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Inkatha and COSATU

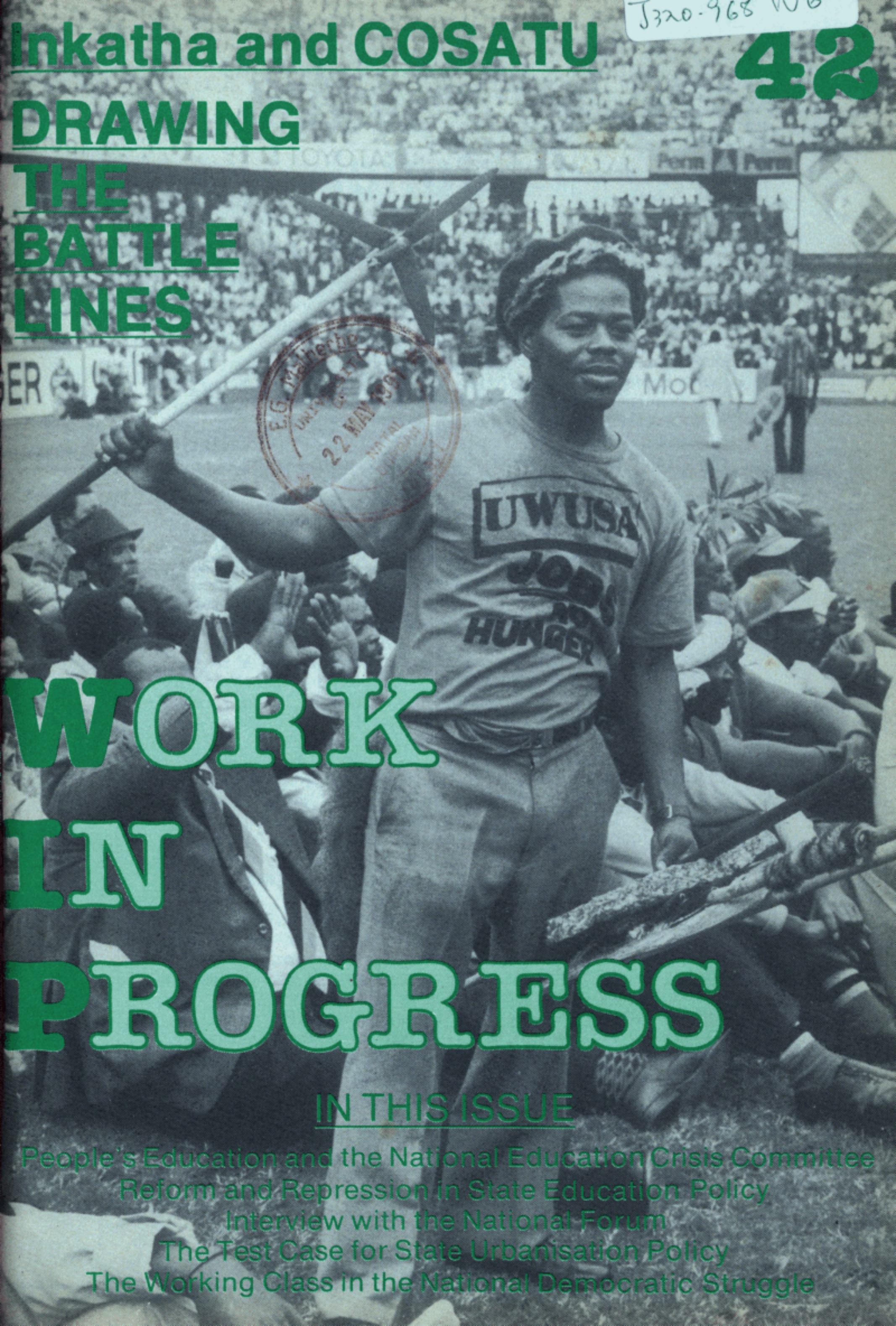
DRAWING

THE BATTLE LINES

WORK IN PROGRESS

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Editorial

Political organisations competing for support, constituencies and power are not always realistic in their assessments. Claims and counter-claims are often exaggerated. Estimates of the number of supporters attending a meeting can differ by tens of thousands, depending on who is doing the counting.

Sometimes, exaggerated claims are made so often that they become accepted as self-evident truths. When this occurs in the progressive political movement, it becomes cause for concern. Political power can never be built on a false underestimation of the opposition's strength. A realistic understanding of strength and weakness can ultimately only benefit progressive and democratic organisation.

There are those who assert that Inkatha is a fundamentally weak organisation, basing its support on coercion and a backward-looking ethnic identity. Inkatha itself claims a million-and-a-half members. Both assessments cannot be accurate.

Whatever one thinks about Inkatha - and the WIP editors hold no brief for that organisation and its policies - a realistic assessment of its strength is important for the progressive movement as a whole. If Inkatha was able to mobilise over 70 000 supporters to attend the launch of the United Workers Union of South Africa (UMUSA), then it must have some power base in Natal. Claims to the contrary are wishful thinking, not realistic analysis.

This is the context in which Phillip van Niekerk argues in this WIP that UMUSA's launch has more significance politically than in the trade union field. While it seems unlikely that UMUSA can, in the long term, develop a factory-floor base of any strength, its launch signifies a growing political battle for ascendancy in Natal. COSATU and the UDF are involved in this battle, and so is Inkatha. And, as Van Niekerk points out, political groups may have dismissed Buthelezi's power base too easily.

No attempt to wish away unpleasant political realities can succeed in the long term. Nor can such an approach benefit progressive politics. While WIP cannot assess the claims and counter-claims regarding the relative strength of organisations like Inkatha and the UDF in Natal, or the National Forum, all progressive groups can raise questions and debates, challenging perceptions which may not always be well-founded.

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Drawing the Battle Lines

The newly-launched United Workers Union of SA may not have much power as a trade union federation. But, argues PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK, the coming battle between UWUSA and COSATU has national political implications for a wide range of organisations.

On May Day this year, at a rally in Durban's Kings Park Stadium attended by between 60 000 and 80 000 people, the Inkatha-linked federation - the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA) - was launched.

UWUSA's launch represented the drawing of battle lines between Inkatha and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Fundamentally this battle is a political struggle between Inkatha and the forces politically identifying with a Congress position.

Apart from the implications for the trade union movement, the battle is significant for the political future of Natal. Inkatha's real strength is now under scrutiny. The battle between UWUSA and COSATU will reveal the extent of Inkatha's strength to progressive organisations - a lesson which it would be unwise to ignore.

UWUSA AND THE COSATU LAUNCH

The emergence of UWUSA appears likely to take a back seat to the overall attempts by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Inkatha to extend their power base through initiatives which include the KwaNatal 'indaba'.

But for the direct catalyst in the formation of UWUSA one has to return to COSATU president Elijah Barayi's speech at COSATU's launch on 1 December last year.

Barayi attacked the 'puppet homeland' leaders, singling out Chief Buthelezi for special attention. At the same time COSATU adopted a policy sympathetic to disinvestment.

A resolution at its inaugural congress

- though unclear in parts - said all forms of international pressure, including disinvestment, were an 'essential and effective form of pressure on the South African regime and we support it'.

The resolution on disinvestment went directly against the policy of Buthelezi who was involved in a high-profile international campaign against sanctions and disinvestment.

According to Buthelezi: 'Members of Inkatha who are members of COSATU came to me at Ulundi on their own, uninvited by me, to complain about what Mr Barayi their president had stated as the policy, and that he had no mandate to speak as he had done.'

'I did not want to have any of my fingers in the trade union pie but when members of Inkatha challenged me to assist them, I could not refuse them that assistance'.

INKATHA AND FOSATU

However, COSATU unionists say that tensions between Inkatha and one of COSATU's predecessors, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), had come to the surface long before the formation of COSATU. There were suspicions for some time that Buthelezi was planning a rival union federation.

For years FOSATU had an uneasy truce with Inkatha. Thousands of Natal workers found their political home with Inkatha but their labour home in the various FOSATU affiliates.

Buthelezi spoke at the launch of the Northern Natal branch of FOSATU and the two organisations actively worked

together on occasion. The Empangeni bus boycott of 1985, for instance, was co-ordinated by a committee composed jointly of Inkatha and FOSATU people.

But before 1 December, substantial divisions had manifested themselves, the clearest of these being the consumer boycott of white shops in Howick, called to put pressure on employers following the mass dismissal of workers at the nearby BTR Sarmcol plant.

Inkatha representatives forced the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) to call the boycott off - an action which led to substantial friction and bad blood between Inkatha and FOSATU.

Barayi's speech of 1 December - and Inkatha's reaction to it - probably did little more than crystallise an already emerging problem. But at the same time it raised issues which went far beyond union matters in Natal and touched on the national political debate.

FORCING POLITICAL CHOICES

The formation of COSATU coincided with the general movement of the emerging unions into an alliance with other progressive organisations.

Though FOSATU had increasingly participated in political campaigns such as the November 1984 Transvaal stayaway, it never reached the point of being identified with any specific political grouping. For this reason it was no contradiction for Inkatha members to belong to FOSATU unions.

From December 1985, following its launch, COSATU moved towards an increasing identification with the United Democratic Front (UDF) on a local political level and held cordial talks with the African National Congress (ANC) in Lusaka.

A joint communique after the Lusaka meeting was explicit about COSATU's stand on the ANC: 'There was a common understanding that the Pretoria regime

and the ruling class of South Africa are powerless to provide any real and meaningful solutions to the general crisis, that lasting solutions can only emerge from the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC, and the entire democratic forces of the country, of which COSATU is an integral part'.



Ardent Inkatha supporter at UWUSA rally

COSATU was doing something FOSATU had never done: forcing workers to make a political choice on the basis of their

trade union membership, which was now aligned to the progressive forces from which Inkatha was excluded.

On one hand, it was insensitive to the thousands of COSATU members who belonged to Inkatha. On the other hand, the rationale had it, the political times were such that unions could no longer back off from making a decisive political choice.

In retaliation, Inkatha took the 'either or' process one step further by forcing workers to make a trade union choice between COSATU and UWUSA, which was born with the blessing and active participation of Buthelezi.

The choice which now confronts many thousands of Zulu migrant workers and workers in Northern Natal is whether their allegiance to Inkatha or COSATU is stronger, or whether they can still find a way of living with both.

If COSATU had bitten off more than it could chew by taking on Inkatha in Natal, UWUSA has probably bitten off more than it can chew by taking on COSATU nationally.

TESTING UWUSA'S STRENGTH

UWUSA's first test - the mass rally at Durban's Kings Park Stadium on 1 May attended by between 60 000 and 80 000 people - was an unqualified success. The second test - recruiting a large membership - seems to be well on the way, though the figures of almost 100 000 given by UWUSA general secretary Simon Conco shortly after the May Day rally are probably absurd.

UWUSA had by early May picked up three plants in the Transvaal: Jabula Foods and Gryphon Engineering on the East Rand and a dairy near Kinross. In Natal it has claimed majority at a number of plants - Erikson Brothers, Zululand Sawmills, Zululand Furniture Factory, Ulundi Bakery, Ntanzini Cartage, Pritchard Cleaners, Pioneer Seeds, Pietermaritzburg Transport, Edendale Tannery, Scottish Cable and Natal Tanning Extracts.

UWUSA's single most important recruiting strategy after Inkatha membership will be the anti-disinvestment drive which was spelled out at the opening rally.

Buthelezi asked, to roars of 'no': 'I would like to know whether, in fact, it

is your wish that disinvestment and sanctions should be imposed in South Africa. Shall I tell those overseas that you are now ready to suffer even more deprivations than you are suffering already?'

But UWUSA's third, and most important, test - servicing, holding onto and winning concrete gains for its members - is more in doubt, given the lack of depth of trade union experience in the UWUSA executive.

No unions have defected from COSATU and the only unions to read messages of support at the UWUSA's launch were the African Domestic Workers Union and the National Union of Brick and Allied Workers Union, an in-company union started at Corobrick.

Inkatha's only union affiliate before the formation of COSATU - the National Union of Sugar Refining and Allied Workers Union - was also an in-company union started by Tongaat-Hulett. It is currently facing a financial malaise and major corruption charges have been levelled against former general secretary Selby Ntsibande.

A message of support was also read from the Black Staff Association of the South African Transport Services, a union which was described by the General Workers Union during its recognition dispute with SATS four years ago as the SATS personnel department dressed up as a staff association.

Several employers were on the stage for the UWUSA launch - lending credence to COSATU claims that UWUSA will be a 'sweetheart' union formed with the active backing of employers. So far there is nothing to indicate that UWUSA will represent a major threat on the shopfloor to COSATU outside of Northern Natal - where its damage potential on the shopfloor and in terms of action against activists could be considerable.

The former president of the Metal and Allied Workers Union, Jeffrey Vilane, even though he is an Inkatha member, was recently shot, and reports of violence against COSATU members continue to be reported on a daily basis.

UWUSA officials appear to have very little real trade union experience. Its general secretary, Simon Conco, is a Kwazulu MP and an Umlazi businessman. The rest of the executive are businessmen and managers, with little experience of trade unions, who are unlikely to be much of a match for the experienced COSATU unionists.

The only major defection from COSATU - Mhlaba Gumede, the former Northern Natal chairman of the Paper, Wood and Allied Workers Union (PWAU) - did not make it onto the executive.

THE SEARCH FOR AID

To compensate for this lack of trade union depth, UWUSA has been casting around for aid overseas and to this end met with two representatives of the American labour federation, the AFL-CIO, and its African arm, the African American Labour Centre (AALC) on 10 April.

The two men - Irving Brown, head of the international section of the AFL-CIO, and Patrick O'Farrell, director of the AALC - have both been publicly linked to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and both caused a furore when they headed a delegation to South Africa in 1982.

According to Conco, no firm offer of aid materialised from the meeting, but the AFL-CIO is likely to help individual UWUSA unions. UWUSA has cast around widely for overseas support, including in Europe and the East, and is likely to receive support from the Israelis. According to Conco: 'We want to look into what's going and will choose the best of what's on offer. Our ideal is to be worker-funded. We think its best not to get people to pay the piper and then watch them take over the union'.

UWUSA AND NATIONAL POLITICS

The launch of UWUSA has so far had more political than trade union impact in a province which is increasingly diverging from the rest of the country. In the first place, the crowd of between 60 000 and 80 000 which attended the launch can not simply be dismissed as

people given a free ride in from the rural areas for the day.

True, a large number were bussed in from the Transvaal and the Inkatha heartland of Northern Natal. But the launch was presented as a national launch. Also Inkatha is not the only political/union organisation which busses people in for rallies or funerals.

A large number of those present - some estimates say as many as 10 000 - were migrant workers from the hostels around Durban who streamed back to the townships in impi formation.

The rally appeared to belie polls showing that Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement have little support and are not a factor to be reckoned with.

In fact, if one compares the UWUSA rally in Kings Park with the much smaller COSATU rally at Currie's Fountain, it is the UDF, which shared the platform with COSATU, which came off worst.

COSATU is, as its general secretary, Jay Naidoo, pointed out, assured of its support on the shopfloor; the UDF has little but rallies such as that on 1 May to show public support in Natal. Since the violent conflict of August 1985, in the aftermath of the assassination of civil rights lawyer Victoria Mxenge, Durban has looked like an increasingly weak link for the UDF and its allies.

KwaNatal will further extend Buthelezi's power base throughout the province. The only real organisational opposition to Buthelezi in the area are the unions and it is in this context that the UWUSA-COSATU battle has political significance in Natal.

If UWUSA has the potential to damage COSATU on Inkatha's home ground of Natal, its emergence also has important implications for political groups which have tended too easily to dismiss Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement.

At the very least the rally should prompt an awareness that Inkatha has very real popular support with deep cultural roots among the Zulu people.

People's Education: Creating a Democratic Future

Thron Rensburg is national secretary of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC). INGRID O'BRYEN interviewed him on the present education crisis and the NECC's people's education programme.

What are the origins of the NECC?

The Soweto Parents Crisis Committee was founded in October 1985 in response to the schools crisis in Soweto and the West Rand. The SPCC convened the first national education crisis conference in December at Wits, which 160 concerned groups attended. They felt the SPCC's approach was correct, and that its officials should form the basis of a NECC, together with representatives from 11 regions. This met for the first time in March, just before the second national conference in Durban, but only after it did the national structure really begin to operate. On 8 April an executive of three was elected: Vusi Khanyile and Rev Molefe Tsele, both based in Johannesburg, as national chairperson and national treasurer respectively, and myself, based in Port Elizabeth, as national secretary.

Last year the students' slogan was 'Liberation now, education later'. At the December conference this was changed to 'People's education for people's power'. Why did this happen and what does it mean - and what exactly is meant by people's education?

Pupils can only organise and become a force for change to combine with other such forces if they are at school. Workers cannot develop working-class consciousness or power if they are not in the factories to organise together. Student structures were increasingly weakened by almost two years of stayaway, and a general breakdown in discipline.

In demanding people's education for people's power in people's schools, we aim to shift the balance of educational

power, beginning by establishing a people's authority alongside the existing state authority. The Crisis in Education Committees (CECs) and eventually the Parent-Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) will lay the foundations for future education structures. In some cases they have already taken on local education responsibilities.

