

SASH



FOCUS ON CHILDREN

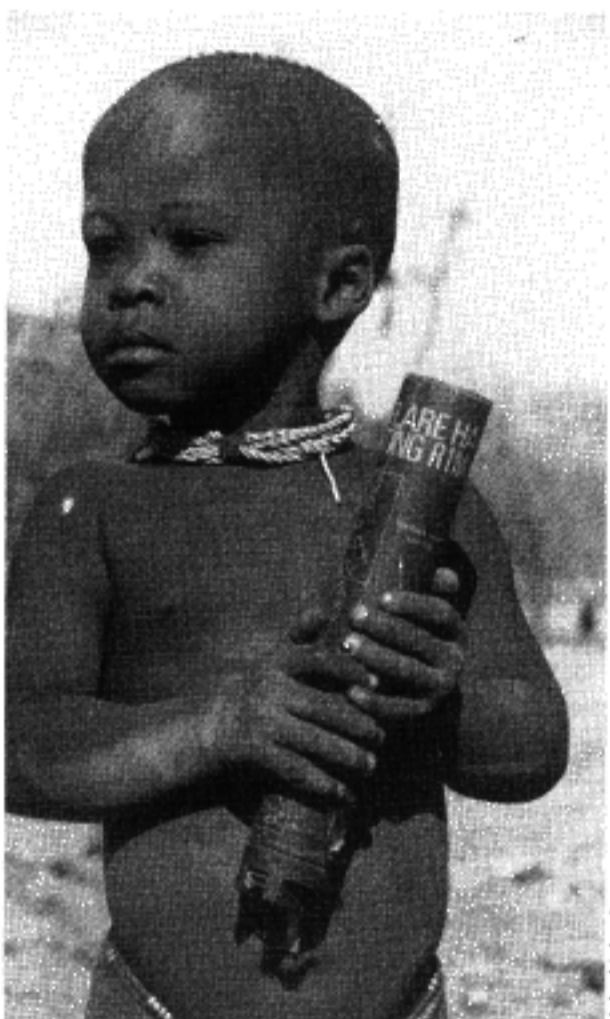
CHILDREN: PAWNS IN LIFE'S CHESS GAME
LAWS THAT PROTECT, LAWS THAT ENDANGER
COORDINATED CLOUT FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR CHILDREN?
WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY
NAMIBIA'S CHILDREN: APARTHEID'S FORGOTTEN VICTIMS

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COVER PICTURE: Father and Son, Athlone, Cape Town, 1978. By Paul Alberts

SASH magazine

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editorial

'Much more clearly than ever before, childhood was now seen as a distinct phase in the development of a human being, with its own characteristics and requirements. The child was ceasing to be regarded as merely an immature and incompetent adult...' (M.S. Anderson, Europe in the Eighteenth Century)

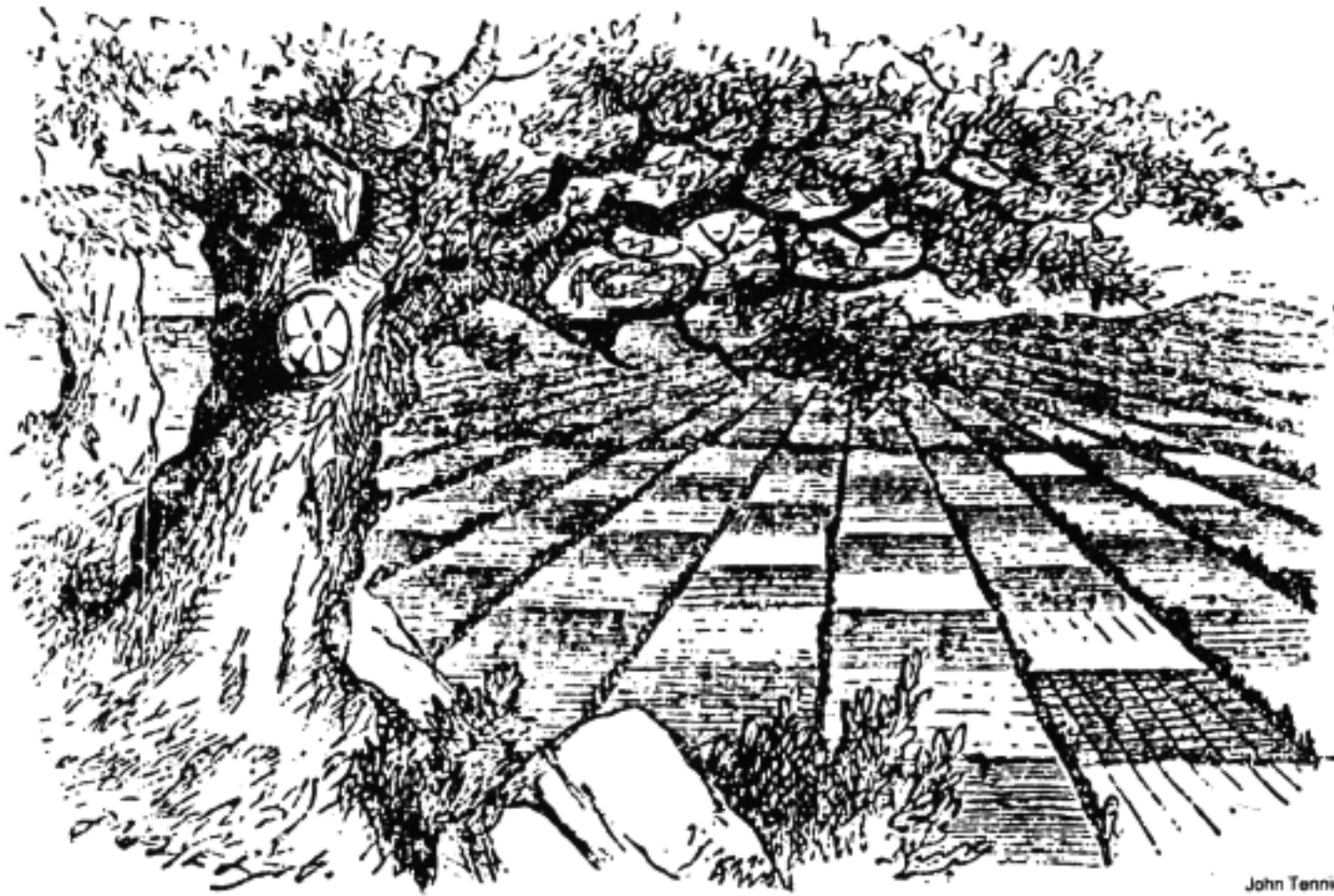
How far the world has come in attention to childhood as 'a distinct phase' can be measured in a number of ways, from the allocation of funds to meet children's 'requirements' to the growing tonnage of studies, investigations and reports. Looked at another way: the 18th century (1789) saw the Declaration of the Rights of Man; two hundred years on, we have brought forth the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It seemed natural to expect that healthy, happy children with rosy futures would claim a substantial part of our 'Focus on Children'. They certainly exist - streaming home from school; revelling in sport, the arts and books; laughing with their peers as they spend their pocket money in shops. And yet: scratch the surface of childhood in South Africa and you uncover distress. Can the ideals, the commitment, the creative responses to children's needs of childcare workers and child advocates, of parents and, indeed, of children acting on their own account, ultimately cope with the enormous task of putting things to rights?

We have attempted much with this issue of SASH and are only too aware of how far it falls short. Children may be small - as a subject they are vast! Pamela Reynolds has set the scene by looking at our region as a whole. To express the complexities of children's position in society she has chosen the metaphor of 'Kings, Queens and Pawns' - a theme which turned up in other contributions. Since 1989 was a milestone on the road to children's rights, we have given considerable space to international as well as local projects around this issue. We draw attention to 'The case for coordinated clout', an attempt to carry forward the debate concerning what has been termed a Children's Institute.

Very many contributors are members of the Black Sash. As parents, professionals and volunteers (or all three at once) they are in close touch with children and their needs. Their contributions make sombre reading on the whole but also hold out the hope that commitment and perseverance can make a difference. Lastly - although, as often said, not least - we commend the articles where 'children speak'.

Candy Malherbe



John Tenniel

kings, queens and pawns

pamela reynolds

Lewis Carroll in *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* makes Alice's dream journey into moves across a chess-board. The Red Queen takes Alice to the top of a small hill:

For some minutes Alice stood without speaking, looking out in all directions over the country - and a most curious country it was. There were a number of tiny little brooks running straight across it from side to side, and the ground between was divided up into squares by a number of little green hedges, that reached from brook to brook.

'I declare it's marked out just like a large chess-board!' Alice said at last ... 'It's a great huge game of chess that's being played - all over the world - if this is the world at all, you know. Oh, what fun it is! How I wish I was one of them! I wouldn't mind being a Pawn, if only I might join - though of course I should like to be a Queen, best.'

The Red Queen declares Alice a Pawn and sets her on her journey across the board promising her that she will be a Queen when she reaches the eighth square.



John Tenniel

... those in power accord children as little care and attention as if they were pawns in a game.

Carroll parodies the world of adults in the absurdities of Alice's moves in life's chess game. It often strikes me, working with children in southern Africa, that those in power accord children as little care and attention as if they were pawns in a game.

Children as figments of the imagination

Alice comes across the Red King snoring beneath a tree. Tweedledee says to Alice:

'He's dreaming now, and what do you think he's dreaming about?'

Alice said, 'Nobody can guess that.'

'Why, about you,' Tweedledee exclaimed, clapping his hands triumphantly. 'And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?'

'Where I am now, of course,' said Alice.

'Not you!' Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. 'You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!'

'If that there King was to wake,' added Tweedledum, 'you'd go out - bang! - just like a candle!'

Adults as Kings 'dream' children in that they design childhood to suit the political, economic and social requirements of particular societies. Their designs do not always match with the needs and desires of children. When children protest, the dream can fall apart.

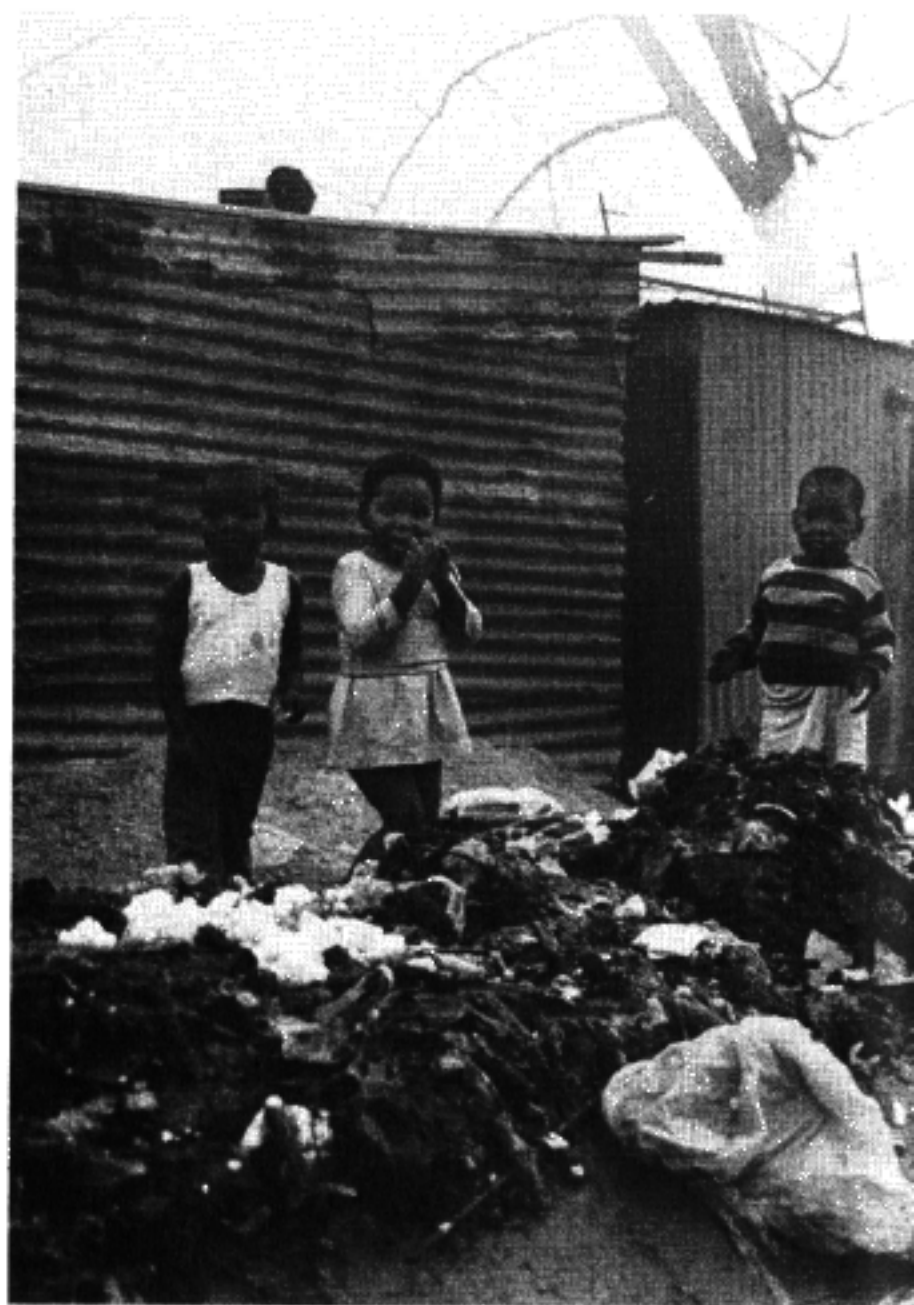
Within adults' dreams, children can be little kings, captured for political or ideological purposes and used as tools in the games of grand masters.

Jewels in a tarnished crown

The Executive Director of UNICEF, James P. Grant, reports in *The State of the World's Children 1989*, that

the advances already achieved during the 1980s in immunization, ORT (oral rehydration therapy), family spacing, and in the drafting of a Convention on the Rights of the Child, are among the great humanitarian achievements of our times. But they are the jewels in a tarnished crown.

The tarnish is caused by the failure of many third-world countries' economies to flourish, partly as a consequence of rising debt repayments and falling commodity prices. The total debt of the developing world is over US\$1 000 billion and in the last ten years real prices for the developing world's principal commodities have fallen by approximately 30 per cent. Taking everything into account, the report says, the southern world is now transferring at least US\$20 billion a year to the northern hemisphere. The real cost is being paid by the poor and by their children. Grant blames the debt on irresponsible lending and irresponsible borrowing. Grant adds:



Soweto. July 1989 (above)

And when the impact becomes visible in rising death rates among children, rising percentages of low-birth-weight babies, falling figures for the average weight-for-height of the under-fives, and lower school enrolment ratios among 6- to 11-year olds, then it is essential to strip away the niceties of economic parlance and say that what has happened is simply an outrage against a large section of humanity. The developing world's debt, both in the manner in which it was incurred and in the manner in which it is being 'adjusted to', is an economic stain on the second half of the twentieth century. Allowing world economic problems to be taken out on the growing minds and bodies of young children is the antithesis of all civilized behaviour. Nothing can justify it. And it shames and diminishes us all.

Children, along with their poor parents, are pawns in the international game. They can be pawns too in national, ethnic, gender, community and family machinations. The litany of abuse is well known. But like the Red King who dreamt Alice, we can put our imaginations and our creative powers together to design a world in which children can play and work in



Gil de Vlieg/Anagix

'Allowing world economic problems to be taken out on the growing minds and bodies of young children is the antithesis of all civilized behaviour.' James P. Grant

safety and health.

Statistics on trauma caused by war, poverty, gross misuse of resources, and the abuse of human rights, including those of children, are, in southern Africa, amongst the worst of the world's regions. Three of the world's six countries with the poorest economic and social indicators are in southern Africa: Mozambique, Angola and Malawi (see table). The other countries of the region, including South Africa, fall into the half of all countries with the worst indicators.

The table (drawn from tables in the UNICEF Report) pulls together key economic and social indicators for the main southern African countries plus three countries whose Gross National Products (GNP) per capita are similar to South Africa's.

It illustrates South Africa's economic dominance of the region (76 per cent of regional Gross Domestic Product - GDP), and the country's poor performance in general terms given its relative wealth. Most of South Africa's indicators of economic and social performance are comparable with those in Zimbabwe and Botswana. These countries enjoy only a third and less than a half, respectively, of South

Africa's GNP per capita.

South Africa's record is dismal compared to other countries with the same average GNP per capita, for example, Mexico, Malaysia and Hungary, whose infant and under-five mortality rates are far lower and whose life-expectancy is higher.

The best hope for quickly improving South Africa's indicators lies in a redistribution of income and improved access to services. Government's expenditure priorities must be moved away from defence and law and order to training and employment, especially of teachers, medical professionals and urban managers. Unemployment, now more visible than before because of rapid urbanisation, will cause the greatest difficulties in the immediate future. High inflation and low growth can be expected to lower real wages for many low-status workers over the next decade as the labour supply increases. Major redistributive measures such as free or low-cost health and education will be vital to bolster family welfare.

Beyond South Africa's borders, reduced military and security expenditure would help to free governments to spend more on social services and formulate development-oriented budgets. A stronger regional economy would be the best guarantee of improvements in the conditions for children. The opening game has to be played by South Africa.

The King's messenger

We have called, thus far, for the kings to re-order the context in which childhood can be experienced. However, within the structures that determine people's lives, there is great scope for freedom and variety in the shape that children's lives may take. We should celebrate the plurality of societies in the region. We should create spaces in which children, like queens, the finest strategists in chess, can help mould their destinies in a myriad of ways.

The philosopher Michel Foucault set out in his work to make perceptible the political and social processes by which societies are ordered. He wanted to show people that a lot of things that are a part of their landscape - that they think are universal - are the result of some very precise historical changes. They do not necessarily have to be accepted. He said:

All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made.

There lies the challenge. We need to examine closely the institutions that handle children and change them where we find them wanting. There are two examples from the institution of education that illustrate the need. The first ex-

We have called ... for the kings to re-order the context in which childhood can be experienced.

ample has to do with a dyslexic child. The boy's mother, some years ago, made a request to the provincial education authorities that her son be allowed to use a typewriter during his matriculation examinations as it greatly facilitated his ability to reply to questions well. The authorities replied by letter refusing permission, saying 'The system cannot handle individuals.' Then scrap the system!

The other example is a recent one. A six-year-old girl has a father who is in detention. His arrests, his frequent spells in prison, his disappearances from her life have upset her profoundly. He is a man of the church and she cannot understand what it is all about. She wakes, her

mother says, early each morning and dresses quickly fearing that she will be late for school. She is very anxious during the long drive there. Why? Because, at her school if a child is late she is put into detention.

Let us minutely examine the words we use, the rules we make, the threats we proffer, the pain we cause children. To do so we need to document their experiences and stand up beside them to demand change. It is almost as if, like the White Queen, we punish children before they have had time to live. The White Queen lives backwards and her memory works both ways:

'I'm sure **mine** only works one way,' Alice remarked. 'I can't re-

member things before they happen.'

'It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards,' the Queen remarked.

'What sort of things do you remember best?' Alice ventured to ask.

'Oh, things that happened the week after next,' the Queen replied in a careless tone. 'For instance, ... there's the King's messenger. He's in prison now, being punished: and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday, and of course the crime comes last of all.'

'Suppose he never commits the crime?' said Alice.

Key indicators of Economic

World country rank	Countries in Southern Africa*	Under 5 mortality rate		Average required annual % rate of reduction ⁺ 1987-2000	Infant mortality rate (under 1)		Life expectancy at birth (years) 1987	GNP per capita (US\$) 1986
		1960	1987		1960	1987		
3	Mocambique	330	295	10,5	190	170	47	210
4	Angola	346	288	10,3	208	169	45	470
6	Malawi	364	267	9,8	206	151	48	160
44	Lesotho	208	139	5,1	149	101	57	370
45	Zambia	228	130	4,7	135	81	54	300
53	Zimbabwe	182	116	4,3	110	73	59	620
60	South Africa	192	98	3,7	135	73	61	1850
63	Botswana	174	95	4,1	119	68	59	840
Indicators from 3 countries with GNP per capita similar to South Africa's:								
73	Mexico	140	70	3,9	92	48	69	1860
90	Malaysia	106	33	3,4	73	24	70	1830
105	Hungary	57	19	2,9	51	17	71	2020

KEY

* The UNICEF Report lists 131 nations in descending order of their 1987 under-five mortality rates (shown in bold type). Numbers before the countries give their rank order.

+ The average annual reduction rate required, to achieve the United Nations' target of reducing under-five mortality rate to 70 or less by the year 2000, or halving the 1980 rate, whichever is less.

'That would be all the better, wouldn't it?' the Queen said ...

Alice felt there was no denying **that**. 'Of course it would be all the better,' she said, 'but it wouldn't be all the better his being punished.'

'You're wrong **there**, at any rate,' said the Queen. 'Were **you** ever punished?'

'Only for faults,' said Alice.

'And you were all the better for it, I know!' the Queen said triumphantly.

'Yes, but then I **had** done the things I was punished for,' said Alice; 'that makes all the difference.'

'But if you **hadn't** done

them,' the Queen said, 'that would have been better still; better and better and better!'

We laugh at Carroll's parody. Yet we remember the adolescent boy who killed himself because he had been imprisoned after a demonstration and, under torture, had revealed his comrades' names and, upon release from prison, his family and community had turned on him and he could not bear the shame. The White Queen could not have improved on that. We punish children for failing to live in tune with the bizarre societies that we create. We make them pawns in our mad games.

Let us call for a resolution to first-third world financial flows; for a

redistribution of the region's wealth; and for a questioning of the institutions, including the family, that handle children. We can, at the very least, document children's experiences and create fora where children can seek advice and be heard sympathetically. We can lobby those in power and shame them into re-drawing the landscape of children's lives. □

*Pamela Reynolds directs the Childhood Action Research and Documentation Institute in Harare and is the author of **Childhood in Crossroads**, reviewed on p. 51.*

and Social Performance

GNP per capita av annual growth rate (%) 1980-86	Gross domestic product (GDP) (%) 1984	Total population (millions) 1987	Population annual growth rate(%) 1980-86	% population urbanized 1987	Av.growth rate of urban popln (%/p.a.) 1980-85	% of central government expenditure allocated to:			Debt service as a % of exports of goods and services	
						health	education	defence	1970	1986
-7,6	2,9	14,5	2,7	23	5,3	—	—	—	—	—
—	4,9	9,2	2,6	26	5,8	—	—	—	—	—
-0,7	1,1	7,6	3,2	13	—	6,9	11,0	6,0	7,8	40,1
0,5	—	1,6	2,7	18	5,3	6,9	15,5	9,6	2,7	4,2
-5,3	2,7	7,6	3,5	52	5,5	7,2	16,0	—	6,4	16,8
-0,1	4,8	8,8	3,7	26	5,0	6,2	20,9	15,2	2,3	22,3
2,8	75,8	33,0	2,2	57	3,3	8,2	14,9	13,6	—	—
7,4	1,0	1,2	3,5	21	4,5	5,0	17,7	6,4	0,9	4,3
Total 83,5										
-2,0	—	83,0	2,2	71	3,6	1,4	11,5	2,5	23,6	36,8
1,1	—	16,2	2,7	40	4,0	—	—	—	3,8	13,7
1,5	—	10,6	-0,1	58	1,3	3,6	1,6	6,9	—	35,9

Sources:

Grant, James P. 1989 *The State of the World's Children*, United Nations Children's Fund; Oxford: Oxford University Press, Tables E:88-9; 1:94-5; 5:102-3; 6:104-5.

Wilson, F. and Ramphela, M. 1989 *Uprooting Poverty. The South African Challenge*; Cape Town: David Philip, Fig. 1.10c:29.

laws that protect - laws that endanger

what is 'childhood'? who is 'a child'?

'Children are all foreigners. We treat them as such.'
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

We protect children. We provide for their needs. We define their responsibilities. We discipline them. We control their admission to our adult world.

The results of our efforts may be less consistent, less even-handed, less clearly guided by the welfare of the child than we would like to believe. There is, for instance, ample proof that we manipulate children in terms of race and gender to regulate the labour supply, to fill the army, and to spare the state the costs of equal maintenance provisions for all. 'Defining children', to use Sandra Burman's words*, is rich in ambiguities which often are embodied in our laws. The ages at which children reach significant milestones on the road to adulthood are shown on the chessboard on the right:

*"Defining Children", in Emile Boonzaier & John Sharp, *South African Keywords, The Uses & Abuses of Political Concepts*.

Under 7

You are protected by certain laws but cannot be held responsible in law for anything you do



laws that protect - laws that endanger

7-13 years

You are presumed not to be responsible for criminal acts of which you are accused but the state can challenge this in court, and you can be detained under security laws, e.g., the Internal Security Act and the Emergency Regulations under the Public Safety Act



18 years

You are no longer protected by the Child Care Act; you may apply to the Supreme Court to be declared a major; if you are male, you may achieve adult legal status through marriage; if you are 'white', 'coloured' or 'Indian' you acquire the parliamentary vote but if you are 'black' you may vote only for your local authority.

10 years

You are entitled to give or withhold consent regarding your adoption

16 years

You may own a firearm; you may make a will; if you are black, you are regarded as a lodger and wage-earner under your parents' roof and your parents (or custodian) cease being eligible for state maintenance (if you belong to any other 'population group' you remain a dependent of your parents)

you may take out life insurance; if you are a member of a non-black population group, your parents (or custodian) cease being eligible for state maintenance (see age 16 for blacks); you may be served liquor in a public place; you may take out a driver's licence

17 years

If you are a white male, you become liable for compulsory military service

under 21

You are defined as a juvenile by the Prisons Act which regulates conditions in police cells and prisons

12 years

If you are female, your consent to sexual intercourse is a defence to a charge of rape but the accused may be charged under Section 14 of the Immorality Act (No 23 of 1957) in terms of which sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 16, albeit with her consent, is a statutory offence.



