

## Up-date on detentions

SINCE Neil Aggett's death in detention on Feb 5, 1982, at least five detainees have been admitted to hospital. Two of these were trade union officials: Thozamile Gqweta (President of Saawu) and Sam Kikine (General Secretary of Saawu).

A third Saawu official, Eric Mntonga, from the East London branch, was reportedly admitted to hospital, but "neither the police nor the hospital spokesman had heard of him" (Rand Daily Mail, 1/3/82).

Thozamile Gqweta was first detained and held under the Terrorism Act on Dec 8 last year. On Feb 10, after 65 days in solitary confinement, he was admitted to a psychiatric ward of the Johannesburg General Hospital. After visiting him, his brother reported that he was "almost unrecognisable" (Mercury, 27/2/82) - he had difficulty in lifting his head, his eyes were bloodshot and he had problems with hearing.

Saawu issued a statement saying that Gqweta's detention "leaves much ground for suspicion regarding attempts by the police to crush the union" (Sunday Times, 21/2/82.)

On Mar 4, he was released together with 3 other detainees. He was immediately redetained in the Ciskei but released later the same day.

Sam Kikine was admitted to St Augustine's Hospital, Durban, on Feb 24 for psychiatric treatment. He had been in detention since Nov 26.

He was placed under police guard but allowed visits by close family and an Anglican Priest. Questioned about Kikine's condition, Brig J R van der Hoven, head of the Security Police in Durban said "it is for the doctors and myself to discuss" (Mercury, 27/2/82).

Kikine was discharged from hospital on Mar 10 on condition that he not be detained in solitary confinement. He was taken back to police headquarters, C R Swart Square.

These incidents have sparked off demands from Detainees Support Committees for detainees to have access to doctors of their own or their families' choosing. The Johannesburg committee set up an independent panel of doctors and requested that they be allowed to see detainees. This request was turned down by the State.

In a related development, the South African Psychological Association has warned that the State would have to take note of the psychological consequences of indefinite detention and solitary confinement. The Association also called on the Ministers of Justice and Police "to view statements made by detainees in the same light as statements made under physical duress", since "symptoms shown by detainees were the same as those shown by mentally disturbed people" (Rand Daily Mail, 2/3/82).

The assault on the independent trade union movement by detention of union leaders continues. Mary Ntseke, General Secretary of the General and Allied Workers Union (Gawu) and two Gawu members, Elliot Shabangu and Solly Pholotho were detained in Johannesburg on Mar 2. Shabangu and Pholotho were released on Mar 5 while Mary Ntseke was released on Mar 10.

Matthews Oliphant, the general secretary of the National Federation of Workers and Magwaza Maphalalo, the national organiser were detained in Natal on Mar 13. Maphalalo was released after questioning on Mar 15 whereas Oliphant was transferred to John Vorster Square in Johannesburg.

At the end of March, a number of people were released from detention, including Liz Floyd. She had been detained since Nov 26, and had been hospitalised during her long spell in detention. Liz Floyd was working for the Industrial Aid Society at the time of her detention.

At least eight of those recently released have been served with banning orders. These include four unionists from the Eastern Cape: *Dumile Makanda*, *Zandile Mjuzawa*, *Sipho Pityana* and *Maxwell Madlingozi*. Pityana was an organiser of the General Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa) and the other three were all Macwusa officials.

NOTE: Merle Favis, the South African Labour Bulletin's managing editor, was released from detention on 21/4/82 after being held in solitary confinement since Nov 27 1981.

STOP PRESS: Thozamile Gqweta was redetained (for the seventh time) on May 5. He and two other SAAWU trade unionists, Sisa Njikelana and Sam Kikine, appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court on May 6 charged under the Terrorism Act. The case was remanded to May 28. All three were refused bail. (Natal Mercury 7/5/82).

**DETAINEES SUPPORT COMMITTEE, DURBAN, Mar 15**