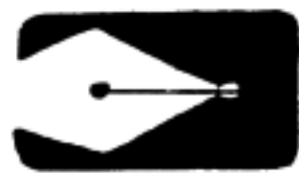


Making education serve
the people - see Pg 20

People's democracy grows in
the townships - see Pg 14

Since the State of
Emergency, Saspu
National's offices have
been smashed up and
destroyed by fire. Staff
have been detained
and harrassed. We
regret the delay -
Saspu National is now
back. But censored in
terms of Emergency
regulations.

SASPU



NATIONAL

A SA STUDENTS PRESS UNION PUBLICATION VOL. 7, NO. 4, NOV/DEC 1986 30c

APARTHEID FORCES have killed
so many people this year that
the Congress of South African
Trade Unions has called for a
national day of protest.

Cosatu is calling on millions of
workers to stop work on
December 1, to protest
against apartheid killings
including more than 250
Cosatu members killed this
year.

The call follows the police
shootings at the Metal and
Allied Workers Union's AGM in
Durban, in which a worker was
killed and 25 injured as
workers boarded buses to go
home.

The mining disaster at Kinross
took the lives of 170
mineworkers, in an accident
that the NUM says was the
inevitable result of cutting
costs at the cost of safety.

An average of three
mineworkers die in accidents
every day on the mines.

Lack of adequate safety
measures at Jabula Foods
meant four workers burnt to
death in a dust explosion there
recently.

Workers in every sector are
taking up the call for the right
to safety at the workplace; it is
management's responsibility
to pay for this from their
profits," says a Cosatu
spokes-person.

Last year worker leader
Andries Raditsela died in
detention; while commem-
orating deaths such as his,
Cosatu is also voicing fears for
the safety of 460 unionists still
in detention.

Cosatu also points to the
increasing attacks on worker
and community leaders by
apartheid-supporting forces,
who terrorise many townships.

A Fawu shop steward was
killed by an unidentified
assailant on his way to work in
Springs recently, and the wife
of Mawu organiser David
Modimoeng was killed when
his house was petrol-bombed.

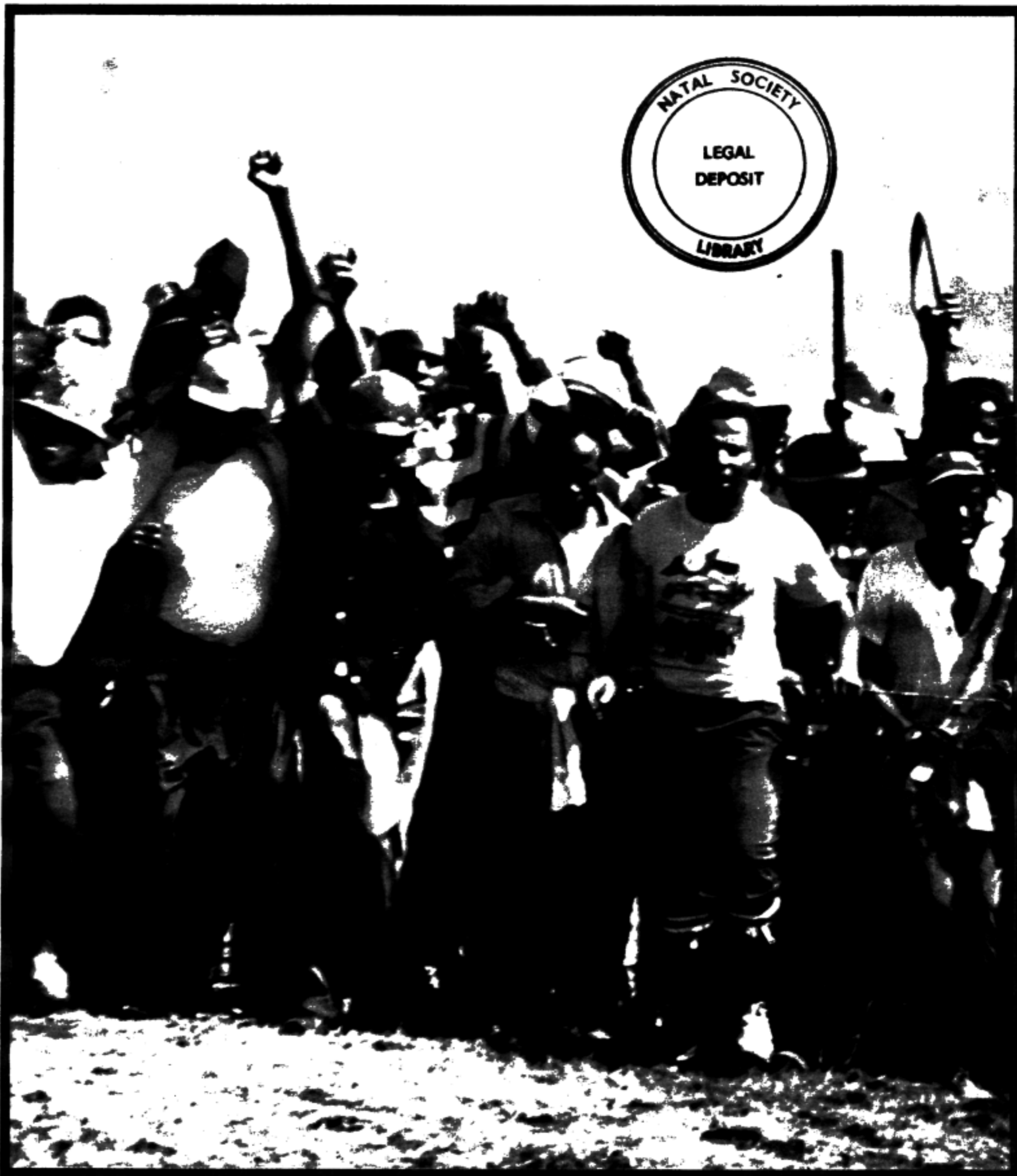
Many worker and community
leaders in Natal live in fear of
attacks by impis.

Hundreds of students,
residents and youth have also
been killed in a year in which
apartheid controls have been
made increasingly unwork-
able, and the government has
lashed back with vicious
repression.

So many people are missing
that it is impossible to be sure
how many are dead and how
many detained. At least 22 000
people have been detained
under emergency regulations.

Some have estimated that at
least four people are being
killed every day. But because
of the government's control of
information under the emer-
gency regulations, the exact
numbers of apartheid's victims
are not known.

But they too, will be
remembered on December 1.



STOP THE

KILLING!

Frontline states are taking aim against apartheid

AFTER SAMORA MACHEL'S tragic death, Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe assured the Mozambican people that Zimbabwe would never stand by and allow Renamo to take over from Frelimo.

In response, Renamo declared war on Zimbabwe. "This is a declaration of war from South Africa" said Mugabe.

Tension between Zimbabwe and SA has been mounting. Mugabe has taken a firm stand on sanctions, and at the Non-Aligned Movement Conference in Harare, he called on Rajiv Gandhi to donate Indian fighter jets to the frontline states, to help fight "the apartheid war machine."

Frontline leaders are once again considering a united military strategy as a defence against South African aggression.

Renamo would be a key target. And the first step would be to cut off Renamo's bases in Malawi. But Banda is a tricky customer, and all the more so now he believes Zimbabwe and Mozambique are plotting to overthrow him.

If Malawi was persuaded to cut off support for Renamo, the bandits might be forced to take refuge in SA. SA would then have to choose whether or not to support a full-scale war across its border with Mozambique.

The SADF already has its hands full in the townships; the war in Namibia is costing 5 million a day, and the debt crisis is bad enough to make even the bully-boys in the cabinet think twice about the costs of

another border war.

Zimbabwean troops are already helping defend Mozambique. They guard the railway line, the road and the oil pipeline from Zimbabwe to Beira. This is Zimbabwe's route to the sea - and their only alternative to using South African ports for their goods.

At present, Renamo sabotage of these routes means about 90 percent of Zimbabwe's exports leave from South African ports.

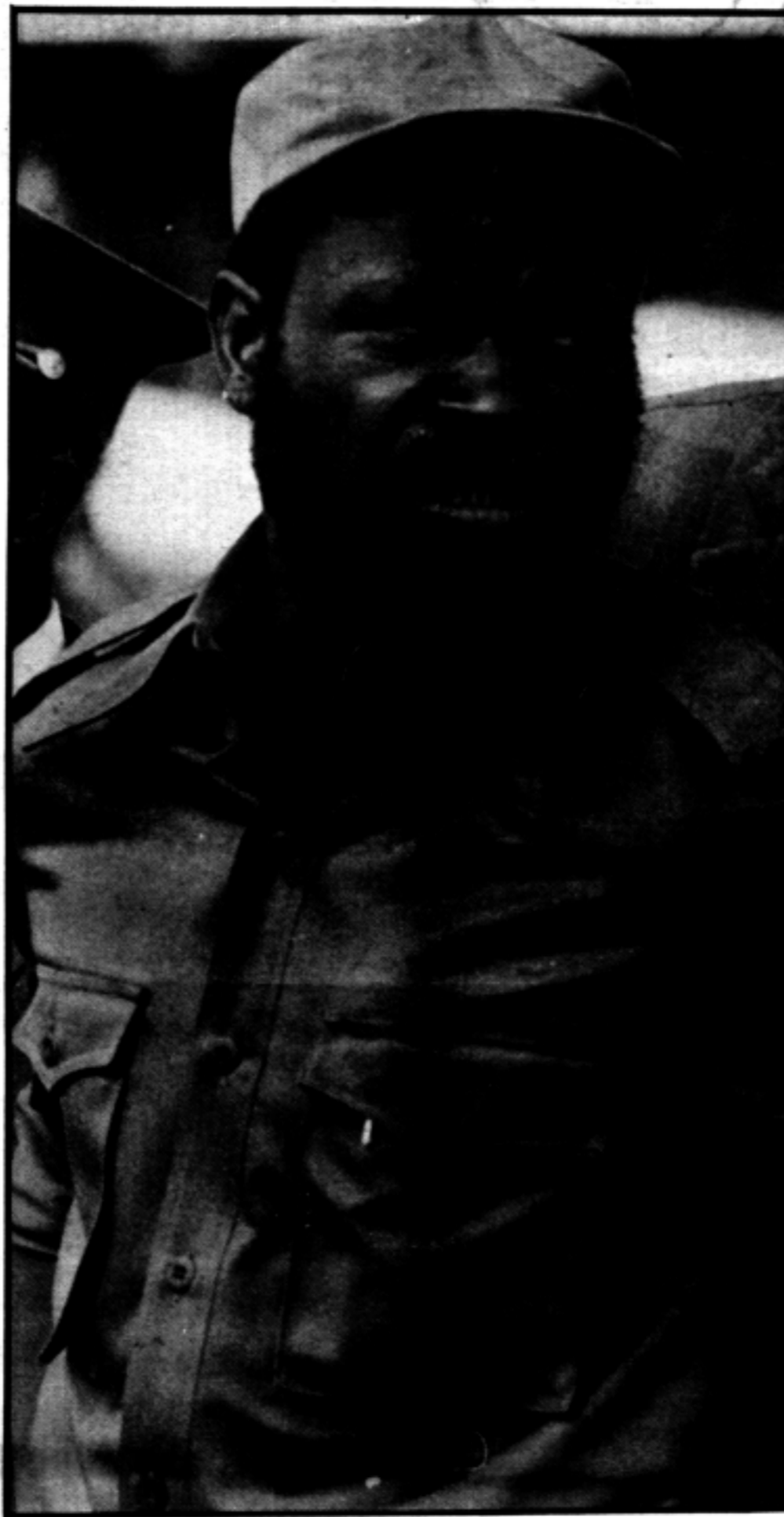
As the international isolation of SA intensifies, it becomes all the more important to SA to have co-operative neighbours - whether they co-operate through force or friendship.

SA needs its neighbours to help it get around trade boycotts. "As long as goods from the frontline states leave from SA harbours, sanctions are more difficult to apply", says a Cosatu spokesperson. "Because SA can put false labels on their goods, and claim they are from Zimbabwe or other frontline states".

If Mozambique were a more friendly neighbour, SA would also be able to ship their goods from there, and pretend they were from Mozambique.

International isolation is also squashing ruling class hopes of an "export-led" recovery from the recession in SA. If no-one else will buy SA goods, then SA plans to make sure its neighbours do.

One reason the Nkomati Accord was met with such glee by big business here was that it opened new markets in Mozambique.



Samora Machel was a tireless fighter, who led Mozambique to liberation and fought to build socialism despite the obstacles

SA's hands are bloody from backing the bandits

BY THE TIME the Nkomati Accord was signed, the links between SA and Renamo were an open secret. But Nkomati was supposed to put an end to all that.

So after Nkomati, Mozambique agreed to have the SADF defend the Cabora Bassa power-lines from Renamo attack. This meant SA troops were given access to over 800 miles of Mozambican territory.

But while SA was loudly talking peace with Mozambique, the SADF was still quietly backing the war.

When Mozambique and Zimbabwe jointly attacked Renamo's base at Gorongosa, they seized documents which proved SA's involvement. These showed that Deputy Foreign Minister Louis Nel had even visited the Renamo base-camp, deep inside Mozambique.

They also showed that a South African submarine fetched a Renamo General from the Mozambican coast; that another Renamo leader travelled from Mozambique to Durban on an SA Navy ship; that tons of supplies were dropped at Renamo bases by SA; that an SADF Dakota flew AK47's and six cases of ammunition into the Renamo base; and that South African soldiers were building a landing strip for Renamo.

The SA government claimed that the SADF was supporting Renamo without official permission. But official or not, these are not the only links exposed.

Mozambican refugees arrested in SA for illegal immigration say Renamo officials visited them in prison, interrogated them about Mozambique, and tried to recruit them.

And some detainees in the Eastern Transvaal say that Renamo representatives tried to recruit them in detention.

WHEN THE FASCIST dictatorship in Portugal was overthrown, the new government was keen to end the horrors of Portuguese colonialism. This meant independence for both Angola and Mozambique. In Mozambique, Frelimo had already liberated most of the North, and took power.

The liberation of Mozambique and Angola was a blow to imperialism. It gave socialist forces a strong foothold in Southern Africa, and affected the international balance of forces.

With Zimbabwean liberation also clearly round the corner, SA feared the consolidation of a socialist bloc of frontline states. These could provide military bases for the ANC, and unite to break SA's dominance in the region. SA hoped to blackmail them into neutrality by pulling the strings of economic dependence; and by using the threat of military action.

So, with behind-the-scenes backing from imperialist forces, SA gave support to Unita in Angola, and Renamo in Mozambique. SA also went on a furious campaign of military and economic destabilisation in the region as a whole.

From the start, Renamo hit Mozambique where it hurt. They aimed their attacks at economic targets, to prevent Mozambique overcoming the problems inherited from colonialism.

Mozambique could not simply leave these problems behind; colonialism created the conditions Frelimo was up against in achieving socialism.

When Frelimo took over, only 0,1% of the people had completed primary school; 97 percent of the people were illiterate; the economy was almost completely dependant on South Africa and Rhodesia; and when the Portuguese transferred Mozambique's foreign exchange and

Socialism in Mozambique is a thorn in Botha's side



Chissano, the new president, with Dos Santos, Frelimo politburo member, at the funeral of plane crash victims

gold reserves to the new government, they were only worth one million dollars.

As a colonial power, Portugal had not invested much capital in its colonies; instead, it made money by using Mozambique's resources to service the needs of neighbouring colonies.

Taxes on migrant workers sent to SA mines, and charges for SA and Rhodesia's use of railways and harbours made up 90 percent of Mozambique's income.

The only products that they could sell to other countries were cotton, cashew nuts, tea and sisal. But prices for these were low.

There were few industries. These relied on machinery and raw materials bought overseas, and on Portuguese technicians - who left in a flood after independence.

These problems have made Mozambique very vulnerable to military and economic destabilisation.

Renamo's strategy has been backed

up by direct military aggression from SA - like the Matola raid - and by other methods of economic destabilisation.

These tactics are all aimed to make it impossible to achieve socialism, or to improve the quality of people's lives.

The imperialist world believes that if people still suffer and live in fear after they have won their liberation, they will lose heart, and that will provide the basis for a counter-revolution. Renamo is doing the dirty work of imperialism. Fighting this onslaught is using huge amounts of Mozambique's resources. These could be going into breaking the chains of underdevelopment - into health, education, housing and the other vital needs of Mozambique's people.

It is also forcing many of Frelimo's advanced activists back into military roles when they are needed for political and economic tasks.

It was in an attempt to end the problems caused by war that Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord with SA in 1984.

The trade-off was that Mozambique would stop the ANC launching military offensives into SA from their territory, in return for SA cutting support for Renamo.

The Nkomati Accord was signed just before PW's tour of Europe. PW used it to present SA as the "peacemaker" in the region; the US claimed it as a victory for their constructive engagement policies, and Thatcher and Kohl used it as an argument for

strengthening ties with SA again.

The Accord took both the ANC and the frontline states by surprise. Oliver Tambo described it as "a temporary setback" for the ANC.

Although the ANC did not in fact have military bases there, Mozambique did provide an important supply-line for internal operatives.

The Accord made the ANC speed up the process of basing its military operations internally. A series of bomb-blasts shortly after the Accord left no-one in any doubt that the ANC would soon adapt to the changed conditions. Although the ANC presence in Mozambique has never

returned to what it was, Oliver Tambo's presence as an honoured guest at a People's Assembly in Maputo was seen as a sign that tensions over the Accord had been overcome.

The Nkomati Accord also had economic implications. SA agreed to use Mozambique's ports again, and to employ more Mozambicans on the mines. Deals have also been made with SA farmers and businessmen, for SA farmers to take over some of the state farms that have been unproductive. Crops grown there will be sold to SA.

But the war has intensified, and SA has been caught breaking the Nkomati Accord many times. Mozambique has had no way to enforce it. But when a land-mine went off in the Eastern Transvaal recently, Mozambique was accused of breaking the Accord. Now SA is refusing to employ any more Mozambican miners.

ALUTA CONTINUA



"ALUTA CONTINUA," were President Samora Machel's last words to frontline leaders as he boarded the Turpolev jet bound for disaster on Sunday 19 October.

This is the call echoing through war-torn Mozambique today, as a nation mourns the untimely death of their president and 33 others killed in the crash.

"In this sorrowful and difficult moment in which we have lost our commander-in-chief, the best homage we can pay to him is to step up the struggle against the enemies of our country, and the enemies of socialism," said Defence Minister General Chipande, in a radio broadcast to the people of Mozambique.

The crash is not referred to as an accident in Mozambique. There are still too many unanswered questions.

ANC General Secretary, Alfred Nzo said

Survivors accounts of the crash and the aftermath do not explain why it happened, but they do raise many questions.

Fernando Joao, Machel's bodyguard and one of the few survivors, told his story to AIM, the Mozambican News Agency. He says about five minutes after passengers were told to prepare for landing at Maputo, "we heard the plane screech, and a sound like a shot." The lights went off, the engine failed, and for about three minutes the plane travelled blindly, with no power. Then it crashed. This was at about 10pm.

Joao stumbled to the nearest house, and a woman took him to radio from the local religious mission. This was at about midnight. He told the police at Komatipoort what had happened, and asked them to tell Mozambique immediately.

But Mozambique was only informed the next

morning.

Another survivor, Almeida Pedro, says the police arrived about five hours after the crash. But it was not until a helicopter arrived four hours later that the injured received any treatment.

"What they were worried about was not to help the wounded," he said.

"Police ignored people as they lay screaming and bleeding," he told reporters. "They were just collecting documents and money and putting them in cases."

Then Pik Botha announced that SA has transcripts of a meeting implicating Zimbabwe and Mozambique in plans to overthrow President Banda of Malawi.

The details of why President Samora Machel's plane crashed may never be known. But his tragic death will not stop the Mozambican people from taking up his final call - Aluta continua, Mozambique.

RENAMO ROAMS around the rural areas in Mozambique, in gangs of up to 1 800 armed bandits. People they have attacked tell stories of torture, murder, rape and destruction. Renamo has cut off people's ears, saying: "Now you can't listen to Frelimo anymore".

This is hardly the way to win hearts and minds. But Renamo is more concerned about making socialism unworkable. "What Frelimo builds, Renamo destroys", says an old man who fled from Renamo brutality.

The war is intensifying. Since Machel's death, Renamo have taken over two towns in the North, killing more than 100 Mozambican and Zimbabwean soldiers. Earlier this year, they seized the towns of Loaba, Caia and Marromea. Frelimo fought to get these back. Matola, Machava and Maputo have been attacked at night.

SA is using the "Joint Monitoring Commission" set up at Nkomati to try to persuade Frelimo to negotiate with Renamo. The United States is backing this too. But any negotiation package would no doubt involve compromising on Frelimo's socialist direction. Renamo is being used as a weapon to force Mozambique back into the imperialist camp.

Renamo has a force of about 18 000 armed bandits. Some are leftovers of Portuguese colonialism, and their brutal secret police. Others are

Armed bandits attack the land and its people

chiefs who collaborated with the colonists and are fighting to get their privileges back; and others are lumpen criminal elements from Mozambique, who now get foreign funding for their crimes.

Renamo's main bases are in Malawi. They also launch attacks from Swaziland. Apart from SA, Renamo has had aid from Isreal, the Commores, and Imman. It has support networks among the far-right in Portugal, and among the 600 000 Portuguese who fled to SA from Mozambique and Angola when they became independant.

By the time Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord, Renamo had attacked over 140 communal villages, and destroyed crops, granaries, farming tools, tractors and machinery on a wide scale - making it impossible to meet agricultural production targets.

They also sabotage roads, railway lines, vehicles and petrol stations. This makes it difficult to transport food to the towns, causing shortages.

Many villages now grow as much food as they need themselves, because they cannot get it to the towns to sell - and so food production has dropped further.

At the same time, things like clothes, nails, or hoes made in the towns cannot get to the rural areas. Renamo's destruction of more than 1000 shops makes this all the more difficult.

In the village of Changanine, supplies were blocked for three months. Villagers had no salt, sugar, maize, or soap, and they could not buy collectively in Chibuto, 100 kilometres away, because all their vehicles had been destroyed.

The destruction of transport networks also means that spare parts



This woman's ears were cut off by Renamo

and raw materials needed from SA or Zimbabwe never arrive in Maputo. Production is forced to a standstill. Fear of Renamo brutality in the villages has meant floods of people to the towns - leaving their land unused. This means unemployment, overcrowding, and more mouths to feed in the urban areas.

A hundred refugees a day have also been flooding into SA, seeking refuge in Gazankulu. Renamo has targetted any project related to the SADCC. The SADCC was set up as a strategy to reduce the economic dependance of Southern African states on SA, by collectivising resources.

SA has done its best to reinforce this dependance, so it can keep pulling political strings. It has offered strong economic incentives

to collaborator states, so as to undermine SADCC.

A key aspect of SADCC's strategy involves the use of Mozambique and Angolan ports and railways. But SADCC has been weakened by Renamo's attacks on all communication and transport routes from either Zimbabwe or Malawi.

SADCC also planned to provide energy throughout the region. Renamo has repeatedly cut power lines - causing electricity to be rationed for three to six hours a day in Maputo. Despite all efforts, at the 1985 conference, the SADCC executive reported that the region was poorer and more dependant than in 1980; and that the economic output of its members had gone down.

Foreign aid projects have also been a target, because they are helping Mozambique develop economically. By Nkomati, fifty two foreign technicians had been kidnapped, and 13 murdered.

In April, 100 Renamo bandits destroyed a UNICEF health and farming project in Tete, and murdered and mutilated the aid worker.

And just to ensure that Mozambique doesn't reduce its reliance on foreign skills through people's education, Renamo has destroyed 840 schools. Their first targets in attacks on villages have been Frelimo leaders and teachers.

Venda clash with police

PROGRESSIVE STUDENT organisations have been banned at the University of Venda, after months of clashes between students, the university authorities and police.

"Every time there are problems the rector calls the police instead of dealing with the students," said a Univen SRC member.

Earlier this year students threatened to boycott graduation unless their parents get seats at the ceremony, the African National Anthem is sung instead of the Venda Anthem, there is no police presence, and cabinet ministers are only there as parents.

Students also demanded two more weeks of term so June 16 does not fall in their holidays, because then it couldn't be a stayaway.

At the same time, 'young lions' at Dimani High School were on boycott demanding the expulsion of five racist white teachers. Police - known as 'Mapantsula' in Venda - beat students. Some ran to the campus (Univen) to seek refuge.