14-20 years

You are responsible in law for criminal acts; you may witness a will; you may open an account at a building society

15 years

If you are female, you may marry with your guardian's consent, and you may achieve adult legal status through marriage; if you are detained, you will be treated as a child, for statistical purposes, by the state

under 18 years

You should be tried in a Juvenile Court and held in a Place of Safety (rather than police cells) in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act

21 years

You attain full legal capacity

laws that protect - laws that endanger

the child care act in perspective

This analysis of the Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983) was presented by Chris Giles, speaking on behalf of the Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa (OASSSA), at the Children and the Law Forum organised by the Education Subcommittee of the Free the Children Alliance, Western Cape, in November 1988. It has been updated for SASH.

In many respects the Child Care Act (CCA) is well-designed to protect those whom it is meant to protect, but in others it is inadequate. The following are some of its good points - the list is not exhaustive:

- it applies indiscriminately to all persons under the age of 18;
- it is quite clear that all children have not only the right to be parented, but the right to be parented by adults who are fit to take on such responsibility. The CCA also spells out what behaviour or attitudes would constitute unfit parenting;
- the Act provides for removing a child from unsuitable circumstances - very quickly if need be - and provides checks as to how the child is cared for thereafter;
- it provides for a compulsory court hearing where all the parties concerned, including the child, may be represented by lawyers;
- the CCA recognizes the right of a child to a permanent place to grow up in, and requires welfare workers who remove a child from his/her caregiver to find another permanent place within two years;
- it establishes that child maltreatment is a notifiable condition, the child possessing a legal right to have her/his condition examined by qualified persons and suitable treatment arranged.

The inadequacies of the CCA lie both in the Act itself and in the enabling regulations. Some deficiencies of the Act are:

- the right of the child to legal representation seems to depend on the parents' agreeing to this. Often the parents do not want the child's point of view argued too clearly or forcefully;
- child maltreatment is notifiable -

but only by doctors, dentists and nurses! Teachers, social workers, psychologists and police are left out;

- the notion of the 'unfit' parent as opposed to the idea of the 'child in need of care' introduces an unnecessary and simplistic accusatory element into child protective work.

The regulations are inadequate in these among other ways:

- welfare services are defined as 'own affairs' despite widespread requests and recommendations that one national Department of Welfare be created. This means that there are several sets of regulations, with unnecessary duplications and complications;
- while the Act provides for a Welfare Advisory Council, this has not materialised and non-governmental opinion is felt to be underrepresented;
- the registration of abused children is incomplete and confused as each department has its own forms and procedures. Also, some departments do not require the registration of neglected children, although this is a much more common and serious form of child maltreatment. The reason given is that no satisfactory definition of 'neglect' exists!

There are also a number of wider issues involved. One is lack of knowledge of the CCA. Any Act is complex and written in a way that makes it hard for ordinary people to understand and use. A booklet designed to make the Act more accessible would be of value.

It must be noted that the CCA does not protect children against whom criminal charges have been brought. This was recommended as

long ago as 1937, and is a recently introduced reform in countries such as Brazil where the horrors to which such an omission leads have been recognised. Moreover, the CCA is specifically superseded by security legislation. In this way children are deprived of all the protections which would otherwise be theirs by law: access to lawyers, to the courts, to their parents.

In 1985 the state began working on, and issuing for comment (which it largely ignored) proposals for a welfare policy. The policy, announced in 1989, is divisive and sinister. Welfare is entrenched as an 'own affair' and the state which, in the past, ran an effective welfare state for 'poor whites' (who are today's gravy-train bureaucrats) has now made individuals primarily responsible for their own welfare. New funding procedures make control of welfare initiatives by the state very much easier, and there is a clear intention to provide improved services and housing to certain communities who have shown themselves to be 'trouble spots', in an effort to defuse protest without conceding full democratic rights. Welfare is being misused to pacify, divide and control.

The experience of many countries both in Africa and elsewhere, that children are damaged by involvement in violent conflict, is available to us - but is not part of our CCA. It has been recommended that more comprehensive child protective legislation would incorporate the following principles:

- children should be respected as 'zones of peace';
- they should at all times have access to basic services;
- refugee legislation and services

laws that protect - laws that endanger



Eric Miller/Arpix

- should be extended to those who are displaced within their own country and not only to those who cross international borders;
- under no circumstances should children be recruited into armed conflict;

- places frequented by children - schools, hospitals, buses, play areas - should not be attacked.
- In sum, aspects of the CCA are good, work well, and should be known and used more widely. The CCA fails in defining child abuse too narrowly so

that structural or economic abuse is not dealt with. The CCA also fails in being superseded, in a situation of prolonged turmoil, by security legislation which sacrifices child protection goals on the altar of 'state security'. □

laws that protect - laws that endanger

children under the state of emergency

their only right a name



Gilf de Vlieg/Atropix

In June 1989 the International Congress on Working for Children's Rights assembled in Helsinki, Finland. Janet McCurdie of the Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town, presented a paper on behalf of the Free the Children Alliance, Western Cape. Her contribution has been abridged for SASH.

Discrimination that disadvantages children in the legal and penal systems manifests itself both in 'the law in theory' and in 'the law in practice'. Racial discrimination is written into the law, for example in group areas, housing, education and labour legislation. In practice, the law draws a disproportionate number of black children into the legal and penal systems.

Discrimination affecting all of South Africa's children has received less attention. This is law and practice that disadvantages children by treating them as adults, thus ignoring their special needs as children. Consider the particularly negative consequences of incarcerating physically and psychologically vul-

nerable children along with adult prisoners. This is an example of a failure to discriminate actually producing discrimination.

In theory, South African law provides for the special treatment of children by means, for example, of the Child Care Act and certain provisions of the Criminal Procedure and the Prisons Acts. In practice, however, security legislation takes precedence over special protection legislation. Placing a child in solitary confinement would constitute neglect under the Child Care Act if committed by a parent or guardian but the state is free to do so under its security laws.

Many children are arrested and charged with the common law offence of public violence. It

laws that protect - laws that endanger

appears that the overly broad definition of public violence is being used as a convenient and legal means of intimidating, controlling and criminalising those involved in political protest against the apartheid regime. It has become common practice for security forces to extract confessions by assaulting children arrested on charges of public violence. The following statement was taken by an attorney representing a youth charged with public violence:

...they put a sack on my face choking me and teargassing to [get me to] admit that I stoned a house of Mr.... Then they forced me to admit and write a statement...On the very same day we appeared at court with the two white policemen who forced us to admit, we then admit[ted] only because those policemen were there...

Lawyers report special difficulties defending these children. They are often not informed as to where the child accused is being detained, and are denied access until the police have extracted a confession. Undefended child-accused are often denied bail and spend months in prison awaiting trial. Where there is legal representation, however, sentences appear to be more lenient and the chances of acquittal, or withdrawal of the charges, greater.

In 1982, South Africa's security laws were consolidated by the enactment of the Internal Security Act. This provides for the indefinite and incommunicado detention without charge of persons for security reasons. The detention provisions expressly override all other statutory and common law provisions. This effectively removes the protection of children afforded by the Child Care and (so far as it goes) the Prisons Acts. It further removes protection by ousting judicial review of arrest and detention practices. The incommunicado detention of children is an extremely harsh practice, exacerbated by the increased risk of police abuse.

Since June 1986 the whole of South Africa has been under a State of Emergency in terms of the Public Safety Act. The Emergency Regulations allow a security force member to arrest any person whose detention is, in the opinion of that member, necessary for the safety of the public, for the maintenance of public order, or for the termination of the State of Emergency. These Regulations do not provide for the specific treatment of children; rather, laws which contain protective provisions are overridden when in conflict with the Regulations. For example, the parent or guardian of a child is not required to be informed of her or his child's detention. A 13-year-old boy who spent three months in detention reported:

At first we were about seven in the cell. The

food we were given was not enough. We had to share from one plate. We were given porridge and tea for breakfast, porridge and soup for lunch and porridge and coffee for the evening meal. We slept on mats on the floor. Three people had to share one mat and we were each given one blanket. We were very cold. I did not see my parents at all during the first two months. We had no hot water and had to shower in cold water. We had no books, magazines or games at all...after the first two months we were taken to another prison...more children were brought in and eventually we were about 37 in the cell.

Since 1976 when children took to the streets in protest against unequal education, they have formed an integral part of the resistance movement. In resisting 'the system' our children have found themselves pitted against the powerful legal machinery of the criminal justice and penal systems. Within five months of the June 1986 State of Emergency, thousands of children had been detained. Serious concern galvanised many extra-parliamentary organisations into campaigning for children's rights. A 'Free the Children' campaign was started in Johannesburg [SASH, Feb. 1987] and this was the seed from which the Free the Children Alliance developed.

In February 1987 the Minister of Law and Order was asked to state the number of people who had been detained and the number of these who were under 18 years of age. He replied as follows:

Extra parliamentary activists and radical groups, amongst others the South African Communist Party, the African National Congress and the United Democratic Front are, for revolutionary and propagandistic reasons, also interested in this information - they misuse it to the detriment of South Africa and the majority of its inhabitants.

Eventually he revealed the statistics. In the interim, however, the state had created a new definition of 'child' which limited the figures released to those of children under the age of 15 years. It is clear that, since children in their late teens constituted the large majority of juvenile detainees, releasing the actual figures would have increased the public outcry. Before long the Commissioner of Police prohibited the call for the release of children. Although the Natal Supreme Court overturned this restriction two weeks later, the state attempted to continue with its enforcement.

By June 1987, mounting publicity and international pressure achieved the release of a large number of child detainees aged 15 years and

In resisting 'the system' our children have found themselves pitted against ... powerful legal machinery

laws that protect - laws that endanger

under. In April 1988, approximately 300 children were still being held in terms of security legislation, but by the end of that year only 11 children remained in detention according to the official figures.

Community organisations have recognised that in campaigning for children's rights it is vital to consult with and involve children. We need to take their opinions seriously: to fail to do so would deny them their right to be heard, which Article 12 of the Draft Convention on the Rights of the Child upholds. It must be emphasised that advocacy and action to implement children's rights must not be seen in isolation from the broader struggle for a just, democratic and non-racial South Africa in which the human rights of ALL people are protected.

In campaigning for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, much can be learnt from past experience. The networking and co-ordinating of community and service organisations remain difficult. Problems include the suppression of information, the detention and restriction of community leaders, the banning and restrictions on or-

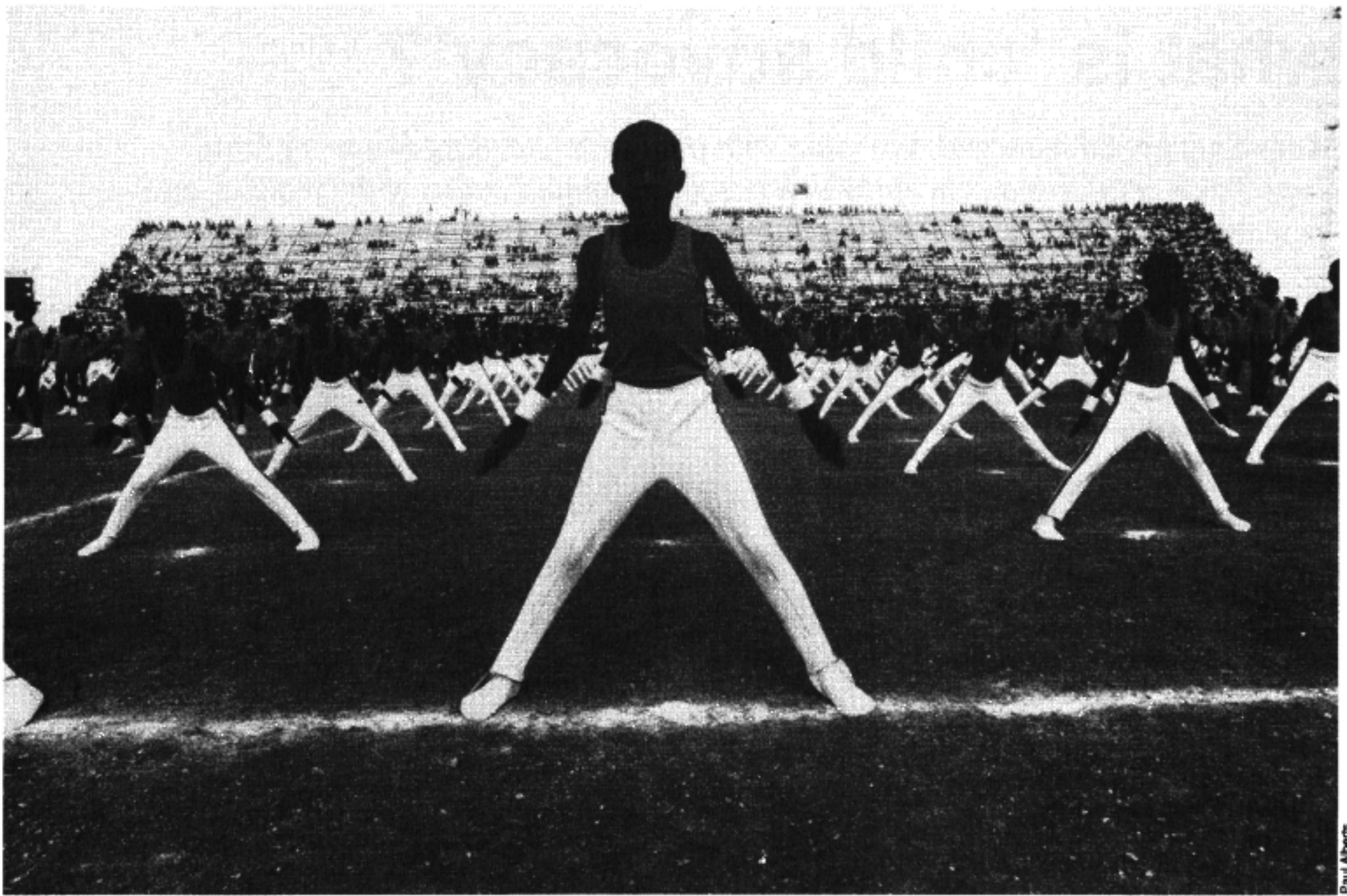
ganisations and meetings, the fostering of inter-group conflict by the state, and poor communication due to inadequate resources and state repression.

To devise a 'masterplan' would not be feasible. Rather, any strategy that promotes children's rights should be identified and enacted. Thus press campaigns, legal action, the development of organisational awareness and educational programmes, and pressure from the international arena will contribute to an awareness of and, ideally, to the implementation of the Convention. International pressure has increased the cost to South Africa of violating internationally accepted standards for the treatment of children. Where such standards are specific it is easier to pressurise the government into adherence to them.

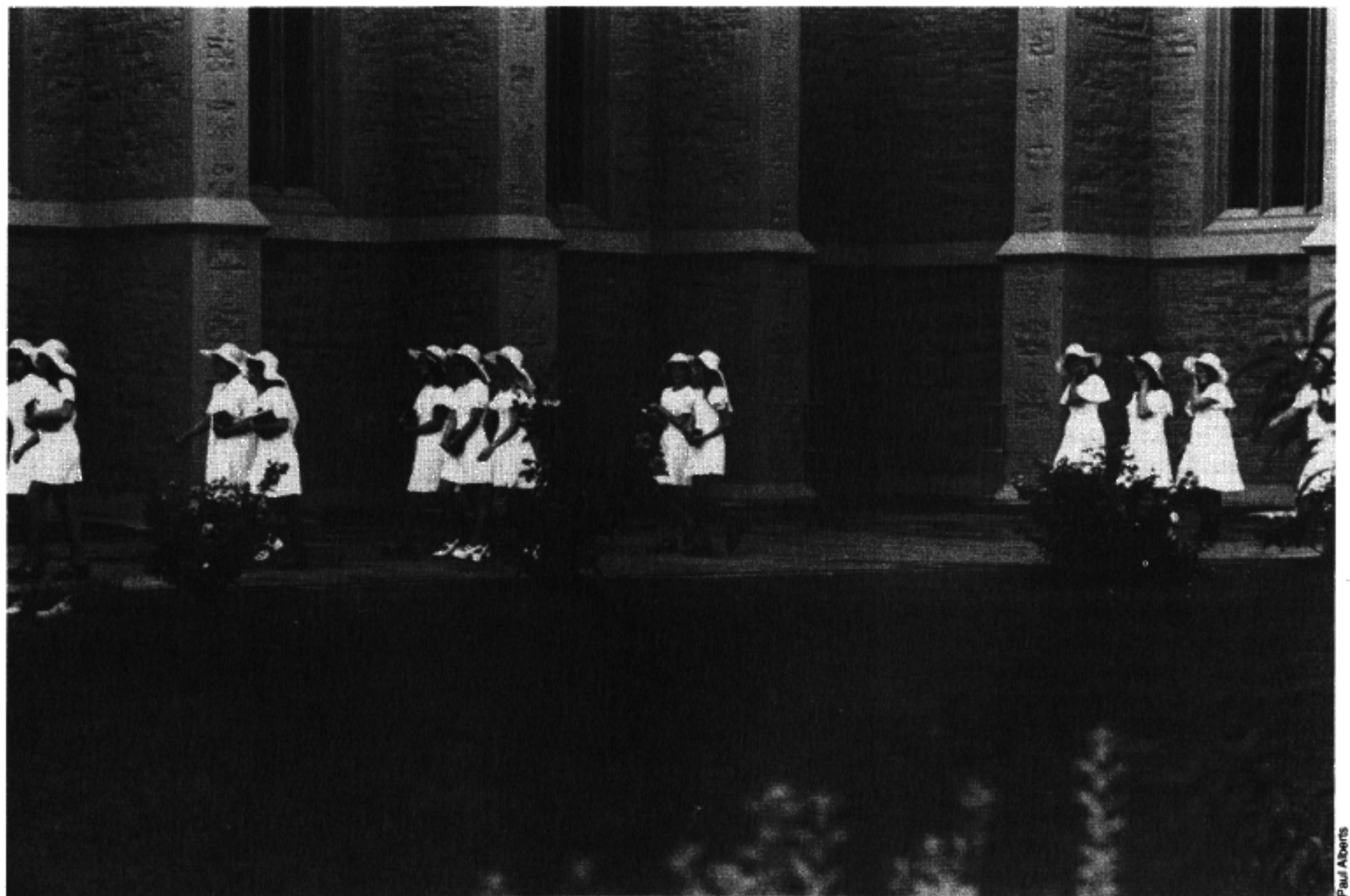
As long as children continue to be subjected to the discriminatory practices of the criminal justice and penal systems in South Africa, the campaign for children's rights in this sphere must continue. As a well-known human rights lawyer has said, 'One child in detention is one too many.' □

Article 7, Convention on the Rights of the Child: The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name...





Paul Alberts



Paul Alberts

Order takes many forms. Above: Bophuthatswana. Below: Oudtshoorn

what is 'child advocacy'?

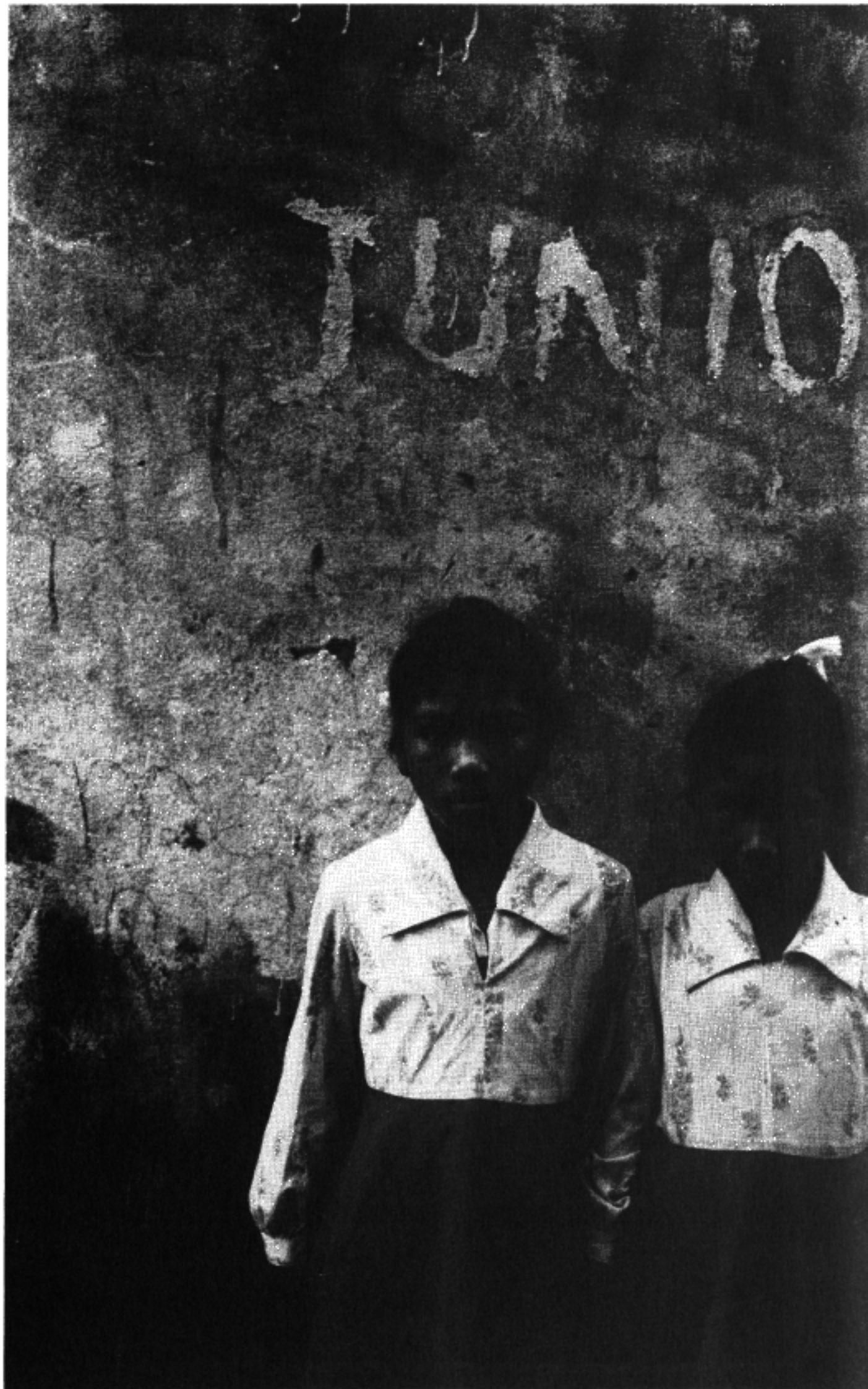
Mary Savage, Educational Associate with the Early Learning Resource Unit, Cape Town, explains a concept which has gained equal status with 'service' and 'research' as a strategy to fulfill children's needs.

Definitions of child advocacy vary but the 'rights of the child' are embedded in the concept, which has broadened from individual casework undertaken by child advocates to wider concerns for justice and a fair deal for children.

The idea began to take shape in the late 1960s in the United States and Britain. In South Africa, child advocacy has begun to imply an intervention on behalf of children in order to address the circumstances that impinge on their lives. A number of initiatives have drawn attention to the widespread plight of children and their families illustrated by: high infant mortality rates in some areas, the phenomenon of 'stunted children' (below weight for age), child labour, child soldiers, street children, high primary school dropout rates (50% for African children by Std 5), teenage pregnancy, child abuse.

Strategies range from gimmicky to confrontational in order to influence public awareness and exert political clout towards redefining priorities such as the dire need for a coherent overall plan for children and changes in inadequate and discriminatory resource allocation. Despite the existence of a number of sound programmes for children in various parts of the country, South Africa's children are presently fragmented into 17 ethnically organised education departments - let alone further divisions of health and social welfare.

Child advocacy in South Africa emerges out of the recognition that children's rights are legally binding and have to be kept upfront at the local and national levels if the serious inequities and deficiencies which exist are to be addressed. Child advocacy recognises that changes in social systems, institutions and laws require planning, persistence and pressure in order to compete for scarce resources. □



what is 'a child advocate'?

N. Cecilia Sililo-Tshishonga, lawyer and Deputy Director of Entokozweni Early Learning Centre, Soweto, explores the potential for advocacy where children's issues reach our courts.

Children are vulnerable creatures, and often they suffer in silence. The necessary change should start within the family but if the situation within the homes does not improve, then intervention by outsiders becomes necessary. Somebody out there needs to stand up and speak for the child, particularly where the child is 'gagged', that is, where the parents are the perpetrators. This, then, is where advocacy comes in.

Who, at present, is the child's advocate? According to the Children's Act, and the Criminal Procedure Act, no child is allowed to make a statement without the assistance of his/her parent or legal guardian. What then if the child needs to speak against his/her parent or legal guardian? The Children's Act states that the Supreme Court is the ultimate guardian of all minors, that is, the courts can override the powers of any parent/guardian if need be. But how often do the courts exercise this right? Relatively seldom, in fact. This, therefore, calls for advocacy by a child advocate.

