



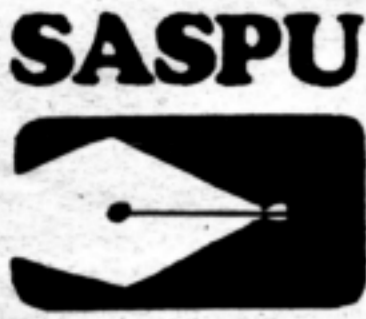
**Cholera:  
the disease  
of apartheid**  
• See centrespread



**Cosas president  
on controls  
in education**  
• See page 6



**Comment on  
Rabe and Steyn  
Commissions**  
• See page 8



# NATIONAL

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Central Johannesburg is brought to a halt as thousands march to the cemetery

## Hero's funeral for Aggett

THE PEOPLE of South Africa will mourn Dr Neil Aggett by taking his work forward.

This was the common message at Neil Aggett's funeral when thousands of people gathered near the graveside to hear speaker after speaker outline the ideals of the Transvaal secretary of the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU) who died in detention on February 5.

'The monument we must build to Neil is the unity of the trade union movement', said one speaker.

Earlier over 5 000 people from all over the country — trade unionists, workers, medical colleagues, family, friends, students and sympathisers — crowded the St Mary's Cathedral in central Johannesburg for an emotional service interspersed with freedom songs and hymns.

Jan Theron, general secretary of the FCWU blamed the government for Dr Aggett's death.

'Let us say in plain language that a trade unionist has died for the work and ideals he stood for', he said.

'In the Transvaal where so many unions were going in different directions, Neil was the person who brought them together, and at the time of his death he was engaged in forging a stronger unity'.

Theron said Dr Aggett had worked for the union without pay and had continued to work at Baragwanath hospital as a doctor.

'Sometimes he would work the

### INSIDE

- FCWU tribute — page 2
- 100 000 stop work — page 3
- Funeral pictures — back page

whole of Friday night at the hospital, and then be in the office the next morning to deal with workers' problems', he said.

After the service, a procession of hundreds of cars gave way to a march when mourners decided to walk the 15 kilometre route to the cemetery.

The strong presence of security police and riot squad with sjamboks and teargas did not dampen the spirit of mourners who remained calm and continued to chant protests and sing freedom songs.

During the march the crowd swelled to over 15 000, led by union banners. As they approached the cemetery, a group carried Dr Aggett's coffin shoulder-high to the graveside.

Speaking on behalf of the democratic trade unions, Dave Lewis, general secretary of the General Workers' Union (GWU) said the government labelled Dr Aggett a 'criminal' because he had believed in democratic worker organisations and had been dedicated to uniting



Pall bearers leaving the cathedral

the union movement.

'In a country where workers are not allowed to have control over anything, not even their own trade unions, then Neil was a criminal'.

'Neil's work and Neil's death will bring us together', said Lewis. 'His death is a great price to pay for the union movement, but we must now clearly see who the common enemy is'.

He said the government should be shown that 'while they sit in parliament passing laws about the trade union movement, their hands are full of the blood of our heroes'.

'But most of all we must show the government that for every Neil that dies, there will be 1 000 to take his place.'

Lewis said Oscar Mphetha 'a great South African leader' had called Dr Aggett 'a man of the people'.

'There is no greater thing that can be said about anybody and there's no better person to say it about than Neil'.

Robert Gqweta, brother of detained SAAWU president Thozamile Gqweta said the government had launched a 'terror campaign' against trade unionists, community leaders and students.

'The ideals Neil and others have died for are now stronger than ever', he said.

A friend and colleague of Dr Aggett's, Dennis Reubels said, 'For Neil there was no difference between union work and medical work'.

'Neil didn't want to be a doctor who just handed out pills — he wanted to put the causes of illnesses right'.

'Neil believed only the organised working class could do this', he said. 'But he also believed that worker organisation without democracy was meaningless'.

Reubels said Dr Aggett was first and foremost a democrat. 'But for Neil democracy didn't mean putting a cross on a piece of paper once every couple of years. For Neil democracy was a process everyone should take part in everyday.'

'As David Lewis has said, the best memorial we can erect is a living memorial — a memorial to remember how he lived and why he died'.

# Food and Canning Workers' Union: Tribute to Neil Aggett



Neil Aggett — 46th person to die in detention

ON 27 November 1981 Neil Aggett, our Transvaal Regional Secretary, was detained by security police. His comrades in our Union and the trade union movement, and the thousands of workers whom he had tirelessly worked for and whose respect he had earned, were not to see him alive again.

At 1.30 am on 5 February 1982, so the police say, Neil Aggett was found hanging in his cell at John Vorster Square, Johannesburg.

The trade union struggle is an open struggle. Everything that a trade union leader does or says is put before the workers, who are the Union members, for their approval. That is the way our Union works and that is the way Neil conducted himself.

The authorities seek to convince us that his detention is for other reasons, reasons of state security which have nothing to do with the Union. This is a lie. At the time of his detention the Security Police took from our Johannesburg office our minute book, petty cash book, bank deposit book, receipt book, letterheads, and files on negotiations with employers. The Security Police refuse to release these books, despite representations by our lawyers, despite the fact that many of these things were not even used by Neil. What have these books to do with state security?

The workers know that Neil worked day and night to build up the workers'

organisation. When was there time to threaten state security? When will the Security Police admit it in public: any Union which isn't under their thumb, any Union which isn't in the bosses' pocket, is regarded by them as a threat to state security.

Neil first became involved in the Union in 1978, when Union organisers in Johannesburg to re-organise our Johannesburg Branch stayed at his home. The Johannesburg Branch of the A.F. & C.W.U. had been smashed after a series of bannings by the State in the 1960's. Yet workers in the canning factories still remembered the Union as a body which had stood for their interests, and many of the workers in 1978 had been members of the Union before. It was these workers that were to form the backbone of the reorganised Johannesburg Branch.

The Union had no resources whatever - no funds with which to buy a vehicle or pay salaries, rent offices - other than the 20c subscriptions that each member contributes.

Neil, who was a qualified doctor and working at Baragwanath Hospital at the time, was always willing to assist officials with lifts to the factories. Later he became increasingly drawn into the administration and organization of the Branch, and was asked to help in an official capacity. But because there was no money to

pay another salary and the Branch was struggling to make ends meet, he continued to work part-time as a doctor.

At that time all the resources of the Union were thrown into the Fattis & Monis strike. One of the strategies the Union resolved on was to organize the Fattis & Monis factory in Isando, in the Transvaal. After various attempts to organize these workers had failed, Neil was entrusted with the task. He set to work, with commitment and great persistence, organizing house meetings, organizing in the hostels of Tembisa.

Neil had been associated with Tembisa since his first job in the Transvaal, and sought to root the Union in the daily lives and struggles of the working people of Tembisa. As a result this was the area of the Union's most rapid growth, to the extent that a separate office, with its own Branch Executive Committee, was necessary in Kempton Park.

Through the same methods of thorough organizing, through holding regular meetings with workers and committees and taking up the issues that mattered most to workers, our Union also grew and was consolidated in other areas. In doing so Neil had to overcome many difficulties such as the apathy of the workers, lack of resources, and the suspicion towards a white that was shown by certain

blacks who portray the struggle in racial terms.

Neil also played a leading role in building up links of comradeship and solidarity between different Unions in the Transvaal. In our own Union he fought against any tendency to separate the struggles we were fighting from the struggle of all workers, and in the trade union movement he fought the sectarian thinking that has weakened and divided the movement as a whole. His influence and his example contributed to the success of the solidarity meetings between different Unions in the Transvaal, following the Conference of Langa in August last year.

As a person Neil was modest and unassuming. He never sought to build up a personal following. Yet he commanded respect, by the example he set, of quiet hard work, and by the respect he himself showed to others. He was greatly loved by the workers, and our Union is proud to have been associated with a person of his calibre.

He died for the work to which he dedicated himself: the establishment of a strong united democratic trade union movement.

## Mpetha not in court as trial continues

THE TRIAL of Oscar Mpetha and 18 others which has been in progress for almost a year now, has recommenced and is expected to continue for at least another six months.

Oscar Mpetha, a trade union and community leader, is seriously ill. Many fear that the 72 year old chairperson of the Nyanga Resident's Association and African Food and Canning Workers Union's organiser, will die before final judgement is passed. His diabetic condition has worsened and one foot has become gangrenous.

Mpetha has not been granted bail to be hospitalised and remains at Polsmoor prison. He is taken to the outpatients Groote Schuur for treatment.

No evidence has been led against Mpetha since September last year and he has been excused from appearing in court.

Eighteen others and five youths, who cannot be named because they are under 18, are accused of murder and face six charges under the Terrorism Act with alternate charges of public violence and conspiracy.

They continue to appear in the Cape Town Supreme Court four days a week in what must be one of the most drawn out and dramatic political trials in the history of the Western Cape. It was alleged that five statements made by the accused and used by the prosecution had not been handed over to the defense. The accused in question claimed their statements had been made under duress.

A 'trial within a trial' followed which questioned the admissibility of the statements. The defense made a successful application that the statements be handed over.

The next part of the trial within the trial was to determine whether the onus was on the state or on the defense to prove that the statements had been made voluntarily.

The judgement passed on the first day after the recess was that for the first two statements the onus lay on the state and on the others the onus lay on the defense.

The trial is now proceeding with the state attempting to prove that these two statements were voluntarily made.

The courtroom was packed on the day the trial resumed.

The prisoners are allowed visits once a week although Mpetha's relatives have occasionally had problems obtaining the required permission.

## Aggett stood for worker unity

DR NEIL Aggett is dead because he stood for the unity of all workers in all unions, speakers told a memorial service in Cape Town's St George's Cathedral.

More than 1 500 people filled the cathedral where messages of condolences from a number of organisations were read out.

Referring to recent government assurances about the safety of detainees, the Detainees Parent's Support Committee said Dr Aggett's death exposed the 'horror of their lies'.

Addressing the meeting, Jan Theron of the Food and Canning Worker's Union said the question was: 'How did Neil Aggett die?'

He said, 'The security police who are conducting a campaign of harassment against trade unions are cooking up a show trial in which the democratic trade unions will be charged with furthering the aims of the working class of South Africa'.



FCWU general secretary Jan Theron addresses Cape Town memorial meeting

'They say Neil was detained to play a star role in that trial. No doubt Neil is dead because that role was not to his liking', he said.

Shahida Issel, wife of community leader Johnny Issel who has been in detention for more than three months, said Dr Aggett's death showed

the government had no respect for human lives.

'The death of Neil has reminded us that when our loved ones are taken in the early hours of the morning, we may never see them again', she said.

The suffering caused by detention would continue 'as long as injustice

continues to destroy this country', she said.

A strong contingent of plainclothes and uniformed police kept watch outside the cathedral during the service.

The service ended with a minute's silence and the singing of Nkosi Sikelele Afrika.

## Detention death sparks national protest

PROTEST FOLLOWING the death in detention of trade unionist Dr Neil Aggett was not confined to workers. Democrats throughout South Africa held meetings to voice opposition to detentions, deaths in detention and security legislation.

In Cape Town, a meeting of over 500 staff and students at the University of Cape Town's Medical School condemned the attitudes of the South African Medical Council and the Medical Association of South Africa towards detention.

The meeting adopted a statement by Groote Schuur Hospital's Chief Physician, Professor PI Folb, saying that the medical profession shares a responsibility for the death in detention last Friday of Dr Neil Aggett.

The statement slammed the South African Medical Council, 'which condoned the treatment meted out to Biko', for doing nothing to give effect to its own resolution 18 months ago to change the detention laws in order to ensure the safety and well-being of detainees.

The Medical Association of South Africa was also criticized for failing to achieve any progress with regard to the conditions of detention and for showing 'no public signs of concern'.

Frances Ames, Professor of Neurology at UCT, told the meeting that suffering of Steve Biko and Neil Aggett should concern the medical profession as a whole.

'It is inconceivable that any South African doctor who honestly believes in the nobility of our profession can still remain silent and passive in the face of this challenge which strikes at the very heart of our professional commitment,' she said.

The meeting also adopted a resolution calling for 'the abolition of detention and the unconditional release of all detainees'.

The resolution further demanded that the health of detainees be protected in the interim by free and unrestricted access to medical personnel of their own choice.

'Under present circumstances, we are forced to conclude that no-one working for progressive change in

South Africa is safe under the present gamut of security legislation', the resolution said.

In a statement read out at the meeting UCT Principal, Dr Stuart Saunders, called on South Africans to speak up to ensure that Parliament repeals Section Six of the Terrorism Act when the report of the Rabie Commission is debated.

'The damage that the excessive police power Section Six conveys causes too great a wound in the fabric of our society. Lets do away with it,' the statement said.

At Baragwanath hospital in Johannesburg, where Neil Aggett was a doctor at the time of his arrest, a memorial service was held by the

Transvaal Medical Society (TMS.) In a tribute to Dr Aggett, the TMS described him as a true health worker.

'His concern for his patients went beyond their immediate illness'.

The tribute said Neil had recognised that factors such as housing, education, nutrition and a stable home contributed to a person's health and this was why he became involved in organising workers.

'Neil's death is not only a loss to fellow health workers but to all underprivileged sectors in our society. His death will spur us on in our struggle for a just and democratic society,' the TMS statement said.

# Strengthen student-worker ties — Phaahla

1981 MARKED an important shift in the student movement, with students now playing a supportive role in workers' struggles.

Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) president Joe Phaahla said this at the Nation Union of South African Students' Nusas congress in Cape Town — the first time in 12 years that a representative from a black student organisation had addressed a Nusas congress.

'But', he warned, 'while it is important in the coming year that students continue in this direction, we must also persist in challenging the values upon which our society rests'. He stressed that education was an essential area for student action.

He said students should consis-

tently challenge the system's ideology to counter increasing attempts at co-opting students into the status quo.

Phaahla cited the establishment of SRC's on black campuses as an example of 'the new approach to accommodate students. "SRC's can be progressive', he said, 'but they can also be a means of co-opting students into the system.'

'We need to strengthen our organisations to resist these attempts and at the same time strengthen student-worker relations so that our challenge to the ideology is based on a commitment to ending exploitation.

In this way the schools and universities must become real bases to reject co-option and oppose exploitation, he said.

Phaahla outlined the areas in which students, because of their particular position in society, are able to contribute to the workers' struggle.

Students, being relatively unconstrained by responsibility, are more able to respond to political issues 'without feeling the pinch', whereas workers usually react more readily to matters directly affecting their livelihood such as working conditions and wages.

'Students have more time to research, collect data, analyse and compile information which can be used to strengthen the workers' theoretical understanding of their situation'.

The supportive role of students, he said, extends to producing pamphlets, stickers, collecting funds and arranging meetings.

Tracing the student movement from the ANC Youth League in the 1940's, Phaahla examined lessons learnt from past experiences which led to the present position.

He looked at the 1968 break-away of black students from NUSAS and the subsequent formation of SASO. 'Black students were frustrated with the liberal orientation of NUSAS which did not seek to tackle even the fundamental issues on a political and economic level.'

This split had a positive effect on both black and white students, he said, on the one hand reviving political debate amongst black intellectuals while at the same time injecting introspection into the white student movement.

He said it was still important for

black and white students to operate from their own organisations. 'Each student group faces specific problems and they must go about challenging the present structures in different ways. It would be counterproductive for people experiencing different situations to amalgamate.'

Black and white student organisations should work together on common issues and through the co-operation form a base for a future society.

Phaahla said priorities for students in 1982 would be to strengthen the organisation by building up democratic structures, to tackle attempts at co-opting students into the status quo and to draw more white students into the democratic movement; while sustaining its supportive role in the workers' struggle.

## Azaso to draw up 'Education Charter'

The Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso) plans to draw up an Education Charter which will list student demands and rights.

This was decided at Azaso's first General Students Meeting of the year, where the theme 'Education towards a democratic society' was adopted.

