

# Sash

**Volume 29 No 3 November 1986**



**CHILDREN  
NEED  
PEACE**



## Childrens' campaign

*In November the Black Sash started a campaign to build up public pressure to free more than 4 000 children currently in detention and in prison under public violence charges.*

*The little girl is wearing one of the T-shirts which are part of the publicity campaign. They are available in yellow or white from the Johannesburg advice office at prices ranging from R8,50 to R12,50.*

*The posters behind her are also part of this concern about children and are available at R1,50 each from Black Sash offices in Johannesburg and Cape Town.*

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# The National President talks

*Mary Burton advocates more debate to help us develop ways of understanding and responding to issues and the situation she describes.*

The state of emergency has been in force for almost five months. Thousands of people have been detained, thousands more are living in hiding lest they too be detained. Many of them are minors, and grave concern is felt about the conditions of their incarceration and the effect this will have on them. Recent reports have drawn attention to the desperate problems facing South Africa's children, and to the implications they hold for the future.

With restrictions in force governing the dissemination of information there is a real danger that those who have no access to first-hand accounts will be lulled into the belief that the 'emergency' has served to reduce dissent and anger. The reality is that South African society becomes ever more violent.

Repression elicits retaliation; poverty and unemployment aggravate the situation; crime breeds anger and revenge; sanctions are beginning to bite, and in some instances the furious, fearful reaction of those affected is a retreat into conservative intransigence.

Far from implementing its own much-vaunted reform programme, the National Party government relentlessly pursues its policy of ethnic separation, heedless of the consequences; it has threatened more forced removals from, for example, Oukasië (Brits) and Lawaakamp (George); it has proposed that Woodstock be proclaimed a 'coloured' group area, against the wishes of its residents; it has failed tragically to devise satisfactory programmes for education and urbanisation.

We share in the conviction which is growing in many circles that matters of military and security consideration have a significant impact on the decisions made by the government, and even dictate the strategies implemented at local level through the Joint Management Centres. We are witnessing the encroachment of the military into more and more aspects of our lives, and many of those who dare to resist are summarily removed.

## The values of liberty, equality and human rights

We are in the throes of a critical battle, the outcome of which will determine the shape of our society into

the next century. The country slides further and further away from the Rule of Law, and it often seems fruitless even to try to uphold the time-honoured values of liberty, equality and human rights.

Two of the University of Cape Town's professors have pointed to this. In a thoughtful article in the most recent issue of *Reality*, David Welsh concludes sorrowfully: 'the brutal and unpalatable truth is that in the circumstances of South Africa in 1986 liberalism (at least as it is understood) is not an attractive philosophy to the great majority of able, creative and articulate African scholars'.

Writing to the *Cape Times* about the O'Brien debate, Charles Villavicencio suggested why this might be: 'liberals in South Africa, even while affirming democracy in principle — and therefore academic freedom — are in danger of becoming a peripheral minority because they are not heeding the cries of the majority. It is sad that in our hour of crisis liberals find themselves outflanked by people demanding genuine democratic change. This is what will make them so damned irrelevant when the chips are down'.

## The need for debate

In the past month several issues have reminded us that debate remains crucial:

- the implementation of sanctions and the withdrawal of several multinational companies;
- the academic boycott and the incidents at the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand concerning the presence of Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien;
- the expulsion of the South African government representatives from the Geneva conference of the Red Cross, and the retaliatory threat of expulsion of the representatives



Mary Burton

Gill de Vlieg

of the International Committee of the Red Cross who are stationed in South Africa.

The significance of these events internationally is that the South African situation is widely considered irredeemable except by the most drastic means; that the government's policies encounter general rejection; and that even those who do not believe in sanctions and withdrawal as solutions will not defend apartheid.

Within South Africa itself we are all too aware that sanctions and boycotts are dangerous weapons: they can cause incalculable harm on a far wider scale than that intended by those who wield them. Yet we are in a struggle in which other dangerous tools are already deployed in the field: propaganda, controls over the media, guerrilla attacks and conventional military weaponry. In these circumstances, there is at least good reason for wide-ranging, well-informed debate of the boycott strategy. And our commitment to academic freedom reinforces the belief that all points of view should be heard.

What is imperative is that organisations within or outside the country's borders which adopt these tactics to exert pressure for change should make such decisions with maximum possible consultation with the majority of the people.

For ourselves in the Black Sash, we are developing ways of understanding and responding to issues such as these, buffeted as we are by the critical events around us: we continue to hold to the basic values our organisation has always striven for; at the same time we seek to strengthen democratic processes within our own organisation; and we try to further the aims of those who seek a radical transformation of our society into one which will offer protection by law for basic rights and freedoms, redress the inequalities of wealth and privilege, and contribute to establishing justice and peace.



*Children live what they learn. It is at their mothers' knee that they learn loving, caring responses. Children raised in circumstances of deprivation lack the security of being loved and therefore do not learn to trust.* photo: courtesy of Financial Mail

# Children need peace

**Fear exists that youth of this country have become so brutalised that a bloodlust has developed which makes violence an end in itself. Sheena Duncan referred to the problem in her last conference address as president:**

*'How does one cure those young people who lust to kill and burn and for whom hatred is the staff of life — those who can burn a person with the dreadful necklace and dance around the flames?'*

*Working on the limited premise that the problem can be viewed as a breakdown in mental health, Sash approached professionals in the field of human behaviour in an attempt to find an answer. Extracts from interviews and papers of the following people were combined:*

- *Prof Jill Straker, head of Applied Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand;*
- *Mrs R, a psycho-therapist who works with the Detainees Counselling Service and who may not be named for professional reasons;*
- *Dr Cliff Allwood, senior specialist psychiatrist at Baragwanath Hospital (Soweto);*
- *Dr Mamphela Ramphela, social anthropologist from the University of Cape Town who was interviewed by Helen Zille of Cape Western in May 1986.*

In answer to the question, 'what can be done?', Dr Allwood and Prof Straker both started by describ-

ing where mental health comes from in order to show what South Africans have to do to solve the problem.

## What children need

'... I see ... the breakdown in family life ... as fundamental in producing and aggravating mental problems in children,' Dr Allwood began in an address to the National Council for Mental Health in October 1986. 'The literature is replete with studies which say the same thing in different ways. The early development of the child needs to be within a safe, consistent, holding, accepting, shaping, social structure such as that provided by a biological nuclear family. Adaptations of this have been shown to work well, provided that basic rules are followed.'

Breaking these rules will produce disastrous results with few exceptions.

'It appears not to matter too much whether the constancy, the holding, the living and the training take place within a nuclear family, an extended family or a kibbutz — the results will usually be good.

'But, disrupt the child frequently, introduce violence, acrimony, abuse, set no limits, allow the child to do what he or she likes, give inconsistent discipline over a number of years and one has the recipe for disaster in the development of personality and inter-personal relationships later.'

Similarly, Prof Straker says: 'Children live what they learn. And its at their mothers' knees that they learn pro-social behaviour — the formation of loving, caring responses, successful personal interaction, morality and values. Later they learn from the wider family network and finally from the community — their schools, churches, sports events, ballet lessons, birthday parties, boy scouts and so on.

'Children who live in a brutalised society act out what they have learned. The necklacing and arson that takes place today are not simply a result of troops in the township. It's a problem that has its roots decades back in legislation that was and is inimical to the formation of pro-social behaviour.'

#### **What children get**

The system of apartheid with its influx control, migrant labour, social and economic deprivation, forced removal of settled communities, legislated discrimination, escalating institutionalised and individual violence is a prime cause of the disintegration of family life in South Africa. Dr Allwood also includes the sexual revolution of the 60's and 70's, mass media with its sex and violence and moral decline, materialistic expectations of parents.

Yet, Dr Allwood concludes in his interview: 'What we are seeing today is the predictable end result of apartheid.' In his address he says, 'Psychologists and sociologists keep telling us that attitudes and relationships which children experience in childhood will frequently be repeated in adulthood. Terms such as the 'cycle of deprivation' and the 'cycle of violence' have been coined. But the concept is not new. In the

books of Exodus and Numbers we read . . . 'the iniquity of the father is visited on the children to the third and fourth generation'. The message is loud and clear, what is sown now will be reaped later.'

Again, Prof Straker says the same thing: 'Apartheid has sown the seeds of its own destruction. Many countries have their violent gangs, such as the Ku Klux Klan, but South Africa is one of the few countries in the modern world that has actually passed legislation which destroys family life.'

Dr Ramphela describes the situation in which children grow up, and have grown up for generations — one that falls far short of Dr Allwood's prescription of 'safe, consistent, holding, accepting, shaping' — without violence or abuse. She says:

'These children have 'tumbled up' rather than growing up as white children do within a structure of acceptable values. The concept of 'average family' cannot be applied where children are born to mothers who are themselves psychologically traumatised, undernourished and often subject to physical assault.

'Children raised in circumstances of deprivation lack the security of being loved and therefore do not learn to trust. Too many children lack security even about the next meal. Their parents are frequently both at work, the father perhaps coming home late, drunk or exhausted, lacking time or inclination to communicate with the children. When such children grow up believing that their parents have accepted such conditions of deprivation they react with anger against those closest rather than against 'the system' — a more difficult thing to do.'

Dr Allwood's description of how children are brought up includes this comment: 'The white man is suffering under the delusion that the extended family takes care of children whose parents are separated by legislation. There are generations of children who have been looked after by other children or by child minders. They grow up without a sense of parenting or loyalty. And in situations of stress children have no one

to help them deal with the trauma. Studies have shown that children are tremendously resilient and can survive desperate situations if they have parents to talk to and who can help them come out of the trauma they are in.'

#### **Peer groups help to fill the gap**

Dr Ramphela goes on to explain how the peer group fills the gap between what children need and what they get: 'Peer groups become the most reliable, constantly present social support system, therefore the most influential. The generation gap is far greater for black children than for white children. Questions, for example on puberty, go unanswered, through ignorance and taboos, even by teachers and nurses. Traditional rituals that used to systematise the process have been lost and nothing has replaced them. The peer group is all that is available. Comrades are a fascinating phenomenon — sometimes being admired, even by the old, as activists who have the means to oppose the system.'

#### **Many develop in spite of deprivation**

'However,' Mrs R emphasises: 'One mustn't only be negative. These very harsh conditions (and here she includes the trauma of detentions and other repressive State measures) do damage to a lot of people and there are people who do carry out these anti-social activities as a consequence of circumstances that dominate to produce the behaviour, but there are also a remarkable number who have developed because of the circumstances. Some meet up to the challenge in an extraordinary way. There are a lot of people who despite being put under severe stress in their daily lives are loving and caring people. Although a whole generation of youth have been brutalised it's remarkable how many are really very responsible.'

Prof Straker and Dr Allwood also hold this view. Prof Straker says, 'As a psychologist I am surprised that there isn't a whole lot more violence. It shows how caring and persevering black mothers have been over the

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***South Africa is one of the few countries in the modern world that has actually passed legislation which destroys family life.***

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generations in keeping things together.'

Dr Allwood adds another reason for the exceptions: 'Black adults take responsibility for children who are not their own. This is a strength which is peculiar to the black community — there is a lot more caring amongst the community than exists in any other, a principle of *noblesse oblige*.'

### Those who become killers

Dr Allwood explains how youth become involved with brutal activities: 'From my perspective people *en masse* are different from people as individuals.'

I'm not sure that the behaviour of the group is truly representative of each of the individuals within it.

'The phenomenon develops amongst people who move around in groups — a different reality develops and the progress of the whole phenomenon becomes something that no one person can control. People begin to feed one another's feelings and ethics change. Mass suicides and mass murders are examples of the same thing. There's a ground swell of anger, a basic feeling of injustice that gets triggered and led by a group.'

Prof Straker makes another point about this group phenomenon: 'People are anonymous in a group. Each one gets spurred on by the feeling of the group and individuals at times become overwhelmed by it.'

'Besides,' she adds, 'to say that what is taking place in South Africa today is the work of "damaged" youth is not entirely correct. One

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cannot say that those who deliberately burn buildings are mentally disturbed. If one does, then one must say that soldiers who bombed buildings in the Second World War were also "damaged". These youth consider themselves to be at war and they are using whatever means there are at their disposal.'

Dr Allwood adds, 'Many of the people who have taken these steps are normal, not psychopaths. If society could be normalised they'd be okay.'

### Contact with individuals

Dr Allwood talks about the individuals who come to hospital seeking help: 'As individuals we see them as traumatised, depressed, bewildered; and confused by everything. We don't see the bravado of the killings and the necklacing. We see teenagers who would give anything to live a normal life and to write their exams. We see the backwash of police and comrade brutality and a vast number of people caught up in this — which doesn't mean that they condone it.'

'We did a survey of our cases seen in 1985/86 and found that 50% of children and adults have a stress-related condition which finally brings them to hospital. They come because of a suicide attempt or a psychosis of some sort and in the

background somewhere it's related to a house burnt down, somebody killed, the constant presence of security forces etc. One young man was chased by the security forces at school and when he came to us he was in a state of acute anxiety. He'd obviously been a leader before. In many cases a whole family is generally tense and, for example, a little squabble about washing dishes leads to a major suicide attempt. After a particularly bad weekend we saw six young people who had made suicide attempts.'

'We also see policemen as individuals. As individuals they are torn apart. They too are suicidal and suffer from depression and the effects of the severe stress they are under.'

### The use of therapy

Mrs R talks about the possibility of therapeutic solutions:

'In the present circumstances there is a very limited amount one can do to restore people who have been disturbed through particular circumstances — whether it's the trauma of detention or the trauma of either observing or participating in violence. Post traumatic stress disorders make people feel helpless and depressed in the face of a power that they cannot control. People come to us, not because they want to be changed, but because they want *not*



*We see them as teenagers who would give anything to live a normal life and write their exams*

*photo: Dave Hartman*

to be depressed, or to suffer the symptoms of post-traumatic stress such as sleeplessness, demotivation, lack of concentration, loss of memory, social withdrawal and so on.

'The situation is such that one can't really help the individual to adjust to it. Do you help a person by helping them to adjust to an abnormal society — if that's what therapy is? All one can hope to do is to give people better mechanisms to cope under stress, to come to terms with their past traumas and perhaps to help them look for alternate ways of dealing with their anger.

'But what alternate ways are there at present? Does socially acceptable behaviour mean that one acquiesces to government law? They close your school, what are your alternatives? If you're living in an area that's threatened with removal and you've spent five years trying to negotiate and nothing you can do has any effect, what is a legitimate way of channelling your anger? All that we can do is to get people to look at their feelings of helplessness and impotence and help them recognise that they still have some potency, however limited.

Mrs R gives an example of youth and older people she saw from Huhudi, an area threatened with removal. They had just come out of detention. 'All we could do was to help them deal with what they felt as a consequence of their experience and to be in touch with their own anger. We tried to help them regain a sense of their own dignity. All we could offer them was that they need each others support, that they can share each others strengths.

'But inevitably they still go back into a situation where there is little space for negotiating — over schooling, housing, unemployment. You can give them strength to overcome things that have been difficult for them. You can help them to own their own strengths, to recognise their own anger or see how dangerous it can be, but beyond that there are not enough avenues for them to go and behave in a socially acceptable way. The horror of the violence is inevitable. But it's gone so far and this abused syndrome has run so deeply that people will become abusers themselves.'

She takes a very hypothetical example: 'Say it were possible to work with a group of youths and one helped them to see alternatives that

are constructive and not destructive then one's got to have a place where they can go and live a constructive life. Even if you train 500 teenagers to be constructive, where will they go to build a new life?'

### The future

Dr Allwood feels that it is not yet too late for a cure if radical changes in political and social fields can be made soon. In his address to the National Council for Mental health he concludes: "health for all by the year 2000" is a realistic goal in the field of Child Mental Health. Much ground has been lost — there is a great job to be done in the next 14

years. . . I believe the goal is achievable.'

Amongst the methods to achieve that he stresses the role of education, the use of mass media, mass literature etc to put across messages about good parenting, coping with stress, responses to violence, interpersonal conflict resolution and very important — undoing the things which are causing violence to become a way of life.

Mrs R and Prof Straker stress the need for *immediate* change: 'The longer the extremes persist, the longer change takes, the worse things are going to be.'

## Witnessed at the Goodwood Showgrounds, Cape Town, Sunday September 7 this year

— SUE SPARKS recalls . . .

