

# SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY



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## SPEAK

needs your  
support and  
participation



Placard bearing residents oppose high water and lights tariffs and control over their areas by the Peri-Urban Board.

## Lenasia in boycott of high water and lights

Thousands of Lenasia residents are for the second consecutive month refusing to pay the higher water and electricity rates of the Peri-urban Board.

The boycott action follows an increase in water and electricity rates by the Board, after it took control of four extensions in Lenasia from the Johannesburg City Council.

Residents in extension 8, 9, 10 and 11 firmly refuse to pay the rates. As much as 50 per cent higher than the City Council's.

They are instead continuing to pay the lower City Council rates, and have demanded the four areas be administered by the Council like the rest of Lenasia is.

Last month, hundreds of placard bearing residents demonstrated against the increase at the Peri-Urban Board's local office, and paid the old council rates in full settlement of their accounts.

Numerous house meetings, house visits and mass meetings, organised by the residents associations of the various extensions, were held before the decision to boycott was taken.

Pamphlets, explaining

how to calculate the City Council rates, were also distributed door-to-door.

The board has refused to accept resident's accounts as settled.

Mr J.J. Smit, the regional representative of the board, said the balance of the money owing by residents would be added to their following month's accounts.

He threatened to cut off their water and lights if they did not pay the balance.

Residents have responded with a determination to continue the boycott even if their lights and water are cut.

They demand the board meet a Federation of Residents' Association (F.R.A.) delegation

to discuss the issue.

The F.R.A., an umbrella body to which all the resident's associations are affiliated, has been consistently frustrated in its attempts to meet with the Board.

Mr Smit has said he is willing to talk to residents through their "chosen representatives", the Lenasia Management Committee.

Residents reject the Management Committee.

"Now he is telling us who our chosen representatives are," one resident said.

"Each of our associations were democratically elected at meetings of residents, and each of our associations are affiliated to the F.R.A. We are the F.R.A.," she said.

She also condemned the Board's attempt to form a consultative Committee for the four extensions. "It would operate in the same way as the management committee — powerless, controlled and undemocratic," she said.

The F.R.A. has challenged the Board to attend a public meeting of residents.

The conflict between residents and the Board began in January when it first announced its takeover of the extensions, and immediately demanded a new electricity deposit of R130.

Residents had previously paid the Johannesburg City Council a deposit of R50.

Waves of protest greeted the announcement, and residents complained they could

not afford the increases.

Pressure from the residents eventually forced the Board to reduce the deposit to R60.

Residents vowed to continue fighting against control of their areas by the board.

"Now directly after our struggle and victory in bringing down the deposit, they go and increase the tariffs," another resident said.

Meanwhile residents remain united and continue to meet.

A letter has also been sent to the Administrator of the Transvaal asking him to intervene.

Support for the residents have been expressed by many organisations, including the Soweto Civic Association and the Co-ordinating Residents Action Committee.

## Transvaal UDF is launched

"THIS is a historic occasion which marks an important step in the long march to freedom" said Professor Mohammed as he opened the meeting to launch the Transvaal United Democratic Front.

The meeting held on Saturday 21st May in Johannesburg and attended by more than thirty community, labour, youth, cultural and religious organisations was set up to present a united response to the governments constitutional and reform proposals.

Mr Eric Maloabi, former executive member of the Black People's Convention presented a paper on the need for unity amongst the oppressed.

"There is a urgent need for a mass based broad front which will frustrate and bring to an end the reform proposals and enhance the gains of the oppressed."

"The PC proposals and the Koornhof Bills provide the basis for a United effort with worker organisations playing a dominant role," he said.

The meeting was convened by an interim committee of the UDF which was formed at the Anti-Saic Congress in January. The call for a united front against the government's reform proposals was made at the congress by Dr Allan Boesak president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Mr Thozamile Gqweta, President of the South African Allied Worker's Union.

Amongst the organisations that have pledged their support to the UDF are: Saawu, Gawu, S.A. Mine Worker's Union, Cusa, Cawusa the Committee of Ten, the Transvaal Indian Congress, the Anti PC Committee, Huhudi



Eric Maloabi - need for mass based front

Civic Association of Vryburg, the Womens Federation, Cosas, Azaso, the Witwatersrand Council of Churches and the Islamic Council of South Africa.

Several observers endorsed the formation of the UDF but did not have the mandate from their organisations to pledge their active support.

Prof Mohammed apologised to those democratic organisations who could not be reached or were mistakenly overlooked. He emphasised that the UDF would undertake a ongoing process of consultation and would coopt any organisation that abides by the declaration.

The meeting decided to constitute a co-ordinating council composed of two representatives from each organisation. The co-ordinating council would form a secretariat and whatever other structures required for the functioning of the UDF.

Provincial UDF structures have also been formed in Natal and the Cape. A national UDF structure is to be set up later in the year.

### Inside



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Drought is  
more than  
just no water

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# Council words mislead

THE Johannesburg City Council has been slammed by West Rand coloured townships for making "conflicting claims" to residents and not meeting its responsibilities.

At a meeting held three months ago with the Co-ordinating Residents Action Committee (Crac) to discuss rent and service charge increases, Mr Thuis Wilsnach, the City council's housing director, said:

- the council would reassess on merit the rental of any resident, and reduce it if showed it could not be paid.
- the council would investigate Crac's claim that residents are being charged unequal amounts in service charges.
- the council would provide Crac with a break-down of how service charges are calculated.

The meeting, which came after the council

threatened residents with eviction if they did not pay the increases, was an important breakthrough for residents.

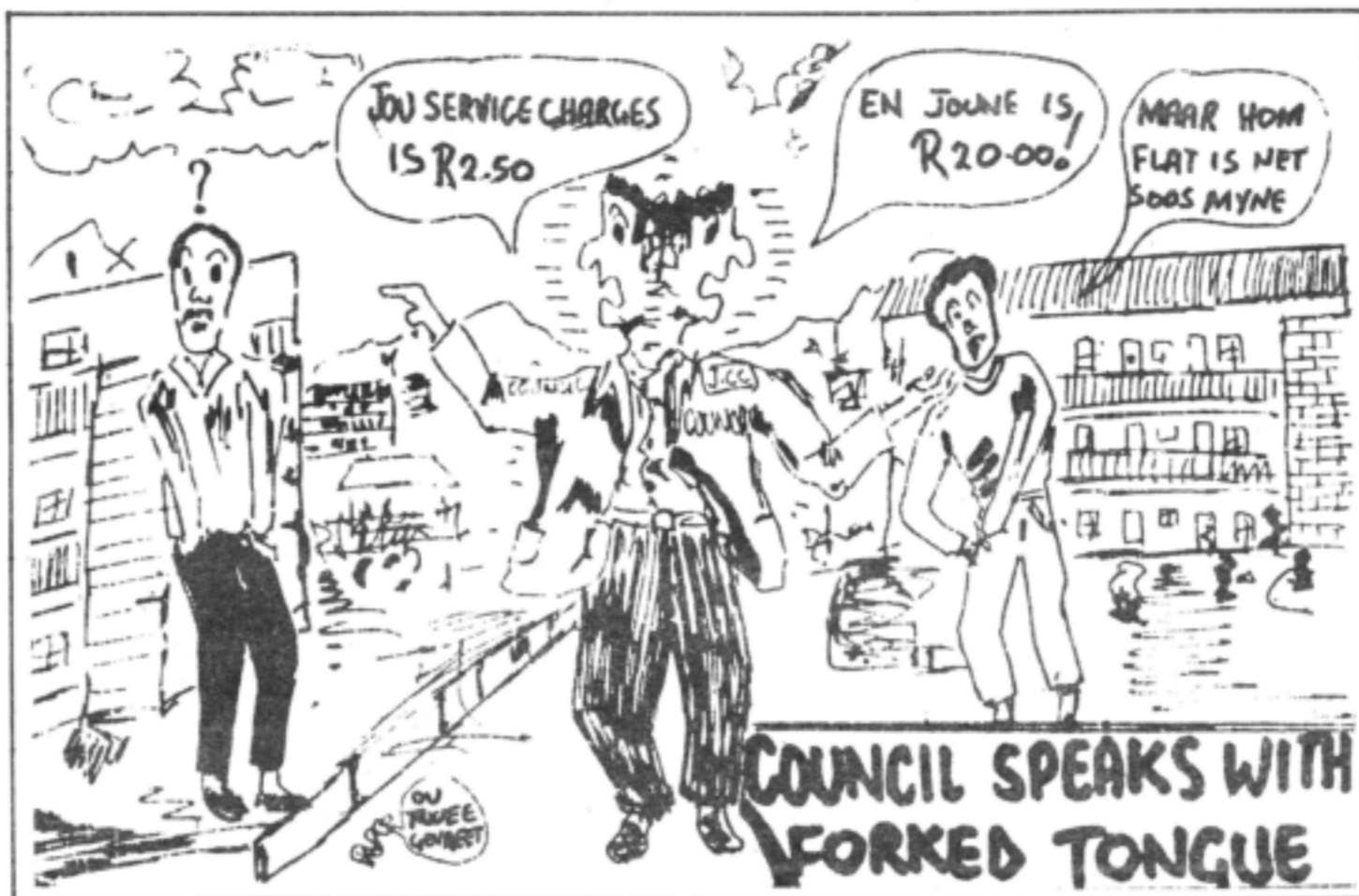
"Our united determination is the only way to get the council to recognise our grievances and strip away their insensitivity," a spokesperson for Crac said.

"We just simply cannot afford these increases."

Crac representative said widespread unemployment and the high cost of basic essentials made it difficult for residents to pay any increases.

Service charge increases they said, were not justified when council homes and flats suffer from poor facilities, improper maintenance and general negligence.

"After much struggle, the council has given us certain limited undertakings. We intend to see that they're met," the spokesperson said.



Testing the council on its promise to reduce the rents of people who show they cannot afford it, Crac explained the council's concession to residents through house visits in Westbury and Eldorado Park.

In Westbury, the Westbury Residents Action Committee (Wrac) was assisted by the Federation of Residents Association of Lenasia (F.R.A.) and the Eldorado Park Action Committee.

Residents from three extensions in Westbury, decided to go together on one day to have their rents re-assessed at the local rent office.

Officials at the office said Mr Wilsnach had not given them power to reduce rentals, but gave residents letters asking the welfare for financial assistance.

"These letters show that the council accepts we cannot afford their rents," one resident said.

"Yet they are not prepared to bring the rents down," she added.

Council officials also revealed that everyone in Westbury had to pay a service charge of R2.50.

Service charges is a charge for services like sewerage and rubbish removal, and makes up part of the rent account.

"Those residents paying more than R2.50 are in fact paying a rent increase," the spokesperson for Crac said.

He said it was important for residents to understand that they might by paying a rent increase they should not be paying.

"According to the letters the council sent us, all rent increases have been postponed to July."

In Eldorado Park, residents were told service charges are calculated as a percentage of rent.

"This is not what was said to residents of Westbury. It also conflicts with what we were told at the meeting with the city council — that service charges are calculated according to the size and type of flat or house," the spokesperson pointed out.

"If service charges are a percentage of rent, and rent is worked out

according to income, then residents are paying service charges based on their income," he explained.

"Different incomes mean different service charges. How can people living in the same block of flats for example, pay different amounts in service charges when the services provided are the same for everyone," he asked.

"To date they have still not given us a breakdown of service charges as promised by Wilsnach."

The spokesperson also condemned the attitude of Coloured Management Committee (CMC) members who sat in on the meeting with the city council.

He said a Crac delegate who could not afford the rent increases was told by a CMC member to live in a cheaper house or to ask her boss to pay her less.

and the establishment of SRC's could have been implemented without any difficulty, but for the type of struggle we had to wage against repressive measures by the government."

"This kind of action served as a demoralising factor for the membership of the Cosas branch," he said.

The branch however did not cease to exist.

The spokesperson said the annual congress of the organisation

served as a "stimulating occasion".

"The launching of an Education Charter campaign helped us to develop a programme to efficiently organise students on educational matters and activities."

He said Cosas was overcoming its obstacles.

"A way seems to have been paved for the consolidation and better operation of the organisation."

# Bitter struggle heralds victory

TWENTY two retrenched garment workers were recently successful in their fight for reinstatement at Young Clothing Manufacturers in Johannesburg.

The workers, some who had over 25 years service with the company, were retrenched while the company continued to hire other workers.

Daily lunch time meetings of the workers in a central Johannesburg park decided the action of the company constituted an unfair labour practice.

They agreed to approach their union, the Tucsa-affiliated Garment Workers Union, because the company would only talk to workers through the union.

The union has a closed shop agreement with the company which means every person employed by the company has to become a member of the union.

"Whether you like it or not," one worker said.

Union members have been dissatisfied with their union for a long time.

"The union does not really consult and represent us," the worker said.

Workers insisted the union abide by certain conditions when it negotiated with the company.

These were:

- the union should consult with the affected workers,
- worker representatives should be present at all union consultations with lawyers,
- worker representatives be involved during negotiations with the company.

Subsequent negotiations with the company were successful and all the workers were reinstated.

"For the first time, we were involved in meeting and deciding our own futures", another worker commented.

"Not only were we taking a stand against recession and the bosses, but also against the union."

"This made the victory all the more difficult, but sweeter," she said.

crease and have remained united. Many general meetings have been held and the issue is being constantly discussed.

The workers hope that their unity and determination will beat management's intransigence.

# Cosas runs tuition class

THE Soweto branch of the Congress of South African students (Cosas), a non-racial organisation for school students, is organising extra-tuition classes at the Glyn Thomas Wits University Residence over weekends.

The classes, aimed at high school students who have difficulty with their school work, is being run with the help of university students. Assistance is also expected from the Teachers Ac-

tion Committee, the Rand College and the Soweto Training College.

The activity is part of a drive to popularise the aims and objectives of Cosas and provide a programme for students with an emphasis on educational issues.

Cosas in its four year history, has suffered many setbacks through continuous harassment and detention of leading members by the police.

"The actual function-



Tshediso: Transvaal Cosas Organiser

ing and programmes of our branch have been affected," a spokesperson for the Soweto branch

said. "Membership drives, recognition of the organisation in schools

# Hard line taken on strike

350 workers went on strike at Premier Paper Mills in April. They were protesting against selective wage increases and managements refusal to negotiate with their union, the Paper, Wood and Allied Workers Union. The workers struck after a long battle with their bosses over wages.

The workers were not only demanding an increase. They also wanted the bosses to close the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers.

The bosses argued they could not give large wage increases because

of the recession. The union pointed out that the company was continuing to make profits.

Management also tried to divide the workers by promising increases to some workers only, the workers said.

When the workers went on strike, management threatened to dismiss the workers if they did not return to work.

The workers refused to go back until management agreed to increase all wages by 40 cents per hour.

The union threatened to take management to the industrial court if the striking workers were

dismissed.

The following day, management agreed for the first time to negotiate wage increase with worker representatives. However they cancelled their recognition agreement with the union.

Angry workers responded. "We can not go back to work without our union."

The next morning police with dogs greeted the workers at the factory gates.

Workers also noticed their clock cards were missing, implying they were to be fired.

While the majority of workers wished to con-

tinue the strike, shop stewards felt the unity of the workers should be maintained by returning together.

Some workers, especially contract workers who are in a vulnerable position, began to feel uneasy about continuing the strike.

They returned to work after management agreed no one would be victimised because of the strike.

Management also promised a 20 cents per hour pay increase, which workers accepted as a compromise. Their initial demand had been 40 cents.

