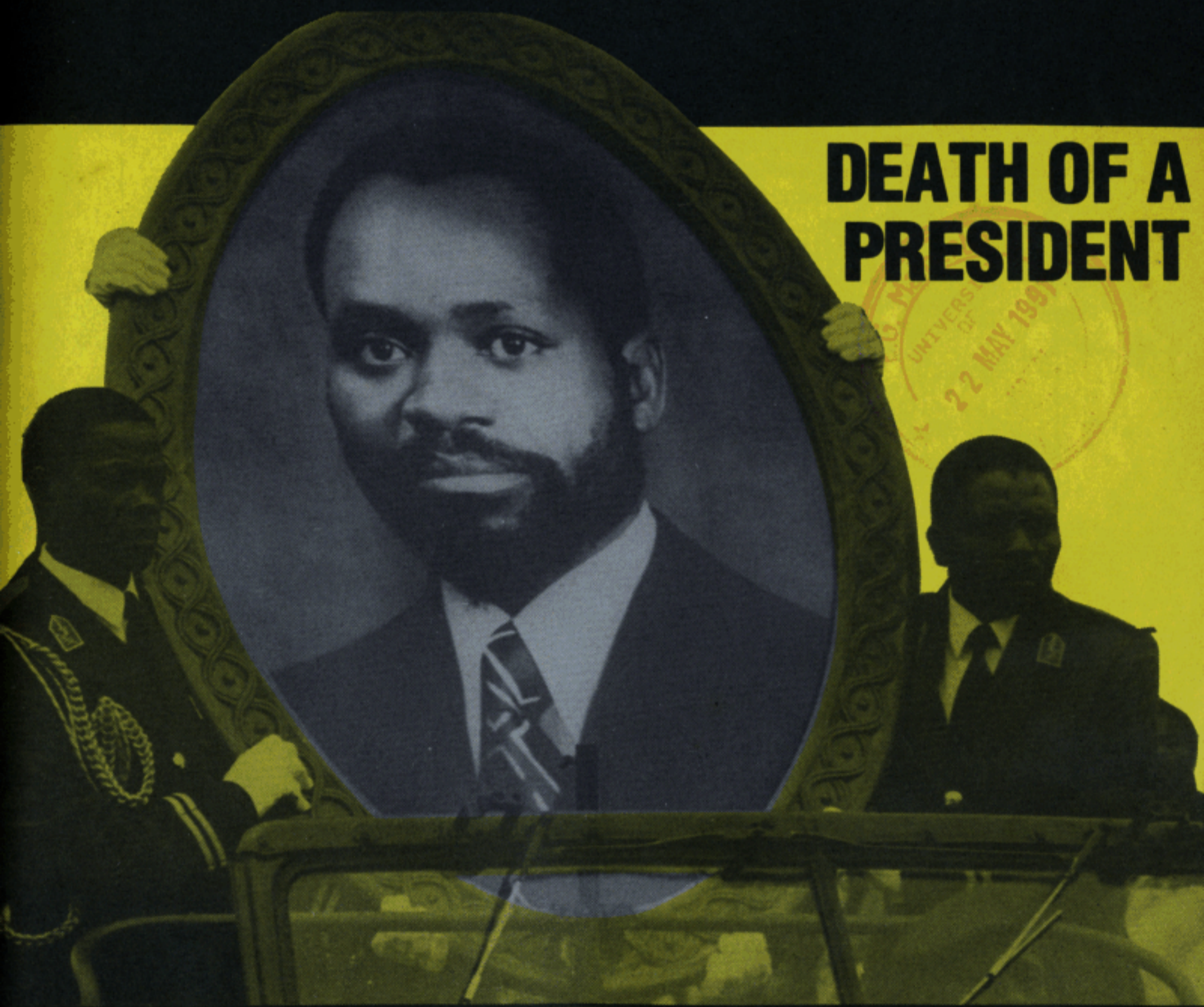


WORK

45

IN

PROGRESS



DEATH OF A PRESIDENT

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- ★ ANC Women
- ★ National Education Crisis
- ★ Unions and Inkatha
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The nature of **Work In Progress**, which is to stimulate debate and present views on a wide range of issues, ensures that the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial collective.

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Editorial

The Soviet Union has accused South African forces of bringing down the flight carrying Mozambican president Samora Machel.

Speculation is rife that this was done through the use of a beacon giving off false direction signals. This would have caused the pilot to believe he was landing at Maputo airport when in fact the plane was way off course.

Perhaps the decoding of the flight recorder on the ill-fated plane will establish the truth of these claims. And perhaps what really happened on that October night will only be known to a few.

But many are prepared to believe South African agents were responsible for the crash because this is so compatible with other South African actions on the sub-continent, and foreign policy in general.

South African troops invaded Angola in 1975 in an action the South African public was kept ignorant of for months; military missions into Angola since then have become almost common-place, with South African troops even attempting economic sabotage.

SADF forces have invaded Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola, destroying property, killing combatants and non-combatants alike.

Government has a long involvement with terrorist groups destabilising Southern Africa - especially in Mozambique, where the war against the South African-backed MNR has done so much to weaken the FRELIMO government.

South African forces have often been accused of assassinations and kidnappings of exiles in neighbouring countries, and many believe that South African agents were responsible for the murders of Joe Gqabi, Jeanette Schoon, and many other ANC activists in Southern Africa.

But as the spiral of violence and counter-violence, attack and counter-attack continues in South and Southern Africa, one thing is clear: for every act of aggression carried out by South African forces, a price is paid.

Andrew Zondo bombed an Amanzimtoti shopping centre in retaliation for a South African raid into Lesotho. Recently-convicted ANC guerilla Marion Sparg says indiscriminate killings during South African raids into neighbouring states are hardening the attitudes of Umkohonto we Sizwe soldiers. And the ANC's changing policy on civilian casualties has its origins in military and police aggression both within and without South Africa.

WORK IN PROGRESS 45 - NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1986

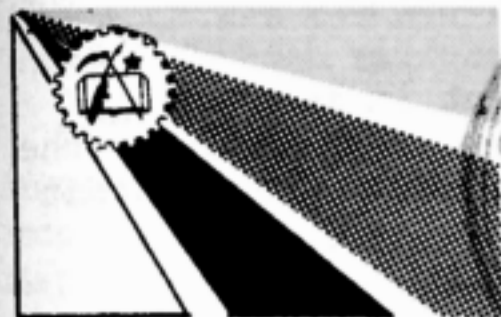
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The death of Mozambican President Samora Machel is one more blow to an already severely strained FRELIMO government. ROB DAVIES of the Eduardo Mondlane University's Centre for African Studies, Maputo, analyses its implications in the context of recent South African strategy towards Mozambique.

Mozambique and South Africa

DEATH OF A PRESIDENT

The air crash on the night of 19 October which killed President Samora Machel and other senior FRELIMO and Mozambican government leaders will have a major impact on both the political situation in Mozambique and Southern African regional relations.

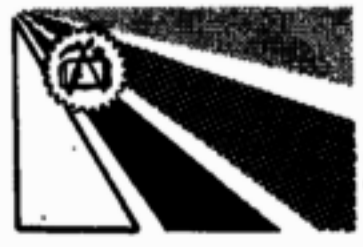
Full details of the crash itself are not yet available, and it is still being officially investigated. Although it may in the end be difficult to prove conclusively, there is a growing body of circumstantial evidence suggesting that the crash might have been caused by some sophisticated form of electronic sabotage. Informed sources in Maputo discount suggestions that it resulted from poor weather, 'human error' resulting from an allegedly inexperienced crew, or the plane drifting off course.

It appears that the flight proceeded normally until the presidential plane was about 70 km from Maputo, in the Manhica region. There were no faulty systems on the plane, the weather was fine and the crew experienced. Contact was lost shortly after the control tower in Maputo ordered the plane to prepare for a routine instrument landing.

The plane crashed 200 metres inside South African territory near the Mbuzini mission in KaNgwane at about 9-30 pm on Sunday 19 October. However, the Mozambican authorities were not informed that the plane had crashed on South African territory until 6-40 the next morning, despite the fact that its flight and entry had been monitored on South African radar, as Foreign Minister Pik Botha acknowledged.

Moreover, one of the survivors, Captain Fernando Manuel, walked to a local clinic after the crash, arriving at about 10-00 pm, according to Business Day. Shortly afterwards the clinic telephoned the local police.

One hypothesis is that an electronic signal could have interfered with the plane's instruments and controls. An expert on electronic warfare in the United States said that there are 'false beam' devices quite capable of this kind of interference.



PRETORIA INCREASES THE PRESSURE

Whatever happened, the fact remains that this tragic development occurred at

a time when Pretoria was stepping up pressure against Mozambique.

On 8 October, ostensibly in response to a landmine incident in KaNgwane in which six SADF members were injured, the South African government announced that it was prohibiting recruitment of Mozambican migrant workers.

On 11 October a Mozambican government communique said that information obtained from a South African citizen 'linked with economic interests' indicated that 'the militarists' in Pretoria were planning to launch air raids, and had infiltrated a commando to carry out attacks in and around Maputo city.

Indeed, just a few days before the air crash, Machel told a group of journalists there had been several previous attempts by the South African military to assassinate him - the most recent in November 1985, when plans to attack his motorcade with bazookas were uncovered.

All this took place against the background of a stepped-up assault in Mozambique's central provinces by MNR armed bandits operating from Malawi. They are supplied, trained and directed by the extensive network maintained in that country by South African Military Intelligence with the active connivance of the Malawian authorities.

A major objective is to cut the Beira Corridor, preventing it from serving as an alternative to continued dependence by Southern African Development Co-ordinating Council (SADCC) countries on South African ports and railways - particularly in the event of application of 'counter-sanctions' measures by Pretoria against neighbouring states.

Recent South African actions against Mozambique bear examination, both as a background to the death of Machel and as an indication of the possible direction of future South African policy towards the country.



INTENSIFIED DESTABILISATION

The Pretoria regime said that the 8 October ban on migrant labour recruitment (and by implication the subsequent military measures which it did not acknowledge) were a response to the KaNgwane landmine explosion of 6 October. Defence Minister Magnus Malan

alleged in a statement the next day that the mine was planted by ANC members operating from Maputo.

True, Pretoria has complained on a number of occasions during the past few months about alleged ANC activity out of Maputo. It clearly wants 'the ANC presence' in Maputo further reduced, if not altogether eliminated. In August, Deputy Foreign Minister Ron Miller said that Pretoria wanted to raise the issue with Maputo. About the same time the *Cape Times* quoted officials claiming that the 'the ANC has begun using Mozambican territory for infiltration again'.

Nevertheless, there is good reason to believe that the KaNgwane landmine was no more than a convenient pretext to implement a series of measures already planned against Mozambique. No proof was put forward to substantiate the allegation that the landmine attack was planned or carried out by ANC members in Maputo, while repatriation of foreign migrant workers was threatened on several previous occasions in retaliation against sanctions.

In fact, implementation of this measure (and the other pressures applied) was probably provoked by two other recent developments: the Frontline States' pressure on Malawi aimed at persuading Malawi to cease allowing its territory to be used as a rear base by MNR armed bandits; and the US Congress vote to override President Reagan's veto of the Senate sanctions bill.

There is no doubt that concerted pressure by the Frontline States against Malawi posed a direct challenge to Pretoria's current regional strategy. Malawi has been a base for MNR operations for years. Indeed, after the capture of the former MNR headquarters at Gorongosa in August 1985, it became the main rear base for bandit activity in the central provinces of Mozambique.

At the same time, bandit action in the central provinces became more strategically important to the Pretoria regime. One of South Africa's principal levers against the SADCC countries is their dependence on South African ports and railways - a dependence artificially maintained by repeated sabotage of Mozambican facilities.



SANCTIONS AND COUNTER SANCTIONS

As pressure for economic sanctions against South Africa increased, Pretoria indicated it intended to use leverage arising from SADCC's dependence on South African transport services in a 'counter-sanctions' campaign. This was demonstrated by hold-ups of Zimbabwean and Zambian traffic in August, and in early October when Pik Botha threatened to respond to a US Congress vote for sanctions by blocking the trans-shipment of US grain to Southern African states.

Pretoria clearly regards it essential to prevent Mozambican ports from serving as an effective alternative. In January, SADCC gave top priority to rehabilitation of the Beira Corridor, to carry an increased tonnage of SADCC cargo. South Africa saw this as a threat. As the *Financial Mail* of 15 August put it: 'There is...a real possibility that if Beira threatens to become a viable alternative, Pretoria will shift from economic warfare to the real thing, using its military power (or MNR surrogates) to disrupt the rail link and oil pipeline from Beira, on which Zimbabwe is so heavily dependent'.

This prediction proved accurate. As rehabilitation work on the Beira Corridor advanced - faster than expected by many cynics in South Africa - bandit activity from Malawi was stepped up. Initially it was concentrated in Zambezia and Tete provinces, but there is no doubt that the plan envisaged embracing the entire central region, cutting the Beira Corridor. On Friday 17 October the MNR claimed to have attacked Villa Machado in the corridor itself.

Frontline State pressure on Malawi in response to increasing bandit activity from its territory represented a serious challenge to Pretoria's current regional strategy. Pretoria appears to believe that Malawi has strayed from the fold before (notably in joining SADCC and hosting the 1981 SADCC summit), and thus to be vulnerable to such pressure.

It seems Pretoria concluded that more pressure should be applied against Mozambique to weaken the impact of Frontline pressure. A few days after the 11 September news conference in which President Machel spoke about the possibility of closing the frontier with Malawi and stationing missiles along it,



Maputo, 28 October: FRELIMO's Marcelino dos Santos leads the funeral procession

SABC News Commentary strongly attacked both Mozambique and Angola.

The commentary said the president's remarks showed the 'real cause' of destabilisation in the region was 'civil wars' in states ruled by 'marxist dictatorships' unrepresentative of their people. These were spilling over into other states.

This was one of the first times since the Nkomati Accord that such language was used in SABC commentaries about Mozambique. It was also one of the first times that the MNR bandits were so blatantly accorded legitimacy in official media.

Probably the other immediate cause of Pretoria's current moves against Mozambique was the US Congress override of the presidential veto on the Senate sanctions bill. The Pretoria regime was angered by the US vote. Not only did the bill represent a severe setback, but Pik Botha's lobbying (including a threat to US grain sales) backfired. His threats to various undecided senators had the effect of turning them against him.

This may in part explain the decision to take action against 'legal' migrants straight away, rather than targeting only 'illegals'.

But this does not explain why only Mozambican migrants were affected, nor the threatened military action against the country's capital. If we reject the explanation that these moves were a response to the KaNgwane landmine, the

only conclusion is that current pressures are more than mere reaction to recent developments, and more than a mere demonstration to the outside world of South Africa's capacity to damage the economies of its neighbours.

They represent an attempt to force changes in Mozambique - either in political behavior or political structures.



SOUTH AFRICAN OBJECTIVES

The loss of President Machel is a major blow to the embattled FRELIMO government. It adds further insecurity to an already fragile situation. However, Mozambican people appear shocked and sad at the loss of a leader whom they held in considerable esteem. There is also outrage, since Pretoria is widely assumed to be responsible for the deaths.

The immediate effect has thus been consolidation of popular support behind the FRELIMO leadership. At the same time, Pretoria has to some extent been placed on the defensive. It is obliged to cover its tracks and deny involvement in the incident. These factors suggest that in the short term Pretoria may well lay off visible direct pressures against Mozambique. Above all, it will probably not wish to confirm the general

assumption that it was responsible for the president's death by further economic action or direct assaults on the capital at this moment.

But this does not apply to the MNR, which has already announced it will attempt to take advantage of the situation by stepping up its activity.

But in the medium term, Pretoria will probably resume its pressures on all fronts. While Pretoria saw its recent pressures as a means of pushing for change in Mozambique, it is not clear whether changes sought were of government positions and policies, or to bring about a change in government.

Indeed, there were indications that, while a South African government consensus existed that Mozambique should be kept under pressure, there were differences within the regime as to the precise objectives of such destabilisation measures.

Differences of tone and emphasis were discernable in the comments of members of the regime. For example Magnus Malan said, in a speech the day after the KaNgwane mine incident and the day before the announcement of the ban on Mozambican migrants, that Machel was unwilling or unable to prevent his country from serving as a base for a 'Moscow-inspired revolutionary war against South Africa'. He claimed Machel appeared to have lost control of the situation in Mozambique, and said Pretoria was extremely concerned at the course of events there.

Such a statement has all the hallmarks of a classic disinformation tactic designed to provide 'justification' for overthrow of a government.

On the other hand, in a speech on 16 October, State President PW Botha said he hoped that the Nkomati Accord would survive.

And the fact that information on plans for stepped-up military pressure around the capital was apparently leaked to the Mozambicans also points to possible divisions within the regime.



**'MINIMALISTS' AND
'MAXIMALISTS'**

Two competing positions probably exist within the State Security Council, with the regime's policy regime vacillating between them. For convenience these could be described as 'minimalist' and

'maximalist' positions.

The minimalists, who may well be found in the ranks of the military as well as among civilian politicians and diplomats, appear to differ from the maximalists only on how far to push the escalating cycle of destabilisation measures against Mozambique.

These are members and defenders of a besieged racist minority regime isolated to an unprecedented degree both regionally and internationally. As such, they would accept as necessary further pressure on regional states to reduce the ANC presence in the region, as well as maintaining the widest room for manoeuvre in a 'sanctions war'. They would probably strongly support intensification of bandit activity in central Mozambique to prevent the Beira Corridor serving as a viable alternative for SADCC states.

They would not want to see Frontline States succeed in pressuring Malawi to abandon its support for the armed bandits.

They would probably share the view that any ANC presence in any regional state is a potential threat. They would thus want to see the ANC presence in Maputo drastically reduced if not altogether eliminated.

However, they would differ from maximalists in not necessarily favouring an attempt to overthrow the Maputo government. They would probably emphasise the risks to Pretoria of such a move - the prospect of being tied to supporting a puppet regime, with FRELIMO fighting in the bush. For minimalists, escalating destabilisation would be a means to change political behaviour, not political structures.

