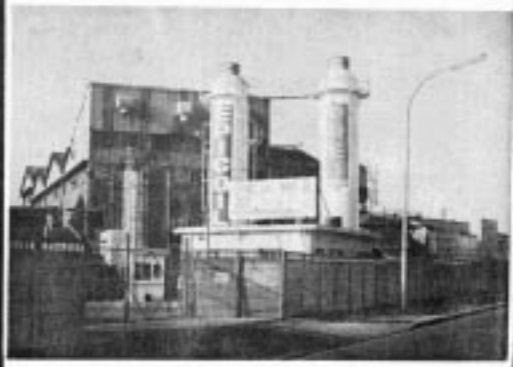
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Poor housing and living conditions causes TB

# WHO IS TO BLAME?

**'Why give us such houses?'**

"THE pain started in my back. I got thin and tired, so very tired. It was like having asthma sometimes - I just could not breathe. The doctors cut away two of my ribs to get to my lungs. I was very sick," said Johanna Baron, 20, of Bellville South.

**TB**

Johanna had TB, one of the most serious sicknesses in this country. In Cape Town alone there were 2 636 TB cases in 1977. Today,



the clinics say that 453 people in Bellville have the sickness.

Johanna believes that the bad housing made her sick. "The cold hits through the walls. Many people have TB because they are living on top of one another. When I became sick two years ago, the doctor said I must sleep on my own.

**Daughter**

But how could I? There were ten of us living in one house. The shock came when my daughter Charlene also got sick. The sickness was in my milk. She was still a baby then. We both had treatment for more than a year. I had three operations before I recovered. I still feel so tired and cannot work very hard.

"Why must they give us such houses which make us sick?," she asked.

- We have no ceilings.*
- The water drips from roof all the time.*
- We have no electricity.*
- Our children study by candlelight.*
- We have no drains.*
- The germs breed in our yards.*
- People have died here.*

TB is a serious disease that should not occur at all in a wealthy country. Yet in South Africa more than ten people die from TB every day and at least 100 000 people get TB each year.

Why is TB so common?

At a conference held by medical students of the University of Cape

Town recently, speakers made it clear the TB is a disease caused by low wages, poor housing, poor nutrition, and unhealthy living conditions.

TB is a serious chest infection which occurs when people have a low resistance to illness due to poor food and bad living conditions. TB is so common in South

Africa because these conditions are so common.

To understand why TB has become so serious it is important to understand South Africa's history.

One of the speakers at the conference said that before capitalism and the migrant labour system, South Africa's people were able to support themselves properly and TB was rare. When gold was discovered on the Rand, many young men were forced to go and work on the mines.

**Crowded**

Then, in 1913 the Land Act was passed, leaving only 13% of the land for the majority of South Africa's people. These and other reasons led to overcrowding and poverty in the rural areas and TB spread throughout the country.

Many workers work in conditions that increase their chances of getting TB. On the mines people work in hot, humid, dusty conditions which are bad for the lungs and chest. Through the migrant labour system, TB

spread back to the islands.

Workers who get TB have difficulty getting compensation and often lose their jobs. In industry, checks to find out if people have TB are often poor.

**Wages**

Often people who get TB are made to feel that they are to blame for getting sick. But no amount of health education will help if people have to live under poor conditions with low wages and bad housing. It is the duty of the State to provide better housing and of the bosses to pay higher wages.

A video was also shown about TB in the Western Cape. It included interviews with people suffering from TB and health workers who treat TB.

Many people felt that the video could be used to stimulate discussion about health at meetings, in schools and community organisations.

The video can be obtained by contacting Health Care Trust, 41 Scott Rd., Observatory. Ph. 47-2846.



Poor housing and living conditions causes TB.

## Organising for a healthier future



This means that into-houses which will many of us will be put make us sick. Are we

Bellville South residents are asking: Is this what the government wants?

More than 20 years ago, the government built the houses which today help to make the people ill. Bellville South residents know how it is to live in houses with no ceilings, no electricity and cement floors.

Now we hear that the government wants to build more such cheap houses.

going to allow this?

The people of Bellville South realise today that they did not put up any fight when they moved in.

