

PROGRESS

The ANC Consultative Conference

Can it blow
some life into
the movement?

THE LAND
Rural reform:
Whose ground
is it anyway?

THE MEDIA
The right to
like what
you write

THE SCHOOLS
Life in the
black bored
jungle



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Editorial

The ANC has long been 'A Good Idea'. Many South Africans have experienced it as little more than that - as the major source of usually serious perspectives for the unity of all in South Africa around a common commitment to democracy. But the challenge of the moment is that the ANC become a great deal more than that. That something is an *efficient organisation*, actually organising people on a large scale, aggregating their interests, thrusting the demands of the most dispossessed and oppressed to the forefront, and seizing the political initiative in the process.

The progress the ANC has made since February 2 is only a start. It is only a bridgehead — only phase one. Its activists must now fan out into the nation and bring the ANC's huge support into a democratically disciplined relationship with skeleton headquarters and regional structures.

There is no sense in which the ANC can be satisfied with membership figures, which are only a fraction of its polled support. There is no way in which it can continue to accept communications breakdowns between head office and the regions and branches. There is no way that members can continue to tolerate what often seems to them a cavalier decision-making process at top level. Even less can members be expected to float in limbo without a clear formulation of strategy and tactics for the crucial months ahead.

If there are people in the leadership who prefer that the ANC remain only a good idea rather than an efficient and democratic organisation, integrity demands that they prepare to step down or move aside. Since the National Conference and elections to the national executive committee have been postponed to June next year, such people have the time to make alternative arrangements.

But major challenges confront the membership and leadership of the ANC at the December consultative conference. The first challenge is strategy and tactics for the months ahead. The second is to develop structures to serve strategy and tactics. The third is to ensure these structures are filled by people who *actually can and will do the work*. The fourth is to ensure that greater internal answerability and democracy are entrenched in the ANC, with allowance made for the kind of flexibility the leadership will need to employ in the months ahead.

We on this magazine consider the time has come for plain speaking. Criticism, for us, is an act of loyalty - a paradox all but the most politically insecure can understand. Our loyalty is to the actual achievement in South Africa of those democratic values with which the ANC has been most closely associated. We are aware that it has become quite fashionable in some circles merely to knock the ANC. Ours, however, is intended as a serious intervention.

For this reason, we concentrate in this edition on the major issues confronting delegates at the forthcoming ANC national consultative conference.

In the latter half of the magazine we also isolate several areas begging for coherent address from the ANC: the need for wider political organisation in the townships, education, control over land, health, media and others. We are confident the ANC, particularly given the determination and rich talent on which it can now draw inside South Africa, is capable of overcoming the shortcomings evident in its record so far. That potential must now be transformed into reality.

Owing to rising costs of production, WIP has reluctantly concluded it has no option but to increase subscription costs with immediate effect.

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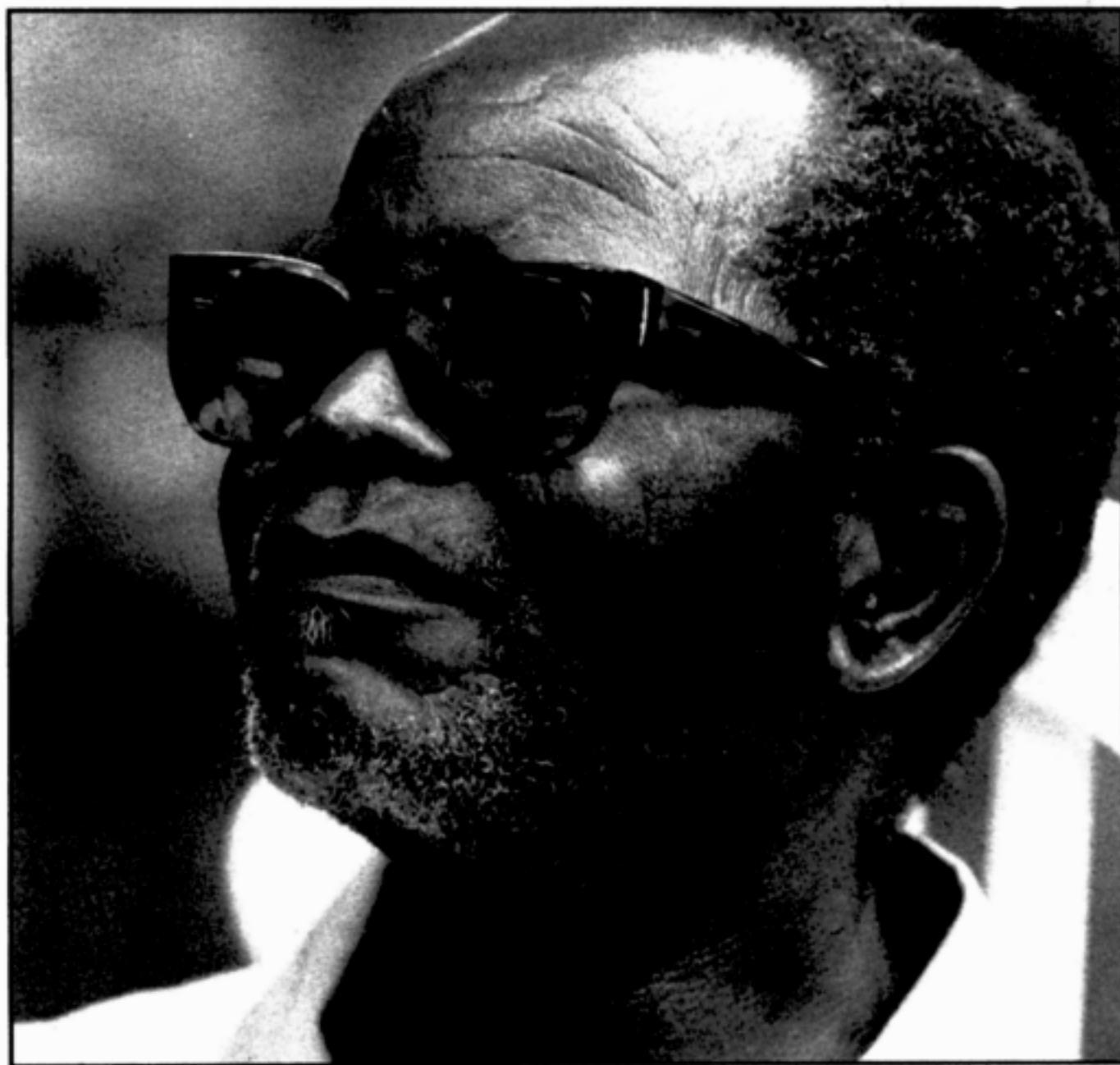
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Strikes and disputes



Coming home to problems

ANC President Oliver Tambo is due home in the first weeks of December, shortly before the movement's December 16 Consultative Conference.

A mammoth task awaits the ANC leadership — and the membership as a whole — as they map out the road ahead.

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Two stinging attacks on the new Urban Foundation report on land reform

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Hell for leather

MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD trade unions are involved in an initiative to form a new union federation.

The main force behind the initiative is Freddie Swartz, general secretary of the 5 500-strong Transvaal Leather and Allied Trades Industrial Union. He has written to approximately 176 unaffiliated unions inviting them to attend a meeting in Johannesburg on 21 November to establish whether there is sufficient common ground among them to warrant the establishment of a new umbrella body.

In the letter, Swartz states that unionists from the unaffiliated unions have often expressed the need to get together in a federation, and points out that they have more members than the combined membership of the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu). The principles on which such a new federation would be based, he adds, could include non-racialism, non-violence, non-involvement in party politics and opposition to sanctions and disinvestment.

Swartz also points out that unaffiliated unions frequently find themselves in conflict with Cosatu unions in the course of their work and that if they want their views to be heard they have to unite.

'There are many disadvantages in not being in a federation', Swartz told WIP in response to queries about the initiative. 'Other groupings claim they speak on behalf on labour. But in terms of numbers and policy

they do not really represent the whole of labour. These groupings are also closely aligned to certain political parties. We are not sure that is a role labour should play.

The response to the letter has been 'heartening', he adds. - *Robyn Rafel*

THE NEW RIGHT

The Uncle Tom freedom fighters

ON THE last Friday of October, Zimbabwe Unity Movement leader Edgar Tekere could be found some 30km out of Johannesburg enjoying that much-loved South African form of entertainment, the braaivleis.

If eyebrows were raised it was not because of the Afrikaner-inspired cuisine (after all, United Democratic Front treason trialists have been known for their addiction to biltong) but because of the company.

Tekere's hosts on this occasion were the Federal Independent Democratic Alliance (Fida), whose affinity to Tekere was explained in their letter of invitation: 'He has first-hand experience of Africanisation and is a strong opponent of Marxism and the one-party system', the letter stated.

Fida, headed by 52-year-old former churchman John Gogotya, was brought into being in mid-1987 - a year into South Africa's longest state of emergency and in circumstances where tens of thousands of UDF supporters had been detained without trial.

Following Fida's launch, Gogotya expressed strong opposition to the UDF - which 'had high on its

agenda plans to necklace black moderates like us' - and to the system of one person, one vote. 'We have seen what this has done to the rest of Africa', he said. 'It has brought oppression and deprivation to the whole continent'.

The man who believed just two years ago that ANC leader Nelson Mandela was 'in jail by his own choice', hailed Tekere as a freedom fighter.

And, within a week of the Tekere braai, Gogotya and his team were closeted in the Union Buildings with president FW de Klerk jockeying for a place at the negotiating table and asserting that - provided one did away with 'simplistic models such as the "Westminster system"' - the principle of one person, one vote could be respected.

Fida claims anything between 300 000 and 600 000 supporters. Its activities are all-but unreported. Gogotya claims this is not because the organisation does little of note, but because the media has systematically boycotted its events.

Fida has been seen in anti-apartheid circles as a state project, as part of the counter-revolutionary strategy pursued since the mid-80s by the Botha regime, which involved smashing democratic organisations and inserting government-sponsored structures into the resultant vacuum.

The suspicion arose not only from the timing of the Fida launch, but also from Gogotya's association with Maboyi Zondo who in turn was linked with a vigilante group which operated with impunity in its war against UDF-aligned groups in the Eastern Transvaal town of Leandra.

While Gogotya has always denied government links, until recently he

refused to disclose alternative sources of sponsorship. Now he states that South African business, often through the Afrikaanse Sakekamer, is a major benefactor. So, he says, are multinational oil companies.

He remains insistent that Fida receives no foreign funds. But it is quite clear that the organisation considers itself part of an international anti-Marxist movement. Propaganda of the International Freedom Foundation adorns the walls of its Johannesburg head office.

And Gogotya is also chairman of the Progressive Alliance, which makes claims on Christianity in its stridently anti-ANC/SACP pitch and has Richard J Harty of the World Commonwealth Foundation manning its Washington office.

Tekere's primary South African host is considerably less contentious than Fida. He is Phil Khumalo, described in the press two years ago as Johannesburg's 'fastest growing black businessman' and head of a venture called Business Challenge.

Khumalo, the first black South African to be granted a Nashua franchise and a former lecturer in small business development at Wits University business school, sent his daughter and designated successor, Pam, to university in Harare.

The motto of Business Challenge, says sales co-ordinator Sydney Maisela, is 'we put people into business'. He adds that party-political alignment is out. 'We deal with anybody, but anybody'.

Business Challenge does this in a number of ways: by collectively investing the modest contributions of its members with the Allied Building Society, in an elaboration of the stokvel principle, and providing

collateral for loans made by Allied.

Secondly it links the 'informal sector' very firmly with big capital, providing agents for major manufacturers - including the United Tobacco Company, which markets a wide range of cigarettes.

Apolitical as Business Challenge affects to be, it is certainly a second circuit to big capital and hardly the shortest route of access to any of the liberation organisations in the country. Fida, without doubt, is inimical to simple non-racial democracy and the organisations which promote it.

No doubt, as he extended his stay in South Africa Tekere reached beyond these initial sponsors. But his strange entree does more than tease. It calls to mind his electoral alliance early this year with Ian Smith's all-white Electoral Alliance. - *WIP Correspondent*

MERGER

One post office, one union

A MERGER with two other post office staff associations and privatisation of the post office are two key items on the agenda for the Post and Telecommunication Workers' Association (Potwa) congress in Johannesburg in January next year.

Other matters that will come up for discussion are negotiations between the African National Congress and the government and greater participation by Potwa members in civic associations.

Potwa president Kgabisi Mosunkutu says a merger with the 5 300-strong Postal

Employees Association of SA (Peasa), whose membership is predominantly coloured, and the SA Post and Telecommunication Employees' Association (Saptea), which has 1 260 Indian members, has been on the cards for some time.

Says Mosunkutu: 'The congress will open the way for the merger with Peasa and Saptea - probably in the middle of next year. At the same time Potwa will be transformed into a fully-fledged trade union, in line with a resolution adopted at our 1988 congress. After that the major challenge will be to organise white workers into the union'. - *Henson Sompetha*

LABOUR

Bantustan union trade-offs

TRADE unions have not wasted time in exerting their influence in Ciskei and Transkei where they have recently been given the green light to operate: they've pushed the two bantustans into making changes to the new labour laws.

As reported in *WIP* 69, the new labour dispensation in Transkei came into effect in June and in Ciskei in July. In late September and early October Cosatu requested further concessions in talks with Ciskei's Brigadier Oupa Gqozo and Transkei's General Bantu Holomisa. Briefly, the changes Cosatu has won in Ciskei are:

- farm and domestic workers, and those employed in small businesses (concerns employing less than 20 workers), who were previously excluded from

the ambit of the new law, will now be covered by it. Farm and domestic workers are already covered in Transkei;

- workers are no longer required to give employers 24 hours notice if they intend going on strike. By the same token, bosses do not have to give notice if they intend imposing a lock-out;

- the 180-day time limit for parties to refer disputes to conciliation boards is to be extended;

- requirements for trade union registration will be simplified. Two unions are already registered: the SA Clothing & Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) and the SA Municipal Workers' Union. Both are Cosatu affiliates. Sactwu and two other Cosatu unions - the National Union of Metalworkers and the Chemical Workers'

Industrial Union - are registered in Transkei. In its talks with Holomisa, Cosatu asked for the law to be extended to cover government and parastatal workers and for union registration procedures to be simplified.

No details of the concessions the Transkei military leader is prepared to make were available when *WIP* went to press, although Cosatu regional chair Thembinkosi Mkalipi said the discussion was 'very good and positive'. Nevertheless, both leaders are still firmly excluding civil servants from being covered by the new laws.

Gqozo, clearly threatened by the prospect of strikes in the public service and journalists not toeing the line, has announced that journalists at Radio Ciskei are regarded as civil servants. - *Louise Flanagan*

Co-operative Planning and Education (Cope)

Cope, a development agency providing training and education for co-operatives and community development, invites applications for the following positions:

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Applications, together with a full CV and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two referees, should reach Cope before **December 1 1990**. Send applications to:

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16 December

*It's all systems go for the ANC's first Consultative Conference since 1985 — the movement's first legal conference inside the country since its was banned in 1961. In this special 15-page focus, **WORK IN PROGRESS** looks at some of the issues due to be discussed on December 16. We also look at the the SACP's expectations of the ANC, the role of the Youth and Women's Leagues — and, finally, offer an incisive 'delegates manual' for those attending their first ANC conference*

The search for political direction

There will be little time for celebration at the ANC consultative conference on December 16. There are too many serious challenges facing the organisation to allow for triumphalism, as Jenny Cargill reports

While the African National Congress (ANC) has downgraded its December 16 national conference to a consultative one, the gathering will be no less important.

The consultative conference will face two crucial challenges:

- to break the ANC's current organisational inertia; and
- to fill the vacuum on the key issue of strategy and tactics for the months ahead.

The movement's National Executive Committee (NEC) had perhaps little choice but to postpone a fully-fledged conference. Just two months from the scheduled date, only a handful of draft policy papers had been prepared, and still fewer had been distributed to branches for discussion. This threatened to taint the conference as undemocratic even before it started. Since the consultative conference has a more limited agenda, the distribution of papers and resolutions is more manageable, and the prospects for democratic participation by delegates, albeit around fewer issues, are improved.

Added to that, sluggish progress in negotiating the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles promised only limited representation from the two groups with the greatest experience of the movement and its current leadership. To have pushed ahead with a fully fledged national conference without their participation would have added to the growing restlessness in what is historically the ANC's inner core.

But the ANC still needs to demand of government the right to bring to the December conference a strong exile contingent. This, says one senior ANC source, will be vital to creating the necessary 'unity and trust in the build-up' to the proposed national



1990...





While surveys put ANC support at more than 50 percent of the country's potential voters, actual membership is a mere 150 000.

June next year.

While downgraded in status, the conference needs to kick off with an understanding that serious organisational and strategic decisions cannot be delayed until June. As one ANC source puts it: 'Six months is too long to wait'.

In his view, this means that the pervading atmosphere at the conference must be one of 'openness', where delegates are not just voting fodder. Leadership adulation - with delegates being overawed by proceedings and 'names' - has to be avoided, he argues.

Regional conferences have already given pointers to possible pitfalls on December 16. Specifically, from the start, the conference needs to devise and agree on procedures which ensure people vote on the issues and are not just led by personalities.

Enough has already happened in the few months since the unbanning of the ANC to get a sense of the kind of issues that are likely to dominate the proceedings. And, with the impact of negotiations unfolding, debate is already underway on the most appropriate strategy and tactics for the coming months.

A growing view in ANC ranks is that the organisation is sorely missing a coherent plan that spells out all the elements in this current phase of struggle and how they inter-relate. Consequently, the organisation has slipped into a one-dimensional approach, with the talks having almost a monopoly on the movement's energies and resources.

Because of this, the ANC assertion that negotiations is a terrain of struggle in which the masses are involved has remained merely rhetorical.

Past ANC strategy was premised on four pillars of struggle: mass action, the underground, armed struggle, and international support for the democratic movement and the international isolation of the apartheid state.

The negotiating process begs a number of questions which the conference will need to debate vigorously. An ANC statement on the December 16 conference emphasised the agenda would include issues such as an interim government and constituent assembly. The government finds both these issues particularly contentious, and ANC negotiators have signalled some readiness to compromise on them. Delegates will no doubt want to express themselves on any such readiness to compromise: under what circumstances, if any, could such a compromise be tactically justified? How

conference next June.

The postponement of the national conference also provides the fledgling internal branches with time to get a better feel of the ANC, to form realistic opinions about individual members of the leadership, as well as to debate and test mechanisms of internal accountability and democracy.

The character of the national conference as it was initially envisaged was being shaped more by notions of the ANC being a government-in-waiting than by the challenges confronting a liberation movement still involved in struggle. Conference organiser and NEC member James Stuart said policy formulation was necessary not just to 'manage this period of transition', but to 'prepare for a future non-racial government'.

This agenda included a long list of policy papers, covering a number of issues - such as the environment - which would not have even earned a cursory mention before.

But a number of leading ANC members feel this concentration was inappropriate. The current political climate - in particular, the violence - has necessitated a re-ordering of priorities, they argue: the issue of struggle, and its component pillars must be re-asserted - though without losing sight of the longer term goals and policies.

As such, the December 16 conference will centre more on issues of the moment, such as the political situation, the state of ANC organisation, and strategy and tactics to guide the ANC through the

current period.

The postponement of NEC elections to June is both problematic and advantageous.

A leadership whose mandate has not only run its course, but was obtained from what is now just one section of the ANC (the exiles), will be taking the organisation into a crucial political phase - negotiations proper.

To some extent, the ANC has already tried to address this inadequacy. More often than not, NEC meetings today include Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), notably Cosatu, leaders. Usually young and well-schooled in grassroots politics, their presence necessarily changes the character of the NEC. However, this presence is discretionary, and not guaranteed.

It is still unclear whether the December conference will consider options for ensuring a more representative leadership. Options could include entrenching extended NEC meetings as an interim measure and electing a specific team for negotiations, for instance.

Currently, the ANC teams leading and facilitating talks are entirely dominated by people recently returned from exile. Should the ANC not be drawing on the immense experience of union leaders in negotiating, as well as the fine legal acumen of many home-based lawyers?

A point in favour of the postponement of elections is the extra time it gives members to get to know those in leadership positions, therefore providing the opportunity for a more rational vote in



Zuma: With all his commitments, is there time for organisational work?



Suttner ... ANC must dictate the pace of struggle from the streets

could leadership be kept democratically accountable to membership in the event of such a compromise, yet retain a necessary degree of flexibility?

But the crucial question before the conference isn't whether or not to negotiate and compromise tactically in the process. Rather, it is how to ensure a balanced and realistic strategy of which negotiations are merely one component part.

Currently, mass action is being heavily underlined by many ANC members as a guarantor of progress at the negotiating table. Recent political developments have made clear the struggle for constitutionalised democratic freedoms is by no means over.

In an article for the ANC mouthpiece, *Sechaba*, political education chief Raymond Suttner argues for the movement to 'focus very strongly' on 'our most powerful area - the political terrain'. He says while the ANC 'initiated the present process, we do not automatically retain the initiative'.

The ANC 'has to keep the momentum going and in fact ensure that we put the democratic forces in command, dictate the pace of struggle from the streets, townships, workplaces, etc', adds Suttner.

This emphasis demands that mass action is also discussed in the context of the ANC's relationship with the MDM and its alliance partners. And consultation between the the ANC, SACP and the MDM, it is widely acknowledged, must be radically improved.

International isolation is another pillar of struggle that will undoubtedly continue to command strategic attention. The most likely outcome is an endorsement of the current thinking on retaining international pressure in principle, while employing tactical flexibility.

The underground remains an element of the ANC's current political approach. It is, after all, guarantor of continued existence if the talks fail and South Africa returns to all-out repression of democratic opinion. Yet, in practice the underground appears to have been left out of current strategising. Both the Political Military Council (PMC) responsible overall for underground operations and its regional subsidiaries are no longer functioning. This makes the underground more abstract than real - a situation which is obviously difficult to sustain.

The ANC also has to consider whether it has the resources to retain at least a core of its underground, or whether both resources and personnel might be better

deployed elsewhere.

The underground also creates a dilemma for the ANC at the level of principle: can the ANC retain clandestinity at a time when it is trying to democratise its ranks?

Therefore, it is difficult to see the conference resolving to breathe new life into the underground. But clear decisions are necessary on it.

Umkhonto we Sizwe is a more complex problem. The ceasefire has transformed it into an army-on-hold, which remains nonetheless under pressure from Pretoria. So far there has been no clarity on how the ANC views MK's role - if it has any at all - in the negotiations.

The conference will have to give serious attention to the uncertainty and sense of insecurity which affects MK cadres inside the country and, more particularly, the 4 000-odd in camps abroad. Having been recruited, mobilised and trained for war, and having been prepared to make the supreme sacrifice,

they deserve and need (perhaps more so than many others) to be kept fully abreast of, and *involved in* developments towards a negotiated settlement.

Clear decisions on strategy and tactics will mean little if the December consultative conference does not adequately address another key item on the agenda, the state of the ANC's internal organisation.

In short, ANC organisation looks pretty shoddy.

Undoubtedly, problems of relocation from exile, the violence, and limited resources are inhibiting the ANC's ability to build a mass legal base.

But the ANC's organisational shortcomings are not adequately explained by these difficulties.

Structurally, the ANC has an Internal Leadership Core (ILC) tasked with building a new, legal and mass-based movement. Under it are two committees: the political and organising committees.

According to sources in ANC headquarters, the workload of political committee members has made it impossible for the committee to strategise on a daily basis.

The organising committee, say these sources, is also not functioning. The state has effectively blocked a number of members joining the committee: some do not have the necessary immunity to enter the country; Mac Maharaj is detained; and Ronnie Kasrils is in hiding to avoid arrest. Others like Jacob Zuma and Popo Molefe have numerous other commitments. And Chris Hani only returned to circulation in September, after weeks in the Transkei waiting for renewal of his indemnity.

The end result is dismal recruitment figures. While surveys put ANC support at more than 50 percent of the country's potential voters, actual membership is a mere 150 000.

Given that the political space for mobilisation has never been better, the conference must find this result intolerable. And it would be seriously amiss if it closes without suggesting workable solutions and appointing people who *can and will actually do the job*.

In essence, the conference needs to be less a celebration of achievements in struggle, and more a planning forum seeking solutions to a complex political process. The ANC cannot afford to let this chance at pulling together a coherent strategy and tactics slip away - as happened five years ago at Kabwe. •

Read, young lion, read

If nothing else, members of the African National Congress Youth League will be constitutional experts by the time the league is formally launched next year. As you read this, many of them are probably grappling with the new 13-page ANC Youth League Provisional Constitution and its Code of Conduct - complete with its classification of 'grave crimes against the struggle' and suitable penalties.

At the beginning of this year, as members of individual youth congresses around the country, they had their own - vastly different - constitutions and programmes of action. Members of the Piketberg Youth Congress, for example, would be bound by Peyco's own constitution and code of conduct.

All that changed in April this year, when the SA Youth Congress (Sayco) national congress resolved to change from a federal structure to a unitary structure, and individual youth congresses became Sayco branches. Peyco then became the Piketberg branch of Sayco, and had to debate and adopt a uniform draft constitution.

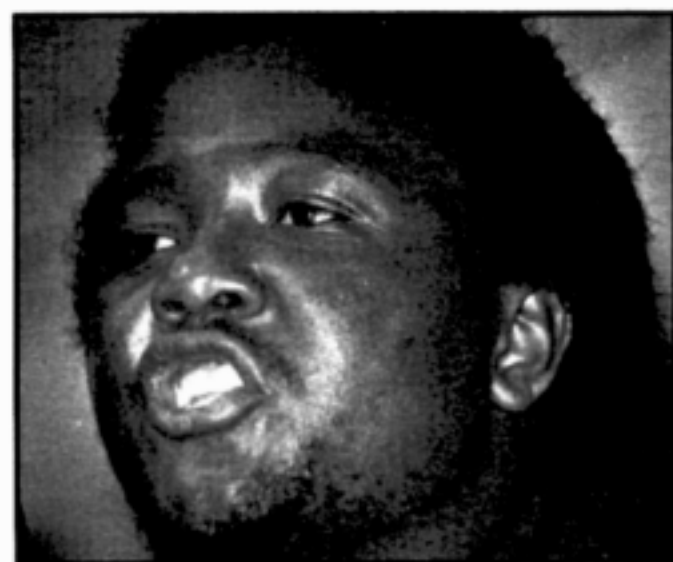
Then, a few weeks ago, a new 'bible' arrived for discussion: the ANC Youth League constitution, complete with its proposals for the establishment of a Provisional National Youth Committee (PNYC), with a Provisional National Youth Secretariat (PNYS) and Regional Youth Committees (RYCs), and the guidelines for code of conduct.

'I feel sorry for some of the younger comrades', said a more experienced Sayco activist. 'It's a lot for them to grasp. Youth congress, Sayco branch, now youth league...'

The net effect of all this debate, he pointed out, is that many youth structures have been able to do little campaign work this year. Political organisation has had to make way for political education - and the lack of activity has had a numbing effect on South Africa's 'Young Lions'.

'We are used to campaigning, building, organising. We have lost some of that. Sometimes the youth no longer roar ... we have to remind them the struggle did not end with the release of Mandela'.

But Sayco members are not the only ones grappling with new concepts: the youth league's constituency stretches



Mokaba ... likely to continue leadership role

much wider, encompassing the high school membership of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas); the SA National Students Congress (Sansco) and National Union of SA Students (Nusas), which organise at universities; religious youth formations like the Young Christian Students (YCS) and the Catholic Students Association (Casa); and even Jeugkrug, which organises students on Afrikaans-language university campuses. Added to that are members of the ANC in exile, many of them members of Umkhonto weSizwe and the ANC Youth Section, who will join the Youth League at a slight disadvantage: as they will only be able to return home later this year, or possibly even next year, they are missing the crucial process of the next five months.

All, however, are expected to join the new umbrella youth league - although it is obvious that Sayco members will play the leading role in this new body: more than 24 of the 30 national members of the PNYC are Sayco members, as are most of the additional 14 regional youth committee leaders who sit on the 44-member PNYC.

Nobody is expecting the process to be trouble free. A recent pre-Youth League weekend workshop of Sayco and Jeugkrug members, for example, resulted in clashes over nationalisation and other economic bogeys.