Possibly minimalists hope current pressures would force the Mozambican government to return to the Joint Security Commission (JSC) set up by the Nkomati Accord. Some sources suggest this is one of Pretoria's immediate goals.

Until recently, Mozambique's non-participation in the JSC (following the discovery of the Gorongosa documents) probably did not bother Pretoria much. The agenda of meetings would probably have consisted of a series of well substantiated Mozambican complaints about South African violations.

But since mid-1986, it has become clear that Pretoria wants a reduced ANC presence in Maputo, and wants a forum to raise 'complaints' on a regular basis.

Clearly, no-one in the regime would want the JSC to become a forum dominated by Mozambican complaints about continued South African support for the armed bandits. Nor would any member of the regime want it to become a forum in which the ANC presence in Maputo were traded off against South African support for the MNR.

The Pretoria regime needs more bandit activity, particularly around the Beira Corridor; it cannot afford to give this up even if Maputo offered concessions on the ANC. The minimalists might support an attempt to revive the JSC, but on different terms.

This might involve trying to extract a

the 8 October ban 'regretted' it 'had been found necessary' to take this step, but said it was not able to 'evaluate the security considerations on which the decision was based... The Chamber earnestly hopes that negotiations between the South African and Mozambican governments will lead to an early return to normality'.

Perhaps minimalists favour renewed attempts to use the JSC to 'suggest' or push for a 'negotiated settlement' between the Mozambican government and the MNR - a long-standing objective of Pretoria's Mozambican strategy.

But for maximalists such an outcome would not be enough. They appear to

believe overthrow of the FRELIMO government is essential if any of the major objectives of Pretoria's current regional strategy are to succeed. They would probably also argue that it would enable them to reduce their existing, increasingly costly, commitment to the MNR and re-deploy scarce resources on the domestic front.



**THE
LESOTHO
MODEL**

Precisely how would such forces go about overthrowing the Mozambican government?

The Lesotho coup of 20 January merits close study as a possible modus operandi. Despite occasional reports of contacts between the SADF and members of the Lesotho Defence Force,

the principal South African intervention in Lesotho did not involve direct plotting of the coup. Nor did Pretoria attempt to install its direct allies - the Lesotho Liberation Army.

Instead it applied economic and other pressures, pushing an already acute internal situation to the point of collapse. The result was that the new government was not seen as, and indeed was not, a mere puppet of Pretoria. Pretoria was not obliged immediately to



Mozambicans mourn a popular president

tacit understanding that the JSC confine itself to discussing alleged violations only from the territory of the signatories - an effective agreement that bandit activity from Malawi would be kept off the agenda. South Africa may then be prepared to trade reduction or elimination of ANC presence in Maputo for some resumption of migrant labour recruitment.

This seems to be what the Chamber of Mines may be proposing. Its statement on

step in and sustain it.

But the new Maseru government immediately conceded a number of Pretoria's demands, and has shown itself more susceptible to South African pressure than its predecessor.

Recent pressures against the Mozambican capital may, for the maximalists, play a similar function to the pressures against Lesotho Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan in January.

Attempts by both Pretoria and certain Western intelligence services to promote a negotiated settlement between the FRELIMO government and the MNR are now generally seen to have failed. From the maximalist point of view, intensified pressure would aim to push internal Mozambican contradictions to the point of social collapse.

For some time it has been obvious that Pretoria tries to target interventions at perceived contradictions in states which are destabilisation victims. In Lesotho there were obvious contradictions between a minority in the armed forces which supported the Basotho National Party Youth League, and the majority.

In Mozambique such obvious splits do not exist. But the literature of the MNR bandits (which to some extent probably reflects the views of the SADF) suggests that they see a potential contradiction between certain unspecified senior 'nationalist' figures in the Mozambican armed forces, more disposed to negotiate

with the MNR, and FRELIMO's political leadership, which is seen as intractable 'communists'. Recent statements by MNR spokesmen indicate that they consider that without Machel the two factions will not be able to hold together.



**A TESTING
TIME
AHEAD**

Machel's death (assuming that Pretoria had a hand in it) could represent a compromise between maximalists and minimalists. Removing the president may mean a change in political structures which might result in policy shifts, but would not involve the risks to Pretoria of a wholesale change of government. However that may be, in the medium term at least, some resumption of the intensified destabilisation campaign can be expected.

Whether this will take the form of an attempt to force the Mozambican government under a new president to enter negotiations on new, less favourable terms, or whether it will mean an attempt to provoke domestic contradictions to the point of rupture remains to be seen.

The FRELIMO leadership - now minus Machel - is in for a testing time, and will have to mobilise all the domestic and international support available if it is to weather the storm ahead.

THE HEALTH ISSUE

Number 36 Autumn 1986
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ANC Women: Their Strength in the Struggle

FRENE GINWALA, a senior member of the African National Congress active in the ANC Women's Section in London, recently spoke to WIP about women's emancipation and the issues confronting women in the national liberation struggle.

What is the history of the ANC Women's Section?

Before the ANC was banned, the ANC Women's League was active in South Africa. After its banning, a separate Women's Section was set up in the 1960s as part of the external mission. Like the ANC after 1969, this includes women of all races - every woman member of the ANC is also a member of the Women's Section. Women operate within the organisational structure on the same basis as other members, but also work within the Women's Section.

The Women's and Youth Sections are two major ANC departments. The Women's Section is responsible for organising South African women in the liberation struggle and organising international support for this struggle especially among women.

What do you regard as 'women's issues'?

We do not see these as isolated from national and social liberation. Too often they are taken to mean only the liberation of women. Some of us would argue it is equally necessary to liberate men: men with chauvinistic attitudes indicate political backwardness.

The responsibility of the liberation movement is to raise all members' political consciousness, so it must deal equally with men's and women's attitudes. In the liberation struggle, we see women's liberation as something for the whole organisation to deal with. The leadership explicitly recognises that this is the task of men and women - not something women alone can do.

In an official ANC publication it was stated that: 'We must start now (if we have not started) to free ourselves from "male chauvinism" and its counterpart, "feminism"'. Can you explain what this means?

This acknowledges what I have just said. It might be preferable to refer to Western feminism, rather than feminism in general. Unlike some Western interpretations of feminism, the ANC does not see women's liberation in isolation from other forms of oppression in society. If an entire society is oppressed, then to talk of women's liberation in isolation is negative.

In South Africa, the prime issue is apartheid and national liberation. So to argue that African women should concentrate on and form an isolated feminist movement, focusing on issues of women in their narrowest sense, implies African women must fight so that they can be equally oppressed with African men.

National liberation addresses many issues. What guarantees are there that the liberation of women, the question of male chauvinism as you put it, does not get lost or postponed in the struggle for national liberation?

There is no guarantee in the national liberation struggle. The only guarantee is for women to be involved and make sure their demands are forcefully raised and dealt with.

There will never be guarantees, even if clauses are written into constitutions. The danger exists that the issues will not be taken up. This

happens in every society. But one must look at organisations' stated policy and objectives.

In the liberation movement there is stated policy which encompasses the liberation of women. This is not just in the form of additions to other policies, or throw-away statements. For example, before the 1985 Nairobi Women's Conference, the ANC and SWAPO presidents pledged that they would not consider their objectives achieved, the task completed or the struggle at an end until the women of South Africa and Namibia are fully liberated.

over the world live in countries where there are excellent stated positions, yet they are still not represented in positions of leadership.

I believe that liberation can only be achieved by women themselves, by getting involved. They must use the stated positions of their organisations to move and pressure. Women's participation in the struggle will enable them to raise issues, put these on future agendas and bring about solutions. The strength of women's organisation will determine how and when women's emancipation takes place.



African National Congress women at the 1985 Nairobi conference to mark the end of the decade of women

Women's liberation is an integral part of the liberation struggle. It is not something that will be done after liberation, and it is recognised that the liberation process will not be finished until women are liberated.

This is an excellent stated position, but it is wrong to say all you need is this sort of declaration. Many women all

Turning to the Women's Section: how does it operate, and how is it linked to the ANC?

Women are members of the ANC and the Women's Section, and participate fully and equally in the various branches of the ANC. A full-time functionary in a particular department is part of it, but in addition gains strength from

belonging to an organised women's section. The head of the Women's Section is an elected member of the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC), but there are other women also elected to the NEC.

There are women representing the ANC in a number of countries. The first women in this capacity was the chief representative in Lusaka, Gertrude Shope, who is now head of the Women's Section. At present there are other women chief representatives in Sweden and France. A previous United Kingdom chief representative was a woman.

It would be false to say this reflects in any way the full potential or talent of women in the ANC. The point is this indicates what is possible.

Are the women on the NEC voted in by the Women's Section?

No, the national conference elects the entire NEC. The Women's Section has its own appointed secretariat which is responsible for issues that affect women, how women are to be organised and ways to develop women's skills. Each region has a women's section which includes all women ANC members in that region who elect the regional women's committee.

Does the Women's Section formulate policy?

Yes. It has had a few women's conferences and the policies formulated there feed into the national movement. But national conference and the NEC are the ultimate policy making organs.

What kinds of issues have come up most recently?

The Women's Section aims to get support for women as well as the whole liberation movement. For example we have given evidence to the United Nations Human Rights Commission on how apartheid affects the lives of African women; the condition of women political prisoners, torture etc. In addition we participated in the Nairobi Conference. In January there will be a conference in support of the ANC. It will be organised by the National Assembly of Women in the UK and supported by the Women's International Democratic Federation. The Women's Section liaises with women's groups, women's sections of political parties, and trade unions.

In the organisation itself we struggled to make sure there were always creches at meetings. This is now the case, and is policy. This may seem unimportant, but ANC women cadres in Western Europe do not have supportive family structures to help with childcare.

Was this a battle?

Not really - it was a question of pointing out its importance, then dealing with practical aspects. We have now established creches so that full-time ANC functionaries can be fully active. In Tanzania we have a creche where women cadres of the ANC can go to have children. They can stay there for up to two years, then can leave the child there while they go back to their duties. There are also creches in Lusaka, because it is not ideal for women to leave their children.

This has meant that as far as possible the organisation has taken on some responsibilities so that women can operate fully in the ANC.

What about other projects or programmes of concern to women?

The Women's Section pays particular attention to training opportunities. Whenever there are training opportunities or scholarships we try to ensure women are considered. The ANC gets a lot of support for training refugees, and we make sure women are chosen. We have also taken up the issue of birth control and family planning for young women.

Would the Women's Section run workshops on these issues?

Not workshops as such. We make sure there is education and advice available, but these issues are not dealt with separately. Family planning concerns men as well as women, and there are general discussions about this.

At what level do these issues come up?
They would be discussed at the Solomon Mahlangu ANC school at Morogoro for example, and wherever there is a concentration of ANC cadres.

Women need a more supportive structure in the general society. In environments where this is not available, it is

provided. We have also looked at questions of racism and sexism in the learning process, and go through some texts and rewrite others.

Has the question of sexism or chauvinism ever been debated or brought up within the ANC itself?

Yes, of course. Policy is clear and everyone agrees these questions must be considered. But how this gets worked out in practice and what it means must continually be impressed on members. It must be stressed both to men and women, because often women will say they are not oppressed.

Both women and men must be politically educated to realise that women's emancipation is part of the liberation process, that it cannot wait, and that women's emancipation will not develop automatically if apartheid is destroyed.

These debates are included in some of the official documents and publications. Some people say these issues should not be discussed publicly, and are quite critical. But we feel they must be raised.

How does the political education process take place?

These issues arise in political education classes and in discussion within the organisation. The ANC declared 1984 the Year of Women. There was a great deal published and the classes focused on these issues.

At the last National Conference there was a specific paper and discussion on women. Statements called for more attention to be focused on women's issues, and emphasised that the end of the United Nations Decade of Women, marked by the Nairobi Conference, did not mean the end of the struggle for women's emancipation. The struggle for the active and conscious involvement of women must continue.

But how do you ensure conscious involvement. Is it enough to just mobilise women?

This varies, depending on the number of members who are fully conscious and raise these issues. We include women's issues as part of any formalised political education taking place in the movement and in its schools. Outside formal educational structures issues are

raised by members themselves. We recognise you cannot effectively mobilise women into the national liberation struggle unless you address women's demands.

In one ANC publication it was argued that women have to be organised both generally and specifically. What does this mean?

While it is important that women are ordinary ANC members, there is a very specific women's element to oppression which will not just naturally work itself out through national liberation. It is something which must be focused on and this is recognised within the ANC. The Women's Section has the crucial responsibility of ensuring that women's views feed into all aspects of national policy and drawing the world's attention to South African women's issues.

Would you say that the separate organisation of the Women's Section enables it to play this role?

If you are organised as women you can work out issues and see them more clearly. It is one thing to know theoretically that women are oppressed, but it is another to comprehend how this oppression actually affects you in your day-to-day-life.

So it is necessary to formulate strategies to overcome that oppression and to relate this to national liberation. This is something women in organisations like the Women's Section have to do. Men can comprehend this oppression intellectually but because women experience it, it is different.

Women's liberation in South Africa cannot be achieved outside of the context of the liberation struggle. And the question of women's liberation will only be taken up to the extent that women are involved in national liberation. But a problem arises because there is a tendency to see the two as separate. We have struggled to make it clear that these are not two separate issues. They are different facets of the same issue and therefore at all stages have to be seen as a whole.

Now we do not kid ourselves and say that because we understand this, the problem is solved. It is an ongoing process to be dealt with at all times. If, for example, you talk about forced removals, you must ask what this means for women?

Have a younger generation of women in the ANC raised new issues?

To some extent their involvement has made the task easier. The issues were always somewhere on the agenda but the activity and participation of younger women has raised the debates very clearly.

If older women did not have an awareness and consciousness of women's issues a conflict situation between the generations may have emerged, but this has not happened. Women active in the 1950s worked out a highly articulate and relevant programme in the Women's Charter. These demands were integrated in the Freedom Charter.

What do you think is specific to women in South African society?

People often ask why pick on South Africa when there are so many other oppressive systems? But apartheid is unique in its oppression of women. It is one of the most institutionally-organised systems of oppression which has horrific consequences in terms of women's rights, health and social conditions.

South African women have a rich history of struggle. But this strength needs to be channeled. Women are not as much in the leadership as they need to be and this must change. And the liberation movement must stop pretending that women have the same opportunities as men. The organisation is confident enough of its policy to be able to say this publicly and address itself practically to the issue.

Women must also stop behaving as if

there is no place for them above certain types of work in the organisation.

But women are also oppressed by their own men, not just apartheid.

Yes, it is not only apartheid but questions usually focus on the oppression of women in black society. One must also ask how liberated white South African women are within their own social and cultural environment? Where is the writing on the oppression of white women in South Africa? We have not seen it.

People tend to focus on black society. White women should realise their liberation lies with the national liberation movement. For it is the only organisation in South Africa, black or white, which deals with the issue of women's liberation in its proper context.

What sort of South Africa do you envisage for women after liberation?

A lot depends on how we get there. When apartheid is destroyed and there is a government based on one-person-one-vote in a unitary state, this will not automatically mean that women are adequately represented at decision making levels, or that women's rights are fully achieved.

We have a long task ahead of us, but hopefully we can lay the foundations for women's emancipation and remove the institutional problems. After liberation we will still have the problems of education and attitudes among men of all races. That is part of the political education process which we have to continue.

National Education Crisis

No End in Sight to Schools Crisis

For two years, black education in the Transvaal has been in crisis. Ongoing school boycotts, disruption of classes, school closures, and a now-permanent presence of troops in the townships brought the resented system of Bantu Education close to collapse. Local, regional and national crisis committees were formed, and developed and sponsored the slogan 'People's education for people's power'. JON CAMPBELL summarises some of the main events of 1986, and then interviews Eric Molobi of the National Education Crisis Committee.

In February 1986, after two years of sustained school boycotts and educational disruption, most black students in the Transvaal responded to the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee's (SPCC) call to return to school.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) scheduled 8 January for reopening African schools. But students returned on 28 January, on condition that the DET met their demands by the end of March.

This conditional end to the schools boycott was decided at the SPCC's December 1985 educational conference, attended by 160 delegates from a range of student, political, trade union and community organisations.

Demands to be met by the DET by the end of March included:

- * Unbanning the Congress of South African Students (COSAS);
- * Withdrawal of South African Defence Force troops from the townships;
- * Recognition of Student Representative Councils (SRCs);
- * Permission for internal examinations to be written on a date agreed upon by pupils and parents;
- * Reinstatement of dismissed teachers;
- * Lifting the state of emergency in all areas, and
- * Release of detained students and parents.

Not everyone accepted the return to school. As students ended their boycott, there were some disruptions. At two primary schools in Mafola North, delivery vehicles were looted, youths armed with pangas tried to force students out of some schools.

The SPCC reiterated its call for

students to return to school and referred to those disrupting the process as 'provocateurs'.

Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp, Tembisa, Katlehong, Sebokeng and Soshanguve were hit by sporadic class boycotts during February.

At Mabopane Technikon in Pretoria, some students were refused re-admission. National Education Crisis Committee spokesman Molefe Tsele commented: 'We have reached the stage where it is very difficult for us to insist that students remain in their classes in the face of the provocation that is going on'. He cited ongoing detention of students and expulsion of students who had not paid school fees as particularly provocative.

By March the SPCC warned that school attendance rates were dropping and that the situation was breaking down.

As the 31 March deadline for the DET to meet students' demands drew closer, the NECC met top DET officials in an effort to avoid further class boycotts.

But shortly afterwards, the DET suspended classes at more than 20 schools in the townships of Ikageng (Potchefstroom), Kanana (Orkney), Khuma (Stilfontein) and Jouberton (Klerksdorp) in the Western Transvaal. This barred 20 000 students from attending class.

Tension increased at schools in Nelspruit, White River and Bethal, as well as several Soweto high schools.

In the three black townships of Witbank, students began a boycott in protest against the detention of colleagues and the presence of troops in the townships. During March the DET responded, suspending classes at higher

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primary and high schools.