Who should assume this important duty of advocacy on behalf of the defenceless child? The pos-

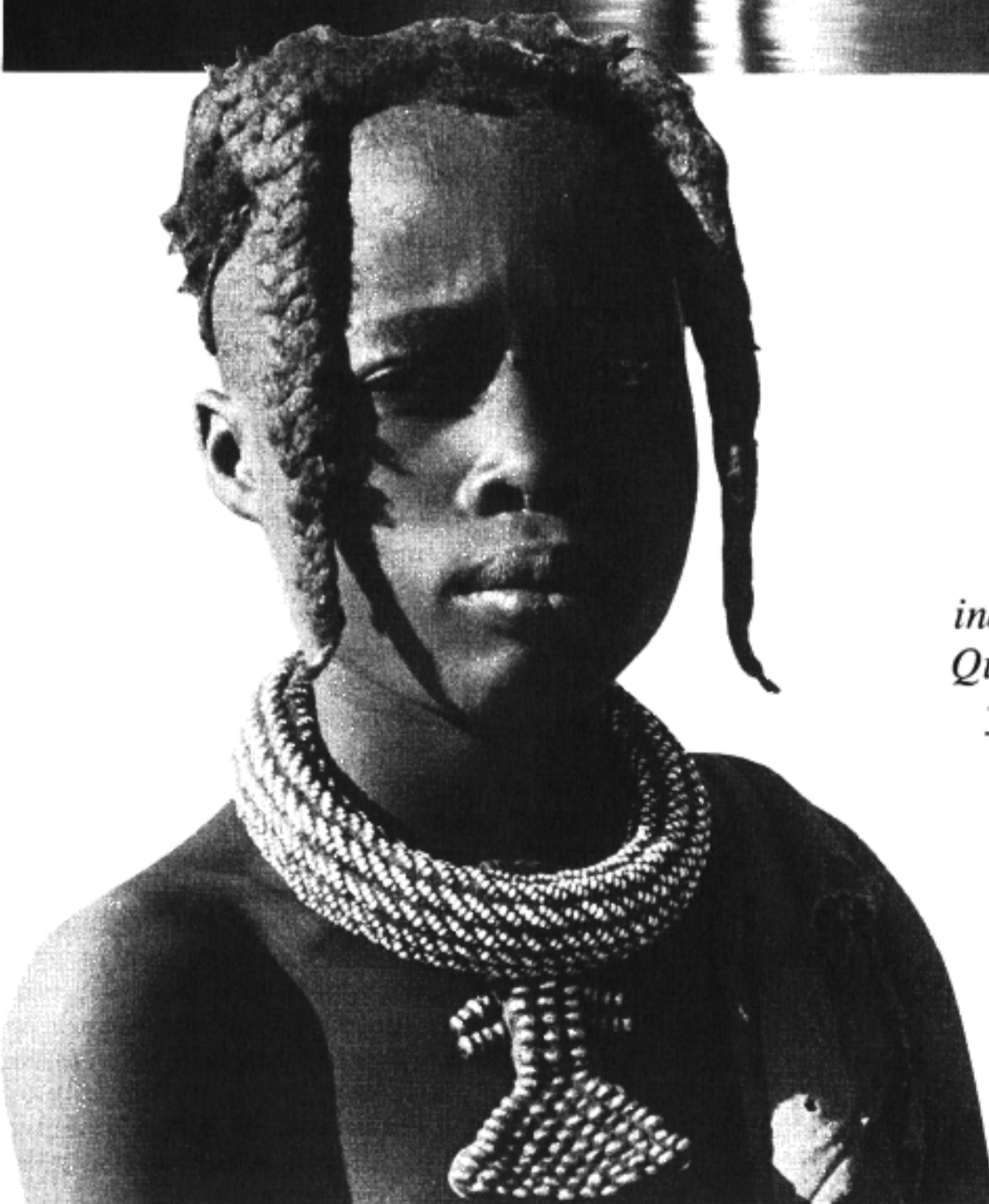
sibilities include child care workers, nurses, doctors, or any conscientious member of the community. However, there is red tape to be overcome: for example, counsellors with Child Line, a branch of Life Line which is concerned with child abuse, require the assistance of a registered social worker to take this kind of action. The social workers themselves find it difficult enough if a case is taken to court and they have to square up against a determined attorney or advocate.

Where, then, does this lead us? Does it not call for child lawyers who specialise in children's rights? Rather than let a state-employed social worker bicker in court with a trained lawyer, might it not be best to insist on legally qualified persons on both sides in order to reach an equitable decision? I can foresee a problem: costs. Who is going to bear the costs of a case that is 'brought to court by a child'? Must child lawyers appear Pro Bono? Will they appear *in loco parentis*, or as mere representatives?

The question of child advocates is a tricky one, which needs to be considered seriously. □



J. Lieberberg/Atropix



Gil de Vlieg/Atropix

children of namibia

From 'fifth province' to independence: who were the 'Kings, Queens and Pawns' in Namibia's 70 years of administration by South Africa?

Above: Young herdsman in Oshakati hospital after playing with a rocket found in the veld.

Below: Young Himba girl, Kaokoland, Namibia, May 1987.

Katutura - 'we have no dwelling place'

Katutura, a black township outside Windhoek, is the home of 60 000 to 100 000 people, 45% of whom are children under the age of 18. The fact that nearly every second adult between the age of 18 and 65 is looking for a job guarantees that Katutura acts as a cheap labour reserve for the largely white commercial city of Windhoek, and keeps wages low...

Katutura is an ever-growing township. Originally, people were split into 'ethnic groups' and 'O' for Ovambo or 'D' for Damara can still be seen on doors. Although it is not illegal to live in another area, poor people cannot afford to move house for the sake of the principle of national unity and children grow up accepting this division into ethnic groups as normal.

Children are visible everywhere in Katutura. With an average of eight people to each tiny brick-built, tin-roofed house, they have to play outside in the stony yards or in the dusty streets. The younger children, usually left in the care of an elderly relative, have hardly any toys. There are no green areas near their homes, and no play equipment is supplied by the municipality.

The older children can be seen running errands or looking after the younger ones. Schooling for black children is not compulsory, and many parents can simply not afford to send their children to school. A number of the children have turned to street violence...One of the more distressing products of this harsh social climate is the increasing number of child prostitutes...

White children

White children are a very small minority in Namibia. They live in a carefully protected environment and often do not see the harsh realities of apartheid or war - unlike their black counterparts. White children, like black children, have ambitions; but unlike black children, they have some chance of realising them.

Today, white children have ten years of compulsory schooling in English, Afrikaans or German. Al-

though numbers of white Namibians, anxious about the possibility of independence, are leaving and school rolls are falling, the money spent on white education is not being reduced.

In recent years, there have been some 24 times as many whites as blacks from Namibia attending university in South Africa.

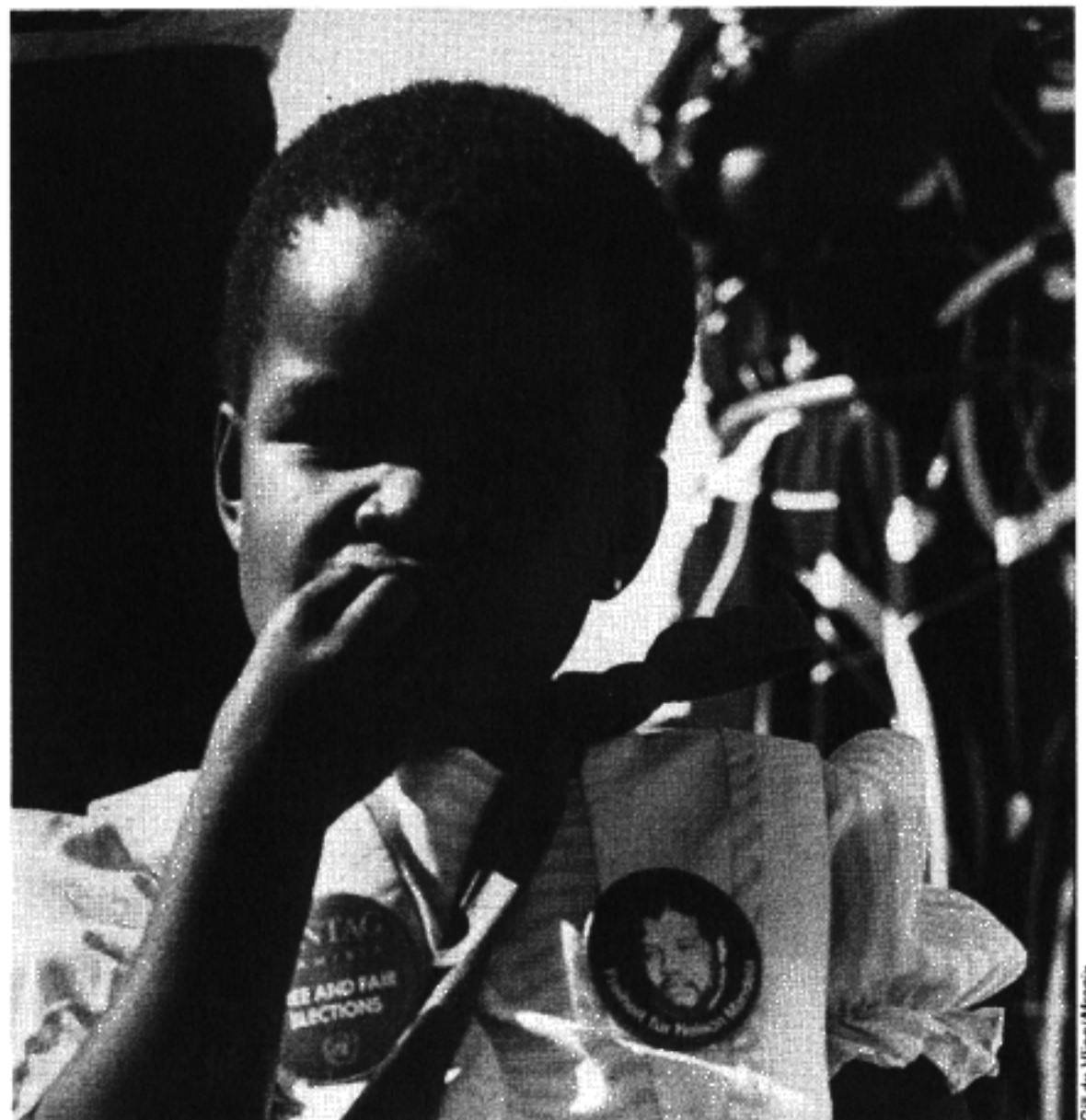
Health services reveal much the same picture. For a white child, medical services are good. In 1981 almost fifty times as much was spent on average per annum on the health of every white child as was spent on a black child from the southern area of Rehoboth and 15 times as much as on a black child from the Damara 'homeland'.

Although white children have a better material life, they are trapped by the ideology of apartheid in which they are brought up, just as much as black children are trapped by poverty. Each has as little chance of breaking free. White children are taught to regard blacks as both inferior and potentially threatening. There is almost no opportunity for white and black children to meet on equal terms and get to know each other.

Life in the war zone

Thousands of parents living in the north today were children themselves when the war first broke out in 1966. Their own childhood was marked by the terrors of war, and they are now watching their own children accepting as normal a situation the rest of the world would regard as intolerable. Children are exposed to the sights of a particularly brutal war - people beaten to death, houses burnt down, military vehicles flying a red ribbon to designate a SWAPO 'kill'. Many of them seldom see their fathers, who are away fighting in the war or working as migrant labourers; daily life is frightening and uncertain. It is not surprising that some children turn to delinquency and aggression. The older children in particular are forced to take sides and make judgements of a kind many adults would find too challenging. Childhood ends abruptly for most Namibians today. □

From *Namibia, Apartheid's Forgotten Children*, a report for Oxfam by Caroline Moorehead, 1988



the united nations convention on the rights of the child

'South Africa has not ratified a single treaty on rights. The human rights ethic is disregarded point blank...' (Brian Currin, national director of Lawyers for Human Rights). How can we make this present Convention a first? For a start: don't wait for the movie - read the book! A 'briefing kit' prepared by Defence of Children International/UNICEF is available and gives a readable account of the provisions of this vital document. A few questions only are answered here.

Why seek special rights for children?

By virtue of their status as human beings, children are protected by the same laws, declarations and treaties which affirm and uphold the rights of people in general. Might it not be unwise to target children for special rights, for example, if to do so affects the rights of other groups? And who are 'children'? Definitions of childhood vary widely from country to country, and even within countries according to

factors such as gender and (in South Africa) race.

The groups charged with drafting a Convention (see box) had to resolve these and other questions before they could fairly start. In the end they agreed to base their approach on the propositions that:

- 'children have special human rights rather than special rights as opposed to other humans';
- where the rights of children and adults coincide it is generally necessary to ensure higher standards for children;
- the notion of 'universal rights' will be interpreted variously, according to the socio-economic and cultural realities which exist;
- nevertheless, important perceptions of children's rights are widely shared.

A short history of the campaign to promote the human rights of children

- 1924** - Children's rights conceptualised at international level in the five-point Geneva Declaration, endorsed by the League of Nations
- 1948** - Geneva Declaration revised and amplified as part of the process of creating an umbrella human rights text, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (the first step towards a legally enforceable International Bill of Rights)
- 1959** - Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations
- 1966** - International Covenants adopted by UN General Assembly (another step towards a binding International Bill of Rights)
- 1976** - International Covenants entered into force with respect to signatory states
- 1979** - International Year of the Child: proposal for a UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to supplement the 1959 Declaration and create an international instrument binding on those states which ratify it; establishment of a Working Group to draft a Convention
- 1983** - formation of a 50-member Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Ad Hoc Group to assist the UN Working Group
- 1989** - International Year of the Rights of the Child: adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the UN General Assembly; commencement of ratification process; recommendation by the S.A. Law Commission to the South African state to endorse the Convention

What rights does the Convention seek to secure?

In finding how the special needs of children can be served, the UN Working Group together with the NGO Ad Hoc Group arrived at a new concept of human rights. They have preferred an integrative approach in preference to the categories - civil, political, economic, social and cultural - which have been considered hitherto.

By giving primacy to children's needs they have noticed that traditional rights combine in various ways in order to secure such fundamentals as survival (nutrition, health services, etc.), development (access to information and education, freedom of thought, religion and so on), protection (from exploitation and cruelty, of family life, or by means of special care) and participation (letting children's views be heard, enhancing their status in society).

How will the Convention work to secure children's rights?

The draft is a fully-fledged Convention from the moment the General Assembly adopts it, but it must wait to come into force (i.e. become a treaty which is binding on signatories) until it has been ratified by 20 states. It is not certain how long that may take: for example, although all the states have signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights except for Saudi Arabia and South Africa, the ratification of the International Covenants by the required number of states proved a much slower process (see box).

The Convention applies to all children under the age of 18, except where adulthood is defined at an earlier age under national laws. A

key statement of intent is contained in Article 3 which stipulates that 'In all actions concerning children...the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration'. Important innovations concern the right of children to have their opinions taken into account in matters which affect them and the duty of states to promote child survival and development. As governments review their commitment to the wellbeing of children; as parents, child care workers and specialists of many sorts employ the Convention as leverage in securing children's rights; and as children themselves become more aware of their entitlements, it is expected that improvements in the lives of children will take place. □

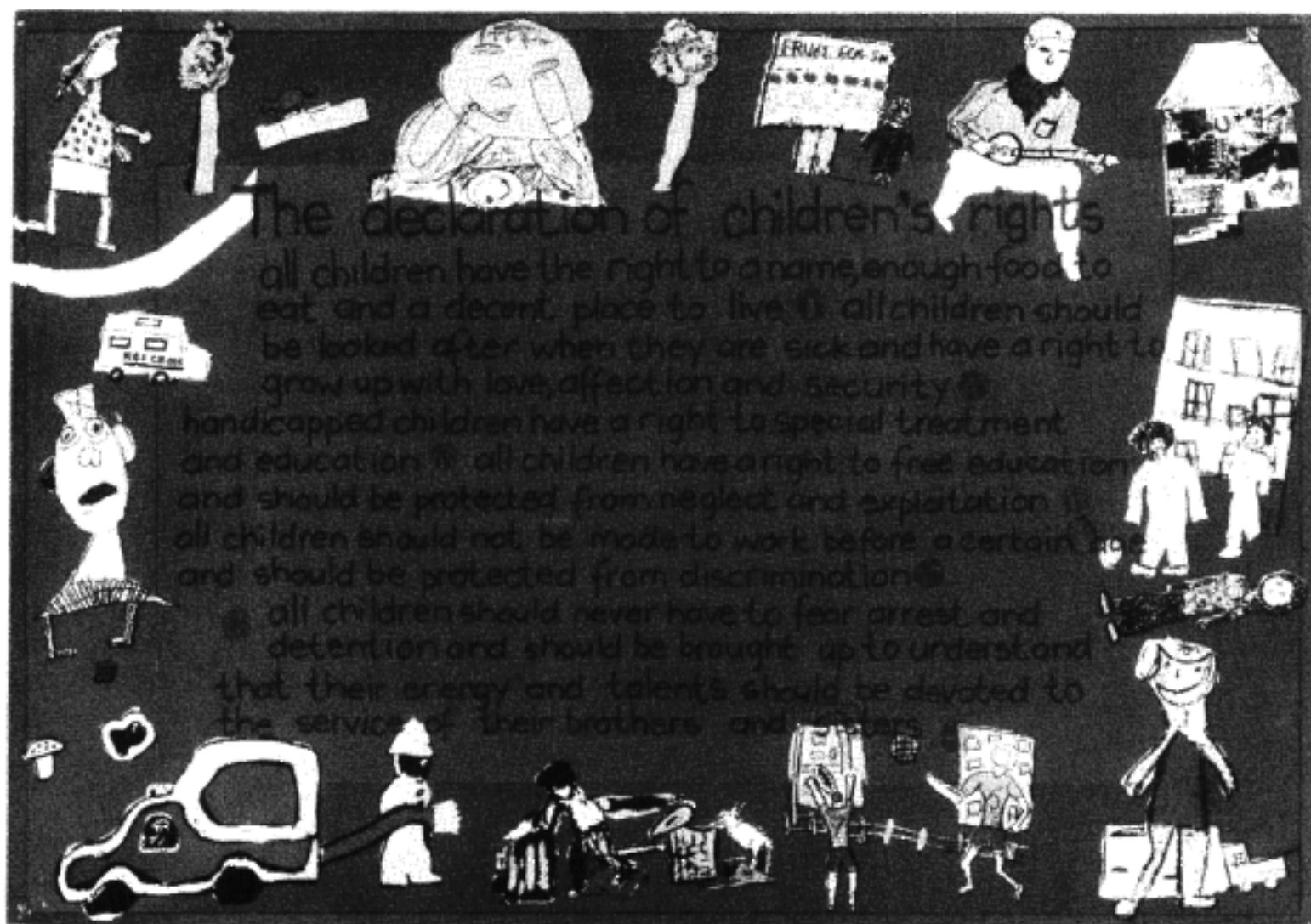


John Liebenburg/Atropix

An Ovahumbu speaking boy with SADF ammunition found near his home. Ruacana, 1988.

the case for coordinated clout for a better deal for children

mary savage and hilary ivory



There are two worlds of childhood in South Africa. One is a privileged world of easy access to services and resources which ensures optimal child development. The other is a world of deprivation and, in the case of many township children, of violence. The Rev Frank Chikane describes township conditions as having 'affected children more than many people realise...It is a world made up of tear gas, bullets, whippings, detention and death on the streets. It is an experience of military operations and night raids, of roadblocks and body searches. It is a world where parents and friends get carried away in the night to be interrogated. It is a world where people simply disappear, where parents are assassinated and homes are petrol-bombed.'

In South Africa children have become a major political issue: their vulnerability to manipulation and emotive propaganda has opened them to become pawns in the struggle, used by all sides to further sectional agendas.

Over the years there have been a number of initiatives to create an umbrella organisation addressing children's rights and needs. In 1986 Owen van den Berg, academic advisor to the rector of the University of the Western Cape, floated the idea of an umbrella body along the

lines of the National Children's Bureau in England to act as a clearing house for information about children in South Africa.

Francis Wilson and Mamphela Ramphele in *Uprooting Poverty* asked '...has the time not now come for the establishment of a new organisation for the purpose of focusing specific and continuing attention on the problems facing children in southern Africa? The composition, control and functions of such a body require detailed discussion amongst a

wide range of people. However, such an institute could play a very creative role in strengthening the work of existing organisations and in helping to articulate the needs and interests of children'. For purposes of discussion, they refer to such an umbrella body as a 'Children's Institute'. In 1989, the Free the Children Alliance, Western Cape, convened a meeting to discuss this concept.

So far no initiative has succeeded. Several reasons have been identified:

1. Territorialism: there is a fear of being 'put out of business' by a 'super-organisation'.

2. Non-professional groups are concerned that their skills may become redundant.

3. Suspicion of the whole concept of 'information centres' in terms of who would control the information and the possible pre-emption of existing specialist data bases, e.g., in the medical field.

4. Cross-disciplinary rivalries - medics and para-medics vs. educators and para-educators, for example. Who would be dominant in an umbrella organisation?

5. Anxieties regarding who would represent children's interests and how their interests would be represented.

6. Control of financial resources: who would be charged with this responsibility?

7. The problem of semantics: some organisations use terms that others perceive as threatening, such as 'comrade' and 'children's leagues'.

8. Lack of commitment to non-racialism, a

factor which some feel is often concealed.

9. Tensions caused by differing interpretations in the field of child development theory.

10. Adequate and fair regional representation if the body is to be a national one.

SASH set out to explore the facilitation of combining the efforts of existing interest groups and organisations involved with child rights, health, education and welfare, in order to combat the situation with collective clout. In an attempt to explain the various positions on this matter, SASH put the following question to a cross-section of 18 Cape Town-based organisations: 'Is there a need for a structure or body in South Africa to coordinate action towards a better deal for children?'

Incredibly, consensus was achieved with an overwhelming 'yes' from all quarters, who felt that present shortcomings would hopefully be overcome by such a body. These shortcomings were defined as follows:

- An overall research facility is seen as necessary, whose function would be to gather information about children, store it and disseminate it through reports or publications. This would obviate the present non-system of having to consult a myriad organisations and institutions to pool a composite picture of information required.
- There is a gap in the realm of advocacy: such a body could promote public awareness of children's issues and lobby government.

It was pointed out in several replies that such a

'Is there a need for a structure or body in South Africa to coordinate action towards a better deal for children?'



Children holding FEDTRAW T-Shirts, showing the concern of this organisation for children's rights.



body should be wary of involvement in the service function, which could be counter-productive to existing efforts of service organisations. It is financially impossible to consider non-governmental alternative service provision on any meaningful scale. However an 'institute' could identify and help to find creative ways to fill the gaps in service provision.

Children's services in South Africa are fragmented into different departments (education, health, welfare, etc.) and there is a lack of interaction between them. A more holistic approach is required, which might be provided by a bridging body.

Existing organisations are perceived as pockets - as carrying out great work but without proper coordinating structures. The net result is that many children are 'falling through the gaps'. There's a need to pool resources and to avoid wasteful duplication of effort, especially in view of the fact that the needs of many are not being addressed at all (e.g., disabled children in rural areas).

Finally, it was noted that individual efforts are OK for fact collecting but, to be effective, strategy requires collective action, must be broad-based, and needs money.

The thorny question of strategy was the cause of much of the diversity of opinion in the past failed initiatives. It would be foolish to pretend that substantial differences do not still exist; nonetheless it is useful to look at the summary of points - some 'do's' and 'don'ts' - ranging from suggestions to upfront stated requirements as they were presented to SASH:

- The formation of this body should start with the concept of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and just South Africa.
- The fact that 'sound practice' and 'sound politics' may be at odds, even while both serve as powerful agents for positive change, must be faced.
- The proposed body should rise above sectional differences and avoid taking on a particular political stance or ideological bias in order to prevent exclusivity, division and fragmentation. A focus on the adoption and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child might serve this end.
- The structure should be accountable to its own aims and its contributors. It should not be an umbrella body with constituents for whom it has to speak: it should speak for itself.
- It should focus on specific goals and objectives, as opposed to being so all-encompassing that the initiative becomes difficult to sustain. The Convention on the Rights of

the Child would be important in providing guidelines and leverage.

- It should avoid drawing distinctions between professional and non-professional personnel in the child care field. Collective action as broadly based as possible is desirable, to include existing organisations whose efforts are all valuable.
- Such a body should be prepared to take a back seat, deriving satisfaction from the increased effectiveness and enthusiasm of its member organisations - avoiding trying to become powerful or a competitor for scarce funds. Emphasis should be on empowerment.
- It should further be aware of the impatience in the active fieldwork organisations of 'initiatives' that are all talk and no short-term action to help children.
- It would need regional representation if it is to be a national body, but not a labyrinthine one that impedes rather than facilitates urgent decision-making.

UWC's Institute of Counselling, Centre for Child Guidance, has expressed willingness to host a working group of professional and community representatives drawn from legal, health, education, social and other services in order to further explore the question of advocacy and the forging of links with research and service provision. This is a very encouraging development.

Achieving a better deal for children is a matter of great urgency. We hope that this article will galvanise all parties into action. One of the respondents to SASH's question summed up this urgency by quoting from a poem by Gabriela Mistral:

*We are guilty of many errors and many faults,
but our worst crime is abandoning the children,
neglecting the foundation of life.
Many of the things we need can wait,
The child cannot.
Right now is the time his bones are being
formed
his blood is being made, and his
senses are being developed.
To him we cannot answer, 'Tomorrow',
His name is 'Today'.* □



children speak

To gain an insight into how children in South Africa perceive themselves and their society, we asked a number of teachers from schools throughout the country to have their Std 9 and 10 pupils write diaries that would reflect a week in their lives. We chose the week in which 16 June fell in the hope that the diaries would reflect an awareness of the significance of that particular day.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to conduct the exercise in black schools as many were closed. However, we did get a response from individual black students.

Responses among the white students varied enormously - the majority not showing any awareness of the significance of 16 June. In fact the extracts that we have printed do not mirror in proportional terms the great number of diaries that make no reference to Soweto Day.

We have changed the names in the following extracts but for the rest we have quoted them verbatim - spelling and all!

Jenny. Johannesburg.

Woolworths was a mad-house. It is Friday the 16th so people should stay at home. What a wish! When I was walking from school to Woolworths today I saw a dreadful sight. About ten security guards were chasing this black boy about my age. They grabbed him and shoved him head first into the back of a bakkie. How dare they treat another person like that? I wonder if they would have treated a white guy with slightly more respect? My Mum has just called me and told me that I have about half an hour to get ready for a cocktail party we're going to. My 23 year old friend, Jane, is going to England for 3 months so this is her farewell.

Sipho. Grahamstown.