The People's Education Secretariat, consisting of five people appointed at the April NECC meeting in Johannesburg, will set up offices in their regions to gather information and contributions from all interested organisations. The secretariat will compile and present its findings to our next national conference in Port Elizabeth at the end of June.

Its suggestions will include alternative programmes, courses and material to be used in schools. This content will emerge as interested organisations and the various crisis committees look critically at Bantu Education, considering each subject taught to identify what should be scrapped or replaced. History, for example, will certainly not be an exam subject next year: we have recommended to regions that they discuss this. We will formulate our own history syllabus, which will include people's perceptions of what history is, international and African history.

The secretariat will also consider the applications of science subjects, and also look critically at the language question. For example, it will consider introducing 'people's set-work books'. These books, for instance a new poetry book, will be chosen or compiled by people involved in implementing people's education. This process will not be completed overnight, and it will be

constantly changing and dynamic. The next two months will give us the embryo, but real people's education is a process rather than a rigid written doctrine.

Who are the people who make up the secretariat? What experience have they in education or as educationists? Do they have links to progressive teachers' organisations?

The secretariat convenor is Zwelakhe Sisulu, the editor of New Nation, who has been interested and concerned with the educational struggle. We define an educationist as a person concerned with and involved in the issues of the education struggle, because education is located within the broader society, not apart from it. Other members of the Secretariat are the Rev Stofile, a theology lecturer from Fort Hare, Pravin Gordhan, who is involved in the Natal Indian Congress, Fr Albert Nolan and Fr Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, general secretary of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference. These convenors will employ a full-time person to run the regional office, consult with all progressive teachers' organisations, and gather information. The employees should be activists with experience in the educational struggle since 1976, in education crisis committees, PTSAs or student bodies like COSAS, able to consult with a wide spectrum of people and organisations and acceptable to most groups.

Delegates to the December education conference at Wits represented 160 organisations of many different kinds. Delegates to the March NECC conference were regional representatives from parent, student and teacher organisations. Why the change in the nature of representation, and was it successful?

We wanted representatives from organisations specifically engaged in the education struggle. The NECC is a specialised educational organisation of the people, the embryo of a future education structure in a people's republic. We envisage similar specialisation in the civic movement and in other areas of organisation.

The idea of regional delegations was to get as large a spread of representatives as possible. Delegates represented crisis committees from the

regions: Western Cape, Southern Cape, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Border, OFS, Natal, and North, South, Eastern and Western Transvaal. Crisis committees are the basic local structure the NECC is working with at the moment.

In Port Elizabeth, for instance, the CEC consists of 28 organisations, including the nine COSATU-affiliated unions, the local community, women's and youth organisations, PEBCO, PEWO, PEYCO, and the Port Elizabeth Student Council (PESCO). They elected a 'committee of ten' which forms the working CEC. The Eastern Cape region as a whole includes about 30 towns: 120 representatives from 20 of these towns attended the national conference. In the Eastern Cape, too, an ad hoc committee of five represents and co-ordinates the whole region. These structures will soon be formalised; the NECC is drafting a constitution for CECs locally and regionally.

Reportedly a number of students were not happy about the NECC decision to return to school, and school attendance in some areas is still very low.

At the April NECC meeting in Johannesburg we were told that in some areas CECs were unable to report back to the mass of students, to explain this shift in strategy and direction and why they must return to school. The state banned meetings in a number of areas, and this is one reason for the misunderstanding.

Many students expected a major decision along the lines of an immediate national rent boycott, or a massive worker stayaway. The NECC of course could not call for these things since it is an educational committee. We would have to consult extensively with civic bodies if we wanted to initiate a rent boycott, and they would have to get mandates from their constituencies. Similarly with trade unions and a stayaway.

I think the CECs did not realise they had not prepared students sufficiently for what might come out of the conference. This also reflects a problem common to many areas - lack of understanding between students' organisations and parents. At the conference this was reflected in the huge parent representation which outweighed that of students: a definite imbalance we must work to redress.

A problem is that we do not yet have a

formalised structure for the CECs at local level. In some areas individuals are appointed rather than elected organisational representatives. The question then arises as to whom they are answerable, to what extent they are aware of student problems or feelings, and whether they are in daily contact with students and their organisations.

Once PTSA's are set up in all higher primary and high schools, we can look forward to building co-operative relations between PTSA's and other local organisations, such as street and worker committees, to ultimately form some sort of town structure. This of course raises questions of the transitional state and the concept of dual power is crucial to achieving this.

It has been argued that NECC should co-operate and organise with as broad a range of educational organisations as possible. To this end it has formed an alliance with the African Teachers Association of South Africa (ATASA). ATASA is regarded by many, particularly teachers in the National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA) and other progressive teacher organisations, as conservative and often reactionary. Its president and secretary have held their positions for over 20 years. Can you comment on the relationship between ATASA and the NECC, and general NECC policy regarding relations with teachers' representative bodies.

We recognised ATASA as the major representative of teachers in South Africa, with 54 000 members nationally. It was the only existing body for African teachers until the progressive organisations came along. It could make deals with the state because it served on state structures. ATASA is made up of regional teachers' organisations like the Transvaal African Teachers Union and also town structures.

I am not clear on its elective procedure, but it is quite possible that the president and secretary have held their positions for years. Traditionally there is not much connection between ATASA membership and its leadership and I think this is unlikely to change very much.

Members of ATASA who are school inspectors or have other jobs implementing DET policy have not stopped what they are doing. They will come under great pressure to give up their

jobs. For example in Port Elizabeth, a Mr KB Thabata, a deputy director of the DET, evoked the ire of both people and students by denouncing the local PTCC, and actively working against it. His house was petrol-bombed a while ago.

Our opinion at the March conference was that it would be tactically important to recognise ATASA.

Progressive teachers organisations objected and put forward a motion rejecting ATASA. The conference instead passed a resolution condemning teachers' organisations or their members who victimised teachers involved in progressive organisations - a problem particularly in the Western Cape, where some teachers were expelled.

Reading between the lines, clearly ATASA is expected to respond by moving in a progressive direction. It has already withdrawn from certain government bodies on which it served until the time of the conference.

After the conference, students in Uitenhage gave ATASA members a one week ultimatum to resign and become NEUSA members. A similar situation occurred in Port Elizabeth and the crisis committees in both areas managed to neutralise the situation. The conference took a resolution condemning Inkatha. If ATASA members in Natal remain linked to Inkatha, the next conference will take action against them.

The NECC does not believe teachers should be forced to align with any specific teachers' organisation. But increasingly ATASA members are incurring the wrath of the people and they will have to move. We are waiting for democratic teachers' organisations to come to the fore; there is space for them to organise and recruit from ATASA membership.

Other teachers' organisations represented on the NECC include the Western Cape Teachers Union, the Democratic Teachers Association (Western Cape), and the Eastern Cape Teachers Union. In the Western Cape these organisations appear to work together. I do not think there is any alliance of organisations in the Eastern Cape although both NEUSA and Eastern Cape Teachers Union are members of the CEC and thus in touch with one another.

What role will teachers' organisations play in implementing people's education? Does the NECC have a policy for inclusion of white, coloured and Indian

teachers' organisations, and will the people's education programme apply to such schools?

Teachers, not activists, will be most important in implementing people's education. And we will have to rely particularly on teachers currently involved in democratic teachers' organisations, as the most effective people to implement people's education.

demanded people's education immediately. They want to know why teachers still provide gutter education. Pupils constantly pressurise teachers, and organisations like ATASA will have to shift fast if they are to provide education acceptable to students.

As regards other race groups: this is a serious problem. Clearly we cannot implement a new education system without support from all groups, and we have



NECC conference - Demanding people's education for people's power

We will liaise with their organisations nationally, and provide them with our programmes and suggestions for them to expand on and implement. Teachers will be the cadres of people's education.

In a number of schools since the March conference pupils refused tuition and

been looking at ways to move into these schools. We have talked, for example, to the National Union of South African Students, which contacted a number of white schools in its education charter campaign.

We will begin by moving through these sorts of channels, and of course through

progressive white teachers. The 'white bloc' has until now been impenetrable, but I don't think this is the case anymore.

We have serious problems in coloured and Indian areas where there is often little adult political organisation. In Port Elizabeth for example pupils in Indian and coloured areas are still struggling to resolve the prefect versus SRC issue. We have urged all our CECs to address this problem, and to incorporate representatives from all townships, not just the African ones.

This is crucial since people's education is not a blueprint for African schools alone. Individuals in some coloured and Indian areas are in touch with NECC structures, but we have no formalised links as yet - except in the Western Cape, where coloured schools are very involved in the NECC. But that region is divided, with one CEC based in the coloured community and another in the African community. This is not an ideological but a geographical divide, which we are trying to resolve.

What regional differences are there in the NECC's organisation and mobilisation?

The Eastern Cape is the most organised, and has a rudimentary regional structure. We are still battling to set up regional structures in other areas, although recently, on 10 May, the Transvaal region held its first regional conference. In Natal we have serious problems from violent attacks by Inkatha on members of student representative councils: Lamontville for instance is still in a state of seige, with one SRC member killed and a number in hiding.

What role did trade unions play in the NECC, and to what extent will they be involved in formulating and implementing people's education?

We had full delegations from both COSATU and CUSA at the March conference. They participated fully, especially on the issues of the May Day stayaway and the 16-18 June stayaway, for which they gave us the go-ahead. But we do not foresee a specific role for workers' organisations in implementing people's education. They will make an input at local, town and regional levels where they form part of the NECC's grassroots structure.

What about organisations and student bodies linked to National Forum?

There is no special provision to include or exclude any group. What determines participation in the NECC is the situation on the ground in the various areas. Which organisations sit on local committees will be determined at regional level. Nationally we welcome and expect involvement from all those concerned and committed to revolutionary change and the establishment of a democratic education system.

What particular organisational problems are there in bantustan schools, and does the NECC have a strategy for these areas?

At this stage we have no structures in 'homeland' areas. The three main areas where we face many problems and repression from so-called homeland authorities are Kwazulu, more recently Lebowa, and the Ciskei. The Ciskei has consistently attacked COSAS since 1983. But 'homelands' are part of the future agenda. In 'South Africa proper' our target group for organisation is about 5,3-million pupils in African schools, and there are a further two million in 'homeland' areas.

What are the different organisational issues in small and large towns?

It is easier to organise in small towns because there are fewer schools. For example in Port Alfred or Alexandria in the Eastern Cape there are four or five schools. Two are lower primary which leaves about three higher primary and senior secondary schools, which are the major organisational targets.

But on the other hand state repression tends to be more vicious in small towns. Leadership is more easily identifiable and suffers constant harassment. For example in Lebowa, some people were killed by the A-team vigilante group which operates there and an A-team is also active in Lamontville.

UDF regional structures are important in rural areas and small towns, where we often share the same structures. Often a UDF town structure will consist of the same organisations as the Parents' Crisis Committee.

In bigger towns the number of schools is dramatically greater. In Soweto, for example, there are more than 60 high and

higher primary schools, and PTAs have to be organised in each one. In Port Elizabeth there are 22 higher primary and 11 high schools, where SRCs have to be organised. But it is easier to organise in bigger towns, although there is harassment, and students are generally more politicised, and tend to emulate adult organisational structures, meetings and procedures.

Another problem is school buildings. In Port Elizabeth four schools have been totally destroyed, and 40% of the rest affected by burnings. So there is massive overcrowding. In Port Elizabeth 30% of schools have morning and afternoon teaching shifts, with overloaded teacher-pupil ratios, often with between 60 to 130 pupils per teacher. And where two different groups of pupils are taught in shifts, both groups' school day is shortened from seven to four hours.

This will inevitably lead to a massive failure rate, which forms part of state strategy. The DET in Port Elizabeth refused to budge an inch with regard to fixing existing and constructing new buildings although we made many representations to them about it. In Duncan Village they did do something, but involved the community council, so the community rejected the project. The community councils are in fact inoperative, while the CEC is regarded as the only legitimate committee by the community. The DET recognised this and now faces a dilemma: whether or not to involve the CEC in rebuilding schools.

The Port Elizabeth CEC made it clear that unless DET moves, it will build schools itself - people's schools totally outside the jurisdiction of the DET.

Is it really a dilemma, or is the state planning a mass failure? It is in an economic bind; it cannot create jobs and cannot afford to have masses of

African matriculants demanding them. The state also has no clear idea of where Bantu Education is going and what to do about it. It argues that activists take advantage of the situation to 'foment unrest'; it cannot be seen to be weak and give in to democratic demands.

There have been occasional reports of an ongoing Education Charter campaign, and also a Transvaal Student Congress million signature campaign to unban COSAS. What has happened to these campaigns?

The Education Charter campaign is continuing, and will combine with our People's Education Secretariat. The activists running the Charter campaign have skills crucial to our education campaign, and would be useful in running the secretariat regional offices.

The March conference decided not to go for the million signature campaign. We did however decide to 'unban' COSAS ourselves. On 16 June we will go on a massive campaign. Students countrywide will wear their COSAS T-shirts in open defiance of the state. So students will re-appropriate COSAS for themselves.

What developments do you anticipate in the education crisis this year?

The NECC is committed to the policy that this is a school year - pupils must go to school. Black schooling is in a deep crisis. Teachers indicated to us that if students did not have setbooks by the end of March they would be unable to complete syllabi in time for exams. But we will still push for a school year. 16-18 June will of course be critical, and we cannot predict the state's response to activities then. State response may also be a deciding factor as to whether students will insist on continued boycott.

From Revolt to a Search for Alternatives

Resistance to South Africa's education structures has altered since the 1976 revolt. Concrete questions of educational alternatives are now part of the agenda. LINDA CHISHOLM surveys the changing nature of the education struggle.

Schooling on the Witwatersrand and in the Eastern and Western Cape came to a virtual standstill by the end of 1985. By November in Soweto alone, all high schools had been closed. Schools were no longer merely 'contested terrain'; they had become one of the major battlefields of political struggle. Students were sjambokked into schools (Soweto) and off school premises (Cape Town); casspirs occupied school grounds and children as young as seven were detained in mass swoops on townships after the declaration of the state of emergency in June.

More students, parents and teachers than ever before became politicised. While organisations with roots in the post-1976 era were banned - notably the Congress of SA Students (COSAS), founded in 1979 - and members of oppositional groups active on the educational front were driven underground or detained, new tendencies and initiatives emerged in response to the large-scale disruption of the educational process.

The Soweto Parents Crisis Committee (SPCC) was formed in October 1985 in an attempt to give direction to student struggles and restore order in the schools. It was responsible for convening the first national education conference, at Wits University in December, where the explosive student slogan 'Liberation before Education' was replaced with the slogan 'People's Education for People's Power'. At the conference, SPCC members were delegated to form the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC). The NECC organised the second conference in Durban in March. The decision taken at the earlier conference to return to school was ratified with the proviso that a few hours each school day be spent on

people's education.

Teachers have begun to commit themselves more actively to the process of opposition to apartheid. The African Teachers Association of SA (ATASA), hitherto quiescent and moderate in its stance towards 'politicisation' of schooling, has been forced to confront its isolation from the education struggle. HH Dlamlenze, the now-retired ATASA secretary, was instrumental in forging links with the SPCC in late 1985, and the SPCC accepted it as the main representative of teachers. In early 1986 ATASA urged all its members to withdraw from Department of Education and Training (DET) structures; it also supported the May Day stay-away call.

The significance of this shift cannot be underestimated, but it is unclear whether this shift in ATASA's public position represents a fundamental change of attitude among its membership, or to what extent it is leadership rhetoric. ATASA has not, for example, indicated whether it has withdrawn from the South African Council of Education, the multi-racial advisory body to the Minister of Education on general educational policy. The SACE is not strictly speaking a DET structure. In recent years, new and progressive teachers' organisations have mushroomed. They are bitterly opposed to apartheid education in any form, supportive of student demands for a non-racial democratic education in a democratic and united South Africa, and suspicious of older, racially divided and traditionally more conservative teacher associations.

The National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA), formed in 1980, grew steadily on a non-racial basis during 1983 and 1984 in Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal, and was infused

with more than 3 000 teachers from the Eastern Cape and rural areas of South Africa in 1985. The Eastern Cape Teachers Union (ECTU) and the East London Progressive Teachers Union (ELPTU) are also active progressive teachers' organisations.

The Western Cape Teachers Union (WECTU), consisting of some 2 000 teachers from coloured schools, was formed in November 1985 in Cape Town. In Cape Town's African townships, the Democratic Teachers Union (DETU), also espousing a progressive ideology, was founded, while politicised white teachers united in Education for an Aware South Africa (EDASA).

All these organisations are young, and have not yet co-ordinated their activities nationally. They are still relatively weak, but nonetheless represent a vital new development: their members are predominantly young teachers integrated into wider political struggles. It is on such teachers that 'people's education' and the future transformation of the education system will depend. At present many African students demand that their teachers join such bodies, since they believe only teachers based in these organisations can become the cadres of people's education.

These developments are a direct response to struggles of students and youth, both in schools and in the community, at local and national political levels.

As conflict in the schools intensifies, with children singled out as special targets for state-sanctioned violence (see for example US Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 'The War Against Children: South Africa's Youngest Victims') it has become increasingly difficult for teachers to remain neutral and for parents not to intervene.

Central questions are: why and how schools became one of the main sites of struggle; and why black teenagers became the 'shock troops of a nationwide political insurrection' (City Press, 20 April 1986).