Thousands of pupils in Alexandra, Ratanda near Heidelberg, and Bethal also boycotted classes: the DET suspended classes at these schools until 20 March.

During this period matric examinations were held. These replaced the aborted 1985 end-of-year exams. But only 6 858 matrics wrote nationally. In 1984, itself a year of sustained national class boycotts, 72 500 wrote the matriculation examination.

Commenting on the climate in education at this time, Molefe Tsele said the crisis was far worse than the previous year. Schools were disrupted, students harassed and teachers transferred from one school to another. And many students were still in detention.

Despite the worsening climate, the NECC conference at the end of March decided students should return to school when the second term began on 2 April. But dissatisfaction with the DET response to student demands remained strong. Some demands were resubmitted to the DET, including the unbanning of COSAS, withdrawal of troops from the townships and rebuilding of schools.

When schools reopened, about 80% of students returned - but the situation was by no means calm or normal. Many areas were still affected by boycotts, and in Vosloorus on the East Rand, a stayaway was called to honour a suspected ANC insurgent shot dead by police in the area. Unrest soon spread to Ratanda, outside Heidelberg.

School boycotts spread to the Free State. The DET responded by suspending classes there. Later that month classes were suspended at eight more schools - three in Sebokeng, four in Parys and one in Katlehong. In protest against the suspension students in the Vaal Triangle decided to stay away from classes.

On May Day, thousands of students stayed away from school; two weeks later classes at six Atteridgeville high schools were suspended after a two-week stayaway by nearly 25 000 students. Demands included the unbanning COSAS, repair of school windows and a refund of exam fees.

The DET postponed the third term re-opening of schools from 1 July to 14 July to plan 'normalisation' measures.

A few days later it announced shock new security measures. Students were to carry ID documents, schools would be

fenced and security guards used. Then on the eve of the reopening, State President PW Botha gazetted an emergency regulation forcing all students to re-register when schools re-opened on 14 July. The regulation empowered the DET to bar any student from school without giving reasons.

Nearly 80% of students returned to school, according to the DET. However, at least 340 000 (20% of the 1,7-m students under DET control) did not go back. They refused to re-register, and many burned ID books. Disturbances at schools continued, mainly in protest against the presence of troops.

At the end of July an urgent NECC application to declare the emergency regulation on registration invalid failed.

Throughout August boycotts and educational disruptions continued. At the beginning of September the DET closed 33 schools - 20 in the Eastern Cape, ten in Soweto and three on the East Rand. The DET claimed that no one was attending those schools, and teachers would be transferred.

In Tembisa, students embarked upon a boycott on 10 September. They demanded release of student leaders, that the DET meet with the Tembisa Parents Crisis Committee and the removal of security forces from the township. Students returned to school on 24 September.

In the first week of October 80 000 pupils stayed away from schools in Soweto, Alexandra, the Vaal Triangle, the East Rand and Eastern Cape. This was a response to calls from student organisations to boycott classes until the DET met their demands. New demands were that the DET reopen the 33 schools, disband DET 'youth camps' and meet the NECC.

These calls were backed by the National Students Co-ordinating Committee, which embarked on a campaign of 'sustained national action'. 6 October was marked as the day to 'unite in mass action against detentions and closure of schools'.

The DET has warned that where educational unrest persists, schools will be closed.

Examinations began on 28 October and were disrupted on the first day by groups of youths. This was condemned by a wide range of organisations, including the NECC and the Soweto Civic Association. Despite strict security

arrangements, the number of students writing dwindled to a reported one in five in Soweto - about 4 000.

The Transvaal Students Congress (TRASCO) has called for exams to be postponed, for all students to be re-admitted, and for all teachers who were

expelled, transferred or detained to be reinstated next year.

This is the setting for continuing conflict between students and the DET in 1987, with seemingly little chance of resolution.

The NECC: Doing Battle with the DET

ERIC MOLOBI is national co-ordinator of the National Education Crisis Committee. JON CAMPBELL posed some questions to him about developments in the education struggle.

How has the NECC developed since its Durban conference in March?

The conference decided to set up the People's Education Commission under the leadership of Zwelakhe Sisulu. The commission consists of civic associations, trade unions, parents, students and even some priests. Two subject committees have already been set up: a history subject committee and an English subject committee. A research unit for the development of a curriculum has also been established.

Some prominent academics have given support to the new system and others have shown willingness to do so.

A national office has been set up in Johannesburg and is functioning well, as are regional offices.

But the state of emergency has affected other structures, such as the parent-teacher-student associations (PTSAs), although SRCs are still functioning in some areas.

Has the NECC developed a national structure? And if so, what form has it taken and how does it operate?

The Wits Conference of December 1985, convened by the SPCC, decided that if the state failed to meet its demands, another conference, national in structure, would be held.

Three members of the SPCC formed part of a national structure (the NECC), with one member from each of the other regions. This is how the NECC developed a structure.

Notwithstanding state of emergency restrictions, every region holds



Eric
Molobi
- NECC

meetings from time to time. Reports are co-ordinated and sent to other regions to keep them informed. In these meetings students, teachers and parents participate.

The NECC has on occasion negotiated with educational authorities. What gains have been made through this, and is there a limit to these forms of negotiation? What conditions does the NECC lay down before embarking on such action?

The NECC operates on mandates. We consult and consult again. Conditions in South Africa, specifically in education, change so often. New situations of tension turn out new demands at every turn. This creates a need to remain keyed-in to students, parents and teachers at all times.

The type of negotiations we hold with government functionaries are not to be equated with talks that may occur between government officials and the

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national leadership of the liberation movement. Our negotiations do not touch on issues of the transfer of power, or cessation of armed confrontation. Our negotiations result from unbearably repressive measures in the townships.

The NECC is sensitive to the national demand that discussions between it and the DET should take place. We are concerned with the deteriorating education situation, with thousands of our children condemned by ministerial decree to roam township streets and face SADF casspirs.

The NECC has already approached the DET. But government and the DET have to remove some obstacles before negotiations can begin. These include:

- * Written permission for the NECC to consult with students. We must be able to report back and consult with our constituency. Otherwise discussions are futile;
- * A guarantee that our detained members, students and teachers, once released, will be able to participate in discussions, and not be redetained;
- * Release of our members and students from detention.

In addition, new issues thrown up by the changing conditions. For example, discussions on the examination issue are going on between students to finalise a position on it.

What kind of programmes has the NECC embarked upon, and how successful have these been?

One of the major programmes is People's Education. As mentioned, we are making progress, albeit under the restraining conditions of a clampdown.

Issues to be embarked upon will be curriculum development, gathering information, and in the long run suitable books will be written. PTSAs are being revived in some parts of the country. The SRCs were affected by the closure of schools but student structures continue, as seen in the emergence of the National Students Co-ordinating Committee.

What are the present demands and future needs of the NECC?

- * We need to establish other regional administrative offices;
- * Students need to broaden their structures and co-ordinate campaigns with those of workers and communities;
- * While traditional educational demands

must still be campaigned for, a broader strategy of opening people's schools, counter to the official policy of closing schools, needs to be embarked on. Structures like street committees must be fully used in this regard;

- * Exams must be postponed, as students are not ready for them. The DET must be flexible enough to accommodate this;
- * Propaganda camps must be stopped forthwith;
- * Detained students, NECC leaders and teachers must be released immediately;
- * The freedom to meet, consult and discuss with students and the community must be accepted;
- * There are needs for resources and resource personnel, for example researchers. In this regard, NECC needs a stronger bond with resource organisations;
- * PTSAs should be established nationally;
- * There is a need for organisations such as the National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA) to start seminars on new methodologies to teach people's education.

How has the state of emergency affected the NECC?

Many PTSA members have been detained, as well as students and teachers. We have in most cases operated in semi-underground conditions, but much work has been able to go on.

The worst aspect has been the state's attempt to cut the link between NECC and the community. We have recently seen an attempted vilification of the NECC through SABC TV, pamphlets, radio news and so on. But this will not destroy the NECC. We have learnt new methods of operation. Regionally, decisions have been taken democratically and I believe we shall emerge stronger and more resilient.

What is the relationship between the NECC and other student and teacher organisations?

The NECC tries to maintain a very close relationship with students. On our executive is a member of the students' national co-ordinating structure.

The Azanian Students Organisation also has a member on the NECC executive. Students and academics will sit side by side on the people's education commission and different subject committees. Our policy is that we will

learn from students while they learn from us.

The NECC is an organic combination of student activism, parental caution and academic foresight all merging together under the broad guiding principles of the progressive, non-racial, democratic movement.

Traditionally, the NECC has had good relationships with teacher organisations, in particular the African Teachers Association of South Africa (ATASA) and NEUSA. At both our conferences, teacher organisations like the Western Cape Teachers Union (WECTU), the Democratic Teachers Union (DETU), ATASA and NEUSA participated.

We hope a broad teachers' federation will soon emerge. We also hope that traditionally progressive teachers' associations will take the lead in instituting seminars and programmes that will unify and strengthen the education struggle.

What relationship does the NECC have to the PTSAs?

PTSAs are an integral part of the NECC, involving teachers, parents and students at school level.

The PTSAs affiliate to crisis committees, for example the SPCC, and these in turn affiliate to regional crisis committees, eight of which form the NECC national executive.

PTSAs are to the NECC what street committees are to civics and the UDF. They are the basic organs of power in that they democratically take decisions at school level. They connect the school with the community it serves, involving parents and the community in the functions of a school. The school therefore cannot pursue a line ideologically and academically hostile to the broad community.

These are the concrete manifestations of the slogan 'People's Education for People's Power'.

In some regions the NECC's relationship with ATASA seems controversial. What is being done about this?

The NECC is aware of areas in which ATASA is said to be hostile to teachers that belong to progressive teacher organisations. The NECC believes that the ordinary membership of ATASA is not hostile and needs to be brought closer to progressive ideas.

The guiding principle directs the

NECC's relationship with ATASA is that in this phase of the national democratic struggle, education has become the arena of sharpening contradictions between mass aspirations and repressive forces. The need is therefore to close ranks, and broaden the mass base in order to isolate the enemy. Though slow, there are changes within ATASA, for example a withdrawal from government structures. There must now be a move to join COSATU and a willingness to meet with other teacher associations for joint programmes.

However, progressive organisations need to be flexible, and understand that to cut links completely with ATASA is tactically incorrect. We can never throw willing allies into the hands of the enemy. Progressive teacher organisations must take the lead in devising strategies that benefit not only their sectional interests, but also those of the broad democratic movement.

Could you outline NECC's relationship to UDF and COSATU, and its role in the 'national united action' campaign? What are the aims of the campaign and what action is envisaged.

The UDF is the most advanced gain made by our people in recent history. So is COSATU. It is obvious that these organisations must play a role in NECC. The NECC does not intend to be another front. The UDF and COSATU are the leading organisations in their respective fields. Prominent figures within the UDF are to be found in the structures of the NECC. The People's Education Commission includes names like Stofile and Mkhathshwa, as well as COSATU people.

Our struggle is multifaceted, with many areas of activity. The present 'national united action' is a point that indicates the linkages of struggle dictated by conditions at ground level in this country.

The campaign aims to:

- * Expose the effects of the emergency on our people; and
- * Unite a cross-section of our people to stand up and show their abhorrence of apartheid.

Each organ, each facet, will devise a programme in this regard. Through constant discussion and consultation each will work towards a national manifestation of abhorrence of apartheid and repression under apartheid.

'DET Destroys Education in Duncan Village'

Since the beginning of 1986, Duncan Village residents have fought to run schooling on terms set by their community organisations. With information supplied by the East London Progressive Teachers Union and the Duncan Village Parents Committee, FRANZ KRUGER describes the struggle to find alternative venues for schooling in defiance of the Department of Education and Training.

East London's Duncan Village township has seen a particularly bitter schools conflict. It left the township as the only one in the country without any school facilities at all when, in August the Department of Education and Training (DET) closed all 11 schools 'for the rest of the year'.

On the face of it, the reason was obvious: no school buildings remain in which classes could be held. In mid-August last year, when violence erupted in Duncan Village, all school buildings but one were destroyed in arson attacks.

But during the first two terms of this year the DET partially lost control of education in Duncan Village, as the Duncan Village Residents Association (DVRA) arranged its own school venues in church halls in direct defiance of the department.

SCHOOLS ARE DESTROYED



It is difficult to say why Duncan Village's schools were attacked with such ferocity when, in August 1985, violence erupted in the wake of Victoria Mxenge's funeral in Rayi, outside King William's Town.

Teachers speak of rising tension in schools, particularly over the right to form SRCs. A DET official allegedly announced that SRC elections should be held, but then retracted the order. Security forces intervened in student demonstrations at various schools.

Relations between teachers and students were also tense. At one school students began locking the school gates once teachers were inside, alleging that teachers had collaborated with police. Just prior to this, the East London Progressive Teachers Union

(ELPTU) was established in April 1985. It aimed to improve relations with students and the community by creating a clearly progressive teachers organisation.

One of the first targets of the violence, attacked in mid-August 1985, was the administration block at Qamqamba, one of two senior secondary schools in Duncan Village. The houses of community councillors and police were also firebombed at about the same time. Soon afterwards the other schools were destroyed, leaving untouched only Ebenezer Majombozi senior secondary school, which is on the outskirts of the township.

For the rest of 1985, the violent situation prevented any return to class. Attempting to salvage some of the year, the Daily Dispatch newspaper offered senior students supplementary courses in science subjects. There was no response. Exams were scheduled to take place at the Summerpride Showgrounds, but only three students are believed to have written any exams at all.

The 1986 school year was to start on 14 January. The Soweto Parents Crisis Committee's December conference in Johannesburg decided that students should register on 28 January. The DET accepted the new date, but announced that students in Duncan Village should stay at home until further notice as no schools existed. The DET told teachers to report to Ebenezer Majombozi from 14 January.

FINDING ALTERNATIVE VENUES



By this stage, the Duncan Village Corporation (DUVCOR) project was under way. Local National Party MP Peet de

Pontes, a businessman and others launched it to build temporary schools to accommodate students until the DET rebuilt the destroyed schools. The temporary classrooms would then be transformed into semi-detached housing.

DUVCOR was funded by the government employment creation fund in the Eastern Cape. It was hailed as a way of tackling the housing, education and unemployment crises together. The DVRA was involved from an early stage in discussions. It seemed a model initiative.

A week before the 28 January deadline, teachers reporting to Ebenezer Majombozi met. They resolved to follow the SPCC conference decision and register students, regardless of what the DET said. Students could be accommodated in church halls and other venues until the DUVCOR project was complete. A co-ordinating committee of four was established, and a press statement called on students to register on 28 January.

The committee attempted to enlist DET support for the arrangements. But King William's Town-based circuit inspector G van der Merwe rejected the plan.

Teachers said their decision had not been confrontationalist, but simply followed the national decision agreed on by the SPCC conference and the DET. They had hoped the DET would erect prefabricated buildings, and saw Van der Merwe's response as individual obstructionism.

Nevertheless on Tuesday 28 January some 3 000 students, of a total student population of about 5 000, converged on

Ebenezer Majombozi to register.

It was impossible to deal with 3 000 students in one school building. One of the co-ordinating committee's first decisions was to send home children from lower primary schools until venues were found.

The committee approached the development board to erect prefabs or provide temporary toilets at other venues. But the board refused assistance. Finally, teachers found four church and church hall venues, and Ebenezer Majombozi was used as well.

DIFFICULT TEACHING CONDITIONS



Teaching began under very difficult conditions. Though many students had registered, attendance was wildly irregular.

Teachers said that many students registered in response to the SPCC conference decision, but did not attend classes because of 'a lack of discipline' and poor conditions. Some venues had too few or no toilets. Overcrowding was severe and few educational aids existed. Blackboards and chalk had to be scrounged from the previous year's leftovers at Ebenezer Majombozi. No exercise books or even teachers' copies of textbooks were available.

Another problem was a student minority which actively opposed the SPCC conference decision, arguing against any



Students from Ebenezer Majombozi protest against the transfer of teachers

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education until 1987.

DET ON THE OFFENSIVE



Meanwhile the DET launched the first of many attempts to break the community initiative and reassert its authority. It ordered lower primary teachers to attend courses at the Border Early Learning Centre, which concentrates on pre-primary education in the region. ELPTU's support was weakest among lower primary teachers.

ELPTU saw the DET's move as a divisive tactic. It sent a delegation to appeal to teachers to return to community venues. Some did, and began classes for the youngest children, often outside the halls. Others played an elaborate double game, reporting to the Early Learning Centre but spending most of their time at the church halls. Conservative teachers continued attending the courses.

The DET still believed that students were obediently waiting at home for the official go-ahead. On 7 February it called on senior secondary and junior primary pupils to register the following week. On 12 February, the Daily Dispatch quoted a DET official saying that registration was 'proceeding smoothly'. But, said the Dispatch, 'a tour of township schools could not confirm this and teachers said pupils had already registered with ELPTU and DVRA last month'.

Giving up the pretence a few days later, the DET blamed 'Duncan Village teachers' for preventing students from registering. Soon afterwards it ordered six teachers to report to remote areas in the Aliwal North circuit. These teachers were either executive members of ELPTU or active members. They were allowed to object to the transfer in writing and all did so.

THE DET BACKS DOWN



On 7 March DET circulars ordering the closure of schools for the following week were delivered to all school sites. Although a minority defied the order, most teachers and students stayed at

home.

On 13 March, a high-powered DET delegation from Pretoria held talks with teachers. Teachers were summoned to three separate venues in town, according to which schools they taught in, and handed questionnaires.

Details were requested as to education arrangements in the community venues: who had drawn up timetables; who the principals were; what work had been covered; and times of operation. Officials told teachers to present their workbooks the next day.

After the three groups had been surveyed, the six transferred teachers were summoned to the Kennaway Hotel and addressed by the Pretoria delegation. One of the six said: 'For a long time, we couldn't work out their mission. But then we found they were on a reconciliation mission. They never explicitly said our transfers were withdrawn, but we could deduce it'.