I enjoyed the day as there was no school because of the exams we were writing. I went to town where we ate at the Spur with my friends. When I came back from town I did not even eat my supper as I was still full. After this I went to a talk on 'Soweto Day' in town. I felt it was very good especially the people who were singing. When I came back from this talk I actually told my friends who did not go what happened. I felt they had missed much they needed to know.

Julia. Grahamstown.

Today was so exciting cause I got a letter from my Dad in Texas. He sent me a R200 postal order. He says that he is really enjoying his over-seas trip. I really miss him.

Felicity. Johannesburg.

I'm sitting here listening to the radio and again I'm wondering how people can listen to Kylie Myngio, Rick Astley, Jodi Watley, FYC etc. And especially that club music at the Thunderdome and all those larny places. I'm into metal, I used to be punk but there is more to metal than punk, although I still do like punk. But I suppose we are all intited to our own opinions on music etc and on life, but I was just wondering.

Sean. Grahamstown.

Soweto Day. A sad day, by all accounts, in South Africa. The Black Sash school's gathering I attended this evening made me feel so sad, so angry, and so ashamed. Why are people so cruel to each other? Why can't we accept each other for what we are? I find that so terribly, terribly sad.

June 16th means so much to many people. To others, it is just another day. I wonder if those responsible for the outrage have ever spared a thought for what they did. I suppose not.

But I am optimistic that, one day, things will change, for the better. I hope and pray, that one day we will

10 000 pupils riot in Soweto

The Argus Correspondent JOHANNESBURG.— More than 10 000 angry Soweto High School pupils rioted and stoned a large contingent of police at Pheleni junior secondary school in Orlando West early today.

At least one pupil was shot as police fired hundreds of rounds into the air.

Many of the 50 police cars which rared to the scene of the riot had their windcreens smashed by the rampaging students.

The Argus CITY LATE
CAPE TOWN, WEDNESDAY JUNE 16 1978

ation to solving problems'

SA welcome for

Here we print two entire diaries - one from Grahamstown and one from Khayelitsha outside Cape Town.

Tony. Grahamstown.

Monday 12th

I have just got a boody English assignment. I have to write this silly diary! Not much happened looking forward to the science EXPO next week. I hope I can finish my project in time! I wonder what Janet is think about?

Tuesday 13th

Oh boy I've just flunked my Maths Test. Boy is Robertson going to be on my case! Well quite frankly he can shove it! Damn got a Chemistry Test tomorrow. What a ball-ache! Janet must really think I'm an idiot!

Wednesday 14th

Am I having a great week or what? I've just flunked my Chem Test! Oh, well on the brighter side I suppose my English presentation did go well. In fact it went rather well! Suppose it compensates for the 35% for the essay! God I hate school!!! Janet!

Thursday 15th

Shit, my boody Afrikaans test was a bitch! Today I bunked the road run for the first time and guess what the boody coach arrives for the first time the whole term!! Oh F—k the EXPO is only six days away and my project isn't half finished!! This has got to be the worst week of my life! I've really screwed things up between Janet and I, DAMN!!

Friday 16th

Weekend thank God!! I can't believe my luck I passed my Maths, with 74% nog al. My Afrikaans teacher must really love my! We got the 'goat' tests back and she's credited me with an extra 10 marks! I passed my Chem as well, 60% is alright! Accounts was a disaster 91%, I should have got 100%.

I don't believe I have to do community service on Fridays, talking to the geriatrics, well I suppose anything is better than marching at cadets! EXPO, damn. Janet, double DAMN!!

Saturday 17th

Oh, well my problems with the EXPO have been cleared up, thank God! Why the hell does the weekend fly so fast? Janet!

Sunday 18th

Shit! I can't believe Dorothy was in an accident! Quite a shock to the system. Mother didn't take it very well! I had the strangest feeling of indifference after I heard they were alright! God how I wish Janet was here to share this with me! Sorry. □

join together across the world. Perhaps I am an idealist. So what? At least I try to see the brighter side.

Louise. Johannesburg.

One more day till weekend yay! Boy do I need it next weeks going to be a killer! School was the usual terrible work work work! Afterwards we went to the shops to change sisies shoes (too small) got home to find Wild Geese 11 on M net so I watched it (lank violent) stayed at home and watched Police Academy later on. Les phoned and we spoke crap as usual.

PS: Dog got troun out into the cold for awhile because he weed on the carpet!

Thembekile. Khayelitsha. Cape Town.

Today I went to a service. This may not be important. What really is important, is that I did not tell my parents. Wanted to but I could not. You know how parents can be after all it was 'June 16'. They can never think positive. Nor why should they take it that it is only a service. They think we want to start unrest. Of course we are the one who always starts them. Never, it can't be their bosses sons who wants to sjambock us. I really think we will make better parents than them, Don't you think so?

Betty. Johannesburg

We woke up at 7am and started getting dressed, when I discovered that I had only packed one school sock and had left my shoes at Rachel's house. I went to school with stockings from the day fore and takkies that I'd worn to 'The Wave'. I thought that Rachel would have realised that I'd left my shoes at her hose, but when she came to school, she discovered that she was wearing one of my shoes and one of her own. I watched Police Academy tonight, it was hysterical - well worth watching if you need cheering up.

Valerie. Johannesburg.

Soweto Day.

This morning it was mentioned in assembly, but it did not affect us. I think most of the pupils forgot about it when they walked out of the hall. It is probably only for the black community.

Vanessa. Johannesburg.

I am getting to hate S. A. more and more each day. I don't know why I hate it so much. The people are alright I guess. I just can't relate to them the way I could with my friends in England. Its getting to the stage when I am counting the days before I leave. I know, I know I'm taking a very negative attitude, but I've been here for over a year and I still haven't adapted. And to tell the truth I don't think I ever will.

Jane. Johannesburg.

June the sixteenth! Soweto Day! I waited for today to pass, with apprehension, half expecting myself to be caught up in a sudden riot. But my Friday was peaceful and yet I know there was unrest in the townships with however many peoples becoming victims to the violence. But the sad thing is that we hear about so much violence on the TV that I have become almost immune to its effects. When I hear about deaths, its just other people, other lives. Anyway some people say that the world is over-populated in the first place.

Jason. Johannesburg.

An important day in South African history. Went to school, as per normal. Got picked up after school, went home had bite to eat and got on my bike and rode up to the squash courts to watch Bev play squash. Unfortunately she lost (just). Came home went with my dad to have photos for Star taken. Came home and made arrangements with Bev to go and see a movie 'TAP'. Enjoyable evening.

Susan. Johannesburg.

I woke up to the report of an army massing, for a day of unrest and violence. In assembly, Mr Smith spoke on the meaning of the day, and

Thabo. Khayelitsha. Cape Town**12 June**

It's about 8.30pm. It's been a awful day to me 'cause in the morning we had to rewrite a question which was not clearly asked by the time we were writing the mathematics paper for the mid year exam. That question I know I didn't do good not at all good.

Relating to the whole day things were quiet normal and I have spend the whole day at my grandmothers house 2,5 km from where I live. Tomorrow on the 13th I'm going to offices at Rondebosch to ask for details about the camp we are going to attend later this month. The class boycotts in our township has made it difficult for us to continue with the vac school and we have held a meeting and we took a resolution of postponing the vac school but to continue with the camp.

13 June

The 1st thing I did in the morning, I planned all the things I'm supposed to do; I know I should have done that yesterday but what's the point? As planned I did went to the vac school offices.

I was very dissapointed when the co-ordinators told me that the camp had also been cancelled, reason the vac school didn't want to stand in the way of students seeing that there has been some detention of students recently and also there was speculation going on that the vac school should completely stop untill everything is settled or the ...(illegible) returns it's normality and so the major issue was that we don't know what's going to happen after the 16th of June maybe school busses can be stoned. I spend the whole day there because I was also filling up some application form for bursary.

14 June.

I went out for a jogging. I usually do this twice a week but during school-days I only jog in the evenings. Went to a local library to loan some some of the books I've been longing to read, it was my chance now since we have finished writing back from last year my everyday life has changed didn't like books so much I was always bussy with the SRC things.

My stepmother arrived from work with a plastic bag full of groceries. She is preparing for tomorrow as shops and all other businesses are going to be closed for the whole day. The only thing she left was paraffin for the heater and I had to go and buy it at our local stores.

15 June

This day was rather a different day from the start because at about 3.35am we were woked up by a strong knock we looked throughout the window Oh! No! I was shivering in a second the knock was of a police outside there we dozens of soldiers standing with their firearm ready to blow, they formed a line stretching about 25m from my home and there were vans. Father opened the door I could read his mind. he was sure that they were looking for me, but I being relaxed I knew I had nothing to fear. They came in and searched first my room then everywhere in the house. Daddy asked them what they were looking for. They said 'weapons' and that they were doing this everywhere in that morning. They came out bear handed. We went back to sleep and in the morning I went to the cafe as usual to get some bread and milk - by the way this is our daily morning food. We call it the second cause because we eat bread after we have had porridge or oats that's one of the diet you will find mostly in our society for breakfast. As on the way I met my neighbour daughter. She said she was surprised to see me for his elder brother and all the youth of my age have been detained by the police in about that time they had come to our house. I figure it out maybe it's because the following it going to be the 16th. But what confused me is

that this girl told me that the reason they were detained was because they were suspected of being involved the gang fight which is these days our everyday part of life. but what intrigued me was why did they take everyone from 12 years up to older people of about 28 years old.

At about 10am I washed my clothes. As was in the process my neighbour came to me and told me that his brother and all the other have been released except for a few boys who are suspected of gangsterism are still held.

During the day I was paid a visit by my friend who's now at UCT he told me that they had just finished writing exams. At my location the atmosphere was starting a (12h00) everyone talked about the 16th some were happy they were not going to work, people at the stores they were buying things that they are going to need for tomorrow mainly bread and flour for baking bread.

16 June

I woke up at about 9am its a clear day than the usual days of 16th June because it usually rains in this day but as I said the day is crystal clear. Our stepmother prepared a nice breakfast for us and she didn't go to work. I went outside and took a stroll to the robots about 100 m from home. It was really quiete. The day seemed to be delicate anything could have happen but to my astonishment there street was deserted with taxis, buses only private cars were on the road, shops were closed. I took a walk to NX 12 to visit my relatives I think I'm very communal whenever I feel lonely I like to visit my relatives and share something new with them. When I arrived I had bad news that the person I've come to visit is in hospital she had had an accident of being a victim of a stone thrown by coloureds people when she was in a taxi one her way home from work. I'm going to visit her in hospital tomorrow.

I went home again, on my way it was rather lonely like there was some funeral. I was lucky enough to see one being made to drink water with OMO soap powder, reason he had been spotted drunk by the observers and he later vomit all the drink he had been drinking, for shebeens were told yesterday not to serve any liquor and it's a custom in days like these that people should abstain from liquor for the whole day. I guess those spotted couldn't bear it no longer not to drink on a Friday. □

The following resolution, adopted almost nine years ago, underpins an ongoing concern for the adequate and equal education of all South African children and for the education crisis - still with us - which gave rise to Soweto Day.

The Black Sash believes that South African education reflects the inequalities and exploitation of its society and therefore does not seek to extend the white system of education to all schools, but recognises the need to develop and establish education in a truly democratic society, based on the will of ALL THE PEOPLE.

Whereas it is considered imperative to express solidarity and to show respect toward the school children who died or were imprisoned during and after the Soweto uprising in 1976, it is proposed:

1. That members of the Black Sash observe June 16 as a day of mourning;
2. That they encourage others to do the same;
3. That members lobby school principals and teachers to encourage pupils to observe June 16 as a day of mourning.

Black Sash Resolution, National Conference, 1981

the reading and prayer were centred around this. The bus was an hour late.

This is what Soweto Day meant to me. This and perhaps a moment of dismal realization. Perhaps a thought spared for those who died. That's it, nothing else.

To many of my fellow South Africans, June the 16th, 1976 was the start of a long, seemingly endless period of fire, guns and fear. And each year the dawning of this day brings the remembrance of tragic death and miserable suffering.

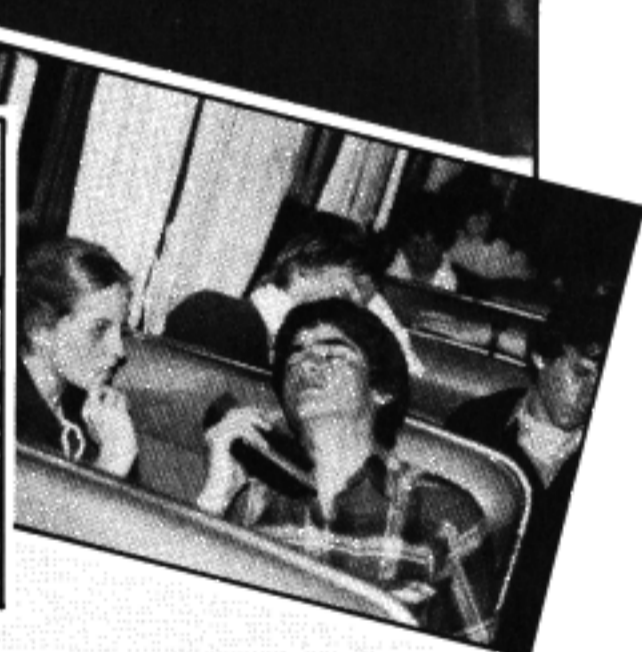
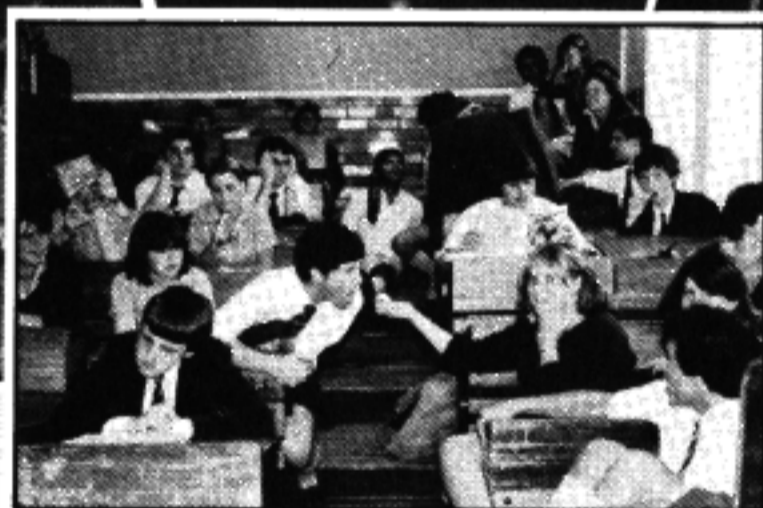
I live a mere ten minutes drive from this world and yet it seems light years away. My only exposure in my safe and protected environment is the TV, paper and radio - who knows if any of these are to be believed? It is no wonder that this country is so torn, when these two worlds live side by side, and yet never face to face. (Somehow the trivial occurrences of the day didn't seem worth putting down on paper.)

Nancy. Johannesburg.

Stayed at home today as we had to fetch mom from airport. She arrived at 12.15 from Mauritius. Sat listening about her holiday and got jealous. Went to Martin's house at about 7pm as he's leaving for Cyprus tonight. Found out that I might be going to Greece in October or December.

Kathy. Johannesburg.

Soweto Day today. I think it should be a public holiday. I'm sure even the AWB supporters wouldn't mind taking the day off! I often think about how it would be living in a township, living with a constant threat of violence. I'd like to find out for myself what it's really like, instead of getting these distorted views from the press. I think it absolutely ridiculous that people be judged by their skincolours! I could go on about my political views, but I often get the feeling that adults don't appreciate kids telling them political feelings. They think we are just repeating daddy's words once spoken at the dinner table.



Anthony, Johannesburg.

Today was 'Soweto Day' and as far as I know, there wasn't any unrest. This makes me feel glad because violence only serves the purposes of evil, making people angry and resulting in the stirring of hostile feelings between the various races and cultures.

My mother and I were supposed to go shopping this afternoon but the stores were chaotic since nobody had arrived for work. I'm not angry or upset though, I just sat down in front of the television and relaxed. It was marvellous to rest and collect myself after such a hectic week.

Carinne, Johannesburg.

I can't believe it. Jane Brown played against me at netball. I haven't seen her since Std 4, she recognised me. I use to hate her.

Adrian, Johannesburg.

Oh boy. What a day! My day consisted of chaos, chaos and chaos. And just to add some more spice to it, more chaos. I nearly got run over by a truck, saw an accident, watched the police arrest somebody, a black which they dragged out of the bushes and treated disgustingly and then at work (I) was attacked by a swarm of customers. Due to the lack of black staff I had to go on a till. When after about two hours I got off the till I found out that my promotion had come through and I am now a full-fledged and fully qualified pay-point-controller or 'PPC' as we say. I was so excited and I carried my duty out with much satisfaction. I am so excited and I cannot wait to get to work tomorrow.

Robert, Grahamstown.

We are all doing cadetts today. Its compulsory from now. Frankly I don't care. Cadetts wasn't too bad. They always do that, make the first day easy. Then they drill you into the ground.

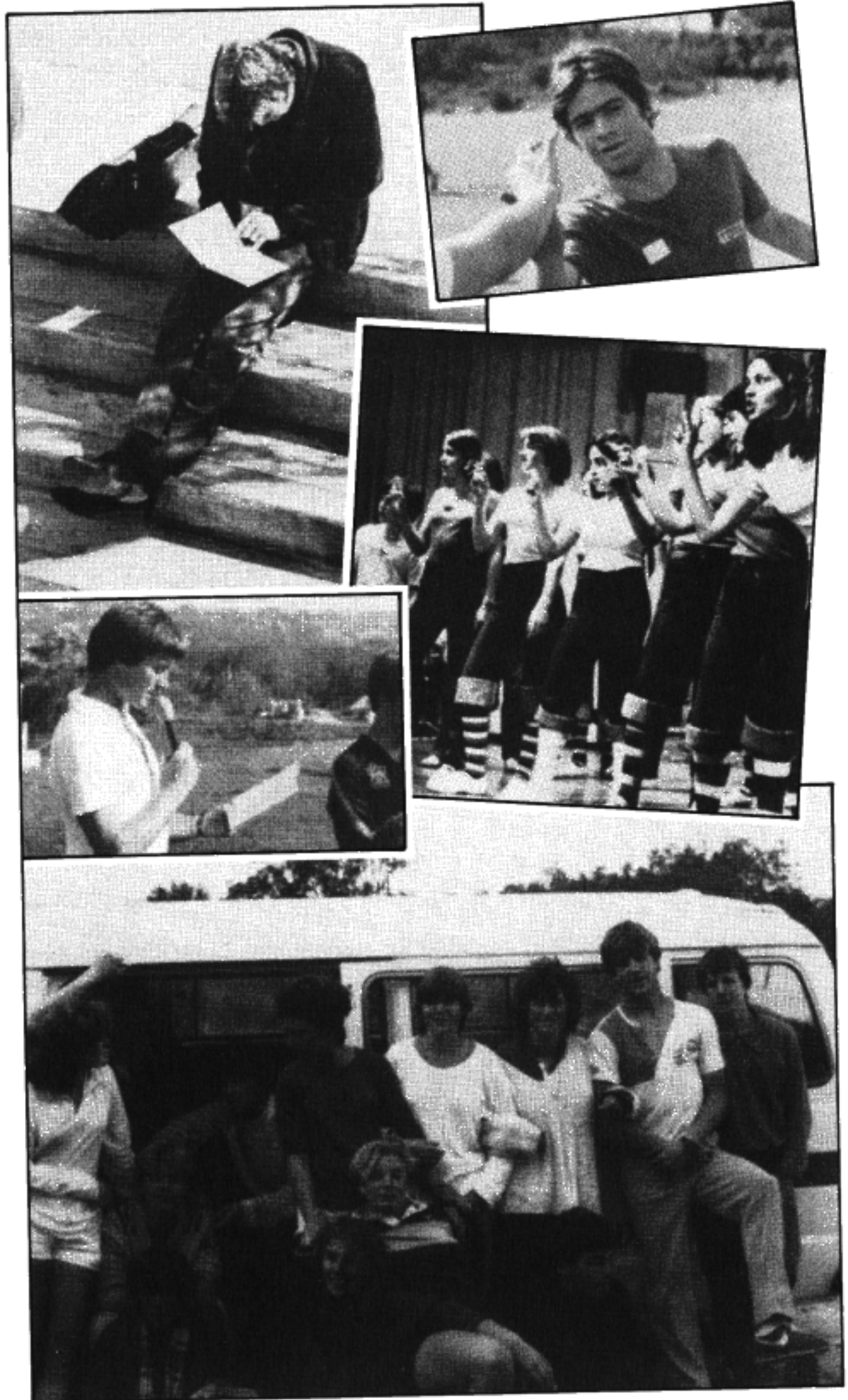
Lilian, Johannesburg.

'Soweto Day'. A day to be remembered by blacks all over South Africa. The thought of those riots

makes me heartsore. I am a bit ignorant about the politics of today. Sometimes I wish I knew more but then I'm also sometimes grateful that I don't. I only wish that people from overseas would not come down on us so hard. There must be something done - and only we the people of South Africa can do it. After all we may be different colours but the colour of all our blood is the same!

Nick, Johannesburg.

Straight after school, I did a bit of work on my plane before Mrs Day came to fetch me to take me to Geoff's house. We went to Northcliff to play Ten Pin Bowling and had dinner at Steers to celebrate his birthday. The six of us spent about R30 in total on arcade games as well. I've haven't had this much fun with my primary school friends. □



children speak

about home and school at hostels in the western cape

The Lwandle hostel complex is one of many similar complexes in the Western Cape. Most are state-owned and -administered, and were built during the 1950s and 1960s as 'single sex' accommodation for male migrant workers. The number of women and children actually present in hostels has vastly increased since the formal abolition of influx control in 1986.

Lwandle is situated about 3 km outside Somerset West on the False Bay coast. There are 56 hostel blocks containing 2 200 beds: each block is divided into a number of 6 m. square rooms, and each room contains 8 beds (some converted into double bunks). Rooms are populated, on average, by 32 people resulting in a bed-to-person ratio of 1:4. Toilets - heavy duty plastic buckets (often lacking seats), in unpartitioned rows - serve 64 to 85 persons each. These

conditions conform with those documented in other hostels in the region.

Some school children of Lwandle wrote as follows about 'The Place Where I Live':

A 13-year-old girl in Std 1:

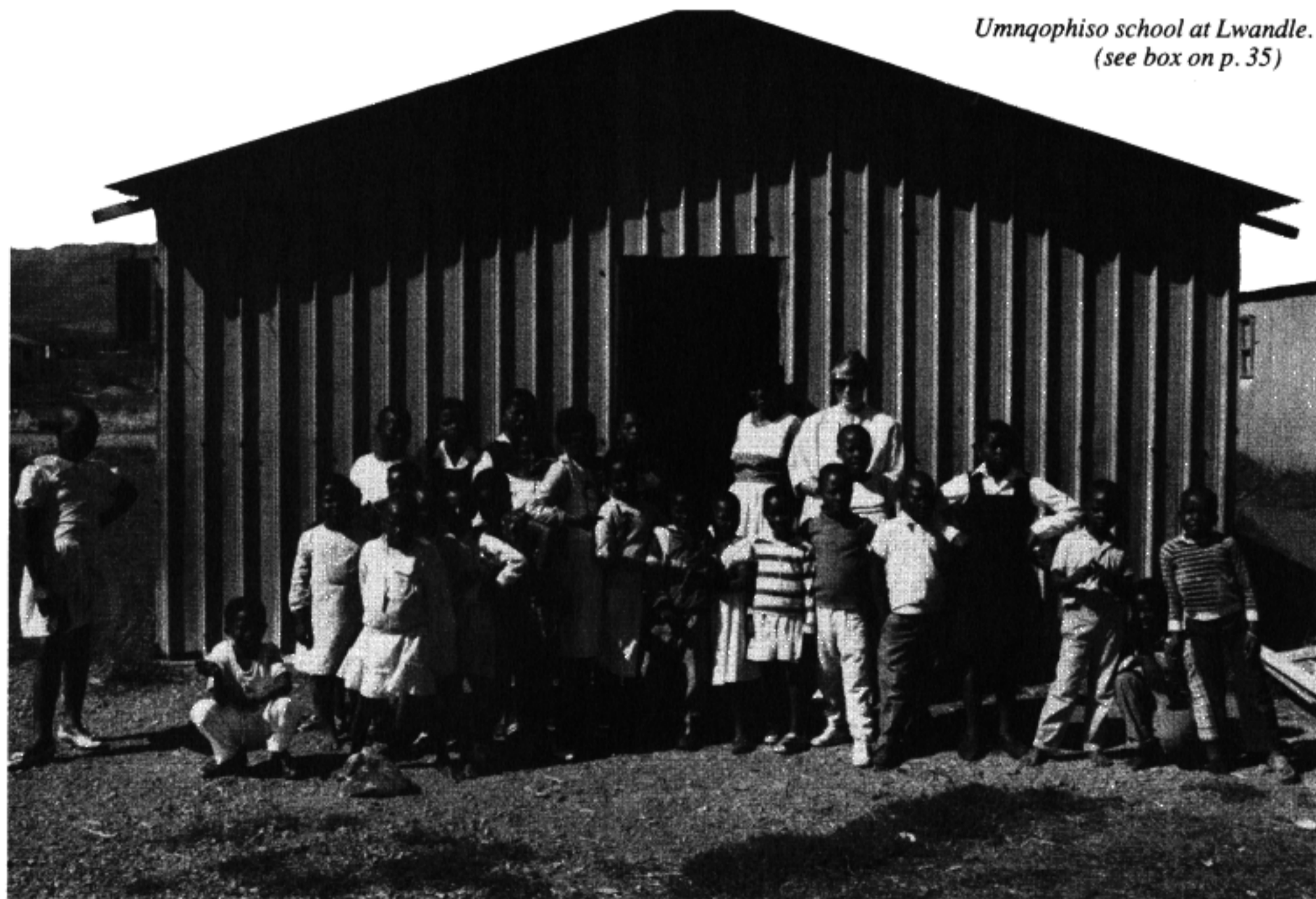
The hostel I live in is very dirty and unhygienic. The hostel is overcrowded. Most of the people in the hostel are youngsters. I stay with my parents, brothers and sisters. The

place stinks. People urinate and excrete in the hostels at night. The hostel is noisy. In our house we try to clean and discipline ourselves. In the room there is someone who sells beer. During the weekends the people sing and shout.

