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Row over Ferrus Funeral March



Over 5000 people attended the funeral of W. Cape leader John 'Hennie' Ferrus.

Top right: Hennie Ferrus.

ONE OF the greatest shows of solidarity at a funeral that the Western Cape has seen in years, has been slightly marred by allegations of "Hijacking" made in the Sunday Times.

The funeral attended by over 5 000 people was for Hennie Ferrus, a Worcester community leader and former member of the Coloured Peoples Congress, who died tragically in a car crash.

According to a headline in the Sunday newspaper, the Ferrus funeral had been hijacked by the ANC. The report was allegedly part of an exclusive interview with Ferrus's wife Petronella (Patty), in which she claimed she was forced to take a backseat at the funeral which was taken over by the ANC half an hour before it began.

Mrs Ferrus has since issued a statement to the press saying that all the arrangements made for the funeral were done with her full consent and approval. (see attached story)

Ferrus's mother Christina, (Tant Stienie) Ferrus, has also denied the allegation made in the article.

Ferrus's wife has since had her statement published in both the Muslim News and the Cape Times.

People from all over the country

Widow denies 'hijack' claim

AS WE KNOW of the Late John Hennie Ferrus, I would have preferred to remain silent at this stage having buried my husband a few weeks ago. However circumstances compel me to speak.

Persons with questionable motives and others with unsavoury political backgrounds have decided to vilify my late husband, insult his life, what he stood for and his memory.

All sorts of lies and distortions are being peddled about. How can I remain silent in the face of all this. Even my personal life has become the subject of comment by malicious persons. I refuse to become involved in fruitless debates in connection with my

late husband, his life, his struggle, what he stood and fought for or my own part in all this as his wife.

All I want to do once and for all, is to put the record straight. Firstly, it was a great privilege for me to have been Hennie's wife and mother of his children. My life with him, all too short though it was, will always remain a beautiful chapter in my life. I knew what Hennie stood and lived for and he never hid this either from me or from anyone else. Indeed all his friends and associates, as also all the people amongst whom he had worked, knew exactly what he stood for. He led no double life and he

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and all sectors of the community attended the funeral, including representatives from trade unions, community organisations and student bodies. A large proportion of the crowd wore green, black, and gold rosettes.

The proceedings started at the family's residence, where a short service was held. The mourners then marched to the Esselen Park Civic Centre, singing freedom songs and giving power salutes.

About 3 000 were able to cram into the hall, decorated with

pictures of Ferrus and posters saying "Freedom in our lifetime", "Jails will not silence the voice of the people". The stage was decorated with a massive list of the demands of the Freedom Charter.

The remainder of the crowd stood outside the hall in the rain listening to the speeches.

Despite the controversy that has followed the Ferrus funeral, for many people the sight of thousands carrying his coffin through Worcester and singing freedom songs will be an unforgettable experience.

A spokesperson for the Food and Canning Workers Union said Mr Ferrus had played an important role in the Rainbow Chicken strike.

Many people had been critical of the union for working with a member of the Labour Party, but "time and this funeral have shown that he was with the struggle. His enemies are our enemies", the spokesperson said.

Speeches were applauded wildly, and punctuated with power salutes, freedom songs and shouts of "Amandla". A pamphlet which

was handed out in the hall contained the Freedom Charter and a salutation, which paid tribute to Hennie Ferrus for "not being afraid to take the decisions the struggle upon you while some in our midst made sterile criticism".

As his funeral had shown, it was "better to die for an idea that will live than to live for an idea that is dying", one speaker said. "The government thought that by detaining Hennie Ferrus they could silence the voice of the people, but by doing that they actually created more Hennies".

A student representative said "Hennie Ferrus lived, sacrificed and made many students into leaders in the national struggle. He was one of the greatest freedom fighters, and his name shall forever remain in resistance to oppression".

Tribute was also paid to his mother for "having produced such a hero".

After marching through the streets of Worcester, the crowd assembled at the graveside and sang the national anthem "Nkosi Sikelel'i Afrika", while Hennie Ferrus was laid to rest in his coffin draped in the ANC flag.

Workers of the world unite



We the Trade Union representatives here present, firmly commit ourselves to a united democratic South Africa, free of oppression and economic exploitation.

We believe that this can only be achieved under the leadership of a united working class. Our history has taught us that to achieve this goal we will have to carry out the following tasks:

1. To organise the unorganised workers and build effective trade unions based on the democratic organisation of workers in the factories, mines, shops, farms and other workplaces.
2. Organise national industrial trade unions, financed and controlled by their worker members through democratically elected committees.
3. Unify these industrial unions into a national worker controlled federation.
4. Combat the divisions amongst the workers of South Africa and unite them into a strong and confident working class.
5. Encourage democratic worker organisation and leadership in all spheres of our society together with other progressive sectors of the community.
6. Reinforce and encourage progressive international worker contact and solidarity so as to assist one another in our struggles.

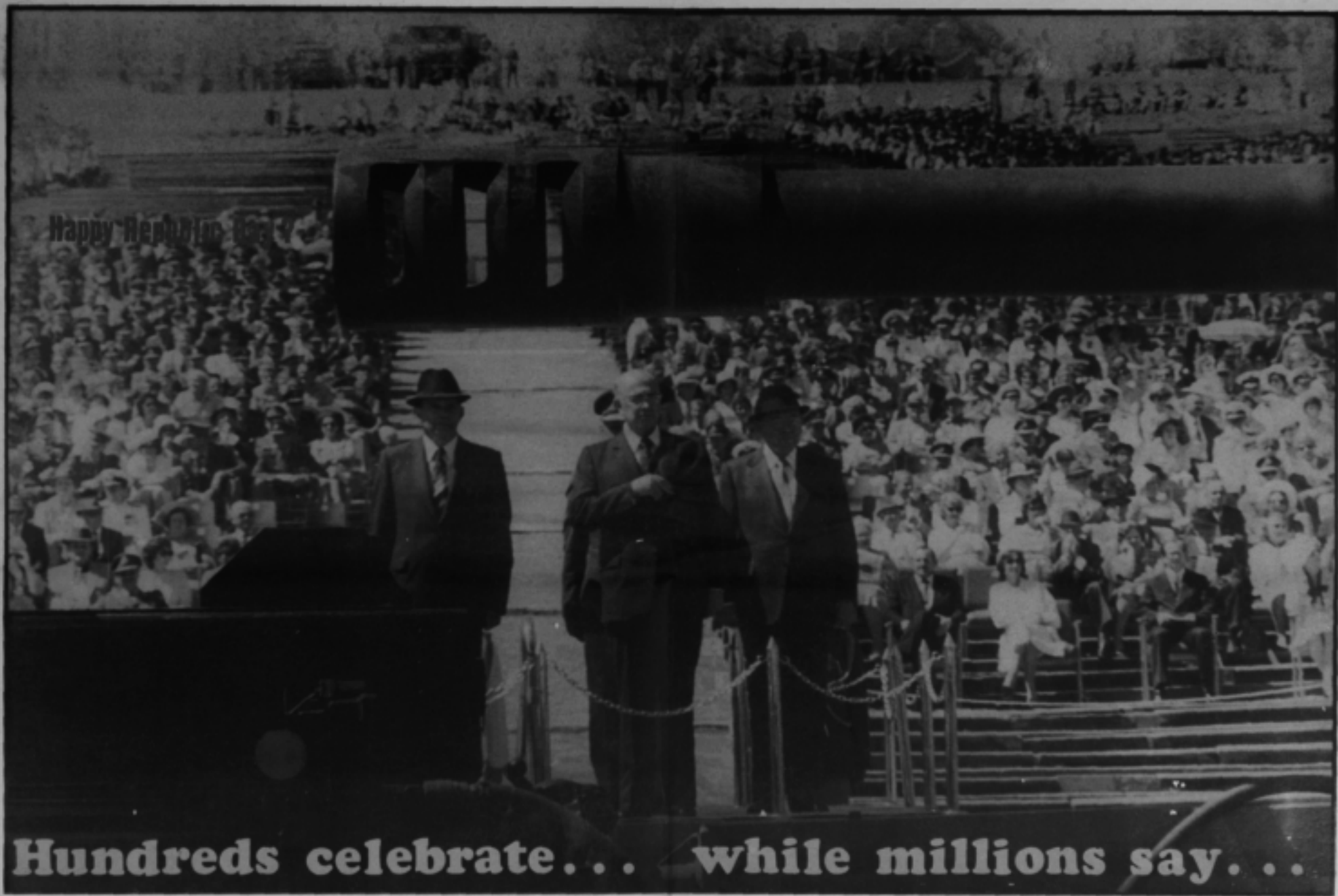
We call on all those who identify with this commitment to join us and the workers whom we represent as comrades in the struggle ahead.

We call on all trade unions to strive to unite their members in their ranks without discrimination and prejudice, and therefore resolve that this federation shall determinedly seek to further and protect the interests of all workers and that its guiding motto shall be the universal slogan of working class solidarity:

'AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!'



One Country - One Federation



Hundreds celebrate... while millions say...

DON'T CELEBRATE APARTHEID!

Victory for UWC students' SRC campaign

A CAMPAIGN lasting many years has forced the administration of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) to give in to student demands for an autonomous SRC.

A spokesperson for the university announced to student leaders on Tuesday last week that the University Council had agreed 'in principle' to student demands. He said the Council itself was 'too unwieldy' to decide on all the technicalities, but it had empowered the executive to deal with 'the remaining technical matters'.

Some uncertainty remains as to what the 'technical matters' are and whether they are to be used to stall the process of forming an SRC.

The campaign for an SRC culminated in a massive protest march on Friday 8th May. Over 2000 students — half the student population at UWC — assembled in the cafeteria to ratify the final list of demands. They then marched to the administration block to present them.

A member of the SRC Ad Hoc Committee and a representative of the Hostel Committee went to call the vice rector, Prof Durant, while the mass of students stood outside with placards chanting 'Dickie is a terrorist'. This was a reference to the rector Dr R.E. Van der Ross, who was in America at the time.

There were no incidents. One

student leader said "they were forced to listen to us because we were united, well organised and disciplined".

There has been no SRC at UWC since 1977 when the existing constitution was withdrawn. While the rector has indicated his eagerness for a new SRC students have demanded amendments to the constitution which would make the SRC fully autonomous. The old constitution provides for university controls over SRC speakers and publications, as well financial controls.

Other demands made centre on autonomy for the Hostel Committee, the present curfew time for wo-

men residents, the presence of security guards at the hostels, racist lecturers and inadequate courses.

A mass meeting was called the day of the announcement and it was decided that preparations for the SRC elections would begin.

The election itself, however, will only take place after the final decision is made by Council. The preparations include drawing up a voters roll, calling for nominations and working out procedures for elections.

The campaign for an autonomous SRC was given a new boost by the resistance in the Western Cape. This year, a referendum was held

which reflected overwhelming support for the formation of an SRC.

An SRC Ad Hoc Committee was then formed, which led the campaign. Meetings have been held and demands finalised. Speakers have also been brought onto campus, such as Leonardo Apples, SRC president at UWC in 1976, and Alf Karrim, SRC president at the University.

Apples spoke on the need for community support and for democracy and non-racialism as guiding principles. Karrim spoke about the experience of UDW students, and the issues that his SRC has taken up.

No go for SA games at UCT

IN THE first week in May, after an important basketball event had already been played in the UCT sports centre, the University's Sports Council reversed an earlier decision to allow their facilities to be used for the South African Festival Games.

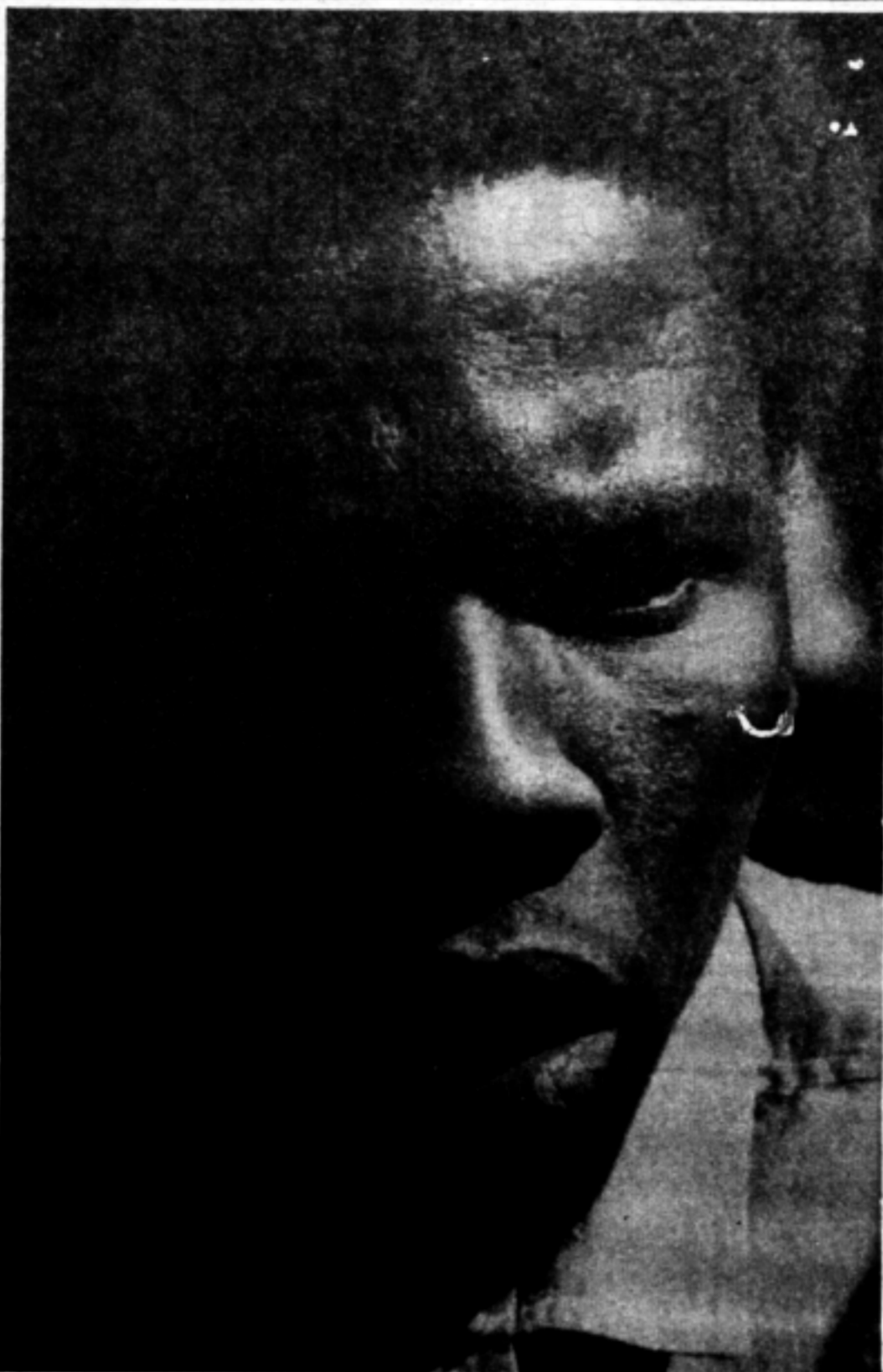
Earlier, the UCT Sports Council had agreed to host part of this year's Games on condition they were not to be part of the Republic Festival Programme.

Mr M.J. Penberthy, head of the Sports Council, said assurances had been given by the Director of the Games, that the Games (coincidentally called the Festival Games this year), were not connected to the Republic Festival.

Justin Hardcastle, SRC Vice-President, said the SRC delegation to the Sports Council's May meeting had presented evidence showing the link between the Republic Festival and the Festival Games.

This evidence included a transcript of the opening address of the Republic Festival in Cape Town and the Festival programme which mentions the Games as part of the celebrations.

Mr Penberthy said UCT facilities would no longer be used for the Festival Games, but added that this was not a ruling on similar applications that may be made to the Sports Council in the future. Each case would be assessed on its merits, he said.



Cosas President Zenzile — "PFP gives a false sense of democracy"

Cosas clamps down on chats with the liberals

COSAS HAS suspended two of its former Port Elizabeth executive members, Thabo Msizi and Themba Mangqase, for speaking to members of the Progressive Federal party (PFP) and giving an interview to Pace magazine.

The decision to suspend them from activities and membership was taken by the local branch at a meeting in Port Elizabeth. Their suspension will be discussed at Cosas congress later this year.

In a statement Cosas said the PFP was "an organisation which we regard as part and parcel of the South African system and a party that is merely attempting to create a false sense of democracy in the country".

Cosas added that Pace magazine was a publication which was involved in the Information scandal and connected with General Van den Bergh.

"We condemn their actions in toto and we further maintain that we will not have any relations with either the PFP or Pace magazine for the good of Cosas", the statement said.