An explanation can be put forward in terms of:

- * intensification of class and national struggles;
- * shifts in the economy and society;
- * the limits and contradictions of state strategy in education.

INTENSIFICATION OF STRUGGLE

The 1970s saw growing militancy on the part of both the black working class and youth. From 1973 onwards, South African industry was rocked by strike waves from workers demanding higher wages and the right to organise. An independent trade union movement emerged, which, although comprising only 3% of African workers by 1979, altered the balance of class power, at least at the point of production.

The student revolt of 1976 against Bantu Education gave birth to a range of popular community organisations and to more developed student organisation in schools. In 1979, a new students organisation, COSAS, was formed to replace the black consciousness student bodies banned by the state in 1977. COSAS departed from previous student politics in that it adopted a non-racial rather than a black consciousness stance, though intense struggles over its position continued.

In February 1980, school boycotts started in the Western Cape, and spread rapidly across the country, involving more than 60 000 students by October. Consolidating the process of radicalisation begun in 1976, new leaders and groups of students emerged to push the educational struggle to a qualitatively different level to that of the past.

Important advances were made in analysis of the roots of inequality in education, and strategic and tactical approaches to combat this; in conceptualisation of alliances with the working class and the community; and in generating a pedagogy which questioned school hierarchies as well as the content and method of education. During this period students developed a critique of capitalism and the role of 'gutter education' in reproducing the working class.

After the state crackdown on the 1980 boycotts, student organisation in schools and on university campuses was more low-key until 1982. Organisation concerned itself with concrete local issues. Students in tertiary institutions began to demand the right to form democratic student representative councils (SRCs) on university campuses, while COSAS was beginning to mobilise high schools, particularly in the Eastern Cape. Issues

involved the limits of compulsory education, a concession introduced in certain areas in 1980; unfair matric results; the prohibition of students over 18 in standard eight and over 20 in standard ten from attending school, a measure imposed after 1976 to curb student activism.

democratic and trade union movements.

After 1983 student focus on issues of power and control over the educational process was expressed in demands such as the national campaign for democratic SRCs in every school, which COSAS launched in early 1984. An end to corporal punishment and sexual



The demand for elected SRCs begins to address the broader question of political power

Since 1983 there have been three main developments in the student movement, which grew rapidly from this period. These shifts dramatically sharpened the form and intensity of national struggle. Students increasingly focused on the question of power, youth congresses emerged and there was a growing alliance between students, youth and the

harassment of pupils was also demanded.

In microcosm, the demand for elected SRCs tackles the issue of self-determination, and begins to address the broader question of political power. The national political context to some extent accounts for this: 1983 saw the formation of the National Forum and the United Democratic Front to oppose the

state's constitutional proposals, which included coloureds and Indians and excluded Africans. Students participated in these national political campaigns as well as their own; their own demands and issues became linked to wider political struggles.

An important development was the emergence of youth congresses. COSAS's organisational base was in high schools. When the DET's age-limits began to exclude significant numbers from schools and hence the possibility of joining COSAS, youth congresses were formed to absorb this constituency. Twenty youth congresses were formed during 1984; since then they have proliferated into a network which today includes even the smallest towns (City Press, 20 April 1986).

As unemployment among youth soared, the base for youth congresses swelled after 1982. These congresses have tended to organise around expressly political issues, rather than specific school, factory or civic questions. Youth congresses have infused a deeper, sometimes more desperate militancy into student and community politics, and they form an important part of the UDF's base.

Recent months have produced evidence of alliances between student, youth, and community organisations, and trade unions. The alliance between students and workers was weak in 1976. By 1980, though limited to the Western Cape, it was firmer. The formation of the UDF and COSATU in 1983 and 1985 respectively, facilitated co-ordinated action between increasing numbers of organised students, communities and trade unions. This was seen in the stay-aways on the Vaal and East Rand in November 1985, and in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage in March 1986 - mass struggles which dramatically shifted the balance of forces to the side of the oppressed.

SHIFTS IN ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Intensified struggles during the past decade have taken place and helped shape deep structural shifts in the economy and society. These significantly altered the terrain of struggle in education.

The state of emergency, declared in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape in June 1985 and extended to Cape Town in

November, was imposed on townships where the working class carried the increasing burdens of the recession. During 1985, inflation ran at 16%; there were large price increases for basic foods and GST was raised twice. Unemployment, which stood at over one million throughout the 1960s, grew steadily. In 1985, between 1,5 and 3 million Africans were out of work. Unemployment was particularly severe in the Eastern Cape where figures reached over 50% in some areas. A large proportion of these people are young school-leavers.

Combined with acute poverty, conditions in the townships further exacerbated economic distress. Untarred and unlit streets, inadequate water supplies, creche and schooling facilities are common township conditions. Rents are high, and when raised in the context of deepening immiseration, have frequently sparked revolt, as in the Vaal Triangle during 1984. As townships ignited one by one and were occupied by the SA Defence Force in the past year, forms of student and youth activities changed. They are fighting back, arming themselves and commandeering petrol stations and trucks to confront state armed forces.

STATE EDUCATION STRATEGY

Faced with a deepening economic, political and ideological crisis after the mid-1970s, the South African state embarked on a strategy of reform, in fields ranging from labour relations and influx control to housing and education. State education policy since the late 1970s involved a combined and contradictory strategy of reform and repression. While reformist initiatives created space for democratic organisation, the fact that the state was only prepared to contemplate limited reform demanded that its programme be underpinned by repression.

As a result, the initiatives designed to win legitimacy for the state were undermined by repression - repression which significantly widened the base of opposition to apartheid education.

Characteristically, the Cillie Commission of Inquiry to investigate the causes of the 1976 uprising only produced its report four years later. In 1980, the commission published its

findings: it cited lack of political rights, influx control and segregation laws as contributing to the hatred, despair and dissatisfaction which lay at the root of the revolt.

Meanwhile, state response to the education crisis after 1976 involved equal parts of reform and repression. While harassing and detaining students, and despite the banning of 18 black consciousness organisations in 1977, the state lifted the ruling on compulsory teaching of Afrikaans which sparked the uprising. It introduced compulsory schooling into certain areas, introduced age-limits in standards eight and ten. Schemes to upgrade teacher qualifications were initiated, and the Department of Bantu Education was renamed the Department of Education and Training through the Act of that name in 1979. By this time COSAS was beginning to organise around free and compulsory education, age-limits and lack of democracy in schools.

To big business, state tinkering was insufficient to deal with the increasingly urgent shortage of skilled labour. During the brief boom at the beginning of the 1980s, business began to stimulate and encourage investment in black education and training. Its growing role in providing education reflected a tentative reformist alliance with the state. This reformist initiative was most clearly expressed in the HSRC Commission of Inquiry into education under the chairmanship of Professor Jan de Lange, rector of the Rand Afrikaans University, and chairman of the Broederbond.

In 1981 the commission, composed of representatives from business and private sector lobbies, state educational institutions and black and white professional teacher associations, presented its report and recommendations for restructuring the education system. Recommendations tallied with the 'total strategy' then in vogue: they aimed to modernise apartheid by improving urban social conditions in order to drive a wedge between urban and rural blacks, and between middle-class and working-class urban blacks.

Although the commission proposed considerable changes to the existing system of Bantu Education and in fact recommended the introduction of a single Ministry of National Education, it bore the stamp of the interests which helped frame it:

* Recommendations were directed at the urban, skilled working class; none concerned schooling either on white farms (which, in March 1983, comprised 73% of the 7 155 schools in the 'white' areas), or in the bantustans, where 69% of African school-goers are concentrated. Here schooling is theoretically the responsibility of bantustan authorities.

* All recommendations made for urban areas were directed at providing education of equal quality; in other words, equal but still separate education administered by different education departments.

In 1983 a government white paper accepted de Lange's proposal that 'equal opportunities for education, including equal standards...shall be the purposeful endeavour of the State', but rejected the recommendation for a single Ministry of Education. The white paper instead decreed that education would continue to be administered by separate ministries for different races. Education for white, Indian and coloured people would be run as an 'own affair' by ministers from the respective houses in the tricameral parliament. Education for Africans in 'white' South Africa would fall under 'general affairs', and be controlled by a minister in the cabinet of the state president. At regional (or provincial) and local levels, provision of education would also be dealt with as an 'own' affair.

But two years later the government was implementing the earlier, rejected, de Lange Commission recommendation for a single education ministry. The new Department of National Education does not, however, replace separate departments of education. Rather, it determines financial policy, conditions of service and teacher registration, and matters of syllabus, examinations and curriculum for all departments of education. In short, it is intended to equalise separate education. The minister, in turn, is advised by a number of multi-racial bodies, including the South African Council for Education.

Practical state intervention in schooling also remains segregationist. For example, state spending on black education increased significantly after 1976. Between 1978 and 1982 total educational expenditure increased by 74%. During the same period, expenditure on African education in 'white' areas and 'independent' and 'non-independent'

bantustans increased by 130%, while expenditure on white, coloured and Indian education increased by 69%, 64% and 107% respectively.

However, the lion's share of the budget is still allocated to white education. In the 1983-84 financial year, 52,8% of the total education budget was allocated to white education (16% of the pupils enrolled at educational institutions), compared with 29,9% to African education in 'white' areas and the ten 'homelands' (70,1% of pupils), 5,8% to Indian education (3,1% of pupils), and 11,5% to coloured education (10,1% of the total).

Students perceived the state's changes as merely reproducing the inequalities of apartheid. Indeed, the impact of 'reform' on student consciousness was minimal. It was in fact seen as an attempt to deepen control. In this context, the struggle for democracy in schools and in society flourished.

For most students, the reality of state intervention was brutality and repression. Student organisation and protest was constantly met on the ground with dogs, bullets and teargas.

Resistance and repression in schools and colleges follows a typical pattern: a peaceful boycott is met by police intervention and arrests. These in turn cause continuation of the boycott with demands for the release of colleagues. Further police intervention, often involving more arrests and deaths, escalates the conflict. Funerals and rallies to commemorate those who died at the hands of the South African state have further widened opposition.

In the Northern Transvaal, for example, boycotts started in two high schools near Tzaneen where students demanded SRCs. In the course of the boycott, 84 students were arrested. They were jailed and assaulted, and needed medical attention after their release. One student was expelled; so the boycott continued, first with demands for release of those detained, then for reinstatement of the expelled student.

At the same time, for different reasons, police attacked students at the University of the North. A number were detained, and a boycott of classes began, demanding their release. During the boycott, hostels were raided in the early hours of the morning, and next day students were forced to class by baton-wielding police. Students responded by calling on Northern Transvaal high

schools to begin a solidarity boycott. They did so, and police violence continued.

These events took place in September and October 1985, at the height of the state of emergency. During 1985, more than 60% of those in detention were younger than 25. At least 209 children were killed. Hundreds were subjected to torture. Unimaginable mental, psychological and emotional damage has been inflicted on thousands of children. In this context, the slogan 'Liberation Before Education' was articulated.

A TRANSFORMED SOCIETY

The radicalisation of communities, in particular teachers and parents, was precipitated by events like those sketched above. Class and national struggle intensified during the 1970s and 1980s, as the grip of recession and unemployment tightened its hold on townships already poverty-stricken and deprived. State initiatives aimed at increased control, through both reform and bullets. Schools and youth became an important focus of resistance.

Although such resistance varies in intensity, in consciousness and in degree of organisation from region to region, it is a national phenomenon. And it incorporates not only the cities, but also rural areas, including the bantustan areas.

Issues of transformation of society and education have become central. In education the call for the implementation of 'people's education for people's power' demonstrates the political lessons learned over the past few years; it also raises concrete questions about the nature of a transformed education system.

How equipped are teachers formed by the present system to teach people's education? What training is required to enable them to do so? What structure, content and method of education will genuinely serve all the people of South Africa? And finally, how can the democratic participation of students, teachers and parents be ensured in the realisation of a transformed system of education?

These questions form the current agenda in South Africa's ongoing education struggle.

'Engaged in Debate and Struggle'

National Forum Convenor Saths Cooper and publicity secretary Lusiba Mtloko spoke to SUSAN BROWN about the NF's structure and operations, and its perceptions of the UDF.

What is the National Forum - an event or an organisation?

The NF is an alliance of organisations of the left, which are all socialist. There is no other common factor. It is not an affiliate structure. A wide range of allied groups attend the forums we hold at least twice a year. They are occasions for analysis and taking ideological positions: one forum produced the first complete internal response to the Nkomati Accord, for example.

At the first national forum in 1983, a wide range of opposition tendencies was represented for the first time, from Black Consciousness and Africanism to workerists and Charterists. This diversity remains: the NF now has Black Consciousness groups like AZAPO; Africanist groups like Azanian National Youth Unity; extreme class-analysis positions like that of the Western Cape Youth League; and non-racialism as represented by some Cape Action League affiliates. There are groups which place the nationalist struggle above the class struggle, and there are labour groupings as well. The Azanian Manifesto sets out the principles of this alliance.

Ultimately, the NF is not an organisation, but a forum - by our nature we must assume organisational limits to our activities. There have been calls for the NF as such to undertake co-ordinated action, but it cannot be done because of our alliance nature.

What are the NF's present relations with the UDF?

The March 1985 national forum in Durban was the first at which no

representatives of UDF affiliates were present. The National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) meeting on the same weekend, which the UDF hierarchy attended, did not fall on the same days as the forum.

The reason the UDF stayed away this time was, we think, its leaders' belief in its exclusive authority, its sole representativeness and its general push for hegemony. UDF leaders see themselves as in a state of internecine warfare, an attitude which has led to the violations of democracy exemplified by violent attacks on AZAPO, particularly in the Eastern Cape.

This attitude represents a misunderstanding of the democratic process - people in South Africa have for so long been victims of lack of democracy that they regard anything but collective conformity to a line with suspicion. When groups which share many of the same aims do speak up in debate, suspicion arises. But the NF does not believe in a one-party approach; its genesis and basis is non-sectarian.

What is your evidence for these criticisms of the UDF?

A major recent instance: the NF, the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and various student, community and educational bodies' representatives initiated the preliminary meeting on 11 December which resulted in the Wits education crisis conference at the end of December last year.

In trying to co-operate with UDF bodies there, we found throughout that, when it came to the question of organisational representation, non-UDF bodies were under pressure: our numbers of delegates were eroded, decisions were

taken in our absence without our being notified of the meetings, and in one case when a meeting was called, none of the UDF organisations showed up. At Wits, motions already passed had their wording quietly altered. Continual violations of even formal democracy were constant in an effort to control and exclude any but UDF interests.

The Easter national forum resolved to attend the NECC meeting collectively to present our objections - but when we learned that delegates had been attacked by Inkatha impis, we changed our minds and stated our solidarity instead, since we did not want our challenge to be identified with Inkatha's attack.

If your accusations about UDF practices are accurate, why should an outsider not see NF and UDF leadership as intellectual groups competing for constituencies and power?

Our tendencies are very different from those of the UDF. We reject the coercive conformity of much of the UDF's practice, and base ourselves on the right to review and criticise. We feel it is positive, for instance, that the Azanian Manifesto may be changed and developed, rather than remaining rigidly static.

Other than rhetorically, how does the NF differ from the UDF?

Our practice is essentially different: it is socialist in principle. Full democratic participation in all joint decisions is basic. That is why we hold the regular forums. And the right to criticise leadership is inherent - something the UDF claims but does not permit. We have no secret cabals which take decisions behind closed doors to impose on constituencies, as they do.

The NF central structure does not intervene in the activities of its local organisations in the way the UDF top hierarchy does. We supported the national May Day call because we were asked by our constituents to do so, but regional programmes will differ as local organisations decide. We believe that local organisations need to be strengthened in their operations rather than weakened by dominance from the centre.

The NF central structure is designed to provide theoretical input, to enable analytical conclusions to be hammered

out and agreement reached on minimum programmes for local organisations to undertake. If representatives of NF constituent organisations cannot agree on policy at a forum, the issue will fall away, though this has not happened to date. We take concerted action only when consensus has been reached. Our detractors often refer to us as a loose alliance, meaning an insignificant one. But we are loose only in the sense that we are democratic.

Our decisions are taken in open public debate. At the last forum, for example, we agreed to discuss the national crisis, and local groups put forward specific issues for the agenda. Issues then raised were those of the national convention, education and disinvestment. For example, once Action Youth put forward May Day action as an issue for forum discussion, various NF area committees sounded out constituent organisations. They are all notified of the agenda - on paper if possible, by telephone if time is short. But representatives at the forum itself cannot lobby for a draft resolution before the debate, because that would be undemocratic.

Recently the NF seems to have tried to offer an olive branch to the UDF.

We never severed relations with the UDF. But we hold to the right to criticise their or anyone's practice and principles, in order to crystallise those areas that we have in common, and in the process of joint action, to develop a basis for unity in struggle.

We see the outcome of this as particularly urgent now, after more than a year of internecine black-on-black violence. Our interest in unity or co-operation is not because we see ourselves as being sidelined; unlike the UDF we have not striven to maintain a high media profile, with national publicity campaigns around the issues we undertake. We prefer the publicity to go to the credit of organisations in the field.

What is your attitude to the proliferation of local-level street and area committees and people's courts, often run by UDF affiliates?