The Education Charter will be drawn up at a conference later in the year. Meanwhile students will prepare for the conference by forming education committees to examine the education system in consultation with educationists and community organisations. Students will also study alternative forms of education.

Azaso President Joe Phaahla said students still needed to understand why the education system was so repressive. 'It does not simply mean inequality in facilities. It also means

an attempt to control the values of the students so that they begin to accept racism as a way of life; so that they accept poverty and hunger as a necessary part of a successful socio-economic system', he said.

A guest speaker, Zac Yacoob, chairperson of the Democratic lawyers Association (DLA) called for closer links between students and their community and stressed the need for students to become involved in the struggles of their communities.

The meeting, attended by students from the Western Cape, Wits, Turfloop, Medunsa, Fort Hare, Seminary Colleges, Durban/Westville, Rand college of Education and Natal University unanimously passed a resolution condemning the continued detention of students, trade unionists and members of community organisations.



Joe Phaahla — Azaso President

## Macwusa five released

PORT ELIZABETH — Five leading trade unionists, held in detention for almost nine months have been released.

The five, all from the Motor Assembly and Component Worker Unions of South Africa (Macwusa) were held under Section Six of the Terrorism Act.

Four were detained at the beginning of June last year while traveling through the Transkei. Apparently they were not carrying valid travel documents. They were Dumile Makanda, Macwusa chairperson, Maxwell Madingozi and Zandile Mjuza, two Macwusa officials at General Motors, and Mxoliso Didiza, a union organiser.

The other detainee was Siph Pityana, an organiser from the General Workers Union of South Africa and Macwusa.

Macwusa is an unregistered union based largely in Port Elizabeth. It had organised extensively in the Ford and General Motor plants and was heavily involved in the massive strikes centred around the Ford plants last year.

## Nation's workers down tools for Neil Aggett

THE HALF hour work stoppage on February 11, when over 100 000 workers downed tools to protest against the death in detention of trade unionist Dr. Neil Aggett was a symbol of the part Aggett had played in uniting the trade union movement in South Africa.

This was said by Dave Lewis, general secretary of the General Workers Union (GWU) to thousands of mourners at the graveside of Neil Aggett, Transvaal secretary of the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU).

The half-hour work stoppage called by the FCWU as part of a day of mourning had been highly successful. FCWU general secretary Jan Theron said the Federated Chamber of Industries and Asso-com had been co-operative and employers in all factories where FCWU organised allowed the stoppage.

Theron said in the light of this co-operation it was notable that TUCSA (Trade Union Council of South Africa) had made no statement on Dr Aggett's death. 'While

employers obviously recognise that the death in detention of a trade unionist had serious repercussions for labour relations, the conservative unions have not responded'. He said this suggested that because they felt threatened by the progressive unions, the death and silencing of democratic unionists served their interests.

The country-wide work stoppage involved workers mainly from the progressive trade union movement with FCWU's call joined by Saawu (South African Allied Workers

Union) and Fosatu (Federation of South African Trade Unions).

In the eastern Cape well over 20 000 workers from the Port Elizabeth, East London and Uitenhage motor industry downed tools.

In the Transvaal, the work stoppage was widely observed. At some factories on the East Rand there was a 100 per cent stoppage and Reef Chemical's workers in Boksburg marched to the administration (Union), Gawu (General and Allied Workers Union), GWU, AFCWU (African Food and Canning Wor-

their workers across the country had observed the stoppage.

Mwasa (Media Workers Association of South Africa and the SASJ (South African Society of Journalists) also observed the half-hour stoppage.

International support came from the Australian Council of Trade Unions which called for a week-long ban on South African shipping and board offices singing freedom songs.

Other forms of protest included motor cavalcade of 90 cars through Johannesburg's city centre and torch-light protest along Jan Smuts avenue organised by the Detainees Parents Support Committee and Wits students.

Wits and Rhodes universities observed the half-hour work stoppage. Speakers at the Wits meeting which was attended by thousands of students, staff and university workers, called for the immediate unconditional release of detainees.

## Eight refuse to give evidence at Khotso trial

EIGHT STATE witnesses have been sentenced for refusing to give evidence in the Khotso Seatholo and Masabata Loate trial in the Vanderbijlpark Regional Court.

Seatholo, the second president of the once powerful Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) and Loate, another ex-SSRC member, are being charged under the Terrorism Act.

Seatholo is charged with forming

the South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRCO) with the aim of inciting blacks to revolt against the government and to undergo military training. Charges include distributing pamphlets, arranging passports and accommodation for people from outside the country, and arranging meetings between themselves and AZAPO members, Sowetan journalists and

members of the Azanian National Youth Union (AZANYU).

There has been tight police security throughout the trial. The COSAS general secretary claimed he was stripped naked by Security Police on the first day of the trial.

The first state witness, a young woman, refused to testify. So far at least eight people have refused.

Some have received sentences ranging from 9 to 18 months, while others have been remanded to the end of the trial. One witness said she would rather go to jail than give evidence for the state.

Thami Mazwai, a Sowetan journalist is appealing against an 18 months sentence for refusing to testify.

# Saawu under fire from

MORE THAN 2 000 workers packed the East London city hall for the South African Allied Workers Union's (Saawu) first mass meeting of the year and one of the most important events to take place in the city for a long time.

The question of strategy in the face of an intensifying onslaught on trade unionism in East London by the state authorities and the bosses was discussed by the speakers. They all agreed that the state and management were working hand in hand in an attempt to bleed Saawu to death.

For a start, Saawu's top three East London officials Thozamile Gqweta, the national president; Sisa Njikelana, the vice president; and

Eric Mntonga, the branch chairman, are still in detention under Section Six of the Terrorism Act after being arrested in early December. In addition Saawu's general secretary Sam Kikine has been in detention since November. Despite comforting letters of support from organisations and individuals nationally and internationally the continued absence of their leadership in difficult times has been a hard blow to Saawu.

Secondly, speakers mentioned the fact that Saawu has recently been evicted from their offices in central East London. The union is now housed in a previously disused church hall in Duncan Village, some distance from the centre of the city and inconveniently far from the

factories.

Mr M. Mdyogolo, the Union's branch secretary condemned the eviction, which took place under the Group Areas Act. He said this law, which had been used to hound Saawu from their offices, was made by the all-white parliament which sat in Cape Town and failed to represent the wishes of the majority of South Africa's people.

'The Laws of the Nationalist government are draconian,' he said. 'Not only are they used as a weapon to crush us but they are designed to allow the bosses to exploit us. The dice is loaded against the worker at every turn.' Mdyogolo said that until a government of the people

came to rule in South Africa the laws would be framed in such a way as to protect and condone the exploitation of the workers.

Speakers also told the meeting that key Saawu members had been dismissed from about five factories over the christmas period. This was seen as part of a general offensive on the part of the bosses to undermine Saawu completely. Acting branch chairman Godfrey Shiba warned the workers to be disciplined and not allow themselves to be provoked into a strike because this was what management wanted.

'When there is a strike, management fires all the workers and then selectively re-employs them making

sure that the most powerful union members are not taken back. The Manpower Development Centre will be used to screen workers from the rural areas to take the jobs of fired Saawu members. They want to remove all traces of Saawu from their factories.'

The onslaught on Saawu by the Ciskei government was another point raised by the speakers and the strike at Dunlop Flooring was mentioned in particular as an example of how the Ciskei intervened in Labour disputes on the side of the bosses. At Dunlop 450 workers went on strike in November, demanding a refund of their pension contributions. Management took an exceptionally hard

## Meeting calls to scrap all security laws

THE TRIALS that emerge after people have been in detention serve only to highlight the tensions associated with an undemocratic society.

This was said in a motion passed unanimously by over 1 000 people at a meeting in the Johannesburg Central Methodist Church organised by the Detainees' Parents' Support Committee (DPSC) to protest against South Africa's security laws.

The motion called for the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees and the retraction of state security laws.

A Johannesburg lawyer, Geoff Budlender warned of impending political trials in the wake of detentions. These were necessary to give the stamp of authority to state actions, he said.

'The security laws are the government's means of containing popular pressure and removing those in opposition by defining them as criminals who have broken the law.'

'This is why they have shut down one avenue after another of peaceful and legal resistance', he said.

He described the 1953 Criminal Law Amendment Act as a turning point in the country's history of repressive security laws. 'This act was passed to stop the Defiance Campaign and since then we've seen a succession of actions — bannings, prohibition of gatherings and so on.'

In this way, he said, legitimate and peaceful forms of protest, demonstration and expression of popular will have been stopped.

Dr Ismail Cachalia, a member of the DPSC said: 'We stand here today in protest against the arbitrary actions of this government — against continued detention, interrogation and harrassment of political prisoners; against bannings and violations of personal liberties.'

He said detention is only a part of this country's vicious system.

'The United Nations has called apartheid a crime against humanity. The government says apartheid is non-negotiable. We say our self-respect and desire to live like human beings is also non-negotiable.'

He said the DPSC joined all democratic forces in calling for the unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees; for the return of all exiles and for a national convention 'where the true leaders of our people can map out the future of our society.'

Professor Jerry Coovadia of the Natal Indian Congress condemned detention as unjust and hopelessly perverse.

'It achieves nothing other than to plunge this land into lawlessness and disorder.'

He said although repression is a constant feature in South Africa, it reaches a pitch at points of maximum crisis.

'The brutal crackdown on democrats this summer can be seen as a reflex by the state to a perceived



Professor Jerry Coovadia, 'the velvet glove of separate development has been drawn off to reveal the mailed fist of apartheid'.

threat to its survival'.

'The velvet glove of separate development has been drawn off to reveal the mailed fist of apartheid', he said.

Viewing the governments' strategy of 'reform', Coovadia said this

nau become 'the new catchword' because the state had found itself in a dilemma: it had realised that economic growth and apartheid did not mix.

He said this 'reform' included 'independent' homelands the Presidents Council, the Indian Council

and community councils. 'These reforms do not even represent the first step to transforming apartheid', he said. 'We reject the ploy of dividing black people into urban and rural groups; we will have nothing to do with the sham councils of state and local government and we will

have nothing to do with the sham, councils of state and local government and we repudiate 'total strategy'.

'We ask for nothing less than democracy; for an equal and just South Africa'.

He said detentions would not stop 'this march to freedom'.

'Detentions won't work because they will have to detain all progressive South Africans and there are too many of us — detentions won't work because we have too many brave men and women in our midst'.

## Students acquitted on security charge

Clapping and shouting greeted the acquittal of student Ben Greyling who stood trial on charges under the Official Secrets Act, on the 20th January.

Greyling was detained on 30th July last year while allegedly putting up

posters commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the South African Communist Party. He first appeared

in court on the 5th of November. The court alleged that he had incited a member of the Defence Force, Gerhardus van der Werff to hand over information and documents, which would 'endanger the safety of the state'.

Van der Werff had already been sentenced to 4 years imprisonment for handing over documents, dra-

wings and information about the defence force, to a member of a banned organisation.

The charges against Greyling involved inciting van der Werff to hand over information, drawing up documents dealing with the treatment of detainees in Kiekanachad and certain functions of the Defence Force.

The magistrate of the Johannesburg Regional Court acquitted Greyling from all charges on the grounds that the state had not proved its case beyond reasonable doubt. Greyling was remanded in custody. He is currently the number 1 accused in a further trial involving

three other Wits students, on charges under the Internal Security Act.

# State and Bosses

line and fired all the workers as they left the factory gates.

From the beginning managements strategy was clear. Dunlop was only a half organised factory and they felt that by weeding out the organised factory and they felt that by weeding out the organisers by provoking a strike (an action which should technically be known as a 'Lock-out' they could look forward to many long years of union-free exploitation. But the workers put up more of a fight than was expected and management, in its attempts to selectively re-employ its most skilled workers, had to send telegrams to individuals asking them to return. Also attempts to recruit scabs

through the Manpower Development Centre failed dismally, as events were to prove.

In a bizarre example of state and boss working hand in hand the Rev W. M. Xaba (Ciskei's Deputy President) announced at a public meeting that 250 vacancies for workers existed at the Dunlop factory. Applicants had to have standard three, be able to read and write English and were to assemble at the Zwelitsha offices of the Ciskei Central Intelligence Service for personal screening by Major General Charles, the notorious head of the CCIS. The next day General Sebe said he had screened 150 who he was going to send down to the Dunlop factory, and at the

same time announced he would play a more active role in screening labour in the future.

The example of the Dunlop strike, the mass detentions of unionists by the Ciskei and the hostile utterances of the leaders of the homeland were all listed by the speakers as proof of the Ciskei's intentions - to smash Saawu. In addition the loss of Unemployment Insurance Fund rights following the 'independence' of the Ciskei last year and the totalitarian function of the labour-marketing Manpower Development Centre were listed as direct threats to worker rights and organisation.

Mdyogolo said: 'We see all around us numerous attempts at

bleeding Saawu to death. Our only reply is to build a solid united front to oppose these attacks. We must be unified in our struggle against the evils of apartheid, the exploitation by the bosses and the general repressiveness of our society.'

What the Saawu speakers were responding to was the huge state clampdown on democratic organisation towards the end of last year which followed the successful anti-Republic Day and anti-SAIC campaigns as well as the incredible upsurge in militant worker activity which marked the year 1981. The meeting stressed that Saawu is just one of the organisations which, faced with the muscle of the state in

alliance with capital, has had to adapt its strategy.

Melvin Mapunye, a member of the workers committee at Johnsons and Johnson, summed it up for the workers when he concluded that the only way to oppose the onslaught was through strong shop floor organisation. 'We must turn every factory into a fortress,' he said. And that is how the leaders of Saawu see the months ahead: hard work, consolidation, a grim battle for survival.

But as Mdyogolo said: 'Our struggle to win our freedom will be a painful one and we are certain to suffer defeats. But if we are selfless and determined we are bound to win in the end.'

## Four Wits Students face security charges.

FOUR WITS University students, Ben Greyling, Elaine Mohamed, Michael O'Donovan and Les Lax appeared in the Johannesburg Regional Court on Monday 8th February on charges under the Internal Security Act 1982. Greyling has been in detention under Section 6 Internal Security Act since July last year. The others were detained on August 13th 1981.

Exhibited as evidence before the court were posters, rubber gloves, a haversack and three bottles containing turpentine. The court has heard evidence from Isak Daniel de Vries, a lecturer at RAU and a self-confessed expert on Revolutionary groups. According to de Vries, the words which appeared on the posters — 'workers unite' — are an abbreviation of Karl Marx's exhortation, 'Workers of all countries unite.' The state alleges that the accused made and distributed posters to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the banned South African Communist Party, and by so doing were furthering the aims of the Party. The accused have pleaded not guilty.

Under Cross-examination captain A van Niekerk, said that he never threatened Greyling or any of the other 3 accused. Neither did he exert any pressure or influence over them during the interrogation. He denied that Greyling was naked, handcuffed and wearing leg irons when he first saw him in his office at John Vorster Square. Captain van Niekerk also denied claims by the defence that he destroyed Mohammed's statement and that she was told she would be detained indefinitely if she did not co-operate.

De La Hunt, for the defence, said that Mohammed would tell the court of a police conversation to the effect that she would be taken to 'the end of the room and be placed in a blue chair' and that one of the policemen had said he could do anything with her and no-one need ever know.

De la Hunt also put it to Captain van Niekerk that detention was a weapon used to intimidate people into making decisions under duress. The trial continues.



People in the Eastern Cape have been hard-hit by the unemployment crisis.

## Job seekers queue in vain as unemployment continues to rise

PORT ELIZABETH — The recurrent scene of huge crowds of job seekers outside Port Elizabeth factories this year is one indication of the growing number of unemployed people in the area.

Many of them have not had a permanent job for years, and some are breadwinners who rely on the goodwill of relatives and friends to buy food and pay rent.