"We were forced to move from Oakdale when it was declared a white area," the people told Grassroots.

"There was nowhere else for us to go. If we knew more, we could have done something to make the council change the houses."

**Committee**

"Some of us have come together to form a committee to do something about the problems here," said Aunt Vivvie of 245 Armada Crescent, Bellville South. "The name of the committee is the Bellville South Housing Action Committee. We want to form a residents association later this year," she said.

If you have a problem or want to help the committee, go to Aunt Vivvie at number 245.

# Come to Bokaap meeting

"We have to pay rent through the bedroom window of the caretaker's house," Schotcheskloof residents say.

One of the oldest areas in Cape Town but still Schotcheskloof has no housing office.

"We have no housing office, no creche, no community centre.

"If we want to play a soccer match, we will find the nearest field in Green Point.

"Are they trying to force us from the area so that the whites can move in?" the people are asking.

## Baby show

The committee recently held a Lucky Number Baby Show which 200 residents attended. Three babies got first prizes and 20 got consolation prizes. The show was held on 31 July at the N.G. Church Hall.

The organisation in the area, the Schotcheskloof Civic Association, has for a number of years battled with council to improve the area. Council has only made promises but nothing else.

"We decided to call together other organisations and clubs in the area to discuss our problems," a member of the civic told Grassroots. At this meeting, the

people decided to go to the City Council to point out the main problems.

They demanded the selling of all houses, the building of a community centre, creche and clinic. They also demanded sports fields. Council's reply was "We have no money".

"Must we believe this?" residents are saying.

We must meet to discuss what we can do."

The civic is holding a meeting on Monday 13 September at the Ou Skooltjie, Penz Street. If you think we deserve a better deal, come to the meeting and bring your neighbour along.

The organisations that have worked with the civic are: Nurul Islam Mosque Committee, Nur-el-Hamediah Mosque Committee, Peninsula Soccer League, representing nine clubs, the United Cricket Club, Schotcheskloof Rugby Club, the Old Boys Rugby Football Club and the tennis club.

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# ADVICE

## FIGHT AGAINST POLIO

THE Advice page of GRASSROOTS has had several queries about polio. We have decided to put all these together, and to answer the questions we have been asked most often.

### WHAT IS POLIO?

Polio is a disease which can affect the whole body.

The person who has bad polio becomes lame in the one part of the body, usually a leg. This can go on to affect both legs, and then even the rest of the body.

If it is very severe, it may even affect the muscles of breathing and lead to difficulty in breathing.

### WHAT CAUSES POLIO?

It is caused by a germ called a polio virus.

The germ enters the body through the mouth, and then travels through the body to the nervous system.

Here it causes the biggest problem.

If a person takes food or water which is dirty and has the polio germ in it, that person may get polio.

### WHO GETS POLIO?

It usually affects young children who crawl around and put dirty things into their mouths.

It is also more common in those areas where people don't have enough toilets or

clean running water.

In these places it is not easy for people to keep their food and their surroundings clean. So their children have a bigger chance of picking up the germ.

### HOW CAN POLIO BE PREVENTED?

If people have clean toilets and running water, there is less chance for the germ to cause problems. So, we must see to it that all people have toilets and clean water.

It can also be prevented by polio drops which are given out at the clinics to young babies.

When babies are 3 months, 4½ months, 6 months and 18 months old the clinic gives them injections and polio drops to help them from getting different sicknesses.

The children should not drink milk for one hour before and one hour after getting the drops.

This is because the milk may stop the drops from working properly.

If the baby has had these drops at the right times, even if he puts dirty things from the floor or from the yard into his mouth, his body can fight the polio germ. He will not get the disease.

### HOW DO PARENTS KNOW THAT THEIR CHILDREN HAVE

### HAD THE DROPS?

In the Western Cape and in most parts of South Africa, when a baby is born or when he first goes to the clinic, he is given a clinic card.

This is a white or pink card. When the baby goes to the clinic, the sister usually writes down what injections or drops have been given. This is written on the part of the card called "Immunisations/Immunisaties."