*The youth with hard eyes drank quickly from the silver chalice which the priest held to his lips before his friend shoved him aside so that he, too, could have a turn. One by one the seven young 'comrades', ill at ease and clumsy, pushed past each other to the front of the line — and took communion.*

*Their faces were expressionless. They huddled together looking furtive, uncomfortable. Their clothes were ill-assorted and very scruffy. Some looked as though they hadn't slept anywhere warm and safe or known tenderness for a long time.*

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*Communion was the high point of the three-hour open-air service for the thousands who thronged the Goodwood Showgrounds to celebrate the enthronement of the new Archbishop of Cape Town, Desmond Mpilo Tutu. It had been a mixture of Anglican High Church with its medieval European pageantry and the rich rhythms of Africa, led by the Archbishop and several other bishops from around the world in their splendid robes. A dozen choirs led the service as thousands sang and swayed to the music.*

*The 'comrades' had been restless during the afternoon. At one point Dr Alan Boesak had had to reprimand them for their lack of respect. One wondered whether they would try to disrupt the service. A tactful promise of a short speech by Dr Boesak and Mrs Albertina Sisulu was offered as a gesture to them.*

*Then came the climactic moment of the Eucharist, the symbolic coming together of the great crowd in a declaration of communal faith. And there were those children of violence and neglect and oppression jostling for a place in the queue.*

*I had been hovering anxiously nearby, as these young men had unceremoniously pushed their way between me and my little son, who stood his ground at the head of the line. I didn't like to be separated in such a great crowd. Communion over, the comrades melted away. As I took my son's hand I had a lump in my throat.*

*All had joined in. Young and old, well-to-do and down-at-heel, black and white, from all walks of life. But all felt bound together by the magic of this day which seemed to project us into the future; into a united, hopeful South Africa.*

# The sanctions debate

*In a continuation of the sanctions debate started in volumes 28 no 2 and 29 no 2, HELEN ZILLE of Cape Western sets out some of the different positions and predictions in the debate.*

The sanctions steamroller has started and who knows where it will end? The Government has begun to hit back, extending 'sanctions' to the UDF by blocking its foreign funds, and to the sub-continent by preparing to repatriate 58 000 Mozambican workers.

This is just the beginning. Internationally, sanctions are likely to gather momentum, turning the South African issue into a full-blown moral crusade. At home, the government will continue to retaliate. There is one thing at least on which the supporters and opponents of sanctions agree: they will herald an extremely painful and messy process, from which no-one in Southern Africa will emerge unscathed.

Yet, supporters of sanctions believe the pain has a purpose and an achievable end: the crushing of apartheid. Others fear it could, over the years, destroy the economy — and with it the hope of creating a just and democratic society.

Thus the fear that a short-term strategy such as sanctions may destroy their long-term goals is an issue which now deeply divides the opponents of apartheid who once comfortably concurred about its abhorrence. Whilst most accept that the rest of the world has the right (if not the duty) to pressure the govern-

ment into rapid change towards 'equal participation' for all South Africans in a negotiated constitution, they differ on appropriate and effective forms of pressure.

It would be easy if one could use the sanctions litmus test to divide the racists and apartheid apologists from the 'genuine' opponents of apartheid. Reality is far more complex. An examination of the different views reveals the strange sleeping partners in South Africa's political bed.

Arguments in favour of sanctions are advanced by constituencies as diverse as the ANC and the UDF, the 'siege economists' within government and the far rightwing. Those opposing sanctions include some classical Marxists, liberals, businessmen, and 'reformists' within government. Then there are the trade unions that occupy the most ambiguous position of all. While they fully support strong pressure against apartheid, they are less than certain whether they are prepared to sacrifice their workers' jobs in the process.

The debate is somewhat academic because sanctions have started. But in other ways it has become more important than ever because, as we reap the consequences, it will be vital to determine whether sanctions are indeed advancing the struggle or whether the unintended consequences are setting it back or subverting its goal of a non-racial democratic society.

A brief account cannot do justice to the complexity of the debate. Yet

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Helen Zille

is seems to be worth a try, even if some of the subtleties are lost in the attempt to categorise different positions. It is particularly difficult to do justice to the pro-sanctions position as the law has, to a large degree, prohibited the promotion of this view.

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## A: Arguments in favour of sanctions

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### 1 The African National Congress

The ANC is committed to pursuing a guerilla war as an important component of its liberation struggle. It is at war with an enemy, and anything that weakens the ability of the enemy to resist (such as economic sanctions) is welcomed. The ANC does not believe that South Africans still have a choice between peace and war under the Nationalist government. The government's 'reform process' is not aimed at achieving universal franchise in a unitary state, but at a form of 'power sharing' between ethnically determined groups, which the ANC (and many other groups) regard as a reformulated version of apartheid. Because the



government refuses to negotiate the transfer of power, there is, at present, no alternative to war. And as the war has already started, the most important objective is to get it over as quickly as possible — a process that can be aided by sanctions.

It is a fallacy to believe that increased foreign investment and trade will lead to a strong economy, fuelling reform and laying the foundation for democracy. On the contrary, economic growth will strengthen the government's ability to pursue its version of reform, increasing military and security expenditure to crush its opponents working for more radical change.

There is also a significant element within the ANC that has little sympathy for further entrenching capitalist economic growth in South Africa. Capitalism is regarded as essentially exploitative, and multi-national capitalism as the ugliest face of an inhuman system, extracting and repatriating huge profits from cheap South African labour and raw materials. Part of the ANC's struggle aims to restructure the economic system, and sanctions could pave the way for that process.

## 2 The 'Tutu' position:

This is a very broad 'pro-sanctions' position, widely held in South Africa and abroad. Its central difference from the ANC position is that it does not regard sanctions as a necessary support for armed struggle, but as an alternative to war. It is the last peaceful method the international community can employ to raise the cost of apartheid so high that the government will be forced to abandon it.

This position also rests on the belief that reform is a sham and that nothing will bring change other than forcing the government's hand. Alternative methods of persuasion, such as 'negotiation' and 'constructive engagement' have patently failed. While they accept that sanctions will have serious economic costs for supporters and opponents of apartheid alike, they believe this is preferable to the alternative — a prolonged civil war in which the government can hold its own, backed by a reasonably strong economy and military. Few are naive enough to believe that sanctions will bring liberation overnight, but they believe the process will be quicker than it

would be without economic pressure.

Yet, even if sanctions do not dramatically hasten the demise of apartheid, they believe there comes a time when a political system is so abhorrent that the world cannot continue business as usual. There may be little the international community can do, but if not sanctions, what? And if not now, when?

Supporters of this position use the example of the sports boycott, saying that it clearly provided the 'incentive' to end some forms of sport apartheid. Without strong pressure the government has no reason to end apartheid.

## 3 'Siege economists'

There are government supporters and economists who say: 'bring on sanctions'. They believe that sanctions will actually boost the South African economy in the short term. Nor are they particularly concerned about the long term because they think South Africa has a greater ability to counter sanctions than the West has to impose them systematically.

They believe that under sanctions, South Africa would keep up to 90 per cent of export revenue. Approximately 70 per cent of that base is made of up precious minerals, which are essentially unblockable. Even those commodities most directly threatened (such as coal, agricultural products and manufactured goods) would find a way through the sanctions net at a discount, with middle-men making millions in the process. Siege economists accept the estimate that the cost of exporting products targeted by sanctions will rise by about 15 per cent. The low value of the Rand, which would probably continue under sanctions, would keep South Africa's exports competitive despite the extra costs incurred.

On the other hand South Africa holds 84 per cent of the world's known reserves of chromium which is vital to the defence and power generating industry in the West; 81 per cent of the world's platinum needed for some explosives, fertilisers and electronic equipment; and 71 per cent of the world's reserves of manganese, used in the manufacture of batteries, various chemicals, steel and cast iron. Siege economists believe a demand for strategic minerals

would continue, despite sanctions, giving South Africa an important lever through which it could apply 'counter-sanctions' against the West. If it had to sell strategic minerals on the black market, it could even inflate the price, making up for losses in other areas.

Sanctions could also boost the local manufacturing industry by encouraging import substitution and diversification. In a situation of economic war introduced by sanctions, local manufacturers could throw protocol to the wind, copying patents and producing strategic products and consumer goods locally. Imports would fall, helping South Africa build up a much needed surplus on the current account of the balance of payments.

Sanctions would also give South Africa strategic leverage in other areas. While the West would have played its trump card, the South African government would still hold a few 'aces'. Sanctions would provide a good reason to repatriate foreign workers (of which there are 350 000 legally employed and an estimated 1 500 000 including 'illegals') to counter the unemployment generated in sanctions-hit sectors.

Moreover sanctions would give the government considerable leverage on its foreign debt repayment. Officially locked out of the international economy, there would be very little incentive for the country to repay its foreign debt. If South Africa reneged, other hard-pressed countries, such as Mexico or Nigeria could follow suit, threatening the international banking system and sending the price of gold (and the South African economy) soaring.

There are also political advantages that could flow from sanctions, argue the siege economists. Firstly it could help the government crack what it calls the international 'blackmail' syndrome by which foreign countries believe they have the right to dictate the course of political developments inside South Africa. The sanctions issue is the ideal issue on which to take a stand, they say, enabling the government to show that foreign intervention will not break, but rather reinforce its determination to pursue its political programme.

Siege economists believe sanctions were unavoidable anyway because the government would not have been able to meet the interna-

tional political demand of majority rule in a unitary state. Any attempt to meet this condition would be far more devastating to the economy than sanctions, they argue, because it would probably bring a Marxist dominated government to power which would lead to economic collapse.

Another political advantage of sanctions would be the leverage it would give the government to smash the ANC's guerilla war in Southern Africa. The ANC cannot conduct this war without bases in neighbouring states, which are heavily dependent on South Africa and hugely vulnerable to 'counter sanctions' and military destabilisation. South Africa could force these countries to their economic knees, demanding that they expel the ANC as a condition for lifting the stranglehold.

Similarly, sanctions would provide the government with a good opportunity to weaken its opposition inside South Africa by cutting off their foreign funding — effectively extending the affect of sanctions to them (This has already happened to the UDF.)

#### 4 The far rightwing

The far rightwing has always been deeply suspicious of multi-national capital. Conspiracy theories abound, but the general consensus is that multi-national capital is a powerful force, wielding its influence across the globe, spurred only by the profit motive and willing to wipe out anything that stands in its way. Its victims are usually small nations trying to preserve their culture, traditions and identity. The rightwing perceives the presence and political involvement of internationally-based big business in South Africa as one of the gravest threats to the survival of the Afrikanervolk.

Politically, multi-national capital aims to promote integration and majority rule, which the far right believes is inimical to the survival of the Afrikaner. Multi-national capital causes more problems than it is worth and its withdrawal would remove a serious political threat to the continuation of apartheid. Nor need whites worry about massive black unemployment as they have no responsibility towards blacks, who must be kept in their homelands by stringent influx control and build their own economies. Moreover,

sanctions and escalating foreign pressure could contribute to the electoral growth of the far right.

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## B: Arguments against sanctions

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### 1 Liberals

The most influential anti-sanctions lobby are South African liberals, epitomised by Mrs Helen Suzman who has spent considerable time and energy arguing against this form of international pressure. However, liberals generally welcome most forms of pressure against apartheid and believe there is no valid argument that can be made against any effective, non-violent means to abolish such an oppressive system. They also have considerable sympathy for the reasons why anti-apartheid forces abroad wish to apply sanctions: they want to have nothing to do with the system, and punish its perpetrators.

But liberals believe that the consequences of sanctions will be precisely the opposite of what these well-intentioned groups think. Once foreign countries have withdrawn (or seriously limited) their economic leverage, they will have forfeited their ability to influence events in South Africa or exert pressure on the government to abandon apartheid. Secondly, there is no indication that sanctions will encourage the government to abandon apartheid — rather the opposite appears to be true.

Although sanctions have certainly made the business community more vocal in its opposition to apartheid (a welcome development) the business community does not keep the government in power. The government's essential electoral support comes from the 40 per cent of all whites employed in the civil service, the artisan class and rural whites, all of whom are moving right under foreign pressure, not left, pushing the government in a more conservative direction and demanding a brake on change.



*Imports of Krugerrands to US and Europe banned*



*Arms sales to SA embargoed*



*Iron and steel imports banned from Europe*



*No landing rights for SAA in US*



*US has banned exports of computers to SA military*

Liberals also believe that if sanctions could work quickly and effectively to destroy apartheid, no reasonable person would oppose them. But sanctions will not ensure a rapid transition. A slowly deteriorating economy will destroy any chance of relatively peaceful incremental change, lurching the country irrevocably into a long and devastating civil war. They recall Harold Wilson's famous prediction that sanctions against Rhodesia would bring down the UDI regime in weeks, rather than months. The war dragged on for another 15 years, claiming 30 000 lives. Sanctions would take even longer, and could exact a much higher cost in South Africa, not only because the country's mineral export-base provides a surer means of evading them, but because of another crucial factor in the South African political equation: the strength and intensity of Afrikaner Nationalism.

Liberals believe the international community fails to comprehend the depth of the perception amongst Afrikaner nationalists that their struggle is for the survival of their nation, its language, culture and traditions in a hostile sub-continent — for which they must retain political power over themselves. Intense ethnic nationalism is more immune than most political forces to the economic cost-benefit analysis that underlies the rationale for sanctions, which would merely reinforce the 'struggle-for-survival' perception and encourage a retreat into the laager.

Nor are liberals insensitive to the question: if sanctions cannot work, what can? They believe the real impetus for genuine change will come from inside the country, and that the strongest weapon blacks have against apartheid is their economic muscle and organised labour power, which can be exercised in consumer boycotts and trade union action. These strategies are only in their infancy and can grow in direct proportion to an expanding economy — but will shrink in direct proportion to a declining one.

Liberals accept that strikers and consumer boycotts are a form of internally-based economic sanction, with the critical difference that they can be employed towards tangible and attainable ends, making gains and reaching a resolution without destroying the economy. Sanctions,

on the other hand, would be irreversible, incremental and self-defeating, blunting the cutting edge of the real weapon blacks had to defeat apartheid: their growing economic clout.

Liberals concede that the anti-apartheid struggle, waged on these lines, would take years, and that blacks want liberation NOW. But the process will not be hastened by sanctions. Indeed, one of the most serious side effects of the sanctions campaign is to perpetuate the myth that liberation is imminent. As Mrs Suzman has put it: 'Tragically, not only is victory not around the corner, it is not even within sight. The transfer of power is not imminent, it is not even under consideration.'

But, she says, change IS under consideration — and even though it seems that the government's version of change is reformulation of apartheid, it does open gaps that could be exploited and manipulated, for ends the government never intended. Sanctions, on the other hand, will close more gaps than they open.

Finally, the destruction of the economy will mean the destruction of the heritage that blacks will inevitably one day inherit. Democracy cannot rise on the basis of a shattered economy. Reasonable economic health may not be a sufficient condition for democracy, but it is a necessary one.

## **2 Reformists in government**

Government 'reformists' oppose sanctions because, unlike the siege economists, they believe sanctions will harm the South African economy — not enough to cause the government of the economy to collapse, but enough to bring reform to a halt.

Reformists dismiss the contention that sanctions can fundamentally harm the South African economy. They point out that the withdrawal of short term loan facilities last year had a far more dramatic impact than trade sanctions could — and this did not bring the economy or bring the government anywhere near the point of collapse. Rather, it impeded the country's medium to long term growth potential. (And despite this, an economic upswing has already begun, they argue).

Trade sanctions cannot fundamentally harm the SA economy, which is highly diversified and has

the technical capacity to manufacture every essential requirement — including liquid fuels. Furthermore, South Africa has been preparing for sanctions for almost two decades, dramatically reducing its demand for strategic imports. The only result of sanctions would be what some call 'a protracted period of below-capacity economic performance'.

This would put the squeeze on State spending — but the government would ensure that military and strategic interests did not suffer. It would prefer to curb 'social spending' in areas such as housing, and education — (which have so recently achieved some measure of fiscal priority), switching its focus directly on 'security' expenditure.

Reformists believe the recent changes have been genuine moves away from apartheid — and that they occurred during or shortly after high periods of economic growth. The rapid economic growth of the 1960's and early 1970's paved the way for labour reforms, and the recognition of the 'permanence' of blacks in urban areas (an acknowledgement that grand apartheid had failed), the granting of home ownership to blacks. And, predict the reformers, if a healthy economic growth rate can be sustained, full industrial citizenship will lead to full social citizenship and culminate in full political citizenship.

Sanctions would not only slow down but possibly reverse this process.

## **3 Marxist position against sanctions**

Although not widely held, there is a 'classical' Marxist argument against sanctions that pops up occasionally and that runs like this: The class struggle is the motor of history and the organised industrial working class is the vanguard of that struggle. Sanctions will limit economic growth and therefore curb the strength of the organised industrialised working class. Moreover, socialist revolutions should ideally take place when capitalism is most advanced. By undermining the economy and the growth of the working class, sanctions set back the progress of the socialist revolution in South Africa and are therefore counter-revolutionary.

## C: Straddling the divide

Trade unions (and workers in general) occupy the most ambiguous position of all. While they strongly support pressure against apartheid, they have never clearly stated their willingness to sacrifice their jobs in the process. This point has been underlined by the available research on the subject. Although Mr Mark Orkin's findings were widely regarded as a rebuff of Prof Lawrence Schlemmer's, both actually reached the same conclusion on the central issue: that approximately 75 per cent of blacks do not support sanctions that could cost them their jobs.

The sanctions recently adopted by

the EEC and American Senate and Congress could jeopardise jobs in agriculture and coal mining, iron and steel. The National Union of Mineworkers has welcomed pressure against apartheid, but warned that if coal miners' jobs are lost through sanctions, the union will consider strike action.

Mr Philip van Niekerk, a leading South African labour journalist, has done the best job of setting out what he calls 'the uncomfortable dilemma of the unions'. Writing about Port Elizabeth, which has a 60 per cent unemployment rate following the Ford Motor Corporation's withdrawal from the city, Mr van Niekerk says that General Motors 'is all that prevents Port Elizabeth from collapsing into a ghost city with a large and hungry black population in its back yard'.

'With an average of five direct dependants per bread winner, if General Motors (which employs 3 500 workers) were to close down perhaps another 84 000 people would be rendered destitute. . . . Workers at GM would certainly not support proposals which would mean that families would have to starve.'

