



CRISIS NEWS

A bulletin of news and theological reflection on the
South African emergency

No. 15

April/May 1987

CLERGY DEFY THE DETAINEES PROCLAMATIONS

The latest proclamation by the Commissioner of Police restricting practically all forms of public protest against detention without trial is seen by many as an attempt by the authorities to remove from the public awareness a matter that is of the gravest concern; another attempt to encourage the belief that it does not exist. With their press curbs, they have succeeded in erasing from the minds of a section of the public the truth about what is happening in the townships.

This time they are trying to do it with the reality of what is happening in our prison cells.

Decades ago the state made the mistake of confronting the Church with the notorious "church clause". It was in the days of Hendrik Verwoerd and his attempts in trying to keep the churches pure white. They then had to back down, because their only other choice was to throw the then Archbishop of Cape Town in jail.

It seems they are heading for a similar confrontation with their latest proclamation making it illegal to call "in any way whatsoever" for the release of detainees, to in anyway support a petition for the release of detainees, to wear stickers, articles of clothing or display posters "depicting a slogan protesting against or disapproving of" detention without trial or supporting the release of detainees.

It is now unlawful to attend a gathering in protest against detention or in honour of detainees and also the "performance of any act as a symbolic token of solidarity with, or in honour of detainees".

Several prominent church leaders reacted immediately and in such a way that the authorities found it necessary to explain and interpret these regulations making fools of themselves but still not scrapping the regulations as they stand and as they will have to be interpreted in a court of law when trespassed.

Adriaan Vlok, confronted with the fact that a church service for detainees was going to be held in St Georges Cathedral, Cape Town, hastily admitted that it was permitted to pray for detainees in a bona fide church service. The Anglican Archbishop of Cape

Town, Desmond Tutu reacted to this with words to the effect that it was clear that the Government had "made a boob" regarding religious freedom with orders prohibiting oral protest and gatherings for detainees.

"The point is that if it is illegal to call for the release of detainees why does it become illegal only if it is outside a church service?" he said. "I will continue to call both within and outside services for the release of detainees, despite the regulations."

At the service held in the cathedral the Archbishop described the order as blasphemous. "I say to the government: You are not God. You may be very powerful but you are not God. You are mere mortals. Beware when you take on the Church of God. You will come a cropper."

At the same service, Archbishop Naidoo of the Roman Catholic Church said: "We are here to state very clearly we will not accept this."

Dr Allan Boesak told the congregation that this service was for him just the beginning. "My plea is for all South Africa to rise up and revolt against this ban to show that our concern, our love for those in detention will not be stifled."

He repeated his intentions to defy the

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Said Allan Boesak at the UDF rally: "Now I don't know about you but I am going to have a sticker on my car. I'm going to have a poster also. And those of you who want posters and stickers you can ask me. You can put them on your cars and in your windows to show that we are not intimidated by this insanity."

Refuse to participate

The Executive Committee of the Western Province Council of Churches said in a recent statement on participation in the coming election that their firm commitment to the democratic process as a solution to the South African crisis contrains them to ask Christians who have a vote in the forthcoming election to note that:

- The WPCC together with all major denominations in this country, expecting the Afrikaans Reformed churches, have condemned apartheid as contrary to the will of God, which necessitates a rejection of an electoral and parliamentary system based on the ideology of apartheid.
- No Party participating in the election can claim to represent the majority of the people in this country, nor is it legally possible for any Party to participate in non-racial politics.

- This Council and the churches it represents called for a "no"-vote in the recent referendum on the new constitution on the grounds that it constituted an entrenchment of apartheid.

- It would in the light of the above be condoning of apartheid and a racist action to appeal to "coloured" and Indians not to vote or participate in parliament without making the same appeal to whites.

- The possibility of free debate in the pre-election period is excluded by the State of Emergency.

- It is presumptuous for whites to assume that they are on their own able to resolve the crisis facing this country, or to determine with which blacks they will negotiate.

It is the conviction of the WPCC Executive that the most responsible political act which voters can exercise at this time is to refuse to participate in an electoral system that makes a mockery of democracy.

VERKIESING

DRIE MOONTLIKHEDE

In 'n onderhoud met dr Beyers Naude, die uittredende Algemene Sekretaris van die Suid-Afrikaanse Raad van Kerke oor die blanke verkiesing van 6 Mei het hy genoem dat daar drie maniere is waarop die Christen kan protesteer teen die "irrelevante" gebeurtenis.

Dr. Naude: "Wat hierdie verkiesing betref moet die duidelik wees vir almal wat dit verloop daarvan volg dat die groot meerderheid van die swart gemeenskap min daarin belang stel. Hulle sien dit as 'n suiwer blanke aangeleentheid. Hulle sien dit as 'n suiwer apartheisaangeleentheid. Ook hoofsaaklik as 'n interne stryd binne die Nasionale Party.