The youth league has given itself just over five months to weld together these different traditions. It is to set about forming branches, zones and regions along the lines of its 'mother body', the ANC, and come up with a formation able, as the new draft constitution says, 'to serve not only the purpose of reinforcing the ANC, but also to strive to





Toy soldier: A younger young lion at the launch of the ANC's Youth League

achieve the mobilisation of the broadest sections of the youth of our country'.

The deadline set by the PNYC is 6 April 1991 - 10th anniversary of the hanging of MK cadre Solomon Mahlangu. One important issue which will need to be defined before then is the relationship between the Youth League and its 'senior partner', the ANC. According to its draft constitution, the Youth League is 'organisationally autonomous' of the ANC, but still 'liaises closely'.

The commercial media is already making comparisons between the new Youth League and its predecessor, which in the 1940s produced the 'youth rebellion' by Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and others. But it seems unlikely that the youth will be given enough leeway to actively push particularly militant positions. Rather, it will probably encourage its members to become involved in ANC branches, and to gather support for their ideas through these branches.

That, too, will not be easy. Already, some ANC branches are experiencing tension between young activists and older, more established ANC stalwarts.

Even now, five months away from that event, it is not difficult to predict some of those who will make up the leadership: current Sayco president Peter Mokaba, for example, is also chairperson of the PNYC and looks likely to continue his leadership role. The same seems likely in the case of many of his colleagues in the Sayco NEC such as general secretary Rapu Molekane (currently in detention), Ignatius Jacobs (who also serves on the Transvaal interim leadership of the SA Communist Party) and Kgaogelo Lekgoro - all of whom are on the PNYC.

The only thing likely to prevent Mokaba's election is his age: at 32, some Sayco members feel he is 'too old' to lead the youth league. At present, the draft constitution allows for membership up to the age of 35 - but some Sayco members are arguing for the age limit to be lowered to 30.

ANC members outside the country, organised into the ANC Youth Section, are also believed to be keen to see a lower age limit. But they have, to a certain extent, been unable to feed in their ideas because they were denied government indemnity and were thus unable to return home. Communication mainly took place through Youth Section leader Jackie Selebi, himself over 40 years of age and also heavily involved in organising the repatriation of exiles. •

What kind of ANC does the SACP want?



'If the ANC is not sufficiently democratised, if it fails to lead active mass struggles, if the working class is not massively present within the structures of the ANC, then the ANC and our alliance are in serious difficulty'

An otherwise generally well-informed foreign correspondent in Johannesburg is betting a case of whiskies that the ANC and SACP will be splitting from each other by the end of this year. The correspondent is going to lose his whiskies.

But there is, of course, more than whisky at stake in this matter. It is not clear whether the chief government negotiator, Constitutional Affairs Minister Gerrit Viljoen, is quite as optimistic (and therefore quite as mistaken) as the correspondent in question. But Viljoen, too, is publicly speculating on an ANC-SACP divorce — at least over the next few years.

To ruminate openly about an impending rift in the way Viljoen has been doing is, obviously, primarily intended as incitement to the act.

In the context of this growing speculation, what exactly is the perspective on

the future of the alliance now emerging from the side of the SACP?

This question is intimately related to a second question: What kind of ANC does the party hope to see evolve over the next months, in the course of the crucial building of ANC branches and regions, through December's Consultative Conference and into next year's ANC Congress?

Ever sensitive to accusations of meddling and manipulation in the affairs of the ANC, SACP official statements and public pronouncements about the ANC have always tended to be somewhat circumspect. Interestingly, in the period after 2 February these statements have become slightly less circumspect. This suggests that, while the party is clearly not in any state of alarm or panic, it is also not simply taking the alliance or the character of the ANC in the new situation for granted.

Appearing a month after the unbanning of the ANC and SACP, the March

1990 edition of the party organ, *Umsebenzi*, carried an editorial which noted among other things: 'The ANC will undoubtedly remain the over-all head of the broad liberation front. The need to consolidate and advance the liberation process in the immediate aftermath of the people's victory may also justify a widening of the democratic camp in a variety of alliances.'

'We can look forward to an ANC of massive strength and every militant must help to make this a reality. In the process, some strata with their own agenda will undoubtedly find it self-serving to flock into its ranks and try to steer it away from its working-class bias. All in all we should be ready for an inevitable sharpening of inter-class ideological contest in the run-up to victory and in its immediate aftermath. It follows that the consolidation and growth of our party and the trade union movement - as independent contingents and as part of the liberation



alliance - is more imperative than ever.'

This perspective is certainly more forthright about the ANC than anything appearing publicly from the side of the party in previous years.

In the most recent issue of *Umsebenzi* (October 1990), under the headline 'No Retreat Now', the leader article takes the forthrightness several steps further. It expresses a clear concern that the strategic initiative is being lost to De Klerk. Although the article is careful to be self-critical of the tripartite alliance (ANC-SACP-Cosatu) as a whole, its criticisms obviously relate most especially to the over-all head of the alliance, the ANC.

The article goes beyond the earlier concern that the necessary broadening of the ANC may dilute its working-class bias. It addresses itself, by strong implication, to the current ANC leadership. It is critical of the fact that in the period after 2 February no 'effective formula' has been found for relating mass struggle

to the negotiations process.

It singles out three styles or modes which it says are coming to dominate alliance politics - working group technical discussions with the regime; an endless round of 'post-apartheid' future-gazing conferences; and the technical building of ANC structures (regional launches, branch launches, elections and AGMs). While all of these activities might be important in themselves, what has more or less totally disappeared, according to *Umsebenzi*, is ANC-led mass struggle.

This disappearance is all the more serious as it corresponds to the regime's primary objective in the present situation. Having been forced finally to recognise the ANC as its principal and inescapable antagonist, the regime is trying to change the character of the ANC by divorcing it from its militant mass base.

The implicit message in the October *Umsebenzi* in regard to the kind of ANC

the SACP would like to see developing is fairly evident. There is an obvious concern that too much time and effort is being expended on grooming the ANC as a future government, while too little effort is accorded to making it a democratically based organ of active mass participation and struggle. 'We need to balance all the talk about "when we are in power", "when we have an ANC government", with solid strategic planning about how we are going to get there in the first place'.

SACP leadership sources are quick to qualify some of this implied criticism. According to one member of the party's national Interim Leadership Group: 'Many of the difficulties and challenges the ANC is encountering relate to objective realities not of the ANC's own making. Organisational building and the consolidation of ANC cadres involves the welding together of exiles, released prisoners, comrades who have emerged out of the last 15 years of mass democratic struggle, and total newcomers. The party, in a smaller way, is encountering the same difficult challenge.

'For the ANC, in particular, this complex organisational task is made all the more difficult by the extraordinary pressures of time and profile to which it is exposed. The regime has learnt from Zimbabwe and Namibia that liberation movements have inevitable difficulties coming out of the bush or coming out of the underground into a new open political role. And so De Klerk is putting on the pressure. If the ANC fails to respond quickly to initiatives from the other side it is presented, at home and internationally, as dragging its feet, as not being sufficiently committed to the peace process.

'But if it moves too quickly it runs the constant danger of outstripping its organised mass base, which is still only emerging. Democracy, consultation, mass involvement in negotiations, all tend to fall by the wayside. While we need to be vigilant and self-critical, we also need to be realistic about the objective pressures we are all confronted with, but which touch the ANC in particular'.

SACP representatives also insist that their concern about the unfolding character of the ANC is not narrowly a concern with the future of socialism and of the party in South Africa. As the same spokesperson puts it: 'When Viljoen incites an ANC-SACP break he is not only trying to frustrate a longer-term transition to socialism. He is trying to

The fight for a fighting alliance

Lip-service to the process of consultation is causing strains between the ANC and its partners in the 'revolutionary alliance' - the SACP and Cosatu.

The alliance, formally established at a meeting between the general secretaries of the three organisations on 27 June, is based on the following principles:

- The overall objective is mass-based organisation around a common programme based on the Freedom Charter;
- the ANC is the leader of the alliance;
- the alliance will be a consensus alliance based on mandates from the component parts; and
- each component should be independent.

It was also agreed that a political committee consisting of representatives of each organisation would be responsible for overseeing the affairs of the alliance. The fact that the committee has not yet met is indicative of the difficulties plaguing the alliance.

Jackie Selebi, a member of the ANC's national executive committee, acknowledges that there are problems: 'So far the alliance has only manifested itself in meetings between the general secretaries. A concrete alliance on local and regional level has not yet been built', he told WIP.

Why is this so? Selebi explains: 'At present, the alliance, like the organisations from which it is composed, is in a transitional phase. In exile, when the alliance consisted of the ANC, SACP and the SA Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu), meeting together was easy. Now the ANC and SACP are busy establishing themselves inside the country and we are dealing with so many things on a daily basis that we have simply not had time to give attention to all the things that we need to'.

Cosatu press officer Neil Coleman agrees that there is discontent

within the federation at the lack of progress of the alliance. But, he says, there is also a recognition that it is not only up to the ANC to make the alliance work.

'The questions relating to the alliance don't simply involve questions of one-way consultation by the ANC. It is a reciprocal problem which needs to be discussed with the ANC and the party', he says.

'The key question is a question of a structured relationship - in other words, how people believe the problems are going to be ironed out. If the answers come up from the local and regional level the problems will be greatly reduced'.

There is also an acknowledgement, says Coleman, of the need for consultations within Cosatu itself on the alliance. 'Several issues have to be resolved', he says. These include:

- The question of independence within the alliance;
- what form the alliance should take at a national, regional and local level;
- what should happen if there is no consensus within Cosatu on a particular issue;
- the overlap of leadership between the organisations;
- what the relationship of the alliance should be to other organisations like the United Democratic Front, youth and civic organisations; and
- how the federation sees the alliance developing in a post-apartheid South Africa.

What of the third partner in the alliance, the SACP? Party spokesman Jeremy Cronin admits there is concern within the SACP about lack of consultation by the ANC. 'But I must qualify that', he adds. 'There is an understanding of the pressures operating on the ANC: the party is facing similar problems, although less sharply. The answer is less to shout at the ANC than to build the organisation up so that it functions solidly on the ground'. - Robyn Rafel •

change the character of the ANC itself.

'Never mind a future socialist project, Viljoen is trying to undercut the quality and depth of the impending national democratic transition. An ANC deprived of a mobilised mass base, and stripped of its SACP alliance, is not an ANC that will spearhead a meaningful democratic transformation of our country. Viljoen knows this'.

These comments, like the implied criticism in the October *Umsebenzi* are, of course, not saying anything that is not being whispered in corridors, mini-buses, and informally in the offices of a thousand and one popular organisations. But the fact that these views are now being voiced publicly and officially by party representatives and in official party organs is significant.

Part of their significance lies not just in the question of what the party hopes to see the ANC become, but to the related question of what the party's own future role and identity might be. And there are not easy nor obvious answers to this latter question. The SACP is having to come to terms with new realities after 40 years in the underground, and in a world where many of the received Marxist-Leninist orthodoxies are now openly questioned. Yet, despite disadvantages, the Communist Party is also launching itself publicly into the paradoxical situation where it has never been more popular, and where the mass support for socialism is riding relatively high.

At its launch rally on 29 July, the SACP set itself the dual task of being both a relatively mass party (general secretary, Joe Slovo mentions a figure of 'several tens of thousands by July 1991'), as well as being a vanguard party. Traditionally, at least in much Marxist writing, the concepts 'mass' and 'vanguard' party have been counterposed as alternative organisational options.

This is a point conceded by various party representatives. But they point to the particular situation in South Africa, and most especially to the existence of the ANC-SACP alliance. There is strong relatively large worker-based support for socialism, and, at the same time, there is a broader, revolutionary national liberation movement, the ANC, with overwhelming mass popularity. The strategic role of the SACP has to be carved out within the parameters of this relatively unique situation.

Apart from its obviously distinct, longer-term socialist perspective the SACP has set itself a number of present

tasks which relate to its endeavours to continue to play something of a vanguard role. In the first place, it is clear that the new forthrightness, a relative degree of independence of perspective within the context of the alliance, and a higher public profile than the party has had for four decades are part of a newly defined vanguard party role.

Another aspect of its vanguard role relates to cadre development. Spokesperson Jeremy Cronin said in a recent interview: 'There's a unique relationship between our party and the ANC, which allows a certain division of labour ... the party can focus more on cadre development, more on building quality, and in this way, although we hope to be relatively large we also hope to continue to play a vanguard role'.

This cadre development is intended to strengthen not just the party, but the ANC as well. The SACP continues to see the ANC as the major organisational vehicle for change in the present situation. In party publications and in interviews the necessity of ensuring the maximum working-class participation within the ANC recurs constantly as a theme.

John Gomomo, an SACP, ANC and Cosatu leader, recently said: 'Struggling for maximum worker involvement in the ANC, and the struggle to build a democratic, mass-based ANC are the best guarantees for a strong ANC and for a strong, ongoing alliance between the ANC, the party and Cosatu'.

Increasingly, at least in media speculation, the SACP's attitude towards the ANC is related to the question of future non-racial national elections for a constituent assembly or for a parliament. Would the SACP stand in opposition to the ANC?

'It's a question we've been asked a great deal in the last months', says Slovo. 'I have tended to say that it's too soon, and too speculative at this point.

'But there are two basic points of departure that could guide us. In the first place it is obvious that it is fundamentally under the ANC umbrella that democratic elections will have to be fought, and it would be short-sighted for the party to split the vote. On the other hand,



SACP general secretary Joe Slovo with Nelson and Winnie Mandela at the SACP launch earlier this year (top), and standard-bearing party supporters at an SACP rally (below)

I believe it is desirable for the SACP to actually test, democratically, its support on the ground. We need to look at various possible formulas. For instance, multi-member constituencies as in the Irish system'.

SACP Political Bureau and ANC NEC member Chris Hani recently expressed a similar perspective: 'We (ie the ANC and the SACP) could have the same candidates at elections. It might be decided that I should contest a particular seat under the banner of the SACP. However, I am sure there will be a common programme between the ANC and SACP because of shared priorities after a democratic transformation'.

But if the SACP needs the ANC at elections, does the converse apply? Viljoen, for one, thinks not: '...almost by way of divine dispensation, the discrediting of communism as an economic, political and social system has happened worldwide. I think the ANC must have noticed that they are becoming discred-

ited internationally by being virtually the only alleged pro-democratic organisation which is still in the anachronistic stance of supporting what was a very strong Stalinist Communist Party'.

Well, the SACP can derive some comfort from the fact that (dare we say it?) 'almost by way of divine dispensation' the party's popularity on the ground in South Africa is uniquely high. Moreover, in the words of one leading market researcher, 'the pattern of cross-allegiances between the ANC on the one hand, and the SACP on the other indicate that considerable voter confusion could arise if the public association between these organisations broke down'. It might run against the grain of world trends, but here in South Africa, the ANC appears to need the SACP.

What about the longer term? SACP representatives and publications consistently note that the ANC is not a socialist organisation, and that it should be an organisational home for all democratic,

patriotic elements who accept its broad programme in the present, whether they are socialists or not. So what happens in the event of a longer-term transition to socialism?

The Sowetan recently posed this question to Hani: 'Surely at some point there will be a logical split between the two, even if they remain allies?' Hani's reply was typically direct: 'Correct. Those are the dynamics of the struggle'.

Other SACP spokespersons have offered a different potential outcome, Cronin points to the Cuban example: 'Fidel Castro and the band of guerillas who launched the Cuban revolution did not necessarily start out as socialists. They were essentially patriots and democrats. At first, the Cuban communists were rather peripheral to the guerilla struggle ... After the successful seizure of power, led by Castro's July 26 Movement, a new dynamic set in. The defence of the national democratic revolution, the deepening of its patriotic and democratic content led, in a straight line, towards a socialist transition. This in turn created the conditions for a successful merger of the July 26 Movement and the party'.

According to Cronin, a similar dynamic could develop in South Africa after a democratic transformation. 'One might find the evolution of the ANC into a broad mass socialist party, within which the party merges. This is rather speculative, but it is a possibility which I would favour'.

Whether they are speaking of the longer term, or of the more immediate situation of a developing ANC as it moves towards its national congress, one thing is striking: SACP representatives show very little interest in the kind of red head count that seems most to preoccupy much of the commercial press. One senior party member comments: 'Frankly, from an SACP perspective, it's largely irrelevant if we have 5 or 35 party members on the new ANC NEC due to be elected in June next year. The alliance between our party and congress was not built on boardroom manoeuvres in Lusaka, but on the ground over decades in mass struggle'.

'If the ANC is not sufficiently democratised, if it fails to lead active mass struggles, if the working class is not massively present within the structures of the ANC, then the ANC and our alliance are in serious difficulty - whether or not there is a high proportion of party members to non-party members on the incoming ANC NEC'. •

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Adelaide Tambo leads delegates in the singing at the national launch of the ANC's Women's League

Looking for the Women's League? Leave a message...

The problems facing the ANC Women's League are similar to those which have dogged women's organisations in the past — in particular, reports Sheila Meintjes, a lack of interest from the ANC leadership

Attempts to organise the ANC Women's League are being hampered by a lack of coherent leadership, a scarcity of resources and minimal support and interest from ANC head office.

The league, which still has to hold a fully representative conference, needs urgently to address how it is going to harness women in the tasks it has set itself.

At the level of rhetoric, the ANC national executive committee has made a remarkably progressive statement on women, saying: 'The emancipation of women is not a by-product of a struggle for democracy, national liberation, or socialism. It has to be addressed in its own right.'

The statement recognises that women in South Africa have experienced gender

oppression, and that their subjugation has occurred culturally, legally and economically as a result of patriarchal domination.

This has prevented women from participating fully in the political process, and this is true even for the ANC.

The ANC pledges itself to giving priority to programmes of education and advancement for women, and claims gender equality as one of its central objectives.

To achieve this, 'women must take the lead in creating a non-sexist South Africa'.

And so, a historic role has been created for the ANC Women's League.

The aims of the new Women's League are spelled out in the draft constitution: to mobilise and organise South African women to participate in the liberation struggle, through their membership of the ANC.

Within the ANC, the league's role is to 'spearhead the emancipation of women', as well as to 'promote the all-round development of women and help in building their own confidence'.

Since the national launch at Currie's Fountain on August 9th, there has been a regionally varied response to the call to join the league. Areas which have a tradition of strong women's organisation, like the Western and Eastern Cape, have successfully drawn women into their branches.

In Natal and the Transvaal, where women's organisation has always been weaker, women have been slow to join, although a Soweto branch exists. On 18 November, a Central Johannesburg branch is to be launched.

To what extent has the league managed to initiate programmes to achieve its objectives?

It has not been able to establish effective women's lobbies within ANC branches. Although women are being elected to branch executives, albeit in small numbers, and many women are joining the ANC, this does not mean that women's particular problems and needs are being addressed.

Women hold office in their own right, and are not there to implement the league's policies.

Moreover, local league initiatives are severely hampered by the lack of support from the Women's League national task force.

Symbolic rallying points have yet to be mobilised in the organisation.



Delegates at the national launch of the ANC Women's League

This is reflected in the absence of a suitable logo.

The interim leadership of the Women's League is largely comprised of exiles, who are still adjusting to the radically changed modus operandi since 2 February.

There are only eight members of the national task force, whose resources are overstretched. To organise effectively, they should be mobile, yet they lack transport. There is no phone connected to the offices of the interim leadership of the ANC Women's League in downtown Johannesburg — ANC head office, in another building, has to take messages.

These are only some of the many difficulties the national task force faces since the league's relaunch.

As yet, the organisation lacks coherent co-ordination. Campaigns emanating from the task force, such as the nationwide Women's Charter campaign, have not got off the ground.

In part, this relates to the difficulties in communication. But there is also a need to face the problem of the lack of a guiding programme of action.

The league needs urgently to address how it is going to harness women to the very important tasks it has set itself.

More seriously, little support has been

forthcoming from the ANC itself.

The Department of Political Education has not prioritised a programme to promote either an understanding of the centrality of women's oppression and its overall social effects, or to encourage ANC women to join the league.

This has implications both for the league and for the future of women's issues in the ANC.

But it is not surprising in view of the massive task the ANC faces in establishing accountable local and national structures as it moves from an illegal underground organisation into party politics in the new political terrain in South Africa.

The Women's League will have to go it alone. One possible strategy to win support from the women of South Africa, is to try and mobilise around the proposed Women's Charter.

Just as the Freedom Charter campaign in the 1950s presented the ANC with the opportunity to organise nationwide, the Women's Charter creates the conditions for a concerted membership drive and politicisation campaign.

The women of South Africa have to be able to express their needs from the grassroots, and the ANC Women's League must take those forward as demands for a future, free and equal society. •



Democracy for beginners: A guide to Consultative Conferences

Based on interviews with participants in previous ANC conferences, Howard Barrell provides the following guidelines to delegates to the ANC consultative conference

Don't be in awe of the occasion or of those personalities temporarily occupying leadership positions. Myths are only myths and in the ANC also usually

have two arms, two legs and only one brain. Problems need to be ironed out.

- Make absolutely certain that conference devises a procedure so that you yourself can deal with issues of policy and detail; otherwise, you will merely be voting fodder easily manipulated by personalities and rhetoric. This means all branches must get position and option papers plus resolutions at least three weeks before the conference starts to allow for *full* discussion by members. If the conference organising committee can't get that together after several months of preparation, the first question to ask is: Why not? And the second question is: Does this committee, or sections of the leadership, want a manipulable conference?

- Level criticism wherever and whenever you genuinely feel it is necessary. Don't get caught up in the ritual celebration of unity for unity's sake. Serious criticism

is an *act of loyalty*; appearances of unity built on brainless conformity are worthless, and they will not improve the ANC's ability to confront the enormous tasks before it. Talk straight.

- Don't imagine that someone somewhere has a master plan for the future sitting in some desk drawer or hidden behind their apparently confident smile. And don't believe them if they say or imply they have such a plan. You, as a delegate, will be at the conference precisely to help devise the way forward; that is your mandate from ANC members in your branch.

- If anyone tries to silence you on the basis that he/she has been in the ANC since 'before you were born', or because s/he was in exile, or because s/he pretends to be a 'massive intellectual', don't be intimidated. Continue to speak out and listen to others until you are satisfied. Note his/her arrogance, and ask yourself if s/he is suitable for any leadership position. The best leaders in the ANC are the best listeners.

- Deciding strategy and tactics for the next six months and beyond is the key task before the December conference. Prepare yourself thoroughly for this debate.

- At the Kabwe conference, about two hours was set aside to discuss strategy and tactics. This was ridiculous. The result was that a strategy and tactics document prepared by a conference commission could not be decided upon. The conference then appointed a committee to prepare a revised strategy and tactics document for adoption after the conference following consultations with membership. Five years later, that committee has still not reported. The crucial point is this: Immediately amend the agenda of the conference if not enough time has been set aside to discuss strategy and tactics; it is the *key issue* on which many other decisions will depend.

- This strategy must clearly spell out how the ANC would like the different elements of the alliance to relate to one another: the ANC, SACP, Cosatu, civics, professional organisations, and others.

- Only once you have decided on strategy and tactics can you decide on what structures you need to create to take forward your aims. So don't let anyone try to fool you into deciding structures and who should be on them before you know what your strategy and tactics are going to be.

- Although the December conference will not be electing a new National Ex-



'Make sure the conference sets out clear tasks for people and structures'

ecutive Committee, there will undoubtedly be changes to some structures. The ANC has suffered much in the past because some people have been elected or appointed to jobs largely as rewards for their past loyalty or because they were big names. Long-term loyalty is important, of course. But there are other equally important qualities. At this conference, make sure that those who are elected or appointed to bodies are people who can do the job, will have the time to do it, and indeed will do the job. So find out about people's actual capacity for hard work (not big talk) by talking to people who know them.

- The ANC is good at making fine-sounding statements of intention. These statements will be meaningless unless they are carried out. The state of the ANC's membership drive and internal organisation is thus a basic issue. Simple structures that can communicate easily with each other and actually work are crucial. Developing these requires the involvement of *organisers*, not big names. If necessary, demand that a suitable consultant on organisational structures be brought in from outside to advise on how the ANC should be restructured.

- Internal ANC organisation must be democratic. Every delegate will be aware that whoever is entrusted with leadership in the difficult negotiating process will have to be able to employ a certain degree of flexibility in dealings with the government and others. So the parame-

ters of their mandate and where they can be flexible must be *clearly spelt out*. Moreover, there must be functioning mechanisms by which they report back to branches and by which they can actually be held accountable for their actions.

- Make sure the conference sets out clear tasks for people and structures. The conference should not write blank cheques. Conference must also set up a body or procedure by which branches can ensure that decisions of the conference on what is to be done organisationally can be monitored and so that action can be taken if people don't perform the tasks they have been given.

- Home-based branches must ensure *now* that the leadership demands of the government and actually gets clearance from the government for a large, properly elected and properly representative delegation from Umkhonto we Sizwe, to attend the December conference. This is vital so that the December conference can get the benefit of their experience in the ANC, their knowledge of some personalities, and in order to assert a realistic basis for the unity of the ANC and the strategic road ahead.

- Use the conference to ensure the crucial decisions are taken for the next six months and more. But also use it as a dress rehearsal for the big one, the national conference in June.

- Keep your bullshit-detecting radar on full alert at all times. •



**Everyone must
enjoy
human rights**



Organise - or die



Whatever the role of a mysterious 'third force' and the legacy of apartheid in the recent carnage in Transvaal townships, democratic community organisations and trade unions must also bear part of the responsibility. Greg Ruiters and Rupert Taylor argue that these organisations have allowed migrant workers and squatters to become alienated from the mainstream of the democratic movement, so making them easy fodder for reactionary parties

FROM THE third week of July to the end of September, conflict in Reef townships saw more than 800 people killed in an intense and unexpected 'civil war'. Many more were injured and left homeless. The communities worst hit were Sebokeng, Kagiso, Thokoza, Katlehong, Vosloorus, Tembisa and Soweto. Why?

The favoured interpretation of the SABC and Afrikaans- and English-speaking press has been to talk in terms of 'black-on-black' (Xhosa-Zulu) violence rooted in inherent forces of ethnic or 'tribal' identity.

This, however, fails to recognise that ethnicity has been manipulated by the ideology of apartheid to give separateness philosophical credence. Moreover, the majority of people reject such labelling. Nelson Mandela has declared: 'This violence is not, as alleged by the mass media, a conflict between Xhosas and Zulus. This is not a tribal conflict at all'.

So what are the causes?

One answer, suggested by Andrew Mapetho in *WIP* 69, is that 'it is clear there is a sinister and organised plan behind this violence'. There can be little doubt that a 'third force' has been operative in significant ways. It would, however, be dangerous - both politically and

from the point of view of analysis - merely to assert a conspiracy theory. Conspiracy theories stress individual and not social factors. They leave unexplained why the violence took a mass group form, why events happened when they did and do not assess the role of apartheid structures in generating division.

An adequate explanation of the conflict must seek out the hidden dynamics behind the events. It must attempt to identify the triggering mechanisms, immediate causes and pertinent underlying sociological and political conditions.

Events sparking the conflict have been acts of physical violence. At Sebokeng on 22 July the trigger was, allegedly, an assault on out-of-town Inkatha members by ANC supporters. On the East Rand, the initial spark, in late July, was over a gambling argument in the Crossroads squatter camp at Katlehong which saw a Zulu-speaker stabbed to death by a Xhosa-speaker. Both events unleashed a spiral of retaliatory killings that spread to other areas.

The immediate causes, which explain why the conflict escalated so rapidly, lie in the increasing politicisation of the townships over recent months. This is generally due to rising expectations generated by the National Party's reform moves.

More specifically, it is a result of the ANC's move to marginalise Inkatha leader Gatsha Buthelezi by calling for the dismantling of KwaZulu. A further factor is Inkatha's launch, on 14 July, as a national political party. The weeks preceding the conflict saw a strong recruitment campaign by Inkatha among Zulu-speakers and other hostel dwellers. It also saw a number of acts of harassment and intimidation by unruly township youth, often acting under ANC colours, against Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers.