We support development of strong people's organisations, whatever their affiliation, as long as they do not

serve the ruling class. But we are dubious of coercive measures which weaken the image of resistance in the communities. Rather than force, there should be a process of conscientisation. Popular leaders are supposed to be representative, and if they use coercive tactics it lessens the appeal of the struggle among the masses. Activists should not make people lose hope and faith in the harbingers of freedom.

What does socialism mean to the wide range of NF organisations which espouse it?

We have no models, in that we do not espouse the Soviet or Chinese or any other existing system, though other struggles may provide pointers. Rather we see the move towards socialism as a process of dealing with specific local problems and issues on a principled basis. Because the NF is coherent as to its goal, it can tolerate differences in approach, tactics and strategy.

The NF is often accused of being dominated by intellectuals, and as such cut off from the grassroots.

Many of our leaders, like the UDF's, are intellectuals. The issue is whether they represent the interests of their constituencies, especially working-class interests. People like the Council of Unions of SA's Phiroshaw Camay and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions' Pandelani Nefolovhodwe are in a sense intellectuals, but represent workers' interests.

The question is not so much the class origins of activists, as the structure within which we operate, and the degree to which it furthers an alternative South Africa. For example, in a number of cases where NF officials have been criticised by grassroots membership, they have been dumped, and indeed some left voluntarily. Officials are accountable and recallable.

What then do you mean by your repeated assertion of the importance of working class leadership?

Intellectuals can maintain working-class leadership, when they are strongly linked to a working-class constituency and act only on a real mandate. It is possible to have organisations with predominantly working-class membership

which do not express basic working-class interests - Inkatha's union, UWUSA, is an example. While the majority of its members will be workers, it will nonetheless work for capitalism.

But is it not Stalinist to assume that a group of activists may be more accurately attuned to workers' real interests than workers themselves?

You would not be able to get a worker to say that it is right that he be exploited to make a boss rich. But any group can be manipulated against its interests, and that is why it is so important to allow the real interests of our constituency to emerge through open debate and democratic structures.

We are engaged in practical education work to instill socialist consciousness, working with student representative councils and parent-teacher associations. We are active in support work for unions. It is not our job to provide worker education as such, that is for the unions, but we contribute to cultural events, and of course have members involved in union organisation. Our labour connections are not limited to CUSA and AZACTU, though in the prevailing climate others avoid unequivocally aligning themselves with us.

We have black students' study projects, and the Cape Action League is active in high schools with its affiliate, Students of Young Azania. AZASM has its Black Students' Study Project. We are concerned with developing alternative education as well, though hampered by limited resources, since we get no outside funds.

Our programmes are not just discussions and workshops. We also undertake house visits, to find out what is uppermost on people's minds. If rent is an issue, we canvass people's opinions - rather than telling them: 'Our leaders say you must boycott'. In the last couple of years stayaway and boycott tactics have been overused and sometimes abused. Such calls may be forced on communities with no thought of the strain on people's resources in terms of jobs, money and safety. And with coercive measures to ensure conformity, there is no openness to alternative suggestions.

But what of your call for action on and after May Day and between 16 and 26 June?

This is not a call for boycott, but rather a call for local organisations to undertake concerted action within their existing programmes for those periods. We do not believe it will collapse the state - it is a long march to social change. Action cannot always be at peak intensity; that is why a period of strongly focused activity is a way of highlighting the power of the people, and at least affecting the government power base. In those periods, we want organisations, NF and outsiders, to get together to seek unity and cohesiveness.

With its stress on theoretical and analytical inputs, it could appear that the NF conceives itself as a vanguard party.

It is a perception that can easily arise, and perhaps that is why the Charterists feel threatened. But we do not have the organisational structure to constitute ourselves as a vanguard party. Realistically, we are limited to acting as a catalyst on principled activists to bring people together.

We cannot say that in the course of time some kind of vanguard organisation might not evolve from the NF, but we cherish no ambitions to claim authority as a sole representative of the people. If a new vanguard socialist party were to emerge which encompassed the principles in the Azanian Manifesto, we would be overjoyed.

Surely the stress the NF lays on conscientising contradicts its socialist position, in that it implies an idealist rather than a materialist approach?

Conscientisation is not a matter of theoretical input only, but involves

practical action and a challenge to existing social relations. We have programmes that follow through during the intervals between forums. Certainly we stress the need to raise people's consciousness - especially when the alternative is coercion - to enable them to perceive the best strategy needed to realise their objective interests. But our programmes and organisations have a real and material existence. We are concerned to combine theory and action, rather than to have action without principle.

It is unfair to see the NF as engaged merely in debate without involvement in struggle and action. And in fact, if our constituent groups are not practically active, why are they subject to attacks from competing groups? It is fear. And that is why other groups are reluctant to share a platform with us in debate as well.

The Easter forum produced a pungent denunciation of a national convention. But why do you consider the issue a live one at present?

That forum dealt with aspects of the national crisis, specifically considering the issue of a national convention, which we perceive to be a centrist tactic to hijack the struggle. Mandela himself is on record saying that the time for a national convention has passed.

But people like Van Zyl Slabbert are now seeking to re-establish credibility in resistance circles. Such operators, we believe, hope to make inroads to dictate the structure of the struggle, to skew it towards being merely an anti-apartheid issue. We feel the point of departure for the struggle must be fundamentally anti-exploitation and anti-capitalist. The Botha reforms could result in a national convention sellout, and this must be guarded against.

ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE NF**

Major constituents

Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO): claimed membership, 110 000; 103 branches in Northern, Central, Southern and Western Transvaal, Vaal, East Rand, Border, Eastern, Northern and Western Cape and Natal.

Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU): claimed total membership of 11 union affiliates, 95 000; based mainly in Transvaal, Northern and Eastern Cape.

Azanian Student Movement (AZASM): claimed membership, 80 000; 85 branches nationwide.

Azanian Youth Organisation (AZAYO): Claimed membership, 12 000; Branches in Pretoria, Vaal and Western Transvaal.

Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU): Membership not available; branches 'in various areas'.

Cape Action League (CAL): Membership not available; 39 affiliates in the Western Cape.

Council of Unions of SA (CUSA): Claimed total membership 180 000; 12 affiliates.

OTHER NF PARTICIPANTS AND AREAS OF OPERATION

Student/Youth/Educational:

- * Action Youth - Transvaal
- * Azanian Youth Council (AZAYCO) - national
- * Black Students Study Project - national
- * Council for Black Education and Research - Transvaal and W.Cape
- * Firgrove/Macassar Students Organisation - W.Cape
- * Ixopo Youth - Natal
- * Lagunyacro (Langa-Gugeletu-Nyanga-Crossroads) Youth - W.Cape
- * Leboakgomo Youth Unity - N.Transvaal
- * Mitchells Plain Islamic Youth Brigade - W.Cape
- * Macassar Students Organisation - W.Cape
- * Mpumalanga Youth - Natal
- * Pietersburg Youth Movement - N.Transvaal
- * Project 2 000 - N.Transvaal
- * Retreat Youth Movement - W.Cape
- * Seshego Students Representative Council - N.Transvaal
- * Students of Young Azania - W.Cape and Transvaal
- * Western Cape Youth League

Civic/Community:

- * Black Commuters Watchdog Union - Pietersburg
- * Bishop Lavis Action Committee - W.Cape
- * Community Support Committee - Soweto/Johannesburg
- * Ithuseng Health Centre - N.Transvaal
- * Kagiso Action Committee - West Rand
- * KwaThema Advice Centre - East Rand
- * Lotus River Tenants Association - W.Cape

- * Macassar Civic Association - W.Cape
- * Mpumalanga Residents Association - Natal
- * Retreat/Steenberg Civic Association - W.Cape
- * Salt River-Woodstock-Walmer Estate Residents Association - W.Cape
- * Seshego Civic Association - N.Transvaal
- * Zimelani Co-op - Transkei

Professional/Cultural:

- * Afrika Cultural Centre - Transvaal
- * Babopu Cultural Organisation - N.Transvaal
- * Black Academic Staff Association - N.Transvaal
- * Black Lawyers Association - national
- * Brotherhood Sporting and Social Club - Eldorado Park
- * Health Workers Society - W.Cape
- * Imbali Youth League - Natal
- * Maake Club - N.Transvaal
- * Port Elizabeth Young Artists Association (PEYARTA) - E.Cape
- * People's Cultural Project - Soweto
- * Sechaba Cultural Club - N.Transvaal

Independent unions:

- * Black Health and Allied Workers Union of SA (BHAWUSA)
- * Domestic Workers Association (DWASA)
- * SA Black Municipal and Allied Workers Union (SABMAWU)

Women:

- * Black Women Unite - national
- * Zamani Soweto Sisters' Council - Soweto

** Information supplied by NF officials, who add that this list is not exhaustive, and claim that further educational, youth and particularly labour organisations attend forums and co-operate in NF programmes, but choose to avoid public identification with the NF.

A Test Case for 'Planned Urbanisation'

The Free State camp of Onverwacht saw the worst of the brutalities of resettlement. Now the township of Botshabelo, its future depends on the outcome of conflicts within reformist and traditional elements of the state. WILLIAM COBBETT believes the area is a test case which will reveal the practical shape of the state's 'orderly urbanisation' and wider reform programme.

Botshabelo township, 55 kilometres east of Bloemfontein, does not immediately spring to mind as one of South Africa's major black urban areas. Yet this township - formerly the Onverwacht resettlement camp - has become the second largest township in the country after Soweto.

The Bloemfontein-Botshabelo-Thaba 'Nchu (B-B-T) axis is in many ways a test-case for the state, in that it serves as a chessboard on which the reform programme can be piloted.

A mini-South Africa is captured within the 60-kilometre radius that covers the three points: there are three industrial decentralisation growth points; commuters; long-distance migrants; bantustan intrigues; and a planned new third tier of government, the Bloemfontein Regional Services Council (RSC).

To date the region has been relatively free of the resistance shown by communities elsewhere. But it is doubtful whether it will stay off the unrest map for much longer, especially if certain state designs are implemented without meaningful negotiation.

BOTSHABELO'S HISTORY

From the early 1970s, as agricultural mechanisation continued apace and the state implemented its policy of forced removals, thousands of apartheid refugees poured into the tiny enclave of Thaba 'Nchu, which is officially a segment of Bophuthatswana. There they created rudimentary squatter camps in Three Bultfonteins and Kromdraai and eked out an existence.

By the mid-1970s, the refugees, who were mainly South Sotho, outnumbered the original Tswana ethnic group, whose Barolong Tribal Authority governed the area.

The Sotho squatters suffered as a result of state-engineered ethnic divisions. Pressure on them intensified when Bophuthatswana was granted 'independence' in 1977. After a series of raids on squatters by Bophuthatswana police in 1978, QwaQwa authorities, representing the 'Sotho homeland', intervened on behalf of the Sotho in the area.

After negotiations between the South African central state, QwaQwa and Bophuthatswana, the South African Development Trust (SADT) purchased a block of land to the south-west of Thaba 'Nchu. In the winter of 1979 the first refugees moved onto this Trust Land to begin the resettlement camp that would become South Africa's largest testament to its policy of massive forced removals - Onverwacht.

Initial conditions were appalling. No facilities were provided. People endured the harsh Free State winters in tents and later in corrugated iron shacks. There were outbreaks of typhoid and in the first few years infant mortality was higher than that of adults. At various times the area was closed to the press, as local officials found coverage too hostile and intensive.

The camp's sewage disposal was by means of a bucket system, still used today. Water was brought in by tanker at first; later stand pipes were laid to provide taps for communal use. As for housing, inhabitants were provided with a stand and instructed to build their own permanent structures.

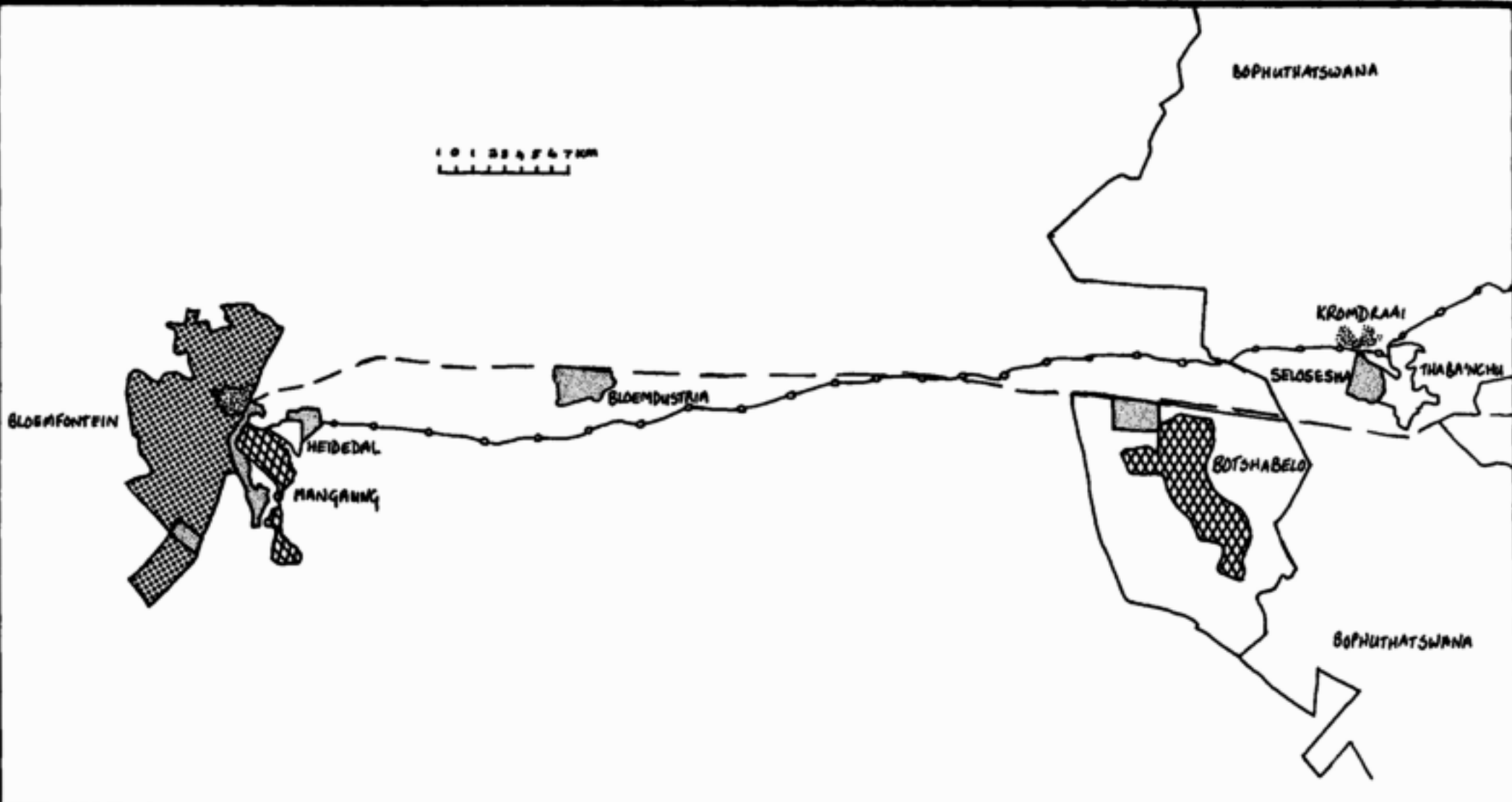
Botshabelo, as Onverwacht came to be

called officially, became the dumping ground for 'surplus' Africans throughout the Orange Free State. Its population grew rapidly from the original 64 000 in 1979, to an estimated 200 000 in 1983. Housing provision, such as it was, could not remotely keep pace with the influx of new arrivals, and the structures which did exist were under intense pressure. Thousands of families could find shelter only as sub-tenants. Stands were bursting with tenants and sub-tenants, a situation reminiscent of Alexandra in the 1940s.

BOTSHABELO AND INFLUX CONTROL

One of Botshabelo's many functions is to relieve pressure on Bloemfontein's Mangaung township. Indeed, an original motivation for its existence was to shift some 26 000 South Sotho away from the Bloemfontein area. These people were moved to Botshabelo shortly after the original Kromdai refugees arrived there.

In 1983 the state 'froze' Mangaung's population at a maximum of 100 000, and



The Bloemfontein - Botshabelo - Thaba'Nchu axis

Overcrowding reached a critical point towards the end of 1985. In an unprecedented display of joint action, between 10 000 and 30 000 people moved to the outskirts of Botshabelo and claimed stands of their own. They erected shanties and stated their determination not to be moved.

Botshabelo's current population stands at an official minimum of 300 000. Some state officials privately speculate that the figure may be as high as 500 000. In short, no-one really knows how many people are there, least of all the state. Between 1980 and 1984, Botshabelo's population grew at a rate of approximately 35% per year. This indicates a population density in excess of 3 000 people per square kilometre.

directed that all future population growth in the area was to be displaced to Botshabelo. Botshabelo's massive expansion resulted in the emergence of a substantial commuter population in the region. By December 1984 some 23 000 workers commuted 60 kilometres daily into Bloemfontein. Some 30 000 migrants who work on the Orange Free State gold fields are also based in Botshabelo.

Botshabelo was made an industrial growth point (IDP) under the 1982 Regional Development Plan. Potential employers would receive very high labour incentives, in an attempt to attract labour-intensive industries to utilise the high level of unemployed in the area.