A 14-year-old boy in Std 1:

We live in a very bad hostel in room XX. Some people are sick. They have TB. Many people smoke. The

*Umnqophiso school at Lwandle.
(see box on p. 35)*



toilets are also bad. There are many germs there. It is very dirty because the people are careless. Some people steal from others. It is worse over weekends. If someone goes on holiday, when he returns he will find that some things are missing. There are no doors.

A 10-year-old girl in Std 3:

In our house I stay with my older brother and sister, Hlumisa and Yoliswa. We always try to clean our house. There is a small shop inside the house. The house is not so clean, but we try by all means to keep it clean. Here in our hostel there are also children who drink. I hate children who drink wine at the age of 11 or 12 years. I wonder what is going to happen to such a child when he or she is old. My mother and father like to see us working and cleaning the house. My father likes to make an example of his brother's house which is very clean.

A 14-year-old girl in Std 4:

What I observed here at Strand [neighbouring town] is the beauty of it. If only houses could be built. My mother said that she would like to buy a house here if they are built. If people could stop selling wine there

would be less fighting and death. If houses could be built, there could be many places to hold church services

in the empty hostels. There can also be nice netball and soccer fields to play on.

Lwandle School (see box) is housed in a single-roomed, corrugated-iron shack. One unqualified teacher handles 80 to 100 children, ranging in age from 6 to 15. The school goes to Std 4 but around 80% of the children (some in their early teens) are in Sub A or Sub B. Under half the children have desks - the rest do their work sprawled across the floor. In their diaries, the children sometimes comment on their school:

A 14-year-old girl in Std 4:

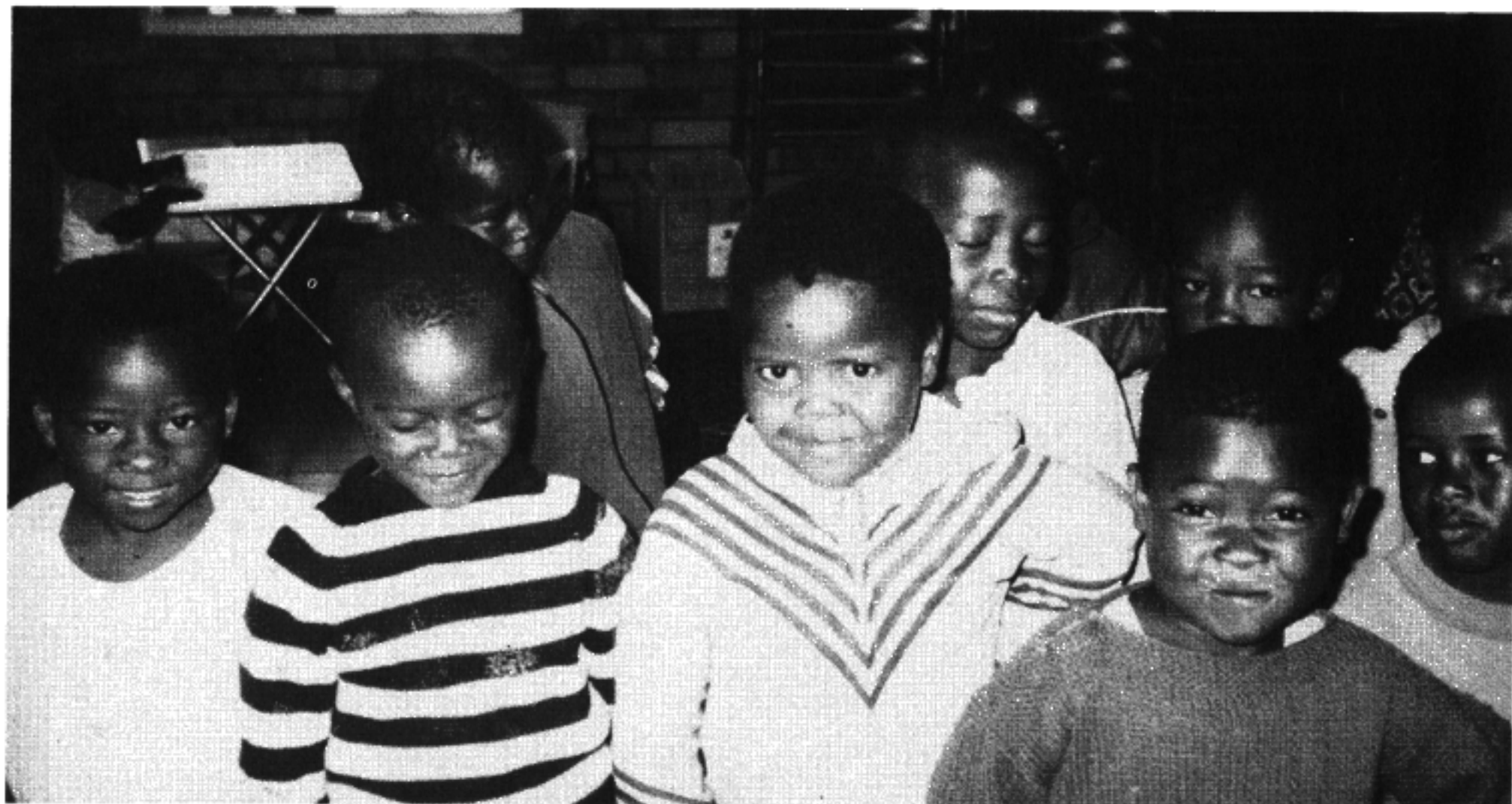
27 July 1989 - Yesterday I went to school and arrived early. We were taught standard 4 maths. We were also taught how to knit jerseys. After school I went to play. After that my mother made some coffee because it was very cold. I put some water on the burner for my father to wash. I always wash our clothes on Saturdays. I love my family.

28 July 1989 - Yesterday we did maths and we wrote notes. We studied our books. During break-time we played netball. Before two

o'clock we ate soup and bread. After our meal we swept the floor and cleaned the school. When I arrived at home I went to fetch water. After that I cooked supper. After supper I washed the dishes and then I went to sleep.

A 14-year-old boy in Std 1:

12 July 1989 - When I arrived at home yesterday, I saw two guys who were selling a bicycle. Its price was R15. I asked my mother to buy it. She said I must wait for my father. When he returned, he told me that he does not have the money. He said



making a school from scratch

Lwandle School began in January 1987. The Lwandle community asked the Somerset West branch of the Black Sash to help open a school as there was none provided by the government.

We started very chaotically on a Monday morning in the community hall with around 60 children, but were promptly told that as the children were not supposed to be living in the hostels, they didn't exist and we could not use the hall. We moved to two corrugated iron buildings, the Methodist and Apostolic churches, divided the children into 'primary school' and 'crèche', found two local women willing to take charge of the groups - and so it began.

We begged and borrowed equipment and, sometimes seemingly miraculously, raised R500 each month for the salaries of the teachers and the cook (who prepares Operation Hunger soup and bread donated by church groups). Towards the end of last year we were able to move the crèche into a far better building belonging to the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Africa and received much-needed support from an inter-church group formed in Somerset West.

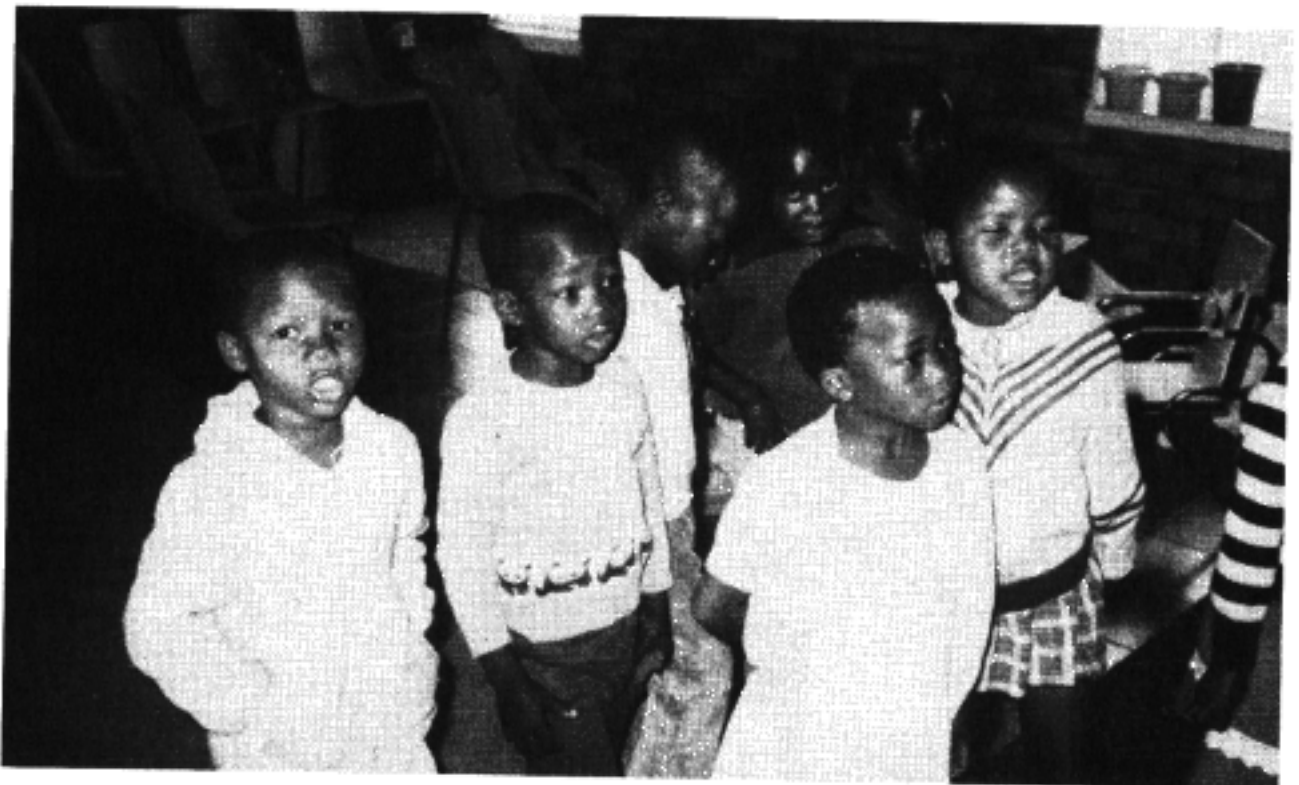
Since then things have improved steadily. The climax came with a meeting of community committee and Black Sash representatives with the Department of Education and Training (DET) in the first week of October. We were told that the school has been recognised, registered and named Umnqophiso - 'school of the covenant'. Moreover we were promised two trained teachers for 1990, with salaries, books, desks and so on provided by the DET. Lwandle consists entirely of hostels which makes it difficult to attract professional staff but hope lies in the fact that it has been declared a township, with the expectation that family housing will be built. □

Mary Comrie and Lin Helme, Cape Western Region

20 July 1989 - After school as usual I went to play soccer with my friends. When I arrived home, I saw my father and mother sitting together unhappy. I asked them what was going on. They told me that both of them had gone to town to look for a job, but no one was lucky. They said they were worried about taxi fares for the next day. I also felt worried.

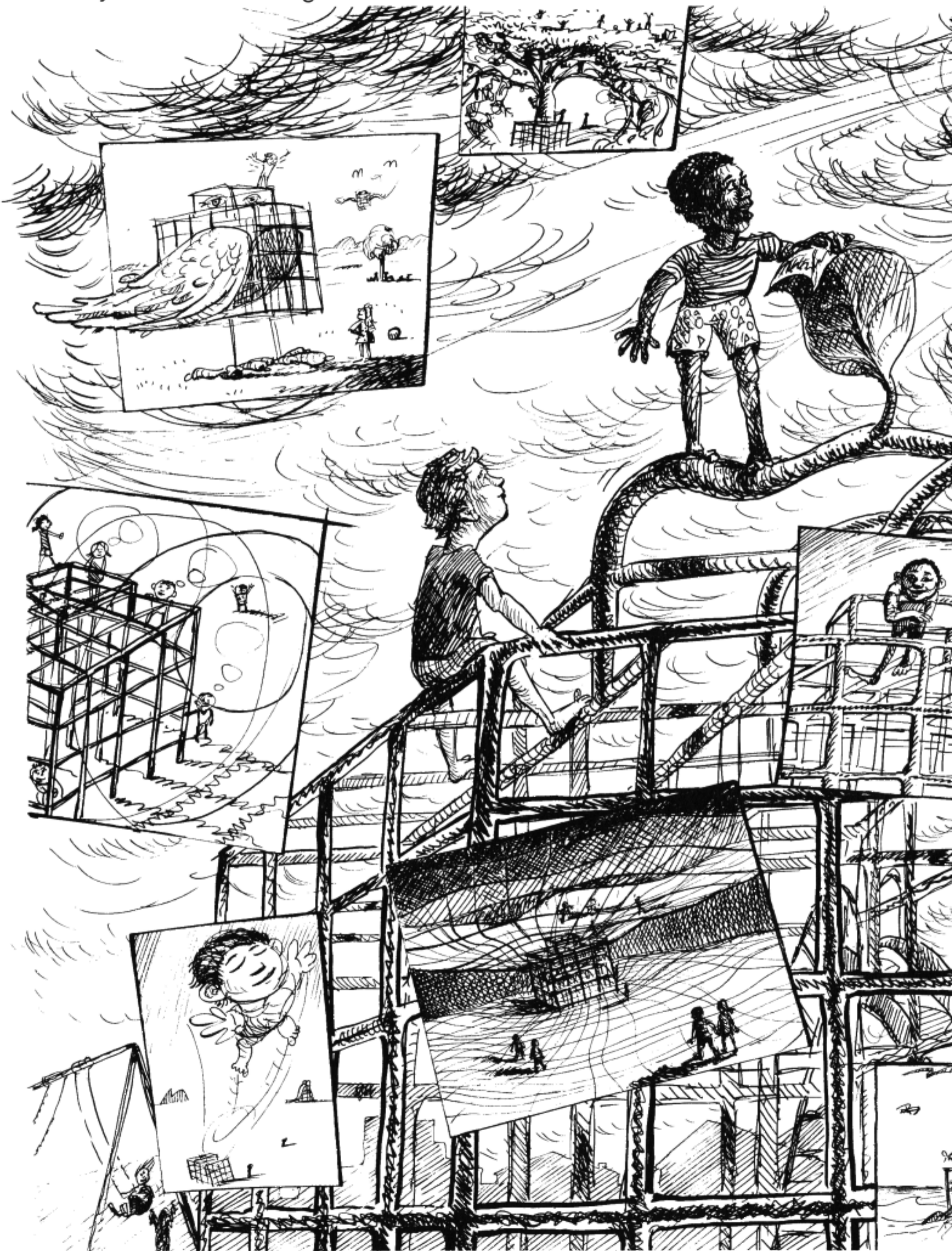
15 August 1989 - Yesterday I did not come to school. My mother did not have the money for school fees. She said she will give it to me on Thursday. Our teacher said that those who do not pay the school fees must not come to school. That is why I was not at school. □

Information about the Lwandle hostels was supplied by Sean Jones, MA student in Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town.



The scenes on the opposite page and on the right show activities inside the Lwandle School

What do you CALL that thing?





taking stock of children globally

In the middle of 1989 Jinny Rickards, Director of Grassroots Educare Trust, spent her long leave attending three major international conferences concerned with children's issues. Here she answers questions put by Shona Bagley about her impressions of the position of children globally.

What was the first stop on your round-the-world conference marathon?

The Helsinki Congress on Children's Rights was particularly important from a networking point of view. I was one of four South Africans among approximately 300 delegates from 59 countries. The conference was primarily organised by Defence for Children International (DCI), a non-governmental organisation which promotes children's rights. It focused on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international legal instrument which will be binding on those who ratify it. The result aimed at is to heighten consciousness all over the world of the plight of the child, by looking at a philosophy for the child; the behaviour of adults in relation to children; and the integration of the Convention into existing juridical practice.

You mentioned networking. What exactly do you mean by that?

The South African delegates (two of whom represented the Cape Town Free the Children Alliance) concentrated on pooling our resources with and tapping the knowledge of our African counterparts: delegates from Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Botswana. This opportunity reminded me afresh of the dangers of isolation for South Africans. From the point of view of the progressive democratic movement, it was important to remind delegates that the apartheid war in South Africa is not a black/white war. It's a progressive/reactionary one. Many delegates were surprised to find that there are progressive white South African women! An Ethiopian woman, who became a friend, on being introduced to me exclaimed, 'I've never met one of those before!'

What impressions did you gain from these contacts?

I was perturbed that people seemed not yet to have fully internalised the realities of the economic disaster that is Africa. In my opinion there was still an overarching sense of unrealistic expectations - a misplaced optimism that everything is going to be all right for the children of a free Africa. And I don't think there is **anything** in the statistics to back that up. The problem of scale is so overwhelming in the entire continent that alternative solutions are drastically needed if the situation is to be salvaged at all. There are the problems of children dying in their hundreds of thousands when they could be saved by simple and inexpensive measures. Measures like vaccine, oral rehydration and breastfeeding which don't require only qualified doctors, but also willing community health people and inspired strategy. It's a moral commitment on the part of governments that's needed, and a coherent international body of thought.

No signs of hope?

I wouldn't say that. There is a growing awareness of the issues, a new willingness to act on children's behalf. There are pockets of innovative thought on children's rights all over the world, including in Africa.

Perhaps the paralysis of being caught between Departments of Education and those of Health and Welfare, or their national equivalents - 'professional apartheid' - is the biggest brake on progress in provision for young children. It's prevalent in almost every country in the world. There is a **radical** difference between kindergartens and nursery schools which were created for middle-class children, and 'daycare', generally welfare-run and

suffering from an acute lack of resources, which was simply noses-and-bums stuff for poor children. And that has filtered from the First World into the Third World. This inheritance of differentiation is a major problem we're facing. Middle-class privileges get entrenched while the poor get poorer, and it all gets translated into governmental terms. Around the world education authorities run nursery schools and kindergartens, and health and welfare authorities run daycare, all for the same child - jealousy, turf battles, etc.

Does all this apply equally to South Africa?

Of course - but here it's exacerbated by the racist apartheid system. We have separate departments of Education and of Health and Welfare for the separate House of Representatives, House of Delegates, House of Assembly. **And**, for black Africans, the Departments of Education and Training and of Development Planning, not to mention Provincial Administrations, RSCs, homeland governments and so on. Add to this the different interest groups, each with its own agenda, within these bodies. The cost in terms of wasted time is staggering, let alone the unjust allocation of resources. Every day, all those vested interests are reducing our children's chances.

And so, in sum?

There are no comprehensive plans in the Third World or the First to meet the needs of children. And preschoolers are always at the bottom of the pile since what resources there are, are always allocated first to the formal school years. Most countries have got around to some sort of formal education policy, but not many

have really considered the years before that.

A feature of the second conference I attended, in London (Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire, OMEP), was an exception that gave us all hope. The New Zealand government, in the light of economic recession, set up a commission to investigate education expenditure. The commission recommended and is implementing cut-backs at tertiary, secondary and primary levels of education but, unbelievably, is stepping up expenditure at preschool level as being the best investment for their society's growth and development. What is more, the health, education and welfare of New Zealand's young children is all to fall under one comprehensive authority. It was a moving moment - a highlight of the trip, in fact. Most of us couldn't believe that one nation on earth had finally seen the importance of the first six years and worked out a logical solution.

What was your next stop?

I was the guest of the Canadian South Africa Education Trust Fund for two weeks. An acute case of 'professional apartheid' has separated what is provided for young children in the school system from a nation-wide daycare movement whose concerns include a high quality education programme for children from birth to school entry; the reality of working parents and poor children; and the importance of para-professional teaching personnel and parental involvement, i.e. the Real World!

One of the most interesting aspects of my Canadian fortnight was being invited to observe a day-long meeting of North America's top First Nations educators at the University of British Columbia's First Nations House of Learning. So strange to be in a society where assimilation is the policy and separatism is seen by some as the only vehicle to retain 'own culture'!

How do parents feature in all of this?

A point which recurred in the various conferences was the importance of parents' involvement **with** education. As soon as children get into the for-

mal school system, that vital influence is shut out. And this is true as much of Canada, Britain and America as it is of South Africa. The parent is the prime educator, and the person who is **bound** to have the child's best interests at heart. Therefore, parents should have a say in who teaches and cares for their children; what they are taught; and how they are taught and cared for. Early childhood educare should begin from where children and their parents are at. It should be culturally appropriate in terms of the children's experience and background. This is not to absolve the state of the obligation of providing educare facilities for all young children needing them, preferably through a local-authority infrastructure. In the Third World, especially, I feel it would be a massive step forward to marry local government accountability with parental accountability: to break down the distance between the child and the state by getting the control of education as close to the community as possible. This would circumvent problems like curricula being imposed from above, and filtered through many levels.

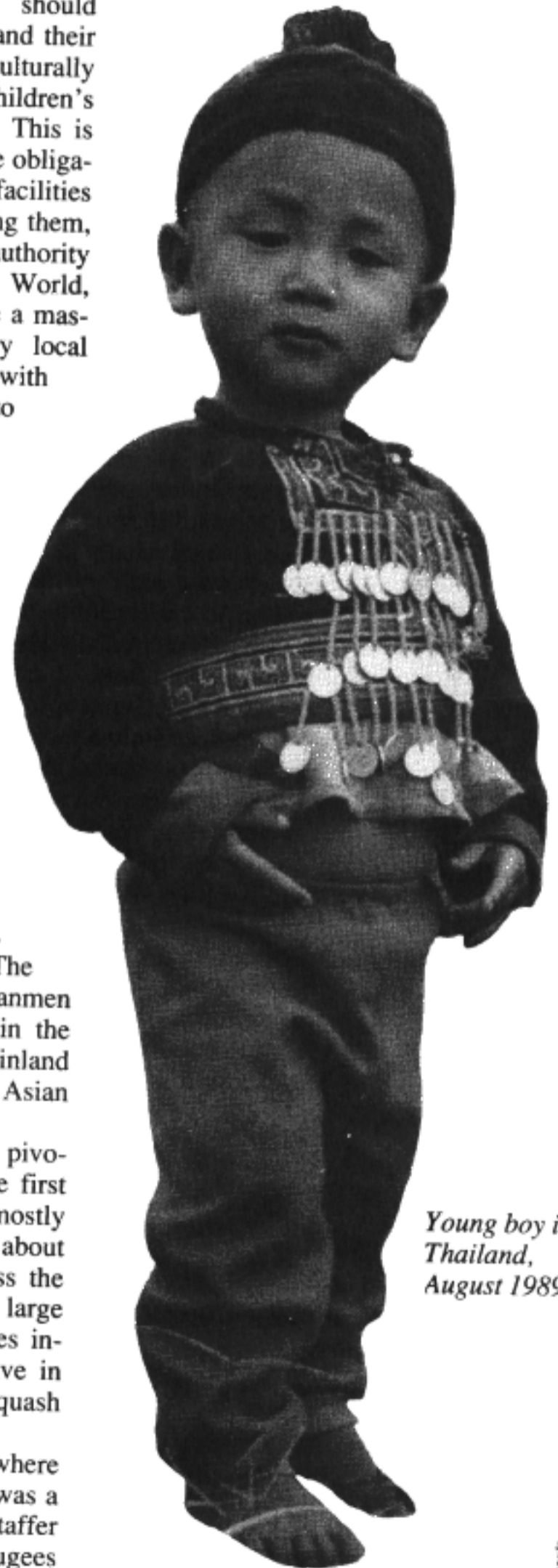
Let's move on to the Conference for Early Childhood in Hong Kong

This was my first experience of the East and the challenges of enormous populations. The tensions of the post-Tiananmen Square period were tangible in the meetings of delegates from mainland China and other South-East Asian countries.

For me this conference was pivotally important because for the first time, I met a group of - mostly UNICEF - people thinking about policy and strategies to address the questions of provision on a large scale. My new-found colleagues included the UNICEF representative in Beijing with whom I'd played squash while at UCT in the late '50s!

My last stop was Bangkok where my most interesting encounter was a 7 am breakfast with a UNESCO staffer who has been working with refugees throughout Asia for 20 years. I was

dismayed to hear him state the opinion that over 90% of international refugee aid is paternalistic and undermines the development process by ignoring the real leadership in the camps and by keeping people dependent. As with these adults, so with children around the world: our task is to empower them and their parents. □



Young boy in Thailand, August 1989.

women's rights:

In August the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA) hosted a Women's Constitutional Conference which was attended by some 50 representatives of diverse groups. Journalist Shauna Westcott reflects on the significance of this event and the follow-up meeting on 26 September.

An important question to come out of a lamentably poorly attended follow-up meeting to the August 1989 Women's Constitutional Conference hosted by IDASA was this: Who are 'the people'? A related question was one of strategy: How does a small group move to gain mass support for a vision it believes is vital to the welfare of all?

There are quite a number of those who claim to speak for 'the people' but I don't believe anyone has more than a faint idea who 'the people' are. I think 'the people' are a myth.

It is a peculiarly paralysing myth, moreover. For it removes the power to act from action's source - individuals in expanding groups - and places it at the mercy of a phantasy of uncertain authority. The result is an ill-defined orthodoxy within which individuals are afraid to move without some kind of blessing that is in fact from 'on high' but purports to be 'grassroots'.