These developments, which played a crucial role in sharpening differences, have to be seen in the context of underlying material conditions which reveal a picture of widespread deprivation among the main social groups involved in the conflict. What is distinctive about the pattern of conflict between mainly Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers and largely Xhosa-speaking squatter camp inhabitants is not the ethnic lines of division, but that the participants and victims of the violence are those who have been among the most severely exploited and disadvantaged by the apartheid system.

Whilst hostels - the epicentres of the conflict - house the most degraded section of the working-class, the squatter camps are home to a predominantly



**Another day, another death:
Have mass organisations addressed
the challenges raised by the recent
violence?**

jobless under-class caught in a culture of poverty. Both environments are characterised by a lack of any personal privacy or recreational facilities, and by severe overcrowding. Hostel dwellers have around three square metres of their own living space. On average the number of people living in one shack is six.

Under the migrant labour system, Zulu-speaking workers, living in cold dark single-sex hostels, are separated from family life and forced to perform the worst kind of dirty work in foundries, other heavy industry and municipalities. Their escape is to return to the increasing impoverishment of the rural areas which they call home.

The position of squatters is worse; living in a state of constant poverty and insecurity, without basic services and sanitation, these people lack fundamental human rights.

The material conditions of both hostel dwellers and squatters are a direct result of the workings of capitalism under apartheid. Big business was quick to denounce the violence as carnage and barbarism. It is, however, guilty of complicity in its creation. If the migrant labour system did not exist; would the violence have occurred? Would big business have such high profits?

In order to explain the extent of the

violence, attention must be given to underlying tensions within community politics and the union movement. In particular, both hostel dwellers and squatters have not been integrated into formal organisational structures. Both groups are perceived as outsiders, politically marginal to local struggles.

Within community politics, particularly in the case of hostel dwellers, there has been a history of conflict. In Soweto, for example, there were riots at Dube hostel in 1957 and, during the 1976 Uprising, Meadowlands hostel dwellers were actively encouraged by the police to attack township residents. Suffering under a semi-pariah status, hostel dwellers have often faced attacks from township youth - themselves affected by endemic school boycotts and massive unemployment.

To township people, hostel dwellers are regarded as 'mogus' or 'amagoduka' (fools or wanderers). Zoned in buildings often situated on the edges of established communities, they do not have strong social networks which link them to townships. The fact that many hostels, such as those in Soweto, are situated near railway stations means hostel dwellers rarely need to enter townships.

Township residents' attitudes to squat-

ter camps are influenced by their fear of the many social problems associated with these settlements. Feelings of hostility have expressed themselves in calls from township residents for the eviction of squatters and the use of their land for formal housing.

The result is that, in many townships, migrant workers and squatters have been largely marginalised within or excluded from civic associations. UDF politics of the 1980s focused on national issues and mobilisation politics which at some points saw sections of youth resort to coercive tactics in enforcing stayaways and consumer boycotts. Political and social issues were not formulated or taken up in a way that drew in hostel and squatter residents. Influx control, for example, was largely ignored as an issue. This meant migrants and squatters were not sufficiently defined as part of the emerging political community.

Although some hostels have independently evolved hostel committees, only in Langa in the Western Cape were serious efforts made to organize hostel dwellers - in the Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association (WCHDA).

In squatter camps, the transient nature of the population poses problems for organisation. But the democratic movement has tended to concentrate only on those who are formally housed. It is only in recent months that the UDF has moved to focus on the defence of squatter camps.

It is true that the prospects for more effective democratic community organisation were constrained by repressive measures, such as the the states of emergency and the banning of organisations in early 1988. But the significant point is that there are too few attempts actually to build a strong grass-roots presence in hostels and squatter camps.

Lacking adequate resources for independent mobilisation, hostel dwellers and squatters consequently remained on the edge of community struggles and found no meaningful peaceful channels for expressing and resolving grievances.

A similar pattern emerges within the union movement. Zulu-speaking migrant workers in Natal and on the East Rand

The key point is that, within the hostels, Inkatha found the space to mobilise

proved easy to organise and were the backbone of the early unions in the 1970s. In recent years, however, migrants have found themselves displaced in industrial union structures by younger and more politicised shopstewards.

Central to this has been the rise of Cosatu and its challenge to Fosatu's syndicalist policy of coexistence of all workers. Fosatu tended to emphasise workers' factory unity rather than political unity. Since Cosatu's emergence, hostels have no longer been central to union organisation as was the case earlier, and migrants who are unionised have experienced a degree of alienation.

Union strategies have failed to adequately address hostel dwellers' grievances and the increasing insecurity of the lowest paid workers who are largely disqualified from reform initiatives relating to housing, pensions and medical aid schemes. Unions have not effectively blocked retrenchments which affect the unskilled disproportionately, and Cosatu recently undersigned a proposed Labour Relations Act which compromises domestic and farm workers.

One pattern highlighting the increasing economic deprivation, insecurity and political alienation of migrant workers is their reluctance to support mass actions and strikes. The 1988 three-day stay-away illustrates this. Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers went home for that period. A Numsa national strike set for July 1990, just before the violence, drew a 53% 'yes' ballot. But a percentage of migrant workers opted for caution and this fed tensions which played a role in the conflict.

It is also significant that industrial violence has increased dramatically. Clashes between strikers and non-strikers who are often members of Inkatha's Uwusa have increased - such as at Haggie Rand and National Springs on the East Rand. Strikes have seen scabs thrown off trains and employers organise vigilante attacks.

The consequences of all this fragmentation have been dire. When the events of July occurred, there were no all-embracing community structures operating in affected areas to resolve the provocative calls for revenge and justice, and to check wild rumours. People were left to resort to informal organisational structures and open confrontation. And a cycle of violence erupted.

Clearly the primary causes of massive social disorganisation are apartheid policies rooted in supporting a form of colo-

nial exploitation. Apart from the effects of draconian security legislation, ethnic and class divisions have been fuelled by increasing competition for scarce resources and the state's selective upgrading strategy. This strategy focuses on private home-ownership and leaves hostel dwellers and squatters out of account. The lifting of influx control in 1986 has dramatically increased competition for housing and jobs in urban areas - especially in a recessionary economic climate.

Since the 1980s, township population densities have risen rapidly but with no corresponding growth in housing and infrastructure. In Katshehong, for example, shacks have mushroomed from just a few thousand in 1980 to over 35 000. In 1989 Tembisa residents started to encroach on hostels for accommodation. Planact's report on the Soweto rent boycott showed that there is a 'mammoth backlog of housing', with a quarter of a million people on the Soweto city council waiting list while many more see no point in adding their name.

Divisions have also been engineered by big business through housing, pension and share ownership schemes. Through its strategy of 'flexible specialisation', big business has promoted division between temporary labour which is used flexibly - that is in terms of the oscillation of supply and demand - and a core skilled labour force.

All this, however, does not totally absolve the democratic movement. Greater attention could have been given to accommodating the political interests of migrants in civics and unions. Instead of being channelled into progressive politics they were left open to reactionary tendencies. Crucially, the ability of Inkatha to expand outwardly from its base has been directly proportional to the omissions and mistakes of UDF, Cosatu and the ANC.

The key point is that, on the Reef, within the hostels, Inkatha found the

space within which to mobilise. In the post-February 2 situation the ANC's slowness to take full advantage of the new openings created by the state enhanced Inkatha's position. The process of the conflict polarised people into distinct camps, forcing some middle ground elements into Inkatha by default. A stronger and more democratic urban political umbrella might have prevented the ensuing factionalism which led to violent conflict.

The conflict represents a setback for the democratic movement. The extent of the ANC's assumed support in the Transvaal has been questioned and the state's security measures under 'Operation Iron Fist' have worked to disrupt organisation and instill a sense of futility. Furthermore, Cosatu unions with migrant workers are now facing serious organisational problems. Numsa, for example, is having to cope with disruption on the shopfloor and a breakdown of local structures.

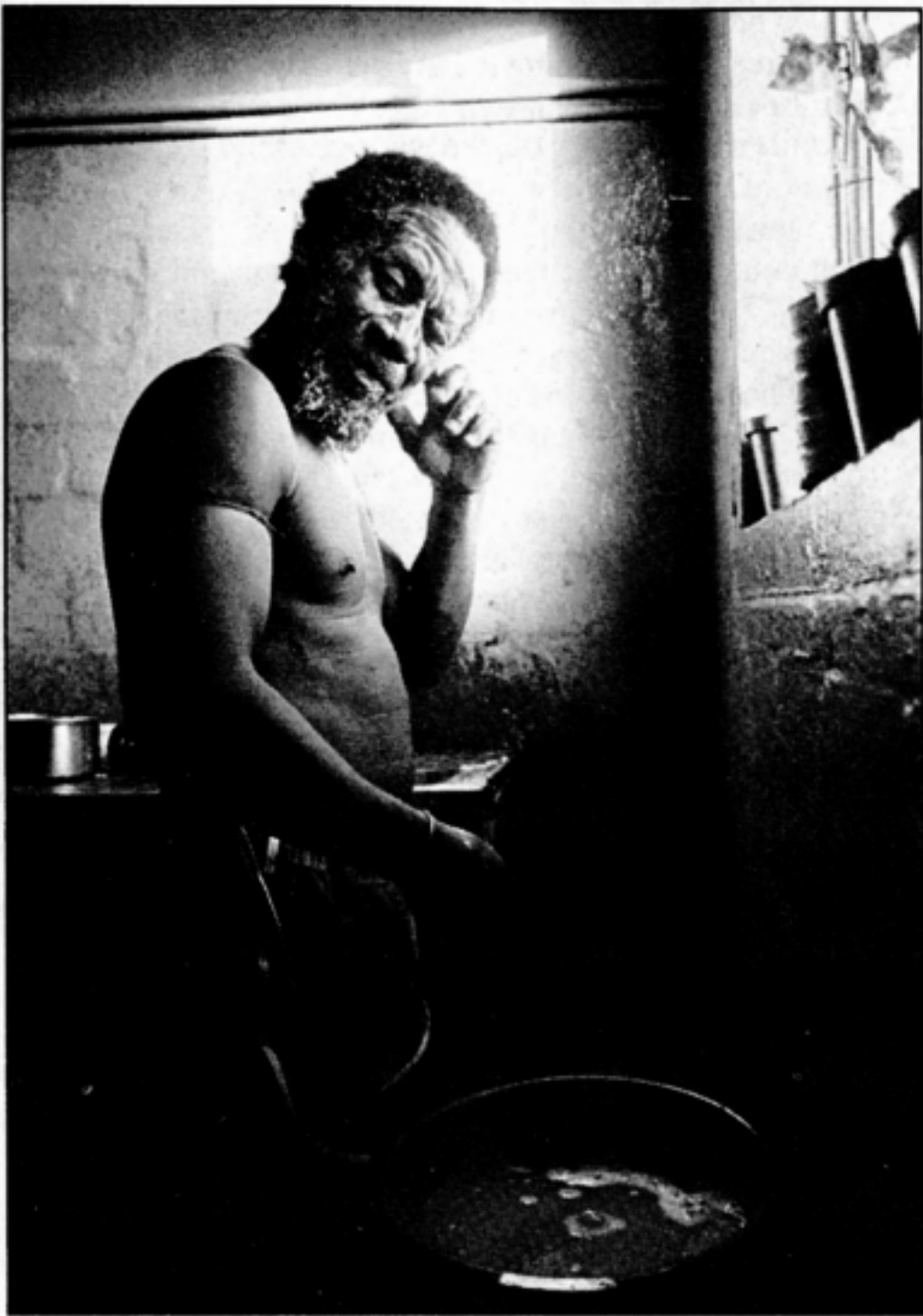
Accepting that the conflict is related to organisational shortcomings, the way forward for the democratic movement is to forge debate on the following:

- organising hostel dwellers and squatters around their specific material problems;
- how civics or other democratic formations could incorporate hostel dwellers and squatters in their structures which adequately reflect their interests;
- how, in conjunction with hostel dwellers and squatters, campaigns for the abolition of the hostel system and the defence of squatter camps can be elaborated;
- giving greater weight to material issues such as housing, jobs and living wages which could serve to strengthen a collective working-class identity;
- building broad working-class structures so as to include all workers; and
- linking national political issues with grass-roots concerns, at the same time re-assessing the current style of leadership politics. In sum, there is need to develop debate on building wider democratic community structures, a more inclusive union movement and finding ways of centralising and unifying local and national struggles. The danger is that, instead of promoting united action, the democratic movement will lose ground to factionalism, threatening the hopes of a democratic South Africa. •

• The authors thank Themba Mthetwa for helpful suggestions and for allowing them to use his third-year sociology project at Wits University, 'Urban Community, migrant workers & popular struggles; a case study of Alexandra'.

Searching for an alternative to hell

Influx control was scrapped four years ago — but the shabby dwellings created to house migrant labourers are still there. In the light of the recent clashes between hostel-dwellers and township residents, Robyn Rafel looks at what alternative forms of accommodation exist



SINCE the violence on the Reef there have been several impassioned calls for single-sex hostels for migrant workers to be abolished. The sentiments behind these calls are understandable - the carnage cannot be repeated. But getting rid of hostels is not as straightforward as it might seem.

Hostels are the product of the migrant labour system and the pass laws. Influx control, of course, no longer applies, having been scrapped in the middle of 1986. But - and this is the point - large parts of the economy are still based on the migrant labour system and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

There are two categories of migrant - foreign migrants and migrants from inside South Africa (including the bantustans).

Analysing the changing patterns of foreign migration in a forthcoming book, *Apartheid's Hostages: Foreign Migrants in South Africa*, University of Natal economist Alan Whiteside makes four points:

- overall numbers have dropped significantly in the last two decades. In the post-war period over half a million Africans

from outside the country were employed in South Africa. By 1973 the figure had fallen to 475 968. In 1982 it reached an all-time low of 279 760. By 1986, the last year for which accurate information is available, there had been a slight recovery: the figure rose to 302 685. According to Whiteside, the downward trend is likely to continue;

- the sexual make-up of the foreign migrant labour workforce has altered considerably. Women accounted for 17,5% of foreign migrants in 1960. In 1970 the figure had dropped to 9,5%. In 1985 it stood at 2,1%. This is unlikely to be reversed;

- there have been major changes in the sectors in which foreign labour is employed. In 1964 58% of foreign migrants were employed in the mining industry. The next biggest employer was the agricultural sector, employing 30% of all foreign workers. By 1970 the numbers employed on the mines had reached 77,4%. In 1986 the figure stood at 81%, the total for agriculture had nose-dived to 4,6%, while the manufacturing sector employed only 3% of foreign migrants. It is expected that the mines will continue to be the greatest users of foreign labour

in the future;

- there have also been major shifts in recruitment patterns, the most important of which are steep declines in recruitment from Malawi and Mozambique.

The mines are the largest employer of foreign migrants, but even there the number of foreigners employed has declined dramatically in recent years. In 1972, for example, 78% of workers employed at mines affiliated to the chamber were foreigners. Today black South Africans make up 60% of the total workforce of 550 000 on chamber mines.

Commentators have isolated several factors to explain this change:

- Malawi's decision to stop recruitment in 1974 following an air crash in which 74 of its nationals were killed. The incident made mine owners edgy about relying too heavily on foreigners;

- fears that the supply of Mozambican workers would be disrupted as a result of the ending of Portuguese colonial rule in Mozambique; and

- a major increase in the gold price in 1973-74 which led to improved pay for miners. Combined with recessionary conditions and the rise of unemployment locally, this meant mining was no longer

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so unattractive to rural - if not urban - black South Africans.

Because this made black labour more expensive, however, the mining houses required black labourers to be more productive so they began to mechanise. This meant blacks would have to perform more semi-skilled and unskilled jobs and the mining houses had their doubts that a labour force consisting mostly of migrants would give the desired result.

The mining houses therefore started promoting the concept of 'career' mining: instead of workers working out their contracts and then returning home, they were given incentives to return to the mines within a period which would not necessitate their being retrained. Against the background of rising unemployment, this policy has drastically reduced the number of newcomers to the industry.

Improved accommodation was also meant to be part and parcel of the promotion of 'career' mining. But this side of the equation remains decidedly unbalanced. Today, the vast majority of blacks on the mines still live in hostels situated on mine property.

In the past the mining houses have justified lack of change by putting the blame on an order issued by the late Hendrik Verwoerd stipulating that no more than 3% of any mine's black workforce would be allowed to live in married accommodation on mines. This rule was eased slightly in 1975, when the government allowed mines to build ac-

commodation for workers who were married and qualified for urban residence in terms of the Black (Urban Areas) Act. Applications by individual mines wanting to go over the 3% limit would also be countenanced. Highly-mechanised collieries and diamond mines could also exceed the limit.

In 1984 4,4% of workers on collieries were living in married accommodation. But by 1986, when the 3% rule was dropped, none of the gold mines had even got anywhere near the ceiling.

It has been claimed that even if the 3% embargo had lifted earlier, influx control laws would have prevented the mines from doing anything much about housing workers on mine property. But a statement made by former Anglo American chairman Harry Oppenheimer puts the issue into its proper perspective. Interviewed in October 1988 on his 80th birthday, Oppenheimer said: 'There are many things I wish I had done. Although we were reasonably in the forefront of improvement in South Africa, I feel the forefront should have been further ahead. We thought we were doing as much as we could, but in fact we were doing as much as was practical. I have one particular regret concerning housing for black miners. We got a long way towards getting them housed on the mines, but Verwoerd stopped us. We then preened ourselves on having made the effort, instead of keeping up the pressure - I think we missed out there'.

Given that migrancy will not end

overnight, what are the mining houses doing to improve the living conditions of their employees?

Of the various mining houses and their various divisions, Anglo American's gold division has been the most active. Its approach to accommodation is based on a study conducted in 1986 which revealed that many migrants were keen to bring their families to live with them on the mines in housing that they would either buy or rent. A significant number, however, opted for continued migration. The latter were mostly foreigners or migrants from within South Africa who had dependents in the bantustans or ties they did not want to abandon.

Armed with this information, the division established a home-ownership scheme. According to gold division spokesman Adrian du Plessis, the home ownership will assist a process of 'orderly urbanisation.' The division assists local communities in securing serviced land - either in extensions to existing townships or completely new towns - and also helps employees secure access to finance for home ownership. Anglo heavily subsidises both deposits for homes (instead of paying a 5% deposit, workers are only required to pay 2,5%) as well as bond repayments - workers pay only 5% interest on 20-year loans.

As for hostels, the division continually reviews standards for the physical condition of hostels, administrative procedures and hostel management. However, it has stressed that financial constraints mean that rapid progress in altering all the hostels to achieve a uniform standard throughout is unlikely.

Notwithstanding the results of the 1986 study, gold division employees have not responded to the home ownership scheme with as much enthusiasm as management anticipated. In April this year only 2 460 of the approximately 200 000 workers in the division were living in their own homes. Of these, the vast majority were skilled workers.

Clearly, although the lowest-paid workers can in theory participate in the home ownership scheme, in practical terms they find the houses too expensive. Du Plessis concedes this point, but adds: 'We do, however, have further proposals to adjust the remuneration structure which will allow even the lowest-paid workers a real and practical choice to live in accommodation they can afford. We are no longer going to impose standards on our employees because it directly affects



Vengeance from the hostels: Kagiso resident Willem Stemper surveys the damage caused by hostel dwellers at the height of the conflict in Reef townships

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affordability.'

Genmin, the second largest mining house, has tackled the accommodation issue from a different perspective. According to Dawid Groenewald, senior human resources manager, the group's policy has been to adopt a 'clean wage' approach and to encourage home ownership off mine property. By 'clean wage' he means an all-inclusive wage as opposed to a system whereby a worker's remuneration consists of a wage component and additional components for food, accommodation and the like.

The 'clean wage' policy was introduced at Genmin head office in October 1987. The target date for all employees to go on to the system is July 1992.

Says Groenewald: 'Instead of subsidising workers, you pay them more so that they can choose where to live. If they want to live in their own homes, they can. If they opt to live in a hostel they also can: they will have to pay for this, though. Look at the total cost to the company. It is cheaper. Building means huge capital expenditure'.

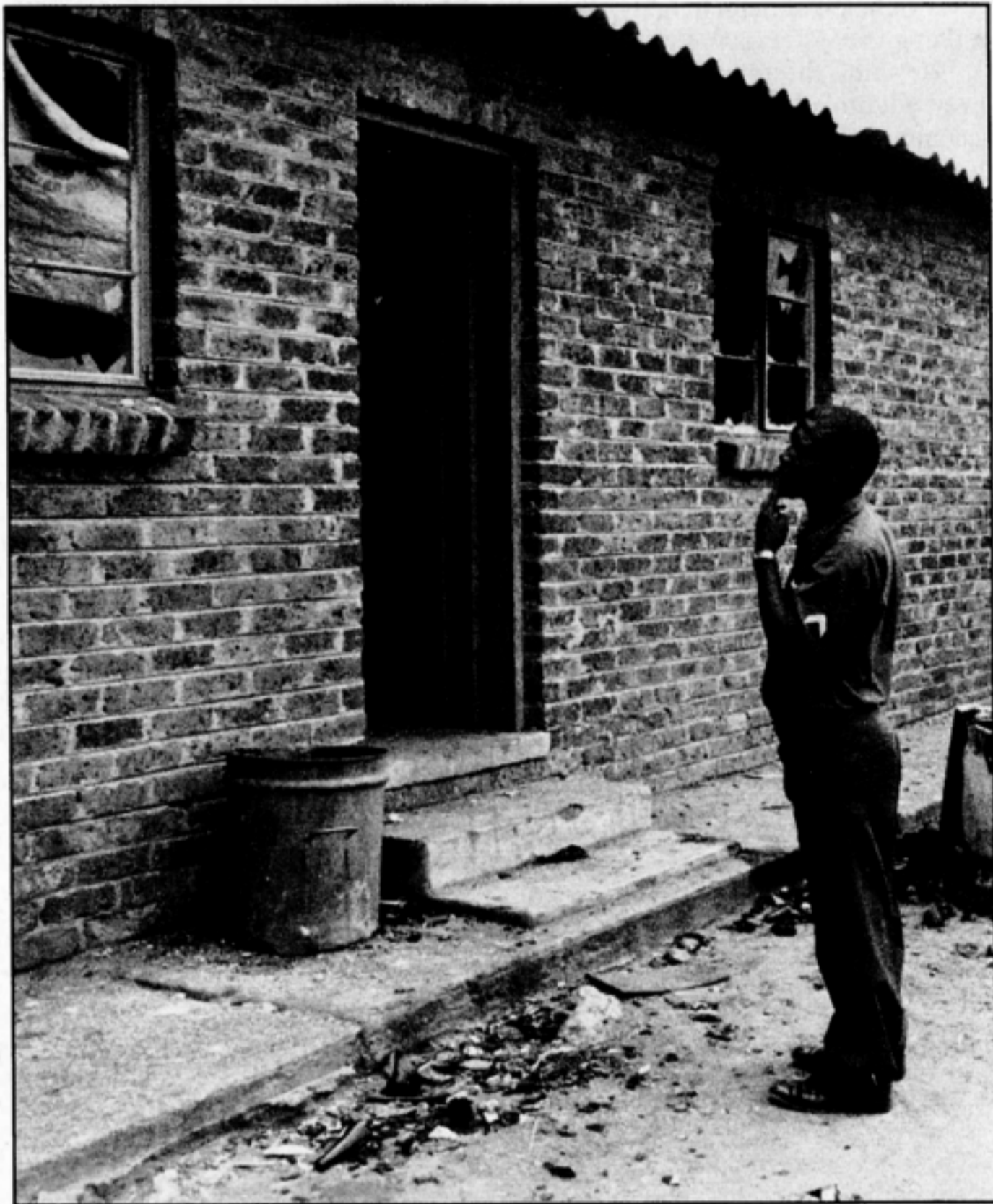
At Khuma near Stilfontein Genmin has given developers the go-ahead with a residential development on mine land adjacent to the existing township. Prices for homes there vary from R30 000 up to R85 000.

Employee response to Genmin's home-ownership scheme has been lukewarm. 'The whole question of housing is a new concept to our workers. Rural ties are stronger than we anticipated. The scheme won't catch on until workers see the advantages of the secondary housing market', says Groenewald.

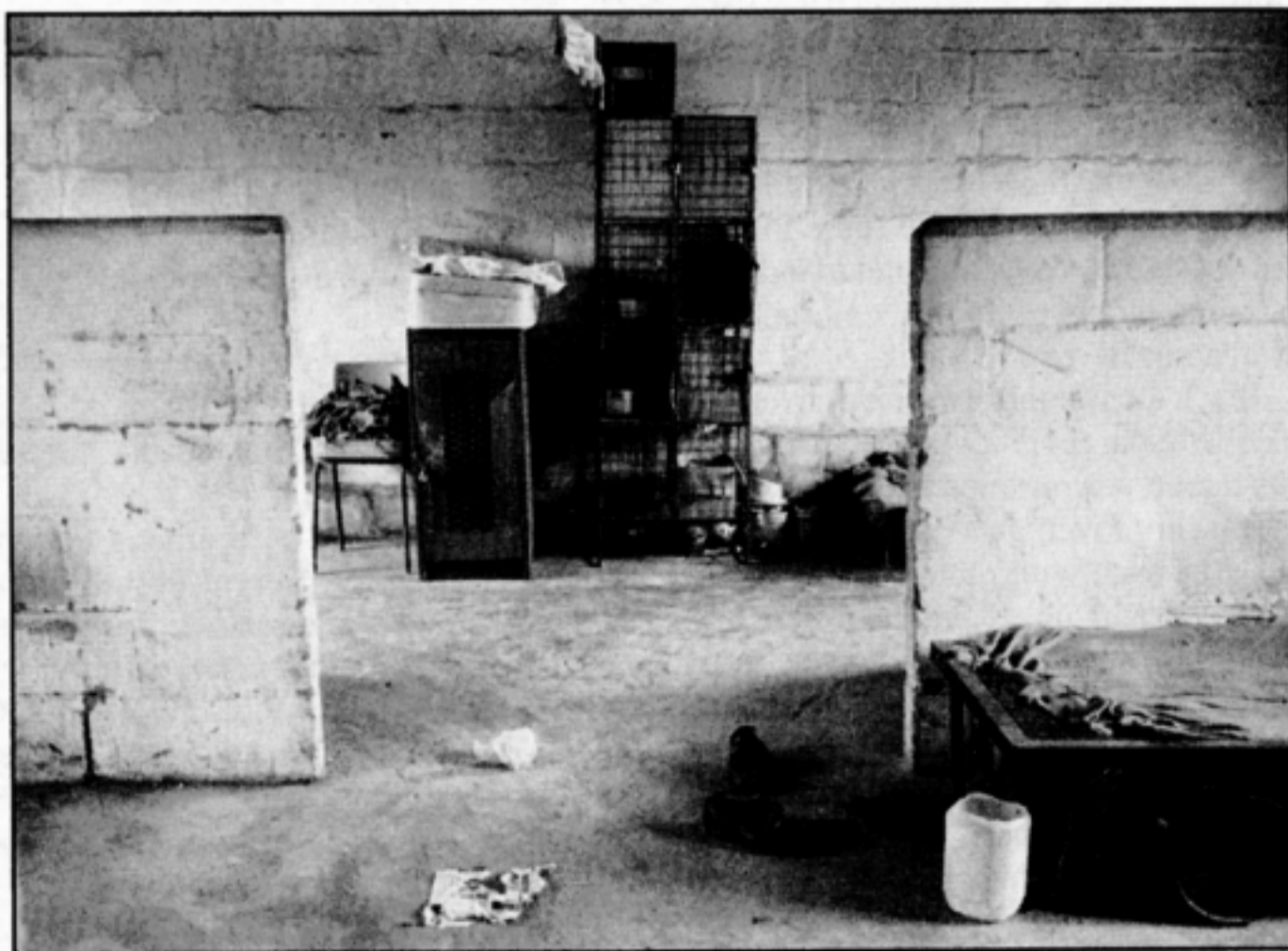
As with Anglo's gold division scheme, however, not all Genmin employees will earn enough to participate in the home-ownership scheme. Like Anglo, Groenewald says Genmin is looking at the SA Housing Trust to supply the solution for lower-paid workers.

The schemes described above have been instituted with little, if any, consultation with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). What does the union make of them? According to NUM spokesman Jerry Majatladi, the union's policy on migrant labour is continually evolving. Nevertheless, he did make some observations.