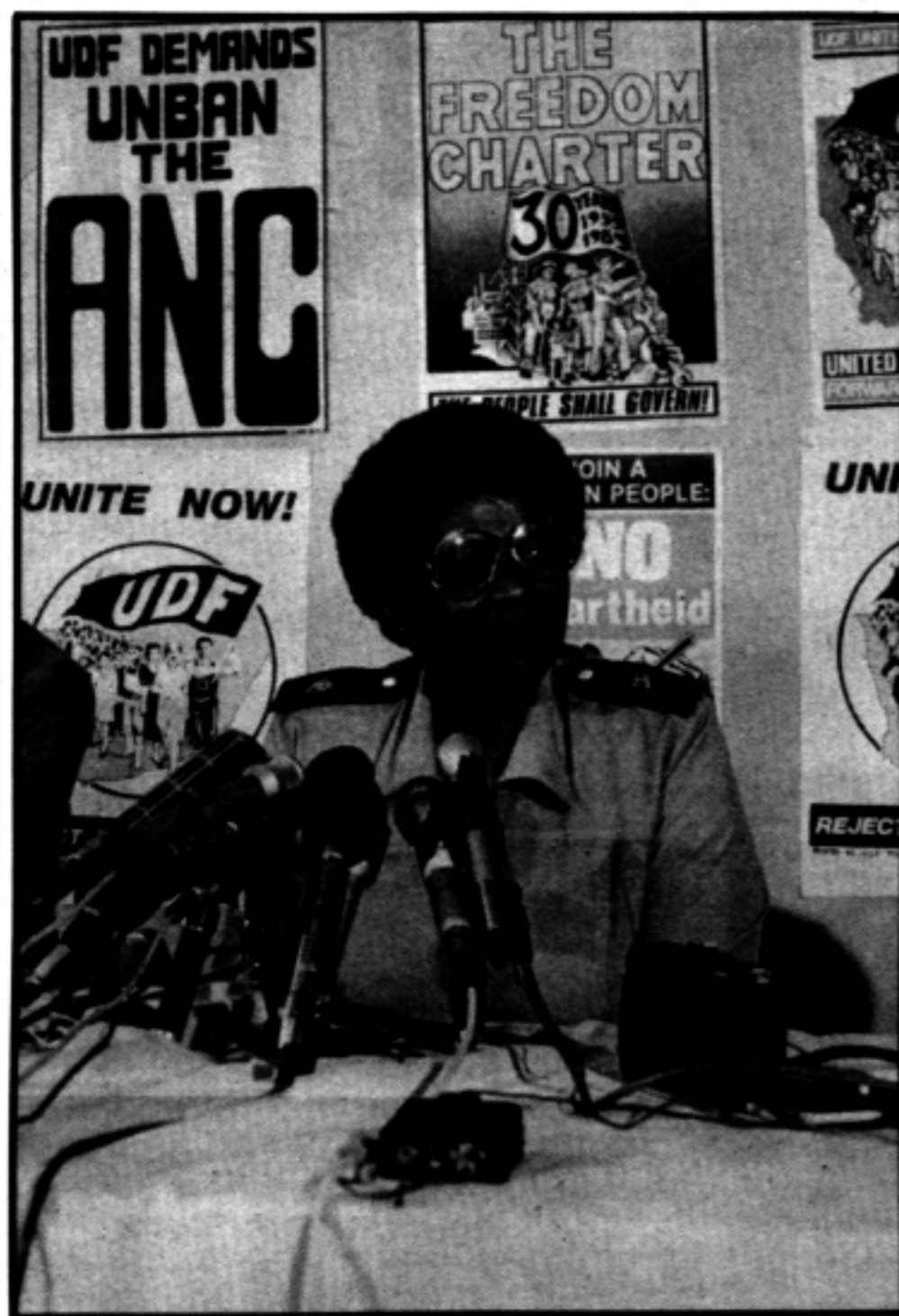
Univen students pledged solidarity with the school students.

The rector closed down the university after pressure from government officials. Police invaded campus beating everybody, including a disabled student and a blind woman student.

"The rector acted like a commander. He gave the police a list of university students who must be detained," said a student leader. "This brutality militarised the students. They vowed to fight back with sjamboks they had bought".

Youth village committees and student action committees have been formed.

But more than 70 student and youth activists have been picked up at dawn and taken for interrogation at Venda security force headquarters in Vhembi. Many say they have been brutally beaten.



UDF President Albertina Sisulu speaking out against latest state restrictions - UDF declared an affected organisation

UDF and Cosatu call for national united action

THE UDF, COSATU and the NECC have announced their joint support for a campaign of national united action.

"A call for unity is part and parcel of the struggle," says Murphy Morobe, UDF publicity secretary.

"But this is not just a call for unity, it is a call for unity in action.

Cosatu says: "We are going to need the maximum unity and the greatest strength to win our demands. Today, with the bosses and the government attacking our movement so hard under their emergency - we feel this more than ever."

Morobe says: "UDF and Cosatu are both important components of the national democratic movement. Already, national unity has been built in practise, through jointly taking up issues like the demand that June 16 and May 1 become paid holidays.

"Some of our affiliates have taken up workers' demands and incorporated them into their programmes. For example, by spreading the struggle to get workers at Metal Box in Pretoria reinstated.

Township activists went to shops and asked shopowners not to buy or sell anything in cans."

The need to build worker/student unity is also a common concern.

Cosatu has emphasised that the groundwork for national united action must be laid at the level of affiliates and their membership.

The Cosatu CEC has called on its membership to discuss what form united mass action should take, and how unity should be built in the short and longer term.

At UDF General Council in Cape Town stressed the importance of consulting affiliates on the content and form of the campaign.

Morobe sees the campaign also building unity with organisations outside the front, like Taxi Associations and Burial Societies.

"Such non-affiliates will be drawn into the campaign as it unfolds," he says. "It is the role of UDF affiliates to consult with appropriate organisations in their constituencies, and to draw them in."

Coloured schools form congresses

COLOURED SCHOOLS in the Transvaal have made the formation of student congresses a priority.

Tensions at these schools have mounted after the dismissal of progressive teacher, Mr Ahmed Essop, of the Silver Oak Secondary School in Eldorado Park. The dismissal follows an attempt by a Labour Party MP Hendrickse to oust progressive teachers.

But there are many grievances. This year more than 1 000 standard six pupils were turned away from schools on the Reef because of accommodation and schools shortages, while over 500 applicants were turned away from the teachers college in the Transvaal.

Recently students from different secondary schools on the Reef met to share their problems. Schools were

represented from Eldorado Park, Riverlea, Noordgesig, Bosmont, Westbury and Coronationville areas.

Students decided to go back to their schools and look into their problems. At the next meeting, the list was long: overcrowding, textbook shortages, lack of recreational or cultural structures, bad tutorial facilities, shortage of teachers, and lack of say for students and parents were but a few.

"Only through the existence of true democratic organisations at schools can we face the challenge of problems in our schools", one student pointed out.

The struggle in the schools falling under the Department of Education and Culture in the 2 Houses of Parliament cannot be separated from the struggle being waged in the DET schools.

Riverlea rents "n skandaal"

RESIDENTS IN Riverlea Extension are getting angry about high rents and water bills.

"Dit is treurig soos die munisipaliteit ons mense behandel - ons slaap, eet en lewe in 'n gemors," says a resident.

The houses are in a terrible condition. "Horse stables are more comfortable," one resident pointed out. Over the past years nothing has changed in the township. Since 1960 no electricity has been installed in the area.

Overcrowding is a threat to hygiene and creates health hazards. More than 15 people live in a two-roomed house. The area is also being crippled by high prices and unemployment.

Recently some residents in the area, including pensioners and unemployed workers, have been served with summonses to appear in court for failing to pay their water accounts. Some owe more than R3 000.

People pay R56 a month rent, for a two-roomed house. The houses in Extension have no electricity. People spend R22 on coal, R8 on firewood and R7.60 on candles per month. Coal stoves expel dangerous gases in the air which often result in people suffering from TB or asthma. Several houses have caught fire.

People are uniting and are now saying: Enough is enough.

Following the recent revival of the Riverlea Civic Association which was formed in September 1984, the

Namakgale mourns

COSATU UNIONS in Namakgale, Palaborwa, did not let the death of workers in Kinross go unchallenged.

At a memorial service for the dead, speaker after speaker condemned the capitalist form of system for being responsible for the disaster. Unionists said that the dead miners died while in the process of producing wealth for a few.

A worker with scars told the service how he got burned and his bosses told him that he was a fool for

having burned himself.

One of the delegation from Northern Transvaal UDF said, "We have now entered a period in our struggle which requires the maximum unity of all the oppressed and exploited. This unity can only be built from a local level, not simply by national or regional executives."

"An injury to one worker is an injury to the youth. The workers must lead the struggle against high rent, transport and lack of houses".

residents took the first step in the long and hard battle to build a better life for themselves and their children.

Sekhukhune and Nebo don't give in

IN MANY AREAS around Sekhukhune and Nebo, structures were crushed by detentions. But now most of them are back on the march.

Around Tafelkop in Nebo, a women's league was formed during the emergency, and village committees are being established in Nebo and Sekhukhune despite the repression by security forces.

The students are organised into student congresses eg. Sekhukhune Student Congress (Sesco) and Nebo Student Congress (Nesco). Sesco students have been boycotting classes in protest against the presence of the army in the schools and villages.

The boycott was in October but after consultation with students it was

called off. Security forces were beating up the students in their villages.

It is alleged that the Lebowa government have formed vigilante groups in Sekhukhune which are trained in Lebowakgomo.

Marion Sparg says "I am no traitor"

MARION SPARG is the first white woman in South Africa to be convicted for joining Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Sparg was recently sentenced to 25 years imprisonment for high treason, for bombing the Johannesburg headquarters of the SAP, and the Hillbrow police station. She also got five years for petrol-bombing PFP offices.

In passing sentence, the judge said Sparg's acts were all the more inexcusable because she was white. This comment has met with outrage



Kinross memorial in Johannesburg

in legal and political circles.

But it reflects the sense of confusion and betrayal with which many white South Africans respond to white democrats.

Sparg did not see her allegiance as being to the white 'volk'. She saw herself as a South African patriot, whose loyalties could not lie with a government which is not based on the will of all South Africa's people.

Marion argued that the brutal force the government is using to repress its opponents convinced her of the need to join Umkhonto we Sizwe.

In a letter to her mother read in court, Marion explains her political choices. The letter gives the lie to the picture of her painted by the Sunday papers, who try to discount her political choices by inferring that she joined MK because she was fat and lonely.

They imply she was an exile in her community. But her letter and her friends set the record straight.

Learning at gun-point at Turf

ON OCTOBER 15 the administration at University of the North arranged for students to write a double examination, including first and second semester.

Students protested by boycotting classes. The security forces intervened and forced students to attend at gunpoint.

This did not bring the situation back to normal as students would just enter any classroom they came across.

Presently the students and the authorities are in a stalemate situation.

No retreat in Aliwal North

IN ALI WAL North, daily police patrols and mass detentions forced organisations into a temporary retreat.

But when the DET tried to introduce ID passes, students firmly rejected them. The schools were temporarily closed by the SADF, and guarded by municipal guards.

Student activists released from detention have been refused readmission to school.

In Stutterheim, the youth congress (Stuyco) declared 30 September a day of mourning to commemorate the death of Jongile Nompon - Stutterheim's first unrest victim last year.

Stuyco says that despite the state's attempt to crush the democratic youth movement, "acts of brutality won't deter us."



Workers hand in ID cards outside GM gates, in solidarity with fired workers who had theirs confiscated

GM - who pays for the pullout?

WHEN GENERAL Motors announced that it intended disinvesting from South Africa, the workers at its Port Elizabeth plant went on strike. They were angered by the company's unilateral decision to disinvest from South Africa, leaving control of the company in the hands of the local management. No plan was made by the company for the well-being, job security and livelihood of the workers. All the GM company was interested in, according to the workers, was protecting its profits and the position of managers. Under the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union (Naawu), GM workers refused to bear the brunt of the withdrawal. 'Workers are not responsible for apartheid,' they said. 'Workers will not pay for the disinvestment that is the product of apartheid. If the bosses want to disinvest, then their profits must pay for this.' Throughout the sanctions debate, capital has argued that their main concern is that workers will suffer. Disinvestment pressures have been used as an excuse for retrenchments that management has been planning anyway. They have tried to put the unions on the spot politically, saying that support for disinvestment is support for loss of jobs. But the GM workers have shown that these don't have to be the terms of

disinvestment. They used their strength on the factory floor to influence the terms on which the transfer to local management took place. They demanded that they be allowed to elect two representatives onto the new GM board. This would give workers access to important information - and make management's strategising a bit more difficult. The worker demands were summed up in these slogans:
 * 'Sanction Bosses Profits - Not Workers Wages'
 * 'For workers Control Over Disinvestment and Sanctions'
 * 'Jobs Before Profits - Workers Needs Before Bosses Greed'
 Sympathy and support for the cause of the GM workers came in from all over South Africa. Other workers also threatened with losing their jobs through disinvestment joined the Naawu workers in formulating demands for all multinational companies planning disinvest. Companies must:
 * Provide timeous notice, and adequate information
 * The new owners must recognise and agree to negotiate with representative unions on all issues affecting workers, including issues arising from the withdrawal or sale.
 * The departing company must guarantee minimum severance pay



Union speaker at meeting of striking workers

for 1 months pay per year of service
 * The company must guarantee that there will be no retrenchments arising from the withdrawal
 * No benefits should be lost
 * Full earning should be guaranteed for workers for at least one year. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), to which Naawu is affiliated, gave its full support to the GM workers. In a statement Cosatu said: 'GM has enjoyed sixty years of good business in the land of apartheid. It has made huge profits from the sweat of South Africa's workers. Now that it is

pulling out, the company is only too keen to make sure that it suffers no real loss and that the interests of management are protected. 'But they do not seem to give a damn about the interests of the workers. 'Cosatu condemns this typical capitalist attitude which exploits labour to accumulate profits and wealth for the few. 'We also wish to reiterate that workers are not prepared to bear the brunt of sanctions and disinvestment which are the direct result of apartheid. Jobs should not suffer - profits should bear the consequences.

Outrage in PE at township controls

IN PORT Elizabeth, Peyco is tackling the new and vicious form of township control - the residential cards. Every township resident must now carry one of these cards, signed and stamped by either the council or the police. The card not only has people's name and address on it, but also who else is registered as legally living in their house. This is no doubt aimed at making life difficult for activists on the run. And at increasing the risks for those who take them in. In door to door raids, it is now far easier for the SADF to pin[point] the presence of extra people in a house. Even movement within the township is restricted. Residents must show their card when passing through the road-blocks now seperating the township zones. Peyco has been out to all the areas where these cards have been distributed, and explained why people should refuse to carry the cards. Youth in the Eastern Cape region have managed to meet to take forward the formation of the Eastern Cape Youth Organisation. One of the major rallying points is the campaign against unemployment. The youth plan to work closely with the unions in developing strategies for this area.

The pace of the struggle in the Eastern Cape is high. And when repression hits there, it hits hard. Saspu National spoke to a UDF leader in the region about how the Eastern Cape has adapted to the state of emergency this time. 'In the first week we were under heavy attack, organisations and structures were laid lame, communication was broken, and in the street and area committes, people were lying low, waiting for the worst to go. 'One serious danger with the state of emergency is that the stark and naked repression breeds a psychology of fear. We must stop this, we must reverse it. We must place ourselves

E. Cape solid as a rock

in a position to seize the initiative again. 'The first step was to revive the momentum of organisation, and to make sure repression did not crush the confidence people had won in the course of the struggles waged. 'We realised that to get things moving again, we needed concrete, achievable demands. 'By the fourth week, some action began again. With the Kabah removal there was general fighting, clashes and chaos. This gave the

organisational inspiration for the need to meet, to give direction to the spontaneous element 'The massive support for the Cosatu July 14 stayaway showed that the spirit of resistance had not been crushed, and organisational networks had not been smashed. In the fifth week, the education crisis started again with the reopening of the schools. The question was - to go back to school or not. Organisations were forced to find ways to meet, to consult people

through structures 'So the schools situation dictated a certain momentum. The DET was putting pressure on students to return, there was the threat of permanent closure of schools, plus pressure from the militant youth for students not to attend classes. 'For about four weeks, people were preoccupied with the education crisis. We went ahead with mass meetings in different areas - in Zwide people came together in Njoli Square one Saturday to discuss the issues. 'Then there was a big mass rally at

Sesonke Centre in Zwide. Here it was decided that it was tactically important for students to go back to maintain their organisational base. If the boycotts continued the students could lose the base from which they are able to collectivise students. 'Already, they were struggling to get together, they were scattered. Also, they needed the schools as a base for alternative education programmes - which had been left in the air once the emergency started. These were also conclusions of Ecasco's (Eastern Cape Student Congress) regional conference 'But the DET has chosen to make sure these plans don't work, with the widespread closure of the schools.



The funeral of Rose Mpetha. Her jailed husband Oscar was refused permission to attend

'Azikwelwa' is the call as the bus fares go up

PUTCO BUS company knows how to make itself unpopular.

While under siege from the bus boycott in Soweto, Putco chose to fire 200 drivers in Durban. And now they are using the bus boycott as an excuse to retrench 270 workers in Johannesburg.

Fare increases of 17 percent were guaranteed to make Putco a target of people's anger, and UDF affiliates in Soweto sent a delegation to tell them so.

But the meeting achieved nothing, and the boycott of buses was called.

"We told Putco how little people earn, but they said they are making losses because the government no longer subsidises transport," says a spokesperson for the Bus Boycott Committee.

"They say they are also very much affected by the general cost of living. We told them they risk much heavier losses if they cause us to boycott; but they were deaf to our arguments," he said.

Putco's losses are already more than they bargained for. In the second week of the boycott, two limpet mines exploded at Putco ticket offices in Diepkloof and Ikwezi, Mofolo North. Estimated damage was R10 000.

And in Kwandebele, many buses were burnt in protest at the fare increases.

On the first day of the boycott, there were long queues at the taxi ranks. "Private car-owners were asked to avail their cars at reasonable charges, and at the moment the transport problem is half solved."

The army set up roadblocks at the entrance to Soweto. Cars which were overloaded were penalised. "Travellers were ejected out of the cars so that the number of the crew aboard conformed with the regulations. This caused many workers to report late for work."

"We regard this militaristic behaviour as a deliberate ploy to make people lose their jobs. It is unnecessary for the SADF to interfere, because this is not a battle zone - it is just a civilian issue," said the Bus Boycott Committee spokesperson.

The Bus Boycott Committee is



Taking the taxis - not the buses

meeting with the Taxi Associations to get them to reduce fares. "Availing their taxis is not enough of a show of solidarity with the workers, because in fact they are gaining a lot. They must also pay the price," concluded the spokesperson.

Meanwhile Putco has launched its own attack in Durban. Two hundred bus-drivers have just been fired, for refusing to take cash fares for five days.

Their demand was for a middle manager to be subject to the same disciplinary procedures as they are.

The bus-drivers, organised by Transport and General Workers' Union, also caused havoc at their depot when Putco made the position of bus parkers redundant.

"Workers said management should be creating jobs, not cutting them," says a TGWU official. "So they parked their buses any old how in the parking lot, which caused chaos every morning."

The drivers also refused to fill out their way-bills until management gave them pens. Now they get three pens a year.

TGWU is mobilising national and international solidarity for the fired drivers. "Right now, Putco is pleading for exemption from US sanctions," says a TGWU official.

"We are making sure the International Transport Federation informs all its affiliates of Putco's labour practices," she says.

Transport workers in other companies are also getting organised.



Kitskonstabels are getting a crash course in Cape Town

CT 'Kits' cops come back

CAPE TOWN residents fear the return of more than 1000 specially trained policemen, who have been on a six week crash course just outside Cape Town.

A senior policeman has said that one of their tasks will be "to curb the violence of the comrades."

According to township sources, most of the recruits are 'witdoeke' - the same men who attacked and killed many people from Crossroads and KTC not long ago. Most of them are from Site C Khayelitsha, known to be a 'witdoek stronghold'.

Because of their experience with the witdoeke, residents see the decision to train these special policemen as "a declaration of war on ordinary peace-loving people."

Some recruits were allegedly told they were being hired as security guards for the Cape Provincial Administration's Community Service Office in Nyabga, and that they could not leave the camp once they were there.

Several men walked out of the Community Service Office when they suspected what the job was about.

An Activist from Guguletu said, "The state often uses our own people to do their dirty work. Earlier this year they used the witdoeke. Now they are formally employing people to fight the progressives in the townships."

"This is part of the state's campaign to portray the struggle in SA as one of 'black on black violence'," he said.

The talk of the streets

In Soweto, the rent boycott provided an impetus for the development of street committees. A street committee activist from Soweto told Saspu National some of the trends in the street committees.

"In organising the rent boycott in Soweto, people wanted to talk about two key issues. Firstly, there were problems relating to housing - like poor sewerage, fencing, and leaking houses."

"Then came the issue of the thuggery to which residents fall victim. As struggle has intensified and government institutions have been isolated, people have stopped reporting crime to the police."

"This is also because of the high rate of corruption in the police force in the townships. The police take bribes and chose the people they help."

"So the housing and crime issues became the preoccupation of the street committee."

"But it also provided a forum to clarify other issues. When parents had questions about the education issues, students seized the opportunity to explain the situation in the schools, and the active role for parents to play."

"The rent boycott intensified with victories clear to everyone. The unwanted councillors exiled themselves from Soweto when they saw the street committees were firmly entrenched, and able to defend the rent boycott against marauding forces of eviction."

"Then the notorious Director for Housing, Del Kevin, resigned, after telling boycotters they won't be evicted."

"As a result, the residents became too complacent, and no longer discussed rent-related issues in our street meetings. Attention often focussed mostly on crime, and corporal punishment became the order of the day."

"Political discussion got left off the agenda, although the rent boycott was still strong."

"This threatened to limit the full development of the street committee in its role as an organ of township democracy."

This pattern has developed in many areas. In Uitenhage townships, plans were made to overcome this problem.

"It was becoming unproductive to spend two and a half hours in a meeting discussing thugs. So we sat down and drew up a programme for the street committees. Two people were mandated to closely monitor the state's response to the rent boycott and compile information for discussions. The threat of forced removals were also lenthily discussed by the street committees of the area."

"In dealing with crime, we also put more emphasis on getting people to understand the causes of crime."

RESIDENTS OF rural villages in the Northern Transvaal are refusing to pay tribal taxes to the chiefs, and demand that chiefs and bantustan MP's resign from bantustan structures.

There are no rents in these villages, but campaigns against tribal taxes and officials have become a focus of community action.

In the past, the survival of the chief depended on the support of other clan. But people say the chiefs are now civil servants, paid by the government - and used by the

No more tribal taxes for chiefs

government to control the villages.

So people say if the chiefs want money from the people, they must resign from government structures.

In Lebowa people pay Lebowa taxes, and on top of this the chiefs impose their own taxes on the villagers. The people have to pay for

a chief's new house or luxury car, and also have to work in the royal fields.

The amounts paid in tribal taxes differ from village to village. People who have refused to pay have sometimes become the victims of forced removals.

"Some chiefs want to rule more people so they can get more tribal taxes. They are like imperialists," says a Sekhukhuneland activist.

"People who refuse to be under their rule are also victimised by the chief's warriors," he said.

The tax boycott has been boosted by campaigns against puppet chiefs in the villages, and many areas are now refusing to work in the chiefs' fields.

Some areas, like Mphahlele, have a history of boycotting tribal levies that goes back to before the formation of progressive organisation there.

Mamelodi massacre mourned

MAMELODI came to a standstill on November 21 as thousands of residents commemorated the first anniversary of the Mamelodi massacre - the day 19 people were killed when security forces opened fire on residents' rent protest march last year.

This year the day was a Friday and pay-day for many workers. But no-one went to work, shops were closed and no taxis or buses were operating.

The previous day activists ducked regular security force patrols to distribute stayaway pamphlets door to door throughout the township.

Mamelodi residents have been boycotting rent since the massacre - and the town council's coffers have been running dry.

The town council threatened to evict residents on September 19 if they hadn't paid up.

A stayaway was called for that day followed by a two week consumer boycott.

This stayaway didn't run very smoothly but it laid the groundwork for the November 21 stayaway.

The day before September 19 SADF soldiers and council police distributed pamphlets from the town council. They said no-one would be evicted, the council just wanted to talk to people who weren't paying rent.

From about 4 am the next day an SADF plane flew above Mamelodi with a loudhailer saying, "This is a normal working day - go to work."

Most people did go to work - because the council had withdrawn the eviction threat.

Activists assessing this stayaway said, although people did go to work, important gains were made:

- No-one was evicted. The threat of the stayaway forced the town council to back down - although people are sure the council still has plans to break the boycott.

- Activist networks and structures were reactivated by the campaign, after taking serious knocks from the state of emergency. It boosted spirits and provided concrete activity for people to get involved in again.

- Residents are still discussing the issues and the rent boycott continues.

- The government spent lots of money to stop the stayaway - on counter pamphlets, hippos and light aircraft.

Tembisa squatters take land

ON SATURDAY 25th October, 3 000 homeless people converged on empty land in the middle of Tembisa to erect shacks.

Given the authorities failure to solve the housing crisis, hundreds of homeless families decided to build houses for themselves.

At 6.30 am squatters began to mark out sites, which were then allocated to each family. But at 12 noon, security forces surrounded them and gave them five minutes to disperse.

On the night of October 29, squatters made another attempt to occupy the land. Working through the night, they managed to set up 17 shacks. But at 6 am, the security forces arrived, demolished the shacks, and arrested 12 families.

Tembisa's squatters decided to occupy the empty land after the council decided to house migrant workers and members of the 'community guards' in four-roomed houses that had been built for families.

Families who had been on the waiting list for eight years decided they had more rights to the houses, and occupied a hundred of them in Ethafeni and Timong sections.

These families were repeatedly arrested and fined. But finally the council gave the families in Timong permits to stay, although they kept trying to evict the families in Ethafeni.

Recently, they have tried to persuade these families to allow community guards to occupy at least one room of each house. But people have said no.

Tembisa has an unofficial population of about 220 000 people - 40 000 more than the township was designed for. But the authorities refuse to build more houses there. A spokesperson for the Tembisa Working Committee says when residents apply for houses, the East Rand Development Board, ERDB, says there is no money for housing construction.

So the community decided to launch a rent boycott, which is now nearly 100 percent. The council has admitted it is losing R2.2 million a month from the boycott.

The housing crisis and rent boycott led to the collapse of the Tembisa Town Council in August. The mayor and four senior councillors resigned because they were not prepared to evict the rent boycotters.

Since then, the council has been run by appointed black administrators, under the leadership of a Mr More. But he recently fled to Bophutswana after his shops were boycotted and his family isolated.

There is evidence that all the key decisions are now made by the local Joint Monitoring Commission - a branch of the State Security Council.

The TWC has called for unoccupied land to be made available to people as a constructive solution to the problem. And squatters built another 20 shacks in the night last week to emphasise the point.



A Brits Action Committee member speaks to younger residents at a people's park in Oukasie. The threat of forced removal hangs over residents, but they are building strong worker and community organisation to fight for their right to stay.

Busting rent boycotts

When two combi-loads of 'black jacks' stopped at a house in Phefeni, Soweto, in early November, women in the street kept a watchful eye.

Ever since 12 people were killed when the council tried to evict Soweto rent boycotters on August 26, the street committees have been alert for their next strategy.

"They said they were coming to fix the electricity in that house but there was no blackout there," says one of these women.

A group of youths returning from a street meeting decided to look into the situation.

"We overheard the black jacks demanding a rent receipt. We then blew the whistles, and everybody was alerted.