The suspension of the two men, both students at KwaZeele schools, was intended to show that Cosas had no room for obstacles or people using double standards in the fight for liberation, the statement added.

A Cosas executive member said of the PE branch's action in suspending the two students: "We wish to encourage this kind of response as a disciplinary measure by our branches for any member breaking the policies of the body. We will take the task of considering their case at congress level".

In another move the PE student's Co-ordinating Council has black-listed three black schools, Newell High School, New Brighton and

Masibambane Secondary Schools and Itamsanqa Secondary School, which do not allow student representative councils to operate.

Seven schools who have SRC's have agreed to boycott these schools by refusing to play sport

against them. This decision was endorsed by representatives from the schools concerned.

STUDENTS at the University of Durban Westville boycotted classes for two days in commemoration of last years education boycotts and to protest against the launching of Republic Day festivities.

The stay-away, held on 30 April and 1 May, was also to protest against the university graduation ceremonies and the 21st anniversary celebration of UDW's establishment

The student action was also a demonstration of May Day solidarity with workers world-wide.

After the decision to boycott was agreed on at a mass meeting, students marched around the campus

UDW students stayaway in Republic Day protest

to inform people who did not know of the decision. This march ended at the administration block, where students informed the rector that their struggle was still continuing as most of last years' boycott demands have not been met.

At lunch time, the students assembled in the cafe to sing freedom songs and to listen to Trevor Smith,

Chairperson of the Medical Students Representative Council speak.

The events for the day ended with more freedom songs.

The next day students again marched around the campus. They stopped at the administration block where a massive "Republic Day" cake was displayed for the rector

and the authorities to see before being burnt.

Sam Kikine of the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu) addressed the crowd on the importance and the dynamic role that students had to play in the workers struggle.

Students then took a decision to stay on the campus right through

the evening to picket the graduation ceremony that was due to begin at 6.30 pm.

At around 5 pm students assembled in the quadrangle and were ordered by police to leave the area around the Main Hall. They then moved to the SRC offices, but left after further police threats to avoid being surrounded.

The students then decided to move to the hostels until the ceremony actually started. However, as soon as the students entered the hostel it was sealed off by riot police and the students were locked inside.

The road leading past the hostel was then picketed by another large group of students singing freedom songs and displaying banners to arriving parents and "sell-out" graduates. At the same time an effigy of a graduate was set alight in full view of arriving visitors. In response, the riot police attacked and forced all the students to retreat into the hostels.

The tense siege lasted for a few hours, with the students facing police taunts. The situation was only defused by the arrival of buses to transport students off campus.

The protests succeeded in that only half of UDW's graduates attended the graduation — a figure far less than in previous years.

THE WORD "f—k" was used 130 times in the film "Apocalypse Now", a Johannesburg court was told recently.

The figure was given by an eminent academic at the trial of Ms Christine Isabel Hofmeyr, charged with producing an "undesirable" publication.

Hofmeyr, editor of the banned literary magazine Inspan, is awaiting judgement under the Publications and Entertainment Act.

Giving evidence in Hofmeyr's defence, Dr Stephen Grey, an English lecturer at RAU and expert on South African literature, said that even though the word

"Poep" OK for me says literary boffin

"f—k" was used extensively in "Apocalypse Now", it was passed by the Publications Control Board. But Inspan, a magazine of considerable literary merit, was deemed undesirable. Dr Ampie Coetzee, an expert on Afrikaans writings, argued that society's values were changing and that what people previously considered "swear words", were now an acceptable

part of language.

He was giving evidence on the word "poep" which he said mothers used when speaking to their children.

The State's case has been based mainly on a poem by Andre le Roux de Toit which follows the format of the Lords Prayer.

The state alleges that the poem goes against Christian doctrines,

which are written indirectly into censorship legislation.

Mr Dennis Kuny, appearing for Hofmeyr, argued that the intentions of the poet were deeply religious and the poem was not intended to offend the beliefs of any section of the population.

He said that Hofmeyr was highly qualified to judge literary merit and had carefully selected the works included in Inspan.

The magazine was directed at a limited audience, the kind of people who would appreciate the literary value of the chosen works.

Judgement will be given on June 15th.

Death robs Cape of one of its most outstanding leaders

HENNIE FERRUS was born to Ms Christina Ferrus (Aunt Stienie) on 8 February 1940. During the early years of his life he was deeply influenced by his mother, attending ANC rallies and meetings in Worcester. At the young age of 19, Hennie joined the Coloured People's Congress, one of the five congresses forming the Congress Alliance under the leadership of the ANC.

In 1962, Hennie Ferrus was detained for the first time. The 90 day detention law was renewed 3 times, keeping him imprisoned for almost a whole year. Two years later he was charged with sabotage for participating in the armed wing of the ANC. He was acquitted, but banned and house arrested on his release.

A banning order did not stop Ferrus's political activity. In 1966 he was imprisoned for four months for breaking his banning order. The following year he was once again con-

victed for the same "crime". This time he was sent to Robben Island for over three years. Hennie completed his matric on Robben Island, only to be banned and house arrested again on his release.

Ferrus married Patty Pieterse a year after the expiry of his banning order in 1976. At this point he decided to join the Labour Party and eventually became the regional chairperson. Although he was intensely critical of the role and leadership of the Labour Party, he considered it a useful base from which to organise. He often said that the Freedom Charter was always his compass, in actively organizing support for worker, student and community struggles.

In 1980, Ferrus was detained by the security police and his wife had to get a court interdict restraining them from assaulting him. He was kept at Victor Verster Prison for five and a half months and once again banned and house-arrested



A young Hennie Ferrus with his wife, Patty

on his release. At the end of last year his banning order was unexpectedly lifted.

On the Easter weekend Ferrus, only 43, perished in a car crash when his car overturned.



Flags, banners and salutes at Hennie Ferrus' funeral

ANC hijack charge rejected

• From page 1

deceived nobody in the ranks of the oppressed people.

His commitment was to nothing else but the total liberation of all the oppressed and exploited people in this country.

Secondly, during his life time and consistent with his views and beliefs, Hennie had indicated to me how he wished to be buried after his death. I want to say emphatically that all arrangements for the funeral which took place on April 26, 1981 were made with my full consent and approval. The funeral was not hijacked by the ANC as has been stated in The Sunday Times. There was indeed a suggestion from other quarters for a different kind of funeral but this

suggestion was unacceptable. I place on record my gratitude to all concerned for having helped me give Hennie a last farewell which he so richly deserved.

Thirdly, if there are people who say that Hennie had everybody fooled, then these can only be people who are in the enemy camp on the side of the oppressors. Everybody knew that throughout his political life, Hennie was with all his being a member of the Congress Alliance and that he remained one until his last breath. What was so secret about it? Nothing at all.

Finally, I place on record my solidarity with Hennie's political life, his aspirations and everything he stood for. His struggle is my struggle.

Aluta Continua • Petronella 'Patty' Ferrus

"THE NP is retaining a power based on repression and deception and today with the Republic day celebrations, we are being asked to indulge in a deception which we refuse to do after 33 years of suffering and degradation".

This was said by Mr Griffiths Mxenge, a member of the Durban Lawyers Association and the Anti-Republic Day Committee at a packed meeting at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the Natal University last month.

Mr Mxenge was addressing an Anti Republic Day meeting at the Students Union.

Those present were the Vice Chairperson of the labour Party and present chair of the Pietermaritzburg Anti Republic Day celebrations; Wenberg a member of the local branch of the Black Sash; Mr Abba Omar, a student from the University of Durban Westville and Mr John Gultig, a student from Pietermaritzburg campus.

All five speakers said there was very little to celebrate because of the deprivation of human rights suffered by the majority of the country's people.

Mrs Wenberg said "when all infringements on personal liberties are done away with and all discriminatory legislation is rescinded then, and only then, will we have cause to celebrate.

The declaration of South Africa as a Republic was illegal said Mr Mxenge. He said blacks were ignored and were never consulted

"We shall not indulge in Republic deceptions"

on the decision, and voting on the matter was confined to whites only.

Mr Mxenge quoted a letter from Dr Verwoerd to white voters in which the good Doctor said "only in a Republic will we be able to unite and allow white people to develop a safe future for our white people".

This shows he was not con-

cerned with the majority of people in this country, the local chair of the Anti Republic Celebration Committee said.

Mr Omar said that if students want to show their disgust for Apartheid, and if they want democracy and more just society, "now is the time they should make their stand and reject Apartheid".

"The Republic celebration itself

shows up an injustice ... The Durban City Council voted R150 000 for the celebration yet when people ask for subsidies on their rent their pleas are rejected" said Mr Omar.

Echoing the other speakers views that there was nothing to be joyous about John Gultig said "In this year of celebration we have 87% of South Africans still without

a vote, more than 20 000 South Africans in exile, 174 people banned, banished and under house arrest, 584 South Africans imprisoned for Political offences and 50 people presently standing trial for political offences.

At the end of the meeting Mrs Wenberg put forward a resolution adopted by 20 churches and concerned organisations rejecting the celebration, "because of the blatant erosion of human rights in this country for the past 20 years".

The resolution was passed with only 14 abstentions out of an audience of approximately 350.

At present there are 25 organisations in Pietermaritzburg which have come out against Republic Day Celebrations.

Thorny issue of campus sport leads to Sacos meeting

SACOS is to meet a university delegation to discuss the thorny issue of campus sport, it was decided at the organisation's bi-annual conference in Durban recently.

Sacos did resolve however, that no organised sport can be played on university facilities.

A debate on whether or not black students should use university sports facilities as a means of organising students to further the struggle has been raging for weeks on the campuses.

Various campus representatives including the Wits Black Student Society attended as observers but were not allowed to speak.

The South African Black Intersvarsity Committee (SABIC) said using university facilities would allow students to come together as in many cases students encountered practical difficulties in using community facilities, in trying to organise university sport.

Also, they argued, by playing sport on campus, black universities would be able to arrange intersvarsities and facilitate contact between oppressed students around the country.

Sabic also sought affiliation to Sacos, which was rejected.

Sacos delegates said Sabic allows for two administration officials to be appointed to all university sports

committees, and secondly that the word Black in Sabic had racial connotations which were not in accord with Sacos' non-racial principles.

But in principle Sacos said they saw nothing wrong with a non-racial intersvarsity committee affiliating to them.

Meanwhile, at Wits two mass meetings were held to discuss the issue. At the second meeting a vote was taken which revealed much confusion amongst students over the issue.

While most students agreed that there was a valid case for unior sport to organise students there was much uncertainty as to whether sport facilities at Wits

should be used.

A BSS statement said the majority were either too confused or intimidated to vote, and furthermore, that few of the hostel students attended the meeting.

A statement issued by the BSS said: "While we may disagree with some of the tactics that Sacos has been, and is, using, we nevertheless still endorse Sacos as the sole representative of the non-racial sports movement in our country.

Whether we agree or disagree with Sacos tactics is not important. What is important is that we stand by the spirit and principles of Sacos".

THE PIETERMARITZBURG SRC came under heavy fire for administrative incompetence and lack of political leadership at a lively student body meeting attended by 900 students recently.

Amid widespread dissatisfaction with the inactivity of the conservative SRC, the Moderate Student Alliance (a left grouping) drew up a petition that forced the Council to face up to student criticism.

Four prominent students, amongst them the chairpersons of Rag and the local PFP branch accused the SRC of intolerance to any criticism. This they said, was indicated by the arbitrary firing of the campus newspaper editor Rosie Davis and its subsequent take over by SRC President Bredenkamp. The newspaper 'Nux' had still been under the control of progressive students.

One student said the SRC's political alignment with the PFP during

Pmb SRC under attack for lack of action on campus

the last election was based on "Calculated self interest and expediency".

The PFP campus chairperson Andy Pearce concluded commenting that "All the actions of the SRC on campus contradict their supposed commitment to the PFP's principles of freedom of speech, freedom of the press and democracy generally".

A number of the critics urged that the SRC move towards a form of

participatory democracy "At present, democracy on campus, is severely limited by its representative nature", said Malcolm McKensie a lecturer in English. "The SRC must take a lead in involving students not only in voting it into office but in its activities during the year".

Mr McKensie also said that the SRC had not paid attention to the issue of sexism on campus or in providing facilities for students wanting to play in non-racial Sacos

leagues and of displaying the laager mentality of the majority of White South Africans by disaffiliation from Nusas.

Speaking in defence of the SRC, Education Officer David Rattray declared that the meeting was an attempt by the liberal — left to hijack the present SRC. He accused Nusas of being "communist or socialist" and said he was proud that the Pietermaritzburg SRC was not affiliated to it.

Rattray made an assurance to his supporters that he was proud to be right wing and that his SRC was a right wing SRC. After defending the SRC as being the most administratively competent SRC in a long while he said, "This SRC will be judged fairly by history".

President Bredenkamp, speaking off the cuff never developed a defence of the SRC but rather countered criticisms made by speakers before him. On whether

the SRC must provide political leadership he said, "I don't really know about that". He went on to say that his support for the PFP during the recent election didn't mean that he supported them "But they were an Opposition so I voted for them".

There was a great deal of mirth over the SRC's handling of the Republic Day issue. When the University Senate decided to boycott, the SRC accused them of being irresponsible. Now the SRC supports it although Bredenkamp had abstained from voting on the issue.

SRC president explained that his presence at the opening ceremony was in his personal capacity and not his official capacity. "In fact I went along to watch a little cousin of mine doing gymnastics that's all".

No vote was taken at the end of the meeting and audience response seemed equally divided.

Political prisoners not criminals

In a recent speech, Nusas President Andrew Boraine told Wits students that political prisoners in South Africa are treated worse than criminals.

MARGARET Thatcher — responding to world-wide appeals for a less rigid attitude towards IRA hunger-striker Bobby Sands — replied: "Crime is crime is crime".

In response to the Release Mandela Campaign last year, the attitude of the South African authorities was remarkably similar: "Mandela is a criminal who has been sentenced in a court of law — he must serve his sentence".

We have very little knowledge of the true events in Northern Ireland surrounding the tragic death of Bobby Sands and three others.

What the intense conflict of last week does do, is once again force us to examine the position of political prisoners here in South Africa.

Both South Africa and Ireland are countries of long and bitter conflict. Northern Ireland was colonised by people from across the sea. So too was South Africa colonised by settlers who arrived, first from Holland and France, and later, from Britain.

Conflict initially began in South Africa over land — who had access to it and who controlled it. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, major wars were fought in areas now known as the Eastern Cape, Natal and Transvaal, the tide only turning with the arrival of regular British troops possessing superior weaponry.

Dispossession of land was legalised by the 1913 Land Acts, leaving most South Africans without right of access to land, except in overcrowded and underdeveloped reserves.

Conflict has also existed, and exists today, in South Africa over the need for those who own mines, factories and farms to renew and control a constant supply of cheap labour. This was done through the use of tax legislation, which helped to force people off their land in search of a cash wage. Further controls included the use of a pass system to allocate labour, and compounds to maintain strict discipline.

In addition, South Africa is distinguished for its complete lack of political representation, and a range of security laws among the severest in the world.

Consequently, South Africa has a massive number of political prisoners — men and women who have helped to organise their fellow South Africans against the misery of resettlement camps, the terror of the 4 am knock, poverty wages, gutter education.

The story of Bobby Sands occupied the front pages of most



"The whole world was bombarded with the story of Bobby Sands and Francis Hughes — Why the silence when it comes to political prisoners in South Africa, especially those who have also fought for better prison conditions through hunger strikes?" — Boraine.

South African newspapers for over a week. Similar acts of defiance also have a common place in South African history.

Pixie Benjamin, a member of the Congress of Democrats, was detained in June 1964, shortly after the introduction of the 90 days detention without trial law. She refused to take food, and drank only glucose water. Her demand — to be charged or released.

It took more than 54 days for the authorities to relent. Pixie was brought to court, charged for a fairly minor offense, and released on bail. The charges were withdrawn against her 10 days later.

Last year 60-70 detainees staged a two-week hunger strike at the Victor Verster prison in Paarl, and just last month, four detainees belonging to the South African Allied Workers' Union were reported to be in hospital in East London after a hunger strike.

South Africa has always had a conservative attitude towards all prisoners. We boast one of the largest prison populations in the world — thanks to the large number of pass offenders. In all, 258 457 went to jail in 1978, a further 246 435 were awaiting trial.

South Africa also executes a record number of prisoners. The figure for 1978 was 132 hangings — and average of one person every three days.

Looking specifically at political prisoners, we see approximately 447 on Robben Island, 36 of whom are serving life sentences. There are also political prisoners in Pretoria Central, Kroonstad, Pollsmoors and

Leeukop prisons.

It is important to look at numbers. It is more important to realise that political prisoners in South Africa have a far lower status than prisoners convicted of criminal offences.