The next day, the DET denied it had ever transferred the six teachers. ELPTU saw the DET's tacit withdrawal as a victory.

On 15 March the DET's regional director, Bill Staude, announced classes would reopen in the community venues. DET officials would visit the schools to help principals and teachers 'in their task of normalising education', Staude said. Soon afterwards, an unpopular inspector, whose resignation had been demanded previously, was transferred.

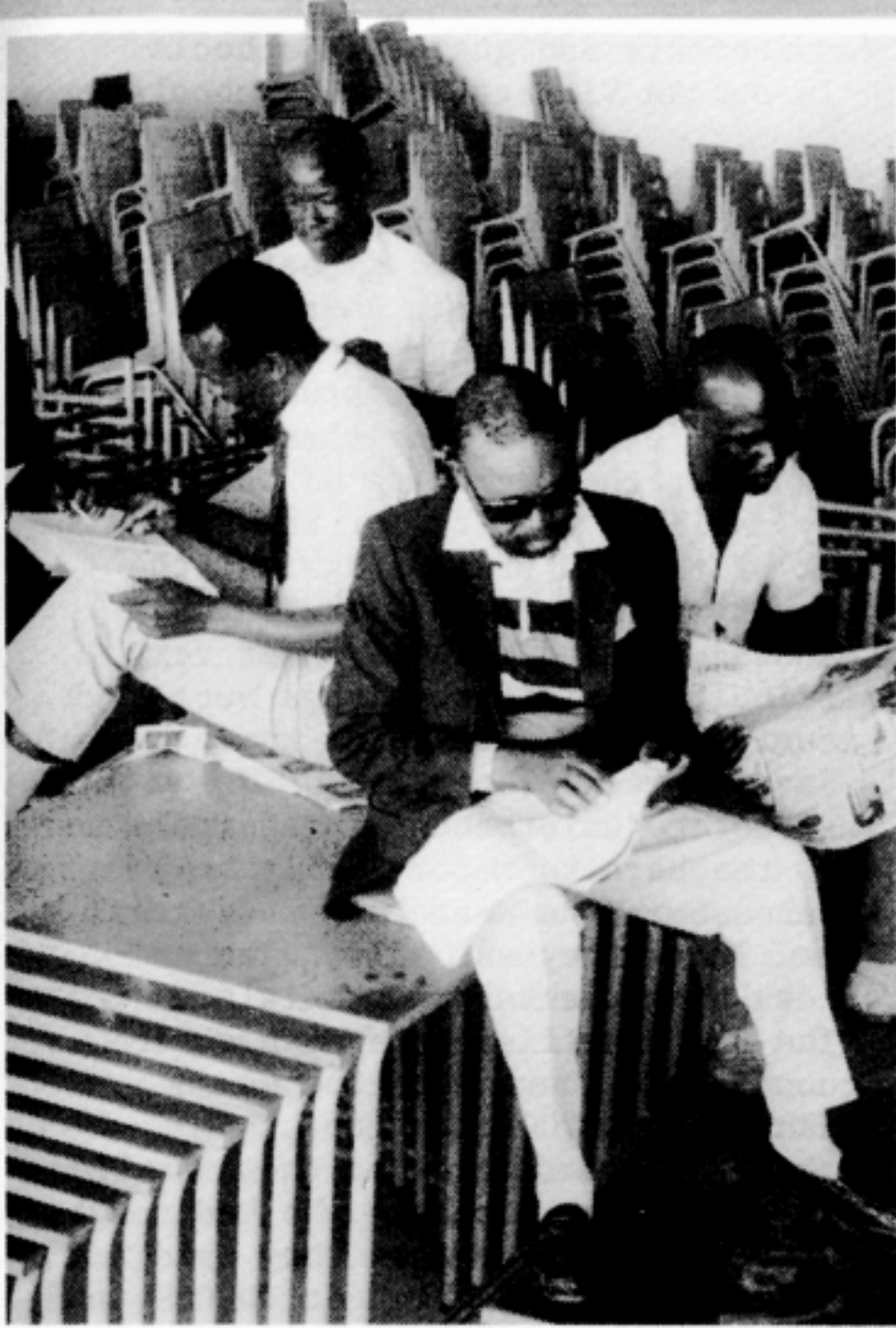
Teachers were jubilant. The DET's attempts to impose its will on the community had failed. It had been forced to accept the community's arrangements.

School attendance had climbed as the co-ordinating committee improved conditions. The DET's stepdown raised morale and attendance increased again. The newly-appointed inspector quickly developed a good relationship with the community organisations by consulting them on various issues and responding to needs as best he could.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION



While school was held in community venues, teachers mostly followed the ordinary syllabus. They said they had waited for materials and a programme from the NECC, but felt unqualified to



Teachers kill time at the West Bank warehouse

teach alternative education without such materials. Nothing arrived. And many teachers were so steeped in Bantu Education that they did not know enough about subjects outside it to teach them. Further, the many organisational problems associated with teaching in church halls tended to leave little time for developing alternative programmes.

But alternative content did find its way into teaching. Some teachers injected new perspectives into subjects like history. In other classes, students raised topics for discussion, with the teacher functioning as a chairperson. Topics included the consumer boycott; Nelson Mandela; the role of organisations like the Cape African Teachers' Association, ELPTU's conservative rival; ANC history; sanctions and their effects; rebel sports tours; and critiques of newspapers.

Teachers remained concerned about the syllabus, thinking it important for students to gain matric certificates. They tried to schedule discussions at the end of a lesson for instance, so as

not to disrupt ordinary teaching. But they still considered these discussions valuable: 'I learned things from my students', said one teacher.

Alternative content also entered the classes in other ways. Students put up posters with political slogans, or pinned up press clippings on current events. As one ELPTU member said: 'The first time I saw a picture of Mandela was when I walked into my class one day'.

CONFLICT OVER STATIONERY



However, the circuit office in King William's Town remained unco-operative. Teachers blamed Van der Merwe's 'lack of interest in education' for its slowness in providing much-needed materials. The DET never provided furniture, which teachers claimed was stored in an East London warehouse. And textbooks for senior secondary schools arrived only in May. Delegations from the parents' committee went to King Williams's Town to press for materials. But it took several visits even for scribblers for senior schools to be released.

Exercise books sparked a new conflict within the schools. Some of the more militant element which had opposed the return to school moved back into the schools to influence events. When books arrived the militants took the lead in burning them. Students at higher primary schools were also dissatisfied, as they had not been issued books. They organised a protest march on Ebenezer Majombozi.

These events substantially disrupted teaching. The East London Students Council called a meeting to discuss the books issue. After lengthy discussion, they decided that the books should be accepted. Books had been paid for by 'contributions from all sectors, and it was not democratic for the students to decide to burn them without consulting their parents and other groups'.

DUVCOR FAILS



Teaching continued until the end of the term despite teachers' growing

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frustration with conditions in the church halls, which remained overcrowded and inadequate. Teachers were also impatient with the lack of progress in resolving the DUVCOR dispute.

DUVCOR lost its legitimacy in early March 1986, when it held a very public ceremony to hand over money for the project to community councillors, who had long-since stopped living in the township.

The DVRA saw this as an attempt to hijack the project. Not only did it feel the semi-detached buildings were unsuitable for housing, but early in the project it had insisted the community council should not be involved. The DVRA declared it would have nothing more to do with DUVCOR until the community council's participation was ended. It also wanted the Nationalist MP's involvement ended, as the DVRA felt he had acted in bad faith.

The DVRA was backed by students, but teachers felt less strongly about the issue, particularly with winter approaching. Classes were still being conducted outdoors at some venues. This would become impossible when it became really cold.

Some students arranged with their teachers to continue lessons in the winter holidays. The stayaway on Soweto Day would, of course, be observed. But classes would resume on 17 June, particularly for the Standard Nines and Tens.

Tension rose nationally towards 16 June, and the DET ordered schools to close early on 4 June for the holidays.

On 12 June State President PW Botha declared a national state of emergency, claiming there were plans for large-scale disruptions to mark 16 June. Acting in terms of the new emergency regulations, the Border commissioner of police barred access to all schools in 15 magisterial districts including East London. Only people with written permission from the DET would be allowed onto school premises from 15 June to 7 July.

'THE DET DESTROYS EDUCATION'



When schools reopened on 14 July, the the DET instituted its new get-tough policy: ID cards, re-registration

requirements and guards at schools.

In Duncan Village, junior schools were ordered to start the third term at the DUVCOR site. Most teachers and students followed the instruction because of the repressive climate and dissatisfaction with conditions at the churches.

Senior scholars were to report back to Ebenezer Majombozi, but students refused to re-register, arguing that they had done so at the beginning of the year. They called a boycott for the second week of term in protest against the security arrangements. Afterwards teaching resumed, albeit under very difficult conditions, with a very high security force presence at the school.

Several weeks later, the DET instructed junior school principals to send teachers to report daily at a warehouse in the West Bank industrial area. There they sat idly, with no access to students or materials.

The DET justified this move on the grounds that there were too many teachers at DUVCOR for the pupil numbers. Teachers claimed that the DET was victimising teachers who had taught at the community venues. They said attendance had been high at DUVCOR, and those teachers left behind had to cope with up to 100 pupils per class. A few days later, pupils marched out of DUVCOR protesting against the transfer of teachers and walked singing down the road. They have not been back since.

At Ebenezer Majombozi, the DET notified teachers on 4 August that senior schools would close until the end of the year as students had not re-registered. Students were to go home, and teachers were to join their colleagues at the West Bank warehouse.

Teachers claimed Staude had told them the DET would tolerate the refusal to re-register as long as teaching proceeded normally. They accused the DET of being less interested in education than in reasserting absolute authority. 'It is the the DET which is destroying education', said one teacher.

Since then, there has been no education in Duncan Village, and it is still unclear what will happen next year. Delegations from the parents' committee have held numerous fruitless meetings with DET officials. They gained the impression that although regional officials would like to take a more conciliatory line, they are constrained by national policy.

Teachers Learn Lessons from Schools Boycott

The successful Cape school boycott of mid-1985 did not bear fruit this year. Political gains won by students then were not consolidated. Three teachers from Western Cape coloured schools, all active in teacher organisation, spell out the lessons of the 1985 and 1986 class boycotts of coloured Department of Education and Culture (DEC) schools.

Class boycotts in Cape Town began on 23 July 1985 in response to the declaration of the state of emergency in other parts of South Africa. By mid-August, 63 Cape Town educational institutions, as well as students from Worcester, Paarl and Oudtshoorn, had joined the boycott.

The student boycott met with heavy repression. Police fired at students with teargas, rubber bullets and live ammunition. They severely beat students, sometimes inside their schools, and arrested and detained them.

In the face of such severe student harassment, teachers in the Western Cape had to take a stand. At a mass meeting on 15 August, teachers from 79 schools and colleges met to discuss their response to the school boycott and police attacks on their students. Teachers felt strongly that they had sheltered behind their students for too long.

They agreed to demonstrate support for the student boycott by 'striking' for two days and helping with alternative education programmes.

At a meeting on 22 August, teachers discussed the need for a permanent progressive teachers' organisation. And on 29 September they launched the Western Cape Teachers Union (WECTU). Its aims were to struggle for a non-racial, non-sexist, unitary and democratic education system in a South Africa free of exploitation and oppression.

CONFLICT OVER EXAMS

The boycott continued for several months. During the last weeks of the

school year, writing and administering exams became an issue of conflict for students, parents and teachers.

On 28 October WESCO (the Western Cape Students Congress), an umbrella structure, at that stage representing the majority of secondary schools, decided not to write exams. WECTU called on teachers not to administer exams because they were anti-educational. WECTU argued that while little schoolwork had been done, the department insisted exams cover the whole syllabus. In addition, exams were to be written under police control and in some schools police already patrolled school corridors.

Few teachers responded to the call. This was probably due to direct police threats to several school staffs. Police threatened teachers who refused to administer exams with detention, while the DEC threatened dismissal. Exams went ahead in November under SADF and police 'protection'.

WECTU's militant stand might also explain its fall-off in membership at the time.

According to teachers, quoted in the Cape Times, 'the police behaviour is bizarre. They go through the classrooms, check the scripts, not knowing what they are doing.

'Imagine writing an exam with a huge cop carrying a shotgun leaning over your shoulder checking what you are writing, especially when a week or two back those same cops were firing birdshot and teargas at you and sometimes killing your buddies.

'The exams are a complete and utter farce. The police think they are going ahead, but the students just sit there pretending, writing poetry, drawing, writing diatribes against the police.

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'In the midst of all this, the police pull students out of classes at random, taking down names and addresses, and there is a real fear they will then go to those houses after school and intimidate the students into giving them information.

'There are kids who come to school prepared to write, but because the cops are right inside the grounds, in the classrooms, they change their minds and refuse. In effect, the police presence is making fewer students write exams'.

WECTU and 155 community organisations such as the Western Province Council of Sport, civic associations and trade unions like the Cape Town Municipal Workers Association and the Food and Canning Workers Union, declared the exams educationally fraudulent and farcical.

About half the students eventually wrote exams. The proportion varied from school to school with numbers ranging from 0-90%. The exams issue created deep divisions amongst students, parents and teachers. These were carried over into the new year.

Student divisions lay mainly between those who had written exams and been promoted and those who had not. Parent and teacher opinions also varied. For example at Harold Cressy High School the PTSA agreed students should not write exams, and not one exam paper was set. In Mitchells Plain large numbers of students wrote even though they were involved in protest activities.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

At the beginning of 1986 most students responded to the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee call to return to school on 28 January.

Student promotion, even of those who had written their final exams, caused great confusion. At many schools SRCs 'promoted' students. Some students saw this as a way to regain support from their parents and heal divisions between students and parents. Some students and their parents argued that they could not afford an extra year in school.

On 7 February House of Representatives Education Minister Carter Ebrahim announced that schools could choose one of three options: promote students

according to June 1985 results; hold exams in March; or make students repeat the previous year.

Most schools decided to promote all their students.

Uncertainty over promotions and exams probably explains the significant drop in school enrolment at the beginning of this year. In some schools students continued to drop out through the year. Many schools now anticipate a high failure rate as students battle to cope academically.

Progressive teachers must assess the exams experience carefully, considering what promotion policy should be adopted during long boycotts. It must be asked whether a decision can be good politics while also being educationally unsound within the present education system.

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS

Another factor causing confusion at the start of 1986 was the suspension and dismissal of teachers who had refused to administer exams. By the beginning of the December 1985 school holiday, 130 teachers had been suspended, dismissed, restricted or transferred.

WECTU decided to challenge the suspensions in court but lost the case.

In the new year WECTU initiated a 'Hands Off Our Teachers' campaign. It distributed bumper stickers, pamphlets and posters, and organised house visits to rally support for victimised teachers.

On 14 January, ignoring the state of emergency, WECTU teachers marched en masse to DEC offices in Cape Town. They handed over a list of demands which included immediate and unconditional reinstatement of all victimised teachers.

That night SABC TV announced that the suspended teachers had been reinstated but charges of misconduct against them remained. Soon afterwards dismissed temporary teachers were also reinstated.

The Department of Indian Affairs had also transferred and dismissed teachers at Rylands High School. In 1986 a well organised community campaign against 'scab' teachers resulted in reinstatement of transferred teachers. Dismissed teachers fought their case in court, but lost and were not reinstated.

Some managed to find jobs at other schools.

The events of 1985 made it clear to progressive teachers that their schools are and will remain a major site of struggle until there is fundamental social and political change in South Africa. Progressive teachers will be called on again and again to take a political stand. This necessitates building a national teachers' organisation strong enough to back this political stand and defend its members.

WINNING SUPPORT FROM PARENTS

Another crucial support base for progressive teachers is the community - the parents of the children we teach. But the lack of political awareness and political education among parents must be recognised. But why is a progressive political culture absent amongst parents? And what can teachers do to overcome this?

Initially the 1985 boycott was characterised by tacit community and parent support. Though parents were concerned for the safety of their children, they were not antagonistic to the boycott.

The closure of all DEC schools in September 1985 was a rallying point for students, progressive teachers and parents. It politicised parents: they complained they were paying taxes to have their children educated, not left to their own devices while parents were at work.

Politicisation of parents often begins through involvement in their children's struggles. But teachers and students must ensure this politicisation is developed and deepened. Parents' attitude was 'political' only in a limited sense. They did not question the form or content of their children's education. This indicates the debate about people's education has yet to reach parents in DEC schools.

PTSAs ARE FORMED

The high point of co-operation between teachers, students and parents was the

community reopening of schools two weeks after their official closure in September 1985. This resulted in the formation of Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTSAs) at many schools. PTSAs raised questions about community control of schools.

PTSAs were short-lived. This was due to the declaration of the state of emergency at the end of October and to students' decision to continue boycotting in the fourth term.

A major issue discussed by PTSAs was students' right to decide when to call a boycott and when to end it. This question, although debated in PTSAs and WECTU, was never resolved. Most PTSAs argued that schooling involved everyone, and there should be consensus between parents, teachers and students regarding boycott. This needs more debate, especially in view of the NECC's decision to call off the boycott while students' right to decide was still being debated.

DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

When the boycott started, functioning SRCs existed in many schools. These took over the co-ordination of boycott activities. Where SRCs were ineffective or non-existent, students formed student action committees. Through these structures student leadership genuinely attempted to inform students about political debates. But at the time, students were still isolated from the mainstream of political argument in the rest of the country.

Student activists also tried to involve the student body in democratic decision-making. However imperfect this process might have been in practice, credit ought to be given to students' efforts to establish a broadly democratic base in their schools. Often teachers were too dismissive of these attempts, saying that student structures were undemocratic and unrepresentative.

Students organised awareness programmes and mass rallies in an attempt to develop students' political consciousness. Awareness programmes tried to develop an analysis of South African society. Students found it difficult to sustain interesting and exciting programmes, especially as

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teacher participation was limited.

More and more students began to stay away from school until only a hard core remained. Conflict between students, police and SADF heightened and erupted into direct confrontation. In some areas street battles became the main arena for student activity.