Some, who cannot afford to pay bus fares, rise at 4 am and walk from the city's black residential areas to factories near the city centre. Outside factories they congregate to wait for a personnel manager to emerge from the building and select a few for employment.

The company official normally surveys the crowd, from behind the safety of a fence or gates, and randomly chooses those closest.

Most job-seekers spoken to relied on Unemployment Insurance Fund

(UIF) payouts for as long as they lasted, but the Fund was alleged to be 'unreliable'.

Workers had to wait for as long as three months to be paid out, and some, who had contributed while employed, had not been given unemployment cards by their previous employers and were therefore not eligible to claim.

People complained of long queues at the payout centres, and of being told to return week after week before receiving their money.

Some workers did not even know of the existence of the Fund. Others said they could not waste valuable job seeking time standing in queues week after week at the East Cape Administration Board (Ecab) offices.

Figures released in Parliament last year showed nearly half the people registered as unemployed by the 15 administration boards in

South Africa were in the eastern Cape.

The most recent statistics of Ecab show 54 309 REGISTERED black unemployed in the area at the end of November. The real figure is likely to be much higher, and the January unemployment figures, which will include school leavers, will be up considerably.

And figures show that the economically active population is on the increase, which will only serve to worsen the situation.

Employer bodies claim the Government's reluctance to assist industrial development in the Port Elizabeth / Uitenhage area is at the root of the high unemployment role.

A Rhodes University economist, P. Black, cites the capital intensive nature of the eastern Cape economy, coupled with a widely predicted recession, as the cause.

The solution, he said, lay partly in

the encouragement of a relatively more labour-intensive industry.

However, South Africa was experiencing a recessionary period, and a decline in the economic growth rate was expected. Under such conditions, industry would employ less labour, Black said.

The situation is bound to deteriorate with widespread layoffs predicted in the motor industry by labour observers this year.

Motor and component companies have strenuously denied they plan to lay off workers, and unions operating in the industries have vowed to fight should this occur.

For two days last month, General Motors shut down the majority of its assembly operations as a result of 'material shortages', and workers were not paid during this period.

This 'short-timing' is in line with union demands that alternatives to lay-offs be found.

# SASPU NATIONAL

## Neil Aggett dies...

We mourn the loss of Neil Aggett — somebody who knew that in order to build a democratic society, the divisions that presently exist need to be broken down and that thus the struggle for that democracy also demands the co-operation and unity of all those committed to change.

He actively demonstrated this in his work both as doctor and trade unionist. Neil's contribution is too valuable to be relegated to the shelves of symbolic praise — it must be actively continued. This is the only way we can pay tribute to him.

## but Section Six stays as govt accepts Rabie

ON WEDNESDAY, February 3 the recommendations of the Rabie Commission on 'security' legislation were published.

On Friday, February 5 Neil Aggett was found dead in his cell. Three days after he was buried PW Botha announced in parliament that his Government had accepted the proposals of the Rabie Commission.

One of the main recommendations was the retention of all present 'security' legislation, including the notorious Section 6 of the Terrorism Act under which Dr Aggett died.

At least 200 other South Africans are presently being held under this 'security legislation.

## Show trials

A series of trials, the State has indicated, are now in the offing. As community leaders, lawyers and trade unionists have all said, these are meant as show trials aimed both at legitimising and justifying present and proposed 'security' legislation. They are also seen as part of an onslaught on democratic organisations by attempting to intimidate them.

Neil Aggett's death, recent allegations of torture in detention, the hospitalisation of at least four detainees and the conditions under which the detainees are held, cannot be divorced from the proposed trials.

## A nation of criminals?

The State seems desperate to condemn all democrats working for a free South Africa as criminals. Yet, at least 20 000 people attended the funeral of ex-Robben Island prisoner, Griffiths Mxenge; 15 000 attended Dr Aggett's funeral; 100 000 workers downed tools to pay tribute to him and countless 1000's of other South Africans have demonstrated against the apartheid system.

If the State's apparent efforts were to reach their logical conclusion, the majority of South Africans would surely have to be considered criminals.

## Steyn: stop press

THANK GOODNESS for Judge Steyn and his commission, who if they have their way will prevent us from having to read about nasty things that might be 'detrimental to the peace and good order' of our Republic. Horrible upsetting things like deaths in detention, cholera epidemics, repression of trade unionists and so on.

If the Commission's recommendations are carried, we can all look forward to reading about nice things in our papers, happy things, that have all been written by fit and proper registered journalists.

This makes one think, doesn't it — is it 1982 or 1984?

# Steyn and Rabie:

ANOTHER SESSION of Parliament has begun, coinciding with the release of two ominous reports — the Steyn and Rabie Commissions.

Any hopes anyone might have entertained that the state's aim was to de-escalate the impending conflict have been dashed by the release of this outline on security legislation. Indeed they point to the regime's anticipation of heightened confrontation by narrowing the confines of reporting on the real issues facing the country, and streamlining the procedures for jailing dissidents.

The Steyn Commission produced an arrogant 1400 pages to justify the control of journalists. There are already almost 100 laws affecting the press. Obviously not satisfied with the authoritarian powers of ministers who can decree the closure of any newspaper, the plan is to introduce a licencing system for journalists, thereby ensuring official approval of anything that is published. Even conservative journalists are balking at it's recommendations, labelling them 'claptrap'.

## Roll call: a gag already stifled



The report rallies forth against the Soviet Union, misguided Western liberals and the Third World who are the main participants in the total onslaught against South Africa. After writing off the rest of the

world, the four-man commission then turns to organisations and ideologies, coming up with such gems as 'The Soviets have been exploiting this power lust and African martial tradition by generously assisting the left wing African elite in its politics of power accumulation by supplying the tools of war and collectivist authoritarian Marxist ideology...'

'Spiritual politicisation now becomes a particularly significant area where anti-South Africanists mingle and reinforce one another.

Attacks are launched on black consciousness (a 'negative doctrine...reflecting the poor self-image its supporters hold of themselves in competitive situations', and black theology (including the WCC and

## Stretching the long arm

Ostensibly the Rabie commission's task was to review the country's security legislation and to make appropriate recommendations.

The report states that security

it's views, which rely largely on police evidence of the 'threat to South Africa'. It states that the SACP, ANC and PAC are the forefront groups active against the South African state.

The Commission considers the PAC not too important due to its small membership and continual internal splits, but it warns that it is showing signs of survival.

The SACP is seen as far more dangerous — 'extending its activities widely in the trade union and labour areas'.

The ANC is given the most attention. Police estimate that about 20 people leave the country monthly to go for training with the movement.

The number of ANC attacks will increase and intensify, it says, and points to the various ANC sectors such as the organisation's information and Research Department, Umkhonto we Sizwe, Internal Reconstruction and Development Department and its close ties with the SACP as indicative of the wide front on which the ANC operates.

The Commission finds that there is public sympathy for the movement (for example in the nature of mass funerals) but is not able to assess how large that support is.

The black consciousness movement organisations of Azapo and Mwasu are viewed as encouraging militancy and even rebellion against authority and this type of civil dis-



laws alone cannot guarantee law and order as such laws do not change the causes of unrest. It even concedes, unlike sister Steyn, that the black population has no part in the government of the country and this is the basis of discontent. But, says the commission, this is a 'political' question which does not fall within its brief which is a review of security legislation.

Instead the Commission sets out



obedience may well lead to violence, says the commission.

The Commission maintains that it is to the government's credit that it copes with guerilla subversion using a judicial rather than a military solu-

### FASHION CORNER

### APARTHEID SHAPES UP FOR WINTER '82

Hi Folks! (the winter of our discontent)

Yes, its nearly Winter '82, and some say its going to be a tough one! What items will the fashionable racist don this winter, to brave the coming storm?

★ The Rabie Cloak ~ Designed by a government team, this item lends an air of respectability to the most dubious undertaking! Honestly, folks, with this cloak you can get away with anything!

★ The Steyn Boots ~ Get dressed up for a real stomp! Another great from our state designers!

★ Total Onslaught Spectacles ~ Designed by 'Big Brother' himself, these specs are more than just rose-tinted ~ Every time you put them on, you see red! And to go with them, don't be without your

★ Total Strategy Sjabok! This all-purpose item sure beats the old-fashioned megaphone as a crowd-stopper! Useful in 101 situations! And remember folks ~ only 2000 to 3000 left!



# more plugs in a sinking ship?

## for press

the SACC who are 'financing terrorists in court cases') and liberalism which is 'politically and intellectually bankrupt'.

And aiding this massive camp of opponents, the commission says, are journalists who have been 'radicalized'.

Against this formidable enemy, the Steyn Commission issues the following brave war cry: 'The requirements for survival and ultimate victory over the aggressors dictate that South Africa gird its loins and marshal all forces at its disposal, as such an onslaught demands a total manning of the ramparts and mustering at the sallyports'.

Its pseudo analysis glares with belated attempts at an enlightened view of journalism in a democratic society. Consider: 'Stifling the messenger does not kill the message — the message seeks an outlet else-where' for 'as you know, the truth must triumph'. Ironic words when you consider that it has been government policy to stamp out any 'messengers' who happen to try to seek the truth (Post and the World for example).

For a report advocating greater accuracy, it has some embarrassing slip ups of its own, such as accusing the Pan African Congress of being a Soviet proxy when it is common knowledge that the organisation has closer ties with Peking; and spelling a trade unionist's name in four different ways.

But then one must ask if accuracy and reality are all that important for the Commission which sees South Africa as a 'developing and expanding democracy'.

## of security laws

tion. What they fail to point out, is that if guerillas were to be recorded as a military foe they would have to be classified as prisoners of war, and not criminals as they presently are. As P.O.W.'s they would have to be treated in accordance with international standards set by the Geneva Convention.

But instead we are told that security legislation requires consolidation including the addition of certain new crimes to the statute book, and the amendment of others. Much of the existing legislation is too vague, it says, and does not necessarily distinguish between acts of violence and non-violence.

The proposed legislation will cover the major crimes of terrorism, sabotage, subversion, intimidation and furthering the aims of communism, and each will be specifically defined. This makes all organisations outside the structures of the apartheid system potentially illegal.

Evidence showed that police are aware that statements not made 'freely and voluntarily' are inadmissible in court and this 'contributes to a belief that the practice of force in any form on a detainee in order to obtain a confession, serves no purpose.'

The police also make it clear that Section Six of the Terrorism Act is more essential for the gathering of information with the purpose of preventing action against the state (and that is why, they say, so few detainees are ever prosecuted')

Provision is made for a few more checks within the state, for which the Minister will be responsible. Detention regulations remain identical to what they are at present, giving the detainee the option of 'civil relief' if he or she is maltreated and can prove it'.

The preventative security measures recommend that the ambit of security laws be enlarged and suggest the implementation of additional short-term detention.



Section 22 is impractical, it says because the police generally need more time in their investigation because 'not only people's liberty but their very lives are at stake' than the stipulated 14 days before the matter is reviewed by a judge.

Also listed as crimes are the internationally accepted means of political action such as 'the boycott of products of companies unwilling to accede to worker demands'.

Although the current laws are seen as too vague, they are not seen as too drastic or of any temporary nature.

Detention without trial is seen as essential, subject only to internal control. External constraints by family, private doctors and lawyers is rejected as this may lead to the 'escape of information which ought not to be known' to avoid hampering police investigation. In some cases this could include the naming of a detainee as restricted information.

Lawyers and the judicial process are also unnecessary in detention control because in the case of the latter 'sometimes it can be very difficult, while an interrogation is in progress, to have sufficient information to lay before a judge to justify a judicial order'. There is always 'Ministerial control' over the police.

This is not of 'little consequence', we are told, as the Minister is responsible to public opinion for any abuses or malpractices in respect of



P.W. Botha....his government has accepted Rabie Commission's harsh proposals.



Section Six detainees.

Detentions should be in the most 'humane conditions possible' with access to family, doctor, and priest and detainees should be allowed reading matter unless it endangers the safety and interests of the state. Detainees should be paid an allowance.

The banning of persons, publications and organisations should also be retained, but with wider implications in the extended system of 'listing'. Up to now the Minister of the

Interior could place certain limitations on people listed as security hazards. Now the list is to be consolidated and updated every three years. It will name persons already listed, those convicted under security legislation, individuals involved in endangering the safety of the state, and certain common-law crime offenders. Listed people can be prevented from having any organisational contacts for as long as the state deems fit.

The Commission also suggests that a warrant officer of higher rank may detain any person for 48 hours in the same conditions as an awaiting-trial prisoner, if he is of the opinion that such a person's detention will prevent unrest. This 48 hours can be extended to 14 days with magisterial approval.

The new law of 'intimidation' is also proposed, whereby people persuading others to change their points of view could face a maximum fine of R20 000 or 10 years imprisonment.

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# Education must be free

## Wantu Zenzile, president of the Congress of South African Students, speaks to SASPU NATIONAL about the education crisis

**Q:** The education crisis has been an ongoing one — could you give a brief background to the present situation?

**A:** When Bantu Education was first introduced thirty years ago, the teachers and parents totally rejected it. The government did not respond to this. So in 1976 students decided to take the issue into their own hands — they took to the street in protest. Since 1976 the government's response has changed — new controls have been introduced in an attempt to curb student activity. Students and the community are now protesting against these new forms of control.

**Q:** What are these controls?

**A:** A number of regulations have been introduced by the DET (Department of Education and Training). We see compulsory education and the age-limit law as being the most far-reaching of the controls.

Students have been demanding free and compulsory education. The type of compulsory education introduced by the DET is not what we envisaged — it is intended to control students rather than offer them opportunities. It means parents are forced to send their children to school regardless of whether they can afford to. On the whole, our parents earn low wages which cannot cover the expenses of education.

A child is refused entry to school if

he/she cannot pay registration fees and pay for books and uniforms. I don't think the government considered the economic constraints on parents when they introduced the compulsory and age limit regulations. Compulsory education is meaningless unless it is also free.

**Q:** How is compulsory education and the age-limit law related?

**A:** Compulsory education goes hand in hand with the age-limit issue — they have similar controlling effects and work together. These

**“Compulsory education is meaningless unless it is also free”.**

regulations mean that if a student's studies are interrupted along the way, that person can say goodbye to education. Compulsory education binds parents because they commit themselves to ensuring that their child will have an uninterrupted education for the specified period. But because the parent might not be able to afford this, it is common for students to leave school for a year or two to earn money to put themselves through school. The new regulations

close this avenue because the student will be older than the age-limit and the parent will have broken the compulsory education contract. The age-limit law is also unrealistic because children have had to be over seven years old to be admitted to school — it is therefore common to be older than 20 in matric.

**Q:** You said these regulations are seen by students as increasing state control over their activities.

**A:** Through compulsory education, parents become responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly — this means that if students boycott, the government can blame the parents. Since 1976 the DET had tried to curb all student activities and exclude politically involved students.

The age limit law will particularly affect those students who were involved in the 76 student uprising, many of whom lost one or two years of schooling. The new age-limit means that they can now be excluded from schools for being too old, — this is exactly what the government hopes to achieve.

Also, the older students, being more experienced, are often seen as 'troublemakers' and the age-limits

can be used to keep them out of schools.

**Q:** I understand that circuit inspectors have been given the right to close down a school if students 'disrupt the education programme'. How do students interpret this?

**A:** This means that if anything in the form of a protest comes up — for instance a boycott — the school can be closed down. The students then have to re-register. This is seen as yet another control because the students are screened before being re-admitted to school and the so-called 'troublemakers' can be refused entry. In this way politically active students are pushed out.

**Q:** Can those refused entrance register at another school?

**A:** No. Another regulation prevents students from moving from

**“DET is trying to curb all student activity”.**

one school to another unless special permission is given. In reality, if a student is refused entry into one

school it is virtually impossible for him/her to register at another school. In this way all these controls work together to exclude those seen as activists or leaders.

**Q:** The DET says the age-limit law will only be introduced later, but from reports it seems that its effects are already being felt.