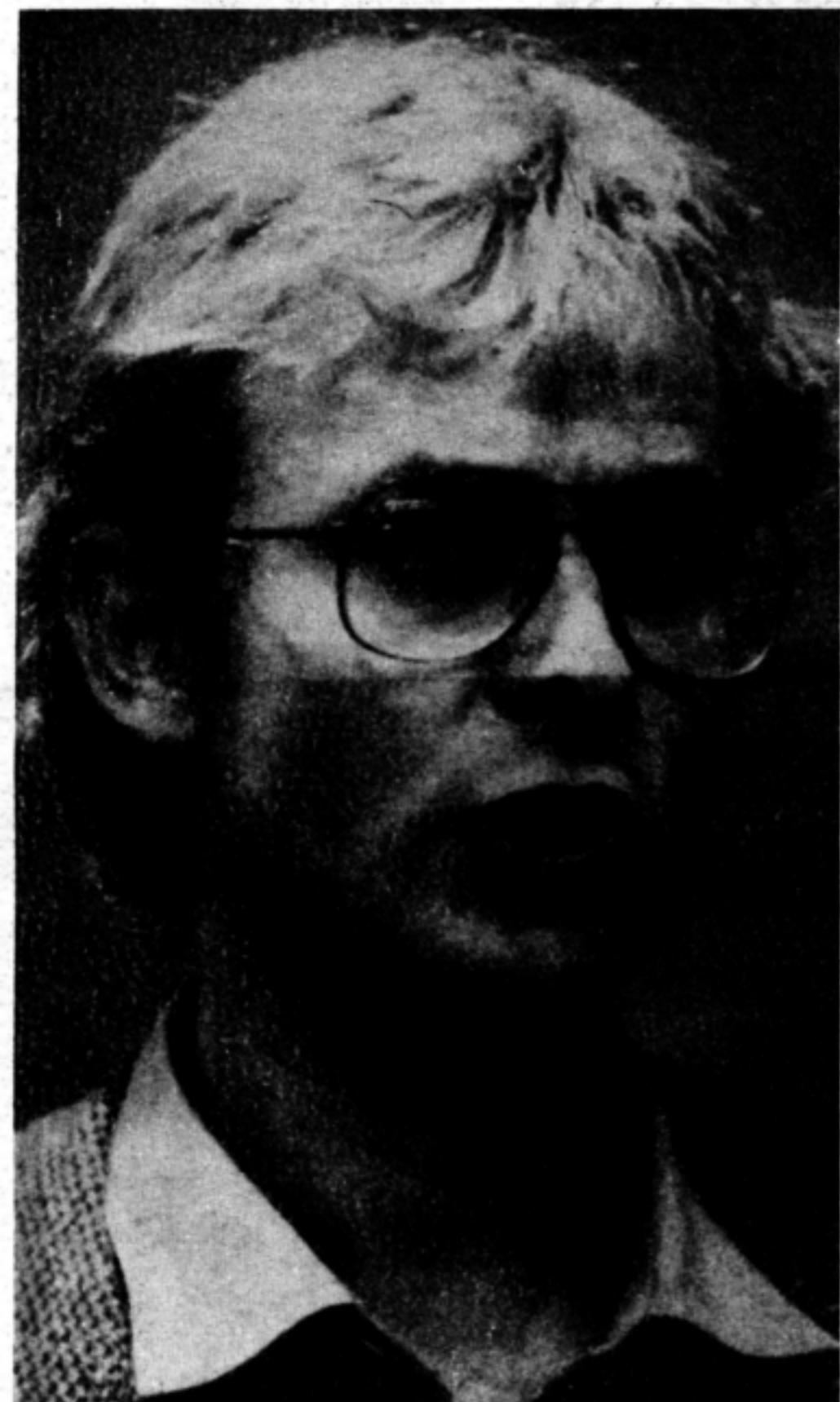
Again, we draw comparisons with the situation in Northern Ireland. Both the British and South African governments claim there are no political prisoners — just criminals.

But there is an important difference. In Northern Ireland, all prisoners qualify for remission of sentence. South Africa denies remission to politically inspired offenders, despite their insistence that there are no political prisoners.

In Britain one can only be detained for a maximum of five days on an order from the Secretary of State. In South Africa, detention may carry on forever. More than 1 200 people were detained in South Africa last year. Court records are full of allegations of torture at the hands of the police. Political prisoners in South Africa have no rights whatsoever — everything is a "privilege".

Above the demand for rights for political prisoners should be the demand for their immediate, unconditional release. For they are the real leaders of the majority of South Africans.

And as we continue to oppose the celebration festivities of a Republic not founded on the will of the people, let our call be for a democratic South Africa, where people like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu can play their rightful parts.



Andrew Boraine ... give political prisoner status

Mannenburg pupils boycott

OVER 500 pupils at Manenberg Senior Secondary School near Cape Town stayed away from classes for a week to back up their demand for the abolition of a practical course at the school.

In a statement released by the Concerned Parents Committee, the course is described as "a monster".

The parents and pupils claim that it does not teach any skills and is not recognised by employers or technical colleges.

"With this course the authorities have found a solution to the criticism that the poor facilities, overcrowded classrooms, scarcity of teachers and so on produce a high failure rate. By introducing the practical course, everybody gets certificates and the critics are gagged", the statement says.

On the second day of the boycott, a meeting between repre-

sentatives of the parents and the teaching staff of the school took place. It was decided that parents would be able to ask for transfers to the academic course, on condition that they would be responsible for any difficulty that the child might experience.

The decision still had to be ratified by the Department of Coloured Affairs, but pupils have rejected the option.

"We want the course to be scrapped entirely", one pupil said. Meanwhile, awareness programmes and marches around the school grounds have been taking place at the school.

The course is for pupils who score less than 100 in a group IQ test in Std. 6. Pupils and parents have argued that the likely academic success of a pupil cannot be determined by a test like this.

Women unite in new grassroots organisation

ANOTHER chapter in South Africa's history was opened at the first conference of the United Womens Organisation (UWO) in the Western Cape on the 4th April this year.

UWO started informally a few years ago when a group of women in Western Cape townships began to mobilise women to protest against high rents and support worker and community organisations.

As more and more women became active it was clear that there was a need for a formal organisation which women could join and under whose banner women could get together and work effectively in their communities.

The UWO steering committee organised the first conference and women from all over the Western Cape came, by bus, by train, in cars and on foot.

The first day of the conference suffered an initial setback when many women were turned away at the entrance to Langa. However many managed to get there and the conference hall was alive with singing and a great spirit of enthusiasm. Posters on the walls reminded of the struggles of women in the past and urged them to continue in the present struggles.

Dora Tamana, the oldest member of the UWO opened the conference. She called on all women to speak out:

"You who have no work, speak. You who have no homes, speak. You who have no schools, speak. You who have to run like chickens from the vulture, speak. Let us share our problems so that we can solve them together".

Dora Tamana also spoke about the Federation of South African Women in the 1950's and told of the determination and commitment of those women who waged protests against rents, pass laws and rising food prices.

Many women spoke spontaneously about the hardships they suffered as women and as members of the oppressed people of South



Africa. They spoke of the need for proper housing and fair rents, of the lack of proper health care and child care, of the high cost of food to be bought from very low wages, cost of transport, job reservation and of their insecure position as women in the workforce.

Throughout the conference wo-

men stressed that the remedy to all these problems did not lie in the so-called government reforms but that they would only be solved when the whole society was changed, and that both women and men had a duty to struggle for these fundamental changes.

A further important message to

emerge from the conference was about the nature of womens organisations — an organisation must be a "child of its own time". The Federation of South African Women (FSAW) was a federation to which other organisations belonged and this was because of the political conditions of that time.

"We know the FSAW as the organisation of women in the active years of the past. After this child of the people was crippled, the women looked around, wanting once more to stand up. The time for the women to stand up came in the late 1970's. This was a time of high rents, busfares, high meat prices, high electricity, no electricity, low wages and families being forced to move from one place to another, with no proper place to live".

It was with all this in mind that the UWO was formed. UWO is made up of branches in each area or township which allows for a large amount of grassroots mobilisation.

Each branch will concentrate on issues of concern to its own community. UWO activities could help women to overcome the hardships they face and will assist them to become actively and confidently involved in the affairs of their communities.

These activities could also help to overcome the prejudices which exist about women's place in society. Women are taught at an early age to think of themselves as inferior to men. By organising, women can play a role in the world outside the home.

The need for women in rural areas to be organised was also stressed. In the 1950's rural women organised spontaneously against the issuing of passes to women. Thus these women have a fine history of resistance and their potential should not be ignored or overlooked the conference stressed.

A speaker at the conference summed up the spirit and intention of the United Womens Organisation — "We will only be able to change our conditions at work, at home, and in the communities where we live and raise a new generation to continue with this struggle, if we are united and organised. But we as women cannot fight for our freedom as women only, we must fight for the freedom of all oppressed men and women across this land. A people can never be free while their women are in chains".

THE first Annual National Conference of the General Workers Union was held in Langa recently. Delegates came from branches in East London and Port Elizabeth and from workers committees in every organised factory.

As the Union will now be organising and setting up branches throughout the country, the name has been changed from the Western Province General Workers' Union to the General Workers Union.

The following statement was adopted.

WE, of the first Annual National Conference of the General Worker's Union, commit ourselves to democratic control by workers and democratic worker leadership of the Union.

We commit ourselves to these basic principles in order that workers may represent and lead the Union's members in the struggle for our rights in our factories, our communities and our country.

Democracy the key for expanding general union

- In the Union, we commit ourselves to full participation by our members in the factories in making the Union's decisions.

We will do this through democratically elected workers committees in every organised factory. Each factory committee must be directly represented on the bodies which control the Union.

- We feel that the factory representatives must be directly responsible to the members in the factories at all times.

Members in the factories must have the right to demand at any time that their representatives ex-

plain what they are doing. Members in the factories must have the right to replace representatives if they are not properly representing their feelings and decisions.

- In our Union the workers must be directly responsible for the financial administration of their factory organisation. The Union officials and committee members must fully participate in collecting subscriptions from the workers every month. Therefore we reject the bosses collecting subscriptions through stop orders.

We feel that stop orders undermine our principles of direct responsibility at all times of com-

mittee members and Union officials to the workers.

- We commit ourselves to worker education and training.

Only with such education can our members take an active part in all union affairs.

Only with such education can they take forward the struggle for their rights. Only with worker education and training can worker leadership be developed and strengthened.

- When we deal with the bosses, we commit ourselves in every organised factory to obtain recognition of the democratically elected workers' committees representing the workers in the factory.

These committees must have the right to negotiate with the bosses on all matters which affect the workers in the factory.

- We believe that it is not the job of the Union officials to negotiate on their own with the bosses.

It is the job of the workers' committees, acting on the mandate of the workers at all times, to negotiate directly with the bosses.

For this reason we reject the Industrial Council system.

- When we deal with the State, we will work for the right of workers to participate fully in the democratic government of the country because workers are the

people who produce the country's wealth.

At all times we will put forward our belief that the first thing which is needed for peace in the factories of our country is the right of workers to negotiate through democratic and representative workers' organisations.

- We say that Union officials have the right to meet with the bosses only when they are instructed by members to do so. The officials can only discuss Union policy with the bosses. They cannot negotiate with the bosses if the workers committee representatives are not with them.

- We in the Union believe that industrial peace can only be maintained if the bosses recognise the democratically elected workers committees as the representatives of the workers in the factories, and if the bosses show they are prepared to genuinely negotiate with workers demanding the fruits of their labour and their rights in the factories.

We will resist all attempts to take any control of our Union out of the hands of the Union's members.

- In our relationships with other organisations of the workers and people of South Africa, we commit ourselves to co-operating and working constructively with organisations which are committed to the same basic democratic principles and aims.

In this way we commit ourselves to carry forward the interests of the workers and people of South Africa towards a democratic future.

Thanks to GWU and Grassroots

New Labour Bill curbs education

UNNOTICED the state has sneaked through a new Labour Bill, attempting once again to affect the independence of the unregistered trade union movement.

The Manpower Training Bill, as it is known, has escaped the scrutiny of labour experts, who have been giving most of their attention to the Industrial Conciliation Act and its recent amendments.

Careful scrutiny of this lengthy and technical bill has serious implications for the future of worker education.

The relevant clauses contained in

section 31 (1) and (2) of the bill provide that any unregistered trade unions who wish to teach "industrial relations" to workers other than their own employers or organisers, must do so at a training centre registered with the registrar of training centres.

Registered trade unions, on the other hand, are given an option of whether to register their centre or not.

But this is not the only blow for the unregistered unions. For once they have registered their centres, they must then submit their training courses to the registrar for his

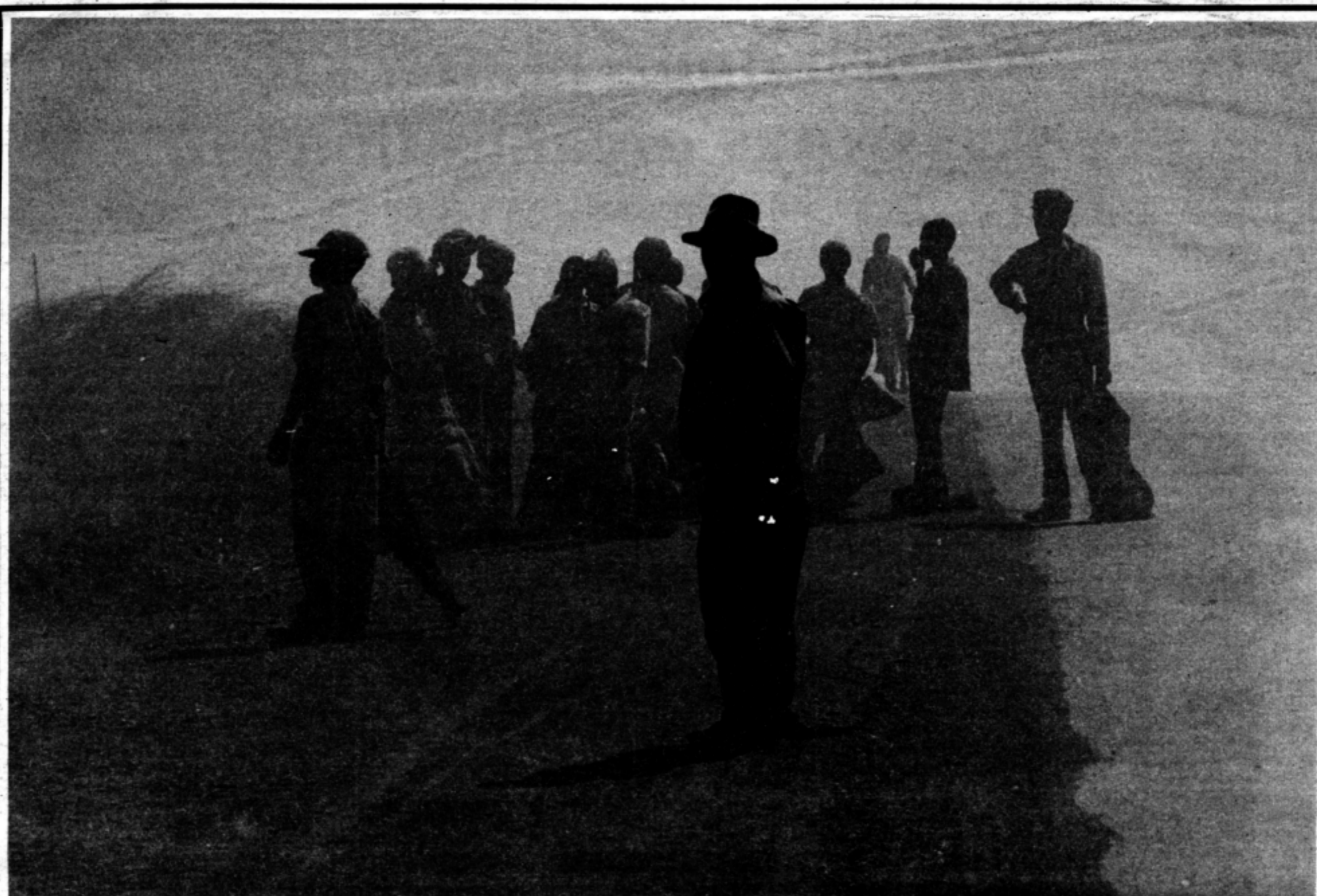
approval.

Despite the serious implications of this bill, it has met with little public protest.

What unionists fear most about it, is that it strikes at the heart of trade union activity — worker education.

The bill should not however be seen in isolation from the existing Industrial Conciliation Act and the new draft bill to amend it.

The state is attempting to cultivate bureaucratic "apolitical" trade unions, and at the same time to make life as difficult as possible for independent unions.