However once the workers returned, management changed its tune. They were not prepared to concede to the workers demands and refused to negotiate with the union. Instead they proposed new elections be held to elect officials to a workers representative committee.

The workers refused to participate in the elections. They said they already had democratically elected shop stewards from the union.

Management went ahead and appointed all the shop stewards, as elected unopposed to a workers representative

committee.

The workers refused to accept this action. Their union threatened management with legal action.

Management gave in and agreed to negotiate with the shop stewards and the union. They also agreed to uphold the recognition agreement.

But management is now only prepared to give the workers a 10 cents per hour increase.

Workers feel they were tricked in to returning to work and that management has gone back on its word.

Workers continue to demand a 20 cents in-

# Body formed to fight P.C.

MORE than 500 people packed Dorcas Creche in Western Township to form the Anti PC Committee on Sunday 8th May.

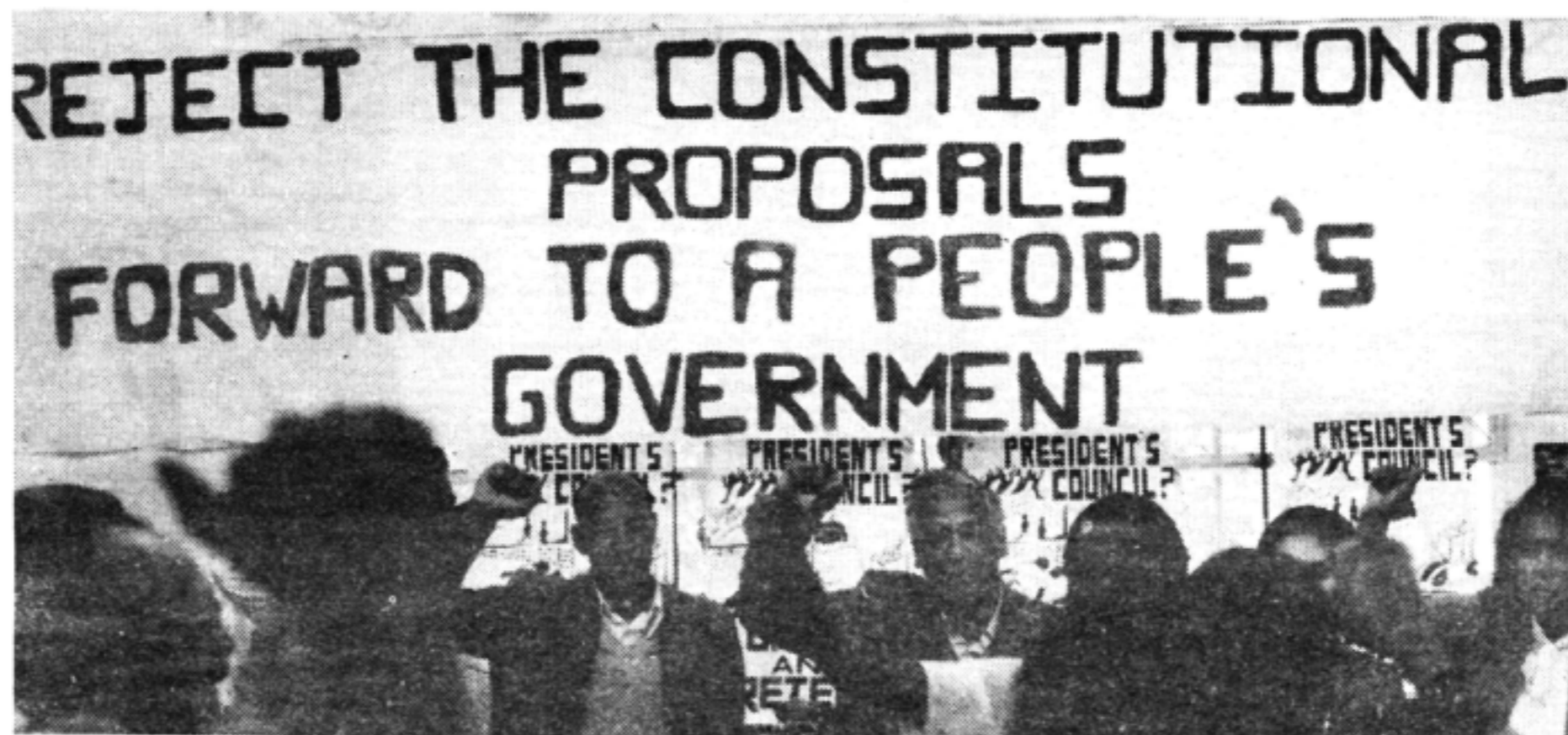
The committee has been formed to oppose the government's constitutional proposals.

Professor Ismail Mohammed received a standing ovation when he was unanimously elected chairperson of the new organisation.

Professor Mohammed slated the government's attempt to divide the people.

"The reform strategy is nothing but the old strategy of divide and rule. It is an attempt to make sections of the Indian and Coloured people junior partners in apartheid" he said.

"Any attempts at reform must be measured against the increasing oppression of those who are paid measly wages, who are unemployed, who are bulldozed out of their shacks and are



The national anthem, Nkosi Sikeleli iAfrika, is sung at the close of the meeting which formed the Transvaal Anti-P.C. Committee.

dumped in the homelands".

Attacking the Labour Party for its decision to participate in the government's new Constitutional Proposals Prof Mohammed said

"The voice that spoke at Eshowe is not the voice of the oppressed and struggling people."

The speeches were interspersed with singing and chanting from the excited crowd.

Messages of support were read from organisations such as the TIC, the NIC and Cusa amongst others.

The Reverend Frank Chikane who was the guest speaker emphasised the need to oppose the PC proposals.

"Outwardly the reform proposals appear righteous but in essence they are nakedly racist".

"The proposals would declare African people non citizens in the land of their birth" he said.

Mrs Ellen Lambert and Mr George Du Plessis both prominent community leaders in Reiger Park were elected as vice chairpersons. Mr

Bill Jardine a prominent sports administrator, from Eldorado Park was elected as Treasurer. Also on the committee are Mr Nasim Pahad — a executive member of the TIC and Mr Isaac Mogase, Chairperson of the Soweto Civic Association.

The meeting unanimously accepted a declaration outlining the broad objectives and guidelines within which the committee would function.

The meeting also passed a resolution committing the organisation to the envisaged UDF.

The Anti PC committee has already established working committees in the different areas. It intends convening a mass meeting in the near future.

"The formation of the Anti PC committee is another step in the direction of opposing the governments reform proposals" said Professor Mohammed.

## Reiger Park to suffer more

RECENT rent hikes in Reiger Park are certain to bring increased hardship to a community already desperate to make ends meet.

Residents have greeted with shock and disbelief the Witwatersrand Council's decision to raise rents.

Mrs Diana Kok, who shares a flat with her husband, said the 'heartlessness' of the town council was 'beyond her understanding'.

She is to pay up to R30 more for her three-roomed flat.

"My husband is unemployed and I'm off work on confinement. I really do not know how we are going to survive," she said.

Many residents are either without jobs, or working only our days a week with no overtime.

Hardest hit is the 'single quarters' — a depressed area of one-roomed houses. Residents are expected to pay up to R25 for the room.

One resident accused the council of 'robbing us of what little hard-earned money we might have.'

Mr George du Plessis, secretary of the Reiger Park Tenants and Ratepayers Association, said: "With wages remaining the same and the price of basic commodities going up all the time, people are feeling helpless and frustrated."

"We have called on the authorities to scrap the rent increases or to defer it at least. Yet they remain intransigent."

At meetings organised by the Association, residents expressed anger at

the increases, calling it 'unfair' and 'immoral'.

"How can we allow this?" asked one resident, Mr Berta Goliath.

Another resident said it was only the people themselves who could do anything about their problems.

"We are reminded of the successful Rand Supreme Court interdict which stopped the town council from increasing rents in 1981."

"That action was successful because we united and supported it. We cannot rely on anyone else. Especially the management committee. They're hopeless. They must resign," she said.

The chairperson of the Association, Mrs Ellen Lambert, urged residents to meet regularly to discuss the rent problem and decide on what action to take.

She said the action decided on had to enjoy the widest possible support in the community.

Support for the people of Reiger Park has been expressed by communities from as far as Lenasia and Eldorado Park.



## High rent for pre-fabs

THE 50 Soweto families who were moved into pre-fab units at Chicken Farm, Kliptown soon after the West Rand Administration Board (Wrab) broke down their shacks, have now been asked to pay a high rental for the units.

The families, and others moved to Chicken Farm in similar

circumstances 2 years ago, are to pay R40 for the single-roomed zinc structures.

"I cannot see the sense of this," Rev. Cecil Begbie, Vice-president of the Witwatersrand Council of Churches said.

"They have to pay R40 for a small, square room which has no

floor. People in proper homes are not paying this kind of rent."

He said his council would take up the issue with Wrab.

The Witwatersrand Council of Churches played a leading role in seeking alternative shelter for the Soweto families after they were left homeless.

Tents hired by the

council offered immediate relief to some families, but Wrab stopped a further 17 tents being pitched by cordoning off the area with police.

A public outcry and representation by the council, forced Wrab to accommodate the families at Chicken Farm until homes are provided.

"When we got involved, people were homeless and living under plastic covers," Rev. Begbie said.

"There are no grounds for anyone to remove shelter without providing alternative shelter."

"The action was inhuman, immoral and unchristian," he said.

The families, most of whom were born in Johannesburg and have legal rights to live in an urban area, put up shacks after years of searching for homes.

Some applied for homes as far back as 1973. It is believed the housing backlog for Soweto runs from 1969.

"There is a housing shortage and people will put up shelter," Rev. Begbie said.

Condemning the government's homelands policy, he said: "Regardless of whether legal or illegal, everybody has a right to live in South Africa."

He appealed for warm clothing, blankets and foodstuff for the families at Chicken Farm, more than half of whom are children.

"With winter in, it adds to the inhumanity of the whole thing."

Rev. Begbie said money was also needed to help pay for the hire of the tents, although the South African Council of Churches' Asengeni fund has contributed.

## 'Operation Winter' - some warmth

THE cold winter months has fast dawned upon us, and for most people in South Africa

this means icy days and nights in badly built houses; makeshift shelters and cold

factories. Once again it is time for BSM's annual project — "Operation Winter". This year, as-

sisted by the Benoni Youth League (BYL), is the fourth year in which members go around to every home in Actonville and collect all the clothing and blankets they can. People always give generously.

"One cannot help wondering why a project of this nature is necessary when we live in

such a wealthy country." BSM president Vincent Francis asked.

"We can clearly see that the majority are forced to live under conditions of poverty and starvation.

"The bit of relief that "Operation Winter" provides is welcomed by people, but it is not

enough because of the large number of problems that people experience daily."

Anyone in need of clothes blankets or wishing to donate, write to:

Benoni Student Movement  
P.O. Box 5219  
Benoni South  
1502

THE Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa) is investigating legal action against the Star after it refused to reinstate more than 200 workers who went on strike in March.

The workers downed tools in solidarity with another worker, Mr Oupa Msimango, after he had an argument with a supervisor.

The workers, all members of Mwasa, said they struck because Mr Msi-

mango was not given a hearing before he was fired.

The Star's management subsequently agreed to suspend Mr Msimango's dismissal pending an investigation.

The shop stewards rejected this as they felt the supervisor, a mem-

ber of the management-favoured South African Typographical Union (Satu), was also to blame and should be suspended too during the investigation.

The Star's management refused, which led to the 209 workers downing tools. Management warned them that

they were "dismissing themselves" by refusing to work.

In an attempt to discuss the issue Mwasa officials met management, but no agreement was reached.

The Star issued a statement refusing to reinstate or re-employ any of the workers.

Mwasa warned that management's attitude threatened future relations between them, and said it could lead to widespread labour unrest in the newspaper industry throughout the country.

"The Argus and SAAN managements have decided to gene-

ralise the dispute and to attack Mwasa as a whole. Mwasa is aware that the decision not to reconsider the dismissals were taken at a level above The Star management," it said in a statement.

Mwasa also attacked The Star for the callous manner in which its decision was made and said it found it "intolerable and extremely provocative". It said management had treated Mwasa with contempt.

## Ccawusa strength growing day by day

MORE and more companies are recognising the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Ccawusa) as a result of worker demands in the retail trade.

Since November last year seven more companies have recognised the union.

Strikes at O.K. Bazaars, Edgars, Woolworths and C.N.A. resulted in wage increases and negotiations for recognition agreements. The first round of talks for recognition agreements have recently been held with Checkers, Macro, the Foshini Group, Pick 'n Pay, 3M S.A. and Gallo.

Ccawusa reports progress in a number of other companies. The union is working towards recognition at Metro, Game, Grand Ultra Bazaar, Southern Sun Hotels, Holiday Inns and Safeguard. Recognition by Truworths and Top Centre should follow once the Woolworths agreement is finalised. In Natal the Beares group has approached the union after the long and bitter game strike.

Through their union, workers are fighting for their rights. This has resulted in the reinstatement of many fired workers, wage increases, and the halting of retrenchments.

Workers in much of the retail trade are now having their shop stewards and union formally recognised, and the membership and strength of Ccawusa is growing every day.

## New demands for Grassroots

CLOSE to 500 people attended the opening of the third annual general meeting of the Cape community newspaper Grassroots early this year.

Grassroots, launched in 1980, has become recognised as the most established community newspaper in the country.

The outgoing chairperson of Grassroots, Mr Essa Moosa, said in his address he was proud to be associated with the newspaper

which had grown in size and influence during the past three years.

"Today it occupies a significant position in the community and fulfils an important role as an alternative paper."

"Grassroots aim was always to be the tool of people's organisation," he said.

Mr Moosa warned against "the new onslaughts" being made on the community by the government. "The constitutional proposals pose new challenges to

the community. Grassroots faces similar challenges and responsibilities," he said.

This responsibility was explained by guest speaker Mr Abdullah Omar. He said the media of the ruling class was giving no coverage to the people's rejection of the President's Council proposals and the Bantustans.

"There is a responsibility to express the will of the people. It is our duty to ensure that the alternative media is kept alive. We must resist the lies and propoganda," he said.

The AGM discussed the role of Grassroots in this light. It was agreed that Grassroots should continue to articulate the demands of the oppressed.

A resolution was passed which said Grassroots should become more educative to assist people in fully understanding their oppression and exploitation.

It was unanimously agreed that Grassroots will remain a mass-based popular newspaper which is the pro-



Grassroots' organiser Leila Patel addressing a session at the AGM

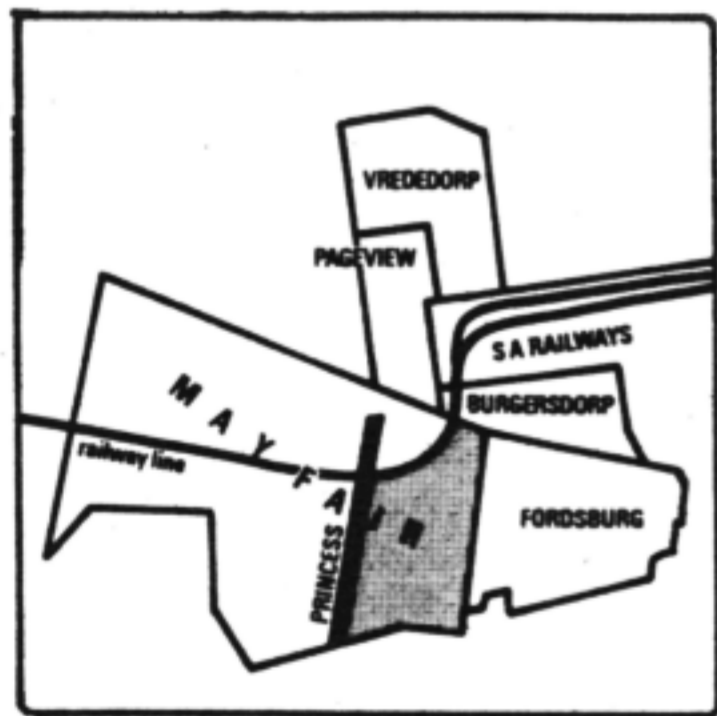
duct of mass work. It will therefore continue to be guided in its policy by community organisations.