It can certainly be said that there seems to be broad support among the majority of the people of South Africa for a future mode of being summed up in the slogans 'non-racial, democratic' and 'peace and justice for all'. But this is a very tenuous basis for a myth of 'the people', particularly in the shadow of the looming environmental catastrophe that has yet to make it to the agendas of 'people's organisations' understandably obsessed by the need to throw off seemingly other nightmares.

They are not other, however. From an

eco-feminist perspective, the struggle against the apartheid regime, the struggle against the iniquities of the class system, the struggle against oppression in any form is part of one struggle that's been going on for at least 4 000 years.

Professor Annemarie Heywood of the Windhoek Academy puts it like this: 'When we speak of oppression, we should never allow ourselves to forget that the subordination of women predates all other forms of subordination, and has served as their pattern and justification. When man first took note of the greater vulnerability of his biological partner, and chose to interpret it as inferiority, that is, when he invented the superior male, he made all other forms of discrimination possible. By seeing woman as something distinct from itself and therefore something to be subjected, man started the habit of domination which in due course has produced slavery, imperialism, colonialism, capitalism and a violated biosphere on the brink of extinction.'

Two aspects of this perspective need emphasis. The first is that time is short: the rain forests burn, the ozone layer shrinks, the 'greenhouse' gets hotter, the air blackens. The second is that it situates the whole question of the rights of women (including Mother Earth) at the heart of 'the struggle'. It is not a side issue we can get round to once the 'main' battle is won. It is fundamental.

Some of the women who used the conference space to speak to each other. From left to right: Andy Durbach, Mary Simons, Mamphela Ramphela and Dorothy Driver



thinking constitutionally

So how does the small group of women who have access to this perspective share it with others?

It was decided (surprise, surprise) that we had to meet again to consider the question further. But a number of ideas are forming. Those of us in organisations are to agitate and entice our comrades into this discourse while those less wary of accusations of individualism are looking for funds and for cronies.

More concretely, there is an embryonic 'information package' consisting of papers presented to the initial conference - including a brilliant analysis by UCT's Dorothy Driver of the 'critical silences' of the ANC Constitutional Guidelines - that will in time and with the blessing of 'people's organisations' emerge in useful forms.

In addition, it was suggested that delegates ask their organisations to consider hosting further conferences and workshops with the aim of popularising a concern about women's rights. The goal is to make a sexist constitution as unthinkable as one that is racist when the representatives of 'the people' get round the negotiation table.

As to who 'the people' are, I would like to suggest that we exist dimly and in the usual danger of handing over our destinies to a small group of bosses. To become real as 'the people' we - all the millions of us - must find the frightening and thrilling place from which we can speak truly to each other. Then we can act together without fear and without permission from leaders, bureaucrats, apparatchiks or mythical entities.

'If we are to survive', says the American writer Starhawk, 'the question becomes: do we overthrow, not those presently in power, but the principle of power-over? How do we shape a society based on the principle of power-from-within?' □

Women raised their voices around constitutional issues when the Federation of South African Women (Western Cape region) hosted a regional conference, attended by more than 300 representatives from 48 organisations, in mid-August. Karin Chubb reports.

A special feature of the FEDSAW (Western Cape) conference to consider constitutional proposals was the presence of guests, notably Thandi Modise and two women from SWAPO, Ellen Musialela and Foibe Jacob. The latter outlined the role that women have played in the liberation struggle in Namibia and stressed the need to create networks of mutual support among women in political organisations and liberation movements.

Perhaps unintentionally, her speech also placed the proceedings of the conference within the context of tensions that seem common in political women's organisations. There is almost always a sense of unease when women's issues are raised, as these are often seen as a pursuit at the expense of immediate political tasks. Women are clearly valued as workers in the political struggle - as long as they do not constitute a threat to the patriarchal order.

Underpinning the discussions were the constitutional proposals of the ANC. Compared with the IDASA conference on the previous weekend, there was not the close analysis of constitutional issues, of language and discourse which gave clarity and direction to the IDASA discussions. At the FEDSAW conference there



Cassandra Parker



Cassandra Parker

Left to right: Rhoda Kadalie, Sarah Christie and Karin Chubb at the IDASA Women's Constitutional Conference.

was little attempt at rigorous critique of the ANC proposals from a feminist perspective. In fact, many if not most of the participants would have been suspicious of the term 'feminist'.

Clearly the discussion of women's oppression moves at a different pace and within different parameters in a mass-based movement which regards gender oppression as a factor of class and race oppression and therefore does not generally address women's liberation as a concern in its own right. My heart sank when, in a workshop session, a bright-eyed SANSCO student earnestly tried to convince me that, seeing that there was no oppression of women under socialism, it only required the overthrow of the present capitalist order for women to be liberated from oppression! Clearly there is a great need for women in South Africa to be educated about the situation and experiences of women elsewhere, particularly in post-colonial countries. It should be the task of the women's organisations to help meet this need with educational programmes.

As an exercise in grassroots consciousness-raising the workshops were very successful indeed. A striking feature was the 'speaking bitterness' of women who, in a supportive environment, felt free to voice their fears and disappointments, their frustrations and their anger - and who stated their demands very clearly. They addressed oppression not only in state structures but also in religion, in the

family and in customs and cultural practices. Traditions which entrench the subordination of women were challenged, particularly in the church where women were encouraged to support feminist theologians and to promote a feminist reading of the Bible. In the family, women called for equal parenting and a non-sexist approach to child rearing. To challenge gender stereotypes effectively, the education of men around gender issues was seen to be crucial.

The demands which were formulated at the end of the sessions, and which are to inform the constitutional debate, centred around the empowerment and the protection of women in the public as well as in the private sphere - posing a direct challenge to established laws and customs. Women demand access to and equality before the law, they want autonomy in decisions regarding their health and fertility, protection against all forms of violence, equal access to education and employment, the right to own land and the scrapping of all discriminatory legislation and practices. Affirmative action was called for to help eradicate present injustices.

Daunting as the task may seem, the weekend's conference gave hope and confidence to all of us who experienced there the tremendous enthusiasm and energy with which women can work collectively: WOMANDLA! □



Right: A scene from the cultural evening at the FEDSAW Conference. Proceedings included the singing of tributes accompanied by dancing

the defiance campaign

At a public meeting on 24 August 1989 Black Sash National President Mary Burton provided some answers to questions about the Campaign. The following extracts are still relevant to future action.

There are many questions concerning the Defiance Campaign which are being asked by those outside the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM). Sometimes they are asked sympathetically, sometimes with hostile intent. It is important not to evade those questions but to look at them honestly and try to answer them.

1. Who is the MDM? Who has planned the Defiance Campaign? How democratically has it been planned?

Representatives of the MDM have stated clearly that it is a broad alliance with COSATU and the UDF and its affiliates as a core. The editor of *Business Day*, Mr Ken Owen, has added the ANC to the list, based on information about a meeting said to have taken place in Lusaka in June. It is only to be expected that organisations within the country should consult with exiled leaders, and only the fact that the ANC and other organisations are banned which makes it advisable not to specify whether they are involved. As the Campaign has progressed, organisations like our own which are not structurally part of any movement have indicated their support for the Campaign and have participated in its actions.

The regulations promulgated in terms of the State of Emergency have so curtailed the ability of organisations to meet in safety that it is difficult to assess what degree of consultation with grassroots structures has been possible. The fact that participation has been widespread, and that UDF affiliates which are geographically widespread have clearly been involved, seems to me to prove that the claims that the Movement is both mass-based and democratic are as correct as possible in the prevailing climate of repres-

sion. Furthermore, I have neither seen nor heard any evidence of coercion, and the fact that in some parts of the country restrictees are seen as too important to the Movement to be allowed to put themselves at risk shows that there is room for differences of opinion and strategy.

2. What are the objectives of the Defiance Campaign?

These appear to be multiple. The first thrust seems to have come from the severe restrictions imposed on many of the detainees released in the wake of the hunger strike at the beginning of the year. Discussions about how to oppose these restrictions led to a wider focus on restrictive laws in general. Secondly, there are the daily conditions of the lives of millions of people which cause anger and frustration. Leaflets have been prepared which detail the facts and register the bitterness which many feel about the ever-deepening problems with regard to health, education, shelter, unemployment, crime, repression and fear.

There are other objectives too, which are equally intrinsic to the importance of the Campaign. There is widespread concern that the crisis situation in South Africa, largely created by internal resistance, external pressure and looming economic collapse, will bring about negotiations and settlements which ignore the views of the majority of the population (who have borne the brunt of apartheid rule, and the costs of the resistance) and of the organisations which have been banned and exiled, particularly the ANC. The Campaign is designed to bring these actors on to centre stage for participation in such negotiations.

It is necessary to stress once again the importance of lifting the ban on the ANC, PAC and other political organisations. It has become

ridiculous, and costly, for organisations in South Africa to send representatives abroad to discuss the future with the ANC. And on return, are these people hypocritically to abide by the laws that prevent them from quoting the people they have met? Let us see the State President exercise true leadership by allowing us (and his own supporters) to meet the representatives of these organisations here, to argue with and question them and to engage in open and civilised debate.

3. Will the Defiance Campaign, however peaceful and disciplined, lead to violent confrontation?

Many of us have witnessed at first hand the discipline and control of those taking part and of the marshalls and leaders in many of the actions. We have also witnessed occasions on which the actions of the police led to violence. Can one say that because this is predictable, given the past history of police action, one should therefore take no action? I believe it is wrong to acquiesce in what one knows to be wrong simply because the wrongdoer has more power and is not afraid to use it.

We do have to say that we do not support the aggressive actions that have sometimes occurred - the throwing of stones by angry people does not lend weight to the Defiance Campaign. The Black Sash cannot accept actions such as the killing of the Nyanga policeman, nor the bombing of banks or other premises. We need to stress that there is nothing except innuendo or suspicion to link these events to the Defiance Campaign.

We see our task as being not to hide away from the violent reality of our society but to do all we can to reassert the claim to the right of peaceful protest and assembly.

4. Can this Defiance Campaign be misused and manipulated, can those who wish for violence use it as a cover, and where does this lead us?

We need to acknowledge that we have these anxieties and doubts. There is a danger that they will paralyse us, and that we will retreat into the world where we feel more comfortable - the world of ideas and debate, rather than risk involvement. If we allow ourselves to be paralysed, we leave the terrain open to the very confrontation which we dread - between those who will take oppression no longer and those who will brook no resistance. There are strategies and techniques which can be learned by those who engage in non-violent action which minimise the risks.

The most important question of all is: What is *our* responsibility? Do we need to throw our weight behind the organisations that represent the majority of the people to achieve their aims - because they *are* the majority? Will we be accused of being 'useful idiots' - the unwitting tools of the ANC, or of the working class, or of the communists?

I believe the question for us is: Do we want to uphold and protect human rights? And if so, how?

We have a special responsibility to tell the truth without fear or favour. We must throw back the thick and musty curtains of apartheid and emergency rule, and let the healthy air and daylight in.

I will no longer be silenced by the emergency regulations, and I call on the editors of all the newspapers of this country to unshackle themselves, to report events with only the proper restraint of wise and responsible journalism, and no longer to deny their readers the full picture of what is being done.

The Defiance Campaign, in the words of Professor Jakes Gerwel, Principal of the University of the Western Cape, is 'an opportunity to rise in a disciplined and non-violent manner and indicate to a minority government that it does not rule with the consent of the people'.

Let us grasp this opportunity. □

DEFIANCE IN ACTION

'I am Sgt Davies. You are under arrest. Come with me.' This, or versions of it, was heard by twelve Black Sash members in Johannesburg on Wednesday, 2 October 1989, as they stood in lawful picket in support of the defiance of hospital apartheid. We were gathered up and escorted to the police station.

The hospital defiance campaign continued without a hitch. Police stood by and allowed a peaceful, non-racial crowd to receive treatment at the hospital. Meanwhile, we sat in a room in the Parkview police station and waited for hours whilst the police decided how to process us. Our small victory that morning came when, after an initial refusal ('Do you think this is a picnic?'), we were allowed to retrieve Sarah's flask from her car, and each savour a half-cup of warm coffee. Later, 'mug-shots' were taken (no fingerprints), and we were each led off and asked to sign that we understood the nature of the charges that we were facing, and that we preferred not to make a statement. Finally, we were released into the arms of our anxious chairperson!

Our analysis was that the police had had firm instructions not to disturb the protest planned at the Johannesburg Hospital. However, they had not been specifically ordered to leave the Black Sash alone. So, out of frustration, they arrested

us on a charge that everybody knows could not be made to stick (that of attending an unlawful gathering as defined by the Internal Security Act). We have heard nothing from them, and do not anticipate that we will ever be arraigned.

STOP PRESS: On 31 October the police advised that the Attorney General had declined to prosecute and the 'exhibits' (sashes and posters) could be returned. □

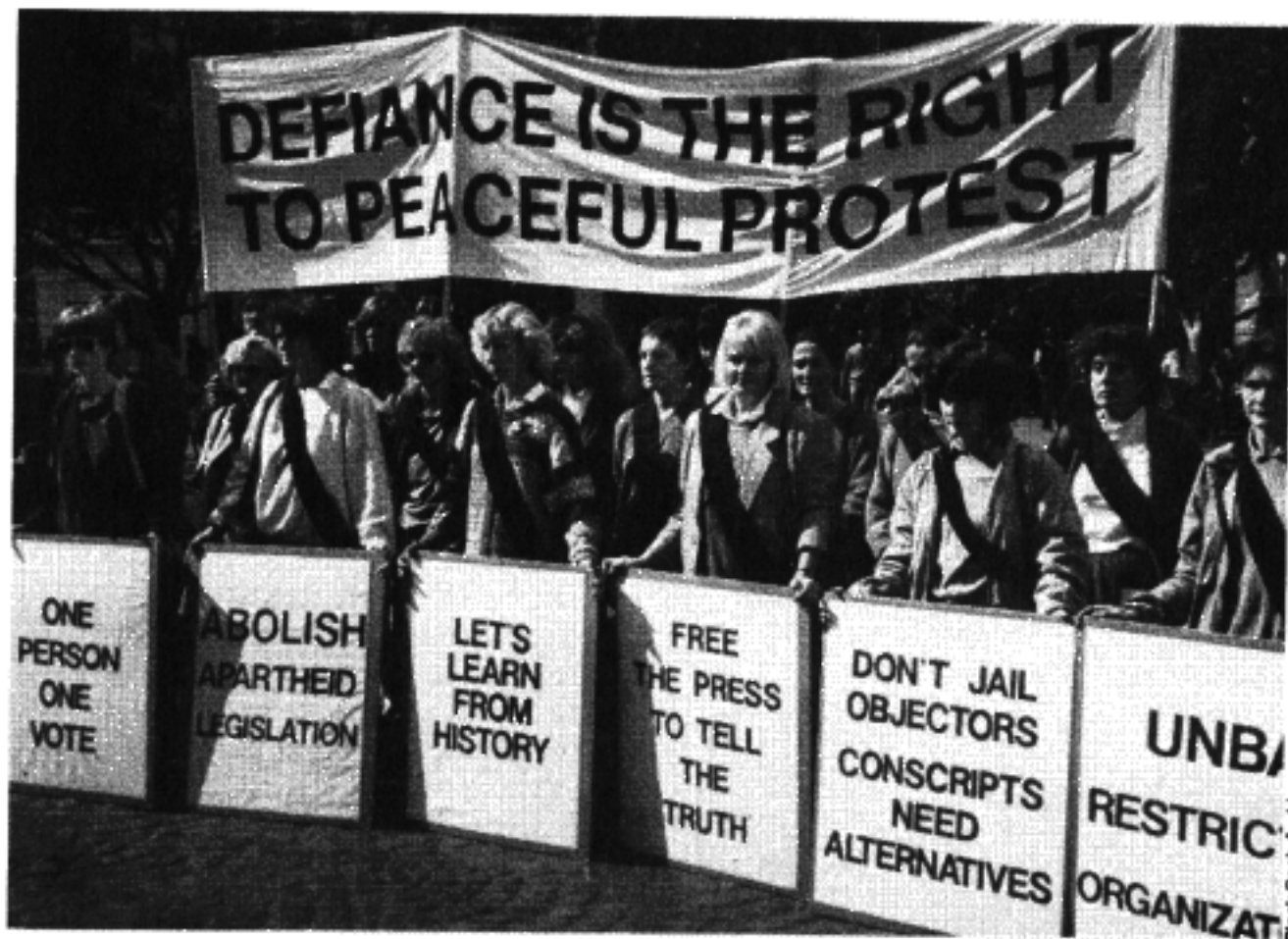
Sheila Weinberg, Transvaal Region

defiance is the right to peaceful protest

On Thursday, 24 August, 22 members of Cape Western Region (pictured below) were arrested for holding a mass stand in Greenmarket Square, following a public meeting addressed by National President Mary Burton and other speakers.

Police who arrived on the scene in yellow vans ordered the standers to disperse after a few minutes only. When the time limit was up, the posters and banner were confiscated and the standers rounded up. After photographs and fingerprints were complete, the 22 were released on their own recognisances and the docket forwarded to the Attorney General. □

Cape Western Region



DEFIANCE IN ACTION

Women's defiance march blocked.

Women from the Black Sash and other organisations are shown in front of the Union Buildings after a court order banning the women's march. A police helicopter hovers overhead while calling police to disperse the women. (Pretoria, 23 September 1989)

Pietermaritzburg Response

On the 23 September 1989 the Pretoria police surrounded St Albans Cathedral with razor wire to prevent women, planning to repeat the 1955 march to the Union Buildings, from attending a religious service.

In response women of Pietermaritzburg made a human chain around the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity and St Peter's Church as a symbol of their right of access to places of worship, and to protest without police interference.

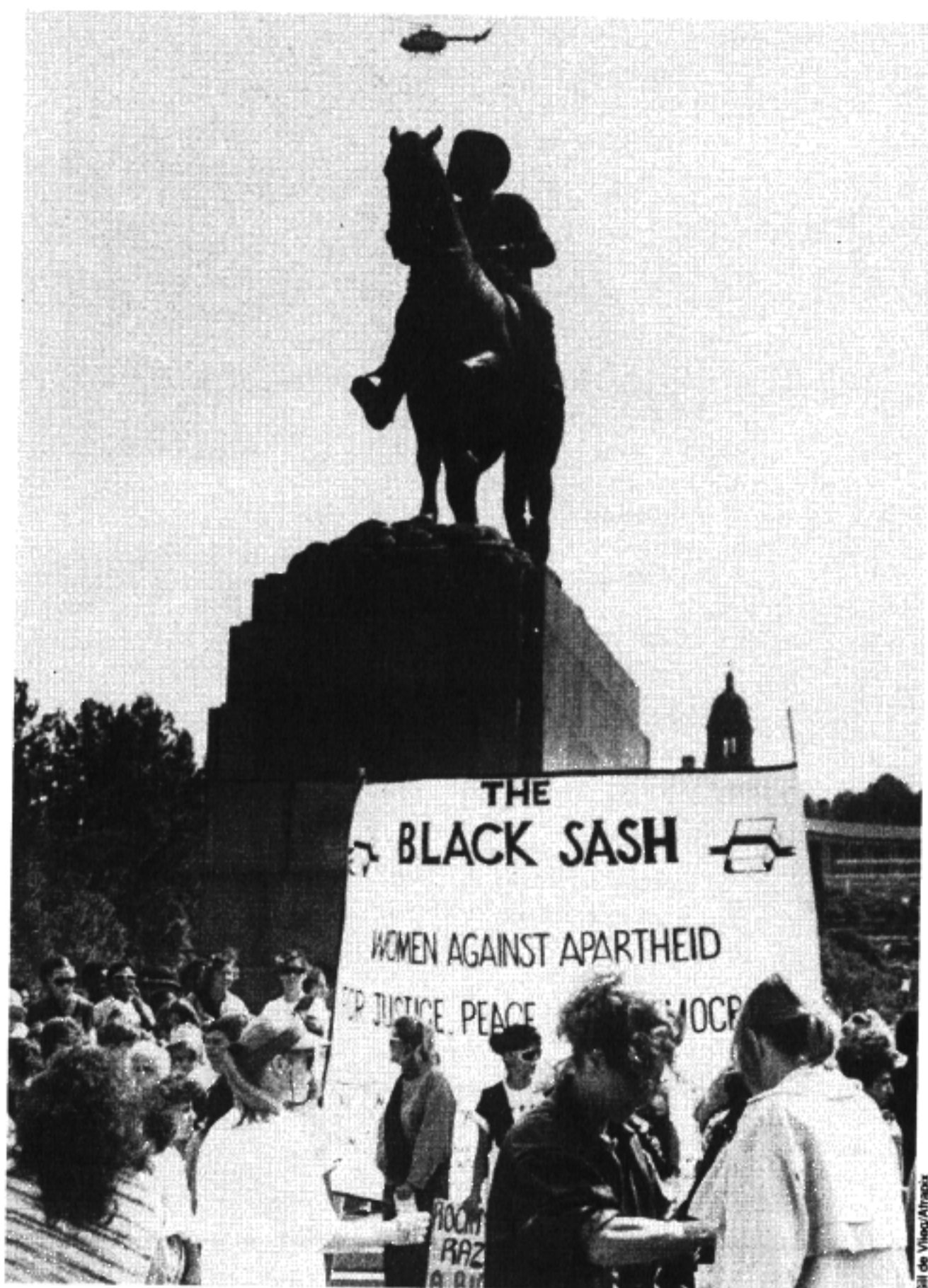
The protest began with an inter-faith service. Immediately after the service women, singing and dancing and carrying banners and posters, left the grounds of the Cathedral and walked to the Longmarket Street entrance. They then formed the chain around the churches and stood in silence for 15 minutes.

The protest was planned and organised by: Black Sash; community women's organisations; Cosatu women; Natal Indian Congress women; women from the Black Students Society and the Students Representative Council of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg; women from Standing for the Truth Campaign.

Much of the success of this protest stems from the fact that approximately 1000 women from so many organisations co-operated in solidarity with one another. □

Natal Midlands Region

Black Sash members Mary Kleinenberg and Joan Kerchoff in the protest chain described above



standing is a complex issue

I stand for human rights!
 Standing room only.
 If you like, I'll stand aside.
 Stand here!
 Stand there!
 We stand together.
 Standing room only.

Stand up - and be counted!
 Standing room only.
 I stand corrected.
 Stand in a corner!
 Stand down!
 She stands firm.
 Standing room only.

Stand against the oppressors!
 Standing room only.
 Are you standing for election?
 On a standing committee.
 What's your stand?
 Standing room only.

They won't stand for it!
 Standing room only.
 I can't stand any more.
 Don't be standoffish.
 Make a stand!
 Take a stand!
 I understand.
 Sorry

STANDING ROOM ONLY!*Anne Schuster***reports from the regions:****How the system targets children: Natal**

Example 1: Three mothers from Clermont, KwaDabeka, and St Wendolins separately approached a social worker. 'Please keep our children in detention,' they asked. 'They'll have a better chance of surviving the violence.'

Example 2: A child at a street shelter (now closed) said he ran away from Mpumalanga, outside Hammarsdale. 'On my way to school I was beaten up because I didn't belong to the United Democratic Front and on the way home I was beaten up because I didn't belong to Inkatha,' he explained.

Example 3: Henry, age 9, lay in a cell in the basement of CR Swart Square police headquarters in Durban. He was held for loitering. He had typhoid. Nobody had noticed.

Last example: Bongani, 13, dropped out in Std 4 to join the UDF and later led a gang of comtsotsis. He was shot by police after he had been spotted driving a bakkie he stole in an armed hold-up. 'I can't help him', said his lawyer. 'He needs rehabilitation.' Bongani went to a reformatory.

These lives make Sash member Priscilla McKay angry. Priscilla directs the Pinetown/Highway Child Welfare Society. She spoke of the four examples above at a South African Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (SASPCAN) conference in Cape Town. What follows are a few points only from her paper on the systematic child abuse built into our society.

- 'It's no good dealing with sexual abuse and stuff like that unless we also look at what happens to children as a result of state policies.'
- 'Three generations of apartheid is the greatest abuser of children in this country.' Her own organisation runs nine daycare centres for more than 800 children but this drop in the bucket 'in no way makes up for the inability of the parents to parent their children.'
- 'Child Welfare has a sophisticated "systematic training for effective



caught in the storm

parenting" programme. But the real need of the parents is for housing and for employment nearby so they can get back in the evenings.'

- 'Domestic workers never see their children in daylight. All the parenting programmes in the world will not enable those parents to help their children.'

The system targets the children - and that makes Priscilla's profession difficult and risky: 'The anger of the children is often extremely high. A school in Inanda Newtown was petrol-bombed while I was there - the headmaster had refused to have an SRC. One of our social workers was shot at. She was in an area where homes were being bulldozed by a public utility company to make way for a housing development for another population group.'

Children are politicised and criminalised without any rehabilitation facilities. Typhoid Henry's place of safety in the dark under CR Swart Square was home to more than 100 children charged with apolitical offences like vagrancy. Nationally the figure is 170 000: 'Sometimes they are held for very serious reasons. There were 16 children held in Pinetown charged with murder, rape, armed robbery and arson around Soweto Day. We accept the need for institutions. But we object to the children's prisons. Do we rather not need rehabilitation and treatment centres?'

A postscript: Priscilla - and daughter Ann, another Sash member - were arrested and held briefly at the Durban 'Free the Beaches' protest on 3 September after she objected to police arresting children. □

Christina Scott, Natal Coastal Region



How the system targets children: Peilton

To be a child in Nkqonkqweni Village, Peilton, today is to be a target of the Ciskei police. Children sent to fetch water try to dress up as adults to avoid harassment. Many have stopped going to school. Others have been sent away to stay with relatives or comrades in surrounding communities.

Since the incorporation of East Peilton into the Ciskei in August 1988 violence has never been far from the surface of daily life for residents. For over a year now the Ciskei government has tried to impose itself on very unwilling 'citizens'. The continual harassment of a community obviously will have serious consequences for the mental wellbeing of the children. However, recently the violence has been directed at children whom the Ciskei authorities see as their most radical opponents.