Walking through the fog of repression, the people plan a bright and clear future

Pic by Morris Zwi

Apartheid aims for diversity but unity is the demand of Apartheid's people

SOME PEOPLE are busy celebrating twenty years of the Apartheid Republic with military parades, speeches and a towering Taiwanese extravaganza.

With all the ornage, white and blue plastered around the place one would be inclined to believe that South Africa itself is having a ball.

The pretty picture, however, has one fundamental flaw — most South Africans are not celebrating. Instead people are asking what there is to be happy about. They won't accept the present situation of inequality, and refuse to celebrate a Republic that was born in conflict.



In the period before May 31, 1961, 69 people died at Sharpeville, state of emergency was declared, and the premier political organisation of the 1950's the African National Congress was banned, as well as the Pan African Congress. The period before Republic Day

also saw the introduction of the first provision for detention without trial — 12 days under the General Laws Amendment Act. All public meetings were banned under a new section of the Riotous Assmeblies Act; the army and the police were placed on constant standby.

The advent of the Republic only served to heighten conflict. Albert Luthuli, former president of the banned African National Congress and Nobel Peace prize winner said in 1961: "We are objection to the establishment of the Republic with no reference to us. We feel that White South Africans should not go on making changes to our lives without consulting us".

This statement, together with many others, was ignored by the then Prime Minister, H.F. Verwoerd.

Six months later, the first wave of sabotage rocked installations of the police, military and local government. Umkhonto we Sizwe, military wing of the now banned African National Congress, had been born.

Opposition to Republic Day, 1981, is not just a refusal to take part in the celebrations. It is not just a refusal to wave little orange, white and blue flags. Saying no to

the Republic implies opposition to years of oppression. It means being part of a broad front of mass resistance. And through this rejection of apartheid by the majority of South Africans has come a commitment to democratic forms of organisation which contain within them the seeds of a democratic South Africa.



The South African government's ruthless purge of all opposition after 1961 is well-known. It took six years to transform 12 days detention without trial to indefinite detention, with solitary confinement the order of the day. Since then, at least 44 people are known to have died in detention. A glance at any court record will show the numerous allegations to torture and beatings — all of course denied by those in authority.

New legislation was introduced after 1961. The Sabotage Act carries a five year minimum sentence — so does the Terrorism Act. At this moment over 500 prisoners are

serving sentences for political offences, in Leeuwkop, Pretoria Central, Kroonstad, Pollsmoor and Robben Island. 38 are serving life sentences.

But opposition to apartheid lies far beyond a condemnation of security legislation and an outcry against excesses by security police.

The fight against apartheid has centred around those areas which are literally life and death questions to the majority of South Africa — housing, wages, employment, rents, transport and food. And it is at this level that the current level of resistance has been pitched.

The struggle in the factories over the issues of low wages and dan-

gerous working conditions have been extended to include demands for democratically elected trade unions.

In turn, this demand has spilled over into other areas of working class organisation. Throughout the country, civics, schools, universities, sporting clubs and cultural groups have begun to organise people on the basis of democracy. Demands range from provision of better housing and the payment of higher wages through to the demand for full political rights.

It is these demands which have come into conflict with the apartheid system. South Africa is fundamentally undemocratic — it always has been. Yet for many

20 YEARS OF REPRESSION

NO CAUSE TO CELEBRATE

At a remote mission hospital a kwashiorkor baby contracts measles, which spread to her eye...



The eye bursts

OUTSIDE A FACTORY A WOMAN FIRES BLINDLY INTO A GROUP OF STRIKERS...



A MAN IS KILLED

N.D. MAZIN 26-5-81

IN HILLBROW TWO CHILDREN ARE SEEN IN THE STREETS AFTER DARK ON A FRIDAY NIGHT 'CLEAN UP'... ITS A FREE RIDE TO PRISON



In a posh suburban home a family celebrates the safe return of Johnny from the border



& Nanny brings the tea

Through the streets of an urban ghetto drives a successful man...



on his way to his desk at SABC-TV 2

In a shack in an isolated resettlement camp a woman waits for her husband to return. He never will.



BEHIND PRISON WALLS AN OLD MAN WAITS FOR FREEDOM



ITS NO EASY WALK

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED & DIED... REMEMBER THEM - THEIR SPIRIT W

years now, and in particular over the last few years, the majority of South Africans have been making democratic demands. Thus conflict will continue in South Africa until such time that the demands of the people can be included in a democratic society.



So let's return to the demands that are being made. The fight for a new education system, for example, is not just for equal education but for democratic education in a democratic society. So too with demands for job security, higher wages and basic living facilities. But demands like these are nothing

new — if years ago delegates to the Congress of the People, the most democratic gathering of representatives South Africa has ever known, formulated the Freedom Charter.

This document encapsulated the minimum demands of South Africans in 1955 — it still does so today.

Thus when groups get together in their opposition to an event such as Republic Day, they do so in accordance with a long history of resistance and a long commitment to the democratic principles of the Freedom Charter.

And it is on this basis that opposition to Republic Day must be judged. Most South Africans stand opposed to the Republic, true, but only true democrats stand opposed, backed by the full weight of mass organisation.

The road ahead is clear. The seeds of a new South Africa have already been planted in the form of

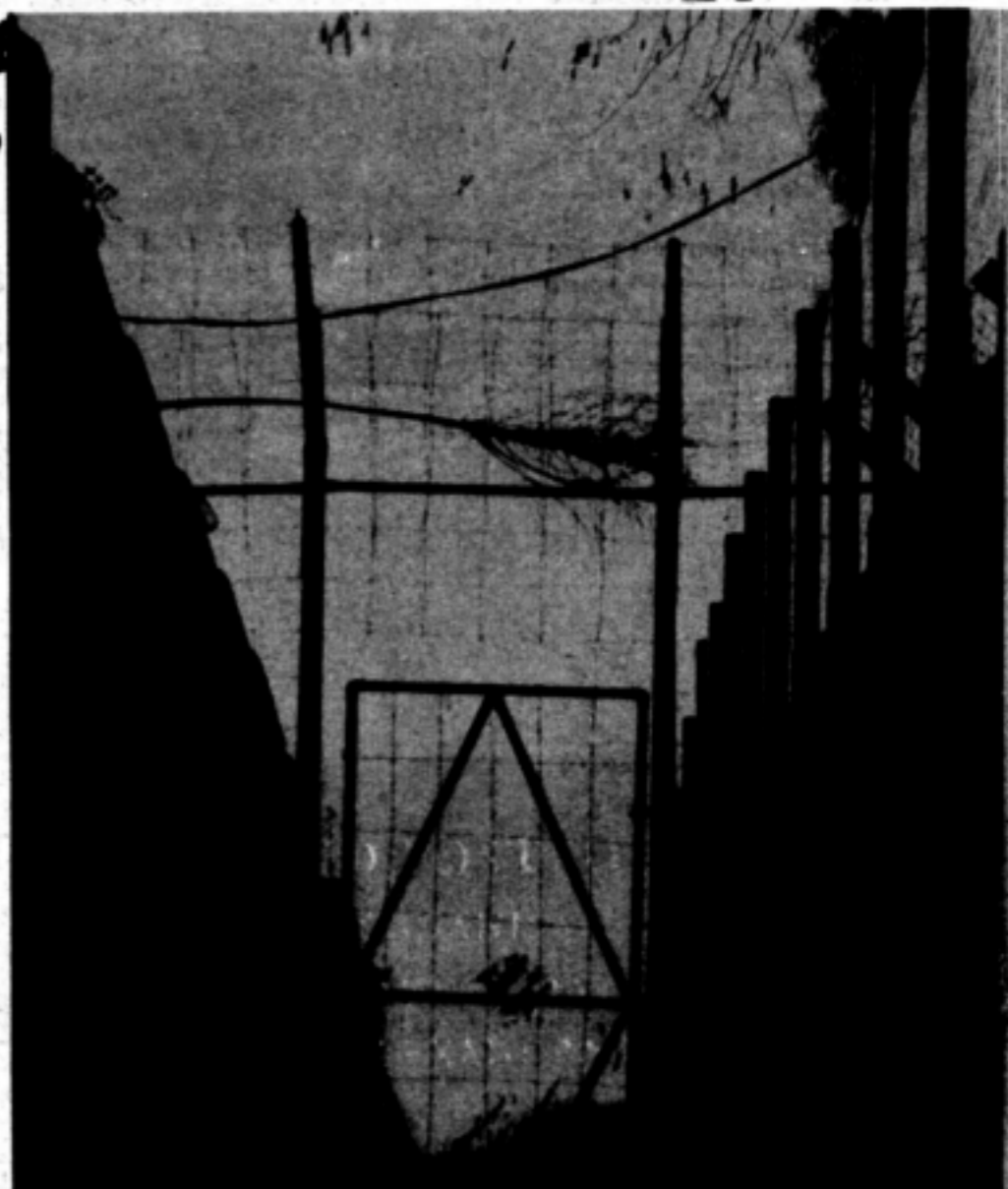
mass resistance. The time is rapidly approaching for South African democrats to come together once again on a national democratic

basis. This demands the release of leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, and the return of exiles.

A convention of democrats does not seek to provide a platform for those who posture in the national press. Neither does it entail a process of negotiation with those who, at this stage, hold power. Rather a

national democratic convention signifies the joining together of all democrats in a united front.

Diversity may be the aim of apartheid but unity is the demand of the people. Unity in the struggle, a unity of democratic forces and a national convention to bring an immediate solution — that is what is demanded!





SIXTEEN years of bitterness and frustration under the Group Areas Act sparked the mid-May Reiger Park Protest — despite an official statement saying it was racial tension between "Coloureds" and Indians.

The statement — issued jointly by minister of Internal Affairs Chris Heunis and Minister of Community Development Pen Kotze — was repudiated by Reiger Park residents.

"We are not going to fight among ourselves to please a white Government. The outcry here is houses, houses, houses, and nothing else", one said.

"People can only take so much. When they explode, then anyone or anything is the target".

The target in this case were 14 or 50 traders in Reiger Park, whose shops and cars were burnt in two weekends of violence.

Two youths were shot dead, and fifteen people injured as police tried to quell the protest.

The protest brought Reiger Park's acute housing shortage to centre stage. There are about 22 000 people in the township — 10 000 of them on a housing waiting list.

The first weekend of violence — May 3 — was sparked off when trader Abie Gungadien — known as the "Godfather of Reiger Park" — reacted to a boycott of his taxi service by pulling out two guns and shooting into the air.

Gungadien, who owns a shop on land expropriated by the Department of Community Development for the building of 52 houses, began to renovate the shop — previously burnt down — an action which brought a sharp protest from the residents, and led to the boycott.

Gungadien has now been charged with attempted murder, so the case is sub justice.

But the initial housing shortage remains.

"We have been begging the Department of Community Development and the Boksburg Town Council to give us houses or to give us ground on which we could build our own houses", said George du Plessis, treasurer of the Labour Party and a Reiger Park resident resettled from Benoni.

"They have refused to do so. So their intention appears to be one of providing limited space to dehumanise one and make one feel like a non-entity.

"I doubt the sincerity of the Government. There are people living

Reiger Park, the commercial of the theory that conflict in

As one community activist h

here who earn good salaries. That money could go into building houses instead of into liquor".

The Boksburg council has provided some housing — 64 one-roomed units, collectively called "the Single Quarters" and thousands live there.

"The Single Quarters, and most of Reiger Park, are a brutal violation of the Slums Act", said one resident. "They are no good for human habitation".

Three families occupy one room in most cases, and they have to share a communal toilet which is always blocked and filthy.

Some of those families used to live in their own house 16 years ago. But that was before they were uprooted from their homes in Springs, Brakpan, Benoni and Germiston and resettled in Reiger Park just outside Boksburg.

The mass removals were carried out because of the Government's commitment to creating separate areas for the different race groups as embodied in the Group Areas Act. It is a commitment repeated during the recent General Election, although the same fervour has never been devoted to providing sufficient housing.

Today, Reiger Park simmers as a monument to a haphazardly executed Group Areas Act.

A pamphlet circulated to residents before the unrest and singled out by the Government for "fanning racial hatred" points out that "the whole housing shortage is intended to further demoralise, disposses and deprive us of a decent way of living".

"Tell me if I'm wrong", the pamphlet says, "if I say the Group Areas Act was specifically passed in order to uproot families that have been settled for years in other areas and dumped on a limited space of ground. That the housing shortage will continue to deteriorate while the Group Areas Act prevails".

"Tell me if I'm wrong", it says, "if I say that the South African apartheid law prevents families from getting a house because of the colour of their skin".

'Its not

The grand Group Areas plan for the East Rand was implemented 16 years ago when "Coloureds" were moved to Boksburg, and Indians to Benoni. "Coloureds" were moved into the old location of Stirtonville, while "blacks" were moved to the new township of Vosloosrus.

By September 1966, when Stirtonville — renamed Reiger Park — was officially declared a regional group area for "coloureds" on the East Rand, the township already held 10 000 people and was being called a "cesspool of iniquity" in which residents were terrorised by gang warfare.

By 1971, the township had swollen to 13 000 — including 250 Indians "soon to be moved" to Actonville, the Indian township near Benoni. The then Minister of Community Development, Blaar Coetzee, promised that Indian traders would receive immediate attention.

Two years later the Indian traders were still in Reiger Park because Actonville was already overcrowded. The Department of Community Development again promised that the re-settlement of East Rand Indians was "being reconsidered at a high level".



ial press told us, was conclusive proof

SA is racially based. But was this so?

has angrily said. . . .

Class Race Damn

it!'

The problem was that 42 Indian traders left behind in Reiger Park were stunting the advancement of "coloured" commercial enterprise, while at the same time the insecure Indian traders were reluctant to make improvements to

their stores and allowed them to deteriorate into slums.

But the Indians stayed. In 1979, the number of Indian traders in Reiger Park had grown to 67, and since the land shortage in Actonville had still not been solved, an alternative had to be found.

It was announced that a new "Coloured" business complex would be established in Reiger Park while an Oriental Plaza would be built in Dunswart for the Indian traders of Actonville and Reiger Park.

Today, the plaza is still at the planning stage, and the unrest has evoked a promise from the Boksburg council to expedite its establishment.

The number of Indian traders in Reiger Park has dwindled to 14 or so, with two Chinese traders.

Meanwhile, plans to relieve the desperate overcrowding in Actonville by resettling Indians in the former area of Rynsoord in Benoni were stalled by accusations of irregularities, and plans to incorporate the white area of Delmore into Reiger Park to relieve the housing shortage there also ran into trouble.

Unlike black townships administered by the Department of Co-operation and Development through administration boards, "Coloured" townships are the responsibility of municipalities.

In March this year, the Boksburg Town Council, while not opposing the expansion of Reiger Park in principle, decided to support a management committee decision against the proposal. The reason was that a "second 'Coloured' group area would be a still greater financial burden for the white ratepayers of Boksburg".

And so, this month the Boksburg council became the second on the East Rand to ask the Department of Community Development to take over the running of the township. Just the month before, Alberton approved a motion calling on the Government to relieve it of the burden of running its "Coloured" township of Eden Park, which has about 10 000 residents resettled from all over the East Rand.

"We admit to making a policy suggestion to the central Government", Johan van der Merwe, chairman of Alberton's Management Committee, said at the time.

"But our motivation is purely economic and not political".

Boksburg's reasons for this move were identical to Alberton's.

Both councils said they could not

afford to run the townships without placing a further burden on "Coloured" residents in the form of increased rents. They felt residents were not in a socio-economic position to afford these.

They also "detested" being in the "awkward position" of having to turn down requests for facilities and services presented to them by the townships' "Coloured" management committees.

They felt the Government was the authority in the best financial position to administer the townships, and since the Government had created them they should run them.

They wanted to wash their white hands of the "Coloured burden because the residents of Reiger Park and Eden Park were not historically part of Boksburg and Alberton. The thousands of residents had been resettled there from all over the East Rand, they said, and white ratepayers were not responsible for looking after them.

However, both overlooked the fact that the "Coloured" communities pay for many of the townships' services themselves, and commerce in both towns is buoyed by residents of the townships.

By handing over the townships to the Government, the town councils would be stifling the voice it simply does not want to hear. Both Alberton and Boksburg are painfully aware of the needs of the people of Reiger Park and Eden Park.

Boksburg responded to the need for housing by asking the Department of Community Development for a loan to build 52 houses. "This gesture makes us look like fools", stormed one Reiger Park resident.

Mostly these councils stare blankly when confronted by the "Coloured" management commit-

tees. In Reiger Park, some of the more outspoken "Coloured" management committee members are more responsive.

They tell residents these committees are "toy telephones", toothless bodies, that housing can never be provided.