TEACHERS NEED POLITICAL EDUCATION

Initially teachers did not intervene in awareness programmes and their participation was limited. Some teachers saw the boycott as a student affair. But perhaps more important, teachers were incapable of intervening because they themselves lacked the political background and skills to help organise programmes.

Therefore one of the most important tasks of a progressive teachers' organisation must be political education of teachers. Teachers provide continuity from one student generation to the next. Students come and go in schools and repeat many of their predecessors' mistakes. Teachers remain.

So it is important for progressive teachers' organisations to continue examining the relationship between teachers and students and consider how to develop a disciplined and democratic political culture in their schools.

Teachers spend many hours each day with children of the working class. Progressive teachers must see it as their duty to contribute to the struggle for liberation by preparing students for future working-class struggle.

1986: A LULL IN STUDENT ACTIVITY

This year has seen a general lull in student activity and student organisation. Exceptions exist, notably in Bonteheuwel where close contact between students and political organisations has consolidated.

Students in DEC schools also supported May Day. Now, student organisations are attempting to break down the 'location barrier' between coloured and African areas in Cape Town. A joint SRCs' committee representing all township SRCs

and Athlone Students Action Committee has been working to break down this barrier.

But we need to understand why student activity was limited this year.

At the end of 1985 student activists said the boycott had politicised students and made them aware of the need for effective organisation. They saw democratic control over the course of the boycott as a major achievement.

Yet 1986 showed little evidence of attempts to build on these gains, to deepen the political awareness of the mass of students or to build solid student structures. The space fought for and won by students in 1985 was not capitalised on in 1986.

Students returned to school this year after the holiday period, which tends to dampen student activity. Divisions created by the exams issue continued into the new year. And confusion over promotion was worsened by the large number of temporary teachers who had not yet been reinstated.

THE PROBLEM OF IMMEDIACY

Politicisation of students in 1985 never went beyond sloganising. Political education was initiated but never deepened and extended from the layer of student leadership. Issues followed fast and furious and there never seemed to be the time or necessity for political education in the ranks of the student body.

The popular slogan 'Liberation before Education' showed students thought freedom was just around the corner. This belief in the immediacy of victory was destructive and prevented more effective political development among students.

By 1986 many students were disillusioned. They realised they had naively underestimated the strength and resilience of the state. Again, this underlines the need for progressive teachers to intervene politically and extend our students' political awareness.

Next year, 1987, will be crucial as teachers and their students explore ways of transforming schools and developing more conscious and informed students committed to people's education for people's power.

Winning Away Inkatha's Base

In a previous article, former General Workers Union organiser Mike Morris criticised COSATU's tactics in the ongoing conflict with both Inkatha and UWUSA in Natal. A senior COSATU official, writing in his personal capacity, agrees that COSATU blundered in attacking Inkatha at its December 1985 launch. But he argues that Morris' alternative strategy for dealing with Inkatha is flawed, and based on a now-rejected FOSATU position of the early 1980s.

Mike Morris' article *Lessons from May Day* (WIP 43), sets the stage for wider debate about Inkatha in Natal.

Although the Morris article focuses mainly on trade unions, it involves a debate which concerns all progressives struggling for an alternative society free of exploitation and oppression.

His contribution is a valuable eye-opener on the extent to which Inkatha organisation and political control has rooted itself in Natal. It is especially instructive to those outside the province who often underestimate the dimensions of the problem.

But there are serious shortcomings in Morris' suggestions as to how trade unions could tackle the Inkatha problem. His plan is to hold out against the Inkatha onslaught rather than to dislodge Inkatha from its politically dominant position in the province.

Given Inkatha's political clout, it cannot be correct to argue that the political terrain should generally be left alone. Trade unions should retreat, Morris says, to the arena in which they are dominant and safe: there they must consolidate against the Inkatha-linked United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA), take up shop-floor struggles and discuss socialism.

Socialism cannot be born out of mere independent trade union struggle concentrated primarily on the shop floor. Socialism is not just an aim of struggle for workers in trade unions, it concerns the whole of society. It is a struggle to install working-class leadership, in the words of COSATU's policy resolutions, 'in all spheres of our society together with other progressive community organisations'.

Progressive trade unions are the most important layer of the working class,

certainly. However, they cannot bring about a transformation to socialism on their own and without involvement in political struggle.

It would be a different matter if Morris suggested that unions abandon a political profile as a tactic. But nowhere does Morris say that he sees it this way. Nowhere does he attempt to address himself to COSATU's well-known position on political struggle; nor does he spell out how his proposed strategy of political non-involvement will relate to the national political campaigns to which COSATU is committed (for example pass laws, education, forced removals etc). He appears to show scant regard for the overall COSATU policy position.

It can thus be assumed the position he asserts is not a tactical one; he sees himself at odds with COSATU's general programme of concerted and calculated involvement in the liberation struggle.

REVIVING THE FOSATU LINE

What Morris presents as fresh ideas on advancing the socialist struggle in Natal are really the old, un lamented positions adopted by Natal FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) in its heyday.

Whenever FOSATU was faced with the challenge of involvement in struggle around a particular issue, it held up the independent working-class position as the red light. The working class was not consolidated enough to begin playing the leading role in 'community struggles', was the stock reply.

This position was coupled with an

equally dubious line on political alliances. 'Because we have members in both UDF and Inkatha, we cannot make alliances with either. To do so would be a source of division among workers'.

What could be more reactionary than to lump progressive civic and militant youth groups with Inkatha, and deal with all as the treacherous populists waiting to waylay the interests of the working class. This policy made it so much easier for Inkatha to consolidate huge political gains in Natal.

Now Morris wants to resurrect this position, which has become generally irrelevant to workers and the progressive labour movement. It goes without saying that workers as workers want to address themselves to conditions of oppression and exploitation outside of the factory. Issues such as rents, housing, education, influx control, unemployment and forced removals are firmly on the agenda for workers. COSATU and its unions have been compelled to take up these demands.

COSATU has also been forced to take a stand on the larger issues of apartheid, repression and the political demands of the liberation movement. Hence COSATU's preamble states: 'We... firmly commit ourselves to a united democratic South Africa, free from oppression and economic exploitation. We believe that this can only be achieved under the leadership of a united working class'.

It adds that a key objective is to 'encourage democratic worker organisation and leadership in all spheres of our society together with other progressive sectors of the community'.

Gone forever are the days when unionists could get away with the contradictory reasoning that 'workers must play the leading role in the struggle' and say in the same breath that 'unions should only enter the political terrain once they have consolidated on the shop floor'.

Today many workers suspect that, by and large, proponents of economism want to avoid political activism for the worst possible reason: that the state (or Inkatha in this case) will clobber those who engage politically.

It is difficult to see why else Morris is trying to resurrect the old strategic approach associated with FOSATU in Natal. On his own admission, it has not even thwarted the rise of Inkatha.

Morris is right that it was poor strategy for COSATU to launch its blistering attack against Inkatha at the federation's inauguration last year. The fierce Inkatha counterattack caught the unions in the region flat-footed. COSATU did not have a clear strategy that unions were geared to take forward and defend on the ground.

Further, such sweeping outbursts do little to highlight and exploit the contradiction between the thousands of passive members and the reactionary leadership. On the contrary, that leadership responds by typically whipping up feelings of tribalism, driving a wedge between Inkatha members and progressive groups.

Time and again the UDF, for example, has come off the loser after Buthelezi used the vast media resources at his disposal to slander the front.

Whatever strategy we adopt must take into account that thousands of workers are Inkatha members. The main concern should be to break the mass-base away from the leadership.

FOSATU responded to the reality of workers' support for Inkatha by avoiding the politics of the day altogether. It saw worker unity on the factory floor as all-important. COSATU, on the other hand, argues that the answer is to deepen workers' experience of political struggle.

The task is for unions (and other local mass organisations) to draw Inkatha members into struggles around issues which directly affect them. We will need to engage Inkatha as an organisation: perhaps even challenge it to come into particular campaigns. We know that Inkatha is not interested in taking up the issues through democratic mass struggle, but nevertheless we must challenge it to demonstrate its bankruptcy. This is part of the process of isolating the Inkatha hierarchy and dismantling its support.

During the Sarmcol struggle last year, Inkatha as an organisation was called in to be part of the support committee. After the first meeting, it pulled out. But the move made it easier to tap broad-based Inkatha support than it would otherwise have been.

Buthelezi, sensing the popular support for the Sarmcol strikers, belatedly tried to buy himself into that struggle

by issuing a statement of support.

Inkatha members among the Sarmcol strikers were thus exposed to the sterile politics of Inkatha. Through MAWU, they went on to form the Sarmcol Workers Co-operative, consolidating their primary allegiance to the union and democratic organisation.

In a similar vein, groups taking up resettlement in the Ladysmith area approached Inkatha for assistance. It made little more than token gestures. After all, the affected people were being removed from black spots into KwaZulu where they would fall under KwaZulu government jurisdiction. At this point Inkatha seemed more concerned with leading deputations to Pretoria for more land to effect the consolidation of KwaZulu than launching a major resistance struggle.

Although progressive organisations as such were not involved, this struggle weakened Inkatha support in the area.

The unions, as well as organisations like the UDF, need to be creative and find tactics of struggle that will draw Inkatha members into struggles over issues which directly affect them.

As always, decisions as to which struggles unions should link into, and the nature of such campaigns, should flow from thorough discussion in the structures.

This approach should be coupled with a vigorous education programme in the unions. By providing information, discussion and debate, the plan should be to peel away confusion and deepen understanding of issues. There must be thoroughgoing discussion of COSATU policy and resolutions. This should plug into discussion about an alternative society in which worker control predominates and where capitalism has been replaced by socialism.

A problem with education in many unions today is that resources and programmes are geared mainly to shop stewards. Unions should ask: how can we ensure that education is turned out to include wider union membership?

VIOLENCE: THE DILEMMA OF DEFENCE

The most difficult problem presented

by Inkatha is its violent attacks on union members and officials. It is unlikely that these will abate if unions confine themselves to factory-floor issues. On the one hand, Inkatha is acutely aware (and terrified to the point of paranoia) of the broad relationship between COSATU and UDF and its militant youth and student affiliates. Furthermore, by launching UWUSA, Inkatha has brought the conflict onto the shop floor. Unable to match the organising skills of the progressive unions, UWUSA turns increasingly to strong-arm tactics. As many violent incidents involving unionists stem from shop-floor clashes as from political parrying in the townships.

Progressive groups thus face the dilemma of either taking the violence lying down or defending themselves. Where people have resisted attacks, the impis have invariably been routed. At the NECC conference, as well as at schools in Lamontville earlier this year, the impis were repulsed and severely embarrassed. Inkatha was at pains to deny that it orchestrated the attacks.

Understandably, progressive unions and township groups are reluctant to raise the levels of violence. The unions' forte is democratic working-class organisation and essentially this is the way the struggle will be advanced.

However, it has become imperative to consider defence in the townships. Shop stewards and progressive youth have found themselves natural allies in the bid to protect their families and themselves in the townships.

It is also politically important for progressive elements to stand up to Inkatha coercion. For continued defeats at the hands of the impis will eat up morale in trade union ranks. And Inkatha doubters toying with the idea of switching loyalties must have confidence that to do so would not necessarily be suicidal.

There is no easy solution to the Inkatha problem. Any strategy that will succeed in loosening the tight control of Inkatha and opening up the real way forward will involve initial setbacks. More debate and discussion is warranted.

Now is the Time for Safety Stewards

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) faced two major disasters within a month: first the accident at Kinross mine which killed 177 miners; then the government's announcement of the repatriation of 58 000 Mozambican mineworkers. Both these events will have resounding effects on the union and the industry. INGRID OBERY draws on JEAN LEGER's report to NUM discussing health and safety conditions on the gold mines.

The accident which killed 177 miners at Kinross mine on 16 September highlighted the issue of health and safety in the industry. But for mineworkers and management this is an ongoing terrain of struggle.

Fire broke out at Kinross when a gas cylinder used for welding caught fire, and then set alight 600 meters of polyurethane sealant used to prevent corrosion and seepage of water in mine tunnels.

The Chamber of Mines has publicised the dangers of polyurethane for the last 18 years, and most mines limited the use of the substance. Kinross management said it had been aware of the danger but that 'many potentially dangerous materials had to be used in all mines, but their use was restricted' and precautions were taken to manage the risk.

At Kinross, these precautions were clearly inadequate. And the same holds for many other health and safety hazards in the mines. Workers are aware of dangers; so is management. Yet not much is done.

The International Labour Organisation recently found that South Africa has one of the highest death rates in the world on its mines. About 600 workers die in gold mining accidents each year. And since 1900 more than 46 000 miners have died and hundreds of thousands have been seriously injured. Most victims were black. And there is no record of those whose lives were cut short or ruined by occupational diseases.

Safety issues have become a priority for the National Union of Mineworkers. In its first industry-wide action, 30 000 workers participated in a half-hour stoppage after 68 workers died at Hlobane colliery in 1983. Evidence at

the subsequent inquest and inquiry bore out NUM claims that there were inadequate safety standards at the mine.

At present NUM is negotiating safety agreements with President Brand mine in Welkom, Saaiplaas in Virginia, Western Holdings in Welkom, Elandsrand mine in Carltonville and Ergo plant in Brakpan.

This is not an easy task according to NUM safety officer, Hazy Sibanyoni. Mine managements believe health and safety is a management affair, and resist worker participation. Sibanyoni compares the struggle to get safety stewards recognised to the struggles unions undertook for shaft steward recognition as legitimate worker representatives. Once safety stewards are recognised, they, together with workers and the union, will begin to challenge all safety and health hazards.

Safety stewards will check work places for hazards, advise workers about health and safety issues, process complaints, ensure that no short-cuts are taken around safety precautions, and negotiate any other health and safety-related issues with management on a day-to-day basis.

Safety steward structures will mirror other union structures with local and regional committees made up of representatives from mines in the area. Sibanyoni believes these structures are most powerful and will help to conscientise workers about health and safety issues.

Although none of these safety negotiations are complete, some are nearly at an end. 'It took a long time to convince management that there was a need to negotiate these issues', explained Sibanyoni.

The Chamber of Mines has claimed that structures already exist for the union

and management to discuss safety issues. They insist that NUM raised only five issues regarding safety in the last 18 months, and that all these were being dealt with.

MINERS DEMAND RIGHTS

Mineworkers do have some rights under existing legislation:

- * the right to refuse dangerous work. But as miners pointed out, this was not always easy;
- * the right to use the complaints book;
- * the right to go to the inspection and inquiry held after an accident - but only if the person concerned is blamed or held responsible for the accident. Stewards and union officials should always have access to accident sites, say mineworkers;
- * the right to call for a special inspection. But this is not the case if miners feel their workplace is unsafe;
- * protective clothing - but miners said clothing provided was inadequate;
- * toilets near to the workface; and
- * drinking water near to the workface;

Workers' rights are the key to safer mining. NUM has drawn up a 'Bill of Rights' which it feels will lessen hazardous conditions. Most clauses have been put forward for inclusion in safety agreements. NUM has demanded that the agreements contain the following:

- * the right to elect safety stewards and safety committees;
- * the right to refuse dangerous work;
- * the right to call and accompany inspectors on all inspections, without loss of pay;
- * the right to proper health and safety training;
- * the right to all information about health and safety;
- * the right to protection from punishment when demanding rights;
- * the right to have a say in the running of the mine and all future plans, such as purchase of safe machinery.

WORKING AT THE STOPE

During 1985, NUM investigated underground conditions in gold mines. Ninety experienced miners interviewed

believed most mining accidents could be prevented.

They discussed daily hazards such as noise, heat and rockfalls, and told how white miners seldom kept safety regulations.

In 1976, special exemptions under the Mines and Works Act allowed many functions previously done by white miners to be undertaken by team leaders, who supervise the group of black miners working the face of the mine - the stope. One of the interviewed miners said: 'In the old days white miners showed me where to bore the holes. Now only the team leader tells me what to do'.

A team consists of a winch driver, a miner's assistant, rock-drill operators and general team members. Team leaders must be able to do all jobs. The team leader answers to a white miner who is in turn answerable to the shift boss.

A crucial part of a miner's day is the process of 'making safe', ensuring that the stope is secure for drilling and clearing. This used to be the sole preserve of white miners but team leaders may now do it. However, this means white miners often do not go near the stope.

Workers said white miners were not keen to experience the extreme heat, humidity and narrow confines of the stopes. White miners, they said, were primarily concerned with the rate of production, since the size of their bonuses each month depends on the rate at which the stope face advances.

Similar problems occur during blasting. Only 'scheduled persons' with blasting certificates may directly supervise the handing out, installation, charging and detonation of explosives. In practice, miners' assistants and team leaders carry out these functions. One team leader said leaders supervised production and had to be able to take part in all aspects of production - '...lashing, fastening packs, doing the wagger pipes, connecting the blasting cables'.

Team leaders assist new workers and provide a large part of their on-the-job training. They have a crucial co-ordination function in the stopes, ensuring safety of fellow workers and that adequate supplies and equipment are available.

Dangerous conditions mean workers' lives are at stake. Often they tolerate the poor environments because the

effects of occupational diseases take years to become evident. But unstable rock ceilings mean death is an ever-present possibility. In such cases the white miner in charge of the stope should evacuate all workers and inspect the area. But often team leaders will not interrupt work once it is under way.

Workers believe that if the white miner is called to inspect dangerous conditions his main interest will be to ensure that workers continue with production. Usually team members rely on the leader to remedy unsafe conditions. In serious cases a white miner is approached, but often such requests are ignored and miners felt the white miners' assistance was unsatisfactory.

CONTROLS AND BONUSES

A typical gold mine has up to 250 stopes, each with 40 meters of work-face - a total face length of 10 kilometers. Few factories have such a length of work space to control. Add pitch dark, confined space, the noise and heat of the stopes, and management supervision is even more difficult.

Control is achieved largely through systems of sanction and reward: the threat of disciplinary action and bonuses. White miners and shift bosses control the 'charging' of black workers - the disciplinary process when workers break rules. They are also the ones who stand to lose big bonuses if production does not reach set levels. A team leader said about his team: 'They do work overtime if they have not finished the work because I will be charged if they do not finish'.