"Aan die eenkant is daar die regsgesindes se poging om die apartheidvisie ongeskonde en onveranderd te handhaaf en verder uit te bou en aan die anderkant is daar P.W. Botha wat voorgee dat daar belangrike hervormings is wat plaasvind maar wat in der waarheid so stadig en onoortuigend gebeur dat dit geen effek het nie. Dan is daar nog die klein groepie blankes in die PFP en 'n klompie Afrikaner-akademici wat nie gelukkig voel nie.

"Dus gesien uit die standpunt van 'n verkiesing wat hom besig hou met die wesenlike vraagstukke van Suid-Afrika dink ek is hierdie verkiesing van min betekenis. Veral omdat die stem van die swart gemeenskap, byna driekwart van ons bevolking, nêrens hier direk gehoor word nie.

Vraag: Hoe sien u die Christen se deelname?

Dr Naude: "Die van ons wat destyds met die referendum duidelik te kenne gegee het dat ons die hele sisteem van die driekamerparlement verwerp omdat dit in werklikheid niks anders was as 'n voortsetting van die hele apartheidstruktuur nie, moet vanselfsprekend homself nou afvra in watter opsig hy of sy as

Christen, nog deel behoort te he aan 'n verkiesing wat deel is van 'n sisteem wat in beginsel reeds verwerp is.

"Deelname aan die verkiesing by wyse van jou ondersteuning aan een of ander party of die uitbring van jou stem beteken dat jy ten spyte van jou verwerping tog nog 'n mate van outoriteit en erkenning daaraan verleen.

"Daar is dus 'n duidelike prinsipiële botsing, jou verwerping van die driekamer-parlement aan die eenkant

How relevant?

27 million people in South Africa.
4 million of them are white
3 million of them have the vote
1,5 million of them use the vote
700 000 of them vote for P.W.
That is 700 000 out of 27 million
They call it democracy

Where does the real support lie?

Two weeks before the election, Tiaan van der Merwe (PFP) called an election meeting in Woodstock. This event was advertised weeks before but only 29 people turned up. Same happened to several NP meetings in the Western Cape.

The UDF called a meeting which was banned a day after the posters went up. One and a half hours before the meeting was due to start, the ban was lifted by the court. In that short time more than 1 500 people came together in the City Hall.

en jou deelname aan die anderkant.

"Ek voel dis 'n saak wat Christene vir hulle self moet uitmaak. Dié Christene wat sê dat hulle teen apartheid is op grond van hulle Christelike geloof moet op een of ander manier duidelik bewys lewer daarvan. Volgens my is daar drie metodes waarop dit gedoen kan word.

"Hulle sou eerstens kon stem vir kandidate wat hulle protes teen die hele

sisteem duidelik hoorbaar maak. Hierdie kandidate sou dan, indien hulle verkies word, onmiddellik moes bedank. In die praktyk sou die meerderheid van hierdie kandidate waarskynlik hulle deposito's verloor.

"'n Tweede moontlikheid is dat jy eenvoudig as kieser besluit dat jy jou protes te kenne sal gee deur jou stembriefie te bederf.

"Die derde moontlikheid is om te sê dat jy die hele saak as so irrelevant beskou dat jy nie jou stem gaan uitbring nie. Jy bly eenvoudig weg. Na my mening moet Christene wat die verwerping van die apartheid-beleid hulle erns maak, self besluit watter een van die drie weë hulle gaan volg.

Vraag: Die N.P. toon duidelike krake, deur nou 'n stem teen hulle uit te bring, sal dit nie help om hulle inmekaar te laat stort nie?

Dr Naude: "Krake of nie, ek dink nie daar lê enige bevredigende oplossing in die huidige struktuur nie. Ek glo nie dat enige deelname aan hierdie verkiesing 'n faktor gaan wees wat 'n beslissing gaan fel nie. Die beslissing is na my mening reeds klaar gefel buite die parlement. Daar bestaan by my geen twyfel dat die meerderheid van die bevolking hierdie hele huidige sisteem sal verwerp. Dat hulle op hulle eie manier en op hulle eie tyd die hele struktuur ineen sal laat tuimel.

Vraag: U dink dus nie dat die blanke stem dit sal vermag nie?

Dr Naude: "Nee. Ek dink dat mens deesdae liever jou energie moet bestee om die blanke gemeenskap bewus te maak van die werklike gevoel van die meerderheid van die bevolking. Ons moet hulle uitdaag deur te sê dat die oplossing gesoek moet word, nie binne hierdie outydse, tradisionele, verouderde en uitgediende struktuur nie, maar dat ons nou reeds ons kragte moet bestee en ons visie moet rig op 'n post-apartheid-Suid-Afrika.

Report by E. Huismans, 126 Chapel Street, Cape Town

CHRISTIANS AND MAY DAY

The prophet Isaiah is very clear when he speaks about the workers:

*"People will build houses and live in them themselves they will not be used by someone else ...
"They will not plant and another eat ...
"They will fully enjoy the things that they have worked for ...
"They will not work in vain ..."*

(Isaiah 65: 21-25)

The above is in many ways what May Day is about. It makes May Day a day for all Christians. The majority of Christians in our country are workers. Many workers are Christians. May Day is a day for workers.