"Shots were fired at us and everybody dived for cover. Then the police blew the whistles themselves and confused the people into coming nearer," says one of the youths on the scene.

Four people were killed and 12 wounded. The head of the council police denied their involvement, or that there had been any intention to evict people.

This was the first move towards evictions since the shootings in White

City, Jabavu.

On the morning of the White City raid - August 26 - three residents were woken up the council/administration police. They were ordered to move out because they had not paid rent. A woman, who asked not to be named, told Saspu National what happened.

"We heard three vans stopping outside our house. Men in green uniforms jumped out carrying rifles into my yard.

"They knocked loudly on the door. When we opened they poured in like a swarm of bees. 'Pack your things and get out now not later', they said.

"I was not scared because I attended the street meetings in our area, where we were told to blow whistles when confronted by these people for not paying rent.

"I grabbed the whistle hanging on the wall and blew it. 'You are making a noise woman, just pack your things and leave this house. Your whistle won't help anything, you're just wasting your time', said the blackjack.

"Before long I heard another whistle being blown. And two more and then many more. There were neighbours in my yard, some in their pyjamas



Barricades put up in Soweto streets

and nighties.

"The police said their seniors sent them to evict me. The residents became mad when they heard all this.

"We were taken to their offices where we waited until the afternoon, when we were just told to go home.

"There we found curious residents waiting to hear. They were afraid to go to work and leave their houses unguarded."

That night Jabavu was tense. At about 6.30pm the tension snapped.

Militant youths charged on the police with stones and other missiles. Teargas was fired at the angry group and soon the air was thick with

teargas and the sounds of whistles and freedom songs.

The police, who were surrounded, used live ammunition to get out of the barricaded zone.

After they left, a 5000-strong crowd marched to the local administration offices. Many joined in on the way.

The council police started to fire teargas from their semi-fortified council buildings. The crowd hit back with stones and anything they could lay their hands on.

The army and SAP returned.

By the next morning, many were dead. The Bureau of Information reported a toll of 12 dead; the Civic reported 18 killed.

While Soweto licked its wounds, the councillors fled Soweto to take refuge in a Johannesburg hotel.

Councillors then issued a statement saying that no-one would be evicted for not paying rent, and removed Mrs Del Kevin from her position of council spokesperson on housing and rent.

Del Kevin's heavy-handedness was notorious among residents. Residents claim she had previously warned them that "the council will not hesitate using the army if rents are to be paid."

A bomb explosion at her house rocked Johannesburg's Northern suburbs shortly after the White City shootings.

Workers won't be bullied by Uwusa tactics of division

DIRTY politics seems to be the name of the game that Inkatha's new United Workers' Union of South Africa (Uwusa) is playing.

And with a reported 60 000 people at its May Day launch, it looks as though Uwusa - through whatever means possible - is going to be a force for the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) to reckon with.

In a pamphlet advertising the launch, Uwusa said: "Jay Naidoo says close the factories! But what do you, the workers, say..."

Cosatu complained that 10 buses travelling from KwaMashu to the Cosatu rally were diverted to the Uwusa rally by police.

But it is not only police who seem to be helping the Inkatha union - it is getting co-operation from other arms of the state too.

A South African Transport Services spokesperson has said that trains were laid on at Uwusa's request, and passengers paid the normal fare. Such favours have not been granted for Cosatu rallies. On May Day, KwaZulu police were on official duty in the centre of Durban for the first time ever (their relations with the SAP must be at an all-time high).

Uwusa also made extensive use of radio advertisements to publicise their meeting, in which they alleged that Cosatu was calling for the factories to close, and wanted people to starve.

Little Support

But even people who support Inkatha don't automatically support Uwusa. One worker at the Cosatu rally who is also a member of the KwaMashu amabutho said:

"The pamphlet calling us to Kings Park was signed by another union. We don't know that union. We know Inkatha, and we know our union, but we don't know this other union and we won't support another union except our own." (WIP 43)

Many Cosatu affiliates in Natal have a solid organisational base, and have relied on shop-floor issues to build worker unity. Over the years, this has won the confidence of workers who are also Inkatha members.



UWUSA launch —protecting worker rights?

Many workers have never been confronted with a critique of Inkatha before. Now they are finding they need a broader political analysis to face the challenge.

But whatever their politics, workers' experience in the unions has led them to expect certain methods of worker organisation.

Principles of worker democracy and control in the trade unions have been painstakingly built.

So when Uwusa organisers spend more time talking to management than to workers, workers suspicions are raised. They then see that Uwusa organisers are councillors, school principals, personnel managers, businessmen, mayors, and KwaZulu MPs. And when they find that these officials are not elected by workers, but are appointed from above, it speaks for itself.

"We have no knowledge of Uwusa actually organising workers around wage issues or other factory-floor issues," Cosatu secretary general Jay Naidoo says.

Uwusa organisers have little or no experience as workers. This might be because Inkatha mistrusts the kind of interests worker organisation represents.

Inkatha leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi says: "Worker organisations have particular vested interests which do not comprehend the totality of society."

Ongoing Attacks

And the ongoing attacks on worker leaders have made Uwusa even less popular.

One union member had his house



Armed guard keeps law and order at UWUSA launch

burnt down by people wearing Uwusa T-shirts. In an affidavit to the Legal Resources Centre, he said: "There is a strong feeling among the people affiliated to Cosatu unions that the SAP at Madadeni Police Station are strongly biased in favour of Inkatha, and do not take steps to investigate matters in which Inkatha people are suspected of alleged offences," he said.

Uwusa claims to be independent of Inkatha. But Inkatha's rhetoric against Cosatu certainly plays into Uwusa's plans.

Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini in his emotional speech on June 16 clearly aimed at Cosatu, the UDF and the ANC as "the enemies".

He said: "I have never taken a party political line against the UDF or Cosatu, but when these organisations move into our midst to usurp the authority of parents; when they move into our midst to turn children into thugs; when they move into our

midst to defile the ground on which brave warriors established the great traditions of the Zulu nation, then I say to you my people: enough is enough - no more.

"As King of the Zulus, I cannot and will not dictate what my people must think and say. Had the UDF, Cosatu or the ANC mission in exile worked for black unity and propagated their views among you, in honour and in broad daylight, no word of condemnation would have passed my lips.

"But when any organisation comes from without to creep in our midst to do the hideous things now being done among you, I must raise my anger to the extent that my position as King of the Zulus is insulted."

Conco confident

No doubt it is rhetoric like this that gives Simon Conco, Uwusa general secretary, much of his confidence.

He claims that Uwusa will not only be a Natal-based union. He claims that already Uwusa's most effective branch is on the East Rand, and that they have 126 card-carrying white members.

"Uwusa will succeed because the wisdom of the ordinary worker is now transcending political bases," Conco says.

Uwusa has applied for funds to the infamous American labour federation, the AFL-CIO, and also to its African arm, the African American Labour Centre (AALC).

Conco led an Uwusa delegation to Washington to meet AALC and AFL-CIO representatives. Both the men he met have been publically linked to the CIA, and were accused of being part of CIA moves to gain influence in and to co-opt the SA trade union movement when they came to SA in 1983.

Conco has also approached the Israeli labour federation, the Hirsudat, as well as other European federations.

But so far Uwusa has failed to provide an organisational threat where it really counts - which is on the factory floor. "They just divide and disorganise workers," says an organiser from the Transport and General Workers' Union in Pietermaritzburg. "They are only a minority, but they make sure that workers end up fighting each other instead of tackling their grievances with management."

"The increasing level of violence against Cosatu leadership in Natal really worries us," says Jay Naidoo.

Mineworkers Killed

At Hlobane Collieries eleven mineworkers were killed and 115 injured when National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) members were viciously attacked.

Inkatha claims that the clashes were spontaneous opposition to a strike called by NUM.

But NUM insists that two busloads of vigilantes were bussed in to the mines to break the strike and undermine the union.

The strike was to protest against a NUM organiser being picked up by mine security and banned from entering and organising in certain areas of the mine.

Yet mine management did not prevent the two bus-loads of non-mineworkers from entering the mine.

"The reign of terror and thuggery continued after the 11 mineworkers were killed, and 988 NUM members fled the mine.

"Many are now without jobs," says NUM spokesperson Marcel Golding. Mine management is giving their jobs away to Zulu workers; other ethnic groups are being turned away.

This strategy was also used at Greenside colliery after workers were retrenched.



Jay Naidoo, Cosatu General Secretary, is carried shoulder high at Cosatu's launch

COSATU is one year old. In that year, workers have flexed their muscles both in factory-based struggles around wages and working conditions, and in national politics.

And despite repression, Jay Naidoo, Cosatu General Secretary, believes that Cosatu has managed to make important advances in its first year, both in terms of building worker unity and strength on the factory floor, and in terms of the growth of working class leadership and working class politics in the struggle more broadly.

"Debates in Cosatu have placed socialism very firmly on the agenda; the growth of working class politics is clear. It is reflected in the methods and content of struggles being waged by democratic structures from village committees to street committees, from shop stewards councils to SRCs.

"More and more, these democratic structures are drawing the link between the oppression they are

Cosatu strong after first year

fighting, and the overall methods of political control of the working class in our society. They are drawing this link not only in theory, but in action, in their tactics and targets. This is heightening the crisis of control for the ruling class.

"These organs of people's power are important for advancing mass struggle now; but they are also important to ensure that we really do govern ourselves after change.

"We believe workers experience of democracy in the unions is contributing to building working class leadership more broadly".

Naidoo believes that working class tactics and organisational methods have matured and advanced in the

past year.

"Workers are more directly confronting the issue of redistribution of wealth; tactics like sit-ins have also put the issue of control of the means of production on the agenda.

Naidoo points to the growth of shop-steward locals as making an important contribution to the growth of working class politics.

The locals bring together shop-stewards from different factories and unions in an area, to discuss issues affecting them.

"In this way, locals allow for a more organised worker response to township-based struggles like rents, transport or removals; for example,

WHEN THE personnel manager at Jabula Foods in Springs started recruiting for Uwusa, members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) were outraged.

"The personnel manager is part of management", says a Fawu shop-steward from Jabula. "How can we accept management organising an opposition union to the one they have recognised? This is a divide-and-rule tactic to weaken worker organisation".

Workers say the white factory manager and the production manager were helping the personnel manager with his recruiting drive.

"Their first target seemed to be the white workers and engineers," say workers. "This was the only way

Uwusa doesn't last long at Jabula foods

they could get their figures up to challenge Fawu".

The personnel manager is also the mayor of KwaZulu. This meant he had power over the workers both at the factory and in the community.

Workers feared that their choice of union might affect their position on the housing lists.

So when Fawu members were pressurised to join Uwusa, workers

mandated chief shop-steward Moses Ntuli to complain to management.

But management rejected workers claims.

Before workers had decided what action to take next, Moses Ntuli was shot dead at the bus-stop on his way to work.

Impis arrived during the service at his funeral in KwaZulu. Workers objected to their presence, as they did

not seem to have come to mourn Ntuli's death.

Back at Jabula, the personnel manager went away on sick-leave.

"While he was away, we found Uwusa membership forms in his office," says a shop-steward. "This was living proof of our allegations."

Workers held a general meeting, and resolved to sign a petition demanding the personnel manager's

immediate dismissal.

"Workers were very angry at the senseless murder of Ntuli," says a shop steward spokesperson. "They took it as their task to win the struggle against Uwusa that he had been leading in the factory."

Management was not blind to the conflict brewing on the factory floor, and the threat of militant worker action.

They moved quickly, and both the personnel manager and the production manager left the factory.

During this struggle, Fawu signed up most of the remaining unorganised workers. They have consolidated their organisation. And now Uwusa has no real presence.



Clover trucks leave the depot - but will anyone buy their products?

Uwusa plays dirty at Clover

CLOVER Dairies has been accused of collaborating with Uwusa to crush the Cosatu affiliated Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu).

A few months ago, 230 workers at the Pietermaritzburg plant were fired. Clover workers throughout Natal went on a five-day strike in solidarity. They went back to work because there was a real danger that they would all lose their jobs.

Fawu believes Clover management have been backing Uwusa all the way. And that Clover would jump at the opportunity to replace their entire workforce with Uwusa supporters.

Fawu has over 2 500 members in Clover in Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. It has nearly 100% support at the Pietermaritzburg plant. But in most plants Fawu organisers are not allowed onto factory premises.

Yet Uwusa organisers are allowed to recruit openly and have been seen

in meetings with management and Inkatha councillors.

Uwusa showed its true colours when Pietermaritzburg Clover workers went on strike on June 6th demanding a wage increase they were promised in February.

Uwusa officials and an Imbali councillor arrived at the factory and went to the manager's office.

"Then they came out and approached the workers, with guns and knives drawn. Workers started to move towards them, at which point two managers also drew guns," alleges a Fawu organiser. "Workers retreated, shouting 'Amandla Ngawethu', while shop stewards controlled the situation."

Management later paid what they owed the workers, and both sides agreed the issue was closed.

"But when Clover Head Office officials came to town, management quickly forgot their promises", says Fawu. Clover held an enquiry into

the strike.

They accused the shop steward chairperson and another worker of incitement. This was for shouting "Amandla" after management had loaded their guns and pointed them at workers. They were found guilty and given five minutes to leave the premises.

All the workers came out on strike demanding their reinstatement - but they too were all dismissed.

"Clover workers all over the country were keen to come out in solidarity," says a Fawu organiser, "but we were worried that management might just dismiss them all, and replace them with Uwusa scabs."

Clover management has good reason to want to crush Fawu. Through national unity, Fawu has been challenging their employment policies, and fighting for one national wage for Clover workers.

Clover workers in Kokstad are

paid R85 a month while workers doing the same job in Durban get R316 - which is still not a living wage.

Management are using all the tactics it can to win this battle.

When the consumer boycott of Clover products began to bite, they got a court interdict preventing Fawu from organising consumer action against them. But Clover products still taste sour to many people.

Clover has also said in radio adverts that the workers have been reinstated. But this is not true.

And three shop stewards detained during the solidarity strike were told that management called in the security police.

Workers in other unions are discussing solidarity action, and Clover Workers Support Committees have been spreading consumer distaste for Clover products.

Mawu wants socialism

"WE ARE committed to building socialism," declared all 300 delegates to the Metal and Allied Workers Union (Mawu) Congress.

The congress took place at a time when Mawu was badly hit by the state of emergency clampdown. But despite repression, Mawu worker representatives did not censor themselves in spelling out the future they intend to build.

"Workers mobilise and lead for a democratic South Africa" was the slogan of the congress.

And in their motion on socialism Mawu looked at how to ensure working class leadership in the struggle.

"The organised working class can only take the lead in the struggle if it has a clear programme and aims, which clarify exactly what is wanted by the working class and what is meant by their demands," the motion says.

Mawu also agreed that it is only on the basis of a clear programme that the organised working class can make correct alliances, and lead these alliances.

Mawu committed itself to discussing such a programme at every level of the union, and stressed that "the organised workers should consult with their allies, especially the organised youth, in order to build a programme which can bring together as many groups in society as possible."

The congress also addressed a range of immediate grievances and problems faced by Mawu members. Workers voted for the right to strike, for a living wage in the short term and for a continued struggle for economic justice.

Workers also called for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, and for the unbanning of all political parties.



the locals have been very involved in resisting removals at Brits; and in the rent issue in Soweto."

Chris Dlamini, Cosatu Vice President, explains how the East Rand local has built working class unity and strength.

"The local allows us to share ideas about tactics on the factory floor, and to learn from experiences in other factories".

Through the local, workers from all the unions and factories in the area also keep in touch with youth,

student, civic and unemployed workers organisations. "The local provides a forum in which we can discuss our collective response to issues like bus fare and rent increases; or the student struggles."

"So through the local, workers can come to grips with these broader issues of working class control, and build unity in action with other sectors - many of which have no more access to the means of production than we do". At Fawu's National Conference, Chris Dlamini

explained why this unity is crucial:

"The unholy alliance of apartheid and capitalism has become obvious and concrete. One cannot expect to eradicate it simply by removing apartheid, nor can economic transformation come about merely by organising workers into unions and demanding a living wage and good working conditions."

"What we are talking about is the total change of the present system in its entirety. This change can never be expected to come about as a result of a change of heart from Big Business or a softening of attitudes by the regime or when Thatcher discards her attitude. It will only come through the struggles waged by all progressive forces of our people...I am convinced that the links with all progressive organisations of our people need to be concretised now".

Building unity in action is the basis of Cosatu's support for the campaign for "National United Action" with UDF and the NECC.

"An offensive of united action on many different fronts nationally would test the resources of the system; and this is clearly a direction we must move in."

"The nuts and bolts of future plans are still being discussed by workers; but the most important thrust is to build unity on the ground. Between workers and the youth, for example. Especially now that Cosatu is organising unemployed workers, many of whom are already organised in the youth," says Naidoo.

Cosatu believes that the consolidation of structures at a local, regional and national level is crucial to strengthen worker power around both factory issues and broader working class issues.

"We have launched five regions, and hope to launch the last three by the end of the year."

"At a national level, the national shop stewards council is an important development, and will facilitate national industrial action".

"We are also likely to see more of the kind of strategy used in the Pick 'n Pay strike." Pick 'n Pay workers, organised by Cawusa, used the sleep-in strategy to bring Pick 'n Pay to a standstill; this also made it impossible for Pick 'n Pay to use scab labour".

"Increased organisation at a national level is going to offer a greater challenge to monopoly capital. Which is something they are scared of".

The implementation of one union, one industry has proved more difficult than expected, but the problems are being tackled.

"Organisation of the unemployed has begun, especially on the Witwatersrand; FAWU is organising farmworkers; a construction union is to be launched in November; we have set up a newspaper; and the issue of women is more firmly on the agenda both internally and in negotiations than before," says Naidoo.

SASPU NATIONAL

With the state of emergency, the government hopes to swing the balance of forces in SA decisively back in the favour of the ruling class.

To do this, they need to crush the development of forms of organisation that have the potential to involve each and every worker, resident, and student in the battle to take their power from them.

Ironically, some of these forms of organisation were given impetus by the last state of emergency.

Because repression forced structures of communication and decision-making to develop that could continue despite the troops patrolling the streets, guarding the class rooms, and standing by at the factories.

It is these forms of organisation that have been a major target of this state of emergency.

And our future liberation depends on our ability to defend and consolidate these organs of people's democracy - the most powerful tools we have for making apartheid controls unworkable.

A specific part of the states attack on the progressive movement is its attack on information. By cutting people's knowledge of the advances and issues all over the country, they hope to demoralise and weaken organisation, and stem the growth of national united action - a development they fear, because it stretches even their repressive resources to the limits.

Saspu National has felt the effects of this clampdown on all progressive media. The newspaper has not been on the streets for some time. Like many organisations, we have been reeling from the blows of the state of emergency.

SASPU National's offices were raided by security police in the first few weeks of the emergency. There were forced entries and much of our equipment was smashed and destroyed. Then we saw in one of the Bureau of Information's infamous reports that our offices had been burnt down. At this stage we cannot prove who was responsible.

Staff members have been detained, and others are in hiding. The same has happened to countless distributors and newsgatherers all over the country.

But we are back on the tracks. And we are determined not to let the government's harsh clampdown on information stop us from producing the paper.

Farewell to Thlabane

FEW PEOPLE heard about the death of a former Cosas national office bearer - Thlabane Mogashoa.

Not long after the state of emergency was declared, the commercial press reported that security forces had killed some "terrorists" in a shoot-out in Alldays - not far from the Northern Transvaal border with Botswana. The information had come from the notorious Bureau of Information.

Most people probably don't know where Alldays is, nor who the slain guerrillas were. Some would have felt a pang of grief, thinking of their sons, daughters, friends and comrades, brothers and lovers who have left the country for military training.

A few weeks after the reports, SADF soldiers went to the Atteridgeville home of Thlabane's parents to say he had been killed.

Thlabane was Cosas national organiser and a member of the Saulsville/Atteridgeville Youth Organisation (Sayo).

He was well known to progressive people, especially students, throughout the country.

His active political life started while he was a school student in Atteridgeville. School conditions drove him to become a tireless fighter against Bantu Education.

In 1983 he was a key figure in the Atteridgeville Cosas branch and the student protests there - against corporal punishment, sexual harassment, the age limit laws, lack of text books, exam irregularities, the prefect system, and other evils of bantu education.



Thlabane Mogashoa

At the Cosas national congress at the end of that year he was elected to the Cosas national executive. He served on this body until he left the country. It was during this time that student uprisings spread throughout the country, Cosas popularity soared and it became the most powerful student organisation in SA's history.

In early 1984 at the funeral of Atteridgeville student Emma Sathekge - the first of many police victims in student uprisings - Thlabane told mourners:

"We want to declare to all the people of South Africa and the whole world that despite assassination, division, harassment, detention and death in detention, we will prove that bantu education is evil and we will make sure it is utterly scrapped, dumped on the junk heap of history and buried once and for all."

"With relentless determination and sparing neither courage nor strength we will strive for an education which

is free, compulsory, dynamic, democratic, non-racial and universal, because we know no other races except one race, the human race."

For Thlabane these were more than empty words. He soon became a key target of repression, but increasingly he dedicated his life to the cause of freedom.

He was not only a fearless enemy of Bantu Education, but the entire system of exploitation and oppression of which it is part.

SAYCO - welding the youth together

THE SOUTH African Youth Congress (Sayco) is the proposed name for the national youth organisation to be formed in the not too distant future.

The idea has been in the pipeline since the 1982 Cosas National Congress. The congress felt a need to organise non-student youth, and set up a commission to look into setting up youth organisations.

From 1983 youth organisations mushroomed throughout the country - many spurred on by the UDF launch in August that year.

This growth of youth organisation was new in the recent history of the democratic movement.

But says a youth leader, "the African National Congress Youth League produced people's leaders like Tambo, Mandela and Sisulu. The youth league had a strong influence in the fifties - it shaped the ANC in a progressive and militant direction and changed the face of the struggle".

Today the youth are again playing a key role. "Over the past few years they have been at the forefront of the struggles in the townships and villages - and are a driving force in the consumer boycotts, stayaways, street committees and major campaigns".

"The national youth organisation must be the voice of the young men and women of our country, channelling the militancy of the youth in a progressive political direction.

A national youth interim coordinating committee (NYICC) with delegates from different regions has been working towards launching the national youth organisation.

"We call on the youth to unite and cement their unity into a solid weapon which can't be broken. We must intensify the struggle and continue marching forward till final victory".

They saluted the courage and determination of the youth.

But, said a committee member, the youth is not the vanguard of the struggle. The working class is and must be the vanguard.

"This has been stated clearly by those in the youth federation. The youth congresses include students, working youth and unemployed. The



youth are not a class but a strata of society, many of them falling within the broad class of working people".

"So the youth must strengthen the leadership of the working class, forge relationships with progressive trade unions, civics and other groups within the democratic movement and add their muscle and ideas".

Despite severe repression and two state of emergencies, in which the youth have often been key targets, preparations to form a national youth federation have continued.

It already has draft constitution, draft policy and proposals for its name and colours, from national and regional workshops. These are being discussed now by youth organisations.

The interim coordinating structures set up in most regions were severely affected by the current emergency but are still functioning.

"They still have to become fully fledged regional congresses which

will form part of the national structures".

NYICC members stressed the role of all youth congresses in drawing up the policy and programme of action of the youth federation.

"The policy should represent people in the youth congresses as it will form the basis of their common direction.

"At the same time the local youth congresses will have their own programmes of action appropriate to their own conditions. These will be accommodated within the broad policy and programme of action of the youth federation".

"For example, a burning issue for the youth in the urban areas might be rent boycotts or councillors, while the rural youth would be tacklingbantustan chiefs.

"The programmes of action of the youth congresses are not necessarily exactly the same - but they will all

still fall within the same broad programme of action and policy of the youth federation.

One example was the problem of superstition in some areas. People from these areas pushed that the fighting of superstition be included in the draft policy.

Draft policy on the relationship to other organisations, the bantustans, sport and culture, education, the unemployed, women and imperialism is being discussed.

Many of the youth organisations support the Freedom Charter, but not all have formally adopted it. They have been encouraged to formally adopt it.

All the organisations participating support the principle of non-racialism - there are no black consciousness groups.

A lot of progress has been made since 1983 when there were only about forty youth organisations in

the plan for a national youth organisation.

Many stressed that it should be built on firm foundations - from the bottom upwards.

They agreed existing youth organisations should first be strengthened in each region, new ones formed, and regional structures built.

Deliberations at the second conference in Durban in 1985 made it clear progress would not be easy.

Most regions reported they were not yet ready for the launching of a national youth organisation. They were still bringing together the youth organisations in their regions. In some regions coordinating structures had been formed.

Delegates agreed that the national youth organisation should have a federal structure and affiliate to the UDF.

The majority of youth organisations involved supported the Freedom Charter and were affiliated to the UDF. But not all the groups were openly political, eg. the religious and cultural groups. Within a federal structure there would be room for them and they could be won over.

This structure would also allow each youth congress to keep its name and identity while falling under the umbrella of the national youth federation.

"The local youth organisations were highly popular among the youth in their areas, but were not yet consolidated, with democratic structures involving each and every person.

"So a federal structure will unite the youth nationally but the local youth organisations can still function as they are".

The International Youth Year (IYY) was another key issue the conference took up. This campaign gave added impetus to organising the youth and massive local and regional IYY launches were held all over the country.

At present, the youth all over the country - and the entire progressive movement - are waiting anxiously for the national launch of the youth organisation.

THE DECLARATION of the State of Emergency on June 12 summed up the situation in our country. A critical point of confrontation had been reached in which none of the major parties could manoeuvre their way forward, let alone out.

Since the Vaal uprisings sparked off the current phase of struggle in September 1984, townships, villages, farms, workplaces and schools nationwide are no longer being ruled in the same old way.

Not even the army of occupation currently patrolling the streets and schools and searching the houses can restore apartheid's law and order. Some areas have replaced it with an alternative system implemented through street committees and people's courts.

These conditions of dual power pose the most serious threat ever to the system of exploitation and oppression known as apartheid.

For the rulers as much as the ruled the battle is one of survival. The oppressed and exploited have decided that their only hope of survival and a decent life lies in fundamentally changing the power of the bosses and the government. This power defends massive wealth and privilege, and its owners and controllers will not let go easily.