**A:** I would say this law has been introduced. A survey done by Cosas of five secondary schools in Port Elizabeth shows that 800 students this year have been affected by the age-limit regulation. In addition there are 175 students who have been turned away because of their political involvement.

**Q:** What is the future of students refused entrance into schools?

**A:** They are defeated. According to the DET, they should complete their studies at adult education centres, but this is impossible because of the gross shortage of such centres. The situation is even more serious when one considers the high unemployment rate at present — these people are unlikely to get jobs.

**Q:** What has been the reaction to

## Cosas meeting says no to new DET controls

**TROUBLE IN** black schools in the Port Elizabeth area is brewing over the controversial age restrictions introduced this year by the Department of Education and Training (DET).

This was clear from speeches made by various student, community, civic and trade union leaders at a packed rally of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) attended by more than 2 000 people at the Sisanke Community Centre in Zwide to welcome home 31 former Kwazakele High School Students released from Robben Island at the end of January.

The regulations introduced in 1980 by Dr Ferdie Hartzenberg, Minister of Education and Training, bar students over the age of 20 from being admitted to Standard 9 and 10.

Students over the age of 18 will not be allowed in Standards 6, 7, and 8 while pupils over the age of 16 will not be allowed to attend primary school.

Pupils affected by the age-limit regulations would have to get permission from the Director General of DET to continue their studies, which they could do at adult education centers. They have to register before the May-June examinations.

At the meeting the crowd cheered loudly as the names of the released students were read out by the national president of Cosas, Wantu Zenzile. They are Mnyamezeli Sulelo, Mncedisi Dawcti, Babini Mde, Vuyani Ncata, Andilo Mvuka,

Sakumzi Macozoma, Alex Rala, Mncedisi Siswana, Andrew Nobatana, Michael Xhego, Mpumelco Odolo, Jamo Mbatyati, Zandisile Manona, Prince Msutu, Thamsonga Mkhongi, Zongezile Skilisho, Lulamile Madolo, Mbuzeli Dukumbana, Eric Mahlathi, Kutaza Mqopi, Mxolisi Yezani, Zwelakhe Nopolula, Benjamin Matyu, Cecil Mkhali, Mzimkhulu Madindo, Michael Mpolongwana, Fezile Mavuso, Fikile Mfukeni, Sheperd Ngakumbi and Nceba Mfuniso.

Some of them were present at the meeting while others had apologised as they had family commitments.

Cosas made it clear that a total onslaught on the present system of Bantu Education would be launched by the organisation this year and a strong demand for a 'free and compulsory education' would be made.

Student leaders said the detention of trade unionists and students, bannings and other forms of harrasment by the government were said to be a total onslaught on those who fought for liberation. But all these they said would never kill the spirit of blacks' determination for freedom.

The chairperson of the Port Elizabeth branch of Cosas, Zola Mtatse told the gathering that already 89 pupils had reported to their office after being turned away from local schools because of the age restrictions or because of their political involvement in students' affairs.

Meetings with parents and stu-



Cosas meeting

dents would be held to resolve this impasse, it was decided, and to call for a free and compulsory education. Tom Manthatha, of Johannesburg, representing the South African Council of Churches as a guest speaker, criticised the introduction of the age restrictions, pointing out that it was impossible for black students to be expected to matriculate before the age of 20 when they started school at the late age of 7 years.

He said social conditions affected many pupils who had to skip a year or two to work in order to support their families and to raise enough money to return to school.

'For a student to do all this demonstrates a sense of community pride. To turn a student away because of his age or involvement without probing why and in what the student had been involved are some of the things that break the bond of good healthy human relations,' he said.

Manthatha said the low per-

centage of university entrance passes among the blacks enabled the government to send blacks to technicians where they were groomed for work in industry as 'good boys' and not as leaders of their community.

He called on blacks throughout the country to establish a united front to work towards a national democratic system.

Manthatha also appealed to parents not to split the ranks of students but to understand and appreciate their problems and support them in their struggle for total liberation and better education.

Blacks refuse to be oppressed forever and oppression is resisted throughout the world,' he said.

Wantu Zenzile, (Cosas president) criticised the declaration forms for compulsory education sent out to parents to sign before their children were enrolled at schools. He said some of the parents did not know the consequences.

He said compulsory education and the age restrictions were inten-

ded to reduce the numbers of blacks at school.

Sicelo Duze, vice chairman of the Motor Assembly and Components Workers Union of SA (Macwusa), said Macwusa's involvement in student affairs was because students were workers in training. Macwusa's approach was that labour issues could not be divorced from those in education and the community, he said.

'The kind of education prepared for blacks is geared to train us to be led and not to lead.' There were people in managerial positions at multinational companies, like Ford, but they are not in real decision — making capacities, he said.

He criticised the exploitation of blacks at home and at work saying they paid high rents and were paid low wages.

Duze appealed to students to talk to their teachers or education authorities to allow trade unionists to teach trade unionism at schools.

Student Barend van Vuuren, cal-





Cosas president Wantu Zenzile.

## Students' skills must aid communities — UWC pres

IT IS as a place of learning that the university had its right of existence and if you neglect that you are not really at university, the rector of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Professor R van der Ross, said.

Addressing first year students in the Main Hall at the start of the UWC orientation week, Professor van der Ross criticised people who said that other things are more important at university than 'the one essential function of scholarship'.

Reacting to the rector's speech, a spokesperson for the Students' Representative Council said the university has a duty to provide its students with more than a purely academic education.

'Students should be encouraged to get involved in their communities and transfer the much needed skills they learn at university into their communities.'

The spokesperson said UWC created a managerial class which did not serve, and was out of touch with, the oppressed, communities from whence the students came.

During lunch-times in the first week of lectures the SRC put on a programme of speakers and films and a panel discussion on education.

### last year's low matric results?

**A:** There has been an outcry, not only from students, but from the communities. People are suspicious — they believe the DET has deliberately ensured a low pass rate in black schools.

Students are also angry about the alleged exam leakage and the fact

that it has had a widespread effect. The DET threatened to subtract 30 per cent of the marks of any student 'suspected' of getting the papers before the exams.

People feel that the DET is responsible for the leakage. Exam leakages only occur because of corruption and the failure of the DET

to control its officials. If officials did not sell the papers, no students would have obtained the papers.

We believe many students who did not have the exams beforehand have been penalised.

Student and community reaction to the matric results and the age-limit regulation had been wides-

pread and vehement. These issues are seen as affecting everyone, and so the community, teachers and students have drawn together to react. Protest meetings have been held country-wide and student-parent committees have been formed in various centres to probe the age limit and compulsory education regulations.

# Education 'reforms' aim to update apartheid

led on students to reject the 'gutter education' they were offered which was intended to create inferior human beings and to provide the private sector with cheap labour.

He said education for blacks prepared them for all forms of exploitation, and reminded the crowd that education was a right and not a privilege.

'Students are struggling for democratic students representative councils which will unite all students to reject gutter education in schools and to support their parents in their struggles,' he said.

Van Vuuren urged parents to strengthen and unite with their tenants residential associations and struggle for lower rents, better houses and cheaper transport.

He appealed to workers to form strong non-racial and progressive workers' organisations and struggle for higher wages and better working conditions.

'Education for blacks in South Africa is a doctrine. It creates inferior human beings. It provides the private sector with a cheap labour force,' he said.

He expressed solidarity with the 31 former Robben island prisoners and called on everybody to reject the 'evil system of apartheid' which was a 'component of the capitalist system.'

Nabantu Mkhali, of the United Women's Organisation, and Q Godolozzi, president of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, appealed for unity among all oppressed groups.

Godolozzi added: 'Polish refugees and immigrants from overseas are treated as human beings when they arrive here while we do not get the same treatment in the land of our forefathers.'

'We are given rotten education that does not enable us to uplift ourselves.'

He said blacks did not want 'white education' but called for an education more acceptable to all South Africans.

THIS MONTH'S Education Conference in Grahamstown strongly favoured the De Lange Report, but agreed educational changes depend on complete social and political reform.

Indeed, 'reform' was the watchword of the conference and attempts of some delegates to point out that the Report represents a 'streamlining and modernisation of Apartheid' were rejected by the conference chairperson, Dr Bozzoli.

Hosted by the 1820 Settlers' Foundation, the conference represented an alliance which has only recently been consolidated in South African Politics — that between monopoly capitalism and reformist elements in the State.

One participant said 'The kind of

delegates at this conference shows how closely its findings will accord with P.W. Botha's Total Strategy.' Delegates included representatives of Anglo American and about 20 other large companies, the Urban Foundation, the English-speaking universities, ethnically-based and reformist teacher associations, the PFP, and the HSRC. The Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council was represented by its head, Dr van Zyl.

Sir Richard Luyt set out the thrust of the conference organisers' intentions in his opening address when he said that the De Lange Report 'can be epoch-making.' He urged the conference to accept the recommendations of De Lange in the interests of 'peace'.

The opening speakers, Franklin Sonn and Ren Hartshorne, themselves De Lange commissioners, both urged the conference to go for total acceptance of the report.

On the second day a number of delegates expressed discontent at the lack of discussion about the report's political and economic bases.

A spokesperson for the group said the De Lange report sought to define the needs of people in terms of the needs of industry, whereas education should aim to prepare people for full participation in a free and democratic South Africa. Another member of the group argued that De Lange was designed to 'get rid of the overt racial ideology of apartheid education, but maintain its economic and exploitative basis to serve

the needs of industry.'

At an urgent, unscheduled debate, about 150 delegates expressed concern that the advertised aims of the conference hampered serious discussion of the report's political and social implications. The conference's set aims were to assess the recommendations of De Lange and discuss how to implement it.

These delegates elected a committee to prepare statements to present at the final session of the conference.

Despite the fact that the conference organisers had repeatedly said they were 'not going for consensus', the chairperson rejected two of these statements during his closing address.

He refused a finding that the De Lange report, along with the Wiehahn and Rieker commissions, aimed to tighten up labour controls and streamline the provision of semi-skilled and skilled workers for the factories.

A statement for publication was also rejected. The statement expressed a fear that although the report recommended a single education ministry, its education management proposals did not do away with separate educational facilities for different apartheid communities.

The group's main criticism was that the De Lange Report's implementation would not be in the interests of South Africa's majority. This was summed up by a delegate from Lebowa who said: 'At last it is clear to me — there is such a thing in South Africa as the Liberalebond, which is as bad if not worse than the Broederbond.'

## Stay-away teachers lose jobs

FIFTEEN TEACHERS in Johannesburg and Cape school have been barred from teaching this year. The Director-General of Coloured Education.

The teachers allege that the reason for their dismissal is because they stayed away from school on June 16 last year in solidarity with a student boycott to commemorate those who died during the 1976 uprising.

Particularly hard-hit by this clampdown are CJB high school in Bosmont and Eldorado Park High where eight teachers have lost their posts.

'CJB seems to have been singled out by the government because of the leading role its students have played in protests during the past two years,' said one teacher. 'By singling out individual teachers the state is trying to crush resistance. This is ironic, especially in the light of the current teacher shortage crippling so-called coloured schools'.

The teachers, in a joint statement said that during the past few years a number of teachers have been dismissed, transferred and demoted because of their political beliefs.

They also criticised the fact that army recruits were being employed in their place. According to a report

in a Johannesburg daily newspaper, fourteen army recruits have been employed at schools on the Rand.

'This seems to show that the state is determined to maintain ideological control over the schools and is in line with their total strategy of attempting to 'win the hearts and minds' of the people', said the statement.

The teachers saw themselves as 'more vulnerable to victimisation' because they held temporary posts, and interpret their dismissal as 'a clearly intended example to other teachers who do not tow the line'.

THE State has made fine statements of intent regarding basic health rights for all, but the words become decidedly shady when its record of performance is examined.

The National Health Services Facilities Plan, launched in November 1980, tries to present a liberal view of social services. It outlines the need for primary health care, health education and the provision of basic subsistence requirements as well as dealing with hospital services. In fact, conceived in terms of Total Strategy, it seeks to co-opt people into believing that the State is actually concerned with meeting the aspirations of the majority.

'Everybody needs drinking water, food, a home and services to help with the disposal of sewage and waste to maintain a complete basic level of minimal health', it announces. However, when it comes to actual implementation, the Health Department is quick to dispel any notions that it is going to take responsibility for this. So, 'the physical provision of clean and safe drinking water is the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries'. Furthermore, it states that it is 'impossible to purify all untreated or unprotected drinking water on a national scale.'

A neat bit of juggling on the government's part as it proposes major solutions to our health problems and then opts out of any commitment to these ends.

Where State action has been provided, it is usually only short-term measures aimed at 'winning the hearts and minds' of the local population. Instead of providing permanent piped supplies, water is brought in to cholera-stricken areas by army water tankers amidst great publicity. Consider this snippet from the Rand Daily Mail (23-11-81): 'Kwa Zulu authorities asked the SA Medical Services to help out in the emergency and within days the tiny 153 bed Mosveld Mission Hospital looked like a military camp with army tents set up for the hundreds of dehydrated cholera patients.'

The state seems to recognise the lack of health facilities as a negative feature only at crisis times, hastily establishing long overdue health services and calling in the SADF to help out in the creation of clinics and medical facilities in parts of Kwa Zulu and Bophutatswana. Chlorination points have been set up by the boys in brown to make cholera-infested water fit for human consumption and army tankers, filled with clean water, rolled in.

All this has been well publicised by the media, overlooking the fact that the state was trying to capitalise on a health problem that it had created itself. The blame for the epidemic was shifted onto 'primitive people who don't have toilets and drink river water'.

Health education was proposed as the main solution to the problem and the SA Army Medical Service was to be the immediate saviour of the people — without any serious attempts being made at creating permanent water supplies.

All in all though, the state's response to the cholera epidemic has been inconsistent, with three successive strategies being pursued.

Initially, health authorities suppressed information on the cholera outbreak in Kwangwane and then deflected responsibility onto the bantustan officials and the individual's hygiene. Kwa Zulu, until recently, received much publicity in the form of widespread campaigns, posters, booklets, lectures and radio

# Cholera: The words are super, so where's the action?



Pit toilets — a health hazard — are common in rural areas

broadcasts concerning its fight against cholera.

This led into the second strategy — the emphasis on personal hygiene and the underplaying of long-term causes and the manipulation of facts.

Natal regional health director Dr Johann van Rensburg was quoted in newspapers as attributing the disruption of health standards to the breakdown of social order by wars and civil disobedience (i.e.) it's not because of officialdom that the crisis has come about, but because of the lack of state control.

Then can the third response — a ban on all comments on the disease except from the official spokesperson for health, Dr Gilliland, who was reported to be overseas and therefore conveniently unavailable to make statements to the press.

According to the Director of Health, Dr Botha, the blackout, which was imposed at the beginning of February, was to 'protect' lab scientists who are busy with important research and should not be dis-

turbed. Professor Isaacson, South Africa's top cholera expert, was instructed by the Minister of Health not to make statements to the press after she warned the public of the possible threat of cholera in seafood. Commercial interests are therefore also protected by this veil of silence so that coastal town can continue to profit from tourism — standard tactics from a regime committed to a policy of 'what you don't know won't hurt you'.

Health education has become a much-banded word by officialdom, yet there is no more effective way of mystifying the real causes of cholera than by one-sided health teaching.

## Poor living conditions are the breeding ground for cholera

Thus people are told that they are ignorant and that they must learn to wash their hands, to boil their water, to use taps and flush toilets or build pit latrines. A line that has little to do with the reality of life in our rural areas where fuel is expensive, wood scarce and the nearest tap often some 50 kms away.

Although the state seems to have been caught unprepared by the recent cholera epidemics, warnings have been coming from the medical profession since 1973 about an impending outbreak. The short-term solutions that it has come up with are likely to tide us through the winter, but the situation is expected

to deteriorate rapidly with the advent of next summer, and all major centres are likely to be affected.