May Day started over a 100 years ago mainly as a call for shorter working hours. Workers in those days often had to put in 10 to 14 hours a day, six days a week.

The first workers to strike for an 8 hour day were the Australians, in 1856. They were followed by the English workers in 1882 and in 1886 American workers went on strike on May 1 for the same reason. In 1889 the International Socialist Congress declared May 1 a Labour holiday. The Church got involved in 1891 when Pope Leo XIII declared "When workers have recourse to strike, it is often because their hours of work are too long."

Since then May Day became a holiday in many countries. The Church went a step further when in 1955 Pope Pius XII introduced May 1 as the feast of St Joseph the Worker, to coincide with May Day. This was to emphasize the dignity of labour, Christian ideals in labour relations and the example of St Joseph as a worker. By recalling the example of St Joseph, May Day gained a Christian perspective.

May Day in South Africa

The history of May Day in South Africa started in 1904 with the white workers and their trade unions. From 1919 they held May Day meetings every year. By 1920 the black workers also started to organise in trade unions and regular meetings on May Day followed. Some of them were big multi-racial meetings on the Parade in Cape Town and in Marshall Square in Johannesburg.

During the Second World War the number of black workers in the cities grew and with it the trade unions. At May Day rallies the leaders addressed the crowds on workers' demands for better housing, minimum wages and black trade union rights. The white Labour Party and unions of the more conservative white workers, held separate May Day meetings. They also passed resolutions about international solidarity but they refused to admit blacks to their meetings. By this time a pattern was established by which the police would break up the meetings of the non-racial unions but leave the white workers' celebrations alone.

In 1948 the Nationalist Party came to power. They tried to repress black trade unions and black political organisations. Since then May Day became a symbol of struggle against apartheid.

Trade unions are agents in the struggle for social justice and for the just rights of working people.

Pope John Paul II ON HUMAN WORK

A just wage which is sufficient to establish, maintain and provide security for a family, is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole economic system.

Pope John Paul II ON HUMAN WORK



In 1950 a mass strike on May Day to oppose the government was organised. In Johannesburg the police fired on the workers and killed 18 of them.

During the fifties there were no more large May Day rallies. In the 1960's the right to celebrate May Day was removed from the industrial council agreements.

The recent history of May Day is well known. With the growth of the trade unions in the seventies the demand for May Day reappeared.

The tasks of the Church are:

- to call attention to the dignity and rights of workers; and
- to condemn situations where these are violated.

Pope John Paul II ON HUMAN WORK



The Meaning of May Day today

May Day was born as a day of struggle. First for a shorter working day, then for minimum wages and then for the right to have a better quality of life. A struggle which most concerned Christians would underwrite.

In many countries machines are replacing workers, and putting people out of work. This has also happened in South Africa. In some countries, like Germany, workers have raised the demand for a 35 hour week. This is not laziness but a demand for more workers

to work shorter hours in order to bring down unemployment and strengthen the workers' position. Unemployment is one of the major crises of South Africa. Since May Day 1984 many workers in different countries have raised this demand for a shorter working day and have succeeded in combating unemployment in this way.

But May Day has become a symbol of much more than this. It has become a symbol of working class unity. On May Day this year, workers will again commit themselves to greater unity, to build up their organisations and to strengthen their struggle for a better life.

On May 1 this year they will again remind themselves that the success of their struggle is linked to the struggles of workers in other countries. The oppression of workers in South Africa is not an isolated case. On May 1, workers all over the world will again commit themselves to international workers solidarity.

May Day has always been celebrated by workers' trade unions and workers' political parties together. May Day has become a symbol of the workers' struggle for a new society where workers will have political power and control over their lives in the factories and in their communities.

As a Christian you cannot stand aloof from this. Christians need to enter into co-operation and fellowship with other workers, to share in their struggle and problems. As Christians we know that God is directly concerned in the way society is organised; the way the wealth is distributed and property is used and in the way in which people behave towards one another. The Scripture condemns inequalities and prejudices.

May Day is about inequalities and prejudices.

VRYGROND

Die tragiese

In 1984 het die stadsraad van Kaapstad belowe om al die inwoners van Vrygrond, 'n plakkerskamp net anderkant Lavender Hill, teen die einde van die jaar in 'n nuwe subekonomiese behuisingskema in die omgewing te vestig. Dis twee jaar later en meer as 2000 mense plak nog steeds onder haglike toestande in die gebied.

'n Besoek aan Vrygrond is een van daardie stories waarna jy later moedeloos huis toe gaan en agter die tikmasjien Distrik Ses, Claremont en Wynberg soos die vroeër was onthou. Met bitterheid verstaan jy nog 'n keer wat die monster van die Groepsgebiede wet gedoen het. Op televisie belooft P.W. en sy trawante, as deel van hulle verkiesingsveldtog, dat die Groepsgebiede Wet daar is om te bly. In Pretoria, op 'n verkiesingsvergadering nooi 'n minister (F.W. de Klerk) sy toehoorders uit om mense van 'n verkeerde kleur wat in blanke gebiede bly, aan te meld. Die Staat sal dadelik teen hulle optree.