Grassroots now has six full-time people on its staff. Last year it published 10 editions, and reached a record

distribution of 26 000.

Grassroots has undoubtedly come a long way, and is still continuing to make great strides

## Mayfair-deep reservations



MAYFAIR tenants have deep reservations about the Group Areas Board's investigation into reproclaiming part of Mayfair as an Indian Group Area.

The area concerned is south of the railway line and east of Princess street.

"We won't be able to afford the high prices of houses or the high rents," one tenant said, referring to property speculators who are already buying properties at prices above their value.

"We fought the cruel Group Areas Act in the courts and in public forums, and were successful to the extent that we gaised temporary relief from eviction."

"Must we now accept

that this struggle of working people for decent houses will only benefit the rich," she said.

Mr Cassim Saloojee, chairperson of Actstop, said the "crux" of the problem is the Group Areas Act.

"It is ironic," he said "that in the same breath as Pen Kotze made his announcement, he threatened action against others living illegally in 'white' areas."

"What is to happen to the coloured people who have strongly resisted eviction in the past because they have no homes and have to live in these areas."

He said the government was "trying to sell the President's Council to the Indian people through measly concession like this."

## Benoni youth in anti-litter drive

AN anti-litter campaign, organised by the recently formed Benoni Youth League, proved a success in mobilising young people and stimulating a community

awareness of the environment.

The campaign involved the distribution of anti-litter pamphlets and stickers and a door to door survey by mem-

bers of the Youth League. They also organised a procession through the streets of Actonville.

The survey found the residents were unhappy with the role played by the Benoni Town Council in keeping the township clean. Most streets did not have litter bins, while in council flats, tenants complained only two bins were provided for up to ten apartments.

Overcrowding and slum like conditions made the litter problem even worse, tenants said.

The league has sent letters to the town council urging them to meet the residents demands for a clean environment



### The Lyric

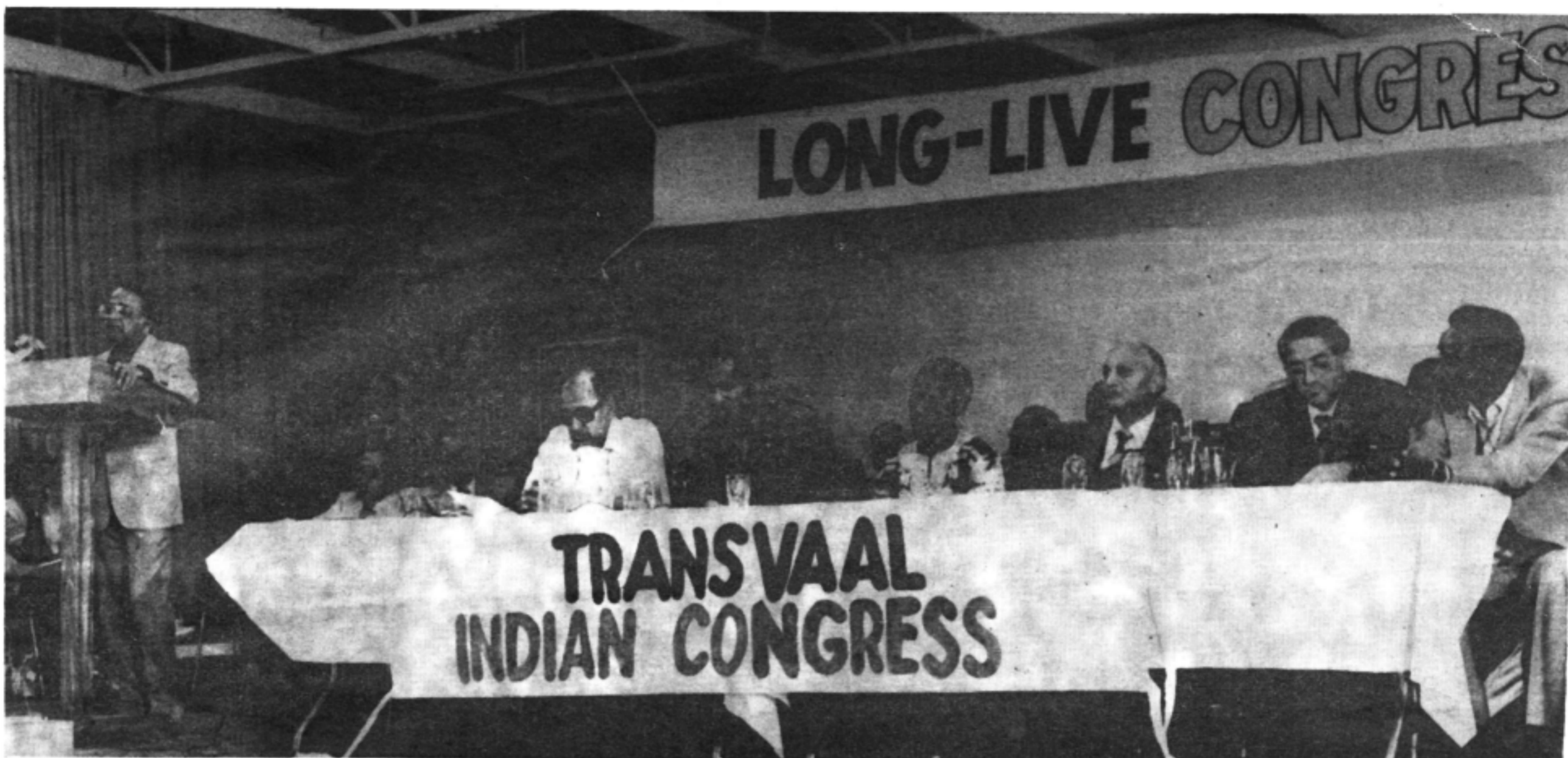
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*Your Favorite Theatre!*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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- ★ motion pictures: notable for their
- ★ good taste, beauty and perfect
- ★ air-conditioning.
- ★ for its relaxing rubber foam seating.
- ★ 70m.m projection, stereophonic sound
- ★ and the last word in beauty
- ★ comfort and style.



From left to right: Dr Essop Jassat, Dr Ismail Cachalia, Advocate Zac Yacoob, Dr Nthato Motlana, Mr Ramlal Bhoolia, Dr R.A.M. Saloojee, Mr Samson Ndou.

THE Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) was relaunched with strong support by a non-racial crowd of 1500 in Lenasia on May Day.

Songs and slogans shook the packed hall as Dr Essop Jassat, chairperson of the Transvaal Anti-Saic Committee (Tasc), opened the meeting and welcomed prominent veterans in the struggle for change in South Africa.

Among them were recently released political prisoners Laloo Chiba, Prema Naidoo, Shirish Nanabhai and Trevor Lakota; Womens' Federation leaders Helen, Joseph and Francis Baard, and the entire executive of the Natal Indian Congress.

## Massive support for TIC revival

Over 20 community, student, youth, political and trade union organisations sent messages of support to the meeting.

The decision to revive the TIC was made at the Tasc congress in January this year. Over 500 delegates to the congress called for its revival.

The TIC, a signatory to the Freedom Charter

and member of the Congress Alliance in the 1950's, played a major role in building the unity of the oppressed.

It was never banned, but remained inactive for 20 years after its leadership was banned, imprisoned and exiled.

Tribute was payed to past TIC leaders such as Yusuf Dadoo and Monty Naicker by guest

speaker Dr Motlana of the Soweto Committee of Ten.

He said he could not question the sincerity of the decision to revive the TIC.

"If the TIC can bring to the national liberation movement a well organised and motivated group, then it will have contributed to the strug-

gle," he said.

The other guest speaker, Advocate Zac Yacoob of the Natal Indian Congress, called for a programme of action for change in South Africa, which would encourage maximum participation by the majority of South Africans.

"There is a place for all in our struggle for a

democratic future," he said.

"Indians, coloureds, Africans, workers, businessmen, students and professionals do not participate in the struggle alone but act together in a dynamic and united way to create something new."

The Freedom Charter, he said, established this national democratic

character of the struggle and provided the framework for flexible tactics and strategy.

With a standing ovation, the meeting unanimously elected Dr Jassat as President of TIC.

Mr Ramlal Bhoolia, the son of Group Areas resistor Nana Sita, was elected as chairperson of the executive.

Nine Vice Presidents, two secretaries, two treasurers and a 20 member congress council was also elected.

The TIC structure would be complete with the establishment of area branches.

Membership of the TIC is open to all residents of the Transvaal who subscribe to its aims and objects.

## Women organise

A MOTHER'S struggle to get her 10 year old child admitted to school because he did not have a birth certificate, has resulted in the formation of a women's group in Western.

A spokesperson for the group said it was formed 'for the sake of our children'.

'Mainly to see to those who have no birth certificates so that they can go to school,' she said.

The formation of the group was encouraged by the case of a mother, Mrs C.

Mrs C, after much frustration trying to get her child admitted to school, eventually went to

her community organisation, the Westbury Residents Action Committee (Wrac) for help.

Together with a Wrac member, she approached the principal of a local school and was overjoyed when her child was admitted to school that very same day.

For Wrac this was a reminder of the plight of many others in the township faced with the same problem.

'We felt these and other problems could best be handled by a women's group such as ours,' the spokesperson said.

'In our society we women are oppressed as workers, as black people

our townships. Presently our children and we as parents are blamed, but it is slum conditions, unemployment, and poor living standards which is to blame.'

'So just as it is necessary for all residents to unite under Wrac and fight for decent houses and low rents, so is it necessary for women to get together and provide strength for one another.'

Explaining the relationship between Wrac and the women's group, the spokesperson said they would work closely.

'We will support and help build Wrac so that it

becomes a strong body, and as women.'

'We get the lowest paid jobs, are the last to be hired and the first to be fired.'

'We also carry a responsibility at home. We must see that the rent is paid on time, that there is food in the house and that the children go to school.'

'So we aim to unite women to fight for a better society. Not just where the rights of women will be upheld, but where all other oppressive conditions won't exist,' she said.

'Take for example a thing like gang wars which is so widespread in

and Wrac will help strengthen the women's group,' she said.

The group intends initiating many other activities, the first of which is a creche, and has called on both men and women for support.

'We will be successful only if the women in the township play an active role by joining the group, and if the men give their total support,' the spokesperson stressed.

Any woman from Western/Westbury and the surrounding townships who wants to know more about the women's group can contact:

- Mrs Fontuin — 220 Pedestrian Court
- Mrs Daniels — 1680 Moguerane Street, Tel:275320
- Mrs Paulson at 6730057

'When the deeds were signed, home owners thought they had to pay 9 percent interest and not 14 percent as the council seems to be asking for.'

'The insurance policy is payment for a service which does not exist,' he said.

'The deed of sale absolves the council from its maintenance responsibility and places it on the back of residents.'

He said many of the houses were badly built

## Workers unite against detentions

THE constant detention of worker leaders has initiated the formation of a United Against Detention Committee (UADC) by trade unions in the Transvaal.

The committee, formed soon after the detention of six Saawu and Gawu unionists by Ciskei security police, aims to publicise the plight of detainees and provide support for their

families.

Up to 100 representatives from various organisations, including community, student and detainee support organisations, participated in the committees initial meetings and gave their full support to the UADC.

'The issue of detention compels us to resist as one united force,' a spokesperson said.

and are now developing cracks in the walls.

Advisors called in by the Action Committee say the cracks may be a result of 'differential settlement of ground or foundation'.

Both these features are unacceptable according to municipal by-laws.

'How can we be expected to pay inflated prices when the council does not guarantee us houses that comply with the requirements laid down by their own ground experts?' asked the spokesperson from the Action Committee.

These and other problems are being monitored by the Action Committee.

Recently, a resident's

driveway caved in and revealed a mine shaft which the planners were apparently 'unaware of'.

Four other houses which are built directly over a mine shaft have since been discovered.

The Action Committee says the City Council is obliged to meet with residents.

'Their suggestion that we work with the Coloured Management Committee is as toothless as the management committee.'

'The council drew up the deed of sale and they have a responsibility to negotiate with us.'

Legal action against the city council is also being considered by residents.

RIVERLEA residents are planning further action to get the Johannesburg City Council to negotiate over the conditions under which council homes are for sale.

Repeated attempts by residents to discuss their grievances directly with the council have been unsuccessful.

The council refuses to meet residents because a previous proposal put forward by residents is still being studied by their

## Residents oppose terms of sale on homes

'legal department'.

It is now three months since an alternative deed of sale drawn up by residents themselves was presented to the council.

Residents have demanded the city council's deed of sale be declared invalid as they were forced to sign it under pressure.

Residents allege they were threatened with eviction by the council's housing director, Mr Thuis Wilsnach, if they did not buy their homes.

'We did not have time to study the deeds of sale and were unaware of some of the implications,' one resident said.

A spokesperson for the

Riverlea Extension 2 Action Committee, the organisation which represents residents of the area, said the deeds of sale contain 'serious misrepresentations' about the purchase price of homes, the rate of interest, the monthly installment, and the council's 'insurance policy'.

# SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

## Unity of the people

WE have learned what unity means and just how important it really is through our struggles against the housing shortage, high rents or high bus fares.

We have learned to overcome our helplessness after realizing that countless visits on our own to Armadale House or the West Rand Administration Board produces no result.

We learn that only through standing together with everyone else who has the same problem and taking joint action are we able to do something about our problems.

Today, the lesson of unity we are learning and building, is being seriously threatened.

It is being threatened by something we cannot very easily see or feel. Not like the rent increases or the breaking down of our shacks.

It is something which at the moment is taking place away from us, in Parliament.

It is the government's President's Council proposals and Piet Koornhof's influx control bills.

These proposals and bills are an attempt to divide us, by giving Indian and coloured people a little say in Parliament and keeping the African people out in the Bantustans.

They are an attempt to protect white control over the running of this country.

And for as long as all South Africans have no full say in the running of this country, then for so long will we have to struggle against high rent, high food and transport costs, the Group Areas, unemployment and unequal education.

We want a truly democratic South Africa. A South Africa in which we will participate and decide over our own lives.

To achieve this democratic South Africa, we must unite against the government's attempts to divide and further control us.

We have to unite in the same way as we have been uniting around our day to day problems.

This unity is a greater unity. It is a unity of the people, and needs to be consciously and actively worked for.

It is a unity of Indians, coloureds and Africans; of workers, students and communities; of rural and urban dwellers.

The last month has seen democratic organisations come together and new ones formed. These are all efforts to work towards this unity.

The Transvaal Indian Congress, the Transvaal Anti-PC committee and the Transvaal United Democratic Front have been formed. All the democratic Trade Unions in this country came together to discuss Trade Union unity.

All these efforts need to be actively supported if we are to achieve the democratic South Africa we want.



## No postal service in Ext 10

WE the residents of Extension 10 Lenasia, show great concern over the lack of postal and telephonic services in the area.