Botshabelo's 600-hectare industrial

area, of which less than 60 hectares are in use, contains about 21 factories which employ a total of 3 000 workers at the extremely low rates characteristic of industrial decentralisation wage patterns. But it is clear that even very generous concessions could not attract sufficient industry to make a meaningful dent in the area's unemployment levels.

Botshabelo commuter access to the Bloemfontein labour market was assured by relaxation of controls in terms of section 10 of the Urban Areas Act. These commuters were given a preferential section 10 (1)(d) access to Bloemfontein; for labour purposes Botshabelo effectively became an extension of Mangaung.

This shows the dual role of such places: they serve as sites for state-aided capital investment, and also provide large labour pools for the traditional existing local labour market.

The state's new national urbanisation policy involves an attempt to desensitise and deracialise any new forms of control over the movement of people in South Africa. The B-B-T sub-region is put forward as a model for the new policy of 'planned and orderly urbanisation'. This policy was first outlined in the President's Council report on An Urbanisation Strategy for the Republic of South Africa in September 1985, and more recently in the White Paper on Urbanisation of April 1986.

For the inhabitants of the B-B-T region, the White Paper merely confirms existing policy in the area. For the past few years, manipulation of housing controls and land occupancy has been the main method of influx control in the region.

Freezing township expansion in Mangaung and making stands readily available in Botshabelo exemplifies the state ordering influx control through controlled provision of land. Clearly, as far as access to labour markets is concerned, Botshabelo's population must be deemed urban. An obvious parallel is on the north East Rand where the newly created Ekangala township outside Bronkhorstspuit has a function similar to Botshabelo's.

Botshabelo and Ekangala show how far labour provision has moved from the simple traditional division between urban workers and long-distance migrants. Peripheral labour pools form

part of extended urban labour markets, by complementing controlled residential exclusion with labour market inclusion.

The state therefore provides for a new hierarchy within the existing division of labour. The relative privileges of a limited urban labour market are now increasingly the target of fierce competition by a relatively impoverished peripheral labour force.

This labour hierarchy seems reinforced by certain provisions of the White Paper. The people of Thaba'Nchu are deemed, by virtue of their 'independence', to be 'foreigners' in South Africa (at least for the time being), subject to the differential application of the new influx control measure which controls land occupancy.

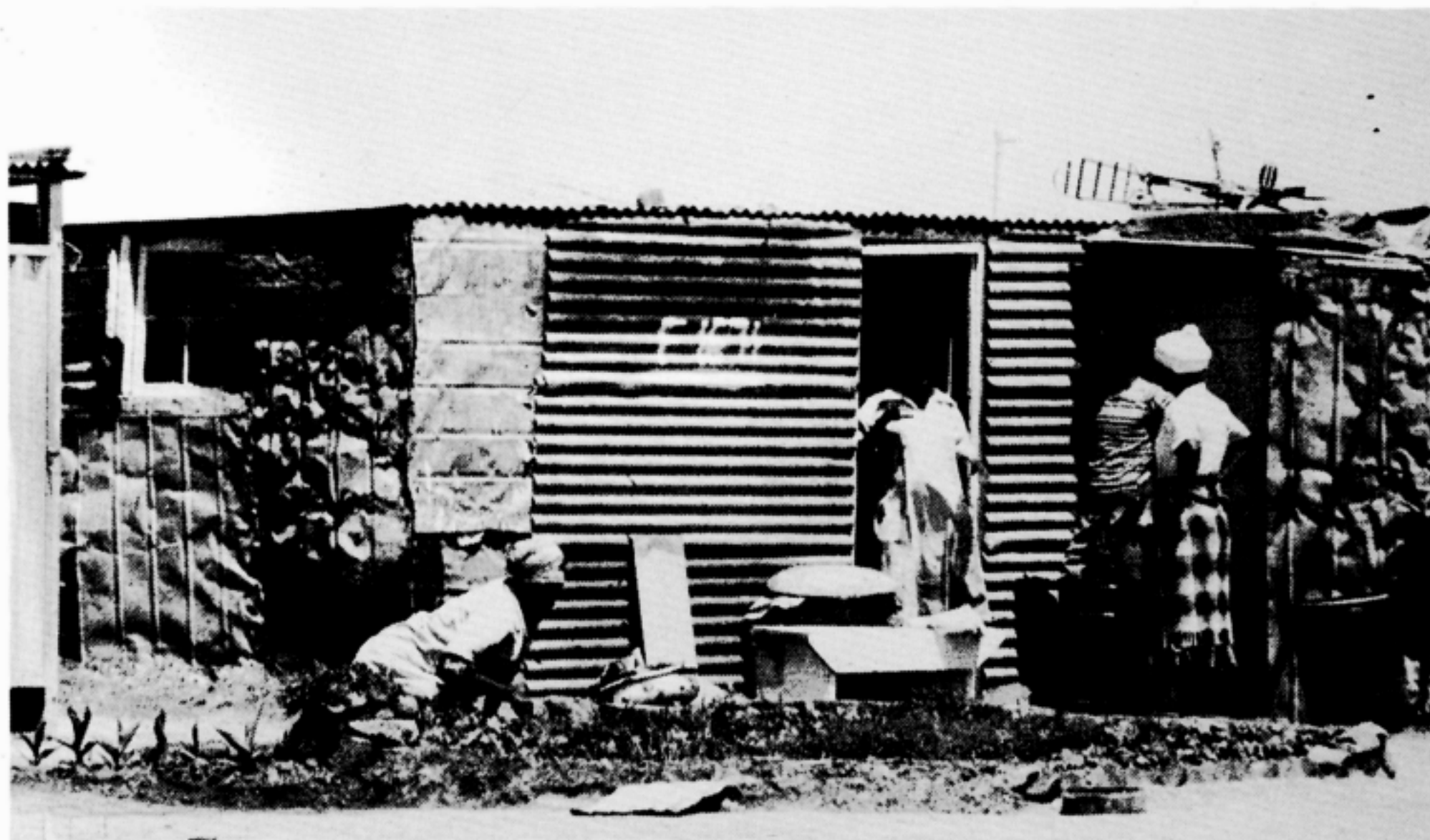
These provisions have profound implications for trade unions. Unions in the Bloemfontein area previously operated within a population of 100 000. They now have to organise within a population total of 500 000, an increase which far outstrips any growth in the employment market. In spite of this, unions have begun organising workers from Botshabelo, including those employed in the decentralisation growth point.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The PC report and the White Paper supersede previous influx control policy based on the 1979 Riekert Commission findings. But both policies have a common fundamental prerequisite for success: establishment of a viable third tier of government capable of claiming a degree of popular legitimacy.

For Riekert, urban 'insiders' were to be made materially aware of their 'privileges' through Black Local Authorities. These 'insiders' would be materially and ideologically estranged from rural 'outsiders'. But the Black Local Authorities system was a spectacular failure and in itself a direct cause of unrest in the country. Popular action, both spontaneous and organised, decimated the system.

The third tier of government has a central role in the strategy of 'orderly urbanisation' - for it is at this level that the new policy is to be administered and managed. The White Paper states: 'Local government



Onverwacht, renamed Botshabelo, was a dumping ground for 'surplus' Africans

institutions should be established for all communities and effective measures should be taken to ensure the viability of these authorities in view of the fact that they, in co-operation with all other government institutions, have the particularly important responsibility of managing the urbanisation processes at local level on a continuous basis'.

(4.3.13)

This central role of third-tier government is to be taken over by the proposed Regional Services Councils (RSC). This two-tier level of local government departs from previous local government policy. While the lower third tier is still based on the Group Areas Act, the higher tier will be multi-racial. One of the RSCs' main functions will be to redistribute resources within a region, although in a thoroughly undemocratic way. Again, the Bloemfontein area will be the test case, as it will receive the first RSC, due to be established in June this year.

However, conflicting strains within both central and local state can be seen at this level, and a range of different state interest groups are involved.

Bloemfontein itself, as part of 'white' South Africa, falls under the ministerial direction of the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning. This department has pressed

strongly for a 'functional' regional approach to planning and administration within South Africa. It views RSCs as the 'ace card' of the whole reform process, and sees their success or failure as likely to have an important impact on future state direction.

Botshabelo is being developed by the South African Development Trust Corporation Limited (STK) which falls under the Department of Development Aid. Some officials do subscribe to the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning approach, but Development Aid is more noted for elements who remain committed to the tenets of Grand Apartheid - most notably those which continue to give the bantustans primacy in any potential constitutional order.

And finally there is Thaba'Nchu - that lonely and distant segment of geographically diverse Bophuthatswana - so far from the rest of Bop that it cannot even get Bop-TV. Bophuthatswana regards itself as the 'showpiece' success story of 'separate development' and is resistant to any moves that might seem to undercut its nominal independence.

RSCs were originally intended to give political expression to economic and demographic realities. Increased integration of existing towns with urbanising populations and the

deconcentration of industrial activity, caused new sites of development to emerge; RSCs are meant to extend political control and direction over these new physical realities.

The development thrust in the Bloemfontein area aims to develop the B-B-T axis as a coherent sub-region. According to this logic, developmental needs would have clear priority over such non-developmental concepts as an invisible bantustan boundary.

On the face of it there are clear signs that the area is being developed as one economic unit. There is, for example, the comprehensive bus service which links Bloemfontein to Botshabelo. The recently-created Bloemindustria growth point, 20 kilometres east of Bloemfontein, suggests that any further growth will move towards the labour force. If Bloemindustria is successful - and some serious doubts have been expressed - commuting time would be reduced. This is one of the stated aims of the White Paper.

However, development planning and local government are not nearly as coherent as they may seem at first glance - in fact they are in a state of some disarray. This mirrors confusion within the central state, which increasingly finds its reform programme overtaken by events. To add to the problem, the 'functional' planning and structural 'deracialisation' which characterise the reform programme often come up against that 'outmoded' concept - apartheid ideology - lurking behind many corners and in many important heads.

This is shown in the recent announcement of the Bloemfontein RSC. Far from following the demographic and economic integration of the axis, as its internal logic dictates, the RSC will include only Bloemfontein and Botshabelo, and exclude Thaba'Nchu. But there is resistance within Bloemfontein about the inclusion of even Botshabelo, which is portrayed as a squatter camp that will drain Bloemfontein's resources.

This casts a different light on local development plans and particularly Bloemindustria. With Thaba'Nchu excluded (or, more likely, with Thaba'Nchu excluding itself) from the RSC, Bloemindustria will provide direct competition for the industrial development point of Seloshesha, already the least developed in the area.

The only real advantage of the Seloshesha IDP is that it is located inside Bophuthatswana, which does not allow South African trade unions to operate in 'its territory'. In fact, the hopelessness of Thaba'Nchu's independent developmental possibilities is causing it to suffer a net population loss. No doubt these people are moving to Bophuthatswana regions adjacent to more promising labour markets, such as the PWV.

Paradoxically, this embarrassing fact is consistent with Thaba'Nchu's own twisted logic. If Thaba'Nchu is an integral part of Bophuthatswana and not the B-B-T region, its inhabitants should seek work in other parts of Bop, albeit hundreds of kilometres away, and not in Bloemfontein, 60 kilometres away. Thus are the laws of economic gravity defied in South Africa.

RSCs were conceived as an elaborate solution to the interlinked fiscal and political crisis that local government has always experienced in South Africa. But clearly the tax base in Bloemfontein-Botshabelo is not big enough to allow for a financially independent RSC. The central state will have to make good the deficit. Given the size and poverty of Botshabelo, this contribution will have to be large if any meaningful upgrading is to take place: more than 99,5% of the population have no electricity, for example.

BOTSHABELO AND QWAQWA

Following their original intervention on behalf of the South Sotho in Kromdraai, QwaQwa authorities remained largely in the background. But there are indications that this is changing.

Botshabelo's possible incorporation into QwaQwa - which is situated on the northern border of Lesotho some hundreds of kilometres away - is again being regarded as a serious possibility (see Beeld, 22.02.86). Here again is a clear contradiction: at the same time as the state outlines plans to implement a regional programme, it shows that it is still trapped by the framework of traditional apartheid.

But Botshabelo does not even fit many of the peculiar requirements of territorial Grand Apartheid. Botshabelo's inhabitants have no

historical reason to be there. Let us not forget that this is a state-created township not yet seven years old. If anything, the South Sotho can lay realistic historical claim to Thaba'Nchu itself, originally a Basotho area under King Moshoeshoe I. An alliance between the Tswana and the Boers led to the land being given to the Barolong tribe.

More important, Botshabelo is not even a Basotho township. Here the state is caught in the lie of its past policies. Botshabelo was made the 'dumping ground' for all 'surplus' Africans in the Orange Free State, so the area is ethnically heterogeneous, comprising Sotho, Xhosa, Ndebele, Tswana, Swazi, Pedi and Zulu people. Any claims about preserving 'pure' ethnicity hold little water.

While certain members of the older generation in Botshabelo may favour the idea of incorporation, clearly the youth - and 73% of the population is under 30 - will not accept any extension of apartheid's bantustan structures. Any attempted incorporation could lead to an explosive situation.

In short, the state has indicated that Botshabelo is inextricably linked to Bloemfontein. Yet it also asserts that Botshabelo residents must be incorporated into the distant 'city-state' of QwaQwa. This comprises 480 square kilometres of mountainous terrain, making it the smallest bantustan. It has undergone a staggering influx of apartheid-created refugees - from a population density of 54 per square kilometre in 1970, it reached approximately 1 000 per square kilometre in 1982 - an increase of some 2 000% over the period.

Botshabelo's proposed incorporation can only mean that the QwaQwa authorities intend taking some form of

'independence', a course which the recent KwaNdebele experience both of incorporation and 'independence' should show to be both ludicrous and dangerous.

INEVITABLE RESISTANCE

The example of the B-B-T sub-region indicates that the direction of any state-initiated reforms remains at best deeply uncertain. Apart from the obvious current confusion within the state, it is apparent that past mistakes are being inevitably repeated.

Hailed as the most dramatic reform to date, 'orderly urbanisation' is itself likely to walk into fierce resistance. And the policy cannot work if its agents of implementation - the RSCs - themselves become a focal point of resistance.

This seems inevitable, given that the popular community organisations have already rejected them outright, instead demanding meaningful negotiations and implementation of non-racial municipalities. Far from providing the solution to the deep-seated problems of local government, the RSCs seem set to extend the fiscal and political crisis at this level.

More immediately, the state must clarify what it means when it talks so readily of an 'undivided' South Africa. Any extension of incorporation or 'independence' - be it KwaNdebele or QwaQwa - further divides an already deeply divided country, and again puts the state in a position of direct and seemingly deliberate confrontation with the will of the majority of South Africans.

The Working Class in National Democratic Struggle

Recently, WIP contributor Duncan Innes argued that the Freedom Charter was not an adequate basis for unity between the popular and working-class movements. TONY KARON and MAX OZINSKY disagree, arguing that the working class is already stamping its leadership onto the national democratic struggle.

Duncan Innes (WIP 41) believes he has advanced the debate between Alec Erwin and Jeremy Cronin (SA Labour Bulletin 11[2&3]) on the working class and the national democratic struggle.

The major question posed by Innes concerns the relationship between the 'popular movement' and the 'working-class movement'. On the one hand he is critical of trade union economism, but on the other sees a danger of working-class interests being submerged in the popular movement. The Freedom Charter as the basis for popular unity in South Africa, says Innes, does not guarantee the interests of the working class, and will inevitably block its ability to assert those interests. He argues that a workers' charter should instead form the basis of unity.

At the outset, it is necessary to warn against becoming carried away with a sense of pioneering importance of discussions between intellectuals in WIP. Innes pays lip service to the notion that questions of working-class leadership will ultimately be resolved in practice, but remains detached from the concerns of that process. These questions are being debated and implemented where it really matters; they are the focus of intense discussion and practical work in the trade unions, in the street committees, in the people's education programme. The pages of *Isizwe*, the UDF theoretical journal, are filled with debates around the practical building of working-class leadership in the democratic struggle. Erwin and Cronin refer to such developments in mass organisations, but Innes is rather dismissive: '(U)ntil such developments are combined in a coherent form which the workers' movement can use as a basis for

mobilising and linking up with others, their usefulness is limited'.

To intellectuals only satisfied with paper guarantees perhaps this is so. But in the heat of struggle where these questions are being resolved they are of infinitely more utility than detached debates about programmes.

For Innes, 'divisive concepts' must be jettisoned in pursuit of 'unity': but unity in the struggle is not principally based on mutually accepted concepts, nor, ultimately, on a shared programme for reconstruction. It is dependent on a willingness in different organisations to struggle together in the field for the achievement of mutual objectives despite programmatic and conceptual differences.

Innes examines questions of programmes only with reference to the task of reconstruction in a society already liberated from minority rule. He consistently fails to confront the questions, both programmatically and practically, of reaching that stage of liberation.

THE WORKING CLASS AND POLITICS

Innes' basic dichotomy between a 'popular movement' consisting mostly of community-based organisations 'inspired by the Freedom Charter', and a 'working-class movement', the trade union movement, is puzzling. He himself criticises as 'syndicalism' Erwin's tendency to focus on the factory floor as the prime form of politics, and to derive other political forms from that arena. Yet Innes' own concept of a working-class movement appears to be

firmlly grounded within that approach. He creates the impression that the working class is suddenly faced, for the first time, with the challenge of inserting itself into the popular struggle in a leading position. This ignores the reality of working-class participation in the liberation struggle at all levels, both in the past and present, and the working-class political tradition in that struggle.