So there is a deadlock - the people want democratic power to govern themselves and control the wealth they produce. The bosses and the government want power to keep control and wealth for themselves. There will be no compromise on this - and so no end to the conflict - for the time being.

For the people to succeed in their task requires strong and united organisation with clear purpose and direction. It requires mobilisation of a broader range of people. It needs education and understanding about what is being fought for, and why. It needs more people to be involved in discussions, planning and decisions about each fight.

Collective decisions are vital to the long-term task of building a new society. Through direct democratic participation in setting strategic objectives and designing programmes of action, people will be part of the changes that are meant to give them control over their own lives.

In this sense the State of Emergency is an emergency for democratic organisation as well. The government and its security forces have systematically set about detaining 20 000 people and forcing about 50 000 underground. Many others have been killed in the ongoing conflict.

In the townships and villages, curfews and police and army patrols make it very difficult to meet or move about. Communication within organisations and between different organisations, areas and regions has suffered.

Many publications are banned or printers are too scared to print. Commercial newspapers avoid quoting progressives and don't want to take any risks with the law, even in the name of truth.

In all this confusion, it has sometimes been difficult to see where to go from here and how.

As organisations recovered from the first blows of the emergency, their first task was to defend the organisation they had built over the past years.

Many activists have pointed out that as the struggle intensifies, repression will get even worse. But organisations couldn't allow repression to overshadow everything else.

POLITICAL COMMENT

The State of Emergency aims to tip the balance of power firmly back in the state's favour. But progressive organisations are adapting to repression and continuing the offensive

The state of organisation

The state of emergency

They would have to take it into account in their analysis, planning and programmes of action. They would have to work out new ways of operating and even develop new forms of organisation which are better suited to repressive conditions. But they couldn't allow repression to dictate to them.

The key problems which everyone faced before the emergency are still there. Struggles were fought around the structural unemployment, created by the system which denies many people access to the land while not providing enough jobs.

Conflict was - and still is - generated by the institutionalised violence which tries to control the movement, location and relocation of black people.

At the workplace millions of workers are expected to work long hours for low wages, and to willingly supply profits to the tiny minority who own and control the nation's wealth.

Many people don't have houses. Residents are still supposed to pay rents they can't afford because of unemployment, low wages and high prices. Bantu education still seeks, not to educate students thirsty for knowledge, but to prepare them for lives of wage slavery.

All of these controls have been the source of increasing conflict over the last few years between the oppressed and exploited masses on the one hand, and the bosses and the government on the other. The fighting has escalated as the working class and its allies have organised and

fought for their short-term needs and longer term goals. In response, the bosses and the government have restructured their mechanisms of control and used more and more physical violence to keep their power.

The challenges the State of Emergency poses for the progressive movement are almost overwhelming: how to resist repression on such a scale, and at the same time take up the issues which generated the conflict in the first place?

The townships are like furnaces and now is the time to forge organisations into strong unbending weapons. Townships like Cradock, Mamelodi, Port Alfred and Alexandra have formed street and area committees, and organised the youth, student, women, civic and trade union groups under united umbrella structures through which they co-ordinate their programmes.

They have set themselves clear targets - the eviction of community councils and police, rent boycotts, consumer boycotts, the upgrading of the township under their own control, and the establishment of a people's education system which they determine.

They have concentrated on involving, training and educating each and every resident so that their progress does not depend on one or two experienced and talented leaders but rests with every last man, woman and child. If one person is taken into jail, forced into hiding, or killed, there are others ready and able to take over the responsibilities.

They have united trade union, community organisation, youth and student groups in action. They have rejected arguments that trade unions should not be involved in politics, and that youth and students should not be involved in residents' struggles.

Under the banner and leadership of the working class all these groups proceed in solidarity to fight not just for their own sectional interests, but for the overall political interests of their class.

They aim to reduce rents, receive more houses, get SRC's, improve wages, get detainees released and troops withdrawn. But they know this alone will not fundamentally alter their oppression and exploitation. These victories would change the degree of suffering, but not roots of the suffering itself.

Until they have political and economic power, they will still be at the mercy of the bosses and their government. They will not be able to control the way society is run; and the class of people who own the mines, factories, farms and banks will continue to extract profits through exploiting wage labourers who own nothing but their ability to work.

And so long as exploitation prevails, oppression will be necessary. Workers and their families will not willingly accept their lack of control and low standard of living while the bosses have access to power and live lives of luxury. Workers, their families,

their children and their unemployed dependants have fought for better wages and living conditions, more security and more control over all aspects of their lives.

The government has responded to this challenge with vicious repression. While a State of Emergency may halt resistance for a short time, it cannot do so forever. Conditions and standards of living get worse, and the issues which started the battles remain.

Organisations adapt and activists learn to cope with higher and higher levels of repression. Organisations have become more and more deep-rooted in the townships and factories - both as a democratic aim as well as as a strategic necessity to combat repression.

Even some bosses have realised that the government's attempt to wipe out opposition is not going to work. They begged and pleaded with the government to take more considered and careful action. They asked the government to scrap the pass laws. They were heard and the pass laws were replaced by the policy of controlled urbanisation - which is not all that different. They asked for Bantu education, the bantustans and Group Areas to be scrapped, but nothing has happened.

When their pleas fell on deaf ears, the bosses started to take their own initiatives. Scared of the rising tide of opposition, the bosses are now trying to negotiate with some civics. They set up their own non-racial schools which they hope will be a model for the future and which they hope will undercut the rising demand for people's education.

They have begun lobbying for the release of Mandela and the unbanning of the African National Congress. They have frequently jetted off to Zambia and London to meet the ANC. They have met foreign governments and used all their commercial newspapers to put pressure on the Bothas to change their strategies. They have started promoting a national convention. In short, they are trying anything and everything to prevent any revolutionary change in South Africa.

The ANC itself has noted that their motive in taking these initiatives is to try and preserve capitalism by taking a leading role in the scrapping of apartheid.

Their change will not mean liberation for the workers. The bosses are not suggesting an end to exploitation. Neither are they suggesting participative control in the workplace, the schools and the communities.

The government, on the other hand, is confused, directionless and scared. They do not understand the nature of the conflict and so blame it on 'agitators'.

They are in for a nasty shock when, despite 20 000 'agitators' being in detention, the townships, schools and factories continue to rise up to tackle the issues of bus fare, rent and other increases, unemployment and retrenchments, and issues of power and control.

While it is trying to figure out what to do, the government is buying time - and costing lives - waging war against the democratic movement. They have removed activists, but they cannot remove unemployment, poverty, exploitation or democratic aspirations.

It is around these issues that people are once more organising. Having recovered from the initial shock of the harshest repression in our history, the democratic flag is once more unfurling.

DUNCAN VILLAGE, In East London, was heavily hit by the State of Emergency. This was meant to crush

the strong organisation there. Saspu National spoke to a leader of the Duncan Village Residents Association (DVRA) about how this organisation was built and how people were starting to govern themselves.

PEOPLE have lived in Duncan Village (DV) for over one hundred years. But since 1964 residents have been threatened with removal to Mdantsane in the Ciskei - despite a massive housing shortage in Mdantsane.

In mid 1983, after a meeting with Minister of Cooperation and Development Koornhof, the DV community council announced a 'concession' on removals. Only one section of DV would be moved.

And from now on the council would do the government's dirty work and control the number of people living in DV. The mayor at the time said "half a loaf is better than none," but residents disagreed.

In early 1984 about 400 shacks were demolished, leaving about 2000

people homeless. Then there was a rent increase which the community council did nothing about.

"The community council was not working in the people's interests. They were just messengers, carrying messages from the authorities," said DVRA.

The East London bus boycott against fare increases also changed the political life of DV. It started in July 1983, and led to a bloody war in which at least 90 people were killed, and thousands detained and tortured by Ciskei forces.

In 1984 there were only unions and Cosas in DV. The bus boycott and removals set the stage for building community organisation.

"The bus boycott heightened people's political consciousness. Especially the workers - in the trains, in the taxi's and on foot, they were having daily political discussions.

"Saawu workers had the understanding that the struggle doesn't end in the factory - exploitation on the factory floor is linked to oppression in the community. So the unions were a source of broader political education and influence."

Activists went about discussing the idea of a residents organisation, forming an interim structure and looking into a draft constitution.

"We split the township into eight geographical areas. And we included Cambridge location - which is not

Building from the



The threat of removal hangs over Duncan Village



Trains became vehicles for organisation

part of DV but is administered by ECAB."

"The idea of a residents association was pushed among the people." And there were ongoing assessments of area organisers' progress - making contacts, having discussions, recruiting people and getting residents to voice their demands.

"Activists in the interim structure organised an anti-removal committee (ARC) made up of adults and youth. ARC pushed a councillor to call a public meeting about the removal.

"We organised people street to street, house to house to attend that meeting. We sent the youth to make sure residents in every street were reminded."

The community centre overflowed, while the councillors

kept people waiting for an hour. "Activists took over the meeting and for the first time ever, ordinary people could speak and ask the councillors questions.

"But they didn't answer, or they blundered and became more reactionary and condescending. They exposed themselves.

"People's passive anger was becoming active anger based on the reasons the councillors had provided themselves. People wanted to physically prevent them from walking out, but activists managed to subdue people. They said the purpose of the meeting was not to physically do something to the councillors but to expose them."

The meeting continued, and people said, "The councillors' time is over -

it is time we took control of our own lives". People's questions and demands were collected and given to the one remaining councillor at the meeting.

The next day, a newspaper picture showed the councillors holding wine glasses in a group with SADF, Ciskei Defence Force and City Council people. They were completely discredited, and organising work intensified.

Student solidarity action during the 1983 bus boycott developed into organisation around SRC's and issues in the schools. By early 1985 there were student uprisings in DV and attempts to get the councillors off the school committee.

In August 1985 many people attended the funeral of assassinated



Since the massacre, Mamelodi residents have boycotted rents

"We want to make sure that we work closely with all the other townships in Pretoria. And the factories.

All the townships send workers to the factories. And we need to start questioning how the factory is run, how the profits are being shared, who owns the company," Mamelodi activist.



MAMELODI is a typical South African township - few facilities, dusty roads and massive overcrowding. Over 200000 residents cram into 13800 houses and countless backyard shacks. Since 1968 no houses have been built.

In the late seventies the old Congress traditions of non-racialism and mass organisation were re-emerging. In 1979 the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) was formed. And the spirit of resistance gained momentum with the execution and mass funeral of ANC guerilla Solomon Mahlangu, a Mamelodi resident.

After the 1980 school boycotts and the Release Mandela Campaign, the Mamelodi Action Committee was formed. Then came the Zakhoni Women's organisation and the Mamelodi Youth Organisation (Mayo). All of which affiliated to the UDF when it was launched in August 1983.

In late 1983 organisations ran their first joint campaign - a boycott of Town Council elections. The poll was 27,79% - some residents voted due to promises of more houses, lower rents and an end to shack removals.

But the new Town Council was no longer getting any income from township liquor outlets which had been sold to private owners. So they increased rents and tariffs. These increases were one of the sparks that later led to building people's democracy in Mamelodi.

From mobilisation to mass action

The first half of 1984 saw massive mobilisation around student

Mamelodi: back to the roots

Mamelodi organisation challenges apartheid controls and gives people more power

demands, door to door visits during the UDF Million Signature campaign and the Federation of SA Women anniversary.

Residents were also discussing the decisive rejection of the tricameral parliament in the August elections and the September 3 Vaal uprisings. The November 1984 stayaway and the Black Christmas campaign were well supported.

But students' demands were ignored, rents were increased and people's anger was growing. Schools and homes of policemen and councillors were attacked.

In early 1985 clashes with police and school boycotts spread. Parents formed the Mamelodi Parents Association (MPA).

The Town Council began to crumble as one by one councillors resigned. Progressive organisations began to extend their influence over the whole of Mamelodi, and through UDF structures, linked up to other Pretoria townships.

Mamelodi wasn't officially part of the first state of emergency in July 1985. But the SADF occupied the township and conflict with security forces followed.

From mass action to people's organisation

The town council had no support and people were boycotting the police. But nothing had yet come up in their place.

Mayo and Cosas launched an 'Operation Clean Up' campaign to

end increasing crime and thuggery in the name of their organisations. They formed Disciplinary Committees (DC's) in different streets - the start of a network of organisation that today criss-crosses the whole of Mamelodi.

The DCs began to control crime effectively. But this wasn't their only task. They were also to give political direction to youth and students and win over parents.

They helped organise a successful two-week consumer boycott in August and a mass vigil for executed ANC guerilla and Mamelodi resident Ben Moloise in September.

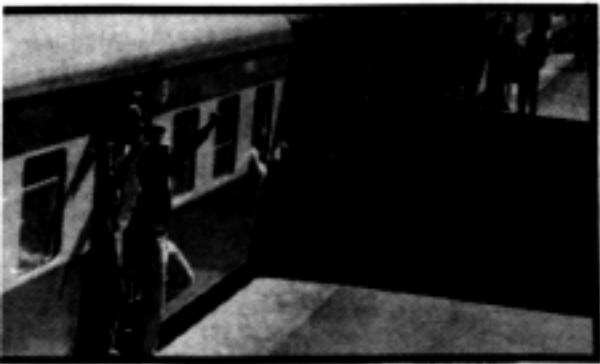
Their emphasis was explaining campaigns to Mamelodi residents politically and not through intimidation. Discussions of the need to replace the local authorities with people's organisation were starting to take off.

Then came the November 21 Mamelodi massacre. About 50000 residents, led by the women, marched to the Town Council offices. They were protesting about high rents and other grievances. Security forces opened fire, killing at least 13 people.

As people ran for cover they were saying: we won't pay rent. The whole of Mamelodi backed the rent boycott and stood united at the massacre victims' mass funeral on December 3. Residents demanded decreased rents, that security forces get out of the township and that councillors resign.

From this time, the process of

bottom up



and the Central Executive Committee (CEC) elected.

The CEC's main tasks were to set up DVRA branches, and categorise the short term, medium term and long term demands of residents.

"We did this in terms of how easily a demand can be met within the existing system. For example, if people want better streets, the government could just do this without changing the whole system, so it would be a short term demand.

"The medium-term demands were things which we could get, but still within the status quo, like creches, old age homes, restructuring of the township with people's participation.

"The more political demands - like we want a non-racial municipality in a non-racial community in a non-racial SA - this can only be realised in the broader national struggle."

To set up the nine branch committees, area organisers publicised the day, time and purpose of a branch meeting in the area.

"We relied on the youth to get people to attend. Each branch elects its own committee."

The branch meetings also had discussions and inputs about ongoing issues like the consumer boycott and

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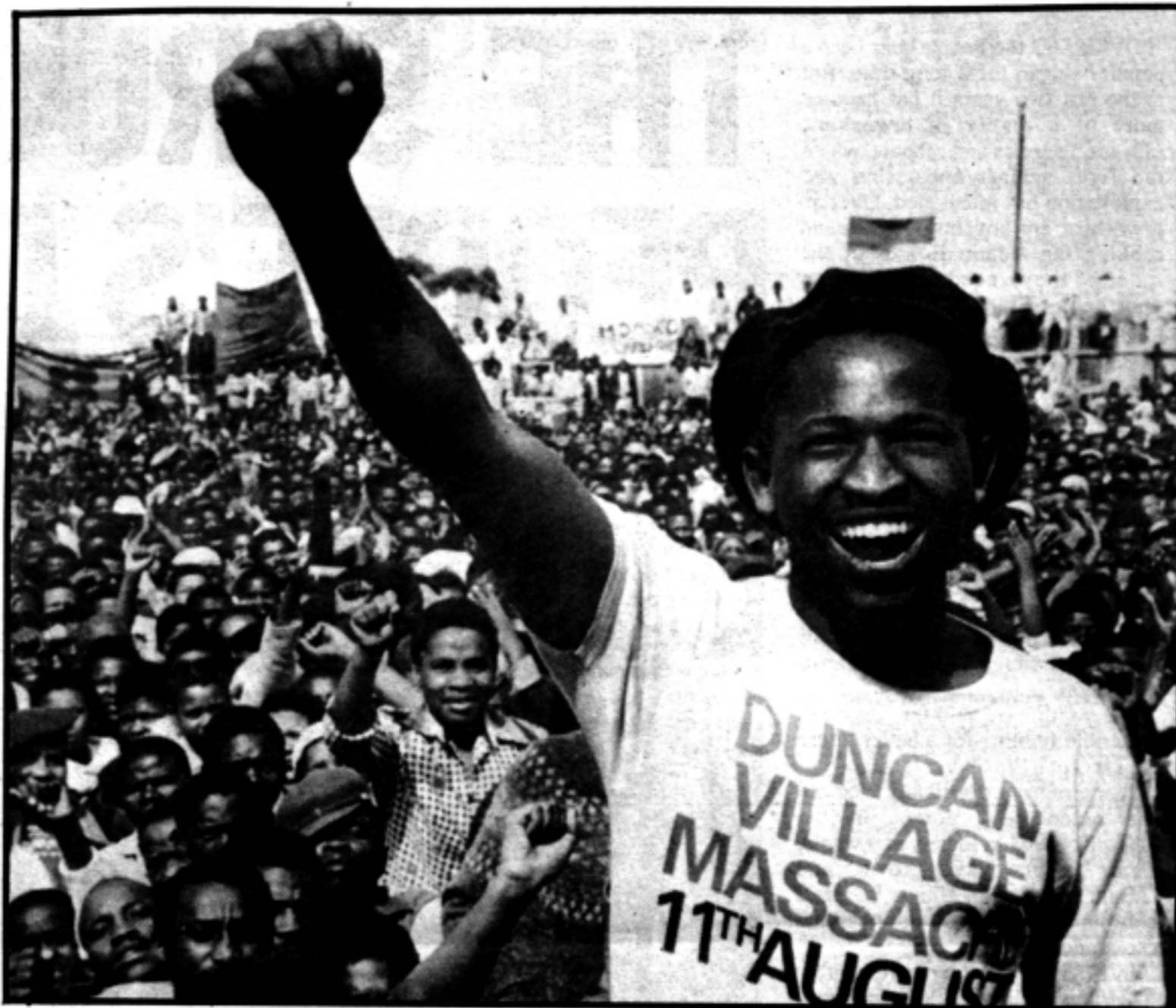
During the bus boycott,

Natal leader Mrs Mxenge. That night anger erupted in DV. Councillors houses and schools were hit. Clashes with security forces continued for the next two days. Many people were killed in what has become known as the Duncan Village massacre.

The following day there was a lull and a total stayaway. "During the uprising people active in DVRA organised a crisis centre at a church. They recruited nurses and doctors to give medical treatment to injured people, and lawyers to help trace those killed, detained or missing, and to organise bail.

"They visited victim's families, and organised food parcels from the crisis centre for families that had lost a breadwinner."

After the mass funeral, DVRA was officially launched at a mass meeting



Residents fought removals in Duncan Village



During the Mamelodi massacre, the youth attacked the police to draw their fire away from their parents.

building people's organisation in Mamelodi escalated.

Parents began to join street committees. Workers, many of them active members of Cosatu affiliates, became involved in township organisation and began to play leadership roles.

Youth structures grew and they began garbage collections in the township - a service cut off by the Town Council in response to the rents boycott.

The youth also built people's parks to honour the massacre victims, and also gave them names such as Mandela Park, Ben Moloise Park, Rivonia Park, Africa Park, Beirut Park, Umkonto we Sizwe Park and We Shall Overcome.

Armed attacks were on the increase. In two separate grenade attacks a policeman was killed and one injured. In February 1986 a security force Casspir detonated a landmine, and eight soldiers were allegedly killed. In March another policeman was killed by an AK47.

The rent boycott was making the Town Council broke. Police tried to force people to pay rent but they refused. Reprisals against activists became frequent - their homes were petrol bombed and shot at. People's parks were destroyed.

But groundwork to form street and other people's committees continued. And when the launch of the Mamelodi Civic Association (MCA) was disrupted, residents responded with a massive stayaway.

How do people build their organised strength in Mamelodi?

The basic unit of organisation in Mamelodi is the street committee.

The youth have their own street committees, as they have their own programme and their own pace and style of work.

Mamelodi has been divided into 35 sections, each representing the streets in their area. The youth attend the section meetings. So joint activities between youth and parents are planned at the sectional level.

Each section elects two representatives to sit on the central committee, which has seventy members. This committee meets every fortnight and represents Mamelodi's top decision making forum.

Ten central committee members, and four representatives elected by Mayo, the student committee, the Zakheni women's organisation and the newly formed Mamelodi Teachers Union (Matu) form the

executive. Hosteldwellers will also be represented in the future. The executive carries out day to day decisions.

This structure is the Mamelodi Civic Association. So the civic represents both the street committees and the organisations.

Most elected civic members are workers - active shop stewards and members of Cosatu affiliates. So there is direct communication between the township and most Pretoria factories.

Organisation's strength in Mamelodi comes from a central political discipline which unites the organisations of the youth, hosteldwellers, students, teachers, workers etc.

The effectiveness of this political leadership was shown by the massive success of the May Day and June 16 stayaways.

The main tasks of organisation in Mamelodi are to make sure the whole township is organised, and to undermine the Town Council politically.

With the boycott of police, people's courts (PCs) were set up. They sit at a street level to discuss matters affecting that street. If a dispute or problem cannot be solved at a street level, then it is referred upwards to

the section, and eventually to the Civic.

Residents are judged by their peers, and sentences focus more on rehabilitation than on punishment. Necklacing is forbidden.

The PCs also have the task of political education. Street meetings often discuss street issues and then move on to broader political and other issues, eg. the Freedom Charter, how much rent should people pay, how to defend people against evictions.

The civic is also looking into raising funds, starting co-operatives and providing certain services for Mamelodi. Already water and electricity have been cut off. But municipal workers living in Mamelodi reconnected it.

Significance of these people's organisations

Street committees in Mamelodi have meant mass participation in decision making. All leadership is mandated and accountable; you cannot become a civic leader if you are not nominated by your street committee or by your organisation.

Information can be passed from street to street quickly and quietly. Decisions such as a consumer boycott

or a stayaway can be communicated quickly. And fake pamphlets are more easily identified and ignored because streets have already taken part in the decision.

Political discussions are much easier. With small meetings of neighbours who know each other, agents provocateurs are quickly noticed.

Street committees can act to defend their street from attack, help activists in difficulties, warn of dangerous situations, and provide first aid to those injured in violent situations. And they provide some political discipline. Political action is planned and discussed widely, so there is less chance of unguided and ill-prepared action. And the crime rate has decreased.

This method of work has built unity in Mamelodi, making it easier to frustrate state divide and rule tactics.

For Mamelodi residents, people's democracy means building democratic political control over their lives.

Their demands are not just for more houses, lower rents, better schools and tarred roads; their demands extend to political control over decisions affecting housing policy as a whole, the content of education in the schools, political control over the police force that patrols the street and over how rent money should be spent.

Mamelodi workers have also begun to extend people's democracy to the factories.

The current state of emergency has hit Mamelodi hard, precisely because it is one of the townships that have begun to undermine the system of apartheid control.

There have been widescale detentions. Patrols move up and down the streets. All gatherings are broken up, so street meetings have to take place in secret. Security forces cordoning off sections and do door to door searches. Police have offered a reward to any resident who denounces a comrade. The Town Council is training Municipal police to defend them.

All this slowed down organisation for a while. But it will never be able to stop it. Through their popular democratic organisations, the people of Mamelodi will be able to withstand repression, and go on to transform their lives.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

"POWER TO the People" has been a popular slogan for a long time. But in the last two years it has become more of a reality in townships, villages, factories and schools, where the fight against oppression and exploitation has intensified. Over 50 townships are boycotting rents and robbing the Admin Boards of the money they need to enforce apartheid. Evictions have met popular resistance and the slogan has become "the eviction of one is the eviction of all!"

In Soweto, not even the shooting of residents could stop the boycott. Councils in some townships are postponing action against rent defaulters. They fear the fate of other councils.

In the schools, boycott actions continue. The DET's hard-line refusal to negotiate has led to a bitter stalemate. They have closed schools rather than abandon Bantu Education.

The youth have said that they will rather die fighting for a better future than accept a life of domination.

Workers have drastically changed the balance of power in the workplace, and in society as a whole. Trade unions have grown, and Cosatu's formation allows for more coordinated action on political and economic fronts.

In 1985 there was a record number of strikes - almost 400 - and since then workers have advanced the use of powerful tactics like the stayaway, sit-in, sleep-in, and rolling strikes.

They have also taken their organisational skills into civic and political struggles and campaigns and helped build street committees.

Migrant workers have been fighting for better wages and working conditions, lower rents and improved standards of living in the hostels, and against resettlement and repression in the rural areas where their families live. Resistance to bantustan thugs has soared.

In the rural areas, village committees have been established among youth, students and residents. Some of the youth congresses in the Northern Transvaal are made up of over 70 village youth committees. Early this year a Northern Transvaal region of the UDF was launched with over 100 affiliates.

But the eruption of mass resistance has had its losses.

Over 20 000 are detained under emergency regulations, and thousands of activists have to work underground to avoid arrest.

Organisations' offices and activists homes have been bombed and burnt; leaders have been abducted and assassinated; and now innocent residents are being beaten to reveal the names and whereabouts of street committee members.

Meetings large or small are difficult, if not impossible to hold, and army units still patrol and search the townships.

So while the widespread uprisings have been a defeat for the system of apartheid controls, people's organisations do not yet have victory in their hands.

The space for people's organisations to take control has been opened up, but the increased repression aims to crush the organisation needed to do this.

The uprisings mobilised millions of people. But the urgent challenge is to actively involve all these people in democratic people's structures.

Street committees, shop steward locals and similar structures have come up with some of the answers to the challenges.

Organised action coming from these people's committees has been far more effective than spontaneous protest - because people at a mass level have been part of deciding on what to do, why and how.

So there is often clearer direction and greater coordination. All in all, making people more capable of taking and using power.

Street committees emphasise the democratic participation of each and



every resident. This makes the leadership keep in step with the mood of the masses, instead of substituting their own feelings and understanding. Action is mandated, more representative and with a deep support base.