However, all Port Elizabeth's blacks are not against sanctions.

According to one young activist, it would be 'better to die on the road to freedom than to die marking time'.

'For the unions, however, it is a much more complex decision,' says Mr van Niekerk.

Perhaps, some of that complexity will be taken into account, as emotions on both sides of the debate subside and sanctions begin to take their toll.

## The EPG report

In October 1985, the Commonwealth nations motivated inter alia by their concern about the 'explosive situation prevailing in Southern Africa' and considering that only the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of majority rule in a non-fragmented South Africa could lead to a just and lasting solution, called on the authorities in Pretoria to follow certain 'steps':

- the dismantling of apartheid,
- a termination of the state of emergency (that existed at that time),
- the unconditional release of Mr Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners,
- the unbanning of political organisations and a process of dialogue involving the suspension of violence on all sides.

A small group of 'eminent Commonwealth persons was established to encourage the evolution of a process of dialogue'.

Over a period of six months (December 1985 to May 1986) the eminent persons group of seven people from five continents gave, according to their report, 'everything they had to offer — integrity, humanity, compassion, understanding and a wide

experience — to holding back a darkening storm'.

In the end they alas concluded 'The Commonwealth has opened and explored the path to change. The Government of South Africa refuses to take it — indeed, would like, it seems, to seal it off. Sanctions and peace for South Africa have now become one and the same'.

The report that documents the mission deals with an evaluation of what **did** happen with each of the objectives separately — not what **will** happen if sanctions are imposed. Chapter 1, for instance, seeks an answer to the question about whether apartheid was being dismantled and what the nature of reform is. Chapter 2, the issue of violence, 3 — developments and conversations concerning the release of Mr Nelson Mandela and so on.

The methods, extent and quality of the mission's investigations as shown in their report lead one to conclude that they did give 'everything they had to offer'. Their report delves behind the scenes of 'reform' with awareness, compassion and integrity. Although it is written by foreigners it is revealing for all South Africans who do not always have entrance into the offices of officials to discuss State intentions, or who do not travel to remote removal camps for on-the-spot inspections.

*The report is on sale at most leading booksellers.*

**Glenda Webster**

## Anne Butler

ANNE BUTLER, a long time member of the Black Sash died in October 1986 aged 80 years.

We miss and value Anne for her generosity, her fine intellect and her irrepressible and sparkling personality. A loyal, willing and persevering member of the Sash, she was also a devout Christian and her compassion stirred her to action — instanced by her Sash involvement and her vision in setting up the 'Friends of the Alexandra Institute'.

She was a French teacher who started out with a degree from UCT. She then travelled and lived in France. On her return she taught for many years.

She married fairly late in life. Her husband, Sam Butler, was an artist and art master. They had two sons.

Original in mind and appearance, she thought her own thoughts and dressed in her own style — a delightful mixture of Edwardian beads and hippie shawls. She was an inimitable grape-viner to boot.

We in Sash are joined in the loss we feel with members of other organisations with whom she worked and with the students who shared her house.

Our deep sympathy goes to her son Jeremy.

**Mollie Field**

# Goods and services in the sanctions package

**Crucial to any consideration about the effects of sanctions is the question of what items the global term 'sanctions' includes. Restrictions on each item should be viewed separately as effects differ from item to item. To this end Sash has received permission from *Business Day* to publish the following article of October 6 1986.**

The US sanctions package announced last week is the most comprehensive yet by one of SA's trade partners, and follows earlier sanctions moves by Europe and Japan.

Taken separately, many of the trade barriers are of limited impact. However, as the list of countries taking action against SA grows, so does the threat to this country's total trade.

## Coal

Sanctions against SA coal exports remain limited so far. The US, which will ban SA coal from January 1, takes less than 1-million tons (2%) of this country's exports. Value of sales to the US is about R70m.

Japan and the European Community (EC), which take more than 70% of SA's exports, have so far resisted pressure to impose coal sanctions, but industry officials fear the US decision will put pressure on them to follow suit.

SA exported 44-million tons of coal last year and industry officials expect to achieve the same level this year. Of that, the EC takes more than 50% and Japan 20%.

West Germany last month blocked EC efforts to impose coal sanctions, but the issue is to be discussed again early next year. Denmark and France, meanwhile, have unilaterally imposed a ban on more imports.

Rand Mines' Witbank Colliery MD Nilo Zolezzi said: 'The direct effect of the US decision is not significant. More concerning is the possible spin-off it will have among other customers'.

Transvaal Coal Owners' Association (Tcoa) MD Leslie Weiss said: 'I think it is possible Europe will follow the US'.

SA exporters are confident they can find alternative markets for the US coal. Loss of major contracts to Japan and the EC would be more difficult in an over-traded world market.

## Iron and steel

Exports to Europe, worth about R780m last year, have been banned since the end of September.

Japan recently announced a ban on SA pig iron and steel materials. But ex-

porters are still waiting to hear exactly what constitutes 'steel materials'. Pig iron exports to Japan are negligible, and iron ore appears unaffected.

SA can expect to lose about 500 000 tons of steel exports a year to the US. Pretoria's voluntary trade agreement with Washington to limit SA steel imports to 0,45% of US consumption is scheduled to expire on October 1 1989.

## Weapons and defence

US imports of SA ammunition and military vehicles are prohibited immediately, and US exports of munitions to SA are also banned. The latest US decision also prohibits military co-operation between the two countries except intelligence-gathering.

## Sugar

The US has barred further SA sugar imports and transferred this country's import quota to the Philippines. SA expected to export 800 000 tons of sugar this year, of which about 2,5% was earmarked for the US under the quota system. However, SA was asked to double its quota and sources said 40 000 tons have already been delivered for the year. Industry sources say that, at fixed US prices, the loss to SA will be about R32m a year.

## Krugerrands

The US Senate Bill makes permanent Reagan's September 1985 ban on imports of Krugerrands, which accounted for \$486m in sales in 1984, the last full year of trade. Europe has also banned import of Krugerrands, while Japan officially discourages it.

## Uranium

The US ban on SA uranium imports affects about 10% of SA's total exports. US sources say that country imported more than 500 tons last year. Prices of the commodity have slipped from \$45 a lb in 1980 to as low as \$14 a lb last year, but the market has slowly come back to a spot price of \$17 a lb.

Fears were expressed at the weekend that the strict implementation of sanctions could spell the end for several mines in SA and Namibia. Rossing Uranium deputy GM George Deyzel said: 'Applying the uranium sanctions could be disastrous for Namibia'.

## Travel

US government agencies are barred from promoting SA tourism, while Japan has announced it will stop issuing tourist visas to South Africans. Certain

European countries already discourage promotion of SA tourism.

## Technology

The US has banned exports of computers, software and services to the SA military, police and other agencies 'involved in administering apartheid'. Also outlawed in the export of nuclear technology and materials. Japan has already banned export of computers to the SA military or police.

The US Commerce Department said computers topped the list of US sales to SA last year, accounting for \$80m of the \$1,21bn in total exports. It was not known what portion of the \$80m went to government agencies covered by the sanctions. Nuclear export figures were not available.

## Tax

The Bill terminates a 1946 bilateral treaty intended to prevent businesses from paying taxes on the same income to both countries. The Bill instructs the Secretary of State to terminate the treaty and the protocol of the avoidance of double taxation.

## Investment

The US ban on new investment in SA and loans to the SA government and agencies controlled by it, is largely a case of legislating what already exists. Foreign banks — and not just those in the US — have been withdrawing, rather than investing, capital and credits from SA for more than 18 months.

This pressure on the capital account has already resulted in a lower exchange rate, higher inflation and a lower rate of real economic growth. As long as the capital outflow continues, SA will have no choice but to run a large surplus on the current account.

'No US loans or investment have been coming into the country, purely because bankers and companies feel the risk is too high, and it is unlikely that they will change their minds soon,' says a local banker.

The ban does not, however, prevent US companies from reinvesting profits generated from SA subsidiaries. Nor does it cover sales on open account (mainly between parent and subsidiary), short-term trade credits or the re-scheduling of existing debt.

## Airlines

The US has banned landing rights to SA Airways. Japan has already announced a similar ban.

## Still detained

## Those released

*Victoria Vena*

*Victoria is also the chairman of the United Women's Organisation in Uitenhage*



*Gay Spiller*



*Peter Kerchoff*

## Those restricted . . .

. . . and no longer allowed to participate in Black Sash activities

### Fettered freedom

Several Black Sash members were released from detention — but under certain very restrictive conditions . . .

#### Conditions of release of [REDACTED]

The said [REDACTED] shall not without the written consent of the Divisional Commissioner of the South African Police for the Eastern Province Division, during the period from the date of his release until 11 June 1987:

- 1 absent herself from the magisterial district of [REDACTED]
- 2 (i) prepare, compile, publish or disseminate in any manner whatsoever any publication as defined in Section 1 of the Internal Security Act, 1982 (Act 74 of 1982);  
(11) participate or assist in any manner whatsoever in the preparation, compilation, publication or dissemination of any publication as so defined;  
(iii) contribute, prepare, compile or transmit in any manner whatsoever any material for publication in any publication as so defined;
- 3 take part in any manner whatsoever in the activities or affairs of the following organisations:
  - United Democratic Front;
  - Grahamstown Rural Committee;
  - Black Sash;
  - Grahamstown Advice Office

Signed at PRETORIA on this 30th day of September 1986.



*Bridget Hilton-Barber*



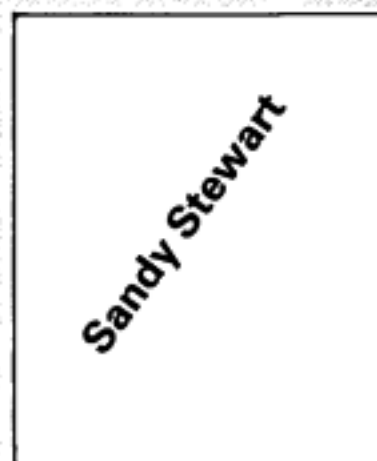
*Joy Harnden*



*Louise Vale*



*Ann Burroughs*



*Priscilla Hall*

# Rural development

According to surveys conducted by Operation Hunger in 1982/83, the average household in the homelands received a cash income of R49,60 per month compared with the barest minimum needed for survival in the same year, R92 per month.

A year before the University of Stellenbosch published statistics which showed that 43% of black children throughout the country had so little nourishment that they suffered from clinically diagnosable malnutrition. Those in the rural areas are worse off. And with the deepening economic crisis more up-to-date figures, if available, show a much more barren prospect.

Yet the question of rural poverty receives so little attention, especially in the present crisis. It's a complex problem involving a variety of issues such as agricultural methods, soil conservation, land distribution, over-grazing, appropriate crop production, utilisation of resources such as trees, as well as a range of social, political and economic problems related to it.

## The land

*The question of land redistribution is not as simple as it may sound. In this article Mr PETER MOLL, from Cape Town, but currently at Oxford writing a PhD in Development Economics considers some of the possibilities, with the problems attendant on them, for improving yields in the homeland areas in particular.*

The extremes of wealth and poverty for which South Africa is famous are no more evident than in the rural sector. The average white farm is seven times larger than the average USA farm. Yet, at the other extreme, the fundamental cause of inadequate output in the homeland areas is that there are too many people and too few land- and non-land resources. Current farm sizes in these areas, together with low levels of inputs such as fertiliser, trap people in poverty.

### The need for science-based agricultural inputs

In most developing countries, especially those in Latin America and Asia, smallholders have shown a remarkable capacity to utilise modern inputs like high-yielding varieties of seed, fertiliser and pesticide, thereby raising their crop yields to levels comparable to those in the developed countries.

This process did not occur among

South Africa's smallholders. A good indicator of the agricultural stagnation in the bantustans is their poor cereal yields. Many different data sources show that maize yields in the reserves fluctuate around 200-400 kg/ha in the period 1948 to the present. These yields are extremely low, and are due to the fact that virtually no fertilisers and other chemical inputs are applied. On the other hand, in 'white' South Africa yield stagnated around 600 kg from 1911 to 1952, and then suddenly rose, constantly to peak at 3.4t in 1981 before falling to 1-2t in the subsequent drought.

Research shows that rural incomes are raised by moving from 'traditional' natural resource-based agriculture to science-based agriculture where modern inputs from the industrial sector are utilised to raise productivity. In the course of this century, fertiliser prices have fallen dramatically, enabling farmers all over the world to increase their fertiliser usage and raise their yields. Farmers who do not follow suit are trapped in a low-input, low-output and consequently low-income syndrome — as in the South African reserves. The reasons for their stagnation have been well rehearsed and need only be stated briefly here as: discrimination in product and input markets, the allocation of State spending, general and agricultural education, and transport networks; overcrowding due to population removals and influx control; and, as a consequence of all these policy-induced factors, serious deterioration of the soil.



Peter Moll

There are two points that need stressing: (1) the quality of life of these people can be greatly improved at relatively low expense; but (2) agriculture alone does not have the capacity to take them out of their poverty. Point (1) is clear enough to anyone who cares to take a look in Transkei, Ciskei or KwaZulu. Women frequently spend half their day fetching water from faraway streams, and collecting firewood from a fast-dwindling supply. Public works programmes could employ people using cheap labour-intensive methods, eg shovels and wheelbarrows, building dams and roads. At greater cost, electrification could be introduced. ESCOM is at present getting electricity to white farmers, who are widely dispersed; the cost per person of electrification in the reserves would probably be one-tenth what it is in 'white' South Africa, due to the higher concentration of people.

The only prospect for income improvement in the reserves in the long term is through a massive out-migration of people combined with a massive influx of resources — credit, science-based inputs, and training.

### Redistribution of land

Another area in which change can be contemplated is in land redistribution. Agricultural census statistics indicate that South Africa has one of the most unequal land ownership distributions in the world. The question is whether land could be redistributed to agricultural labourers, reserve dwellers and unemployed

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

people without inducing a food shortage, high food prices and consequent heavy income losses for urban workers. If land redistribution were likely to have such results, the urban working and middle classes would resist it, even (or especially) under majority rule.

Numerous radical land reforms have been undertaken in communist and capitalist countries this century. In several of them, notably Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, productivity (measured in output per ha) rose as a result of the redistribution, because it gave small farmers greater incentives to work harder. A land reform in 'white' South Africa would differ from these models because it would entail breaking up an already well-developed agricultural system into smaller holdings, and the creation of farmers in a kind of middle size range — smaller than the present white average (over 1 300 ha) and larger than the reserve average (12-22ha). It would not be enough merely to turn land over to farmers without appropriate training and infrastructural supports, for they would be unable to compete with the technologically advanced sector and would retreat into production for subsistence. In short, land redistribution does not automatically imply effective redistribution of much income.

From this there emerge three types of constraint on the nature of a land reform. The first is urbanites' fears of rising food prices, which constrains a land reform to be either

'price-efficient', or so small in scope that it does not affect prices. The second is land availability. The third is the availability of finance for training, compensation for expropriated land (unless it is all confiscated), staffing needs for the land reform agency, research into small-farm production systems and technology, etc.

As regards the second constraint, if the income-producing capacity of the new farms were to be roughly equivalent to mining wages, viz about R5 000 pa maize or wheat farms would have to be at least 40 ha in size. (Interestingly this was the size of farms created in the New Deal programme in the USA in the 1940s). Suppose all the land sown to wheat and maize in South Africa were redistributed — some 5.6 million ha: then 140 000 new farms could be created.

As regards the third constraint, data on land settlement schemes throughout the world show that this method of job creation is far from cheap. Dryland (ie non-irrigated) settlement costs anything from \$6 500 to \$22 000 per family at 1984 prices according to international economic data. Suppose that settlement were undertaken along the lines of the World Bank, or the New Deal, or the Italian land reform of the 1950s, with good training and effective support structures. Then my research suggests that even if as much as half of the entire agriculture budget were devoted to land reform for five years running, only 50 000

farms could be created. This is a minuscule figure compared to estimates of unemployment which vary from two to four million. If the State adopted a heavy agrarian orientation, and spent half the agriculture, community development and defence budgets, some 400 000 farms would be created. Clearly it is the financial, and not the land, constraint that is binding.

### Conclusion

The above represents a non-collectivist approach to the 'land question'. This is not to say that this approach is superior to collectivisation. It is merely that collectivisation is a most unlikely prospect given that South Africa's economy and political traditions are tied up with the West; consider the socialist rhetoric but capitalist practice of post-liberation Zimbabwe.

There appear to be two broad areas where institutional change could improve the welfare of the poor in homeland areas. Firstly, relatively cheap State intervention in the reserves could greatly improve the welfare of the poorest living there. For significant income improvement, however, people will have to move out, farm sizes will have to increase, and resources will have to move in. Secondly, land redistribution in 'white' South Africa could become a major job-creator, but this will not be a 'cheap fix' because the required financial resources per family would be considerable.



*The average size of white farms in SA is seven times bigger than those in the USA*

*photo courtesy of Financial Mail*



## The changes

**Mr MARK GANDAR** development economist of the Institute of Natural Resources, Natal University, Pietermaritzburg, argues that the development of subsistence agriculture will not provide people in homeland areas with a reliable means of survival. The development of homeland agriculture must go hand-in-hand with non-agricultural development to provide jobs and markets elsewhere. Furthermore, a number of technical and socio-economic changes such as the development of infrastructure, the removal of the migrant labour system, need to be made to advance agriculture in the homeland areas.