Innes' dichotomy stems from the construction of an imaginary working-class persona operating within an ideal-type 'working-class politics', (phenomena originally introduced in Joe Forster's keynote address to the 1982 FOSATU Congress). It takes a very partial view of the consciousness of the working class, assuming that this is formed almost exclusively by the factory experience. Thus, workers appear to have a cosmopolitan consciousness, with very little that is nationally specific about it; they observe the popular movement from a distance, pondering when to intervene to secure their specific interests.

Working-class consciousness cannot be equated with idealist notions or separated from an understanding of all the steps necessary for the achievement of a socialist society.

Working-class political consciousness includes an understanding of the interests of other classes, the extent to which their interests differ from those of the working class, as well as the basis on which alliances may be forged with those classes. It is only from concrete experiences of working-class involvement in the national democratic struggle that this consciousness can develop.

In reality, the working class is an essential component of the nationally oppressed people, and this has a profound effect on its politics. It is intellectuals who ponder whether the working class should be involved in the national liberation struggle. Workers themselves do not make the rigid distinctions between their factory-floor experience and their broader political and social experiences. These bind them to, rather than separate them from, other sectors of the oppressed, and the national liberation struggle.

This is reflected in the content of much of the cultural work done by FOSATU workers, and in the songs, slogans and demands which characterised the launch

of COSATU. It is reflected in the strength of people's organisations in areas where unions are strong. For example, when the Metal and Allied Workers Union formed the East Rand People's Organisation, it did not remain outside the popular movement - it became the strongest UDF affiliate on the East Rand. Advanced and organised workers are not distinguishing themselves as a separate grouping outside of the popular movement in the way that Innes is.

The key question, which Innes has failed to pose, is that of building working-class leadership within the popular movement. The way in which trade unions, as a particular organisational form, relate to community-based structures is one of the questions to be posed in this respect. But it is not the only one.

ON THE CHARACTER OF THE STRUGGLE

Innes rather pretentiously sees himself and Fine joining Erwin and Cronin in 'breaking new theoretical ground', with the 'divisive concepts' of the past having been abandoned by all. In particular he lauds the jettisoning of the 'usual two-stage argument'. While critical of Erwin's 'syndicalism', he rejects Cronin's assertion that the 'dilemma' of relating 'transformational politics to liberation politics' is one of Erwin's own making: 'The dilemma cannot be glossed over so easily. One thinks of the course of liberation struggles in Spain, Greece or Chile... where the interests and demands of the working class were sacrificed to promote (unsuccessfully) a broad-based popular unity against oppressive powers' (p 13).

It is not particularly helpful to trot out three 'examples' of popular unity 'subordinating' working-class interests, assuming we are all familiar with the processes in these situations which substantiate his arguments. Innes needs to substantiate the case he is making from such assertions. In the case of Greece, is he referring to the struggle against Nazi occupation, or to the struggle against domestic reaction in the 1940s and 1960s, or to post-dictatorship events? Lazy references of this kind prevent us from giving a serious answer.

In the case of Spain (assuming that Innes is referring to the 1930s), the

working class united with other republican strata in defence of their republic against a Fascist military onslaught backed by imperialism. There is no question that the working class was unable to complete a socialist transformation.

But if the working class had abandoned the Popular Front and proceeded with a socialist programme, this would have brought the collapse of the republic a few years forward. The defence of the republic was the most immediate and vital task of the Spanish proletariat.

Innes seems to imply that had the Chilean working class abandoned popular unity in pursuit of a more rapid socialist transformation, the outcome there (a military coup sponsored by US imperialism) may have been different. Other commentators have suggested the opposite. Random worker occupation of small and economically unimportant businesses was promoted by the ultra-left, who were unhappy at the pace of nationalisation undertaken by the popular unity government. This contributed directly to the alienation of the petty bourgeoisie from the popular unity, and strengthened domestic support for imperialist intervention. Hence the weakening of the popular unity actually contributed to a working-class defeat.

Innes' treatment of these examples reveals a central weakness in his argument: the notion that the interests of the working class are subordinated in popular struggle unless those struggles are fought on the basis of a socialist programme.

We can pose this argument in reverse: although there have been a number of instances of popular fronts suffering defeat, there has never been an instance of working-class victory without the working class having engaged in popular alliances. Indeed, would the Chilean working class ever have been able to create the potential for socialism, which it did, if the popular unity had not included a programme for the middle class? Viet Nam, Angola, Nicaragua and many other examples all speak volumes on the ability of popular alliances to advance the position of the working class.

To understand the tasks of the working class in relation to other classes, we need to clarify the character of the struggle in South Africa.

STAGES IN THE STRUGGLE

We need to be more careful about what jettisoning of the 'usual two-stage argument' entails. We assume 'two-stage argument' means a mechanical separation between the tasks of establishing democracy and of social emancipation. These are slotted into 'stages' separated by a chasm in time. The implication is that the second set of tasks is only placed on history's agenda when the first set is complete. But there is no 'usual' two-stage argument - there have been many, from a wide variety of political positions.

The question of building the path to full social emancipation cannot wait until the achievement of formal democracy in South Africa. It is the process by which the national democratic tasks are completed that will determine the character of the society which follows, and the extent to which progress towards complete emancipation from exploitation will be uninterrupted.

However, this does not deny the existence of historically-distinct stages, phases or moments through which our struggle must pass. These are not determined by the programme or outlook of particular organisations, but mark an objective and historically-determined route along which we pass. In rejecting a mechanical separation between stages, we do not reject the idea of the national democratic struggle as defining the character of the South African struggle.

The national democratic struggle is the path necessarily followed by the struggle for socialism in South Africa. This is a result of the particular nature of South African capitalism - a structure of minority rule and national oppression which has persisted, in essence, from the colonial era.

The national democratic struggle unites all classes among the oppressed, together with democratic whites, behind the pursuit of democracy and national self-determination. It is not in itself the struggle for socialism, nor is it simply a socialist programme which incorporates a challenge to racism. The system of minority rule, through which political power is organised, is the immediate obstacle to socialism in South Africa. Only when that system has been abolished does the possibility of social emancipation arise. Democracy is the vital condition for the completion of

the process of education, mobilisation and organisation of the masses necessary for the transition to socialism.

The immediate objective of the working class is therefore the marshalling of all possible social forces for the eradication of minority rule and its replacement by democracy. The deeper that democracy, the greater the prospects for uninterrupted social transformation.

The national democratic struggle is not an unfortunate detour on the road to socialism: the present national popular mobilisation against the regime gives tremendous momentum to the struggle for socialism in South Africa.

The various classes among the oppressed are united, not by an ideological smokescreen which hides their different class interests, but on the basis of their common, but diverse, class antagonism to the colonial structure of minority rule, a political and economic phenomenon which prevents any significant sector of the oppressed from realising their class interests.

This is not to argue that all classes among the oppressed have identical class interests, but rather that their different interests coincide on the question of eradicating minority rule. The method of that eradication, and the depth of the democracy which replaces it, is the essential class question of the national democratic struggle.

The manner in which Innes rejects the 'usual two-stage theory' is such that he rejects, in practice, all phases, stages and moments in the struggle. There is an inability to deal with struggle as a contradictory process. The specific, the concrete and the historical are all evaporated. Nowhere does this appear more clearly than in Innes' dry, constitutional handling of the Freedom Charter.

It is true that Innes introduces some historical remarks about the compilation of the Freedom Charter. But these remarks (passed on from Fine, who gets them from heaven knows where) simply underline our point: history is gaily flattened out into a timeless debate between 'socialists' and 'populists', between 'transformation' and 'liberation'.

We are told, for instance, without any evidence being offered, that workers and worker leaders were unhappy about the Charter in 1955-6, and that the socialist wing of the Congress Alliance

felt betrayed. If anything, the opposite was the case. It was the right-wing Africanist group, still within the ANC at that stage, who opposed not only the non-racialism of the Charter's preamble, but also its 'communist' nationalisation clause. The radical liberal centre of the ANC was also unhappy with this clause (see Luthuli's *Let My People Go* for a candid commentary on this). At the time the official adoption of the Charter by the ANC in 1956 was widely seen as a victory for the left (see for example *Drum* of December 1955). But in essence, the Charter was and is neither a victory for the left in the national liberation movement, nor a populist sell-out. It is a document with a very wide following, providing general guidelines for all democrats in South Africa. While not a socialist programme, it certainly does not put a lid on socialism.

Our approach differs fundamentally from Innes, who seems to imply that the working class either participates in the struggle for freedom on the basis of its full programme, or not at all.

The Freedom Charter, says Innes, makes too many compromises, and therefore inhibits the development of 'working-class politics'. We believe that the full programme of the working class will not be realised in one process, and that it faces the continual task of removing the immediate obstacles to its progress.

Innes' narrow approach to alliances fails to confront the structure of political power in South Africa, and the concrete tasks of shifting those power relations to favour the working class. It is the task of the working class to weld together the broadest force - on the basis that other classes share a particular immediate objective of the working class - to most rapidly and effectively remove each obstacle in the path of progress.

Failure to win every potential ally at every point, no matter how temporary, vacillating or conditional those allies may be, betrays the interests of the working class. This is because it delivers potential allies into the hands of the regime, thereby reinforcing obstacles in the path of the working class.

WORKING-CLASS LEADERSHIP

Innes' approach to the development of

working-class leadership is largely based on programmes. In his view the major failing of the Freedom Charter is that it does not outline a complete working-class programme. He therefore concludes with a call for a new programme or 'workers' charter' to ensure that the process of transformation is not tackled in a piecemeal way.

Innes examines the question of programmes only at the level of programmes for reconstruction after minority rule. He fails to confront the question of programmes and practices of the struggle to reach that point, to actually liberate South Africa from minority rule. Innes states that 'lack of political awareness has led many union members to believe that the Freedom Charter will liberate them from capitalist oppression - when in fact it does not even give them the right to strike' (p 15). This is reflective of the facile constitutionalism which runs through his discussion of the Charter. He examines the Freedom Charter as if it is the constitution of a liberated society, and concludes that it does not contain sufficient guarantees for the working class.

But the Freedom Charter is not a constitution, nor is it a programme of action. To debate it as such is to miss the living reality of the Charter in the actual process of struggle. The Charter is a document which outlines the objectives of the national democratic struggle, and the tasks of the national democratic state, whose fullest accomplishment will allow the process of democratisation to develop into a process of transformation.

The extent of achievement of those objectives depends on the balance of social forces which develops in the struggle. Here the programmes of action which are designed to achieve the objectives of the national democratic struggle, and the practices which they promote, must be examined. Debating the Freedom Charter as a constitution will tell us very little about the actual development of working-class leadership in the struggle.

The Charter does not represent the final word on questions of liberation and transformation. There is an established tradition of groupings - both on the left and the right - locating the Charter within their view of a post-apartheid society. There have

also been instances of charters emanating from particular sectors of the liberation movement amplifying their particular interests in relation to the Freedom Charter (eg the Women's Charter and the proposed Education Charter).

Innes' proposal for the drafting of a workers' charter is not inconsistent with the character of the Freedom Charter. But he insists on a workers' charter as the basis of unity between the working class and other classes in the popular movement. He thereby outlines a view of struggle which makes working-class participation in alliance with other classes conditional on those classes accepting the complete programme of the working class.

To speak of the working class seeking allies in its struggle acknowledges that while these allies share some of the interests of the working class, they also have important differences in outlook. The working class seeks these allies because it is unable, on its own, to complete tasks which are vital to its advancement. If we accept that the unity of the different classes in the national democratic struggle is not an identity of interests, how can we propose that unity be based on the complete programme of the working class?

But the problems of Innes' approach to development of working-class leadership run deeper than this. The leadership of the liberation struggle is not the inherent preserve of any class or group. The character, form and outcome of the liberation struggle is determined by the relative strength of the different groups which participate within it. To withdraw the participation of the working class from the liberation struggle because the programme of the liberation movement is not the full programme of the working class is the surest recipe for the eclipse of the working class in the struggle. Moreover, to imagine that the national-democratic tasks of the struggle can be by-passed is simply to delay the achievement of social emancipation.

BUILDING PEOPLE'S POWER

The task of transforming society cannot be separated from the process of liberating it. As observed earlier, the essential class question of the national

democratic struggle is the depth of democracy achieved by it.

Transformation is only possible if the liberation struggle ensures the development of direct democracy based on organs of people's power. These are the crucial source of the power of the working class in the national democratic state, and hence the foundation of an uninterrupted transition to socialism.

Innes' failure to properly grasp the class questions that are resolved within the popular movement runs through his critique of the Freedom Charter. The Charter is the common programme of all the classes in the national liberation struggle. The fact that it does not reflect only working-class demands is an indication of its multi-class origins.

This is not to suggest that the Charter inhibits the development of working-class leadership in the national liberation struggle. Working-class leadership in that struggle has to be built; it cannot be guaranteed by any charter.

The intense battles of 1985-6 have forged nascent structures of popular power in many townships: people's courts, alternative education, street and area committees. Other similar structures have emerged throughout the country. At the forefront of these structures have been organisations which endorse the Freedom Charter.

It is through the building up of democratic organs of people's power that the Charter is being implemented by its supporters on the ground. This makes Innes' comment that 'organisations tend to resort to sloganeering and pay mere lip service to (the Charter's) goals' (p 14) reflect his distance from real political struggle.

The importance of structures of people's power in the process of transformation cannot be underestimated. Although initially formed as defensive structures against state repression, they are being transformed into democratic organs of people's power. They fill the gap created by the demolition of state structures in the townships, and through their democratic character ensure that the struggle remains under a firm political leadership and is not hijacked by anti-social elements.

The gains made by these structures are not irreversible, and they are continually open to attack from both the state and divisive elements in the

community. These communities are also continuously aware that in replacing state administration, they face the danger of sliding into reformism. This issue is the subject of constant debate and vigilance (eg Isizwe 1(2), p 12).

The basic units of these structures are street and area committees, and they therefore depend on the involvement of all sectors of the community, including the working class, in the liberation struggle. At the same time their mass-based character allows the development of a disciplined democracy and an accountable leadership within the communities, which is an important step in stopping the development of elitism and individualism.

We have continually stressed that the crucial class question in the national democratic struggle is the depth of democracy developed through that struggle. This is not an abstract question. It is given an immediate and concrete meaning in the creation of structures of people's power. The extension and deepening of these structures creates the most favourable situation for the working class relative to other classes in the national democratic struggle.

THE WAY FORWARD

The South African working class, as a real social force rather than an abstract category of analysis, has begun to stamp its leadership onto the unfolding national democratic struggle. This process is uneven, and certainly not complete or final. But it has dramatically affected the character of the structures which channel the political energies of the masses.

The depth of the democracy won in this struggle is no longer left to abstract projection: hundreds of thousands of ordinary South Africans in the schools, mines, factories and communities have asserted their ability to answer these questions.

It is in the building of people's power, and not in constitutional debate, that the Freedom Charter is given meaning. Sooner or later, this process must impact on university-based intellectuals, and guide discussion in this arena.

18 Years for Limpet Mine Blast

End Street, Johannesburg. Number 120, where the 26-storey Nedbank City Building houses the South African Defence Force's medical corps.

At about 2-00 pm on 28 May 1985, an ANC member known as Caswell, together with a cleaner employed by the SADF, placed a limpet mine on the first floor of the building.

Shortly before the mine was set to explode, a private attached to the medical corps found it in a shoe box, near the building's first-floor staircase. But Captain Heather Cullis of the SADF medical corps ignored the private's claim 'because he tended to fabricate a lot. When Corporal Morebisi, a black serviceman, told us it was a bomb, we started evacuating people from the building'.

Security policeman Charles Zeelie, an explosives expert, was alerted by radio. But on his way to Nedbank Centre East, he took a wrong turn, arriving just before 3-00 pm. As he reached the building, the limpet mine exploded, causing damage of over R500 000.

Almost one year later, Isaac Thulane Mabaso (24), a cleaner employed by the SADF, was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for his part in the blast.

Born in Newcastle in 1963, Mabaso started his standard eight education in 1978. But at the end of that year he failed his examinations. Because his family could not afford to send him back to school, he began seeking employment. With few jobs available in Newcastle, he travelled to Johannesburg, staying with his father in the Jeppe hostel. Because he was not legally resident in Johannesburg, he worked as a 'casual', earning very low wages.

By 1981, Mabaso had started work as a cleaner for the SADF, based at Witwatersrand Command.

Mabaso first met Caswell in 1980, when they both worked at the Poseidon Restaurant in Johannesburg - Caswell as a cook, Mabaso as a dish-washer. When Caswell left his job late in 1980, Mabaso did not expect to see him again.

But towards the end of April 1985, he met up with Caswell and three friends in Noord Street. They all went drinking together, Caswell paying for a number of rounds at a Johannesburg hotel.

When Caswell and his group discovered

that Mabaso had access to End Street Nedbank Centre, by virtue of his SADF identity card, he revealed that they intended placing a limpet mine in the building. Caswell explained that he and his friends were ANC members, fighting to improve the situation of black people. Mabaso agreed to help Caswell gain access to the Nedbank building.