Vrygrond is een van die oudste plakkerskampe van die Kaapse Skiereiland. Dit lê weggesteek, uit die toeriste-oog tussen Lavender Hill, 'kleurling'-woonbuurt en Marina da Gama, blanke spogbuurt. Die kamp het saam met die toepassing van die Groepsgebiede Wet ontstaan. Dit het al soveel as 25 000 inwoners gehad maar vandag is daar net meer as 'n duisend hutte en sowat 2 500 mense oor. Daar word Afrikaans gepraat, met sink en plastiek gebou, met drank en dagga handel gedryf en 'n moord en verkragting elke naweek is "normaal".

Sê Jan de Waal van New World Foundation, een van die min organisasies wat probeer hand bysit. "Die bottom line is eenvoudig, die

mense van Vrygrond is die verloorders. By die Regering is hulle die absolute stiefkinders. Niemand wil iets met hulle te doen hê nie. Selfs in hulle eie gemeenskap is die mense verstoteling omdat hulle so leef. Die City Council gee vir hulle geen werklike geriewe nie, tog moet hulle R6,50 per maand betaal. Driekwart van die gemeenskap is werkloos, dwelmhandel en ander dinge word bedryf. Hulle is die vergete mense op ons doorstep."

"Vrygrond," sê dominee De Waal, "is net 'n tipiese beeld van ons maatskappy. Dit geld ook vir Lavender Hill langsaan. Dit is 'n gemeenskap van mense wat eenvoudig apaties geraak het. Waar hulle gebore word en waar hulle sal sterwe, word vir hulle deur die Staat bepaal. Die mense se nood lê baie dieper as net die hongerte en die armoede. Solank hulle nie werklike seggenskap oor hulle toekoms gaan hê nie sal die situasie soos dit is, net eenvoudig voortduur. Die Groepsgebiede Wet se meegaande gedwonge verskuiwings het van hulle gemaak wat hulle vandag is. Dit het hulle hul menswaardigheid ontnem, ook hulle vermoë om na hulle eie toekoms om te sien."

"Vroeër het van hierdie mense in plekke soos Distrik Ses sinvol gelewe as deel van 'n sosiale struktuur. Die ellende in hierdie gemeenskap vandag is nie veroorsaak deurdat die mense ontaard

het nie maar deur 'n omgewing wat geskep is deur die Groepsgebiede Wet."

Anders as in plakkerskampe soos Crossroads, KTC en Lawaaiakamp, ontbreek daar in Vrygrond daardie gees en vitaliteit van mense en 'n gemeenskap wat saam 'n bestaan wil maak en 'n toekoms wil bou. Daar is so te sê geen leiersfigure of strukture merkbaar nie omdat alles, veral verblyf, onseker is hier.

Alles is tydelik aan die gemeenskap. Kan daar nie betaal word nie, word daar afgebreek en na 'n ander kol in 'n ander bos gestrek. Geen organisasiestrukture kan op dié manier opgebou word nie. Dit is hoekom enige ontwikkelingswerk in

REFLECTION

Rebelling ag

In the Western Cape we are very aware of the State in places such as Crossroads, KTC, Vrygrond and many others. Each par-

It is taken for granted that the church are threadbare and close to unliveable challenge others have not.

Years ago Julius Nyerere spoke so loudly and clearly in South Africa today.

"The significant thing about the divisions is not simply that the one has and the other cannot provide basic problem arises because the man who poor, and the rich nation has power over more important is that our social and supports those divisions and constantly more powerful, while the poor get no future."

"My purpose today is to suggest development of people means rebellion decide to act against these conditions suggesting that unless we participate structures and economic organisation and degradation, then the church will religion will degenerate into a set of church, its members and its organisation involvement and leadership in construction then it will become identified with injustice humanly speaking will deserve to be comprehensible to the modern world."

"The church has to help people to reach this in the most effective way it can be and openly fighting all those institutions existence and maintenance of the consequences to itself or its members building a future based on social justice and creating the changes which are against evils. It is identifying itself with continuing presence."



Vrygrond, 'n plakkerskamp wat hand aan hand saam met die Groepsgebiede Wet en die gedwonge verskuiwings van mense uit plekke soos Distrik Ses en Wynberg, loop. Smokkelary en stukwerk teen R4 per dag is omtrent die enigste gereelde inkomste vir die inwoners.

resultaat van die Groepsgebiede Wet

die gemeenskap so moeilik is.

Enige dag kan die "Rangers" (beamptes van die munisipaliteit) kom, jou huis onwettig vind en jou wegjaag. Of na talle gebreke beloftes sal die Staat jou uiteindelik een van die "Council flats" in Lavender Hill aanbied. Maar die huur is hoog en jy word al gou weer uitgeskop omdat jy nie kan betaal nie en jy trek maar weer terug in die bos.