On 15 August 1989 a busload of pupils on the way back from a sports meeting was forced to proceed to a police station. Here pupils from Nkqonkqweni were pointed out and promptly detained. The next day pupils from the school boycotted classes in protest, forcing the principal to intervene on behalf of those detained. This led to the release of all those detained, after being charged with malicious damage to property.

The youth reacted in anger. That night windows of the houses of Ciskei sympathisers were smashed. The police did not react and the following day the majority of the small group of Ciskei supporters left the village. But on the Sunday, after a service organised by the Council of Churches, the police again moved into Nkqonkqweni. Teargas was fired indiscriminately. Four youths aged 14 to 17 were arrested, taken to the headman's house and sjambokked.

Most of the children and many young adults fled into the bushes and onto neighbouring white farms. Unable to chase them across the 'border', the police opened fire at those fleeing with semi-automatic rifles. Fortunately no injuries were reported. The continued presence of the police in the village prevented many children from returning home for up to three days.

Parents have been powerless to protect their children. Even the courts have showed little interest in their plight. It is little wonder that in September-October one could see reports in the newspaper of children stoning police vehicles, of children burning down the houses of President Sebe's supporters. The tragedy of the South African situation, and its devastating effects on township youth, is being acted out once more. □

Larry Field, fieldworker, Border Region

Discouraging news for street children: little help in sight

Like other cities, Pietermaritzburg has a growing number of street children - children who have fled to the city, who sleep in doorways, on pavements, in parks, wrapped in newspapers and plastic for warmth, sniff glue to overcome cold and depression, survive by begging or stealing. With each escalation in the Natal conflict there are more children to be seen in the city, refugees psychologically traumatised by the violence, the destruction of their homes, the loss of their parents.

What has been done to shelter, feed, educate and rehabilitate the children? The Pietermaritzburg Child and Family Welfare Society found accommodation for about 25 children in a vacant, municipally owned house in a run-down area. For a full year the children were fed and cared for, and many were rehabilitated to the point of voluntarily returning to school.

Then, in March 1989, because a white neighbour had complained about the presence of black children in a 'white' area, the municipality was 'compelled' to evict the children. Petitions drawn up by the Black Sash - initially to prevent the eviction, later to ask for a reinstatement of the children in the still-empty house and for accommodation and care for the many other street children - were sent to the Administrator of Natal and to the Minister of Home Affairs. Appeals went simultaneously to the Mayor of Pietermaritzburg.

The plight of the street children has evoked a considerable response from the public who have donated blankets and clothes, and money to the Street Children's Fund. There is also a feeding scheme organised by the Street Children's Management Committee (made up of church and other concerned members of the public) and administered by Child Welfare. It has been the authorities who have remained strangely un-

good times, bad times, for street children



Street children in a Pietermaritzburg park. The woman with two small children, pictured above, takes food to the park every day.

responsive. Admittedly, an offer was made to accommodate the children in a Place of Safety. This offer was rejected by most of the children and the authorities seem to feel that they are therefore absolved of further responsibility.

Replies to letters by Sash members to the press and to the Mayor and the Administrator have revealed a seemingly granite indifference on the part of those in authority, and an ignorance and insensitivity which could come only from a deep reluctance to know the facts of these children's situation. There has been a plea of powerlessness, and a moralistic line has been taken: to provide the children with food and warmth would encourage them in their pursuit of the adventurous city life.

The number of street children in

Pietermaritzburg has been estimated at around 300. Undernourishment and neglect are taking their toll: many of the children look ill. Not surprisingly, an increase in delinquency has been reported. Black Sash spokespersons have repeatedly argued that the longer the children are left on the streets, the more they will become criminalised, therefore the longer it will take to rehabilitate them, and the greater the cost to the community will be. The latest initiative has been an appeal to Mike Tarr, Democratic Party member of parliament, to use his influence to promote the street children's cause. We are presenting him with a memorandum which he will use to inform and put pressure on the authorities. □

Fidéla Fouché,
Natal Midlands Region

More positive news

A number of projects reach out to the estimated 5 000 to 9 000 children who live on South African city streets. Street-wise (depicted here) is an educational and job skills programme which aims to provide quality residential care for those who make a strong commitment to the programme and want a settled life. Johannesburg, 1989.



Good news for refugees: the Pietermaritzburg Day Centre

During a two-week period in July this year, three things happened: funding from Victims of Apartheid for a centre for displaced youth was confirmed; a venue was made available; and an organiser for the centre was employed. For those who had been involved in lengthy and often frustrating negotiations, this exciting chain of events marked the end of one phase of the project while at the same time presenting new demands and challenges. Within a few days, a group of 23 refugees from the Swayimani area, aged 12 to 25, arrived at the centre. They were homeless and without food, and required immediate assistance.

The plight of these people has become commonplace in this area, so much so that it is regarded by many

as 'normal' and certainly not the responsibility of citizens of the city. It was this realisation and a desire to focus the attention of white Pietermaritzburg on a situation that is a direct result of apartheid ideology (and so, our responsibility) that resulted in the Black Sash decision in March to explore the possibility of providing facilities for refugees. Consultations with local and progressive organisations indicated that what was needed was 'a place' - somewhere for displacees to gather and, it was hoped, to embark on a more settled and integrated life.

What started as a Black Sash initiative became more broadly based and a steering committee on which local black communities were represented was set up. They looked for

accommodation and sought funding for the project. Problems ranged from a city council unwilling to take any action at all, to angry racist responses from a few white residents, and the inevitable refusal to rezone in terms of the Group Areas Act. More positively, the committee was constantly encouraged by generous support from a large number of members of the public.

Since things came together in July, the centre has begun operating from the YMCA premises in Edendale. The organiser and the displacees together are creating 'the place'. It is a place which we hope will be important in the lives of some of the victims of political disruption in this troubled area. □

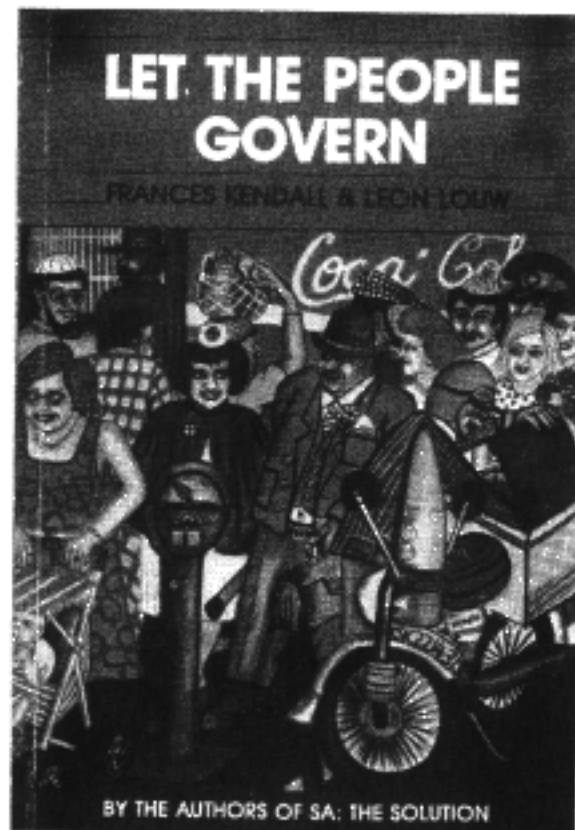
Jenny Clarence, Natal Midlands

REVIEWS

EXPLORING STRUCTURES FOR CHANGE

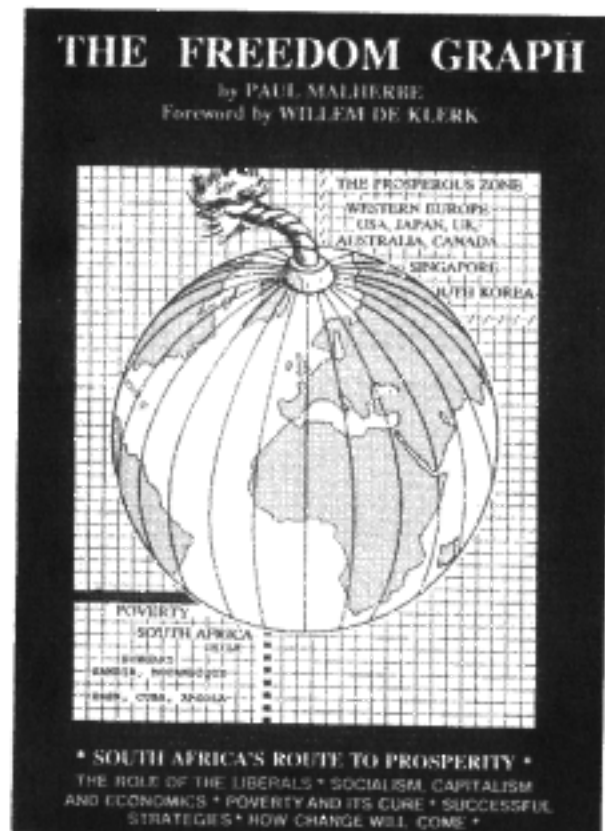
Let the People Govern

Frances Kendall and Leon Louw
(Amagi Publications, Bisho,
1989)



The Freedom Graph

Paul Malherbe (College Tutorial
Press, Cape Town, 1989)



Whilst the significance of the recent election, the change of guards at presidential level and other reform steps are currently topics of much debate and suspicion, there can be little doubt that compared to the 1970s and the mid-1980s South Africa is presently in the midst of a process which could pave the way for a dramatic transformation of society, polity and the economy.

The feeling that, perhaps, fundamental change is possible without accelerating violence or full-scale external sanction pressure, also opens people's minds towards more practical proposals for the restructuring of South African society - proposals going deeper than the mere quest for 'majority rule' or 'own affairs'.

This state of affairs creates a fertile ground for publications expounding on reform strategies and models for change, as indeed, the South African book market is experiencing right now. In this review the focus falls upon two recent publications - Frances Kendall and Leon Louw's *Let the People Govern* and Paul Malherbe's *The Freedom Graph*. Kendall and Louw's book could easily be supplemented by Don Caldwell's *South Africa: The New Revolution* (Free Market Foundation of South

Africa, 1989), a provocative ultra-New Right perspective on the restructuring of the South African economy, whereas the reader of Paul Malherbe's attack on PFP-strategies for political change could benefit from the broader and more balanced views in Lawrence Schlemmer and Hermann Giliomee's most recent book *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (OUP, 1989).

All four books have one thing in common: they are likely to evoke strong disagreement amongst some observers of socio-political change and probably equally strong agreement amongst others; yet, all are concerned with the same process and all six write from the vantage point of liberal, upper middle-class whites convinced that fundamental change is necessary, possible and 'in process'.

Kendall and Louw's new book is really an expanded version of their 1986 *South Africa: The Solution*, which suggested an extreme form of sub-regional devolution of power and practical government for South Africa, vaguely based on the Swiss canton system, but with 300-odd 'states' suggested for South Africa. At that stage many readers were not sure whether the authors were serious with their proposal or just trying to sensitise South Africans to the idea of far-reaching devolution

and local, grassroots decision-making.

The Solution, notwithstanding the arrogant undertone of the title, seems to have been a great success as an instrument for rethinking, and the follow-up volume is likely to elicit a similar response, given the groundswell of search towards a new, non-racial South Africa. One remains sceptical about the relevance of the Swiss canton system for South Africa and winces when reading how glibly job and wealth creation and distribution issues are supposed to be solved by the ingenuity of free markets. Furthermore, one cannot help agreeing with Giliomee and Schlemmer when, in their latest book, they argue that (unfortunately) the two main contenders in South Africa's power-political struggle - the NP and the ANC - both seem rather unwilling to 'risk' devolution as a strategy for change.

Yet, these reservations are almost irrelevant to an assessment of the role of the book. In their freshness, optimism-rich comparative perspectives and almost naïve belief in the virtues of devolution and free markets, the authors succeed in one of the biggest challenges, viz. to loosen the minds of South Africans - of all races and ideological preconceptions - and entice them towards

REVIEWS

Childhood in Crossroads

Cognition and Society in South Africa

PAMELA REYNOLDS

many of the arguments and conclusions presented in the booklet; yet, once again, 'correctness' of interpretation or vision cannot be its significance, but rather its catalytic input into a widening and deepening debate. The real challenge - in all four of the books mentioned - lies in the mind of the 'engaged' South African reader who takes the arguments seriously, debates them with others and reaches his or her own conclusions. □

Wolfgang H. Thomas

Childhood in Crossroads: Cognition and Society in South Africa

Pamela Reynolds (David Philip Publisher, Cape Town, 1989)

This book graphically describes the daily reality of the lives of many of our children living in squatter camps in South Africa, and emphasises the difficulties with which they struggle during the important formative years of their development.

The aim of the work is primarily anthropological and is based on fieldwork for a Ph.D. dissertation. It summarises the results of an ethnographic study of 14 seven-year-old Xhosa children in the squatter settlement of Crossroads, 20 km from the centre of Cape Town. Seven is a pivotal age in the development of Xhosa children because it is then that they begin to take on responsibility for herding, household tasks, and caring for younger children. It is the age at which many black children start school. Also, it is an important age in Piaget's scheme of intellectual development.

The research was initiated because little was known about childhood from the child's point of view and because there is a need to document children's experience in our oppressive society. The author

explains: 'I have emphasised children's cognitive development with the hope that by combining systematic observations and psychological testing I may contribute to formulation of an empirical scheme for collection of data on child thinking-processes.'

There are six chapters on various aspects of the children's lives, detailing numerous tests carried out during 1980 when the author lived in a room built onto a resident's shack and played, talked, walked, ate and worked with the children.

She documents their feelings when violence broke out in Crossroads, and the confusion felt by children when their homes were demolished. She also notes the narrowness of their horizons. None had seen a zoo or walked on Table Mountain; only a few had visited central Cape Town and only two had swum in the sea.

An interesting chapter, titled 'The Children and Dreams', explores the importance of dreams and their meaning in Xhosa culture - a belief that dreams come from the shades of ancestors, and foretell the future. It was significant that a quarter of the dreams featured the father, who was often unable to live with his family, while only one-tenth featured the mother.

In tests to assess intelligence the children did not achieve well. In a discussion of the Human Figure Drawing Test which is used in some school entrance examinations, the author questions the assumptions it makes based on middle-class Western parent-child relationships and culture, and its effectiveness with respect to children impoverished by lack of access to books and pictorial stimuli. Since their lives were disrupted by frequent changes of residence, family caretakers and schools, it is not surprising that the children made little educational progress during the year.

This volume, which includes photographs, tables and a bibliography, makes an important contribution to anthropological literature. □
Jackie Kallaway

new perspectives. *Solution* - most certainly not, but as an exercise for 'future reorientation' - quite fascinating!

In contrast to the relaxed approach of Kendall and Louw, Paul Malherbe's new book reveals a serious, almost bitter and mostly secluded search for a new liberal approach to South African politics. Three undercurrents are visible throughout the 89-page booklet: Malherbe's continued belief in the virtues of a 'multistan'-approach as an instrument for a geographically differentiated transition towards non-racialism, his bitterness vis-à-vis Van Zyl Slabbert as former leader and 'deserter' of the PFP, and his conviction that white fears and minimum demands have to be respected in any strategy for reform and transformation. The central message of the book, that economic and political freedom are interdependent and that South Africa still has to transcend the 'poverty trap' its on way towards 'liberation and adulthood', does not help much in understanding current issues, even though the main chapters - and didactically somewhat pedantic sections on different economic systems, on 'voluntary exchange' and on ways to cure poverty - are not irrelevant to the current debate.

It would be easy to find fault with

LETTERS

sash magazine
questionnaire

Dear Readers,

Thank you for giving us much to digest and refer back to in the 155 responses received. Twenty replies from non-member readers and seventeen late replies were not included in the analyses which yielded percentages in 212 categories! The main messages of the responses are as follows:

To the question 'What should the function of the Magazine be?' the largest number (47% first choice) wanted the magazine to **educate members on current issues and debates** with a very strong 42% making this their second choice.

The second largest number (38% first choice and 25% second choice) wanted the magazine to **be informative about and reflect the work of the Black Sash**.

The preferences which drew less support were **educating the public at large on current issues and debates** (36% fourth choice and 22% third choice), and **provide news about members and serve networking functions** which as fourth choice was supported by 62% (27% made it their third choice).

Looking back at past issues

We get the message from readers that the magazine is read!

32% of readers read 100% of the magazine;

31% of readers read between 80 and 99% of the magazine;

21% of readers read between 50 and 79% of the magazine.

The remainder read less.

The order of reading contents is immensely variable with the contents list, editorial, articles of personal interest and lead article featuring high on the list. 69% of readers finish reading SASH before the next issue arrives.

The style of writing is generally judged easy to read (by 89% of readers). 39% feel the magazine reflects the work of the Black Sash well, 44% feel this job is done

adequately. 73% say 'yes' to theme-focus issues, 20% say 'sometimes' and 7% say 'no' to themes.

96% of readers find SASH politically 'just fine'; 3% judge it 'too conservative' and 1% 'too left wing'.

On the 'too serious - too inappropriately light' continuum, 75% judge SASH 'just right' (11% 'light', 7% 'too serious', 7% 'can't say'). 82% of readers find in SASH a mixture of material new to them and known material.

There was very positive response to the design and general appearance questions about 'right image of the Black Sash', 'cover designs' and 'page design'. We were conditionally encouraged to try 'barkers' on the cover (60% 'yes'). Please do respond to the new cover format tried out in the September '89 and January '90 issues!

Looking ahead: what should
SASH contain?

The written comments in this section presented an important range of readers' ideas and opinion - impossible to reduce to percentages. We will do typed-up memo sheets of these and use them to remind us of the scope for improvement and for serving our readers better. Please bear with us in our double-bind situation. The cost of satisfying some invariably means doing less justice to the wishes of others. However, we will try to keep out of any rut or automatic gear.

Our one unanswered puzzle is, how well do we serve the hundreds of readers who did not return their questionnaires? □

Sarah-Anne Raynham

feminist labels

From Jane Raphaely (Cape Town)

Congratulations on a very well put-together and well balanced issue of SASH. One correction however: Carla Sutherland refers to *Cosmopolitan Feminists* in the context of a quote from the magazine which in fact came from an article titled *Capitalist Feminists* and it shows distinct bias

on Ms Sutherland's part to co-opt *Cosmopolitan* in with this crew, particularly as she goes on to link the magazine with the 'perception that feminism is about white women entrenching and extending their already privileged position'.

Wilful distortions of this kind can do *Cosmopolitan* great harm in quarters where we have fought to get readers to look past the glossy cover and into the actual content of the magazine. We doubt that Ms Sutherland can find another publication in the country which has done so much to meet her perceived 'need for feminism to be promoted sensitively'.

Looking back at that issue I see that the cover featured among other items Miriam Makeba in person and that, inside, South Africans of the calibre of Andy Durbach, Sylvia Vollenhoven, Ben van der Ross and Eddie Cassar discussed their reasons for staying on in South Africa. The most superficial reading of the *Capitalist Feminist* story indicates that this stereotype was under heavy fire. We are very conscious that the magazine does not always achieve the targets that we set ourselves and we welcome constructive fair criticism, even from other magazines. But this isn't worthy of SASH. □

Carla Sutherland responds:

There is inevitably a link between articles and editorial direction - the article in question is, in fact, headlined, 'Cheers for Capitalist Feminists' (my emphasis). If Ms Raphaely thinks I took the link too far, we shall have to agree to disagree. I stand by my argument and feel there has been no 'wilful distortion' on my part.

*While welcoming the inclusion of the types of articles that Ms Raphaely details in her letter, I cannot agree with her that *Cosmopolitan* is in the forefront of sensitively promoting feminism. I would argue that a cursory glance at the magazine leaves one with the impression that I referred to in my article and, in general, a more detailed examination serves only to reinforce this.* □

NEWS-STRIP

Black schooling in the Knysna area

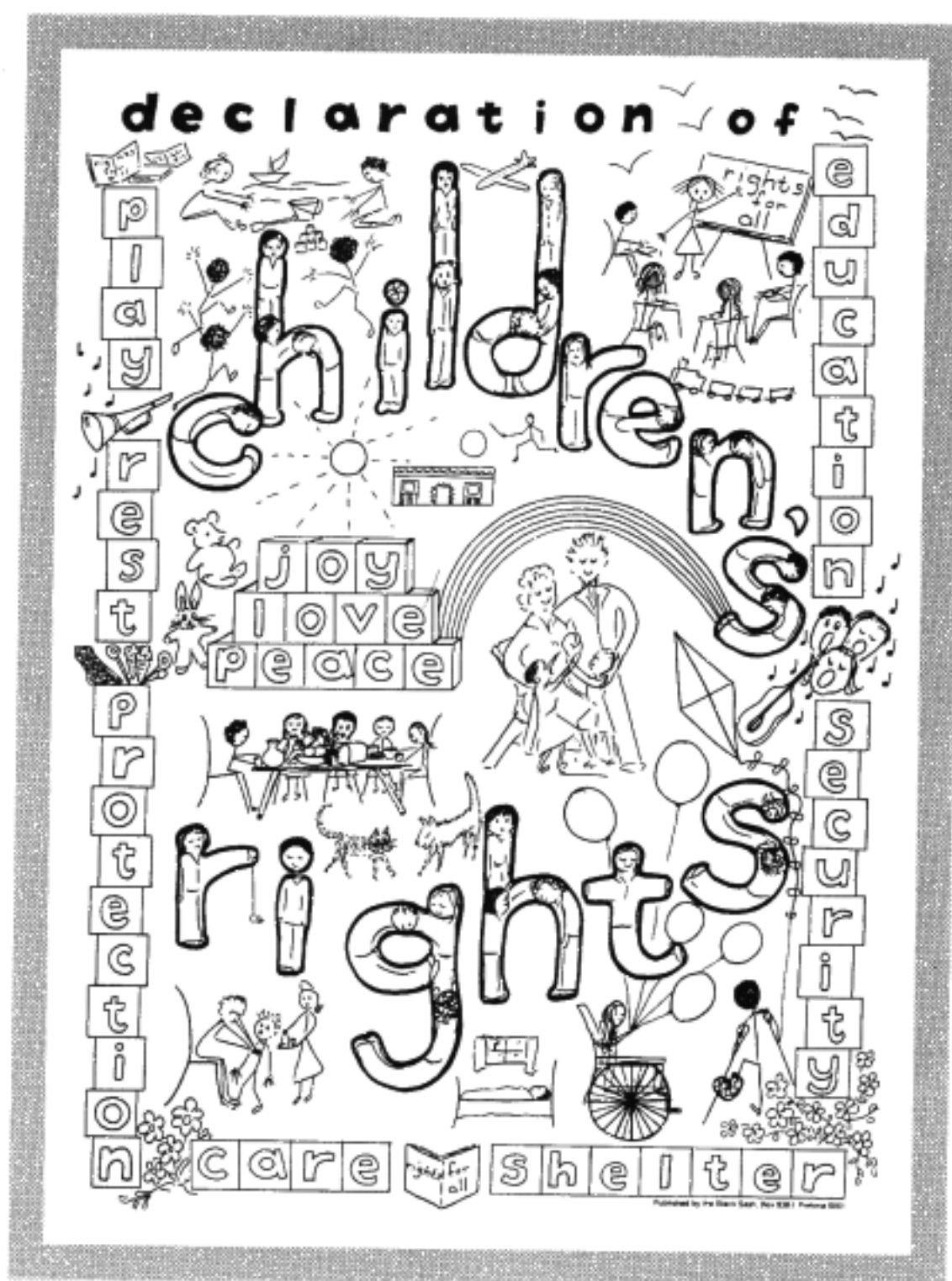
The black population of Knysna is spread over a very wide area in the hills above Knysna village. The government plans to move them to a new township, Khayelethu, on the Uniondale Road where construction began four years ago. Some are willing to move, but others are reluctant to go on account of the increased costs, such as service charges and transport to jobs, which are involved. However, now that the new township has been proclaimed, these people, many of whom live on private land, fear they will get notices to move and have little option but to comply.

At present there are three schools for 1 161 pupils up to Std VII, under one principal and 24 teachers. This is a very poor situation. There has been a lack of communication between successive principals (5 in the last five years) and the Department of Education and Training. Furthermore, pupils who want schooling beyond Std VII have had to go as weekly boarders to George, a route which is poorly served by public transport on weekends, or as full-time boarders to Transkei.

A large school has now been built at Khayelethu, to which all local pupils are supposed to move in January 1990. This new facility appears to be an improvement on the present situation - but it too ends with Std. VII though it may be extended to matric eventually. The transport costs for families who do not move to Khayelethu will be high. Parents who have no wish to leave Knysna want to know: is this 'forced removal' in a new guise? Is the school the carrot to entice people like themselves to move?

The Black Sash and Southern Cape Against Removals (SCAR) are monitoring the situation and assist, e.g. with representations to the authorities, as required. □

*Joyce Edwards and Nancy Sharples,
Southern Cape Branch*



Manion Spies (Pretoria Branch). Family colouring-in poster.