'You cannot address ending migrant labour without addressing the question of housing. Therefore, we say that in the long run the compound system should be speedily dismantled as it constitutes a



The hostel he once called home: a burnt-out hostel in Ackerville, Witbank, after clashes between hostel-dwellers and township residents



Life on the inside: a hostel 'room' in New Canada, Soweto

The Soweto Council says there are 9 000 empty bedspaces in its hostels. Visit the hostels, however, and no empty beds will be found

People are living in the hostels without paying and the council is either unaware of this or reluctant or incapable of doing anything to change the situation.

According to Petros Mashishi, president of Cosatu's South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu), all the municipalities make use of migrant labour because black urbanites have traditionally regarded their jobs as work fit only for uneducated people. Hostel conditions for these workers vary enormously, he says.

The Johannesburg City Council's hostels, for example, have been significantly upgraded. Many other municipal worker hostels are, however, 'not such nice places', says Mashishi.

Conditions in company-owned hostels also vary enormously. Generally speaking, the smaller the company the worse the conditions.

According to worker housing consultant Ian Bernhardt, many major corporations such as Sasol, Iscor, Sentrachem and AECI have made in-principle decisions to abandon the use of migrant labour. In practical terms, however, this is not always possible as it is the workers themselves who wish to continue migrating.

There are a multitude of reasons for this. As with the miners, some have

dependents beyond their immediate nuclear family who they cannot desert. Others don't want their children to be exposed to evils of township life. Yet others are concerned that the education standards in the townships are inadequate. Some simply fear falling victim to township violence. The companies will have to cater to these workers' needs. But they are not recruiting any new migrant labour. In future they will recruit local labour.

If Bernhardt is right, it is quite conceivable that 'internal' migrancy for non-mining companies will end in anything from 10 to 15 years. Mashishi is convinced that the same will apply regarding migrant municipal workers because the pressure for jobs in the cities will be so great.

What about the mines? Will there ever come a time that they won't use migrant labour? Although present recruitment patterns will almost certainly change, this seems less likely. At present foreign migrants tend to be more skilled than 'internal' migrants. With time, however, this profile will change. That will probably result in a reduction in the recruitment of foreigners. Nevertheless, migration from Lesotho seems set to continue indefinitely. The same is probably true of Mozambique.

As for 'internal' migrancy, the industry has had little success in recruiting from the urban areas or urban concentrations near mines. If this trend persists, 'internal' migrancy will continue. But this also depends on what kind of land reforms are introduced in the future and whether attempts at decentralisation will be successful.

The wild card in the pack is Aids. If the killer disease assumes the proportions that have been prophesied, all these predictions will be wide of the mark. •

Three into one might go

REELING from deep rifts amongst its membership sparked by the Reef violence, Cosatu's National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) is working on an ambitious scheme to scrap single-sex migrant worker hostels in urban areas and replace them with housing units that are integrated with the communities around them.

No details were available at the time WIP went to press. But in broad terms the scheme calls for Cosatu, Jan Steyn's Independent Development Trust and the state to each contribute R1-billion to bankroll the endeavour. It is envisaged that the financing would be guaranteed by a consortium of financial institutions, possibly under the SA Perm.

Numsa has undertaken to bear the major responsibility for raising Cosatu's share with funds from the metal industry's pension and provident funds. •

gross violation of human rights,' he told WIP.

'We think the foundation for doing away with this lies in finding alternate accommodation which will have to be in the form of family units. But people should not be forced to own these units, they must be able to rent them just as white miners do. Another alternative we see is that the state should take the responsibility and work together with the mine owners to build mine villages or suburbs with decent houses with rentals that black mineworkers can pay easily'.

Majatladi is dismissive of Anglo's gold division scheme. 'Miners are not interested in it because the houses are beyond their means', he says. He is equally unimpressed by Genmin's 'clean wage' philosophy. 'Normally, when we negotiate wages at the chamber, the mine bosses tell us they pay for accommodation and food and that is the equivalent of an extra R200. Genmin now wants to make this a cash payment. But it does not mean workers get anything extra. All that happens is that Genmin washes its hands of any responsibility for housing and feeding workers'.

'Internal' migrancy is not restricted to the mining industry alone. Countless companies still employ 'internal' migrants, as do many municipalities.

There are three options for hostel accommodation for 'internal' migrants:

- hostels operated by black local authorities;
- hostels catering for municipal workers; or
- company-owned hostels.

It is the hostels run by the black local authorities that have been at the centre of the Reef violence. Within these hostels bed spaces may be rented out to individual migrants, but it is also common for companies to reserve blocks of beds.

Black local authorities have never had adequate sources of revenue. On its own, this factor has militated against any significant improvements to the hostels they run. But what with rent boycotts in the Transvaal and the general breakdown of local government in the townships, conditions in many hostels have deteriorated significantly and there is little, if any, control. For example, according to the Soweto City Council, there are 9 000 empty bedspaces in its hostels. Visit the hostels, however, and no empty beds will be found.

What can we conclude from this?

Post-apartheid health policies

There is an urgent need for wide debate on the formulation of a clause in the ANC's constitutional guidelines on health and health care for all.

Debate around the constitutional guidelines has tended to focus on the more obvious aspects of a post-apartheid South Africa, such as the future form of government and the economy. The ANC itself has organised local, regional and national workshops to discuss these areas. Cosatu has organised a worker charter campaign to address the issue of what right and protection workers should have in a post-apartheid South Africa.

But there is a relative silence on the question of health and health care, a matter of concern to all.

At a South African Health Workers' Congress (Sahwco) conference in 1989 at which the ANC participated through a telephonic link-up, ANC National Executive Committee member Pallo Jordan was questioned about this omission from the guidelines.

Jordan, a member of the ANC committee which drafted the guidelines, threw the ball back into Sahwco's court. He replied that the responsibility for developing such a clause was not that of the ANC alone. All democratic forces concerned with health care and social services had to take on this task.

Sahwco responded to this challenge by presenting for public debate their argument for such a clause. In a booklet called *Health and the Constitutional Guidelines for a democratic South Africa*, the organisation argues that such a clause should be formulated now.

Since its production, the booklet has begun to initiate debate. It was received with great interest by the ANC, which is due to release a second draft set of constitutional guidelines for discussion. This second draft is likely to include a clause on health and health care. In addi-

tion, the ANC has also released a discussion document on health policy.

The demands on health in the Freedom Charter and those that have been brought forward by more recent health campaigns should guide thinking in the formulation of health clause for the new South African constitution, says Sahwco.

It argues that the health clause should include the principles upon which health care in a post-apartheid South Africa would be based. From these principles, would flow a particular health policy and health strategy to give practical effect to the principles and policy.

From the Freedom Charter and recent health campaigns, Sahwco draws out the following principles:

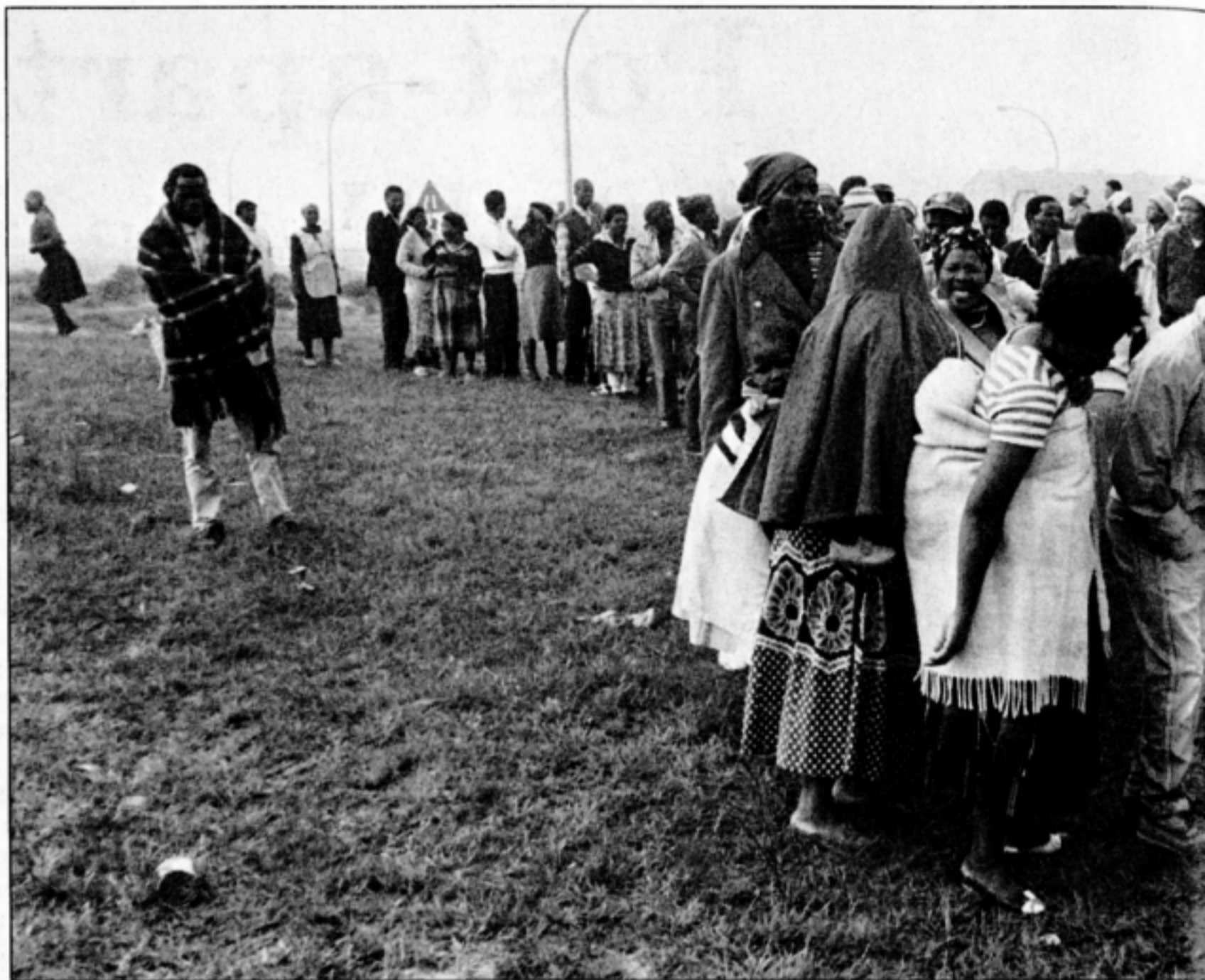
- health care is a basic human right;
- provision of health care is the responsibility of the state;
- health care must be comprehensive;
- the health of workers must be protected;
- there must be commitment to preventive and primary health care;
- there must be mass participation and consultation on health care and health issues;
- privatisation of health care should end;
- health services should be centrally planned and democratically controlled under a national health service;
- health care must be free, and;
- there must be equal and accessible health care for all.

Similar principles are likely to emerge from continuing campaigns around health, such as the Health Charter Campaign, adopted at the Conference for a Democratic Future in 1989.

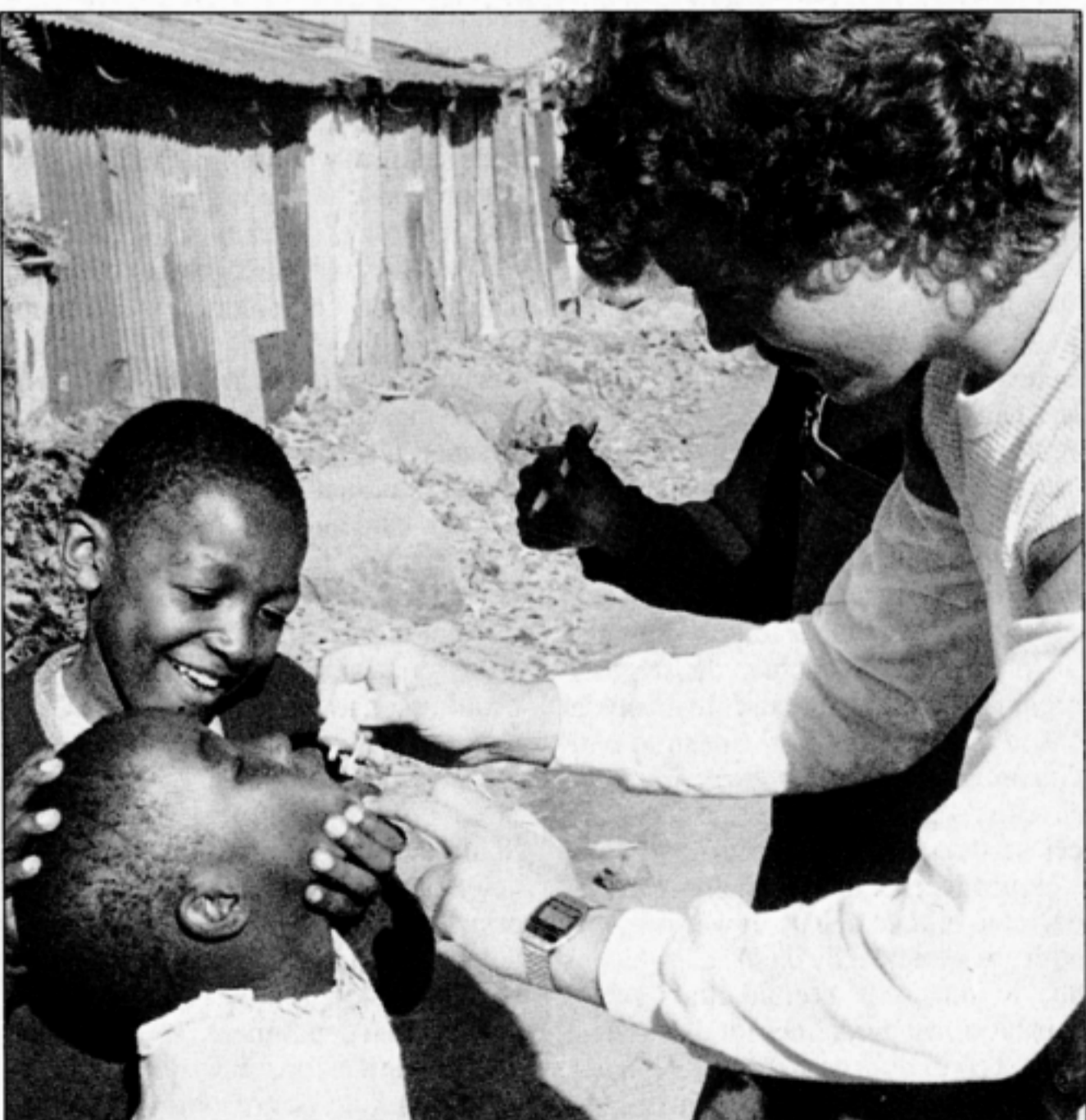
Given the present gross imbalances in South Africa's health care system, the new constitution must at least contain the principle of equal health care, argues Sahwco. Equal health care can only really be possible if there is a single, non-racial health department.

Although a constitution is unable to address the question of removing present

The right to decent health care is enshrined in the Freedom Charter — but, surprisingly, the question of health services is absent from the ANC's constitutional guidelines. The SA Health Workers' Congress is fighting to put that right, according to a WIP Correspondent



Health care for all .. A mobile clinic in Crossroads, Cape Town (right) and an immunisation campaign in Alexandra (below)



obstacles to equal health care, it must commit the new government to this principle. It might also be useful, says Sahwco, for the new constitution to provide for the role of mass grassroots health structures in a future health system.

Upon examination of how health is dealt with in the constitutions of other countries, Sahwco found that of the 50 countries they researched, there were four basic ways in which health was tackled:

- there were those countries which made no reference to health or health care at all. Examples here included South Africa, Australia and Finland;
- in some constitutions health care was set out as a right among other health principles and there was a guiding principle for social and economic policy. Sweden, Spain and Guinea-Bissau fall into this category;
- some constitutions went beyond a statement of health principles and included aspects of health policy such as financing and the structure of health care. Nicaragua, Cuba and Portugal are examples of this;
- health care was also used as a means of social control in El Salvador, it was found.

Although the impact of constitutional



reference to health and health care on the actual health system yet remains to be examined, Sahwco emphasises that it is beyond doubt that a good constitutional clause on health can be a basis of sound health policy.

Although health is not seen as a priority area among most mass organisations in South Africa, the issue of health and health care has been receiving more attention in recent years.

In the wake of the 1986 Kinross mining disaster, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) focussed attention on health and safety at the workplace. Under the slogan 'Organise Or Die', the union began a campaign to raise awareness of health hazards on the mines and how these could be dealt with. They drew up a safety code and demanded the right to safety stewards and independent union investigations when accident occurred.

Outside the workplace, long-standing grievances about the availability of health care were also being voiced more consistently and determinedly.

In 1988, more than 25 000 people in Natal signed a petition calling for free health care. This was in response to a

decision by the Natal Provincial Administration to increase hospital fees. For the first time, pensioners, disabled people and the unemployed were expected to pay for health care.

The campaign against the increases also raised demands for a national health service, decentralisation of health services and equal health care for all

The defiance campaign of 1989 began with the campaign to desegregate hospitals. Thousands of black patients presented themselves at white hospitals with a clear demand: 'Open all hospitals to all people!'

In March 1990, Johannesburg health workers marched to the JG Strydom Hospital, renamed it the Yusuf Dadoo Memorial Hospital (after the South African Communist Party veteran who died in 1976) and handed a petition to the hospital superintendent.

The petition called for, among others:

- a unitary health service, centrally planned and democratically controlled, adequate and accessible to all;
- immediate suspension of own and general affairs legislation applying to health services and immediate desegregation of all health facilities;
- an end to privatisation as a way to solve the health care crisis, since this would place such care further beyond the reach of those who needed it most;
- a moratorium on all hospital tariffs until an in-depth investigation into these had been concluded;
- any and all considerations of proposed amendments to health legislation be done in consultation with democratic and progressive structures that exist outside the state fold.

A march by Durban health workers in April had similar demands.

Some of these demands have been nurtured by the people of South Africa for more than 35 years. Enshrined in the Freedom Charter is the vision that the health system in a non-racial, democratic, unitary South Africa will have:

- 'sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers', and;
- 'a preventive health system run by the state. Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all with special care for all mothers and young children. The aged, the orphans and the sick shall be cared for by the state. Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all'.

Today, the struggle for these rights continues, as does the struggle to have them constitutionally guaranteed. •

Health for all ... why it isn't just a pipe dream

South Africa has adequate resources to provide free and comprehensive health care for the entire population, according to research by community health experts.

This rebuttal of conventional wisdom on health resources has been made by Dr Nicky Padayachee of the Department of Community Health at the University of the Witwatersrand, also a member of the South African Health Workers' Congress (Sahwco).

His assertion is based on research carried out by both himself and Dr Tim Wilson of the Alexandra Clinic on the provision of health care for all in the Johannesburg area. Extrapolating from this research, Padayachee has shown that South Africa has more than the required number of hospital beds, health personnel as well as money, to provide health for all immediately.

Padayachee cautions that the figures he uses might not be absolutely accurate, because such accuracy would need access to official government documents. But he believes experience in the public health sector and checks for consistency ensure his is a fair reflection of what is possible with existing resources.

Padayachee starts from the following assumptions:

- there will in future be a unitary health system - all health workers will work under a single national department of health;
- the national health system (NHS) will be based on primary health care;
- the NHS will promote equity and all citizens will have equal rights to the best health care the country can provide;



Health for all: One of the major challenges is to make health care affordable

- health care will be accessible and there will be points of first contact close to where people live and work;
- health services will be affordable to all and no one will be denied health care simply because of not being able to pay for it;
- the NHS will promote community participation and fundamental to its approach will be decentralisation of day-to-day decision-making;
- the NHS will be based on existing resources in the health sector, although there will be the need for affirmative action and redistribution of resources to primary health care;
- the NHS will encourage innovative management styles and the maximum use of resources as well as the development of all types of health workers to achieve their full potential; and
- the NHS' s aims will take precedence over that of development of the private sector and the teaching institute.

On these assumptions, Padayachee believes the backbone of the NHS would

All that is needed is to bring the public facilities under one authority, reallocate some staff, recruit some more full-time or part-time doctors and reorganise the way resources are used

be a network of community health centres (CHU). If the primary health care approach were seriously applied, the community health centres and those that control them would have a major say in what hospitals and medical schools provide and how they do so.

Many of South Africa's present health

facilities are already close to where people live, fully staffed, owned by the government and waiting to be used properly. Such facilities would be the building blocks for the future national health service.

According to Padayachee, the distribution of community health centres throughout South Africa and their sizes would vary depending on what was available, the local population density, ease of transport and the distance from other facilities.

In general, however, there should be at least some health facility for every 25 000 people and a bigger facility (plus two or three satellites) for every community of 200 000 people. In South Africa about 150 community health centres were needed and about 450-600 smaller neighbourhood clinics. At present there are about 2 424 such community health centres and neighbourhood clinics in the country.

Community health centres and neighbourhood clinics would both need to run

basic outreach, outpatient and extension services.

Outreach services would include the immunisation of children, environmental health and control of toxic hazards, health education, sexual health education, health and welfare services for the elderly, nutritional surveillance and support and home visits to identify those most in need of health care.

Outpatient services would include ante- and post-natal care, family planning, pregnancy testing and diagnosis, and management of common acute and chronic illnesses in children and adults, child abuse and sexually transmitted diseases, including Aids.

Extension services would include health related teaching and research and support for other groups and organisations in the community.

These services, claims Padayachee, can be provided immediately to every-

body in South Africa from existing facilities, using the existing staff and within the budgets of existing services. All that is needed is to bring the public facilities under one authority, reallocate some staff, recruit some more full-time or part-time doctors and reorganise the way resources are used.

Training of staff will be very important because the changes proposed by Padayachee would depend to a large extent on changes in the attitudes of health workers and the communities they serve. However, he believes that with clear goals and political support, the task is not impossible.

In certain areas, such as Johannesburg, where an adequate structure already exists, an embargo would have to be placed on extension and development of these until rural areas with inadequate services have developed to a similar level.

Larger community health centres could be used to provide more cost-effective services if they included in their range of services a maternity delivery unit and a 24-hour casualty service.

Of the current community health centres, only the Alexandra Health Centre has a full casualty and maternity service. Adding these to other CHCs would take the pressure off hospitals. Although 24-hour services are expensive, compared to other primary health care services, they can be cheaper than most hospital costs.

Quoting the Alexandra Health Centre, Padayachee showed that 30 000 people used the centre in 1989 at a cost of R50 per person - cheaper than the cost per patient at any of the teaching hospitals and similar to the cost per outpatient at the Transvaal Provincial Administration clinic in Soweto.

Presently, he said, South Africa spent about R200 per person per year for health care. To provide a comprehensive 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service to the whole population, only 25% of the present health budget would be required.

There were enough hospital beds - 4,8 beds per 100 000 people - provided these were complemented with an adequate and comprehensive national primary health care service, health services were desegregated and the proper class of hospital bed ratio was established.

There were also already sufficient skilled health workers employed in the public primary health care sector. For every 10 000 people in South Africa there are at present a total of 73,7 health professionals. These include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists and paramedics. The breakdown is as follows:

Doctors	7,8
Dentists	1,3
Pharmacists	2,8
Paramedics	7,7
Nurses	54,0
Total	73,7

Padayachee found that in developing countries there were about 9,9 health professionals for every 10 000 people and in developed countries there were 102. The present number of health professionals compares favourably with these figures.

If the joint staff of the universities and the provinces working at teaching hospitals in South Africa were required to commit 10% of their present staff time to providing services and teaching at community health centres, 150 community health centres would be fully staffed. •

Moving towards a primary health care policy



The ANC discussion paper on health says present conditions are a threat to the health of the majority of the people in South Africa.

It suggests a primary health care approach, as adopted by the World Health Organisation and the United Nations Children's Fund, should guide the development of health policy.

The underlying principles of this approach are:

- Health is a basic human right. In particular, the right to free health care should be part of a future constitution and bill of rights and it should be legally enforceable;
- there should be political commitment to improve the quality of life for all South Africans, especially those who have been denied political power and the fruits of their labour; and
- resources should preferentially be allocated to promote health care of the most vulnerable sections of the community.

The goals that should guide health policy in a post-apartheid South Africa are:

- The promotion of good health;
- the creation of a healthy living and working environment
- social and economic development;
- provision of adequate living conditions, including the provision of housing, clean water, sanitation and adequate public services;
- healthy working conditions;
- the creation of a comprehensive national health service that will be unified and non-racial, accessible and affordable, give priority to those most in need, and focus on removing and controlling the major diseases, such as malnutrition, tuberculosis, measles, polio and AIDS.

From crisis to catastrophe in the classroom

Reviewing developments in black education over the past year, Janet Heard argues that 'crisis' could shortly become 'catastrophe' unless democratic organisations intervene decisively

WHILE 1990 has been marked by some normalisation in the political arena, the crisis in education has deepened. Pressure is mounting for education to be given its due priority - whatever the demands of the negotiating process.

Organisations are warning that unless urgent interventions are made to halt the breakdown in the learning process, which this year has been marked by a complete breakdown in authority at schools and growing confusion among pupils, the reference to 'crisis' will be euphemistic. It will be more appropriate to talk of 'catastrophe'.

The deterioration has occurred despite efforts by the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) and its sectoral organisations. They have sought to restore a culture of learning into the school community - while at the same time intensifying pressure on the state.

Exam results are one way in which the extent of the crisis can be gauged. Alarm bells rang at the end of last year after the announcement that only 42 percent of matric pupils at DET schools (excluding the bantustans) passed. Hot on the heels of the announcement came reports of widespread irregularities in the marking of exam scripts.

There is general agreement that there is no chance that pupils who are sitting at the moment for the final year exams - which end on November 29 - will improve on or even meet last year's desperately low pass rate.

The realistically gloomy forecast for matric exam results has served to worsen the morale of pupils already battling to motivate themselves under a discredited and inefficient system. And their efforts are not helped by an environment which is not conducive to effective learning.

The DET was pressured into postponing the end of year exams, and has agreed that pupils who obtain at least a 20 percent pass can write supplementary exams early next year.

A key short-term strategy of the NECC is to get as many pupils as possible through the year in order to prevent even worse conditions at schools next year. It has been pushing for a lowering of the minimum pass required to write supplementary exams.

The effects of year after year of 'bantu education' cannot be concealed when black pupils' exam results are compared with their white counterparts. In the case of whites, all but 2 percent of pupils passed.

However, a crisis is developing in the white education department as well, though it is the exact reverse of that occurring in black schools. White schools have too many resources and declining pupil enrolment. Last year nine white Transvaal schools were forced to close down and there were 177 225 vacancies countrywide.

At DET schools, there was an official shortage of 60 343 primary school places and 99 506 secondary school places, and a pupil-teacher ratio of 54:1, compared to a ratio of 20:1 in white schools. In the bantustans, the conditions are more critical.

The root causes of the continuing education crisis and the steps necessary to begin transforming the system have been stated over and over again and will not be repeated here.

However, this year, there has been a heightened awareness that, in order to alleviate the present chaos which a future government will inherit, pupils should return to schools, organise themselves and understand the important role that education will play in the shaping of a future economic and political policy.

A number of socio-economic crises have weakened the call to attend classes this year. For instance, the violence in Natal is estimated to have displaced about 500 000 pupils. Moreover, the recent power and water cuts in townships affected by service charge boycotts have brought education to a standstill.



A number of other developments added to the general crisis this year. Heightened political expectations comprise one set. Another is an increased sense of urgency among pupils - and in a significant move this year, among teachers too.

The success of the back-to-school campaign at the start of this year encouraged the return of large numbers of pupils who had been forced to discontinue their education. This placed an added burden on overworked and underpaid teachers, and exacerbated overcrowding.

The stubborn failure of the DET, its local bureaucrats and the bantustan education departments to provide additional facilities and a sympathetic ear to pupil and teacher grievances frustrated efforts to bring some semblance of stability to the learning process.

The unbanning of organisations in February enabled structures to begin rebuilding and developing a more open, mass-based style. But many of these structures lack resources, and have battled to build strong and accountable leaderships.

Problems which have arisen centre on a lack of consultation between leadership and members, a lack of discipline among the youth, and a lack of communication between local and national structures.

Moreover, weak organisation and deteriorating social conditions in the townships have resulted in an alarming increase in gangsterism, rape, gambling, intimidation and absenteeism.