The following extract on the subject comes from a paper he delivered to Nafcoc (National African Federated Chamber of Commerce) in August 1985.

Subsistence agriculture is a rickety and leaking vessel. There is a limit to the amount of patching up which can be done. In 1980, the value of agricultural production in the homelands (R363 million) was less than half the value of the remittances from migrants (R753 million) (Simkins 1984a). A common finding of numerous surveys of subsistence



Woman with wheat. The lack of physical infrastructure is a constraint to rural development

communities throughout South Africa is that most families cannot achieve self-sufficiency. Indeed, self-sufficiency in maize in many areas has been a mathematical impossibility for decades. A viable subsistence herd of cattle would have to number 16 to 20 animals and only a small minority of families could possibly own that number. Irrespective of inputs, subsistence agriculture will not contribute to black advancement, though production may be important to many rural households.

### Rural development

Any model for agricultural development in the homelands must be part of a rural development programme. In this sense it differs from established commercial agriculture in which one can speak of the agricultural industry as a distinct entity. In undeveloped rural areas, however, a much greater degree of integration of the agricultural and non-agricultural components of rural development is required.

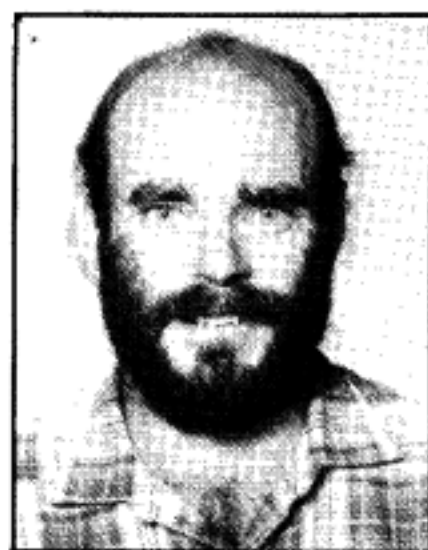
There is a symbiosis between the two components. Non-agricultural development provides jobs to take the pressure off the land and allow consolidation of agriculture. The population it supports provides a market for local agricultural products. Rural industry may be based on processing or manufacturing from locally grown produce.

The multifaceted approach allows the greatest number of people to participate in a viable rural economy. It also gives a degree of stability to the rural economy because of its diversity.

### Constraints

To understand what reforms are required, it is useful to look first at the constraints on agriculture. They fall into two groups: technical and socio-economic. **The technical constraints include:**

- a lack of physical infrastructure
- b inadequate extension
- c inadequate availability of production inputs
- d inadequate information about available resources for planning
- e commitment of much of the prime agricultural land to white commercial agriculture.



Mark Gandar

### The socio-economic constraints include:

- a the high population density resulting in uneconomic units
- b the system of migrant labour which in effect selects out the able-bodied and educated and, in the words of Mountain (1979), 'saps (rural areas) of their vitality and strength, leaving them leached and barren, the repositories of struggling mothers, of the old, the sick, the young and the tired.'
- c Rural poverty on the one hand and lack of privatisation of land on the other, work against investment in agricultural improvements.
- d High degree of illiteracy and innumeracy.

### Reforms needed

The agricultural and related reforms required for the advancement of black rural areas are varied and will not all apply to every situation. These are some of the most widely applicable:

- a Agriculture must be located within all overall development strategy.
- b Neither the methods of subsistence agriculture nor of developed commercial agriculture are necessarily appropriate. New and imaginative solutions are required which are compatible with the development strategy.
- c Non-farm employment in rural areas and security of residence in urban areas should be provided to encourage the population which is not totally dependent on agriculture to move off the land. There is grave danger of a serious ecological collapse unless the pressure is eased.

— continued on page 19

### The crops

**Prof HELEN GARNETT, head of the Department of Microbiology at the University of the Witwatersrand, holds the view that agricultural production in the homelands and 'marginal areas' can be improved by 'bending the plant to suit the environment' rather than 'bending the environment to suit the plant'. She discusses this and the development of alternative crops in the article below.**

In 1984, the maize crop failed due to drought and South Africa spent R1 000 million on importing grain and a vast amount in drought relief to keep farmers on the land. The population of southern Africa, including the independent states is currently 32 million and is expected to rise to 45 million by 2001. We will not be able to feed this population with our current agricultural practices and the desperation will drive many more people to overcultivate and overgraze many of our marginal areas with their saline and low nutrient soils thus increasing desertification and hence further decreasing our ability to feed ourselves in future years.

Apart from other considerations such as redistribution of food and birth control, a solution lies in the introduction and development of new species which will be better suited to the large marginal areas of our country and which will produce an economic return under drought and pressure from disease.

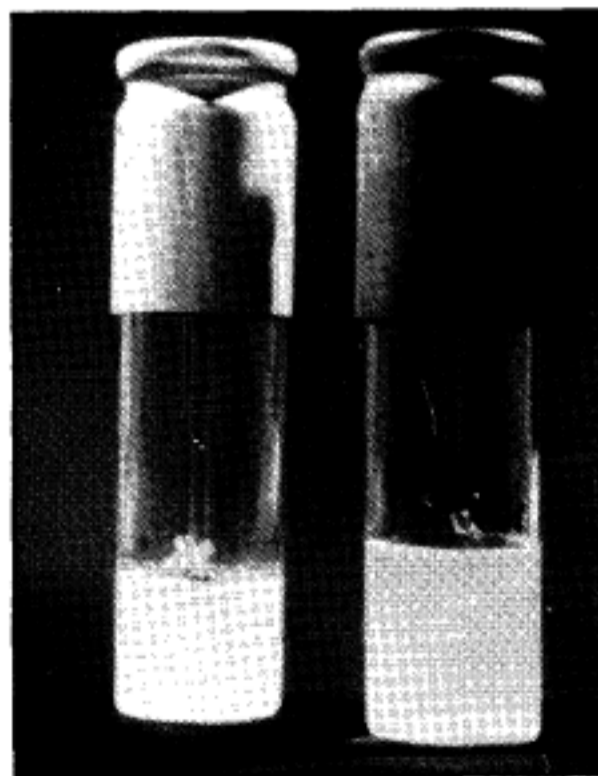
In the last few decades South Africa, like most countries in the world, has concentrated money and effort on 'bending the environment' (by the use of fertilisers, pesticides and irrigation) to produce high yields of a few species that were mostly all imported from overseas — for example, maize and deciduous fruit. Some 95% of our nutritional requirements come from only about 30 kinds of plants. The whole world's diet is based on only eight — out of a potential 80 000 edible plants which the earth has to offer.

### The introduction of alternative crops

Thus there is a wealth of alternative crops for us to explore, both locally and abroad, to provide more viable sources of food and income for the people in marginal areas and in the homelands where production is poor and malnutrition rife. These are the areas that have been almost totally neglected in the race to produce crops with a high export value.

A legume-crop, for instance, with a cash-income yield was successfully introduced into Kangwane. Guar which is actually indigenous to Africa was taken from Somalia to India and Pakistan where it was cultivated in large quantities. From there Guar gum was imported back into South Africa for the extraction of metals in the metallurgical industries.

The leaves of the Guar plant can be eaten by people and cattle and the bean pulp that remains after the gum has been extracted is a good source of protein cereal. By means of experimental plots, and with the backing of the chief, the crop was introduced into Kangwane where it flourished in the drought to produce a cash return for the people who grew it when their maize crops failed.



*Cell culture — By means of biotechnology a cell placed in a particular growing medium can produce a plant or tree. The plant is forced to respond to different types of climatic conditions by being placed under stress while still in the test tube.*



*Prof Helen Garnett*

There are many other local examples of plants which grow wild which people collect and eat or use for medicinal purposes. These need to be researched and developed as alternative crops which are already acceptable.

Further afield plants that grow in marginal areas in other parts of the world could be introduced into South Africa without expensive measures to 'bend' the environment. For instance, the buffalo gourd which grows in the desert in Israel is a rich source of protein.

### The use of modern biotechnology

Modern biotechnology has made advances in two areas to make it possible to 'bend plants' in order to produce crops that will flourish in harmony with their environment, rather than in spite of it.

Firstly, tissue culture has given us the ability to regenerate whole plants from pieces of plant tissue such as root tips, shoot tips and single plant cells. These bits of tissue when put under different kinds of stress, develop mutations and in this way a new strain of plant is produced that survives better in a different environment.

Secondly, by pooling the genes from two cells of two different plants it is possible to introduce new properties into the recipient cell. For instance, in Israel these biotechnological methods have been used to develop a tomato plant that flourishes in saline soil and can thus be grown beside the Dead Sea. Here in South Africa we have the 'resurrection plant' which has the unique characteristic of being able to turn back from brown to green when it has apparently died due to lack of water.

— continued on page 19

### The cattle

**Over-grazing and environmental degradation are by-products of overcrowded homelands where cattle ownership is a traditional means of subsistence. The vicious circle of poverty grows worse as more and more people with their cattle derive less and less benefit from the increasingly denuded soil. Mr PAUL COLVIN, an agricultural economist at the Institute of Natural Resources addresses this problem in a pamphlet entitled 'Welfare Economics and African Pastoralism'. In it he contends that attempts to solve the problem of livestock management can only be successful when planners bridge the perception gap between themselves and the planned by 'accommodating the value benefits stemming from cattle accumulation'.**

It is only comparatively recently that there has been belated recognition by international development agencies of the fundamental need for sociological/anthropological studies of the dynamic and highly integrated processes that exist with the whole man/cattle/land equations of African pastoralism. The need for a detailed re-appraisal of the social factors has arisen only through a long succession of failures to upgrade or develop the traditional livestock sector.

#### The value benefits

A review of recent socio-economic studies of traditional cattle-keeping in southern Africa demonstrates that the ability of herders to respond to commercial and market-related forces is profoundly regulated by their own subsistence requirements and internal priorities. Returns from in-kind produce and service benefits far exceed those achieved through commercial sales for cash when the value of output is expressed in terms of local exchange rates and basic subsistence needs. This is particularly the case for owners of small-sized herds, less than 20 head, and where draught oxen are needed for

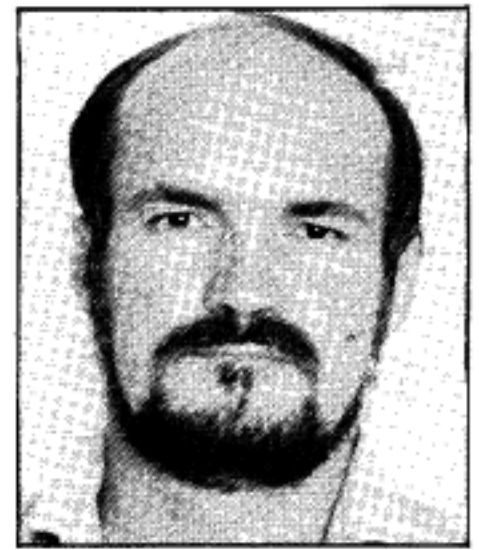
arable cultivation.

So, contrary to popular belief that herders are bound by a 'cattle complex', anthropologists have shown that herders are maximisers of utility, and that they behave in an economically rational manner in relating scarce cattle resources to their multiple requirements. The utility values derived from cattle include meat, milk, transport, ploughing, manure, fuel — at a primary level, followed by social security, religious needs, social status through to a means of deriving hard cash, at higher levels.

If one places a money-value on the utilities derived from cattle one reaches the conclusion that cattle earn greater returns than savings deposited in a bank. The costs of maintaining them, apart from the risk of theft and illness, are minimal. In these money-terms, anthropologists estimate that cattle provide a 20-30% return on investment.

#### The need for economic self-sufficiency

To achieve economic independence and reach the level at which cattle can regularly be sold for cash, each cattle owner needs to have a certain number of cattle. In KwaZulu the ideal herd size is 20-25. Thus in situations of communal grazing as exist in South African homelands a conflict of interest may arise between individuals seeking to maximise their benefits by expanding the size of their own herds, and that of the gain in social welfare that would result from



Paul Colvin

having fewer cattle grazing on the communal land.

#### Resistance to marketing strategies

Attempts to commercialise the traditional livestock sector by means of a higher turnover of cattle for beef exports and an increased emphasis on fewer but more productive cattle will generally be resisted by the indigenous community because:

1 the market prices for beef are too low at present to induce a herder to dispose of his savings (in the form of cattle) to satisfy limited consumer wants. Also, social and contractual obligations make it difficult to do so. In the absence of alternative investment opportunities yielding an economic return equivalent to that of keeping cattle, only a minimal number of cattle will be sold to meet emergency needs.

2 Relative few owners in the homelands have reached self-sufficiency with herds of 20-25 cattle.

— continued on page 19



The value benefits that an African pastoralist receives from keeping cattle exceed the benefits of a cash sale.

photo: Gill de Vlieg

### The natural environment

**The need for more agricultural land for human beings raises the question of our natural heritage. Are nature and game reserves fenced off at the expense of human beings who would survive better if they were allowed access to the resources in them — the trees, grass, plants and animals?**

**Mr KARL LANE, ecologist in the Botany Department at the University of Cape Town shows that through a more rational and practical approach to conservation man and his environment need not be at odds. It's a question of planned utilisation based on a healthy respect for the need to maintain the natural environment for posterity. But South Africa like other third world countries does have almost insurmountable barriers to implementing this approach.**

Most people think of conservation in terms of the Collins dictionary definition; 'the act of keeping from change, loss, injury etc.' But Collins has a second definition: it's the one many of the world's conservationists would agree we need to use if we are to have any hope of preserving our natural resources, including wild places — 'the protection, preservation and careful management of natural resources and of the environment.' It implies a degree of utilisation.

#### Sustained yield utilisation

The idea of utilisation of resources on a sustained yield basis is not new. In 1966 at an IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) conference in Kenya statistics were presented to show the possible financial rewards of utilising plants and animals on a sustained yield basis.

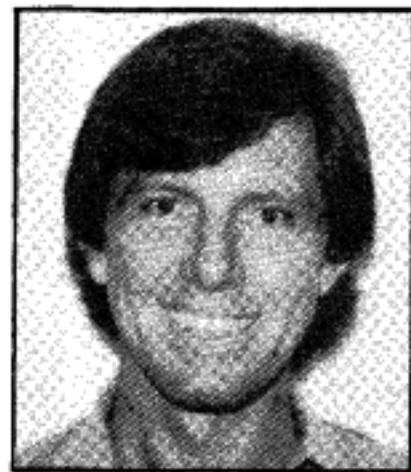
The idea was given respectability in 1980 when the IUCN published its World Conservation Strategy for the long-term survival of the environment. Simply put, the plan is to maintain the systems which preserve soil, air and water quality and also species which are and may become

useful to Man whilst attempting to provide immediate relief and advantages for the world's poor.

#### The use of animals, plants, trees

The people of Africa have traditionally utilised resources extensively for such things as medicines, food and building materials. For example, 75% of the protein requirements of the people of Ghana and Zaire are provided by wild life. In Botswana, 9 million kg of meat is provided by game which then releases beef for export to earn foreign currency. Added to this, tourism and hunting also contribute considerably to the stocks of currency and to job opportunities.

Many wild plants, used as traditional sources of medicine, have also been incorporated into western medicine chests — Cinchona bark, a source of malaria drugs, earns Kenya \$30 million each year, rosy periwinkle in Madagascar produces alkaloids which give 50-80% remission for several forms of cancer and 99% remission for acute lymphocytic



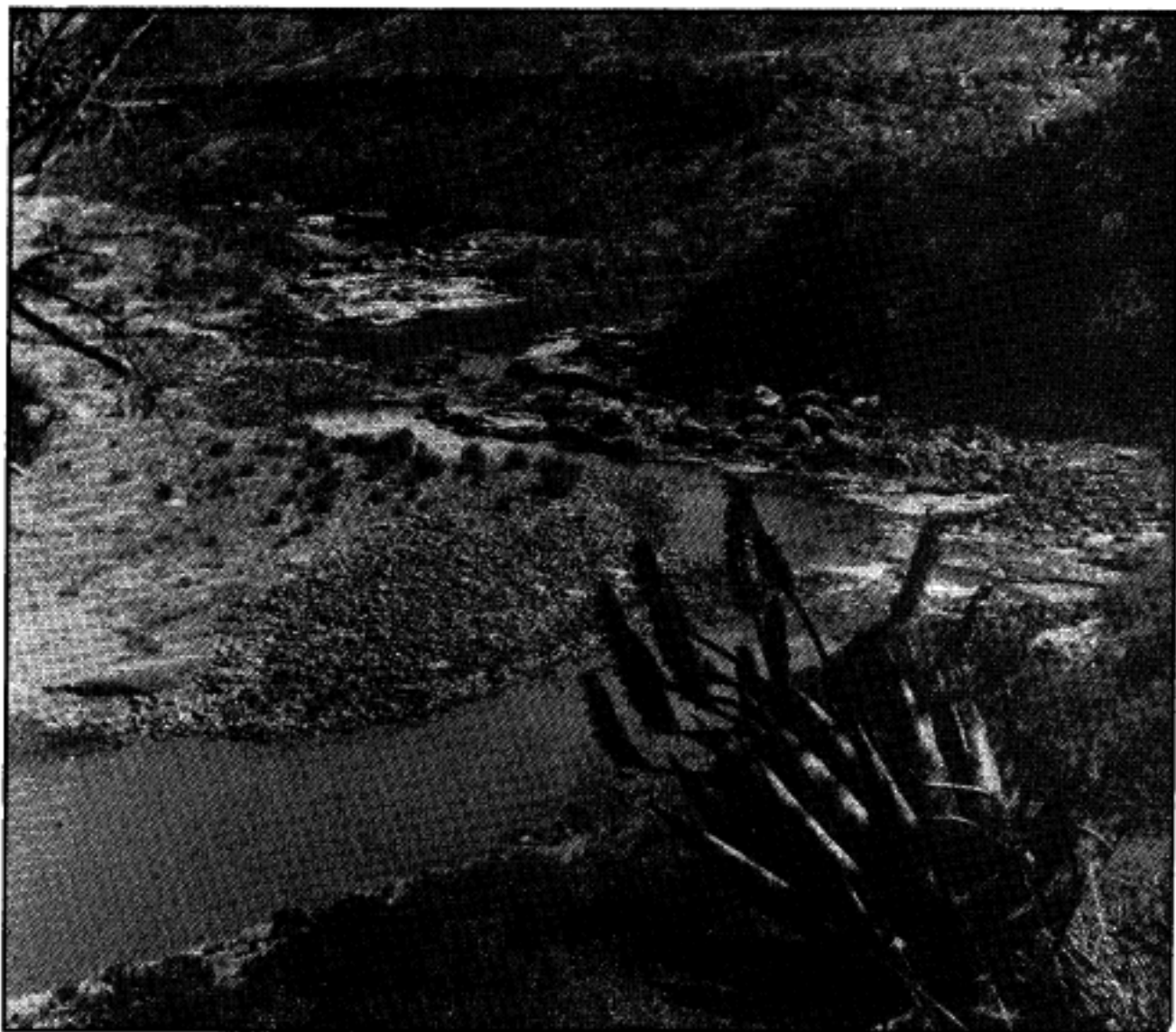
Karl Lane

leukaemia, aspirin extracted from willow bark and many more.