Extension 10 is about 8 km away from the nearest post office and public telephone. There is no public transport to the post office or to the

Speak  
Speak In  
P.O. Box 1677  
Excom  
Johannesburg  
2023

shopping centres. As a result people are forced to pay high taxi fares in order to collect their mail from the post office. Further, it is disheartening to note that in the case of a fire or health emergency, the public telephone is 8 km

away.

Just a few months ago, a house in the area burned down. The calling of a fire brigade was seriously delayed because the public telephone is so far away.

In the light of these problems we face, what plans do the authorities have regarding a permanent postal service. We understand that in order to have a postal service, residents must comply with the requirement of displaying post boxes

together with the house numbers.

We would gladly meet this requirement if the authorities give a definite assurance that a postal service will be installed.

We also want the authorities to erect public telephones in the area so that contact with emergency services is made much more convenient.

J. Magan  
Lenasia

## Let the dead rest in peace

I was completely horrified and upset when I read a notice in a commercial newspaper for the exhumation of the mortal remains of bodies in graves in the Liefont Cemetery.

We Blacks, like many whites, believe that the dead should not be disturbed, especially when the cemetery was used

as recently as 1975. An issue like this is capable of stirring people to real anger and can touch a sensitive nerve of the Black people.

The intention to exhume is insensitive and inhumane. The graves must be fenced in and left alone.

G.K. Du Plessis  
Reiger Park

## Crossword pleases

Dear SPEAK,

As a lazy reader I decided to fill in the crossword rather than labour through the articles. Imagine my surprise when I found that I couldn't do the crossword without reading the paper. Great stuff! Educated and entertained in one. Lots of success for future crosswords (and articles I suppose).

Marion  
Johannesburg



## Wrac women plan creche

THE women's group of the Westbury Residents Action Committee is planning a creche for working mothers from the township.



Children eagerly watch a magic show organised by the Actonville Residents Action Committee (Arac). Arac held a 'colouring in' competition in which nearly 250 children took part. The results were announced on the same day as the magic show.

The group has already approached the community worker of the child welfare office, and is optimistic they would be able to use the old St. Barnabas College premises in Ballenden street.

A member of the women's group said many working parents have difficulty with the care of their children during the day.

"Parents cannot afford to pay the fees for the creches that do exist," she said.

The women's group will try to cater for most children in the township.

## Vandalism hits RSM

VANDALS who sawed through the net poles and fencing of a Roshnee tennis court, were unsuccessful in their attempt to stop a recent tennis tournament organised by the Roshnee Students Movement (RSM).

A spokesperson for RSM said it was "desperate vandalism by elements who on the eve of the tournament were out to disrupt the activities of democratic organisations".

The damage was urgently repaired however, and the tournament went ahead drawing an enthusiastic response from the community.

## Saawu forms workers' committee

AN election of a five person workers committee was held at an Elandsfontein construction factory. Conforce, in mid-April.

In the presence of management and union officials from Saawu, 105 workers voted

unanimously for the committee, and mandated it to negotiate immediately with management on working conditions.

## Youth group launched

A youth group has been launched in the Bosmont-Newclare area.

Social gatherings, sports tournaments, drama work shops and educational activities are planned for young people in the area.

To find out more about the youth group contact:

Rashid (27-1845),  
Alison (673-5542),  
Alwyn (27-1422) or  
Elaine (673-3826).

## Azaso regional structure formed

MORE than 100 delegates from Turfloop, Medunsa and Wits met to form a Transvaal Regional structure of Azaso on the 14th and 15th May. The regional structure will facilitate co-ordination between different campuses in the Transvaal. It will also play an important role in promoting the campaign around the education charter.

# SUBSCRIBE

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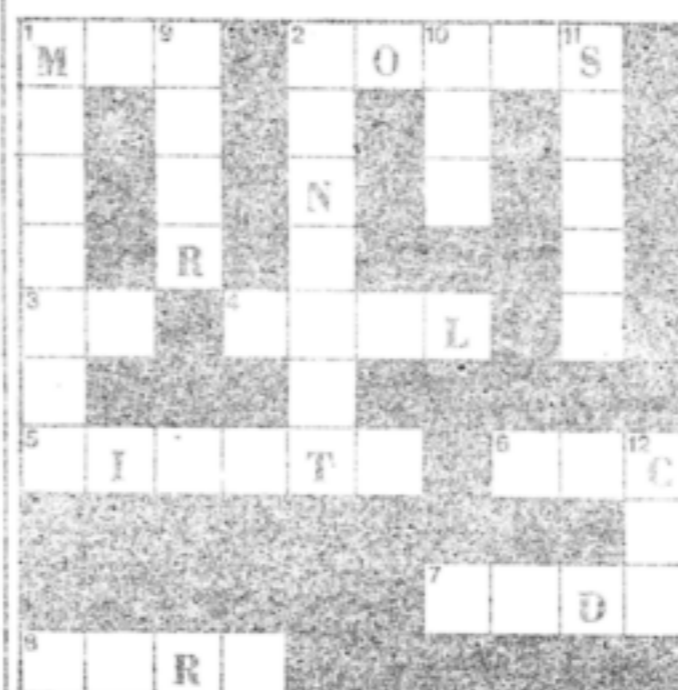
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### YEARLY RATES BY DONATION

	SOUTH AFRICA	AFRICA & OVERSEAS
Individual	R 5.00	R 10.00
Institution	R 10.00	R 20.00

## Speak Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

- Labour Day is celebrated on the 1st of ....
- A non-racial student organisation.
- Initials of a woman Vice-President of the TIC.
- .... Mkhize, a community leader recently shot dead.
- All shall enjoy equal ....
- A leading non-racial democratic organisation in Natal.
- Abbreviation for a detentions committee formed by trade unions recently.
- LVL and BSM are both presently involved with operation winter .... campaign.

### DOWN

- .... tenants presently protesting against the Group Areas Act.
- Newsletter of Lenasia Youth League.
- AGNi's are held once a ....
- Abbreviation for community organisation in Soweto.
- Your community newspaper.
- Government-created puppet bodies.

# S.A. worker solidarity displayed on May Day

ONCE again trade unions are beginning to celebrate May Day. This year at least three trade union meetings were held. Workers came together to discuss issues facing them and to pledge their solidarity with fellow workers in South Africa and around the world.

Student, church and other progressive organisations held meetings on May Day to show their support for the workers struggle.

The first of May is a special day for workers all over the world.

It is a day which gives workers in different factories and even in different countries an opportunity to come together to show their common purpose.

For over one hundred years workers have regarded it as a 'workers holiday'.

Today in some overseas countries, governments have agreed to make May Day an official holiday. However in other countries where this is not the case, workers continue to defy the law and their bosses, and hold meetings and marches on that day.

In the past, workers did not go to work on May Day. Instead they attended meetings or participated in marches and made demands common to all workers.

The idea first originated in Australia where workers organised a one-day protest in favour of an eight hour working day. They arranged meetings and entertainment to fill the day.

It was so successful that they decided to repeat the event every year. Soon the idea was taken up by American workers, until they were prevented from organising demonstrations by the police.

About thirty years later, in 1889, May Day began to be celebrated in Europe. Large rallies, calling mainly for shorter working hours, were held on May Day. On more and more occasions, the meetings would be followed by marches through the streets.

In South Africa since 1926, some workers have fought and won the right for May Day to be a workers holiday. Their demand was included in Industrial Council Agreements. However the government refused to allow this to continue after 1961.

The first demonstration on May Day was organised by the African Federation of Trade Unions. White and black workers came together and demanded "We want bread" and "Work for wages". These demands were directed at the government and the bosses.

The most significant May Day in South African history was that of 1950. For the first time workers in many different industries and jobs decided to stay away from work.

The stay away call was made jointly by trade unions and political organisations like the Transvaal Indian Congress and the African National Congress, to protest against the Suppression of Communism Act which would heavily affect them.

When the act was passed, trade unions were badly hit and many trade union leaders were banned.

Over half of South Africa's workers did not go to work on the 1st of May 1950. There were demonstrations calling for higher wages and other worker rights.

But the peaceful protests turned into violence when police intervened in arguments between returning and boycotting workers. 19 workers were killed and 30 injured.

In the early 1960's the government came down heavily on democratic people's organisations. Many people were detained, banned, jailed or forced to leave the country.

The South African Congress of Trade Unions, which represented the majority of organised black workers, was badly affected. Its activities declined and events such as May Day were no longer celebrated.

However since the early 1970's, trade unions have again been formed by workers. Today more and more workers are joining trade unions.

For over 75 years South African workers have been making demands on May Day which the government or the bosses have not yet met. These include:

- \* the recognition of workers' rights to form and join trade unions of their choice,
- \* the abolition of pass laws and influx control,
- \* the right to strike,
- \* a national minimum wage,
- \* the abolition of discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of race and sex,
- \* sick leave, medical aid, unemployment and pension benefits.



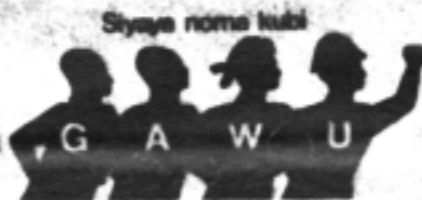
Workers at Orange Vaal General Workers Union meeting

**MANY trade unions celebrated May Day this year. Workers from different factories came together to show their common purpose.**

**This special day, has become a day for workers all over the world to show their common purpose.**

**A day for all freedom loving people to show their support for the workers struggle and the contribution workers make to society.**

General and Allied Workers Union

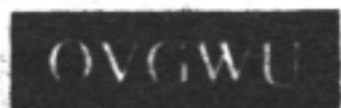


Gawu joins hands with all progressive trade unions and democratic organisations the world over in observing this important day in the workers struggle.

The fact that this day is not given prominence in the South African calendar, is a reminder that we have to redouble our efforts.

This day should not be confined to commemoration but should also be extended to charting the way to victory.

Orange Vaal General Workers Union

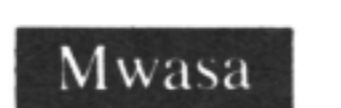


We salute all workers and pledge our solidarity with their daily struggle against injustice and exploitation.

We believe the workers struggle is inseparable from the struggle for political democracy and call for united action by workers against political and economic injustice.

May the workers in this country be inspired by the struggle of workers in other parts of the world.

Media Workers Association of South Africa



This is the day of the working people all over the world. It is a day which is celebrated by progressive trade unions throughout the world to demonstrate against all forms of harassment and exploitation of workers.

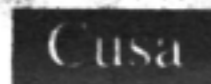
A MAY Day meeting at the Wits University, Glyn Thomas Residence saw students pledge their support for the worker struggle as an essential part of the broader struggle for change in South Africa. Two of the speakers, Mr Samson Ndou and Mr Elliot Shabangu, both from the General

## Students support workers' struggle

and Allied Workers Union (Gawu), encouraged students to continue relentlessly supporting the worker in shaping the future of a non-racial South Africa.

Another speaker, Azaso leader, Aaron Motswaledi, warned

Council of Unions of South Africa



Labour Day is a very opportune moment for workers to examine and discuss their lives and to understand the significance of their oppression.

The system of oppression might be different throughout the world, but the basic demands which workers struggle for remain the same.

There are unjust laws in South Africa which cause much suffering and pain. The continual detention and harassment of trade unionists, the death of Neil Aggett and Labour laws make it impossible for the worker in South Africa to ignore Labour Day.

Municipal and General Workers Union of South Africa

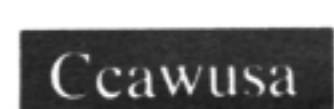


On this day we show our solidarity with fellow workers from all over the world. Workers must pledge to unite and fight against oppression, racism, exploitation and the harassment of workers by their employers.

South Africa belongs to all who live and work in it.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union



The first of May is a workers day and should be observed as such. The message of May Day is for workers to unite and join unions. It is a day on which we unite with other workers.

## Unity for common cause

THE need for unity was the theme of a May Day meeting held jointly by the Orange Vaal General Workers Union, the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Ccawusa) and the Engineering and Allied Workers Union in Vereeniging.

"With the ever growing crises in this country, unity of the workers struggle is essential", said a speaker.

"The basis for this unity is in the common problems, needs and aspirations of workers."

He said the forging of solidarity between workers in different trade unions and even outside of trade unions was of vital importance.

Another speaker reminded workers that improved working conditions were not "kindly gestures" from the bosses, but were rights won by workers through long and difficult battles.

"Workers need to defend the gains of the past since the bosses want to take them back," he said.

He stressed that only through day to day struggles, can the standard of living of workers be raised to a decent level.

The meeting brought together workers from different unions who pledged their solidarity to a common cause.

Federation of South African Women.

She said the struggle of the workers and of women was part of the same struggle for freedom.

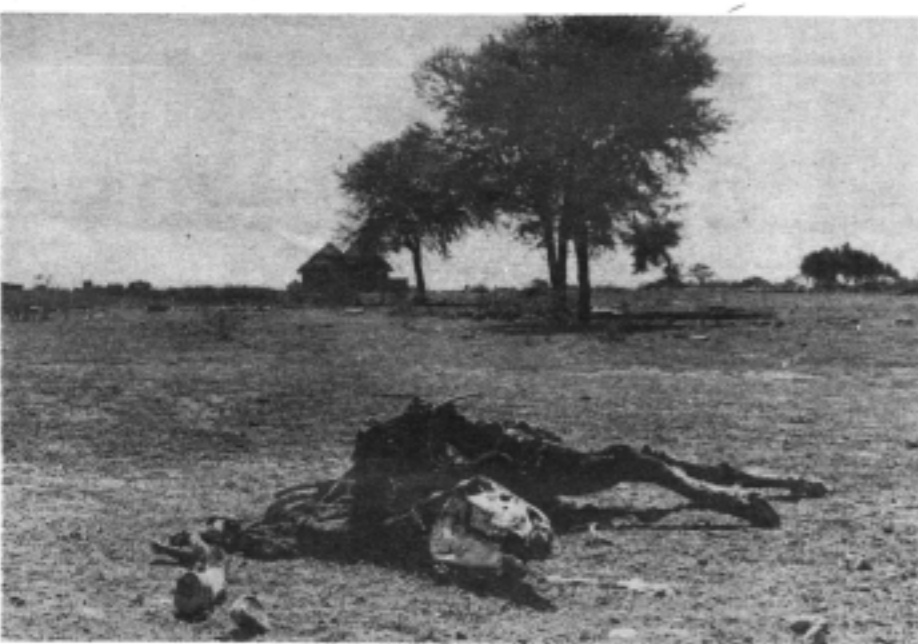
The meeting called for the Freedom Charter to be recognised as the minimum demands of the people.

of national importance.

The meeting was honoured by the presence of Francis Baard, an important trade union and women's leader in the 1950's. She was involved in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) and the

students of the danger of isolating themselves from the majority of the people because of some privileges they might enjoy.

He urged all students to take part in community projects and issues



The parched bones of a dead cow — just one of the victims of the crippling drought.



Women watching and wag in the dry fields for the rains to come.



This girl starts off on her early morning trek for the family's daily water supply.



Two members of a drought-stricken family fill their plastic container at a water pump.

# Drought causes national crisis

## Rural

In the bantustans where 40 per cent of South Africans live, the time for crying is long past. In many areas there is no water at all. Rivers, dams and boreholes are completely dry. The threat of famine, disease, starvation and death is uppermost in people's minds. In parts of the northern Transvaal, Kwazulu, Ciskei and Transkei, people have not been able to plant crops for more than two seasons because of lack of water. Now they face the winter without water and food.