The year has seen some change in direction and tactics within some organisations. If continued, these may yield positive results in the long term.

When the NECC was still banned at the end of 1989, it changed its name from 'crisis' committee to 'co-ordinating' committee. This signified, among others, an intention to draw up alternatives to the present system. One such project has involved setting up a committee to investigate a future education policy for South Africa.

Student power: an education crisis meeting in Alexandra township at the beginning of what has been a turbulent year for students, teachers and parents alike

The NECC has also decided that it will not disband and merge with the ANC. Instead, it will remain an independent non-party political organisation. This, it believes, will better equip it to continue articulating the interests of the widest possible range of people concerned about education.

The year also saw attempts by the NECC and affiliates to hold talks with government department officials. At the same time, defiant actions - one of the most dramatic being the hunger strike by Soweto parents during a sit-in at the DET offices in Johannesburg - continued.

The DET undertook to supply much-needed textbooks, and Education and Development Aid Minister Stoffel van der Merwe talked of forming an 'education compact' involving all interest groups including parents, pupils and teachers.

These undertakings have, in the view of many, proved to be either 'half-truths' or empty promises. For its part, the DET merely sought to shift responsibility for its failure to create conditions conducive

to learning on to popular organisations, pupils and teachers. It was they, DET alleged, who were responsible for the deepening crisis in education.

A relatively new development this year has been the assertion of sectional interests within black education. One of the more significant was the month-long Transvaal teachers' strike, which posed a strong challenge to the system. It marked a growth in militancy in teacher organisation, which had previously been reluctant to directly engage its employer, the state.

As such, it was one factor stimulating the establishment of the giant South African Democratic Teachers' Union in October.

However, the strike was regional and sporadic, and it came at the height of the back-to school campaign. The NECC, representing teachers, pupils and anxious parents, initially backed the chalks-down. But conflict arose when the strike showed no signs of coming to an end and ultimately brought education to a stand-

still for a month.

The lengthy duration of the strike owed much to the intransigence of the state and a lack of unity and strong leadership among teachers.

Nick Taylor of Wits University's Education Policy Unit argues that while sectional actions by groupings in education will probably prove to have been detrimental to matric results this year, these conflicting interests could yet yield positive long-term results.

His view is that only once all groupings have articulated their interests and strengthened their organisational structures will it be possible to sit down to negotiate a future for education.

There has been criticism of the ANC for failing to tackle the education crisis head-on this year. The ANC has been wrapped up this year with adapting to legality inside South Africa, with building structures and with broader issues. But there have recently been signs that it has begun to address the crisis in education. Its appointment of an education advisory committee around Sached director John Samuel, who is due to become ANC head of education in the new year, should equip it to play a more active role.

The NECC is mounting a number of short-term interventions to prevent the complete collapse of learning during the transition process, and one of its primary goals is to re-establish a learning ethos in pupils.

NECC information officer Mel Holland summed up the difficulty of the task ahead. She explained the NECC was not trying to give the present system credibility by encouraging learning, but was trying to make learning a credible activity.

One of the ways to achieve this was to build legitimate and accountable structures such as PTAs and SRCs.

As 1990 closes, it is clear that education is verging on collapse and catastrophe. If efforts begun this year are intensified - such as the back-to-school campaign, the development of teacher and pupil organisations, the re-establishment of a culture of learning, the building of credible structures and the debate over a future education policy - there is a glimmer of hope that the crisis will not create absolutely impossible administrative and political problems for any future democratic government.

But this will require a concentrated national effort by all democratic organisations. •

Learning how to cook the books

SINCE the beginning of 1988 three reports have been released detailing widespread irregularities, dishonesty, nepotism and corruption within the Department of Education and Training. All three reports have come from the Van Den Heever commission, under Justice Leonora van den Heever.

The commission first investigated the DET's requisition of a R4,8-million computer video system through Learning Technologies. One of the main figures was Willem Fourie, son of then-DET director general Braam Fourie, and programme manager for Learning Technologies.

The commission heard that the DET had, without calling for tenders, paid millions of rands to the company. The commission found that Fourie senior was guilty of irregular conduct. In 1989 the report was tabled in parliament: acting director-general Dirk Meiring was axed and 11 officials were suspended. Since Fourie had already retired, he escaped departmental action.

In the second report, the commission outlined printing projects undertaken by DET deputy director-general Jaap Strydom's son, Thinus Strydom, who had a print company called Forma Publications.

In December 1989 the commission reported claims that the DET was defrauded of millions of rands by public servants belonging to a secret section known as Gemkom. Although no figures were given, a witness testified that R10-million could be the value of the contracts obtained by Gemkom. Seven officials were named as helping Thinus Strydom secure contracts for printing.

Following the release of the third report this year, it was announced that criminal charges could be brought against DET officials after the revelation that irregularities and dishonesty were the 'order of the day' in the running of youth camps.

Johannesburg DET regional director Peet Struwig, notorious for his hard-line approach to progressive organisations, was transferred to Pretoria head office immediately after possibly being implicated in the theft of money from private funds.

The commission named six other officials and former officials who could be guilty of misconduct, and found that control of financial matters had been particularly inept.



Teachers' unity rally, Durban, May 1990: five months later, South African teachers were to see the launch of the first united teachers' federation

The union has arrived...

... the education arena will never be the same again!

These are the words of one of the 1 500 delegates who converged in Johannesburg on 6 & 7 October to launch the South African Democratic Teachers' Union.

The optimistic and politically assertive mood which characterised the conference is reflected in the organisational structure, resolutions and strategies adopted at the launch of the new union.

Mandy Sanger reports

The structure adopted by the new teachers' union differs significantly from the usually bureaucratic and top-heavy structures of professional bodies. From the structure of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) it is clear that, in addition to a commitment to internal democracy, accountability, membership control and participation - principles absent from most professional bodies - the new teachers' union is gearing itself for a militant defence of its members' interests.

Like any other union SADTU has the sites in which union members gather - in this case the schools - as the basic units of the organisation.

Unlike professional organisations where there is an individual approach to problems, SADTU proposes a collective way of resolving issues which affect teachers. Instead of approaching the principal who then contacts the circuit office, a teacher who does not receive a cheque or who has any other grievance will have to lodge his/her complaint with the rep-

resentatives of the teachers, called the SADTU school committee - a structure that resembles a factory shop-steward committee. This style of organising teachers is new in this country. It shows that SADTU views itself as a trade union rather than a professional body.

This style of organising is not only reflected in the organisational strategies and structure of the new union, but also emerges in the resolutions adopted at the launch and in the campaigns SADTU proposes to take up. The conference proposed as part of SADTU's programme of action that the union immediately fights for 'recognition from the Minister of National Education as the only teachers' union representing teachers on a non-racial, national basis'. As a recognised union SADTU sees its role as formulating and negotiating a single and acceptable contract for all teachers.

The conference also decided to campaign for a 'living wage for all educators in South Africa'. This campaign is seen as being linked to the struggle against the temporary status of many teachers. The

• The author would like to thank the many people who generously contributed to this article

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As part of its programme of action, the union resolved 'to organise a campaign for a Teachers' Bill of Rights and Teachers' Charter'.

In addition to the call for one education department, SADTU committed itself to developing curricula that 'serve the needs of the people'. The conference noted that, as with the concept of people's education, the development of such a curriculum is not the prerogative of teachers, but must involve parents, students and community organisations. As its contribution to attempts to resolve the education crisis, SADTU decided to convene a conference to address the chaos in our schools and in the present education system.

From the mood at the conference and in terms of the organising approach adopted by SADTU, it is clear that there has been an intense radicalisation and politicisation of teachers in the last few months. Although not politically aligned, SADTU's preparedness to take political positions is attested by the resolutions adopted at the launch conference. The strata known for its political conservatism is beginning to assert itself. The confidence shown at the conference is a result of the unity that has been built over the past few months. It is the culmination of the bitter struggles fought by teachers.

But this path to unity within the teachers sector has not been an easy one. It has been long, thorny and acrimonious.

Given the context of organisation-building which we have witnessed in the last two decades, the coming together of 12 teacher organisations with a collective membership of 100 000 - 150 000 may be seen by those unfamiliar with the history of teacher organisations in this country as just another example of dif-

ferent organisations uniting to form a new body.

The history of teacher organisations - characterised by divisions, factionalism and provincialism - vividly illustrates the significance and special nature of the formation of SADTU.

No other sector has been as divided as the teaching sector. The divisions in South African society and the racially fragmented education system have led to the existence of various federal, provincial, ethnic and local teacher organisations. Before the launch of SADTU more than 30 teacher organisations existed in this country. Most of these were provincial or racially specific organisations linked up in a federalist manner with ethnic bodies such as the African Teachers' Association of South Africa (Atasa); the 'coloured' United Teachers' Association of South Africa (Utasa); the 'Indian' Teachers' Association of South Africa (TASA) and the 'whites only' Teachers Federal Council (TFC).

What is more striking however is the fact that since time immemorial there has been talk about the need for teacher unity. The more splits occurred, the more the talk of teacher unity intensified. Whenever this much-talked-about unity happened however, it never went beyond a paper agreement or a consultative relationship amongst the leaders of the different organisations. The 'deals' at the top fell far short of transcending the racial categorisation of teacher organisations in this country.

The establishment of SADTU is a culmination of a long process which has its origins in the April 1988 conference in Harare hosted by an international association of teacher organisations, the World Confederation of Organised Teaching Profession (WCOTP) and the teacher's wing of the African Continental Trade Union Centre (Oattu) - the All-African Teachers' Organisation (AATO). Also present at the meeting were South African organisations such as Cosatu, the ANC and Sactu. It has taken more than two years for these organisations to implement the conference recommendation of establishing a single, united teachers' union to which they had committed themselves.

This has not been an easy task. There have been times when the prospect of bringing the different teachers' organisations together have seemed very bleak. There have been many fights, stoppages and breakdowns along the way. As re-

campaign for permanent status and job security is part of a broader 'jobs for all' campaign. Consistent with the resolve to struggle for jobs for all teachers, the new National Executive Committee (NEC) was given a mandate to ensure 'that all newly qualified teachers be given posts in 1991'.

But more important in SADTU's attempts to take up the bread and butter issues which affect teachers is the resolution on women teachers. The launch conference demanded an end to discrimination of women teachers, demanding:

- immediate full parity in salaries between men and women;
- immediate full maternity benefits for all women teachers; and
- immediate fully paid accouchement leave for all women teachers.

The resolution did not only focus on the discrimination women are subjected to in the teaching profession, but also raised the need for an end to sexual harassment and victimisation within the organisation. The conference decided to encourage the full participation of women teachers in SADTU structures and to embark on an affirmative programme to ensure such participation. It was also decided to convene a conference that will focus on the plight of women teachers.

It would have been ironical had the conference been silent on political issues such as the need for one education department; the need for a free, equal, democratic and non-racial system, etc. Teachers, located in a politically charged arena, have two options: either they support the people or the ruling class. Clearly SADTU has chosen to be with the people.

The first myth that SADTU has attempted to expose is the demand by the authorities that teachers be politically inactive. In its conference the union has resolved that '...every teacher must have the right to be informed and politically active and to express his/her personal opinions in public without fear of victimisation'. This is a direct challenge to the 'code of conduct' which the education authorities demand teachers stick to. The teachers are not only adding their voice to the call for the right to be politically active without fear of victimisation, but are asserting that they must not be excluded from the political processes that will emerge from the present talks about talks between the ANC and the state.

cently as April this year one of the teachers organisations, the Western Cape Teachers' Union (Wectu) which has now gone into SADTU wrote in its newsletter: 'Sadly, the unity talks having been in process for more than two years, have not brought us closer to the formation of a single organisation. Some participants in the talks are determined not to be part of a single, non-racial organisation'.

In this newsletter Wectu went as far as attacking the two participants in the unity talks - Utasa and Atasa - and posed Wectu as the vehicle for teacher organisation in the Western Cape: 'The reluctance of Utasa and Atasa make it more imperative for progressive teachers to be organised into Wectu'.

Even on the eve of the launch sharp divisions emerged which meant that four of the organisations - the Transvaal United African Teachers' Association (Tuata); the 'whites only' Transvaal Teachers' Association (TTA); the Natal Teachers' Union (Natu) and the 'whites only' Natal Teachers' Society (NTS) - that had participated in the unity talks, are presently not part of the new teachers' union.

Tuata, which claims to represent about 35 000 teachers, had reservations about signing the unity agreement which stipulates that all the constituent organisations should be dissolved within a year after the launch, and that assets will then have to be transferred to the new union. Although Tuata has begun to raise the need to consult its constituency and 'the partiality of the new union to Cosatu' as the association's concerns, it is widely believed that the massive assets which the organisation has is the underlying source of contention. It has since become apparent that Natu is also mouthing the same charges as Tuata.

Both the TTA and NTS had problems with the unity agreement signed by the different teacher organisations on 30 September. According to the NTS the clause compelling constituent organisations to disband within a year and the demand that affiliates do nothing to contradict SADTU between the launch and the next conference, would infringe on the NTS's constitutional standing. Echoing the same sentiments the TTA said the clause stating that TTA members would have to work for SADTU is something that the organisation would not be able to justify in terms of the Industrial Relations Act. As far as the TTA is concerned the law has deter-

mined that its members cannot be compelled to do SADTU work.

But more disturbing was the announcement of the formation of a Nactu aligned teachers' union - the National Teachers' Union of South Africa (Natusa), just before the launch of SADTU.

The examples cited here have not been raised merely to illustrate the way in which even the launch of SADTU has been marred by differences and divisions. The point being made here is that the bringing together of 12 teachers' organisations with different traditions has been a great achievement, despite the difficulties.

The unity talks have gone through different phases and has had many ups and downs.

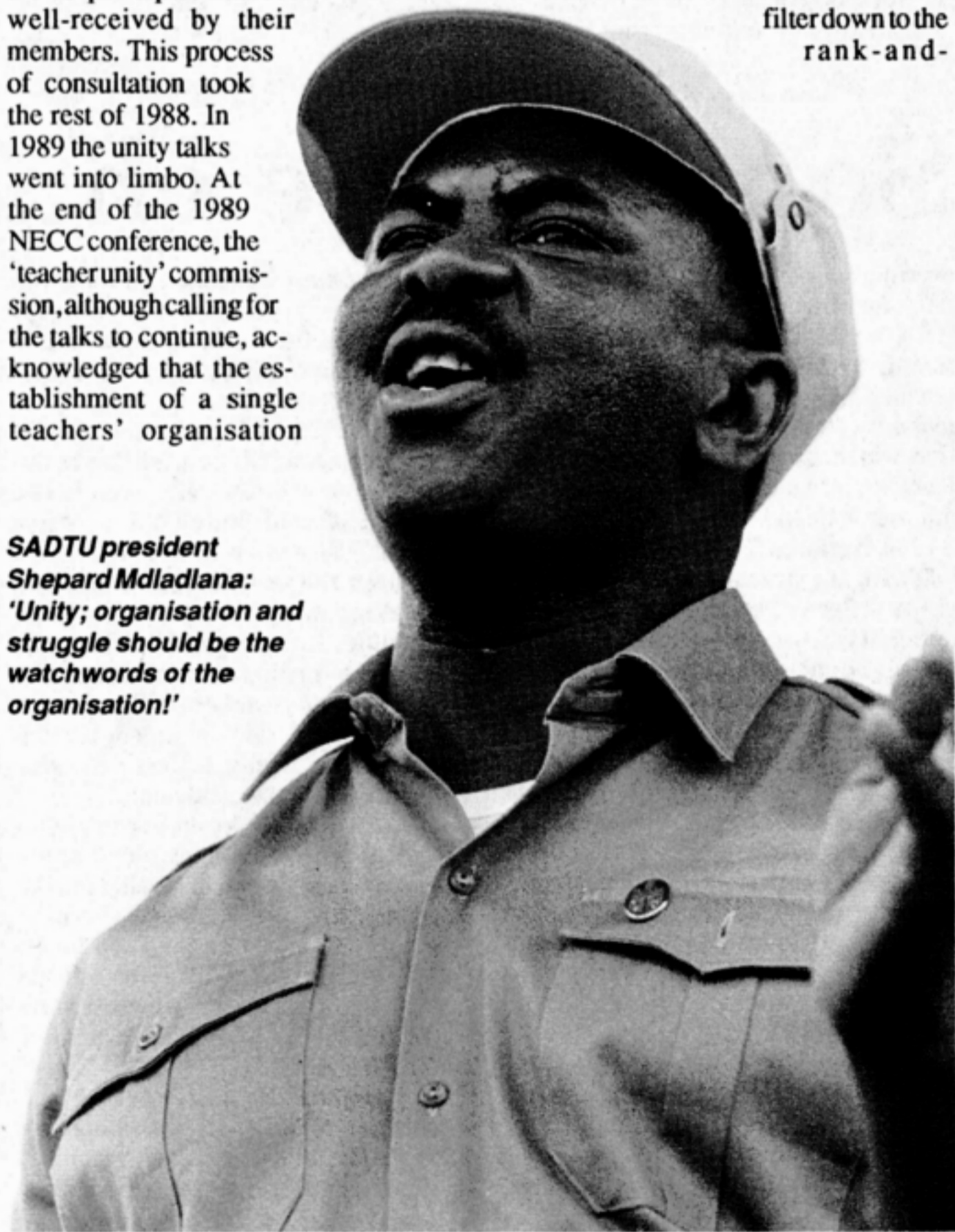
A few months after the Harare conference the first meeting was held to discuss the principles that were raised by the participants. All organisations reported that the 15 principles had been well-received by their members. This process of consultation took the rest of 1988. In 1989 the unity talks went into limbo. At the end of the 1989 NECC conference, the 'teacher unity' commission, although calling for the talks to continue, acknowledged that the establishment of a single teachers' organisation

would take longer than initially expected.

The banning of Neusa in 1988 and Wectu and Detu in 1989, together with the repression meted out against the more militant teachers' unions and their members, meant the unions that had been spawned in the 1984/86 uprisings could not play their role in bringing together the different teacher organisations. This is an important factor if one considers that, despite their smallness in terms of membership if compared to the recognised organisations such as Atasa, Utasa and Tasa, the emergent unions had a more political approach to organising.

The other factor which affected the unity process was the divergent views on the new organisation. While all organisations agreed on the need for a single teachers' organisation, the form that this organisation should take raised many debates and much discussion, which more often than not led to paralysis in the unity talks. These debates did not filter down to the rank-and-

**SADTU president
Shepard Mdladlana:
'Unity; organisation and
struggle should be the
watchwords of the
organisation!'**



file teachers and never really hastened the process of unity.

The two issues that were hotly debated were:

- whether the union would be a trade union or a professional body;
- whether the structure of the new organisation would be federal or unitary.

These two questions led to a crystallisation of two blocs within the teachers' unity forum. A bloc of the established and officially recognised organisations on the one hand and the bloc comprised of the new, small but politically assertive unions such as Wectu, Detu, Matu, Neusa and others. The latter grouped themselves as the 'progressive' bloc within the unity talks and has maintained, since its emergence, that it views and conceptualises the prospective national teacher organisation as a trade union that would affiliate to Cosatu

It was clear to this bloc that teachers, on their own, will be unable to sustain any form of radicalisation on a consistent basis. However in order to make a sig-

nificant contribution to the unfolding struggle, teachers have to maintain a relatively consistent level of radicalisation. The extent to which teachers participate alongside other sectors and strata of society will ensure and guarantee that the national teachers' organisation remains radical in outlook and practice.

But this belief is not as a result of hot-headedness on the part of the 'progressive' bloc. The emergent unions pointed to the conditions which affected teachers such as long hours of work; low wages; job insecurity and victimisation as necessitating a trade union organisation.

Only an organisation with a militant approach to these problems will be able to change the working conditions of teachers. The 'progressive' bloc felt that a teacher trade union will fulfill the task of taking up the bread and butter issues which affect teachers.

It was also important to this bloc that an organisation with a democratic character was built. For the 'progressive' bloc what the thousands of unorganised,

disorganised and loosely organised teachers throughout South Africa need, is leadership that is vigorously accountable, and that facilitates democracy at all levels.

A trade-union identity would incorporate local branches, democratically elected shop-stewards, regional and national executive elections which would perfectly suit the fulfilling of the democratic tasks that face teachers. In addition to this, regular branch, regional and national congresses would ensure the continued accessibility and, therefore, accountability of structures, to the rank-and-file teachers.

Although not opposed to the idea of teachers being organised under a union, the established and officially recognised teacher organisations wavered on this question. They felt the union approach adopted by the emergent unions was not catering for the 'professional interests' of teachers. No strong political counter was forwarded by the established or-

Some of the challenges

The launch of SADTU represents for the first time in the history of South Africa, the birth of a national, unitary, non-racial, non-sexist teacher union. This is a serious challenge by teachers to apartheid education which, over the years, has divided teachers into different racial categories and departments of education.

The National Teacher Unity Forum (NTUF), the precursor to SADTU, already reflected the potential of a single national teachers' union to confront the divide and rule policy of the state. Teachers from all departments and from all corners of South Africa now have the opportunity to channel their common demands through a single union and to direct these at a common enemy - the apartheid state. In refusing to continue to organise in a manner that entrenches the racist ideology of the state, SADTU is clearly striking a blow against the apartheid education system and adding weight to the demand for a single education department.

The state has always relied on the support of teachers to disseminate its ideology and in the main teachers (except at crisis points like the 1940s, 1950s, 1976 and 1984/86) have been obedient

carriers of state ideology into the classroom. In this respect, teachers have represented, on the whole, a conservative force in the unfolding struggle for democratic control of schools.

South African education has been in a crisis for a long time and students, not teachers, have historically been in the forefront of confronting this struggle head-on. More often than not teachers have been the ones to stifle legitimate student militancy brought on by gross inequalities in the system. While students were turning schools into a terrain of struggle, teachers took a neutral stand or stood side by side with the authorities in trying to force the students back into the classroom.

It is clear from recent events, however, that the state has lost the support of a significant section of teachers to the liberation struggle. While previously it was relatively easy for the state to act against individual teachers who refused to march to their tune, today the state would have to act against thousands of such teachers.

After many decades in which the teaching sector has been dominated by politically cautious teacher organisations, we are witnessing the revival of

traditions last seen in the 1940s and 1950s. Teachers are taking their rightful place within the mass movement. The struggle for a people's education is being advanced by the establishment of SADTU. The birth of the union facilitates the building of unity between parents, teachers and students - a prerequisite for seizing control over education.

But more pertinently, what the formation of SADTU raises is a question which has been the subject of intense debate within the mass movement: the question of alliances. Over the years two dominant positions have emerged:

- The position which has been labelled 'workerist' but which more accurately represents syndicalist and ultra-left views on alliances. According to this view non-working-class strata can never adopt radical positions.
- The second view which has become known as the 'populist' position ditches radical programmes out of a fear of antagonising desperately sought-after non-working-class allies. According to this view teachers can be won into the mass movement only if we adopt the lowest common demands.

What is common to both these positions is a belief that the middle class

organisations to the idea of a teachers' union. The concern became the need to find a balance between the 'professional' and 'union' responsibilities of the new organisation.

The fact that teachers had been excluded from the 1956 Labour Relations Act was also raised by the officially recognised organisations. Thus the Utasa booklet used the following extract from the Labour Relations Act in support of its argument against a trade union: 'This act shall not apply to persons ... employed by the state in respect of their employment such as ... nor to persons who teach, educate or train other persons at any university, technikon, college, school or any other educational institution maintained wholly or partly from public funds'.

But this was not a strong argument, particularly in the context of the struggle to have the LRA changed, so that all workers are included under one labour legislation.

The 'progressive' bloc vigorously

opposed all notions of federalism as it merely entrenched the apartheid structures of education. As far as the 'progressive' bloc was concerned a federal structure would mean that the union would remain loosely co-ordinated and that by and large teachers would remain affiliated to essentially racially-defined organisations.

As it was important, politically, for unity to be forged from the bottom and not from the top, the 'progressive' bloc argued that an important component of the bottom-up process was non-racialism.

At a workshop on teachers' unity held in Cape Town under the auspices of Cosatu and involving the CPTA, Detu, Tasa, Wectu and the Peninsula African Teachers Association (Penata) - an affiliate of Atasa, one of the members of the 'progressive' bloc had this to say: 'If we are serious about contributing to the formation and construction of a new South Africa that is non-racial, democratic and

distinctly non-exploitative, then our structures and operations must reflect this. We cannot continue to exist in our separate and racially defined teacher structures on the one hand, and on the other, expect to undermine the state's racist and exploitative education system - let alone contribute to the broader liberation movement for fundamental change in South Africa.

So, for political reasons we need to form a unitary teachers' structure that can fight in a focussed way against the single but federal South African education system. We must begin to undermine the structures that they have imposed on us and the whole of South Africa'.

But it is not only for political reasons that the 'progressive' bloc called for a unitary structure. The proposal for a unitary structure went hand-in-hand with the conception that the new organisation should be a trade union. The emergent unions strongly argued that only a unitary structure can take up the day-to-day problems of teachers.

Although they agreed with the need for a unitary teachers' organisation, the established associations felt a federal structure must be used as a stepping stone to what is an ultimate goal - a new teachers' union with a unitary structure.

The established unions felt it would be premature to disband the existing organisations, as this could lead to dislocation and effective renegeing on the important task of looking after the interests of the teacher members.

What the established organisations feared most was the possibility of losing official recognition. This, they felt, would be a disservice to their members.

It was the teachers' struggles that erupted after 2 February which gave the unity process a jolt. In the aftermath of the unbanning of organisations and the subsequent release of Nelson Mandela we witnessed teachers taking to the streets in their thousands throughout South Africa. Teachers from the ranks of established teacher organisations like Atasa, Tasa and Utasa - many of whom had previously worked hand-in-glove with the government - joined teachers from the ranks of the emergent and more radical teacher unions in marches, mass rallies, chalk-downs and awareness programmes.

We have also seen a joint delegation taking the demands of teachers throughout South Africa to National Education

facing SADTU

cannot be significantly radicalised.

What the formation of SADTU and the recent struggles of teachers reveal is that under particular circumstances, and more importantly under the leadership of the working class, sections of the middle class can be won over to revolutionary positions.

It is important to understand where teachers fit into the unfolding struggle. On the whole, teachers are petit bourgeois. Black teachers, unlike the white middle class, are oppressed and lack fundamental political rights in common with the great majority of the oppressed. For this reason black teachers cannot vote for a single government, live in areas of their own choice, teach in schools of their choice, etc.

With the De Klerk reforms, teachers have become enthused by what appears to be an imminent post-apartheid South Africa. This, coupled with the increasing deteriorating material conditions of teachers, has driven teachers to radical action. On the one hand De Klerk's reforms have raised teachers' hopes, while on the other this has come into direct contradiction with the fact that teachers increasingly have to tolerate appalling conditions: overcrowded class-

rooms, longer hours of teaching, being underpaid, job insecurity, maladministration/corruption in the racially segregated education departments, lack of rights in schools, increasing threats of unemployment and other more overt forms of victimisation.

This contradiction has played itself out in the resultant teacher anger and frustration witnessed in the first half of this year. Inspired by the struggles of youth and workers which led to a mini-political upsurge in the period immediately after the 2 February announcements, teachers began to use methods of struggle which were previously the domain of the most exploited and militant workers in society - the strike or 'chalks-down'; go-slows; marches; the handing in of record books; burning of letters of misconduct; mass rallies; defiant refusal to complete leave forms for stay-away action, etc.

What this demonstrates is that a large section of the black middle class has nothing to fear in a radical transformation of South African society. It is the task of the mass movement to advance this radical programme and not to tone it down, if it wants to win significant sections of the black middle class.

Minister Gene Louw, with the support of thousands of primary and secondary teachers as well as trainee teachers from the colleges.

The teachers' strikes in the first half of this year gave life to the National Teacher Unity Forum (NTUF) and the unity process. It was in a meeting called in April, in response to the strikes and the education crisis, that a timetable towards the establishment of SADTU was adopted.

Thus, thousands of teachers throughout South Africa were drawn to the idea of a single teachers' union through their own spontaneous strikes and marches. This groundswell of activity which sometimes occurred outside of the ranks of NTUF 'structures' very often happened despite NTUF rather than because of its influence.