If parents look on the child's clinic card, they can check and see whether he has had his polio drops.

If this is too difficult, they can take the card to the clinic, and ask the sister to check. If the drops have not been given, the sister will advise on what must be done.

### SO, WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREVENT POLIO?

1. Check that all communities have clean water and enough toilets. If not, ask your civic body to take it up.
2. Check to see that children have had their polio drops. If they haven't, take them to the clinic.



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## Treating ringworms

RINGWORM is a very common skin problem which is also known as "omloop". The name ringworm is misleading because it has nothing to do with worms.

It is caused by a type of germ called a fungus. Ringworm makes a round itchy place on the skin in the shape of a ring.

Ringworm is infectious and like many other skin problems it spreads much easier in overcrowded living conditions.

It is passed on by touching infected people or by touching infected dogs or cats.

Sometimes children get ringworm on their heads. It leaves bald

patches on the scalp where the hair has broken off.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

There are different ways of treating ringworm, but you will need patience because it can take up to six weeks to be cured.

Try the following treatment:

- Wash the skin very well with soap and water twice a day. Do your best to keep the affected parts dry and expose them to the air or sunlight as often as possible.

- Apply Whitfield's ointment to the affected parts three times a day. Continue to do this for at least six weeks.

- In bad cases it may be necessary to get tablets from a doctor.



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**ADVICE**

**PRIVATE**

IN a previous issue we looked at state pensions. Now we want to look at private or industrial pension funds.

**WHAT IS A PENSION FUND?** A pension fund is a sum of money that will be used to pay pensions to workers when they are too old to go on working. It works like this: the workers and the bosses agree that they will regularly pay money into the pension fund while the workers are still employed.

This money is called the contributions of the workers and the bosses. The people controlling the fund invest the contributions in shares and property, or lend it to the government.

In this way they earn interest on the money and increase the size of the fund.

Most pension funds hope to earn at least 10 per cent compound interest on their money.

Then, when workers retire, the money in the fund is used to pay them a pension every month.

The contributions of the workers are always a fixed amount. Normally it is about 5 per cent or 7½ of their wages.

There are two kinds of pension funds:

(1) **Fixed benefit funds.** Here the pension benefit is a fixed amount, and the employer must make sure that there is enough money in the

fund to pay the pension.

(2) **Fixed contribution funds.** Here the employer's contribution is fixed. Usually it will be the same as the worker's contribution. This means that the pension is not fixed, but will depend on the amount of money in the fund when you retire.

We will look at the two kinds of pension fund to see which one is better. It is very important that you find out to which kind of pension fund you belong. You could then decide which kind you want to have.

**Benefit**

The most important difference between the two kinds of pension funds is that you get a different retirement benefit when you stop working.

(a) **Fixed benefit fund** Your pension will depend on the number of yours that you belonged to the pension fund. Your pension will be 1/50th or 1/60th of your wage for every year that you belonged to the fund.

We can write this as a formula:

Pension = No of years x 1/50 of your wage.

This means that if you belonged to the same pension fund for 50 years, your pension will be the same as your wage.

When you belong to a fund that pays only 1/60th for every year, you will have to work for 60 years to get your full wage as a pension. Obviously it is better to belong to a fund that pays 1/50th for every year worked.

Example: Mr Smith has belonged to a pension fund for 20 years. He earns R60 per week. How much pension will he get if he retires now? The fund pays a pension of 1/50th of his wage for every year worked, so

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Pension} &= \text{No of years} \times \frac{1}{50} \text{th of his wage} \\ &= 20 \times \frac{1}{50} \text{ of R60} \\ &= \frac{2}{5} \times \text{R60} \\ &= \text{R24 per week.} \end{aligned}$$

(b) **Fixed contribution fund.**

These funds work more or less like a savings account, because your pension will depend on how much money you and your employer have paid into the fund.

When you retire you will get your fair (or

equitable) share of the money in the fund.

This money is called the lump sum, and consists of:

- (a) your contributions
- (b) plus the employer's contributions
- (c) plus interest on these contributions
- (d) plus a share of the money left in the fund by people who left the job.