For the majority of people in the rural areas it is a continuous battle to survive. Four times as many children are being admitted to rural hospitals. Doctors say far fewer children leave the hospital alive. Malnutrition has ravaged their young bodies, leaving them unable to fight even the slightest cold.

With dry rivers, boreholes and dams, people resort to muddy and stagnant pools for water — a further hazard to their health. Women wake up at 4 in the morning and walk many miles to the nearest water supply.

At the water supply there are long queues, and tension mounts as people are not sure whether there will be any water left when their turn comes. On their way home, the water evaporates in the hot sun and spills as the women walk over rocky patches and steep inclines.

Sometimes the battle to survive turns into a battle between people. A battle for scarce resources such as water, arable land and land for grazing cattle. People fight to be first in the queue at the boreholes. When the boreholes break down because of overuse, they blame each other. Little realizing that the boreholes were badly built in the first place.

Conflict also develops between cattle farmers and crop farmers. Those who have cattle need grazing land and their eyes inevitably turn to the dried out meadow fields. Those who have no cattle, hope desper-

ately for rain to save their skins. So anger rages between those who want to take the cattle into the fields and those who want to keep them out.

White farmers, traders, landowners, cattle speculators and chiefs have all taken advantage of the situation. Traders sell mealie meal and other basics at prices far higher than those in urban supermarkets.

And as people run out of cash, the traders supply on credit; but at such high interest, that many families will remain heavily in debt for a long time to come.

Cattle farmers are forced to sell their thin and bony cattle before they die. They get almost nothing for them at auctions, where they are bought by rich people, then re-sold to the abattoirs at a profit.

In Kwazulu, one bitter man complained about the R5 a head he got for his emaciated cattle. "It's not nearly enough to even buy a mealie for a month". While farmers and sometimes the local authorities often dig boreholes in the yards, buy rain tanks or trucks to transport water with almost a monopoly over water resources, they are able to sell water at high prices.

Chiefs and other Bantustan bureaucrats have often used the drought as an excuse to confiscate uncultivated land. So many people will no longer have any land on which to try and grow crops when the rains do come.

In Winterveld, a charity organisation installed a water supply at a school with the understanding that the water would be made available to the community as well.

Landlords in the area however, who had a monopoly over the water supply and had been selling it for as much as R2.50 per tank, were unhappy.

Those that sat on the school committee, forced the school principal to remove the tap handle. They also stopped the construction of another water supply closer to the residents' homes.

For some desperate rural families, the solution has been to seek out friends and relatives in urban areas with whom they can stay.

The drought that is killing the people, the land and the livestock in the rural areas is not new. In fact the drought started as far back as 1978 and, noticed by all except the farmers and rural dwellers, has been getting steadily worse and worse.

But that now, when we cannot help but notice, we have reached the worst water crisis point in 200 years. Everyday, newspaper headlines scream about the threat to the economy and farming and make constant pleas for water to be saved.

But little is said about the fact that the present crisis could have been avoided with government planning and forethought. South Africa is a country which has experienced drought about every 25 years. Water is used by factories, farmers and consumers as if it is very plentiful.

Industry for example uses the majority of the water in urban areas, yet it has given very little attention to re-using water.

Sufficient boreholes and dams to store water have not been built in the rural areas, and when they have, they are often badly built and polluted, so they soon run dry or break down.

And of course the drought is far more devastating for people in situations of overcrowding and poverty who struggle to survive anyway. Drought affects the poorest people the hardest, and the problem will not be solved when the rain comes.

Instead, in a drought-prone country like ours, water shortages will not be overcome when it is regarded as a priority to ensure that all people have access to sufficient water.

No amount of influx control will stop these people coming to the towns in search of water.

The burden of the drought will continue for years to come. Where people are already living on the brink of survival, they are unlikely to recover.

## Urban

People in the towns and cities feel the effects of drought in a different way.

While water restrictions have been imposed, these do not drastically affect many township residents. More serious for people in the towns and cities is the effect of the drought on the already high cost of living and unemployment situation.

Food prices have increased and will continue to do so. The price of maize has already gone up by almost 10 per cent, pushing up the price of eggs and chickens.

Because so many cattle are dying, shortages of milk, mutton and other dairy products is expected. Some of these are important substitutes for people who cannot afford meat.

Too little water also means too little electricity. Power cuts could envelope entire townships in darkness. While the majority of township dwellers have always relied on coal stoves, candles and paraffin, power cuts could affect the unemployment situation.

Factories may be forced to work fewer hours and pay less, or retrench workers so that profits remain unaffected.

Workers in food factories which rely on farming, may also lose their jobs.

Urban families who often have close ties with rural families would now have to stretch their meagre resources to feed or house their rural relatives.

## Industry

While the poorest people in urban areas have to

cope with increased hardships because of the drought, the biggest users of water do not suffer nearly as much.

More than three quarters of water used in the urban areas, is used by factories and mines.

Industry has regarded water as a cheap, never ending resource — always "on tap". Very little thought has gone into re-using water.

Yet some industries such as the steel industry, could recycle up to 97 per cent of the water they use. While the government has imposed water restrictions on household consumers, it has done almost nothing to restrict the use of water on factories and mines.

In fact in recent years, the government has built schemes which have increased the supply of water to the growing industries on the Witwatersrand. This has been at the expense of water to rural areas. The Tugela-Vaal Water Scheme redirects water from the Tugela river in Natal to the Vaal river to serve the Witwatersrand.

This has meant that very valuable water has been taken away from Kwazulu, which is one of the worst drought stricken areas.

Future schemes aim to get water from the Lesotho Highlands and the Okavango Swamp, and to redirect the flow of the Vaal river.

While factories will continue to be supplied with water instead of being encouraged to design water saving machinery, what will the effect be on the people in Botswana, Lesotho and the Northern Cape.

Such schemes can easily destroy the natural

economies of the regions.

## Relief

The crisis in the rural areas has forced the government to provide some drought relief to farmers. Through concessions worth millions of rands, the position of white farmers has been significantly eased. In addition, the South African Defence Force has allowed farmers to use large areas of its land for winter grazing.

But this is for whites only. The aid that is being offered to people in the Bantustans is of a very different order.

The government has made R20 million available for drought relief in these areas. It may sound a lot, but with conditions in rural areas so bad, it gets soaked off in once-off charity measures.

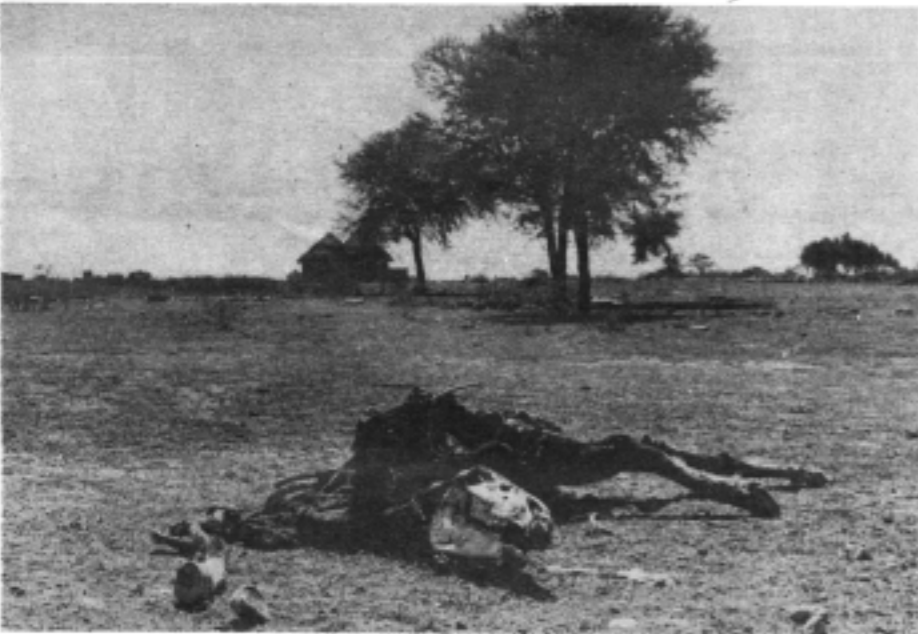
This money together with money collected by other charities is mostly used for emergency food rations and water. Yet while it is crucial at the moment, when people are in the grip of such a devastating crisis, it is too little and far too late.

The problems of the bantustans cannot be solved by relief or short term solutions.

While much more money is needed to build enough dams, reservoirs, water pipes and boreholes, the problems run far deeper.

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The parched bones of a dead cow — just one of the victims of the crippling drought.



Women watching and wag in the dry fields for the rains to come.



This girl starts off on her early morning trek for the family's daily water supply.



Two members of a drought-stricken family fill their plastic container at a water pump.

# Drought causes national crisis

## Rural

In the bantustans where 40 per cent of South Africans live, the time for crying is long past. In many areas there is no water at all. Rivers, dams and boreholes are completely dry. The threat of famine, disease, starvation and death is uppermost in people's minds. In parts of the northern Transvaal, Kwazulu, Ciskei and Transkei, people have not been able to plant crops for more than two seasons because of lack of water. Now they face the winter without water and food.

For the majority of people in the rural areas it is a continuous battle to survive. Four times as many children are being admitted to rural hospitals. Doctors say far fewer children leave the hospital alive. Malnutrition has ravaged their young bodies, leaving them unable to fight even the slightest cold.

With dry rivers, boreholes and dams, people resort to muddy and stagnant pools for water — a further hazard to their health. Women wake up at 4 in the morning and walk many miles to the nearest water supply.

At the water supply there are long queues, and tension mounts as people are not sure whether there will be any water left when their turn comes. On their way home, the water evaporates in the hot sun and spills as the women walk over rocky patches and steep inclines.

Sometimes the battle to survive turns into a battle between people. A battle for scarce resources such as water, arable land and land for grazing cattle. People fight to be first in the queue at the boreholes. When the boreholes break down because of overuse, they blame each other. Little realizing that the boreholes were badly built in the first place.

Conflict also develops between cattle farmers and crop farmers. Those who have cattle need grazing land and their eyes inevitably turn to the dried out meadow fields. Those who have no cattle, hope desper-

ately for rain to save their skins. So anger rages between those who want to take the cattle into the fields and those who want to keep them out.

White farmers, traders, landowners, cattle speculators and chiefs have all been quick to take advantage of the situation.

Traders sell mealie meal and other basics at prices far higher than those in urban supermarkets. And as people run out of cash, the traders supply on credit; but at such high interest, that many families will remain heavily in debt for a long time to come.

Cattle farmers are forced to sell their thin and bony cattle before they die. They get almost nothing for them at auctions, where they are bought by rich people, then re-sold to the abattoirs at a profit.

In Kwazulu, one bitter man complained about the R5 a head he got for his emaciated cattle. "It's not nearly enough to even buy a mealie for a month". While farmers and sometimes the local authorities often dig boreholes in the yards, buy rain tanks or trucks to transport water with almost a monopoly over water resources, they are able to sell water at high prices.

Chiefs and other Bantustan bureaucrats have often used the drought as an excuse to confiscate uncultivated land. So many people will no longer have any land on which to try and grow crops when the rains do come.

In Winterveld, a charity organisation installed a water supply at a school with the understanding that the water would be made available to the community as well.

Landlords in the area however, who had a monopoly over the water supply and had been selling it for as much as R2.50 per tank, were unhappy.

Those that sat on the school committee, forced the school principal to remove the tap handle. They also stopped the construction of another water supply closer to the residents' homes.

For some desperate rural families, the solution has been to seek out friends and relatives in urban areas with whom they can stay.

The drought that is killing the people, the land and the livestock in the rural areas is not new. In fact the drought started as far back as 1978 and, noticed by all except the farmers and rural dwellers, has been getting steadily worse and worse.

But that now, when we cannot help but notice, we have reached the worst water crisis point in 200 years. Everyday, newspaper headlines scream about the threat to the economy and farming and make constant pleas for water to be saved.

But little is said about the fact that the present crisis could have been avoided with government planning and forethought. South Africa is a country which has experienced drought about every 25 years. Water is used by factories, farmers and consumers as if it is very plentiful.

Industry for example uses the majority of the water in urban areas, yet it has given very little attention to re-using water. Sufficient boreholes and dams to store water have not been built in the rural areas, and when they have, they are often badly built and polluted, so they soon run dry or break down.

And of course the drought is far more devastating for people in situations of overcrowding and poverty who struggle to survive anyway. Drought affects the poorest people the hardest, and the problem will not be solved when the rain comes.

Instead, in a drought-prone country like ours, water shortages will not be overcome when it is regarded as a priority to ensure that all people have access to sufficient water.

No amount of influx control will stop these people coming to the towns in search of water.

The burden of the drought will continue for years to come. Where people are already living on the brink of survival, they are unlikely to recover.

## Urban

People in the towns and cities feel the effects of drought in a different way.

While water restrictions have been imposed, these do not drastically affect many township residents. More serious for people in the towns and cities is the effect of the drought on the already high cost of living and unemployment situation.

Food prices have increased and will continue to do so. The price of maize has already gone up by almost 10 per cent, pushing up the price of eggs and chickens.

Because so many cattle are dying, shortages of milk, mutton and other dairy products is expected. Some of these are important substitutes for people who cannot afford meat.

Too little water also means too little electricity. Power cuts could envelope entire townships in darkness. While the majority of township dwellers have always relied on coal stoves, candles and paraffin, power cuts could affect the unemployment situation.

Factories may be forced to work fewer hours and pay less, or retrench workers so that profits remain unaffected.

Workers in food factories which rely on farming, may also lose their jobs.

Urban families who often have close ties with rural families would now have to stretch their meagre resources to feed or house their rural relatives.

## Industry

While the poorest people in urban areas have to

cope with increased hardships because of the drought, the biggest users of water do not suffer nearly as much.

More than three quarters of water used in the urban areas, is used by factories and mines.

Industry has regarded water as a cheap, never ending resource — always "on tap". Very little thought has gone into re-using water.

Yet some industries such as the steel industry, could recycle up to 97 per cent of the water they use.

While the government has imposed water restrictions on household consumers, it has done almost nothing to restrict the use of water on factories and mines.

In fact in recent years, the government has built schemes which have increased the supply of water to the growing industries on the Witwatersrand. This has been at the expense of water to rural areas. The Tugela-Vaal Water Scheme redirects water from the Tugela river in Natal to the Vaal river to serve the Witwatersrand.

This has meant that very valuable water has been taken away from Kwazulu, which is one of the worst drought stricken areas.

Future schemes aim to get water from the Lesotho Highlands and the Okavango Swamp, and to redirect the flow of the Vaal river.

While factories will continue to be supplied with water instead of being encouraged to design water saving machinery, what will the effect be on the people in Botswana, Lesotho and the Northern Cape.

Such schemes can easily destroy the natural

economies of the regions.

## Relief

The crisis in the rural areas has forced the government to provide some drought relief to farmers. Through concessions worth millions of rands, the position of white farmers has been significantly eased. In addition, the South African Defence Force has allowed farmers to use large areas of its land for winter grazing.

But this is for whites only. The aid that is being offered to people in the Bantustans is of a very different order.

The government has made R20 million available for drought relief in these areas. It may sound a lot, but with conditions in rural areas so bad, it gets soaked off in once-off charity measures.

This money together with money collected by other charities is mostly used for emergency food rations and water. Yet while it is crucial at the moment, when people are in the grip of such a devastating crisis, it is too little and far too late.

The problems of the bantustans cannot be solved by relief or short term solutions.

While much more money is needed to build enough dams, reservoirs, water pipes and boreholes, the problems run far deeper.

The problems of overcrowding, too little land, eroded land, poverty and inequalities in the bantustans need to be solved.