Children's rights and the life of the child in disadvantaged communities in South Africa

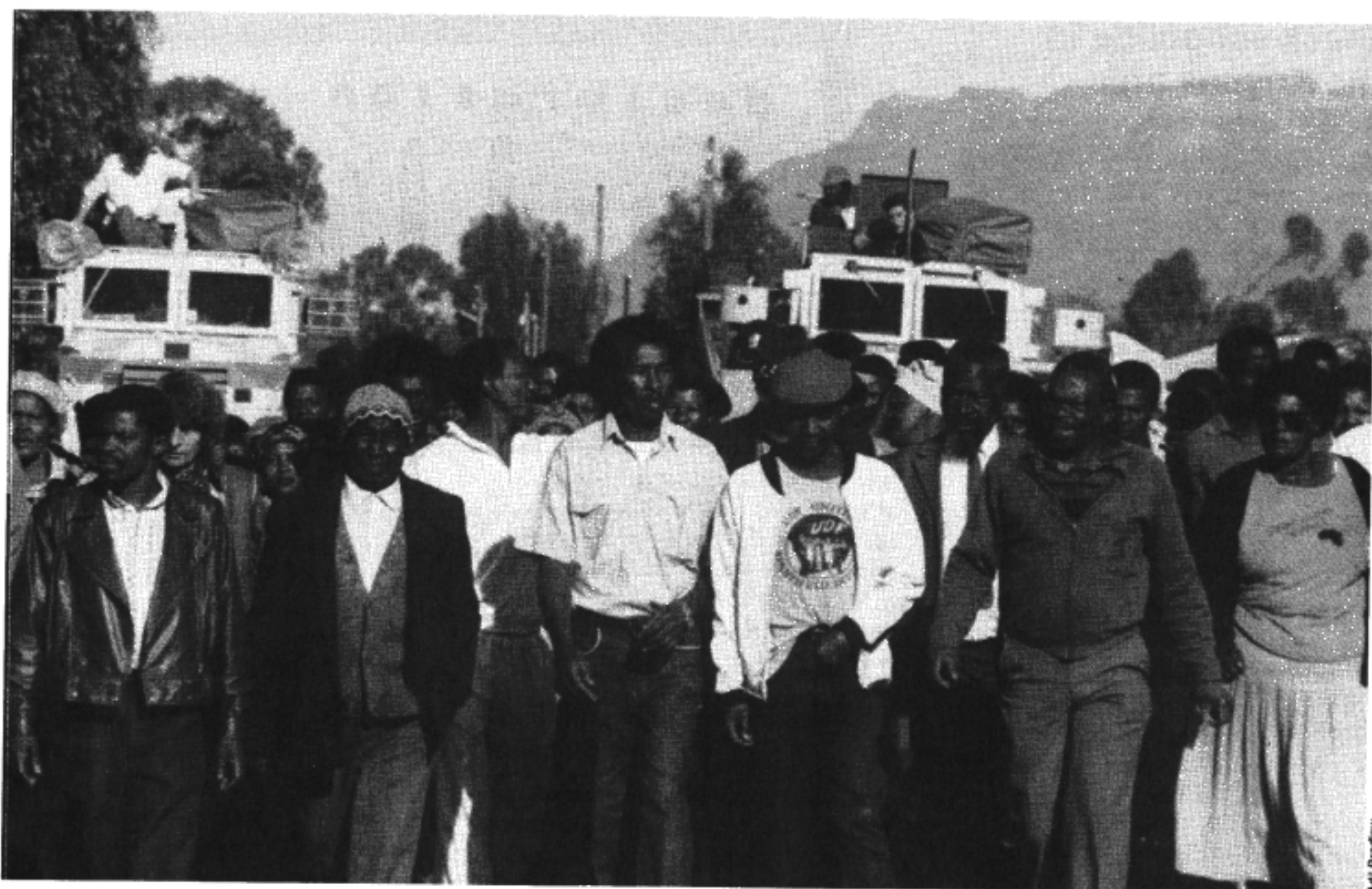
'Children in Soweto are suffering from stress. They have nightmares, they are teargassed at schools...How do you explain to your child why your house is being searched, why there is a roadblock?...These things may happen in the course of restoring order, but none the less the fact remains that it has a negative impact on the mental health of the child.' This and more was reported by speakers from the South African Association for Early Childhood

Educare who, with the Transvaal Region of the Black Sash, hosted a meeting on International Children's Day (1 June) to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

At the same meeting Brian Currin, national director of Lawyers for Human Rights, urged that a 'rights culture' be created, saying that children must know what their rights are. Pointing out that civil law is available for redress of children who have been tortured or abused, he stressed: 'Don't drop an issue which could be tested in court simply because of lack of funds.' Lawyers for Human Rights should be consulted in cases such as these. □

Pretoria Branch, Transvaal Region

NEWS-STRIP



*'Can you walk a little faster?' said the whiting to the snail.
'There's a Casspir close behind me and its treading on my tail.'*

Combating arbitrary pupil exclusions

Six members of Cape Western Region marched with parents from Nyanga Township (above) demanding readmission of their children to Sebenza High School in Crossroads. The pretext for excluding them was 'late arrival in the mornings'; the suspected reason is that Crossroads 'Mayor' J. Ngxobongwana wishes to reserve the school for Crossroads residents only. This is illegal. Sebenza is the only township school in the area with a Management Committee and no Students' Representative Council. □

Cape Western Region

Stop Executions: Natal Midlands Stands

On 28 September Natal Midlands Region stood to protest the impending executions of four men, including two from Pietermaritzburg: Naftan Mchunu and Mphukwa Alfred Ndlela. We also issued a press statement:

The Black Sash and the Society for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in South Africa wish to express in the strongest possible terms our outrage at the practice of killing by judicial process and call for an immediate moratorium on all executions in South Africa today. We deplore the lack of adequate legal representation for those charged with capital crimes, the inhumanity of death row, and the barbaric use of hanging as a method of state killing. We uphold the basic human right to life and strongly question the

authority of a legal system which reserves the right to put it in jeopardy.

Ndlela and Mchunu received a last-minute stay of execution after being granted leave to petition for clemency. As the other two prisoners met their deaths on Friday, 29 September, we stood again in solidarity. Church bells tolled at 6:30 a.m., and the Muslim and Hindu communities offered special prayers in a symbolic act of remembrance and protest. We will continue to stand whenever executions are imminent. □

*Jane Worsnip,
Natal Midlands Region*

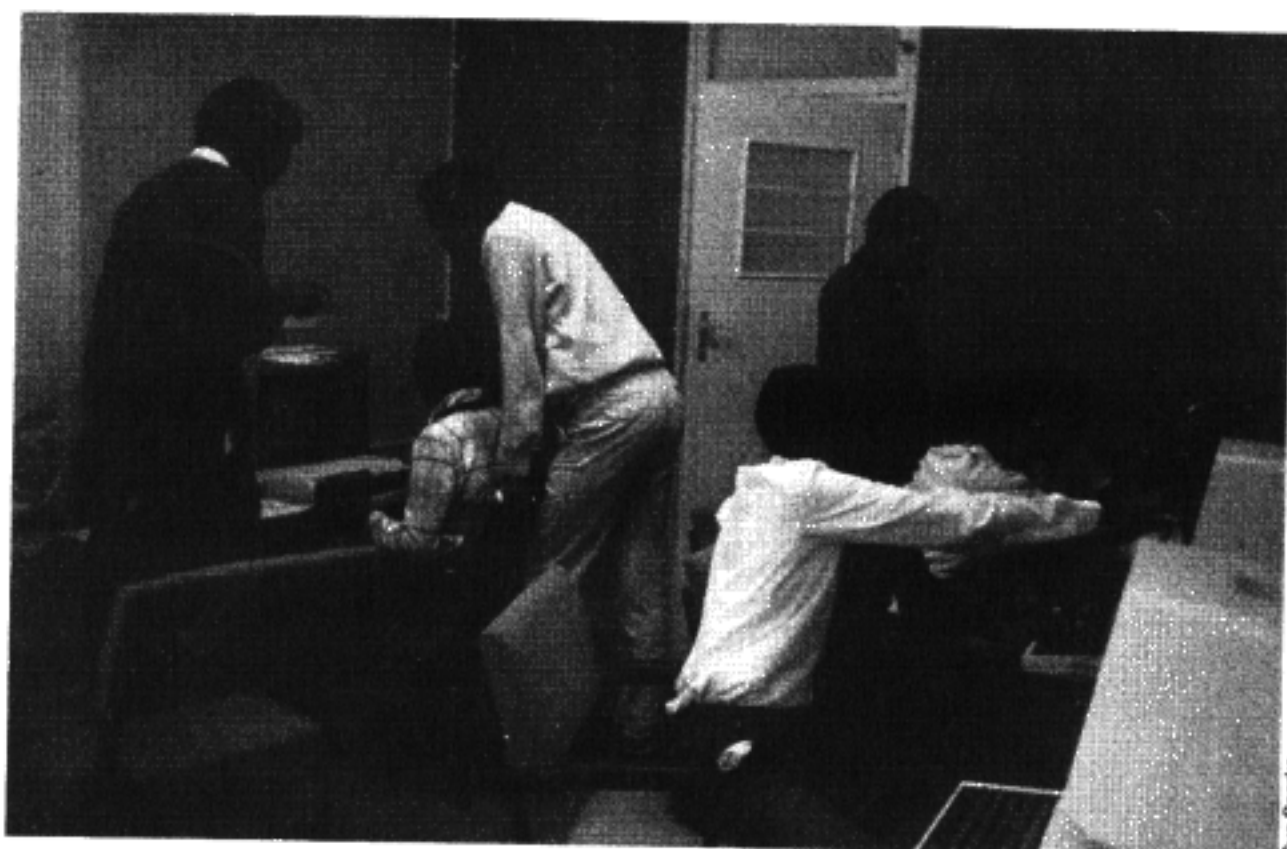
Erratum

The volume number of our last issue (September 1989) should have been vol 32 (not vol 33). □

NEWS-STRIP

Open School workshop

*'It's crowded on a Saturday morning and the kids of all ages seem really glad to be there', reports a Sash member whose son attended some workshops - there are forty each Saturday! - run by the Open School in Johannesburg. A well-known product of the creative activities encouraged by this remarkable school is the book, **Two Dogs and Freedom**, but offerings include a range of programmes such as the computer workshop shown here.*



Sue Sparks



Oliver Power

Winter care hoax

A non-wellwisher - of needy people and the Black Sash - distributed a pamphlet last March which offered a 'Winter Care Programme' at the private address of Susie Power, chairperson of Border Region. When word of it got out the pamphlet was stopped but an area was missed and around a hundred people turned up. All were invited in and given refreshments. They listened understandingly while Susie explained this cruel hoax. A press report of the incident brought a happy result: blankets and food rolled in and so the people got some help.

Human rights workshop

Standard 9 and 10 pupils from nine non-state schools, eight Department of Education and Training schools and 11 Transvaal Education Department schools - 145 students in all - responded to a press advertisement inviting them to a workshop on human rights. Ways were found to cope with the complex syntax and vocabulary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so that this crucial document could be used as the basis of discussion and activity.

Pupils responded enthusiastically: 'Why can't we organise a camp? I hope to see everybody again', said one; another, expressing a general view, said 'I liked the attitude towards everybody because it is unusual to find people who can get along with people from other races so easily'. The Education Committee of Transvaal Region who organised the workshop has prepared a manual to help anyone who cares to act on their idea.

As the organisers agreed, it is always the right time to discuss human rights. One could do it every year! □

*Education Committee,
Transvaal Region*

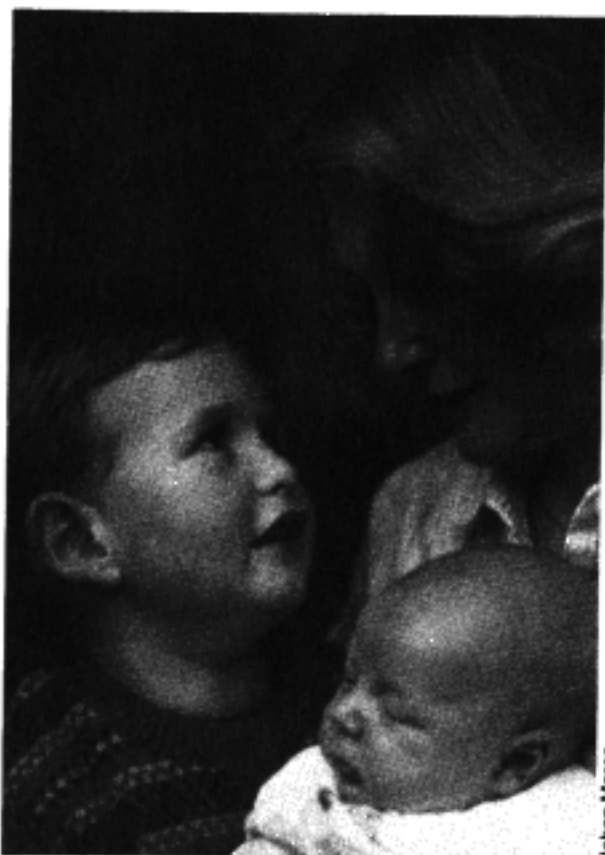
NEWS-STRIP

Brushes with the law

Natal Coastal members find their way around courts and police stations with the ease born of experience: by October 1989, three faced charges, two had been recently convicted, eight others were appealing a conviction and one had been made a state witness. This last is interesting for the fact that the member, who covered a Black Sash demo

in her capacity as journalist, will appear in the same case with two other members whose actions she is supposed to have witnessed - that is, if the Attorney-General decides to prosecute. 'This has not been divisive', reports Christina Scott. 'The three are still on speaking terms!' □

Natal Coastal Region



Johan Maree

SASH magazine's 'own' baby

Congratulations to **Helen Zille** and **Johan Maree** on the long-awaited arrival of **Thomas Carl** on 5 July 1989. While Helen is less busy editing SASH, she is fully occupied in adjusting her work schedule around Paul and Thomas, shown on the left and right of their mother above. (We could have done them better justice by more skilful cropping of the picture which appeared alongside Helen's article in our last issue! See SASH, September 1989, p. 17.) □

Right and Fitting

The University of the Witwatersrand has awarded an honorary Doctorate of Laws to **Sheena Duncan**, formerly National President and currently National Advice Office Coordinator of the Black Sash. We applaud the honour - a fitting acknowledgement of Sheena's contributions in the field of human rights. □

Durban Committee for Children's Rights

Natal Coastal Region, and in particular member Coral Vinsen, worked tirelessly to mobilise a wide range of organisations into the Durban Committee for Children's Rights. They marked the anniversary of the UN Declaration of Children's Rights by providing the opportunity for children to learn about their rights in a day of fun and activity, music and drama events, at the University of Natal. Afterwards, a panel met with the public to discuss a concrete programme of action in respect of child care.

The photographs posted to us by Christina Scott vanished in the corridors of priority mail. Our substitute is a September 1989 Afrapix portrait of a mother and daughter.



Gill de Vlieg/Afrapix

NEWS-STRIP

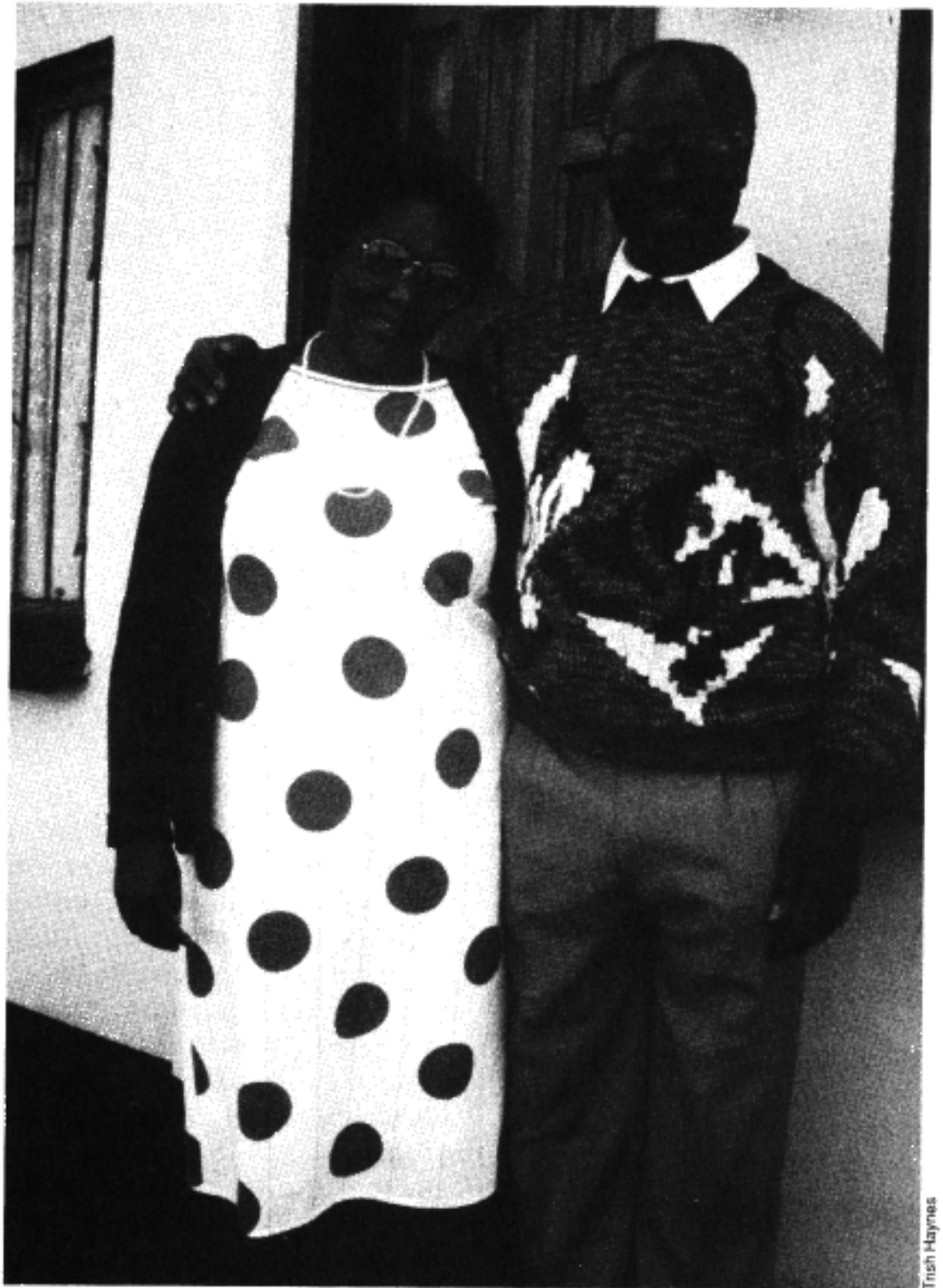
A privileged visit to Andrew and June Mlangeni

June Mlangeni has been visiting her husband, Andrew, throughout the 26 years he has spent on Robben Island and Pollsmoor. Like many other family members of political prisoners, their home is up-country. When visiting, their sanctuary is Cowley House, Woodstock. The staff of Dependents' Conference see to their daily needs and Black Sash assists with driving visitors to the Robben Island ferry and Pollsmoor at weekends.

I have come to know and love June by driving her and her family to Pollsmoor and offering hospitality. She is a woman of great integrity and has shown wonderful strength of character over the years working and bringing up four children. It was a happy privilege to be their guest in their home in Dube, Soweto, over the weekend of the Welcome Home rally at Soccer City on 29 October. Andrew paid tribute during his speech to the work of the Black Sash over 30 years. □

Tish Haynes

PS. When Tish was with the Mlangenis, FEDTRAW members whom she had hosted in Cape Town surprised her with a gift of outfits and T-shirts for her three children. (See them with these outfits on p. 25 Ed.)



Tish Haynes

Occupational hazards

The scene: a busy roadside, a Black Sash stander, a poster which reads 'Free our Children from Violence'. The action: a car peels off, is parked heaven knows where, and an angry man confronts the stander with, 'You silly woman, get back into your kitchen!' What a hope! □



Die doring in die vlees

Ek skakel die radio aan. Dit is 10:30 v.m. en ek is net betyds om die oggend na Vroue Rubriek se uitsending te luister. 'n Skets deur 'n akademikus oor 'ontvlugting' word voorgelees. In pragtige suiwer Afrikaans lees die omroepster: 'Ek wil graag 'n ruimtevaarder wees. Ek wil weg kom van die gejaagdheid op die aarde. Ek wil net sweef daar bo in die lugruim - weg van spitstyd verkeer, besoedeling, daaglikse ergerisse en die Swart Serp vroue...' □

*Louise Angless,
Cape Western Region*

NEWS-STRIP

Grahamstown's cake - there's enough for all

A non-racial picnic was held by the Grahamstown Democratic Action Committee, assisted by Black Sash members, to launch the **One City Campaign** in Grahamstown on 30 September. About 300 people braved rainy weather and gathered on Church Square in the city centre where a large chocolate cake, displaying the words 'one people, one city' was devoured within minutes. The crowd then bopped the morning away to the beat of one of Grahamstown's local marimba bands. An 'art corner' kept small children entertained, drawing pictures around the theme of 'one city'.

The picnic formed part of a joint regional effort to scrap city apartheid in the Eastern Cape. A group of organisational representatives has since met to explore ways of taking the campaign further. □

Barbara Orpen, Albany Region

election dilemma

The Albany Region was caught in a dilemma during the run-up to the recent elections. The contest in the area was a very close one between Democratic Party candidate, Errol Moorcroft, always a good friend to the Grahamstown Advice Office, and the sitting National Party member of parliament. Sash members were keen to register a strong protest against the racially exclusive elections but the possibility of affecting Moorcroft's chances of winning had to be carefully considered.

Consequently they decided to have a successive three-day poster stand outside the Anglican Cathedral but, to minimise any risks, delayed the first one until lunchtime on election day. The posters reading 'Next time, votes for all' attracted strong reactions from the public, for and

against. At the same time, a special service in English and Xhosa was held in the cathedral as part of an all-day vigil for the nation's future.

The good news that Moorcroft had won the Albany seat was known by the next morning, and the second and third stands continued without incident. Posters picked up and supported an issue which is under continuing discussion in the Grahamstown City Council - 'Open City, one Grahamstown'. □

Shirley MacLennan

flowers for protesters in grahamstown

A crowd of about 2 000 Grahamstonians who joined in a protest march on 14 September as part of the national defiance campaign were somewhat amazed by the reaction of the local police force.

The march began on the Rhodes University campus and was led by church dignitaries, prominent academics and members of the Albany Black Sash. It proceeded through the town where traffic was brought to a standstill by the sight of the orderly, singing crowd. At the police station, a petition calling for an end to apartheid and the State of Emergency, and the release of detainees, was ceremonially handed over by four members of the march. The police in return handed over two bunches of flowers.

The marchers accepted the flowers and proceeded to the University Chapel lawns where a service was held. National Sash Vice-president, Rosemary van Wyk Smith, read out a statement in support of the Mass Democratic Movement and the Defiance Campaign, which was greeted with a cry of 'Viva Black Sash!' The march produced an exhilarating feeling of camaraderie and a sense of having come together effectively with shared ideals. □

Val Letcher, Albany Region

OBITUARIES



Jeanette Davidoff

Nobody has served the Black Sash longer and better than Nettie Davidoff. She continued to attend meetings until just before her death, and to the end she was a fount of suggestions, advice and ideas.

Her contribution to the organisation has been immense, from its inception 34 years ago. She was always active, always ready and determined to participate despite failing health, always a tower of strength, and always ready to volunteer.

No task was too menial for her. She never failed in her total commitment, nor to complete anything she undertook. Her last, ongoing and exceedingly demanding task was her creation of vast numbers of books of press cuttings, about Sash and also many of the political affairs with which it is concerned. The completed books are in the archives of

NEWS-STRIP

the University of the Witwatersrand and are an invaluable research source.

It was her intention and her hope to present to Mr Nelson Mandela, an old friend, the books she had made about him. He had been told about this and sent her an affectionate message which gladdened her heart just prior to her death.

Her critical evaluations of the organisation and its programmes were always constructive and relevant, and we shall be much the poorer without her positive presence.

And we shall miss her. We all loved and respected her. Our younger members, those who had not known her for very long, often tapped her wisdom and came to appreciate and care deeply for her.

She was a unique, remarkable and indomitable woman who gave generously and selflessly of her time, her energy and her special talents. Much of what has become traditional in the Black Sash is the brainchild of Nettie's fertile mind and imagination.

Her gift of herself has been immeasurable and we mourn her deeply. □

Joyce Harris, Transvaal Region

Hilda Wood

It is with great sadness that we mourn the death in East London of Mrs Hilda Wood who, at the age of ninety-nine, must surely have been one of the oldest Black Sash members.

Mrs Wood came to South Africa in 1913, having been recruited by the Church of Scotland as a missionary and teacher at Lovedale College in Alice. She joined the Sash at its inception and was an active and enthusiastic member. In particular, her generosity in opening her home for meetings was much appreciated.

Even in her last years when failing health and poor eyesight meant that she could no longer take part in Sash activities, Mrs Wood's love and support for Sash and the ideals it embodies never faltered. □

Jean Daphne, Border Region



Moira Henderson

02.09.1923 - 21.05.1989

The fact that the Thanksgiving Service for Moira's life was attended by hundreds of people of all ages, races and walks of life was proof of the fact that Moira was greatly loved by so very many people all over South Africa and the world. For weeks visitors, messages and flowers poured into Moira and Jerry's home - so many people were thinking of Moira and wished to show how much they loved her.

Moira was a foundation member of the Black Sash, served on the Regional Council of Cape Western Region and was co-director of the Black Sash Advice Office. She was a founder member of Defence and Aid, Cape, representing the Black Sash, and when it was banned in 1966 continued to work on the Dependant's Conference, as a daily voluntary worker, committee member and finally chairperson until she retired. Through her work she met so many different people involved in the struggle to free South Africa and her home was always open to them. Her sparerooms were seldom empty and she prepared meals for an incredible number of guests of all ages, political persuasions, religious

affiliations and races.

In spite of her very great interest in politics, Moira was a well rounded person, a good natural golfer, a much loved mother and grandmother - her four grandchildren meant everything to her. She loved to travel and to walk - she and Jerry walked miles and miles in many different countries including the Himalayas and St Helena.

Moira was a very modest person and her many friends were amazed to hear of all her very different activities as recounted by Francis Wilson and Archbishop Tutu at the Memorial Service. Members of the staff and committee of Dependant's Conference distributed a pamphlet containing tributes from co-workers and ex-detainees and ex-prisoners from Robben Island.

We offer our deepest sympathy to her husband Jerry, her daughter Mosa, John and the four grandchildren, all of whom thought of nothing else but making her last weeks happy and comfortable and full of love.

She will be much missed by so many. □

Noel Robb, Cape Western Region