The drafting of a memorandum of demands and the delegation to the minister, as well as the propagandistic effect of the march, served to centralise the focus of teacher frustration nationally and placed NTUF at the head of all teacher struggles. For the first time the process of teacher unity took on a national and grassroots character.

After the April 'emergency' meeting things moved swiftly and the new union was launched in October 1990. What sceptics called a dream was attained.

But this was not an easy task. Many compromises were made along the way. Until next year SADTU will remain an organisation with affiliates - something which contradicts the desired unitary structure. The question of affiliation to a trade union federation has also been postponed until next year.

As a result of the compromises and the attempts to accommodate everyone, the launch conference took the form of a consensus conference where the adoption of the unity agreement and the constitution and the election of officials were unanimously agreed upon.

The national executive committee consists of representatives of all the teacher organisations that signed the unity agreement. It was agreed that this will be a transitional executive which will see SADTU through the first year during which branches and regional structures throughout the country will be set up.

Just how justifiable these compromises are is to be determined by what happens in the future. What cannot be denied however is that concessions have been made by the parties involved. Another critical problem is the fact that the unity which has been agreed upon

When the toyi-toying dies down we need to be in a position to hold onto the thousands by involving them structurally in the day-to-day running of branches

still remains a paper agreement which has been entered into at the top.

1991 is going to be crucial in determining the character of SADTU. It can either develop into a top-heavy and bureaucratic structure or a democratic and mass teachers' union with an accountable leadership.

The way SADTU goes about building democratic, non-racial, politically vibrant mass branches is vital for the organisation. The danger exists that the unity which has been cemented at the top can disintegrate and that SADTU will become nothing else but a consultative body for racially specific organisations and localised structures.

If SADTU is to develop into a union that can begin to address the dynamic economic, educational and political needs of teachers and society at large, then the gains of the launch need to be built on and developed. The major tasks in this coming year are covered by the resolutions thrashed out and adopted at the conference. SADTU must make sure these resolutions don't just become mere rhetoric, but are used as a guide to a programme of action.

If SADTU accepts that women make up more than 60% of the teaching corps in this country then its only hope of being mass-based lies in its ability to organise women teachers.

The fact that the Transitional National Executive Committee only contains one woman is a reflection of the lack of active involvement of women on the ground.

The regional programmes of action must make women's issues such as maternity leave with full pay, equal pay for equal work at a living wage, sexual harassment, etc, the main issues around which teachers are mobilised. In order

for this to become a reality, regional women's groups/committees have to be set up which are open to all members and which must ensure that women's issues are taken up in a programmatic way and that women become a dynamic part of SADTU.

The programme of action will have to take into account the very real differences that exist among teachers. Even though we have achieved the formation of a national, unitary structure the teachers who are part of this come from very different backgrounds and traditions.

What is needed is a style of organisation that will begin to weld activism and grassroots participation with the ability to maintain and represent a sizeable membership.

We cannot just continue to organise teachers on an overtly political basis. In a period of intense crisis this is possible and necessary - but when the toyi-toying dies down we need to be in a position to hold onto the thousands by involving them structurally in the day-to-day running of the branches.

A union approach has to incorporate organising teachers around the issues that affect them directly, as well as maintain a strong sense of accountability and democracy throughout the ranks.

The only guarantee for a democratic teachers' union lies in the ability of that union to become mass-based and not top-heavy with the leadership in a position to take arbitrary decisions. The lifeblood of SADTU must be the most oppressed and exploited teachers and not those who hold powerful positions in the school.

It is also important that the new union clearly defines its trade union role. The situation that prevailed with those organisations in the 'progressive' bloc where claims of membership were made without being able to verify this in terms of paid-up membership, must be curtailed.

The struggle for recognition will go a long way in solving this. The new union must fight for stop-order facilities with the education authorities.

It will be even more crucial for the union to take up the debate on affiliation to a trade union federation. In order to improve their conditions teachers need the power of the whole working class.

As the president of the new union, Shepard Mdladlana, said in his address at the launch rally: 'Unity; organisation and struggle should be the watchwords of the organisation!'

Waiting for Movement

The state has a future media policy. So do the monopolies which own most of the media. So, asks David Niddrie, how long do we wait until the ANC develops one?

The idea of a 'media summit' to draw together the formations of the democratic movement and elements of the media itself to formulate a position on the media needs of a democratic South Africa was first mooted early in 1989.

In media circles, where isolated initiatives in this direction were already underway, it was greeted enthusiastically. Largely at the prompting of the Association of Democratic Journalists (ADJ), regional media summit committees were established to begin discussions in preparation for a national media summit, which Cosatu and the United Democratic Front undertook to convene.

Since then ... nothing. The regional committees have for the most part withered away and from the centre - from the national convening committee under *New Nation* editor Zwelakhe Sisulu - silence.

The democratic movement is thus moving through a transition period and, presumably, towards a democratic society without an agreed and articulated

media policy.

Even on the issue of a possible ANC daily newspaper, there is not agreement. Since 2 February several leading ANC figures have said the movement was planning one; others have said, equally firmly, that it isn't.

Virtually the only clear and uncontradicted statement to emerge from the democratic movement on media in the last nine months is that they think press freedom is 'A Good Thing'.

This is hardly a definitive statement. Virtually without exception, all significant political formations are saying the same thing.

Others, meanwhile, are hard at work to ensure that their views on how the media should look are the ones that dominate in the future.

A task force appointed by president FW de Klerk's government is doing it at the SABC. The Media Council, a non-government body established under government pressure by the media industry, is proposing changes to legislation affecting the media. It is doing so without consulting any of the formations likely to have to govern the country in terms of these revised laws.

The Argus company - the country's biggest newspaper group, publishing more than half the newspapers sold in South Africa every day - is also seeking to pre-empt major post-apartheid restructuring of the print media. But with a political vision worthy of a company which took its name from the vigilant, 100-eyed being of Greek mythology, Argus is attempting to do so by making the ANC, and anyone else who may swing some weight after apartheid, an offer it is going to be extremely difficult to refuse.

Before going into the details and implications of these initiatives, it is necessary first to establish what might be considered a definition of press freedom appropriate to the plural political democracy likely to be established in South Africa.

Press freedom is no more than one means of exercising a prior and more general right - that of freedom of expression.

At its most basic, freedom of expression grants to individuals the right to



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speaking freely to their immediate circle of acquaintances.

Denying individuals this right - as the government did for the 30 years prior to the legalisation of the ANC, the PAC, the SACP etc. on February 2 - can be a powerful political weapon. Ask the man sentenced to three years' imprisonment for writing 'Viva ANC' on his tea-cup at work a few years ago.

But freedom of expression goes further than this localised right.

Communication in South Africa, as in all other large and complex societies, takes place not only by word of mouth, between individuals. Information and opinions are distributed and received via the printed word (newspapers etc.) and by the broadcast media (radio and television).

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises the resulting dual dictates of freedom of expression. It acknowledges as a basic human right not only 'the right to freedom of opinion and expression', but also the right 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers'.

But equality of access is a crucial yard-stick by which the exercise of any right is judged.

It is on the basis of inequality that most of the world rejected apartheid.

The most graphic demonstration of this is the fact that just over 6-million South Africans have since 1984 enjoyed the right to elect representatives to the tri-cameral parliament. A further 15-million did not - they enjoyed only the 'right' to elect representatives to some form of bantustan structure. This was unequal, and the world therefore concluded that democracy did not exist in South Africa.

Applied to freedom of expression, this logic demands that all South Africans enjoy equally the opportunity to express their opinions: both at the level of expressing themselves to their immediate circle and, more broadly, to the audiences available to the national print and broadcasting media structures.

While the 'local' right has arguably existed equally for all South Africans since 2 February (although restrictions, such as that on advocating communism, remain), no such automatic right of access to the national audience exists.

Every one of the 1,5-million-plus newspapers sold in South Africa every day is published by one of six interlocked companies, which between them also

own M-Net, the national news agency, Sapa (which they own jointly with SABC), the national newspaper distribution networks, and the country's major paper production plants.

And the four biggest of these companies are controlled, in turn, by South Africa's three corporate giants - Anglo American, Rembrandt and Sanlam - which between them control more than 70% of the country's public stock companies.

A handful of 'alternative' or independent media publications have carved for themselves a niche in the media, but the fact remains that they are essentially fringe publications. Argus' *The Sowetan* alone sells more copies every day than all the 'alternatives' combined sell in a week.

Control of broadcasting is even more concentrated, resting almost entirely with the National Party, through SABC.

Access is thus not a right, but a privilege granted on the basis of who the media owners choose to give it to - editors, reporters etc. and who they, in turn select as 'newsworthy'.

As a result, there is little correlation between opinions expressed by the media and those which appear to hold general sway in society - on the issues of sanctions, armed resistance to apartheid, and on the much-debated question of a democratic government's intervention in the economy.

This is not the result of any conspiracy between the owners, editors and reporters.

Harvey Tyson asserted two months before retiring as editor of *The Star*: 'In 17 years as editor ... I was not once approached by shareholders, board members or management about editorial (content).' But two decades earlier British political scientist Ralph Miliband had countered a similar argument: 'Editors write what they like because managers like what they write'. Boards of directors, unsurprisingly, appoint editors who agree with them.

We thus currently have a media in which there is no guaranteed right of access, but which, because of its control structures, unintentionally skews national debates.

An appropriate definition of press freedom must thus go beyond simply acknowledging the right of those who own the printing presses and radio and television transmitters to exercise their right of freedom of expression. It must recognise the need to grant this right to all people through diversification of

control.

Because current disparities of access are experienced not by individuals, but sectorally - the opinions and concerns of black people, the working class, women, and rural populations are particularly under-represented as sectors of society - solutions offered must redress the sectoral imbalance, itself primarily the result of apartheid.

But if the specifics of those solutions must come from the contesting parties themselves, on the basis of democratic debate, one final issue must be raised. Why not nationalise? The media is, after all, a national resource like water, electricity the railways or the post office.

State monopoly media do not have a successful history, almost invariably gravitating towards a single perspective view of society, inevitably that of the ruling party - much as the commercial media inevitably speaks the language of those who ultimately control it.

In Eastern Europe their failure to record the growing discontent of society further widened the gulf between ruler and ruled.

And closer to home, in multi-party Zimbabwe where Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF rules by popular mandate, the state print and broadcast media is criticised even from-within the ruling party as 'his master's voice', reflecting what the government would like to be, rather than what is.

And in South Africa itself, SABC provides a particularly gross example of state-monopoly broadcasting.

The problem with Cliff Saunders is not that he is biased in favour of the white government and its allies, but that his bias distorts the view he presents of the world.

A democratic alternative to this bias is not bias in the opposite direction, but an accountable and representative broadcasting service.

This, however, is precisely what De Klerk's government is seeking to prevent with the current initiative at SABC.

A government-appointed task force, headed by SABC chief Christo Viljoen and with strong representation from the state intelligence community, has for several months been going through the motions of charting the future of broadcasting in southern Africa (see *WIP* 69).

Its conclusions are, however, virtually pre-defined: SABC has begun accepting applications for national and



Harvey Tyson: In media terms, his offer appears to be an improved version of what De Klerk offered in national political terms when he offered to negotiate

substantially ease attempts to redress the imbalance in access to media.

Acknowledging an 'imbalance of resources, of opportunities and of media coverage' and the need to put it right as soon as possible, Tyson told a conference organised by Rhodes University's journalism department: 'I believe the so-called monopolistic press would be more than happy to willingly share a century and a half of effort, talent, sweat, investment and experience to ensure fairness and balance, equal opportunity and diversity of opinion and analysis'.

This sharing, he said would involve offering to historically disadvantaged interest groups all or any of the following:

- full use of the mainstream printing presses at the same rates as the papers now cost out their own printing. This would be a major concession, for the cost of a single newly imported big press is now prohibitive - as much as R100-million for a large colour press with peripherals;
- equal use of all pooled distribution resources, again at the same rates (usually based on circulation) as the existing dailys and weeklys arrange for themselves;
- training facilities for editorial skills, and advice on newspapering techniques. Everything, in fact, except participation in the emerging press' editorial decisions;
- secondment of newspaper managerial

skills;

- circulation expertise and distribution management;
- advertising advice, volunteered free by the agencies;
- Newspaper Press Union membership and its shared facilities;
- Media Council membership.

Tyson stressed that he was speaking in his personal capacity and that his offer was not necessarily formal Argus policy. Since then, however, Tyson has moved on to the Argus board. His general sentiment has, in addition, since been echoed by other Argus executives, and comes after a year-long internal Argus commission 'The Future of Newspapers'.

His proposal is thus one which in all probability carries some weight and is worth considering.

Argus motives are not at issue: arguably, they are attempting to ensure as smooth a possible transformation of the media, and one in which their own structures remain untouched by an incoming government. Considering the sharply contrasting SABC initiative, this is not necessarily something to criticise.

While it would leave the commanding heights of the media in Argus hands it goes a long way to leveling the media playing field, and appears to give any new media initiative - or several for that matter - a reasonable shot at contesting on more-or-less equal terms in the media market place.

In media terms, Tyson's offer appears to be an improved version of what De Klerk offered in national political terms when he offered to negotiate.

One of the problems in responding, however, is the lack of an agreed and comprehensive position from the democratic movement on what it is looking for in a national media.

Until consensus is reached in the democratic movement, it must respond to initiatives such as the Argus' and SABC's on an ad hoc basis. Such responses as there have been so far to SABC have been based either on a more general opposition to state corporation privatisation, or initiated from outside the leading formations of the democratic movement - from the Film and Allied Workers' Organisation and the Campaign for Open Media. The leading formations of the democratic movement have, themselves, initiated nothing.

And until a media summit takes place, they will be without a policy basis from which to do so. •



The Urban Foundation-backed Private Sector Council released a major policy document, 'Rural Development - towards a new framework', in September. The council claims the document 'is one of the most comprehensive studies ever on how South Africa should begin to reconstruct its rural areas as non-racial development regions'. It provides a neat, often useful synthesis of some of the key problems of land and agrarian reform - but Tessa Marcus takes issue with its assumptions and recommendations. She argues that it is a recipe for maintaining the privileges of the few and exploitation of the majority in our countryside

Strategising for capital in the countryside

There are three types of problem with the Private Sector Council's recommendations for rural development. The first relates to the timing of the report, the second to the process which produced it, and the third to its content. Together, they betray the character of the report and its intentions.

Released just two weeks before President FW de Klerk announced the state's intention to repeal the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, the document can hardly be considered instrumental in prompting this partial reform measure. In fact, the timing of the report's release raises questions which are very important in judging the integrity of its claims.

Why had the PSC/Urban Foundation remained silent on an issue so fundamental to democracy and human rights when the political climate was not favourable to such reform? Not because of a lack of evidence nor because of an absence of pressure for urgent reform, but rather because

rural reform was not conceived of as a means to influence the pace of change in the country.

The report is a thrust into political debate when 'a future non-racial development strategy has not yet been thoroughly thought through in government circles... (and) when there is great uncertainty as to the future of urban, regional and rural development policy'. This suggests that they chose to intervene in order to influence the direction of the reform, a conclusion substantiated when we look at both the process and the content of the report.

The problem of process arises from how the report was compiled and the claims it makes within it. The PSC commissioned 39 papers from a variety of academics who had to sign a secrecy clause as a condition of contract. Instead of encouraging a free intellectual debate as the findings became available, it seems the PSC adopted a military-style intelligence-gathering operation to arm itself for the 'offensive'.

The PSC also carried out an extensive literature search drawing on the work generated over the past two decades by the handful of democratically minded scholars, field workers and activists who have engaged with the problems of apartheid restructuring in the South African countryside. Whilst this is normal scientific procedure, it is also normal (and ethical) to attribute the source of your ideas - something the report does not do consistently.

Further, the report claims that 'the summary of research and policy proposals put forward ... can be seen as the contribution of the private sector and community based leadership' to the problem of rural development. In other words, the report implicitly claims that it is not just the standpoint of the PSC but also of unspecified popular democratic organisations, or their leadership.

Instances of plagiarism and, more importantly, the secrecy surrounding the research beg the question: to what type of consultation process was the report subjected?

What seems most likely is that the process of discussing with particular individuals and organisations was misread as consultation and, worse, as endorsement of the report. This is not a minor issue in the context in which this report is presented, since, for the PSC report to take hold, it has to have the backing of the majority of South Afri-

cans.

This is something of which the authors are painfully aware. Thus, they explicitly state that it is not a 'blueprint for unilateral imposition' (who ever thought it could be?) but rather that it is offered as 'a contribution to a vigorous national debate'.

The issues raised about timing and process reflect the main problem in the content of the report - its classist perspectives.

'Rural development - towards a new framework' is a singularly classist statement by monopoly capital. It might seem a little discordant to emphasise this aspect at a time when the national effort is directed towards neutralising the most reactionary, reform-resistant elements within the ruling minority. But when it comes to reform and the future it is the different class interests which come to the fore - as this report clearly displays.

Not only does the report uninhibitedly present the point of view of big business, it is also concerned to project this view as 'objective' and 'neutral', and as being grounded in science. Yet, both the definition of the problem and the solutions proposed hardly originate from a disinterested and impartial perspective.

In making this criticism, I am not dismissing their ideas and arguments out of hand. Rather I aim to highlight their limitations and shortcomings in so far as the problems of land and agrarian reform in South Africa are concerned.

The PSC rural development report makes some important and (in terms of their origins) ground-breaking assumptions.

South Africa is considered to mean the geographic entity established in 1910. And, whilst the report deals with so-called 'black' and 'white' rural areas, it emphasises the connectedness of these areas, and the common conditions of poverty and the poor quality of life enjoyed by the majority of black people living there.

Of particular interest is the suggestion that *all* rural areas are characterised by underdevelopment. This is contrary to most thinking - popular and academic - about white-owned rural areas: these areas are generally characterised as 'modern' and developed.

What are we to make of this suggestion? 'Modern' production can indeed be 'backward' when it is built upon super-exploited labour, as I have argued else-

where. Yet there is nothing in their analysis or policy proposals to suggest that the underdevelopment of white-owned commercial agriculture stems from an examination of production relations in the sector.

Indeed, since they are advocates of growth - and South African commercial agriculture displays features of growth - it would seem that what they mean by underdevelopment are the impoverished conditions of life which most black farm workers and dwellers experience. Moreover, they hold, this impoverishment is not a structural condition of the way production is organised in the sector.

Certain logical consequences flow from this problematic position - both in the way the report further defines the problem and in the solutions it proposes.

One is to identify legally created racial barriers as the primary obstacle to be overcome.

The report presents a strongly argued case for the abolition of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts and the Group Areas Act which determine racial ownership and occupation of land in the so-called white areas (and in the so-called homelands). This has been a long standing call which dates back to the very enactment of the 1913 Land Act - and certainly most of South Africa's population does not need to be convinced on the desirability of their repeal.

The problem, however, is that over time the law has been used to entrench a *de facto* white monopoly of ownership. This will not be swept away today merely by the removal of these statutes.

In 1990, '84% of households in the rural and dense settlement areas received incomes below the Minimum Living Level' and in 1983 average per capita income per month on white farms was R12. Further, in 1985 'the average investment in a commercial farming unit was in excess of R650 000'.

Black rural poverty and the high price of commercial farm land that these statistics underscore begs the question: how many among the black rural population will be able to be counted amongst that new category of farmers the report speaks of - those 'who have sufficient resources to purchase existing commercial farms'? My point is: a non-racial land market will not be created simply by removing moribund racial laws.

The report recognises this fact, in part, by suggesting the creation of two other new categories of black farmers. These are 'emergent' small scale arable or in-

tensive livestock farmers without sufficient resources to purchase existing farms' and 'communities wishing to lease state-owned grazing land in extensive pastoral farming areas'. Thus, the drops of private black land ownership will be made, with state assistance, into puddles of mostly small-holders submerged in a sea of white monopoly.

In part, the answer is said to lie in the restimulation of all forms of tenancy - with due legal protection. But not only is tenancy in a private land market a very unequal and insecure relation, this proposal also begs the question: why should land be owned by those who do not work it? If people are to be made tenants why should they not be tenants of the state? Why should the rent they pay for land be uncontrolled and used as a source of profit by private landlords rather than being effectively rechannelled into the social wage essential to give substance and meaning to an affirmative action programme?

There is not much non-racialism in a countryside where land ownership remains mostly in the hands of whites and tenancy is mostly black.

Another logical consequence is to place the creation of a black farming class at the centre of the proposed solution. Black farmers - resourced or 'emergent', owners or tenants - are to be stimulated through extensive 'farmer support programmes', to be absorbed into the agricultural production system as it exists.

This is problematic for two related reasons.

Firstly, because commercial agriculture is underdeveloped despite increased production. The poverty of the rural areas not only stems from the racial division of labour but also from the social division of labour, and especially from the labour forms and social characteristics of the agrarian working class.

Labour in the sector centres on a small stabilised core of on-farm male workers and their families supplemented by a large migrantised and casualised work force drawn from off-farm labour pools. Most of these workers are women and children. In addition, small pockets of labour tenants and a sizeable number of prisoners work in commercial agriculture.

In other words, the profitability of the sector as it is presently structured, depends on the relative cheapness and rightlessness of the workforce. If the structure

of production is unchanged then, as the PSC correctly observes, farmers will continue to substitute capital for labour to counteract efforts to improve conditions in the sector.

While the report recognises the problematic nature of 'the economic and political structure' of commercial agriculture, this remains little more than an observation. Its implications are not followed through in the report's policy proposals. In turn, this undermines the weight of its call for the inclusion of agricultural workers in the Labour Relations Act - which, again, comes when the state has already indicated its intention to do so.

The PSC report would have it that black emergent farmers should be absorbed into this milieu of exploitation. They should apparently emulate or even exceed the white example in order to survive in conditions in which they are notably resource-poor and at a disadvantage in comparison to their white counterparts.

But even then it is an open question as to whether these emergent black farmers would survive given the centralisation, concentration and capital intensity of production in the sector.

There is a second problematic aspect to the concentration on creating a new black farming class: its composition. Surely the focus should fall on the needs and rights of the majority of people who presently work the land - farm workers. This is not to suggest that they have exclusive rights to the land. But their rights cannot be made supplementary or even incidental to a rural reform programme, not least of all for economic reasons. Farming jobs disproportionately influence both the geographical distribution of the population, (as the PSC report points out), and the social conditions of the countryside.

And what about the women? In the report there is a total absence of any reference to women. Yet, as we all know, the racial and class divisions of the South African countryside are further complicated by a gender division which systematically relegates African women to among the most disadvantaged. They make up the majority of rural occupants and the majority of people engaged on the land - either in sub-subsistence farming or mostly as 'casualised' and sometimes as full-time farm workers.

The legacy of patriarchy which pervades much intellectual thinking does

not satisfactorily explain the authors' failure to address the problem of gender. Assuming their reforms were gender neutral was mistake enough. But there is a further point. The facts necessitate that redressing inequalities arising from the oppression of women (particularly African women) must be a central consideration of any rural reform programme.

Lastly, we need to look critically at the concepts underlying proposals to carry out the report's recommendations. The 'how' has two components.

The first refers to the theoretical means by which the goal of rural development is to be achieved. The problem here is that equity or fairness does not mean equality. Thus, a rural development strategy which aims for 'growth with equity', as nice as that sounds, does not presume to redress the inequalities of the countryside. Moreover, the primary 'redistributive' mechanism is assigned to the market, which as we have already seen is structurally loaded against the majority of South Africa's rural population - black and poor and largely female.

The only redistributive tendencies that market forces display is towards the rich and empowered. In this context, we also need to treat with caution the particular interpretation the report gives to the call for 'growth through redistribution', which it considers as a supplementary measure.

The other refers to how policy is to be translated into practice, how it is to be implemented. The PSC report has taken the 'cargo' notion of policy on board in full. Policy is viewed as a package (from outside), to be delivered in a given fixed space/time framework (a project), and then evaluated to iron out inevitable 'shortcomings'. This approach, although mainstream 'state of the art' and in the mode of thinking of such heavyweights as the World Bank, IMF, most states and many non-governmental organisations, is also highly problematic and needs to be publicly debated.

In sum, the PSC strategy for rural development rests on the creation of a small black farming class, to be absorbed into the predominant system of agricultural production, without impinging on the economic, social and racial privileges of dominant farming interests. Although the proposals make small inroads into racial inequalities, key class, gender and racial issues which affect the majority of South Africa's rural inhabitants remain outstanding. •



Enter the black middle class farmer

Aninka Claassens gives a second opinion on that 'comprehensive' Urban Foundation report, and concludes: It's well-researched, alright — but often way off target

The Urban Foundation's document on rural development has been long awaited. For over five years people working on land issues have heard of the many studies on rural demography, white farmer attitudes and agriculture commissioned by the foundation.

Some years ago we saw a draft policy document which was then put on ice. These documents constitute a unique resource base in the under-researched area of rural development and land issues.

Finally, the results of all this research are published and distributed as a major input to the land reform debate. The foundation calls for the repeal of the Land Act, the Development Trust & Land Act, and other pieces of racially discriminatory legislation.

Barely two weeks after the report is

published president FW de Klerk announces that the acts will be repealed and stresses the importance of a non-racial land market in a future South Africa.

There is common cause that these Acts must go; they make the right to property subservient to race; they have been used to evict black tenants from their homes and to create the terrible racial inequity in land ownership which exists in our country.

Where dissenting parties differ, is in the necessity and extent of mechanisms and processes to undo the legacy created by the Acts. In this regard it is interesting to look at the Farmer Settlement Programme with which the foundation concludes its rural development programme.

This is the most detailed proposal in the document, with a broken-down budget and a comparison of how existing state funding could be re-channelled to implement the scheme. It is proposed that the state acquire large farms and convert them into small farms for settlement by black tenants. The budget includes the costs of external planning and management. The scheme is expensive and 'would need to be aimed at a relatively small and sophisticated farming population ...'.

The scheme necessitates that the would-be tenant farmers move from where they lived before to the newly acquired land.

What we have here, essentially, is a centrally planned, externally managed, expensive model which requires the physical moving of people onto what is *de facto* nationalised land. This kind of approach to rural development has failed and is discredited all over the world. In South Africa, institutions such as the Development Bank have rejected it after burning their fingers and causing irrevocable damage to rural communities.

The scheme contradicts the Urban Foundation's stated principles of a bottom-up approach which relies on community participation and takes account of 'regional complexity, diversity and advantage'.

The Urban Foundation has posed the problems of rural South Africa accurately and well. It has set itself impressive guiding principles. Why then does it proceed to fall back on a discredited, outdated model of rural development which, at best, does not address the problems it has posed, and at worst, contradicts the principles it has set itself?

I believe the answer lies in the fact that the foundation has chosen to sidestep the burning issue of the illegitimacy of present property relations in South Africa. Instead of starting from the land claims of dispossessed South Africans, whether they be farmers who were never allowed to rent or buy land, farmers whose land was expropriated on the basis of race, labour tenants who work for no wages to maintain occupation of farms they inherited from their great-grandparents, or people removed from farming land and dumped in the Bantustans, the foundation chooses to start from the assumption, like De Klerk, that existing title deeds must be protected.

Existing white title deeds are the result of a system of property law which prohibited blacks from buying land, leasing land, or protecting what land they had. Our property law legalised forced removals, farm evictions, and the expropriation of black land 'in the public interest'. Political considerations of race have overridden the 'sanctity of private property' for decades.

Now, suddenly, within two weeks of each other, we have the state and capital both expressing deep concern about the unfairness of the Land Act. The timing is significant. The system whereby the whites own most of South Africa needs to be legitimised before a majority government comes to power. Laws which prohibit one section of the population from land ownership on the basis of race, do not bode well for the prospects of white landowners under a black government. Everyone is aware that few blacks have the money to buy land at current prices, and that whites will be reluctant to sell rich farming land. Something has to be seen to be done to alleviate rural poverty and to give black farmers a chance, but not anything which calls into question the validity of white title deeds.

The Urban Foundation has provided extremely valuable material which shows the disjuncture between patterns of land occupation and land ownership. They, more than any other group, have shown that blacks are in *de facto* occupation of land which is nominally owned by whites in the rural areas. In the urban areas they have documented how little effect white laws of property or eviction have had on the demand for, or expression of, rights to land and housing by African people. African people, having been excluded from the terms of apartheid land law, have claimed and expressed their rights to land by their physical presence and

their tenacity in staying put. They have developed systems of tenure and local 'laws' for transacting land which operate in the vacuum created by apartheid land law.