The lump sum is then used to buy you a pension (also called an annuity) which will be paid at the end of every month.

Unfortunately there is no easy way to calculate what your pension will be when you

retire, as interest rates will go up and down and make any calculations very complicated.

These pension funds also say that your pension will never be more than a certain amount. This maximum pension is usually the same as a fixed benefit pension - 1/50th or 1/60th of your final wage for every year that you belonged to the pension fund.

This means that the pension from a fixed contribution fund will never be more than 1/50th or 1/60th pension from a fixed benefit fund, but it can be a lot less.

**Withdrawing from pension funds**

When you leave your job.

When you leave your job, you normally also leave the pension fund. We say you withdraw from the fund. You will get out an amount in cash, consisting of your own contributions plus 2 or 3 per cent interest. The contributions of the boss plus all the other interest will stay in the fund.

So you lose a lot of money when you withdraw from a pension fund.

Last year the government tried to abolish this withdrawal of money from pension funds.

They said that they didn't want workers to lose their money like this.

Instead they wanted to preserve your pension, by saying that all your pension money must be paid over to the pension fund at your new job.

This meant that you could only get your money out when you retire.

But many workers were not at all happy about this. They said that they didn't like losing money by withdrawing from a pension fund, but they often needed to have this money when they lost their jobs. Otherwise they would starve because the unemployment money is so bad.

After many workers had come out on strike against the plans, the government decided to drop them for the moment.

What can we learn from this? Firstly, we must demand that we can choose whether to preserve our pension money or to withdraw it if we need it. Secondly, we must demand that we get more of our pension money when we withdraw. After all it is our money.

**Changing your fund**

Fixed Benefit funds are almost always better than fixed contribution funds.

Why is this?

- Fixed benefit funds are better protected against inflation, as the pension is related to your wage when you retire. This is very important when the inflation rate is high as it is now.
- It is possible to work out how much your pension will be, so that you can see whether it will be worthwhile to join a pension fund.
- When you retire, you can exchange (or commute) a third of your pension for cash. Under a

fixed benefit fund, you will get more money in cash, even if the pension is the same as a fixed contribution pension.

- When you die a fixed benefit fund will pay out a cash amount plus a pension to your dependants. A fixed contribution fund will pay out a bit more in cash, but it won't pay any pension.

There is no law that says that you cannot change a pension fund or its rules. If you have a pension fund that you are not happy about, you can try to change it.

Ask your union to negotiate a better pension fund with the boss.

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# ADVICE

# PENSIONS



## Who benefits from pension funds

*Not everybody benefits from a pension fund!*

Coloured- people receive a state pension of R71 per month. This will soon be increased to R83 per month.

Africans receive a pension of R40 per month. This will soon be increased to R49 per month.

When you retire, you receive a state pension. But if you already have your own pension, you will lose part of the state pension:

- if your own pension is less than R21,00 (or R10,50 for Africans) you do not lose any state pension.

- if your pension is more than R21,00 and less than R58,00 (more than R10,50 and less than R29 for Africans), you lose R1 of state pension for every R1 that your pension increases.

- if your pension is more than R58,00 (or R29 for Africans) you lose all your state pension!

This means that if your pension is between R58 and R83 a month (or R29 and R49 for Africans) you will get a smaller pension than people who do not have their own pension at all!

You would have done better not to have been in a pension fund at all, and just to have got the state pension.

All the money that was put into the pension fund will be wasted.

*How can you work out whether you will benefit from joining a pension fund?*

Obviously you benefit very little from a pension fund if the pension you expect is less than R83 per month (R49 for Africans).

If it is between R83 and R110 for coloured people and R49 and R70 for Africans per month, it is still not much better than the state pension.

### Fund

When you expect a pension of more than R110 or R70 per month, it will be worthwhile to join a fund.

Look at the table which shows you how much pension you can expect when you retire.

*Who can expect to get a small pension out of a pension fund?*

We know that the longer you belong to a fund, the more you get.

So it is the people who only join the fund when they are already quite old, who get small pensions.

This is because they are not in the fund for very long before they retire.

People who earn low wages will also receive a small pension, because they are putting very

little money into the fund.