As the state is responsible for apartheid and the poverty that accompanies it, so it can be held to blame for the seriousness of the cholera epidemic that has gripped us.

Typical of the state's attitude regarding health was the recent exchange in Parliament between Dr Marius Barnard (PFP) and the Minister of Health, Dr Lapa Munnik.

During the No-Confidence Debate, Dr Barnard used the cho-



# Washing and scrubbing never cleaned away a social problem

Cholera is a relatively unimportant disease.

It is easily preventable and, once diagnosed, easily cured.

Why, then, have so many thousands of South Africans fallen victim to the disease and why have at least fifty four people died?

The causes of cholera are directly linked to poverty and underdevelopment rather than ignorance on the part of the victims, as the Government would like us to believe. Indeed, cholera is commonly referred to as a disease of apartheid.

Most incidences of the disease have occurred in the so-called homelands where the lack of adequate water supplies and health facilities, coupled with a large, impoverished population, have provided the ideal climate for cholera.

Cholera is a disease of underdevelopment — it is therefore necessary to understand this process whereby areas have become impoverished through the development of the powerful South African economy.

With the discovery of gold and diamonds, cheap labour was needed



Water tankers — a temporary measure

to reap the large profits. The African people in the rural areas were progressively driven off their land and forced onto a meagre 13% of the total area. Those peasant farmers who were able to meet their needs and in fact to produce food surpluses

for sale, were deprived of their economic power by political acts of the colonists.

Large numbers of the able bodied population were forced into the cities to work on the mines: this was

## If this disease hardly matters, how come they're so sick?

Community action in response to the cholera epidemic has been limited.

Unlike crises in housing, education and transport, health issues have rarely been taken up by community organisations on any large scale. This reflects the way in which health problems have been mystified and the real political causes of ill-health hidden.

In the case of cholera people often don't understand what causes it, and the constant stream of health education propaganda makes them believe that it is their own lack of hygiene and so-called primitiveness that leads to the disease, and not the lack of basic services which should be provided by the State.

In some areas this lack of understanding has made communities particularly vulnerable to repressive state activity. In Inanda, outside Durban, squatters were threatened with eviction just before Christmas because their poor environmental facilities were supposedly becoming a health hazard for the neighbouring white communities. The possibility of a strong community organisation demanding proper housing and sanitation, rather than being forcibly evicted was not thoroughly explored at the time. Realistically-speaking, the squatters were probably never in a powerful enough position to make these demands, but a greater awareness of the origins of their health problems would undoubtedly have been useful.

However, awareness, like cholera, is spreading. The people of Amawoti and Amawotana, two settlements in that part of Inanda called 'Released Area 33' have established the Iso Lomuzi health and Family Welfare organisation, its chief concern being to deal with the demands of the people: piped water, roads and an



Children of Ncheweni — ready prey for cholera

end to the threats of removal. Amawotana is one of the areas which has not even been supplied with the temporary service of water tankers. In spite of the uncertainty under which these communities live due to threats of removals, the people are strong and have already shown their unanimous resistance to such actions. A detailed memorandum is presently being drawn up to be sent to the Department of Co-operation and Development.

The community-based committee of the Umvoti area near Stanger has succeeded in obtaining several water tankers through donations while the Port Natal Administration Board pays the drivers bringing in the daily supplies of fresh water. But as Dr Ebrahim Bhorat, Medical Officer of Health for Stanger, pointed out: 'How long can they carry on? They have no money. Maybe one, two, three months and then they're going to be in trouble.'

The Stanger area was, until recently, one of the focal points of the epidemic notably the Ncheweni squatter settlement just outside

Stanger. Most of its 30 000 inhabitants have lived there for at least twenty years and many were born there. The area falls under the Department of Co-operation and Development and it is evident that little or nothing has been done for the inhabitants — there are no roads, no sanitation facilities and they have to walk a long way to the water tanks that were only recently provided. In December at least four people died from cholera in their homes. Added to these conditions, the people live under the constant threat of removal.

While Dr Bhorat described the cholera epidemic as an 'apartheid issue', he also asked the question: 'What have the industries in the area done to help their work-force in the way of providing adequate housing and sanitation?' The answer would appear to be that they have done very little.

He pointed out that the State's short-term emergency measures are costing far more than the provision of tap water, and referred to research done by James Rivett-Carnac in 1979 into the establishment of permanent water supplies. These schemes would be self-help projects which would pay for themselves over 10 to 20 years. Such a scheme was realised last month in the Emolweni Trust in Natal.

The potential for community organisation around demands for proper water supplies and health facilities definitely exists. But extensive popular participation in learning about the nature of health problems is needed. The issue is as important as others taken up by communities, for it can only be in a truly democratic society, where people have a say in how their lives are run, that diseases like cholera will be eradicated. ■

achieved by compelling people in rural areas to pay cash taxes such as hut, poll and dog taxes. The traditional economies collapsed due to the pressure of overcrowding, erosion and the loss of healthy young members of the community to the towns.

The reserves or homelands became a reservoir from which migrant labourers were drawn when needed for the South African economy. They also became the dumping grounds for the old, the sick and the unemployed.

Forced resettlements have underlined this process of underdevelopment with large numbers of people, 'economically unfit', being shuffled off to inhospitable backwaters. They are left to survive on their own accord.

Cholera flourishes in areas where sewerage removal is poor, where clean water supplies rarely exist — where the State has failed to provide people with these basic rights.

Adequate water supplies are vital for health.

Cholera, theoretically not a very serious disease, causes diarrhoea and vomiting resulting in water loss (up to 20 litres a day). If this water is not rapidly replaced the victim becomes dehydrated and can die.

Where there are inadequate or non-existent sewage facilities, people go the toilet besides streams and in dongas.

When the rains come excrement is washed into the rivers — often the only source of drinking water — and in this way the germ is passed on.

The government tells us that the disease can be overcome by boiling or disinfecting our drinking water, by washing our hands after the toilet and before touching food and by using proper toilets. In other words, every person must individually ensure that he or she does not catch the disease.

In this way the blame has been shifted from the State, which is responsible for the appalling conditions most people are forced to live under, onto the individual.

If people don't come to understand this they will not demand certain basic rights from the State — such as clean water.

The areas affected by the epidemic, the worst being the north-eastern Transvaal homelands, parts of Natal and Kwa Zulu, share certain features: they are all underdeveloped with poor water and sewage systems; they have a high proportion of family disruption due to migrant labour and suffer from drastic overcrowding.

As long as the social imbalances in our society remain and the authorities don't serve the majority interests, cholera, like the related diseases of tuberculosis, malnutrition and typhoid, will remain with us.

lera epidemic to highlight the sociological, economic and political injustices of the apartheid system. He said cholera was the "inevitable bitter price we have to pay for the implementation of the homeland policy, migrant labour system, the resettlement of blacks, the breaking up of families and criminal neglect of primary health care facilities among the disadvantaged people in the country".

The Minister's response was to accuse Dr Barnard of being part of the "total onslaught against South Africa" and demanded why nothing "positive" was ever said about health in this country. ■

# No easy road for Issel family

Shahida Issel, wife of banned community leader Johnny Issel speaks about the problems of bringing up three children whose father is in detention.

**'I took his previous detentions okay, but now the children are growing up and it's difficult to handle their questions each night.'**

Johnny Issel, 35, has been held for over three months now. This is his fourth spell behind bars in the last seven years under the country's security legislation.

Issel has also been banned three times and taken in for questioning many times, but has never been charged or convicted of any offence, save a minor technical violation of his banning order.

His current detention began on November 2 under section 22 of the General Laws Amendment Act. When the order expired two weeks later, he was redetained under section six of the Terrorism Act.

He was later transferred to Modderbee Prison in Benoni, where he is being held under section 10 of the Internal Security Act.

'If he was down here in Cape Town I don't think it would be so difficult,' said Shahida Issel.

'It's the idea of him being in Johannesburg so far away and the children keep on saying 'lets go phone Johnny'. They refuse to understand there's no telephone. They want to speak to him.'

Shahida said her youngest son, three-year-old Fidel, has been affected the most by his father's detention. He is normally a very active child but has become quiet and moody.

'When I went to Johannesburg to see Johnny, I tried to explain to the children why I was going and how was going to see their daddy.

'Fidel went into a lapse: he refused to talk to anybody, refused to eat and felt so insecure that he wanted to sleep with me all the time.' She said that Yasser, 5, was very attached to his father but has taken his detention quite well. Nevertheless, he often wants his mother to count out on the calendar the weeks and days until the detention order expires on May 15.

She always emphasizes, however, that the order may be renewed.

Johnny and I are allowed to write to each other twice a month.

When Johnny Issel was transferred to Modderbee Prison at the end of November, Shahida went up to see him. She went again in mid-December for three weeks and saw him a number of times.

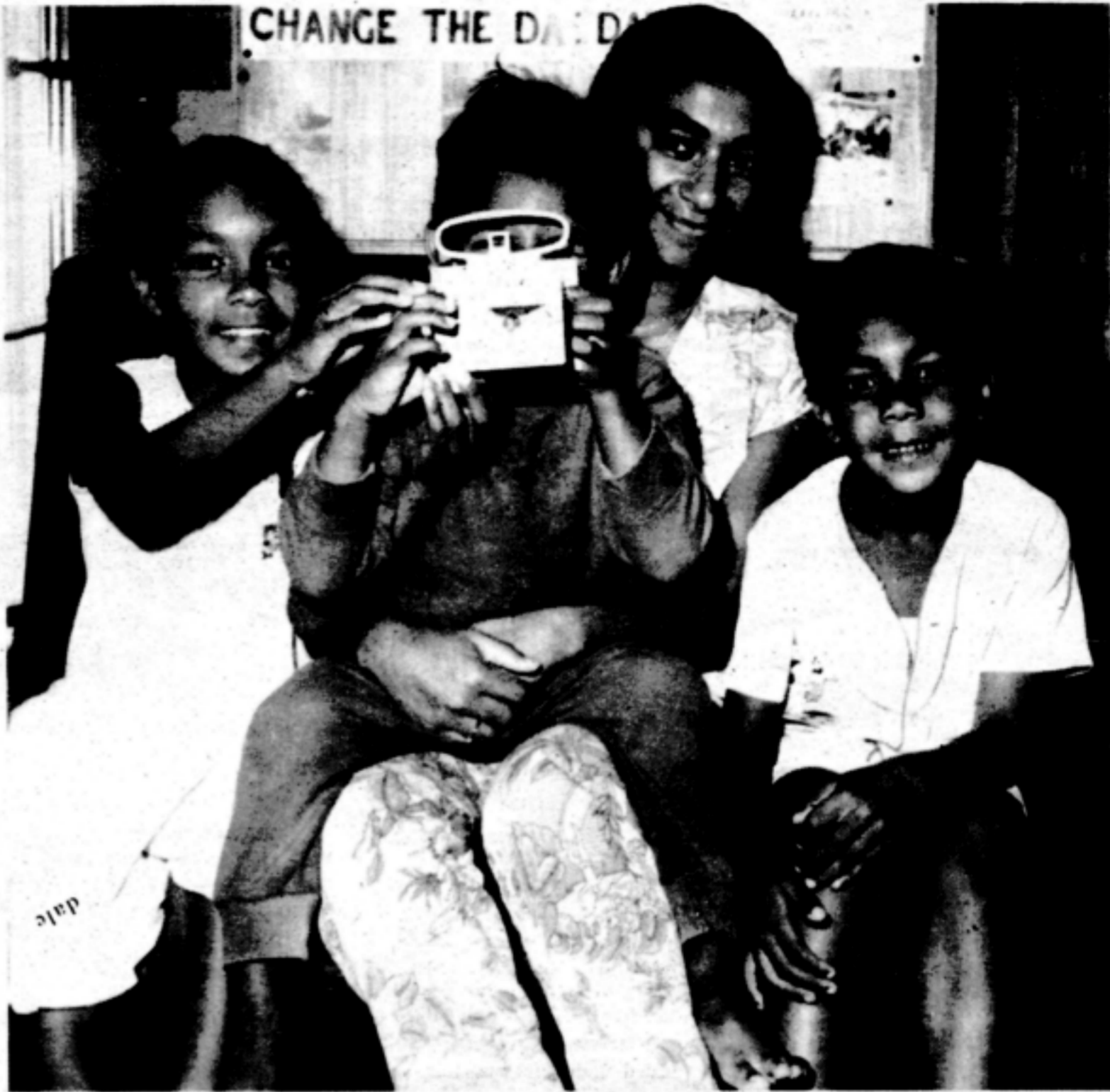
'Sometimes you actually look forward for the half-hour visit to end quickly because you don't know what to say to the person any more.

Shahida said that after her husband was detained at work he was brought home in handcuffs by six men to search the place. 'Leila and Yasser were at home and they asked the police, 'why did you put that on my daddy?'' she said.

'When they left the children started to cry and that hurt.

I had to stay quite strong because if I had to cry how would I be able to go forward then.'

She said eight-year-old Leila picked up a stone and angrily threw it at the car as it drove off. Shahida then tried to explain to the children why their father was being taken away



Shahida Issel with her children Leila, Fidel and Yasser

again.

'On the day that they transferred Johnny to section six, I was at work when two white men came to the house and asked the lady that looks after the children where Leila was. She was still at school so they waited there a bit and then left.'

'When I got home I heard that they had been there for Leila and so I rushed down to the school

'Anyway I found her still sitting at the bus stop. Then I made preparations with the teacher so that no-one but myself can fetch her, or other-

wise she goes home with the teacher and I fetch her there.'

Shahida said she never used to allow the Security Police to come into her home, but now she just ignores them when they come. 'I think I've matured a bit,' she said.

Shahida Issel's small frame and shy manner belies her strength.

'It's no easy road but we'll have to go on and although all this is happening, I feel very strong. We just have to cope with the hardships', she said.

## Wanted: retired US soldiers for Transkei

TRANSKEI HAS been trying to recruit retired black United States Army officers to train its defence force'. Transkei's US representative said on American television.

Mr Ngqondi Masimini, who is based in Washington, said there was almost no country in Africa that Transkei had not asked to supply army officers to train Transkeians.

'I've been busy for the past three years trying to recruit retired black American officers to go and train our people,' he said, when asked why a white former officer in the Rhodesian Selous Scouts was head of the country's armed forces.

'The blacks in South Africa don't know how to handle a gun. Now that we are independent, we have to have our own security forces. I have personally been involved with trying to recruit black Americans to teach our people how to handle guns, how to defend themselves.'

Masimini said Nigeria and most other African countries had friendly relation with Transkei, although none had recognized the former homeland.

Masimini denied that black Americans recruited by Transkei would be fighting the banned African National Congress, arguing that all countries, including Swaziland, which is smaller than Transkei, had armies.

The ANC was banned in Transkei simply because the ANC sent hit squads to assassinate Transkei's leaders after independence, and made Transkei their target rather than South Africa, he added.

## Putco rise sunk in court

THE PUTCO fare increase granted last month by the National Transport Commission (NTC) was overturned when a Pretoria judge granted an interdict stopping the bus company from hiking its fares. The court also ordered the NTC to pay the costs of the application.

Kathleen Mulligan of the United Women's Organisation brought the application before the court. It was granted after the court heard that not all the people opposed to the increase had been given an opportunity to state their objections.

Mulligan claimed that she was among 20 people who had made representation when Putco applied for an increase last year, and that none of them had been notified that a hearing was to be held.

She said that the commission had failed to consider the written repre-

sentations which had been made.

The price rise provoked anger in the black community because it was done without any consultation or opportunity for commuters to voice their objections.

The reason that Putco's buses have generally to travel the relatively long distances that they do — thereby hiking costs — is as a result of the Nationalist Government's policy of pushing blacks well out of the cities. As this is the case why should blacks be made to bear the burden of rising costs of transporting them to and from work.

To some extent this is recognised by government which ensures that Putco receives heavy subsidies.