# Children's Page

Dear children,

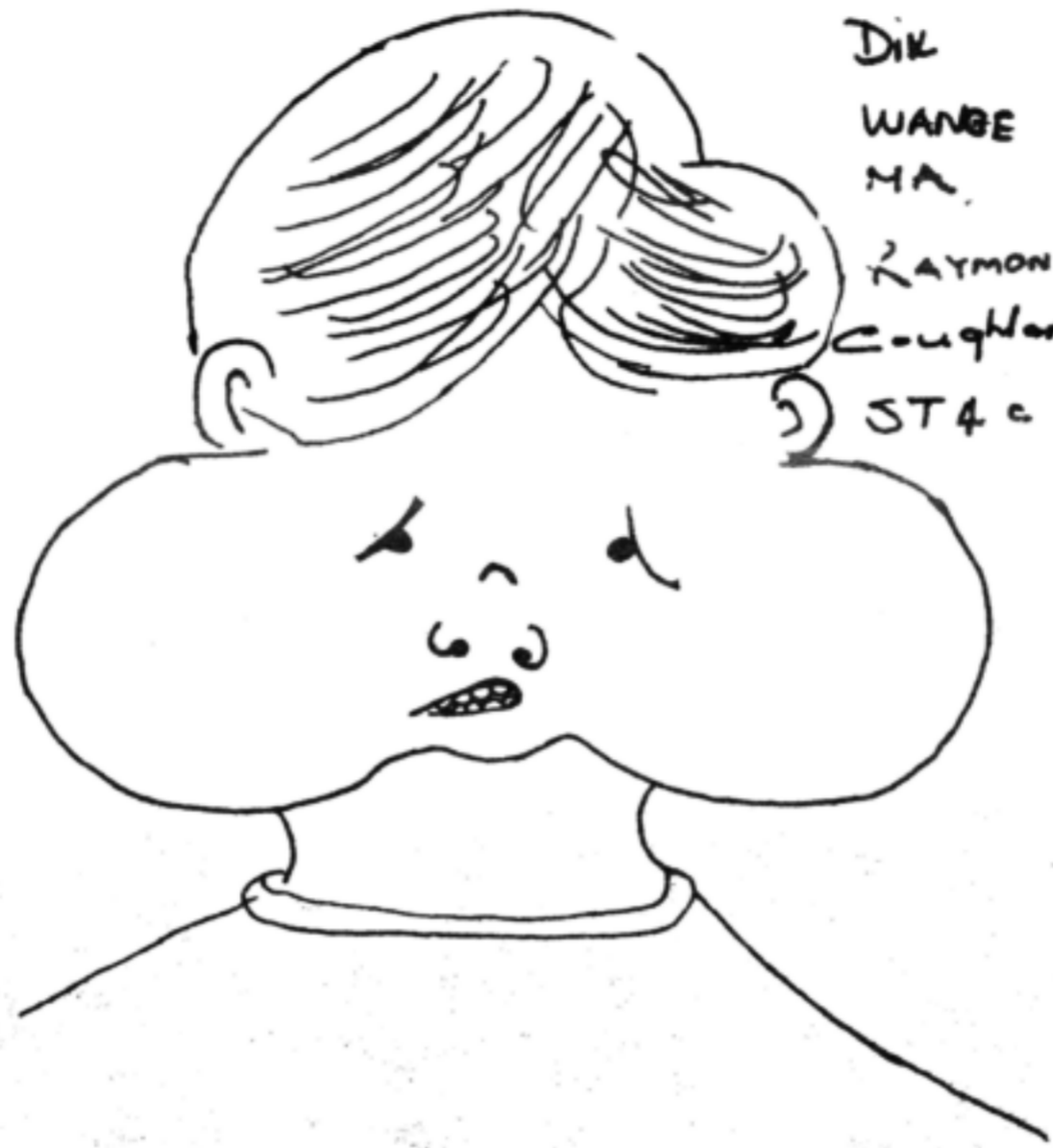
Do you remember we came to visit some of you at school. We spoke about SPEAK and our children's page, and asked you to give us little stories or drawings and tell us what you would like to see on this page.

There wasn't time to visit schools all over, but we did visit Western Primary, Fred Clark Primary, Hoernle Higher Primary and the Catholic School. We also spoke to children in Actonville from Dlabulo Higher Primary and Rusuna Combined.

It would have been nice to visit more schools, but maybe you could write and tell us if your playgroup, youth group or school is doing something that you'd like other children to know about.

Do you see the little bee flying around the page? Well this Bee has come to SPEAK and is going to run the children's page! Isn't that exciting? The only thing is that the Bee doesn't have a name yet. Why don't you write and give the bee a name? Maybe you could even tell us why you chose the name — then next time you'll know what to call our bee.

Meanwhile enjoy the page.



PIET  
WAT  
MEKEER

DIE  
WANGE  
MA.

RAYMOND  
Coughlan  
ST 4 c

PATSON BANDA



VICTOR KOK  
13 YEARS

Is your favourite team the same as Victor's?  
Do you play soccer? If not do you play any other sport?

Staffriders are people that catch a vehicle whilst it is in motion. I think they do not know that riding a staff is a bad habit.



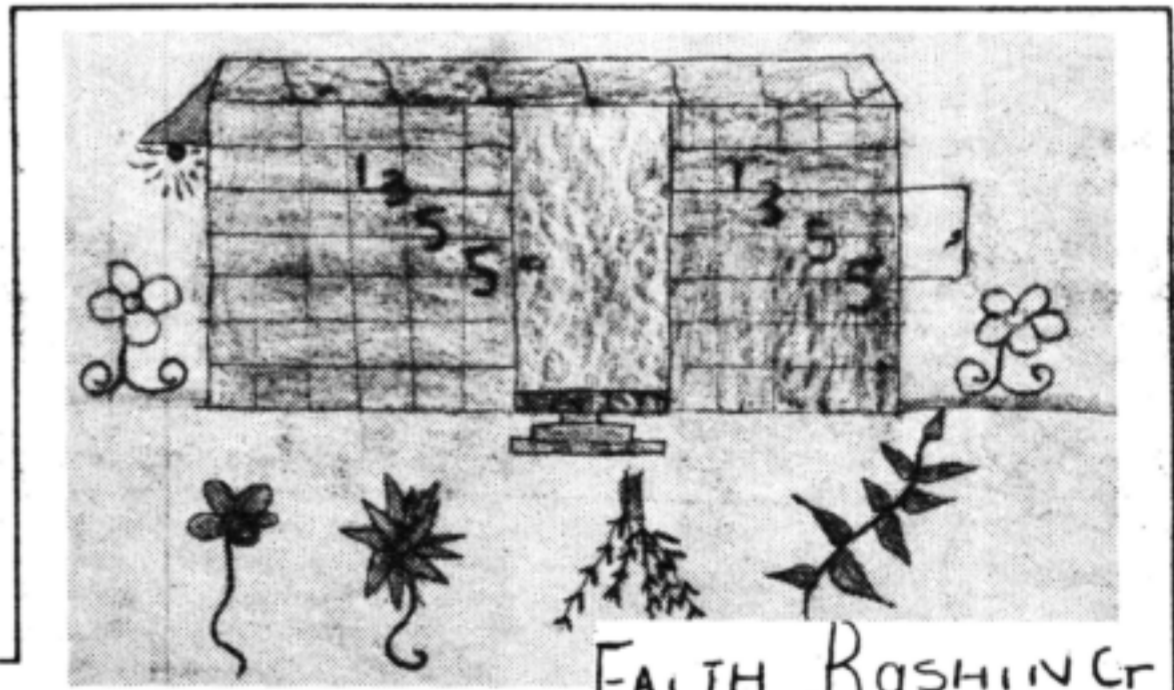
Benedicta Khene

Rosemary Stead

Isn't it horrible that people have to staffride when they can't find a seat on the train or bus? It must be because the buses are so full. What do you think?



Faith lives in Western. Where do you live? Do you like living there?



FAITH BASHING

ONS WOON IN PEDESTRIAN UITBREIDING - DRIE  
 Daar is MOOI huise maar die RENT is ook  
 MOOI. die MENSE baklei oor die RENT dit  
 is baie duur. Maar MENSE KEN dit Bakkeidig  
 Maar PAR NIK.  
 Ons MENSE WAT langs ons woon, is  
 vriendelik. Maar som tyd's wag die papiere  
 in hulle yndie nou ekom hulle ook dit.  
 Daar is MENSE WAT baie baklei met  
 die CONCIL oor die HOE RENT. Hulle ligte  
 word af gesit. die ARME MENSE moet  
 hulle luste geld wat vir daai huise  
 wat so, hok. Maar jy 'n Birtjie, daar h'h!

# culture



## Kippie was a master at his craft

THE jazz world has suffered the loss of one of its greatest veterans in the death of South African saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi.

Hundreds of people packed the Eyethu Cinema in Mofolo, Soweto for his funeral. Among them noted musicians from all over the country.

At one stage during the service, more than 30 wind and string musicians stood up at the same time and staged a jam session.

Traffic came to a halt when the funeral procession left for the cemetery and music was played as the coffin was slowly lowered into the grave.

It was a fitting tribute and farewell for the man

who in his day played with the likes of Hugh Masekela, Dollar Brand, Miriam Makeba and Letta Mbulu.

Kippie was a master at his craft.

Although he lived in destitution before his death, he could look back at the splendid contribution he made to the cultural enrichment of his community.

Born in the heart of Johannesburg, in Small street, Kippie grew up in a musical family at Eastern Native Township — George Goch, 59 years ago.

Like most black artists, Kippie Moeketsi was self taught; one of the few to be a first sight reader of music. His perception, insight and

interpretation of the score sheet is said to have been outstanding.

Kippie associated early in his life with talented musicians. He had a marked influence on Dollar Brand and Hugh Masekela, both of whom have made it big overseas.

He featured in major musical productions like King Kong.

It is sad to think that a musician of such calibre faded into oblivion, poverty and neglect.

Kippie expressed his disillusionment when he once said: "I learned something about this world. It is a place where dogs eat dogs; the law of the jungle prevails, based on the survival of the fittest and craftiest."



Kippie Moeketsi

# REGGAE LIVES!!



PROBABLY the first time a greater number of South Africans heard of Rastafarianism was through the music of the likes of Bob Marley and Peter Tosh.

At first a spontaneous response to the distinct sound of Reggae music with its catchy choruses ... Get up ... stand up ... stand up for you rights ...

Then an actual identification as more and more young people are observed in the streets, wearing red, green and yellow coloured caps and bangles, long locked hair, and T-shirts proclaiming "Jah-Luv".

And as the trend catches on in South Africa, the debate also begins around questions like: What is the social relevance of Rastafarianism? Do those sporting the red, green and yellow colours understand the Rasta Movement and what it stands for? Has Rastafarianism been co-opted by big business? Can it contribute to social change?

Just what is the Rasta Movement whose music sets many a feet tapping, and whose symbols a significant number of young people are beginning to identify with.

**SPEAK decided to stimulate discussion on the subject with a contribution from a reader which follows below.**

The Rastafarian movement has a rich historical background. It has its origins in 18th century Jamaica, when it was a British colony.

But to help understand the Rasta Movement, we have to first be clear on the meanings of certain basic concepts which are an integral part of the movement.

Ras — title given to European loyalty.

Tafar — family name of the king.

Jah — short for Jehovah (God)

Lion — the lion represents former emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie.

Under British colonialism, the Jamaicans suffered great hardship, domination and poverty. It was this misery which gave rise to the Rasta Movement.

Because of these oppressive conditions in Jamaica, the Rastafarians aimed to end all forms of oppression. At first the Rastas felt that their lot would improve only with a "movement of the people" (Exodus) to Ethiopia. Ethiopia to the Rastafarians represented a heaven on earth, Haile Selassie, the former Ethiopian emperor is therefore an important person in the Rasta movement. This theme has feature prominently in Reggae

iv) The rastafarians don't use patent medicines. Rasta medicines are made of herbs, and are very potent.

### Dagga smoking and the Rasta movement

Dagga smoking is only permitted to elders on religious occasions. Many people are incorrect when they say that Rastafarianism actively encourages Dagga smoking.

Long hair and dagga smoking are part of the religious beliefs and symbols, of the rasta movement, and does not detract the movement from its main purpose, which is to express the demands of all those who consider themselves Rastafarians and to fight against and destroy all forms of injustice.

### Reggae music

Rastafarianism is a total way of life expressing itself in various forms. Through sculpture, art and music. The important aspect of Rasta culture is that it is linked to the living conditions experienced by people all over the world. It has never failed to highlight issues of racism and inequalities.

Bob Marley sang "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery. None better than ourselves can free our minds".

In another song Jimmy Cliff sang:

"Too many people are suffering. Too many people are sad. Too little people got everything. While too many people got nothing. Remake the world. With love and happiness ..."

The relevance of Reggae music to the downtrodden and oppressed can't be denied.

### Rastafarianism in South Africa

Sadly in S.A., Rastafarianism has become somewhat commercialised. The emphasis of the Rasta movement seems to have shifted here. South African Rastas forget that the Jamaicans suffered similar forms of oppression as us. These Rastas must extend beyond a love for badges, bangles and berets. They must show their love for freedom and justice.

Peter Tosh commenting on the S.A. Rasta movement said — "The Babylon system in S.A. has to be changed. Roots music teach us to sing about our peoples struggle wherever they are in the world. Most of my songs have been directed at the apartheid regime because it is evil and unjust."



## Gandhi



in the Potato Boycott and the Defiance Campaign of 1952.

The film also does justice to Gandhi in portraying him as a political tactician. The Indian National Congress prior to Gandhi's return to India was essentially an organisation of educated Indians who desired to bring about changes through petitions and speeches. It was Gandhi who had the ability to evoke the resistance of the ordinary masses. He transformed the Indian National Congress from an organisation of elite Indians to a mass based organisation with which ordinary Indians identified.

In the film the central role of Gandhi is played by Ben Kingsley who really deserves the oscar for best actor for his portrayal of Gandhi from the age of 24 upto his death fifty years later.

The controversy around the film will continue to rage. Many would question Gandhi's method; his adherence to nonviolence even against the violence of fascism, but no one can question the spirit of resistance which Gandhi embodied.

THE film Gandhi, playing at many local cinemas has generated a tremendous amount of controversy. The controversy has raged around Sir Richard Attenborough's initial decision to attend a segregated premier in South Africa. After pressure from numerous local and overseas organisation Sir Richard decided not to come to South Africa at all.

Controversy has also raged around the relevance of Gandhi today.

Whatever the controversy, Sir Richard Attenborough by translating the life of Gandhi into a film has faithfully

spread the message of Gandhi. The story of Gandhi is in many ways the story of the struggle for the independence of India. However it is often forgotten that Gandhi's story of struggle began in South Africa.

Gandhi describes his expulsion from a whites — only railway carriage and a lonely night spent on the Pietermaritzburg platform as a "watershed of my life".

Gandhi's ideas grew out of his own early experiences, and crystallised while he was in South Africa; they were modified and refined by him later but they re-

mained intact. It is in South Africa that Gandhi develops the only concept of resistance available to the powerless, that of non-cooperation. Non cooperation has been one of the cornerstones of struggle, not only in India but also in South Africa. In India Gandhi led a march to oppose British monopoly over salt. He initiated the movement to boycott clothing manufactured in Britain from Indian cotton.

These campaigns have their parallel in South Africa in the passive resistance campaigns of 1906 and 1947.