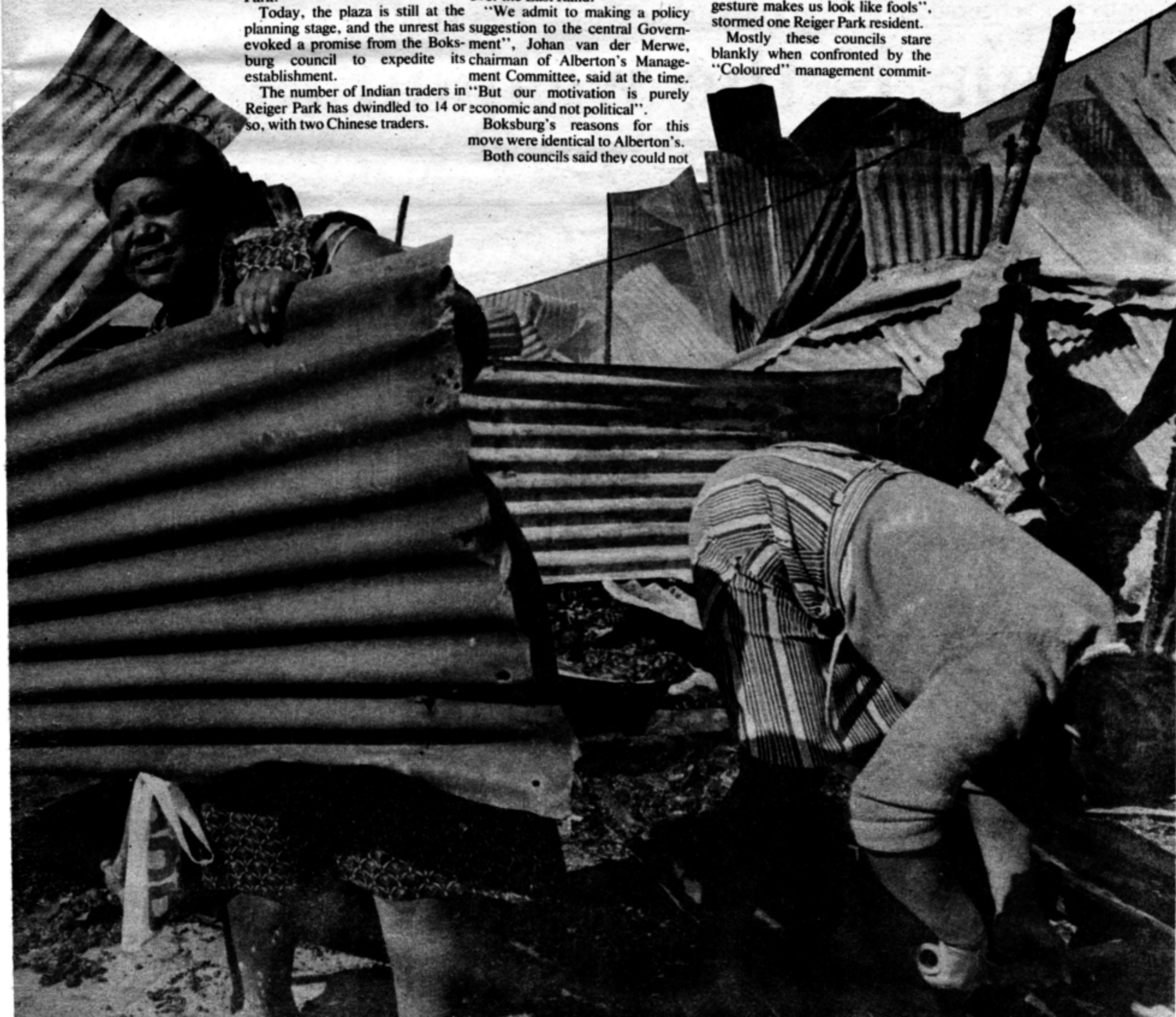
They also tell residents they serve on these bodies so "the white man can never turn around and say he knew because he was never told".

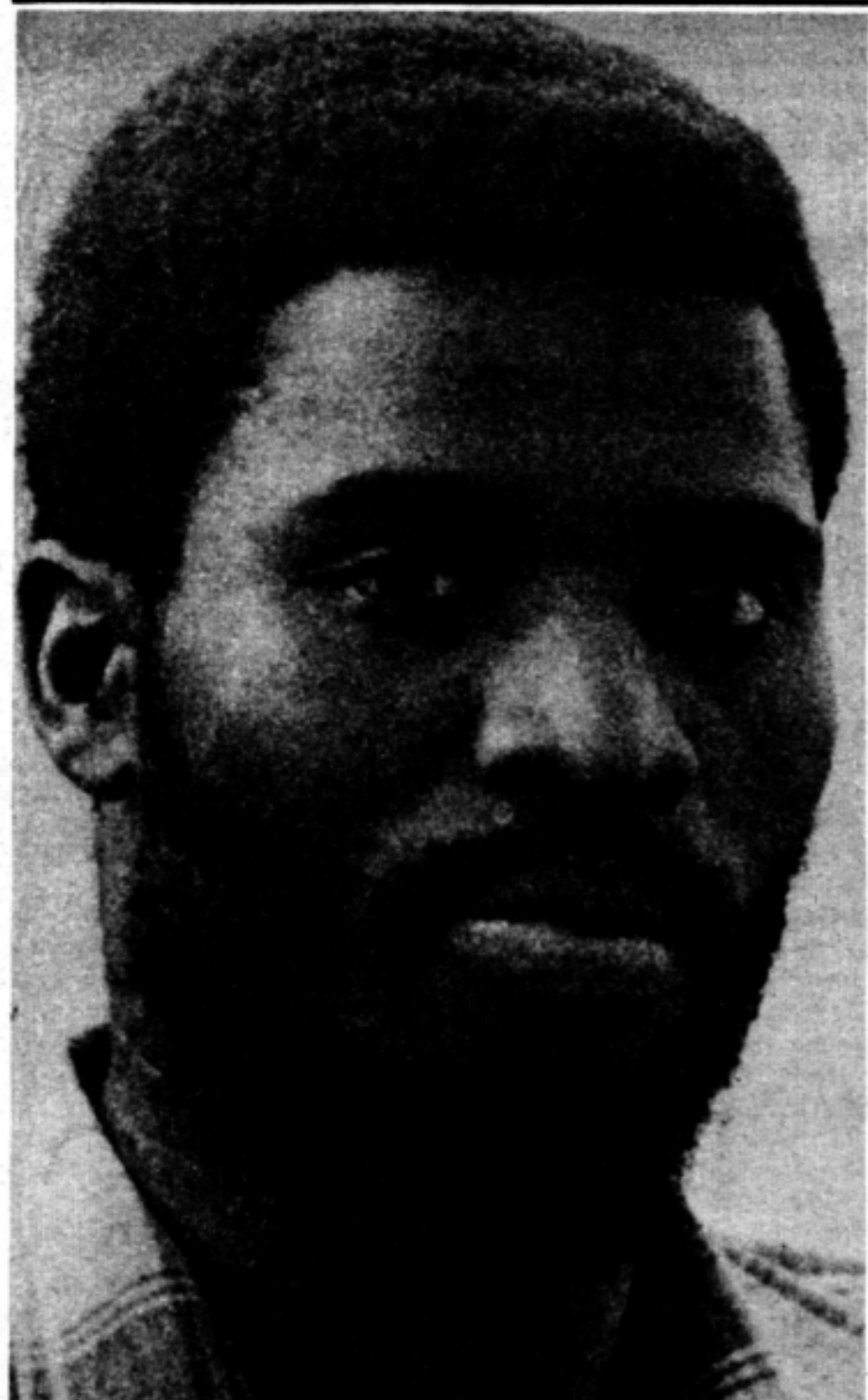
Because of their honesty, some members of the "Coloured" management committee in Reiger Park are highly respected by the community. Two of these are Jac Rabie and Aubrey Dick, both of whom were shot when they tried to beg the police to stop shooting.

It has taken shooting and violence for the Government to concede that there might in fact be a housing crisis in Reiger Park. Consideration had for several years been given to extending Reiger Park, but these efforts had been hampered by mining activities, a Government statement said.

"An area has now been identified, and will soon be investigated as a possible extension to Reiger Park", the statement said.

Members of the Government must be uncomfortable about Reiger Park. It surely must have become clear by now the "bruin Afrikaners" are identifying strongly with blacks. It surely must have become clear by now that dormant "Coloured" consciousness, first awakened during the schools boycott in the Cape Peninsula, is now organising itself around the issue of housing.





Saawu President, Thozamile Gqweta

Leaders re-elected at Saawu congress

WORKER delegates came from all over South Africa to attend the second conference of the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu) held in Durban recently.

The workers re-elected Mr Thozamile Gqweta as national president and Mr Sam Kikine as general secretary, while Mr Sisa Njikelana was elected vice-president.

The conference called for the release of Nelson Mandela, saying he was a nationally recognised leader who could save the country from self-destruction.

The call was in line with Saawu's policy of linking workers' demands with the wider political struggle — Saawu says the struggle in the workplace continues when workers go home at night and therefore has a policy of involving itself in community as well as factory struggles.

The conference rejected the 'bantustan' system. Speakers said the system made them foreigners in the land of their birth and robbed

them of the country's wealth which they had created.

It also rejected local government bodies such as township councils whose members are nominated by the government and demanded the recognition of democratically elected community bodies to represent the people.

Other resolutions condemned the proposed labour bills which, representatives said, are "intended to destroy the only peaceful weapon available to workers in their struggle for their rights".

They condemned the Minister of Manpower Utilization, Mr Fanie Botha, saying he was responsible for the current labour unrest in East London.

Saawu said he incited bosses to hold out against unions till March 1981, when legislation to curb the activity of unregistered unions was expected to be passed.

They condemned the detention of union organisers and other workers by both the South African and Ciskeian authorities and demanded

the release of all those detained.

Saawu re-affirmed a previous decision not to register in terms of government labour legislation on the ground that this would increase government control over the union.

In a stirring speech to the conference, Mr Gqweta said that the "adbrgement of workers' rights to form or belong to trade unions had added insult to injury".

He said workers must fight for a future, non-racial South African in which workers, be they black or white, must live and work together in peace and harmony as members of one society, one nation and committed to one common goal, mainly the equal development of their skills and technical know-how as workers of one nation and grow like a tree planted in generous soil where their rights as workers and as a nation will remain unimpeded".

This future South Africa would be free of racial hatred, free of mass unemployment and free of poverty and oppression and exploitation, he said.

Thanks to Press Trust of South Africa

Thousands have cheered the birth of a new union based in Port Elizabeth

Labour is the weapon to our

ABOUT 3 000 people cheered and sang at the inaugural congress of the General Workers' Union of South Africa (Gwusa) as speakers urged them to use their labour as a weapon to obtain their freedom.

Gwusa — which is open to all workers outside of the motor industry was formed recently under the direction of the Port Elizabeth-based Motor Assembly and Component Workers' Union of South Africa (Macwusa).

Speaking at the meeting in Port Elizabeth the main speaker, Mr Joe Mavi, president of Black Municipal Workers Union (BMWU) said workers had to unite and mobilise themselves against exploitation from employees.

Mr Mavi said there were black employees in the townships who also played the role of exploiter by paying "our sisters" R8 a week.

He said black workers since the turn of this century had been barred from the democratic rights of collective bargaining through pass laws, job reservation and the Industrial Conciliation Act.

Mr Mavi slammed the migrant labour system which brought black workers to work under strange conditions and did not allow workers to move freely.

"Although we have been denied those rights, our African people since the turn of this century, have worked for true trade unionism, and we find ourselves bound to do the same", he said.

Mr Mavi urged black workers still to sell their labour but to tell the employer exactly how much it was worth.

"If he refuses you your rights, then deny him your strength", he said.

Mr Mavi appealed to black supervisors or officials in firms to treat their black brothers working under them with respect because they lived as neighbours in the townships.

He added: "There is only one way to freedom, black workers must unite and forget things that divide you. Let there be no longer any talk about Xhosas, Zulus, Sothos, Coloureds, Indians, Whites and Vendas. You are all labourers and let labour be your common bond", he said.



Over 3000 people attended Gwusa's inaugural rally in PE

UBCO supports Union's stand

RESIDENTS associations had to work hand in hand with "relevant" trade unions, the interim chairman of the Uitenhage Black Civic Association (UBCO) Mr Fikile Kobese told the inaugural congress of the General Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa) recently.

In a surprise move earlier this year, Mr Kobese resigned as secretary of the Federation of South African Trade Unions in Uitenhage to join the independent Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union of South Africa (Macwusa).

Macwusa and Ubcu are strongly opposed to Fosatu which has opted for government registration and believe that their growing strength is a significant challenge to Fosatu in the Eastern Cape.

"Relevant trade unions need our moral support and contact so that we can work together as organisations relevant to the struggle", Mr Kobese told the rally.

"Trade unions cannot undermine us", Mr Kobese said. "We must strengthen our civic bodies and maintain contact with relevant trade unions."

"But we must not waste time with irrelevant trade unions — we need a body that can fight for us as workers against the government and management".

The president of the Johannesburg based General and Allied Workers Union (Gawu), Mr Samson Ndou called on the new union to combine with 'progressive' trade unions to form a "no-

werful labour front".

Mr Ndou hit out at unions who were opposed to politics in trade unionism as it was apartheid legislation which continually frustrated the efforts of progressive unions.

"Trade unions cannot solely concern themselves with bread and butter issues but must work hand in hand with liberation movements to bring about social justice in South Africa."

"It is the worker that will be a major factor in bringing about social justice in South Africa", he said to cheers from the audience.

The meeting was also addressed by Macwusa chairperson, Mr Dumile Makhanda and worker representatives from Ford, Feltex, General Motors, Plascon Paints and C and T Products.



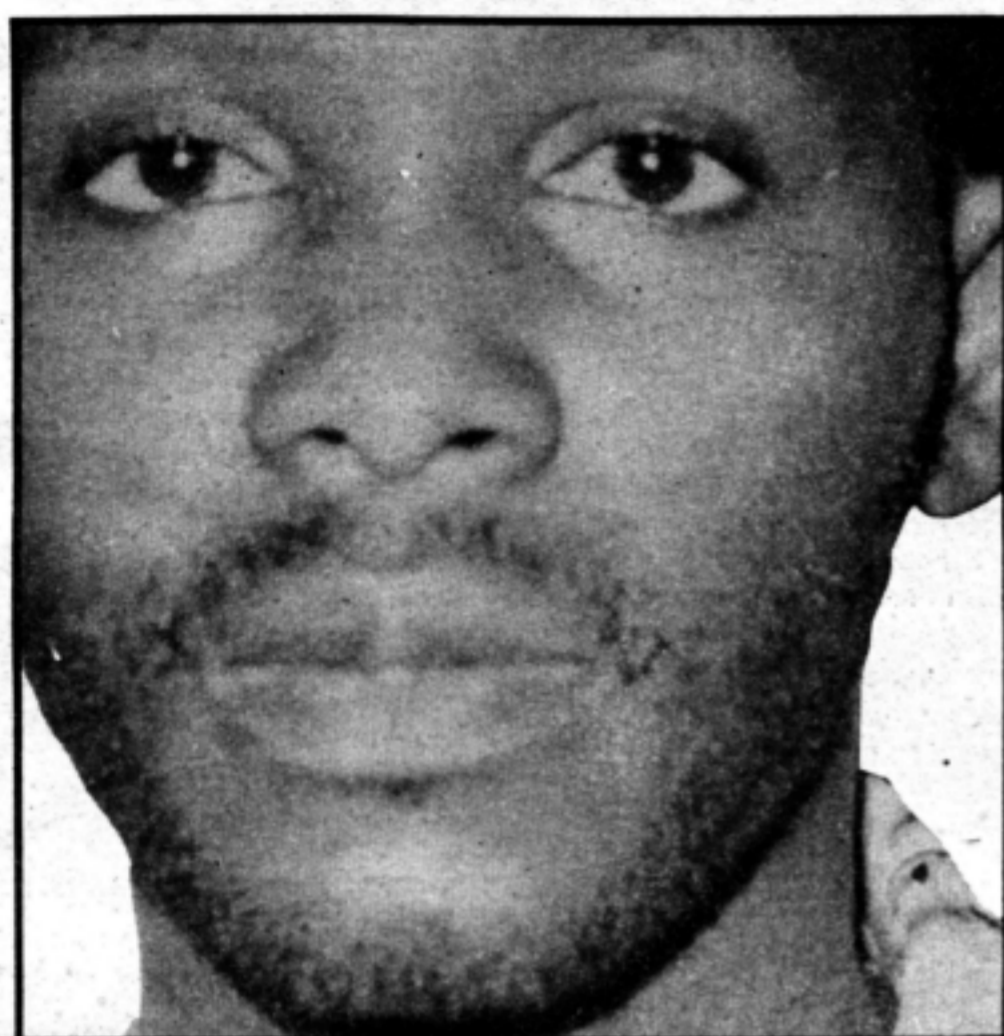
BMWU's Joe Mavi



Mr Dennis Neer



Mr Government Zini



Macwusa President, Mr Dumile Makhanda

Macwusa — New union setting E. Cape alight

IN THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS ON THE INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS, SASPU NATIONAL TALKS TO MACWUSA, THE NEWEST UNION IN THE EASTERN CAPE.