Putco claimed that two public hearings on the proposed hearing was held in Pretoria. It claims that the only group that protested was the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured people. Putco claimed that it was surprised that groups later tried to have the decision of the National Transport Commission cancelled.

The NTC must now convene another meeting to listen to the objections of black commuters. Putco's PR Pat Roger says that Putco will follow the normal procedures to arrange for the next hearing.

## DPSC keeps tabs on SP

AT LEAST 277 people detained last year have not been accounted for.

'It is not known whether these people have been charged or released, or are still in jail', said a spokesperson of the Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC) which is monitoring detention statistics.

'Information on detentions is not released automatically. It is only on specific request that detentions are confirmed', he said.

This veil of secrecy prompted the group to start monitoring detention by collecting information from various sources and to keep a constant check on the situation.

'There have been instances of detainees being brought to court and convicted without their parents or attorneys being informed', the spokesperson said. He cited the case of Happy Mkhafa and Mandla Dlamini who were detained last year on 28 June under Section 22 of the General Laws Amendment Act, transferred to Section Six of the Terrorism Act and then charged on December 3. It was only on 21 December that their attorney became aware of these developments.

'Instances like this make it important for us to monitor these statistics' the spokesperson said. 'We appeal to all relatives of detainees to notify us of any information in this

regard'.

The DPSC is also attempting to keep tabs on the detention situation in the bantustans, but the spokesperson said that it is 'impossible to get figures of those detained in the homelands'.

'The DPSC estimates that 771 people were detained last year. This figure includes 57 people in the Transkei, 318 in Ciskei and one in Boputhatswana', said the spokesperson. 'During January there were 27 confirmed detentions. Four further detentions in Venda have not been confirmed. At least seven people have been detained so far in February.'

# Today's lessons are tomorrow's weapons - Omar

**SRCS are a focus of debate on black campuses. Abba Omar, SRC president of the University of Durban-Westville, speaks to SASPU NATIONAL about the particular situation at UDW, boycott as a tactic and the role of an SRC on a black campus.**

**Q:** 1980 was the first year an elected SRC operated at UDW. Why was an SRC not formed before then?

**A:** In the past, university authorities had consistently tried to keep student organisations under the control of admin. This was done mainly through attempts to force students to form clubs and societies.

Then in 1971 an interim SRC was elected and spearheaded moves to form an SRC acceptable to students. A constitution was drawn up and presented to admin in 1972. This constitution was turned down without the University Council having been through it, and students were presented with a constitution that gave the rector immense power over student affairs.

Students boycotted in protest against admin's actions and resolved that there would be no organised activity on campus until certain conditions were met. This became known as the '72 Resolution' and it demanded that an SRC have the right to make press statements, produce publications and invite guest speakers without the rector's permission. Another condition was that the SRC have control over student recreation monies.

The 1980 elections were really the culmination of a move which began in 1979.

At that stage a problem had developed: A large number of students, because of years of opposing the formation of an SRC, saw such opposition as being based on an immutable principle.

This in fact went against the grain of the '72 resolution' which saw the conditions on campus as being dynamic and allowed for the possibility of achieving an acceptable constitution.

At a meeting held in 1979 a constitutional committee was elected. Constitutional arrangements were completed by early 1980 and admin had agreed to the demands of the '72 resolution', but elections had to be postponed until September 1980 because of the education boycott. A poll of 42% was returned.

**Q:** You've mentioned the 1980 boycott. I understand that the situation at UDW was always volatile. What is your assessment of the 1980 boycott in terms of organisational gains at UDW?

**A:** The boycott had a tremendous impact on all those who were touched by it — whether they were school students confronting the police or parents who provided them with unqualified support. It had an immense politicising effect on students at UDW — it was almost like an internal 'great leap'.

However, after the boycotts many of these gains were lost because of poor follow up. This was mainly because structures to incorporate these students and to extend their organisational abilities had not been set up.

Also, the question of having an SRC was once again taken up. Admin had apparently flouted the constitutional provisions by not allowing a guest speaker to enter the university premises, and this caused some students to embark on a campaign to halt the formation of an SRC. After much campaigning and pamphleteering from both sides, it was finally decided to continue with the SRC's formation.

**Q:** What were the reasons students forwarded against forming an SRC?

**A:** Their main argument was that an SRC would give credibility to an institution of apartheid (the university); that there was a danger of it being taken over by reactionary elements; that the university authorities could easily suspend an SRC when they thought it necessary; and that it would misdirect the energies of the students.



Riot police were a common feature at UDW during last year's boycott.

**Q:** In 1980 there was a poll of 42 per cent in the SRC elections whereas in 1981 only 11 per cent of the students voted. What led to this sharp decline?

**A:** Once again, I would like to give a brief background before focussing on the election itself. The first SRC took office, as I explained, in an atmosphere of heightened political consciousness. It embarked on a programme of active support for community issues and focussed on days of political importance such as September 12 and October 11. But a growing disenchantment with the SRC because it was 'too political' resulted in a new approach — the SRC began catering for the interests of all students.

However the momentum that was being created and the progress achieved, was cut short by the 1981 boycott of examinations. The reasons for the boycott are probably well known: students boycotted over three issues:

- they had to write exams on June 16, a day of commemoration for most South Africans
- the University Administration refused to investigate grievances of physiology students who were being taught human physiology by a Zoologist
- in support of 600 school students in Natal who were expelled for anti-Republic Day activities.

The effects of the boycott are, however, less well known. Students were not united over the boycott. During the boycott the university authorities managed to fragment students into semester and non-semester students; hostel and oppidan students; and into 'agitators' and passive supporters. This was perhaps the greatest loss we suffered — the loss of unity. It was a divided student body which finally decided

to return to class. The SRC also came under attack. For example, many people saw the SRC as being responsible for the boycott. Admin assisted in creating this impression by claiming that the SRC was spearheading the boycott. This is utter rubbish! Members of the SRC tried to oppose every move towards a boycott. The SRC was also criticised as a poor instrument of negotiation during the boycott.

Therefore, the 1981 elections occurred in an atmosphere of confusion, disappointment and division and we expected a low poll.

**Q:** You say the SRC was against the June boycott last year. What were the reasons for this?

**A:** Firstly, the SRC opposed a boycott because students were not united about it. We had repeatedly said that our strength lies in our numbers. If we are united in our action and thus able to mobilise the majority of our people, our chances

of success are improved. To carry out any action when our ranks are in disarray would certainly mean failure.

Secondly, the wider community would not support the boycott. Any action needs the backing and approval of the community to succeed: the 1980 boycotts had been successful because parents had supported students' actions. Also, in 1981 students had already boycotted twice: over anti-Republic Day and graduation ceremony issues. The SRC felt a third boycott would not get community support and community members might see students as being irrational and irresponsible.

Thirdly, the boycott demanded too many sacrifices. It was obvious

that the boycott demanded too many sacrifices. It was obvious

from the outset that admin would take a hard line attitude to the boycott and would not budge on the issues.

Finally, the SRC sees any battle as part of the overall struggle. The exams issue was a specific battle with admin and we needed to structure our protest in a way that would bring as many gains as possible. A boycott in the particular situation seemed limited — the losses would outweigh the gains. The SRC felt students could make more gains by protesting in another way — perhaps by using symbolic protests. For example students could show their opposition to the June exams by wearing black armbands.

When the students decided to boycott, the SRC was forced to play an administrative and negotiating role with admin. As we had suspected, admin would not budge on the demands and played on the original student divisions over the boycott. The resulting loss of unity weakened organisation even further.

**Q:** Despite students' disappointment in such a structure, do you still feel the necessity for an SRC?

**A:** The conditions under which such an SRC has to operate includes:

- deep cleavages in the student body;
- there are no satisfactory grievance channels which students could use;
- our society is still ridden by the evils of apartheid;
- students still feel dissatisfied with the academic standards;
- Admin has not changed its oppressive outlook — security guards still swarm all over the university.

In answering the question I would like to ask:

Do we need to represent student demands to admin?

Do we need to organize and unite students?

Do we need to engage students in the struggles of their community?

Do we need to intensify the demand for a relevant and equal education system?

Can SRC initiated activities become an integral part of student life?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then I think there is reason enough to have an SRC.

I would also like to draw attention to the '76 experience. In 1976 students here boycotted to protest against the atrocities committed in Soweto and in common cause with the students. Admin and the state unleashed their forces in unison. Students streamed back to class.

If it was four years before UDW students began participating in any relevant activities in a united manner.

After the exam boycott last year, the SRC started to pick up the pieces, our main task being to rebuild unity — a united student body is a confident, active and energetic student body.

Large numbers of students have begun to attend SRC activities and many have been drawn into community struggles. For example, the strong student participation — largely an SRC initiative — in the anti-SAIC campaign emphasised that an SRC is an important organising structure especially at this stage.

We believe that an SRC can play a constructive role — a confidence which stems from the realisation that the lessons of today are the weapons of tomorrow.

RESIDENTS OF the East Rand township Katlehong used posters, stickers and graffiti to voice their opposition to recent community council elections in the township.

On polling day signs of discontent were to be found at public places where slogans on walls urged people not to vote. Posters announced: 'A vote for the community council members is a vote for apartheid' and demanded the establishment of an Independent Residents Organisation to deal with issues such as rent, housing, pensions, recreation centres, roads with drainage and electricity.

Katlehong residents had formed a committee to oppose the elections. Members of the Congress of South African Students, (COSAS) the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) the Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO), the East-Rand Peoples' Organisation, the East Rand Community Advice Bureau and the Young Christian Workers (YCW) were involved in forming this committee.

'But', said one committee member, 'we are not involved in this issue as separate organisations — it is a committee drawing on all the township's residents. The committee is made up of residents facing a common attack'.

A spokesperson for the committee said residents oppose community councils because they do not represent the interests of the community and, as government-created institutions, are 'toothless bodies'.

'They serve only to strengthen government control over the residents', he said.

'We see the need for a resident organisation that works independently and is elected by the people. The community council system tries to stifle this need'.

One of the main obstacles to forming such an organisation, he said, was the lack of a venue to hold mee-

# Community council a 'toothless body'



Posters spell out Katlehong residents opposition to council elections.

tings. 'The community council control the one community hall in the township. Our money built the centre — we should be able to use it'.

Residents' dissatisfaction with the Council centres on common issues such as frequent rent increases and the need to improve the township's basic facilities.

'Although we are expected to pay tax and rents keep going up', said one resident, 'we never see what hap-

pens to the money'. She said residents aren't given the opportunity to organise opposition to rent hikes 'because we are only told about the increases when we go to pay the rent'.

Another criticism of the community council is that it has no control over funds, as was seen last year when Dr Koornhof, Minister of Co-operation and Development reported to parliament that the East Rand

Administration Board had invested R27,8 million and had lent R1,7 million of its funds. This drew protest from community councillors who had been told funds were not available for housing and township improvement projects.

Residents also complained of corruption in the Council.

'The council does not achieve anything for the community. All we see is that the councillors get richer

— they become owners of shops and garages in the township. It is they who benefit, not us', said one.

It was also alleged that residents are often intimidated into voting by being threatened with eviction.

Asked to comment on these allegations, one of the election candidates said he recognised that previous councillors had been corrupt.

'In the past councillors seem to come to a 'gentleman's agreement' on owning the businesses'. He said this had occurred because 'once they become councillors, they forget about the interests of the community and instead only work for their own rights'.

'But, he said, 'you will never gain anything if you don't work from within these dummy institutions.'

He said councillors had not been popular with the people because they 'only come out at election time to campaign for votes. Otherwise they never come back to the community on developments and to see what residents demand'.

He said he was aware that in the past eviction threats had been used by individual councillors to force people to vote, but denied that these had been used in this election.

While some of the polling stations seemed active, others were 'waiting for voting to speed up'. A supervisor at one of the stations said it was mainly older residents who had voted.

A 15 per cent voting poll was recorded. It was alleged that sub-tenants in Katlehong, who comprise the majority of residents (about 25 000 were not allowed to register as voters. This would mean the percentage poll is inaccurate, and support for the council even lower than the poll suggests.

## Durban three face terror charges

THREE MEN who face charges under the terrorism and internal security acts greeted a packed courtroom with defiant salutes in Durban last month.

Fana George Sithole and Jabulani Wilfred Ngcobo, both from Umlazi, appeared briefly in the regional court with Titi Alocia Mtenyane of Soweto. They were remanded in custody until Feb. 23. All three men have been held in detention since June last year.

The men face two counts under the Terrorism Act with alternative charges under the Internal Security Act.

Charges range from recruiting members for the Africa Youth Congress and encouraging people to undergo military training outside the country to obtaining a plan of Durban's Caltex Oil SA terminal.

Under the alternative count, the State alleges the three men incited people to join the ANC of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

Sithole also faces 15 counts contravening the terms of his banning order.

Victoria Mxenge is conducting their defense. She is the widow of Griffiths Mxenge, a Durban lawyer and ex-Robben Island prisoner who was murdered in November last year.



David Johnson: Third BSS leader to be banned.

## BSS president Johnson banned

DAVID JOHNSON, president of the Black Students Society (BSS) at Wits University, has been banned.

This is the third banning order in seven months to be served on a BSS leader.

In July last year the past president of BSS, Firoz Cachalia, and an executive member of the organisation, Azhar Cachalia, were detained and then banned for five years.

Firoz Cachalia was recently detained again as well as a former BSS

member and Wits lecturer, Ismail Momoniat. Both are being held under Section Six of the Terrorism Act.

David Johnson, a third year social work student at Wits, was apprehended while travelling on a highway and taken to John Vorster Square. After three hours of questioning, he was served with a banning order restricting him to the Johannesburg — Vereeniging area.

A BSS statement condemns

detention and banning as 'attempts to suppress the people's legitimate demands'.

'BSS, like other individuals and organisations affected by such actions, shares a common desire for genuine representation, justice and a free society'.

The BSS statement calls for 'the immediate release of all detainees and political prisoners and the withdrawal of banning and banishment orders.'

## Liberal varsity a myth — Webster

THE UNIVERSITY of the Witwatersrand's 'liberal' history is questionable. A recent study shows that in the 1930's university authorities asked the minister of education to legislate against blacks entering white universities.

This was said by a Wits academic, Dr David Webster, in his closing address to the National Union of South African Students' (Nusas) Congress in Cape Town.

'While many people still believe in 'liberal' universities taking up the fight against racial and sexual discrimination, it is obvious that Wits has dragged its feet on precisely these issues', he said.

'The university's early employment policy was against appointing or promoting women staff and university records show that university funding came from mining and capital.'

Many courses were launched to serve government departments, he said. 'My own department, Social

Anthropology, was launched in 1923 to teach district commissioners how best to understand and control the black population.'

'Our universities are not independent or liberal', he said.

Webster pointed to the 'Koornhof incident' at Wits last year. 'The Vice Chancellor condemned student behaviour', he said, 'but it was soon revealed that what lay behind his attack was that donors from private industry would stop donating funds to the campus.'

He said students had come to see the university as a 'site of struggle'. 'We must fight for the university to serve the needs of the poor, the illiterate and the powerless', he said.

It was also important for students to challenge university staff and jolt them into recognising 'that major struggles over the nature of the university and its place in society have to be fought'.

Students should examine their universities and seek support

amongst academics to strengthen their campus base. At Wits, he said, such student action had caused a group of academics — the Conference of Academics for a Democratic Society (CADS) — to form.

'CADS attempts to examine and act on some of the issues constantly being thrown up by a university and society in crisis' he said.

He outlined some of the demands campuses should fight for as:

- a socially relevant education that can be put to the services of the masses
- education that is geared for action and application
- democracy in education
- freedom of access to information, knowledge, ideas and research
- keeping police off campus and NO university collaboration with police.

In his closing address, Webster also traced trends in the student movement from the 1960's, when protest politics was the dominant

form of student activity to the present where students are now involving themselves in working class and community struggles.