## Small's play is worth watching

A few weeks ago Adam Small's play "Hey smile wit me" toured the townships after being held at the Market theatre for some time. The play was shown in community halls where the sound was often poor, but the communities response has

been very positive. In Coronationville, for example, the entire audience applauded and joined in with the shouts of 'Power' coming from the stage.

This identification is an important one. The play speaks mostly about housing, the

Group Areas Act, evictions, and bulldozing. These are the very issues which confront the community.

It makes clear the housing crises or the President's Council being forced on us are all part of the life we lead.

The cast have worked

in lines that come from their own experiences, making it a dynamic play which relates very closely to our lives. It is clear that the cast itself does not see the PC as an answer to our community's problems.

They make this play worth watching.

## HONEST BURIAL SERVICE



# Burial societies can bind communities

WHILE most people who live in the ghettos around Johannesburg are workers and are poor, the cost of dying is very high, and rising all the time.

The cost of even the cheaper funerals (including coffin, hearse, buses and food), runs to at least R500, while the average home in Soweto earns only about R240 a month. Almost all of that is spent on living expenses — very few people are able to save.

The position is made worse because South Africa does not care for its poorer communities. There is no proper social welfare system. Pensions are ridiculously

low, and unemployment benefits only reach a handful of workers who have lost their jobs.

### Organised

In many places, communities have organised and defended themselves against the crippling financial blow a death in the family can bring.

In a crisis, like a death, or the sudden loss of a job, the family needs help from other people — friends, neighbours, relatives, and work friends. Many communities go further. They organise self-help societies, like burial societies or *Mohodisano* which help to save money

for these difficult times.

A recent survey in Soweto showed that three quarters of all families belong to a burial society and, if other self-help groups are added, the figure is over 80 per cent.

### More than money

Burial societies and self-help groups have a long history in working class communities both here and overseas. In South Africa, they existed in Prospect, Kofifi and the Doornfontein Yards.

In England, they were known as friendly societies, covering death, sickness and unemployment benefits, and sometimes

grew into trade unions, or were groups where community issues were discussed. Some became the place to discuss and democratically handle the political wishes of the community.

Both overseas and local groups give more than just money. They also bring together members of communities who begin to work together, and grow to trust and depend on each other.

### How societies work

There are three main ways of organising a burial society. First, when someone dies, people may donate

what they can afford to the widow. But this is unorganised and unreliable, since very few people have extra money, and if there is more than one death at about the same time, people struggle to donate twice.

The second way is for individuals to subscribe to a funeral insurance scheme. But this doesn't help organise a community at all; and many of these agencies have taken people's money and disappeared. There is no community control over the funds.

### Community control

The third way is for direct and organised community participation. The most popular type is for groups to meet regularly (about once a month) and contribute to a fund (anything from R2 to R10.) This money is controlled by elected representatives who bank it. When the fund reaches, say, R2000, no more money is collected, but the meetings continue.

The group decides who is covered by the fund, and how much is paid out for every funeral. It is important that the members have democratic control over the funds and all the decisions that are taken.

Community control is the only protection against organisations which rob the poor — the confidence trickster and rip-off organisations. When properly organised, burial societies can play a very important role in binding members of communities together, building trust and understanding, and taking part in democratic practices.



# Through hard work LYL is on the move

"Youth on the Move" is the 1983 theme for the Lenasia Youth League, and the youth league has certainly moved during this year.

The Lenasia Youth League has become a well-known name in Lenasia through its wide range of activities which have entertained, informed and involved not only the youth but the whole community.

Its name spread further recently, as members of the youth league went knocking on the doors of many homes, collecting old clothes for its "Operation Winterwarm" project.

A pamphlet drive, mobile public announcements and set collection points formed part of the well organised campaign.

Most of the clothes and blankets were given to the Residents Action Committee at Winterfeld, a large squatter camp north of Pretoria. Others were given to school cleaners at Lenasia schools and to residents in Kliptown.

For the growing youth league, this was only one of their many activities. Since their formation at the beginning of last year, they have organised a variety of activities which have enabled young people in Lenasia to play a useful and positive role in their community.

Most prominent was the Youth Festival held last year. It succeeded in providing young people with the opportunity to participate in sporting and cultural activities.

The festival laid a basis for the organisation to become very active over 1983, enabling it to grow and strengthen. Previous projects have been expanded and new ones initiated.

In March, a Netball association was formed after the youth league organised a highly successful Netball Tournament.

The Lenasia Youth League Netball Association aims to encourage the participation of women in sport and to foster a spirit of goodwill amongst sportspeople.

Already 15 teams have affiliated to the netball association and fixtures began at the beginning of May.

The publication of "Contact", the youth league's newsletter, is another major activity. So far seven editions have been published containing articles of interest and concern to scholars and other young people. Scholars eagerly gather as youth league members distribute "Contact" at school gates.

Two days every week, the Jiswa Centre in Lenasia is a hive of activity as up to 100 scholars are assisted in their school work by youth league members. In the last half hour of the programme, scholars and tutors come together to discuss issues of topical concern.

This tuition scheme is run by Time to Learn, an affiliate organisation to the youth league. Time to Learn has been providing these and related educational activities from as far back as 1972.

For scholars who cannot afford to attend school, the youth league has a bursary fund. The Lenasia Bursary Committee, another affiliate to the youth league, has organised film shows and jumble sales to raise money.

The key to the Lenasia Youth League's success has been the active participation, support and commitment of its members.

They believe only through the hard work and involvement of their members can the organisation maintain its momentum and build its strength.

# Workers learn of Saawu

MANY workers in Kempton Park and Tembisa had not heard about trade unions until recently when the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu) started organising workers in the area.

Today Saawu has over 5 000 members in the area and workers have won the right to negotiate with 11 companies on wages and working conditions.

The union is presently negotiating agreements to recognise worker committees in three more companies. In four other companies, Saawu has recruited the majority of the workers, but workers committees have not yet been elected.

"We have members in many factories," said the union's organiser, Mr Herbert Barnabus, "but because we are short of staff, things do not move fast enough".

Saawu's Kempton Park office, has two organisers who are employed by union members. They are assisted by volunteers who are often workers who have been retrenched or fired.

The organisers and volunteers are responsible for recruiting members and introducing them to the union. They try and recruit at least ten workers in one factory and then encourage those workers to recruit others.

When over half the workers in a factory are

members of Saawu, the workers elect a committee to represent them.

The workers' committee negotiates with management on recognition of the committee and the union, as well as on wages and working conditions.

Meetings are being organised by the union almost every Sunday in the hostels. Workers from a number of companies attend, and some are signed up as members. An organiser may then visit them where they work and try to recruit more members.

Workers themselves run the union through the Branch Committee. This committee consists of representatives from the different worker committees.

The branch committee, to which the organisers are responsible, decides how the union should run and what direction it should take. It is also a forum for workers to share experiences and learn how to overcome problems with management. Common problems are discussed and joint action is planned.

One of the biggest problems workers in the union face is retrenchment. Sometimes the union is able to take up the issue. Bosses at one factory agreed to a three or four-day working week instead of firing workers.

Workers who lose their jobs, do not stop being members of

Saawu. However they do not have to pay subscriptions to the union.

Often when unemployed members find new jobs, they encourage the workers at their new workplace to join Saawu.

Saawu has also organised committees of workers in Tembisa. These are called township committees. The committees help keep unemployed members together and educate people in the township on the importance of trade unions.

Saawu organises workers all over the country. It has branches in Newcastle, Pretoria and large branches in Durban and East London.



# Mkhize

COMMUNITY leader Mr Saul Mkhize, was shot dead by a police constable at a protest meeting in Driefontein on April 2.

The elected leader of the Driefontein people, a "black spot" freehold area near Ermelo in the South Eastern Transvaal, he was fighting the forced removal of the 5 000-strong community of Driefontein from their ancestral land.

More than 3 000 mourners, including prominent community and church leaders, gathered at the remote Transvaal village to pay final tribute to the man described as a "saint, a martyr and a hero".

The shooting catapulted the small town of Driefontein to international prominence and evoked worldwide condemnation.

A letter written by Mr Mkhize to Mr PW Botha setting out his people's dilemma and gently appealing for help was allegedly not received by Mr Botha.

Mr Mkhize's decision to appeal directly to Mr Botha over the head of the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Mr Piet Koornhof, arose out of the growing frustration at the failure of Dr Koornhof to respond to his pleas against forcing the people of Driefontein to move.

Mr Mkhize was also frustrated at the attitude adopted by the Wakkerstroom commissioner of Dr Koornhof's department, Mr M J Prinsloo, at a meeting in Driefontein.

Mr Prinsloo told the villagers the government had already made its decision about the Driefontein removal.

One of the purposes of the protest meeting at which Mr Mkhize was shot, was to discuss a petition he had drawn up following Mr Prinsloo's remarks at the meeting a fortnight previously. But the main reason for calling the meeting was to tell the community about arrangements Mr Mkhize had made with a firm to drill boreholes in the village.

The meeting was to

take place at the Cabangani Higher Primary school. A crowd of about 300 people, most of them women and elderly men, had assembled inside the grounds.

The Police Division of Public Relations said Mr Mkhize was fatally wounded when the two policemen were forced to defend themselves when attacked with knobkerries and a pistol stolen from one of the policemen.

But eye-witnesses said there was no riot, and that the gathering was peaceful. They said there was no pistol "other than the gun the policeman used when he shot Mr Mkhize".

For almost a year, repeated threats were made on Mr Mkhize's life and property. He also laid a charge with the police in connection with the alleged assault of his 17-year-old son by 10 unknown men. He was also concerned about the harassment and intimidation he said was being conducted against the people of Driefontein.

But Saul Mkhize's spirit and the campaign against the resettlement of the people of Driefontein will not die with his death.

The members of the Council Board of Directors at Driefontein to which Mr Mkhize belonged, have pledged that they will continue working and fighting for the people of Driefontein.



**THE recent deaths of community leaders, Mr Harrison Dube and Mr Saul Mkhize, sent shockwaves throughout the country. Not only do they focus international attention on South Africa once again, but they raise new questions on the tragic and senseless deaths of community leaders in this country who die at the barrel of a gun. Two community leaders who fought different issues but were united in their struggle against an unjust system.**



# Dube

ON April 24, community councillor Mr Msizi Harrison Dube, was shot dead at point-blank range by two masked gunman outside his home in Mbhele Street, Lamontville, Durban.

A week later at his funeral, more than 5 000 people turned out to pay their respects to the community leader who fought tirelessly against proposed rent increases by the Port Natal Administration Board (PNAB).

An outspoken community councillor, Mr Dube played a leading role in major issues affecting the people of Lamontville — like the increases in bus fares last year and the 63 per cent rent hikes this year which were to be implemented from May 1.

He was a member of the Joint Rent Action Committee, Jorac, which represented residents in PNAB townships who were opposed to the rent increases.

Mr Dube was a former ANC activist and served three years on Robben

Island. An unshakeable sense of outrage at injustice had made him return to politics to fight the system from within.

The murder of Harrison Dube left the 13 000 residents of the township in a state of shock. He had been their tireless campaigner and had taken up issues that affected their everyday lives. Now he was gone — gunned down by three unknown assailants.

Anger welled up throughout the township and erupted in a week of unrest.

Busses, police vehicles and administration buildings were stoned and burned. The house of the 'mayor' of Lamontville, Mr Moonlight Gasas was attacked and burned — Mr Gasas was thought to have agreed to the rent increases.

The death of Mr Dube sent shockwaves throughout the country. Not only did it focus international attention on South Africa once again, but raised new questions on the violent deaths of community leaders who die at the barrel of a gun.



Crowds at Harrison Dube's funeral

# Looking for legal help?

## What is Legal Aid

Legal aid means getting legal advice or help free of charge or for a very small charge, if you cannot pay for a lawyer.

## First let us look at your rights to get legal representation

**A. In a criminal case** (if you are arrested) (This does not include rights of political detainees.

1. An **ARRESTED PERSON** has the right to request the assistance of a lawyer, from the moment of arrest. The person may request that a lawyer be present during his questioning. The person has the right to refuse to answer any questions if his lawyer is not present. He does not have to make any statement, or sign any document, without first consulting a lawyer. But, the person **MUST GIVE** the police his correct name and address in full.

2. When the person appears **IN COURT** for the first time, he will be asked to plead guilty or not guilty to the offence. The person **DOES NOT** have to plead, if he tells the court the following:

- he does not want to plead as he needs a lawyer; or
- he cannot plead, because he did not have enough time to prepare for his case.

If the court accepts this, then the case will be postponed to a later date. Then the person **MUST** try to see a lawyer immediately.

**ALMOST** every day people encounter the law in different ways. Most people do not know that when they buy something or when they sign a document or even when they buy a train or bus ticket, they are making an agreement. If someone does not keep to the agreement, then that person is breaking the law.

In most cases people do not need help from someone who knows the law. But there are times when people do need to look for advice or help. When you sign a document which you do not understand or when you are arrested by the police, you will require legal help.

But not everyone can pay for the help they might get from a lawyer. Most people in South Africa earn very low wages to be able to pay lawyers fees.

It is therefore important to know where you can go for legal help without paying for it, or paying very little.



Advice being given at the Legal Resources Centre.

3. **THE CRIMINAL COURT WILL ONLY APPOINT A LAWYER FOR THE PERSON, IF THE CRIME CARRIES A POSSIBLE DEATH SENTENCE.** Here are some examples of crimes which carry the death sentence:

- Murder; rape; robbery; house-breaking and certain political crimes.

**B. IN A CIVIL CASE** (If you are being sued)

When you receive a document called a summons you must immediately seek advice or help.

1. In a Supreme Court action you may be able to apply to the Court for legal aid if:
  - the court is satisfied that your salary is so low that you will not be able to pay a lawyer for a long time.
  - You do not own any property to the value of R100,00. This does not include household goods, clothes or tools you use in your trade.

The court may refer you for legal aid. The lawyer will investigate your financial circumstances as well as your chances of winning the case. If the lawyer takes on the case and if you win, the lawyer may claim his fees from you.

2. Sometimes a Magistrate's Court; a Commissioner's Court and a Black Divorce Court may grant you free legal aid.

So far we have looked at your right to legal representation in a criminal and civil case. Now let's discuss where you can go for legal aid.

## How to obtain legal aid

There are two kinds of places you can go to for legal aid.

The one place is a government run place and is called a Legal Aid Board.

Not everyone can get legal aid here. Either because

- (a) your wages are more than the fixed rate or
- (b) the kind of problem you have does not qualify for government aid.

The other kind of place is privately run organisations. There are many such organisations.

### APPLYING FOR LEGAL AID FROM LEGAL AID BOARD

1. Any person may apply for legal aid at the Legal Aid Office.
2. If you qualify for legal aid, then the Legal Aid Officer will refer you to a lawyer. Usually you will be asked to pay a small fee.

— The address of the Legal Aid Board is

9th Floor Security Building  
95 Commissioner Street  
Johannesburg  
Tel: 836-0421/22

### PROBLEMS THAT THE BOARD WILL HELP WITH

The Legal Aid Board will help you with:

1. **CRIMINAL CASES** — They will look at the person's criminal record and work record. They will decide whether the person deserves help.
2. **CIVIL CASES** — Legal Aid is available in cases of divorce, disputes with firms (for example — Hire Purchase), etc.

### PROBLEMS THE BOARD WILL NOT HELP WITH

The Legal Aid Board will not help you with:

1. Traffic offences (parking, speeding, or any offence to do with the use of a motor car).
2. Proving who is the father of a child.
3. When you want to sue someone for damaging your name; seduction and persuading a person to leave his/her husband or wife.