Workers fear 'charges' - that is facing complaints laid by a senior miner before a disciplinary 'court'. If found 'guilty', a worker may face demotion or dismissal. Miners interviewed said many charges arise from circumstances beyond their control.

According to one miner, the team leader 'reported to the white miner that I had not finished my job. I was charged. But I did not finish because we were forced to knock off early because they were ready to blast. I tried to ask questions at the disciplinary committee, but the miner who laid the charge was not there. They said to me: "Here are the papers, you did not want to work".

They gave me a record'.

In such situations workers are encouraged to take risks rather than ensure their safety. They are also hampered by a lack of statutory rights which would allow them to refuse dangerous work.

Both white and black miners receive bonuses. But bonuses paid to white miners are open-ended, and there is no limit to the amount they may earn. Black workers are limited to maximum bonuses of one third of the basic rate of pay. White miners receive 'supervisory' bonuses which relate to the amount the teams they supervise have produced. Often they supervise up to one hundred men.

Black miners receive individual bonuses for work done. On most mines only machine-drill operators and their assistants get bonuses, although some mines pay team bonuses.

Does the bonus system cause accidents? Many workers were not clear as to how their bonuses were calculated, but felt safety precautions were more important. As one miner said: 'We first count our lives, money comes thereafter'. Team leaders feel this most strongly since they are responsible for team members' safety and they believe bonuses are too small to worry about: 'You cannot kill people for fifty cents'.

But, workers believe, many white miners neglect safety measure because of their bonuses: 'If you tell the white miner that this place is dangerous, he will tell you to do the job faster so he can get his bonus'.

REFUSING TO WORK

Workers do not often refuse to work in dangerous conditions. When they do, intense confrontations between team and white miner often result and usually workers return to work when the miner insists.

A machine operator told this story: 'When I got into the place it was too dangerous, the place was trembling. I told the team leader who told the white miner. The white miner told the team leader, "Put the packs here, the only thing I want here is work". I refused to drill. The white miner fetched another machine operator and I did the lashing job. When I knocked off I was taken to

the mine captain who asked me why I refused to work. I said it was dangerous. He asked me if there were supports in the stope. I said yes, but it was still dangerous. The mine captain said "The white miner said you struck". He said it was a final warning for me'.

Workers believe if they persist in refusing to work they risk a disciplinary charge. Yet their experience is that if they return to work the risk of death or injury is extremely high. Workers believe they should have the right to refuse dangerous work. As one miner said: 'It is my right because when those hangings fall, they will kill me, nobody else. When I am dead, there will be nobody to support my family'.

Many workers said they generally had to 'work first, complain later'. They said the 'mteto', a code of five primary safety rules they learned in training, were often not adhered to.

Workers in other countries have far more legislated rights to refuse dangerous work or work which threatens their health.

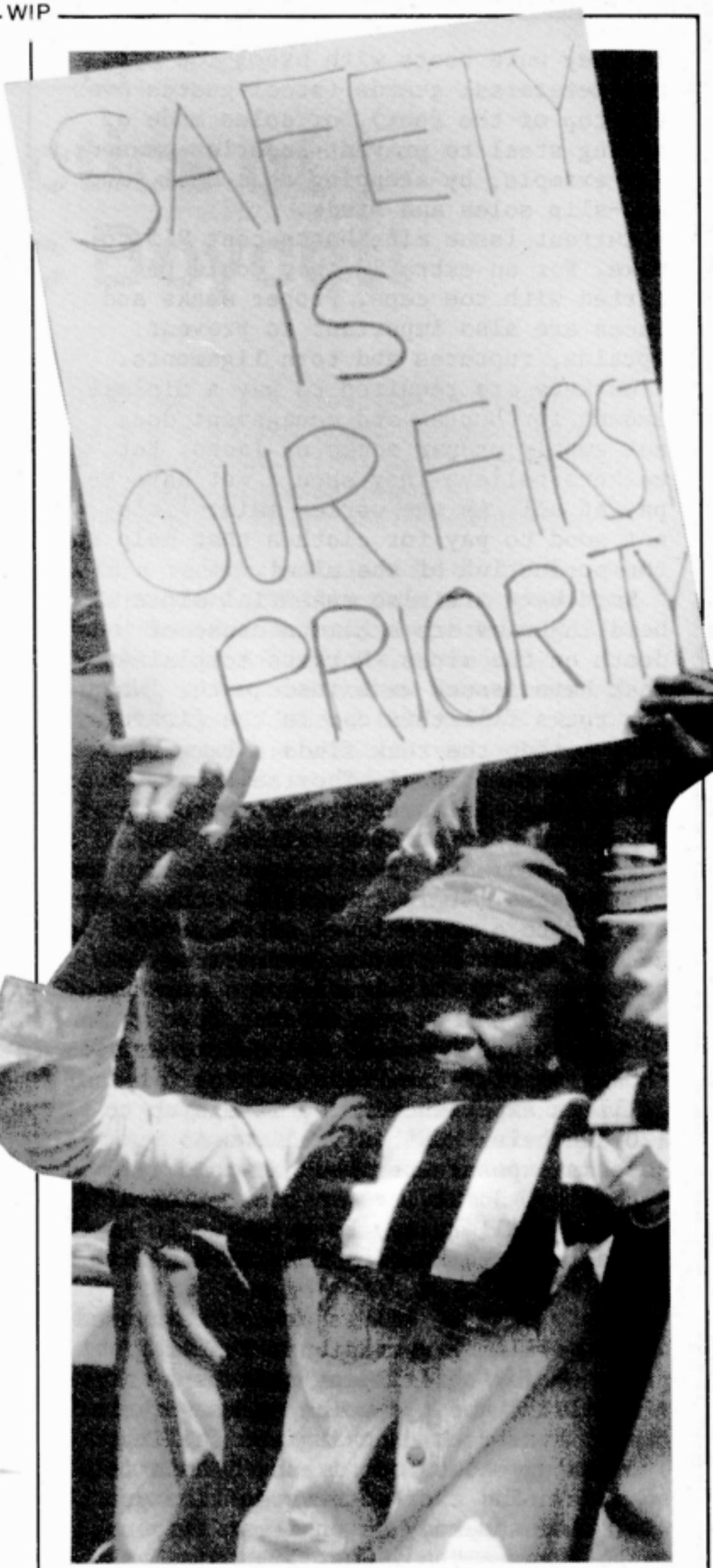
South African mineworkers cannot accompany mine inspectors during regular inspections. They can do so after an accident but only if they are held responsible for the accident.

Workers interviewed said union shop stewards should be able to go on all inspections and that this would avoid pressure on workers to commit perjury at accident inquiries. One miner said that when somebody has an accident, the white miner may pressurise black miners to agree that the place was safe. If a shaft steward was there, he could not agree with the report, and the truth would be told about the accident.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING ◆

For management there is always a conflict between effort and resources devoted to improving the working environment, and constraints on working costs. This applies particularly to underground mining because once an area is mined it has no further value.

Safety measures include engineering controls and safeguards such as silencers on drills, guards around moving parts, hydraulic and timber supports. There are emergency procedures



Workers at a Kinross memorial service

such as checking vehicle brakes, evacuating workers where danger threatens, and personal protective equipment to minimise injuries when accidents occur. Examples are boots, hard hats, gloves and hearing protection.

Miners suffer many injuries to toes and feet. Many could easily be prevented

if they wore boots with steel toe-caps and metatarsal guards (steel guards over the top of the foot), or soles made of spring steel to prevent injuries caused, for example, by stepping on a nail, and non-slip soles and studs.

Current issue mine boots cost R15 to make. For an extra R2 they could be fitted with toe caps. Proper socks and laces are also important to prevent sprains, ruptures and torn ligaments.

Workers are required to pay a minimal amount for boots, and management does not supply proper socks or laces. But workers believe they should not have to pay at all. As one worker said: 'It's not good to pay for clothes that help in the production of the mine'.

Hard hats are also essential since head injuries are a common cause of death on the mines. Workers complained that hats issued were inadequate. 'When the rocks fall this cap is the first to fall - then the rock finds a bare head and danger appears'. They said hats should have brims to protect ears, and straps to prevent them falling off.

Noise deafness is a constant hazard to mineworkers. It is incurable. Miners are exposed to a noise level of above 100 decibels. Manufacturing workers may only be exposed to this level for a maximum of 15 minutes a day according to Machinery and Occupational Safety Act (MOSA) regulations. Mine machine drillers experience noise levels up to 120 decibels. MOSA only allows 45 seconds exposure per week at this intensity. So at least a quarter of all machine drillers may be expected to have noise-impaired hearing loss within five years.

Nearly half of all injuries are caused during drilling operations. The 'fog' produced during drilling reduces visibility, and the noise means workers cannot hear rock cracking and falling, or warning shouts or sirens. 'There is so much noise that after some time you will find somebody, even if still young, cannot hear a damn. Just like mine now, I have been going to the medical station for some treatment. There is none', said one mineworker.

Mine management does not provide adequate ear protection underground, although miners learn about this during training in the mine school. But workers are also not keen to wear protection because they say it prevents them hearing warnings of rockfalls and rockbursts.

Since pneumatic drills make much of the noise underground, one solution would be to fit them with suitable silencers. These would cost approximately R50 extra per drill. The silencer also reduces the amount of exhaust fog.

FANAKALO - LANGUAGE OF THE MINES

Fanakalo is the language of the mines. It is a mixture of English, Afrikaans and various African languages. All mine training courses for black miners are taught in fanakalo. This is dangerous, workers say, since new workers 'do not understand fanakalo and become confused. And new workers are given a very short time (for training) because they go underground before they are conversant with underground implements and how they are used, and before they are conversant with fanakalo. Even if you say "pasope" they just give you a blank look'.

Most workers said training was inadequate, and that many techniques and equipment demonstrated in training were not applied or available underground. Formal training provided for both black and white miners is very short by international standards.

New workers' lack of understanding of fanakalo means they cannot read or understand basic safety signs and calls such as hazard stripes, 'no entry' and 'methane'.

Studies of mine accidents have shown that novice workers with less than four months suffer far more injuries and have twice the number of accidents than experienced workers (two-and-a-half or more years) doing the same job.

Underground fatality rates for white workers were higher than for black workers until the early 1930s, but by the 1980s the black worker fatality rate was 67% higher than that of white miners.

Black miners believe white miners are to blame for neglecting safety precautions and coercing workers in order to achieve production bonuses. But white miners are not the core of the problem, merely fitting into a profit-oriented system of production. They do less and less directly productive work, but are a crucial management front-line, deflecting worker anger about conditions away from management.

The Tactics of Academic Boycott

WILLIAM COBBETT, a visiting fellow at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at Warwick University, discusses the debate about the academic boycott. He argues for a selective boycott in which political and trade union bodies consult with progressive academic organisations.

In September 1986 debate about the academic boycott of South Africa re-surfaced when a South African delegation was excluded from the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) in Southampton.

Just prior to this, two South Africans were admitted to the conference of the International Sociological Association (ISA) in New Delhi in August. Then there was confusion over the York conference on 'The South African Economy After Apartheid' in October, and the events surrounding Irish scholar-journalist Conor Cruise O'Brien's visit to the Universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand in October.

The only point on which opposing parties agree is that the debate is confused: as to how effective the policy is; who is implementing it; what the respective positions are; and, more recently, how South African academics should respond to the academic boycott.

THE THREE ARGUMENTS

The wide range of opinions about the boycott generally fall into one of three broad categories: those in favour of a total boycott; those completely opposed to any form of boycott; and those who argue for a flexible, selective approach.

The central points of the three positions are:

*** Anti-boycott:** The central argument is that boycott opposes the very principles of academia. Intellectual work can only flourish with the free exchange of ideas and debate, while academic boycott undermines that freedom.

In a recent article entitled 'The New McCarthyism', Philip Gawith argues that 'the case for maintaining academic links (with South Africa) is especially strong, given the unique importance of a 'community of ideas, the unique importance of academic freedom'. He concludes that to defend academic freedom 'is not a matter of hanging onto a threadbare liberal ideal, but of recognising that universities are the repositories of many values dear to civilised society'.

There are other, more practical, objections to the boycott. It is seen not to work, to be unenforceable and, more seriously, to be counterproductive. Therefore it hits hardest at those one is trying to help - the forces aligned against apartheid - while the regime's apologists and ideologues move around the world's conferences with relative ease.

*** Pro-boycott:** Those who support the boycott do not view it in isolation, but as a crucial and logical part of the wider isolation of the South African regime by the international community. Just as trading and sporting links are targets of boycott pressure, so too must cultural and academic aspects of South African life be attacked.

Arguments pleading a special case for academics are seen as elitist and self-interested. Breaking one part of the boycott undermines all other attempts to isolate South Africa, particularly when the campaign to isolate the country is gaining momentum daily. Andrew Anderson, writing in the *Oxford Magazine* says: 'There is now a case to be made for a boycott on the grounds that, in the present crisis, it may achieve a good significantly greater than the undoubted harm it would bring about through its

effect on academic free association and the exchange of ideas'.

* **Selective boycott:** The selective boycott position argues for a flexible but tactical approach. It is usually proposed by supporters of the boycott who concede some of its practical failings. They argue that opponents of the South African state must be able to identify and aid friends of the larger struggle, while applying sanctions against the regime and its supporters.

The different positions regarding the academic boycott stem from their different answers to the crucial question: is the boycott primarily an academic or a political issue? These answers to a large extent determine the tactical approach to the boycott.

If the boycott is purely an academic issue, then arguments for free exchange of ideas and information are paramount. The boycott must therefore be opposed as it undermines the conceptions of absolute and pure academic freedom.

Conor Cruise O'Brien, writing in *The Times* curtly dismissed the academic boycott, and said of the WAC affair: 'The idea of "damaging the regime" by excluding archaeologists from a congress is ludicrous. The Afrikaner right, the cutting edge of the regime in question, generally despises eggheads and looks on the South African universities as hotbeds of treason'.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM - ONE OF MANY

An argument often used against the academic boycott is that it undermines academic freedom, one of the most basic rights of a university. Academic freedom gives universities the necessary flexibility to decide who is taught, what is taught and by whom. This freedom includes the academic's ability to move within the international community of ideas, to argue and debate with other academics, broadening knowledge to the advantage of all.

Those supporting the boycott, however, say it is misleading to state that meaningful academic freedom exists on South African campuses: student access to certain books is curtailed by the state, as is their ability to demonstrate or discuss certain issues vital to the future of South Africa. However, it does not follow that the

best course is to add to that curtailment of freedom.

The academic boycott does affect academic freedom - just as the sports boycott curtails the absolute freedom of sportsmen, and sanctions curtail the 'freedom' of the South African economy. But we must assess the relative importance of academic freedom against other rights and freedoms currently being struggled for.

In an address at the University of Cape Town, one academic, ironically opposing the boycott, stressed the indivisibility of the struggle for various freedoms: 'Academic freedom is a genuine value, and a precious one; but it does not come very high in the hierarchy of human values. The right to academic freedom is not as high as the right to live where one chooses, or the right not to be forcibly separated from ones' family'. He concludes: 'A society which sets a high value on academic freedom and a low value on the other rights may be...far worse than a society which denies academic freedom while respecting the more elemental human rights'.

For academics, therefore, the academic boycott must not be seen as a separate issue affecting them only, but rather as one issue in the context of struggles for other, more basic, human rights. Academics who concern themselves only with issues directly affecting them will be seen to be acting out of self-interest and attempting to further sectional privilege.

Therefore it is necessary to see the logic behind pro-boycott argument as political and not academic. The argument also contains an overriding morality which dictates that the governing principle must be political.

So academic freedom must be subordinate to the larger freedoms, and if the defence of academic freedom ever undermines the struggle for more universal freedoms, then that defence is wrong.

This is the position O'Brien faced on his recent visit to South Africa. In a *Times* article before his visit he said: 'I shall be glad to have my visit taken as a demonstration of solidarity with the staff and students of the University of Cape Town'. He also said his visit was 'a gesture of defiance against an intellectually disreputable attempt to isolate what I know to be an honest, open and creative intellectual

community'.

This individualistic arrogance led to his downfall. By linking his visit to an attack on the 'Mickey Mouse' politics of the academic boycott, O'Brien was asking students to show their agreement with his position by giving him an audience. He implicitly gave them a choice between himself and the liberation movement. He added insult to injury by showing solidarity with the South African Tourist Board - 'taking a break' in the Kruger National Park.

WHY A SELECTIVE BOYCOTT?

The strongest argument for a selective boycott is the way South African intellectual life has changed in recent years. In some disciplines, South African academics and students are challenging and replacing the intellectual colonialism which has dominated the universities for so long. In its place they are forging a vigorous and innovative academic climate in South Africa - particularly in the social sciences, which are more attuned to the particular demands of society and the struggle.

Evidence of this new yet flourishing climate is the high quality of debate within the universities, growing numbers of small publications and newspapers, and tentative but increasing links between campus and community.

This growing confidence of progressive academics takes place at the same time - and is in no small way responsible for - the dramatic and far-reaching collapse of apartheid ideology and the utter confusion of its supporters. The left is gaining the dominant position in the ideological battleground in South Africa. Ideas generated in the universities have filtered outwards into union, community and political organisation.

But - and a big but - progressive teaching staff and students on campus are in a minority. The 'liberal' reputations Wits, UCT, Durban and Rhodes enjoy result from the activities of a small minority. While the majority of staff and students at all these universities may not actually support apartheid, they do precious little to challenge it. This, though, rather than reflecting left-wing weakness, indicates

that universities are dominated by people in positions of privilege.

It is the small, active minority that the selective boycott must seek to identify, support and widen, while applying the strictest censure to the rest. The same principle must be applied, internally, to the 'homeland' universities.

THE INTERNAL BOYCOTT

The academic boycott debate is mirrored inside South Africa, although it is not discussed as much, and is probably as confused as the larger debate.