Over the next few weeks, Caswell met up with Mabaso on a number of occasions. Often driving a BMW motor car, he seemed a generous person, buying rounds of drinks, and lending the accused small amounts of money. On one occasion, Caswell offered to 'boost' Mabaso's finances. Mabaso gratefully accepted, suggesting a loan of R20. The next day, when Mabaso met Caswell, R250 was given to him, and he was asked to accompany the group to End Street.

On 28 May 1985, Caswell drove his ANC colleagues and Mabaso to the Nedbank Centre in End Street. When they arrived, Caswell removed the limpet mine from the car boot, and asked Mabaso to accompany him. John, one of the others in the car, was armed with a gun, and took the steering wheel in preparation for Caswell and Mabaso's return.

Mabaso escorted Caswell into the building, using his SADF identity card. They began climbing up the fire escape. At the fire exit on the first floor, Caswell told Mabaso to take a shoe box, in which the limpet mine was hidden, out of its plastic bag. Caswell set the timing device of the limpet, and Mabaso placed the box next to a door.

A number of people were injured in the resultant blast. According to Lizette Scheepers, who was running down the stairs at the time, 'Cement and bricks fell on us. I lost consciousness. When I came to, my right shoulder was dislocated, my body had scratches all over and there were cuts on my head. I still do not have the full use of my arm'.

Captain Heather Cullis, the senior nursing sister in charge of the medical corps that day, had both ear-drums pierced by the blast. Her shrapnel wounds needed 15 stitches, and her eyesight and hearing were permanently impaired.

The next day, the ANC's Addis Ababa office in Ethiopia acknowledged that the

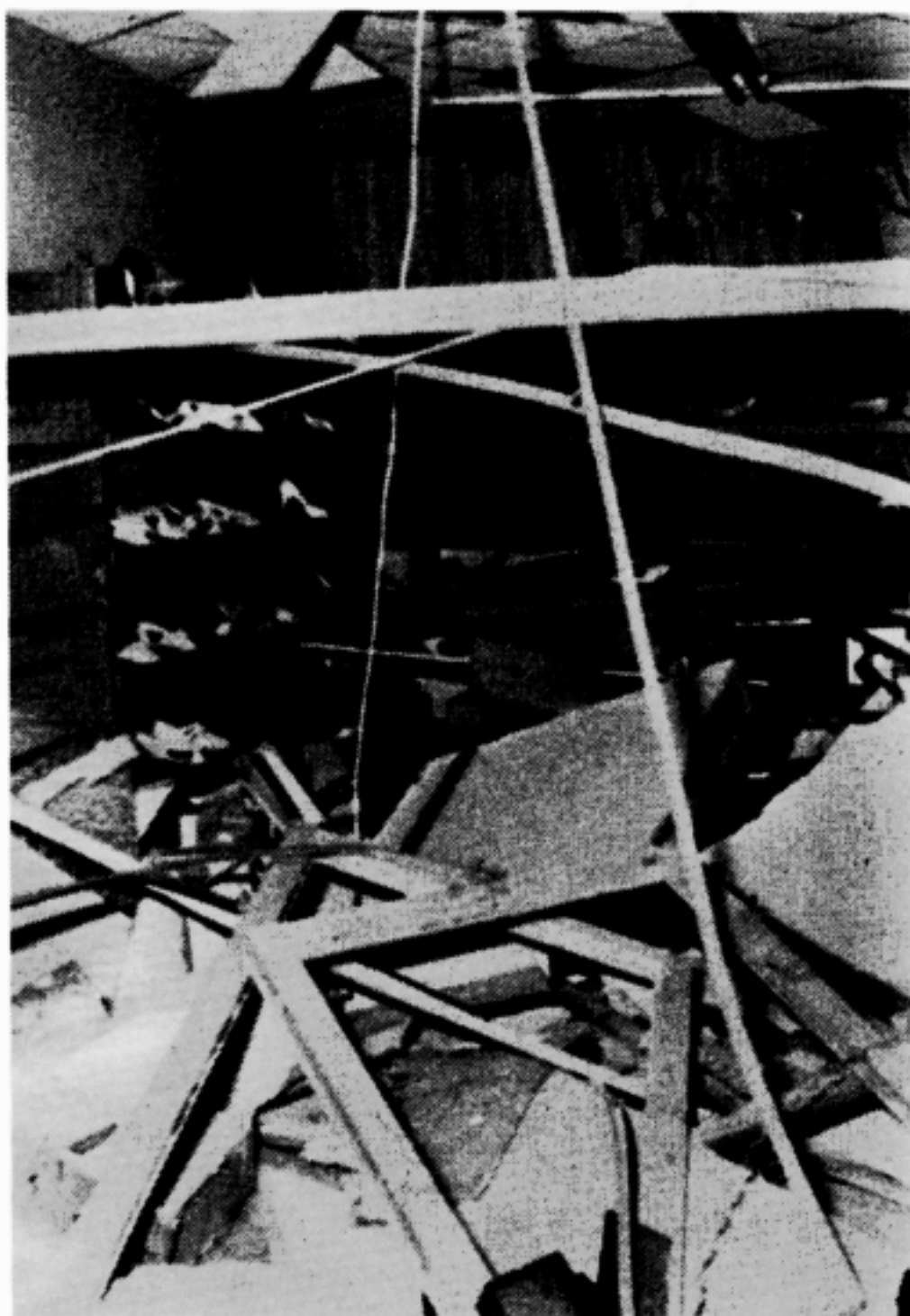
attack had been planned and carried out by Umkhonto we Sizwe guerillas. An ANC spokesman said that the attack was 'part of a general escalation of the liberation war. These attacks, together with the uprisings presently engulfing the whole country are a concrete manifestation of our people's determination to rid ourselves of the racist regime', said the spokesman. 'No amount of reforms or adjustments to apartheid can turn our revolution back'.

Mabaso was detained by security police at the beginning of August. When he appeared in the Rand Supreme Court on 28 April 1986, he pleaded guilty to a charge of terrorism. In mitigation of sentence he told presiding judge McCreath that he had been worried that people might be killed in the blast, but that Caswell assured him the bomb was timed to go off late at night. But this evidence was rejected by the judge.

The state prosecutor argued that Mabaso was used as cover by Caswell and his group, making it possible for them to plant the bomb. This was by no means a minor role, according to the state, and called for a sentence of life imprisonment.

Defence advocate Eric Dane disagreed, arguing that the court had to consider how the accused had become involved. He was not an ANC member, neither had he undergone military training. Clearly, argued the defence, Mabaso was influenced by Caswell, an older, more sophisticated and experienced person.

In sentencing Mabaso to 18 years imprisonment, Justice McCreath said that if anyone had been killed in the blast, he would have considered passing the



Damage caused by the bomb blast

death sentence on the accused. 'Mabaso abused his position as an SADF employee. He allowed his identity card and his own presence to be used to enable the crime to be committed', said the judge.

On being sentenced to 18 years imprisonment, Mabaso smiled in relief, saying it was two years less than he had expected.

Subversion Charge Follows Kagiso Meeting

Five Kagiso residents face charges of subversion following a 16 June meeting held in 1985.

The accused, who also face an alternative charge of public violence, are:

Daniel Moname
Isaac Genu
Kenneth Mlabulane
Lucky Masetla
Joseph Korasi
Albert Khenyile.

Subversion is an offence created by the Internal Security Act of 1982. Its terms are very broad, and in this trial,

the state alleges that the accused are responsible for a series of actions which followed the 16 June meeting.

According to the state, the accused intended to

- * overthrow or endanger state authority;
- * achieve constitutional, political, industrial, social or economic change;
- * force the government not to act in a certain way;
- * force the general public to act in a certain way by demoralising them.

With intention, claims the state, the accused caused general dislocation in

Kagiso; interfered with the supply and distribution of food and commodities; prevented people from assisting in the maintenance of law and order; endangered the free movement of traffic; and created feelings of hostility between various population groups.

The state's case is that the accused arranged and attended a meeting held at the Kagiso Methodist Church on 16 June 1985. This meeting led to acts of arson, public violence, and the damaging of buildings and property belonging to Kagiso town councillors. In addition, claims the prosecution, the meeting led to a confrontation with the members of the police, and the disturbance of peace and tranquility.

After the meeting, a group carrying sticks, bottles and stones marched through the streets of Kagiso singing freedom songs, and shouting slogans. The state claims the accused participated in the march.

Initially they marched on town councillor Msabeni Goodman Mabaso's shop, setting it on fire, stoning and plundering it.

They then moved on to a shop belonging to Kagiso's 'mayor', Lesaoana Eduard Moeketsi, attacking it with stones and then burning it.

Moeketsi's car was also damaged in this incident when it was hit by stones thrown by marchers.

Participants in the march also stoned and set fire to the house of 'deputy-mayor' Anthony Zulu.

Finally, the crowd stoned one or more buses belonging to United Greyhound.

The maximum penalty for subversion is 20 years imprisonment. However, if a court rules that an accused should have foreseen that violence could have been a reasonable possibility, the maximum sentence is increased to 25 years.

The accused were initially detained by security police towards the end of August 1985, and held under section 29 of the Internal Security Act. When they appeared in court, they were all released on bail of R500.

The trial is due to begin in the middle of July.

In Brief

Johannes Soudeni Mahlangu (27)

Mxolisi Bright Gebashe (28)

Two alleged ANC guerilla fighters face 13 charges of terrorism, membership of the ANC, unlawful possession of arms, ammunition and explosives, robbery with aggravating circumstances, and attempted murder.

According to the charge sheet, Mahlangu comes from Mamelodi, and Gebashe from Soweto.

The state claims that both accused joined the ANC and underwent military training in East Germany, Angola, Russia and Zambia. Gebashe, it is alleged, left South Africa in 1977, while Mahlangu followed in 1979.

They allegedly returned to South Africa with false identity books. From their Northern Transvaal area of operation they plotted acts of violence, and recruited others to support the ANC's cause.

They also allegedly attempted to gather information for the ANC, and identify targets for sabotage. As part of their ANC activities, they allegedly purchased two motor cars with ANC funds to transport weapons.

During the period April-December 1985, the prosecution alleges that they were in possession of two 9 mm Makarov pistols, 16 rounds of 9 mm ammunition, two F1 defensive handgrenades and one RGD5 offensive grenade. These weapons were stored near the Northern Transvaal area of Kwaggafontein.

On 22 November, claims the prosecution, Mahlangu and Gebashe robbed the Mohlala Bottlestore, near Dennilton, of R875. In doing this, they allegedly threatened the bottlestore owner and his wife with firearms, and in the process wounded Moses Mohlala. They are also alleged to have made an attempt on the life of David Chali during the bottlestore robbery.

Finally, alleges the state, when a Captain RF Maritz attempted to arrest the accused near Kwaggafontein, Mahlangu tried to murder him.

The trial is due to begin in the Pretoria regional court on 21 July 1986.

Strikes and Disputes: Transvaal

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Acoustical Fibreglass Springs	CWIU	400	03.04.86	<p>Workers staged a one night sleep-in when negotiations with management broke down. Workers demanded an hourly increase of R1 to raise the minimum wage to R2,82; recognition of 16 June and 1 May as paid holidays; and a revised maternity leave scheme and reduction of the working week from 45 to 43 hours. Management offered 40c/hour. Towards the end of April, the company increased its offer to a 70c/hour increase, improved leave, reduced hours of work, a shift and long-service allowance and recognition of the two holidays.</p>
Adcock Ingram	SACWU	350	10.03-12.05.86	<p>Workers went on strike when negotiations, which began in November 1985, deadlocked. SACWU demanded a R38/week increase while management offered R17/week. On 11 March the company obtained a court order evicting strikers from the premises and restraining workers from intimidating people entering the premises or interfering with the conduct of business. CUSA, UDF, AZAPO, AZASO and SOYCO agreed to launch a boycott of the company.</p> <p>SACWU condemned the National Soccer League for not pressuring the Barlow Rand parent company through its sponsors, National Panasonic, also a Barlow Rand subsidiary. At the beginning of April Adcock Ingram and SACWU agreed to independent mediation in a bid to end the strike.</p>
Dairy Belle Clayville	FCWU	500	04.04.86	<p>Three senior shop stewards were suspended from the Clayville factory after management accused them of instigating a work stayaway on 31 March and assaulting workers hired to replace them. Workers staged a sleep-in strike on 1 and 2 April demanding the stewards' reinstatement. They returned to work the next day after management obtained a court interdict ordering them stop intimidating other employees and interfering with deliveries.</p> <p>On 4 April workers stopped work in the afternoon when management identified two of the stewards who were then arrested by police. Over 350 workers were evicted by four busloads of police using sjamboks.</p> <p>On 7 April the strike spread to four Dairy Belle depots in Johannesburg and Pretoria, disrupting home deliveries. School children were hired to help with deliveries.</p> <p>On 8 April the company dismissed 500 workers from the Clayville plant. The company hired security guards to protect drivers of delivery vans hired to replace the strikers.</p> <p>A further 75 workers were dismissed the following day from the Koedoespoort depot in Pretoria when they ignored an ultimatum to return to work. The union warned that the strike would spread to other centres if the workers were not reinstated. On 11 April RAWU members at a Bloemfontein Dairy Belle depot staged a one-hour work stoppage.</p> <p>The strike ended after arbitration on 21 April and workers were reinstated. Arbitration upheld the dismissal of two stewards and ordered reinstatement of the third.</p> <p>Dairy Belle and FCWU are involved in a dispute centering round the company's refusal to treat the Clayville factory and four depots as one unit in wage negotiations.</p>
Festive Farms	SFAWU	850	10.04.86	<p>Workers went on strike over a wage demand. The company settled with a minority union at 40c/hour on the minimum of R66,50/week.</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Foschini	CCAWUSA	240	25.04.86	CCAWUSA began a national strike at 47 Foschini stores following the retrenchment of 301 workers countrywide. Management ignored the union's request for short-time or reduced working hours. Foschini workers picketed outside the company's Isando head office and in Eastgate shopping centre. CCAWUSA demanded reinstatement and negotiations on work-sharing schemes. On 3 May negotiations deadlocked. By 6 May the strike was unresolved.
G&W Base Minerals Wadeville	CWIU	200	05.05- 07.05.86	Workers staged a sleep-in strike demanding a 50c/hour increase. They rejected management's offer of a split increase of 30c/hour backdated to April followed by a further 5c/hour from October. They finally settled for a 40c/hour increase bringing the minimum wage to R2,36/hour. The company also agreed to a two-week annual bonus.
Haggie Rand Jupiter and Germiston	MAWU	2 000	04.03- 21.03.86	Following a deadlock in wage negotiations, workers staged a sleep-in strike to prevent the company from hiring scab labour. The union demanded plant-level bargaining on wages, overtime rates and conditions of service, and 1 May as a paid holiday. Workers ignored an ultimatum to return to work by 17 March and were dismissed. MAWU threatened to launch a campaign for an international boycott of Haggie Rand products. The company reinstated workers on 21 March. Workers will not be paid for the strike period. The company agreed to begin negotiations on worker demands for long service bonuses and allowances but could not reach agreement with the union on the level at which negotiations over other demands should take place.
Jet Stores (Edgars) Roodepoort	FEDCRAW	400	17.03- 18.03.86	Workers staged a sit-in over the dismissal of three colleagues found guilty of intimidation during a September 1985 strike, sparked by a white supervisor's alleged racist attitude to black workers. Four hundred workers were dismissed but reinstated after negotiations. Management denied that it had given an undertaking to persuade the supervisor to withdraw charges. Five workers were dismissed earlier this year on similar charges.
Krugersdorp Town Council		800	07.05.86	Workers met at the town hall to discuss their grievances. On 5 May workers asked for 100% pay increase. A delegation of workers negotiated with the management services department.
Lebowa Transport	TAWU	1 000	17.04.86	Workers went on strike over wage demands following unsuccessful negotiations. The company dismissed 250 workers from its Burgersfort and Mokopane depots. Another 500 workers from the Seshego depot joined the strike in protest against the dismissal. The company used army personnel to maintain the bus service.
Murray and Roberts			May	The company is due to start retrenching staff as it streamlines its operations. Since June 1986 employment levels have dropped from 58 000 to 56 500 and a further 2 000 jobs will be lost in the next three months.
Noristan Pretoria	SACWU	320	12.03.86	Over 260 workers went on strike following the dismissal of 60 workers earlier in the week for allegedly sabotaging production. Management refused to show evidence for the charges. Workers ignored an ultimatum to return to work on 13 March and were dismissed. Negotiations over dismissals reached