In many cases African people have real rights to land which, while they have been denied by apartheid law, can be upheld in terms of the general principles of property law. The basis of common African claims to land, whether these be birth, inheritance, occupancy, or contractual rights such as purchase or tenancy, are also the basis upon which the system of private property is upheld and defended.

We need to develop mechanisms and legal proposals which confirm existing rights of occupation and land ownership and so heal the disjuncture between the formal legacy of apartheid law and the reality on the ground, and confirm the beliefs and values of all South Africans.

We must consolidate the work already begun in the development of a new system of registering existing rights to land, whether these be by occupation or other forms of ownership. Furthermore, we need to develop processes to adjudicate conflicting claims to land. The registration and adjudication must be linked together so that land transactions cannot be registered until the process of confirming existing rights and solving disputes has been completed.

As long as the 'free market' reigns, land will be bought and sold according to who has money - notwithstanding historical and occupational claims. To say we must have a land claims court is mere rhetoric unless there is provision in the registration process that all contentious transactions be referred to the court.

The Urban Foundation has access to the best expertise in these matters, all of which need to be developed further. But it did not take advantage of the imminent repeal of the Land Act to pursue this direction. Instead, it builds a policy on the debased and racial legacy of existing title deeds. We need to undo the legacy of apartheid land law, not entrench it. To pretend that it can be de-racialised by merely extending it to cover wealthy blacks is cynical and dishonest. It leads to a denial of the very principles of free enterprise, secure ownership, and non-racialism which the Urban Foundation publicly upholds. This makes plain how it is that the foundation reaches the somewhat bizarre position of advocating perpetual tenancy and nationalised land for black farmers. •



Winding down the Angolan war

A ceasefire, elections and a 'mixed economy' are the Angolan government's objectives in the current round of peace talks. But David Coetzee asks: Will that satisfy Savimbi?

As a regional conflict the Angolan war is proving one of the most intractable to solve.

In October, the latest and most creative attempt was made in Lisbon to get progress, but it was postponed to early November.

Already there have been a series of meetings (see chronology), but the big difference this time has been that the Soviet Union and the US have sent 'technical advisers' as observers.

South Africa has also sent a preparatory team from the foreign ministry and from what was described in Portugal as the 'interior' ministry, to Lisbon.

It has been kept quiet - but South Africa has been having continuing talks with Angola, the Soviets and Cuba in the commissions set up after the December 1988 New York accords to monitor the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. (The next meeting takes place in January). These commissions have provided the diplomatic base for South Africa's forays into the Eastern bloc.

This time in Lisbon all the preparations for Angolan peace talks have once again been made with Portuguese mediation through foreign minister Durao Barroso.

As *WIP* went to press, promises had been received that the major Angolan parties would attend the postponed talks beginning on November 6. This followed a meeting of the central committee of Angola's ruling MPLA party which formally agreed to replace one-party rule with a multi-party system.

This has been one of Unita's key demands: the Angolan government should recognise it as a legitimate party before there could be movement towards a ceasefire.

The two sides have been dancing endless diplomatic steps round this issue: on its side Unita has agreed to recognise the MPLA - until elections. It had earlier recognised president Jose Eduardo dos Santos as the head of state.

There are also problems over the logistics of creating a single military force out of the still-warring sides.

But Unita was this time also asking for a list of six African countries to be added to the observer team.

This, they say, should constitute the core of a monitoring group for the ceasefire being negotiated and for the elections to come.

Included is Zaire, which Luanda has said should no longer be involved as a

'mediator' because of its active role in support of Unita.

There is plenty of meat here for diplomatic delay - unless there is the will to break through.

Everywhere there are signs that patience is wearing thin: the US repeatedly stresses that the Soviet Union is cooperating nicely. US secretary of state James Baker said on October 19: 'In Africa our joint efforts with Moscow led to full Namibian independence. Now, we are working together to achieve a ceasefire and multi-party elections in Angola'.

The US congress, which has looked the other way in the past when the CIA put forward its budget requests for the supposedly covert war in Angola, this month had a long debate, and a radical motion to overturn Unita aid was narrowly defeated.

Instead, the US congress voted to make the aid conditional on both sides keeping to the talks, and the Soviets stopping their military aid.

This they have already said they are prepared to do, if the US cooperates.

So in theory the way is open for an end to Unita military supplies through Zaire.

Whether the congress' vote will have an immediate effect remains to be seen - the CIA has been notoriously disdainful of congressional votes in the past, and this vote was in many ways targeted more against them than against Unita, seeking to stop up some of the loopholes revealed in the Iran-Contra affair.

Indeed, the right wing in the US probably sees Angola as a chance for a re-run of the Nicaraguan elections, with a war-weary populace burying its pride and voting for the US candidate and peace.

For all except this still influential group, the continuation of the war seems an anomaly. The 'Cold War' is dead and overt South African destabilisation ended. In the US the right wing has, however, been allowed to have its head on this issue till now because Angola has simply not rated on the domestic political charts.

For years Angola has in vain sought to reassure policymakers in Washington that it is friendly to US business. Finally Luanda launched an all-out diplomatic offensive just before Jonas Savimbi made his trip to Washington a month ago to seek to ensure Unita's access to continued military aid.

This no doubt had its effect - and for the Congressional Black Caucus, Angola is now the major Afro-American issue. But an added impetus for a changed US policy change could now come from

1988

December: Angola, Cuba and South Africa sign tripartite accord in New York in the presence of US and Soviet observers; it foresees Namibian independence and Cuban withdrawal from Angola, and is the culmination of a series of contacts started in 1976. The meetings subsequently took place on Sal island, Cape Verde; in Egypt; and in Congo, before ending up in New York.

1989

April: The UN sets up shop in Namibia on 1 April to bring Resolution 435 to fruition. The entry into the country of armed elements of Swapo is perceived by Pretoria as a violation of the accords. A week of violent combat follows but the peace process is still on track.

June: Zaire's president Mobutu hosts two dozen African heads of state in moves to mediate in the Angolan conflict. Unita leader Jonas Savimbi and Angolan president Jose Eduardo dos Santos are there and on the 24th shake hands on a ceasefire - but it is never observed. Luanda wants Savimbi to go into exile; Unita accuses Mobutu of taking sides.

September: Unita meets in an extraordinary congress and approves proposals to 'reactivate Gbadolite'.

November: Swapo wins Namibian elections.

December: Dos Santos promises various reforms and measures to achieve peace. The government prepares a nine-point plan as a basis for negotiation, in

which exile for Savimbi is included.

1990

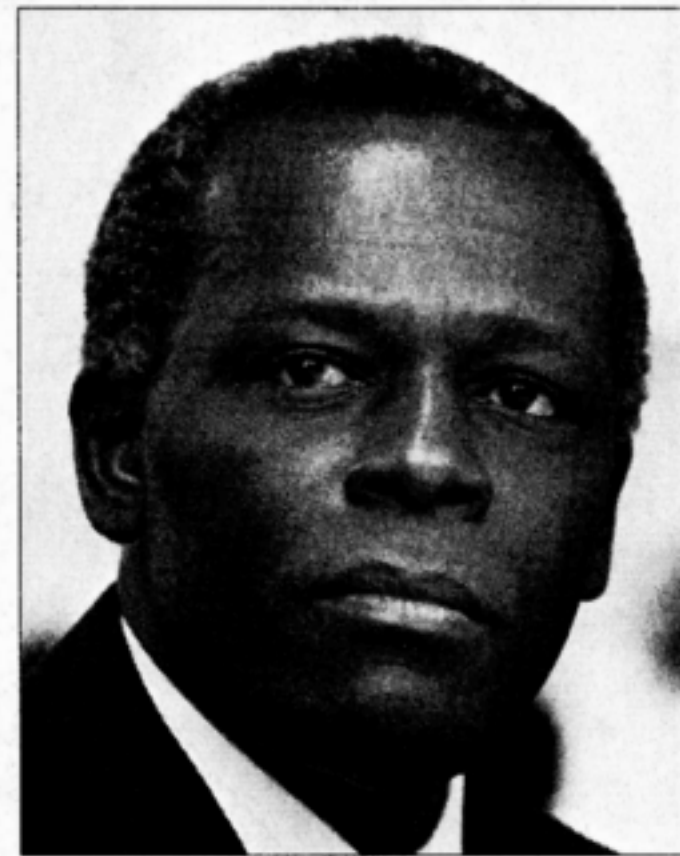
January: Savimbi visits Portugal.

February: Angolan armed forces announce on the 2nd that they have entered Mavinga, a key position on the route to Unita's headquarters at Jamba. Unita says it will not negotiate 'with a knife at its throat'.

March: Namibian independence is proclaimed on March 21. Dos Santos meets Portuguese foreign minister Durao Barroso.

April: Dos Santos meets his Congo, Gabon and Sao Tome counterparts and says he is rejecting Zaire mediation. This appears to end the first chapter of negotiation process, which started a year previously in Gbadolite. On the 7th Unita recognises the Angolan state and says its ready to sign an immediate ceasefire without conditions. It demands direct contact with Luanda. That recognition is one of the conditions Luanda regards as essential. It is announced that Paulo Alicerces Mango is chosen by Savimbi to coordinate meetings. Previously in Bonn, he is transferred to Lisbon, replacing Alcides Sakala. On the 18th Angola's foreign minister, Pedro de Castro van Dunem ('Loy'), holds talks with Barroso in Lisbon. Just before the meeting, Loy has extolled Portugal's role in unblocking the impasse preventing di-

The long road to



Dos Santos ... promised to achieve peace

rect talks. On the 23rd and 24th in Portugal, the first meeting between Unita and Luanda government takes place, with Barroso as Portuguese facilitator. The Angolan government delegation is led by jurist Antonio Pitra ('Petroff'), with Cirilo de Saita, while the Unita delegation is led by Gen Alicerces Mango, with a representative from Jamba, Paulo Lukamba ('Gato'). Two days later, the first Congress of Angolan Cadres abroad takes place in Lisbon, bringing together those sympathising with both sides in the

outside, from the Gulf crisis: the US is Angola's best customer for its fine grade oil, taking between 80% and 90% of production. But Washington is now growing aware that the US had become too dependent on the Middle East for its oil, and it needs to diversify suppliers.

Any further rationale for the US to back this war has been removed by Luanda delivering most concessions Washington has sought through the years of its proxy war - except immediate recognition of Unita.

The government has not only - as part of the Namibia deal - agreed to the Cuban forces leaving but it has submitted to direct US involvement in its own constitutional affairs, agreeing to multi-party elections.

US demands were not made in a vacuum - there was already pressure for

constitutional change inside Angola, and inside the ruling party.

Dos Santos has said, however, that he does not anticipate elections on this constitution before three years after the end of the war. Unita has given a cautious welcome to the move away from multi-party rule but questioned the proposed three-year delay.

Multi-partyism is the trend elsewhere in Africa, where single party rule has been tried and found wanting. But Angola's experience of the single party has been different: nowhere else in Africa has a single ruling party had to lead a high level technical war for so long on this level.

Angola's survival as a unified state has probably been due to the centralisation and discipline of the MPLA. But the rigid, centralised model, allied to an

absolute lack of the necessary levels of cadres, has led to an inertia and bureaucratism, while urgent development tasks have needed to be carried out.

With elections, Savimbi may emerge as the leader of a new Unita party, taking his place in the people's assembly (or there may be a third force, to which Unita supporters will accrue). The US has, however, always played for higher stakes, with Savimbi entering government.

All this will be hard for Luanda residents to stomach.

Their image of Savimbi is of a man who has kept a civil war going because of personal ambition and nothing else. He has permitted terror bomb attacks on cities and towns, hitting civilians, and has operated a policy of cutting peasant production by blowing their limbs off with anti-personnel mines.

Yet Luanda, and in particular Dos Santos, have taken the long view and agreed to the post-ceasefire legitimisation of a disarmed Unita. First, they want Unita to drop its weapons - not go into the elections as an armed force, as happened with the Contras backing the US-backed Uno party in Nicaragua.

What is not yet clear is how Luanda will deal with some of the underlying reasons for the existence of Unita. Until now the government has been denying that this is a civil war, but there are enough tensions in the society to underpin such a conflict - especially with outside aid. They will reveal themselves in a multi-party dispensation, too.

The most cited divisions concern rivalry between the Ovimbundu (who constitute the backbone of Unita) and the Kimbundu of the north. But there is also the tension between town and countryside. And if the new economic reform takes root, there will be more class-based tensions also, to find political expression in parties.

However, there is no other course. The government's own structural adjustment plan depends on constitutional change, too.

At the end of last year Lopo de Nascimento, provincial commissioner for the south, said that it was necessary to free up the politics of the state before the economic restructuring programme could work.

A ceasefire, elections and an economy using both market and planning is the government's preferred path now. But will Savimbi see enough in this scenario to guarantee him the future he feels he deserves? •

peace

Angolan conflict.

May: A communique signed by Unita's political bureau members and the high command of its armed forces recognises Dos Santos as head of the Angolan state. Alicerces Mango announces in Lisbon that Savimbi is sending a personal message to Dos Santos proposing a ceasefire for June. Tony da Costa Fernandes, Unita's secretary for foreign relations, brings the Portuguese government a message on the negotiations. Barroso then goes to Luanda where he meets Loy.

June: A second round of talks begins in Oeiras. The meeting is interrupted on the 18th when the Unita delegation says it has been called back to Jamba 'for consultations'. At the end, Barros says the two sides 'have never been so close to a deal'. It is announced that the contacts will resume in the first half of July.

July: An editorial in the Jornal de Angola says the government is not interested in pointless meetings, and will only agree to participate in a third round of talks when Unita's leaders give clear signs that their words and their actions will correspond. Barroso meets for five hours with Savimbi, to whom he brings a verbal message from Cavaco Silva. On the 31st, Venancio de Moura takes Cavaco a message from Dos Santos.

August: Barroso announces the postponement of the third round until the end

of the month. The move to delay it came from Luanda, and Unita reacted. Loy says there were problems of a legal, constitutional and political nature with the recognition of Unita as a political party. Cavaco Silva meets Dos Santos on the 9th in Sao Tome and says the two sides will get together in Portugal on the 15-20th. But on the 15th Luanda publishes a declaration accusing Unita of delaying a new round of talks set for the 21st. The talks eventually get under way on the 27th, and last four days. They end without agreement on the recognition issue, but the parties agree to meet again. Portugal proposes that US and Soviet observers should be present at the next talks. Luanda is negative. Ninth meeting of the joint commission on south western Africa, in Windhoek on 13 September, with Angola, Cuba, Namibia and South Africa, and the US and Soviet Union present as observers. An opportunity for indirect talks in advance of the next round of peace talks in Portugal.

October: Another round in the peace talks is set for Lisbon, this time with the Soviet Union and the US as 'technical observers'. Talks postponed to November 6. At the same time the US Congress votes to make further aid for Unita, set at \$60-m, conditional on both sides holding to the talks, and to the Soviets stopping their military aid for Angola. The vote is welcomed by Luanda. MPLA formally decides to adopt multi-partyism, but sees elections three years after a ceasefire. •

Coming
to terms
with the
past

penguin
forum
series

the ANC's armed struggle



penguin
forum
series

apartheid's secret weapon



MK: The ANC's armed struggle
By Howard Barrell (Penguin Books)
Death Squads: Apartheid's secret weapon
By Patrick Laurence (Penguin Books)

THESE are the first two titles in Penguin's new 'Forum Series', which 'offers alternative perspectives on critical social issues to enhance democratic participation'.

The release of short, accessible and relatively cheap books on contemporary issues is to be welcomed, especially as South Africans begin grappling with the past, trying to make sense of how it has given rise to the present, and ponder what sort of future will be created out of the battles to conserve, transform or eradicate apartheid society.

Superficially, Howard Barrell and Patrick Laurence's contributions deal with some of the same issues from different sides of a single conflict.

Barrell analyses the growth and development of ANC military activities, while Laurence describes the state's military and police initiatives to destroy organised forces opposed to apartheid through destabilisation, assassination and physical attack.

But that is where the similarities end. *MK* is a deeply thoughtful book, which frankly analyses the successes and failures of the ANC's armed struggle.

Barrell argues that neither Umkhonto we Sizwe nor the ANC ever succeeded in mounting an armed or insurrectionary struggle which could seriously contend for state power. He acknowledges that *MK* faced some of the most difficult and inhospitable conditions ever to confront a revolutionary movement, and traces the attempts of *MK* leaders and soldiers to overcome these objective impediments over three decades.

The first sabotage campaigns of the early 1960s; the fascinating story of the ANC military link-up with Zapu and engagement with Rhodesian forces in the Wankie campaign; the slow rebuilding of decimated ANC and *MK* structures in the early 1970s; the rush of militant and politicised youngsters to join *MK* after the 1976 uprisings; the armed propaganda of the late 1970s and insurrectionary moments of the mid-1980s - all involved shifts in *MK*'s strategic thinking, organisational tactics, and structures of implementation and co-ordination.

But, at core, Barrell's argument is that *MK* - and the ANC - failed as a revolutionary movement aiming for the seizure



of state power.

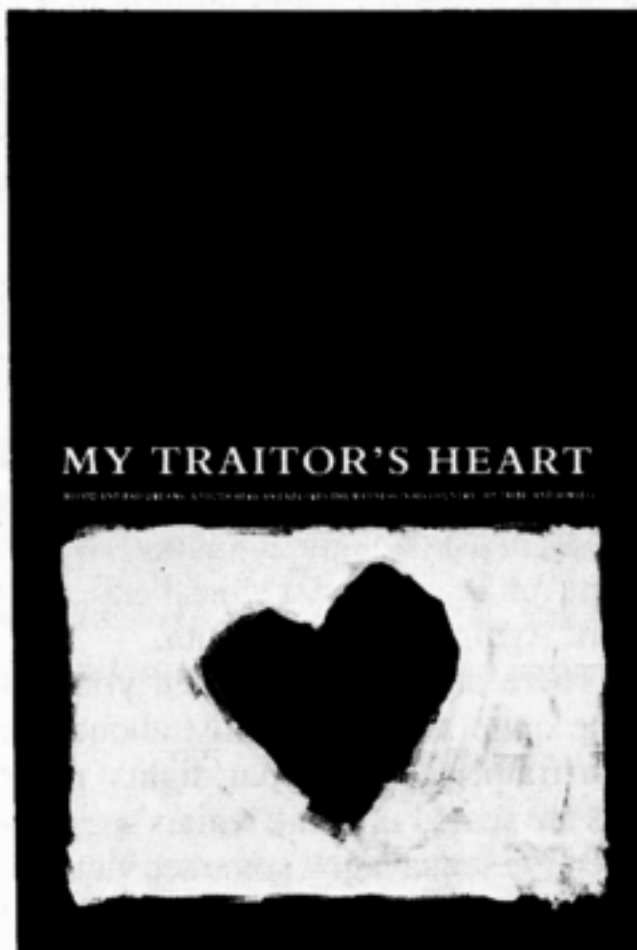
This failure was in part the result of the difficult objective conditions: but at the same time, according to Barrell, the major reason for the failure of the ANC and *MK* to achieve their aim of the revolutionary seizure of state power was 'their inability - despite opportunities to do so - to develop internal underground leaderships, at both regional and national level, exercising day-by-day, hands-on command and control over all aspects of political and military work'.

Much of Barrell's book is devoted to various ANC and *MK* attempts to resolve the contradictions between military and political struggle and organisation, exiled leadership and internal activists, central direction and local initiative. Barrell argues that Operation Vula - currently the subject of a major trial involving high-level ANC and *MK* leaders - was by far the most successful attempt to achieve a synthesis of these tensions.

Despite these failures, Barrell notes that there is a sense in which *MK* also succeeded - not as a revolutionary movement, but in the light of its 1961 claim that it was going to war not only to 'create the conditions for a credible peace ... but in order to avoid war'.

Barrell suggests that *MK*'s main achievement was essentially propagandistic: it played a vital role in 'bringing South Africa to the verge of a negotiated end to white minority political domination'. If this happens, *MK* will have 'miraculously accomplished the movement's initial political objective: They would have gone to war to avoid war ...

This isn't going to be an easy review



My Traitor's Heart
By Rian Malan (*The Bodley Head*)

To Rian Malan

This isn't going to be an easy review. Not for the usual, unstated reason: the yawning reviewer battled to finish the book.

I have just read *My Traitor's Heart* hungrily, lured on and on. One breathtaking, lovingly crafted, always aching narrative flows into the next.

So how do I begin? Let me tell a small story of my own, or rather the bones of a story, the details have long since washed away. Some time in the course of a prison sentence I was abused verbally by a particularly nasty prison officer - Kaptein Arend Schnetler. It was for something irrelevant that I have long since forgotten. Later when the officer and his entou-

and won'.

Death Squads describes the emergence and activities of assassination and 'dirty tricks' squads linked to police and military structures. The book is a useful compilation of material which has already emerged through evidence in the Harms Commission, investigative reports largely undertaken by journalists of the *Vrye Weekblad*, and research by lawyers, the Human Rights Commission and David Webster Trust.

All the major actors and incidents which were revealed during 1989 and the first half of 1990 are present: police death squad members like Dirk Coetzee and Almond Nofamela; the Vlakplaas farm near Pretoria where 'Askaris' - ex-guerrilla fighters working for the police - were housed; the limited evidence on the SADF's shadowy Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) which emerged through the Harms Commission; the Johannesburg City Council spy ring.

But ultimately Laurence's work falls a bit flat: there is little information in his book which was not already known to regular newspaper readers. And his final chapter, which attempts to explain rather than describe death squad activity, lacks nuance and depth.

This is partially a result of writing without the benefit of original research and interviews with participants - an area in which Barrell's work is much stronger.

Death Squads adds little in knowledge and texture to what is already known, or could have been gleaned from a careful reading of newspaper reports. The actors and their motivations in these sordid episodes remain one-dimensional, and at the end of the book one is left with a very limited understanding of how the death squads came to be, and the nature of those who staffed them.

Barrell, by contrast, knows his subject well. *MK* includes extracts from interviews, anecdotes, some original material. The author is clearly sympathetic to *MK*, the ANC and their objectives. But his is a critical voice, acknowledging bravery and sacrifice, but distanced from the terrain of moral judgement.

Perhaps this is asking too much of *Death Squads*, especially given the difficulties in researching the squads in detail. But as a centralisation of material, Laurence's book is useful, and will hopefully be read by many ordinary white South Africans coming to terms with the past, and needing to know what the government was doing in their name. - Glenn Moss •

rage had disappeared, one of the warders (Basson? Badenhorst? or perhaps it was even a Malan) glancing over his shoulder, came down to me, clucking under his breath, whispering in sympathy: 'I don't care if a person is a warder, or a prisoner, or what. You just don't speak to a white man like that'.

You see, reading your book has brought this now fading anecdote back to me. But why?

I am not really sure. Maybe it has something to do with being lured into an unwanted complicity. This isn't going to be an easy review.

Your book is written dangerously, looking over your shoulder. I don't mean in the sense that the person with the by-line 'Rian Malan' goes into dangerous, front-line situations to bring us these despatches. I mean that you invite us into your heart. There is considerable honesty in your book. It would be rather crass if I now rolled on to this terrain like a good old Soviet T64 tank and blasted away something like this:

- You tell us: 'Even the Communist Party deferred to Dawid Malan's legacy and organised under the slogan 'workers of the world unite and fight for a white South Africa'. Nonsense! You pride yourself in being a hard-nosed, researching journalist, and here you are repeating a long debunked distortion which even the SATV did not quite manage to purvey in its recent 'documentary' on the Communist Party.

- 'There are no classes in the United States?' No Rockefellers, no working stiffs, no unemployed blacks, no migrants, Latinos? ... Come on!

- 'Black democrats like Gatsha Buthelezi', you write. Without a trace of irony?

- Dealing with the 1985-6 period which saw, amongst other things, bitter UDF/AZAPO clashes, you speak of 'Bishop Tutu's UDF'. At this time Tutu was a patron of both the UDF and the National Forum of Azapo and CAL. But that doesn't quite suit the symmetry of your argument.

- For the same period - you give only the barest hint that 40 000 people were detained under the State of Emergency, and the overwhelming majority were from UDF structures. The resulting and massive dislocation to organisational discipline and political strategy, likewise, doesn't quite fit your argument.
- Etc., etc...

I could go on, but I don't want to be this sort of T64 tank.

BOOK REVIEWS

When I started by saying that reviewers sometimes struggle to read books I was thinking of the novel I was meant to review together with your book. By contrast with that novel, *My Traitor's Heart* confirms me in a particular prejudice.

Most of the best writing that is going on in our country at the moment, I mean even aesthetically speaking, is in the field of journalism. Personally, I find South Africa of the 1780s or the 1980s turned into fiction a great an-aesthetic.

Your archival reconstruction of your ancestor Dawid Malan, who eloped in the 1780s with a slave woman. Who turned his back on white colonial privilege, only to emerge again this side of the Great Fish River as the prime ideologue in the Slachter's Nek, racist rebellion, beats the fiction I've read covering similar terrain. Ditto all the other narratives you weave together: the renegade NUM shop steward dispensing 'protective' muti to a band of striking mineworkers before they wade fearlessly into gunfire butchering two white policemen; the life and times of the murderous Hammerman of Empangeni; the tragedy of the Azapo Wauchope family in the midst of deadly sectarian struggles in Soweto; the Alcocks in Msinga; and many more. There is truth here, and my T64 tank is not going to blast away with claims to the contrary.

But if journalistic writing, if the New Journalism, is a powerful, compelling mode for our place and times, it also has potential weaknesses. It is not innocent, and it is not merely empirical. Through all the research there is the angle, the selection. No matter how often (and it IS often in your book) that there is a pause for pulse-taking and self-analysis, the author has motivations, some less declared than others.

Let's get back to the complicity.

Or rather, first, what's the angle running through it all? What are the motivations? You speak quite often of 'my circle of hell, the circle of white left liberals'. You also speak of your own 'Marxist' past (I could quibble, but I suppose this 'Marxism' is like fear. It might be groundless, but if it exists in the psyche of the beholder, it exists after a fashion.)

There are many shibboleths you attack in the course of your book. But at the centre of it all is a sustained attack on, an exorcism of this 'Marxism', this white left liberalism.

So let's get back to the complicity. A

great deal of what you say is absolutely correct. It connects with raw nerves. Hidden, unadmitted truths. Yes, there is truth in your book and I don't care whether you are a warder, or a prisoner, or what.

But, at the end of the day, there is also a more fundamental sleight of hand. Indeed, despite all the apparent straight-talking, the fearless testing of nerve, the to-hell-with-the-bullshit, you are carving out a nice niche - having eloped, you are now returning back over the mythical Great Fish River, to an uncomfortably comfortable place with a tough-talking New Journalism your alibi.

What is the device at play? When the 17th century philosopher Descartes wanted to produce absolute certainty, to cut through the mists of medieval scholasticism, he began by doubting. He doubted everything and thought that in the act of doubting he had secured his first clear and distinct truth.

My Traitor's Heart is forever signalling: what I am saying has not been easy. First there are all the physical dangers. This story comes from the frontlines. Township stones rained down on my car roof. I was crapping in my pants. Here is my despatch, it comes besplattered with blood. Look here and here. Ergo it must be true. The writing also proclaims its origins in psychological trauma. Here is living proof, this text, this book, this heart. Again, blood ergo truth.

(There are moments when you become quite smug and elitist about this truth framed within your sights: 'Our eyes are sealed ... Some whites see danger, some see savages, some see victims, and some see revolutionary heroes. Very few of us see clearly'.)

There are philosophical precedents for this theory of knowledge. The Inquisition was premised upon it, truth is born of blood. Hemingway, in his way, introduced it into aesthetics. Spyker van Wyk of the Security branch held to it - truth only emerges out of pain.

And what if the truth is often more prosaic, more banal, or utterly more complex? After all, danger-run or blood on the tiles is no proof of verity whatsoever.

Nevertheless, what is the supposed, absolute, bottom-line truth that emerges from your own morbid doubting? Strangely, but not so strangely, this methodology of blood emerges with, as its a priori, axiomatic beginning...Blood. Race. Biology.