Just as the international community regards South Africa as a pariah state, so the majority of South Africans regard the bantustans. Academic contact with bantustan and ethnic universities is not welcomed, as it legitimises them. These 'bush colleges' have strong links with conservative Afrikaans universities.

Yet selective boycott arguments can be applied to relationships between open and bantustan universities. Many people at bantustan universities reject the bantustan fraud with which they are unwittingly identified. These strong and courageous voices of dissent are often subject to greater repression than their counterparts at Wits or UCT.

Those South African academics looking for a constructive approach to the international academic boycott, should examine their relationship with universities within South Africa.

THE SELECTIVE BOYCOTT: WHO DECIDES?

Those proposing a selective boycott argue that if effectively and representatively administered, its impact is potentially more powerful than a total boycott. Total boycott draws no distinction between those actively fighting the regime and those who support it or do nothing.

This raises the thorny question many think it better to avoid: who decides if certain academics are to be exempted from the boycott, and on what criteria?

There are a host of problems, for example in ensuring that the policy is evenly and fairly applied, and that

personal dislikes do not sway decisions. Is not the danger of faceless committees judging individuals very real?

These real concerns must be addressed openly and honestly. And if they prove insurmountable, then a total, rigorously enforced academic boycott must be understood to be the only alternative. But I believe a serious attempt by all concerned can result in a workable selective boycott.

Many current academic exchanges take place through personal networks. South African academics are invited overseas, or their counterparts are invited to this country because they have friends and contacts in the right places. No questions are asked, and the visits are generally not subject to the scrutiny or approval of the wider academic community.

A more concrete example is that of the two South Africans accepted to the ISA congress in India in August. They were never told what criteria were used in vetting them or why they were acceptable while others were not.

These points need to be clarified so that other academics in similar situations can know what is expected of them. As the academics concerned themselves stated, 'Our conclusion is that...(vetting) cannot be done on an individual basis. It is extremely difficult for international organisations who know very little about you to judge you as individuals'.

Organisation of the conference on the post-apartheid economy at York in October was even more confused. After well-founded rumours that it was to be boycotted, the conference finally took place and included an ANC delegation with observer status. But none of the delegates had been vetted - only the Urban Foundation was definitely not welcome.

The supreme irony was the speech at the formal dinner, delivered by Anti-Apartheid Movement President Trevor Huddleston, who took the opportunity to stress that organisation's commitment to the academic boycott. He was apparently unaware that the speech was delivered to the largest collection of South African academics assembled in Britain for many years. The audience also included employees of South African parastatals, and an academic who made a statement congratulating the conference organisers for allowing the boycott to be broken.

The above examples are not intended to

knock the good intentions of the persons concerned, but rather to show the need for open debate. It is therefore necessary to stop criticising and put specific proposals forward.

An effective selective boycott requires some form of vetting. If one accepts that the dominant logic of the boycott is political and not academic, it follows that representative and democratic political organisations should be involved in this process. UDF publicity secretary Murphy Morobe said when presenting the emerging UDF policy of 'tactical flexibility': 'It is the regime we want to isolate, and to achieve that we support the boycott. But there are cases in which inflexibility is not appropriate. What is important to us is that progressives are screened in some way by the broad democratic movement'.

There are two points which support such a position. It is vital that organisations within South Africa have a central role in the vetting of local academics, allowing for informed decisions to be taken. By accepting organisational vetting, the debate shifts away from the dangerous ground of individuals being vetted by self-appointed committees. What is then important is which organisations can and should be involved in the vetting process.

A non-sectarian approach is crucial, so those vetted would have to stand within the broad progressive movement aligned against the apartheid state, rather than subscribe to one particular ideological position.

The major stumbling block to such a proposal is whether organisations have the time or personpower to engage in vetting academics.

THE ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT

However, this proposal is only half-complete without academic's involvement.

Ideally a joint committee with representatives from progressive organisations and those from academic bodies should deal with vetting. However, at the moment there is no co-ordinated academic response to the crisis, and nor does a progressive academic organisation exist to provide political leadership.

Resurgence of debate around the academic boycott has been partly responsible for South African academics discussing the creation of a national organisation. But the greater impetus has been increasing political conflict on campuses, police invasions and detention without trial of staff and students.

An organ representing progressive academic staff is long overdue. Practically, it will enable academics to respond to student demands for solidarity action in a coherent, strategic and unified manner. It should further facilitate solidarity between staff and students who find themselves under political attack, locally and nationally.

University academic staff have staff associations, but these are more concerned with protecting members' statutory and material rights and do not present themselves as appropriate vehicles to represent their members politically. It is also doubtful whether the inert University Teachers Association of South Africa (UTASA) has the potential to emerge strongly enough to meet the challenges currently facing the universities.

A break with the past is necessary and the time is right for an independent yet overtly political national academic organisation to be formed. While progressive academics are in a strong ideological position on campus, their limited numbers leave them somewhat vulnerable. A political academic union would have an important role in defending members' political rights. It could facilitate confident and cohesive initiatives and campaigns, such as increasing links between community and campus. Such an organisation should not emerge merely in response to the pressure of the academic boycott. But if this pressure leads to constructive

internal responses, the boycott's value is clear.

INVOLVING ACADEMICS IN STRUGGLE

There have already been significant changes on some campuses. At UCT the political crisis surrounding the first state of emergency was the catalyst for academic initiative. The resultant organisation was independent of the Academic Staff Association, and tried to involve staff, students and workers. Such initiatives need to be actively encouraged.

Such organisations will facilitate successful application of the selective boycott through contact with political organisations and trade unions to decide the fairest and most appropriate method of implementation. Of course mistakes will be made, but must be counted as part of the cost of attempting a more sophisticated position.

The burden of the boycott will fall on South African academics and students who wish to attend conferences and study abroad. But the same principle of selectivity must apply to foreign academics wishing to visit South Africa. Organisations representing academics overseas could meet with the external mission of the liberation movement, in consultation with internal progressive organisations, and so control the boycott from the outside.

The real value of a successful selective boycott will be to involve the academic world in struggles off campus. The universities have shown themselves to be an important site of struggle. Political organisations closely associated with wider struggles off campus now seems essential for taking that struggle further.

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NOW ON SALE

Sparg Sets Out ANC Policy On Violence

Marion Sparg placed limpet mines in three South African police stations. Two exploded, causing R2 600 damage at the Cambridge police station in East London and R38 500 at John Vorster Square. The mine at Hillbrow police station failed to explode. Police detonated it, causing R7 630 damage.

She undertook these actions as a trained soldier of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe - the ANC's first known white women guerilla.

As a young journalist, Sparg fire-bombed Progressive Federal Party offices in 1981, protesting the PFP's failure to boycott Republic Day celebrations. Subsequently she worked as a journalist in the ANC's Lusaka-based Department of Information and Publicity, writing for the women's section journal, 'Voice of Women'. Together with Stephen Marais, she smuggled limpet mines and detonators from Lesotho into South Africa.

Marion Sparg did not dispute the substance of the treason and arson charges against her. She was more concerned to explain her development from student at Rhodes University, to Sunday Times journalist, to ANC member, to Umkhonto we Sizwe soldier.

She pleaded guilty to the charges, apologising only for 'political immaturity' in attacking the PFP offices: she was not a member at the time of the PFP attacks and was not acting on ANC instructions. 'My political thinking at that time was immature and emotional...I today regret the fact that I chose the PFP as a target for violence. I still stand by some of the criticisms I made of the PFP'. Sparg said she did not believe she was correct in choosing the PFP as a target for such violence.

Together with fellow-journalists Arnold Geyer and Damian de Lange, Sparg fire-bombed three PFP offices on 31 May 1981, causing over R20 000 damage. Days later, she left South Africa illegally for Botswana, and made contact with the ANC. She then travelled to Lusaka as an ANC member and left for Angola in 1982, where she underwent military training at the ANC's Caxito camp.

At the time, neither the ANC nor Sparg intended her to be deployed as an

Umkhonto we Sizwe fighter. But the ANC wanted as many members as possible to be able to defend themselves. 'The training took place in 1982 and the raid on Mozambique in 1981 by the SADF in which the ANC had lost 12 members was still very fresh', Sparg explained. During these six months, she was the only white South African in the training camp, and at times the only woman. Blacks training spoke to her about white South Africans whom they respected and admired: 'they spoke in particular of Joe Slovo,...a white South African prepared to fight and die alongside them for a South Africa all could enjoy'. Sparg said she became aware her presence in the camp sparked off discussions on the nature of the ANC's enemy, and what type of targets Umkhonto we Sizwe should strike. ANC members, particularly in Umkhonto we Sizwe, 'are growing younger every day because of the situation inside the country... For many of them my presence proved that the ANC is not fighting a racial war', she told the court. Sparg returned to the ANC's Lusaka office in August 1982.

In December 1982 the SADF raided Lesotho, killing 30 South African and ten Lesotho citizens. Sparg explained that some survivors reached Lusaka and told them the SADF 'did not seem to care that they were attacking homes, not military camps... Children and babies were killed and injured'. She could not forget the challenge she faced as a white member of the ANC doing military training in Angola. 'I felt the raid left me with no alternative but to join Umkhonto we Sizwe'.

Sparg left the Lusaka office in mid-1984. By early 1985 she was ready for deployment and in about May she entered South Africa from Lesotho with a false passport. She established herself in South Africa, set up communication links with the ANC in Lesotho, and investigated potential sabotage targets. In mid-February 1986 she and Stephen Marais, an ANC supporter living in the Transkei, went to Lesotho where limpet mines and detonators were hidden in their car. Over the next three weeks, Sparg placed limpet mines at the Cambridge police station (19 February),

John Vorster Square (4 March) and Hillbrow (4 March). On 7 March police raided Sparg's Hillbrow flat. She was detained under section 29 of the Internal Security Act until 15 August, when she first appeared in court.

Like many South Africans, Sparg was deeply affected by South Africa's violent raids into neighbouring territories. Her attitude on violence hardened: 'If I stop to think of the people I knew in that first camp in Angola, particularly those who instructed and commanded me, there are literally only one or two still alive. I was in Maseru in December last year (1985) when a raid took place in which several South Africans and two Lesotho citizens were killed. I am aware that the South African authorities deny participation in that raid. However, there is no doubt in my mind and in the minds of most ANC members that it was either the South African police or SADF.

'I knew all the South Africans who died, not only as colleagues or comrades but as very close friends. I was particularly close to a young white woman who was killed, Jacqueline Quinn, whose only connection to the ANC was that she was married to a member of the ANC. She had a child. That child was only one year old when both her parents were killed in front of her'. Sparg said the ANC accepted raids like this would happen, but said the SADF soldiers were aware the people they intended killing were all unarmed, and included Lesotho citizens and others not connected to the ANC. 'That did not deter them'.

Trial judge Van der Walt asked Sparg whether the potential effect of limpet mines in police stations was not similar to the Lesotho raid she described, especially as far as people and their families were concerned. She disagreed strongly: 'In the first Maseru raid (1982) 30 South Africans died... Ten Lesotho citizens also died... Of the 30 South Africans some were ANC members. There were however many South African refugees and family members including children. Those raids were directed at private homes. My actions were directed was threatening the families of any policemen or women'. Sparg said the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe do not simply regard any supporter of the Botha government with or without military training as a military target. 'By placing limpet mines at police stations I was directing them at supporters of this government with considerable military training and experience'.

In the course of her evidence, Sparg set out both ANC policy and her personal position on a variety of subjects: **Violence:** 'When Umkhonto we Sizwe first began its campaign of armed actions it did so by avoiding loss of life completely'. That is no longer possible, she said, and escalating ANC violence is the result of actions by South African police and the SADF.

Sparg expressed the hope that before much more blood is shed 'white South Africans and the Botha government will realise the conflict can be settled peacefully at a conference table.

'The ANC leadership has indicated on enough occasions that they are quite prepared to take part in such talks, but you cannot expect the ANC to simply suspend violence without a similar commitment from the Botha government'. **Civilian targets:** After the ANC consultative conference held at Kabwe, there was speculation that Umkhonto we Sizwe would no longer draw a distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' targets. 'I insist that no member of Umkhonto we Sizwe has been instructed to strike directly at a civilian target'. She said the senior Umkhonto commanders instructed that whenever possible she should avoid civilian casualties, and where this was not possible she should still consider the number of civilians put at risk.

She could easily have placed limpet mines in police station charge offices: 'I rejected this because in any charge office there are usually more civilians present than police'.

On white farmers: ANC policy towards the white farming population has developed over some time. Sparg said in 1982 this became a very emotional topic in the camp. 'A number of members of Umkhonto we Sizwe had died in clashes with white farmers, mostly in the border areas. When members of Umkhonto we Sizwe enter this country they have absolutely no desire to clash with any white farmer'. But clashes continued, and Umkhonto we Sizwe had no option but to go on the offensive. 'Most of the areas in which landmine explosions have taken place are areas of great strategic significance to the SADF... The ANC does now regard certain white farmers as a legitimate military target, but not the whole farming community'. **The police station attacks:** Sparg said the bombings at John Vorster and Cambridge police stations were actions on behalf of an organisation which represents the majority of black South Africans and a significant, increasing

number of white South Africans.

'I deliberately timed those limpet mines to go off at noon, both at Cambridge and at John Vorster Square and at Hillbrow... The policy in Umkhonto we Sizwe now is that because of the increasing indiscriminate aggression practiced by the South African police, and also because of the policy of the authorities to cover up as many actions of Umkhonto we Sizwe as they can, it is necessary for MK actions to happen in broad daylight where it is very difficult for that action to be hidden from the public. But that does not mean that I personally wanted death or injuries as a result of those explosions'. She said the value of her actions was that the bombs were directed at targets symbolising apartheid, violence and brutality.

The Geneva protocol: In 1980 ANC President Oliver Tambo became one of the first leaders of a national liberation movement to hand a declaration to the international committee of the Red Cross, in which the ANC stated it was prepared to recognise the broad sections of the Geneva Convention, in particular the 1977 protocol. 'This (protocol) takes into account the type of war that is being fought in South Africa, in which one party to the conflict does not recognise the existence of the state of war'.

While a signatory to the 1949 Geneva Convention, South Africa has so far refused to ratify the 1977 protocol. **ANC leadership:** 'I regard it as a privilege to have met people of the calibre of Oliver Tambo, Thabo Mbeki, Professor Jack Simons, Joe Slovo and many others... No matter how much I agree with the aims of an organisation, I would have had very serious doubts about laying down my life for that organisation if I did not know its leaders to be capable, rational, sensitive people'.

The relationship between military and political in the ANC: When the ANC decided to move to armed struggle it did not abandon all other methods of struggle. 'Outside South Africa the ANC has departments dealing with health, culture and education... Inside South Africa ANC members not only carry out armed action, they also carry out important political tasks'.

Sparg said recruitment for military training and armed struggle are not the ANC's central theme. A political-military council controls ANC activities

inside South Africa. 'That body has two sub-committees, a political headquarters and a military headquarters. Both are seen as equally important... The importance that the ANC attaches to other tasks other than military tasks can be seen by developments in the last two years in Angola. A decision was taken to move a considerable number of members out of Angola (to South Africa)... not to carry out military tasks. Many were sent to the South African Congress of Trade Unions and an equal number sent to carry out political tasks'.

On joining Umkhonto we Sizwe: 'I do not regret joining the ANC or Umkhonto we Sizwe. But I do regret the suffering I have put my family through. This is a conflict that many black families have faced for generations... a conflict which increasingly white families are beginning to face. When I joined Umkhonto we Sizwe I was very much aware of the fact that I have three brothers, all of whom have completed military training in the SADF and that it was very likely that any of them could be affected by the actions of Umkhonto we Sizwe. I resolved that conflict only because of my belief that the type of South Africa we are fighting for in Umkhonto we Sizwe is a South Africa which we are all going to enjoy, black and white'.

In passing sentence, presiding judge Van der Walt indicated he considered Sparg's race an aggravating factor. 'The fact that as a white South African you chose to espouse the cause of revolution I regard as an aggravating feature'. It was more understandable for a black to undertake such actions, he said.

Observers interpret these remarks as meaning that while whites have proper political channels, blacks do not. This view was challenged by defence attorney Norman Manoim, who noted that 'the thrust of Sparg's evidence was to say that political avenues open to whites had become totally frustrated'.

Sparg, too, did not see it the judge's way: 'As a white South African I do not owe any loyalty to a government that is clearly not based on the will of the people. I believe that my actions amount to patriotism, not treason', she said.

On 6 November 1986 Marion Sparg was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment - five years for the 1981 arson attacks on PFP offices, and 20 years for treason.