### (b) PRIVATELY RUN ORGANISATIONS

Here is a list of some privately run organisations. It also shows you the type of problems that are dealt with by each organisation.

PRIVATELY RUN ORGANISATIONS	PROBLEMS THEY WILL HELP YOU WITH	PRIVATELY RUN ORGANISATIONS	PROBLEMS THEY WILL HELP YOU WITH
<b>LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE</b> 401 Elizabeth House 18 Pritchard Street Johannesburg 836-9831/2/3/4/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Influx control</li> <li>— Labour cases;</li> <li>— Housing problems;</li> <li>— Consumer exploitation</li> </ul>	<b>BLACK SASH</b> Khotso House 12 de Villiers Street Johannesburg 37-2435.36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Influx control and related problems</li> <li>— Pass laws</li> </ul>
<b>LEGAL AID BUREAU</b> 209 Arop House 71 Von Brandis Street Johannesburg 29-4872/75 8.30 am - 12.30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Takes on all criminal and civil cases</li> <li>— Specialized advice on family matters</li> </ul>	<b>POWA</b> (People Opposing Women Abuse) 783-5029 (24 Hours)	Assists women who have been assaulted or raped
<b>BECKER STREET ADVICE OFFICE</b> 2nd Floor Metropolitan Homes Trust Building Cnr President & Becker Streets Johannesburg 838-2593	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Pass laws;</li> <li>— Trespassing;</li> <li>— Curfew and related offences</li> </ul>	<b>INDUSTRIAL AID SOCIETY</b> 415 York House 57 Rissik Street Johannesburg 836-4422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Labour law</li> <li>— Pensions</li> </ul>
<b>DEPENDANT'S CONFERENCE OF THE SA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES</b> 5th Floor  Khotso House 42 De Villiers Street Johannesburg 28-2251	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Assists the family of people affected by the Security laws</li> </ul>	<b>DWEP</b> Room 102  Kenlaw House 27 De Beer Street Braamfontein 39-6757	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Labour problems of Domestic Workers and gardeners</li> </ul>
		<b>HOEK STREET LAW CLINIC</b> 801-7 Metro Centre 266 Bree Street Johannesburg 29-5356/7/8/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Consumer exploitation</li> <li>— Labour cases</li> </ul>
		<b>ACTSTOP</b> Room 111 Kenlaw House 27 De Beer Street Braamfontein 39-7233	Assist people affected by the Group Areas Act with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Housing;</li> <li>— Evictions;</li> </ul>

# What is a Breast lump

Any swelling or thickening or lump that you can feel in your breast is a breast lump.

## Different types of breast lumps

- (1) The most common breast lump in young women is known as fibro adenoma or the breast mouse. This is a slippery lump which can be easily moved around. It is not a serious disease and can be cured by a simple operation.
- (2) In older women the most common breast disease is called chronic mastitis. Both breasts feel lumpy with this sickness. There may be pain in the breasts. It hurts more with periods.
- (3) **Breast Cancer**  
This is a common cancer in women.

## Signs of breast cancer

If you are 35 years or older and have a breast lump which:

- is in one breast only
- is growing fast
- is hard and does not move easily in the breast
- if there is dimpling of the skin over the breast
- if there is a lump in the armpit on the same side
- if there is blood coming out of the breast.

You must report to your doctor. Do not ignore breast lumps. If treated early breast cancer can be cured. Most breast lumps are harmless.

- Examine your breasts regularly
- Early breast cancer can be detected by regular self examination
- Early breast cancer can be cured.



The areas of the breast that have to be examined.

- Dimpling of the breast.
- Inverted nipple.

# How to examine your breasts

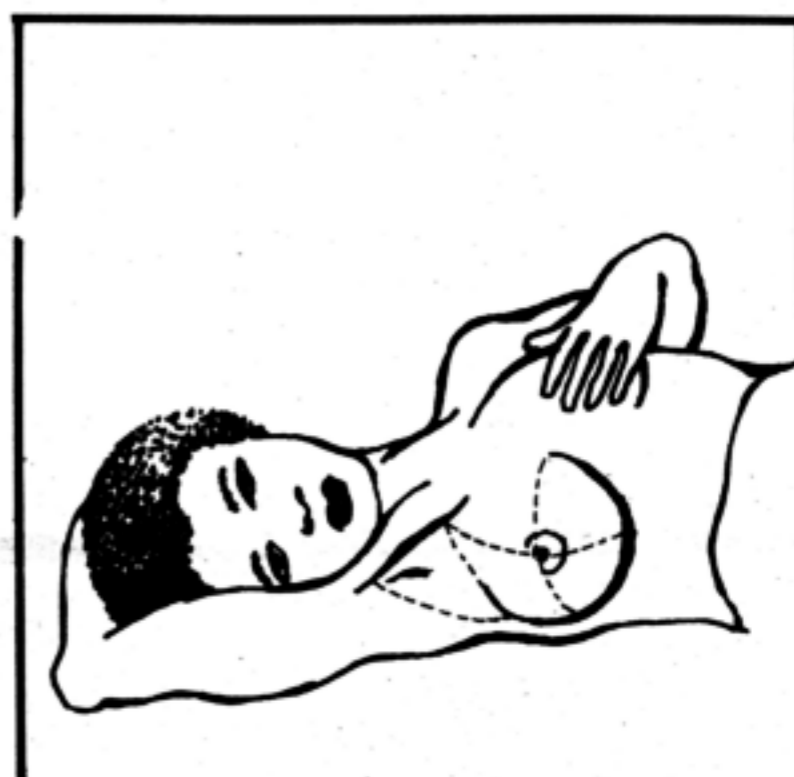
All women over the age of 25 years must examine their breasts every three weeks — after menstruation.



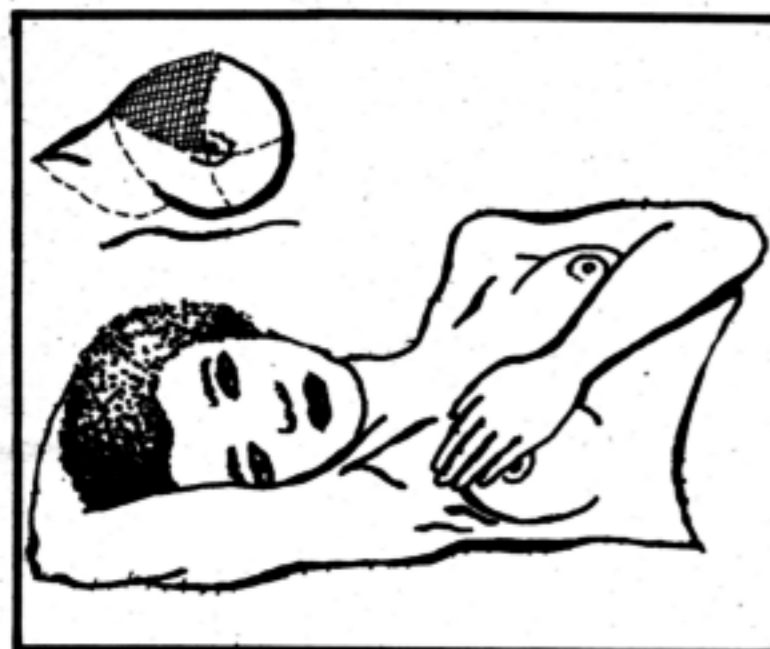
Sit or stand in front of a mirror with your arms relaxed at the side and look at your breasts carefully to see whether there are any changes in size or shape. Look for any dimpling of the skin.



Raise both your arms over your head and look for exactly the same signs.



Lie down on your bed, put a pillow under your left shoulder and place your left hand under your head.



Feel for a lump or thickening in the left breast with the finger of your right hand held together flat by pressing gently but firmly in small circular movements. Feel the inner upper part of the breast.



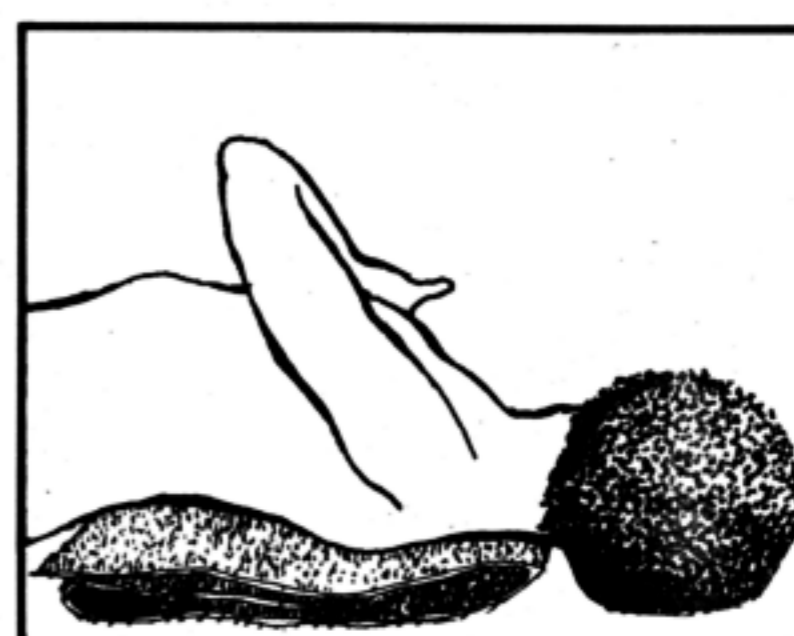
Then feel the inner lower part.



Now feel the lower outer part.



Now bring your left arm to your side and feel under your armpit.



Do the same thing on the other breast.

# Trade Unions seek Unity

SINCE 1979 trade unions have increased in number and grown in strength.

Workers have joined trade unions to fight against low wages, retrenchments, victimisation, detention of union leaders, influx control and government attempts to control the unions.

Many times workers have gone on strike against these common problems.

However, the actions of individual unions are not always strong enough to force the bosses to meet workers demands.

In recent years, workers have realised that different trade unions need to take common stands to challenge their bosses and the government.

In 1981 for example, workers all over the country went on strike against the government's Pension Bill, forcing the government to withdraw it.

Trade union unity has therefore become an important question for the independent trade union movement. Trade union leaders and workers alike have been spurred on to come together to discuss this question.

In August 1981, representatives from all the independent unions came together in Cape Town to discuss trade union unity.

The meeting, known as the Langa Summit, was very successful and the unions pledged to:

- reject government interference in union business
- reject industrial councils as a method of collective bargaining
- establish regional solidarity action committees, representing different unions which would work together and co-operate on day to day issues.

Follow-up summits held in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth however, were marked with difficulties. Unions differed over the best method of achieving

union unity, and the talks broke down.

The unions issued a statement saying, "there is no basis for unity at this stage".

In the meantime, the bosses were on the offensive and conditions became more difficult for the workers' struggle.

The recession and rising unemployment provides bosses with the opportunity to undermine gains made by workers over many years.

Realizing that unity is a priority, the unions came together again at a fourth summit in Cape Town last month.

The summit set up a feasibility committee to discuss the possibility of a federation which would unite all the trade unions.

At the moment the South African Allied



'Hlanganani Basebenzi' - workers unite

Workers Union (Saawu), Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), General and Allied Workers Union (Gawu), Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union of S.A. (Ccaawusa), General Workers Union (Gwu), Food and Canning Workers Union (Fcwu), African Food and Canning Workers Union (Afcwu) and the Council of Unions of S.A. (Cusa), have joined the feasibility committee.

While all the unions participating in the unity talks are committed to

unity and most agree that a federation is needed, differences still exist over how unity is best achieved and how a federation should come about.

Some unions feel now is the right time for a federation. Unions which are not ready for a federation, they say, should join later.

Other unions feel a firm basis for a federation should first be laid. Working jointly on concrete issues through Solidarity Action Committees will build unity in the strongest possible way, they say.

While discussion continues amongst the unions, trade union unity has become an important question for other organisations too.

The African Food and Canning Workers Union (AFCWU) initiated meetings with community and student organisations to discuss the issue.

"We welcome the re-opening of the unity talks," one community leader commented.

"The unity of the workers is essential for our struggle as a whole."

"Every step taken by

the unions should build on unity rather than weaken it."

Bosses are less prepared to give wage increases despite rising prices, and if workers strike, bosses use the strike as an excuse to retrench workers.

Thousands of workers have been laid off and often union members are the first to go.

Harsher implementation of influx control makes it more difficult for people, especially contract workers and "illegals", to stay in urban areas. It is almost

impossible for contract workers to get new jobs after being laid off.

At the same time the new constitutional proposals attempt to divide coloured and Indian workers from Africans. The government came down on the workers' organisations as well. Trade union leaders, including some who had been present at the Langa summit, were detained. One detainee, Neil Aggett—Transvaal secretary of the African Food and Canning workers union, died in detention.

It was becoming obvious that in the face of a concerted attack from the bosses and the government, workers needed now more than ever to stand together.

So while the summit meetings stopped, talk about unity continued at general meetings of workers, shop steward council meetings, and at meetings of office bearers.

Some unions continued to come together over common issues, but not as often as necessary.

In some areas the Langa suggestion of regional solidarity committees was taken up. In Johannesburg the committee achieved some success and continues to meet. Trade unions in the region committed themselves to the committee as a practical way of building unity.

## focus on



# CRAC

## co-ordinating residents action committee

WITH this issue SPEAK begins a series which will focus on a number of different community organisations.

A focus on the history, formation and structure of the organisation; the struggles it has gone through and the activities it is involved in. How it organises and how it allows for the democratic participation of the community.

If you want your organisation to be focussed on ... just write in.

### What is Crac

Crac is the co-ordinating body of residents associations in Johannesburg and the East Rand.

### How was Crac formed

During September 1982, residents of Western, Westbury, Newclare, Coronationville, Eldorado Park, Klipspruit and Riverlea, received letters stating that rents were to be increased from the first of October.

Many people would have found it difficult to pay the higher rents. So most areas formed action committees to fight the problem.

When action committees were formed in

most of the affected areas, people realised that we all had the same problem. All the action committees from the various areas came together to form a committee and decided to take action together. The name Co-ordinating Residents Action Committee, (Crac) was decided upon for this larger committee.

### Joint Action

All of us attended house meetings in our areas and finally drew up a memorandum and de-

monstrated at the Johannesburg City Council offices on 8th September 1982.

### Common problems

Crac had regular meetings, and through these meetings it was learned that other areas also had problems. At the time Actonville flat dwellers had a rent problem too, so did Geluksdal and Reigerpark. We also learned about other community organisations like — The Federation of Residents Associations in Lenasia and the Soweto Civic Association. All these areas and organisations were invited to Crac meetings.

### Strong local bodies

Maybe we will have a strong united regional body one day — but we must first strengthen our local residents associations and action committees.

### What is an Action Committee?

All the residents of an area (tenants and sub-tenants) are considered members of the local action committee.

Each street or block of flats arrange house meetings where they discuss the problems and elect representatives.

Representatives from all the streets or flats in an area then meet regularly at rep. committee meetings. The reps. are the representatives of the action committee. If there is a need, areas arrange mass meetings.

### Message to residents

You are part of the area action committee. It is important for you to attend house meetings.

If you do not have a rep. in your street or flat, contact your area action committee and arrange for a meeting to elect one.

### Where does Crac fit in?

Crac is only a co-

ordinating body. It does not have officials. Crac meetings are held to:

1. Help committees to help each other to solve problems
2. Help committees to discuss collective action. (eg. the rents).

We can only have strong joint action if our local bodies are strong. It is important for us to encourage everyone in our areas to participate in the local committees.



This is how Crac works