SINCE the beginning of the year we have seen a rapid rise in trade union activity in the Eastern Cape.

Two new unions suddenly appeared on the scene in Port Elizabeth — the Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union of South Africa (Macwusa) and the General Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa) — and within a short while have shown themselves to be a powerful force in union politics. In an exclusive interview with SASPU NATIONAL

Macwusa Chairperson, Dumile Makhanda and organisers Maxwell Madlingogi, Mpumi Cilibe and Mxolisi Didiga talk about these unions and workers struggle in South Africa.

Q: What is your policy on non-racialism?

A: We are totally non-racial. "Race" doesn't count to us. A worker is a worker, whether black or white.

Q: Do you see any chance of organising "coloured" workers?

A: We already have some "coloured" workers as members.

Q: Do you want to comment on

the proposed amendments to the Industrial Conciliation Act?

A: We are suspicious of any legislation designed by the Government affecting unions. Should there be any threat of us being closed down, we are well armed, and feel that we could withstand any onslaught. Our membership is organised

Our ability to organise depends on the workers' strength, not on Government actions.

Q: How do you view general unions, like GWUSA and the WPGWU?

A: General unions are practical and strong because they involve all industries. Industries are interconnected and interdependent. General workers unions can be very powerful if organised in the correct way.

Q: Do you see any possibility of potential conflict between Gwusa and the GWU, and has there been contact between the two?

A: Yes, there has been contact. If there is a general workers union in Cape Town, and one in PE and one in Jo'burg — surely the thing for them to do is to come together. You can't have a GWU based in Cape Town operating in PE as well as a GWU in PE working here. I don't see any reason why they cannot come together.

Q: What is your role in the formation of Gwusa?

A: There is a symbolic relationship between Macwusa and Gwusa. Macwusa is going to be affiliated to Gwusa.

Q: How does Gwusa see itself organising, for example, domestic workers and gardeners?

A: At this point we have a problem with organising. People come to our offices on their own. We have been approached by domestic workers. The problem obviously is — how are we going to negotiate for these workers?

Perhaps we will make a call for employers to form a representative committee that it is possible to negotiate with. We will even negotiate with individuals.

In the area of domestic workers, our work is mostly in the area of conscientising. It is very ambitious to think of organising a boycott of certain employers of domestic labour

We intend to make contact with progressive domestic worker organisations. But this is still very much in the planning stages.

But with organising we have no problem — the people flock in. But at the moment there is little shop floor organising — we don't go out to organise. We set times for meetings, and those who come take away membership forms and bring them back themselves. But we are preparing ourselves for the time when no-body will be coming in, and we go out to factories.

Q: What is your attitude to registration?

A: Macwusa is against registration for various reasons. The question of industrial codes (tape recording unclear) ... The unions were never approached and consequently the codes disregard the interest of the workers.

Influx Control and Job Reservation — those unjust laws — then I don't see them as representative of the workers.

Q: Would you say that Fosatu membership has fallen?

A: (M. Cilibe) Yes, most of our members are people who have fallen away from Fosatu to join us. However many of the workers do not understand the implications of registration. A

Macwusa is not registered. It is not known by the Government. It can be banned (tape unclear) ... When we hold meetings we explain what it means to be registered and make the workers aware of the implications. After each meeting you find workers resigning from Fosatu and taking out membership with Macwusa and taking away membership forms to their factories.

(M. Didiza) Another thing —

We have approached some of them to discuss this. What we gathered is that they regard registration as just a piece of paper.

Q: How do you practically organise your workers?

A: We have meetings in our offices every Saturday at 2 pm where we explain and discuss things. We haven't organised an intensive programme of conscientising because of the time factor. We concentrate on basics, and we have rallies.

Q: Looking at Pebco with its previous rally-type activities without grassroots organisation — don't you think that you could fall into the same traps?

A: (M. Madlingogi) It's a question of leadership. There weren't the people in Pebco to take over, except some opportunists.

(D. Makhanda) If organisation had been at the grassroots level, a new competent leadership would have emerged. We are not relying on this rally-type activity. For instance, we don't organise General Motor workers with Ford workers at the same time. When you hold a big meeting you don't get at the basic problems. People tend to be emotional and make speeches.

Q: What are your aims and direction?

A: We are a progressive union. Our direction takes into account the broad future of SA. We think the very fact that the worker has accepted the principal of non-racialism is important. We would like to see expansion — worker units extending to all areas. The workers' struggle is the most important part of the struggle.

We are involved in the following factories — Ford, General Motors, Feltex, Firestone, Good Year (Uitenhage), Plascon and Volkswagen, and are making progress in Armorplate Safety Glass, General Tyre, Uniroyal and Shatterprufe.

Some of our main successes have involved the reinstatement of dismissed workers.

Q: Do you have formal contact with community organisations?

A: With the Uitenhage Black Community Organisation (UBCO) and Pebco. We are carrying members of Pebco, and the Ubcu leadership are Macwusa members. Meetings are mostly informal.

To survive we must plan to keep contact with community organisations. We hope to mobilise Pebco, in fact. And we want to make contact with other progressive unions.

Freedom rally told



Freedom songs and salutes at PE mass labour rally

THE PRESIDENT of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas), Wantu Zenzile, said in New Brighton last week students had come to realise they could not stand alone in the fight for liberation, or better education, without the support of their parents.

Speaking at the inaugural congress of the General Workers' Union of South Africa, Zenzile said the relation between the worker and the student could not be divorced — they must work together, because they had one goal, freedom.

"If we, as students, stand alone, we will not reach the land of honey and that is one of the reasons the organisers of this meeting, the Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union of South Africa (Macwusa) has invited a speaker from the students' body to address the workers who are our parents", he said.

But, Mr Zenzile said, it did not mean that students should support

Students not alone

all unions because there were those that were irrelevant, or pseudo-trade unions, listing among them those that had now opted for State registration.

"How can we register under the very people who are the machinery of the oppressive laws of the country and create bad conditions we have to work under in the factories?"

"People who join such unions are merely committing suicide because we regard registration of a union as a selling-out act", he said.

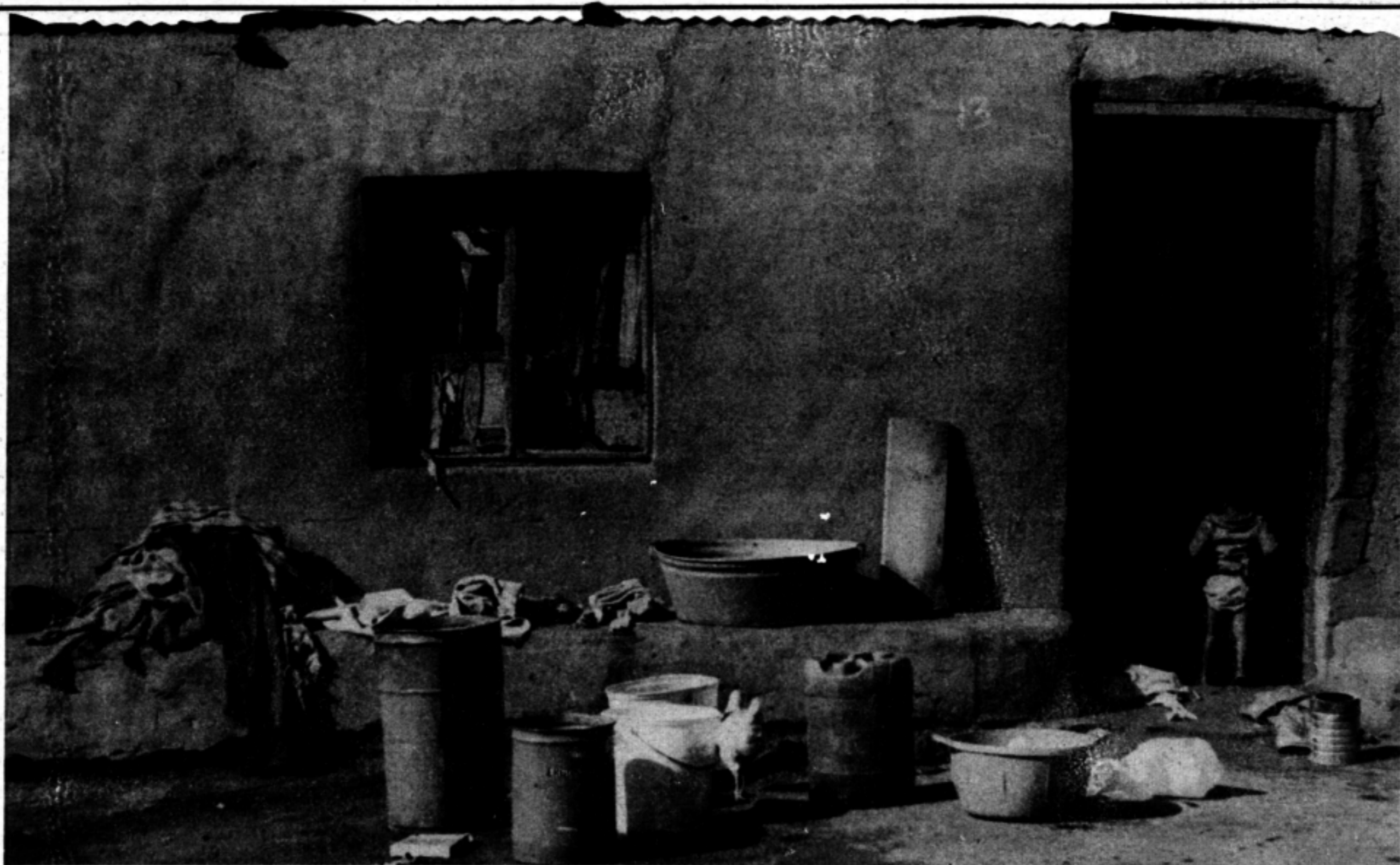
Mr Zenzile said the workers had the economy of the country in their hands, and that meant they had a weapon they could use to gain their liberation and it was the workers' duty to use that weapon to get what he wanted.

Mr Maxwell Madlingogi, a

member of Macwusa's executive committee, said Macwusa was not a racist organisation and would welcome whites, "Coloureds" and Indians who wanted to join its ranks.

"It has been given this racist outlook by the country's prevailing racist circumstances in which whites, in general, have been brought up in an atmosphere of being employers and not workers. But we are prepared to educate and help the white worker to fight for his rights", he said.

Mr Madlingogi said this was demonstrated when Ford black workers who returned to their jobs after the 1979 strike demanded their bonuses. When management decided to grant them, all workers, black and white, at the factory received them.



Winterveld ... originally a free hold farm

Winterveld a ragged casualty of Apartheid

THEIR classrooms are windowless tin shacks — dark, overcrowded and unbearably hot. They sit on the raw earth and struggle to read the blackboard through the gloom, even though the midday sun shines outside.

Some are well-groomed, neatly dressed in black and white uniforms, but most are barefoot, ragged and in need of a good meal.

This is a school at Winterveld, a sprawling, poverty stricken squatter camp 30 kilometres from Pretoria.

The families of most of these children have probably been living in Winterveld for some time. The camp, inside Boputhatswana, was originally a freehold farm which was divided into small plots and sold to black farmers.

Beginning in the late fifties there was a massive influx of people who had been resettled from black spots, or who had moved off white

farms in the Transvaal and Free State to find work in Pretoria.

There was no housing provided for these people in any of the townships, and so they began to rent small plots from the land-owners and erected mud houses.

Over the years the place has become more and more crowded — today it is rare to find anyone who uses land to cultivate crops.

In this impoverished and dry area, farming people is far more profitable than farming crops. The camp is dotted with thousands upon thousands of little houses made from clay or corrugated iron and wooden crates from the motor assembly plants in nearby Rosslyn.

There are no official statistics to say how many people live in Winterveld, or to say how they live, but it is accepted that there are be-

tween half and three quarters of a million people who have come to live on the edge of the city in the hope of finding work.

But hope is not enough, and the vast numbers of men and women who spend their days at home is testimony to an unemployment rate estimated at 80 per cent or more.

The high unemployment rate is related to more than just a lack of jobs. Since 1976, when Boputhatswana gained its "independence", there has been a deliberate policy of excluding Winterveld people from jobs and social services.

The most common excuse for this is that "the Winterveld people are not Tswanas, so they cannot take jobs that should be kept for the legitimate inhabitants of Boputhatswana".

It is now clear to Winterveld people that they are being deliberately "left-out".

Now, many Wintervelders survive by doing odd jobs in Pretoria, or by selling fruit, vegetables and sweets on the street corners of the camp.

Traders are told that they cannot get licences if they are not Boputhatswana citizens. But those desperate enough to give up South African rights and accept the passport of a puppet state, have found that citizenship is granted only to

those with the right documents — and often only to those who can pay.

There are no social services in Winterveld at all. Electricity, running water, and even a basic sewerage system are unknown luxuries.

People cope as best they can with unhealthy pit toilets, and with borhole water that must be bought from the land owners.

At 5c for 20 litres, the people of Winterveld are paying far more for water than Pretoria housewives.

Disease is ever-present, particularly malnutrition and other diseases related to poverty.

Schoolteachers say pellagra is rife among the young children, and that many babies never survive more than a few months before dying of starvation and gastroenteritis.

There are almost no proper health care facilities in the area.

A handful of private doctors nearby charge far too much for most people — only those who are seriously ill will pay R6 for medical attention.

The clinics are badly overcrowded and understaffed, as are the hospitals in the Pretoria area. So, people accept illness as just another one of the hardships of life that has to be endured.

The spirit of many of the Winterveld people is low. The day-to-day struggle for survival and harsh state repression has destroyed any attempts at community organisation.

A candle-making co-operative begun a few years ago, broke down after the people involved were detained by the security police. An attempt to organise literacy classes for illiterate adults met a similar fate.

It would seem that the only organisations tolerated in the area, are those which are under the control of, or serve the interests of, the authorities.

For years, the future of Winterveld has been the subject of debate. At the time of the Boputhatswana independence, the

area became a political football with both the South African government and its homeland creation denying responsibility.

Then Boputhatswana said it would accept those who were legally there — and the harassment of the unemployed and the non-Tswana majority began.

A committee was formed of some of the wealthiest landowners in the area, with Mr Sam Motsuenyane, of Nafcoc and Afribank fame, as its head.

When the Boputhatswana government announced plans to expropriate the land and resettle the population, the committee responded angrily raising objections relating to compensation, and the expropriation of private property.

Meanwhile, the Council for Scientific & Industrial Research has been involved in a massive project to plan for the upgrading of the area, which include proposals for a proper water sewerage system.

But these plans will not benefit many of the people who have lived in Winterveld. The harassment, poverty, disease and neglect of the past years has meant that many of them have been forced to move on.

And the latest creation of the South African government, the Ndebele homeland of Kwandebele, is the area to which many Winterveld people have gone, scattered in vast resettlement camps like Kwaggasfontein, Hammansdrift and Kameeldrift.

The big advantage of these new areas, is that there is slightly more hope of finding work than there was in Winterveld.

Men, can at least register as work-seekers and try to find work as migrant-labourers.

Women can find work on nearby white farms — although the wages are low (one rand a day) and the hours long.

But resettlement can never be a solution to the problems of Winterveld, because the difficulties go beyond a mere shortage of housing.

Winterveld is a casualty of a system that allows for starvation wages and mass unemployment; it is a casualty of a system which tries to divide the country into weak and repressive Bantustans.

As such, the only real solutions to the miseries of Winterveld are solutions that deal also with these fundamental social and political problems.



Many Winterveld people survive by doing odd jobs in Pretoria ... selling fruit, vegetables, sweets and anything else that can keep them alive.

Squatters — forced from home in the East and . . .

Forced removals are still a way of life for many in SA. Here SASPU NATIONAL looks at what's going on the Cape.

SCORES OF FAMILIES in the impoverished East Cape community of Riebeeck East face the grim prospect of forced removal later this year to Alicedale, 18 kilometres away.

For although the East Cape Administration Board has said that no-one will be made to move against their will, it has also been said that the existing location is to be demolished.

It has not said what will happen to those who wish to stay after their homes have been demolished.

Several householders, however, told SASPU NATIONAL that they had been informed by members of the local community council that they would be "dumped along the roadside" if they did not agree to resettlement.