Daar bestaan 'n buse kringloop. Al die jare al is daar huise aan die mense van Vrygrond belowe. So elke nou en dan kom daar 'n bouprojek klaar. Soos Sea Wind onlangs wat drie keer deur die bouinspekteurs afgekeur is voordat die huise bewoonbaar verklaar is. Dis die Raad wat bepaal dat die mense wat in die flats van Lavender Hill woon waar hulle 'n minimum huur van R27 per maand betaal het, dat hulle genoeg verdien om nou huise in Sea Wind te koop. Hierdie mense beland dan skielik in 'n situasie

waar hulle van R120 tot R200 per maand moet betaal.

Die mense van Vrygrond wat reeds gesukkel het om hulle maandelikse R6,50 by te bring raak al gou agter op die huur van hulle "Council flats" in Lavender Hill. Die mense van Sea Wind kan ook nie betaal nie en kort voor lank is beide terug in die bos. Die keer waarskynlik in 'n onwettige, ongenommerde of aangeboorde konstruksie wat weer enige oomblik deur die "Rangers" platgeslaan kan word. Die "Rangers" kom gereeld. Hulle regeer Vrygrond met 'n streng hand. Hulle tel en meet en breek alles af wat groter as vier by vier meter is of daar nou een of vier gesinne in die hut woon. Dit is behalwe in sommige gevalle, want die reëls kan gebuig word, vertel die Vrygronders. Dis in ruil vir 'n bottel drank of wat die Rangers ook al bereid is om te aanvaar.

Die tydelikheid en gedurige ontwrigting maak van Vrygrond 'n gemeenskap sonder permanente organisasiestrukture. Vandaar die apatrese dag-tot-dag bestaan.

Werkloosheid, afhangende van die seisoen, wissel van tussen 70% tot 75% in Vrygrond. In die buurgemeenskap van Lavender Hill is dit om en by 50%. Smokkelhuise en die gepaardgaande drank- en daggamisbruik vier hoogty in beide gemeenskappe. Die bedryf word gewoonlik georganiseer deur professionele misdadigers maar betrek uit nood ook 'n groot aantal inwoners wat 'n aantal jare gelede nooit aan misdaad as 'n inkomste sou gedink het nie. Soos 'n paar jong mans van

Vrygrond vertel: "Daar is 'n klomp van ons wat dit doen omdat ons g'n keuse het nie. Dis die enigste moontlike source of income."

Vir konstuksiematskappye is dit 'n bekende feit dat jy met 'n vragmotor 'n span werker vroegoggend in Vrygrond kan oplaai, vir pik en graaf- en boskapwerk teen R4 per persoon per dag. Die spanne bestaan veral uit vroue.

Deur twaalf kanne wyn vir een van die smokkelhuise te hanteer vat jy darem R7,50 en 'n dop saam huis toe, vertel 'n middeljarige Vrygronder.

Vir die gelukkige wat uiteindelik 'n amptelike dak oor hulle koppe kry in die 'flats' van Lavender Hill neem die probleme oor geld net toe. Koste styg en om meer te verdien moet jy meer vir die smokkelhuise doen en groter kanse vat. Saam met die drank en die dagga, kom die geweld en vandaar die gereelde moorde en verkrachtings.

"Dit gaan nie net bloot oor die voorsiening van 'n dak oor die kop nie," sê Jan de Waal. "Dit gaan oor 'n ontwrigte, stukkende metskappye. Die Staat se goedkoop behuising, gebou met goedkoop materiaal en goedkoop arbeid lei tot 'n goedkoop metskappye waarin die kwaliteit van menselewens ook goedkoop sal wees."

Vrygrond, en woongebiede soos Lavender Hill wat binne enkele jare reeds 'n stedelike agterbuurt met al die sosiale probleme daaraan verbonde geword het, is die resultaat van die Groepsgebiede Wet, sy gedwonge verskuiwings en metskapplike ontwrigting.

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gainst the slums

of the slums directly and indirectly created by the TC, Langa, Guguletu, Khayelitsha, Lavender Hill, of the country will have its own painful places. It always has a role to play when social conditions are bleak. Certain churches have taken up this social

ne striking words about this subject and they ring

ion between rich and poor people, rich and poor the resources to provide comfort for all its citizens needs and services. The reality and depth of the is rich has power over the lives of those who are er the policies of those which are not rich. And even economic system, nationally and internationally, itly increases them, so the rich get even richer and latively poorer and less able to control their own

to you that the church should accept that the n. At a given and decisive point in history, people ns which restrict their freedom as people. I am te actively in the rebellion against those social is which condemn people to poverty, humiliation I become irrelevant to people, and the Christian superstitions accepted by the fearful. Unless the ations, express God's love for human beings by ctive protest against the present human conditions, itice and persecution. If this happens it will die, and die - because it will then serve no purpose

abel against their slums; it has to help people to do done. But above all the church must be obviously ions and power groups, which contribute to the physical and spiritual slums regardless of the rs . . . The church must work with the people in e. It must participate actively in initiating, securing necessary. Its love must be expressed in action and the Christian religion with injustice by its

(From "Freedom and Development")



Van ontwikkelingsprojekte in Vrygrond is daar nie juis sprake nie. "Crowbar" 'n jarelange inwoner het begin om meubelstukke uit afvalhout te maak. Hy kry steun hiervoor van New World Foundation maar die projek bied op die oomblik hoogstens werk vir twee of drie ander. Daar is 'n gebrek aan ruimte en Crowbar moet buite langs sy hut werk.