So if your wage is less than R250 per month, or you are older than 45 or 50, you must think very carefully before joining a new pension fund.

Quite often you will get very little for all your and the bosses contributions. Some people will even be worse off.

You can ask your pension fund to make all these calculations for you, but you must tell them to make all the calculations in today's money. Otherwise you can't tell anything.

You can also con-

tact Grassroots for help.

These rules about state pensions - called the *means test* - are obviously not in the interests of workers.

You can demand from the bosses that they should try to get the rules changed. But this will not happen quickly.

*What can you demand in the meantime?*

The first demand should be that people who won't benefit from the pension fund must not be forced to join it.

Workers who are over 45 or 50 must be able to choose whether they want to join the

fund, or not, because it is very likely that they won't get much out of it.

The second demand should be that something else must be done to provide for the old people who do not benefit from joining the fund. They must at least still get the death benefit from the pension fund if they die before retirement.

### Contact

If you need any further information about pension funds, you can contact the Grassroots office at 43-2117.

## How much will your pension be?

PRESENT WAGE	PENSION IF YOU BELONGED FOR:				
	5 yrs	10 yrs	15 yrs	20 yrs	30 yrs
R150 pm	R15,00 pm	R30,00 pm	R45,00 pm	R60,00 pm	R90,00 pm
R175	R17,50	R35,00	R52,50	R70,00	R105,00
R200	R20,00	R40,00	R60,00	R80,00	R120,00
R225	R22,50	R45,00	R67,50	R90,00	R135,00
R250	R25,00	R50,00	R75,00	R100,00	R150,00
R300	R30,00	R60,00	R90,00	R120,00	R180,00
R350	R35,00	R70,00	R105,00	R140,00	R210,00
R400	R40,00	R80,00	R120,00	R160,00	R240,00

- If you belong to a fixed benefit fund that uses the 1/50th rule these are the pensions that you will get.
- If you belong to a fixed benefit fund that uses the 1/60th rule, multiply all these figures by 5 and divide by 6.
- If you belong to a fixed contribution fund, these figures are maximum pension that you will get.



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# Botswana conference looks at our culture

## ART AND THE PEOPLE

PEOPLE who have learnt things should teach them to others. Those with studios and rooms where photographs can be developed, should share them with people who want to learn.

Artists suggested this at the art festival held in Botswana over five days last month.

The artists included musicians, writers of poetry and books and people involved in the making of films.

They discussed what part they

could play in the struggle for a better society.

People said the communities were very important. Art must come to the people. Exhibitions need not be in galleries, artists must take them to the people.

Everyone agreed it was important for people to work together and to use newsletters like Grassroots to keep in touch with each other.

A mime group and a drama group from Cape Town were present. James Mathews, a poet and Richard Rive, a writer, both from Cape Town, were also there.

During the evening performances one Capetonian of special note showed how music could get a good message across. Abdullah Ebrahim, who we all know as Dollar Brand, played his District Six piece to the



Dollar Brand at conference.

packed civic hall.

In doing so, he "went back" to Cape Town for the first time in six years.



Bringing the message to the people through drama.

## Grassy Park exhibition

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THE art exhibition in Grassy Park recently was an attempt to bring art to the community.

Three local artists displayed their work at the Grassy Park library.

"If our artists want to show how our life is in the communities, they must leave the art galleries," a speaker from Lotus River/Grassy Park Residents' Association said.

#### Encourage

"Art must come to the people so that we can judge ourselves. It is only the people who can decide," he said.

"Artists must get off their canvas and actively assist us.

"All we think of is using a koki pen. But there is a need for many other things - posters have to be drawn. Artists can help," he said.

But we must remember that artists have their own problems as well. If we in our organizations want artists to help us, we must try to help them too. Support and encourage your local artists. They need you.