However, residents said the board constables who conducted the "survey" told them they had to choose between moving to Seymour, near the Ciskei, and Alicedale. Believing they could not choose to stay, they opted for Alicedale as the lesser of two evils.

The board's director of community services said that families who did not want to move would be left to live where they were — in direct contradiction to the Chief Director of the board, Mr Louis Koch, who said that if any people wanted to remain in Riebeeck East (to keep their jobs there) their families would have to go anyway.

When the move was completed, the location would be demolished.

"We can't keep, say, five families in Riebeeck. It is not an economic or social proposition", said Mr Koch.

The move has the support of the local community council.

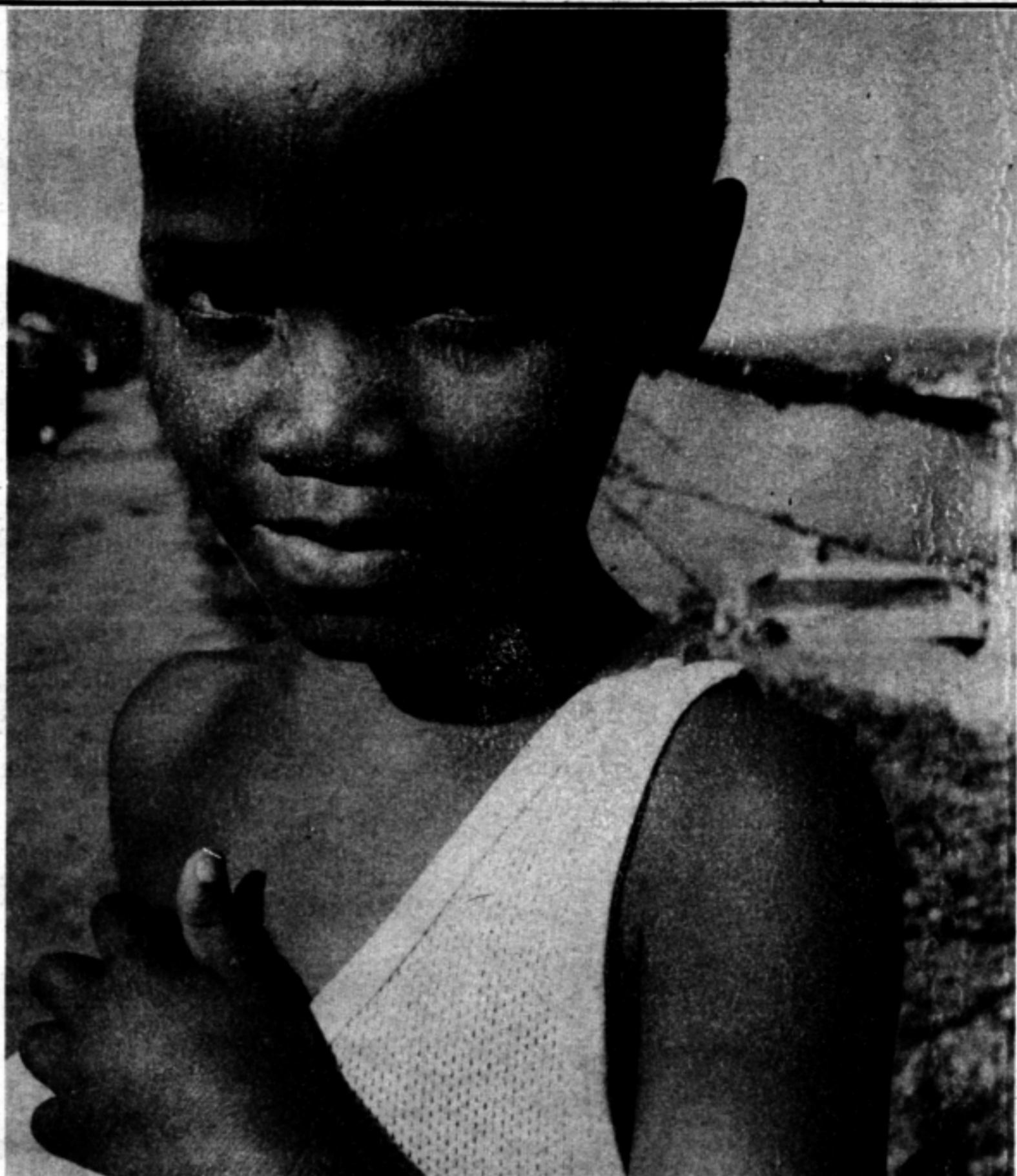
The council was told by Mr Koch at a special meeting in April that the board had investigated the possibility of providing services and other facilities for the inhabitants of Riebeeck East, where only about 25 people were in registered employment.

This would be too expensive, and the community could either stay "in misery" where it was, be resettled in the Ciskei, or move to Alicedale, where there would be improved job opportunities, better administrative, school and health facilities, and better housing, he said.

He assured the council that residents would be provided with free transport to Alicedale.

Asked at the meeting about the difference between Riebeeck East rents (R2,60 a month) and those in Alicedale, which are expected to be about R25, he said persons in need, such as the pensioners who comprise about half of the heads of households, could have part or all of their rent waived.

But of 15 heads of households approached at random by the Herald this week, 11 said they wanted to stay. Only four — including the chairman of the community council, Mr S.A. Kalani, and a



board employee — said they wanted to go.

Mrs Ethel Mafu said the majority of residents were opposed to the move. "Many people are going only because they are afraid their houses will be bulldozed".

She said she and her husband, a sheep shearer, were Xhosa, but her widowed mother in law was a coloured.

"Who will look after her if we have to go?" she said.

An elderly widow, Mrs Maggie Veli, who works as a domestic servant for R10 a month — not an unusual wage in Riebeeck East — said: "We are struggling here. How much more will we struggle in a

place we don't know?"

And Mrs Mynah Nogqala said: "My husband is buried here, and I want to be buried next to him. This is the place I know".

Another widow, Mrs Katie Jongilana, who earned R17 a month as a domestic servant, said she wanted to go to Alicedale. "I'm not happy here, I'll look for another job there", she said.

But according to an Alicedale community councillor, Mr S. Taboshe, this will not be easy.

"There's absolutely no work in this town", he said. Most of the men worked on the railways, many of them commuting to Port Elizabeth and back every day.

This meant they were travelling for seven hours a day. Some of them were forced to sleep on the luggage racks of the coaches in order to get some rest.

Mrs Ida Bavuma, who like her two teenage daughter was unemployed and looking for work, said Alicedale people "only get work in Port Elizabeth".

Her husband worked in Port Elizabeth, living in a hostel and coming home only at weekends.

The board has already built enough houses at Alicedale to accommodate 60 per cent of the Riebeeck East families, and the move is expected to start within the next two or three months.

... conned out in the West

A COMMUNITY of squatters in Hout Bay has been conned by the Peninsula Administration Board (PAB) into demolishing their own homes.

The PAB gave certain assurances to the community of about 300 squatters living in zinc shanties on the sand dunes above Hout Bay harbour. On condition that the squatters demolish their own shacks, the PAB promised that alternative accommodation would be provided. The PAB would assist those in regular employment by ensuring that documents and work registration permits were put in order. Lastly, for those in the Cape for medical reasons, the PAB would consider each case individually.

These were empty promises, leaving many unemployed and destitute.

The PAB gave certain assurances to the community of about 300 squatters living in zinc shanties on the sand dunes above Hout Bay harbour. On condition that the squatters demolish their own shacks, the PAB promised that alternative accommodation would be provided. The PAB would assist those in regular employment by ensuring that documents and work registration permits were put in order. Lastly, for those in the Cape for medical reasons, the PAB would consider each case individually.

This sequence of events began in June 1980 when the squatters were given a week to demolish their shacks and leave the area. "Coloureds" and "blacks" were approached separately by the Divisional Council and the PAB. The people were obviously reluctant to leave, their main concern being accommodation and what would hap-

pen to their jobs in Hout Bay. Many of the men did piece work for the local fishing industry and had to be at work early in the morning, or had to be readily available when the boats went out. The women, many involved in domestic work, had incomes dependent on the amount of work they could find themselves.

Their fears were amplified by the fact that the nearest location is 15 km from Hout Bay. Living in a location and travelling to work is a harsh reality when there are no direct busses and the trip is long and expensive. Most of the people did not have the necessary passes, documents or permits to live in the Cape Peninsula.

On the day that the people began demolishing their homes, the Cape Times (1 July 1980) quotes Gerald Laurence, assistant director of labour, as saying: "We have assured them that there is no fear of their having to sleep outside".

The squatters, their belongings and their building materials were loaded onto administration board vehicles and taken to the main barracks at Langa. They were all fingerprinted, and only six families

were given permission to relocate their shacks at the Nyanga transit camp. The 83 women and 135 children were offered rail warrants to the Transkei. Most refused these warrants and began paying rent to live in the main barracks, already accommodating 600 people, mainly families previously evicted from other parts of the Peninsula. Some from Schotsche Kloof had been living there for two years.

Almost immediately some of the men experienced difficulty in getting registered in their jobs. One man who approached PAB with his employer was given 7 days to leave the Peninsula.

A number of men and women got formally married in the hope that the wives could stay, and that this would help them qualify for family accommodation. However, it soon became apparent that PAB would not provide anything further. People allege that PAB approached certain doctors and told them not to give certificates for people to stay in the Cape for medical reasons. They also allege that Mr Swart, a PAB official, approached their employers and encouraged them to stop employing unregistered

workers.

The Main Barrack at Langa had been allocated to a large employer of migrant labour in Cape Town. This firm wanted to re-construct the Barracks for use by its own workers. So PAB stopped taking rents and gave the people living there eviction notices. On 12 March, 100 people were moved out of the barracks with their belongings. This was followed by the first of a series of police raids in the early hours of the morning. In this raid, 60 people were arrested, charged with being in the area illegally and released on R60 bail.

On March 19, the remaining people were given notice to vacate the barracks and their belongings were moved out of doors. Police raids followed and people returning after being bailed out found the little they had possessed, had been pillaged and vandalised. Rain had ruined furniture, cupboards had been set alight and clothes, pots and pans had been stolen. Many people had nothing left. Eventually the gates of the barracks were locked and only people who could produce a pass were allowed to enter.

Locked out and destitute the remaining group of people turned to the only place that would give shelter — the church. Since their eviction from the Main Barracks, the men have moved into the classrooms attached to St Cyprian's Anglican church while about 60 women and children settled in the cultural centre of St Francis Catholic church.

They have remained there since the end of March as virtual prisoners. Some of the men managed to retain their jobs in Hout Bay but most of the women have lost theirs. They are afraid to leave the centre to go to the shops or to hospital because they might be arrested again. No one has any money left to pay bail. By mid-April there were still six people in Pollsmoor prison. One of them has a wife with a young baby. With no means of support except the charity of others, her baby is sick from lack of milk and sleeping on the concrete floor of the centre.

Meanwhile, until the churches decide that they can no longer have people living in their classrooms the PAB are apparently content to ignore the critical situation that has developed.



Dr Coovadia

High priced medics are making the country sick



Water a right, but not in SA



Like most of SA's youth this child's future is uncertain

IN a bid to gain acceptability for apartheid, the South African state has embarked on a massive propaganda exercise.

What is the nature of this propaganda war in the field of health? This issue was examined in a recent address by HOUSEN COOVADIA, a senior Pediatrics lecturer at the University of Natal, Durban.

The state would have to believe that it has the interests of all South Africans at heart and it is merely an accident of culture and development that there are such disparate levels of health among different groups in this country.

In fact the opposite is true. The health of individuals and communities is secondary to the needs of the State and a privileged minority, and it has always been determined by the prevailing social and economic conditions.

The establishment of the Cape sea route by European settlers brought to Africa a wave of new illnesses. These swept through both black and white alike wreaking great havoc.

However, it was the introduction of smallpox, with its 50% mortality rate, in the 18th Century which saw the greatest devastation. In 1713 sailors recovering from smallpox, on route to Holland from the Far East stopped for fresh food and vegetables at the Cape they sent their clothes to slave women for washing.

The disease spread like wildfire among the slave population resulting in a 20% mortality, while thousands of other local inhabitants died. The Hottentots were particularly susceptible and entire tribes were wiped out.

European colonists also suffered from the ravages of infectious illnesses — measles, whooping cough, malaria, typhoid and unidentified fevers took a heavy toll on human life.

Towards the end of the 19th

Century there was a slight change of emphasis with alcoholism becoming the country's worst evil.

The racial division of health care has been present from the very dawn of our history. The smallpox epidemics gave rise to the first suggestions of separate hospitals for slaves and whites, and in 1755 two infectious disease hospitals were opened in the Cape Peninsula, one for the whites and the other for the 'Natives'. This trend continues today.

Hospitals were built, not simply to further health care, but also to act as agents of 'civilisation', the assumed morality of colonialism.

The major disabilities of health endured by South African blacks today are rooted in a lack of political control, inadequate land, poor housing, inappropriate or absent education and unrealistic earning power.

There is a tendency to look at living standards of people today and believe that the high living standards for whites and low standards for blacks are natural.

However between the 17th and 19th centuries the differences between Boer and black, although present, were not so marked. Both were rural people with access to fairly restricted medical care.

The frontier Boers had very little contact with qualified doctors and relied heavily on home remedies or healing the sick, eg. dog's blood was used for fits.

However, white society developed with the underdevelopment of blacks. The concentration of resources in white hands and the promotion of white socio-economic interests led to the freedom from infectious illnesses and improved standards of health enjoyed by whites today.

Blacks have, from these earliest days been exploited in the most cruel manner. It is hardly surprising then that their health has not im-



1981 — year of the disabled

proved with the advances made by the country of their birth.

The major causes of sickness and death among black children are the twin scourges of a lack of food and infectious illnesses, which have a direct relation to poverty.

The roots of this problem lie in colonists' seizure of black land. There is evidence to suggest that blacks had thriving societies before such social dislocation and were largely self-sufficient.

The reason many blacks go hungry today is not that they do not know how to grow food or are ignorant of its preparation, but that their ability to provide for themselves and produce a surplus has been eroded away by historical forces.

Gradually blacks lost their independence altogether and became subservient to whites as wage labourers. Crowded into narrow reserves which cannot support the existing population, compelled to live in the decay of urban ghettos, crushed by a multitude of social evils, the black man has seen the health throughout South Africa. It was only at the end of last century that Public Health legislation, which was in any case inadequate, was passed.

Wits medical conference a great success

THE ANNUAL medical students conference at Wits Medical School took place in the first week of May. The theme of the conference was "South African Health. History of the Main Complaint". The conference was well attended by a wide range of people, and dealt with the factors leading to poor health in South Africa.

The conference focused on the background to ill health in this country — the historical, social, economic and political factors. The conference did not focus primarily on the medical services available in the country, although two papers related to this topic. The first was a paper by Dr de Beer, Director General of the Department of Health. He commented that in the past only 1 — 2 percent of the Health Budget was spent on preventive services. This had now been increased to 3 percent of the budget which Dr de Beer saw as a major shift in direction. He estimated that

preventive services would receive 15 percent of the budget by the year 2000.

Dr Jerry Coovadia discussed the origin of the medical services in South Africa and compared the relationship between the provision of services and the needs of the economy and the state. (This is discussed in depth in his article elsewhere in this issue of SASPU NATIONAL).

Dr David Webster discussed the process of underdevelopment in rural areas and how this has affected the health of the people. After the discovery of gold and diamonds, black farmers were forced off their land by a variety of measures. These included limiting the amount of land available to them and imposing various taxes in order to force people into wage labour. The growing South African economy was dependant on a cheap and well controlled labour force. The migrant labour system



Panel discussion at the conference — "doctors are part of the problem"

was devised to serve this purpose. Where once people grew enough food to eat well and sell their surplus, they were now forced to enter wage labour in order to survive. The rural economics and the land itself were impoverished in this process.

Another speaker spoke about nutrition in Zimbabwe. He emphasized that the effects of underdevelopment too applied there as in many other parts of Southern Africa. However the policy of the Rhodesian security forces during Smith's regime led to declining

nutritional status of the people. The local population were herded into "protected villages" during the war. This was an attempt to prevent the guerilla armies from receiving food and support. It also limited the amount of time available to black farmers to cultivate their land and had serious effects on reducing local agricultural production. The Rhodesians also had a policy called "Operation Turkey". This policy was initiated to destroy food supplies getting to the guerillas. Food stores were burned and cattle killed. People tending their fields du-

ring curfew hours were shot on sight. All of these factors must be seen as the background to poor nutrition in Zimbabwe.

The Land Act and resettlement have resulted in the majority of people having access to only a small proportion of the land. Overcrowding in these areas has followed. This has led to apparent "overpopulation", because there is a demand for resources. Ms Barbara Klugman described how those that control the resources of society feel threatened by the increasing number of poor people.