Volgens reël mag die huise in Vrygrond net vier by vier meter beslaan. Op die agtergrond die toilette wat meesal heeltemal te ver van die huise geleë is. Daar is ook 'n aantal krane en vir hierdie "diens" moet die inwoners R6.50 per maand betaal.

VRYGROND

from page 5

Namate die ekonomiese toestande in Suid-Afrika versleg, is Vrygrond en die plakkerskolle in die aanliggende omgewing heimlik besig om te groei.

Daar is geen skole in Vrygrond nie. Geen kliniek nie, geen winkels nie en geen openbare vervoer nie.

Daar is wel een ligpuntjie. Die kleuterskool. Dit word swaar gesubsidieer deur New World Foundation maar nie deur die Staat nie.

The Group Areas Act has created this slum. In their election campaign the Nats have promised never to scrap this monster-act.

Dis die ou Catch 22. Om staatssubsidie te kry moet daar aan sekere fisiese standaarde voldoen word. Nie drie plastiek potjies en 'n waskommetjie nie, maar 'n ry toilette en wasbakke. Die skooltjie het plek vir 28 kinders van moeders wat werk. Hulle betaal R1 per week om kinders in die hande van juffrou Reneë te laat. Die kleintjies van 2 tot 5 jaar oud kry hier twee maaltye per dag en hulle sing en teken en doen al die dinge wat ander kleuters doen.

In hierdie grys wêreld het Juffrou Reneë haar bes gedoen om die vaal mure met prente op te helder en die bankies en tafeltjies te verf. Tekentyd val die klein Vrygrondertjies soos alle kleuters oormekaar om hulle hande op die vetkryte te kry-met een verskil. Die rooi en geel en ligblou kryte bly onaangeraak in die blikkies staan. Hulle baklei oor die bruin, die swart en die donkergroen en donkerblou kryte. Donker patrone verskyn op die gebruikte rekenaarpapier. In 'n hoek teken 'n driejarige ingedagte 'n landskap met 'n wit stuk kryt op die wit papier. Vir die kinders van Vrygrond bestaan daar weinig kleur.

LIFE IN LAVENDER HILL

Lavender Hill is not a pretty place. Forget the lavender and the hill. The inhabitants of the place occasionally wonder whether the name was given just as a sick joke to a cluster of scrub-covered sand-dunes. The site was windswept and dreary. Nobody really wanted to go there but the Group Areas Act forced them to move. Most of the first inhabitants came from such places as Claremont, Diep River and District Six, from long-established families living in old houses with plenty of memories of fathers, grandmothers and great grand-parents who had lived and died there and had been buried close together in cemeteries long overgrown and forgotten.

The Lavender Hill community, therefore, started in ill-feeling, grievance and disruption of an established life-style. The area remains unloved; people stay there because they have to. Officials constantly assure them that they are lucky to have a home at all. The flats and houses they occupy have electric power, waterborne sewage, baths (albeit not hot water laid on) and are no more damp than can be expected of houses erected in the path of the winds of the Cape.

So why not adapt and be happy, as the officials seem to expect them to be; send telegrams of gratitude to the responsible minister of state thanking him for not having moved them further away? Feel gratified that the homes they were forced to abandon were snapped up by speculators, renovated and resold at vast profit; appreciate the fresh winds which at least blow away the stink of bad drainage; sympathise with the City Council that the value of scrub land is so high that open spaces, recreational areas, play-grounds and parks are far too costly - luxuries for the well-to-do suburbs only. Feel grateful that it is only 4 km to the nearest station (Steenberg) with no public transport but numerous mini-bus taxis charging 40c a ride if you don't feel like walking.

Walking is excellent exercise provided that you are not tired and it isn't raining, so appreciate all the opportunities for a good stroll. Appreciate also the conveniences. There are shopping centres at Retreat, only 6-8 km away, a few local corner shops where emergency supplies are obtainable at the usual inflated prices and games-rooms where children and youths are tempted to escape from boredom into the realms of space wars and other weird

electronic games. Appreciate also that there is a lovely beach and a nice lake six kilometres away. There is no public transport but nothing to stop you from a brisk walk or forming a group and hiring a coach. Trouble was that when Lavender Hill was created, the nearest beach (Sunrise Beach and Muizenberg) and the lake were prohibited to persons of colour. This gave an additional feeling of being hemmed in like pariahs, unloved and unwanted, and was a cause of mounting rage and dissatisfaction. At least now apartheid has been relaxed by the municipal authorities, and what a pleasure to get to the lake and Muizenberg, find a restaurant, or recreation area, putt-putt course, or picnic site and be out of Lavender Hill into a pleasant area just for a little while where entrance is not prohibited because you are Coloured.