The higher levels of this organisation are there to carry out the mandate of the street committees. They are accountable to them and delegates may be replaced if they don't express the wishes of their mass base.

Street committees have often taken up problems that aren't obviously political - like marriage problems, drunkenness, theft, loud parties, witchcraft, broken toilets, sickness and many more.

These might seem unrelated to the liberation struggle. But many of these problems have their roots in SA's political and economic system.

Also, by tackling these problems, the street committees help people directly, and win their confidence. So they stay involved.

And these issues often give the basis from which to move to broader political issues, and tactics like boycotts and stayaways.

And every person who is not part of the system (like police or councillors) is encouraged to get directly involved in solving the street's problems - if you are poor and illiterate, uneducated or ugly, an old granny or a beggar.

Through the street committees, ordinary people develop organisational skills; they are given tasks and responsibilities, learn about mandate and accountability and how to operate democratically.

And they get confidence in their ability to change their lives - and eventually the whole of SA - through people's organisation.

Without organisation, they cannot win even the most basic issues. Demands cannot be won through protests alone.



PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

Organisation is needed to defend gains already won, like delaying rent or busfare increases, or getting dismissed workers reinstated. But because power remains in the hands of the government and the bosses, these victories are often partial and shortlived.

Rent increases have been stopped, but low wages and the burden of unemployment make even the old rents unbearable. Community pressure for affordable rents has to be kept up or else they will rise again.

Fighting all these battles needs strong and civic organisation alongside trade unions. So they can fight side by side on joint campaigns and strategies.

In some areas shop stewards have worked closely with other activists to form street committees. This laid a basis for united action between civic and union structures.

Successful stayaways in townships from the East Rand to East London all relied on strong worker involvement alongside other groups in the community.

The same solid organisation must have gone into the stayaway in Uitenhage in July 1986 called to protest against the Langa removals.

After successful stayaways on May 1 and June 16, and despite extreme repression there was a total stayaway for two days.

Port Alfred, where street and shop stewards structures have also been developed, was able to organise a one week stayaway of all women in protest against the failure of the police to arrest an alleged rapist.

Their street assemblies also decided that all shebeens should close at 8pm. If this decision had not been taken democratically, it may have been highly unpopular.

Democratic structures also ensured high levels of coordinated action at Vaal Reefs, the largest gold mine in the world. About 30 000 workers protesting against the continued detention of five fellow workers staged a go-slow - they came up half way through their 8-hour underground shift.

Management had no time to arrange others to take over and so they lost four hours production out of every eight.

It is only with thorough organisation and a network of shaft stewards to work that so many workers could agree on such an advanced tactic - and carry it out successfully.

Developing organisation in the Northern Transvaal rural areas has tapped the potential of spontaneous militancy and driven police, puppet chiefs and collaborators out of many villages.

In Steelpoort there is strong coordination between the youth and workers. Farmworkers stayed away on May Day and when some were fired, workers came out on strike in solidarity.

In some Nebo villages, people went to harvest the crops in the fields which Lebowa had taken from them.

Activists have stressed the importance of campaigns being decided in advance and planned as part of an ongoing programme,

always knowing the next step.

If there is mobilisation around an issue, which is then dropped, it can do more harm than good. Built-up expectations are let down, leaving a sense of cynicism.

But if action is planned and programmatic, even set-backs can be dealt with because people know what their longer term objectives are, and they keep working in that direction. They can regroup, plan afresh, adopt new tactics and continue the fight.

Over the last six years organisations have sprung up everywhere. But many of the gains through the period of uprisings were largely unplanned and unorganised. It was often the bravery and initiative of the youth that fought the councils and promoted the rent and consumer boycotts.

The civic, student, womens and youth all have pressing demands, and their challenge is to build structures and programmes of action to wage their struggles systematically and successfully.

Even with all these obstacles, people have broken down many controls over their lives. This has left competing powers in the townships, factories and schools - the emerging power of people's organisations, against the government and the bosses' power.

At this stage these antagonistic forces are locked in intense conflict, but neither is really able to get the upper hand. They are all trying to resolve the current crisis in their own interests. The bosses are struggling to counter the economic effects of the crisis and to increase profits. They know their super-profits need a weak and subordinate working class.

An organised, confident working class can cut back the power of the bosses. It becomes more difficult for them to replace workers with machines, close down factories, or pay lower real wages.



Some capitalists are now changing their strategies. They are trying to coopt the unions into bureaucratic systems that rely on officials and limits participation of workers. For example, some bosses refuse to negotiate at plant level. They insist on the undemocratic national industrial council, where sell-out unions join them to blunt progressive unions' demands.

In the constitutional and political arena the bosses want a new dispensation to guarantee them the stability and the domination necessary to make profits.

They know that if capitalism continues to rely heavily and openly on apartheid controls, mass resistance won't only focus on the nationalist government, but on the capitalist system as well.

That is why they have been calling for negotiations with the ANC, the release of political prisoners, ending the state of emergency, and the

scrapping of Group Areas and Bantu Education.

The government's response has been much less creative. Their organisation is in disarray, especially since the collapse of the township local authorities and Bantu education. So-called reforms have been transparent attempts to replace outdated and useless controls with more modern ones.

Even their security forces, now the core of their desperate attempts to keep control, face thousands failing to answer call ups for "border duty" in the townships.

Ideologically they are hopelessly confused. The "free enterprise approach" introduced by PW says Apartheid is now a dirty word. But separate education, group areas, and homelands are still crucial to their social, political and even religious systems.

They have failed to produce fat cat allies in the black middle class to act

as a buffer between the oppressed and exploited majority and the tiny capitalist minority.

Even Nafcoc has identified itself with the broad policy of the ANC, and bantustan bureaucrats like Mabuza call for negotiations with the ANC.

The people's response to the crisis was to rise up and strike hard to make control unworkable. The government is still reeling from these blows. Bleeding and bruised, it is not sure how to hit back. Its blows have been wild and sweeping, often hitting the wrong target.

With this state of emergency they did find a target that hurt - the base level organisation - street committees and shop steward structures. But because they can't detain entire communities or factories of workers, those detained can and will be replaced. And people's organisations won't give up until final victory.

Duncan Village

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the rent boycott.

"DVRA inherited the rent boycott sideways - it was first called at the massacre memorial service. And DVRA reiterated the call at the mass funeral. It came spontaneously and was supported. No rents have been paid since July last year."

Branches also helped people affected by the ongoing detentions, disappearances, and random shootings.

One of the branch committee's first tasks was to make sure street committees were elected. "DVRA must be each and every person living in DV - not a group of people in the CEC or the branch committees."

Each of the nine branches is divided into areas. The street committees in each area elect an area committee.

Two representatives from each branch committee sit on a General Council (GC), along with two or three people from the CEC - 21 people altogether. The GC elects its own executive.

"The GC is the think-tank of DVRA." Decisions from the GC go to the CEC. Sometimes the full CEC and GC meet.

The street committees take up problems like a wife being beaten or a man who is a nuisance in the township.

Organisations such as youth, student, trade unions exist alongside the DVRA structures. Most meet in the local UDF unit.

"But members of these different organisations are DV residents and part of DVRA, so they must fall in line with DVRA structures. In DVRA we are breaking down sectarianism.

"There were some problems in the past. Some of the youth and the amabutho were disregarding the elected street committees, and taking action without discussing it properly.

"In a quarrel over a backyard shack - the youth would just decide and say "don't waste time", and a person could be killed. Opportunists or system elements can take advantage of this way of operating.

"The main thing is - any issues or problems must be discussed and taken up by the appropriate structures.

People stopped reporting cases to the police and took them to the people's committees.

"It was felt that we shouldn't be seen as people who are terrorising the community. The community must trust us, willingly and readily. If we beat the hell out of a person, he might be recruited as a vigilante. So there are dangers in physical punishment.

"People must find ways to make the person feel he did something wrong. Alternatives that are of service to the community need to be workshopped.

"Many people said their houses don't deserve to be paid rent for. Some also felt it is reformist to say we will pay rent if there are some improvements."

"If the person is given manual labour it should not be like prison labour. If he has to work on the bucket system, the activists must work with him. It is not for us to humiliate him in the community. He shouldn't hate you. Show him the wrongness of his deed. People must participate in structures, not from fear, but from personal convictions."

After the uprisings and the rent boycott the Development Board stopped services and repairs. In some cases street committees organised skilled residents to fix things such as plumbing.

DVRA was looking into organising certain services for the community. But this raised the question: "how far do we go in providing services that should be provided by the state, and how far can the state allow people's projects to go?"

One area of need was medical care.

The idea was to have a mobile clinic, staffed by nurses from the community on a voluntary basis. Already health training workshops have been run.

"People must see these services as their own initiative, but the final responsibility still lies with the state. We don't want to reform the state, otherwise we would be doing charity work. We must link these services to the broader political struggle."

Because schools had been burnt down, students used the churches instead. But they didn't have enough toilets. The DET refused to help, so students, teachers and parents committees and DVRA looked at ways to force the government to provide them.

After consulting with the student council, DVRA went to the City Council about the lack of schools and the need for temporary structures. They were sent to a Nationalist Party MP, du Pontes. They told him that residents wanted the township to be administered by the City Council, not by the Development Board.

Du Pontes and a Mr Lightbody from Wilson Rowntree management suggested schools be built and later turned into housing units. This project would be administered by the Duncan Village Corporation (Duvcor), made up of two people from their side, two from DVRA and two students.

But then DVRA saw that the plans were for semi-detached houses. And residents had already rejected semi-detached houses, but Du Pontes refused to compromise.

"The next day we saw in the press that money for the project was being handed to the exiled community council mayor."

DVRA called on Du Pontes to publicly reject community council involvement. "He refused and left us with no option but to withdraw."

The CEC had to act quickly, so they took the decision, but made sure the branches discussed it as soon as possible. It was unanimous that the CEC decision was correct.

Building on the Duvcor schools started in January 1986. Du Pontes and Lightbody went on an anti-DVRA campaign, saying DVRA wasn't representative.

But the people proved otherwise. The community was united, saying their children would not attend these schools and DV workers should not participate in the project.

Eventually Duvcor announced that "due to intimidation" they were stopping the project. They held DVRA responsible. This was seen as a victory for the community.

Then DVRA requested another meeting with the city council.

Some city councillors - especially businessmen - were ready to accept DVRA. The consumer boycott was hitting businesses hard, and they knew DVRA was part of the consumer boycott committee.

But the city council said they would only meet DVRA if the central government accepted it as the body representing DV. "Du Pontes said we are intimidators and agitators and Le Grange should deal with us. After Le Grange came to East London, DVRA faced a severe crackdown. Many were detained.

Anonymous anti-DVRA pamphlets were distributed from planes, saying DVRA were tsotsi-hiennas. The crackdown weakened DVRA at first, but residents came to its defence.

"DVRA is the people themselves. An understanding of local issues is not enough in itself, the broader struggle must be addressed. The street, area and branch committees, the DVRA GC, all develop leadership. People don't just sit and say we have our CEC, they themselves are part of the structures, they are part of decision making and that is where they learn. So even when leadership are detained the struggle can and must continue."

Chiefs power is challenged in the villages

ONE OF THE pillars of the bantustan system - the chiefs and tribal authorities - is starting to crumble.

Resistance to these structures has intensified dramatically in the last two years in many Northern Transvaal villages. Chiefs' kraals and businesses, tribal authority offices, induna's and the chiefs themselves have become targets for popular opposition.

Along with policemen living in the villages, they have been first in the firing line. Many have left their villages and gone into hiding. Some have been killed. Others have been forced to resign from bantustan structures.

But not all chiefs are seen as enemies of the people. As in the past, some have sided with the people. In the old days some chiefs led their people against colonial invasions, and later people like Albert Luthuli and Sabata Delindyebo led under the Congress banner.

Recently chiefs are being forced to make their stand clear on:

- villagers' grievances and demands.
- spontaneous uprisings and protests.
- ungovernability in many rural villages.
- security force action.
- increasing support for progressive organisations and ideas.
- growing people's power in the villages where the village people as a whole run and control the village.

Boycotts of chief's businesses have helped many chiefs decide which side they are on.

Spearheading the campaign against the tribal authorities - the chiefs, chiefs' councillors, induna's, impi's and vigilantes - are militant and politicised youths. They see the chiefs as direct agents of the bantustan and Pretoria governments.

But opposition goes far beyond just the young people. Entire village communities - students, the unemployed, parents, migrant workers, farmworkers, young and old - have burning grievances against the chiefs.

Many of the older people still hold on to traditional loyalties and customs. But even they say the chiefs are eating their money. With money already scarce, daily survival becomes more important than traditions.

The rural areas, especially the bantustans, have long been poverty stricken dumping grounds. But in recent years things have become even worse for the rural people.

The economic crisis has meant increased poverty and starvation. Prices go up, but there are even less jobs. Villagers depend on the poverty wages of those who have jobs in the cities and the farms - they have no other way of surviving.

Now thousands of workers have been retrenched, so entire communities have lost the wages that sustained them.

Because of this, grievances against the chiefs have grown.

These include:

- paying tribal taxes.
- working in the chief's fields for no pay.
- being forced to pay money for the chief to enjoy a big house, smart cars and other luxuries while village people themselves are struggling to survive. And at gaPhasha, near Steelpoort, the chief built a new Tribal Authority office with money meant for a clinic. *corruption. There are many cases of villagers paying for something for the community, only to find the chief takes the money for his personal use.
- chiefs dictating to people. No-one is supposed to question what the chief says or does.
- the chiefs' role as labour recruitment officers. Often they work hand in hand with white farmers looking for cheap workers. And, to get any job, villagers need the chief's permission. Youth activists from Sekhukhuleni explained:

"Before you can get a dompas, you must go to the chief's tribal office to get a letter from the chief. Before you can get that letter, they check whether your parents have paid the tribal taxes they owed to the royal family, or money for local burial societies or schools.

"If you don't pay that money, you don't get a letter from your chief - and that means you are going to be unemployed for the rest of your life."

These youths organised themselves and urged their parents not to pay tribal taxes, "because the taxes are only used to fill the stomachs of lazy tribal councillors who appointed themselves just because they came from the royal family."

"The chiefs are living in double-storey houses, and still they impose more tribal taxes. They collected money to build schools because the classes are overcrowded. But they didn't build that school. All the money went to the chief and councillors' pockets."

In some places the youths' opposition is supported by their parents. But, in other places, "the parents understand, but fear to state their views because of intimidation and fear of victimisation by the chief's supporters and vigilantes. He recruits these supporters with money and livestock which comes from us," a youth activist said.

Collaboration with security forces makes chiefs even more unpopular. Some chiefs cooperate openly with the SADF, bantustan and SA police in trying to crush rural organisation and resistance.

●Mohlalese youth said their chief gives VIP treatment to soldiers - he feeds them, and allegedly allows them to take food from homes and shops in the villages. Villagers believe the guns carried by the chief's vigilantes come from the soldiers.

●Soldiers allegedly told a detained member of the Sekhukhuleni Parents' Crisis Committee (SPCC) that the chief had told them to shoot

him because he was a member of the UDF, and because he taught the youth to become 'comrades and trouble makers'.

And activists have been killed by the chief's vigilantes:

●In Madibong, a youth activist, Happy Mashilo, was killed in clashes with the chief and his supporters, after the youth accused him of collaborating with police, and taking R17 000 the community raised for a school.

Village communities have demanded that the chiefs resign from bantustan structures and join the people. They have used many ways to pressurise them - like having discussions with them, and boycotting their businesses.

Some chiefs have resigned because they support the struggles of progressive organisations. And there have been short-term alliances between chiefs and progressive organisations - like resistance to Moutse's incorporation into KwaNdebele, KwaNdebele independence, removals and SADF occupations of their villages. But these chiefs do not always make

reliable allies, nor are their reasons for siding with the people the same. They can exploit the situation to their own advantage - like the Lebowa MP's from Moutse who would have lost their seats if they had become part of KwaNdebele.

They also don't always agree with progressive organisations' methods and the more long term goal to seize state power and set up a people's government based on the Freedom Charter.

But activists argue that to win goals their attitude to the chiefs must be strategic. "In some areas the chiefs still have support from the people, as their chief. So if activists try to isolate the chief without the support of the masses that is a problem - especially when the whole masses still support him".

In some villages the older people oppose chiefs as individuals only. They want another person to be

chief, but don't question the whole system of chiefs. In other cases people oppose the system of chiefs but are not sure about what to do instead.

A youth activist explained the problem of their township in Nebo: "Some people thought a town council would be better than the chiefs. So the youth educated people about why people in townships all over the country had fought and destroyed the town councils.

"But we had no way out - who would administer the people's affairs in place of the chiefs? We got stuck there. Then we started to discuss civic associations. We didn't have experience of them or know everything about them, but people were happy about this idea. The

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NOTPECO

Bridging the gap from town to village

The Northern Transvaal People's Congress (Notpeco) is organising migrant workers and closing the gap between their rural communities and the cities.

Many rural people have to leave their homes and families to find work in the towns and cities, the mines and factories.

It is not easy for these 'migrant workers' to go home to help make decisions about their villages or to join progressive organisations in the rural areas.

Notpeco (the Northern Transvaal People's Congress) is a new organisation which is determined to overcome these problems. It is organising committees of migrant workers in the towns and cities to work alongside village committees in their villages.

SASPU National asked Notpeco organisers to speak about their work and goals.

Q: How was Notpeco formed and what does it aim to do?

Notpeco is basically for the rural people. It was formed by delegates from villages in the Northern Transvaal - like Phaahla- Manoge, Nkadameng, and Moutse. Many are from Sekhukhuneland, and some from Sibasa in Venda.

We want to organise people from every sector of the economy - farmworkers, domestic workers, mine workers and workers in industry - who come from the rural areas.

We want to organise them into village committees and community organisations. People in the rural areas, especially the youth, are very militant. Where the pressure is, there you get militant people.

They are oppressed by the central government and the homeland governments, and the chiefs are some of the worst oppressors and exploiters of the people.

Our duty is to try to reach the people, to popularise Notpeco and politicise people so they know what is wrong and what is right. We want people to join the progressive movement.

Q: How will organising migrant workers help rural organisation?

Village people who are working in the cities are regarded by people at home as having more power, because it is their wages that feed the people in the villages.

Women and other people in the villages prefer to consult the working men before taking decisions. Often wives won't join organisations until they have

discussed it with their husbands.

So when there is a problem in a village, for example with the chief, people working in Joburg go home to hold meetings with their people in the villages.

Notpeco will help get more people to join the struggle in those areas, and help form more village committees in the rural areas.

A good example of this type of action was the Botlokwa removals in 1978 - migrant workers would go home every two weeks to hold meetings about the removals, and the chief had to run away.

Q: How do the structures work?

Phaahla-Manoge Action Committee and Moutse Civic - which are part of Notpeco - are made up of people working in the cities and people living in the villages. A committee is formed in the villages and one in town.

Each time one committee meets, a delegate is sent from the other committee. So if there is a meeting in Joburg, a delegate from the village committee will attend. And if there is a meeting in the village a person will attend from town.

The village meeting and the group in town share the same agenda. So when they meet, they must come out with one common decision that combines the views of the urban and rural committees.

Q: How were people organised?

Burial societies have been important, because people from the same village who are working in the cities often form burial societies together.

We go to the burial society's meetings, and talk to all the villagers there. Then, we go home to their villages, speak to the people there, and get them to join Notpeco.

Q: Are hosteldwellers being organised?

They are already in Notpeco, and we plan to organise more. The problem of clashes between hosteldwellers and other township residents drives us to organise the people in the hostels.

People in the townships haven't made enough effort to organise people in the hostels. Often they are not consulted about stayaways or consumer boycotts, and don't understand the reasons behind the decision. This is why there have been clashes in the past.

Many hosteldwellers have been left behind. Now we want to bring them into organisations so they can be directly involved in the political struggle.

Q: What about the migrant labour system and influx control?

No-one wants to be a migrant worker. No-one wants to live in compounds and hostels. Workers want to be free to work without coming by contract. And we have discovered they are given the hardest work for the least pay. If you are well educated or not, you can't do the work of our choice.

It's also broken a lot of families - the father comes home maybe once a year.

They said passes are cancelled, but they are still operating indirectly. We don't see any difference. The contract is still there and the homeland system is still there. And they are still using other ways to get people out of the urban areas, like the housing and squatter laws and the Aliens Act.

People don't want to change the colour of the book they have. People want to dismantle the system and

build a non-racial democratic South Africa.

It is no use to have passes scrapped but people are still suffering and exploited and hungry. Until they have enough to eat, until they can share in the country's wealth, the struggle will continue.

Q: Is tribalism still a problem?

In some areas tribalism is still dominating. We need to educate people to try to remove it. But with more people in Notpeco structures, it will be overcome. In Notpeco we already have people coming together from Venda, Kwa-Ndebele, and Lebowa in the struggle to face the common enemy.

We don't want the homeland system. We want it completely dismantled, otherwise we will destroy it. The bantustans must be part of SA, administered and run by the people.

People have discovered most of the chiefs are in the Legislative Assemblies of the homelands. Now people are taking their chiefs out of these bantustan structures. If the chiefs want to be part of the people they must resign.

Q: Can you explain more about the chiefs?

The chiefs are some of the worst exploiters. They collect a lot of money from people. Most of them are corrupt, they are eating people's money. You find innocent people losing a lot of money but they get nothing. The chiefs are not accountable to anyone about how they spend this money.

And they are using people to work for them but not paying them. We warn them to stop exploiting the community. The chief must pay each person or family who works in his

kraal, otherwise we will take action against him.

Some chiefs are like policemen. The army is roaming around our villages with guns. We can't tolerate what is happening. But the chiefs did nothing. Phatudi called a meeting with chiefs and they agreed they should co-operate with the security forces and inform police about who is doing what in their areas.

Notpeco warns the chiefs not to harass the people or call the police. We would like everybody to live in peace.

Q: Have some chiefs sided with the people?

There is a difference between chiefs who play an important role in the struggle and reactionary chiefs who are part of the bantustan structures and who sit on top of the community.

In the past, Luthuli and other chiefs were leaders in the democratic movement. And recently, there is the example of Chief Mayisa from the Leandra Action Committee who was killed by vigilantes. He was no longer taking decisions for the people, but with the people, as part of them.

Q: How are decisions taken in the villages?

Traditionally, the chief makes decisions. When the chief has spoken no-one must ask questions, he won't answer to anyone, no-one is supposed to criticise him. His word is final.

If you oppose him you are creating a problem for yourself.

It is the duty of Notpeco to teach people what is wrong and right and to warn the chiefs they can no longer dictate and take decisions. Decisions are to be taken democratically through the village committees which are being formed. Everybody concerned must be consulted before anything is done.

Q: What do people want instead of chiefs and tribal authorities?

The administration of the villages must be run by the village committees. We are strongly against the chief and his royal council running the whole affairs of the village. The people benefit nothing out of this.

The community must be actively involved in the way the village is run. The community will take over the

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FOR MANY WHITES, 'the border' is no longer somewhere in Namibia where soldiers get sent on military service. It's come a lot closer. White farmers living along the Transvaal's border with Botswana and Zimbabwe are now arming themselves, and are in the frontline of the SADF's war against 'insurgents'.

Like characters from a colonial novel, they eat, sleep, dream and work in anticipation of the day 'the final onslaught' arrives. Many of them thrive on it, as if they were back in the frontier-busting danger days of the Great Trek.

Others are more cynical. There are the ex-Rhodesians, who have been through it all before and recognise the pattern.

But for all of them the war has already been declared.

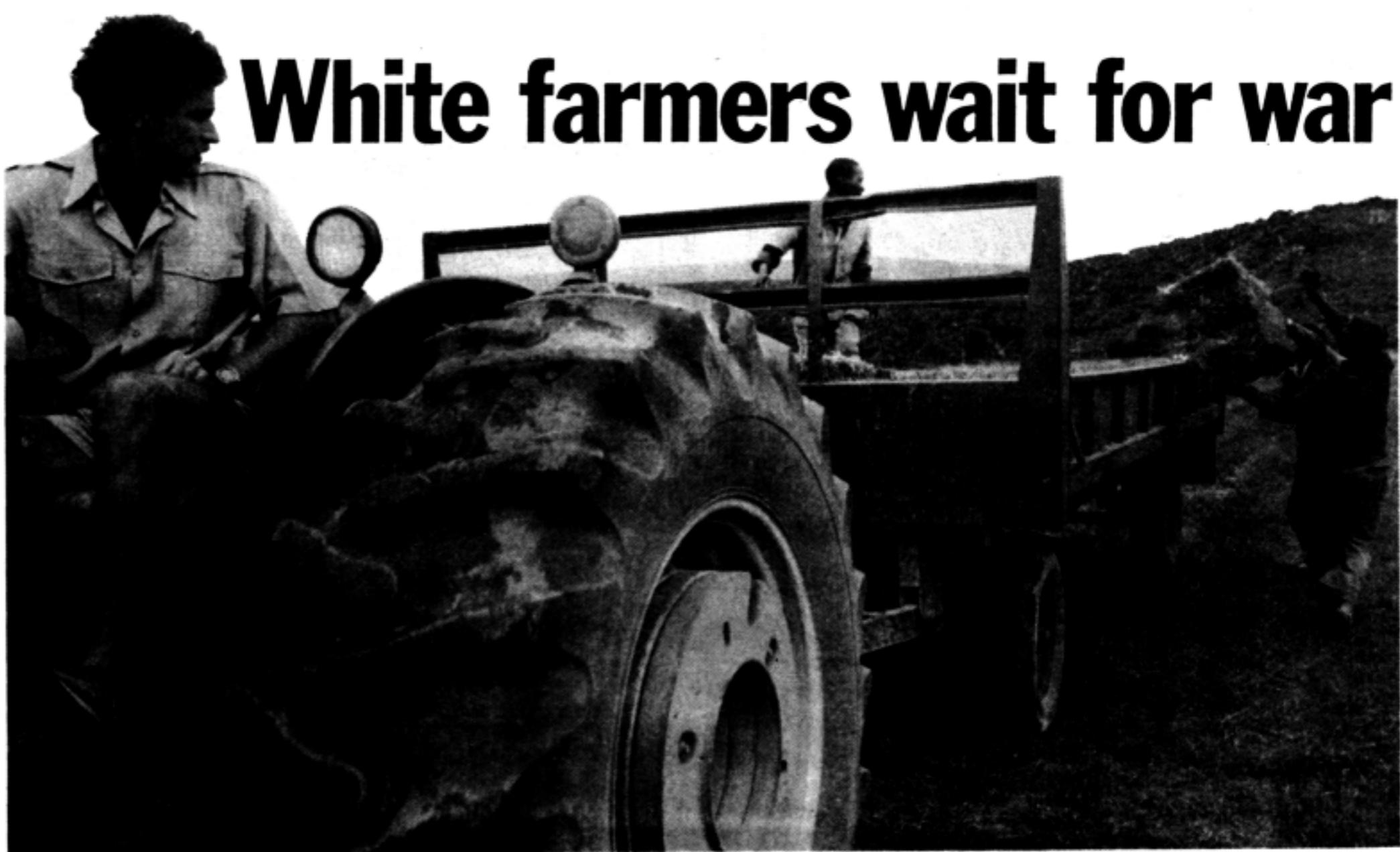
General Charles Lloyd, the SADF's commanding officer for the Far Northern Transvaal military area, announced last year that the Zimbabwe/Botswana border area was to get 'higher priority' than the war in Namibia.