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>stalemate on 21 March. SACWU demanded unconditional reinstatement of the 320 workers. Noristan insisted the workers acknowledge that the original dismissals were in the interest of protecting future quality and safety of Noristan products.</p> <p>On 7 April the company placed an advertisement in a newspaper appealing to fired workers to return. The following week four homes of Noristan workers in Mamelodi were petrol-bombed and police detained three workers. SACWU will seek mediation in a bid to solve the dispute.</p>
Pick 'n Pay	CCAWUSA	8 000	07.05- 14.05.86	<p>Workers at 76 supermarkets voted to go on a national strike from 2 May after three months of intensive wage bargaining and the failure of a conciliation board meeting. CCAWUSA demanded an increase of R90/month. Management offered a R50 increase backdated to 1 March and a further R40 from October. The minimum wage is R303/month.</p> <p>On 2 May Pick 'n Pay met CCAWUSA in a last minute bid to avert the strike. CCAWUSA suspended the strike after Pick 'n Pay threatened to apply for a Supreme Court interdict declaring the strike illegal because the 30 day period of conciliation had not elapsed. Management offered a R60/month increase backdated to March and another R30 from July or R80/month backdated to 1 March. CCAWUSA rejected the offer.</p> <p>The strike began on 7 May at 45 stores involving about 6 200 workers. About 4 500 strikers slept in 24 supermarkets and five hypermarkets. Nineteen stores were closed. Workers staged marches through some stores. The company was granted interdicts in Bloemfontein and Natal prohibiting worker violence or intimidation.</p> <p>At Pick 'n Pay's Benmore Gardens outlet, a bomb was detonated. CCAWUSA denied involvement.</p> <p>Pick 'n Pay chairman Raymond Ackerman threatened to fire the strikers if they were not back at work by 13 May and letters were sent to strikers detailing this.</p> <p>Negotiations resumed on 10 May. In the early hours of the morning of 13 May, after all-night talks, Pick 'n Pay and CCAWUSA reached agreement on an R85/month increase backdated to March. The increase was extended to workers in the Western Cape and Northern Transvaal who were unaffected by the strike and will affect about 13 000 workers in total. The agreement will last till February 1987. Workers returned to work on 14 May.</p> <p>According to the company, R7-m was lost in turnover due to the strike.</p>
SASOL	CWIU		29.04.86	<p>After months of negotiations, SASOL management at SASOL 2 and 3 plants and Secunda collieries agreed to release all day shift workers who are members of CWIU at noon on 1 May so they can attend a May Day rally.</p>
SEIFSA	INF unions CMBU	300 000	15.04.86	<p>In annual wage negotiations, MAMU demanded an increase in the minimum wage from R1,60 to R3,50/hour, an across-the-board increase of 50c/hour, a 40-hour week without loss of pay, the right to strike without dismissal, six months paid maternity leave with job guarantee, no SEIFSA factory to make products for the police or army, and an undertaking from employers not to involve the police or defence force in labour matters.</p> <p>Thirty thousand metal workers downed tools on 17 April in an one-hour stoppage protesting against SEIFSA's 28c/hour increase on the minimum wage. SEIFSA also offered to increase the leave bonus by 1.5% over the next three years, and to give women who report back to their employer within six months</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>of going on maternity leave preference when vacancies arise. Their employment will be treated as continuous for leave and service benefits purposes. The offer included an industry sick fund maternity benefits for 26 weeks instead of the present 13. Together with UIF payments women are offered about 90% of their wages for the period.</p> <p>MAWU has refused to sign the industry agreement every year since it joined the industrial council in 1983. This year the local co-ordinating committee of the International Metalworkers Federation failed to set common wage demands. On 25 April MAWU and EATUSA declared a dispute with SEIFSA.</p> <p>At the start of the talks SEIFSA indicated that it would recommend to the government that May Day be declared a national paid holiday and replace another public holiday. This year SEIFSA adopted a 'no work, no pay' attitude for workers staying away on May Day.</p>
Sentrachem	SACWU	3 000	13.05.86	<p>Wage negotiations began in January and a conciliation board was constituted at the end of March. Following its failure to resolve the dispute workers voted for strike action. The strike affected seven Sentrachem companies: National Chemical Products (Germiston, Chloorkop), Fedmis (Sasolburg), Agrihold (Pretoria), Karbochem (Sasolburg, Newcastle) and Safripol (Sasolburg). Management said production was unaffected because white employees took over the work.</p>
Soweto Council	NUPSW	250	28.04-05.05.86	<p>Cleaning workers went on strike claiming the council had failed to fulfil its promise of increases of between 25-35%. Following negotiations with management, they agreed to wage increases of 10%-15%.</p>
Soweto Council	SABMAWU	500	26.03-11.04.86	<p>Council policemen went on strike demanding a 50% wage increase. They earn R265-R370/month. Other grievances concerned overtime pay, long working hours, and discrimination within the force.</p> <p>They refused to resume duties - which include guarding council property and councillors' homes - until their demands were met. Workers were dismissed the next day when they refused to sign forms undertaking not to strike, to accept the salaries they were receiving and to give the council the right to retrench or dismiss workers at any time.</p> <p>On 2 April SABMAWU applied to the supreme court to order the council to reinstate the workers. On 9 April the council and union agreed to reinstatement. Policemen resumed work on 11 April. Payment for lost working hours was still being negotiated.</p> <p>The National Union of Public Service Workers and the Soweto City Council Staff Association later claimed credit for settling the dispute.</p>
Success Pack West Rand	GAWU	42	09.05.86	<p>In January workers refused to work when management failed to fulfil its promise of a R5 weekly wage increase to meet the cost of alternative transport to work because of a bus boycott in Kagiso, Krugersdorp. Police evicted workers from the premises and ordered those who wanted to return to work to stand to one side. When workers did not respond the police told them to go home and collect their wages four days later.</p> <p>On application, the industrial court ordered the reinstatement of the workers, be effective from 21 February.</p>
Unilever Boksburg	FBWU		22.04.86	<p>Workers returned to work after deadlock in negotiations when management refused to recognise May Day as a paid holiday. They resolved to take May Day as an unpaid holiday and to stay away on 2 and 3 May</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>in protest. The union also attempted unsuccessfully to negotiate a 40-hour week.</p> <p>On 17 April seven unionists were arrested outside the Unilever offices during a demonstration. They were charged with contravening the Internal Security Act and resisting arrest. They appeared in court on 7 May, were not asked to plead and released on bail.</p>

Strikes and Disputes: OFS/Cape

George Municipality		215	08.04.86	<p>The municipality dismissed all its African workers when they failed to report for work on 4 and 7 April. It intends to hire only coloured workers in future. It wants to move Africans from nearby Lawaakamp to Sandkraal which is 3 km away. Residents do not want to move. The council threatened to bulldoze all illegal shacks, the single workers compound and raise rents by over 100%. The previous week it demolished 150 illegal shacks.</p> <p>On 12 April the municipality received notice from attorneys to reinstate the workers or face industrial court action. In February the council fired 400 workers following a stayaway over the same issues, but later rehired 215.</p>
Nightingale Lingerie Athlone	GWU		15.03.86	<p>At the beginning of October 1985, the factory was badly damaged by fire. The director approached the union for financial assistance in wage payments. The union advanced R12 000. In December the company again requested assistance but the union refused.</p> <p>The union subsequently applied to the supreme court to have the firm placed under provisional liquidation. The court granted a provisional order.</p>
Paxit Pipekor Strikland	PAWU	100	22.04.86	<p>Workers went on strike when a colleague was arrested on allegations of theft. Following negotiations management agreed to issue a notice explaining that the worker had been cleared of the allegation in an internal investigation. Management also agreed to withdraw charges. Workers returned to work on 23 April but resumed the strike the next day demanding that the company ensure charges were dropped and pay workers for the days they were on strike. Workers returned to work on 25 April when the company paid bail for the arrested worker.</p>
Plascon Epping	SACWU	90	March	<p>On 3 March Plascon locked out its workers following a two-day strike in support of workers dismissed in the Transvaal and a 12-day legal strike over a wage dispute. A conciliation board sat on 10 March but was unable to discuss the wage dispute as this was outside its terms of reference. The two parties then conducted wage negotiations but were unable to reach agreement.</p>
Western Cape Admin Board	WCABWU	1 200		<p>In August 1985 the union demanded an across-the-board 25% increase. The board offered 5,5%. Negotiations failed and in November the parties applied for a conciliation board hearing. This was scheduled for 19 March 1986.</p>
SA Abbatoir Corporation Bloemfontein	RAWU	100	14.04.86	<p>Workers went on strike demanding union recognition. The corporation refuses to recognise unregistered unions. On 16 April the company issued an ultimatum to workers to return to work or face dismissal. Talks continued the following day.</p>
Wolke's Town Council	OVGWN	13	23.03.86	<p>In December 1985 workers went on strike demanding the return of union documents confiscated by a</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				council official and the dismissal of the official. Following an industrial court hearing the council agreed to reinstate 13 workers dismissed after the strike. Their reinstatement is retrospective to 2 January. The period between their firing and reinstatement will be regarded as unpaid leave. The union will also be granted de facto recognition while its membership is verified. Both parties undertook not to involve police in attempts to resolve disputes.
Welkom Hospital	OVGWU	190	22.04- 23.04.86	<p>Women cleaners went on a two-day strike protesting against the hospital's refusal to recognise the union, low wages and the absence of an effective communication system. Workers ignored an ultimatum to return to work and were fired. On 24 April police arrested 140 workers at the hospital. They were charged with trespassing.</p> <p>OGVWU, NUM and AZAPO formed a committee to pressure the provincial authorities to reinstate workers unconditionally, and are considering a consumer boycott of white businesses in the area.</p>

Strikes and Disputes: Mines

Blyvooruitzicht (Rand Mines) Carletonville	NUM	7 000- 10 000	09.03.86- May 1986	<p>A sit-in strike continued over dissatisfaction with a bonus system. On 14 March management gave the miners an ultimatum to return to work. After clashing with police during a march that evening, six miners and a security guard died and 100 miners were injured. Mine property was extensively damaged. Twenty-two workers were arrested on intimidation charges. On 17 March 7 000 morning shift workers returned to work. One hundred and sixty miners who refused to sign an undertaking to return to work were sent home. A further 1 000 returned to work. One more miner died, while 54 were held by police. The union has demanded the release of an arrested organiser and shaft stewards before any settlement is negotiated.</p> <p>Management obtained an extension of a supreme court interdict preventing workers from intimidating colleagues, destroying property or interfering with mine operations. NUM gave management until May Day to meet demands. Workers claim management ignored two letters stating their demands. Demands included: three-monthly increases be continued; abolition of the liaison committee and recognition of elected worker representatives; recognition of NUM; and that whites stop assaulting blacks underground. Management has denied knowledge of the letters.</p>
Chamber of Mines	NUM	250 000		<p>Once the Minister of Manpower failed to appoint a conciliation board within 30 days of a dispute being declared over May Day, NUM was legally entitled to strike over the demand for May Day as a paid holiday. The Chamber asked the industrial court to rule NUM's demand an unfair labour practice, but on 11 April agreed to ask the court not to make an order. A conciliation board was then appointed.</p> <p>NUM agreed not to initiate any strike action pending a supreme court hearing on 24 April where the Chamber contested NUM's right to a legal strike. But the court ruled against the Chamber leaving NUM legally entitled to strike on May Day. The Chamber also asked the court to set aside the conciliation board arguing that its terms of reference did not reflect the dispute. The court granted this, ruling that the Minister had exceeded his powers by appointing a board to deal with the issue.</p> <p>The Chamber adopted a 'no work, no pay' attitude over the May Day stoppage. The CMU announced that its members would no longer do the work of black strikers. It threatened to instruct its members to unilaterally declare 1 January a holiday if black mineworkers treated 1 May as one.</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Greenside Colliery (Gold Fields) Witbank	NUM	3 000	02.05- 06.05.86	Workers returned to work after a four-day strike and sit-in which began when mine security detained a shaft steward for his involvement in a May Day celebration, and handed him over to the SAP. Workers were attacked by mine security and police armed with guns and sjamboks in the hostels. More than 20 people were injured. On 4 and 5 May workers were forced back to work under armed guard. But they refused to work and sat underground for the duration of the shifts.
TEBA	NUM	450	12.03.86	Workers boycotted TEBA canteens when management failed to redress long-standing grievances over discriminatory practices, dissatisfaction with food, hampering union activities, and victimising shaft stewards. TEBA laid charges against NUM members campaigning for the boycott because they had contravened company rules and the liquor Act. On 21 March, 60 NUM members were fired after striking twice the week before against the dismissal of two NUM members.
Vaal Reefs Orkney	NUM	1 750	19.03.86	About 1 750 mineworkers left the mine after the death of 16 miners in the past week and injury of 99 because of faction fighting on the mine. NUM claimed that management had instigated tribal faction fighting on 15 and 16 March. On 21 March NUM met Vaal Reefs management for talks to reduce tension on the mine. NUM's grievances included dissatisfaction with the induna system and migrant labour system, police intervention on the mine and the position of workers who were not reinstated after 14 000 strikers were dismissed in 1985.
Western Deep Levels (Anglo American)	NUM		13.05.86	Following negotiations, black mineworkers were granted a 27% increase on production bonuses, effective for all categories of stoping production from the beginning of May. Bonuses of 75%, effective from June, were agreed on for development, tramping, and vamping workers.

MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY MAY DAY

COSATU held rallies round the country attended by 100 000 workers. Johannesburg, Pretoria, Western Transvaal and East London experienced almost total stayaways. Six rallies were banned in Port Elizabeth, East London, Empangeni, Ladysmith, and Pretoria. Students stayed away from schools.

About 200 000 miners stopped work. Stoppages were reported on the OFS Goldfields, Phalaborwa, Thabazimbi, Carltonville-Klerksdorp area, Witwatersrand, Kimberley, Witbank and Namaqualand. Twenty-eight unionists were injured when police broke up May Day meetings at the mines.

De Beers Consolidated granted a paid 1 May holiday to 2 000 black workers at its Finch, Kimberley and Namaqualand mines. Wit Nigel, which is not a member of the Chamber, declared 1 May a day of thanksgiving.

COSATU demanded the right to observe May Day as a paid public holiday, a 40-hour week on a living wage with social security, the right to strike and to work, the rights of students to form democratic SRCs, equal pensions for all people on a monthly basis, the right to free political activity and the unbanning of all banned organisations, the release of political prisoners and dropping of treason charges, the right to free movement and decent housing at affordable rents, and the immediate end to the pass laws and influx control. COSATU condemned the formation of UWUSA, Gatsha Buthelezi and Inkatha as government collaborators.

The UWUSA national launch in Durban was attended by about 70 000 people. A COSATU May Day rally nearby was attended by 15 000.

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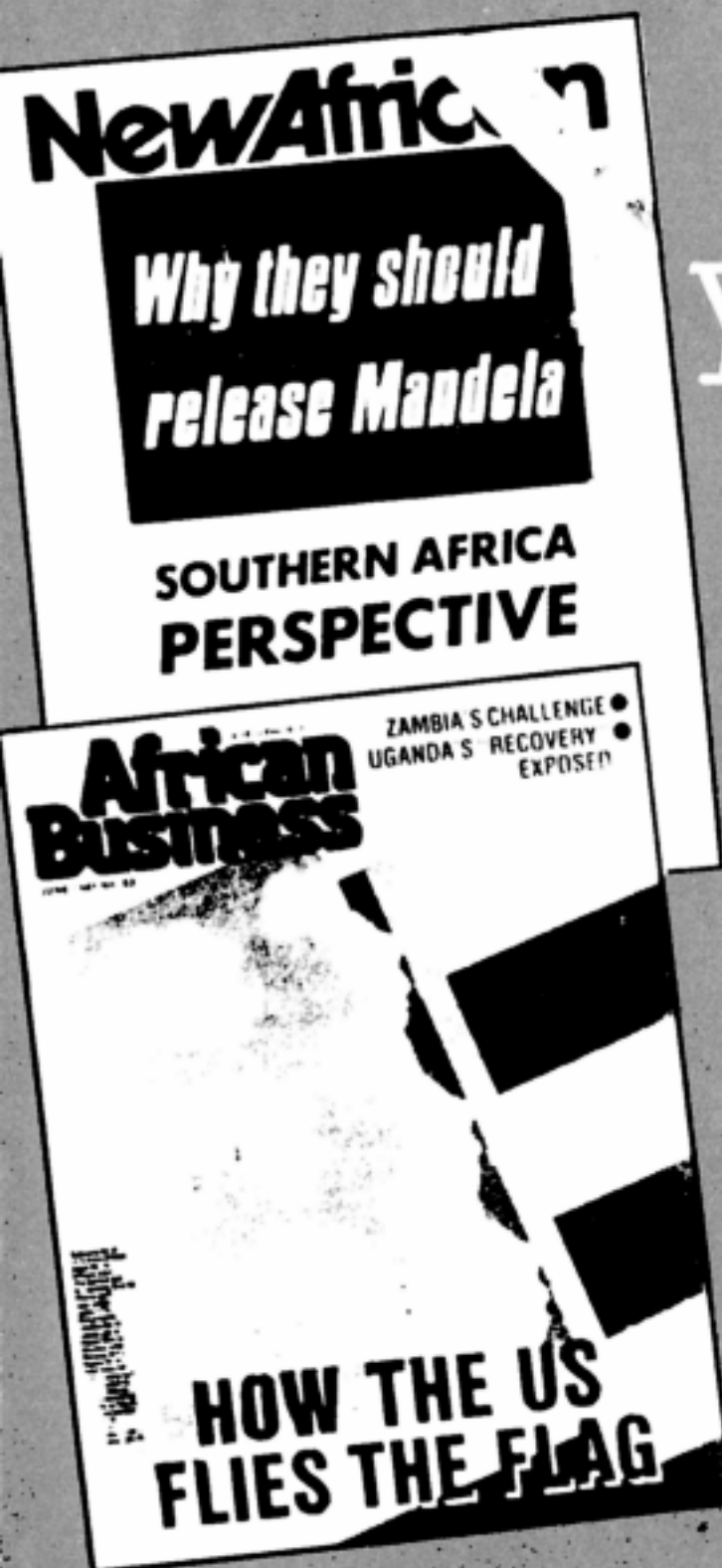
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