As in all slums, the lack of recreational facilities has an evil consequence. Children must play. There is no room indoors and no place outdoors apart from the streets. The games-rooms lure them. They need money to play these games. Their parents have little or nothing to give them, so they start stealing money; they join gangs; they learn to smoke cigarettes and then

dagga. They are influenced by the image of successful gangsters, toughs who can afford clothes, girls, cars, drugs. School becomes a drag; they start bunking a few days here and there. They fail their exams and then drop out altogether.

The crime rate mounts. The gangs have territories; they defend them by fighting one another in mindless feuds. There can be no mixing of girls or boys from rival areas. There are punishments for intrusion in territory, threats of breaking up homes unless protection money is paid. All the rackets common to gangs all over the subculture slum world are present.

Chest problems, TB., malnutrition, boredom, frustration, unemployment, the debauchery of youth by the endless glamorization of lunatic pop groups and degenerate drug addicts, mindless violence on TV, films, in books, and the creation of phoney cult figures such as Rambo - celluloid heroes with feet of clay and pumpkin seeds for brains. Where does it lead us; how do we ever escape the squalor and degradation of places such as Lavender Hill?

by Hester Benjamin, (Chairperson of the Lavender Hill Residents Association)



Lavender Hill. People stay here not because they want to but because they were forced to. This township is one of the flagships of the Group Areas Act. A community, forced removed, that started in ill-feeling, grievance and disruption of an established life. After many years the area remains unloved. Die Staat se behuisingskemas kon nie daarin slaag om gemeenskappe te bou nie. Lavender Hill se 'Council Flats' in die agtergrond.

MAY DAY! DISTRESS

CALL?

May Day might well be a distress call for our present regime. The last signals of a sinking ship or plunging aeroplane. For decades the National Party have tried to suppress this day and all that it stands for. They broke up the workers' demonstrations. Scattered their peaceful meetings and festivities. They banned their planned activities, they shot at them and killed them.

During the sixties they started to believe that they had rooted the idea of May Day out of the minds of the workers. But, as with so many things, they were wrong. Since the late seventies and with the rise of the trade unions, the workers have begun to hold meetings on May Day again.

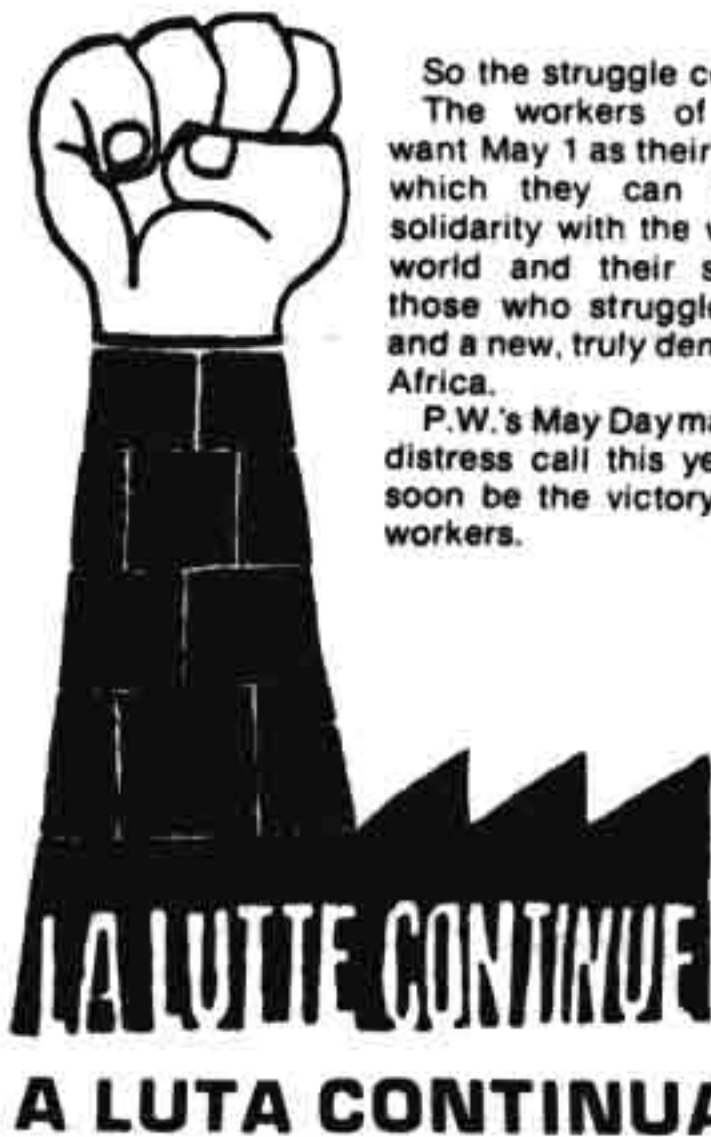
One of their demands was May 1, as a paid holiday for all workers in South Africa. They wanted May 1, because May 1 is International Labour Day . . . the day on which the workers of the world unite.