He said that joint strategies between the defence force and civilians would be devised to combat 'terrorist incursions'. Careful not to give 'secrets to the enemy', he outlined training courses for farmer's wives. They have also been given firearms, take measures to protect children travelling to school by bus and are part of 'anti-ANC propaganda' moves.

In January this year a security meeting in Nylstroom was attended by General Lloyd, the local security police chief, MP's (mainly from the Conservative Party) and representatives of the agricultural unions of at least ten areas. A statement released after the meeting said that organised agriculture 'fully supported the SADF'.

Following this, African National Congress leaders said that white border farmers who are in police and army commando units could not be considered soft targets. Shortly after this there was a series of landmine explosions in the Lowveld, SE Transvaal, and Northern Transvaal along the Zimbabwe and Botswana borders.

Before long arms sales soared and the walls went up. White farmers formed their own commando units and linked all their farms with shortwave radio. Soon SADF patrols were sweeping the



White farmers wait for war

roads for mines at least twice a day and no farmers went out unarmed.

About 20 km east of Messina there is an electrified border fence. Now farmers are saying that the double wire fence west of Messina is totally ineffective, and want electrified fences right across the border.

Soon after the far-rightwing Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) disrupted a speech by Foreign Minister Pik Botha in Pietersburg the National Party announced a further helping hand for border farmers wanting better security. The government has offered to pay 80 percent of the cost of mine-resistant vehicles, and at least half for other measures - like fortifying homesteads.

Fences around farms on the Messina border have signs showing the skull-and-crossbones, and no-one is allowed into the area without permission from the district military commander.

The green Limpopo River winds slowly past trudging SADF patrols, sandbagged homes and workers in the cotton fields on the SA side.

Many of the whites living in the far-northern Transvaal are ex-Rhodesians who fled that country before independence. The government lured them there - more for their experience in counter-insurgency than farming.

Apart from the sandbags, most of the homesteads have high windows and low beds, grenade covers for the windows, and bunkers outside in the garden.

"The defences are useful against handgrenades and shooting although they won't do much good against mortars," said Mrs Margie du Preez. Her family are ex-Rhodesians. They settled on the border because of the good deal offered by the government. "Basically," says Mr du Preez, "the idea was that it was cheaper to put us here than a large military force. So far it has paid its way."

They complain that during heavy rains parts of the border fence get washed away, leading many farmers to question how secure it is. The rain also makes mine detection very difficult and it is impossible to see where the ground has been disturbed.

"A little rain and the workers dive for cover. I think I can trust them but you never know. I don't think it is going to be like Rhodesia where the terrorists subverted the local population first. At least that is what I would like to believe."

Mr Willie Esterhuyse, leader of the 50-man local commando, carries a 9mm pistol at all times and has even taught his eight-year-old son to use an automatic rifle. He is also an ex-Rhodesian.

"Quite a lot of us now have soldiers living with us. It's like Rhodesia all over again with the security arrangements, the worries. But for me the main problems are financial. Interest rates keep going up, production and transport costs are getting ridiculous, I'm in debt up to my eyeballs.

"Another security hassle is that so many of the farms are unoccupied," said Esterhuyse.

Pretoria has been quick to step in with financial aid to stop the exodus of whites from the farmlands.

There have been some successes, in part because of plans to turn Messina and Louis Trichardt into growth

points for new decentralised industrial development.

But cattle farmers on the Limpopo, Crocodile and Molopo rivers have been driven off their land by the worst drought in living memory. Not even the government's recent R262 million package for farmers in summer rainfall areas can keep them there.

In 1980 the government spent R38 million in financial aid to farmers already in the Far North border area, and in an attempt to get new settlers - like the du Preezs and the Esterhuyses - there.

Many of them sold their farms soon afterwards at a huge profit to 'weekend farmers' - professional people living in the cities. Unoccupied, these farms are considered security risks. So the government has now stopped this. Farmers who buy land there now have to stay for at least ten years.

Over the past two years another R34,6 million has been spent 'improving infrastructure and halting depopulation'.

It's all part of the price of apartheid....

Chiefs must go and the people must run villages

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problem was how to establish it." This example and struggles against the tribal authorities raises a lot of questions. What should the role of chiefs be once they have resigned from bantustan structures, what was their role in the past, and what it should be in the future under a people's government.

Traditionally chiefs were supposed to serve their people and be their representatives. The villagers would look after the chief's well-being, making sure he had food and a roof over his head.

Under colonial rule this began to change, and with the Bantu Authorities Act in the early fifties chiefs were given even greater powers and became paid officials of the government's Bantu Administration Department. This led to massive resistance in some areas, like Pondoland,

Sekhukeland and Zeerust.

Chiefs who refused to become part of the government's tribal authorities were stripped of their position as chiefs, and replaced.

In many areas now people insist that the chiefs should no longer run the villages. The villages should be run democratically by the people, through village committees and other structures. This is already happening in some areas. In some villages the tribal courts have been replaced by people's courts.

Some say, once chiefs have resigned they can stay in the villages and people there will look after him or her like in the old days. But the chief will no longer be able to exploit people by getting them to work for him without pay, and he won't be able to dictate anymore.

Others say the chiefs shouldn't have any special position. They quote the Freedom Charter saying the land shall be shared among those who work it. So the land shouldn't belong to the chief. He must just become like everyone else in the village. He can participate in the mass based democratic structures like all the other villagers.

The answers and solutions to these questions won't just come up overnight. They will be resolved in the process of building people's organisations in the rural areas.

Notpeco is bridging the gap

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chief's office to administer the village. A constitution will be drawn up by the whole community. This will be used as a guideline to run the village.

The chief will be stripped of his powers over the community. So it won't be like in the past where the chief runs the village, and where people run bringing presents to the chiefs.

Q: How do you see the Freedom Charter and the question of the land?

We agree with the Freedom Charter. The land shall be shared among those who work it. It is not that we want a situation where there are small farms and big farms. We want a situation where the people work the land collectively.

The land must be returned to the people. But we need strong organisation to win this demand. We are not asking or pleading for that land. It was ours but it was seized from us.

At the moment the land is not

shared by those who work it. You find a big house on a huge piece of land while people have nowhere to stay, or they are living like sardines in a tin. And the farmworkers on these farms are sleeping without food. Even though they are producing the profits, they get nothing.

Q: How will Notpeco relate to other progressive organisations?

Notpeco was actually organised by the Northern Transvaal UDF, and we are affiliated to the UDF. We want to work hand in hand with progressive organisations, in education and community matters, with the youth congresses, and with Cosatu.

We are very keen to exchange views with Cosatu, and there will be an overlap in members. Most of the people Notpeco is organising are workers. If they are not part of Cosatu already, then we will encourage them to join Cosatu. People in Cosatu structures can help a lot in building Notpeco.

We are organising mine-workers who belong to the National Union of

Mineworkers (NUM) to join Notpeco. Farmworkers are also being organised into trade unions. So when Notpeco organises people on the farms they will also be building farmworkers union structures.

We will also work hand in hand with Cosatu in organising unemployed workers and domestic workers. And when the youth leave the villages to look for work, they can be directly involved in our structures.

Q: Are there other organisations like Notpeco?

As far as we know we are the first in the country. Our intention is to get other parts of the country to organise in this way.

It is important for other organisations and civics to try to build closer relationships between people in the hostels and people in the townships. We don't want to see any divisions of a tribal type.

In the future we would like to see such organisation nation-ally. We want each and every person to be politically active.

MOST South Africans have got used to an economic cycle that goes boom, and then bust.

In the boom there is more economic activity, companies make record profits, there are lots of jobs available, and wages even go up. Then suddenly everything comes crashing down. Companies that were hiring start firing. Profits fall and the bosses start speaking of doom and gloom.

Economists hunt for signs of an economic upturn. They pray for the gold price and the value of the Rand to go up. The government urges increased exports.

These ups and downs in the economy are caused by factors that come and go - cyclical or circumstantial factors. But the more serious problems behind the economic crisis are the structural and permanent ones.

Progressives in SA want to restructure the economy in the future. They want to make sure that the people participate in creating and accumulating the wealth. To do this the economy's structural problems need to be identified and understood.

Depression begins

SA's current depression is the worst since the great crash of 1929. It began in July 1984 when the government decided to slow down the economy to combat high inflation.

They had been battling to get inflation down to under 10% - it averaged 10,3% in the 1970's and almost 15% in the 1980's.

The government blamed it on consumers. They argued that people were spending too much money so companies were selling their goods and services at higher prices. This made prices and inflation rise. To stop this they decided to discourage spending, thinking this would force producers to decrease prices.

Most people buy stoves, furniture, etc., on credit. So the government made credit and HP more expensive by pushing up interest rates.

Ordinary people could no longer afford to buy the more expensive consumer goods. This hit the furniture, automobile and housing industries very hard.

Going down, down, down!

The SA economy is riddled with problems. But it is the workers who bear the brunt

As sales began to drop, producers found their profits shrinking. So they produced more and tried to sell more. There was a flood of products nobody would or could buy.

The 'laws of supply and demand' say that if there is an excess of a product, consumers won't pay high prices for it because they know they can easily get hold of it.

The theory is that this forces producers to lower their prices. So people spend less. And lower prices means falling inflation.

But this theory behind the government's anti-inflation drive didn't work in practice. Instead of dropping, prices increased.

One problem was that the exchange rate of the Rand fell. This meant it was much more expensive to import (buy from overseas) machinery and raw materials needed to produce goods in SA.

So the cost of producing goods in SA increased. And to meet this increase, producers increased the prices of their goods.

Exports down

The government had hoped SA would earn lots of money from exports, but it didn't. Because prices were high in SA, other countries didn't buy much from SA - except for gold and precious metals. They preferred to buy from countries that

had more efficient and advanced economies and sold things more cheaply.

Other countries also had much lower inflation rates. The USA - one of SA's most important customers - had an inflation rate of 10% less than SA. This meant SA had a 10% disadvantage in any deals with the USA.

In the second half of 1985 the State of Emergency was declared and Botha's gave his notorious 'Rubicon' speech. The Rand plunged by 35% against the Dollar and more against the German Mark, the Japanese Yen and the British Pound.

This drove up prices in SA even more, because West Germany and Britain are also major customers and suppliers.

Things worse

So instead of cutting inflation and restoring the economy, the government's actions since July 1984 have made things far worse. Now they are trying to stimulate the economy again by encouraging consumer spending. They have made credit cheaper and easier, and improved HP conditions.

But consumers and business are simply not spending more money - they have too little faith in the future of this country.

But whatever the problems in the economy, businesses always take steps to increase their profitability:

- They push up production hoping to sell more goods.
- They try to cut wages to save money.
- They cut jobs, fire and retrench workers and at the same time try to get the remaining workforce to work harder. By doing this they spend less on wages and improve productivity.
- They bring in new machinery and methods of production.

● When things are really bad they take their profits and they run. They invest them in other industries or even other countries where they might be able to get better profits.

All of this of course hits workers far harder than the companies.

Although profits are down, very few companies are actually making a loss. A survey of 54 key companies in March 1986 showed that only five were making no profits.

Many companies have been weathering the storm, but they have been brutal in cutting jobs. The construction industry cut about 100000 jobs between March 85 and March 86. And the metal and engineering sector laid off 25000 people between Jan 85 and March 86.

Things are so bad that half the members of African households who could be working, have no jobs. Ten years ago 40% of potential African workers had no jobs. Over the last ten years the population has grown by 3% per year, but the number of jobs available has only increased by 1,2% per year. So more and more people are jobless.

Burden on workers

Many companies' profits went down because of bad management decisions - not because of anything that the workers have or have not done. But the workers still bear the burden.

● Many companies miscalculated the falling Rand and lost badly on foreign exchange dealings. They got caught owing millions to overseas companies or banks and had to pay back more because the Rand was worth so much less.

● Companies selling imported products, or who use imported parts, like the automobile industry, were especially badly affected.

● When the government forced up interest rates to discourage spending,

many companies were sitting with heavy debts. So their interest payments sky-rocketed and cut into company profits.

In response to decreased sales, higher interest payments, foreign exchange losses and higher import costs, companies have tried to cut wages, increase productivity and even lay off workers.

Things are not likely to get much better for workers. The problems bedeviling the SA economy are not short term. The growth in the economy has been pathetic for the last 10 years. Growth has averaged 2% per year and is unlikely to improve.

The economy could expand if SA earned large amounts of money from sales in SA or overseas. These could be reinvested in new industries.

But the internal market is shrinking - by about 7% in 1985. And chances of increasing exports are dim. This is because of political opposition and also because local industry is just not advanced or efficient enough to compete internationally.

Gold can't pay

Gold and mineral sales can't pay for the economy to expand because our gold earnings have reached their ceiling. The SA economy has become more, not less, reliant on gold to earn money - gold sales now make up 50% of our export earnings - but it still hasn't grown.

Companies have resorted to borrowing money overseas, because there isn't enough investment capital internally.

Borrowing increased rapidly in the 1980's and by mid-1985 SA owed about 20-25 billion dollars in short term debt (money which had to be repaid within three years).

Overseas banks became nervous and started demanding repayment - especially when they saw the country plunging into civil war.

But neither business or government had the money to pay back. To avoid bankruptcy the government imposed a debt standstill. At the time, SA owed about 118% more than it was earning from exports.

At the moment our reserves are \$6-7 billion and the short term debt is around \$20 billion. So, at a time when SA needs to create jobs and expand the economy we find that there isn't enough investment coming into this country, and more and more money is leaving the country. We don't have adequate export earnings and we can't even borrow new money.

The economy is likely to stagnate. This means higher unemployment, less wealth creation, and probably a shrinking economy. Fewer and fewer companies will invest here and more and more will leave. Local capital is determined to maintain or push up profits by any means possible, and so workers can expect to bear an even heavier burden over the next year.

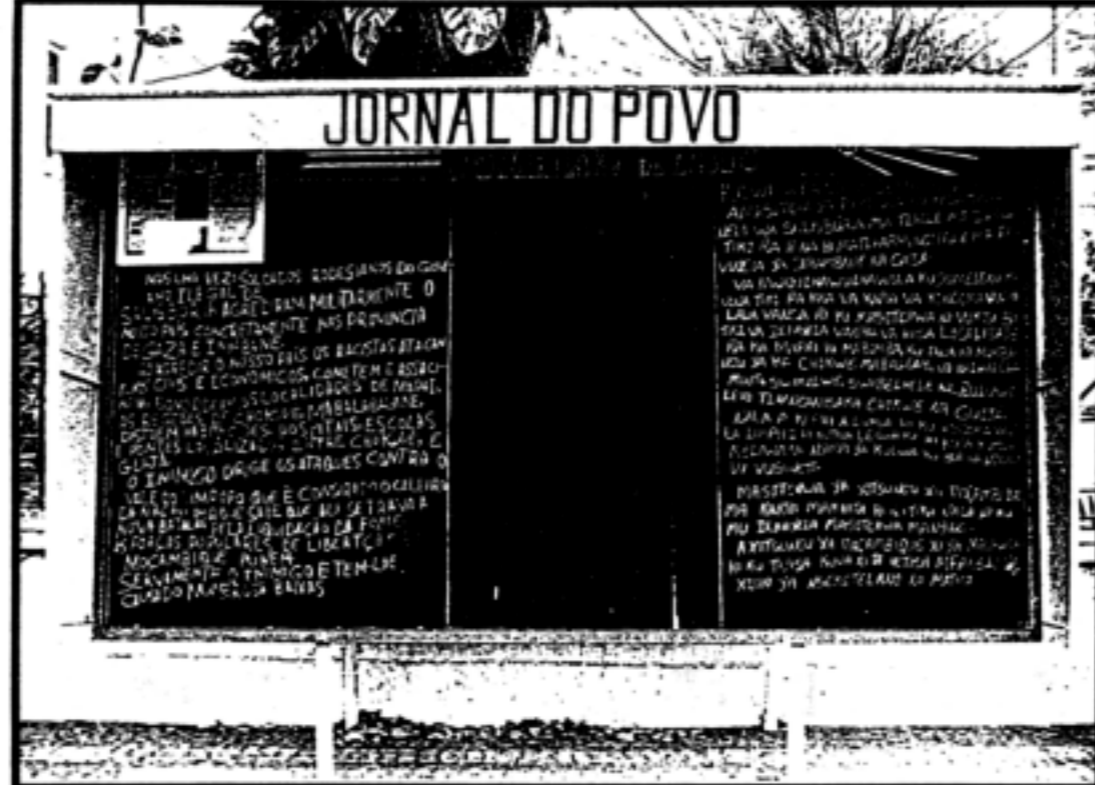


Education is needed to put power in the hands of the people

Part three in our series on People's Education looks at some strategies used to make education serve the interests of the people in liberated societies



Learning to grow food is part of education



The people's newspaper — a street blackboard for news updates

AFTER THE LITERACY campaign in newly-liberated Nicaragua, a peasant who had just learned to read and write sent this short poem to the right-wing land-owners' organisation:

"Now I can write
Now you can't push me
around anymore".

For many workers and peasants in newly-liberated societies, learning to read and write is an important part of making sure the ruling class never pushes them around again. But literacy is not the only skill that the working class and its allies need to take control of their society.

As we saw in the last edition, one of the major problems in newly-liberated countries has been the lack of cadres with higher education.

This is because the education system in these countries had been organised so that specialised knowledge, especially of scientific or technical nature, was monopolised by a select minority. The people who made it to the top in these areas usually came from ruling class backgrounds, and were well-rewarded for using their skills in ruling-class interests.

Even where education was available to working class children, poverty wages made sure that their families could seldom afford it.

And in the factories, workers were kept in ignorance, and expected to do what they were told. Their bosses told them they were stupid; ruling class ideology told them their lack of education made them inferior. Certainly, they got the message that they were in no position to demand more say in running their country.

Many workers accepted this inferior status, and did not challenge their lack of power.

In this way, inequality in education has helped maintain and justify class inequality in society.

This is why Le Duan, the Vietnamese leader, says: "The task of training scientific and technical cadres is very important. We often say that socialist industrialisation is the central task of the period of transition; we speak of the need to build the material and technical foundations of socialism; we stress that the technical revolution is the key to socialist industrialisation.

"But if we do not have a large group of scientific and technical cadres, as well as our political theory, we can never reach our objectives."

THE STARTING POINT for democratic education is that education must be used to put more power in the hands of the people; it must serve the interests of the working class.

Democratic education does not qualify students for privilege and a stake in ruling class power, but to work to build democracy.

In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas are trying to build a people's education. Student leader Roger Sanchez explains their approach to education:

"The longer students study, the greater their debt to the workers, because it is the workers who create the social wealth that pays for their education. If that money were not spent on education, it could go to building much-needed clinics, schools, and houses.

When students finish their studies, they must pay back that debt, by using what they have learnt to help build a better life for the working people."

Paying back this debt starts while students are still in school. During holidays, students are involved in their community through vaccination drives, harvesting, building new schools, and more.

In a school in Maputo, students help in the hospital in return for first aid classes at the school.

These programmes give students a sense of responsibility to their community, and help the education system to break down attitudes that reinforce divisions between classes.

People's education must spread a commitment to sharing the resources of the country, to working collectively for the good of all. It must teach democratic values to new generations of children.

This means looking at all aspects of the socialisation of children, and seeing where the old values lie hidden in a poem, a song, or a game, as well as in the more obvious places like the history that is taught.

Democratic ideas

In Cuba, teaching democratic ideas starts from an early age. This is a children's song based on a speech by Fidel Castro:

"My house is not my house
If there's someone without a house
Alongside my house

The thing is that my house
Can't be my house
If it's not also the house
Of whoever has no house."

Part of building people's education involves the growth of a popular culture - giving expression to the lives and hopes of the working people, and to democratic values. The longstanding dominance of ruling class ideology often means there is very little literature or art that expresses these values.

One of the first tasks in building a new education system is to revise the syllabus and replace the textbooks.

In Mozambique, the new history programme presents history as an ongoing struggle of opposing class forces. For this reason, it does not simply romanticise traditional African society, but criticises the exploitative aspects of the ancient African kingdoms, the inferior position of women, and the African collaborators who helped the colonialists.

Political education classes were also started after liberation. It is stressed to teachers that if students just learn to shout political slogans without understanding what they mean, then it is no better than

teaching them the Portuguese national anthem.

Learning about production

People's education also teaches students a different attitude to work.

In capitalist society, pupils learn to see manual work as inferior, and workers as therefore inferior members of society.

But democratic education teaches students how society relies on production in the factories and fields to create the goods people need, and to create the social wealth needed to build clinics, schools, houses, recreational facilities and much more.

They learn that work is a collective effort to develop the economy, and improve the quality of life for all.

So, working in the fields, workshops and classrooms is all part of the school day. Equal value is given to each, because society depends on the skills and hard work of people in all these spheres.

During the struggle in

EDUCATION FOR THE



Many liberated societies make democratic education a priority to help overcome underdevelopment

PEOPLE

Mozambique, schools in the liberated areas were often self-sufficient, growing their own food, and producing a surplus to help feed the guerrillas. After liberation, the schools were given a production target, as part of Frelimo's agricultural plan.

"When everyone participates in productive work on the basis of complete equality, each learns from the other, and the barriers between the intellectual and the illiterate, between teacher and pupil, are removed by the hoe and the shovel. We all put our knowledge to practical test, make mistakes, and learn from them. In the revolution, manual work is praised, not despised," says a 1976 Frelimo document.

In Cuba, students spend time working in the factories; and they are sent from the urban areas to help with the harvest.

Each one, teach one

Through such methods, students also learn that it is not only people with university degrees that have lessons of value to pass on, and barriers

between different sectors of people can be broken down.

In Nicaragua, the literacy campaign was structured so that the literacy brigades worked in the fields during the day, and taught literacy classes at night. Both the peasants and the young 'brigadistas' learnt to respect each other's skills and contribution. And the less-organised peasants overcame their suspicions of the Sandinista literacy brigades.

Through such experiences, students learn about their society's problems, and the urgent need for technical and scientific advancement and education.

But this lesson does not only apply to students, because people's education does not end when students leave school.

If the division between "experts" and machine-operators is to be broken down, then workers must also take responsibility for advancing their knowledge, once adult education is available to all.

As the Vietnamese leader, Le Duan, said: "Every cadre, whatever his position, must study hard. They must show determination to scale the highest peaks in all domains of knowledge necessary for creating a

new society."

The Cuban motto for education echoes his call: "Every worker a student, every student a teacher." And in Cuba, for someone to be elected a "model worker" in their factory, they must have taken steps to advance their education.

But this is only possible once the shortage of teachers has been solved.

Teachers also learn

A shortage of teachers, especially those with a progressive consciousness, has faced most newly liberated societies.

In Mozambique, teacher-activists at schools in the liberated areas played a key role in spreading progressive ideas in their schools and communities. After the Portuguese left, there were many areas where teachers had never played this political role, and needed a political education.

People's education does not just mean changing what people are taught, but also how they are taught. Students learn best by participating and understanding, and by seeing the social purpose of what they learn.

So if they are growing cabbages in agriculture, their biology may focus on how a cabbage grows. Teachers work together to integrate the different aspects of what they are teaching.

Teachers are encouraged to prepare their classes collectively, to share ideas and methods. They are meant to sit in on other teacher's classes each week, to learn and to give constructive criticism.

In this way, teachers teach each other. They also have assessment sessions with their students. This helps to change the relationship between students and teachers - and between students themselves, who are encouraged to work collectively and not to compete. Students are not only assessed in terms of passing or failing, but also in terms of their participation and co-operation, and whether they apply progressive values.

Discipline is also a collective problem in people's education. If a student is rowdy in class, this makes it difficult for the teacher to teach, and for other pupils to learn. It is therefore their collective responsibility to deal with the problem. Often the pressure of

disapproval from other class-members during assessments is enough to solve the problem.

Centres for democracy

People's education also reinforces democratic values in its structures.

In most cases, the day-to-day running of the school is handled by committees made up of student, teacher and worker representatives. These committees handle administration, health and hygiene, discipline, sport and more.

Student, teacher and worker representatives also discuss how to implement the overall priorities in education. These are decided at a national level by representatives from all constituencies, in terms of the overall social priorities.

Each class elects activists to these committees. They also elect a class council. In Cuba, each class elects representatives both from the classroom, and from production, to emphasise the equality between intellectual and manual work.

In some cases, student representatives sit on exam councils, which evaluate students not only on their marks, but also on their participation.

Leadership is seen in terms of the extent to which a student has internalised the values of people's education.

A student interviewed at a school in Cuba explains:

"Some of us might become leaders, but being a leader does not mean being better than anyone, or having more power; because here in Cuba, the ones with power, the ones who direct, are the masses.

"We're not going to be rich, we're not going to live off the work of others; we're going to work to develop our country."

National action is key in the struggle for a living wage

The struggle for a living wage is linked to the struggle over township conditions. Because both workers' wages and living conditions reflect their access to the wealth they produce.