## WESTRIDGE ACTION COMMITTEE

People of Westridge are unhappy with the wall between Eisleben Rd & Cypress way



People must either walk an extra km. to go round the wall or climb over it, which is difficult and dangerous

The people went to Westridge Action Committee for help



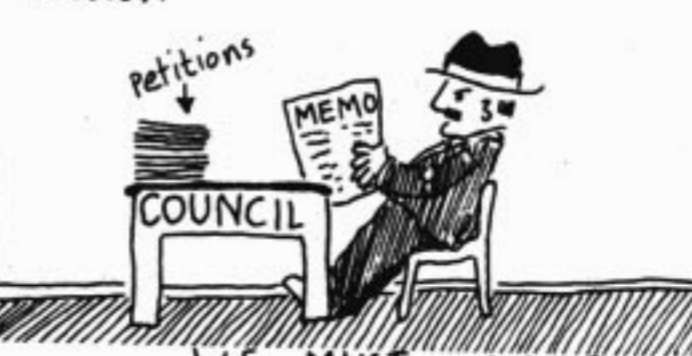
House meetings were called to talk about the matter



People decided to have a petition. 330 residents signed.



The petitions, and a memorandum were sent to the Council. We gave Council 3 weeks to take action



Now, a month has passed, and still nothing has happened.



WE MUST ALL STAND TOGETHER TO WIN OUR DEMANDS!!



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# JOHNNY GOMAS

## A life time of struggle

WHEN we spoke to Johnny Gomas he was an old, sick man — he died two years ago. His memory was not good any more. He could not always remember details or dates. It was for this reason that we found it necessary to speak to younger people who knew "Uncle" Johnny to get a better picture of him and the times in which he lived.

However, during our interview with Johnny, it was clear that age and illness had not killed his spirit. He was still very aware of what the struggle was about, what he had fought for all his life, and how much still remained to be done.

Often during our talks he would break into song or poetry.

He was born in Abbotsdale. Before he was 20 he left the little village for Kimberley where he learnt tailoring. But he did not only become a tailor's apprentice. The man who taught him to make clothes also gave him his first lessons in socialism.

After a few years he left Kimberley for Cape Town where he remained for the rest of his life. He again got work doing tailoring and almost immediately got involved in the tailors' organisation and other political and community organisations.

### Leader of ICU

At that time the Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU) was very active in Cape Town and Johnny became a member, and later a leader, of that organisation. He spoke to us about Clement Kadalie, the leader of the ICU. He had a great respect for Kadalie, who, he said, was a great leader of people. But he said that Kadalie did not understand the role of the trade union properly.

Johnny felt that the ICU which was one big union catering for all types of workers was not the best way to start organising. He felt that the workers in different industries should organise separately until they had built up their strength in fighting against their individual bosses.

On the basis of this strength they would then be able to come together to build a strong federation of all workers.

There were also other disagreements as well, especially when the leaders of the ICU became more conservative in later years. Eventually Johnny and several other militants were expelled from the ICU in 1927.

However, he continued to work with workers organisations. In 1934 he became a full-time trade union worker, as secretary of the chemical workers union.

Johnny was involved in many attempts to bring about national trade union unity. But the differences were too great and they failed.

Johnny believed there were important lessons to be learned from failures and defeats. One particular failure, this time at

This is a story of the life of Johnny Gomas. It is also a story about our people's fight for their rights.

There are many Johnny Gomases in our communities. Write to us about them. We must not lose the stories of the past.

a more personal level, taught him something very important.

He was put up as a candidate for the City Council in the ward in which he lived, District Six. He stood on a radical worker/people ticket. His backers thought he couldn't lose. So did Johnny, especially when he considered who the only other candidate was.

His opponent lived in the posh white suburbs — a fat-cat capitalist landlord who had made a fortune out of high rents for the dingy dwellings he let to the poor people living in District Six.

Mr Fat-cat won hands down.

This taught Johnny how money could sometimes turn democracy inside out, so that working class people can be so confused by a flood of expensive false propaganda that they could vote *against* a working class candidate and *for* the very man who was responsible for so much of their suffering.

### Freedom

Johnny believed strongly in the need for people all over South Africa to work together for freedom. He was involved in national organisations as well as CapeTown ones. He was a member, at different times, of the Coloured Peoples Congress, the African National Congress, the Communist Party, the National Liberation League, to mention only a few.

He helped set up many of these organisations and was sent to other centres to help people organising there. In this way he met many people.