Strikes and Disputes: Transvaal

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Abkins Steel Germiston	MAWU	200	07-09.10	About 200 workers at the Germiston plant staged a strike and sleep-in, demanding recognition of MAWU. The strike centred on a dispute over whether separate recognition agreements should be negotiated for the three Abkins' subsidiaries. MAWU claims this is an attempt to divide workers. Strikers returned to work while negotiations continued. The union will continue to push for a single recognition agreement.
Allied Publishing	MWASA			The dispute between Allied Publishing and MWASA over pay increases and working conditions for newspaper vendors has been resolved. Allied agreed to give vendors permanent staff status, and increased weekly wages to R60. The dispute began with a three-week strike in January.
Ciba-Geigy Isando	CWIU	200	23.10	After a wage agreement the minimum wage has been raised to R4,10/hour. This is a 27% increase in the minimum wage and reflects the concerted attempt by CWIU to achieve industry-wide minimum wages of more than R4,00/hour in 1987.
CNA	CCAMUSA	1 000	25.10	Workers considered national strike action after a deadlock in the four-month wage dispute. They demanded an across-the-board monthly increase of R105. Management has offered R85. The union applied for a conciliation board which was granted at the end of September. It met without success on 8 October. On 3 November, 348 workers went on strike at the Carlton Centre CNA and two Elandsfontein Warehouses. Workers slept in at the premises despite a court order prohibiting this action. The strike continued and by 6 November workers from 32 stores in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban were on strike.
Dunlop Benoni	CWIU	600	07.08- 16.09	Workers went on strike when wage negotiations broke down. They were locked out on 15 August and a conciliation board met to try to resolve the dispute. Negotiations broke down again on 27 August and on 1 September workers were locked out again. CWIU, MAWU and NAAWU shop stewards planned solidarity action which resulted in solidarity stoppages at PG Glass, Liquid Air, Reef Chemicals and Chesebrough. Settlement was reached when workers accepted a 60 c/hour increase to be paid in three instalments. This brings the minimum wage to R3,03 an hour. Workers initially demanded a R3,10/hour minimum, the previous minimum being R2,43/hour. The agreement also provides for four months maternity leave and a long-service award.
Farm Fare Wynberg	FAWU	500	11.09	FAWU has resolved a wage dispute with Farm Fare after a five-day sleep-in strike and an application by management for a court interdict to restrict workers from entering company premises. Workers have been given a R14 across-the-board increase: R8 from July and R6 from next February. Farm Fare recognises 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays.
Garlicks	CCAWUSA	500	16.10	Workers at four Garlicks stores went on strike when the Minister of Manpower delayed the appointment of a conciliation board to resolve a wage dispute. The union applied for a conciliation board on

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				15 September after management offered a monthly increase of R55 in response to the workers demand of R180 across-the-board. Workers' demands would raise monthly minimum wages to R400 while management's offer would increase them to R300.
Katlehong Town Council		100	30.10	A hundred striking council police were arrested after going on a rampage outside the council offices in support of increased wages. After causing extensive damage the police were held under emergency regulations.
London Deli Restaurant Johannesburg	ACUSA		10.10	A worker was allegedly locked in a cupboard and set upon by a dog after refusing to inform on other workers whom the deli-owner accused of stealing. The worker laid charges against the owner and had to receive hospital treatment. She returned to work on 26 September but was fired after requesting time off for further treatment. The union is demanding her immediate reinstatement and has instituted legal action against the shopowner.
Manganese Steel Krugersdorp	SEAWU		23.09	Wage talks between SEAWU and management deadlocked and the dispute referred to an arbitrator. The union is demanding a R3,50 an hour minimum wage while management will agree to R2,31.
Marley Tiles Nigel	UMMAWUSA		15.10	The union is in dispute with management over the retrenchment of 19 workers, and is demanding short-time as an alternative.
Matthay Rustenburg Platinum Refiners Wadeville	CWIU		03.10.86	Workers refused to co-operate with a new shift system introduced at the Germiston plant. The new system is to compensate for lost production at the British plant where workers have been retrenched. On 3 November 200 workers staged a work stoppage protesting plans to relocate the plant in Bophuthatswana. Management failed to meet workers on 30 October to discuss accusations that it was taking advantage of the bantustan's 'union-free zone', supporting apartheid and wanting to benefit from cheap labour. Management was given until 6 November to reverse the decision, clarify its position on apartheid, provide documentary proof that wages and conditions of employment were the same in Wadeville and Bophuthatswana, and establish in writing that workers living in South Africa could work in Bophuthatswana.
Mondi	PWAWU	1 500	17.08	Union members voted in favour of strike action after wage negotiations reached deadlock. Workers rejected an offer of five cents across the board and are demanding ten cents. Negotiations between the union and management over wages and conditions of employment for certain workers at Mondi's Merebank Plant have been halted by the Industrial Court. This follows a SA Boilermakers Society application to be given full representation in the talks. Most workers are members of PWAWU, but a minority belong to SABS and are now claiming full representation rights. The application is significant as it may decide on the principle of majority unionism. This is an issue with large industrially-based unions coming into conflict with small craft-based unions.
OK Bazaars Ga-Rankuwa	CCAWUSA		08-16.10	On 8 October workers stopped work and demanded the store manager's dismissal. A dispute over the recognition agreement with CCAWUSA followed on 10 October. Workers demanded their conditions of employment be standardised with those of OK workers outside Bophuthatswana. 'Foreign' unions may not

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				operate in the bantustan and so it is impossible for CCAWUSA to negotiate for its members in Ga-Rankuwa. Management claims that it applies the South African recognition agreement when dealing with Ga-Rankuwa workers.
OK Bazaars Valhalla	CCAWUSA		10.09	A CCAWUSA member is taking legal action after a till-supervisor refused her permission to go the toilet. She relieved herself in front of customers at 10-40 am, after being told to wait until lunch time.
Pilkington Glass	CWIU	2 000	12-13.10	About 2 000 workers at five plants held a two-day work stoppage over dissatisfaction with management's response to negotiations. Workers demanded a minimum increase of 55c an hour. This follows a wage talk deadlock at the end of August when management refused to negotiate. The union applied for conciliation and prepared for a strike ballot.
Printpak Gravure Johannesburg	PWAWU	90	29.10	Workers went on strike after a shop steward was arrested at the plant. Joseph Mene was detained after being called to the manager's office. The union has declared a dispute with management after it issued workers with written warnings following the strike.
Rand Water Board	OVGWU		12.10	The RWB is using a clause in the Labour Relations Act ('the Act does not apply to persons in respect of their employment in farming operations') to prevent the union from organising workers on the board's farms. Wages on these farms are low: one worker earns R95 a month for a 14-hour day after four years of service; another earns R120 after nine years service. Farm workers have no legal protection from victimisation for union activities, cannot form registered trade unions and have no access to the Industrial Court for unfair labour practices. Also, they cannot conclude legal agreements on working conditions, minimum wages or laid-down conditions of service and have no unemployment benefits or minimum safety regulations governing working conditions. The union has 100% membership on the farm but the board will not deal with the union, allow it to have meetings on the farm or allow workers to do union work during working hours.
Robertsons Alberton	CWIU	200	22-24.09	Workers went on strike over delayed wage negotiations. Management had agreed to negotiations after recognition and procedural agreements had been signed, but then said it would be willing to negotiate wages only after the agreements had been 'finalised'.
SA Druggists Elandsfontein	SABMAMU	140	10.09	Following weeks of negotiation, management declared a dispute with the union over a plan to introduce night-shifts. Over 140 workers went on strike; 100 workers who failed to heed an ultimatum to resume work were dismissed and locked out of the plant. Six workers were arrested for intimidation and following a court appearance the case was postponed until November. The union filed papers in the Industrial Court challenging the dismissals.
SASOL 2 and 3 Secunda	CWIU	6 000	10.09	The union prepared a strike ballot after wage negotiations collapsed. Workers demanded a 34% increase (bottom grade) and a 12% increase (top grade) and rejected management's R95 (25%) increase.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Streamline Metal Marshalltown	AAWU	2	16.09	Two union members are considering legal action after allegedly being assaulted with an iron bar and prevented from collecting their possessions when they were fired.
Summit Industries Rosslyn	PWAWU	210	19.10	PWAWU is taking the company to the Industrial Court over the dismissal of 210 workers after a work stoppage following the retrenchment of 60 workers.
Table Top Clayville	FAWU	280	11.09	Workers staged a work stoppage protesting the detention of a shop steward. Eighty workers were dismissed and negotiations between FAWU and management continued.
Town Talk Furnishers			Sept	A worker with a standard eight education who was fired in March, lodged an unfair dismissal claim in the Industrial Court which denied him an attorney because Ellerines (Town Talk's holding company) objected. Ellerines said it had not engaged an attorney for the case to avoid legal expenses. The worker challenged the matter in the Supreme Court arguing he was not qualified to conduct his own case.

Strikes and Disputes: Natal

BTR Sarmcol Howick	MAWU	1 000		<p>The 18-month-long strike has finally reached the Industrial Court which set November aside for the hearing. Despite worker demands that the hearing be in Mphomeni township it is being held in Pietermaritzburg. The case opened on 3 November and BTR was accused of committing an unfair labour-practice by dismissing 1 000 workers. The court heard evidence of workers' long service - the average being 25 years.</p> <p>During the strike workers, facing unemployment and starvation, organised co-operatives; together with the union they conducted a local and international campaign of consumer boycotts, mass rallies and support action. The European Economic Community is sitting in Brussels to investigate alleged contraventions of the EC employment code by BTR Sarmcol. Six BTR shopstewards were refused passports to attend the hearings.</p>
Clover Pietermaritzburg	FAWU	1 500	15-22.09	<p>Following a strike in June when 230 Pietermaritzburg Clover workers were fired, 1 500 workers voted in favour of strike action. Management claimed only 166 workers were dismissed. Despite management refusal to allow ballots to be held on Clover premises, workers in eight Natal plants came out on 15 September. On 19 September workers suspended strike action pending continued negotiations with FAWU and the progressive reinstatement of dismissed workers. Management agreed to consider reinstatement should vacancies arise in Natal plants.</p> <p>During the strike two Port Shepstone Clover workers were detained with alleged management collusion. In view of management reluctance to reinstate all workers, and their general attitude, the union brought 20 charges of unfair labour practice against Clover in the Industrial Court</p> <p>On 24 September Clover obtained an interdict restraining FAWU from organising a consumer boycott of its holding company, National Co-Operative Dairies. The union, which has until 26 November to respond, decided to challenge state of emergency regulations on strikes and boycotts in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court in November. In terms of the regulations it is subversive to call or promote a consumer boycott. However, the vagueness of the regulations makes it difficult for union officials to determine</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>the difference between subversive and legitimate action.</p> <p>The dispute continued at mediation and on 5 November FAWU rejected management's offer to reinstate workers should a vacancy arise at any Natal plant. The union demands the reinstatement of all workers with an agreed number to return to the Pietermaritzburg plant.</p>
Rowan SA, Mobeni	NAAWU	200	15.09	After a strike and 200 dismissals, workers agreed to return to work pending negotiations.
Scotford Mills Mayville	GWIU	300	16-17.09	Workers were dismissed after striking because of dissatisfaction with severance and holiday pay. After deciding to relocate the plant in Ladysmith, management offered workers with less than a years service severance pay of R8 and those with longer service between R30 and R50.
Ungeni Iron Works	BAWU	500	19.09	Workers held a work stoppage over the proposed retrenchment of 17 workers. BAWU is trying to negotiate short-time as an alternative. A dispute was lodged with the industrial council, but management retrenched 16 workers on 31 October. Five hundred workers walked out demanding the reinstatement of retrenched workers and the union called a strike from 3 November.

Strikes and Disputes: OFS/Cape

City Tramways Cape Town		4	18.09	An out-of-court settlement was reached following Industrial Court action by the Legal Resources Centre on behalf of four retrenched workers. A worker with 16 years' service received R5 000 severance pay, while others with less service received smaller amounts.
ESCOM Vaal Triangle	OVGWU	300	07.10	<p>Management recently announced that about 2 000 workers would be retrenched. Agreement was reached with 12 unions representing ESCOM workers over redundancy and retrenchment criteria. Workers at the Lethabo and Kragbron power stations went on strike over the planned retrenchments, fearing the loss of their homes in the ESCOM-funded housing scheme. Workers returned after discussions between the union and management.</p> <p>On 15 October management announced a retrenchment package to be implemented from February 1987. Workers will receive the equivalent of seven months wages or early retirement after a two-month notice period. Leave, bonus and pension money will be paid out while ESCOM houses may be occupied for six months at current rates.</p> <p>Meanwhile, an ESCOM worker who was fired last February after his certificate of competency was withdrawn, allegedly without reason, is to take the issue to the Supreme Court.</p>
General Motors Port Elizabeth	NAAWU	2 100	21.10-	<p>American multi-national, General Motors, has decided to sell the company to local GM executives. The company has not made a profit since 1981 and management blames this and slow political reform for the move. At a meeting held on 23 October, workers criticised management for lack of consultation over plans to withdraw. They demanded severance pay as they would no longer be employed by the company, a refund of all company and worker contributions paid into benefit funds, and the appointment of two workers on the new board of directors.</p> <p>After receiving written refusal to these demands, workers went on strike on 29 October, sleeping in at the Kempston Road and Aloes plants. Representatives from MACWUSA and the SA Iron and Steel Union</p>

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>were also invited to talks between NAAWU and management on 30 October. But the same day, management was granted a court order compelling striking workers to show cause why the strike should not be declared unlawful by 3 November. The strike and negotiations continued.</p> <p>The strike has halted production on the new Opel Monza, to be launched on 23 November. This was a strong bargaining point for the workers. On 3 November management threatened to fire workers who could not show reason for not working, as their strike was illegal. The following day workers were given a final ultimatum to return to work by noon or face dismissal. At midnight on 5 November, police forcibly removed workers from the plant and 500 workers were fired. On 7 November the union announced workers would return to work and that negotiations would continue. But at a meeting held the same day workers decided to return to the plant but not work. An arbitrator has now been appointed in the dispute.</p>
Laingsdale Engineering Cape Town	EATWU	127	09.09	The union is to take management to the Industrial Court over 'union bashing'. Management threatened workers with dismissal and security force action at a worker meeting, which resulted in the union losing 70 of its 127 members. This action ended recognition negotiations as the union no longer had majority membership. Both Laingsdale and Renak (where there is a wage dispute) are owned by multinational Plessey and the union has appealed for assistance from the International Metal Federation.
Renak Diep River	EAWTU	40	08.08	Workers, already in dispute with management over wages, went on strike over the employment of students at an hourly rate higher than the workers are demanding. Students were being employed as scab labour to beat an overtime work-ban. Workers are demanding a minimum rate of R3,90 an hour. They have also objected to new security measures and harassment by management. Workers returned on condition 'scab' employment ended and security measures withdrawn.
SA Breweries Port Elizabeth	FAWU	230	25.09	Workers went on strike in protest over the dismissal of Sithembile Kawa, chairperson of the shop stewards' committee. Talks between FAWU, the SAB Shop Steward Committee and management ended in deadlock with management refusing to reinstate Kawa, who is also regional chairman of FAWU and branch chairman of COSATU.

Strikes and Disputes: Mines

Beatrix Gold Mine (Gencor) Theunissen	NUM	8 000	07-10.09	Workers went on strike after a mine security officer fired rubber bullets and birdshot, injuring 16 workers returning from a NUM meeting. After negotiations between workers, NUM and management, strikers agreed to resume work.
Geduld Gold Mine, Welkom (Anglo American)	NUM	3 500	16.09	Workers went on strike and demanded the dismissal of a shiftboss who carried a gun underground. Workers returned after NUM and management agreed to negotiations.
Kinross (Gencor)	NUM	6 000	06-08.10	Miners went on a two-day work stoppage after the dismissal of NUM regional secretary, Eric Vala. Talks between management and the union were held to resolve the dispute.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Kloof Mine, Westonaria Deelkraak and Doornfontein, Carltonville (Goldfields)	NUM	35 000	23-30.10	Over 35 000 workers went on strike demanding wage increases, income security for injured workers and improvements in holiday leave bonuses. Gold Fields pulled out of wage negotiations between NUM and the Chamber in July and so were not part of the substantive agreement reached on 25 October. At first management refused to talk to NUM but began negotiations on 29 October. These broke down after a demand that striking workers return before negotiations could continue. After alleged police action against workers at the Doornfontein mine, workers added the release of 18 arrested colleagues to their demands. Workers returned on 30 October after discussions between workers and NUM officials. NUM and management committed themselves to talks through the Chamber.
President Steyn, Welkom (Anglo American)	NUM	5 000	03.11	Workers went on strike, demanding the reinstatement of a shaft steward dismissed in November 1985. They returned to work on 4 November following talks between NUM and management.
Zincor (Goldfields) Springs	NUM	600	03.11	Workers went on strike demanding a 35% wage increase, free board and lodging, a 6% shift allowance, 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays, a 40-hour working week and 36 days annual leave. This follows a deadlock in wage negotiations in September. The union applied for a conciliation board but the Minister failed to act on the application. Further talks deadlocked and a NUM strike ballot on 31 October voted in favour of strike action.

1986 MINE WAGE TALKS END

The wage dispute between NUM and the Chamber has finally been resolved. The Chamber agreed to increases from 1 October ranging from 19,5% to 23,5% for surface and underground workers; increased accident leave for staff workers and non-staff employees; and no downgrading of wages for workers injured or disabled in accidents if they are then employed in a lower job category.

Talks began in May. NUM demanded an across-the-board increase of 30%, income security for injured workers, a shorter working fortnight, a paid holiday on 1 May and improvements to fringe benefits. NUM did not accept some of the Chamber's set pre-conditions. These included: that NUM accept a schedule indicating the mines it represents; that talks for gold and coal mines be separate; that outstanding matters from the 1985 talks not affect this year's talks; that any settlement be regarded as final; that no cost-related changes on conditions of employment be implemented before 1 July and that certain exemptions from the Basic Conditions of Employment Act be accepted.

The Chamber first offered increases of between 15% and 20% and, claiming union acceptance, implemented these on 1 July. NUM said these increases were unacceptable and talks resumed in early July. At this point Gold Fields and Rand Mines Collieries pulled out of the talks and implemented the 15%-20% offer.

Talks broke down at the beginning of July. Most issues were resolved except for wages and income security. NUM declared a dispute with 29 gold and 18 coal mines affiliated to the Chamber on 7 July. The matter was taken to the conciliation board. At the first meeting on 21 August the board adjourned due to disagreement over which workers NUM represented. The issue was resolved on 4 September and the hearing adjourned to 15 September. This round of talks deadlocked with NUM demanding 26% increases and the Chamber offering 18%-22%. NUM said it was willing to consider a split offer from the different mining houses. But talks deadlocked again on 20 September and NUM announced it would conduct a strike ballot. Mediation continued and at talks on 11 October the Chamber increased its offer by 1%.

On 16 October talks deadlocked again when the Chamber insisted NUM drop its income security demand before considering wage increases. NUM then announced plans for a strike ballot to be held from 20 October. But on that day the Chamber called a new round of talks in a bid to avert the strike. The Chamber accepted income security for incapacitated workers. On 23 October the Chamber, acting for Anglo-American, Gencor and JCI, increased the wage offer by 0,5% to between 19,5% and 23,5%. After consultation with its members, NUM accepted the offer. Rand Mines gold division offer remained at between 19% and 23%.