Trees and other vegetation are essential to prevent erosion and regulate the flow of water. Vegetation on watersheds and catchments acts like a sponge to hold rainwater and release it slowly over a long period of time. In this way streams flow all year round and aquatic life and fishes can survive. If the vegetation is cut floods often result and the fast flowing water carries the soil away and eventually deposits it in dams and estuaries that become blocked in a short space of time.

Finally, wild life has an aesthetic and educational value which will become increasingly important as stan-

— continued on page 19



The partially eroded Tugela river valley. Trees and other vegetation are essential to prevent erosion and regulate the flow of water all year round

photo: courtesy The Star

### The changes

— from page 15

- d As far as possible, land use should be planned to optimise the available resources. The reconciliation of this aim with the land use patterns imposed by sociocultural factors is one of the challenges of development.
- e While traditional land tenure is undoubtedly an important obstacle to agricultural improvement, it is often exaggerated. Changes in land tenure are generally responses to, not precursors of, agricultural changes. It will sometimes be wiser to formalise spontaneous changes as they occur in response to economic stimuli, rather than to tinker with the system in the hope of catalysing agricultural development.

### The crops

— from page 16

Research is currently being done to determine what controls this 'behaviour' in the plants so that we can fuse it into other plants in the future.

At the end of her address during the Senate Special Lectures in 1985 Prof Garnett concluded:

'I believe that by understanding the soil types that we have, by realising that we are an African country and not a temperate northern hemisphere country, and in so doing accepting the needs of our peoples and the potential use of lands, and by pooling the skilled human resources that we have, that we can make this country the bread basket for Africa and develop industrially important raw materials.'

### The cattle

— from page 17

(The average size of herd for those who keep cattle, and many don't, is in the region of 8-9 per herd.) Thus the aim of most potential cattle farmers is to increase the size of their herds still further. In this situation, improved marketing incentives and range conservation campaigns urging people to sell more cattle will have little impact, since it will be dif-

ficult to persuade people to act against their own self-interest.

3 Having fewer cattle per unit of land would also mean a reduction in the number of people owning cattle, to allow for a relatively few commercial ranchers. It may be necessary to introduce land reform, through entrenchment of property rights and the enclosure of holdings, so as to protect individual ranching interests. This runs counter to traditional social practices and will be actively opposed by the majority in the community.

#### Implications for policy

Regional surveys provide evidence for the need to devise livestock development strategies organised around the philosophy of integrated rural development. This requires a more general commitment on the part of the Government to tackle related issues in such fields as land tenure and reform, urbanisation and employment, education, regional market and infrastructural development etc. Without attention and investment in support of measures of this kind, it would seem that realistic improvements in traditional cattle ownership and husbandry cannot be achieved through production-based incentives alone.

### The natural environment

— from page 18

dards of living rise. It would be a tragedy if the people of Africa had no wild places left to enjoy when they finally gain the opportunity to do so. It is very sad that much of the old heritage of Africa will be lost to them.

#### The obstacles

In South Africa implementing a policy of sustained yield utilisation is fraught with many almost insurmountable problems which have to be addressed if we are ever to arrive at a happy balance between people and their environment:

1 The population, growing rapidly at 2,7% and likely to double in the next 20 years, places a tremendous strain on the environment. For example, the population of KwaZulu is already double the

maximum the area should support.

- 2 Over-grazing in the Karoo, in the over-crowded homelands and in other marginal areas turns vast tracts of land into desert every year.
- 3 People in the homelands and other marginal areas need indigenous trees as these are their only source of fuel and building material. The government does not have an agro-forestry policy of any significance and attempts by others to establish woodlots have not been very successful. The loss of trees contributes further to the process of desertification.
- 4 There is a general lack of understanding about the importance of the environment amongst the population of South Africa. Educational and environmental awareness programmes are inadequate and there is often suspicion on the part of black people when white people try to implement programmes that are apparently in conflict with their immediate needs.
- 5 The resources needed to combat these problems are great and here in South Africa very little is left for conservation. It is possible to reclaim deserts, to plant trees — China has done it but it requires the mobilisation of thousands of people and financial resources. The USA with all its resources only just manages to contain soil erosion.
- 6 Added to all this, at the present time the tense political situation makes it difficult to work in some areas — for instance to collect data for research.
- The political situation will eventually sort itself out but the destruction of natural resources will not. Our natural environment is under severe threat and we need its resources to sustain our growing population. We all need to join forces in an apolitical struggle to conserve what we have left for a healthier, more prosperous and enjoyable long-term future.

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# Advice office workshop

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*The first ever national advice office workshop held in Port Elizabeth on August 23-24 1986 highlighted the need black people have to seek help with problems related mainly to getting and keeping the right to live and work in urban areas, to maintaining employment, surviving unemployment or dealing with repression.*

*In this report SUE JOYNT of Cape Western, outlines these problems and summarises the discussion which took place amongst the 55 members present concerning an appropriate Black Sash response to them.*

This was the first national meeting of Black Sash advice office workers outside of annual national conferences. The weekend was structured to provide an initial day of input followed by a morning of informed discussion on the functioning and direction of the advice offices.

The input session was divided between the problems arising from

- the abolition of influx control, new identity documents and restoration of citizenship;
- labour legislation and the handling of problems experienced by non-organised workers and
- input from the rural field workers employed by the Sash.

The day was rounded off by the participants dividing into groups to identify areas of concern to be covered in the next day's discussion.

## **The abolition of Influx Control**

The Abolition of Influx Control Act (promulgated on July 1, 1986) has removed from the statute book all legislation which discriminated against the freedom of movement and availability for work of black

South Africans. It is a South African law which deals with South African citizens only, since those nine million South African citizens who lost their citizenship when Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthaswana were made independent are now foreigners or aliens and are subjected to the stringent restraints of the Aliens Act (as amended in 1984).

Some of them (The Minister of Home Affairs reckons about 1 750 000) will be eligible to have their South African citizenship restored to them and some will be accepted as permanent residents in SA and can apply for SA identity documents. The rest, ie the citizens of the TBVC countries, will be aliens and will not be allowed to work in South Africa unless they have work permits.

Underlying the discussions of the workings of these new laws was the vexing question of whether the Black Sash should have anything to do with such obviously divisive laws in the first place. It was agreed however, that we should make every effort to talk to as many organisations as possible — community, trade union, employer, academic etc — so that people were accurately informed about the meaning and effects of this legislation. The way has been paved for this work by the detailed analyses drawn up by Sheena Duncan who led this discussion.

## **Labour legislation**

We then moved on to look at labour legislation. Jillian Nicholson provided each region with a dossier of notes covering the relevant laws and information regarding the availability of wage determinations and Industrial Court agreements that lay down minimum wage levels and other conditions of work in certain industries. She clarified the hierarchy of labour practice controls and put forward the suggestion that advice office workers should aim to become less reliant on lawyers in initiating applications for conciliation boards to deal with disputes, cases of unfair labour practice or dismissals in situations where there are no industrial councils.

Strategies for handling the increasing number of problems and delays with benefit claims to the unemployment insurance fund were discussed. It was also agreed that advice office workers (and the wider



Gill de Vlieg

Sue Joynt

Black Sash membership) should look to investigating more developmental approaches to unemployment. For instance, there is a great need and scope for job creation projects both at grassroots, self help level and by the established business community.

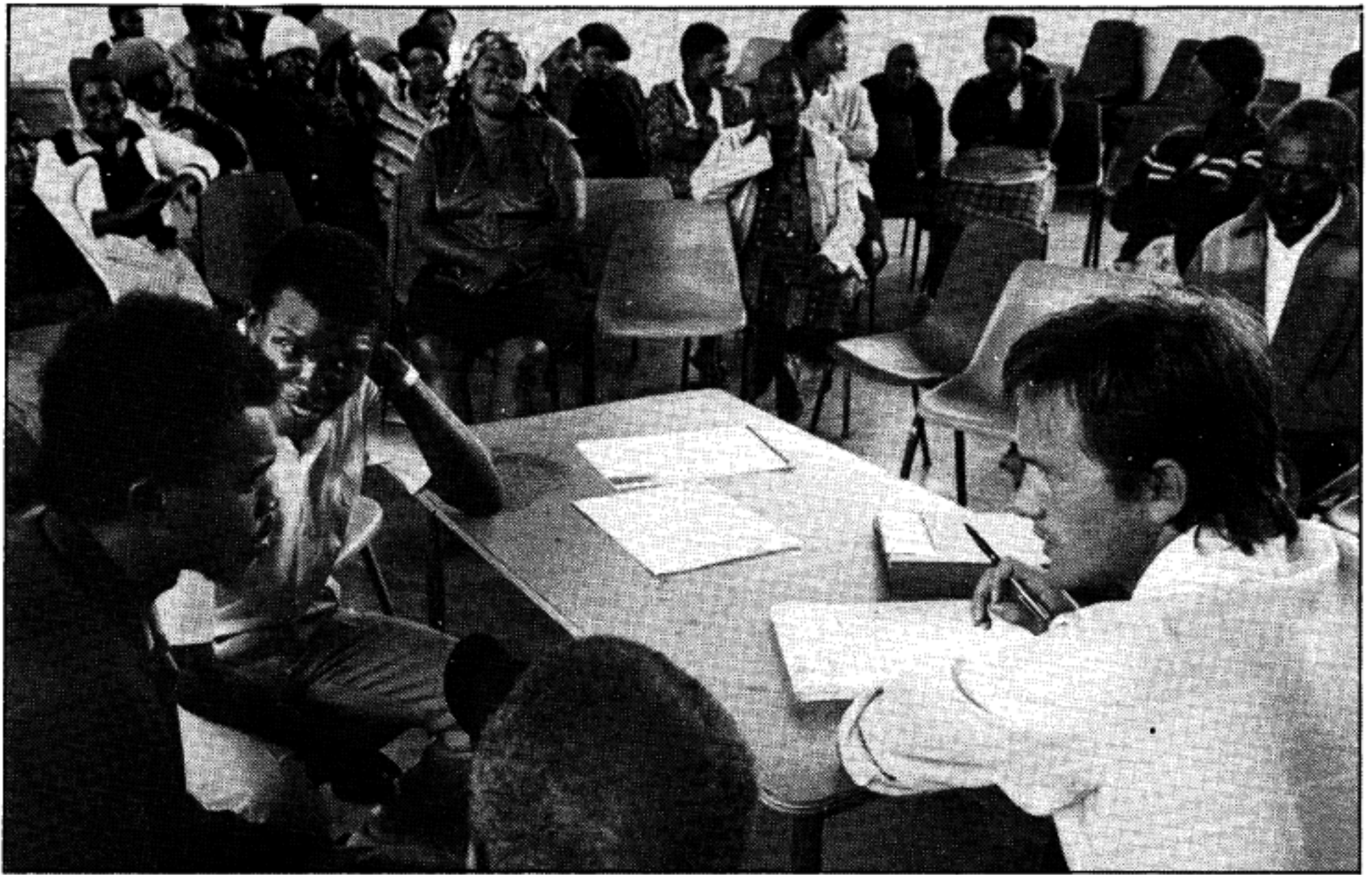
## **Forced removals and other repressive measures**

Rural field worker Aninka Claassens described elements of TRAC (Transvaal Rural Action Committee) work in Transvaal, Cheryl Walker, newly established in Grahamstown gave details of the work she has started to do on detentions in that area and Sue Joynt described the court monitoring of public violence cases that has been carried out in Cape Town and its surrounding magisterial districts. Judy Chalmers described the circle of bladewire fencing around New Brighton township and the state of tension and repression in the Port Elizabeth area and Janet Davies followed this up with similar descriptions of life in Duncan Village.

## **Discussion on Sash response**

On Sunday we divided up into four groups to discuss the questions thrown up in the previous session. These fell into broad categories such as the question of neutrality, the role and direction of the advice offices and the way we deal with unemployment.

The importance of remaining neutral to divergent black political groups and accessibility to the victims of all kinds of conflict was emphasised. At the same time it is clear that the Black Sash cannot be neutral in some of the conflicts surrounding us. Our role is to continue to expose injustice and to promote the



Philip van Ryneveld (right) assists with information in the Cape Town advice office.

Guy Tillim



Beulah Rollnick

Beulah Rollnick reported on the involvement of Black Sash advice office workers in the formation of Unemployed Workers Committees which aim to respond to the problems facing the unemployed, particularly their ability to use the UIF.

They aim to organise the unemployed for support in working out alternative means of survival. Cosatu has provided the coordinating committee with an office while the Industrial Aid Society has already employed a field worker.

principles of democracy. Group counselling and facilitating discussions between groups is an impor-

tant aspect of our work and we will therefore be working on developing the appropriate skills. At the same time, however, confidentiality needs to be respected. The main object of advice office work should be to equip the people who come to us with the information and understanding that they need to deal with their problems themselves.

reed that as this was a vast topic, a separate workshop should be arranged to address it.

The final and most taxing problem discussed was how we reconcile the difference which sometimes arises between the political stance taken by the Sash as an organisation and the help given to individuals in the advice offices. It was again emphasised

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***The main object of advice office work should be to equip the people who come to us, with the information and understanding that they need to deal with their problems.***

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The role of the advice offices in the field of welfare work was discussed and it was agreed that as this is a specialised field we should wherever possible refer matters to appropriate agencies and if possible act as catalysts in initiating the development of welfare projects outside of the advice offices. A logical extension of this concern led to the suggestion that we should try to develop a more constructive approach to the problem of unemployment. We ag-

that our primary role is to equip the individuals who approach us with all the knowledge at our disposal so that they are able to make informed decisions and that, if possible, we could then assist them in attempting to carry out those decisions.

The weekend ended with unanimous enthusiasm for its success and a decision that Sheena Duncan should take on the role of National Advice Office 'Co-ordinator'.

October 8, 86

# The failing fund

**Based on figures supplied to SOLVEIG PIPER of the Black Sash Natal coastal branch by the Unemployment Insurance Fund Commissioner, she estimates that the fund will become bankrupt before the end of this year — at a time when the country's registered unemployed alone numbered 800 000.**

**In this article Solveig traces the roots of the problem, starting with the attitude of the State and employers to assume responsibility for social welfare expenditure, the 'social wage', especially with regard to the disenfranchised black population.**

The social wage has three major components — health, education and welfare. In almost every case where workers enjoy some basic minimum rights in these vital areas, they have had to struggle against an unwilling capitalist State to achieve this.

For instance, this is the case in Britain where Lord Beveridge admitted that it was only trade union struggles which finally forced the State to recognise the principle that there should be a national minimum subsistence allowance below which no one should be allowed to sink — and this is the social wage in its minimalist bared form — available to all those unemployed or unemployable. The other components, especially health and education, must be provided by the State because capitalists cannot in general make a profit from these activities.

In case anyone here is moved to complain about the abuse of the welfare system, let me hasten to point out that a major study in the UK done in 1975, revealed that known abuse of the system was exceeded by known abuse of the tax laws by the wealthy, by a factor of at least 100.

In 1974, £2m pa was stolen from social security system (ie wrongly claimed); £15m pa from petty commodity producers — self employed — taken from the receiver and £200 to £500m — estimated as non-taxable losses by the wealthy (known as

'operating the lump'). (Field, Meacher & Pond. *to him who hate*, Pelican 1977 — p 163.)

The granting of unemployment benefits to ameliorate some of the worst hardships of capitalism reduces expenditure on such items as health and welfare and where workers are unable to fight back or impose their own interests these cuts are invariably put into force.