In SA workers' low wages and poor township conditions reflect the way in which workers are dominated as a class.

It suits the business sector that the apartheid government forces people to live in townships, with the bare minimum of facilities and services. This has allowed big business to keep more of their profits.

Houses, roads, sewerage, electricity, clinics and other basic services cost money. The government could only get this money from taxes on profits - which businessmen are as reluctant to pay as they are to pay a living wage.

Since the township uprisings, some businessmen have argued that conditions must be improved, to prevent any threat to the survival of capitalism.

But when they get to the wage negotiation table, their big talk does not turn into big wage increases.

In fact right now, many workers are fighting for a wage that simply gives them and their families the right to survive.

That's hardly a living wage, but it's an important start in the long battle to ensure that the wealth of the country is shared by those that produce it.



Workers occupy General Electric's Head Office as part of Mawu's living wage campaign

Miners demand share of profit

THE STRIKE by 35 000 mineworkers at three Goldfields mines in the Western Transvaal brought mineworkers' bitter battle for a living wage back under the spotlight.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has not only been demanding a living wage. They also demand job security for workers. This will improve their overall bargaining power.

NUM won a longstanding battle with mine management over the renewal of contracts.

"In the past, management has used the contract system as a way of informally retrenching and victimising workers. They would simply refuse to renew certain workers' contracts when they returned from their annual leave", says NUM. Now workers jobs are guaranteed when they return.

1985/86 - Chamber of Mines profits
- R1 900 million

Gencor: R458 million.....	up 56%
Goldfields: R201 million.....	up 44%
Anglovaal: R66 million.....	up 50%
JCI: R149 million.....	up 21%
Anglo: R88 million.....	up 30%
Rand Mines: R110 million.....	up 36%

NUM also won a decrease from 100 to 98 working hours for underground workers.

An average of 3 mine workers die in accidents every day. The NUM argues that workers should be paid more for taking these risks.

Many sectors of the mining industry are making record profits.

South African coal mines make a 70% profit on exports - and are still

the cheapest suppliers of coal in the world. This is because they pay such low wages.

This year, coal miners' wage increases lag so far behind inflation that their wages will be worth 10% less than in 1982.

The gold mines are not using their record profits to improve workers lives either.

"Wage increases must be kept in

check so as not to fuel inflation", says management. But the NUM does not buy this line.

"Inflation is a result of mismanagement of the economy," says an NUM spokesperson. "Far from causing inflation, higher wages would actually boost the economy by increasing spending power. "Capital complains that they cannot raise wages because the economy is stagnating, and they cannot sell their goods. But until people have money to spend, this problem will remain. And it's certainly no excuse for the mining industry."

Until now, the Chamber of Mines minimum wage for underground workers has been R193 a month. Surface workers got R162.

Mine management claim that with accommodation, food, recreation and medical services included, these

are living wages. Workers disagree.

"There is bad accommodation and bad food, and these are only for the mine-worker himself - he must still send money for food, housing, and schooling for his family; and what can you do with R193 a month?" says NUM.

Migrant labour

"The mines cannot wash their hands of responsibility for the survival of workers' families, even though this was their aim when they introduced the migrant labour system. We cannot let them get away with it any longer."

NUM started off demanding a 40 percent increase. When the Chamber of Mines said 15-19 percent was their final offer, the NUM declared a dispute. They also declared disputes with 8 mines which are not members of the Chamber.

Talks deadlocked again during Conciliation Board hearings, and NUM prepared to hold a strike ballot.

Wages and income security were the key issues in the dispute. Many workers suffer injuries or illness because of their work, and are then transferred to a lower-paid job-category. NUM demanded that such workers be guaranteed their original wage for six months after they go back to work.

To prevent a legal strike, the Chamber called NUM back for more negotiations. They accepted the demand for income security.

The Chamber also increased its wage offer to between 19,5 and 22,5 percent for underground workers, and between 20,5 and 23,5 percent for surface workers.

But Goldfields and Rand Mines Coal Division pulled out of the negotiations, causing 35 000 mineworkers to strike. Goldfields agreed to meet the union, and the workers returned to work.

Mawu gets tough for a living wage

"THIS YEAR we fight" is Mawu's slogan for their living wage campaign. And they've lived up to their promises.

They are demanding R3.50 an hour minimum wage for metal workers.

And they are turning the screws on the bosses to make sure they get it.

Since 1975, real wages have not gone up for metal workers, despite the huge profits the bosses are making. Anglo American Industrial Corporation's profits have gone up 500% in that time.

Workers in all Mawu factories started discussing the campaign last year.

By the time negotiations started on the Industrial Council, workers were poised for national action.

So when discussions first reached deadlock, there was a one hour stoppage in all organised factories. And since April, metal workers nationally have refused to work overtime.

At the next deadlock, Mawu increased the pressure, with a national one-day stoppage. Management has tried hard to break the campaign.

Some companies are trying to settle the wage-dispute outside of the Industrial Council and SEIFSA, by offering to bargain at plant level - on condition their workers pull out of the national campaign.

Workers at Siemens and other plants have refused these terms. But some less-organised factories have had to accept them, or risk dividing the workers, because many are desperate for the increase.

Some employers, like Steelmobile, have actually met the living-wage demand so as to break the campaign in their factories; others, like Robert Bosch, Siemens, and Barlows have come close.

Mawu has long demanded the right to plant-level bargaining, but the bosses swore they would never accept it. Bernie Fanaroff, MAWU

national organiser, explains their change of tune:

"Until now, management used national bargaining to strengthen their hand against the workers in negotiations; but now workers are using national pressure effectively against them.

"So now they are trying to use plant-level bargaining to undermine national worker unity.

"But our demand for plant-level bargaining was never meant to replace bargaining at a national level; it was intended for winning demands over and above what was won nationally.

"Management are learning their tactics from the British metal industry, where national bargaining was smashed.

"They decentralised it so much that on one site, they would define three or four different profit-centres, and have separate bargaining procedures in each.

"This makes it impossible to unite

workers, who get screwed as a result. "The strategy of decentralising bargaining is just a more sophisticated form of anti-unionism than SEIFSA's rather crude approach," says Fanaroff.

He explained that national bargaining gives workers maximum strength on the factory floor, and national unity also allows workers to flex their political muscle.

During the campaign, Mawu organised 18 000 new paid up members. 9 000 of these are from Iscor.

Mawu declared a dispute after Seifsa's final wage offer, but it was gazetted, making strike action illegal. Now Mawu members are discussing next year's campaign.

Job security will be a major demand. There are about 2 500 retrenchments a month in the metal industry, and over 100 000 metal workers have been retrenched since 1982.

Cosatu weathers the storm and puts pressure on the bosses



A NUMBER OF Cosatu organisers and shop stewards from Northern Natal were released from detention recently. The security police dropped them off at the bus terminus in Empangeni - just when workers were streaming home from work.

When they realised the unionists were being released, there was singing and celebrating, and the bus queues became a spontaneous mass meeting.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions in Northern Natal was hard hit by detentions.

But instead of weakening Cosatu, membership figures shot up in the region, and strong local shop-steward committees have been built in Empangeni and Madadeni. All over the country, Cosatu structures have weathered the storm, and union membership has risen dramatically.

SASPU National looks at how Cosatu and business have responded to the State of Emergency.

MORE THAN 500 trade unionists have been detained since the State of Emergency was declared on June 12. There have been mass arrests of more than 2 200 workers involved in protest action.

The state has attacked the unions at their strongest point by detaining many shop-stewards. In addition, many unionists released from detention have been placed under restrictions which bar them from continuing their work.

"The State of Emergency affected us dramatically at first," Jay Naidoo, Cosatu Secretary-General, told Saspu National.

"Workers are now much more aware of how state repression can undermine our organised strength. They also saw how we relied on strong organisation to regroup.

"As a result, there is a renewed sense of urgency and commitment to building our organisation."

SADF occupation of the townships at the start of the Emergency made mass protest in the townships almost impossible. But workers were still brought together at their workplace - and their collective outrage was expressed in guerrilla strikes and action.

There were more than 100 protest strikes in the retail industry.

At one Woolworths branch, workers simply locked their tills and left with the keys, leaving management to deal with the confusion. And more than 60 000 mine-workers flexed their collective muscle in protest action around the country, using half-shifts, go-slows and sit-ins to close the shafts.

At factories all over the country, workers did what they could to counter the attack - often in the absence of organisers and officials.

Work-stoppage

Many union recognition agreements give workers 24 hours before a work-stoppage is defined as a strike, and workers took full advantage of this.

Worker action destabilised the economy, and heightened the crisis faced by the ruling class.

Many union offices were forced to close. "Re-opening our office was in itself a form of resistance to the attack," says a Metal and Allied Workers' Union (Mawu) spokesperson. "We managed to get shop-stewards time off work to run the office, but then even they were detained."

Mawu also challenged certain clauses of the State of Emergency in court, winning some legal space. But the state was quick to close the gaps with more legislation.

The battle against repression is by no means over. Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union (PWAWU)

won the release of their Transvaal branch secretary, Siphon Khubeka, after launching an international campaign. And at Printpak, Industria, PWAWU members downed tools recently demanding the release of a senior shop steward.

Street committees

Despite the onslaught against the unions, the government still denies that the unions were under attack. They argue that trade unionists are being detained for their street

committee activities, not their "bona fide" union activities.

"But for workers, involvement in street committees is a logical extension of their activities in the factories," says Naidoo. "Street committees are a similar form of organisation to factory committees. They allow people in the townships to be democratically involved in carrying forward the struggle.

"The leadership has to be elected, to operate with mandates, to report back and to be accountable to the community."

In interrogations of some unionists, the security police have said that if the unions stick to the framework of industrial relations, that's fine; it's workers involvement in politics that worries them.

This shows their concern at the dramatic increase of workplace action around political issues.

Capital's responses

There have been contradictory responses to the State of Emergency from capital.

"There is no way we could have continued to do business while people were burning down schools and murdering each other," said a past-president of the Afrikaaner Handelsinstituut.

But representatives from AECl, the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), and Premier Milling came out strongly against the State of Emergency.

These contradictory responses highlight the different strategies within the ruling class about ways of keeping capitalism alive in SA.

Many ruling-class ideologues believe that capitalism will not survive in this country if big business does not distance itself from apartheid.

Stayaways, consumer boycotts, and even sabotage attacks on targets like Anglo headquarters show that for many, big business is seen as part of the problem in SA.

"Political pressures mean that it suits capital to have an anti-apartheid image these days, but we question their commitment to ending apartheid," says Naidoo.

"It is in their power to put real pressure on the state, but they have never done so. Apartheid continues to serve their interests; they continue to use apartheid laws to make their super-profits, regardless of the human costs."

The chair of the Johannesburg Chamber of Industries (JCI), called on the government to address the causes of black grievances. Since the township uprisings started, calls to upgrade the quality of life for black South Africans have become one of the themes of the ruling class.

But capital prefers to remain blind to their role in forcing people to live in poverty.

Migrant labour

"Right now, employers are actively resisting our campaign for a living wage; they still take full advantage of the migrant labour system; and companies like Gencor are moving to bantustans where repression lets them exploit workers even more harshly than in the rest of SA," says Naidoo.

So when FCI proposed that workers and management should form a united front against the State of Emergency, Cosatu rejected it. "We would not consider a united front with the employers, because capitalism is protected by apartheid - often at gunpoint.

"How can workers who are fighting tooth-and-nail battles with the bosses in their factories be expected to see them as allies on any level?"

"We believe we would weaken the growth of the working class movement by entering a united front with monopoly capital. Instead, we have pressurised them to grant us rights in the factory that would allow us to regroup on our own terms. But their response has been fairly lame", says Naidoo.

While FCI proposed a united front, many FCI affiliates have been reluctant to guarantee job and income security to detained workers. Cosatu unions are fighting ongoing battles on this front.

Assocom's Business Confidence Index gives some insight into the average employer's response to the State of Emergency: it showed a marked increase in business confidence in the South African economy after the State of Emergency was declared.

It seems repression is good for business.

One of the reasons given by employers for this growth in confidence is that "violence in the townships is on the wane". Maybe employers believe the Bureau for Information when it says everything is under control. Or maybe they think the violence of state repression doesn't count.

RURAL WOMEN have tended to stay away from politics in the past. But not any more.

Saspu National spoke to a Federation of Transvaal Women (Fedtraw) activist about organising women in the rural areas.

"Traditionally the husband prefers his woman to be away from politics. But now this is changing.

"In every home there is a comrade. There are detentions and killings, the police and army are raiding and occupying the villages and townships in the region.

"This forces the women to come together to see what they can do. They can't sit back. It is no longer possible.

"Some are still docile, they take it as normal. But many are bitter, saying the SADF makes their children go wild, it just creates problems.

"The pressure from the youth, their children, is making the women more political. Their harsh experience is making them political. Their children are no longer at home. They are hiding in the mountains.

"In an effort to find a solution to these problems, parents have to indulge in politics. They reach the stage where they say we must take on the fight ourselves to save our children.

One example was in Mankweng. A youth congress member was killed in clashes with police. Thousands of older people, including the women, were inspired by the spirit at his funeral.

"They wanted to be together so they could say something. Many attended the civic meetings. The old women were very militant. At one meeting the police invaded. This made the women more politically minded."

"One old woman said from now on she want to wear a UDF skipper. She said she understands what makes people react towards the government like this."

The killing of Northern Transvaal UDF president, Peter Nchabeleng, also provided the spark for women in his area to become more active.

In Phokoane, a woman led the procession at a security force victim's funeral just after the state of emergency was declared. She marched carrying a bundle of branches tied together - a symbol of unity. Later, women - young and old - clashed with the army and the police.

"The present political situation is demanding that women act, that they don't have to wait for their husbands."

But activists say women's participation is still not as high as it was in the rural areas of countries like Vietnam, Mozambique, Angola or Nicaragua.

At a mass level it is still mainly the young men who are active. But increasingly women are beginning to occupying leadership positions, eg.



Women from Turfloop University in the NTVI reflect the growing militance of rural women

Rural women rally to cause of freedom

Conditions in the villages are pushing rural women to get involved in politics

in youth and student organisations and in trade unions.

But there is a lot that still holds women back and prevents them from joining or becoming active in progressive organisations.

"Traditionally they are taught to be submissive. They are taught not to do things without permission from the man. There are too many strong women who are afraid to come up. Women have many tasks to do at home. Often they don't have the time to become active.

"Then there is the tradition that young women can't stay out late or sleep out. She isn't allowed to go to meetings at night. If she does she can

be punished at home.

"So often, if she wants to be active in politics and in organisations, she has to be prepared to be chased from home. She will only do that if she loves the struggle a lot.

"What can be done about this?"

"The youth and other activists can speak to the parents. Each youth must bring his parents to meetings, so they can understand. The male activists can also help at home. So women have more time to be active. Then we can develop faster.

"In organisations women must be allowed to express themselves. Give them the credit they deserve. If she is prepared to do something, boost her

up, don't stand in her way.

"Women are often crippled with fear. But this doesn't mean they won't stand up. If we go through the Freedom Charter, then women will realise they should fight seriously for their rights."

Some civics and youth congresses in the region have started special portfolios or subcommittees for women.

A youth congress activist said they were setting up a women's committee to organise more women to participate actively in their organisation.

He said the task for organising women was not the task of women

alone. But there are problems affecting women that they could discuss and organise around, eg. why more women, especially older women, don't participate, how male domination affects them.

The aim is also for women to gain more experience in the organisation, for them to be part of political education programmes and to develop organisational and leadership skills.

Women are also getting involved through women's groups in the villages. A Fedtraw activist explains:

"We start with small groups, collectives, and engage the women in

ORGANISING domestic workers is very hard. They are cut off from their communities. Often they don't know what is happening.

They have no rights and they are subject to rampant exploitation without any protection.

But domestic workers organisations like Cosatu's SA Domestic Workers Association (Sadwa) are working hard to change all this. And a national domestic workers union is about to be launched.

After a period of groundwork and discussions, Sadwa was officially launched in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town in 1981. Today the Transvaal branch and has over 25000 members - 9000 of them paid up members.

After the launch the organising drive intensified. Sadwa leader

Margaret Nhlapo explains: "Each person would organise domestic workers in his or her own small area, organising in the white suburbs and in the townships.

"We would start by educating the workers, telling them what Sadwa is, why they should join and how it can help them. We are making them aware of the situation generally, how they are exploited. We also look at things like how to bargain to improve their situation.

"Some are resigned to their exploitation, so Sadwa activists try to take them out of that frame of mind to show them how they can help themselves.

"Once they come out, then it is easy. In the same way that they themselves were organised, they talk to others and organise them.

It's like a fire, when it catches, it

No tea on these terms say domestic workers

soon spreads.

A PE Domestic Workers Union (Pedwu) organiser had similar experiences: "We had to win them over. Some say, I have been with my employer for many years, she loves me. So we tell her, don't take your madam as your family. They only want your work and when you are old and sick they don't want you"

"Many can feel the exploitation and oppression. Once they join, it is some kind of relief to know they are not facing their problems on their own.

Pedwu organises domestic workers into street committees in the suburbs. And the members in a street organise others to join.

In Johannesburg Sadwa has area committees, made up of a number of streets. Each area elects an executive and has representatives to coordinate with the Sadwa Head Office.

The areas are worked out according to size so the women can meet easily. "They can only meet over lunch times and at night. They

have house meetings. Some meet often, even daily, others meet once a week or once a month or whenever they get time. At the meetings they discuss their problems and how to deal with them. And all the time education goes on," says Nhlapo.

Area committees are encouraged to handle the problems of their members. This works well where the organisation is strong. But in some cases Head Office people are called in to assist.



Women's collectives are organising gardening projects

small projects like making beads or gardening. Some organise bulk buying together. We keep talking to them.

"They go out and recruit others, and so the group grows. They sell the things they make and share the money. We try to make the groups self-sufficient."

Usually women from one village or from nearby villages form a group, so they can meet easily. In the groups the women share their problems and work out how to solve them.

"If they are unorganised and alone, they don't always know what to do. But as soon as they are together, they can talk about their problems, their frustrations. They can realise that the government, the whole system, makes their living conditions what they are."

"Most only discover once they are there in the group - by the way now we're involved in politics."

"Their problems are many - poverty and hunger, water shortages, unemployment, the high cost of living, lack of health care facilities and exorbitant fees at clinics, pensions and rent problems, the crisis in the schools."

"Then there is also the pressure from their husbands who are oppressing them. Most women face problems due to the situation in the home."

"But it is all these problems that unite women. Now in the groups they can tell one another and discuss them."

"The woman carries the burden of running the family. The husband is drinking, she must see to it that there is food for the family, the kids are dressed and many other things."

"The men are working in Joberg and it might seem as if they forget their wives. But we teach the women not to blame their men. He is not allowed to live with his wife. It's the system that created that. So the women in the villages are feeling the pinch of the migrant labour system."

Many farmworkers are women. "The farms prefer women workers as they can pay them even less than men. They are picked up from the villages early in the morning and then dumped back there after the days work. Often it is difficult to organise on the farms. But the

women can be organised in the villages."

What effect has the economic crisis and things like retrenchments had?

"The government is offering more women the dirty jobs - cleaning next to the tarred roads, working on the roads, carrying dustbins - manual work previously done by men."

"There are no jobs for the men. They go around drinking, and some of the women go out for work. In the evening she still has to come back to do the washing, cleaning, cooking. And she has to contend with her husband's frustrations."

"He is used to working and being able to buy things. At home he finds he can't even get bread. He tells her she is useless."

"The political set-up means that both men and women are oppressed and exploited. They have no power. Now the man wants to make sure that at least he has power at home. So he takes it out on his wife. He oppresses her at home instead of encouraging her to join the struggle."

"If a man knows his wife is working, then he should do the housework and she can provide for the family. Then everything will run smoothly at home."

"But instead he waits for everything to be done by her. He believes that because he is the man he shouldn't have to do those things."

"It is difficult for the woman to suggest he does. She needs courage to be able to do this. The man will say she is no good. And she can be sent back to her parents, because he paid labola."

"Even discussing this with men in organisations, they will resist when it comes to this. But it must be done."

"Labola also leads men to illtreat their wives. If two young people are in love, the man must pay labola to the woman's family before he can marry her."

"Then the man says to his wife, I bought you, I paid for you, I own you. I can do what I want with you. She becomes like his slave. But this practice is still very strong and doing away with it can be very difficult."

"A better system would be if both parents contribute something for the couple to make a start. So there wouldn't be this domination of one by the other."



Ccawusa workers demand higher wages. Women still get paid the lowest wages and have little job security.

Unions take up women's demands

WORKING WOMEN are still super-exploited and victimised by employers who know they are desperate for work; they get the worst paid jobs.

In Soweto, women are paid R5 a day for cleaning the streets.

But organising around women's issues is high on the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) agenda. Already organised action is speaking louder than words.

Equal wages and the rights of pregnant women workers have been the most pressing demands coming from workers.

By law women may not work for four weeks before the birth of their baby, nor for eight weeks afterwards. But the law does not guarantee them their jobs back, and they often lose them.

Last year the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (Ccaawusa) managed to get Metro Cash and Carry to agree to protection from dismissal while pregnant, a minimum of six months maternity leave after the baby is born, and the right to return to work for up to 12 months afterwards.

The Chemical Workers Industrial Union included womens rights in all their negotiations this year - with some breakthroughs to show for it.

They have made maternity agreements at five factories, which guarantee:

- time off to attend clinics
- job security while pregnant
- guaranteed return to work with no loss of pay or benefits.
- health safeguards while pregnant.

Four of these factories pay a proportion of the workers' wage while they are on maternity leave - and Rolfes Ltd. is paying wages in full.

But once maternity leave is over, many mothers go back to work with fears about their children playing in the streets.

Only 0,4% of pre-school African children are in creches.

The National Automobile and Allied Workers Union (Naawu) has negotiated that two BMW plants make creche facilities available to both men and women workers.

Job security is another big issue for women workers - they are often the last to be hired, and first to be fired - except in organised factories, says Susan Shibangu, Transport and General Workers Union organiser.

Recognition agreements can force management to stick to certain retrenchment procedures which apply equally to men and women.

But women still have huge problems getting and keeping jobs.

Their desperation gives those in positions of authority power over them. And many exploit this to demand sexual favours.

But women are not taking sexual harassment lying down.

"Through women's groups in the unions, women are learning that they should be at nobody's mercy," says Shibangu.

"Women give in to sexual harassment because of their fears of losing their jobs. Then afterwards, she doesn't know who to turn to, she's scared of the disgrace and of how it might be used against her."

"Men in the factories are also highly unhappy about the sexual harassment. Because they know if it is happening to women workers in their factory, it can be happening to their own wives. They are keen to support action against this," says Shibangu.

she changes.

Nhlapo says it is easier to organise domestic workers working in the white suburbs. "A domestic worker working for a black madam is more difficult. She has a sense of duty. Often she is illegally in Johannesburg, so she feels this person is doing me a favour. She is not free to make her own demands."

"Some domestic workers working in the townships come with complaints. But there is still a need to organise these people. It would be racist if we pointed fingers at the white employers only, while knowing what's happening with domestic workers in the black townships - African, coloured and Indian areas."

In PE, Pedwu is popularised in the community, through the street committees. At funerals they have

speakers along with other progressive organisations. The PE Women's Organisation (Pewo) encourages its members who are domestic workers to join Pedwu. And Pedwu encourages its women members to join Pewo, and the men (eg. gardeners) to join the youth and the civic organisations.

One difference between domestic workers unions and other unions is that domestic workers are scattered. They have to be organised one by one where they work.

They don't come together every day like factory workers. This makes it more difficult. They have common problems, but when we have to negotiate this has to be done with different bosses, says Nhlapo.

Sadwa usually starts trying to sort out a problem by phoning or writing a letter to the employer. But if the

employer is stubborn they sometimes have to use lawyers or take the case to court.

Some cases are serious, eg. one domestic worker was raped and murdered by her employer. In another case a gardener demanding his wages was beaten up. Some are bitten by dogs or assaulted by their employers. In these cases assault charges are laid.

Sadwa is also fighting for domestic workers' statutory rights. They are demanding domestic workers be recognised as workers and that things like minimum wages and working hours be written into the law. A memorandum was sent to the government last year but there has been no progress yet.

In the meantime Sadwa is running campaigns for minimum wages, notice pay, annual leave and time off.



"We are human beings, we are workers", says Sadwa

Some area committees have come up with an effective tactic to deal with employers who treat their domestic workers badly. They make sure the employer doesn't get another domestic worker until he or

It is a tribute to the determined resistance of SA's people that the UDF has not only survived the most severe state repression but has grown into a powerful mass movement. One would have to gag a whole nation to crush the UDF today.

The UDF launch marked a dramatic leap forward in the national liberation struggle. It brought over 500 grassroots organisations together in a broad front against apartheid. Its aims were:

- To campaign for the massive rejection of the tricameral parliament and black local authorities.
- To build unity among the oppressed people.
- To set up new organisations and strengthen existing ones to become effective weapons for mass struggle against apartheid.

We have had success few envisaged three years ago. Mass action since 1983 has completely wrecked the government's plans and has thrown them into a crisis of enormous proportions. Our goal of liberation is closer than ever before.

Achievements of three years of united action

● **Defeating the 'new deal'.** In its first years the UDF and its affiliates campaigned tirelessly and successfully against the black local authorities and tricameral elections. The majority of people decisively rejected the 'new deal' and any form of government-imposed bodies and would be satisfied with nothing less than majority rule.

● **The collapse of bodies of minority rule.** Ignoring the stated wishes of the masses, the government pushed ahead with attempts to reform apartheid. By giving the new black local authorities powers to increase rents the seeds of their downfall were sown. Despite election promises, councillors raised rents and service charges and did nothing to improve living conditions.

Township uprisings began in Tumahole in July 1984 but it was the uprisings in the Vaal Triangle in September 1984 which signalled the beginning of the end of the black local authorities. By the end of 1985 few town councils remained intact.

Rent boycotts further intensified the campaign against the black local authorities and the whole apartheid system. Starting in the Vaal in 1984 they spread to more than 50 townships. Local government structures are millions of rands in debt as residents refuse to pay for their own oppression.