He became even more well-known after an incident in Parliament.

On a quiet afternoon the House was suddenly awakened by a booming voice.

For nearly a minute the MP's listened

to a stinging attack on the system of oppression and exploitation they were accused of upholding. The craned their necks to see the owner of the thundering voice.

Up in the front row of the gallery they saw the commanding figure of John waving his arms fiercely as he spoke.

Johnny's stirring speech was cut short when security men grabbed him and dragged him from the chamber. But the incident was to create quite a stir throughout the country because for the first time, a Black voice had been heard in Parliament.

### Harassed

Johnny suffered the usual harassment of those who oppose the government. He was jailed several times for breaking laws while organising — for example for illegal strikes. In the fifties he was banned from his trade union work and had to go back to private tailoring.

Then in the "emergency" after Sharpsville he, together with thousands of others, was detained, first in Roeland Street, and afterwards in Pollsmoor.

He described how the authorities tried to use discrimination to divide the "Coloureds" and "Africans". They gave mats to the "Coloureds" while the "Africans" were supposed to sleep on the floor. This didn't work as whatever mats there were were shared by all in the cell.

In 1964 Johnny was responsible for the unmasking of a police spy who had been responsible for four young Johannesburg "Indians" (one of them related to Mahatma Ghandi) getting a total of 50 years on Robben Island.

The spy, a certain Jardine, prodded them into an act of sabotage, led them into

a trap and then vanished.

Shortly after the trial the spy was sent to Cape Town to lay a similar trap for members of the Coloured Peoples Congress (CPC).

### Set a trap

Johnny picked up Jardine's trail soon after his arrival. Cleverly he laid a trap for Jardine.

Thinking he was in the company of a "sympathiser", Jardine was tricked into admitting his treacherous role in Johannesburg and into revealing his plan for the Cape CPC leaders.

Unknown to him, everything he said was recorded by a member of the press (whose presence was organised by Johnny) and the story was "splashed".

It was the end of that particular spy's career!

### Mission

When we spoke to Johnny, he was still living in District Six. He had devoted his life to working for what he felt was right. His involvement had not made him rich. His life had been a hard one. Even when we visited him he had to worry from day to day as to when he and his family would be thrown out of their humble home in District Six and where they would go.

But one thing was very clear — Johnny never regretted how he had spent his life. His spirit was still strong. If he had his life over again he would do things the same way. He and the people he worked with had a "mission" to carry out — to fight for the liberation of South Africa.



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# Joburg meeting rejects PC proposals

MORE than 1 500 people passed a resolution rejecting the proposals of the President's Council at a meeting in Lenasia in Johannesburg. The meeting was called by the committee who campaigned against the South African Indian Council elections late last year.

This is part of the growing opposition around the country against the President's Council proposals.

Community organisations, student organisations, trade unions and religious bodies have taken a strong stand against the proposals of the President's Council.

The meeting was addressed by the chairperson of the Transvaal Anti-Saib committee, Mr Jassat.

He said that the President's Council is proposing "nothing more than a powerless and ethnic parliament. Its proposals do not meet even the most basic demands of the people."

He said these demands were made

## FCWU wage agreements

THE Food and Canning Workers Union have made significant wage gains for its members after a series of negotiations with the bosses:

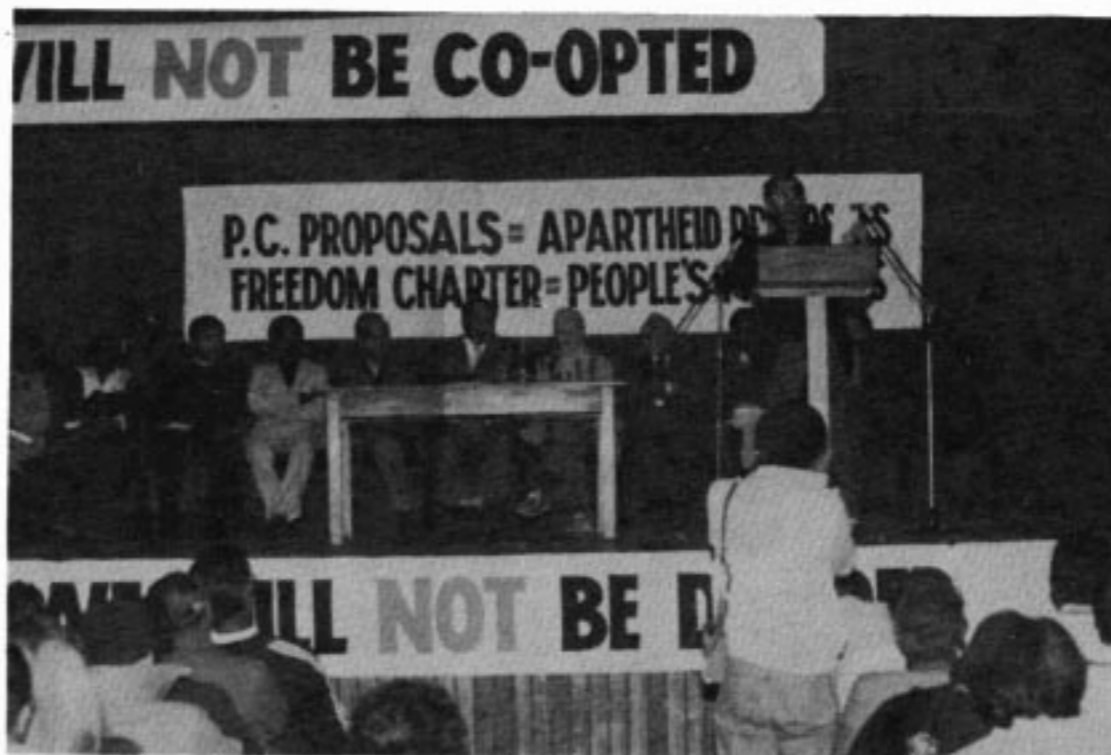
- Irving & Johnson (Woodstock, Paarden Eiland and Hout Bay): A new minimum of R50,14 representing an increase of 19 per cent. (The inflation rate is 16 per cent).
- Epic (Johannesburg), Epol (Maitland, East London and Johannesburg), SA Milling (Cape Town and Johannesburg): R62,00 up to 19 per cent with a further 10 per cent to come into effect at the beginning of next year.
- SASKO (Rondebosch): R60,00 up to 22 per cent.
- Appletiser (Elgin): R61,60 up to 16 per cent.
- Sea Harvest (Saldanha): Across-the-board increase of R8,28 up 19 per cent plus a weekly travel subsidy of R2,22.

known a long time ago by the Freedom Charter which was drawn up in 1955.

"The people's demands for a national convention, for the vote in a single parliament, for decent housing and for the right to live where we please have not been met. We must oppose these policies. The road to free-

dom and justice is not easy".

Rev Cecil Begbie, the vice chairperson of the Witwatersrand Council of Churches, said "The PC is an attempt to fool people. Apartheid is evil through and through. We will not be divided. All people are created equal and should be granted equal freedom.



# Youth workshop builds unity

AFTER serious assessment of the direction of youth, the Mitchell's Plain Youth Movement

(MPYM) decided to have a workshop.

This workshop was held on the 23rd to

25th July.

The aims of the workshop were firstly to create and build unity amongst the various branches of the movement (six branches in all) and secondly, to discuss the problems experienced by the branches.

Many problems such as the lack of proper venues, discipline and lack of creativity were highlighted.

These issues were tackled in group discussions.

Generally, the group discussions were very fruitful because it allowed for maximum participation and a clearer insight as to how to tackle these problems were gained.

Important lessons were learnt and this being the contribution that each member can make.

The importance of carrying out tasks no matter how small was spelt out.

There was general agreement that as youth we have an important role to play in society.

In fact we have a responsibility towards our community. And this being to support the struggles of our parents.

The objective of the workshop was thus achieved because a unity amongst our branches was built and we were able to commit members to the movement.

# Belhar bus protest



Belhar residents have organised in the area to change the bus route. The present route does not serve a large section of the people. The Belhar Civic Association is taking up the issue.



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