In South Africa elements of the social wage have been paid to white members of the working class for many years now. No such consideration applied to the majority of the work force, the black workers. After all they did have a 'mythical' life support system in the bantustans or closer to home, an extended-family system in the townships.

Unemployment benefits in SA were first introduced in 1937. They covered a mere 90 000 skilled and semi-skilled workers and deliberately excluded all 'native' labour. Throughout the history of this unemployment insurance fund, both capital and the State have waged a constant battle to:

- 1 limit the size of the Fund
- 2 limit the number of black workers eligible for unemployment benefits
- 3 limit the amount of individual benefits.

## Employers' contributions

Employers have always been afraid that unemployment benefits on anything like an adequate scale would discourage 'natives' from seeking work on its farms, and in its mines and factories. The trick has been to set benefits so low that the unemployed workers would be forced to accept any work no matter how low the pay rather than depend on the UIF to stay alive.

Capital has also consistently balked at paying anything but the barest minimum in UI contributions to the State and has continuously sought to abandon the principle of progressivity adopted in the 1946 UI Act.

Since that time capital has made a concerted effort to shift from contributing proportionately more to



Solveig Piper

the UIF than workers, to a position where until December 1985 it contributed less than workers. Presently however both contribute an equal amount but still in proportionate terms the workers continue to contribute more than employers.

## State's contribution

From 1952 to 1983 the State has progressively shed its responsibility for the financial predicament of the Fund. It reduced its contribution to the Fund from 50% of total contributions of workers and employers in 1949 to less than 3% in 1984.

The main reason for this drop was that in 1977 the State legislated, with little opposition, to drop its contribution from 50% to a meagre 25% but not exceeding the amount of R7m in any financial year. Under the 25% rule the State's contribution in that same year would have been over R8,5m and R50 million in 1984.

As a result of these cuts the State has allowed the UIF to run down to the point where it simply cannot cope with the demands made upon it.

From research done by our labour monitoring committee we have estimated that the strength of the fund measured in terms of the amount of money invested per worker — as measured in constant 1975 rands — fell from about R480 in 1955 to about R30 in 1981.

In 1983, the State's response to this was to negotiate separate and unequal funds for all the so-called independent States — TBVC countries — and to devise a clever way for employers to assist in exporting hapless unemployed nationals back to their bantustans — out of sight and out of mind — until the next upswing, if ever, causes them to be re-



quisitioned.

Likewise those chronically unemployed must also simply disappear — after a suitable period of time in the UIF benefit queue.

The unemployment crisis in South Africa has now reached monumental proportions. According to my calculations at the current rate of demand the fund will be bankrupt by the end of this year.

Figures given to the Black Sash, Natal coastal, by the Unemployment Insurance Commissioner, Mr J Scheepers in January 1986, speak for themselves . . .

There are 120 000 new applications for benefits each month. The fund receives R20 - R21 million in contributions each month while it pays out R34 million in benefits each month.

On December 31 1984 the fund had R242 million invested. A year later the figure had dropped to R133 million. From the end of 1984 to the end of 1985 the fund lost over R 9 million each month and is presently losing R14 million per month. At this rate, unless there is an increase in levies, the fund will not remain solvent.

However, at the end of 1985 monthly contributions from both workers and employers were increased by 0,6% (0,2% from workers and 0,4% from employers). These increases should generate another R12 million per month and reduce the deficit to R2 million per month, delaying the bankruptcy, if unemployment remains static.

The present UIF system cannot ever hope to provide adequate insurance cover against unemployment for South Africa's working population until the whole philosophy underlying welfare in South Africa is reviewed.



*Thousands of jobless workers wait patiently for their UIF benefits at the Centenary Great Hall, New Brighton. Many have arrived as early as 5 am for their pay.* photo courtesy City Press

## Mary Tilley

Veteran Black Sasher Mary Tilley passed away peacefully on July 12 at the age of 83. Well known for her love of humanity and her sense of justice Mary can be seen on most photographic records of Black Sash stands over the years. She was also the sister of a founder member and former MP for the Progressive Party, Owen Townley Williams.

Apart from her political activities which included working for the Progressive Party in its day and the various amalgamations that came after it, Mary had a fascinating and varied life.

Born in the well-known Natal family of Townley Williams, Mary was one of four children, all of whom went on to distinguish themselves. After completing her schooling in Durban, she went to England and graduated from RADA to become a successful actress. After first making her mark in repertory, she consolidated her success by becoming a recognized Shavian actress. Many of her fellow students at

RADA and her acting associates became famous on stage and film.

She returned to South Africa with the Nelson-Terry Company and in 1934 married successful business man Arthur (AC) Tilley. Though committed to her two sons and her marriage (so much so that she curtailed tea with George Bernard Shaw and his wife to return to her son who had been left with his grandmother for the first time!) Mary nevertheless had time to involve herself in the formation of the Children's Theatre in Johannesburg. She was also invited on a number of occasions to lecture to interest groups at the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Natal.

Extremely artistic she was well known for her magnificent paper flowers and her fine handwriting.

Though she was not active in the Sash in recent years, she will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her. She is survived by two sons, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

# New strategies for forced removals

## From residents to squatters to aliens in the land of their birth

**The publication of 11 lines in the Government Gazette on October 16 1986 turned 10 000 settled inhabitants of Oukasie, Brits, into squatters overnight. As squatters, the Squatting Act gives the Government 'the right' to remove them to the place of its choice, in this case, Lethlabile on the edge of Bophuthatswana some 25 kms from town. Once there, by redrawing boundaries these South Africans can be extricated from the map of 'white' South Africa by incorporation into that 'independent National State'.**

**ALAN MORRIS of the Transvaal rural Action Committee (Trac) describes the significance of the forced removal of the Brits inhabitants.**

By a few strokes of his pen, and using certain provisions of the Black Communities Development Act, Mr Chris Heunis has 'disestablished' an established community. This move comes in reply to a long and dignified series of pleas and disciplined negotiation strategies conducted by a community wishing to remain in a township where it has resided at peace with its neighbours for some 50 years. Dr Grobelaar, local Nationalist MP described the deproclamation as the climax ('hoog punt') of his career.

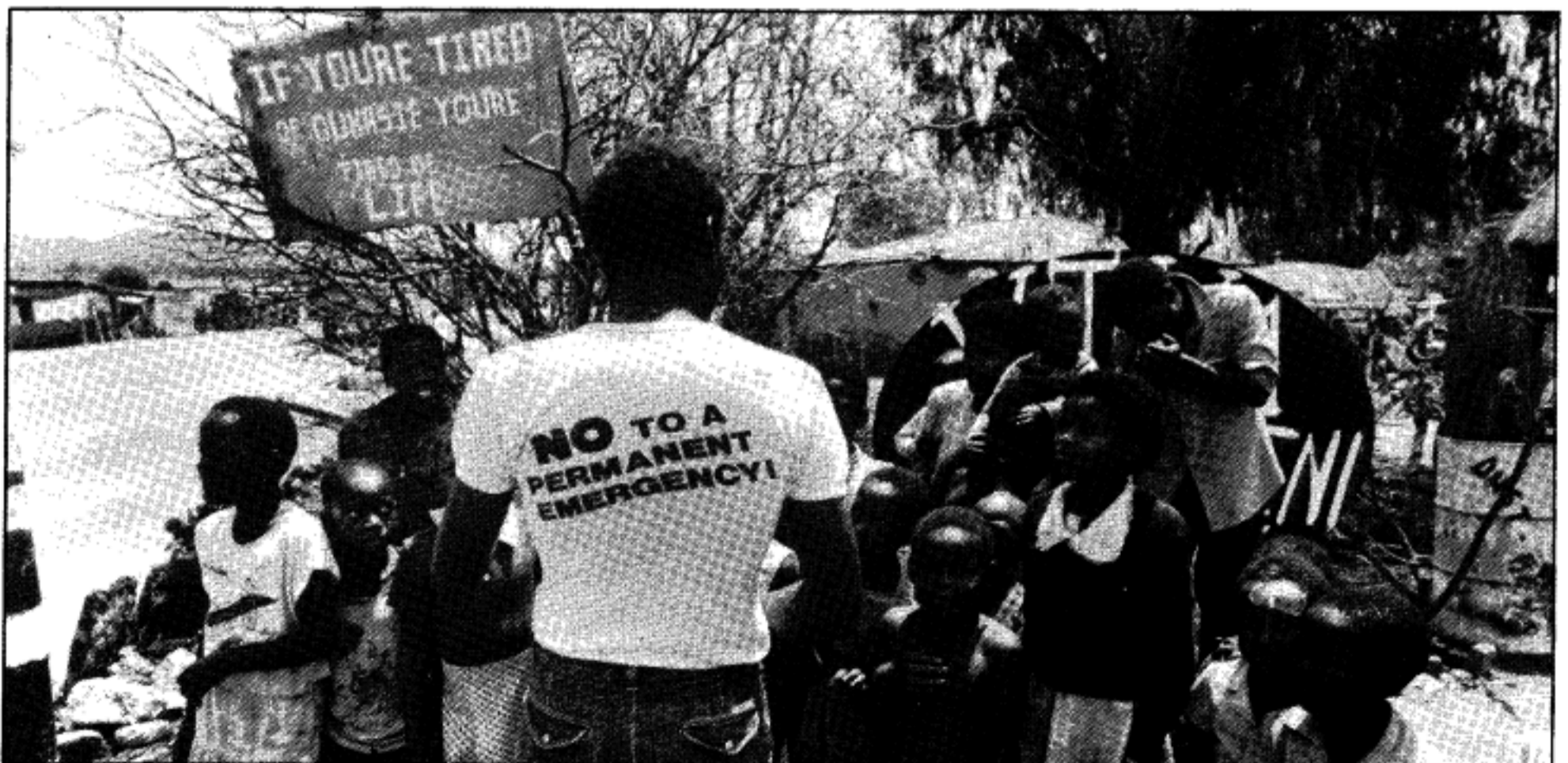
The move is a tragedy for the people themselves, but it is also a

tragedy for South Africa. It represents a significant step backward, a concession to the ultra-rightwing Brits community. With apparent contempt and disdain Minister Heunis has brushed aside an entirely reasonable, orderly and self-disciplined campaign — one which, moreover, was strongly supported by the Federated Chamber of Industries, the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (Seifsa), other employer organisations and trade unions such as the Metal and Allied Workers Union and the National Automotive and Allied Workers Union. The deproclamation was

not the unconsidered blunder of a low-level official. It was, in fact, a calculated and deliberate strategy of officials at the highest level. It flies in the face of any practical consideration about the anger it will unleash at this time in our history.

The government's decision to remove the inhabitants of Oukasie living in a narrow strip some two kilometres long and just 250 metres north of the white group area of Brits, first surfaced on December 7 1985 when the township's Community Council called a meeting to announce the decision. According to an article in *The Citizen* at the time of deproclamation, Mr Heunis stated that the reason for removing the Brits Oukasie community is that the township is unhygienic and the costs of upgrading it would be astronomical.

In contrast the Oukasie community were in possession of very different information. Their representatives, the Brits Action Committee, along with Mawu and Naawu had commissioned a professional team



*Brits Oukasie residents — a settled community since the 1930's*

*photo: Steve Hilton-Barber*

of engineers, architects, townplanners etc to investigate the cost of upgrading the township. The team's study illustrates that it is feasible to upgrade the township at a cost of R3 million. It shows that the drainage system has collapsed because it has not been maintained and that with minimal expenditure it can be restored. The study also shows that although the soil is clayey this does not in anyway preclude the provision of an adequate water-borne sewerage system or houses.

The present state of the township is due to a policy of deliberate neglect. The only services that the authorities have provided for the com-

munity are the provision of water (from 50 widely-spaced standpipes) and the collection of refuse and night-soil, the latter twice a week. For this, plottolders pay R22 a month and tenants R16 a month.

Conditions were worsened in December 1985 when the State started knocking down many of the solid brick houses vacated by people who left for Lethlabile. Many of the remaining houses are made of corrugated iron, some 200 built by the State in the 1930's, and many more by landlords or their tenants since then. There are now a large number of vacant stands. If permission was granted for residents to move onto these, the present congestion would

be lessened as the average number of houses per stand would be reduced from approximately three to two.

It is unclear whether the government will press ahead with its grotesque plan. Negotiations are continuing and hopefully the decision will be reversed. If it is not this will be the first forced removal since Magopa but with an even greater potential for violent resistance.

A failure to reverse the dreadful decision will not only be a tragic day for the residents of the community, it will graphically reveal that the government is only concerned with its own interests and those of the ultra-right and it will attempt to satisfy these no matter how great the costs.

**Separate development, alias Apartheid, continues its divisive strategies amongst settled rural communities. MARJ BROWN of the Transvaal Rural Action committee (Trac) reports . . .**

**T**he Nationalist Government has come up with yet another way of eradicating black people from the map of white' South Africa. It simply draws a line around the particular black community it wants to extricate on the map. It then colours in the space to show that the area is part of one of four territories to which it has already granted 'independence', viz: Transkei, Ciskei, Venda or Bophuthatswana. In this way bits of South Africa and the people in them get annexed to 'foreign' countries and 'white' South Africa is no longer responsible for them. Roads, schools, hospitals, pensions, unemployment insurance, passports, voting rights, all become obligations that the 'foreign' country must shoulder.

The new method is all so neat and clean — and much less messy than forcing people onto trucks, sometimes at gunpoint, and then driving miles to dump them in a 'foreign' country. This new method, hopefully for the Government, also avoids all the fuss made by foreign diplomats, international press, community organisations, church groups and all the irritating people who care about human rights and human suffering.

### **Extensions to the legislation**

The 'law' that gives the government this extraordinary power is called the Border of Particular States Extension Act. An amendment scheduling yet more areas for incorporation was passed by all three houses in Parliament in the last few days of the last parliamentary session. Thus, the Houses of Delegates and Representatives, who justify their seats on the grounds that they are there to strike a crushing blow against the apartheid edifice have actually assisted in putting up another strut.

Trac works with three communities in the Transvaal that are about to become alienated from the land of their birth in this way. They are BLOEDFONTEIN in the central Transvaal, BRAKLAAGTE in the Marico district in the west and MACHAKANENG near Brits.

Ironically, all these communities have so far successfully managed to avoid being physically forced off their land. Now the boundary around them will simply be redrawn and they will be labelled 'alien, resident of Bophuthatswana' — unless, in the case of Bloedfontein the residents 'voluntarily' choose to move

off this land and live in a place that the Nationalist Government has chosen for them.

### **Bloedfontein**

Bloedfontein was bought by the ancestors of the present residents in the 1920's. Yet amongst the 15 000 residents even these owners were excluded from the plan that was colluded between representatives of Bophuthatswana, Kwandebele and South Africa to incorporate their territory into Bophuthatswana. Bophuthatswana is to get the land. The people, largely non-Tswanas, can go to Rust de Winter due for incorporation into Kwandebele if they do not wish to become residents of that 'foreign country'.

The residents of Bloedfontein are adamantly against their incorporation into Bophuthatswana. The reason becomes abundantly clear after consideration of their chances for a settled livelihood in the future.

1 If they accept incorporation and remain as residents of Bophuthatswana they have two choices. They can keep South African citizenship but if they do so then new legislation in Bophuthatswana automatically precludes them from holding

citizenship of Bophuthatswana as well. Without Bophuthatswana citizenship, as residents they lose various rights including a government pension, unemployment insurance, the vote — for what it's worth — and so on.

Moreover, there are stories that Bophuthatswana residents who take out South African ID's may be ordered to leave the area within 24 hours. The Bloedfontein residents also fear persecution as non-Tswanas because there has been widespread harassment of non-Tswana residents in Bophuthatswana since the territory got its 'independence' in December 1977.

- 2 If they apply for and receive Bophuthatswana citizenship then their entry into South Africa (where most of the employment opportunities are) will be governed by South Africa's Aliens Act. They will be treated as foreigners. Their employers will have to obtain permits from the Dept of Home Affairs in order to employ them. To get these permits their jobs will have to be jobs that cannot be filled by other South Africa citizens.
- 3 Finally, they can 'voluntarily' choose to give up their homes and move to Rust de Winter where, for the time being, they can con-

tinue as South Africa citizens. But judging by developments that have taken place in Kwandebele in recent weeks (eg, the detention of the prince and his family who are against independence) it is possible the South African authorities are not prepared to accept the Kwandebele national assembly's vote against independence taken on August 13 1986 (see *Sash*, volume 29 no 2).

#### **Braklaagte and Machakaneng**

The other two Transvaal communities due for incorporation face the same dilemma over their existence and they have also already had to fight against plans for their forced removal.

Braklaagte has been fighting attempts at removal since 1937. The outbreak of World War 2 stopped the government plans from proceeding. In 1958 the tribe again faced removal to Driefontein. The people of Braklaagte were beaten off their lands with sticks and their chief was jailed for six months to try and break his resistance to removal. A headman and 40 families from a neighbouring farm were removed. Yet, nothing would smash the community's resolve to stay. Now, after half a century of resisting removal, the Braklaagte people are by means of a new connivance to become part of

Bophuthatswana.

The Machakaneng community, resident on the farm Boschfontein near Brits has also fought a successful struggle against forced removal that began many years ago with threats to remove tenants off their land. In 1983 the tenants were moved without notice in a manoeuvre involving security forces with guns and helicopters. The families of the landowners were later also told to move but they refused as they were aware of the suffering that the loss of their land and the move to a homeland would entail.