He pointed out that 1982 is the anniversary of three important landmarks in South African history:

- \* The launching of the Congress of Democrats and the Coloured Peoples' Organisation, 'organisations dedicated to non-racialism and the struggle, in alliance with like-minded organisations, for a just and truly democratic South Africa'.
- \* the 1952 Defiance Campaign, a disobedience campaign aimed at six 'unjust laws', during which 8 000 people received short prison sentences in an attempt to overload the prisons.
- \* the 25th anniversary of the Alexandra Bus Boycotts, where residents of Alexandra township boycotted the Putco Bus Company for three months over a fare increase.

# UWC SRC says campus is basis for broad organisation

**Struggle for SRC recognition is past and the struggle to heighten student awareness and involvement is on**

AFTER ACHIEVING a major victory against the administration, students at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) are now settling down to the nitty gritty of building a strong SRC.

A campaign waged for many years culminated in May last year when 2000 students marched on the administration to demand an autonomous SRC. The demand was met, and soon afterwards an 11-person SRC came into office in an uncontested election.

Student resistance is not new at 'Bush', as UWC is locally known.

SRC President Mike Mulligan says wryly: 'We've come a long way since 1970 when there was a boycott around a question of men having to wear ties!'

In 1973 students took the administration to court over the SRC constitution, and that year the university was closed for two months after students boycotted against the permit system. In 1976 the country-wide unrest also spread to UWC and the SRC was suspended in 1977. Since then UWC has been without an SRC.

'An SRC is important for continuity in student activity', says Mulligan. 'Over the past years, there have been highs and lows in student activity at Bush. The breaks have clearly occurred because there has been no continuous leadership.'

Now, SRC members see 'strengthening student organisation' as a priority.

'Progress was made last year in

getting support for the SRC and building student unity on matters which affect us most', said one member, 'and this can only hold good for the coming year'.

The new SRC clearly see the campus as a base for organising.

'We need to dispel the myth that students by definition have a certain awareness. This has to be developed. People are at different levels of consciousness. You can't take an ordinary person that comes to Bush and in the first year expect that student to get involved in the community.'

SRC members believe campus activities such as clubs and societies and issues such as Wilson Rowntree can raise a student's level of consciousness and through these students can be drawn into community involvement.

'One has to constantly gauge the level of consciousness amongst students and channel this in a useful direction. All students won't go and work in the community, so there must be other activities to engage them.'

Another SRC member said UWC had learnt important lessons from students' action at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW).

'Because campuses are not united, an ongoing problem at Bush colleges is to ensure that the SRC remains progressive. At UDW groups tried to gang up with the administration to smash the SRC. Here, too, reactionary elements started to push for boycotts earlier on last year, and this can be dangerous for the work being



'Bush' SRC president Mike Mulligan: Building student unity.

done on campus because SRC's can be destroyed'.

The SRC sees students as having to take their place in a broad front involving communities, workers and students.

Within this front, students would play 'a complementary and supportive role to communities and workers'.

Support, the SRC believes, can be given in moral, intellectual, material and other ways, but 'students should never believe that they are in the vanguard of the struggle. Workers and communities will always determine what support is to be given and how it is to be given.'

On national contact, the SRC feels that 'there is a need for students to get together more frequently on a national level so that we know what is going on throughout the country.' Ways of overcoming this problem should be considered to improve student organisation and involvement. Referring to the Azanian Students organisation (AZASO), one member said: 'It is clear that at a later stage affiliation to a progressive, national student organisation will again come up for discussion. For the moment, establishing the SRC and consolidating campus support must be our priority.'

On their victory against the authorities, the SRC say they were

'surprised at the ease with which our autonomous constitution was accepted by the administration. But we should salute previous students at Bush because this victory is not the product of our work only. If it wasn't for the fights students engaged in with the administration in previous years, our success would not have been possible.'

'But the granting of autonomous SRC's should also be seen in the context of the government's broader strategy to coopt the 'Coloured' and Indian communities, with talk of these groups being able to vote and things like that', another member added. 'It could be that, through giving autonomous SRC's, leadership could at a later stage be coopted.'

We must at all times guard against this and make sure that our activities never fall in line with these strategies. We must not abdicate our responsibility towards the community, towards the students and towards the broader political fight. Students must bear in mind that we did not achieve this victory for people who are not going to promote the general liberation struggle.'

The state and the administration will still have to learn that when we talk about our liberation, we are determined. We will continue to fight until the people govern.'

## Adelman banned and now exiled

IN THE last week of January this year, banned student leader Sammy Adelman, joined the ranks of those South Africans forced into political exile.

Adelman crossed the Lesotho border on January 31, on foot. Since then, he has flown to London where he plans to continue his legal studies.

Adelman, the 1980/81 Wits SRC President was banned in June last year for five years. He rose to prominence during the Anti-Republic Day campaign when he spoke out strongly against the apartheid system and together with other representatives of the non-racial democratic movement called for the people of South Africa to reject the governments' celebrations and to work towards a free society based on



Sammy Adelman now in London

the principles of the Freedom Charter.

Since his banning, Sammy was continually harrassed by the security police.

Adelman was also due to appear in court facing two charges, one for breaking his banning order by failing to make his weekly report to the Hillbrow Police Station and the other for alleged forgery following the seizure of his passport last year.

A warrant for his arrest has been issued after he failed to appear in court to face the first charge.

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# Increasing the high price of poverty

RESIDENTS IN the Western Cape are reeling under the rent increases for this year, and backed by the people's community organizations are mounting protests against rent increases and inadequate housing.

Meanwhile the Government has again displayed its insensitivity to the needs of the people by the announcement in January of a huge cutback in the State subsidy allocated for housing.

The deputy director general of Community Development said already approved housing projects of R500-million would be delayed because of a lack of funds.

This announcement comes at a time when the housing situation in black townships throughout the country becomes even more critical. And at a time when residents of townships are facing new rent increases which they cannot afford.

Access to decent housing is a basic need, and a basic right, in every society. In South Africa the majority of the people have no say in the democratic process. They have no say in where, or how they live. Nor do they have any say in how much money is allocated for housing.

The Government does not want to accept full responsibility for providing adequate housing for all its people, saying that the private sector should bear some of the costs for housing.

And the private sector in its endless search for profits is not interested in providing adequate housing for its labour force.

The provision of housing is heavily influenced by Apartheid policies. For example approxima-

tely 200 000 people in the Western Cape were moved from their former homes to distant townships. They had to pay the cost of removals in the form of greatly increased rents, and exorbitant transport costs.

This illustrates how, as a result of the Group Areas Act, the highest rents fall on the poorest people. The hardest hit are those who can least afford to pay.

Tenants feel that while rents go up annually they receive nothing in return from housing authorities. The townships remain without recreational facilities, houses are not maintained properly and some areas are not provided with even basic services. Areas such as Bishop's Lavis remain without electricity.

The Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac) an umbrella body of 30 organisations, is spearheading a campaign in protest against the rent increases. It has formed a Rents Action Committee which includes representatives of a number of churches, mosques and trade unions.

Its aim is not only to stop rent increases but also to demand that people be charged rents they can afford. A petition drawn up by Cahac and signed by more than 40000 tenants demands:

- All rent increases be stopped.
- Tenants angry at the huge rent increases are now demanding that the government, and not the people, take responsibility for the increased cost of apartheid.
- People pay rents they can afford
- Central government take responsibility for housing
- The State provide bigger subsi-



Rent protest: Community action against increases.

dies for housing

Rents for all City Council tenants went up on January 1, with Mitchells Plain, Schotsches Kloof and the Malay Quarter being hit the hardest. In most City Council areas rent increases are between R2 to R3 a month.

Tenants feel that even though the increases seem relatively small they eat heavily into their small pay packets. With the majority of people in these areas living on, or even below the breadline, even the most minimal increase is excessive. Low wages earned by most tenants make them unable to meet even the minimum increase. Wages are low because minimum wage levels are not based on the cost of living but what employers can pay.

The Town Clerk for Cape Town, Mr H.G. Heugh, when accounting for the rent increases, said rents were increased because the cost of repairing and rebuilding houses had gone up, new salary and wage demands had imposed new burdens, and water and electricity, which are included in rent, had gone up.

Rents in Divisional Council areas are even higher than city council areas because tenants have to bear the burden of developing the area.

The provision of black housing has always reflected the struggle to

reduce the cost of accommodation to a minimum-for the authorities concerned.

This is achieved in two basic ways: firstly by cutting housing costs to a minimum. The result is that housing is not only inadequate but also of a low quality. Secondly, by pushing the cost of housing onto tenants by making them pay for basic services.

Rents are divided into two parts: basic rents and Service charges. Basic rent is worked out according to a formula devised by the Department of Community Development. Although the 'formula' specifies 'protections' which should give relief to tenants, these in effect do not apply as local authorities do not apply the protections.

According to the formula the maximum limits for basic rents are:

- For a breadwinner earning up to R150 not more than 5 per cent of the income

- if more than R150 is earned not more than 25 per cent of income

As the majority of tenants fall within R150 - 250 category this rule does not help these people who are struggling to make ends meet. Most of the people in R150 category are pensioners or disabled.

Another disadvantage is that the 5% is not applied. For example in Atlantis where rents for people ear-

ning less are 13,75% of their incomes. For people earning more than R150 rents are calculated according to the cost for the house and on income. This rent pays back the loan on the house and interest on the loan.

And although for this group rent should not exceed 25 per cent of income, in most places it does. For example tenants earning R151 pay R61,88 in basic rent i.e. 40,98 per cent of income in some places.

In addition to basic rents, service charges are levied to pay 'for the running of the townships'. These are determined and administered by the local authorities and are therefore not uniform in all areas.

Tenants do not distinguish between basic rent and service charges -rent for them is the sum which has to be paid every month from their pay packets. And more and more of them are finding they can no longer afford it.

A Cahac survey carried out in Macassar and Scottsdene last year showed that 68 per cent of tenants could not afford basic food expenditure after paying rent.

And the Divisional Council last year had to evict 100 933 tenants who could not meet their rent payments. These people were forced into squatter camps.

# Cape : 3 000 people protest new hikes

CLOSE ON 3000 people at a protest meeting held at Mitchells Plain recently, demanded that the Minister of Community Development, Pen Kotze, meet with a delegation of residents to discuss rent increases. The minister said, however, that he was too busy.

Commenting on Mr Kotze's claim that his schedule was 'too tight', a spokesperson for the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC) said: 'The people's pockets are also tight.'

'The refusal of the minister to meet a delegation of democratically elected representatives of the people is an indication of the insensitivity of the lawmakers to the needs of the people,' he said.

Other demands made at the meeting included that rent increases be stopped, that the central government take responsibility for all housing and that it subsidise housing to a much greater extent.

The huge and appreciative audience which crowded into the Westridge Civic Centre, heard speaker after speaker stress: we demand rents we can afford. On one wall a banner read: Houses, Security and Comfort, and listed the 42 organisa-



3 000 people packed a Mitchell's Plain meeting to protest rent hikes.

tions which make up the Rent Action Committee (RAC), which under the auspices of CAHAC, had organised the meeting.

A CAHAC speaker said: 'The struggle for rents we can afford is very much a part of the struggle against passes, the struggle of the workers for higher wages and the struggle for democracy.'

Messages of support came from representatives of the Catholic Church, the Moslem Judicial Council, the Anglican Church, the United Womens Organisations and the Youth of Guguletu. There was also a

guest speaker from Pebco.

A joint message of support was delivered by a spokesperson for six trade unions — The Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of SA; the Media Workers Association of SA; the Food & Canning Workers Union; the General Workers Union, the National Union of Commercial Catering and Allied Workers and the Social Service Workers Union.

The statement read 'The Wages that we carry into the house by the spoonful are carried out with shovels. We as unions cannot condone

such a situation.'

To massive applause another speaker said: 'God will not come down and perform a miracle. The things that need to be done can be done by us!'

The meeting came as the culmination of a long campaign of protest which started as soon as the increases were announced in December. It was revealed at the meeting that 33 586 signatures had been collected for a protest petition.

Residents in one area burnt their rent papers, and other residents staged a placard protest. In all the areas

affected, house meetings were held to mobilise support for the campaign.

Rent increases have been imposed in all the areas falling under the Cape City Council, Cape Divisional Council, BAAB and Citizens Housing League jurisdiction. In some areas, increases have amounted to up to R61 per month.

The campaign has been marked by consistent attempts by the local authorities to avoid the issue and confuse the people. Besides the minister's refusal to meet the CAHAC delegation, there has been an announcement by the Divisional Council that they had made a 'mistake' in calculating the new rents. The announcement came within days of the mass meeting.

When resistance mounted, the BAAB announced that they would drop service charges by R1, and the Citizens Housing League also found a reason to drop their rent increases. CAHAC, however has indicated its intention to continue the struggle. It is felt that the rents are already too high and that people cannot afford them.





Nusas President Jonty Joffe

# Nusas: Students organising for democracy

**SASPU NATIONAL speaks to the president of the National Union of South African students, Jonty Joffe about the achievements of 1981 and the work that lies ahead**

**Q:** 1981 saw the banning of two Nusas executive members — namely Andrew Boraine and Sammy Adelman. Later in the year, numerous students and others connected to the student movement, were detained. What effect has this had on the student movement?

**A:** 1981 was a fairly heavy year for the student movement - the Nationalist government came down heavily on both black and white students. But it was a year which taught students several important lessons. The primary lesson it taught us in Nusas, is that what we're doing isn't a game, it's quite serious. If you're participating in the struggle for democracy in South Africa, sacrifices are going to have to be made. In the face of those detentions students will go into 1982 feeling stronger than ever about their commitment to working for change in SA.

**Q:** Can you expand a little on what you mean by saying that the detentions have strengthened students?

**A:** The detentions have strengthened students' resolve to work for change in SA. It's made their commitment far more genuine because they understand the conditions under which they are working. The detentions have greatly strengthened the organisation of students and more generally of white democrats in SA. People who weren't previously involved have been mobilised to participate in Detention Support Committees, Care Groups for specific detainees or in Parent Support Committees.

This organisation and politicisation of people will last well beyond these detentions and will negate the effect the authorities hope for by detaining, banning or even trying people.

## 'The detentions have strengthened students resolve to work for change in SA.'

**Q:** What do you see as the most important developments of 1981 for Nusas?

**A:** 1981 saw the consolidation of Nusas playing a role in the broad democratic movement. The broad democratic movement involves organisations from student organisations to trade unions, political groups, women's groups, community organisations etc. It is a non-racial movement in which black and white democrats participate equally.

In 1981, there were numerous occasions where Nusas participated in national campaigns like the Anti-Republic Day Campaign and the Wilson Rowntree boycott.

I think we go into 1982 having established credibility in that movement. We are accepted as participants and are called upon to play our part within it.

**Q:** How successful do you think the Nusas theme for 1981 was - Students for a democratic future?

**A:** The theme attempted to highlight the anti-democratic nature of South African society at all levels - the political, the economic and the educational - and then contrast it with the struggle of the majority for a democratic future in SA.

What emerged strongly was a realisation of the necessity for students to be democratic in their own organisations. Students have to develop as people who understand

democracy and will be democrats for the rest of their lives.

Students learned too, that living in an anti-democratic country like SA makes it very difficult to operate democratically.

In general the theme was a very positive one. We learned important lessons and it was very popular on the campuses.

**Q:** Nusas Congress was held in December. What important things emerged from that?

**A:** Congress attempted to make last year's theme more specific.

What emerged was the necessity for students to remember their campus base. We've established oursel-

ves quite strongly as participants in the broad democratic movement but that participation relies on our strength on the campuses themselves.

'Campus Action for Democracy' was chosen as the theme for 1982. The intention is to focus Nusas activity on the campuses - to mobilise, organise and politicise the students there.

**Q:** There had been a lot of activity over the past year revolving around the universities, both within the nationalist government and liberal establishment circles. What was the reaction of Congress to this?