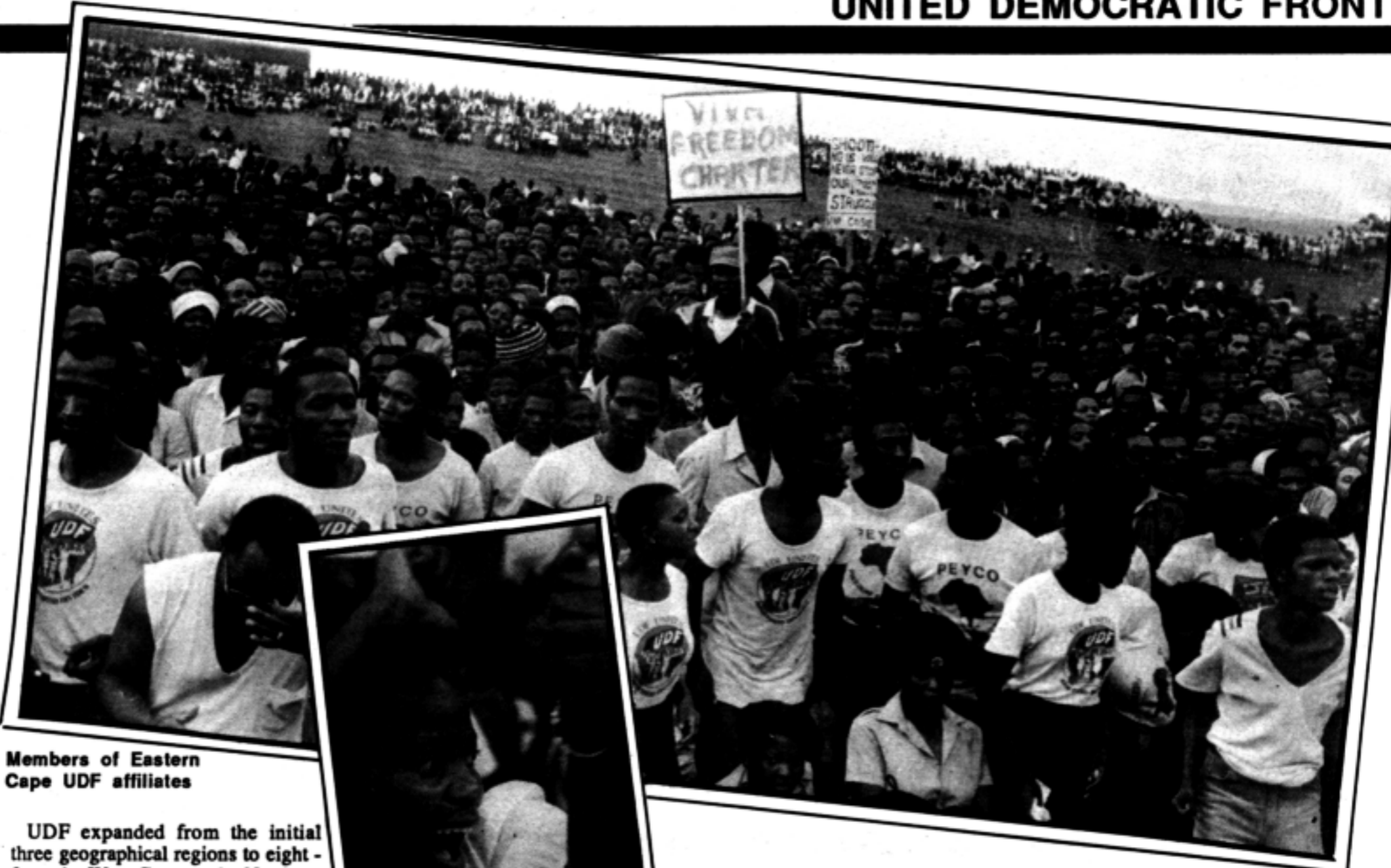
● **Fighting bantustan structures.**

The bantustans joined the tide of resistance sweeping the country. From anti-removals campaigns to the campaign against KwaNdebele independence of KwaNdebele, UDF has become involved in rural struggles. The most phenomenal development of the UDF, especially in the last year, has been in the rural areas - through progressive youth congress or village councils in many villages, especially in the Transvaal.

A key UDF call has been for the dismantling of undemocratic tribal structures and the institution of democratic village councils.

● **Building organisation.** UDF spurred unprecedented development of organisations. Ad-hoc committees fighting the new deal transformed themselves into civic and other structures. National contact facilitated the sharing of experiences and resources.

The UDF Million Signature Campaign spread the UDF message and gave people impetus to fight against apartheid, to unite and form organisations. UDF activists used it to discuss the political situation with hundreds of thousands of ordinary people.



Members of Eastern Cape UDF affiliates



UDF expanded from the initial three geographical regions to eight - from the West Coast to the Northern Transvaal.

Increasing activity attracted thousands of young people who were recruited into the newly established youth structures and became tireless cadres in UDF campaigns. The 1985 International Youth Year gave the youth movement added impetus in the broader struggle.

Mainly youth-led resistance shifted to involve workers, parents, residents and others through civics and parent-teacher-students associations.

● **Building national unity.** The UDF made large scale nationally coordinated opposition to apartheid possible. UDF in its first year spearheaded national days of action and campaigns eg. in solidarity with the people of the Ciskei.

People's growing militancy coupled with heightened organisation and unity has drastically increased the scope for national action. A variety of creative strategies such as consumer boycotts spread regionally and then nationally in mid-1985. 1986 saw highly successful national stayaways on May 1st and June 16th effected mainly by Cosatu and UDF.

Unity in action between the UDF and the trade union movement has grown. The November 1984 Transvaal stayaway brought together student, community and worker demands. The formation of Cosatu greatly enhanced the possibilities for nationally coordinated political and economic action.

Nowhere has unity produced greater results than in the education struggle. 1984 and 1985 saw the growth of Cosas and the articulation of national student demands. The state responded brutally and eventually banned Cosas, the UDF's largest affiliate. This led to growing involvement by teachers and parents and the setting up of joint students, parents and teachers committees in many parts.

At a time when the UDF was under attack, UDF's civic and student affiliates were the driving force behind the attempts to bring different sectors together. National conferences in December and March adopted a common national approach to resolving the crisis. National demands were put to the DET and the state.

Lastly, the UDF has constantly strived to mobilise the broadest possible range of forces to fight against apartheid rule. Today even taxi drivers, shebeen owners and small businessmen support UDF demands and campaigns.

UDF SPEAKS

The UDF has become a formidable force since its launch. Here the UDF takes a look at these 'three years of united action'.

● **Weakening the unity of apartheid forces.**

Increasing resistance under the banner of the UDF has made many white South Africans doubt the state's ability to resolve the present crisis. More and more whites are beginning to acknowledge the inevitability of majority rule and there is a growing recognition of the ANC as an authentic national liberation movement.

Business has also increasingly begun to criticise the Nationalists and to support the democratic movement's pre-conditions for negotiation such as the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of the African National Congress.

The UDF 'Call to whites' campaign formed an important part of our movements attempts to show whites that there is a future beyond the Nationalist Party.

● **From Mobilisation to Organisation**

In many areas, apartheid functionaries like bantustan chiefs and town councillors had been forced to resign. In their place civic, youth and student congresses have begun to take control of local administration.

Tribal authorities and black local authorities are being replaced by new forms of mass organisation such as democratic village councils, street and area committees.

Unprecedented community unity

has been achieved through these structures since by definition they involve the entire community in collective decision making. In places like Atteridgeville and Alexandra stayaways could be called overnight as a result of strong street committees.

These structures also led to undisciplined elements being brought under the control of the people and their organisations. And they enabled people to defend each other against vigilante attacks and evictions.

Campaigns such as the consumer boycott needed people's full participation. This led to street committees which enabled people to wage these campaigns without coercion. This was demonstrated in the second Port Elizabeth consumer boycott where the boycott was 100 percent successful.

● **International solidarity.** Apartheid repression and the state's intransigence mobilised unprecedented international support against apartheid. The Consulate sit-in by six Natal UDF leaders seeking refuge from detention provided UDF with its first opportunity to become integrally involved in the international campaign to isolate the allies of the regime such as Thatcher and Reagan.

When the people of South Africa opposed the New Zealand Rugby Tour, UDF office-bearer Rev

Arnold Stofile, visited New Zealand to voice their protests.

The state responds

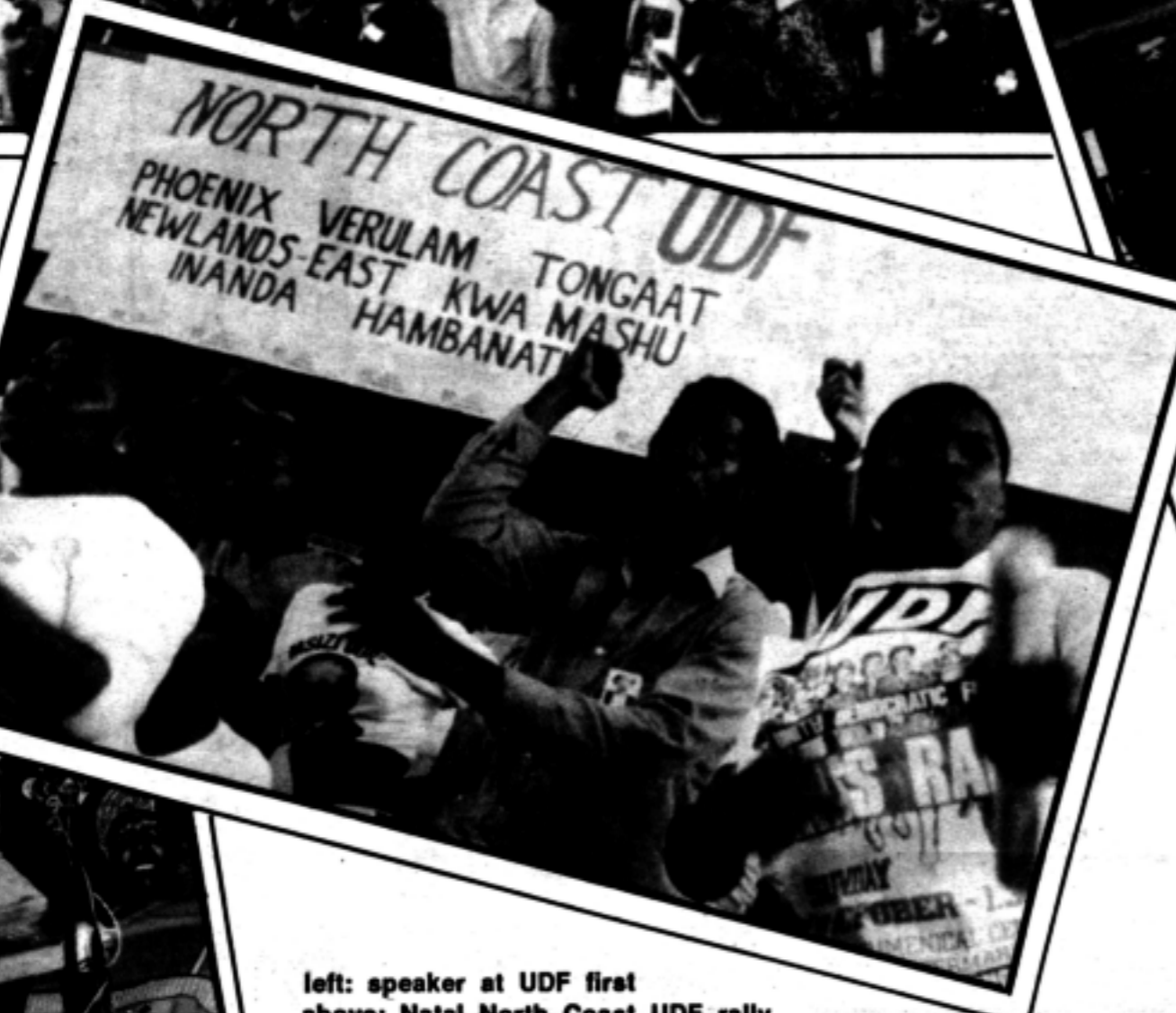
The people's will to advance their struggle despite mounting repression has been a central feature of the past three years. Detentions and harassment failed to stop the march forward. Then there were anonymous death squads and vigilante attacks. There were also attempts to criminalise the activities of the Front. While charges against 16 UDF leaders in Pietermaritzburg were dropped on the basis of a weak case, the treason trial in Delmas of UDF and civic leaders continues.

So far not even two emergencies and the massive detentions and stringent regulations which have accompanied them have succeeded in crushing the democratic movement. As repression has increased, our people responded by forming self-defence committees and embarking on campaigns to isolate the apartheid forces in the communities. The Front is now facing its second Emergency determined not only to survive but to grow.

While the UDF has always attempted to promote unity among all sections of the oppressed people, political divisions have been systematically exploited by agents of the state.



left: 1985 UDF National General Council, below: NTVI UDF regional council



left: speaker at UDF first above: Natal North Coast UDF anniversary rally in Joburg



When the democratic movement has faced its most serious attack, other groupings have attempted to impose solutions above the heads of the people. Initiatives such as the National Convention Movement failed dismally. Instead the democratic movement has continued to occupy the centre stage in opposition politics.

More serious is the conflict Inkatha has orchestrated against the UDF. Hundreds of our activists have been attacked and harassed by Inkatha imps. Lack of popular support for Inkatha has made Buthelezi determined to crush the democratic movement in Natal. UDF has constantly called on Inkatha members to side with their brothers and sisters and not allow themselves to be used as Pretoria's pawns. In fact growing numbers have come into the ranks of the democratic movement.

The current situation

Over the last two years the people have created a new situation in our country. They have seized the initiative from the state and begun to create conditions for the transfer of power to the people as a whole.

Just prior to the declaration of the emergency the apartheid regime's continued existence was being threatened on a number of fronts. All attempted piecemeal solutions such as

the partial state of emergency, the scrapping of the pass laws and the introduction of the national statutory councils had failed to crush the uprising or win mass support. These measures merely deepened opposition and isolated the regime further.

The declaration of the national emergency on June 12th was thus a major attempt by the state to take the initiative from the progressive movement and to create completely new conditions to retain white minority rule.

The emergency aimed to:

- Eliminate the democratic movement.
- Close off all legal space for mass mobilisation and organisation.
- Smash the township and rural uprisings in order to regain control and prevent the advance of people's democracy.
- Intensify attacks on the Frontline States with the aim of militarily defeating the ANC.
- Re-unite the ruling group.

Has the state succeeded in fulfilling its objectives?

Despite detaining thousands, occupying the townships and villages, crippling the media and generally launching a full-scale offensive against the people, the state has had little success.

● The democratic movement has not been crushed. While widespread detentions - over 70% of which are of members of UDF affiliates - have hit some areas hard, many activists foresaw the emergency and took the necessary precautions. They have been able to avoid detention and remain active, even if covertly. Our organisations are stronger and deeper than before and are thus better able to replace activists detained, killed or forced into exile.

The army and police have not gone unchallenged.

The state hoped that with the elimination of the democratic

movement, dummy bodies could be revived and propped up. Yet councillors continue to resign and numerous local authorities have been taken over by white officials.

Most significant however is the victory of the KwaNdebele people. In the face of tremendous repression they literally laid down their lives to defeat Pretoria's schemes. The UDF salutes the courage and determination of our people in this area.

Stringent curbs on the press, bannings of meetings and other harsh emergency regulations have made it difficult to mobilise and organise on the legal terrain. Yet our people's capacity for united action has not been broken.

● The emergency has not undermined the growing unity between the trade unions and the rest of the democratic movement - a unity that the state finds very threatening. Shortly after the emergency was declared numerous retail workers went on strike against it and in protest against the detention of their leaders. The June 16th stayaway went ahead as planned. More recently there was a successful stayaway in Uitenhage.

● The information black-out has not resulted in an acceptance by the majority of the people of the misinformation fed to us by the Bureau of Information. In fact in KwaNdebele the government's propaganda about 'black on black' violence has backfired. The Imbokotho have been exposed as death squads operating to eliminate opponents of apartheid. The conflict was clearly between those collaborating with apartheid and the majority of people fighting against it.

In communities which do not directly experience what is going on in our townships and villages the media-blackout has to some extent enabled the state to pull the wool over people's eyes.

● The regime has failed to retain control of the townships and prevent the growth of people's democracy. Despite bans on meetings, people have devised ways to meet - right under the noses of the troops and casspirs. Street committees are being set up for the first time in places like Soweto. The rent boycotts have not been crushed, in fact they have spread. People have had no alternative but to defend themselves against rent evictions and seizure of their furniture.

School students have successfully used a variety of tactics to resist attempts to break the development of people's organisation in their schools through the occupation of their schools and the introduction of the 'dompas'. They have refused to register, burnt their ID cards, embarked on limited boycotts, occupied the schools but refused to attend classes and have used the classrooms to teach people's education.

● The armed struggle has become a growing reality, not only on the borders but in the townships. There are increasing incidents of armed conflict between the people and the security forces.

● Disputes and divisions amongst the rulers reached a new intensity before the emergency. The state hoped the emergency would win back support from the right wing by showing it was capable of controlling the African majority and that it refused to bow to international pressure. It hoped to win the support of the liberal and business community by proving that the restoration of 'law and order' is a necessary precondition for continued and successful reform initiatives.

With the exception of the right wing it has failed. At least eight influential businessmen have come out against the emergency and demanded the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC. Widespread repression, media restrictions on the media and the handling of the sanctions issue and the courts have alienated the very people whose support the government aimed to win.

The way forward

Botha is trying to reverse the tide of history, to prevent the old order from dying and a new South Africa from being born. As with the defeat of fascism in Europe, it is only the maximum fighting unity of all democratic forces which will prevent the forces of reaction from destroying everything in their desperate attempts to cling to power.

It is a time where we must defend our organisations and our gains against fierce state repression. But it is also a time where we must continue to take the struggle forward to achieve our liberation.

To defend our gains and take forward our fight for freedom we need to deepen organisations where they already exist, establish organisations where they do not and build greater unity between all forces opposed to apartheid minority rule.

Our organisations stand as a shield between the regime and our people. Yet they also take forward our struggles against apartheid. Without our organisations we are defenceless.

Let us ensure that in every factory, school, village and street throughout the country there are democratic committees elected by and accountable to the people.

These committees will make our trade unions, student-parent-teacher associations, youth, women and civic organisations solid and powerful. And when these organisations act together at the local, regional and national levels through national organisations such as the UDF, Cosatu and the NECC, we will be building a mighty and impregnable national movement.

All democratic forces must close ranks to prevent the regime, which governs by divide-and-rule, from exploiting any divisions amongst the people.

We must also be wary of those attempting to impose solutions above the heads of the people, those who hope to persuade leaders to make deals without the mandate of the people and without meeting the immediate demands of the people.

We have repeatedly stated that no solution to the conflict in South Africa is possible without the meeting of certain conditions, and without the involvement of the people and their organisations.

Let us forge a national unity of all democratic forces struggling against apartheid and committed to the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. This unity must be based on the people's immediate demands:

- End the emergency!
- Troops out of the townships!
- Release political prisoners and detainees!
- Scrap apartheid laws and structures!
- Unban the ANC!

The UDF is a front of the people of South Africa. It was created by the people and can only grow through the energies and efforts of all the people. Only the tireless dedication and sacrifice of UDF supporters in democratic organisations in every township and village will bring us closer to that day of liberation we are all yearning for. Let us march under the banner of the UDF and the democratic movement.

IN AN INTERVIEW in 1980, Samora Machel explained the challenges of reconstruction facing Frelimo after national independence: "The reconstruction of our country could not mean a simple reform of structures. Reformism would have led us to neo-colonialism."

"Reconstruction necessarily implied a struggle at the level of the theory and organisation of the new people's state; the control of the economy and the movement towards economic planning; the creation of a solid economy that serves the interests of the popular masses."

"Reconstruction had to mean the implantation of a people's democracy, of people's power at all levels of society. At the level of production, it was necessary to substitute the old capitalist relations of production with a new type of democratic relations of production."

On Independence Day in 1975, Machel outlined the challenges facing Mozambique in transforming the colonial state structure.

"The state is not the bureaucratic machinery of civil servants, nor a mere technical apparatus. The state is always the organised form through which a class takes power to fulfil its interests. The colonial state must be replaced by a people's state, forged through an alliance of workers and peasants, guided by Frelimo, and defended by the people's army."

To ensure that the state serves the people, Frelimo stressed that the masses must be clear on the aims and tasks of transformation. And they must direct the state to meet these aims.

People's assemblies

Elections and policy discussions were held in village, town, provincial and national assemblies, ensuring the leadership kept a dynamic link with the masses.

"The organisational complexity needed for democratic participation and mobilisation is far greater than that needed for top-down bureaucratic structures," says Frelimo. Organisation must also go hand in hand with a progressive ideology.

Organising, mobilising and politicising people was the task of Dynamising Groups (GD's); these were made up of committed activists elected in every factory, village, and community.

After Frelimo's Third Congress, these GD's were replaced with party structures.

The Mozambican people are fighting to defend socialism in village and town



The Dynamising Groups remained the form of mass organisation in the communities. They were elected by neighbourhood assemblies. Frelimo party cells provided political direction and support.

Frelimo again faced the huge problem that because there had been little mass organisation in the urban areas during the liberation struggle, these tasks had to develop hand in hand with introducing people to democratic participation.

In some areas, the first step was to launch information sessions in the schools, streets and parks, distributing pamphlets and explaining Frelimo's programme.

Block committees

In 1976, Frelimo nationalised all rented housing, and reallocated housing deserted by the Portuguese. So rents were low, and every family had the right to a house. Frelimo set about upgrading the newly-legalised squatter settlements.

In one project, government planners met with the GD's in the Maxaquene area, to discuss priorities. People wanted taps, roads for buses, ambulances and garbage removal; schools, childcare centres, parks, clinics and other community facilities.

Plans were drawn up and accepted at a mass meeting. People collectively moved certain shacks, and divided the land so that all the plots were equal sizes.

Community squares were made at regular intervals. About fifty houses around each square formed a block; block committees were elected - and the GD's stressed that half the representatives should be women.

Then block committees started planting trees, turning their squares into community parks, and using them for meetings and community events. People chose street names.

Lack of resources meant some of the infrastructure was slow to develop; but slowly, roads and sewerage systems were laid down.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE



MOZAMBIQUE'S STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Samora Machel was a familiar figure in factories, villages and schools

But development in the communities has been made difficult by the war. Destabilisation in the rural areas has caused mass migration to the cities, causing unemployment problems, housing shortages, and greater pressure for food supplies.

Transforming the rural areas

Frelimo nationalised abandoned settler farms, and used them to establish state farms and co-operatives. They also created over 1000 communal villages, to draw together the rural population, who were widely scattered on family plots.

In these communal villages, people

share their time between collective work and work on their own plots. The money raised from collective work goes into developing the village - building schools, clinics, shops, and roads, or investing in equipment needed to expand production on the communal land.

The communal villages are also a political unit - with their own political assemblies, where elections, criticism, and planning take place. They have their own people's tribunals, and branches of the youth and women's organisations.

Frelimo saw collective production as a way of changing relations in the countryside. A key part of this is changing attitudes; for so long, work had been for the benefit of the colonialists. "But gradually, people

began to realise that they could all benefit by working together."

But the lack of skills has been a huge problem. On many farms, no-one could make written orders for supplies, or work out how many fields to plant to meet their production quota. They had never organised mass food production. This also limited their participation in decision-making about production quotas.

This led to a reliance on the help of state officials, who haven't always had the necessary skills either. So decision-making tended to become centralised and bureaucratized.

Frelimo recognised this at their Fourth Congress, and stressed the need to "put politics in command" again.

But this is a slow process that has sometimes been sacrificed for the more immediate priority of producing food. And it has been made more difficult - and more urgent - by Renamo's destruction in



Frelimo has tried to collectivise production in the rural areas. But Renamo attacks communal villages and state farms

Workers could not maintain the machines, and often there were no workers who knew how a product was made from start to finish. At a meeting of workers from all the major enterprises, Machel proposed a system of Production Councils through which workers control could become a reality.

Factory democracy

The Production Councils' tasks were to mobilise workers to increase production, to fight economic sabotage, and promote the health and safety of the workers. They also allowed workers to participate directly in the planning and control of production.

For production to continue at all, Frelimo often had to rely on the small-privileged group who had been educated under the Portuguese; but often these people did not have working class interests at heart. So there was a danger that they would entrench themselves in positions of power in the factories.

To make sure these people did not sabotage the growth of workers' control, Frelimo held mass meetings in the factories where workers were encouraged to criticise and raise their problems.

But many problems remained. Production in many factories came to a standstill for long periods; Mozambique often did not have enough foreign exchange to import the raw materials needed; and supply routes were regularly sabotaged by Renamo. (See page 2).

Struggle continues

The struggle to achieve socialism in Mozambique is facing huge obstacles - obstacles whose roots lie in Mozambique's colonial past, and are constantly made worse by the destructive economic and military strategies of imperialism - and especially of South Africa. The key to Mozambique's problems lies here in SA; in ending the vice-like grip in which the apartheid government holds back the freedom of all the people of Southern Africa.

the rural areas. See page 2 on Renamo's role.

Now, although Frelimo remains committed to collectivising production in the rural areas, they are restimulating production on family plots to try and revive agricultural production.

Industry

At a mass meeting in the CIFEL steel foundry in Maputo, the administrator said: "During the colonial period, these machines dehumanised man. Avoiding work was the only form of protest that the Mozambican people were able to make. Work was alienation."

"Now we have to defeat that, to realise that work is for the liberation of people - liberation from suffering, from poverty, from ill health, from the old forms of cultural deprivation. Our struggle is not just a struggle for production. It is a struggle to be more human, to create human relationships of a new kind."

A roar of "Viva Frelimo" followed these words. But the process of building workers control in the factories has not been easy. Firstly, there was no tradition of worker organisation in colonial Mozambique. So workers' first experience of worker democracy was when they had to control their factories.

Also, there were only a handful of skilled workers when the Portuguese left, and no Mozambican technicians.