#### **State tactics — no consultation**

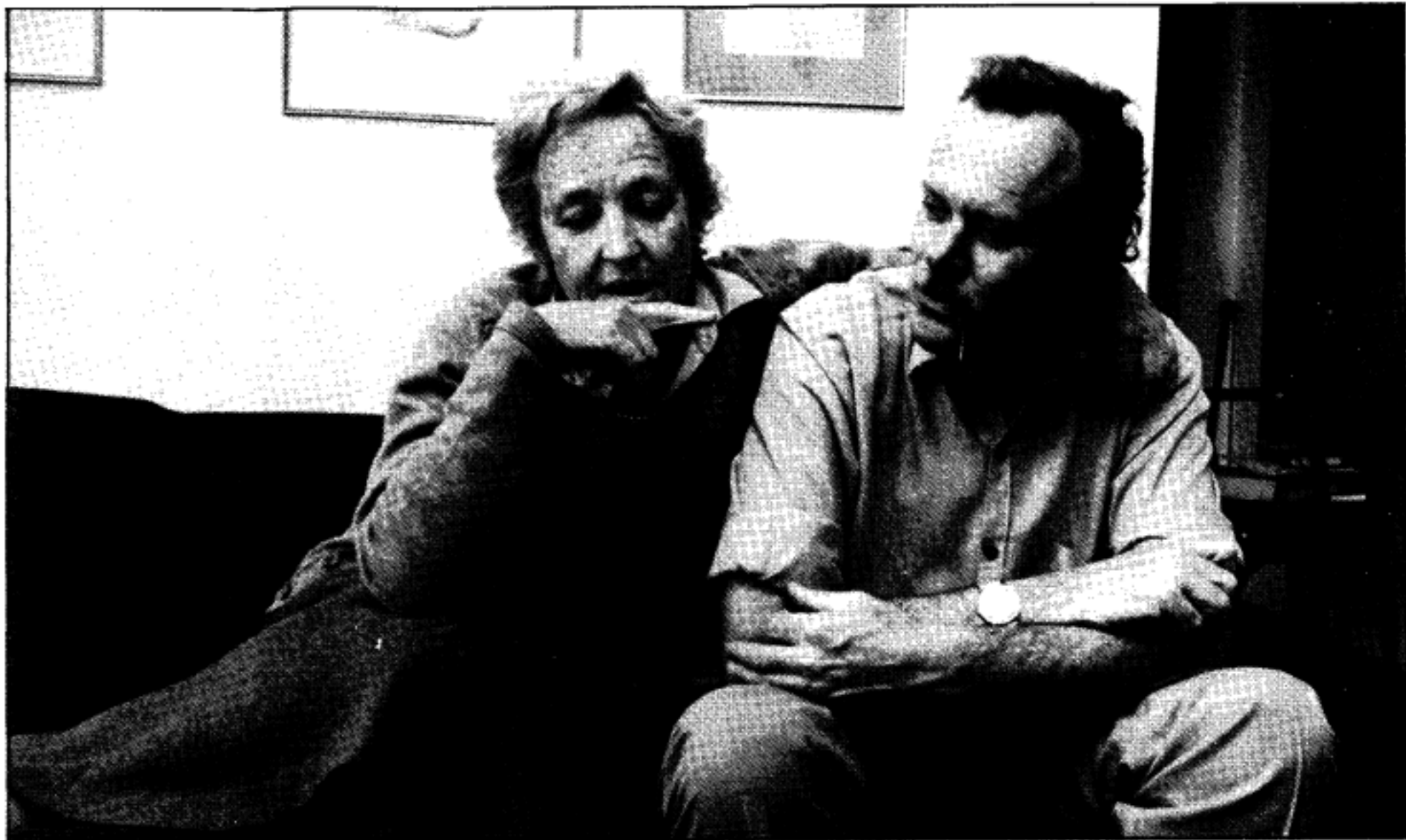
In all three incorporation plans landowners and inhabitants were excluded from negotiations between homeland governments and the South African government. Yet, in September 1985 when these consolidation plans were first announced. Deputy Minister Wilkens said that the communities involved *had been consulted and had agreed*. In relation to this, Bloedfontein was specifically mentioned. In fact the first the community knew about the incorporation was when they read about it in the newspaper. The Braklaagte community only heard of it in July this year, from a Potchefstroom official. They immediately rejected the

— continued on back page



*Braklaagte — signing the petition against incorporation into Bophuthatswana*

*photo: Gill de Vlieg*



Niek and Annica

photo Gill de Vlieg

## Annica Hakandotter van Gylswyk

***On August 15, 1986, Annica van Gylswyk, Pretoria Branch chairman, was forced, after several weeks in detention, to leave South Africa. JOYCE HARRIS pays tribute to her from us all.***

Annica is one of those rare human beings who is loved and respected by all who have had the privilege of knowing her. She has a tremendous zest for life and care for people. In her deep concern for the suffering of others; in her determination to improve their quality of life; in her tireless pursuit of justice she has devoted herself to the wellbeing of others.

In a situation such as pertains in South Africa, where so many are disadvantaged, it is easy to oppose the system but more difficult to keep sight of the individual humanness of every suffering person. Yet this is what Annica has done. She has gone about her activities acquiring friends in every walk of life. Quite apart from the actual work she has done she has offered a remarkable service to South Africa by the bridges she has built between the different groups and constituencies. She loves people and they love her, irrespec-

tive of who or what they are.

\* \* \* \* \*

Annica was detained on the night of June 15-16, 1986. She spent 45 days in solitary confinement, 18 of them in Pretoria Police Station under appalling conditions, and the rest of the time in Pretoria Central Prison, where conditions were better. She was interrogated on July 5. For the rest of the time she was on her own, except for two visits from a judge, occasional visits from her husband and her daughter, and daily visits by a nurse. She had no watch. She was very cold. She was permitted only very limited exercise. She was finally given the Hobson's choice of a 'voluntary removal' to Sweden, where she was born, or a further 180 days detention, a charge in the courts and after that a deportation order.

She has not the slightest idea why she was being subjected to such primitive and traumatic experiences. She had done nothing unlawful and nothing secret. She operated openly through the Black Sash, the Winterveld Action Committee, the Justice and Peace Commission of the Pretoria Catholic Archdiocese and the Dependents' Conference of the South African Council of Churches.

Apart from her position as chairman in Pretoria, her work in the Black Sash involved serving in the advice office which seeks legal redress where possible for black people in all their manifold problems with influx control, housing, pensions, wages, unfair dismissals, disability payouts and so on.

The Winterveld Action Committee, of which she is a founding member, aims to improve the quality of life of the residents of Winterveld, a huge squatter area situated about 30 kilometres north of Pretoria in Bophuthatswana. The area, a political football between the governments of South Africa and Bophuthatswana, has been neglected, and the WAC, with funds received mainly from the USA, has sunk boreholes, promoted literacy, initiated self-help groups, and aided the aged, sick and disabled.

Annica was in the forefront in the prevention of the construction of a road through Winterveld which involved the bulldozing of many homes. She was able to persuade the authorities to pay old-age pensions to residents. She accompanied many Church and government dignitaries to Winterveld and exposed to them

the plight of its inhabitants, also assisting with the compilation of a pamphlet on the subject.

As violence increased she tried to help people in distress. As a member of Dependents' Conference she was concerned with the provision of financial and moral support for the families of political detainees. She was invited to attend a number of funerals of victims of police action, which she did, often together with colleagues from the Black Sash. She took part in the revision, publication and distribution of a pamphlet, 'Coping in Crisis', which advises people on their rights when arrested and gives other useful information. Annica is a strong proponent of non-violence. She recently arranged for a workshop on this subject which was held in Pretoria.

The main thrust of her work has been to obtain redress for people within the framework of the law. Her detention may have been precisely because she has with some suc-

cess sought to highlight the lawful obligations of and restraints on those in authority and to establish and publicise the legal rights of oppressed people.

In addition to all her voluntary activities Annica has for the past ten years run the Documentation Centre for African Studies at the UNISA Archives on a half-day basis. For this she collected original documents and oral evidence pertaining to black political and economic history. This brought her into contact with many black people throughout the country and in Southern Africa. Many of the journeys about which she was interrogated while in detention were as a result of her work for UNISA and at their behest. However her husband was unable to get a letter or any documentation to this effect from the university, which has done nothing whatsoever to assist her and in fact has not even paid her salary. She was put on unpaid leave.

Now she has left this country where she has lived for 30 years, and where she married and raised three children. Her South African husband forfeits his career, his pension rights and they both face separation from their children when he follows. They face impossible choices in a cruel situation.

Since Annica has devoted her life to the good of others and the pursuit of justice, there must surely be better rewards awaiting her elsewhere than those meted out to her by the country to which she has given so much. In any normal society she would be considered the very best example of a public spirited citizen, yet interrogators told her 'This country doesn't need people like you'.

On the contrary South Africa, and the Black Sash in particular, will be the poorer for her departure.

She is a very special lady. We love her. We salute her. We shall miss her. And we wish her well.

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## Enid Robertson

**E**nid Robertson, a founder member of the Black Sash, died on September 12, 1986. At her funeral JILL WENTZEL paid tribute to Enid and in so doing remembered also Enid's brother Eddie Roux and the political heritage from which they came and to which they contributed so much.

Enid's family, the Roux's, poor, tough and politically vital, made their mark on the history of our country. Enid herself played a quiet, determined and suffering role in the long battle against apartheid.

Her paternal grandparents were Karoo farmers and strict Calvinists. Most of their ancestors were French Huguenots. Enid's father, Philip Roux, reneged on his background, became an atheist, fought on the English side in the Boer War, then became an aggressive pacifist. A born politician, energetic, argumentative, brittle-tempered and maverick, he turned his home cum pharmacy in Bez Valley into a socialist meeting place and talk-shop.

There Enid grew up with one sister and four brothers in an eccentric and volatile but happy home, because of her mother's uniquely calm and cheerful disposition. She was an Englishwoman, a nursing sister called Edith May Wilson.

Their father's political and philosophical beliefs were the very stuff of their lives. He would not allow his sons to attend scripture lessons nor take part in cadets at Jeppe High School. And there, among the much-maligned and victimised non-cadets they met the future trade unionist Solly Sachs and author Herman Charles Bosman.

The children grew up amid the activities and campaigns surrounding the 1913 and 1922 strikes and the growth of the socialist movement. Most of the strike

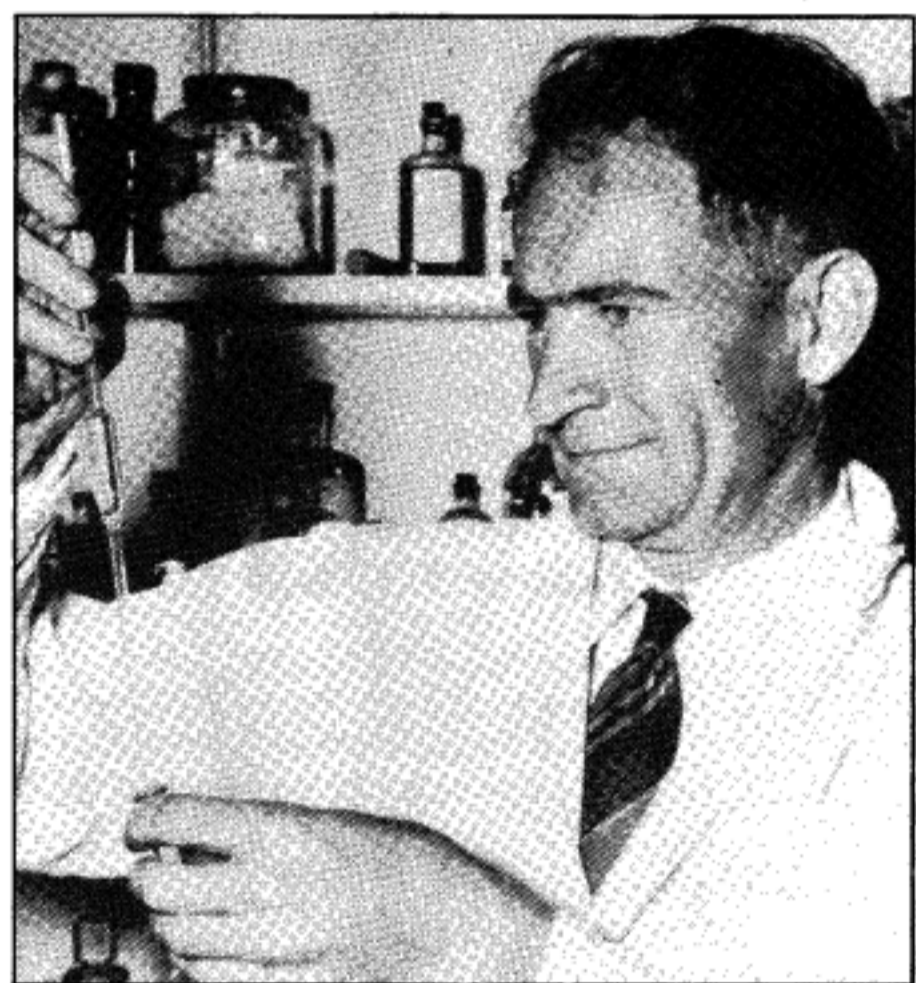
leaders of 1913 who were deported to Britain, were family friends. Enid remembered the arrest of S P Bunting at the time of the Bucket Strike in 1918 and her brother Eddie was later to become a colleague of Bunting's and to write a brilliant biography of him — together, of course, with *Time Longer than Rope*, *Rebel Pity* (which was banned for a long time) and many botanical works.

Enid's mother, an energetic Women's League member, in order to publicise their economy drive during the first world war, made a famous and much publicised outfit out of sacking with a hat made from dried fish tails which she wore to a League meeting. That outfit, I think, has been given to the Transvaal museum. Enid and her mother were founder members of the Black Sash.

Enid trained as a nursing sister and served in England during the war. Later she worked as a librarian at Wits. Her life was never easy. She lost two husbands and in her old age she lost the company of her only child, Iain.

I think that in remembering Enid, we have to remember Eddie, too, because his political life formed the basis of Enid's staunch loyalty to all anti-apartheid movements. Though her own politics were less radical, her opinions and her outlook were tempered always by her admiration for the courage and the sacrificial hard work of Eddie and his friends and colleagues.

Her brother Eddie was a great and saintly man, to whom she was devoted. His early death, from leukemia, was a terrible blow to her. She had followed his political career with complete empathy and spoke often of his activities. She was right behind him when he joined the Young Communist League at the time of the Great Strike in 1922; and again when their father threw him out of home for joining the Bunting/



Enid Robertson and brother Eddie Roux

Andrews faction of the socialist movement which believed in carrying the message of communism to black workers as well as white.

Enid collected and kept all the copies of *Emsebenzi*, a newspaper in the vernacular for black workers which Eddie produced in 1930. With a few peripheral helpers he edited, typeset, cut linocuts for cartoons, organised translations and sold it himself outside Cape Town station. Enid told me that during that time he bought no clothes, cooked no meals, lived in the typesetting room and took a weekly bath in the public wash house in Hanover Street.

Like many of his political colleagues, Eddie was academically brilliant, but like them, he put his politi-

cal work first. He was the man who attended the nomination meeting for a bye-election in Germiston in 1932 and nominated a black man, J B Marks. In making a getaway he was caught and beaten up. He was always in trouble in those days, and Enid had published in the *Rand Daily Mail* a Pimpernel rhyme about him: 'They seek him here, they seek him there. Detectives seek him everywhere. Is he up a chimney or under a bed? That damned elusive Roux the Red?'

He taught at Charles Baker's night school, he wrote voluminously, he footslogged and fund-raised, and addressed meetings. In 1933 he was charged with incitement to violence for his speeches during the 'To Hell with the Pick-up' campaign. He was convicted and sentenced to four months' hard labour, cleaning out latrines. That was his second term in prison, having been gaoled in Durban in 1931 for defying a banishment order.

Long after he had left the Communist Party and joined the Liberal Party he became listed as a communist under the Verwoerd regime. He was not even permitted to teach in his beloved botany department at Wits, though he was a world-renowned authority on grasses. Bertrand Russell wrote that he was a 'worthy addition to the long list of victims of bigotry from Socrates to the present day'. Eddie like Enid, was a rationalist. He contributed much to that debate.

It is hardly surprising that Enid's son grew up a dedicated political campaigner. He left SA many years ago to avoid military duty and has given his life in exile to the liberatory struggle. Enid was immensely proud of him.

From the time I first knew her roughly 12 years ago Enid lived in the midst of what I imagine most people would call a nightmare — a lonely life with very little money and no transport. She bore it with stoic and energetic gallantry. She was vehemently loyal to the Black Sash, the UDF and anyone else who opposed the government for that matter. She tried to take part in everything that was going. Inhibited by lack of transport, she often used to walk many miles to meetings. She was thrilled and excited during this last year to be involved with the *Weekly Mail*, where she worked on their press clippings files. She compiled and kept up to date an invaluable index of the Black Sash magazine.

I know that Enid suffered bouts of anxiety and depression. But she dealt with these, and she bore the absence of her son with great nobility. Though it was difficult for her she believed this was her painful contribution to a better future for this country and she knew she was one of many such mothers for whom no day passes without anxiety and yearning.