By 1984 some of the trade unions succeeded in winning May Day as a workers' holiday for their members. The demand for a national holiday grew and as a result a significant majority of all workers stayed at home on May 1, 1986 . . . pay or no pay.

This year in March, P.W. Botha's distress call was beamed over our television and radio air waves. He succumbed. The workers can have their holiday. They may even call it Workers' Day. But not on May 1. They can have it on the first Friday of the month of May.

This call can be read in several ways but one of them was an election ploy. May 1, which would have certainly led to another enormous stayaway from work, would have come before May 6, election day. This would have sown more doubt in the white voter's minds. May 1 and the first Friday of the month coincides this year. Disaster avoided. But it won't in the years following.

Not good enough, said the trade unions. "WE WANT MAY 1 AND NOTHING ELSE!" The symbolism of May 1 is more important than another long weekend.



So the struggle continues

The workers of this country want May 1 as their day. A day on which they can express their solidarity with the workers of the world and their solidarity with those who struggle for freedom and a new, truly democratic South Africa.

P.W.'s May Day may sound like a distress call this year but it may soon be the victory shout of our workers.

FREE THE CHILDREN

Despite the new regulations which prohibit any public campaign protesting against the detention of people or demands for their release, the Western Cape branch of the Free the Children Alliance went ahead on Easter Monday and released hundreds of helium-filled balloons carrying cards calling for the release of children in detention. These cards carried questions about the number of children in detention, their ages and the fact that they were treated as common criminals. The cards also strongly objected against the "squandering and brutalisation of the lives of our children, the nation's most important asset . . ."

Through these cards the Alliance urged the people of South Africa to speak out against the detentions and warned that: "Silence is collusion"

At the press conference of the launch of the Alliance, United Women's Congress executive member Ms Hilda Ndude said: "They can detain the children but not their ideas. As mothers we are determined to carry on the fight of our children. We cannot give up until all children are free".

After the Free the Children Vigil held in St George's Cathedral January 29, in Cape Town, some 20 organisations continued meeting and have since combined to form the Free the Children Alliance.

The authorities are not releasing verifiable facts concerning numbers detained and conditions in jails and police cells. Some parents do not know whether or where their children are held.

During 1986 approximately 28 000



Children prepare to release the helium-filled balloons carrying clusters of cards demanding the release of children in detention. This happened on Easter Monday, Family Day at Quaker House in Mowbray, Cape Town.

people were detained, among them thousands of children, aged 17 years and less - some as young as 11. Hundreds are believed to be still in detention and the anxiety of parents and monitoring groups is growing.

The Alliance demands the right to campaign for the children to be free from:

- detention
- being held in police cells and jails

which are most unsuitable places for children

• security force action which overrides those protections guaranteed by the Child Care Act.

People and organizations who want to support these demands and who wish to join the Alliance may contact them at 5, Long Street, Mowbray. 7700.

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN DETENTION

Several people working for the South African Council of Churches and their regional offices are still in detention.

The most recent victim of the State's clampdown on churchworkers' activities was Rev Chris Nissen who was detained in Cape Town and released again in April. Chris Nissen, a popular youth leader is a member of the Western Province Council of Churches executive committee and the field worker of Inter-Church Youth.

Still in jails spread over the country

are the following Council of Churches people:

- Mr T. Manthata (SACC - awaiting trial)
- The Rev. J. Moselane (Wits - awaiting trial)
- Ms N. Botha (Border)
- Mr A Motele (Border)
- Mr B Mkalipi (East Cape)
- Mr S Lebese (Pretoria)
- The Rev A Maja (Northern Transvaal)
- Mr R Moringi (Northern Transvaal)
- Dr A Nkomo (Pretoria)
- The Rev M Raphesu (Orange-Vaal)

Mr M Goniwe (Midlands)

Mr A Hlilane (Midlands)

Mrs M Moko (Midlands)

We, WPCC want to express our protest at their detention. We demand that these people be released and allowed to return to their families and the good work that they were doing, or else be charged in court.

We pray for these people and their families. We pray for the different Councils where their absence is sincerely felt.

We ask our readers to pray for them.

DETENTION

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latest bans at a UDF rally later that week and promised posters and stickers to those who wanted "to show us where you stand".

He wished that people would join his campaign and said that to give up the work for the release of detainees "will be the betrayal of those who have suffered so much for so long."

Shortly after the mentioned posters and stickers were published, Dr Boesak explained that he felt that the service in

Archbishop Tutu has declared that he was "fully in support of the campaign". Archbishop Naidoo also confirmed his support.

Meanwhile the Free the Children Alliance have gone ahead with the launch of their campaign. Free the Children T-shirts were openly worn and displayed during the last weeks of April in Cape Town and the WPCC have distributed their own stickers in connection with detainees.

St George's Cathedral was not enough to make the government fully aware of the attitude of the church towards the

latest emergency regulations.

"We had to do more to show the government our opposition to this insane law, so we had stickers and posters printed which called for the release of detainees."

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