**A:** Yes there's the De Lange Commission, the HSRC Report - various recommendations by all sorts of people! These and other political events during the year were discussed and many of the ideas are encapsulated by the new theme.

Students felt they should work out their demands for a university which would equip them for a democratic future in SA.

Here co-operation with democratic academics in the universities, is essential. Probably the majority of academics are quite conservative, but there are those who are working for the same democratic future that we as students are.

1981 also saw the co-operation of the university administration with security police in certain instances - an issue which particularly angered students. Also, the SADF made concerted attempts to establish military

commands on campuses.

1982 will be a year where we'll continue to participate in broader political issues, but where we focus far more on the universities. Another issue which emerged at Congress was the need for students to examine the militarisation of South African society.

**Q:** Could you comment on the significance of Joe Phaahla's speech at Congress?

**A:** The talk given by Joe, the 1981/82 Azaso President, was one of the most exciting and significant things at Congress. It's almost thirteen years since a black student leader actually addressed congress. It showed that there is now common ground between black and white students where we can get together on a far more significant basis.

What struck people most about Joe's talk was that black and white students are talking much the same language, while six to seven years ago there was a very marked difference between what white, essentially liberal students in Nusas were saying and what the black student who were caught up in Black Consciousness were saying.

Now both student movements are a part of the broad democratic movement which I spoke about earlier.

**Q:** Why do black and white students not organise together?

**A:** There is general agreement between people in Nusas and in Azaso that at this stage, it is very

## 'If you're participating in the struggle, sacrifices are going to have to be made'

important to organise separately. Conditions on black and white campuses are very different. Black campuses are very much more repressive - there's a constant police presence and a far more brutal treatment of students.

For the organisation of democrats to be most successful it is important for black and white students to organise separately so that they can take up the issues specific to the students they're working with.

As strongly as we feel that, there is a strong feeling of the importance of co-operating where there are common issues and common ground.

**Q:** What is Nusas' relationship to the various white student groups in SA?

**A:** Contact with other groups obviously varies considerably. Our relationship to the ASB (Afrikaanse Students Bond), at the

## 'The theme intends to focus on the campuses to mobilise, organise and politicise students there.'

moment is non-existent. Over the past few years there has been very little common ground between us, the ASB being nothing other than a Nationalist Party student group.

When Andrew Boraine was detained in 1980, ASB refused to condemn the detention of our president. On that basis we felt there wasn't adequate ground to be co-operating with one another.

With groups such as SUCA (Students Union for Christian Action) or POLSTU (Politiese Studente Unie), we don't have official relationships with them but have had fairly close working relationships.

With the crystallization of a broad democratic movement which is identifiable and has definite aims, our priority has been to work with groups in that movement. So, to the extent to which the aims and activities of groups like Polstu of SUCA are compatible with the demands of that movement, we are willing to work with them and have done so.

**Q:** Nusas has received quite a lot of negative publicity over the past few

years through the media - what image do you think it has now?

**A:** We've become used to negative publicity — whether it be the talks given to people in the Defence Force or the news bulletins of the SABC.

One could conclude that Nusas has a bad public image but I don't think that is true.

If the public is defined simply as the white South African population, then our public image is not that great. If one looks at the broader

public and not just the privileged four or five million, I think our image is much more positive.

Nusas has credibility as a genuine opposition group in SA. The media, particularly the SABC, is bound up with the current political structure in

SA. If one is working against that structure and for democratic change, one has to anticipate negative publicity and I think we've weathered that remarkably well.

**Q:** How strong is Nusas on the affiliated campuses themselves?

**A:** Nusas is at one of its strongest stages. We go into 1982 with four of the five English speaking campuses affiliated to us - Durban, UCT, Rhodes and Wits. Pietermaritzburg, at the last referendum held on that campus, decided to affiliate but last year's SRC undemocratically disaffiliated. The 1982 SRC has a more positive attitude and there are people with whom we can work closely.

The other four campuses have the strongest and most soundly pro-Nusas SRC's in a long time.

We are strong, but that must be qualified. Students are easily swayed

So whilst at one stage we enjoy considerable support it wouldn't take

much for the situation to be reversed. South African society generally is becoming far more polarised.

White South Africans are in many instances retreating into the laager and developing very stereotypical attitudes to groups working for change.

Nusas has to find a balance between participating in political activity and at the same time maintaining student support. I feel confident that we will succeed in this during 1982.

# TV2... winning hearts and minds with sight and sound?

IT WAS to be expected that the advent of SABC's Television Two and Three — the 'black' services — would constitute no more than an extension of Television One on the one hand, and Radio Bantu on the other.

And certainly there have been no surprises: the programmes have been aimed at escapist entertainment with Eurocentric documentaries, sport and variety shows dominating screens from the services' inception. Local news tends to concentrate on bantustan heads, cabinet ministers and government housing projects.

As on TV1, the Polish situation gets blanket coverage, but there are no programmes on South Africa's trade unions and their struggle against the system.

Not one iota of criticism of the status quo, no items on urban or rural squalor, migrant labour, detentions or the Group Areas Act.

There have been such electrifying and socially important programmes as the lifecycle of the oyster and a dubbed documentary on the American space programme.

A variety show featuring dancers dressed as miners on the opening night carries the same implication as mine-dancing and shows such as 'Ipi Tombi'. Blacks are fundamentally happy, oppression is just a slogan

and they have oh, such natural rhythm.

Musical shows do feature local artists including the odd very good local jazz group, as well as many sequin-clad mindlessly bopping overseas acts, but their music, like that on SABC's 'black' radio services, carries very little social challenge.

Of course any critique of the services must also be a critique of apartheid, the system which spawned the SABC.

Most established press criticisms are much in the vein of those of TV1. They seek improvements within the service rather than questioning its existence and links with apartheid. There were even one or two naive hopes that the service might be ever so slightly progressive in outlook.

The way the new service is structured, the items that are featured all fall well within the parameters of apartheid ideology.

The most obvious sign is the implication that whites and blacks must remain separated that they cannot share in a common service hence the TV 1 and 2.

The obvious language for any one South African service would be English, a language that is probably understood by more South Africans than any other language. But the new service has two: Zulu and



Sotho, further underlining the divide and rule policy. Tribalism is emphasised, and bantustans, by implication, promoted.

It is a service modelled on American/European lines, aimed at entertainment, escapism and lulling viewers into an acceptance of apartheid. Commercials add to the broad message: Stake your claim in the apartheid system and start climbing the status ladder.

South Africa's large rural population is, again unsurprisingly totally ignored.

The effectiveness of the new services as a propaganda tool is still to be seen. Television is a powerful medium in that it demands so little effort on the part of its audience and its audio-visual nature gives it a credibility above that of other media forms.

However, when the experience of people is directly opposed to the message conveyed by the medium, this credibility becomes considerably lessened. Thus to a certain extent the success of TV2 and 3 is tied up to the attempts by the state to build up a strong black middle class as a buffer against real change.

Although the majority of blacks cannot afford television sets, the values pushed by the new stations will reach a sizeable audience, with sets being established in shebeens, shops, mine compounds and hostels. Domestic servants of the wealthy are also likely to have access to the new stations as their employers pass on their sets and buy new ones to keep up with the proverbial Jones's.

For television to be used in a constructive way in a third world country such as South Africa, there

would have to be fundamental changes to the ideological context within which it would operate. The aims of those who control it would have to be in line with building a more democratic society.

Such a service would have education (in the broadest sense of the word) as its priority. Programmes would have to be designed for communal viewing, and the development potential it could have would not be hampered by illiteracy.

However, as long as the present political set-up continues there is no hope for a people's television station, one that would reflect the aspirations of the majority of the country's population, aspirations which aren't glibly modelled along the western idea that the media are just another commodity to be passively consumed.

# Do-it-together book gears for change

TO THOSE eeking out an existence in South Africa's rural areas, officialdom means trouble.

Unlike other Third World countries, government officials here do not have the interests of the majority of the population at heart - their job is to enforce control rather than help people achieve a better quality of life. Rural areas are generally seen as a dumping ground for 'surplus labour'. The path to development here is thus one of self reliance, of striving to improve things outside the restrictive framework of apartheid.

What then can be done at this stage in time? The most important thing is for people to become aware that they can have some measure of control over their own lives, and that by pooling their scanty resources and working communally, the basis for an alternative future can be created. There are certain short-term goals that can be achieved, such as improving skills and attaining a degree of self-sufficiency.

An important milestone in this regard is the publication of the 'People's Workbook' by the Environmental Development Agency, an independent rural development organisation.

For the first time, a wide range of relevant information on how to improve the quality of life in poverty-stricken areas is presented, technical information placed in a sound political context. This is important, because for people to progress they have to be aware of the social situation they exist in and the factors



A well illustrated book covering the A to Z of communal living.

that got them there in the first place.

Thus there is an explanation of the nature of rural poverty and the immediate steps that can be taken to overcome it, all of which is put in a simple style. Written in English (EDA is aware of the limitations involved) the book is intended to serve as a catalyst for community change and as a basic textbook for those learning how to speak English. A lot of effort has gone into this progressive publication.

The underlying premise is that real change can only come about through democratic co-operation and hard work. Examples are given

of the successes and failures various groups have experienced in trying to organise themselves.

Divided into sections on agriculture, water supplies, health, building, legal rights and how to work in groups, the 560 page manual brims with practical information and interviews. An alternative history of South Africa is presented in comic strip form. It is the story of Vusi, a young man from the city who returns to his family in an overcrowded homeland, and through conversation with his grandfather is shown how whites came to control the sub-continent with their technical superiority and imperialist backing.

The section on agriculture outlines the problems facing black farmers, 70% of their country's land is denied to them and this is the reason behind the overcrowding, overgrazing, soil erosion and landlessness that handicap them.

One of the ways officialdom exploits black South Africans is by keeping them ignorant of their legal rights. However, the legislation of apartheid makes it almost impossible for most people to live decently without breaking the law. The most hated form of legal control over black South Africans are the pass laws which determine where people

may live and work. Section 10 rights are detailed as well as the intricacies of contract work and handling labour bureaux.

The advantages of trade unions are chronicled and there is a brief history of worker organisation, one of the most powerful forms of challenging exploitation. The example of the 1980 strike by 20 000 Johannesburg City Council workers is given in an interview with a worker still fighting to get his job back after the massive layoffs - which followed the dispute.

Other information here consists of workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance, the rights of domestic workers and pensions and grants. There are also details on marriage and divorce laws, adoption, making a will and understanding hire purchase agreements, as well as how to deal with police.

Because most ways of improving the quality of one's life involve communal work, the section on working in groups is particularly useful. This includes the actual establishment of production teams and the courses of action open to them, for instance making clothes and furniture. Working in groups is also an educative experience, and this aspect is also examined.

Although handicapped by the fact that the book is currently only available in English, it nonetheless is a well-researched contribution to developing a democratic society outside the structures and values of apartheid and the economic exploitation that accompanies it.



The marabi man and the union man — counterparts in the play

# Marabi dances onto the stage



George — a character strung out between jazz and the music of marabi

JUNCTION AVENUE Theatre Company has brought Modikwe Dikobe's novel, *The Marabi Dance*, to the stage.

'The idea of Marabi was first seriously considered at the beginning of 1981 when some members of the Junction Avenue Theatre Company met Modikwe Dikobe. This book and the culture it describes captured our imaginations because we were seeking to present that part of history which is largely unwritten: the history of the working people of South Africa. We wanted to discover and reveal some of the roots of our own urban culture; to capture the strength and vitality of the slumyard communities of Johannesburg, and the tragedy of their destruction...although the book was our starting point, the play is not a direct adaptation of the book.'

Junction Avenue, inspired by the gently told, simple story of Martha and her people's struggle to survive, have created an entertaining and dramatic musical event with a muscular political statement.

This is the result of six months of workshops, involving group members whose jobs vary from domestic work to post-graduate study. Although there are problems inherent to such a project — funding, time, energy and distribution — the results in this case are exciting and challenging.

This dramatised Marabi only faintly resembles Dikobe's novel. We are taken into a vividly-created Doornfontein slumyard and meet Martha and George — the young protagonists of marabi — who, in the novel, are antagonised by Mabongo and Mamabongo's (Martha's parents) adherence to tradition and custom.

Although a trace of this traditionalist stand remains in Marabi, the theme in the novel which explores so strongly the clash between the old rural customs of Mabongo's generation and the urban disregard of Martha's slum generation, is almost substituted by what Junction Avenue saw as more relevant to their 1982 audience: a need to create characters who would reflect the struggle; reflect a growth in consciousness, political and personal.

To aid this, the group have created a union man — Makhhalima.

'The creation of a union man is intended to throw a more accurate or militant light on the period to give our generation's view,' says Malcolm Purkey, the director. 'Makhhalima, the union man is smashed because the state did smash them. It smashed them in the fifties, the sixties, the seventies and it smashes them today. But the fact is the spirit lives on and that is what is interesting to us. That is what we are trying to portray.'

The story of marabi's apparent death through the destruction of the slums due to forced removals to Orlando, becomes a dramatic metaphor on which to peg the political growth of the working people.

Makhhalima's return to the slumyard from his union activities in Cape Town introduces a political counterpoint to the anarchic note of

the spirit Marabi. He introduces the ideas of unity and organization; urges the people to strike when Mabongo loses his job and to resist their removal to Orlando.

At times he verges on a dramatic stereotype but is saved by Ramolola Makhene's interpretation which is intense, committed and above all good humoured.

The union man's existence in the new Marabi is finally justified by the dramatic mileage gained in his relationship with the other created character — Ntebejane, the maker of marabi music.

Ntebejane — described as 'the monkey, the hunchback, the personification of the slum spirit, the pain and the pluck' — provides some of the most exciting moments in the show. Perfectly cast and endowed with some of the punchiest writing in the performance, Henry Mahlatie comes to embody the ambivalence of slum life.

Ntebejane, sustained by nothing but Skomfana and his love for the 'real people' of the slums, is ugly and repellent like the slums and sustains them with his music, with his marabi, with his hatred for everything else. He is funny, entertaining and totally compelling.

And in Ntebejane, Makhhalima, the union man, sees the danger and evils of marabi.

The two characters are almost direct opposites and so create much of the play's dramatic tension and colour. Finally, though, we see their fight is the same. In the deserted slumyard after the removals, we discover in striking images the state-silenced union man strung to a door-way; the Skomfana duped marabi-maker lying abandoned like a forgotten note across his piano.

The relationship between these two totally original characters shows how Junction Avenue have come to terms with the dramatic medium and have shed any temptation to take easy routes via the novel.

A further example of such innovation is seen in the growth of the lovable and enduring traditionalist father of Martha, Mabongo becomes an embittered, experienced man of the world returning with a new dignity and resolution from a war into which he has been conned. 'Burn Germany...burn England...burn Europe.'

Another interesting transformation is seen in the novel's main marabi player — young George, Martha's lover.

In Marabi, we watch George shift from a charming clown — barely tolerated by Mabongo and Mamabongo — into a self-centred character who rejects the pregnant Martha for his newly found interest in jazz. Thereafter he goes back to marabi and rediscovers his roots. He too is silenced.

So in the world of Marabi, George becomes a victim of the Marabi's destruction — the destruction of Doornfontein — the destruction of freedom.

'What we'd like to show is that marabi lives on, despite all attempts at hiding it and wiping it out of the history books' says Malcolm Purkey.

Junction Avenue has certainly succeeded not only in reviving marabi in our historical memories, but creatively communicating one of the strongest, most positive political statements seen on a South African stage for a long time.

The struggle continues — in the union man's last words and the final words of the play: 'We live in the ghettos of Orlando now, but there are still many of us on the train.'



A trade unionist, Makhhalima (centre) is introduced to focus action on today's struggles



COFFIN IS CARRIED SHOULDER-HIGH TO GRAVESIDE

# Hamba Kahle, Neil Aggett



NEIL'S PARENTS LEAVE HIS GRAVE



FUNERAL SERVICE