When we remember Enid we will remember first, and nor will we ever forget, this dogged gallantry. Indeed, it was leadership at its most fundamental, this example she set, of living each day in an organised, interested and involved way in circumstances which cause many to crack up. If, when our lives close in around us, we remember Enid, and try to follow her example, then we shall be paying homage to her particular creativity.

To her brother Claud, and to Iain, we send our love and our sympathy.

# **State of emergency — the method behind the madness**

**Based on his experience as a field worker in the Boland, PHILIP VAN RYNVELD comes to the following conclusions about State motivation**

**T**he key to understanding the State of Emergency is to recognise the State's fear of political and community organisations that do not operate as part of the government's constitutional structures. Its main aim appears to have been to try to crush these organisations wherever possible.

Predominantly the State has used force in the form of widespread detentions, physical violence such as beatings and shootings, and implicit and explicit threats of violence, in attempting to achieve this aim. Simultaneously they have tried to establish or re-establish bodies in the townships which will co-operate with the State.

In other words, the SoE has been used primarily to attempt to set in place new local government constitutional structures thought up by the State and in particular, Mr Chris Heunis, Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, and to destroy competition to these structures. This correlates with reports from within parliament that Mr Heunis was pivotal in the decision to declare a SoE.

In the Worcester township of Zwelethemba where the community council had long disintegrated, there was a committee of seven elected by the inhabitants in an election organised by the Ministers Fraternal. They had already been involved in negotiations with the authorities when the Emergency was declared. Three of the committee were detained immediately (along with many others in the community) and the rest went into hiding. Roadblocks were placed at the entrance to the township, a curfew was imposed and there were constant reports of widespread police brutality. A few weeks later a representative of the Development Board called a

meeting to elect a new committee to work with the authorities. Not a single Zwelethemba inhabitant turned up to the meeting. The following day it is alleged that police went about the streets beating people indiscriminately with sjamboks.

In Nkqubela, near Robertson, in the heart of the major white wine producing area in the Cape, between 90 and 100 people were detained out of a total township population of approximately 3 000. On the first Monday of the SoE police forced people at gunpoint (including old people and children) out of their houses and made them pick up papers. Asked why, Colonel Nothnagel of the Worcester police said, 'Ons wil hierdie land op 'n mooi manier reg ruk, en ons gaan hom reg ruk,' or words substantially similar.

Community Guards from Zolani, Ashton, were also present and threatened people that if they did not pay their rent they would be beaten and evicted. Breaking of rent boycotts has clearly been an important part of the State's agenda and they have been partially successful in achieving this so far in the Western Cape.

In Nkqubela there was also an attempt to set up a new body that would work with the authorities. The Board was more successful there than in Worcester. Here at least a group of mainly older men did get together and elect some people at a meeting. However, women were excluded by this group, and the arguments of some of the younger men asking why they were electing new people when their legitimate representatives were in jail were met with uncompromising hostility. The original request of the board official was that this body should be only temporary. When new members

were to be elected a few weeks later nobody could be found to fill the positions and the body disintegrated.

## **'Kitskonstables'**

With legitimacy of black local government structures largely a forlorn hope State organisations trained in the use of violence have begun to play an ever more important role. Firstly there has been an almost obscene rush to arm those township dwellers who the State believes it can use to bolster its new township government structures. The establishment of armed 'Community Guards', often drawn from 'vigilante' groups such as the 'Amasolomzi' in Zolani, who undergo little more than a couple of weeks training mainly in the use of fire-arms are an example of this. They fall under the direct control of black local government bodies as a township 'police force'. (This process began before the present SoE).

A further example is the creation during this SoE of the 'Kitskonstables' (instant constables). This appears to have occurred first in the Western Cape with manpower drawn from the black townships of the Cape, and trained for three weeks at Koeberg. Approximately 300 'kitskonstables' have already been trained with another 700 or so undergoing training. It seems that their primary role will be direct support of the SAP. (In a period of rising unemployment these are the only formal jobs being created by the State.)

## **Military involvement in civilian life**

Secondly, the military has been brought into the process of making and implementing decisions previously considered to be firmly within



- Ouster clauses that restrict court cases against the forces or interdicts to set aside the regulations.

To try and address this concern, Sash gathered reports based on affidavits and signed statements collected by agencies that aim to assist detainees, political prisoners and their families. These agencies include the DPSC, Descom, PFP Missing Persons Bureau, Repression Monitoring Group, Dependents' Conference, lawyers and Black Sash fieldworkers working with communities who seek help from repression that comes as a result of their resistance to apartheid.

For residents of white suburbs, cut off as they are from the realities of life in the black townships today, the information gathered together may seem untrue. Yet the offices of agencies providing assistance fill up everyday with people seeking help with a range of problems such as

- tracing children or family members apparently taken by police and later untraceable to any particular prison
- getting medical and legal attention for victims of assault and torture
- getting financial assistance for a family whose breadwinner was shot dead by the police, the army, the vigilantes or some other unidentified person with a gun
- getting legal advice for people whose furniture was repossessed because the breadwinner was in detention for months and there was no one else to take care of the bills
- seeking accommodation because of houses burnt down by vigilantes or people suspected of being police
- seeking legal redress because a woman was raped at gunpoint by people dressed in police uniforms.

The immediate picture that emerges is one of chaotic mayhem with police, army, vigilantes, 'kitskonstabels' and other State attachments ('A teams', 'black jacks' etc) having virtually free reign to exercise whatever terror they choose on the people they suspect to be opponents of apartheid. Yet the agencies stress 'although repression may seem to be random, mindless violence, it is not. It is in fact a systematic and directed attempt to break organisations and disrupt communities. An important new development has been the general at-

tack on families and non-activists in an attempt to intimidate whole communities in the face of growing resistance.'

The attack on 'whole communities' appears to be more applicable to rural communities. Agencies said they were most concerned about townships on the outskirts of little towns and villages where reporters do not go and where their agencies' do not have offices. Often all the representatives of Descom or the Dependents conference in the area may be detained and then there is no conduit for information and help. Agencies have sometimes heard about police activity by chance.

### **The methods used to 'break' and 'disrupt' communities**

#### **1 Detention**

During 5 months of the current SoE some 20 000 people have been detained with about half of them still in detention. This compares with 8 000 during 7 months in the last SoE, about 500 in 1983 and 1 150 in 1984. Detainees allege that frequently detention still goes hand-in-hand with torture and assault.

The DPSC estimates that some 40% of the detainees are under the age of 21. 'There seems to be a blanket assumption that all youth are involved in the struggle and are therefore legitimate targets. Most of those affected are about 15 but we have had reports of children of 9 spending long periods in detention.'

People are sometimes picked up for short periods of time, say 48 hours, during which they allege they are severely beaten and threatened (even with 'the necklace') or pressed to become informers or provide information. Their names are often not included on registers as having been detained.

In a few cases, lawyers assisting their clients who are detainees have been detained.

#### **2 Assaults, shootings and other physical violence**

People report having been kicked, hit with fists, batons, sjamboks in their homes, school yards or in Hippos and then driven into the veld where they are left for dead.

People returning from work or from visiting friends allege they have been picked up or shot at, merely because they happen to be in the vicinity of funeral vigils or general unrest scenes.

There have also been many reports of people who have been picked up, assaulted and forced to point out their friends or 'comrades'. Families have been threatened that if they do not tell a relative in hiding to report to the police, that person will be shot on sight.

A number of reports indicate systematic bombings and burning of activists' homes.

#### **3 Public violence and murder charges**

Statistics are not available but more and more people are being charged with public violence, murder and an increasing range of other 'non-political' criminal charges.

#### **4 Post-detention trends**

The use of youth camps has already been widely reported in the press. They were suspected of being places where youth could be brainwashed but this was never clearly established and it is suspected that whatever the purpose was, they do still exist.

Sometimes people who are released from prison cells after detention are issued with restriction orders that virtually curtail all their previous political resistance work.

#### **5 Training, or not, of additional attachments**

Municipal police, who are said to be 'more trigger happy', are increasingly more involved. This pushes control and responsibility onto black town or village councils

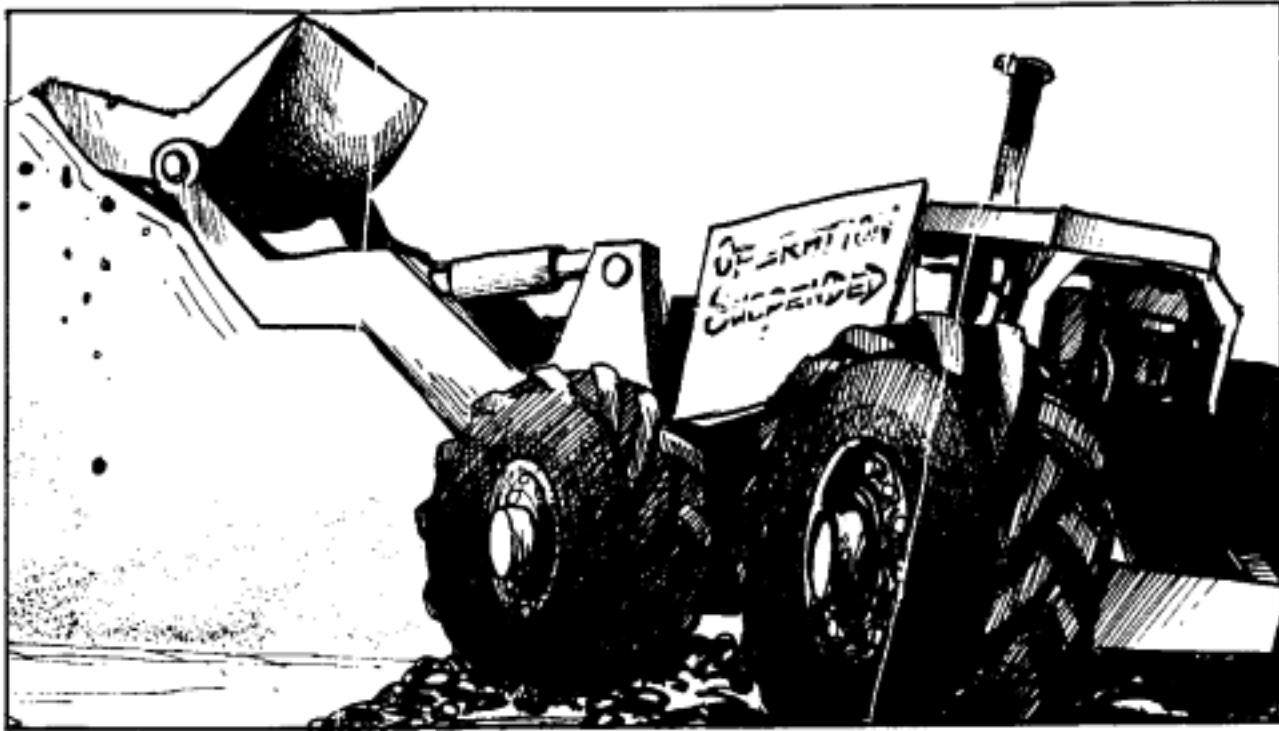
Unemployed people who have been attracted by advertisements to become trained as security guards to work, they presumed, for private firms have found themselves on instant police training courses. Already widely reported is the arming and equipping of vigilantes — the 'A teams', the 'black jacks' and the like.

#### **Conclusion**

As frightening as these reports may appear to be two other comments aggravate the picture. The DPSC concludes: 'What we have isolated are a few trends. To cover fully all the instances of violence and other forms of repression would be impossible.'

Dr Beyers Naude's assessment of the future is worse: 'As the resistance grows the State will continue to resort to the methods already used and increase the tyranny of oppressive rule in the hope of breaking that resistance.'

**Glenda Webster**



*A symbol of State motivation — the same bulldozer that demolished the Bhongolethu advice office was used to upgrade the township's roads*

the domain of civil society. This has been brought about through the Joint Management Centres, which in the Western Cape are all headed by local SADF officers — apart from the Cape Town JMC which is headed by Brig Swart of the SAP. The Joint Management Centres are committees headed by the Security Forces and consist of local officials and co-opted businessmen. They are supposed to identify local grievances that could be a threat to National Security, and react in whatever manner they think appropriate. They appear to be local versions of the State

***The State wishes to maintain power and control in its own hands. It is not prepared to tolerate organisations demanding the right of people to control their own lives.***

Security Council, widely regarded by political analysts as being the most powerful decision making body in South Africa. While legislation providing for the establishment of Joint Management Centres, was passed before the declaration of the SoE, they appear to have established themselves under the SoE.

One example of the operation of a JMC is the experience of a group of people in Nduli, the township of Ceres, where there has been very lit-

tle 'unrest'. This group was delegated by the community to see what they could do to avoid rent increases, with almost every household in the township contributing two rand for transport of the delegation to Cape Town. The only people they had contact with was the Black Sash, and Timo Bezuidenhout of the Board who expressed gratitude that they had come and spoken to him, and they sent a memorandum to Heunis' deputy minister, Badenhorst summarising their grievances. At the end of July their houses were raided at 2.00 am one morning.

The group decided to go to the police to ask why they had been raided. They were referred by the police to a local army major, who listened to their grievances, taping their conversation in order that he be able to take their grievances to his committee. He then organised a concert for them in the township hall where soldiers from 202 Battalion sang. This, according to the group, was the authorities' way of trying to apologise. As yet nothing substantial has occurred to improve the position although there have been indications that the authorities have been taking slightly more note of their problems.

There seems to be greater recognition than before on the part of the

authorities that township dwellers do have legitimate grievances. The statement by Mr Le Grange recently to the effect that poor living conditions have contributed to the social unrest is one indication of that. In Bhongolethu, the township of Oudtshoorn, there is a fairly substantial upgrading scheme being implemented, consisting of the building of new roads and houses. However, an advice office that was in the process of being built using materials and money donated bit by bit by the inhabitants of the township was demolished — not apparently to make way for any improvement, but simply because the authorities found the idea of a community advice office intolerable.

### **Forced removals continue**

Apart from the relevance of the Emergency to structural changes in the patterns of authority, the restrictions on reporting and other abnormal powers granted under the SoE have been used by the State authorities to give themselves space to complete various unpopular tasks on their agenda, such as removals planned before the announcement of an end to removals.

In the Western Cape there have been extensive removals of people to Khayalitsha in the aftermath of the fighting which erupted before the SoE. There have been the ongoing removals of inhabitants of Lawaakamp in George, to Sandkraal. Outside of the Western Cape there has been the removal of people from Langa, Uitenhage.

Perhaps the essence of State policy at present is to be seen in the demolition under police supervision of the Bhongolethu advice office using the same bulldozer as that being used for the upgrade of the township. The State wishes to maintain power and control in its own hands. It is prepared to spend fairly large amounts of money to do such things as 'upgrade' townships; but it is not prepared to tolerate organisations demanding the right of people in the townships to have greater control over their own lives.

## **The madness**

The Emergency regulations have added three hefty new barriers to the whole range of mechanisms and attitudes already in existence to curb

information about the way in which the State deals with its opposition in the black community. Concern about the effect of these new barriers was expressed in our last editorial (see *Sash* Volume 29 no 2):

- the prohibition on photographs or any images of police and army conduct in situations of unrest
- orders to prevent journalists and reporters from being present at the scene of unrest

## REMOVALS

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plan outright. Similarly the Machakaneng community wrote to the Minister rejecting incorporation when *they* heard about it.

The Bloedfontein and Machakaneng communities have written numerous letters to the relevant ministers expressing their rejection of the plans. So have their legal advisers. Often these have not had any response. Requests for urgent meetings about the issue have also been met with silence. In the light of this it is strange that the Government should claim that the communities have been consulted. It is stranger still that Mr Temple, chairman of the consolidation commission should state that the communities involved have not made representations about the issue.

### Manipulation of leadership

In the case of Braklaagte, overwhelming support for the chief, John Sebogodi, and his strength in resistance, has become a threat to the governments of Bophuthatswana and South Africa. Plans have therefore been made to depose him. In April this year the Bophuthatswana government sent a chief from Dinokana to announce that chief Sebogodi who has ruled since 1949 and whose position has been confirmed by three commissions of enquiry in 1980/81, is not the rightful chief. The 'new chief' has seized the tribal books and will no doubt agree to incorporation. The direct parallels with this case and Mogopa are interesting. Prior to the forced removal of that community the South African authorities had secret dealings with one Jacob More whom the tribe had deposed as headman. The State insisted on his leadership and as he had agreed to the move, conducted the forced removal as a 'voluntary, negotiated' move.

### The future

An important precedent exists for averting the tragedy that will arise through these incorporations. If President Mangope of Bophuthatswana refuses to administer or accept the affected areas there is no way that the South African government can continue with its plans to deprive some thousands more South Africans of their citizenship. In 1985 Mr Mabuza the Chief Minister of Kangwane refused to accept responsibility for administering the Kwangema and Driefontein communities who were due to be removed into land in his area. This refusal meant that the government of SA could not go ahead with its plans and eventually the two communities were reprieved.

Bearing in mind the Government's attitude to removals, its consistency in breaking promises and Mr Mangope's tacit acceptance of the incorporation strategy, the future looks bleak.



*Mothers of children in detention*

*photo Gill de Vlieg*



"This is an illegal gathering under the riotous assembly provision of the Internal Security Act. I'm giving you three minutes to disperse!"

Cartoon drawings by Tony Grogan of the *Cape Times* are featured each month in this 1987 calendar available from Black Sash offices at R7,50 each

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