'I was desperate to win black trust and friendship' you say honestly and self-

critically of your younger self. Ah, yes, here there's complicity between you and me. I recognise that yearning. I know it. I remember it.

And now all your New Journalism weaponry is brought to bear on this longing that we've shared. Every single narrative in your book is lined up to debunk that innocent and naive yearning. But you draw the entirely wrong conclusions from the debunking.

What are the stories you tell designed to say? Basically this: in South Africa, when the barricades are up, it is black and white, simple. Blood and race. The proof? In the hour of the fires, as a white your political convictions and sympathies are not inscribed on your forehead. In the time of trouble, it is foolhardy as a white to wander on to the black side of the township barricades. The naive yearning for acceptance is just that - naive.

I agree, but I do not draw your conclusion that, therefore, it all comes down to 'Africa, and the ancient mysteries of race'. The truth is at once a damned sight more simple, and great deal more complex. Of course, in a bitter war situation it would be highly naive as a white, armed only with some progressive, inner convictions, to wander into the townships. It would be equally naive of the black comrades to accept your unlikely explanations.

But this does not mean that progressive whites are foolhardy or naive to side in a broader, more general but still active sense with the liberation struggle; to work, as thousands are, in mundane, heroic or unheroic, passionate or slogging ways for a non-racial, democratic or even socialist South Africa.

Politics is not only, or not even mainly barricades and brinkmanship. Of course, many of the white comrades I am referring to began where you and I began - with a naive longing to be trusted and loved by blacks in some kind of sweeping generic way. A generic way that would, of course, carry away a massive guilt.

Well, we all have to grow up.

Our political commitments and analyses cannot be based on the desire for instant self-gratification, on some vague desire to be saluted and absolved by the dark masses out there.

But equally, Rian Malan, nor should they be based on petulant recoil into the mythology of the ancient mysteries of race.

Yours etc

Jeremy Cronin •



Tackling the conglomerates: Barlow Rand workers at a recent demonstration in Johannesburg

The victories continue... struggle is certain

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu) have moved another step closer to achieving their aims in their campaign against the Labour Relations Act (LRA). As reported in *WIP* 69, the cabinet on 20 September accepted a proposal that a draft bill based on the Cosatu-Nactu-Saccola accord on the LRA - as amended by the National Manpower Commission (NMC) and a working group established by president FW de Klerk - be submitted for consideration by the parliamentary standing committee on manpower.

The committee heard representations on the Labour Relations Amendment Bill in late October, paving the way for it to become law next year.

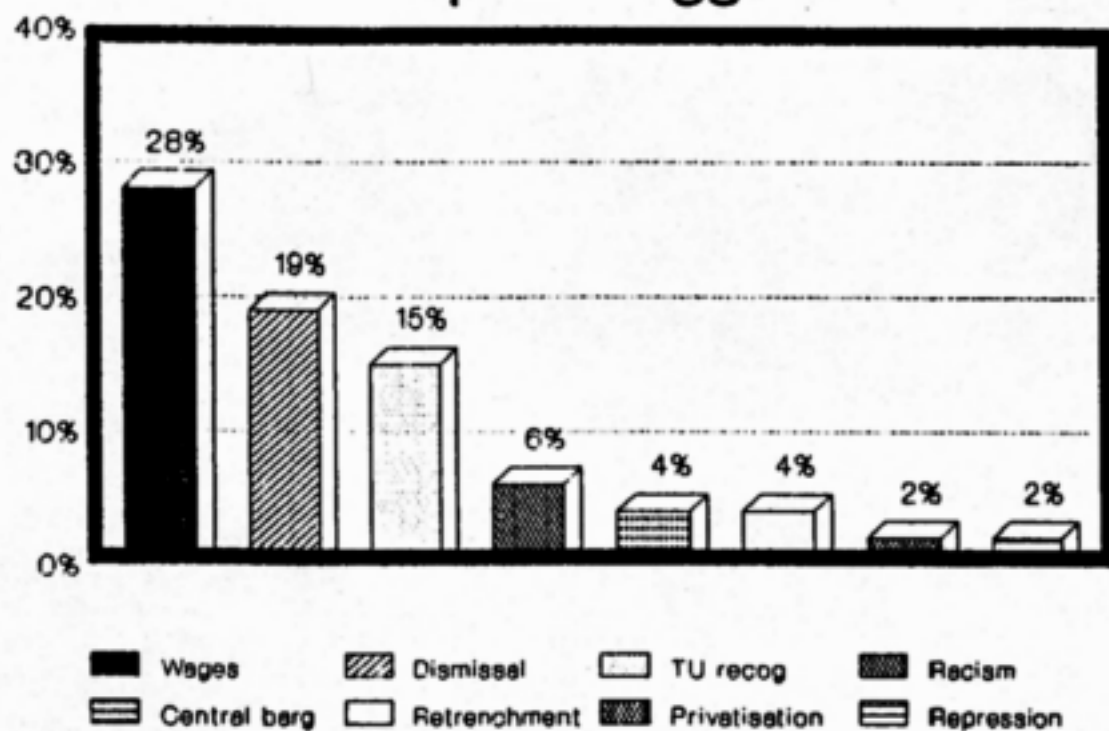
The labour federations are quite naturally pleased with this development. After all, they have been campaigning for this change for over two years. There is, however, still some concern about the steps that lie ahead.

According to Cosatu's Geoff Schreiner, the bill is not entirely to the federation's liking; there is also a degree of uncertainty about what will happen in standing committee and, later, in parliament.

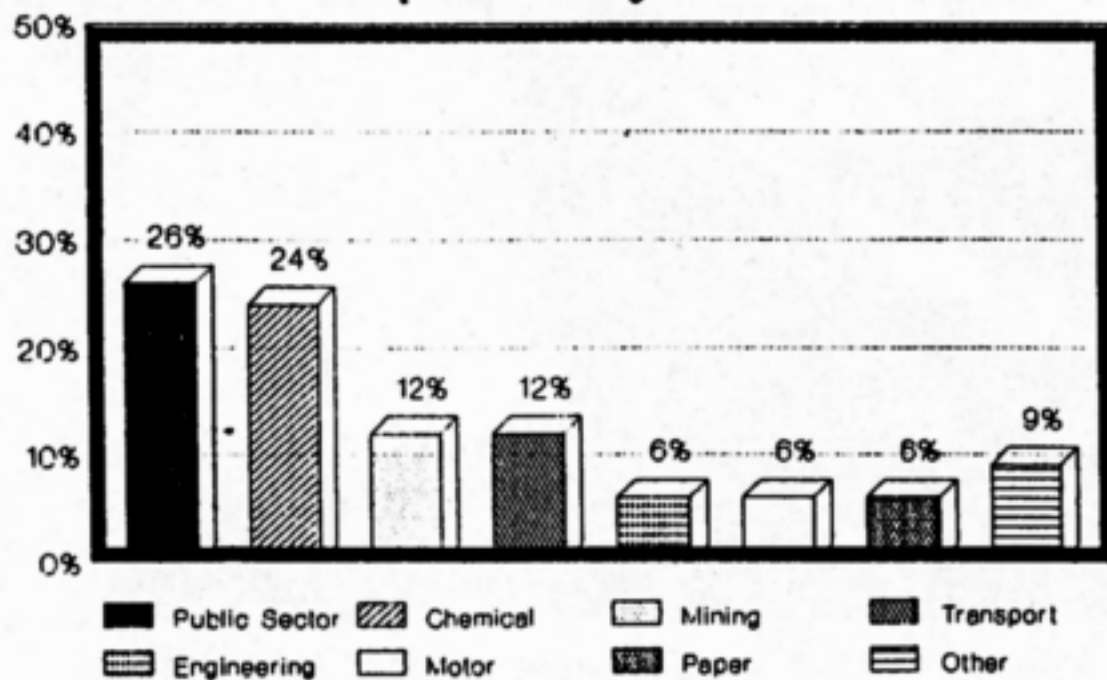
'The state's law advisers introduced certain changes which we believe change the substance of what was agreed in the working group,' says Schreiner.

Cosatu met with Manpower Minister Eli Louw to discuss its objections prior to giving evidence before the standing com-

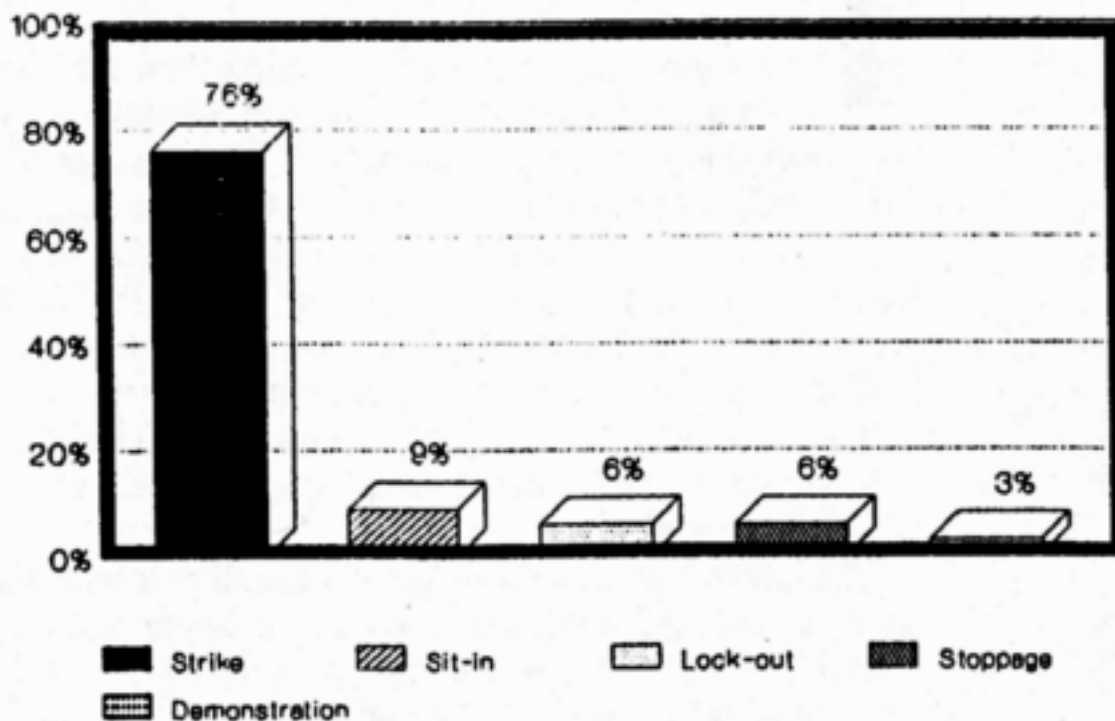
Dispute triggers



Disputes by sector



Type of action



certain procedures. But they can still be fired for being on strike. Employers can also interdict them from striking. And if workers live in company accommodation, they can also be evicted during a strike.

'If they had the right to strike - as workers in other countries do - these things could not happen. This is fundamental if we are start equalising the relationship between capital and labour.'

Trade union rights for all workers in South Africa is another goal that has not yet been attained.

The Cosatu-Nactu-Saccola accord makes provision for civil servants and farm and domestic workers - who are presently excluded from the ambit of the LRA - to be covered by the Act.

The government, however, is still resisting this and the Bill differs from the accord in this respect.

Cosatu is also set upon ensuring that labour legislation is extended to the bantustans.

The industrial court and the Department of Manpower are an additional problem.

'At present the industrial court does not have credibility - it must be revamped. Similarly, the Department of Manpower does not reflect modern realities.'

'We need to have effective mechanisms to give effect to any LRA,' says Schreiner.

Then there is is challenge posed by participation in the National Manpower Commission.

'In principle we have agreed to participate', says Schreiner, 'but we need to work out things like who should be there and what power it should have.'

• WIP monitored 34 disputes involving some 86 680 workers in the period between 21 September and 24 October. Of these 26 were strikes, 2 work stoppages, 3 sit-ins, 2 lock-outs and 1 a demonstration.

Three of the strikes were national strikes, of which the largest is the Nampak strike which centres on a demand for centralised bargaining.

As can be seen in the graphs, wages demands were the trigger for the majority of the disputes, followed by unfair dismissals, and trade union recognition.

The majority of the disputes occurred in the public sector and the chemical industry.

The mining and transport sectors were the next hard-hit. •

mittee. The minister noted the federation's objections and undertook to table them as amendments with the standing committee.

'If the Bill goes through as amended in our talks with the minister, it will be a great victory,' says Schreiner. 'But it depends on how it comes out of the

standing committee and parliament.'

The campaign around the LRA does not end here, however. As Schreiner points out: 'Workers still have to win many other rights.'

'For example, the right to strike is not entrenched in the law. Workers have the freedom to strike - provided they follow

STRIKES AND DISPUTES

12 September to 24 October

National

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Details
Nampak	Ppwawu	3000	19 September	The central issue in this strike is Ppwawu's demand that Nampak management agree to centralised bargaining for the group instead of the present system in terms of which the union bargains at 40 individual plants. Other demands are that Nampak should pledge to help rebuild the defunct paper and printing industrial councils and institute a group-wide investigation into 'bugging' of union activities. Initially the strike involved workers at 19 plants, but it subsequently escalated to encompass 32 plants. Management's response to the strike has taken different forms. It has made applications in the industrial court and supreme court to interdict workers from striking. It has also withdrawn recognition agreements at several plants. And some 1 000 strikers had been dismissed at the time of going to press. On the union's side, several protests have been staged to reinforce the strikers demands. On 26 September some 200 workers demonstrated outside Nampak's Sandton head office. On 16 October some 5 000 people - including strikers, community members and students - marched from Alexandra township to the head office of Nampak's parent company, Barlow Rand. A march was also scheduled to take place in Cape Town on 25 October, after WIP went to press. The union has in addition requested the TUC and the Anti-Apartheid-Movement in Britain to put pressure on two supermarket chains - Asda and Sainsbury - not to purchase supplies from Nampak companies here. Cosatu has given the strike its full backing. On 22 October the federation announced that the strike would be a major focus of national protest action designed to press demands for centralised bargaining at Barlow Rand subsidiaries. Members of various Cosatu affiliates have also taken action in solidarity with the strikers: there have been petitions, workstoppages and blacking of Nampak companies.
Post Office	Potwa	22000	18 September	Postal workers staged sit-ins countrywide in rejection of the new Post Office Bill which makes provision for the Post Office to be split into separate postal and telecommunications divisions. According to Potwa, this amounts to an attempt at privatisation.
SA government	PSL	20000	16 October	Thousands of so-called coloured civil servants went on strike demanding a 20% wage increase and an end to job differentiation. Top-level talks between a senior official of the House of Representatives and government paymasters were scheduled to follow.

Transvaal

ATC Brits	Numsa	600	14 July	As reported in WIP 69, this dispute started in May when the company dismissed six Numsa members, three of them shop stewards. In an effort to have them reinstated, workers began preparing for a legal strike. On 9 August, however, management obtained an industrial court order interdicting them from striking. On 14 August management instituted a lock-out. ATC subsequently proposed that the dismissals should be referred to arbitration. The company also agreed to negotiate a recognition agreement with the union.
Duvha colliery Witbank	Num	870	27 August 3 October	Workers embarked on a legal strike when management offered to increase wages by 14.5% in response to their demand for a 29% across-the-board increase. During mediation on 20 September workers revised their demand, asking for 15% increase instead. Management, however, refused to meet their demand. Thereafter, workers were issued with an ultimatum to return to work on 3 October or face dismissal. Management has since banned union meetings and ruled that workers may not wear union T-shirts.
Fosroc	CWIU	90	17 October	Workers struck demanding the reinstatement of a dismissed worker.
Home Care Potteries Vereeniging	Cawu	69	27 August	As reported in WIP 69, workers were locked out after going on strike because management hired casual workers a month after retrenching 33 of their fellow workers. The matter has now been referred to the industrial court.
Iscor Sishen, Thabazimbi Elisras	Num	5000	17 October	Mineworkers went on strike at 3 Iscor mines - the Thabazimbi and Sishen iron ore mines and Grootgeluk colliery at Elisras - following a breakdown in wage talks with management. Workers demanded a minimum monthly wage of R630, while management offered R560 a month. Other demands are for full-time shop stewards and 16 June and 21 March as paid holidays. At a meeting with management on 24 October Num proposed that the parties go to mediation to try to settle the dispute. Iscor has agreed in principle to this.
Kamillen Products Johannesburg	Sacwu	31	5 July 3 September	Workers went on strike when management offered a wage increase of R95 a month in response to their demands for: a R150 a month across-the-board increase; a 40-hour working week; a thirteenth cheque; and 21 March as a paid holiday. According to Sacwu, the action came after the company reneged on an agreement to allow union auditors to examine its books. The dispute was settled when workers accepted a wage increase of R90 per month from September to December followed by a R30 per month increase in January 1991 and a further R10 a month hike in September 1991.

Lebowa government Lebowakgomo	Notrapsw	16000	19 September 10 October	Lebowa's civil servants went on strike demanding recognition of their union, the Northern Transvaal Public Service Workers' Union (Notrapswu), permanent employment for casual labourers and an end to various forms of discrimination. The strike was characterised by high levels of violence, with several arson attacks on government buildings. Six executive members of the union were detained during the action. The strike was resolved on 9 October after negotiations between the bantustan government, Notrapswu and Cosatu. The government undertook to negotiate a recognition agreement with the union and granted Cosatu permission to hold a rally at Lebowakgomo on 21 October to report on the settlement. In return, Cosatu and the union made a pledge not to call for any strikes, boycotts or other actions in the region while negotiations with the government are underway. The detainees were released after talks between Notrapswu and the police.
Lichtenburg m'pality	Nups	108	27 September	The workers, who earn between R200 and R300 a month, downed tools demanding a minimum monthly wage of R520 and recognition of Nups. Management held talks with the union the same day and indicated that they would consider the wage demand. When the union representatives went to report back, however they found that the workers had already been served with dismissal notices. The union has declared a dispute and applied for a conciliation board.
Matia Colliery	Num	860	22 October	Mineworkers went on a one-day strike when management decided to take disciplinary action against 40 of their workmates for Witbank 23 October using changehouses allocated for skilled workers. The action of the 40 formed part of Num's defiance campaign to end racist practices on the mines. The strikers insisted that the 40 should not be singled out and that management should rather take action against all of them. The dispute was resolved when management agreed not to institute disciplinary action against the 40 in return for an undertaking from workers not to use changerooms for skilled workers.
Meyerton m'pality	MSFAWU	202	30 July	As reported in WIP 69, workers downed tools after the council offered to increase wages by R395 a month in response to their Meyerton demand for an increase of R800 across the board. On 1 August they were all dismissed. The council has since offered to re-employ 89 of the strikers but has refused to do the same for the others, saying their posts have been made redundant. The dispute has been referred to the relevant industrial council.
Motovia	TGWU	94	27 September	The workers, who are long distance drivers, went on strike in protest against long working hours and the company's decision West Wood to withdraw travel allowances. A third demand was for the reinstatement of a dismissed workmate. According to TGWU, workers are expected to work 24 hours a day when on duty. To back their demand, workers embarked on an overtime ban, knocking off at 5pm every day. On 27 September management obtained a court order interdicting workers from continuing with the overtime ban. Workers, however, defied the order. On 28 September they were all dismissed. Management subsequently offered to re-employ the workers provided they signed short-term contracts. Workers rejected this saying the issue of short-term contracts should be discussed with the union at national level.
Pact	PPWAWU	270	25 September	Workers downed tools demanding an audience with Pact deputy general director Louis Bezuidenhout after a report-back by Ppwawu Pretoria shop stewards on talks with management over stop order facilities. The union had for several months been demanding that Pact deduct union dues from members' pay packets. Pact's response was that it was locked into an agreement with another union and was awaiting an exemption from the relevant industrial council. All the workers were dismissed less than two hours after the start of the work stoppage.
Pietersburg Hospital	Nehawu	300	27 September 28 September	Workers staged a work stoppage after a white wage clerk was racially abusive to a worker. The worker, who had been queuing for pay, left the queue to go to the toilet. When she returned, the clerk accused her of jumping the queue. The workers demanded that the clerk apologise publicly. They resumed work after management forced the clerk to accede to their demand.
Post office, Joh'burg	Potwa	100	2 October	The workers, who live in post office houses in Molapovilla in Soweto, staged a demonstration outside Jeppe Street post office
Potgieters Transport Lichtenburg	TGWU	38	4 September	Workers went on strike demanding recognition of TGWU and the reinstatement of 5 workers who were dismissed because they had joined the union. A third grievance was the company's decision to withdraw 7 workers' company cars. Management agreed to reinstate 4 of the dismissed workers, but refused to do the same for the fifth, or to accede to the strikers' other demands. All the strikers were dismissed on 4 September. The union then made an application in the industrial court to have them reinstated under section 43 of the LRA. The application was, however, refused on the grounds that the strike was illegal.
Pretoria Glass	CWIU	52	9 July	As reported in WIP 69, workers at Pretoria Glass & Aluminium went on strike in protest against the dismissal of a fellow Pretoria worker. All were on 16 July. Management has since re-employed 17 of the strikers. The union is fighting the dismissals in the industrial court.
Reckitt & Coleman	CWIU	350	29 May	As reported in WIP 69, workers embarked on a legal strike in an effort to force the company to participate in the Chemical Elandsfontein Industries' National Provident Fund and were all dismissed at the end of June. In response, the union called for a consumer boycott of the company's products. A conciliation board hearing on 19 October failed to resolve the dispute. A continuation of the consumer boycott is under consideration.

Samancor Witbank	Numsa	2000	30 August 19 September	Workers embarked on a legal strike when management offered to increase wages by 15% in response to their demand for increases of between 15% and 36%. The dispute was settled when workers accepted an offer for a 16% increase which raises wages for Meyerton unskilled workers to R4.55/hour and to R10.92/hour for skilled employees. Other improvements include time off for shop steward training and an undertaking by management to abide by job security clauses in the Main Agreement for the metal industry.
SAMIEA	Numsa	30	11 October	Some 30 Numsa shop stewards, who represents 60 000 union members, staged a sit-in at the Pretoria office of the SA Motor Pretoria 11 October Industry Employers' Association (SAMIEA) to back wage demands currently being negotiated by the union and the employer body. Workers are demanding R4.50 an hour. Management is offering R2.50 an hour.
Sigma Colliery Sasolburg	Sacwu	2000	29 August 20 September	Workers at this Sasol mine went on strike when negotiations on wages and working conditions broke down. Workers were demanding a minimum wage of R1 299 a month; a R400 across-the-board increase; more paid holidays; an improved shift allowance and reduced hours of work. The colliery had offered to increase the minimum wage by between 20% and 30% (which would have brought the minimum wage for underground employees to R500 a month and R454 a month for surface employees) and to increase the number of statutory paid holidays from 7 to 8. On 3 September 8 union members were arrested, charged with malicious damage to property and allowed bail of R200. On 13 September all strikers were dismissed. The dispute was resolved after mediation by IMSSA. The union settled on a 30% increase which raises the minimum for underground workers to R150 a month and for surface workers to R469 a month.
Zebediela Citrus Pietersburg	NUFW	1500	8 August	As reported in WIP 69, workers at this state-owned farm went on strike demanding a 50% increase and a minimum wage of R400 a month as well as recognition of NUFW. On 8 and 9 October the strikers were evicted from their quarters by Lebowa police in terms of a court order obtained by management. The farm's security personnel, whom the strikers had accused of harassing them, and who live in mud huts on the estate, then moved into the quarters. On 12 October the magistrate who had sanctioned the eviction of the strikers rescinded the court order. This meant that the strikers could re-occupy their quarters. However, the security guards refused to move out and on 15 October went on strike themselves. Nactu has threatened to call a national stayaway over the dispute.

OFS

OwaQwa government OwaQwa	Nehawu	8000	17 September	Civil servants went on a one-day strike over the arrest the previous day of 10 Nehawu officials who had staged a seven-day sit-in at the bantustan government's offices after the government reneged on an undertaking to discuss the summary dismissal of 528 workers. The officials were charged with trespassing.
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Natal

Indian Ocean Fertilizer	CWIU	250	13 August	As reported in WIP 69, management imposed a lock-out after workers voiced their dissatisfaction with wages and working Richards Bay conditions. Mediation on the dispute took place on 1 November, but the outcome was not known at the time WIP went to press.
Mainline Carriers	TGWU	150	23 September	Workers went on strike demanding the reinstatement of a senior shop steward who had been dismissed. Management responded by Pinetown dismissing them all. In subsequent negotiations with the union, management offered to reinstate 63 workers but not the rest. The union rejected the offer. Talks are continuing.
Nicholas Kiwi	CWIU	80	23 October	Workers went on strike demanding the dismissal of a supervisor who had been rude.

Cape

Cape Electric Lamp Port Elizabeth	CWIU	100	10 September	Workers at Electric Lamp Manufacturers staged a sit-in following a deadlock in wage talks. On 13 September management obtained a court order interdicting them from being on the premises. The workers, however, refused to leave. They were evicted by police on 14 September.
Ellerines	Saccawu	100	17 September	Workers at seven stores in the Ellerines group embarked on a strike demanding the reinstatement of 2 dismissed colleagues. It Port Elizabeth was later announced that negotiations with management were underway.
Mercedes-Benz SA East London	Numsa	200	16 August 8 October	This strike began when a group of employees opposed to the National Bargaining Forum (NBF) - a body established last year at Numsa's request as a forum for negotiating wages and working conditions at 6 motor manufacturers - downed tools demanding that management negotiate these issues at plant level. They did so because they believed they could get a better deal that way as Mercedes pays more than the other manufacturers. The workers then occupied the factory. On 10 August management obtained a court interdict ordering the strikers to leave the plant. The order was not heeded. On 21 August Mercedes announced that they had been dismissed. On 2 September police evicted them. The company thereafter announced that production would not resume until: damage to the plant had been assessed and repaired; Numsa gave assurances that the problems over the NBF had

				been resolved; Numsa satisfied management that workers would abide by the terms of their employment contracts and any other agreements between the union and the company; and both the union and the company agreed on a practical process to remove problems that affect the company's growth and viability. Agreement on these issues was reached in late September. Numsa also confirmed that workers had agreed to accept the wage agreement concluded at the NBF. Production resumed on 3 October. The dismissal of 538 workers during the strike has been referred to arbitration.
Rocklands Poultry Uitenhage	Fawu	200	21 August	Just under 200 workers were dismissed on 21 August when they refused to heed an order to return to work following sporadic industrial action flowing from a dispute between Fawu and the company over several issues, including wages and the employment of casual workers on a permanent basis. After the dismissals the workers occupied the plant. On 22 August the company obtained an urgent supreme court interdict, ordering them to leave. Fawu says the dismissals constitute an unfair labour practice and is taking up the matter in the industrial court as well as rallying community support for the workers.

Ciskei

Ronber Pharmaceuticals Dimbaza	CWIU	36	14 August	As reported in <i>WIP 69</i> , workers went on strike demanding recognition of CWIU and were dismissed on 17 August. Ten of the Dimbaza workers have since been re-employed. The union has applied for a conciliation board to determine the fate of the remaining 26 workers.
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Transkei

TRTC Butterworth	TGWU	2000	6 August	This dispute began on 3 August when workers at Transkei Road Transport Corporation's Butterworth depot downed tools demanding an explanation for the suspension over the past month of 57 of their workmates. Management refused to accede to the demand Umtata and later called in the police to act as mediators. In the interim, however, news of the dispute reached workers at the corporation's Umtata depot. They demanded a meeting with management to discuss events at Butterworth. On 6 August 400 Umtata depot workers downed tools and forced management to talk to them by locking the depot gate. One member of management did, however, manage to leave the depot. He summoned the police. On 7 August police called in the Transkei army to run the depot. Management also obtained an urgent court order interdicting the Umtata depot workers from disrupting operations at the depot or molesting or intimidating those who wanted to work. On 8 August the court order was extended to cover all TRTC depots in the bantustan and the army took responsibility for running all services. A hearing to determine whether the interim interdict should be made a permanent order was set down for 6 September. There have, however, been several postponements and the matter was due to be heard on 11 November. Management has refused to have any dealings with TGWU throughout the dispute. Eight shop stewards from the Umtata depot, who were detained after 7 August under Transkei's equivalent of section 29 of the Internal Security Act, were released in mid-October.
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