Starvation and malnutrition are common in South Africa — but would never occur in a democratic SA



SA's health problems must be prevented

collapse of his traditional existence and the rupture of family life. He is caught in the grip of a cycle of poverty from which he cannot easily escape.

In the past South African medicine has concerned itself with the needs of the minority of settlers. Today, it is like any other commodity — available for those who can afford it. Accordingly the enormous problems of the poor have been left largely untouched.

The development of health services was skewed towards care for a minority of individuals suffering from uncommon illnesses. The majority of sickness which is uncomplicated, was being neglected.

The result has been a hospital-orientated, curative organisation of

The system of curative rather than preventive medicine was encouraged and implemented with most money being spent on hospitals and clinics, the gap between urban and rural services widening, and private practice and medical aid schemes flourishing in urban areas mainly for the privileged.

Today of course there is an apparent concern for preventive medicine and health-for-all, with a chorus of recommendations for community medicine. This new awareness has culminated in a National Health Facility Plan for the Republic of South Africa.

In seeing why this has come about, Health needs to be defined. These are several approaches: the first is freedom from illness and full development of human creativity and self-discovery. At present this is attainable by a few who are among the affluent. Among the poor, there is a constant struggle merely to stay alive.

Health is also a commodity for profit — that is to say that the organisation of health services from private practitioners to multinational drug companies depends on buying health and generating profits. This type of health care at an ideological level emphasizes and supports the basic economic relations in South Africa which are geared towards private enterprise and the accumulation of wealth by a minority.

Thus to the employer of labour on a large scale, health is equal to the ability of workers to perform their tasks.

Accordingly, the less important the worker to the employer, the less important will be the health services and the greater the need for the worker, the better the health services. The need in South Africa's mining-based economy has been for unskilled labour which was plentiful and cheap to replace. There was, therefore, no requirement for proper health care for black labour.

More money is therefore to be invested into health for the workers.

It is therefore logical that included in Botha's 'total strategy' is a total plan for health. This is the National Health Plan for South Africa (1981).

But still basic social causes of differences in health and illness among South Africans are not addressed, and the problems of inequality in power, land ownership, wealth distribution, educational facilities and achievement, employment etc. are not questioned. The

Plan goes only as far as basic needs to prevent illness but does not explore mechanisms for promoting health which will definitely require a radical readjustment of our society.

It has not been drawn up with the participation of representatives of all South African citizens and will result in one type of care for the

disadvantaged and another type of care for the privileged. Flowing from this is the exclusion of the so-called Homelands areas from the benefits of this Plan.

There is another level at which health services in South Africa are eroded. This is the continuing and increasing emigration of locally qualified medical personnel to other countries.

Local doctors are caught up in the irresistible pull of the 'centripetal' forces of the international medical community. This medical community derives its ideology — and structure — from the arrangements of high finance.

Because it accepts the prevailing norms and dictates of western economies, the medical profession subscribes to the accumulation of personal and corporate profits, which is enhanced by an inflexible process of centralisation. This gravitation of medical men from all third world countries and South Africa to the high standards of life, the sophisticated technologies and the extravagant health care systems of richer nations is the result, to varying extents, of their class origin, their education and training, and their expectations.

One of the facile truths of modern medicine in this country is that we have all blundered in the past in giving undue importance to hospital-based curative medicine, when what is needed is community medicine.

This has its roots in similar systems operating in western countries.

Because of this medical 'colonialism', the profession admits people who are unsuited for the needs of the majority in South Africa and trains them to be ill at ease among their own people. As long as such people have their exalted expectations satisfied in this country they will remain — if however, there are shortfalls, they will leave in droves.

Extracts from a speech by Dr Coovadia delivered at Wits in May



Ms Barbara Klugman

They see the solution in terms of limiting the growth of the poor population by family planning and birth control. The "overpopulation" issue is thus used in an attempt to safeguard the access that a small sector of the population has to the vast resources available.

Three speakers from the Industrial Health Project in Cape Town described the situation regarding the health of workers. Workers are more likely to suffer from a variety of illnesses, and their life-



Dr J de Beer

expectancy is also shorter than those of the rich.

Workers in South Africa are mainly blacks. They suffer from accidents at the workplace in factories and mines. They suffer the effect of dusts, poisons, chemicals or gases where they work. Their health receives little protection. This is because employers would have to decrease their profits in order to provide safer conditions. They are very reluctant to do this unless they are forced to. Al-



Prof Phillip Tobias

though there is some legislation to protect the health of workers, this is very inadequate. It is also not enforced properly. It thus becomes clear that only when workers are strongly and democratically organised will they be in a position to safeguard their own health at the workplace.

Dr Neil White mentioned in a pre-conference session that tuberculosis should be regarded as a disease related to working conditions and stress.

A paper by Cedric de Beer focused on the drug industry. Multinational corporations are able to extract vast profits at the expense of the local workers. Many drugs which are barred from sale in some countries are freely available in underdeveloped countries. The industry also seeks to promote the use of drugs and dependence on them. Once again, the pursuit of profits at any expense, is shown to be harmful to health.

Thus interesting techniques were used at the conference. Prior to the session on workers and health, conference delegates passed through a dark room. Bizarre music was playing and they are subjected to a series of sensory images. They were shouted at with slogans like "Come to the mines — it's wonderful" or "You'll never come out alive" or "first they make you sick then they send you home". It was hoped that this sensory shock would introduce people rapidly to the topic of discussion.

Another technique involved forcing people at lunch time to have either an excellent lunch reserved

for the rich (a small proportion of the delegates were given these), good food for comfortably off, and the very little for the poor. The poor had to organise themselves in order to get access to the food available. These techniques could be adapted and used elsewhere.

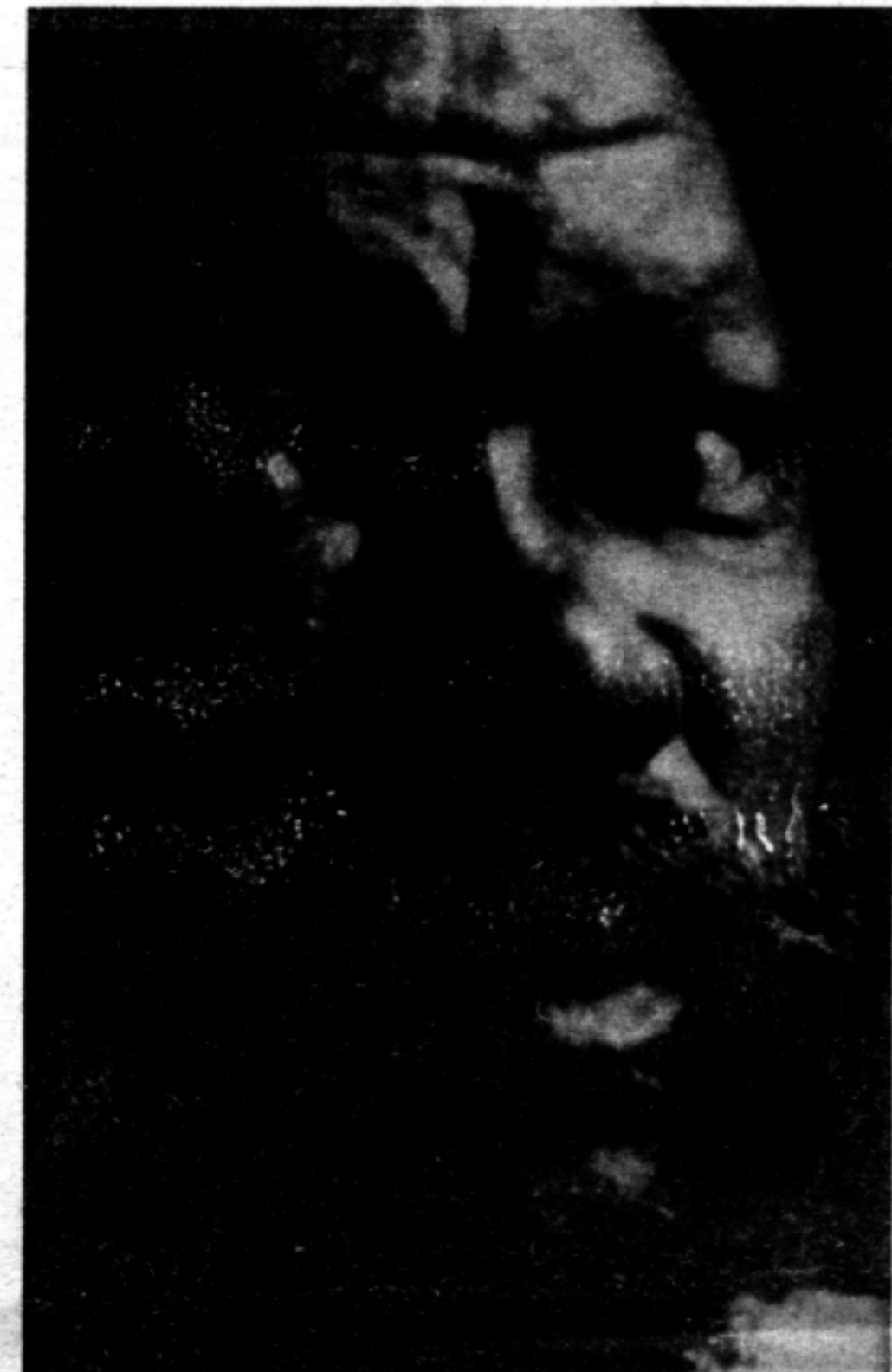
The conference concluded with a panel discussion which acknowledged that health is political, and that it is the concern of all health-workers. Doctors and other health-workers often hide the real causes of ill health in South Africa. In this way they become part of the problem that must be overcome to promote health.

It was recognised that health can only be promoted in a democratic society, in which all the people participate in determining how the resources of the society are distributed. Health-workers can play a part by assisting truly democratic community and worker organisations and by publishing relevant information.

The conference proceedings are to be published and will be available.

Putting the squeeze on Colgate

A bad odour hiding behind a toothy smile



Colgate workers — ready to strike

THE STRUGGLE of workers at Colgate Palmolive is the struggle for basic trade union rights.

It is the story of the lengths management is prepared to go to deny workers these rights. Colgate (the company that sells its products with a smile) has for over 15 months refused to grant recognition to the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU), a Fosatu affiliate with over two-thirds membership among Colgate's workforce.

The central issue in the struggle at Colgate has been the nature of the recognition given by a company to union representatives of its workers.

At the outset of the dispute management refused point-blank to have anything to do with the CWIU as it was not registered. This was the first of the numerous obstacles they have used to resist the worker's demand of the recognition of their union. Despite this, they claimed to have a policy of neither "encouraging or resisting" the unionization of their workforce.

Later, management agreed to recognize the CWIU but only on the condition that it agreed to negotiate wages and working conditions on an industry-wide basis via an industrial council.

And the purpose of this approach is clear — it was an attempt by management to retain sole discretion in setting wages and working conditions. It was an attempt to avoid having to negotiate these matters with the union.

The Industrial Council for the chemical industry covers less than 10% of Colgate employees. The



minimum wage levels set by the industrial council are well below the wages paid to Colgate workers. Not only would these negotiations have no bearing on the wages Colgate pays its workers, but many working-conditions are not included in the agreements negotiated by the industrial council.

The workers refused to accept the type of recognition offered by Colgate. They saw it as a recognition devoid of its most crucial element.

In terms of the offer the company recognized the right of union shop-stewards to act as worker representatives and of union officials to have access to the factory. In addition, the union would be granted stop-order facilities for subscriptions. The effect of acceptance would be to reduce the union to little more than the liaison committee the workers had already rejected.

In the light of management's refusal to negotiate wages and working conditions the union took the

sent conflict seems to be an attempt to rid the factory of any Saawu presence for once and for all. The dismissal of the union members took place after two weeks of negotiations had failed to secure the reinstatement of both the initial three workers who had walked out as well as the 92 who had downed tools until they were reinstated.

The workers have decided to call on the community and on other workers to support them in their struggle. The response by both management and the state has been uncompromising heavy.

To date, 24 workers have been detained by the Ciskeian Security police, the most recently arrested was busy petitioning for the release of the others.

Rowntree have also employed about 200 "scab labourers" but informed sources maintain that production is nowhere near normal and that there is a big problem with reject products.

Rowntree parent company in Britain — Rowntree Mackintosh — have taken a similar stand to local management. They have accused Saawu of forcing workers to join the union. The union is at present considering legal action against management.

Apart from local support for the struggle of the Rowntree workers British trade unions are also starting to take up their cause, and meetings are being held by workers in associated industries with the British bosses.

The Rowntree workers call for support from the community has been met with immediate action. Already support committees have been launched in Cape Town and in Johannesburg, as the boycott gains national momentum.

SAAWU calls for a nationwide boycott



**SUPPORT
THE BOYCOTT**

some workers from the gum department, and the demand that the remaining workers produce as much as is usually. Management was produced with a full workforce to increase the number of workers.

A third work stoppage took place over a pensions issue. Worker allege that they were told by management that their pension fund was lent to other companies which had been hit by strikes, Ford and National Converter Industries. The workers demanded the immediate return of their money, and downed

tools until the bosses agreed to this.

The last stoppage of the year occurred after union members were detained by the Ciskeian Security police. They were released soon after the incident.

Although management has been forced to deal directly with Saawu on more than one occasion they consistently refused to recognise either the union or the democratically elected workers committee in the factory. Management's hard line on recognition and on the pre-

step of applying for a Conciliation Board to discuss the dispute. The Minister of Manpower Utilization approved this application which indicates, among other things, that he was satisfied that the CWIU was representative of workers at Colgate-Palmolive.

The result is that management is compelled to meet union officials and shop-stewards across a table to discuss the recognition dispute. Failure to reach a settlement will allow the workers to go on a legal strike.

But the Industrial Council is not the only institution that management has utilized in its attempt to oppose the unionization of its workforce. It has also made frequent use of that prime example of a third-class institution created by apartheid — the Liaison Committee. (A institution created to "bleed African trade unions to death" and one that the Nationalist Government now finds too embarrassing to retain.)

Shortly after the CWIU's first request for a meeting with management of the Liaison Committee was swiftly convened. The committee consisting of equal numbers of management and employee representatives — unanimously decided that "there was no justification at present for the establishment of a Trade Union within the workforce of Colgate-Palmolive".

The workers were not told about this meeting and the minutes were kept confidential to ensure they would not hear about it. Shortly afterwards, petitions signed by 198 (of approximately 300) workers called for the resignation of the worker representatives of the Liaison Committee.

The Liaison Committee has been used more actively to oppose the union. Management introduced, without consulting the workers, a grievance procedure which required workers to take their grievances to the Liaison Committee. This, a Liaison Committee member said, would "greatly improve the credibility" of the committee.

But it was introduced shortly after the Union had sent a draft Grievance Procedure to the company.

The cynical use of an apartheid institution to resist worker demands exposes as a show Colgate's publicized commitment to "the elimination of racial discrimination" and the principles of the Sullivan Code. The purpose of such codes is to boost the overseas image of multi-nationals, assisting black workers in South Africa. It shows the hypocrisy by companies that publicly proclaim one thing, and then do the opposites. Such companies' treatment of their workers would be rejected by their American counter-parts.

The Chemical Workers Industrial Union has published a detailed account of the workers' struggle at Colgate, both inside and outside the factory. This includes an interview with a worker who was assaulted for using an "integrated" changing-room, as white workers saw it as their own preserve. The booklet's objective is "to explain to the public and particularly to the unemployed why workers at Colgate might have to take industrial action in order to secure their basic trade union rights".

Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the CWIU, 8 Fines Building, 28 Voortrekker Street, Benoni.

OVER 500 dismissed workers from the Wilson Rowntree factory in East London have called for a boycott of all Rowntree products, until such time as they are reinstated.

The workers all members of the South African Allied Workers Union (Saawu), were dismissed in February following a dispute over the firing of three workers by a foreman.

"A systematic victimisation of workers began", according to a union — statement, after more than 90 per cent of Rowntree workers joined Saawu last year.

This is in preference to the Sweet Workers Union (SWU), a Tucsaf affiliate which has had a presence in the factory for a long time.

Despite this the workers maintain that their needs were not met by this union which until recently, only provided meagre funeral benefits to African workers.

Once management realized that Saawu was organising in the factory the SWU began to try and actively win members, but Saawu was far stronger.

The present conflict at Wilson Rowntree is not the first. Since the union started organising there have been a number of work stoppages and disputes in the factory.

Last year there were a series of work stoppages. In October last year workers from the moulding department were dismissed for complaining about their foreman. All the workers walked out in protest at this and demanded their reinstatement.

Management was forced to agree and had to negotiate directly with the worker's Central Executive Committee. Soon after this there was another work stoppage in protest against the retrenchment of